

CONNECTING WITH ANIMAL ENERGIES: REFLECTIONS IN A TRANSPERSONAL MIRROR

By Helene V. Ramos

Whether we call them Fluffy or Fido or other names far more exotic, according to the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association, 63% of US households are also home to an animal friend of the furred, feathered, finned, or scaled variety. Companion animals provide comfort, friendship and a sense of family in what can be a hectic and impersonal world.

But what I want to touch on here is another facet of the relationship - the larger, more symbolic aspects of our continuing conversation with animal energies.

If we begin to view our interaction with the world “out there” as a dialogue between our current self and the evolving expression of the larger self that we are becoming, then everything becomes part of the conversation. The natural world of plants, minerals, and other energies communicate with us in patterns that we can learn to read and understand. So too do the animals embody energies and patterns that can speak to us and teach us on a transpersonal level.



The Huichol Indians of western central Mexico enjoy an intimate relationship with their natural environment. Under the influence of the sacred peyote plant, the Huichol express this relationship through vibrant, visionary artwork. Only their shamans however, are empowered to interpret the visions. Paintings like this one are available at www.tribesgallery.com

What healers, diviners or mystics in indigenous cultures – including our own – have learned over the ages is how to absorb and decode the language of those energetic patterns. To become “brothers and sisters” with the animal or plant – and act as a vibrational bridge between them and the human world. These shamans and medicine people are adept at looking into nature - both as a reflection of reality and as a metaphor - to clarify the imbalance of dis-ease in the individual or the community and set it right; the most skilled among them incorporating the entire ecosystem of both human and non-human members.

In more scientific language, this concept of energetic patterns manifest in the material world is articulated by innovative biologist Rupert Sheldrake in his theory of morphic fields and morphic resonance. These are organizing fields of what it is to become a horse, a crystal or a plant and are contained in the memory of nature. These fields then impress their patterns on nature’s random activity to bring a particular order to the cellular level, which directs further activity, and with the ability to evolve as well. To expand on this most simplistic of summaries, visit Dr. Sheldrake’s Website at: www.sheldrake.org

It is possible – with intention and focus – to connect intuitively with that memory core, directly into the template level of these organizing fields. Like all conversations, these dialogues occur at a variety of levels and, like buying local, the most satisfying and nourishing of them take advantage of what is native to the area. For instance, animals coming into your awareness will be different when you are in Virginia than those that appear while in New Mexico.

So how can you initiate these conversations? The most important elements are intention, focus and attention. First, make your intention clear. In meditation, before sleep or in a landscape with which you resonate, send out the message that you are open to communication. Focus your intention as if it were a strong searchlight and begin to listen... gently. Expect that you will be answered but don’t have any preconceived notion of how the answer will come. Remain clear in your intention and relax quietly into your inner awareness, keeping a sense of spaciousness in your mind.

If you are in meditation, you may imagine, sense or feel an animal drawing close to you. If you are entering into the dreamtime, you may have a numinous encounter within a vivid dream. Or, if you are in a geographic place, you may slowly open your eyes, softly scanning the area and notice whatever there is for you to notice. Be patient, aware... and expect the unexpected. The animal energy may appear clearly but just as often it reveals itself more surreptitiously as in a synchronicity. Perhaps a song on the radio that comes on at precisely the right moment, the license plate of the car in front of you, or a verbal pun that becomes obvious as you write down a dream.

Soon, regardless of the way the energy comes to you, you will find that you notice it more easily. And because any conversation is a two-way street, it’s beneficial to acknowledge and express a sincere gratitude for the exchange.

Now, how to interpret the message? I have found that as with dreams, the most pertinent point of interpretation comes from your own inner wisdom and associations. For instance, what does a particular bird mean to you? What are the circumstances of the encounter? Did you see one or many?

There are excellent references available that will deepen your personal interpretation and take you into another dimension of connection. Ted Andrews is an internationally recognized author, storyteller, and teacher. He has written several excellent reference books on animal energies and communicating with these energies through movement, ceremony and meditation. Among the books are *Animal Wise*, *Animal Speak* and *Shape shifting*. There are also a number of websites to be found with a search on keywords such as totem animals. Another tool is a good reference dictionary of esoteric symbols signs, and totems.

Perhaps a story about the possum in my trashcan will show how the process of reflecting on animal energies can be helpful. Last fall I needed to make some hard decisions about a new direction in my work but I was spinning my wheels. I was bored at work but was it the right time to make the change? One evening while putting out the trash, an opossum surprised me. He had made his way into the trash during the day and eaten his way down to the point of no escape. Once I got over my surprise, I gently turned the can over so he could walk away. But he didn’t move. I checked several times but he just didn’t seem to know that he was free and as I thought about it, I realized he was probably too dehydrated to leave. So, I left some water and waited overnight – opossums are nocturnal after all – and in the morning the water and the opossum were gone.

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The energy of this animal reflects the ability to mold situations strategically according to what is needed and to assume whatever role is called for at the moment. The opossum teaches emotional and mental stability and personal empowerment. I realized that like the opossum, I needed to be strategic while keeping my ultimate goal clear. I still needed to gather resources but had gotten deep into the trash surrounding what I needed to do and had exhausted myself trying to think my way out. With difficulty, I calmed down and realized I needed to “play possum” for a while before I was ready to leave. The opportunity finally came at the end of the year. The opossum had moved on and so did I. The final chapter of the story came this past spring. Just weeks before I finally left my job, a possum appeared early one morning quite dead and right in front of the animal burial ground I have in my yard. He was the only animal ever to do this although many rest there. I believe it was a reflection that the cycle was complete... time for him – and for me – to move on to another life.

Opening to learning from animal energies will enrich your life, expand your frame of reference for personal growth and connect you more deeply with the wisdom inherent in the web of life. Everyone has the capacity to do this.

Helene has a private practice in downtown Charlottesville. She specializes in providing support to those who are actively engaged with change in their lives – particularly on a spiritual level. She is skilled in working with intuitive energy medicine, engaging the subconscious through the use of hypnosis, working with dreams as a pathway to healing and facilitating inner creative dialogues via mandala, tarot and sacred ritual. You can be in touch with Helene at 34.466.8951 or bluecat@ntelos.net.

*Belated Happy Christmas
And
A Happy New Year*



**Wallace W. Lossing,
C.O., C.Ht.**

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