

# Articles to Read

	PAGE
<i>How To Hear Your Angel's Messages</i> , Doreen Virtue	1
<i>Mind's Eye Imagining</i> , Jon Young	3
<i>Pets and Telepathy</i> , Owen Waters	8
<i>Owls</i> , Evan McGown	9
<i>Becoming Vegan</i> , Diana Delmonte	13
<i>On The Other Side Of The Purr</i> , Adi Da Samraj	15
<i>Animal Totems</i> , Starstuffs	17
<i>The Cats Are Talking</i> , Will Falconer, DVM,	26

# How to Hear Your Angels' Messages

*Four channels for tuning into angels.*

BY: Doreen Virtue, Ph.D.

34 17 8 0

*"We aren't that difficult to hear, if you will listen for us with an open heart. Most of the time, we are closer to you than you can imagine. A whisper, a thought, is the only signal we need from you to get a conversation started. We have enormous respect for what you're going through here on planet Earth at this time. We never seek to interfere with your lives, only to bring you blessings of insights and new ways of looking at yourselves."*

*–Messages from "Your Angels" oracle cards*

Not everyone "hears" angelic voices as an audible sound. Many people receive divine messages through nonverbal means such as visions, feelings, or a knowingness.

**Clairaudience:** Hearing the voice of an angel is called "clairaudience," which means "clear hearing." Their voice may sound like your own or it may sound different. The voice can emanate from within your body, within your mind, or sound as if it's outside your head. When an angel warned me that my car was about to be stolen, his voice sounded as if he were talking through a paper [towel](#) tube, just outside my right ear.

You know that guidance comes from angels when it is loving, focused, consistent, and not hurtful to you or your family.

**Clairvoyance:** Your angels may speak to you in pictures and visual mental images. We call this "clairvoyance" or "clear seeing." Angelic messages may come to you as single snapshot images, either in your mind or outside your mind. Or, you may see miniature scenes, as if from a movie. The images may be black-and-white or full color. Angelic visual messages can be symbolic, such as seeing a stop sign as a signal that you should take a rest, slow, or stop what you are doing.

**Clairsentience:** The third way we receive angelic guidance is through our emotions and physical sensations. We call this, "clairsentience," or "clear feeling." Clairsentients get divine guidance through bodily sensations.

Each of our five senses has a corresponding spiritual sense. Clairsentients receive angelic guidance through an etheric sense of smell, taste, and touch. You may know that your beloved deceased grandmother is near when you smell her perfume or favorite flower fragrance. An angel may shower your room with the aroma of [orange](#) blossoms to tell you of an impending wedding.

Clairsentients receive a lot of guidance through their intuition, gut feelings, and hunches. Much of our intuition comes from the stomach region, and the stomach flutters, relaxes, and tightens

according to the angelic guidance. Instinctively, the clairsentient interprets the meaning of these gut feelings, and a wise clairsentient follows these internal directives without hesitation.

Clairsentients get angelic messages through their heart and love emotions, as well. If a thought of doing something swells your chest with warm feelings of joy, this is a directive from God and the angels.

**Claircognizance:** We call the fourth means of angelic communication "claircognizance" or "clear knowing." Men are frequently claircognizant, and may not even realize they naturally receive detailed and accurate information from the angels.

A claircognizant knows, without knowing how he knows. Consequently, he may doubt the validity of his knowingness. This is a mistake, because when divine wisdom enters our mind, it is a gift we can use to improve our life, and to serve the world.

We all have access to all four channels of communication. Usually, we have one primary means of receiving angelic guidance and one secondary or lesser channel of communication. With practice, you can become adept at receiving messages in all four ways. In the beginning of speaking to your angels, though, most people concentrate upon their natural means of communication.

## **Mind's Eye Imagining**

### **Mind's Eye Imagining in a Nutshell:**

Use and strengthen your imagination as much as possible, imprinting images in your mind gathered from the experience of all five senses.

### ***Developing the Imagination***

This routine develops our imagination and our ability to re-experience events with our eyes closed. If our goal is nature literacy, then we must go one step beyond plain reading into reading with the intent to “learn by heart.” Not only visual images, but also smells, flavors, sounds, and textures imprint in magnificent detail in people’s brain patterns when they rely on their nature literacy for survival. Routinely imagining with our Mind’s Eye allows our sensory experiences to really sink in. This skill provides us with the dynamic memory required for field biology and bird watching and is the evidence of a well-developed naturalist intelligence.

### ***The Mind's Eye Imagining Technique***

When you come across a track while on a walk, look at it closely for a minute, then close your eyes and picture it in your mind’s eye. This simple sequence intensely focuses your mind on the shapes of that track. Your mind strains to see it in full detail, preparing to re-tell the wondrous story about its every detail. When you open your eyes again, you see some things you didn’t notice the first time, and when you close your eyes again, the picture in your Mind’s Eye grows clearer and more vivid. Birdwatchers use this technique as they develop their eye to spot birds’ flight patterns, their movement in the trees, and the slight differences in coloration among all those “Little Brown Jobbies.”

The participants in our Kamana Naturalist Training Program learn to use the Mind’s Eye technique to make sketches in their field journals. First, they look closely at the pictures—perhaps a Northern River Otter—in the field guides. Then, without looking at the pictures, they sketch the animal. In the act of sketching, they will notice they hadn’t registered the length of tail, or the spacing of eyes, or how the otter stands up on its hind legs. Looking back at the pictures, they take note and fill the gaps in their original memory. This sketch-image of the otter greatly improves, not only on paper but, more importantly, in the Mind’s Eye Imagination of the artist.

### ***Storytelling with the Mind's Eye***

The Mind’s Eye Imagining routine develops a filing cabinet of single images for identifying what you see in nature and it offers a potent technique for telling the Story of the Day.

Before I incorporated the use of my imagination into my nature studies as an adult, I remember how scientific reports and descriptive passages in literature bored me. I saw just a bunch of words with little behind them. After a few months of using my Mind's Eye technique to draw plants and animals, suddenly those words opened doorways into a vast landscape of images in my imagination. I was floored.

The more I used my mind's eye to remember leaf shapes and bark patterns, the more I enjoyed it when other people talked to me about these things or I read about them. It was as if suddenly I could see the movie behind the lines in a book.

Turning this around—adding all other senses and memories to the mix—I began to write and tell stories with my mind focused on the rich sensory wholeness of the experience. Since then, I've become a student of the great storytellers and speech-givers and I have discovered they all use the power of their imagination, their Mind's Eye Imagining, to enthrall their audience. We are image-based, sensory creatures at heart.

As people tell the stories of their day, help them ground themselves in the moment of their experience. Help them use all their senses to remember the precise angle of the harrier's tipped wings, the smell of damp earth or spring flowers, the squishy warm feeling of wet socks, the first touch of sun on their cheeks on a cold morning. Children, always so present to their experiences, are all born storytellers. But they will only truly know this about themselves when they practice using their Mind's Eye Imagining and tell their tales from a place of bright, detailed imagination.

## **Listening for Bird Language**

### *Listening for Bird Language in a Nutshell:*

Be still and listen. Quiet down and crane your ears and eyes to notice the vocal signals and body language of birds and other animals, including humans. What message do you hear in their voice?

### *The Language of Birds*

You know how you can talk to your best friends on the phone and just tell, by how their voices sound, they feel upset? Or surely you've seen the fast street-walk of people in business suits that says, "Don't bother me. I'm in a hurry!" is watchful interpretation of subtle signals into clear, meaning-filled communication is what the Core Routine of Listening for Bird Language is all about. We call it "Listening for Bird Language" but we extend the metaphor to include keeping

our own presence quiet, and then listening, watching, and feeling all the nonverbal signals that sing and flutter about us all the time.

Much of the evolution of birds has been invested in the development of their complex vocal language. By learning how to tune into that language humans and other animals can be part of a constant many-species conversation that offers rich information about life within any landscape. Lots of other animals—squirrels, dogs, crickets, and frogs for instance—use complex vocalizations to communicate, too. All of it together creates a language in which a panoramic range of hidden meaning can be understood—if we pay attention.



### *Learning to Listen*

As I first heard Tom Brown, Jr. say, every time an animal moves in the forest, it is like dropping a pebble into the clear surface of the pond: concentric rings go out, announcing the disturbance to everything the ring touches.

Once people see the communication possible by reading bird language, they will observe for themselves the more sophisticated nuances, the “concentric rings” of alarm that vary with the type of predator, the time of day, the time of year, and the length of time they can sit quietly without being the source of the disturbance.

Therefore, the routine practice of Listening for Bird Language begins with not creating your own disturbance. Listening for Bird Language can inspire people to walk quietly through the landscape so they don’t create a “bird plow,” a swath of wake before and behind them that silences or alarms all natural talk. Even the very young can be inspired to hold still a long time until they blend into the landscape and hear birds come alive again with their daily baseline twittering.

Over time, we learn to move through a forest without disturbing so many birds; we learn to blend into the landscape and relax our body language to put birds at ease. After learning how to move through the “alarm systems” of birds without setting them off, we eventually come upon stunned wildlife, whose eyes give us a quick amazed look of surprise that a human could see them first.

## *Self-Knowledge*

Observing and understanding meaning in subtle patterns of sound and behavior can be applied more broadly to the rest of human life. As each person learns to be still and listen to the tones that reflect the moods of sensitive wild things, an awareness grows for the disturbances that they and others cause. People will eventually realize that their moods—fears or angers, impulsiveness or hesitations— send off concentric rings of disturbance, both in the natural and human worlds.

Think of when you walk outside each morning to the mail-box, to your car, or to get the paper. The birds in your front yard watch you and come to expect the body language and moods you demonstrate. They react accordingly. Your bird neighbors watch you so carefully that they probably know you—in some ways—better than you know yourself.

If we don't move gently through the forest, the birds and the rest of nature give us immediate feedback. Here is the deeper lesson to the routine of Listening for Bird Language: the attitudes and body language we carry affect the world around us. Listening for Bird Language as a routine shows us that we can choose the impact we create as we move through the world.

### **Thanksgiving in a Nutshell:**

Find in yourself a grateful heart and express gratitude for any and all aspects of nature and life. Begin every episode with thanksgiving and give nods of thanks as you go about your day.

### *Thanksgiving as a Routine*

How is “Thanksgiving” a routine for nature awareness? Taking a moment to see the grace in elements of the natural world— frogs, rain, berries, or the sun—deepens our relationships with each one. Thanksgiving reinforces the interdependence of all living things and their ground of being and reminds us of our kinship with nature.

### *Find a Grateful Heart*

When we say “Thanksgiving,” we mean routinely remembering and expressing gratitude for the things that make it possible for us to be alive. We mean generally appreciating things common to all humans, as well as those specific to each of our lives.

As the media constantly reminds us of everything going wrong in the world, the Core Routine of Thanksgiving reminds us of all the things going right: clean water comes out of faucets; birds sing beautiful songs; humans we may never meet grow plants and raise stock so that we can have

food on our tables; trees bring beauty and oxygen as well as wood for houses and tools; and this very moment earthworms are decomposing matter into fertile soil. We could go on and on, and sometimes we do.

Be genuine.

Grow soft and lift your heart to feel grateful.

Stop everything and listen when someone has a story to tell.

Take time to say “thank you” and to write thank you notes. Discover the extraordinary in the ordinary and admire it.

### ***Find a Grateful Heart***

When we say “anksgiving,” we mean routinely remembering and expressing gratitude for the things that make it possible for us to be alive. We mean generally appreciating things common to all humans, as well as those specific to each of our lives.

As the media constantly reminds us of everything going wrong in the world, the Core Routine of anksgiving reminds us of all the things going right: clean water comes out of faucets; birds sing beautiful songs; humans we may never meet grow plants and raise stock so that we can have food on our tables; trees bring beauty and oxygen as well as wood for houses and tools; and this very moment earthworms are decomposing matter into fertile soil. We could go on and on, and sometimes we do.

### ***Notice the Positive***

Right now, as you read this, do a little experiment. Look up and glance around your place and notice all the square or rectangular shapes around you. Can you see them? Do they pop out at you? Now turn your attention to all the round shapes in the room. Do these pop out at you? I’ve watched many people do this exercise with different colors or shapes and they all say they notice the same thing. Just as brain patterning theory contends, our perception of reality is determined by what we focus our attention on.

The routine of anksgiving simply calls our attention to the multitude of things going right with the world. We don’t deny either the pain or tragedies of life; we just choose to concentrate our mental focus on all the good things that we can easily overlook. We want to help people notice the relentless springing of life all around them, with authentic hope in the rejuvenating powers of the earth.



Thought is also fully holographic in the sense that, when you unravel a thought package, you gain a full experience of the picture being transmitted - the sights, the sounds, the tastes, the smells, and also the feelings on both a physical and emotional level. If the thought package is about an experience that the sender has had, you will be able to share and relive the entire experience.

Telepathy is a natural medium of communication. Animals use it. Dolphins and whales use it. Humans use it at night, when they are out-of-body and traveling in the spirit world. Speech was developed as a means of communication in the physical world because the human conscious mind is tightly focused upon the exterior world, emphasizing the use of five physical senses for its information.

While the conscious human mind typically ignores telepathic input, the subconscious mind is fully telepathic. Your subconscious mind perceives every thought that the subconscious mind of another person - or the conscious mind of a pet - directs towards you.

Your subconscious mind is fully connected to the global mind, which Jung referred to as the "collective unconscious" and Teilhard de Chardin as the "noosphere," which means "mind atmosphere." You continually receive thoughts from this global mind atmosphere in tune with the frequency of your consciousness at the time. Then, you process these thoughts through your own consciousness and automatically retransmit them back into the global mind.

Therefore, because of this automatic thought-sharing process, every moment that you spend in uplifting thoughts is a moment spent uplifting the thoughts of the world.

Professional pet psychics have found that pets even learn some words from the human vocabulary. Pets know the sound of their own names, but they also pick up other words. Once, a pet psychic was asking a horse what his favorite food was and the horse telepathed the word, "beans." Thinking that beans would be a strange item in a horse's diet, the pet psychic told the horse's owner about this. He replied, "Oh, when I feed him horse food pellets, I always think that they look like beans. That's where he must have picked up the word."

You can use telepathic communication with your pets with just a little practice. Your pets already read your thoughts, especially if they are expressed with supporting mental pictures. You can practice conversing mentally with your pets, asking them questions and waiting for their responses to enter your awareness.



## ***OWLS,***

*by Evan McGown*

One day I had an unforgettable experience with one of the most elusive and most beautiful of birds. Leaving my Sit Spot just as the sun started to set, I decided to jog on the trail back to my car.

Jogging, I used my peripheral vision, what we call Owl Eyes, intentionally causing my eyes to see more than normal. I also used all of my senses, sniffing the earthy air, listening to the last bird-songs of the day, and feeling the breeze on my skin. Suddenly I heard a great big “whoosh!” right behind me, stopping me in my tracks. It’s a good thing I ducked, because a bird about as big as a cat swooped right over my head. It landed on a tree branch about three feet away from me, settled its wings, and just stared at me. Can anyone guess what flew at me? It was a Barred Owl.

Standing there, my heart beating fast, I thought, “Owl ... if I want to learn to use Owl Eyes, here is the greatest teacher I’ll ever meet.” So I stared back at the owl with its huge eyes and imitated the way it perched on the branch, completely calm and quiet, blending into the woods around it. My whole body relaxed like Owl’s, and I slipped back into Owl Eyes, allowing my eyes to go soft and wide. As I did, my body relaxed.

I became Owl: when he turned his head slightly to follow the sound of leaves rustling on the ground, I also turned my head, feeling my neck as a well-greased machine, turning on bearings. Rotating my head and using my Owl Eyes, I could see almost the entire landscape around me.

I’m not sure how long I stood there. Time didn’t matter, maybe only fifteen minutes passed. Suddenly I saw a movement ahead of me. I quickly turned my owl-head to focus: a pair wings thirty feet away, opened up and sailed into the air ... and came straight towards me. In a moment, this second bird landed three feet away on the other side of the trail ... another owl!

So now, one owl perched three feet to my left, and another one perched three feet to my right. Can you imagine my excitement at being so close to these two wild animals of the night? I returned to my Owl Eyes so I could see both owls in my peripheral vision. I looked at their beautiful, long, sharp talons, but didn’t feel fear. Instead, I imagined I was just another owl,

sitting with my relatives. I felt the fluff of feathers all over my body. I gripped my toes and imagined talons clutching the branch. Moving my shoulders ever so slightly, I felt great wings resting at my side.

The sun sank below the horizon, and the woods around me grew darker and colder. I listened, and smelled, feeling the wind blow against my skin. Then I heard a sound down the trail. In the exact same moment, all three heads turned ... mine and two Owls'. Using Owl Eyes, I recognize a jogger's shape through the trees. We heard footfalls and heavy breathing. When that jogger was still down the trail, Owls and I made eye contact one last time, then they lifted silently, and flew about twenty feet into the woods where they perched a bit higher. They dissolved into the darkening web of tree branches silhouetted against the sky.

I took a cue from the Owls and took just one step off the trail, next to a tree, then relaxed back into being an owl, blending into the leaves around me. Watching, my Owl Eyes detected the swooping flight of bats. I could still make out the lump-shapes of the two owls. I wondered if they watched to see to see if my owl disguise would hide me from the jogger.

As the jogger approached, he ran with his head down, huffing and puffing away. I kept being an owl as the man ran by ... and didn't notice. Whew, he didn't even see me. But the instant I thought this, he must have seen a glimpse of my bright yellow shorts, because he suddenly screamed, tripped, and fell on the trail, looking up at me as if I were a ghost.

"What ... wha ... what are you doing? You scared me to death!" He was shocked, not understanding why I would just be standing on the side of the trail like that.

"Sorry, I didn't mean to scare you ... I am watching and imitating Owls, see up there in the trees?" He didn't even look where I pointed, but just got up, turned around, and ran off, running more quickly this time.

I had to let out a giggle ... so this is what it's like to be an owl. Silent, catching every single movement with their eyes and ears, hiding just enough so that people can't see them ... except; it seemed I still had some work to do on my hiding skills. I thanked the Owls for the lesson they gave me and walked the rest of the way in the dark, my senses drinking in the landscape.

The Owls taught me about using my senses to notice everything happening around me and how to stretch those senses far out into the distance. By doing this, we can see others before they see us. Since then, I've used Owl Eyes and my other senses to see animals before they see me: I have stalked herons, and leaping frogs, massive bears, and tiny shrews.

## ***OWL WALK How-To***

After inspiring people with a personal story about using all your senses, such as the one above, have everyone stand in a circle outdoors. Then invite the group to expand their senses by imitating the following set of animals. You can adapt these however you see fit. If you have an attentive group, you can do them all together. Or, you might break them up over a series of days, practicing a new sense each day.

**Owl Eyes.** is a way of using peripheral vision. Pick a single point somewhere straight ahead of you, glue your eyes on it, and imagine that your eye-balls can't move, just like an owl's eyes. Owl's big eyes are literally stuck in place, so they turn their heads all around when they want to focus. They spend most of their hunting time open eyed and gazing widely, waiting to notice the tiniest movement in the field that would be their food. Imagine and become an owl perched on a tree; feel the wind ruffle your feathers, feel your sharp talons and the strength in your wings.

Still anchored on that single point, let your eyes go soft into peripheral vision, and notice that without moving your eyes, you can actually see in all directions for 180 degrees. You naturally use this type of vision when you look at the night sky hoping to catch a shooting star, or when you want to catch the hiders in hide and seek.

Now stretch your peripheral vision: hold your hands straight out in front of you and wiggle your fingers. Notice that you can see the wiggling movement. Now move your arms slowly out towards your sides while your eyes still look absolutely straight ahead; stretch the edges of your vision sideways as far as you can to still notice the wiggling. Bring your wiggling hands back in front of you, then stretch one up and one down. Widen your vision again, this time vertically.

Relax your arms and now notice with your Owl Eyes if you can see tiny movements of leaves when the breeze lifts them and all the people in the circle, even the ones next to you. Notice all the different colors you can see, the different shapes, the shades of light and dark—all without moving your eyes even once.

**Deer Ears.** Let your ears become the huge ears of a deer. Deer ears have huge bulging muscles that can turn about like satellite dishes to focus on different sounds. To put on deer ears, cup your hands behind your ears and turn your head to focus on certain sounds. Do you notice that the sounds become louder? Now cup your hands and put them in front of your ears, so you can hear behind you without turning around? Does it make a difference? Wow, you can hear twice as much as your eyes can see because your hearing picks up a full 360 degree sphere of sound.

While also keeping your vision wide, pay attention to all the sounds around you. What do you hear in front of you? From your sides? Behind you? Are there constant sounds, like wind or

running water, car traffic, or maybe your own breath? Listen for soft sudden sounds like little birds or buzzes. Where are they coming from? What is the closest sound? What is the farthest sound?

**Raccoon Touch.** Now, use the touch of raccoons. Raccoons practically feel their way through the world. They don't have good vision or great hearing, but they have long and amazingly sensitive fingers. They can use them to break into our garbage cans and then feel for the food they want. So, while keeping your Owl Eyes stretched and your hearing tuned, feel with your skin.

Feel the clothes on your body. Feel your feet touching the ground. Do you feel heavy? Light? Do some parts of your body feel cold and some warm? Feel the sun on your skin. Feel the wind on your skin; which way does the wind blow? Feel your heart beating.

**Dog Nose.** Think of dogs you have seen walking down the street, with their noses to the ground, or sniffing around every bush, smelling every thing as they go. Turn into a dog and pay attention to your sense of smell. Take quick sniffs of the air around you like a dog. What do you smell? Smoke from a fire? e grass or the flowers? Yourself?

Can you smell differently with a long breath than with quick sniffs? Try taking a long slow breath in through your nose. Try sucking in a tiny bit of air through just parted lips. Get down on all fours like a dog, or pick up a leaf or handful of dirt and hold it close to your nose. If it's safe, taste your leaf. What do you smell? Does it smell like it tastes? How would you describe it? What smells hit your nose the strongest? Still keep your Owl Eyes wide and your Deer Ears perked and your Raccoon Touch sensitive.

**Synthesis.** Now turn on all your senses together. Let your eyes be soft and stretched, listen with your ears to the little sounds around you, feel the wind on your face, smell the air with long breaths. Hold this whole, wide-open awareness for as long as you can stand it. How long can you simply pay attention like a wild animal? Some animals do this all day long, that's why we never see them. By expanding your senses, you too can have the awareness of a wild animal.

## Becoming Vegan

“Killing living beings?” I reminded my Zen teacher, who by law had to exterminate termites in order to sell his house. “We live in an imperfect world,” he said, “and we do what we have to do.”

Each one of us has her own path to follow, our lessons and karma. And, as Carolyn Myss refers to, our “scared contracts,” agreements made with others before we take birth. Most importantly, every individual lives their own truth. We can’t judge what others do. We don’t know what is right for them, or what contracts they have made, and for what purpose they have made them.

My colleagues tell me that animals have given consent to be consumed, and that by consuming them there is an energy exchange. True, every being that is alive depends on another being for survival. Yet who among us wants to die? We all fight for life. We all want the same thing—to be free of suffering.

Not eating animals who are unnecessarily tortured and brutally slaughtered against their will does not free us from a karma-free diet. If we want to get picky, slaughtered animals are in everything we consume and use. Rendered in the food we feed our companions, in homeopathy and Chinese herbs, medications and chemicals tested on innocent laboratory animals. Even refined sugar is processed using animal bones. The list goes on. We all have blood on us. It’s impossible not to.

Like everyone else, I live my truth, and have chosen to live a vegan lifestyle. Becoming vegan was for me a gradual process of awakening, and practice of ahimsa, or non violence.



It wasn’t easy to stop eating meat in a world that socially accepts it.

I became “vegetarian” in 1978. The word in quotation marks, for during the early years I still ate fish. At the time, not eating meat had nothing to do with health or animals. It had to do with being anorexic in a ballet company and having little money for groceries. I lived on granola, yogurt, peanut butter, lettuce, beer, pot, and cigarettes. After three years I could no longer get red meat down. I tried and tried for one whole year. It tasted like the smell of a wild animal’s damp fur and moldy citrus. I stopped chicken in 1989 for the same reason.

Then I started my Zen practice in 1994, and took Buddhist vows; no killing or creating suffering for others. I then stopped fish, dairy, cheese and eggs. I love cheese and fish, and when I was tempted I would watch PETA’s *Meet Your Meat* to strengthen my commitment. (Also a more comprehensive documentary, entitled *Earthlings*. And there are many more today) I stopped wearing leather, wool, silk and no longer used honey. I buy only ‘cruelty free’ cosmetics and household cleaners, eat only dark chocolate and burn soy candles. I try to do all the “right things”, grateful for the opportunity to be able do so. Not everyone can make spirulina smoothies in their vita mix. Nor do they want to! Choice can be a luxury. I’m fortunate to have been able to choose.

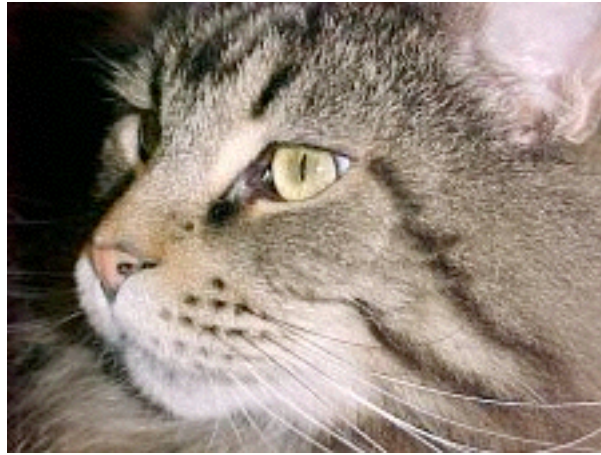
Some friends point out that my faux leather (plastic) shoes are not good for the environment. All our choices have consequences. This is true. I purchase, when possible, American made, man-made materials, and buy only what I absolutely need. I'm not perfect, and I don't judge others. Nothing is black and white. Everyone has their own path and life lessons to learn.

What I don't understand is the hierarchy on the food chain. A wild life sanctuary rescues tigers, lions and chimps and serves the 'lower animals' for dinner at a fundraiser. We don't buy fur, but wear leather. We are horrified that cats and dogs are raised for food and skinned alive for fur in some parts of China and Korea, yet we do the same here to intelligent chickens, pigs and cows. Why don't we slaughter horses and dolphins for their flesh? Eagles instead of duck? Eat our pets? Who decides whose life is more important? All beings deserve a decent life, not just some, and not just us.

I don't force my way of life on others, nor deprive my cats of a diet that they are designed to eat. They are true carnivores, with razor teeth for ripping, strong stomach acid for digesting meat and short digestive tracks for eliminating it. I feed them raw meat, shipped from New Zealand where animals at least roam free. We all have blood on our hands, me included, dripping on my soy candles and dark vegan chocolate. We do what we have to do. As my Zen teacher put it, "Everyone draws their line." He then sliced his finger through the air and said, "I draw mine here...where do you draw yours?"

Diana DelMonte  
Voice of Experience Column  
*Vegetarian or Omnivore*  
Species Link;  
Summer, issue75, 2009

## On the Other Side of the Purr



Awareness, a Maine Coon cat, 2004

*A talk by Adi Da Samraj  
December 13, 1996*

**ADI DA SAMRAJ:** There's no reason to suggest that the body-mind is only associated with a superficial process. The in-depth dimension of existence always exists. The sleep state is simply one that relaxes association with perceptual and conceptual experiencing and associations and functions. It's no longer involved in memory, or identification of egoic self with the body or the body-mind location or relations. And even if you get up from sleep and go about and live and get attached and do all that for another day, every time you go back to sleep, you don't have anything like that there again.

So all your troubles are in your attachment to, or illusions about, waking and dreaming. And you can struggle with all that and so forth. Basically, the wise have always chosen to economize that in order to maximize time spent set apart, sacred time, or otherwise, to intensify the in-depth process even in the midst of daily activity, as you imagine the bees might do, as compared to the lions, who lie about.

The lions set aside rest time, and have their in-depth perhaps more there, and are more, when active, in the short-term mode of handling business—the body turned on by glandular this, that, and every other thing, for the hunt, and survival purposes, and so forth. So it's all done quick, and efficiently, and then they return to rest. So maybe the lions are less deep in their waking moments, but enter into their depth a lot of the time because they have so much of it left over.

And the bees, who have little leisure, it seems, are, in their depth, profound moment to moment. And they get [prasad](#) from the queen, whom they serve, at foot, even with their tongues, and she provides them with a nectar that keeps them all attuned, it seems, to the chemical integrity of the hive and its Contemplations beyond, or subtler, deeper, such that they don't require outward-directedness when they fly from the hive. They are primarily in a kind of exalted condition in which to allow their bodies to do their functioning while they otherwise remain resonantly absorbed.

**DEVOTEE:** The lions do play, though, Beloved.



**ADI DA SAMRAJ:** Yes, right, of course. They do their time at that. But a lot of that playing is just practicing the moves, you know, and passing on the lore about how you can do the hunt, and whatnot. But then everybody scatters in some rest-position. And cats in general have the purring thing. They seem, while doing it, to be in an altered state of physical awareness.

Did you ever look at one of those pictures, also videos now, where you look at them a certain way and all of a sudden you see a 3-D image?

**DEVOTEES:** Yes.

**ADI DA SAMRAJ:** Getting to purr is something like that. Generally, a human being would find it difficult to find such a mechanism working in themselves physically. But what it feels like is the shift that would have to occur in your whole relationship to the physical, and so on—just as a shift has to occur in order to purr, just as a shift has to occur to see one of those 3-D images in that just-seems-like-a-smear-of-pattern in those pictures I just described.



Awareness, a Maine Coon cat, who likes to purr.

But when they are purring, cats are not just in the ordinary sense physically aware. Just to be able to get to purr, they have to be in that other dimensional way of relating to the physical, where they're peripherally associated with it. In fact, that is the way that vibration of the purr occurs. You can feel how they feel themselves as energy, and they basically feel the physical is transparent to that. At the level of energy, you can feel and even see right through the physical. They are meditating on that, knowing that, with each moment of that purring. That's how they are aware of the physical when that's occurring.

They're not afraid, in the slightest. And yet, if provoked by anything, instantly the cat can respond, even from that purring state. Zap!—they can deal with an environmental intrusion of some kind.

Having that quickness, they can afford to get into this deep state. More tamasic animals have to be sort of semi-awake all the time. They have to see something coming for a long time just to get around to maybe doing something about it. If you haven't seen the chameleons down here in Fear-No-More Zoo, you ought to go and check them out, in terms of their extraordinary non-quickness, generally speaking. But the cats have the gift of being able to purr, because they can respond suddenly. Human responses are quick, but not as quick.

Cats Contemplate, meditate, inherently. It is structurally determined, even. Disturbed cats don't purr. Jostle a cat physically, require physical attention from a cat, they stop purring. They can't purr and be physically active in the ordinary sense other than in the act of purring.

<https://www.starstuffs.com/>

*"In the beginning of all things, wisdom and knowledge were with the animals, for Tirawa, the One Above, did not speak directly to man. He sent certain animals to tell men that he showed himself through the beast, and that from them, and from the stars and the sun and moon should man learn.. all things tell of Tirawa..."*

*Eagle Chief (Letakots-Lesa)  
-Pawnee*

# Discovering Your Animal Totems

by StarStuffs

The word *Animal* is derived from the Latin *Animalis* which the root is "Anima" the soul or breath of life. The English word "totem" was first known and used around 1776 and originally come from the Anishinaabe word *odoodeman* or the Ojibwe *oto·te·man*, which means "consanguine kin" or a "kinship group of familial relationships". Countries such as Australia, Asia, Africa, Europe and The Americas all had forms of animal totem connections and still continue to today. Whatever terminology is used for these animal partnerships, the totem represented the connection and relationship as a symbolic expression to the clan and individuals who adapt the animal energy for spiritual guidance and insight. Regardless of culture, the variety of animal totem terminologies around the world, reflect our sacred kinship with animals which pervades linguistics.

Animals emanate the breath of our lives by showing us certain qualities and behaviors that we should emulate somewhere in our daily lives. Our kinship with them teaches many things such as patience, endurance and the balance of our male/female aspect or sometimes called yin/yang energy or polarities. Subsequently, Carl Jung's concept of male/female in the "collective unconscious" concept is animus/anima respectively. Is it through the archetypal energy that we are able to communicate with this collective unconscious a gateway to our true selves. Animal wisdom emits these fundamental truths if we are willing to learn and understand their language. As humans we can learn and remember our connection to animals and the knowledge that inextricable links us with them. Nature is an amazing teacher that breathes new life into our spirit.

Our knowledge and connection to the animals have expanded considerably over the last few decades. Since there is widespread knowledge at our fingertips spanning the globe, personal animal associations have become broadly adapted to animals from other regions. Animal symbology has progressed beyond cultural and national boundaries to encompass a broad spectrum of animals over many continents. In this new age of knowledge, power animals are not subject to nor can the belong to one culture. Our animal kin speak to our hearts and souls from across the land to guide and instruct our personal pathway. Animal Totems should not be looked at

only as symbols but rather as a way of life, as a way of being connected to The Great Mystery.

Depending on the various world wide traditions, one may have a set number of animal totems present in one's life. Of the vast array of animal species in the world, biologists think between 2 and 50 million, our symbolic references to the animals is likewise exponential, especially in this digital age. Perhaps there is no real fixed number of animal archetypes after all. The key is not in the counting of the animal guides but more importantly learning from each over our lifetime. Depending on the spiritual tradition if you reach the limited number of animal totems within that belief, the mind may close to additional animal guides which would be an opportunity potentially lost. There are millions of opportunities to learn if we are only open.

### **Animal Totem Types**

There are Animal Totems in the spiritual and physical that are attracted to us and will appear in order to teach the qualities of itself. Animal Totems may also be ones we are attracted to with an internal calling toward the animal. They give us fresh insights into the direction of our decisions, our choices along with mental, spiritual and emotional guidance. Their appearance teaches us qualities we can learn from if we are open to their messages. The many animals that come to us can overlap and melt into another as needed for ongoing spiritual lessons.

Animal totems have three main categories in which two are considered "Spirit Totems".

- **Spirit Guides as Life Totems**
- **Spirit Animal Guides**
- **Nature Totems - The Physical Ones**

### **Spirit Guides - Life Totems**

We each come into this world accompanied by an animal spirit - a significant indicator of our personal power - that walks with us on our soul journey through space and time. These Spirit Guides are very personal totems since they strongly reflect our inner spiritual nature. These Life Totems are animal spirits that are with you your entire life. They are your essence, your character, and reflect your innate core traits. This relationship remains the same throughout your life. They are your closest personal guides to help discover the truth of who you are. They are always with you.

One could have several of these Life Totems since they guide us along our path and give us courage and strength in our journey. They may appear to you at separate times throughout your life or perhaps alternating in appearances, all to teach us lessons we need to learn. This could be viewed as a hierarchy of animal totems: from everyday spirit helpers/reminders to "mother-father" type figures in the spirit realm who guide, watch over and train us throughout our lives.

### **Spirit Animal Guides**

"Animal Guides" are a subset of the spirit totem which are animals that are with you for a long or short duration depending what is going on in your life. This relationship can last days or years depending on the lessons it is trying to teach. They guide you to expand and incorporate knowledge into your core traits by building up spiritual character and awareness. They may teach through the emotional facets that we need to encounter whether it be fear, anger, insecurity or confidence, strength and patience. They teach another facet of our ultimate truth. These animals may frequently come to you in dreams and meditation and impart valuable lessons and spiritual tools. The length of time they are around depends on how well you learn and incorporate the knowledge into your life.

These Spirit Animal Guides have *chosen you* and will appear when you are ready to understand the lessons. They are also usually wild in nature (not domesticated). There is an unmistakable familiar knowing associated with its appearance. Honor, respect and attentiveness must be given because you are now ready for a new segment in your journey. Over time trust is built and we eventually take on those imbued characteristics and merge with the animal spirits, becoming one with the energy.

### **Nature Totems - The Physical Ones**

The next category of animal totems are The Physical Ones or The Nature Totems. These animals are what you need to be open and aware of in everyday life. These nature totems bring spiritual messages by appearing in a variety of ways which always seem very noticeable. For instance, you may experience a long gaze, strange actions and behaviors, pronouncement of vocalizations and merely and out of the ordinary appearance. The Physical Ones can appear due to immediate life's circumstances and issues that you are dealing with. These Nature Totems speak of special qualities to contemplate when they appear.

The more we are in tune with our natural surroundings, the easier it is to receive such messages from our animal relations. The better our inner awareness, the easier it is for this form of communication to take place. The subtleties, nuances and actions of these animals will tell you a lot. Some of these animals may repeat their appearance many times in your life. The Nature Totems are there to help you as a specifically chosen property for your current path for that particular moment. Nature has sent a special gift of learning.

#### **Animal Totem Meditational Exercise**

This simple exercise to contact your spirit animal totem can be done either inside or outside. If you are outside a Physical One may appear as well. The technique remains the same. If you don't hear, see, or get any impressions this is alright. You are creating a sacred space around you, in mind, body and spirit, to allow communication to take place. Above all be patient with yourself.

In whatever pose and place of comfort you choose, find your calm center. You may opt to hold a stone, gem or crystal or place personal sacred objects near you. You can also play meditational music if this helps you achieve a peaceful mind. There are many ways and means to achieve a meditational state, do what you feel guided to do.

Breathe deeply several times and allow your mind and body to relax. Shift your body as necessary to accommodate your relaxation. Keep breathing deeply with conscious effort. At this time you may state your intent such as, "I would like to meet my animal totem," or you can say a prayer of your choosing.

Let your thoughts come and go like leaves floating on a stream. Don't hang onto them. Watch them float by and let your mind empty. This may take some effort depending on your meditational and visual ability. Just try your best to relax in any case. You may notice after a while, the more you find your calm mind, your breath will naturally slow.

Using the stream analogy, use all of your senses toward the stream; hear the sound of the water, see the ripples, feel how cool and refreshing it is. Observe the water and its behavior. Allow the purity of the stream to refresh you.

Gaze at the stream and listen carefully to the sounds around you. Do you hear walking? Do you hear noises, calls, sounds? Do you feel that something is watching you? Animal totems can be any size so watch for even the smallest animal kin to appear.

If you do hear or feel something, it can bring out a little anxiety and excitement. Remain calm and know that you are perfectly safe. Take some deep breaths, watch the stream and continue to observe your senses. If you are too scared at any point in the meditation you can return. You will eventually learn to be comfortable however long it takes. This is part of the process. The dialogue has begun. They are very patient teachers.

When you are ready, slowly turn your gaze upward along the stream bank. Watch and observe any animal or animals that may appear near or in the distance. They may be fleeting or they may remain and approach you. They know your feelings. If you are uncomfortable at any time, simply say in your mind for instance, "I am uncomfortable right now". This is for your benefit only, not theirs. They have no fear. In most cases, the animal will halt contact until you either stop the process or leave the meditation. If you are comfortable the animal may come closer. Listen and watch for its messages. Open your heart and mind to greet your animal. Allow the animal, lessons and any messages to arrive at its own pace.

The animal can simply make an appearance and leave without any imparting thoughts. This is perfectly fine. Contact has been made and the dialogue has been opened. The animal can also become so close you can feel its breath or feel its skin, fur, feathers etc. The experiences vary greatly according to your comfort level and familiarity with the animal. It is always good to tell it "Thank You" and send energy of appreciation. Trust in the relationship with the animal will build over time.

Often the animal departs on its own accord and you return feeling refreshed with a wonderful sense of amazement for your new friend.

### **Animal Totem Communication**

As with any human relationship, we need to understand the language of the animal partner in order to fully understand it. Listening is approximately 85% of a conversation. In humans, when we listen, actually listen to every word and meaning the person is saying, we come to understand minute details that are important to that person. The same applies likewise within the animal kingdom. Communication and interaction strengthen and empower the union between animal worlds and ourselves.

Learning of your personal animal totem(s) will give you a greater sense of appreciation of your own connections to all life. In human relationships, it may also help to understand the significance of that person's spirit animal(s) and how it interacts with your animal totem(s). When you acknowledge the other dynamic energies that play a part of the relationship it will help you better understand the dynamics of the relationship as a whole. This understanding can enhance and create a lasting foundation in all that you do. Listening to the animals around you will teach you something about yourself.

By recognizing and acknowledging animal totems as you see them, the energy working in your life will increase. You will start to notice your personal power animal(s) everywhere you go, in books, magazines and postcards, in nature, in dreams and visions. By surrounding yourself with totem images you connect with the animal and the energy and wisdom it imparts.

Your awareness will abound. Here follows a basic guideline to finding your special animal.

- **Which animals have always fascinated you, especially in childhood?**
- **Which animals have you always felt connected to?**
- **What animals do you see frequently in the wild?**
- **Which quality of animal best describes your personality?**



- **Which animals do you have around you in pictures or figurines?**

### **Definitions**

There appears to be a line that is shadowed a bit by the multiple definitions of Spirit Guide, Secondary Totem, General Totem, Shadow Totem, Life Guide etc etc.

Definitions change depending on beliefs and cultures. This can be quite overwhelming for some. Please don't let definitions hinder what you think, feel and intuit about the animals. They are simply either spiritually based or physically based. Getting caught up in definitions may distract from the lessons it is trying to teach. The big question seems to be - how do you know which is which and what is what? You will know by experience, trust the animal to tell you. This is part of the communication process. ALL the animals are there to guide, **to teach lessons either through positive or negative perception filters**, and to show you what is happening in your worlds. **There is no good or bad, only lessons to restore balance and harmony.** ALL the animals, including us are connected, there are no "lines" of separation - only separation by levels of awareness.

For spiritual totems or an overall natural one, it is wise to study the habits of the animal in its surroundings, what it eats, where it sleeps, how it moves, including the gestation and life cycle, this will help you recognize what it is telling you to apply to your life.

The Dictionaries of Animals I have compiled are short-handed explanations of some core energies of the animal's characteristics vs an extensive write-up. I study the animal, its surroundings and behaviors and apply the animal energies into human terms. It's important to do your own inquiry into your spirit animals. This page and site gives you the necessary tools to start along that path of discovery. No one can give you the \*meaning\* of the answers you need.

### **More Awareness Tools**

Now that you have some tools to discover your personal totem animal we shall then look at how we are joined to the rest of the animal kingdom through the common

animal totems. All animals are linked by the Great Spirit, including humans. Nature has a way of communicating if we only listen as they are representatives of our unconscious minds. Through the appearance of animals in the everyday environment we can then determine what the underlying situation is in our lives. For instance, the direction we should take in dilemmas, what the best course of action is, and how we should behave in given circumstances. The Great Spirit has linked us all together in order to learn and grow in our own Spirit. He has given us the chance to learn or perhaps relearn the language of the animals.

When you come across an animal that is not normally seen around you. Take notice. If a bird is constantly vocal outside your window, listen and watch. A deer or a rabbit strays into your yard, listen and watch. After a while you will know and understand what the animals are trying to tell you. It is understood that there may be a variety of animals around you everyday. However, it is the subtle awareness, the nuances, which allow you to listen what is being said.

You can also take note of dreams and visions: the same properties apply in this realm as in the dream realm. Often times a Spirit Guide will show you things and teach you in a way you can comprehend for the moment. Be aware of the animals, for there is no separation between the physical and spiritual as they are one.

Some subtleties of the animal totems that you need to be aware of are as follows.

- **How is the animal moving in relation to yourself?  
(Right, Left, Away, Toward)**
- **How is it crossing your path: emerging, coming into or leaving your life?**
- **Notice where the animal is looking, walking, flying, heading etc.**
- **Which direction is the animal coming from or going to?  
(see Animal Directions)**

## The Cats are Talking... About Chronic Disease

by Will Falconer, DVM, Certified Veterinary Homeopath

**Note:** This article not meant to be a "feline" article per se. At first glance, it may seem to be that, but it's in fact more of an exposure of modern medicine, veterinary as well as human.

Having watched animals and their illnesses for the last twenty-odd years of practice, I am seeing a disturbing trend. Have you noticed it, too? When illness strikes our pets, it is long term, chronic, and difficult to cure. The best that conventional medicine seems able to do is to (barely or briefly) control symptoms, but these poor creatures never get back to a normal, enthusiastic level of health. We've all seen these animals: they are allergic to something and itch a lot; they have thyroid problems and lose their hair or their body weight (depending on whether they have too little or too much thyroid function); they have stiffness and pain in their joints; or their teeth get filthy regularly, and they don't stay clean with our best efforts at dental hygiene. Why is this becoming so common? When I look at it carefully, it's apparent that we are not raising healthy pets. Oh, we try, we follow the veterinary line that says we should vaccinate every one every year, we should feed only one kind of food from a bag or can, we should brush teeth regularly, control fleas with the latest chemicals, but where is this getting us and our four-footed companions? The cats are telling a story about this that I want to share with you.

Back twenty some years ago, dogs were the most popular pet in America. Cats were less popular, and, therefore, had less likelihood of being brought to the vet. As the years went on, more people lived in smaller spaces, led busier lives, and had less time to care for a dog, but wanted that special companionship that a pet can bring, so cats grew in popularity, until, by the mid-80's, they overtook dogs in numbers owned per capita. And where did the conscientious pet owners get their advice on raising the healthiest cats they could? From their local veterinarian, of course. What was the definition of giving the best care? Vaccinating annually, feeding Science Diet, brushing teeth, treating for fleas, etc. Just like it had been for years before with the canine population.

Interestingly enough, the diseases that are quite common in cats now were virtually unknown in the late 70's when I was in veterinary school. We had two donated diabetic beagle siblings who lived in the hospital and taught us about this strange disease. It was something we never saw in cats, and it was pretty uncommon in dogs for that matter. We learned of hypothyroidism from several canine cases, but cats didn't have thyroid problems, and [hyperthyroidism](#) was not in the books or the exam rooms. We saw horrible skin allergies in dogs, with crusts and scabs and red feet and unending itchiness, but we didn't see cats with this disease, either.

Well, if you've been observant in recent years, you know that these chronic diseases are fairly commonplace now in the feline population. As are heartworm (again, a dog disease originally), asthma, kidney failure, inflammatory bowel disease, dental calculus and decay, heart disease, and cancer. Why? Could it be that the cat is now following the same road that the dog has gone down? I think so, and what's more, I think we need to redefine what is the best way to raise a healthy animal.

More veterinary care in the usual preventative way has backfired, and I think we are actually causing these chronic diseases to become more prevalent. While prevention is still most important, it's not best done by annual vaccines, toxic food, and topical flea poisons that warn us not to get them on our skin.

And guess what? Wild cats like the lynx and bobcat are not experiencing these chronic degenerative diseases. Wolves don't die of heartworm disease or have dirty teeth. And nobody is dropping them heartworm pills monthly nor brushing their teeth. Might we do better to follow their example (fresh, healthy food, no/minimal vaccines, no toxic chemicals)? I think we will all be happier and see less disease in all species when we do. I know this approach works. Experience has borne it out in daily practice on hundreds of animals. Question the norm! Don't raise an average animal in the common way.

The cats are talking. Are you listening?

Will Falconer, DVM is a Certified Veterinary Homeopath. He practices at the Alternatives for Animal Health clinic in Austin, Texas. Telephone Consultations by Appointment 512/288-5400