

THE FOUR WINDS SOCIETY

Healing Through the Luminous Energy Field Alberto Villoldo Interviewed by Helen Fost

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Alberto Villoldo, Ph.D., founder of the Four Winds Society, trained as a psychologist and medical anthropologist, has investigated the traditions of the Andes and Amazon for more than 25 years. During an early expedition he discovered a group of Shaman-healers who specialized in treating illness before it manifested in the physical body. They did not work on the physical body itself, but on the Luminous Energy Field (LEF) surrounding it. These master medicine men and women understood that the LEF is a template of light that determines how our body heals, how we live, and how we might die. When the imprints of disease are erased from the LEF a person returns to health. Dr. Alberto Villoldo has developed these ancient healing practices that can be 'known but not told' into an accessible and contemporary training, the Healing the Light Body School.

Helen Fost: Where did your interest in healing start?

Alberto Villoldo: My training was originally as a psychologist and medical anthropologist and for many years I studied the workings of the human mind. Back then we were interested in seeing how the mind influences the body, whether it could create psychosomatic health instead of psychosomatic disease. I was running a laboratory at San Francisco state university and looking at the mind-body interface. I remember taking a slice of the human brain, putting it under a microscope and trying to find the mind. Of course we couldn't find it because the mind is not confined to the body or the brain. Then one day I decided I was probably looking through the wrong end of the microscope; instead of going smaller and smaller I would have to go bigger and bigger to get an understanding of how we could create health. So I left the university and headed to the Amazon to study with medicine men and women who did not have technology or medication but relied exclusively on the mind's ability to create health. And I was so fascinated by what I found that I spent the next 25 years actually becoming a student of the shamans.

In what way was their approach the right end of the microscope?

They practise a healing modality where they intervene not directly on the body or mind but on the luminous energy field, which surrounds the physical body and informs the body in the same way that a magnet will organize iron filings on a piece of glass. I discovered that these were the traditions of the feminine, of the earth, which are not unique to the Americas; they're the traditions of earth peoples from around the world, whereas our mythology is based very much on the masculine. For example we have practically the only mythology in the world in which the feminine is created from the masculine, from Adam's rib. We also have practically the only mythology in which we're kicked out of the garden, and no longer speak to the rivers and the trees and to God. And to whom the rivers and the trees and God no longer speak.

If you look at the archaeological record in Central Europe you will find that up till 6000 years ago the representations of the divine were the feminine form, and had been for the previous 35,000 years before that. Then 6,000 years ago Indo-European sheep herding peoples brought in a mythology in which god is represented by the tree of life, the phallus. The divine shifts from the feminine to the masculine. And if you look at the history of Europe since the arrival of the masculine all you find is a history of war, because the mythology of the masculine is a mythology of depredation, conflict and aggression, and this is the mythology that's informed medicine.

So we have the battle against heart disease, antibiotics that kill biological organisms in the body, chemotherapeutic agents targeting cancer cells: a medicine of war. And we've come to the end of this combative, aggressive approach, of anti-microbial medicine. Our antibiotics don't work any more today like they did when they were first discovered – 26 percent of all staphylococcus infections are resistant to antibiotics, so that the third leading cause of death in America and in the UK today is hospitals. What we've been doing with this battle against germs has been to breed and cross breed for stronger and stronger organisms. And right now the score reads 'germs and bacteria 1, humans 0'; it's not a battle we're going to win.

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We've come to the end of the paradigms of the masculine. We're now looking for new paradigms of sustainability, of ecology, of spirituality; and those are the paradigms of the original earth peoples of Europe and of the Americas. In Europe they were decimated 6,000 years ago, in the Americas with the arrival of the conquistadors they were obliterated 500 years ago. But there are remnants left.

So what were the remnants you discovered amongst the shaman-healers that you studied with?

These healers or Laikas recognized that there are four levels of reality. The first one is the physical level, the second is the level of the mind that informs the body and creates psychosomatic disease or psychosomatic health, the third level is the soul that informs the mind and the body, and the fourth level is spirit that informs all the levels above it. So if you want to change the body it's easier to change it through the mind and not through surgery; you can create psychosomatic health or disease. If you want to change the mind and the body it's best to do it through the soul, and if you want to change all of the above it's best to do it by intervening at the level of spirit, which is the level of energy, which is what the shamans knew how to do. They didn't have MRIs or antibiotics but they had access to the luminous energy field that informs the body, and that creates the matrix of the universe.

Over the last 25 years I've researched and translated these ancient healing modalities to make them practical, scientific and contemporary. And I train contemporary shamans, individuals who can perceive and work with the invisible world of energy. In a two year period they learn the four core healing disciplines of shamanism. My interest is in training modern shamans who can mediate between the visible and invisible world, who can become powerful healers and make a difference in the world.

Do people have to be psychic or seers to do this?

No, but they have to have an interest and it helps if you have a bit of innate talent, like with anything else. But the training of the shaman actually develops innate skills that we all have. We all have the capability to perceive the invisible world, it's just been educated out of us by our Western, consumer culture. Babies do it but later we are taught that the only thing that's real is what you can touch, feel, and purchase. So what we do is we uneducate people, we teach them how to go into trance states where they can see the invisible, how to wake up from the cultural trance that has dulled us and allowed us to perceive only a small segment of reality. We unblock perception, and then we train our students in the four core healing practices of the medicine way: illumination, extraction, soul retrieval, and the life and death rites.

Can you say more about these healing practices?

The first, the illumination process, is where we learn to track for imprints in the luminous energy field that predispose us to physical and emotional disease, and we learn how to clear them before they have a chance to express as disease in the body. Imprints work like an icon on your computer that's sitting harmlessly in the far corner of your screen until you double click on it. And when you double click on it, it takes over the entire screen. You may have an imprint for a breast condition and then as a result of stress in your life it can double click that gene and suddenly manifest as a problem.

Or you may have an imprint for repeating emotional patterns. A friend of mine invited me to his fifth wedding. And I called him up and said 'Do you remember what you asked me to do to you if you ever thought of getting married again?' and he said, 'Alberto, this is different, you have to meet her'. And I met her and she was a blond version of the last one. So we don't want to keep marrying the same person, the same situation, the same job; we want to clear these imprints from the energy field so it doesn't keep organizing our physical or psychological reality for us. The illumination process erases imprints and overwrites them with light, so we break free of the grip of karma, and we're no longer guided unconsciously through our lives into the repeating emotional and physical ailments that we can see so clearly when we look back at our histories.

The second is the extraction process. This is where we learn to extract intrusive energies and entities from the luminous energy field. The shaman understands that we're exposed to energies that do not belong to us and that can be very toxic and deadly within our luminous energy field. Things like envy, jealousy or rage that may be directed towards us can penetrate the defences in our luminous energy field and can embed themselves in our physical body. For example we speak about someone who did something treacherous to us as having stabbed us in the back. There's an energetic configuration that organizes itself literally around our metaphors. And these are energies that must be extracted. Some of these are crystallized energies that can embed themselves in the physical body; others are fluid energies that flow within our luminous energy field.

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The other kind of extraction practice we do is with entities, which are not very common but there's no amount of psychotherapy that will get rid of an entity that's attached itself to you. And these can be our own former lifetimes or a relative that died unconsciously and who's coming to us for assistance. They will generally come to whoever is most psychically open and compassionate, no matter what kind of relationship you had with them. And this person who may have died unconsciously or in an accident doesn't realize they're dead, they're caught between the worlds in a nightmare they can't wake up from. So this is the second intervention that we work with, that we learn in the second week of our training.

The third healing modality is the soul retrieval process, a technique used by shamans to journey into a client's past, along what we call a time line, to revisit traumatic events that were the cause of soul loss. The trauma may have occurred in early life or even in a previous lifetime. In soul loss part of the essential self fragments, and we don't have these resources and energies available to us for our development. So during soul retrieval our students learn to journey back to discover an original wounding, the source of soul loss. And whenever there's an original wound, we enter into soul contracts that are often terrible agreements that we make in order to feel safe. Under duress we cut the best deal we can. So for example a little girl that's being abused by her father may enter into an agreement that says, 'If I'm a nice girl daddy won't hurt me'. Now this is actually the story of a client of mine. And this is a perfectly workable, understandable agreement if you're 6, but I met her when she was 46 after she kept meeting, dating, marrying and working for abusive men who continued to hurt her. This was a soul contract that was still operant that we had to renegotiate.

So discovering the source of the original wounding is not enough – we also have to renegotiate these soul contracts which follow us lifetime after lifetime. When we renegotiate them we become free again and then we can recover that part of our essential self that fled in order to remain whole, to remain in grace. So we invite it back to receive its energy and reintegrate its gifts, so that all of our resources become available to us again. And then we can remember the original agreements we made with Spirit before we were born and we can say 'yes' to our calling.

Soul retrieval can accomplish in a couple of sessions what can take years to do in psychotherapy, because it works at the energetic level: we retrieve that quanta of energy, not just information. This is the subject of my new book *Mending the Past, Healing the Future through Soul Retrieval*. It describes how we can not only travel backwards along a time-line to find an original wound and recover a lost soul part, but how we can also journey forward along a time line and retrieve a desirable destiny. Once we heal ourselves we become unfettered to time, and then we can track the most desirable future for ourselves. The shamans say that you come into the world with two books, a golden book and a silver book. One of those books is already written. That's fate. The other book is blank and you can write it yourself. Fate is the unconscious movement through life; destiny is when you steer your own course through life, when you're fully and consciously present.

In the fourth part of our training in the medicine way we learn the great rites of passage – the life rites and the death rites. We learn how to assist a loved one in making their journey back home to the spirit world consciously, without suffering, without getting caught in the domains between the worlds that the Buddhists call the bardos. We've forgotten the death rites in the West. In fact we've forgotten all the rites of passage, the puberty rites, the rites to menopause when we come into the wisdom years. And when we don't go through these rites of passage our growth becomes stunted at that age. So many men end up relating more intimately to their automobiles or their motorcycles than to their families, or they don't know how to step off the path of the warrior entrepreneur workhorse to enjoy the prime of their life. The death rites are also the life rites, the transition rites, which allow who we have been to die so we can truly step into who we are becoming.

So in the death rites we learn how to help the luminous body disengage from the physical body, and how to seal the chakras, the energy centres in the body, so that the luminous body cannot return back to identify with a shell that is decaying, and instead can make its way back home to the world of spirit. During the training our students actually learn to journey to the world of spirit, which is traditionally known as the out of body experience, and they discover the trails that lead back home while they still have a body to return to, because when you make your final crossing it's not the best time to be asking for directions.

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To sum up, how would you describe the path of the shaman?

There are four paths that the shaman can take. There's the path of the healer, in which the shaman is of service to the village, to the community. There's the path of the warrior, which is not the one who makes battle but the one who makes peace. There's the path of the teacher or sage, the one who continues the transmission of the medicine way and of the body of wisdom. This is where the path of the shaman becomes a spiritual path. And the fourth is the path of the seer and of the visionary. Here we recognize that the world is a dream and that we can dream it into being, and when you don't dream it into being then you get caught in the collective nightmare that we're all living through.

References:

1. Island of the Sun by Alberto Villoldo (Vermont: Destiny Books, 1992).
2. Shaman, Healer, Sage by Alberto Villoldo (New York: Harmony Books, 2000).
3. The death rites and the other core healing process are described in detail in Villoldo's book Shaman, Healer, Sage (op cit).

Biography:

Alberto Villoldo's book, Shaman, Healer, Sage, was selected as book of the month by the One Spirit Book Club. His other books include: The Journey – The Work of Alberto Villoldo, PhD, Dance of the Four Winds: Secrets of the Inca Medicine Wheel (Vermont: Destiny Books, 1996), and Island of the Sun (Vermont: Destiny Books, 1992). His latest book, Mending the Past, Healing the Future through Soul Retrieval is published in the UK by Hay House in April 2005.

Alberto Villoldo is director of the Four Winds Society which has ten teachers he has trained, and teaches students around the world. A new Healing the Light Body training programme beginning in the UK in April 2005 will consist of four meetings of six days every six months.

For more information about Albert Villoldo and the Healing the Light Body training, phone 0800 081 1523 or 001 435 647 5988, or email: fourwinds@thefourwinds.com; www.thefourwinds.com

Helen Fost is an astrologer, life coach, and psychotherapist, and is currently completing her training in the Healing the Light Body School.