

Vincent's Notes for the Dangers of Spirits Panel

- ❖ Spirits are real, individual persons. They have different agendas from humans and different viewpoints – this must not be forgotten.
- ❖ To be a Shaman is to be in relationships with Spirits, and the form that a right relationship takes with each will look different for each.
- ❖ Occasionally spirits may "ask for the moon", just to see what you will do. Don't be too quick to agree to what they ask; these arrangements are not to be entered into lightly.
- ❖ Ancestors are not Gods who will necessarily have your best interests at heart and guide you accordingly. Can't be a "yes person" to all spirits, even familial ancestors. They are their own people and have self-interests. Like your living relatives, sometimes they may think they know what is best for you without understanding you at all.
- ❖ Don't jump into relationships with spirits or gods too quickly, or without understanding completely what the relationship entails. What do you do to keep your side of the bargain? What do you get in return?
- ❖ Do not give blood to any spirit that you don't have a long, deep relationship with. Blood is a bargain. **Especially do not give blood to Elves.**
- ❖ Cosmic "IOUs" can be called in for bad things at bad times. (I was forcibly reminded of the "markers" of the John Wick movies as an example of this.)
- ❖ You are not the top of the food chain in dealings with spirits. Be careful to set boundaries.
- ❖ There do exist hungry entities who want to feed. Haunting, cleansings and ghost removals... entities that move into your house and decide that it is theirs.... All these need to be removed or an agreement made with them.
- ❖ Keeping agreements made with spirits is very important. These entities are real and they know how to find you. Breaking agreements can be dire.
- ❖ Spirit entities may not necessarily feel that they need to give informed consent. They may accept simple consent, without the details being filled in, and then hold you to that agreement even if the "fine print" turns out to be practically impossible.
- ❖ Linda suggests playing the "wishing game" where you try to think, for instance, of a wish that a genie could not twist to hurt you somehow (see also the movie "Bedazzled") as practice for dealing with spirit negotiation (esp w/ the Fae). The Fae do not like to be under obligation to humans. If they do something as a reciprocal action, do not thank them. Praise the gift or the giver.
- ❖ If the Fae are teaching you a magical practice be sure to ask if "all the steps are there?" The Fae require a high degree of skill to work with.
- ❖ You might see if there is another deity, who is in a relationship with one that you are in contract with, to broker a change to that contract if necessary.

- ❖ Get and read the book “Dealing with Deities: Practical Polytheistic Theology”
- ❖ Humans can also help to broker dealings with spirits in their area of experience (i.e: Linda for the Fae).
- ❖ Divination can also be useful in helping to renegotiate w/ spirits.
- ❖ How do you know if you are speaking with a spirit vs a mental “sock puppet”? (With the caveat that spirits are real, have their own agenda, and might be misrepresenting themselves in communication with you... an added complication.)

- ❖ Divination.
- ❖ Also, go to another diviner to get another read on the situation.
- ❖ Go to another deity who knows the situation and ask them about it.
- ❖ Go to someone who has a very long relationship with the spirit or deity who claims to be the one communicating to you.

- ❖ Write down impressions of the contact: how did it look, how did it feel, where did you feel it (heart, head, etc.) were there sensations in the spine, skin, etc? Over time you will be able to discern the difference between genuine contact vs sock puppet.
- ❖ The “inner bell”. The presence of spirit does things to your body that you can learn to notice if you pay attention to the experience and learn to look for the signs.
- ❖ Most spirits do not spend a lot of time tormenting one person over and over again. This is extremely rare, almost certainly coming from inside. Also spirits that show up out of nowhere and ask you to self-harm are extremely likely to be **not** external.
- ❖ When working with diviners new to you, a good filter is to ask them up front if they are ok with you getting a cross-check from another well-qualified diviner. If they say "no" without a very good reason, you might want to keep looking.
- ❖ When people come to you it could be a mental health thing which is the issue, rather than a tormenting spirit. Over time you can get a feel for this. One shaman says it feels like a sort of ‘static’ over everything when the client is talking to him. A person who has serious mental health issues (reality-level issues) will sometimes go to a shaman, rather than a therapist, because the shaman “believes in all sorts of things” and will presumably believe what that person is telling them as well, without discernment.
- ❖ Knowing your own personal ethics and boundaries are important, also knowing your own skill set. Humility is necessary in all this work.
- ❖ Make your bonds ahead of time... don’t be the one who just shows up to the spirits only when you need something. Forge those relationships.

- ❖ Having your shamanic friends listed as clergy so they have legal recourse to get to you in case of an accident.
- ❖ Trading your magic for a thing of great value can end up lobotomizing you even if you get what it was that you wanted. Trading your life for something you want very badly may well be taken up. Be very very careful what you do. Is your life even yours to trade if you are in service to something higher than yourself? If you do make that trade, make sure it has an END DATE... don't end up an afterlife servant.
- ❖ Keep in mind that certain spirits have been so badly abused by humans that they may have an extremely dark view of humanity. This view, while not necessarily embraced, should be at least respected and understood.
- ❖ Spirits that you ally with may expect you to do more than simply leave offerings. Are you ready to do ecology work, volunteer at an animal shelter, work with the Big Brothers Big Sisters, or do something else that takes up your time and energy in order to demonstrate your commitment to shared values?
- ❖ Over time the views of the spirits you are deeply allied with will become your own. Be prepared to be changed; you won't come out of this the same as when you went in.
- ❖ Sometimes the things that your guides want you to do will be hard; things you don't really want to do, but that if you do them, will cause you to adapt and grow. The end result can be to place you in a situation where you are better able to carry forth your mission if you have one, or are just better situated in general; happier, more fulfilled.
- ❖ The coincidences in your life can be an indicator as to if you are or are not on the right path. Are things lining up in such a way that you are having a richer life experience, one that supports this Work?