

Gini Stanley: Odette, how do you conceptualise the condition that has been labelled schizophrenia?

I basically see that for people with schizophrenia, or people suffering from what I call 'acute sensitivity', their core self has been shattered from an early age. Over a period of time the core self moves out of the body and moves into the area of the spirit body. All the chakras go pretty much out of alignment, base and crown chakra are the main two that go straight out of alignment. Over a period of time their aura breaks open and they end up like a radio receiver and they can suck in just about anything... they're the type of people that walk into a party where five people are in a bad mood and as an acute sensitive they can walk out of the party with the five people's bad mood and the other people will be fine.

The best analogy is that you are a particularly sensitive being living in a house that has been yours for many years. Over time the house has become very run down—the doors and window hinges are old and rusty, hence they often fly open. One day, at your weakest and most vulnerable point, a group of bored, disturbed teenagers passes by. They notice that out of all the houses on the street, your house is wide open. This is their invitation... they can squat here and call it home. You succeed in getting them to leave by drawing what's left of your strength to close the shutters and doors. However, you find that you are living in fear worried that they might return. They sit on the sidewalk outside your house and patiently wait while your fear builds and your strength weakens. Then they walk right in and become your worst nightmare... teasing and tormenting. Your fears are like an open book for them to read and feed off, you have become the perfect host.

GS: How do you suggest dealing with such situations?

My recommendation for dealing with these negative energies that 'set up house' in your aura is first to accept that they're there to teach you and to see what the underlying messages are. This usually comes down to having no core self and no self esteem. You need to work on getting your core self back. This means building up your self esteem, rebalancing your energy bodies and finding your passion in life (which gives you a lot of your core self back) and doing things like 'soul retrieval' which is basically getting the fragmented bits and putting them back together.

People ask whether schizophrenia is all in the head—I think initially it's a spiritual illness but that sooner or later it will fry your mind. If you're dealing with that much spiritual input, and you're not balanced, it's like a shaman's sickness, you could be lost in the dark forever.

The schizophrenics that I've talked to all agree that the voices they have are very different from imaginings. They've felt that they are actually true beings. In my own personal encounter of voices I also felt them to be true beings. But instead of ignoring them and letting them accumulate and accumulate to the point that I didn't know where my own mind was, I sat there and said, "OK I'm here, so what do you want then?"—I actually conversed with them. Whether that was conversing with my own inner self or a true entity doesn't matter. After realising that they were here to teach me that I don't think that I'm good enough I said, "OK I've got the teaching". Maybe they'd come back again the next day and say the same thing and I'd say, "Thank you for your teaching. Thank you, I realise you're here. Now I'm going to move you onto the Light"—and I would sit there and in my imagining move them onto the Light. I found that the best way to move them onto the Light was to be a child and have fun with them.

GS: Could you give me an example of that?

I encountered a being that had a mischievous energy. So I imagined myself and it in a truck race. It went into the Light and I didn't. I found that if I was terrified it helped to imagine the energy as a much smaller version of itself, as if it were a child.

For a couple of days after doing this I would feel like I didn't have a problem at all but then I would start to feel irritable and a bit depressed. I can usually tell by my irritation that something is around. So I just go inside. Sometimes I feel like I have a busload of people waiting to be moved across to the other side. In a lot of ways that's what acutely sensitive people are: they're like gateways to the other side. Unless they know how to clean themselves and work the gateways they're going to accumulate a lot of horrible energy from all sorts of different places. If you can't protect yourself, the best thing you can become is an impeccable cleaner. And if you're an impeccable cleaner you can get anything off you.

GS: But you had the strength to do that.

Sometimes I didn't have the strength to do it. I realised that the best time to do it was when I woke up early in the morning. I had more energy when I first woke up. Then I sat down and went right into my meditation. During all that time I thought there was a really good chance of going crazy. Since then I'm not frightened because I know that I have faith in me now, in my ability to survive.

GS: What do you think causes acute sensitivity?

It really doesn't matter what kind of family you come from. I think it's a soul's choice to learn this way.

Through training and personal experience Odette Nightsky has developed ways of working with people diagnosed as schizophrenic. She prefers to call them "acutely sensitive". Here she describes how she works mainly using shamanic techniques and also how she dealt with her own experiences of visitors from other realms. Odette, together with five others, is working towards setting up a healing sanctuary in the Byron Bay area for people in Spiritual Emergence.

I reckon there's a power in being acutely sensitive when you're balanced. The key is to find the power in your gift. Acutely sensitive people can be incredible shamans, incredible artists, incredible check-out chicks. It's not what happens to you it's what you do with it.

GS: Would you say that most of the people you work with have been or would be diagnosed schizophrenic?

Yes, but a lot of them wouldn't have been classified as "schizophrenic" if somebody had taken the time to talk with them and counsel them. It would have been realised that they were walking through a Spiritual Emergence. A Spiritual Emergence is a powerful encounter and if it's not taken care of in the early days it can turn into something a lot more freaky. If you're taken into an institution and medicated and your power is taken away, the emergence is sabotaged and then that emergence becomes dysfunctional after a while. However, there *are* people who actually want to choose that spirit world. Most of them will say to me that they're quite happy in that world—they say that if they were to let go of it they would have nothing else.

GS: How would your sanctuary be different from a psychiatric hospital?

If somebody were to walk in here now and this was a sanctuary, first I'd be getting a doctor to check their diet and their hormones and their vitamin levels (most schizophrenics I know eat lots of sugar, smoke lots and have lots of caffeine). I'd also assess whether they have had a history of brain damage or car accidents—that is, look at the physical side of it. I'd have a psychologist look at them from the emotional/psychological perspective. I'd also have somebody who is psychically/energetically in tune to be a third person to look at the overall energy. Thus between the three of them they would get a case history of that person. It's important to know what you might encounter—has there been sexual abuse, has there been a fat girl issue, etc. Those issues will come up when a crisis occurs.

GS: How do you approach someone when they're living in another world?

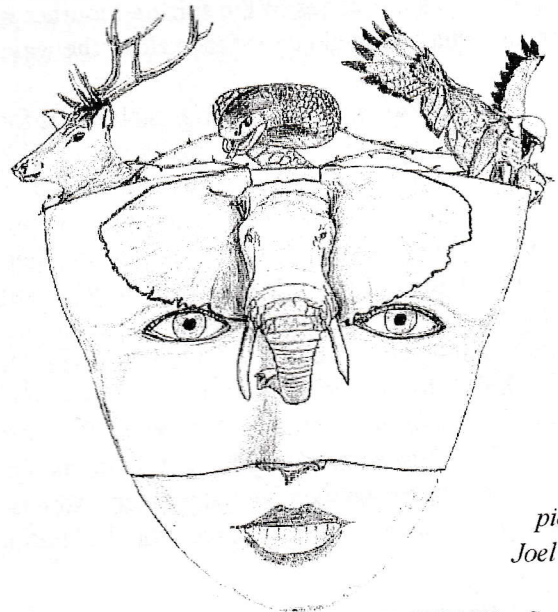
I would befriend them first and get their trust. Most of them don't trust many people. My first priority is to gain their trust and walk into their world. To get them to share it with me without them feeling like I'm going to negate it. I try to see where they're coming from in their world. Then slowly, slowly, I introduce certain things. It's like walking the storyline in their world. For example, there was a guy who really liked all the Viking lore. So I went and got as much as I could on the Vikings. While I'm in their world I try and give them things to stabilise them. In this case, I introduced a peaceful Viking Goddess.

The most important thing I've noticed is validation of their story and having someone to walk with them through their own world. Finding ways to ground them is really important. For example, I did a journey with someone the other day and she journeyed to find a strong guide and a strong power animal. So now, when she rings me in crisis, I remind her to call on the strength of this animal to ground her and I remind her to call on this guide to wield authority. Most sensitive people who aren't drugged to the eyeballs really love journeying. They've got better imaginations than most people.

GS: How did you learn about shamanic healing?

I went and trained in England at the College of Past Life Healing and Associated Therapies, and I was in residence for a year. I trained in soul retrieval, vision quests, rebirthing, other lives, between lives, alien encounters and all forms of shamanic journeying. Soul retrieval was the best technique I learned and it was the biggest gift that helped me. We did soul retrieval quite differently—you actually do your own soul retrieval but you're guided. When I did that it changed enormous energy in my core. I was abused as a child, only once, but it stopped my growth dramatically and I had my kidney removed. I didn't remember it till I was 33 and at 34 I did my training. If I didn't have soul retrieval I think I would have suffered a lot more. I would recommend it everywhere. It's a way to get your fragmented bits from whatever trauma and bring them back to your soul self, so you're not walking around as an empty person but as a whole person again. Before that I often wanted to die. After soul retrieval I felt that, finally, I wanted to be on the planet.

*Odette Nightsky can be phoned on: 02 66858081
email: shamansunlimited@hotmail.com
or write: c/- P O Box 832 Mullumbimby 2482*



*picture by
Joel Stewart*