



Illustration by Gaia Orion

Meet your Power Animal with Reiki

BY COLLEEN BENELLI

A POWER ANIMAL IS A SPIRIT GUIDE similar to a guardian angel in animal form. Power animals are great spiritual companions, and they work well with Reiki. They are not exactly the same as guardian angels, but close. They can help us in our daily lives and with our Reiki treatments and classes. Reiki gives us easy ways to meet and build relationships with our power animals.

Power animals are most often associated with the spiritual practices of indigenous people, shamanic cultures, animistic religions, and those who see nature as the source of the Divine. A power animal follows its original instruction from Great Spirit, Creator, God, or Goddess, to assist humankind on its earthly journey. They can provide guidance from a different perspective, do healing work on us, and they can be protectors and companions. They carry the wisdom and qualities of the animal nation they represent. For example, Eagle offers us a view from high above our path. When Eagle is guiding us, we see our path from a place high above it and with wider vision. If Mouse is guiding us, we may see our path from a very close perspective with all the details right in front of us. Each power animal has unique gifts. There is not a hierarchy and one power animal is not better than another. Horse offers freedom with stability; Cougar is powerful and gentle; Fly offers multifaceted vision and asks the question, "What have you missed?" All have wisdom and guidance.

Although there are many books and websites that tell us the qualities of different power animals, they only give summaries of the real wisdom your power animal can provide you. If you really want to know your power animals and work with them, it is important to build a relationship with them. To interact with them, you will need to create a method of practice, such as Reiki, meditation, or journeying with Reiki. Then learn how to listen for their guidance. They will try to get your attention in various ways so they can help you, and they are so patient even when it takes you a while to hear them! They also listen to you and get to know you by the style of spiritual practices you use, and they will try to answer you in the most effective way for you.

I have powerful relationships with Bear, Cougar, Horse, Hawk and Crow. I do not worship my animal guides; it is not that kind of relationship. I do honor them, just as I would a respected teacher, friend or colleague. They help me with my Reiki treatments and Reiki classes, and they help me in my personal life.

They watch out for me and let me know about my surroundings. They help me travel safely when I journey with Reiki. My world would be lonely without these amazing friends.

I think of my power animals as beings I want to get to know. So just like any other friendship, I put time and effort into building the relationship. I spend time with them, call them, and I listen when they call me. They come to see me, and I go to see them. I ask for their advice and listen when they speak. They also ask me for advice, and I speak thoughtfully about the subject. Remember, power animals are not human and often they need information from us in order to serve us. My relationship with my power animals is definitely a two-way street. I help them when they call as much as they help me when I call. Therefore, it is helpful to have a style of spiritual practice like Reiki to connect with your animal guides. Eventually you will get to the point that you can hear them at all times, not just in meditation. Getting to know them awakens the world around you, and you will start to understand the various animals when they speak in the ordinary world.

Journey with Reiki to your Power Animals

Power animals live in non-ordinary reality, in the spirit realms of the Divine Earth. Reiki can take you on a bridge of light to the enlightened realms of the Divine Earth to meet your enlightened power animals. It can provide a style of practice that allows you to meet them and connect with them consistently to gain their assistance.

The Reiki symbols will assist you in reaching spiritual realms. Invoke the Power symbol (CKR) and you will call the loving Universe. It is like a spiritual phone system. The Distant Healing symbol (HSZSN) is like an enlightened highway. It is a bridge of light that connects you through time and space to the enlightened spiritual realms of the beings you call. The Mental/Emotional symbol (SHK) is the spiritual translator and can help you understand each other's language. It can help you hear in a completely new way, not just the language you speak. The Usui Master symbol connects you to the Great Being of the Universe, and the Fire Serpent symbol connects you to the Divine Presence of the Earth.

There are various classes of power animals; most are helpful, but some are not. Because of this, it's important that you only work with enlightened power animals. The Reiki symbols can be instructed to direct your journeys to enlightened spirit realms only. I have given my Reiki guides this as an ongoing instruction.



Photo courtesy of Colleen Benelli

Hawk teaches us patience and clear site from a higher perspective.



Photo courtesy of Steve Carney

Bear teaches the great value of introspection and guides you to exercise your abilities as a natural healer.

Anytime I journey with Reiki, I ask my guides to connect me with only enlightened spiritual helpers, whether they are power animals, spirit guides, Reiki guides or ancestors. I call them “beings of light and love” and all of my spiritual helpers know that means I am asking for enlightened associations only. It’s also important that you have an enlightened spiritual guide that you’ve given authority to oversee all your spiritual work, including working with power animals. Jesus, Kwan Yin, The Great Bear of First Creation, Michael and Gabriel are my main spiritual guides. They make sure that all my spirit guides and I are always working in the highest interest of all.

There are many ways to meet your power animal with Reiki. I describe one method, a Reiki journey below. However, you may use Reiki before you go to sleep and ask to dream your power animal; you may invoke Reiki and dance for them, or you may drum or rattle for them. Or, as the website www.shamanlinks.net says, “You can ask the power animal to show itself to you and if you start seeing one or another animal frequently that would be its way of revealing itself to you. For instance, you are flipping through the channels and see an elk on a nature program, and then later you hear someone talking about going to Elk Grove Village to visit their cousin. You see a sign for an Elks Lodge. It is believed that the animal guide can communicate with you by

drawing your attention to things around you, and a repetition such as that would be a way of communication.”

To meet your power animal in a Reiki Journey:

Note: You may want to listen to drumming CDs or trance-like music while you journey.

- Invoke all Reiki symbols you are attuned to, prepare yourself and the room with Reiki, and invite your enlightened Reiki guides. Use self-Reiki and settle into a meditative state. Engage your senses. Activate your imagination and intuition.
- Invoke CKR, stating your intention to journey to the enlightened realms of the power animals to meet your power animal. Invoke SHK to ease communication with your power animal.
- Invoke HSZSN; imagine it as a bridge of light that takes you through an entry point into the divine heart of the earth. It could be a tree root, tunnel, waterfall, or any other portal that goes down into the earth.
- Notice the light at the end of the portal. Intend that you have arrived.
- Notice the landscape, the smells, sounds and colors. Breathe the air.



Photo courtesy of Colleen Benelli

Peacock teaches watchfulness and the power of strong foundations.

- Ask your power animal to reveal itself and to give you a clear sign.
- You may want to pet it, play a little, and perhaps give it some food.
- Ask it to show you its skills and powers, what it likes to do, and how it will help you with your Reiki work.
- Return to ordinary reality through the portal on the Reiki bridge of light.
- Return to yourself, feel yourself merge back into your body.
- End your journey by drawing a large CKR over your body.
- Write about your experience in a journal. Write your impressions, colors, thoughts, interactions, and smells.

When learning to journey with Reiki it is important to notice how your intuitive mind works. Not all people “see” their journeys. You may “see” power animals as images in your mind, or you may simply “know” they are there. For some, the sense of smell defines the journey; others hear what is happening during their journey in their own words. There are many ways to experience a Reiki journey. Your way is the best way for you. It sometimes takes time and patience to gain the experience you need in order to understand how your journeys work. Invoke SHK to help your mind align with your intuition.



Photo courtesy of Colleen Benelli

Horse offers wisdom of freedom, stability and guidance to overcoming obstacles.

Another common experience people have is that they wonder if they have made it all up. The answer is yes and no. You have made things happen, such as creating a bridge of light and a portal into the earth. However, “You can make things happen without making them up,” says Tom Cowan, in *Shamanism as a Spiritual Practice for Daily Life*. The more experienced you become, the more you realize you could never make up what happens. It is so diverse, active, and alive. It is very different from ordinary reality.

Yes, you do use your imagination to journey. However, I find that many of us need to heal the definition of our imagination. We have been taught that we use our imagination to make things up. In spiritual practices, your imagination is your sixth sense, a vital part of your intelligence. Having an active imagination is a skill that is intentionally developed. Your imagination is the doorway, the portal to the spiritual realms of non-ordinary reality. It is accessed through your third eye, the sixth chakra. I find that many of my Reiki clients need healing of their beliefs about imagination and need to balance their sixth chakra. A new definition of imagination is often revealed to them and their intuition returns. The intuition and imagination work together. I encourage you to increase the use of your imagination as part of your daily practices. SHK is a powerful symbol that activates the power of your divine mind. Activate it and spend time daydreaming to increase the power of your imagination.



Photo courtesy of Steve Carney

Wolf offers an opportunity to develop strength and confidence in our decisions.



Photo courtesy of Colleen Benelli

Hummingbird teaches us how to integrate joy into our daily lives.

“Remember that your spirit helpers and power animals are magical and they can do anything. Birds can swim under water, whales can fly, and tigers can talk. They are your protectors and guardians,” says Jan Engels-Smith in her book, *Becoming Yourself, The Journey from Head to Heart*. She also says, “The images you bring back are largely metaphorical. It may take some time and guidance to understand their meanings. Frightening images are usually metaphors that may be projections of you own fears, but they are almost always there to teach you something.” If something strange or “scary” occurs in your journey, it probably doesn’t mean what you think it does. Remember that you have asked Reiki to take you only to the enlightened realms. Therefore, this is where you will go. HSZSN is a spiritually guided Reiki bridge of light. You can trust the power animals you meet. Some of them have watched over you all of your life. You may even have known them as a child. So if they do something you don’t understand, ask them to explain. They don’t always know how to communicate clearly to us, so be sure to ask. Then listen. You may not understand right away. Sometimes it takes time to receive your answers.

As you get to know your power animals, you will understand their style of communication better and your relationship will grow deeper. You will understand the depth of care your power animal gives you. They are your protectors and guardians. It is a

good practice to include your power animals in your future journeys with Reiki. They love to travel with you. They watch out for you and alert you if you need to pay better attention. They can bring you information and answers from another perspective. It takes time and practice to understand them. Remember, they are your friends and colleagues.

Invite your power animals into your daily Reiki practices. They are like guardian angels. They can contribute to your healing sessions for your clients and you. My power animal Chukotka, the Great Bear of First Creation, helps find people when they are lost, in all the ways they can be lost in their hearts. He often includes the healing breath of first creation on my breath when I use Reiki and *Koki ho*. The Dancing Bears come to help people reconnect and align their heartbeat with the heartbeat of creation. They heal the disconnection and empower the rhythms within. Then they give the person the opportunity to look deep into their own eyes all the way inside themselves to the light at their core so they remember their divine presence. Your power animals will work with you in the way you need them. You may not understand how they work for a while. This is okay; they are enlightened; Reiki is present, and they can do their healing work regardless of how much you understand.

It is a good idea to keep pictures of your power animal around to remind you of their presence. I have animal pictures for power



Photo courtesy of Steve Carney

From buffalo we learn of abundance and strength of character.

animals in the photo galleries on my website, www.reikilifestyle.com. They are free and copyright free.

When you become skilled in relationship with your own power animals, you can use Reiki to journey for your clients' power animals as well. I have seen great results and healing for people who rediscover their power animals. They often feel the sense of companionship they couldn't quite find in other ways. They have a sense of protection around them, and they feel safer in the world. Use the Reiki journey technique described above as you give Reiki to your clients, and ask their power animals to reveal themselves to you on behalf of the client.

Power animals tell me they love Reiki. Reiki gives them an easy pathway for people to connect to them and they are grateful for the ability to be in relationship with Reiki practitioners. Creator, Great Spirit, God, Goddess, are all expressed in nature. We are natural beings. Animals have always played a crucial role in human life and survival. It is no wonder they also play an important role in our spiritual lives. Use Reiki to develop a meaningful relationship with your power animal.



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See Colleen's article
"Reiki and Power Animals"
in this magazine.

Colleen Benelli

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Visit Colleen's New Web Site!

The new, updated web site makes it even easier to find everything you want to know about Colleen's Reiki Lifestyle events and philosophy of "Living the Light of Joy."

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