

Polar Bear Medicine
January 18-21, 2018
Shaman---Great teachings and supernatural power
in physical and spiritual realms

A large bear inhabiting the Arctic regions of both the Old and New World. It often reaches nine feet in length and weighs over 1000 pounds. It frequents the shores, ice floes, and swims well. It is creamy-white in color and has a long neck, narrow skull, and small molar teeth.



To the Eskimos, the polar bear is “nanook” and is believed to have great supernatural powers. To the Inuit, polar bears embody the living spirit of the North. Hence, the polar bear is a shaman, acting as a liaison with the spirit world, keeping the wisdom of the ages. It is a teacher to the native people, showing them how to hunt, navigate, and survive in the Arctic.

These fearsome and independent animals were hunted for food and skin, and for generations were considered relatives, embodying the great spirit of the people. All bears can swim and walk like human (heel to toe), and so they were often considered the closest kin to humans. Many traditions have myths of humans and bears living together, bears walking around as people, and people becoming bears. Some traditions teach that the bear is a ghost or spirit of a relative who has passed on and with whom there is unfinished work.

The senses of bears are extremely acute. Their sense of smell is better than a dog's, and their hearing just as sharp. It is believed that unlike other animals, bears see color. They also have prehensile lips, agile and unattached to the gums, enabling them to eat a variety of foods otherwise unattainable. Bears often indicate that our senses and our appetites are growing stronger.

Polar bears are one of the largest carnivores. It is one of the most outstanding hunters of the bear family. These white bears have no fear and they have no enemies or predators except humans. They are more powerful, more dangerous, and in many ways more gentle than any other bear. They embody power in strength and gentleness, in all extremes.

Polar bears prey mainly on seals, hunting them on ice/ They rely on a steady, stealthy approach, and a highly developed sense of smell. Polar bears have a hundred times more nasal sensors than humans. They can sniff-out a seal under two feet of snow 20 miles away. When they approach, they do it slowly, often lying in wait, appearing to be an ice chunk to draw to draw seals out. They must do this because seals are experts at detecting movement above them on the ice. Such hunts are more successful alone, so polar bears remain relatively unaccompanied and solitary.

Mating time is one of the few times they seek company. The female digs a den in November and the cubs are born during the arctic winter. The den's interior, warmed by the mother's body, is warmer than outside. When the female gives birth to the cubs, she is particularly careful to avoid males; because she knows that the bigger and stronger male will attack her to get to her cubs. She keeps her den meticulously clean. She passes very little urine and feces. Stimulated by increasing amounts of light, in March she emerges with her cubs.



Polar bears move equally well on land and in water. They can run up to 18 miles per hour on ice and as fast as 40 miles per hour on land. They can cover 100 miles nonstop in the water. They move between land and water with ease, and thus they are teachers of how to move from one realm to the next and back again with great ease and power.

They can adjust their metabolism, as with many bears, to conserve energy and body heat. When asleep, their pulse rates slow to eight beats per minute, and they can awaken in a moment into a kind of "walking hibernation". The polar bear teaches us to control our metabolism, to move between realms, and to conserve our own energies and efforts.

The mother bear is very loving and caring toward her young. The cubs will stray with the mother from two to five years learning what it means to be a polar bear. When the polar bear appears as a totem or a guide, a tremendous period of learning and power is being born. The teaching and learning may take two to five years, but in the process, you will learn how to move between realms, manifest your strength, and pursue what you need deliberately and powerfully.



Polar bears can almost magically appear and disappear out of nowhere. They are the travelers and guides between worlds. They walk the path between spirit and the physical, unafraid and unrestricted. Even though the adult bears are fierce, they will exhibit behavior that can only be interpreted as play and can teach us how to be both fierce and playful within our lives.

Sometimes two bears will form friendships that last weeks or even years. The friendly bears may feed and travel together or even form “play groups”. It is not unusual as we start on a power journey that brief and even lasting friendships with those on a similar path may arise,

When the polar bear travels into our life, a new and powerful journey is about to be undertaken with the potential to awaken our greater abilities in all extremes of life.

Questions to ask:

Am I following the crowd or do I need to step out on my own?

Am I willing to face realms that I have dreamed of but never truly experienced?

Am I willing to take the time to develop my powers and abilities, no matter how primal?

Am I being too aggressive in my endeavors?

Is it time to learn new techniques to accomplish what I wish, to be able to move into new realms with great strength?¹

Who Should Come

The workshop is designed for people from all walks of life. It is focused towards expanding the awareness of spiritual explorers, healing and shamanic practitioners, and the delightfully inquisitive.

What to Bring

Please bring any rocks or crystals that want to come along. A journal notebook is encouraged as well as any comforts for sitting on the floor, such as floor chairs, back supports, blankets, pillows, etc. *Bring lots of grounding stones*

Plan for

We will be in the outdoors of the many sacred energies of Bethel Horizons Camp. Plan for hiking and spending some in nature. Plan to learn to clear your subtle energy field and to adjust it with each moment by being a living, healing presence.

Details

The workshop is residential and will be held at a beautiful Lutheran kids camp at Dodgeville, WI. You will receive detailed directions and a list of what to bring with your registration.

Please include your email with any registration. Suzette will send out registration confirmation. These emails will come from rocksandsouls@gmail.com. Suzette and I will both be able to read any replies. The fee for the workshop is \$545, which includes lodging for Thursday, Friday and Saturday night, a light luncheon on Thursday evening, 3 meals on Friday, 3 meals on Saturday, and brunch on Sunday. There is a fee of \$10 for linens and towels or you can provide your own. Class size is limited to 26.

¹ Source: Ted Andrews, “Animal Wise: The Spirit Language and Signs of Nature”, 1999

To Register: Please send a refundable \$100 deposit or the amount in full to Marie Smith 19126 Campbell Hill Dr, Richland Center, Wi. 53581 by December 1st. We eat gluten free at these workshops and you can preview the menu upon request. All special needs like vegetarian or dairy-free can be honored. I will take names for the waiting list if/ when the class fills.

We will begin class at 9 am on each day and end at 2:00 pm on Sunday afternoon. If you have questions, please contact Marie Smith at marie@hawkrdg.org or (608) 647- 2366

Presenter:



Herb "One White Horse Standing" Stevenson (Shawnee and Cherokee) has been exploring indigenous healing practices for over 20 years. <http://www.onewhitehorsestanding.com>