

The Lesson of Sioux Holy Man: Woableza

By Jim PathFinder Ewing

For the past two weeks, I've been totally occupied with the healing, help, support and protection of man I have come to know as a living example of what Spirituality in action is all about.

Those of us on this path of Spirit find that there are many impediments to progress, that we have many lessons, that barriers are frequent and setbacks common.

To keep going forward, we try to hold in our hearts the energy of peace and understanding, the inner "knowing" of doing the right thing, incorporating the techniques for finding the stillness within from which to operate, from the heart, not the mind, not the ego.

It is a difficult path. We frequently fail. But we are emboldened by the precept that spiritual progress, not perfection, is our goal. Because, if we try to obtain perfection, we certainly will fail.

We find the perfect imperfection of our being as a great teacher, leading us forward. In this way, we do go forward, in the spiral of Ascension, the constant Medicine Wheel of all our woes and opportunities. It is the ideal that leads us forward, but it is the challenges that keep us directed.

So it is that I have found the ideal and the real in a wonderful and tragic way with this Sioux holy man Woableza.

Here Is The Story

Shortly before midnight on Monday, July 14, the phone rang. I had just finished doing a long distance soul retrieval for a client in Texas, and I thought maybe it was the client wanting to ask more questions.

But, it was my friend, Lee Standing Bear Moore of the Manataka American Indian Council located at Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas.

I was overjoyed. Bear and I have been friends for years, I have stayed in his home, his family has treated me as one of their own.

Nonetheless, for him to call, much less at midnight, was rare. It was wonderful for him to call, but what was the matter?

He was concerned that his friend Robert "Woableza" LaBatte had been injured and had been taken to University Medical Center in Jackson, Miss.

Bear did not know the details. He asked me to find out and help in any way. I immediately called the UMC emergency room and could not get a condition, but did confirm he was admitted and his room number. I related this to Bear, whose worry was great. So, we settled on a course of action. I immediately began healing work from here until he could arrive.

It is not uncommon for me to be called to do Reiki for people who have had accidents and are in hospitals. So, that was no problem. But my feeling on this one was that there was much more to it; Spirit was insistent, this was a major emergency beyond the plight of this one man.

So, I did the full nine yards: full Reiki treatment, a full drum ceremony, journey work, setting up a healing Merkaba, using crystals in the Antakarana: all the distance tools. Praying for this man and all beings, working with the energies – some of which were huge.

In this work, I saw there was much more than physical damage. This was a struggle between light and dark, life itself, not just for this man, but for all. It was a powerful knowing that kept me going: this was not just an "accident."

What happened to this man would affect many, maybe the Earth itself. I worked til about 3 a.m., got up at 5:30, dressed and drove into Jackson. I found LaBatte in Room 534 of the Neurological Unit. He appeared to me to have been beaten severely on the head and face.

He was unconscious. Both eyes were blackened, there was bruising on his cheeks, his left ear was scratched and bruised; this was in addition to the incision and bruising on the left upper side of his head.

There, doctors had removed skull bone fragments from his brain that had been imbedded from a blow or blows and had installed a steel plate. It was a miracle he was alive. But, by touching him, I could feel his Spirit was strong. I felt that he would live.

I spent as much time with him as I could those first few days, doing healing work, including various energy medicines, Reiki, Consegrity®, praying and drumming (quietly) until Bear could get here from Arkansas. Woableza told me "they" had tried to kill him. He didn't identify who "they" were.

In time, it emerged that he had been doing Spirit work in Mexico with other indigenous holy men, combating those who are trying to control the Earth with pain, suffering and darkness.

The events that led to his hospitalization may be seen from a 3-D perspective of drunken men in a rage; but I have no doubt that the perpetrators were merely actors, unconsciously driven, by a greater darkness that envelops the Earth. We must all pray on this.

The physical circumstances of Woableza's plight are many and complex. A full account is on the Manataka Web site (www.manataka.org). I suggest anyone who cares about Spirit in this 3-D world, and of justice and injustice, read it, and get involved in supporting this man.

But here I want to speak to another facet. I had known "of" Woableza for years. For years, Bear had told me: "Oh, Jim, you must meet Woableza. I'm sure you two would be good friends." But whenever I was at Manataka, the sacred Place of Peace that MAIC maintains, under the eye of the Rainbow Woman, the Spirit of the Mountain, Woableza was not; and when I wasn't present at a gathering, he was. It had long been a small puzzle to me. I guess it took these bizarre and troubling circumstances for us to finally meet.

Bear had indicated that since I was here, where Woableza needed help, that I should watch over him and help him in any way. I took this charge seriously, not only out of deference and loyalty to my friend Bear, but as I got to know Woableza, I saw that his healing, help and support was linked to my own salvation and that of the world.

Anyone who knows me knows that over the past few years, I have dedicated my life to healing and wholeness, for self and others, that by practicing tools of energy medicine, we are Healing The Earth/Ourselves. In Woableza, I found the living embodiment of that aim. It has been a wonder.

Woableza has been a great teacher for me, of living in Grace, of "being" peace, whatever the circumstances. His gentle, loving, and fun-loving spirit, knows no hate, no resentment, no fear. His is a courage of the loving heart, that is ever full and knows no want.

It has been a great blessing to sit with him and learn from him, just by being in his presence. And, perhaps, it took this way for me to meet him and come to know him in a meaningful way.

It was my friendship, trust and respect for Bear that alerted me to him. These good qualities were the "hook" that brought me in. But it has been through being with, observing and speaking with Woableza, that light has been shed on other areas in my being that need healing and wholeness.

I am so grateful to the Creator that I was called in this way and given this opportunity. I could not have known or seen this in any other way.

And I believe that is the gift of Woableza for all of us at this time: to allow us to see ourselves more clearly. Not only us individually, but as a whole, as a society, as communities of individuals brought together for a common good. I believe he sacrificed himself in this way so that we as peoples could be brought together in wholeness: to heal ourselves and our world.

Woableza is doing everything I believe in and aspire to. He's a living example of compassion, love and healing help for others. His mere presence is a teaching. I learn just from being with him; and I find comfort in the thought of him. And so, by recognizing these qualities in him, I find them in myself, and I am inspired that this path is the right one, the good one, and am emboldened to go on.

The help and healing I give to him is the help and healing the Creator gives to me, and to us all, if we will only find it in ourselves.

Sometimes, it takes a teacher like Woableza to remind and point the way.

It helps that Woableza – Robert LaBatte – is such an improbable man. And I say this in pure love and joy. If you see him, you want to laugh. He is not an imposing person. It's almost as if he could turn invisible if you turned away. He is such a sweet, kind, gentle person, who does not take himself seriously. He loves to laugh. He is childlike in the wonder he sees in the world. He loves to speak to people, and listen to them. (We found that out when he used up the month's minutes allotted the cell phone given to him for his hospital stay in only one day!

He sees the good (the "namaste" – the divinity, the light) in every person, and he speaks to that goodness!

And there is no calculation here; no hidden motives, no putting on a show, no deception – no little whirring of wheels spinning in his mind beneath the words he speaks. He speaks from a depth that is, oddly, light, fun and joyful. The gravity of the words he speaks are in their meaning, their effect, sometimes subtle, but not the words themselves. He casts a spell of love all around him.

What you see with Woableza is truly Woableza. And he speaks from a place inside himself that eternally resides in the goodness of others, seeing only that and acting – not reacting – to it. He speaks to each and every person individually as if that person were the only person on Earth, but the effect of his words is to help all people, by creating love within and without.

He is an incredible human being. His is a great power: greater than any "fearsome" thing. It is awesome.

I believe that the lesson of Woableza is a lesson for us all. We were speaking about this in his hospital room at the Tribal Health Center at the Choctaw Reservation on Friday night.

A Little Background

When he was taken to the Tribal clinic on Wednesday, we found there were no telephones in the rooms; the only access to the outside world was through the phone at the nurses' station. The Reservation is very remote, even by Mississippi standards. There

was no one trained in rehabilitation, which his doctor at UMC said he needed for his throat, which was crushed in the attack. No one present knew how to work the device he was given at UMC to keep fluid from his lungs, to prevent pneumonia. When he checked in, the pharmacy was closed. So the only pain medication they could give him was Tylenol 3 (For brain surgery; massive trauma?). The Tylenol wasn't designed to go in the feeding tube; they had to crush it up and pour it down the tube. There were flies buzzing around the room; the nurse provided a well-used fly swatter. They first couldn't find and then didn't know how to operate the feeding machine; and only showed up with it around 10 p.m. He had not had nourishment since that morning at UMC.

Despite the fact that men who had attacked him were still at large and he was beaten and left for dead less than two blocks from the clinic, only one officer was present when we arrived and he explained they didn't have enough manpower to keep someone there. The officer then left.

So, there he was: in excruciating pain, hungry, with inadequate care which he desperately needed for recovery, with no security – literally abandoned, and the tribal authorities taking no notice or even seeming to care.

His plight has now received worldwide attention and the tribal authorities are beginning, it seems, to come around to offer the services he needs.

But we spoke Friday night not of how this affected him, the lack, but of the goodness that could come from it.

On Wednesday, he stunned me when he said he was grateful he had been brought to the Choctaw clinic from the fully equipped and expert care of University Medical Center in Jackson. Why? Because now, he said, he saw firsthand the level of care being given the Choctaw people.

On Friday, rather than condemning and resenting the care given him, his thoughts were on how to improve the care for these people – people who may not even know they are not being given adequate treatment, from a man who has suffered from it.

He has viewed his plight despite all the pain and even mortal risk to his own life and healing from the perspective of compassion, for others.

It is ironic, to me at least, that despite the millions of dollars the Reservation's (now) two casinos are bringing in that such low health care is being given. But he didn't see it from the perspective of condemning it, but of improving it – for all.

I felt as if I were sitting with a living, breathing example of the power of Quan Yin. So, this is the way I see for approaching the plight of Woableza and that of the people – who, though expressed in physical form as others, are really us, each and every one of us on this Earth.

Rather than using the shield and sword, the mask, of anger over his plight, and by extension, all those who do negative things in the world, we should operate from that place of compassion that helps all.

Woableza confirms for me, in daily living, my own mantra: An Alchemy For The 21st Century, which has been on my Web site for years: "When confronted with evil, give love and understanding. When confronted with sorrow, give compassion. When confronted with life's failings, give hope, faith – forgiveness. Transmute the dross, give up the drudge. Every moment – the present – is an opportunity, a present from God."

The Lesson of Woableza is that we are our own saviors, the lessons of love and light are within ourselves. We must only see them and bring them out around us in the world.

Thank God there are people like Woableza to remind us of it.

Aho.

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