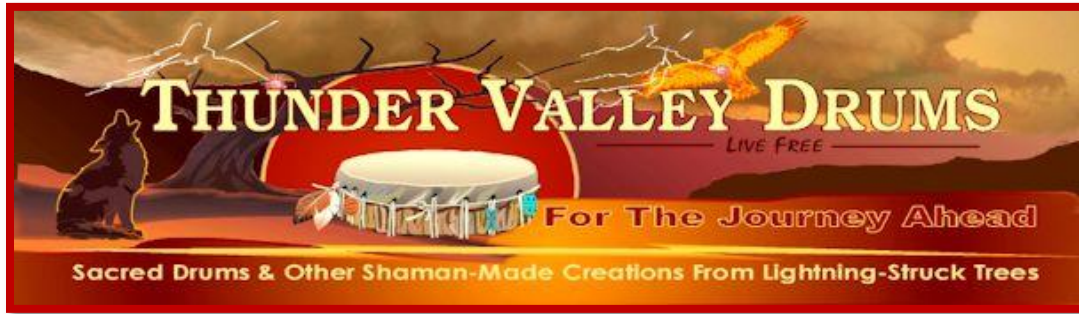


Paradox In Your Hands...  
*The Lightning Stick*



**An Evolving Primer For Using A  
Powerful Spiritual Healing Tool**

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## The Lightning Stick: Paradox In Your Hands

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## PROLOGUE

### **The Lightning Stick: Paradox In Your Hands:**

### **An Evolving Primer On the Use of a Powerful Spiritual Healing Tool**

#### **Purpose of the Primer:**

Prior to late June and early July, 2009, anytime someone received one of my Lightning Sticks, I wrote a letter generally explaining its use, and trusting that the new owner would intuitively know or develop his or her own methods of using this wonderful tool. But over time, I have come to see the need to begin maintaining a more formal *Primer* where uses of the Sticks may be recorded for posterity. I regret not having done so earlier. It is so versatile and such a part of my own spiritual healing practice that I find it impossible to recall all the ways I have used it. Also, available literature on Lightning Stick medicine is extremely limited. So please read this *Primer* and know that its size and scope will change and grow over time. This is a living document and is constantly evolving.

The *Primer* is written in the context of shamanic use, but if you are familiar with spiritual energy work in general, you will find that you can achieve effective results using the Lightning Stick in your practice. Over time, the *Primer* will grow to include specific applications for many modalities.

And finally, these caveats: I make no assertion that these Lightning Sticks alone can do anything. It is only through the power of YOUR intentions that these spiritual tools can be activated and successfully implemented for energetic work. Also please note that, as made, the Sticks address spiritual subjects only and that I make no other claims about them or their use. I suppose I should also state that these Sticks should be used only by adults.

And finally, you should know that the FDA (the federal Food and Drug Administration) has neither tested nor approved the use of Lightning Sticks.



## Chapter One:

### Introduction and Overview

The mystical power of lightning, as illuminator, destroyer and creator, is deeply significant in my practice of shamanism. That is obvious as one reads the information on the Thunder Valley Drums Website (<http://www.NaturalShamanDrums.com>) as it relates to lightning-struck drums and other spiritual tools I make. As with all such implements, it is intention which powers such an instrument.

Long before I would become aware that others had used such a stick and other lightning-struck materials in spiritual healing rituals, I had intuitively used Lightning Sticks in my practice. Only recently have a few references to the use of Lightning Sticks as spiritual healing aids been available on the 'Net. (There are even online references now for "Lightning Stick" as a brand of hockey stick!) But, overall, little is known of the historical uses of lightning-struck wood in spiritual healing ceremonies. Sadly, like many, many other spiritual healing practices, the use of lightning-struck wood has passed silently into history, mostly because of suppression and outright eradication by ignorant conquerors who feared paradigms other than their own.

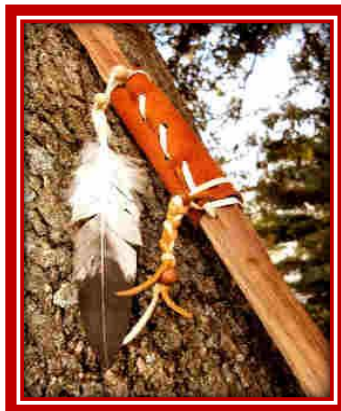
Using such materials seemed natural to me, though, since I had long observed the benefits derived from lightning-struck drums, and knowing that spiritual healing properties also resided in any wood from a struck tree. Essentially, and akin to the belief of some Native American and other tribal cultures, Celtic peoples included, when a person or other living being is, say, stung by a bee, the person or being is then imbued with "bee medicine." Thus, a tree and its wood is imbued with the properties of lightning medicine when struck.

The particular stick shown here, representative of the types available from my little shop, came from a small cherry tree literally destroyed by a lightning strike. Two friends and I gathered sticks and limbs and pieces of the trunk that had been blasted up to 50 feet away from where the tree stood. Not enough of the trunk remained to make even one drum! (Of course, you need not buy a Lightning Stick from me, as you can probably find one yourself that was flung from a tree struck in your own neighborhood.)



Lightning medicine is powerful, indeed, and includes aspects of transmutation, as in transmuting suffering and spiritual illness into spiritual healing, or turning poison into medicine.

When making a Lightning Stick for spiritual healing use, I aim not for beauty, as I may do with a drum, but for utility. First, I never coat a stick with any sort of finish. Unlike a drum, this spiritual healing aid is not affected if it gets wet. And if it gets soiled, it is easily cleaned with a few buffs from sandpaper. In this natural state, the stick is as pristine as it was when in contact with lightning, and thus has no barrier (like polyurethane or some other coating) between it and its intended use. Lightning is raw power, and a Lightning Stick is raw medicine, unrefined yet pure. I don't try to shape the stick into an artistic form. I simply cut away weak areas and buff out any splinters.



I then make a wrap around the middle to protect against future splinters (which can feel like little lightning strikes if one rubs a smooth hand across it!). The better reason though, for the wrap is to act as an insulator against contaminating the spiritual healing energy flowing through it. After all, the user is not putting his or her energy into the patient, but is merely facilitating the energy flow between earth and sky and the recipient (just like the lightning cycle, from above to below and back again, like a pure electrical/spiritual current). The wrap keeps your energy from passing into the current and visa versa.

While one may think this all sounds rather strange, consider this: while we may first think that a medical doctor wears gloves and a mask for protection against a disease we as patients may have, we must also remember that the gloves and mask also protect us from any germs or disease the doctor may have!

Next I add a few natural items denoting "symbolic intention," that is, common things which represent abstract and sacred concepts. These include:

- 1.) my intended use of the instrument,
- 2.) my acknowledgment of the universal spiritual healing energy that I seek for the client / patient who will be served, as well as for the healer who will use it, and
- 3.) my humility as a facilitator.

In that regard, then, the stick bears leather lacing that serves as a representation of the Sacred Spiral, from which comes life, spiritual healing and All That Is, with the stick acting as a conduit for channeling the energy from the Spiral's center. Closely following the same theme, the triad of illumination, destruction and creation is depicted in the braided leather seeming to emanate from a central point, in this case a lone bead. In ceremony, then, these three aspects are intended to illuminate the problem or illness, destroy the cause, and create spiritual healing in the patient, represented by the lone

bead at the end of the braid. And finally, knowing that spiritual healing is NOT about the facilitator but about the patient, the ruffed and imperfect feather represents the “wounded healer,” a classic shamanic concept. And finally, I add copper in some form, as a conductor, and an emerald, as a focusing lens, the latter which I associate with the heart chakra.

Naturally, you may wish to decorate your Lightning Stick in any way you choose, but I would recommend the addition of copper and an emerald.

While my training and intuitive guidance are most firmly rooted in the teachings of Native American and Celtic shamanism and other teachers of many forms and locales, I always include thoughts of the triadic aspects of the Hindu deity Shiva when it comes to spiritual healing ceremonies involving the Lightning Stick. While representing much more than this, three aspects of Shiva – who is thought to be connected with the power of storms (as in lightning!) – is illumination, destruction and creation. To a certain extent, the ancient Celts saw similar attributes in the deity Lugh, and in the goddess figure Brigid. Native Americans recognize many similar associations with a pantheon of healing spirits. And to this day, many Siberian shamans prefer healing tools that have been lightning-struck because of the belief that they contain these properties and something else—heaven’s hair, a beautiful term referring to the filaments of wood split open by lightning.

This medicine then, akin to many pharmaceutical compounds used in scientific drugs, comes from our relatives in the plant tribes and from the etheric realms. Unlike refined and processed drugs, though, this medicine involves a science of its own and is best used in its pure, raw form. As with so many great spiritual truths, its power is paradoxically hidden in the most common and humble appearance.

A mere stick.

When employed in ceremony on behalf of someone who suffers, though, and when it is fueled with the intention of spiritual healing and connection through loving service, it shines with the purifying light of a thousand suns.

I am always reminded of the *Gospel of Thomas*, Saying #77, when I make or use a Lightning Stick. In that passage Jesus says, “Split a piece of wood; I am there.”

Indeed, there is spiritual power awaiting those who understand the enigma and paradox of life on earth. What appears mighty is not, and what appears insignificant is not. You will understand all of this with complete clarity as you use this beautiful and humble spiritual healing instrument.



## Chapter Two: The Basics

*(Photo at left features a close-up view of a Lightning Stick with a black wrap, embedded emerald, and four "Indian Beads" held fast with a copper pin.)*

As a healer you know it is so exciting to master the use of a spiritual healing aid, like a crystal, or any other of a plethora of implements, as it imbues you with confidence and your client with greater spiritual healing. Generally speaking, the better you are with your tools, the more effective they and you will be with those who seek your help.

The Lightning Stick is no different in that regard, as the more you practice with it, the more familiar you will become with its properties and how best to use it and under what circumstances to use it. And as with most spiritual healing tools, the Lightning Stick invites innovation, in that once you become adroit with its energies, you can then try different techniques or combine techniques to add new ways of using it. That's why it is a part of what I call an "Evolutionary Healing" instrument, that is, a tool with an ever expanding range of uses. So, even though I will outline some possible uses here, I am most confident that you will discover many more as time goes on.

When I first started using a Lightning Stick long ago, there was NO information available on how to use it. The idea of using such a stick just hit me one day, like, well, a lightning bolt! And as I began to experiment with it, I found it to be a very effective aid for treating such things as entity interference, energetic blockages, electronic and energetic imbalance and non-specific or "free-floating" anger. Before long, I also discovered that it could be used to clear spaces of interfering energy, and even as a sort of wand or baculum in other ceremonies intended to increase knowledge via connection with the "etheric realm" during journeys. (Specific uses and articles on wand use can be found on line. For instance: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wand> ) Once you read some of these articles and do your own research, you will find that the terms "wand," "baculum," "Lightning Stick" and so forth begin to overlap. My preference, obviously, is the Lightning Stick, because I am most familiar with it and because I believe it has some properties other implements do not.

As explained on the Thunder Valley Drums Web site, you and I as healers empower and are in turn empowered by intention and its beautiful reciprocal in order to intervene for spiritual healing on someone's behalf. When it comes to the instruments a healer uses, though, we all know that the simplest of things can take on great



importance as we find our “inner medicine.” In this regard, the Lightning Stick is organic, and therefore you both will learn as you work together.

Before I outline some techniques to begin working with the Lightning Stick, however, I feel it is necessary to offer some additional notes about it.

- First of all, be sure that your Lightning Stick is a real lightning-struck piece of wood. Over the years I have accumulated quite a collection of cherry wood that was struck by lightning when it was part of a real tree.
- As indicated, I think it is quite appropriate for a meaningful feather to be attached to a Lightning Stick. (You can check my Website for instructions on a beautiful method of wrapping and attaching feathers.)
- The Lightning Stick and any attachments should be repeatedly smudged three times in preparation for use, to signify a new beginning, free from past energies which it may have channeled or been near to. That act alone, in my opinion, signals the beginning of the partnership between you, the stick, your helpers and those who will benefit from the alliance.
- The feel: If you’re like me, you’ll want to feel the length of the stick, to sort of size it up in your hands. As stated in Chapter One, I don’t apply any sort of finish to the sticks, so what you are touching is the raw wood. Many woods without finish, as you probably know, have a tendency to sometimes flake off tiny splinters, no matter how much they are sanded, the result of drying. As this is lightning-struck wood, it will do so more frequently.
- If you apply a finish, the splinters will stop. But I believe the Stick’s spiritual healing energies will be reduced. A hand rubbed wax will minimize the splinters. It is up to you, of course, to decide what, if anything to do about this. I much prefer the natural stick, and in shamanic terms, I believe it best retains its medicine power when left that way. Not only do I not mind the splinters, I really do appreciate them. In ceremony, they remind me of the tiny splinters of energy jutting out from real lightning. The suede wrapping around the middle has two purposes, the first being to protect you from the splinters. The second has to do with the suede acting as an insulator, to keep the energy being transferred through the stick away from you, and to keep your energy away from it.
- Many people perceive one or more spirit helper symbols in the Lightning Sticks. For example, some may see a lion’s eye, or the head of a crow, or the drape of an angelic gown deep within the grain, or whatever else.

- I always include a small coil of copper wire threaded through an emerald chip or other arrangement to attach to the Lightning Stick. It is optional, of course, and you don't have to place it on the Stick. But here's the rationale for doing so: The ancient Celtic peoples and a plethora of other ancient cultures equated the emerald with healing energy, particularly heart energy. The copper wire is a conductor, and threaded through an emerald then attached to a Lightning Stick (or its thong) can help direct energy in ways that you specify.
  
- You must decide on what will be the Lightning Stick's "pointer end" and what will be its "base end." Generally speaking, energy will enter into the base end and exit at the pointer end. Sometimes you will want the pointer end pointed at a particular area of your client's body, as when activating or transferring good energies. And sometimes the pointer end will point away from the client's body, as when dissipating negative energies.
  
- Here's my way of retrieving, smudging and empowering the stick that I use. I ...
  - First make sure it is a lightning-struck tree.
  - Walk around it three times while scattering tobacco ahead of me and saying a prayer.
  - Sit at the base of the tree and be with it for a long time.
  - Ask the tree a question and await an answer.
  - Then ask the tree if I may use a part of it for healing ceremony, and await its answer. (If the answer is "no," I find another lightning-struck tree.)
  - Retrieve the stick and once again offer tobacco to the tree for its sacrifice.
  - I journey to the Lightning Beings and ask for help.
  - I ask Spirit for empowerment for me and the Lightning Stick as healers in service to others and to all of life.
  - Recognize and give thanks for the Lightning Stick's existence and for its ability to unite earth and sky, the male and female into powerful medicine.
  - Then offer thanks to the Lightning People for entering the stick and for imbuing it with the power to illuminate and to destroy illness and suffering.
  - Ask that the stick be their tool for helping to illuminate my knowledge and service.
  - Ask them for help in understanding the who, what, when, where and how for knowing the stick and when to use it.
  - Honor them by offering the stick to them, holding it in a horizontal position over my head.
  - Offer it to Father Sky and to Mother Earth.

- (You don't need to use this specific language, this is only a guideline. Perhaps you recognize these forces in a different way, so by all means, use your own language and symbols.)
- You may also want to encircle it with crystals or other stones or items important to you as a way to cleanse, initiate and charge it for the service you intend.
- After cleansing and initiating it, you may consider having the Stick with you several times during ceremonies or practices before actually using it. Give it an honored place where it can share in the energy of the healings you are doing.
- Anytime I have used a new spiritual healing aid, I have relied on it to tell me when it is ready to join in the work. By that point, I feel confident that I am in union with it. So maybe the same will hold true for you. Perhaps after only the first smudging and ceremony, the stick will signal its readiness to join you, and you may feel confident about it in return. Maybe it will take longer. Or maybe it will occur in a different way for you, I am not certain.
- I would never suggest that the Stick is the sole spiritual healing aid to use. As you know, we use as many aids as we need to get the job done. I don't use it exclusively, but only in context with other procedures and methods. Sometimes I don't use it all, and other times, I use it when nothing else seems effective. Thus, I can't tell you when to use it. This is up to you and the circumstances.
- And finally, I never allow my Lightning Stick to touch bare ground. If it does, I seek to reactivate it.

It bears repeating that in only rare circumstances have I found any reference in literature to the use of Lightning Sticks in a spiritual healing context. Thus, the uses listed in this *Primer* are based on my own practice and any instructions I may have received from the Spirit World. There are bound to be many, many more uses than I have so far discovered. It would be greatly appreciated if you would report your uses with specific notes so I can add them to this *Primer* over time.



## Chapter Three: Uses for the Lightning Stick

There is certainly not much written or even handed down orally on the use of many things a shaman or other healer uses, and for sure, you won't find much at all about Lightning Sticks. It is, as I have said, up to the user to determine the Stick's highest and best use. There are, however, and based on my own long experience, a few suggestions for its use.

Before each use, always begin by cleansing and re-empowering the Lightning Stick, whether by smudging or through your own cleansing methods, making sure to also ask your power animals

/ spirit guides to cleanse it, as well. Then, repeat your intentions in using it and ask that it be charged in order to help fulfill your intentions. Offer it up to the sky, to the earth. Sit with it. Join with it in your own way.

Try not to touch the actual wood by keeping your hand around the leather wrap only.

I am a firm believer that we are led to know what to do when it is prudent and called for. So when you feel the need for the particular medicine powers you have learned with the stick, stay focused on the intentions until you are finished.

It is optional whether or not to explain to your client what you are doing with the Lightning Stick. Sometimes, your client will be in an altered state when you realize you should use the stick, so circumstances may prevent you from explaining. When you are first learning the stick, you may wish to explain to your client that you are learning and would like to share its wonderful medicine with him or her.

### **What to Expect**

It is very difficult to describe in writing all the subtle things that can and often do occur when using the stick. Absolutely critical, though, is keeping an open mind and staying on your toes, a prerequisite for any journey or spiritual healing work, of course.

### **Possible Uses As a Spiritual Healing Tool**

In shamanic work, it is often common to introduce energies into a client, as with power animals and soul retrieval, and at other times to extract energies. Thus, at times, I have held the stick vertically over the patient, with the base end pointed toward the area of

pain or suffering in his/her body. At times, I place the base end directly on the person. This is to allow the negative energy associated with the affected area on the body to dissipate up through the Stick and out the tip. (You can then direct the energy to a specific location, like into water or into a tobacco trap in order to neutralize it.) At other times I have directed the pointer end of the Lightning Stick at the client's body in order to direct energy into an affected area. Sometimes, you will find this can be used in combination, as in first cleaning out an area with the base aimed at the body, then infusing the same area with spiritual healing light and energy with the pointer end pointed at the area. (Please note: I would not recommend using the Sticks during so-called "extraction" or "depossession" events unless you are fully trained in those modalities.)

I never point or touch either end of the Lightning Stick directly at or on a person's head.

Often, as mentioned, I will allow the Stick to actually come in contact with the client. This is for maximum power. For instance, when attempting to break through a particularly rigid energetic blockage, I let the pointer end actually touch the area, thus producing an extra charge of light to accomplish the task. Resting the base end against the body will also, at times, facilitate a more effective transference of energy away from a particular area of the body.

At other times, particularly when balancing a client's energy, I will place the stick either horizontally or vertically directly on the client's body (but at an angle to avoid pointing it at the person's head). When I am satisfied that the energy is moving, I will then reverse the position for an equal amount of time, thereby achieving balance.

In other instances, I will encourage a client to actually hold the Lightning Stick with both hands, one hand near the pointer end and the other near the base, in order to maximize the effect I'm after. This seems to be quite effective in helping the client to achieve clearing and balance. Also on occasion, I will have the client hold the stick as described while I am performing other interdictions, as it serves to help them maintain a balanced energy level. It also helps keep them present and active in the work.

As a general rule, and in practically every case, no matter the distress being addressed, and at a certain moment, I feel a charge, sometimes quite powerful, sometimes more subtle, and at that instant I am led/caused to lower the pointer end of the Stick onto that part of the body where the person suffers, or where I have identified as the place where the suffering originates from. The spiritual healing energy is thus transferred with power and precision.

At that moment, any number of things can happen.



Sometimes, you will actually be able to see the affected area in a new way, perhaps even view it on a molecular level, and extract energy from it. Sometimes the spiritual illness is obliterated, or the suffering simply goes away. Other times, I lay the stick across the person's chest, hips or elsewhere, and the effect seems to be to hold the malady in check until I do something else, like extraction or cleansing. A few times, the stick placed horizontally on a person has resulted in the heat from their suffering being pulled out of them and dissipated along the axis of the stick and into the ground or surrounding terrain, water or trap. When that occurs, I usually throw or spit water in the directions of the dissipation in order to neutralize the energies associated with them. I have also recently been led to discharge such a dissipation directly into containers of water and tobacco placed nearby, as stated previously.

When a session is completed, I always sing my healing song to end the process.

### **Use on Other Beings**

Interestingly, I've found the stick to also be useful in helping animals to heal, using the same methods described above. Seldom will you be able to place the Stick directly onto an animal, but it can be used quite effectively with the pointer end and base ends, per the above descriptions, either near their bodies, or actually touching their bodies. I have discovered that animals are quite sensitive to the Stick's energies, so you do need to be more subtle when using the Stick for their spiritual healing.

### **Using The Stick Remotely**

Surprisingly, I have found the Stick to be helpful, even when I don't have it with me! A few years ago, as one example, a cat was suffering from what appeared to be a broken hip, and the owner was sadly considering euthanizing her beloved pet on the advice of a veterinarian. I talked to the cat for a while then, quite spontaneously, the Lightning Stick came to mind. I asked for its help then touched the cat's hip with my finger while visualizing my finger to be the stick. Within a week, the cat was walking normally.

I have used the Stick in a remote spiritual healing, whereby I visualize a client who may be miles away and to then use the Stick to effectuate a spiritual healing "at a distance."

### **Combining The Stick With Other Aids**

The Lightning Stick can also be used in conjunction with other tools in your medicine bag, like with crystals, herbs, hand's-on spiritual healing and many other modalities. I do so all the time. But we must wait for you and others to report specific procedures in order to feature them in the *Primer*.

## Epilog: End Notes

This mini-eBook is, of course, only an outline. There are countless things that can and do happen, impossible for me to outline and innumerate. As with any spiritual healing regimen, there is also the possibility that the use of the stick will be inappropriate at any given time, in which case, NOTHING will happen. When appropriate, though, something will happen, and it will be beneficial. It may be that you get a new perspective on your client, or it may be that a wonderful spiritual healing is initiated. Often, it takes time to know.

I do not believe it is possible to use such a stick for ill intention. And further, I do not believe the stick can cause harm when used in a spiritual healing context, and so long as it is cleansed between uses. It seems the Lightning Stick works on a spiritual level where only spiritual healing energy is allowed to come in, and only negative energy is drawn away.

I invite your comments and input into this evolving project.

Aho and Namaste,  
Bob

