



WINDS  
OF  
SPIRIT

## The Awakened Self

Renee Baribeau, *The Practical Shaman*

Enjoy this excerpt from Chapter One of the upcoming offering from Hay House, *Winds of Spirit: Ancient Wisdom Tools for Navigating Relationships, Health, and the Divine*. In Sandra Ingerman's words, *Winds of Spirit* is, "one of the best books I have read. It is inspiring and unique."

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"It just takes one moment of new perception to change a life."

— Marion Woodman

Awakening is a natural process, and wind is the sacred mediator. The transition from sleep to wakefulness happens every morning. Before you wake up, your breath deepens. Then you become conscious and open your eyes.

Awakening in a spiritual sense is a similar consciousness-raising activity. Invisible forces unite and animate all matter. As we observe our breathing—the core experience we may have of our own life force—we enhance our ability to perceive the movement of the energy inside and around us. Over time, our deepening awareness makes us more capable of navigating the changing conditions in our lives peacefully and successfully. We begin to know ourselves as parts of the whole of nature.

Many people spend years seeking a path toward wholeness. Becoming present with the winds blowing through our lives is a path that can help us heal body and mind, restore balance when it is lost, and guide our creativity.

Here is a way to experience the winds right now. Simply inhale, catching (but not forcing) air into your lungs, letting your abdomen inflate. Hold this life force inside you for a few moments. Then raise a hand and place it near your open mouth. As you gradually exhale, feel the steady wind created by your breath. This wind breath connects you to the moving air in the atmosphere that circumnavigates the globe every few days. During the course of its existence, the energy and molecules of your wind breath will subtly touch every other living being on the planet—plants, animals, people, and even rocks.

Full-scale awakening can take many years. In general, waking up occurs in three stages: first there is self-awareness awakening, which is followed by spiritual awakening, and then radical awakening.

#### SELF-AWARENESS AWAKENING: LIFE FLOWS LIKE THE WIND

In childhood, I developed obsessive tendencies while waiting hours for my estranged father to arrive for a visit. To soothe myself, I would repeat nonsensical phrases and count the cars that drove by. At age 30, these types of compulsive coping skills were sabotaging my career as a chef. Every morning I would pace back and forth in front of the small restaurant I owned, waiting for my most loyal employee to arrive, and then proceed to remind him of his shortcomings. My controlling behavior gradually pushed him and all my other staff toward the exit door. For five years, my restaurant's reputation had flourished even as I slowly died inside. Running it demanded a level of business acumen I did not yet

possess. There were bills to pay, meals to prepare, staff to manage, and customers to wow. What the patrons could not see beneath the perfectly presented plates of food I served them was brewing anger, selfishness, and a growing despondency.

My father then died abruptly, ending our difficult relationship. The winds of spirit motivated me to take action. I visited several doctors, wellness practitioners, and psychics, and attended 12-step meetings to deal with my issues with substance abuse. During the first raw days of sobriety, it was as if a tornado ravaged my inner landscape. The winds were so intense that eventually I decided to spend two weeks recuperating in a mental hospital.

During one of our regular walks, the hospital psychiatrist suggested that finding answers to my problems required reconciliation with my past. It was good advice, but I was not ready for it. His words left me feeling stranded. I could not move forward because I was unable to forgive others or myself for events of long ago.

Eight years later, while driving along a country road, the wind inside me shifted. I was driving with a friend in her gray 1969 Datsun convertible under a wind-tempered sun, along the back roads of Route 20. It was the perfect central New York day for a top-down excursion. Black-spotted dairy cows ambled across the fields. I lifted my head toward the heavens and felt the warmth on my skin. Suddenly, a glimmering wind exploded in the center of my being and illuminated my consciousness. In that moment, I saw billowing clouds moving apart and revealing the cerulean blue of a clear sky. For the first time in my life, I knew that I did not want to engage in self-destructive addictive behaviors anymore. It was as if a fog that had been blinding my vision of who I “could be” was instantly lifted. This moment of clarity was so intense that it served as the catalyst for

a 25-year adventure to heighten my consciousness further.

For most of us, the urge to “wake up” is evoked by an experience that profoundly disturbs us or interferes with the progress of our lives. Longing for deeper connection creates an opportunity for us to change and do things differently or move in a new direction. Because we must be willing to change, experiencing the self as seeker, is typically the first stage of awakening. It can provide the necessary wind power to invoke forward motion.

Self-awareness that does not lead us to take action will ultimately be fruitless. Engaging in spiritual practices is essential if we are going to become true masters of the winds in our lives. Even so, mastering our powerful inner winds is an incremental process. Just as one must train to scale one of the Seven Summits by hiking smaller mountains first, we must practice wind work during breezes and while in the doldrums so as to learn to keep our sailboats upright when navigating squalls and hurricanes. Self-awareness must become a habit. With each passing windstorm, you will become more capable of flowing with the prevailing energy inside and around you. The quest to find peace is akin to the wind, growing in intensity and speed, as it gathers force with practice. (Begin your journey for 2018 with the Winter Solstice I AM Symposium [<http://www.iamsymposium.com/ref/26/1>])

## MOVING FROM SELF-AWARENESS TOWARD YOUR RADICAL AWAKENING: BEGIN YOUR WIND WALKER’S JOURNEY

Learn how to navigate the winds to take you from Self Awareness to a Spiritual Awakening, and then to your Radical Awakening that lies beyond the distant

shores. If you pre-order your copy now (see link below) which you will receive in February 2018, we will send you the first chapter now for you to begin your Wind Walker's journey.

<http://thepracticalshaman.com/winds-of-spirit-book/ref/26/>

## **About the Author**

**Renee Baribeau** is a wind whistler, Hay House author of *Winds of Spirit: Ancient Wisdom Tools for Navigating Relationships, Health, and the Divine*, an inspirational speaker, entrepreneur, and workshop leader, known and respected for her down-to-earth approach. During her life, the wind gods have steered Renee's course in many directions. A former chef, in 1987 she opened the first farm-to-table restaurant in Central New York, Brown Bagger's, in Syracuse. In 2005, Renee established the Desert Holistic Network in Palm Desert, California, an online regional resource directory. Renee served as the Resident Shaman at We Care Spa in Desert Hot Springs, CA. Since 2013, Renee has worked for Foundations Recovery Network, a national system of residential treatment facilities.

As a writer, Renee is a featured contributing blogger for *Elephant Journal*. Renee has also contributed chapters to the anthologies *Pearls of Wisdom: 30 Inspirational Ideas to Live Your Best Life Now* (Hierophant Publishing, 2012) and *The Five Principles of Everything* (Five Birds Publishing, 2012). She makes her home in Palm Desert, CA, and Whidbey Island, WA.



# RENEE BARIBEAU

THE PRACTICAL SHAMAN

THANK YOU  
We hope you enjoyed the first chapter

## About your host

Renee Baribeau, is The Practical Shaman, a Wind Whistler, and Hay House Author. Renee is the “go-to” Soul Coach for innovative change-makers and dynamic spiritual keynote speaker. She injects humor and practical wisdom into her dynamic, inspirational Wind Work® workshops.

Renee helps individuals at a point of transformation in their lives. She helps them find their enlightened way of life and guides them towards their true purpose through the wind’s knowledge.



The Wind Work™ system relies on an ancient sacred technique used by farmers, shamans and sailors. It will show you how to navigate your personal path, providing insight into how to manage the wind patterns and shifting conditions affecting you.

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