

Article 217: Asava Massage -part 2

While focusing on evil spirits and forces as the cause of disease and sickness, it seldom occurred to ancient people that illnesses could heal without some interventions to drive out the evil forces and cleanse the patient's body for benevolent spirits, so the healer who possessed the power to enliven these spirits and make changes was held in awe ...and given full credit while the patient was ill, but if the illness was relieved, the recovered patient frequently gave himself credit for having provided a receptive body for good spirits ...who rewarded him with good health ...or escape from the grip of evil spirits.

Of course, when patients died ...they were frequently blamed for not providing and maintaining a proper place for good spirits to reside in. When patients or other malevolent forces could not be blamed for the death, witchdoctors could be punished with death for violating tribal prohibitions ...or for not properly sacrificing or performing rituals to gain the favor of good spirits ...as his position required of him. At other times, the medicine man's failures were blamed on the patient's enemies sending more evil spirits to again curse the barely recovering individual, ...which then required that the enemy be discovered and stopped, ...however, before this could be accomplished, the patient frequently died. All illness and unsuccessful cures were blamed on outside, uncontrollable or uncontrolled forces and dreams, ...which created an explanation and reason for everything in life, ...and everything in this view of life seemed reasonable, that man is the victim of evil actions ...and depends upon good spirits and forces for protection and recovery.

In all of this, the medicine man was directing good spirits or forces against evil ones, which meant that he controlled both good and evil spirits, ...therefore, he was frequently expected to direct evil forces against tribal enemies in the same way that malevolent individuals sent evil spirits to curse patients. Through this, you can understand that the medicine man, though normally ineffective, had great power and status in the tribe. Aren't you treating doctors•healers•therapists today with similar misplaced awe and status ...and not considering your own actions in creating•curing diseases, illnesses, and afflictions in your own body and life? Have you listened closely and carefully to your own words about good and bad matters? ...or to your doctor's, healer's, or therapist's words about the pains and problems in your body? ...and the effectiveness of their cures and treatments? The medicine man had as much effect upon distant enemies as he did upon evil demons in a patient's body and life, but his

actions certainly affected those who watched him and believed; they believed in and trusted the medicine man's good spirits and feared the power of his evil spirit forces. Ohh, the medicine man was not evil, they feared the powers he seemed to possess. They were deceived by their own perceptions ...but these self-deceptions gave them an increased sense of strength and courage which appeared to protect and heal true believers. It seems that believing and understanding were the true healers ...and fear and doubt were the causes of diseases and illnesses.

As an example of an ancient healer, consider this story of Achena, a healer of the Oneida Indian tribe who traveled the Hudson River in the early 1600's healing members of other Oneida villages, ...as well as, Mohawks, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca villages along the river. This group of five tribes was also known as the Iroquois Confederacy, ...which was founded a hundred years earlier by the prophet Deganawidah and his disciples in an attempt to reduce the constant intertribal rivalry and warfare ...and even cannibalism. This confederacy thrived, such that their cultural, medical, and material life was the most advanced of the eastern tribes at that time. And though women raised corn and squash and beans, while the men hunted deer and small game, women held a high status in the society.

Achena, a direct descendant of Deganawidah, born to be a medicine woman, was raised in a small palisaded Oneida village along the river; but when she received her call from spirit, her name was changed to "she who knows". And though she studied and worked beside other healers, Deganawidah was said to be her real teacher, ...the one who gave her a true insight into and understanding of the invisible spirits that completely penetrated the visible world ...and he was the one who instructed her in handling and directing the invisible forces affecting the lives of her patients. She was trained to enter the spirit world and shield people from evil spirits by rendering their destructive powers harmless.

Achena, being very successful at controlling fiendish demons, enjoyed great power and prestige in the Oneida tribe; but in answering her greater calling as a seer and a prophet, she also chose to visit other villages ...and other tribes. She felt that her power and purpose in life was too great to be limited to a few people. She was determined to carry "the good sacredness" from one village to another, and from one tribe to another, ...and she often spoke of the "great spirits" at the village long houses.

Achena bound two canoes together, so, sitting in one canoe and carrying her belongings in the other, she became an obvious and familiar

sight paddling the currents and eddies of the Hudson River. And though few people knew exactly what she was doing ...and seldom understood her abilities, she was constantly hailed from the shore to help someone in need, ...for she was fully trained in herbs and healing ...as well as spirit guidance and prophecy.

When called to help someone, she first entered into "the greatness" to discover the patient's weaknesses and the spirit forces at work, so she could properly see into the future and foretell events ...and prescribe something to hold back or block the evil spirits and create a cure. Today, we call it "preventive medicine",...but, greater than that, Achena could see the problems and difficulties which were arising in their lives, not just those appearing upon their bodies, ...and she spoke of those things.

Achena's prophecies also created problems, ...for if the difficulties came true, that proved that her cures and "spirit shield" had not worked properly, and if the events did not occur, no one ever knew whether she was right or wrong in the first place. Sooo, there was a great risk and many difficulties in attempting to help people in these ways, but feeling it was important that they foresee, acknowledge, understand, and prevent or overcome problems in their lives, she was willing to risk these difficulties in her own life, ...simply because she had the strength and ability and dedication to help the sick of mind and heart and body.

And when people questioned Achena's prophecies, she responded, "If I and the spirits can do the great things you've heard about, which have helped so many people, would you spit upon all that I've said about your future?"

She had a very logical and rational way of expressing herself to those who earnestly listened, ...but to those who turned deaf ears to her words and her spirit voices, she threatened them or imposed tasks and obligations upon them, ...or, at other times, she even cursed and bedeviled them for their unholy beliefs and attitudes.

It was not that she was black-hearted or uncaring, it was just that she saw their fears and knew what they needed most, ...and her actions were designed to break through the destructive spirits who were causing problems and illnesses. By being stronger than their spirits, she hoped the sufferers would accept and follow her advice. Sometimes they did, ...sometimes they did not. But it was important for Achena to present herself and her guiding spirits, so each individual might see and understand her advice, draw strength from that, put the new awarenesses

into their own lives, change their ways, heal their ills and bad beliefs, and accomplish something worthwhile.

And after consulting her own spirits, and the spirits of those she was healing, Achena frequently gave her patients a "special charge", ...it was something they had to do or create ...or establish, or pay back, or offer to another. And out of that then, she declared they would be healed ...or overcome the approaching illness or misfortune.

Most individuals, fearing her great spirits, and doing exactly as she divined for them, found new guidance and direction, solved problems, and changed their lives, ...and proclaimed Achena to be a great prophet and healer ...which she was. But she also realized that in giving them something to do in a different way, when relating to someone of the family or village, or when working or hunting with another, they did much the same as they'd always done, but they did it in an exceptional way ...with new attitudes and feelings, ...they followed and answered to greater spirits.

Achena wasn't guiding them to a new life, and she wasn't just predicting a problem or an illness and then overcoming that, she was creating a greater, more spirited individual. And though they may not have understood fully what she was doing, they soon discovered that by following her instructions and charges to the fullest, they felt better about their lives ...and what they were doing.

Her patients often declared loudly at the evening campfire, or quietly to each other, "That wasn't so bad. I feel pretty good, ...look at my body! And if I do some more of that, ...then I won't get sick, ...and that'll be even better, ...and I'll have the strength I need. Good spirits are certainly on my side now, because I know how to do these things!"

And so, they spoke greatly about their own feelings ...or even bragged, ...but, of course, they didn't brag about Achena, they boasted about what they'd done and the spirits they had on their side, which made them feel fine and strong and important ...and able to care for themselves, ...but that was all right. She was willing to accept their crowing and blustering as long as they did what she asked ...and stayed well, ...for out of this, she was creating a whole new individual, and that was important to Achena, for she didn't want to heal the masses ...or cure their problems, she was willing~and she was directed by Deganawidah~to spend her life awakening the sleeping "creative spirit" or force in each individual, which starts life and creates a new empowerment, a greater life, and a wondrously different individual. It was more than healing that she was looking for and bringing forth from each person, ...she understood their

bodies and lives, which she held in her fingertips, ...but even greater than that, she also saw and knew the nature, spirit, and essence-body of each individual, ...Achena touched that with her eyes ...and her mind.

Seeing and handling the essence of individuals was the purpose and goal given to her by Deganawidah and his spirit disciples, ...but more than that, she was charged to be aware of and know exactly what she was doing. It was not enough for her to just feel or sense or image these things, she was to put the creative force to work in people's lives and let that spread by awakening them to that ...and teaching them about the spirit and power within all things.

Achena was to enliven all individuals to their own spirit and nature, show them to their essence body, bring about a conscious awareness and use of their great inner-abilities, help them know the meanings and beginnings and understandings of all things, reveal their strengths and beliefs, and show them to the fulfillment and enrichment inside of each one, so they could live wholly and completely in harmony with themselves and all of life.

It was a great responsibility placed upon Achena ...which she happily fulfilled, for Deganawidah had predicted that everyone would meet someone like Achena in their own life and have the opportunity to accept or reject the great spiritual charge placed upon them, ...and she was fulfilling that prophecy.

Have you met an Achena in your life today? Have you accepted and fulfilled your own charge? Are you awakened to the nature and great spirit within you? Are you consciously enlivened in your life, ...or are you still asleep? Do you know of your life in consciousness? Have you awakened to and touched your own essence and the true nature of all things? Do you feel and understand the vibrating harmony within you?