



THE INTERACTIVE WORKBOOK

Spirit Animal *Discovery* Guide

Find the animal walking beside you —
and learn what it came to teach.

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ONE SHAMANISM · SHAMANISM.ONE

A quiet word, *first*

This is not a quiz you can fail. It is an invitation to pay attention to something that has probably been trying to reach you for a while.

Most people arrive here because an animal has been on their mind. A hawk on the same fence post three mornings running. A wolf in a dream so vivid it followed you into breakfast. A word you keep hearing — *bear, butterfly* — until it stops feeling like coincidence. In shamanic practice, that is not noise. That is a knock at the door.

What follows has three parts. The first explains what spirit animals are, how they speak, and what they are not. The second is a test — a real one, with a scoring key — that points you toward one of five animal teachers. The third gives you the work: journaling prompts and guided pages where the discovery becomes something you actually live.

Take it slowly. Answer the test with your body, not your preferences. The animal you *want* and the animal that *comes* are often two different beings, and the second one is the one with something to say.

How to use this workbook

Every ruled line and box in this guide can be typed into directly on screen — your writing saves itself in your browser. Or print it, and write by hand. Hand is older. Hand is often better.

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“The shaman sees with the heart.”

PART ONE

What Are *Spirit Animals*?

Educational ground. What they are, how they arrive, and the misunderstandings worth setting down before you begin.

An old *relationship*

A spirit animal is a helping presence that takes animal form so you can recognise it.

Long before anyone wrote the word "psychology," people everywhere understood something simple: we are not alone in here. Guidance arrives, and it tends to arrive wearing a shape we already trust. A wolf. A heron. A bear at the edge of a clearing. Cultures across every inhabited continent built practices around this — not because they agreed with each other, but because they each noticed the same thing.

What is actually happening is less important than what it does. Whether you understand your animal as a spirit being with its own life, or as a living image the deep mind uses to speak in pictures, the relationship works the same way: something in you that could not be said in words gets said in a body, a movement, a pair of eyes. And you understand it.

A spirit animal is not a costume or a personality label. It is a *relationship*. It has its own timing. It asks something of you. And like every real relationship, it changes both parties over time.

It arrives for a reason

Animals come when a particular quality is needed — or when a quality you already carry needs naming and permission.

It speaks in your language

Your animal draws on the images, memories and landscapes already inside you. That is why the message lands so precisely.

It expects reciprocity

Guidance is not a vending machine. You are asked to listen, to remember, and to live differently because of what you heard.

Three words, three *relationships*

These three terms are used interchangeably online, which causes real confusion. They describe genuinely different relationships. Knowing which one you are in changes how you work with it.

TERM	WHAT IT IS	HOW LONG IT STAYS
Spirit Animal	A guide that arrives for a specific season of your life — a passage, a grief, a beginning. It carries the medicine that season requires.	Weeks to years. It leaves when the work is done.
Power Animal	A core companion representing an intrinsic strength you were born with. In many practices it is met once, formally, and kept in relationship for life.	Lifelong, or across long chapters.
Totem	An ancestral, clan, family or tribal emblem — belonging to a <i>people</i> , not an individual. It is inherited and carries social meaning, not personal guidance.	Generational. It is not chosen or discovered.

Which one is this guide about?

Primarily the first, with a doorway to the second. The test that follows points to the animal *walking with you now*. If the same animal keeps returning across years and life changes, you are likely meeting a power animal — and that relationship deserves deeper, guided work with a practitioner.

A note on "totem"

Totem is a specific anthropological and cultural term. Calling a personal guide "my totem" borrows a word that means something else to the communities it came from. Spirit animal or power animal is both more accurate and more respectful.

A word on *respect*

The practice belongs to everyone. The traditions belong to the peoples who carry them.

Shamanic practice is not one religion. Something like it has been found in Siberia, the Amazon, Scandinavia, Mongolia, Korea, the Andes and across the Americas — related in shape, entirely distinct in substance. Working with animal helpers is part of that broad human inheritance, and you do not need permission to sit down, breathe, and listen for one.

What you do need is honesty about what is yours and what is not.

Don't borrow closed ceremony

Specific Indigenous rituals, songs, regalia, medicine names and initiations belong to living communities with their own rules of transmission. Not being invited is not the same as being excluded.

Don't claim a title

"Shaman" is a word from the Evenki people of Siberia, and in most traditions it is a role conferred by a community, not chosen by a student. The title belongs to the tradition; the practice belongs to everyone.

Don't flatten cultures into aesthetics

"Native American spirit animal quiz" collapses hundreds of distinct nations into a decoration. Real respect means specificity — or, when you don't have specificity, silence.

Do work from your own ground

Your ancestors also had animals, songs and land. Ask what your own lineage carried. Practise honestly, credit generously, and let the work make you humbler rather than more exotic.

Taught with respect, not mystery-making.

How spirit animals *speak*

Almost nobody hears a voice. Contact is quieter than that, and it usually happens through one of six doors. Most people have had several already and filed them under coincidence.



Dreams

The oldest door. A dream animal that feels *watched by* rather than merely watched — and that you still remember days later.



Synchronicity

The same creature three times in a week across unrelated contexts — a book, a stranger's tattoo, a roadside. Repetition is the grammar.



Physical encounters

An animal that behaves unusually: holds your gaze, comes close, arrives at a threshold moment. Note what you were thinking about.



Journey & meditation

Under drumming or in stillness, an animal appears and stays. The traditional test: it shows itself clearly, from several angles, more than once.



Recurring symbols

Not the animal itself but its signature — feathers, tracks, a shell, a shed skin — turning up where you didn't put it.



Body knowing

The lift in your chest at a name. Tears at a photograph you can't explain. The body recognises before the mind agrees.

The test for all six

Ask two questions. **Does it repeat?** One heron is a heron; three herons is a conversation. **Does it ask something of me?** Real contact tends to arrive with a request attached — rest, speak, leave, begin.

Common *misconceptions*

None of these are silly. Most of them are things I believed once too.

✧ “I get to pick mine.”

You don't pick your spirit animal — it finds you. You can prepare, ask, and listen. You cannot cast the role. The animal that arrives is frequently not the one you'd have chosen, and that gap is usually the whole message.

✧ “Some animals are better than others.”

There are no weak or inferior spirit animals. Mouse medicine — attention to small detail, close-range care — is not lesser than eagle. People are disappointed by mouse and moth roughly as often as they are thrilled by wolf, and the disappointment is the ego talking.

✧ “You only get one, for life.”

Many people have a lifelong companion *and* seasonal guides that come and go. An animal leaving is not abandonment. It usually means the lesson landed.

✧ “My animal is just my personality.”

Sometimes it mirrors you. Often it arrives carrying exactly what you lack — bear visiting the person who cannot rest, butterfly visiting the one gripping too hard.

✧ “It's all shadow-free and lovely.”

Every animal has a shadow side, and yours will show you both. A guide that only ever comforts you is probably your own wishful thinking wearing fur.

✧ “I need substances to meet one.”

No substances required — the drum alone can carry you. Breath, rhythm and attention have done this work for tens of thousands of years.

If none of this feels certain yet

Doubt is not a disqualification. Most people begin exactly here — half-convinced, slightly embarrassed, and paying attention anyway. That is enough to start.

Answer with your *body*

The test that follows works only if you stop curating.

Read once, choose fast

Your first pull is the honest one. The second thought is your self-image editing the answer.

Answer as you are, not as you'd like to be

This is a mirror, not a wish list. Aspirational answers give you an aspirational animal with nothing to teach.

Sit somewhere quiet

Ten minutes, no phone. If you want, light a candle first. Ceremony isn't decoration; it tells your attention that something is beginning.

Ties are meaningful

If two animals finish level, two are walking with you. Read both profiles. The tension between them is often the actual work.

Take a breath. Let your shoulders drop.
Then begin.

PART TWO

The Spirit *Animal Test*

Eight questions, one scoring key, five animal teachers — each with its gifts, its shadow, and its lesson.

Choose the answer your *body* chooses

1. Where does your body relax the moment you picture it?

- ☐ A A forest clearing at dusk, with others somewhere nearby.
- ☐ B Open ocean, warm water, movement in every direction.
- ☐ C A high ridge above the treeline, everything visible.
- ☐ D A cave mouth on a mountainside, a fire, no one expected.
- ☐ E A sunlit meadow, tall grass moving, nothing fixed.

2. Which word does this year actually ask of you?

- ☐ A Loyalty.
- ☐ B Joy.
- ☐ C Clarity.
- ☐ D Courage.
- ☐ E Transformation.

3. Which hour feels most like you?

- ☐ A Night — when the world quiets and the senses sharpen.
- ☐ B Midday — full light, full energy, everything in play.
- ☐ C The first grey line of dawn, before anyone else is awake.
- ☐ D Dusk — the day closing, the body asking for rest.
- ☐ E The hour after sunrise, when the air first warms.

4. When life asks something hard of you, your instinct is to...

- ☐ A Gather my people close and face it together.
- ☐ B Stay light, stay moving, find the flow through it.
- ☐ C Get above it until I can see the whole shape of it.
- ☐ D Withdraw, rest, and tend the wound before anything else.
- ☐ E Let the old form go and see what wants to emerge.

Four more overleaf. Don't go back and change these.

Keep going — don't look *back*

5. What do people quietly come to you for?

- ☐ A Steadfastness. I show up and I stay.
- ☐ B Lightness. The room breathes easier when I'm in it.
- ☐ C Perspective. I say the true thing they can't yet see.
- ☐ D Safety. People rest near me, and heal.
- ☐ E Permission. Around me, people let themselves change.

6. Your shadow, honestly — which one costs you most?

- ☐ A I lose myself in belonging, and fear being cast out.
- ☐ B I stay playful to avoid going anywhere painful.
- ☐ C I watch from a height and forget to come down.
- ☐ D I isolate, and call my defences boundaries.
- ☐ E I keep becoming, and never quite land.

7. Which season are you standing in right now?

- ☐ A Finding my people, and my place among them.
- ☐ B Play returning, after a long hard stretch.
- ☐ C A decision that needs long sight and a clear head.
- ☐ D Healing, retreat, and learning to say no.
- ☐ E An ending that is quietly becoming a beginning.

8. Which sentence lands somewhere in your chest?

- ☐ A "I keep my promises."
- ☐ B "There is still joy here."
- ☐ C "I can see it clearly now."
- ☐ D "I can protect what is mine."
- ☐ E "I am not who I was."

Now turn the page and count.

SCORING

Your tally

Count your answers by letter. If you are working on screen, the bars below have already filled themselves in. On paper, mark a stroke per answer and total each row.

Wolf		0
Dolphin		0
Eagle		0
Bear		0
Butterfly		0

YOUR ANIMAL

Answer the eight questions to reveal your result.

The key

MOSTLY	YOUR ANIMAL	ITS SEASON	PAGE
A's	Wolf	Loyalty, instinct, belonging	15
B's	Dolphin	Joy, breath, adaptability	16
C's	Eagle	Vision, clarity, height	17
D's	Bear	Courage, solitude, healing	18
E's	Butterfly	Change, lightness, becoming	19

A tie? Read both profiles. Two animals arriving together usually means one carries your gift and the other your growing edge — and the whole lesson lives in the distance between them.



The teacher of loyalty, instinct, and the courage to belong without disappearing.

HABITAT

Forest, deep woodland,
the edge of the treeline

ELEMENT

Earth, with the pull of
the moon

HOURL

Night

Core qualities & strengths

Fierce loyalty. Instinct you can act on before you can explain it. Wolf reads the room the way it reads weather — through the body. It holds family and chosen family as sacred, keeps promises past convenience, and knows how to be both fully itself and fully part of something larger. Wolf is also the great teacher: in many traditions it is the pathfinder, the one that brings back the way through.

The shadow side

Wolf's shadow is over-dependence on the pack — belonging bought at the price of yourself. It shows up as the fear of being cast out: agreeing when you don't agree, staying loyal to people who left long ago, mistaking a cage for a den. Its other face is the opposite extreme, the lone wolf who calls exile independence. Ask yourself honestly: *where am I abandoning myself to stay included?*

Core lesson

Trust what you already know. Wolf arrives when you have been overriding your instincts to keep the peace, or when you are learning what real belonging costs and what it must never cost. It teaches that loyalty begins with yourself — and that the pack you can be honest inside is the only one worth running with.

A PRACTICE FOR WOLF

For one week, notice the first instinct before the reasoning arrives. Write it down. Act on one of them.

MOSTLY B'S



Dolphin

The teacher of joy, breath, and moving with the water instead of against it.

HABITAT

Open ocean, warm and moving water

ELEMENT

Water, and the air it must surface for

HOOR

Midday

Core qualities & strengths

Joy as a discipline, not a mood. Dolphin adapts without losing itself: it plays in rough water, finds the current, and turns effort into flow. It is deeply social and deeply communicative — the animal of laughter, of sound, of connection made easy. And it breathes consciously, every breath a decision. Dolphin people are often the ones who keep a hard room human.

The shadow side

Dolphin's shadow is lightness used as an exit. Play becomes deflection; charm becomes a way of never being known. It can skim the surface for years, always moving, never staying long enough for anything to reach it — and it can exhaust itself holding everyone else's mood up. Ask yourself honestly: *what am I keeping things light in order to avoid?*

Core lesson

Come up for air, then go deeper. Dolphin arrives when life has become grim work, or when a hard season is finally loosening and you have forgotten how to play. It teaches that joy is not frivolous — it is a form of intelligence — and that you are allowed to stop swimming against the current you were never meant to fight.

A PRACTICE FOR DOLPHIN

Three conscious breaths before each hard conversation this week. And once, deliberately, do something for no reason but delight.

The teacher of vision, clarity, and the courage to look at what is actually there.

HABITAT

Sky, high mountains,
ridges above the treeline

ELEMENT

Air

HOURL

Dawn

Core qualities & strengths

Sight — both kinds. Eagle sees the whole landscape and the single detail within it, and it can hold both at once. It brings perspective to people drowning in their own middle distance, and it tells the truth even when the truth is unwelcome. Eagle is patient in the way only a hunter is: it waits, reads the wind, and moves once, decisively. Where Eagle appears, self-deception gets difficult.

The shadow side

Eagle's shadow is altitude. Perspective curdles into distance; clarity into coldness. It can watch its own life from above rather than live it, judge from a height it never has to descend from, and mistake detachment for wisdom. It can also be brutal with a truth that needed gentler handling. Ask yourself honestly: *what would it cost me to come down and be in this?*

Core lesson

See clearly, then land. Eagle arrives at decisions, crossroads, and moments when you have been avoiding a fact you already know. It teaches that vision is only half the gift — the other half is bringing what you saw back down into a life, a body, a conversation with someone who needs it.

A PRACTICE FOR EAGLE

Name the one thing you can see and have not said. Then choose the kindest true way to say it — and say it this week.

MOSTLY D'S



Bear

The teacher of courage, solitude, and healing that only happens in the dark.

HABITAT

Mountain and deep forest;
the cave

ELEMENT

Earth

HOURL

Dusk

Core qualities & strengths

Strength that has nothing to prove. Bear is the great protector — of children, of the vulnerable, of its own quiet — and it is unhurried in a world that rewards hurry. It is the medicine animal in many traditions: the one who knows roots, who withdraws into the dark and returns whole. Bear grants permission to rest, to say no, and to defend a boundary without apologising for having one.

The shadow side

Bear's shadow is isolation and over-defensiveness. The den becomes a bunker; solitude that was healing turns into hiding, and the boundary keeps out the very people who could help. Bear's strength can also turn heavy — slow to move, quick to growl, protecting a wound long after the wound has closed. Ask yourself honestly: *is this retreat restoring me, or hiding me?*

Core lesson

Go inward, and come back out. Bear arrives in seasons of depletion, grief and healing — when you have been strong for everyone and rested for no one. It teaches that withdrawal is a legitimate act of courage, that the dark is where things mend, and that hibernation has an ending built into it.

A PRACTICE FOR BEAR

Take one deliberate hour of doing nothing this week. Then name one boundary out loud to the person who needs to hear it.

MOSTLY E'S Butterfly

The teacher of transformation, lightness, and trusting the part you cannot see.

HABITAT

Meadow, garden, open
sunlit ground

ELEMENT

Air

HOURL

Dawn into early morning

Core qualities & strengths

Change carried lightly. Butterfly has already died once and come back different, which is why nothing frightens it about endings. It brings beauty without weight, movement without force, and an instinct for what is ready to be released. Butterfly people are often the ones who make change look survivable to everyone else — living proof that the caterpillar was not the final draft.

The shadow side

Butterfly's shadow is restlessness dressed as growth. Perpetual becoming, nothing finished; a new beginning every spring and no roots by autumn. It can flee the difficult middle of things — the cocoon part, the unglamorous part — and mistake escape for transformation. Ask yourself honestly: *am I transforming, or am I leaving?*

Core lesson

The dissolving is part of the making. Butterfly arrives at thresholds — an ending, a leaving, an identity that no longer fits. It teaches that you cannot skip the cocoon, that what feels like falling apart is often assembly, and that you are allowed to become someone the people around you have not met yet.

A PRACTICE FOR BUTTERFLY

Name one thing you are ready to lay down. Write it, and this week do one concrete thing that makes the ending real.

PART THREE

Journaling & *Integration*

Three phases: first contact, shadow work, and the daily practice that turns a discovery into a way of living.

PHASE 1

First contact & discovery

PHASE 2

Integration & shadow work

PHASE 3

Actionable daily wisdom

First contact & *discovery*

Work through these slowly — one or two per sitting, not all at once. Write longer than feels necessary. The useful sentence is usually the fourth one.

1. Which animal felt immediately familiar to you — before you read anything about it — and why?

2. What recurring animals have shown up in your dreams, your childhood, or the objects you keep?

3. Describe your earliest clear memory of an animal. What was happening in your life at the time?

4. Which animal in the five profiles did you resist — and what exactly did you dislike about it?

5. If your animal has been trying to reach you for a while, what have you been calling those moments instead?

6. Where were you standing, emotionally, when you picked up this guide?

7. Ask directly, on the page: *Why have you come to me now?* Then write the first answer that arrives, without editing it.

Answer these on page 24, or in a notebook you keep for this work alone.

Integration & *shadow work*

These are harder. Do them when you have time afterwards to be gentle with yourself — not last thing at night, not between meetings.

1. What traits of your animal do you feel you lack — or actively push away?
2. Read your animal's shadow side again. Where in your life is that shadow currently running things?
3. In which area of your life do you most need this animal's medicine right now — and what has stopped you from taking it?
4. Who in your life carries this animal's strength easily? What does your reaction to them tell you?
5. What would you have to stop doing for this animal's gift to have room in your life?
6. If your animal named the one thing you are avoiding, what would it name?
7. Write the sentence you least want to write about yourself this year. Then write what your animal would say back to it.

Answer these on page 25. If a prompt brings up more than journaling can hold, that is information — consider working with a practitioner or therapist alongside this.

Actionable daily *wisdom*

Insight that never becomes behaviour turns into decoration. This phase is about the week you are actually in.

1. How could you express this animal's strength in your work this week — concretely, on a specific day?

2. What would change in your closest relationship if you brought this animal's quality into it?

3. What creative work is your animal asking for — and what is the smallest first move?

4. Design one small daily ritual — thirty seconds is enough — that reminds you your animal is with you.

5. What is the one boundary, request, or sentence your animal would have you say out loud this week?

6. How will you know, in three months, that this animal's medicine actually landed? Name the evidence.

7. Write a short vow — one sentence — to the animal walking with you. Keep it small enough to keep.

Answer these on page 26, then return to the same page each week and mark what you actually did.

First contact

THE ANIMAL THAT CAME TO ME

WHICH ANIMAL FELT IMMEDIATELY FAMILIAR – AND WHY?

ANIMALS THAT HAVE RECURRED IN MY DREAMS, MY CHILDHOOD, MY LIFE

I ASKED: WHY HAVE YOU COME TO ME NOW? – THIS IS WHAT ARRIVED

ONE IMAGE I WANT TO REMEMBER

Shadow & integration

THE TRAITS OF MY ANIMAL I LACK, OR PUSH AWAY

WHERE THIS ANIMAL'S SHADOW IS CURRENTLY RUNNING MY LIFE

WHERE I MOST NEED THIS ANIMAL'S MEDICINE RIGHT NOW

WHAT I MUST STOP	WHAT MY ANIMAL SAYS BACK
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My spirit animal's message to me today

TODAY'S MESSAGE

MY INTENTION THIS WEEK

MY DAILY RITUAL

HOW I WILL CARRY THIS ANIMAL INTO MY WORK, MY RELATIONSHIPS, MY CREATIVE LIFE

MY VOW – SMALL ENOUGH TO KEEP

Keep the *thread*

You now have a name, a shadow, and a lesson. What you do with them over the next season is the actual practice.

Come back to page 26 weekly — the message changes as you do. Reread your animal's profile in three months and notice which lines land differently. And when the relationship goes quiet, don't panic. Guides withdraw when their work is done, and something else eventually knocks.

Go deeper

Shamanic journeying with a drum is the traditional way to meet a power animal directly — no substances required.

Learn with others

One Shamanism runs trainings and guided journeys for beginners and practitioners. shamanism.one

“The shaman sees with the heart.”



Carolin Mallmann

ONE SPIRIT · ONE JOURNEY · ONE COMMUNITY