

The Awakening Compass

A Useful Tool for Mapping Your Innerverser®



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In a world rife with stress, we must make our emotional stability and intentions to be a source of solace for the people we serve a priority when our tranquility is tested by the issues they present to us.

Renee Baribeau

As helping professionals—whether as a shaman or healer, a therapist or coach, or a consultant—establishing our bearings before aiding our clients is crucial. Without keen self-awareness, we risk compounding their burdens by attempting to impose our feelings or a personal agenda on their situation. It is common to feel triggered if the story we are hearing reminds us of something that happened to us. Or if we temper our advice according to our fears for our personal safety. In a world rife with stress, we must make our emotional stability and intentions to be a source of solace for the people we serve a priority when our tranquility is tested by the issues they present to us. We are not immune to stress. The world's troubles are ours, just the same as they are for everyone. And we are just as vulnerably human and confused at times, as everyone else.

The turbulence of the changes happening in our time can be anxiety inducing because so much about the future is unknown. But years ago, the global turmoil we are currently facing was predicted by the Q'ero elders with whom I studied in Peru. They saw our era as an age of disconnection—from ourselves, from each other, from nature. Conversely, millennia ago, Vedic

mystics heralded an eventual age of enlightenment, and astrologers announced the dawning of an epoch of peace and harmony guided by the constellation of Aquarius. Yes, these two visions seem opposite, but perhaps they are not. While we all long to experience unity, the path to get there may shake the bedrock of our society and even jeopardize our sanity as individuals (temporarily).

If you ever feel like you are getting stuck in fear, worry, and despondency, a spiritual intervention could be necessary before you can reach out to comfort your clients. A tool I use for guidance when I feel stuck and to raise my self-awareness may work for you too.

THE AWAKENING COMPASS

Within your body there is a navigational technology that can help you transcend fear. This awakening compass is a means to gauge your mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual coordinates, while you are exercising your free will. Much like a gyrocompass aligns with Earth's rotational axis to help us find north, we can align our actions with the axis of our inner north: our ambitions, values, goals, and principles. Knowing these gives us our bearing to a place of



equilibrium where passion for life is evident, needs are met, results are tangible, and fulfillment comes in part from contributing to humanity. (The last factor is especially meaningful to healers and helpers.)

As awakened healers and helpers, we must learn to process sensory information so we may align our actions with our objectives. Part of this involves developing relaxed, yet constant situational awareness when we are working with our clients, and aligning professional abilities with where we are in our personal journey. We gather experiential data to determine our direction.

Free will is like recalibrating the three gimbals of a gyrocompass. A gimbal is a rotational support structure that helps the gyrocompass spin in three dimensions. We are free to make decisions that diverge from societal norms or peer pressure on the axes of the mind, the body, and the spirit. These interconnected aspects of who we are help us maintain our balance and orientation when life challenges us.

Independent of external forces, as healers and helpers we must strive to make decisions rooted in the internal compass of our morality and ethics, living authentically so we may continue to be in service to individual clients and the greater good. Our freely spinning navigation system allows us to chart a purposeful course through life.

THE SPIN AXIS OF YOUR INDWELLING SPIRIT

At the heart of your awakening compass is the spin axis of your indwelling spirit. If you believe in reincarnation, you will recognize this as the eternal essence of your soul across time. This spirit, which directs your life's mission, can be animated in your body by your breath. Experiences spin around this core, which provides energetic continuity. Your indwelling spirit is attuned with your inner north, which you embody through your thoughts, emotions, actions, and energy.

With recognition and mastery, your internal compass

will guide your ambitions, use of your capacities, and your karma, signaling you when to pause, proceed, or pivot, regardless of your external circumstances. Nature, too, provides directional cues—through the spiritual winds of East, South, West, and North. While writing *Winds of Spirit* (Hay House 2018), I explored these natural navigational cues through extensive research and direct personal revelation.

For awakening compass work, we borrow from the ancient Greek sailors. They called the east wind Eurus, the south wind Notus, the west wind Zephyrus, and the north wind Boreas. Your spirit is always holding you aligned with your inner north. But like sailors on the seas, we must move and pivot with the cardinal winds of fate to get to our intended shore. This may require tacking, changing direction, or sailing headlong into a wind. Our work as healers is to "tack" with our eyes wide open, no matter what challenges we face.

For all of us, spiritual tests and growth opportunities come in many guises, including the loss of a relative, an animal, a job, or a home. At the beginning of the year, I experienced just such an event in the form of the death of a tenant renting a condo from me. The need to respond as a property owner created a chaotic disruption in my routine that I was able to navigate more skillfully using my awakening compass. I had to, because, I must admit, I was upset and thrown out of my center. The feelings that were triggered in me interfered with me being good at my office job in marketing and in my work as a shamanic practitioner. After observing how destabilized I was, I did an exercise to realign myself with my true north.

HOW I REORIENTED MYSELF WITH THE HELP OF MY AWAKENING COMPASS

It took me several days to find the time to review events and fully process my upset. When I did have a spare moment to reflect, I did a simple ceremony to connect with the four cardinal winds. I began by checking in with the north wind. Boreas symbolizes our spiritual resolve, community ties, and service. As the unexpected news of my tenant's passing had sent shockwaves through me, I knew the appropriate step was to ask Boreas for help to view the source



of my upset as an opportunity for deeper spiritual understanding and service.

Next, I connected with Eurus, which symbolizes the intellect and new beginnings. In this exploration, I encountered my grief, not only over the tenant's death, but also remnants of grief over previous losses that I had experienced from the death of family members and friends. Eurus brought me solace. Like a Nor'easter that cleanses the landscape with its mighty breath I began to view this event as opening me to the possibility of building something new.

"Where would I make my fresh start?" I asked.

The wind did not hold its breath for long. It quickly occurred to me that I could change the entire look of the condo as part of cleaning it up and making it ready for new occupants. Eurus is the keeper of the dawn, mind, memory, and beliefs. I knew I had the know-how to move forward because of earlier experience as a property manager.

It is good to periodically remind ourselves that being aligned to our personal magic and the creative power of manifestation does not mean inconvenient things won't happen in our lives. At the same time, being aligned to the possibility of miracles happening can help us to organize our resources and respond quickly. In my case, the next day I would arrange for all the old furniture in my condo to be hauled away, and I made design decisions and hired contractors to start immediately.

After connecting with the East, I transitioned to exploring the energetics of the south wind, Notus, which is symbolic of the emotions that live in our bodies. The tension between answering the north wind's spiritual test while managing my emotional currents was palpable. I felt as if I had frozen icicles lining my solar plexus. It was clear that I needed some external support to navigate my feelings about this death in my condo. Death can be messy. I was haunted by images of what I had seen. My sleep was restless, my food choices were poor, and I was unable to find my joy.

This discovery would lead me to seek counsel from a

trusted healer. After an EFT tapping session with her to clear some issues from my nervous system, I was subsequently able to find my footing emotionally, and the ice in my gut melted into water.

The winds had my back every step of the way in providing me renewed orientation while I felt lost. When I connected with the cardinal wind of the west, Zephyrus, which is symbolic of the physical dimension of our lives, the insight I got was that repairing the house to new order was going to be a spiritually orchestrated dance. One step to the next, things would unfold in perfect order and harmony. I could trust that I was being supported.

Sure enough, in the days that followed my doing of this brief exercise, Spirit cooperated, and lined up the exact tradespeople and counselors I needed. But even as outer progress was smoothly made, my inner space needed more time to heal. I revisited Zephyrus many times in the evenings after the sun went down as I took nightly wind walks through the neighborhood. Another way I healed my trauma: after the condo was repainted and refurbished, I moved into it, had friends over for dinner, and prepared it once again to become a seasonal rental property. Despite everything I did to restore the space and my energy, it took a full month to get back to my morning writing ritual and to feel open to working with clients again as a healer. In retrospect, it was humbling for me to be so thrown off kilter. Still, nature provided the cycle, and clues on how to move through this experience and realign with my true north.

EXERCISE: VISUALIZING EVENTS THROUGH YOUR AWAKENING COMPASS

If you are interested in trying to use the same exercise to find your own inner bearings, here are the instructions.

This exercise is designed to deepen your understanding of the influence that an event, whether current or past, has on you. The goal is to bring clarity to experiences that may be troubling or confusing, thereby empowering you to serve your clients more effectively.



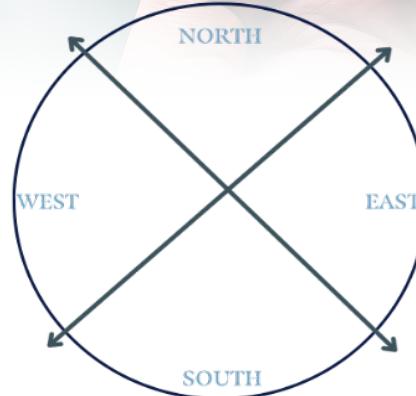
Setting Your Sacred Space

Initiate the Sacred: Transition from the mundane to the sacred by closing your eyes and invoking the presence of the four cardinal winds, one by one. Use tools that resonate with you, such as wind ocarinas, to slow your breath and enter a receptive state. Alternatively, light a candle, burn incense, or recite a meaningful prayer to open your space.

Mapping the Event

Draw the Compass: On a paper, draw a large circle to symbolize the event in question. Divide this circle into four equal sections with an X, creating quadrants. Map the quadrants of your compass as North, East, South, and West.

- Talk to the Winds One by One: Go around the compass and with the help of the wind that governs the quadrant you're in, consider how the event is affecting you. Northern quadrant: Here, call upon Boreas for help. Consider the spiritual dimension of the event. Reflect on how your inner wisdom and community support spoke through you. What insights or realizations emerged? Contemplate whether this event is a call to deepen your spiritual practice or to pivot in a new direction.
- Eastern quadrant: Call upon Eurus for support. Focus on the event's onset and progression. Record your initial thoughts, beliefs, and memories. Challenge yourself to reconsider any outdated ideas that this event has brought to light.
- Southern quadrant: Welcome the input of Notus. Document your immediate emotional response and instincts. Identify if there was an innocent or vulnerable reaction from within you at the event's commencement.
- Western quadrant: Invite Zephyrus to speak with you. Reflect on the event's denouement and your preparation for its resolution. What actions did you undertake? How did you reconcile with the event's outcomes.



Integrate the Experience

Review your notes from visiting each quadrant in the awakening compass. Trace your journey through the cardinal points. Did the event initiate in the East with a jarring change? Did it stir raw emotions in the South? Did acceptance begin in the West? And did clarity and understanding finally emerge from the North?

By considering the multifaceted dimensions of your experience, you can gain a comprehensive understanding and higher perspective of the event's impact on you. The lesson or lessons you draw from it may be different than you initially anticipated. Also, the actions you need to take to clear your energy may be more evident having undertaken this self-reflection. This process allows for learning and applying these insights to future experiences. Remember, events in life, like points on a compass, often signify a cycle, directing us toward new avenues for growth and introspection.

In navigating the compass of our experiences, we discover that each direction—each event—leads not to a destination, but to another path on the journey of self-discovery and improvement. Embrace this cycle, and you may find that with every challenge faced, you are not just moving forward, but experiencing life more fully.



Learn more about Renee Baribeau by visiting www.thePracticalShaman.com