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Tapping Primal Life Force

By Keith Varnum

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When the residents of the Scottish spiritual community of Findhorn first encountered Pan in the forest, Pan asked them to convey a message from the Beings of Nature to the rest of humanity. Pan said: "Tell them, `We never left—you did."

The colorful toucans squawked from within their tiny cage: "Why would any free spirit ever confine another free being?"

The incarceration had rendered the once vibrant birds withdrawn and lifeless captives. Their eyes cried this piercing question just as the same bewilderment echoes from the dull gaze of every animal in every zoo:

"Why would any being with heart ever drive the dagger of imprisonment into the heart of another being?"

The answer is obvious. No being with heart would shackle another free being. No being whose spirit still lives would ever kill the spirit of another being—by any means.

The beseeching toucans were on exhibit at the country inn where I stayed in Costa Rica. The innkeeper explained he was building a huge cage around a tree so the birds would have a whole tree around which to fly and live. But the confined birds told me they didn't want a larger enclosure. No cage would ever be big enough. Their spirits needed to be free. After a few days, I could no longer look into the toucans' eyes. Before long, I avoided going near their cage altogether.

Instead of focusing on the plight of the caged toucans, I was guided by my inner coach to explore the free and untamed treasures of the stunningly vibrant and beautiful country of Costa Rica. During my travels, I was blessed by direct encounters with wild animals, virgin forests, raging rivers and an erupting volcano. In their natural state, these diverse elements of life were undomesticated, unbridled, unfettered and unspoiled. Every cell of my body felt the raw, free essence of each basic kingdom of nature: mammal, reptile, bird, plant, water and mineral.

Tapping Primal Life Force

I connected with a sloth hanging out in its jungle haunt, a tabor scouring the forest carpet for grubs, a crocodile sunning in a sultry swamp and a very curious iguana checking me out through the mist of a waterfall. I shuddered at the primitive roar of jaguars too close for comfort. I witnessed reptiles called "Jesus lizards" with so much aliveness they literally walk on water, skimming across the surface on webbed feet.

I reveled in the unrestrained, exuberant expression of brilliant orchids, enticing mushrooms and outlandish fungi. The beauty and grace of exotic parrots, wild toucans and resplendent quetzal birds awed me. I was gratefully battered by the uncontrollable strength of ocean surf. Standing at the edge of an exploding volcanic cauldron, I exalted in the undiluted rapture of the fiery, flowing lava.

Soon I began to appreciate my soul's purpose in sending me to this lush, virgin land. My spirit's strategy was for me to encounter so many dynamic examples of the exhilaration of raw nature that I would break through to the other side of my rigid, conditioned, overly civilized state of being. And I did!

Through diverse outer appearances of vitality, I connected with the inner source that animates all forms of life. I danced with deer riding waves of natural electricity over grassy hills. I soared with caracara hawks spiraling with wind currents above luxuriant valleys. I clamored with howler monkeys playing in the rain forest canopy. I surrendered with meandering sea turtles to rhythmic tidal currents.

On the surface, animals, plants, rocks and volcanoes appear to be solid forms. Through intimate contact, I discovered firsthand that what creates these seemingly immutable shapes is primal life force, the basic essence generating and driving all forms of life.

A volcano in Costa Rica was the natural element that shared this secret with me in the most dramatic, effective and revealing way. When the molecules of mountain granite are sped up by intense heat, the true nature of this solid form is disclosed as being fluid, moving, alive energy. Universal life force is so fundamental and powerful, it melts granite. It transforms the most condensed form of matter into molten lava, liquid rock. Primordial life force is so alive, pure, wild and basic that it's potent enough to liberate the most rigid crystallized matter into free-flowing life expression.

My soul arranged for me to "accidentally" stumble through the dense fog onto an active lava flow for the purpose of exposing me in a very palpable, tangible way to the true nature of all reality. Walking on this semi-solid river of fire, I absorbed the raw, innocent, spontaneous vital energy lying at the core of all physical manifestations of life. I merged with the alchemical power of basic life force—uncontrollable, undiluted and pristine.

The direct transmission I received from the volcano and all the other wild creatures of Costa Rica is that this fundamental life force energy is as available to us humans as it is to them! If we choose to unite with this energy and allow divine alchemy, we also can become one with the pure, primal, passionate, undivided, unqualified, unlimited expression of life. This underlying flow is referred to by the Chinese as the Tao—the river of knowing, the central stream of consciousness, the God current that is our true nature and essence.

The harsh contrast between the toucans in captivity and the toucans in the wild awakened me to the

Tapping Primal Life Force

magnitude of the aliveness and connection we humans lost somewhere along the way in our collective life journey. The fact that we cage toucans and other animals in zoos and homes around the world is a clear indication of how far we have removed ourselves from the natural vitality and joy of freedom—both our own and that of other inhabitants of Earth.

Our human quest for love, security and energy cannot be achieved as long as we remain in a state of consciousness in which we systematically seek to control the freedom of our fellow beings—human and otherwise. In the process of "civilizing" our species, we humans have become conditioned to not feel deep, dynamic passion and love for life. Our collective heart, the world's heart, has become so crystallized and armored that it is now as hard and cold as the granite of a mountain. Our collective heart has turned to stone. Only a granite heart could do what we are doing to the natural expression of life—within ourselves and on the planet.

The original Old English meaning of the word panic was "of the nature of Pan: wild and free-flowing." But now we humans are so shut down, controlling and cut off from nature—and from our own vital

electric nature—that we experience "wild and free-flowing" energy as scary and threatening. Life's creative enthusiasm sends us into a panic in the modern sense. Most of us are terrified of living fully alive and free.

How can we humans reverse this process? How can we melt the granite façades of our public institutions—and our own faces—that so starkly reflect the state of our hardened soul? How can we re-light the pilot light and stoke the cosmic fire within us?

As I melded with the effusive wildness of Costa Rica, I unearthed an answer. We humans can re-connect to our natural aliveness by opening to a force that is more powerful than our programming, more compelling than our collective conditioning. The force that can liberate us is universal life energy, primal life force. This unbridled exuberance abounds everywhere around us—and within us. Fortunately, cultural conditioning cannot control primal life force. This raw creative energy is free and innocent of all human concepts and beliefs. Primal life force doesn't follow its own drumbeat; it is the drumbeat.

Primal life force is more fundamental, more basic, than our human psychological and cultural creations. In reality, this power provides the lifeblood, essence and juice that sustains and supports the entire human culture currently existing on the planet. Primal life flow is the natural energy source that literally runs our human creations.

Several years ago, a wall of red-hot lava streamed down the side of a volcano on the Big Island of Hawaii cutting right through a village located between the volcano and the ocean. So intense was the temperature of the boiling lava, its radiant energy vaporized the wood and cement foundations of the human structures before the lava physically touched the foundations. All traces of the village and human habitation were annihilated in the wake of the lava inferno as it made its way to the sea.

Modern science doesn't know a way to stop the power of the Goddess Pele, the impassioned expression of the spirit of the volcano. The human structures were not as real, fundamental or

Tapping Primal Life Force

substantial as the energy of the volcano. Human concepts, beliefs and paradigms trying to overlay and dominate nature are no match for the raw, creative primal power of natural vigor.

The vibration of original vitality, passion and excitement is strong enough to melt our collective granite heart. Just as primal life force vaporized the not-so-solid foundations of the Hawaiian physical structures, primal life force can dissolve the foundations of the psychological structure that makes us think we need to control and feel separate from other life in order to get enough energy to survive.

One key to becoming fully revitalized is to reconnect with universal life force in such a way that we are not only fed by it, but also transformed by it. If we resonate with the abundant aliveness all around us, divine alchemy will transmute us into the experience of being that eternal essence of life energy. When we become one with universal life force, we are able to draw our very sustenance, supply and security from our own source within. We are sovereign, self-generating, in terms of where we get our energy. Sourcing our own energy, we then have enough personal power to melt the crystallized granite heart within ourselves and our culture. And until we walk with the authentic sovereignty of natural vitality, we won't have the courage and strength to go out and love with true spirit and fulfill our core purposes on Earth.

Another crucial aspect of the message I received from the wildness of Costa Rica is that to be successful on our quest, we humans need to open to this primordial energy through direct, pure,

spontaneous, innocent and fresh means. We cannot approach this enterprise from an old paradigm or model. For, if we seek natural, organic vitality in an unnatural, nonorganic way, we won't uncover the pure source we seek. To approach aliveness in a sequential, methodical, linear manner prevents us from contacting its basic nature. This natural aliveness does not exist within the framework or box in which we currently exist as a society. Pure, free life expression lives outside of our cultural conditioning, underneath it, behind it—beyond it.

We can reclaim our natural power only if we approach the challenge in a manner that is new, wild, free, unexpected and in-the-moment. If this alive space is sought in any way that is familiar or known, it won't be found. Where we're going and what we're looking for isn't located on any existing cultural map.

The way to natural vitality is uncharted because the very finding of this energy transforms us and our universe to such an extent that no previous map, blueprint or paradigm is relevant. By the very nature of the goal—aliveness—the path to the goal remains fresh and spontaneous, impossible to document or plan.

No methodology, technique or structured approach can ever remain valid for any period of time—or even a second time—to assist us in reaching this vibrant state. This space, once achieved, once embodied, once lived, is so free, transforming, creative and constantly changing that any existing map, chart or way won't take us there a second time. Strategies previous to this moment take us to old places and old experiences. Really cool, but not current. Pleasant, but not present. Potent, but not profound.

Tapping Primal Life Force

To undertake this odyssey in the most advantageous way, my inner coach suggests a simple, direct, personal approach. To rekindle our fire of aliveness, we can open to peak moments in our life when we experienced a strong connection to the vibration of raw, creative primal life flow. Many of us can't think of—or remember—a time when we did merge with this basic life force. Fortunately, it doesn't matter that our memory of our true nature is blocked by our mind. We can employ our intuition as a guide, instead of the mind. Our intuition knows where and how to access this vibration of vitality. Our intuition knows how to remove or go around any barriers or denial. Behind our veils of fear, dismissal, distraction, invalidation and misinterpretation are hundreds of firsthand encounters with this universal fire. Within each of us lies a treasure house of direct personal experiences readily available for the enhancement and transformation of our everyday life.

The heart of Costa Rica radiated one primal message: "Go for the juice, the electricity. Forget the form."

If whatever is happening in the moment looks and sounds right, but doesn't feel intuitively right to you, then it's not right. It isn't what you're meant to be doing at that moment—it isn't what is spiritually appropriate or indicated for you to be doing at that precise time.

In regard to any situation, the key question to ask yourself is: "For me, in the moment, is there passion, aliveness, heart?"

If there is not, then you are not in the right place, no matter how convincing the outer appearance might be. Let it go.

The spirit of the Earth urges: "Move on. Stay open. Keep flowing."

In an Arizona canyon twenty years ago, a venerable Hopi medicine man named Medicine Cloud shared a keen observation with me: "Everything you need to know about life you can learn from streams and clouds."

I now know what he meant.

Drawing from the wisdom of native and ancient spiritual traditions, Keith Varnum shares his 30 years of practical success as an author, personal coach, acupuncturist, filmmaker, radio host, restaurateur, vision quest guide and international seminar leader (The Dream Workshops). Keith helps people get the love, money and health they want with his FREE "Prosperity Ezine" at www.TheDream.com.

Guitar Tapping Tips And Techniques

By Brad Finley

Although made popular recently by Eddie VanHalen, guitar tapping or right hand 'legatos' is a technique players have been executing for years. Country players know the benefit of laying down a

Tapping Primal Life Force

nice subtle lead and just putting in those quick hammers with clear guitar tapping. And while it's not the easiest thing, guitar finger tapping techniques are really nothing much more than fast hammer on and a pull offs. Whether you use your middle finger or your first, most times you can hold the pick as usual to execute your guitar tapping and get the speed and positioning essential to good guitar tapping techniques. But like anything else, guitar tapping takes practice and patience.

Since this is a highly specialized, yet popular way of playing we hear a lot of player's guitar tapping these days—and just as many tapping badly. Especially when a guitar is cranked through distortion, a whole host of extra noises will come out if the player's guitar finger tapping techniques aren't the cleanest. An important trick to 'clean-up' when you are cranked through that Marshall Stack and you're in "overdrive", is to rest the back of your right hand on the lower strings for muting; what you want to avoid is these strings making a lot of extra noise while you get that guitar tapping in one steady movement. Of course, if you're a rock player you are most likely already dreaming of the all-too flashy 'cross-handed tapping' but this is so impractical it only ever works when playing live (and even then it is a hard to get those guitar tapping progressions cooking in this way!) Admittedly though, this particular type of guitar tapping, above all other types of guitar finger tapping techniques, creates a truly distinct tone.

There are hundreds of videos and books that show guitar tapping tips, but as it is with everything else, you can't even begin to understand how guitar tapping works until you get up and do it yourself. Although modern listeners have been conditioned to want speed like Eddie V., it is more important to get the strong and clear sound of each note than to sacrifice technique for potential sloppiness. Guitar finger tapping techniques are only good if you can do them; nothing sounds worse than reaching for a flashy technique and not being able to pull it off. As with everything else you learn on guitar, if you master a technique on acoustic then you can feel all that more confident trying it on electric.

Playing a difficult and flashy exercise, such as guitar tapping or lightening fast arpeggios, sometimes seem to be easier on an electric; you get-off on the sound you are creating, the noise, but don't catch nuisances or mistakes. Try tapping on an acoustic guitar (or you want a big challenge—try guitar tapping on an acoustic bass!) Guitar finger tapping is hard on an acoustic; cross-handed guitar tapping is almost impossible (it takes a ton of strength and precision), but master guitar tapping on an acoustic and you'll find you are that much more prepared for what you might do on your electric.

Brad Finley is senior editor of MyGuitarWorkshop.com – Guitar Lessons and Music Theory. Website provides guitar lessons, instructions and music theory for all level guitar players. Please visit

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