

# The Voice of Intelligence in the Ayahuasca session<sup>1</sup>

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## 1. Introduction

During Ayahuasca ceremonies, the person that drinks this medicine comes into contact with an intelligence that communicates with him/her and provides information as a teaching. After the ayahuasca session, it is very common to hear participants say "Ayahuasca told me this or that thing", "I was told or shown or taught this or that thing", etc.

In this brief presentation, we would like to draw a synthetic profile of this Voice or rather Intelligence that expresses itself dialogically with the Ayahuasca drinker.

## 2. The Amazonian wisdom comes from the teaching Voice of plants (nature)

The tradition of Amazonian ancestral medicines developed a body of knowledge that allows indigenous people to communicate with the invisible world, also called "world-other" by anthropologists. This world-other transcends and precedes the "world-this" of the sensitive creation in which we are immersed. The procedures developed to communicate with the world-other come from this same world and were communicated in dreams, inspirations (insights or sudden evidences), and spontaneous or induced modified states of consciousness (fasting, extreme physical exercise, fatigue, illness, etc.). In other words, it is in the world-other that the initiative is taken to guide humans in their needs.

In this ocean of lush vegetation, it is mainly the plants that assume this mediating function between the world-other (invisible) and the world-this (visible), with a transcendent and intelligent dimension. Therefore, entities of the other world can use this channel to communicate with the human being. These entities are organized in several hierarchical levels and at the highest level we can find a "voice of wisdom". On one occasion, a woman saw in an Ayahuasca session a big mouth that said "*I am the voice of truth, ask me what you want to know*".

These entities are presented as spiritual beings linked to a place, a family, ancestors, or groups of animals or plants. For plant spirits, the tradition designates them as "*madres*" (mothers), thus indicating that they constitute the non-visible matrix of each visible species. This angelic entity presides over each species and not each individual of the species, unlike human beings who on the contrary are endowed with an individual angelic entity (guardian angel). Being incorporeal, they are perceived by the human being through

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its biological filter and its symbolic structures, the universal ones inscribed in his body and the cultural ones associated with his surroundings. Thus, they can manifest clearly and be visualized by the patient in an anthropomorphic or zoomorphic manner. Therefore, there is a complete traditional "dictionary" around the perception of plant spirits that shows some constants in the morphological features that characterize these entities and their specific qualities. For example, the spirit of tobacco is characterized by its great strength, its rectitude and firmness, its ability to protect. These are mainly masculine features (at a psychic and symbolic level) that will come together to compose the figure of a dark, muscular, powerful man. Blackness here symbolizes the extreme condensation of energy. The spirit of camalanga (*Strychnus sp.*) a plant of great medicinal power against darkness (magic, witchcraft...), is full of light, endowed with feminine virtues (at a psychic and symbolic level) such as flexibility, softness. It will manifest under the shape of a golden snake.

These "*madres*" of the plants are the ones that teach to the human being, being this function of teaching recognized by the ancient Amazonian tradition, which led to qualify those plants with the term of "*plantas maestras*" (teacher plants).

Ayahuasca is considered as a "teacher of teachers" and therefore her voice is considered as the supreme voice of wisdom.

Therapeutic procedures lead patients to contact these different entities that are expressed as a teaching voice. That is to say that the properly ritualized ingestion of master plants allows to benefit from useful indications, either during the therapeutic sessions, the retreats or diets, or during the dreams that accompany or follow them. This same voice guides the apprentice healer during his training and gives him the necessary instructions to advance in the path toward knowledge. The master healer will also receive the necessary instructions to cure his patients, with great precision, and even adding recipes with new plants to his repertoire. The dialogue with these "*madres*" of the plants will be established with therapeutic songs, or *ikaros*, that the former transmit to the healer as a way to call for them and request their intervention.

While the notion of "voice" refers to an auditory perception, the "mother" of plants can use all other senses to communicate with the human being (visions, tactile sensations, flavors, smells) and also various psychic functions inducing thoughts, internal motions and emotions that the person identifies as coming from something other than himself.

### **3. Requirements to listen to that Voice**

The body of knowledge transmitted by the spiritual entities and then elaborated in human practices determines the listening quality of that voice. The main conditions are the preparation of the person, his honesty and respect, as well that as of the master healer, the ritual framework with the consecration of the therapeutic space-time, and finally the follow-up and integration after the healing procedures.

Without going into the details of these procedures in this short text, it is worth insisting on some key points.

The inner attitude of the patient and of the master healer play a fundamental role. In fact, any therapeutic approach requires the responsible commitment of the patient as well as of the therapist. Moreover, during modified states of consciousness, this internal posture prior to experience will largely determine what will happen during its development. In other words, the therapeutic contract involves not only the patient and the therapist but also the spiritual entities that are summoned. As in many traditional healing practices around the world, the patient is prepared with a previous cleansing process and an evaluation regarding his personal background. The Amazonian tradition offers multiple purgative plants to prepare the body to come into contact with spiritual entities. The preparation includes nutritional measures and regulation of sexuality. The evaluation sometimes takes the form of a true confession with the master healer. In particular, the patient will be asked about his intention to communicate with the world-other, to ensure his seriousness, his right orientation, and his respect for the world-other. Simple curiosity or trivial matters, even worse if with evil intentions (learn witchcraft, revenge, steal knowledge...), do not deserve to enter this process unless the master healer considers it to be a good opportunity to confront the person with his/her own shadow and receive a lesson in humility (in the popular language "the plant will punish him/her"). Impertinence, impudence, superficiality, will all be paid dearly.

The humbleness of an act of faith is here necessarily established considering that the patients render themselves to a process that takes them to unknown spaces. During the process, they should put in brackets their expectations for immediate understanding given that the final destination of this process will appear gradually and will be fulfilled only at the end of it, and sometimes for a much longer time that can be counted in years. Therefore, one has to temporarily abandon his usual reading grids of reality, his mental categories, his methods of classification or analysis, and surrender with confidence to what will happen and that will happen when the time comes. In a way, the order of understanding is hierarchical from the body to the affective and psychic consciousness, and finally to the spiritual level. The information is recorded in the patient's body during the therapeutic process and will be available for the intelligence of the heart, mind and spirit when these instances will be able to integrate it.

The therapeutic time must be consecrated through a precise ritual that marks its beginning and its end. In the ritual context, this invisible spiritual guide will take the patient to the end of the therapeutic process in the allotted time. What it offers to the healing entities of the world-other is its time, its availability at a precisely defined time. It is at the end of this period, if respected, that the integration of the process can play fully. Therefore, the patient must make of this a "useless" time for other occupations and thus "dedicate" this time to fulfill the period formally established at the beginning. Under these conditions, the possible results will be acquired, to the extent of the patient's commitment, within the time previously decided. From this perspective, it is essential to complete the commitment deadlines assumed at the beginning.

During the process, the revelations, information, or understandings can appear in a continuous line and in a logical and coherent perspective, as a conversation taken again at the point where it was left the previous day; often the dispersed elements will compose a puzzle that will not find its coherence until the end of the process, when all the pieces

will come together to deliver the final message. The story told will then find its outcome only in the "last five minutes."

In the same way, it falls under the master healer responsibility to consecrate the ritual space and the different tools that will be part of the process, from healing objects, to vegetable preparations or even food.

The ritual form, also transmitted to the healer by his own teachers and by the spiritual entities, determines the conditions of safety and good profit of the healing operation. The master healer must then have had a clear and specific qualification from his teachers. The self-promotion to this important role represents a deceit to himself and to his patients.

The prescriptions indicated for the post ritual phase also condition the satisfactory integration of the teachings. They involve nutritional, sexual, and social rules and exposure to natural elements (cold water, sun, smells, etc.), among other norms. Not to abide by these prescriptions can lead to an internal energetic disorder with physical, psychic and spiritual alterations that are known in the Amazonian tradition as "*cruzaderas*" (crossings). They can become dangerous like states of madness or serious physical pathologies that force to resume the therapeutic process.

#### **4. The discernment: who is speaking?**

Avoid to consider the rigorous conditions that involve the intake of master plants, can lead the patient to contact with invisible evil entities, or bad spirits. The world-other is also inhabited by negative angelic entities that preside over all forms of manifestation of Evil in the visible creation. The correct ritualization in the induction of modified states of consciousness establishes a filter that allows them to be discarded and thus ensure to get access to a good and wise teaching. Therefore, the ritual form cannot be an improvised or only based on aesthetic, but it must be attached to the demands and extreme rigor of the world-other.

Other interferences may arise from the personal unconscious and should be identified to avoid confusion between the transcendental spiritual Voice and the person's egotic voices. The projection mechanisms require a lot of care from the therapist.

The ego is able to retrieve any information from the spiritual world and appropriate it to develop mentalizations designed to feed itself. Its tendency to inflation must be detected in time to use the therapeutic tools that allow deflation. Humility and serenity represent fundamental criteria of discernment in this area. Enthusiasm is not fascination, nor joy is euphoria.

The framework for containment and integration of these therapeutic procedures plays an essential role in these matters. To the extent that this framework is clearly established and approved by the patient, and then respected in practice, the dangers are greatly reduced. The transgression of the rules almost always indicates a form of "*cruzadera*" and the presence of a potentially dangerous disturbance coming from the invisible world, external or internal.

Discernment thus represents an essential quality of the good therapist and requires both a long personal process as well as learning the criteria that in all traditions were established to respond to this great danger of loss and confusion.

## **5. Characteristics of the Voice**

Once the false voices of the evil spirits, of the projections of the personal unconscious, of the arrogance of the ego or over-mentalization processes are discarded, the Voice transmitted by the angelic spirits or “*madres*” of the plants, and that would correspond to mediations of divinity or the Holy Spirit in the Christian tradition, can be considered.

Through the different channels of perception, the teaching that comes or goes through the mediation of the ritualized use of plants is constantly manifested as coming from an intelligence superior to that of the human being or at least of their ordinary consciousness. The “*madre*” of the plants, and especially of Ayahuasca, shows an extraordinary intelligence that is revealed in all its magnitude in the therapeutic strategy developed for each person in a singular and specific way; and thus, arouses astonishment. This strategic intelligence goes beyond the ambition and ability of the best therapist and shows that this is only an agent in charge of establishing the proper conditions so that this intelligence can act and more than anything can be received in the best way.

Which are its characteristics?

This intelligence does not judge, it does not have a tone of reproach, it is full of benevolence, but without complacency, it is generous but demanding, full of wisdom and oriented towards good and truth. It can be strict without malice and humorous without teasing, straight without being rigid and smiling without sarcasm. It minimizes our internal tragedy without trivializing it. It presents itself as a good counselor whose tone, ways and instructions are perfectly adapted to each individual according to their cognitive abilities, their emotional intelligence, their life itinerary, their character, their needs of the moment and the requests or intentions they formulated.

It shows absolute respect for the patient's freedom, without interfering in their inner world where it does not enter without permission. Its interventions can surprise and overcome the prejudices or expectations of its listeners, sometimes unexpectedly, and in this sense, they cannot be attributed to an expression of the patient's mind or unconscious. It can provide data or disclosures about the patients' past or their ancestors that they ignore, but can eventually be verified. Sometimes, it even allows access to elements of ancient traditions, symbols, mythologies, completely unrelated to the history of the person or their filiations of origin.

It does not order or adopt an authoritarian tone of command, but invites, requests, advises with a gentleness that does not exclude firmness.

It can also adopt the strategy of silence to encourage a more careful listening and invite the patient to review the adequacy of their positioning: have the previous commitments been fulfilled? Is there respect on the meeting? Is there sincerity? Were the advice or

answers previously provided taken into account? Truth and authenticity always condition the continuation of the "interviews."

It shows autonomy, independent will and freedom and cannot be manipulated or summoned at will. It is always perceived as coming from beyond the patient and not from their inner world, even if deeply buried in the unconscious.

It is not an inveterate speaker and its interventions are generally brief and condensed, sober, concise. Its answers have the strength of simplicity without being simplistic. It humiliates arrogance without malignancy and without free humiliation. It attracts without subjugating.

Its words are accompanied by a natural authority that makes them clear as daylight, full of common sense and wisdom. It does not enter into intellectual, rhetorical speeches, into sterile debates, but instead focuses on relentless responses in its obviousness and common sense. It is not necessary to discuss and argue extensively to snatch the conviction of the person who remains free to ignore or listen, even in the face of the display of unstoppable logic that affects not only the cognitive sphere, but is accompanied by the evidence in the listener of their resistance mechanisms to its word. This extreme coherence is maintained during successive interventions and at different times and without ever contradicting each other.

Finally, it can use a very direct language, but also express itself metaphorically, speak in parables, illustrate its teaching with examples, analogies, comparisons, images, use proverbs, sayings, verses of poems or songs.

## **6. Words of Mother Ayahuasca**

By way of illustration, we want to conclude by listening to that Voice as heard during Ayahuasca sessions held at the Takiwasi Center. During patient interviews, they pointed out some phrases heard during their modified state of consciousness induced by Ayahuasca and considered as coming from this superior intelligence and carrying key messages for their own personal evolution. We have gathered those phrases as if it were a continuous discourse. They reveal a profound wisdom and universal characteristics.

*"I am a woman: not only does the sun shine, but also the moon. I give you my blood, my sap, you, you offer your body. I'll never leave you alone. If I tell you one thing, and the opposite to your neighbor, is because my teaching adapts to the openness that has been offered to me. I teach neither good nor evil: I reveal them in all.*

*Search your past, your childhood memories, images, people, places... See how the milestones of your life were installed: read them! Get together, look at the mosaics: we can do something good with spare parts!*

*The child takes 3 years to appropriate his body. Stand in your life, listen to its song, listen to the silence. The song awakens your old memories, the fetal memory is auditory. Be present and may your love and your lucidity help to cleanse. Deep down, you know your strength, you know your weakness, but you don't know how far they go. So, stay attentive.*

*Look at nature and learn from it: celebrate life with humility. The tree is the path of change. "I'm just a great water stream," says the raindrop as it falls into the Amazon river. Everything is in order, everything loves. Look at the cataclysms: that is what happens when men forget the gods and attack the earth.*

*In human nature, the mother gives, the father orders. The mother can only love, the father must command.*

*Everything makes sense: a difficult birth can be a gift because it is initiatory to know both death and birth at the same time.*

*Listen carefully: in every corner the pride hides... and in the reflection of these recesses... and in the look you take on this reflection... and in the joy you felt in digging it up from the deep! Do not think that you have killed your pride, you have only erased its reflection. Pride is like a veil that you don't see, it disappears with life.*

*Lower your head and straighten up! Lower your ego and raise your spiritual dignity! Work the true humility of knowing how to ask for help when you need it. Which also consists in accepting one's qualities because it is saying yes to God and, therefore, restore this force to the world. Don't give yourself more value than you have, but don't criticize yourself negatively either. Look for simplicity because to be big you have to know how to stay small. Don't cry too much for yourself: the important thing is not you, but what is more important than you.*

*So, listen to the Father's voice and learn to say yes. But let your obedience agree with your inner feelings, otherwise disobey! Do not forget that it is thanks to the breath that you are alive. Learn to replace the word "why" with the word "sorry". Know how to thank because true gratitude equals a thousand stars.*

*In this way, you will learn to discern what is human from what is not. Welcome the first, offer your light to the second. What must disappear will disappear!"*