

Ancient Healing Arts for Your Modern Life – Shaman Jorge Hachumak – #968

Dave Asprey:

You're listening to The Human Upgrade with Dave Asprey. Today is a really cool podcast because we get to talk about shamanism. And in a recent episode, I talked with a cultural anthropologist who has had a bit of a negative take sort of like, why are so many people saying that they have a shamanic practice when they don't really? So, it's an interesting conversation. And now we have what I'm going to say is a real shaman named Jorge Hachumak who studied in Peru, and he just came out with a book called "Journeying Through the Invisible" that is fantastic and it's worth your time if you're interested in the spiritual side of biohacking.

And the reason I like this is that yes, I have the Encyclopedia of Shamanism one and two and you have to be either high or drink a lot of coffee just to read it. And when you look at this book, it's approachable, it's understandable, and it's very, very readable. So, if you wanted to just understand more about what is shamanism, how does it work, this book will teach you that. With no further ado, Jorge, welcome to the show.

Shaman Jorge Hachumak:

Thank you very much for having me today.

Dave:

How'd you get started as a shaman? Were you born saying I want to be a shaman and you were eating mushrooms when you were three? How does one become a shaman?

Hachumak:

Well, I never looked for it. I never try it or was pursuing some doors. It was offered to me actually as a learning. And I guess you are born a healer, but then you need the training and the learn from other people experiences. And there's so much techniques plus the shamanic gifts that are passed. It's like a force that is passed from one person to the other one through the fluids, to the breath.

But when I look back, there was a lot of things that I was doing as a child. Like we were going on vacations with my parents and when I was arriving to the beach, I was talking to the beach and saying hi and welcome us. And I was eight, 10 years old. I was saying goodbye and talking to the waves and the animals. And I think there is something. But I never connected with that at all. But then later in my life I started in martial arts and Tai Chi and the practice of [inaudible 00:03:04], the Chinese frame of vital energy and breathing and moving with intention.

Dave:

This is really cool because you are Peruvian of Spanish descent, but you started out using Tai Chi and Qi gong in Lima, Peru.

Hachumak:

Yeah. Lima has a very old China town. It's as old as probably San Francisco. Really immigration started at the end of the 1840s. And I discovered that place when I was at University. I was training as an agricultural engineer. Everything was rolling well. I was just going to have a career into that, but I discovered that world, I was probably 20, and I felt that it was touching an archetype of something way more universal than just the teachings about production and things like that. And I start practicing.

I had an epiphany when I visit ancient temple that this is still kind of hidden still in Chinatown in Lima. And I felt like a fish in the water. And then I practiced for several years. I had several teachers. Three of them were of a good level of Tai Chi. They were all from China. There was a strong colony and people coming back and forth all the time. And then my last teacher, she was a lady that was from Shanghai, and she was from the approach of going to competition and those things. My previous teachers were really despising competition. They saw that you cannot prove anything, everything is about moving energy. And none of the judges that are checking you might tell what you are really doing inside.

But anyway, we were five or six people and we tried to please our teachers. So, we went to competition and then for a few years, I was national champion of Tai Chi forums, metropolitan champion of forums in Peru. I went into '98 and won the South American Tai Chi forum competition, gold medal. And those things coincided. It was like a turn of destiny.

Those things coincided with the fact that the chief of the social security in Peru at the time, 1995, when I was already practicing and competing, opened up spot in the national social security hospitals for alternative practices for elders. So, I was kind of on the news, on the newspaper, on TV so they invited me to teach, to implement some of the Tai Chi courses for elders. Me and other people, I wasn't alone. And so, in the next years I moved to the north and then I was working in a lot of clinics, hospitals in the little valleys, the fisherman towns, going to a lot of remote areas of the north of Peru. And the north of Peru actually inherits a very strong cultural tradition that is completely different than the Incas and completely different than the Amazon. A lot of people think in terms of Peruvian, [inaudible 00:06:31] and all that, but that's only in a certain region. Peru's a continental country.

Dave:

It's big. I admit to making that mistake. I went to Peru in 1999 actually, and I wanted to do ayahuasca, but I was in the Incan [inaudible 00:06:52] in Cusco and I bothered the guest house where I was staying until they found a Northern shaman who was practicing in that region, a jungle shaman who came. That was my first and actually only experience with ayahuasca. It was in a stone circle done in the traditional way, overlooking a [inaudible 00:07:13] woman. And funny enough, just by coincidence, I'll be in Lima again in about two weeks after this call. Didn't plan it that way, but it worked out. Visiting again.

Hachumak:

Yeah. I'm going back to Peru in October. I'm trying to do some promotion of the book.

Dave:

Oh, very nice.

Hachumak:

Yeah. So, to go back to the story, I was working in those little villages. I worked for several years, and I was so committed with my exercises. I did my own personal resume of my exercises, what I learned from my different teachers, I kept what was complementary. I chose the best of what was similar, and I was having great results that way. Actually, there was a small documentary about the results and the classes with all these people.

So, it turned out, I never knew it myself, that a lot of these elders that I was visiting, that I was going to the villages to the parties, going to their houses, I was so committed that my work was beyond my hours at the hospital. I was really bringing herbs to them and visiting the relatives that some of them, suddenly, it happens at the same time, it was very interesting, in different valleys, some of them

reveal themselves and they say, "Teacher, you are good with us. I would like to show you some things. Would you like to learn this? Or "That mountain that you see when you are driving through the desert on the left, it's a special place. You should go there and fast for a couple of days and be alone and see if the mountain tells you something."

So, I felt that I was taking care of the people of the land in a very committed way. And suddenly the spirits of the land, the people, wanted to share some of what I had. And that's how my new life chapter started. I never asked for it. I was offered to learn, and it was for me to say yes or no. And I spent the next 10 years traveling, going to the mountains, like ancient pyramids, off the beaten path places. And it took me to traveling to the jungle, everything above the north of Peru, the Northern mountains. And I went into the jungle. I crossed the borders to [inaudible 00:09:31] to Brazil, to the rivers. And then that's how I learn and build up my toolkit, my craft.

Dave:

You're really interesting because you weren't born into this, you didn't have, when you were 15 or 10 or something, the village shaman didn't invite you into the practice, you didn't have a near death experience. You curated this. And what I have found is that when you're doing certain kinds of work, others, like you said, will unveil themselves to you. They'll approach and say, "I see what you're doing," and then they show you something. And I've been blessed to have a few experiences like that as well. You're always like, "Wow." There's people who don't always show things. In fact, a lot of that part of things is hidden.

Hachumak:

Yeah.

Dave:

You've chosen to, at least temporarily, step out of your normal life. You live in an off the grid part of the jungle that's three boat rides away from civilization with 45 families. Yet here we are connecting over the internet. You're in Connecticut right now. And you decided to have a public face again, and you've done this. You had a public face when you were in the government in Peru teaching elderly people. You went silent and learned and now you're public again. Why decide to go public to talk about this?

Hachumak:

I don't think if there is so much thought about that. I was working very hard in Peru. When I work in the villages of the area, in Northern parts, I never charge the people. We are connected into a system of bartering. Whenever somebody needs something, if you have the skills, either psychic or shamanic skills, or just physical skills, everybody helps everybody and then the flow of energy of the community comes back and forth whenever you need it. And I'm very happy to that system.

But I had very tough times at the time. I was married and I had two girls that I was raising, from my partner. And we were struggling a lot. And the government, the pay was small, and it was a change to that. So, we were surviving basically with our activities, but we kept on going. And then suddenly one time I remember I help a lady with a sclerosis and liver cancer and her son that was living in a European country, connected with some people that were traveling looking for shamanism, for experiences. So, I connected with them and then suddenly after I took them to the desert. We [inaudible 00:12:19], they got some important outcomes.

So, I started to get invitations to travel. And then suddenly everything changed because I felt there was so much need, there was so much appreciation, but at the same time, there's a pedagogical

side on me, I guess, that I wanted, when I saw the way, the knowledge was taken and was approached and the things that were happening that were really bad.

Dave:

Like what?

Hachumak:

That people were doing ceremonies without the right protocols and there was a lot of collateral damage.

Dave:

Thank you for saying that. We're going to talk about that.

Hachumak:

Yeah. There's a whole chapter in the book where I'm explaining a little bit of my experiences on that. So, I think that a vocation of an educational thing came into me. And so, I have done some trips here and there. And then the book just came because COVID forced me to stay in the house. Peru was extremely, extremely strict with the lockdowns. And I have been hearing for years when people have been coming to the jungle people I have met, I don't do many ceremonies, I work with very small amount of people, and I really like to rub our elbows for several days until we cook a certain state and we are ready to step into the invisible.

So, during that time, I explain about the language. Is a language that still is in the back of our minds, but we have kind of lost it cognitively. The language of the sacred poetry. Analogy, symbols, metaphors. That's the way the spirits speak to you. Is the language of the dreams. And that's the language that you'll get important lessons through that language. So that wasn't explained. A lot of people had amazing important messages, but they were unable to understand what they meant. So, I have been hearing for years, "Jorge, you should write a book." I wish I knew those things before I had so many experiences. The international community will benefit if you put your two cents in the middle of the whole discussion universally.

And so, I use creative energy for healing. You have to. And the amount of creative energy is limited per day. So, it's up to you to what you are going to allocate it. So now that suddenly I was not doing any more healings, I could not travel to the jungle, I was basically on my sofa watching movies in Lima. Then I decided to put that energy and to finally do the book after so many years of hearing about that. So that's kind of the story, how I came up to here.

Dave:

I get it. People talk about shamans, shamanesses, witches, warlocks, wizards, magicians. Can you tell me the difference between all of these or are they all the same?

Hachumak:

Well, for me, I'm none of those. I'm a medicine man. The reason why is because if you see the translation of most of the words in the Americas in general, it's person who carries medicine, person who has knowledge, person who knows. So many different expressions. In Peru we have [inaudible 00:15:46], warrior shaman, warrior healer. So, I prefer to use a simple translation of an American expression, which is medicine man, medicine woman, medicine person.

Dave:

Is that different than a sorcerer though? Is a sorcerer a dark version versus a light version?

Hachumak:

The thing is that words in Spanish like [inaudible 00:16:27], is the clash of cultures. Those words aren't so important. And so, uses like the word God or the word love, it means so many different things at the same time. And actually, an interesting semantic differentiation would be very interesting. They can apply to different things. But what I can say that is very simple to understand, and I'm just phrasing what I see from one of my teachers, is that everything that interferes with the free wheel of any member of a system when you are trying to assess a case, a situation, will always step into the grayish toward the black. You should never interfere with the free wheel and the free choice of anybody into a system.

And so basically, if you are going to define what is clean to do, if you want to stay as a keeper of the beauty of creation and to open the gates of the flow of the force of life, there's only two things you can do. There's a lot of specific techniques and that's extremely rich, but at the end, they all fall into two categories. One is deblocking, detaching, pushing away, cleaning things that don't belong to the person that are external interventions or parasites inside of the person, sometimes voluntary parasites.

Dave:

And sometimes involuntary too, though. Right? You can have parasites that someone put in there, right?

Hachumak:

You have both. And then there's an interesting discussion about the word curse because it's used with extremely lightness. And that's, I think, a mistake. I'm happy to explain about that in a moment.

Dave:

Please do. Yeah.

Hachumak:

So, one thing is basically cleaning, opening up, detaching. And the other part is nourishing, feeding, nurturing, officiating the sole consciousness of the person, the sole consciousness that is usually shrunk and under the power of the suffering consciousness, which is the negative ego, is the one that's his life, just by ambition, gratification, fears, paranoid thinking. Just from your wounds, you create a partial truth, that is not the real truth. And that overrules the soul consciousness that is the one who already knows everything, because he's connected with the soul of everything. So, you nourish and you enhance that part.

And then you have the shamanic gifts that might come somewhat spontaneously, or you might proactively bring it for people, for different patients or clients that are beautiful, like pinatas, that will help in all aspects of their lives. So, it's basically nourishing, giving vitamins to the soul, or cleaning, pushing away negative things. And that's the only thing you can do. Any other thing that will be about forcing any situation and involves manipulating people's will, even if it looks good from the outside, you should not do.

Dave:

There are a very meaningful number of Western energy workers who don't know what you just said. And they'll come in and their intention is good, but they take away free will from you or from others

they impose. And it doesn't seem like that works in the long term, but it works in the short term. I think there's a lack of knowledge that comes from a true lineage of learning in the jungle from people who've spent decades on it. I want to get your take on something. Oh, go ahead.

Hachumak:

Sorry. Go ahead.

Dave:

When I had that first ayahuasca experience 23 years ago, I feel like I was fortunate because the shaman put a ring of stones around where he was doing the ceremony and afterwards, I actually felt pretty good. I wasn't throwing up like most people. It was only me and another person doing it. But I said, "I'm going to go for a hike." And he almost tackled me. And he said, "No, you're not." I said, "What do you mean? I feel fine. I'm not high. I can touch my nose. I'm okay." And he said, "Yeah, but you're still open. And if you cross this circle that I put in place to protect you, other things will stick to you and it's really hard to get them off." And I thought it was crazy at the time, because I was a little bit younger and more egotistical. What happens if someone does ayahuasca without appropriate protections in place? What are the risks?

Hachumak:

He's right. When you do in the beginning, because when you do, I don't call it ayahuasca, I call it the sacred plants or the healing brew, because there's so many other plants and you keep respect for all of them.

Dave:

Thank you. Yeah.

Hachumak:

Oh, that's fine. But I understand what you mean. So, in the beginning, the journey starts looking inside. That's why usually you work in the night because it enhances the inner look. There's no light, so there's no stimulation for your eyes. You are forced to go into self-reflection. And then during those times, you should stay in the circle. And part of the shamanic craft is about becoming a weaver because you have to weave the space around. And it takes about half an hour to do it properly and that includes even the section from the restroom where people go to pool or whatever outside, everything is included in the cocoon that you weave. And inside that cocoon, nothing that is not for healing can come in. If something comes from the outside, it will always be allowed for a purpose because the healing family, the spirits of the lineage, are watching what you are doing. So, they are there. They are just keeping the space too. So, if you are doing that type of ceremony, you should stay into the sacred space.

But then later, when people are more experienced, more seasoned, and they have work because in the beginning everything is about your past. You might get lessons and revelations, but the main subject is basically your past, your [inaudible 00:22:57] consciousness. The patterns of your personality and the baggage of your painful experiences. But then later, after you do that several times and you develop what I call the internal placement, is that you know already how to place yourself as an observer of what's going on. And you have already done your big purges, so you are not overwhelmed anymore.

Then another phase of the craft comes, which are the walkabouts. When you walk in nature with the plants, with your eyes open, in order to see invisible landscape and learn from it. And actually, there is a hinge practice in between is that usually you take the plants after dark, not even at dusk. You have to wait until the rules of the night are well set. The transitional time between the light of the song and the darkness, the coming of the stars, is like the rules are intermediate. So, there is a lot of things that come in and out there, it's a little bit like commuting in a trade. It's not the perfect, quiet, you need the precise rules of the universal setting. So, you do that in the night.

And then later on, when people have done it several times and the medicine person have observed that the person is already rolling, he knows how to swim in the pool, then you will start a ceremony by probably 3:00 AM. Because the purpose of that is to wait for the first rays of the sun and understand the meaning of the sun, the understanding of what daylight means.

Dave:

I think I've done that at Burning Man a couple times. Or you might be on some certain medicines, and you might be up until the sun comes over. It's pretty spiritual stuff actually.

Hachumak:

Yeah. And then you start to see all the change of the patterns invisible and then the sun comes. And then after that, once you understand that and you do it two or three times, then you start doing the walkabouts and you can also do walkabouts later on with Moonlight and everything. So that's a completely different practice. I will subscribe by what the shaman told you at the time because probably you still have to work more, or you were still very open. And then he was probably working out the right space. And it's just a process.

Dave:

I'm thinking of a certain guy who's a highly traumatized person, who's clearly very bullied, other traumas. Semi-successful entrepreneur does two or 300, maybe more, journeys with all sorts of psychedelics, and then says, "I'm a shaman," and is now administering ayahuasca and other plant medicines to other, I believe he's targeting multimillionaires and billionaires. What are the risks of someone who basically has done a lot of drugs, but hasn't had a shamanic initiation? What are the risks of them serving plant medicines to others?

Hachumak:

Every case is different. I have met people who have told me the spirit of the plant has told me that they should give it to other people, that they should. So, there's nothing you can say about that, just respect the opinion. The only thing is that there are so many cases to resume it, basically a lot of people have a lot of psychological psychotic cracks in their brain.

Dave:

Yeah.

Hachumak:

And this society, this is another big discussion, contains a lot of schizophrenic things. You are told contradictory messages from very powerful sources in the Western society, in the modern society. And those contradictions that you are forced to live with create fractures inside. Most people who have had

the chance to have love in their life, who actually have love today, have love for themselves, they can navigate through that and have a good life. But there's a lot of people who doesn't. So, the plants will open up so powerfully that some of those cracks can get worse. So many cases I have seen in other countries, I have had to fix things, things happening in Peru, coming out with people, coming out with the delirium, persecution, delirium, and then having hallucinations, unable to function.

So, you might be lucky when you work with people who can really hold themselves together. But if you have a few cases that are borderline, you might really harm them if you are not able to move the healing force. The healing force is a gift from nature. The plants can help you in many ways, but the healing force, you acquire it on a different space than working with the plants. And also, you have the force that another medicine person has passed you. It's a gift that you receive and then you keep it inside of you that allows you to really pull the strings on the invisible. That's the craft, it goes to initiation.

And so if you have not received that... On another hand, you also have a spontaneous possibilities. I'm thinking about Edgar Casey, the great mystic. One of the greatest US mystic people who just suddenly got it one day, was there for him. So, every case has to be seen on a particular case. The other thing too, is that you have to keep yourself teachable and you should put yourself in the hands, it's the same as psychotherapy. You should put your yourself in hands of other people that you have an intuition, or you respect too periodically. And I do that myself. I have to. Helps me so much to keep them on the rail.

Dave:

You write in your book about a fake healer in Lima. And I know the U.S. is plagued with what I'm going to call fake healers right now who do not have even good intent sometimes, and certainly haven't developed the healer energy that you're talking about. They probably believe they have, but they haven't and they're going out there and having all sorts of ceremonies. I'm actually really concerned about that because of some of the effects that you just talked about. But you even ran into a fake healer. Tell me the story of your fake healer in Lima.

Hachumak:

At the time, I was in martial arts, and I was not at all into this world at all. And then these two ladies, friends, asked me to go. Kind of a supportive presence, kind of a bodyguard, but I was just there just in case. And basically, this person, this old lady, very strong character, lot of jewel, speaking very strongly. You could see that she was playing a psychological overpowering of people. And everybody was so respectful, so frightened of her. And actually, during the night, she was singing, and people were saying their things and putting envelopes. And we were super dark, and then suddenly we were hearing things just falling onto the floor. And then after a round, they were turning on the lights and you had all these object that were apparently buried that she was supposedly materializing and taking out from where they were buried.

So, you have these bottles with dark fluids or these puppets with things. And then she was saying, "I'm taking these things out," somebody. She was playing a lot the frightening card by saying, "People have cursed you and then I'm taking that." And it was so obvious that on the roof, it was a panel that was a trapdoor there. But for me, the value of the experience was not so much the anecdotal part, which is that thing was like that. It was to suddenly see the credulity of people. The fact that people in pain will put themself through things that are not even reasonable.

And even myself, I find constantly challenges, people who have heard about what I do and didn't want to see me. But they really come with a lot of strong challenges. And there's not a problem at the

end it's just do it and you'll see. The fact that you can work with a healing force in a non-cognitive channel means that you can work with somebody who doesn't speak your language, somebody who can be in coma. So many people that are close to death and they're impaired or somebody who doesn't tell you anything. So that's why I have chosen this proposition. The book is very short on the book, and I want to deploy it later on a larger work, is a spiritual minimalism.

If you strip out the ritual, because ritual is mainly for the mind. It works great, and why not? It helps a lot of people. But it works for the mind. It has to be understood as a tool for the mind to put you on the right mindset for something. But the same way it can put you on the wrong mindset because it can put you as an unempowered acceptance of whatever being. So, if you strip things and you keep the minimum necessarily ritual, then what is left is the essence. If the essence is there, then it can be felt, it's a reality, and it's also, again, educational. People can really see, "Oh, there's true. There's a real invisible world. There is a real force that can connect and that can go deep and modify things in people." It's a force that I think science might be able to touch one day, but this is still far.

Dave:

I think we might be getting closer on the science front than a lot of people think. There's been research globally, Russia probably did some of the best research on this, even going back in the 60s and 70s. There's been a lot of research in China around Qi gong and looking at the electrical and magnetic and other energetics of it. So, there's these bodies of knowledge, but it hasn't been brought together.

Hachumak:

There is a lot of interest. There's a lot of very intelligent people trying to understand. But the thing is that, for example, one of the big frontiers is the mapping of the functioning of the brain. And they're mapping basically electrical fields and connections and the groove that get made on the brain and everything. But one field that has not yet been worked well, if I think, are the emissions. They're not even waves, but the forces that the brain can emit that are not located inside of the physical brain so they cannot be taken by regular imagery. And I'm not talking about those aura pictures that basically are translation of an electrical current into colors, which is kind of not a real picture.

But I'm talking about, to say it in a different way, I will say it in a completely different way. When you read the ancient books that they speak about the powers of the [inaudible 00:35:02], of the mystic things. They speak about by location, they speak about changing the shape, their size, and things like that. All those things, in my opinion, are translation of the work of the visions because everybody was doing their own plans, but everybody was doing it really. If you look deeply. And so again, another discussion.

So, what happens is that when you work in a ceremony, when I focus into somebody, the person will fill me on their side, will hear my voice on their side. Might even hear the touch. But I'm not moving. I'm here. And I'm deploying like a carpet energy that lifts everybody's, again, form of the weaving. It's a lot of weaving in shamanism. So, this is not about the electrical currents on my wave, it's really something special connection. And that, when I am speaking about the doctors, we cannot really think about what will be the way to measure that, to assess that. Because it's not electricity.

Dave:

It's interesting. One of my companies called 40 Years of Zen does electrical mapping for altered states, including shamanic states. And we teach people how to do that. We've had about 1,500 entrepreneurs and high performance people come through over the years. There's a lot of personal development work that happens at the same time that you're getting a picture of your brain. And I've had some very

powerful people come through. Energetically very powerful, medicine people. And a substantial number of them, when I say, "All right, do your thing," they do it and the equipment fails. And it happens reliably.

Two of my friends, who have big names, cannot use wireless microphones because when they go into their full power, wireless stops working, and all of their audio/video people just know you have to have a wired microphone for them. And I found that really frustrating because when I would try to measure it electrically, it's not that it's too powerful, it's that the equipment fails, and you have to reboot it. And it happens over and over and over to the point that it's not a joke and some of these people carry four cell phones because one of them is always going to break and they just keep rotating through. Do you experience that? Does that sound crazy to you?

Hachumak:

No. It happens often. Actually, my grandmother, from my mother's side, I'm talking about the 70s early 80s, when she was approaching the TV set, many times it was just getting blurred, and we were getting electric shocks from her all the time. No, right now, I'm doing this because actually with the engineer, we couldn't have the headphones connected to the computer. I don't know, but they didn't work. No, that happens all the time. I don't know exact; I don't try to make a theory of it. But what I'm saying is that it's something more something than just the electrical thing. It has to be something else. But I don't know what it is.

Dave:

It works across the planet and magnetic and electrical fields drop off at a cube of distance. So, it's not that it couldn't be those because an electrical field continues, the one you're making in your brain, continues to the ends of the universe. It just takes time and becomes so faint that you'd have to be pretty powerful to pick it up. But it is entirely possible, and some listeners may just think I'm crazy, but I'm not, to have a connection with someone across the planet. A real time connection where you have a dream, they're in or they have an intense experience, you pick it up. I have one friend I'm thinking of, I know when they're doing drugs because I feel it and it's the weirdest thing, but I feel it. And I am not an expert in this stuff. I just know more than the average bear. You're far better trained. And you know if you tune into someone that you can pick up what's going on with them. And that's not electrical, it's not magnetic.

Hachumak:

Yeah. I don't know what it is. Everybody has these experiences about, for example, somebody is staring at you on the back and then you feel it on the back of the neck and then you turn. Or you know that the phone is going to ring. Everybody has had in their lives so many things like that. And then the thing about connection, that things come suddenly out of the blue. And then, what's that? I don't have an explanation.

What I am very into saying in the book a couple of times is that emotions, the things that we deal with, the things that we clear, the heavy energies, are closer to matter than energy. Because in shamanism, you assess them as matter. You cut them, you slice them, you suck them, you move them, you break them. They are like artifacts or solids that you move. Myself, for example, I'm all the time liking things like glass artifacts, those Murano blown glass things, because the world where I move when I'm into the invisible is a very amoeba, jellyfish kind of way. This is one of the ways it manifests. So, I'm moving stuff that are like jellyfish, pieces of things like that. Like soft solids. And not all the sentiments are like that, but heavy emotions. Like terror, like trauma, like intense guilt, anxiety. You feel

them as solids. So, it's kind of an intermediate kind of a spiritual plasmatic thing. I don't know. I can move it, but I don't know how to explain it.

But then you have all the things that are extremely more subtle. And the fact that the suffering consciousness is a victim of time, sees time as an enemy. So, everything has a moment, is thinking about the future, trying to change the past. But the soul consciousness is also under the domain of time and the space, but in a way more stretchy way. So, I don't know if instead of vibrations that could be measuring, it's more the approach of the angle that we connect with the setting of the universe, the dimensions. And also, I don't like how some people speak about the multiverse when they have some visions of the future or things like that are quite common in my profession.

But I don't like to call it the multiverse either because it keeps a certain arrogance that saying, "We know this universe, so it cannot be this universe, it has to be another universe." So, we call it the multiverse because actually we know what this universe is. But actually, it's not the multiverse. It's like, we are still just touching a very small reach of this world, of this true universe.

Dave:

I love that perspective. Until you know this universe, how do you know if you're in a different one versus just seeing more of this one? And there's some philosophical digging to be done there. This is actually your first podcast ever, thank you for honoring me with your presence.

Hachumak:

Oh, [inaudible 00:42:28] very happy.

Dave:

You've done some other interviews though that are more written. And in one them you talked about electricity and what you've seen electricity do now that we have LED flashlights and things that can hold a charge for a long time. What has electricity done in the communities where you live?

Hachumak:

Well, in my community and the other ones on the shore, there is no permanent electricity yet. People have cell phones that they charge when they can, where they can. So often they go to larger cities for buying, for selling their goods, their pineapples, their coal, and a lot of the young people have cell phones. But it is going to come. Half of the communities, half of the population is completely pro electricity. They want to watch their movies and DVDs and things like that so it's going to come.

I have a very philosophical approach about electricity. I think electricity was always known, not necessarily to the form of alternate electricity, and can be transmitted for long spaces, but the ancients, what they were calling the sacred fire was electricity, was not a sacred fire. From materials it's Spanish because he steals the fire from the gods. It's not fire. Fire was known long time before. They are talking about the possibility of transmitting the electricity that you receive by lightning.

Myself twice, I have not been hit by lightning, but twice I have been very close. One time I was probably at 50 yards in the plains in the Highlands when I was in my 17, 18 years old and lightning came on the ground. And for an instant, I saw the whole thing lit and I had a pink filter in my eyes, and I was seeing things pinkish for a couple of hours. And my whole sensation and perception changed completely. So, the ancient certainly knew electricity as static form, probably direct current. Many other forms of probably we are unaware, of grounding ways and things like that.

This is the thing. It was the sacred fire, from [inaudible 00:44:59] got punished, because probably humans, we should have never embraced electricity as a tool, or we were never ready spiritually to embrace the powers of electricity. The flux of electrons, which is right now the main power that exists and the power that is having a very strong people and forces interested in controlling, can create worlds. We are seeing that already. The question is, what kind of worlds can we create when we are using these forces and working these tools from our suffering consciousness? From our collective suffering consciousness. What I want, the way I want it, how I want it, and the more the better, and the sooner the better.

Dave:

When you talk about building worlds, do you mean like the metaverse? Like virtual reality worlds or artificial intelligence? What are you talking about?

Hachumak:

Yeah. And the fact that everything will try to be reduced as an algorithm, converted into an algorithm, expressed an algorithm. You can express the suffering consciousness as an algorithm. The map of strong emotions and psychological profiles can be done of somebody. But the soul, justice, love, generosity, hospitality, faithfulness, love in all its forms, sacrifice, gratefulness forgiveness, those cannot be measured, cannot be expressed into algorithms. So, what we are going do is basically put away that reality and then just build an artificial reality by things that can be measured and can be expressed in zeros and ones. And that is going to be a great loss.

Dave:

Why do you say that those things can't be measured?

Hachumak:

With what units can we express gratefulness or forgiveness?

Dave:

Well, the fact that I don't have units doesn't mean we haven't invented them yet. There's all sorts of things that we've created.

Hachumak:

That's true.

Dave:

This is an open call to anyone listening. Hey, come up with a quantifiable way of measuring gratitude so we can measure how grateful all of our politicians are, realize they have no gratitude, and then we can destroy them. Or something else. But bottom line is I'm working on these problems, and I can tell you that if you use gratitude as a spark to light the fire of forgiveness, you can see exactly what happens in the electrical signaling of someone's brain. That's at the center of what I teach people. And what it looks like is certain frequencies in certain parts of the brain will suddenly lose all their power. And the power goes somewhere else in the brain.

It goes into manifestation, it goes into intuition, or it goes into healing. And the states, the things you see in those states, are very similar to what you'll see if there's someone walking around you

banging a drum, or if you're staring in the fire in the jungle after you've had something. There's a great relationship between the two, but they're not identical, but they're so close. And so, can I measure it? I can tell you whether someone's experienced gratitude and experiencing forgiveness because of what it quantifiably and permanently, for 90% of people, permanently does to change the basic wiring of how you operate.

Hachumak:

Yeah. And biochemistry too. The substance can be measured. But those sentiments... It's extremely tricky because in human history, science took a certain line, was developed in a certain way, because everything that can be expressed into units can be sold. So, everything for making big business, you need new fields to allocate units and then create markets. So that's when the scientific mind started to advance. There were a lot of other alternative posturings and hypotheses that were dropped because they could not match the easy handling of units in order to make great businesses.

And that's why a lot of the heroes of science, like Newton, like Pascal or Galileo, they were strong believers into the invisible, they were strong spiritual people. They believed in soul, and they believed in heaven and a lot of different things, but we have stripped those things out of them and make heroes of the full, rational, cognitive approach, binary logic approach.

And that phenomenon happened strongly since the Renaissance and after. We put the attention in what could be expressed in measurements to the point that if you see... The perfect philosopher for the industrial revolution was [inaudible 00:50:09]. The French guy [inaudible 00:50:10]. Basically, he's one of the heads of the current [inaudible 00:50:15] that says mistrust anything that cannot be expressed in a scientific law. Cannot put in an equation, cannot be expressed in units. This is real reality, let's stay with this. The rest? Speculation, leave it there, don't look too much into that.

And right now, with the possibilities of creating, developing, mimicking words with algorithms, we can certainly stimulate people. You tell a story; people will change their emotional field and things like that. But from somebody who sees the invisible, to a certain extent from my profession, the way those sentiments move and what they can do, it's infinite. It cannot be expressed on a unit because it's an infinite source of love and of intelligence. It never ends. It's not that if I give this, I will be deployed of some, I will need to renourish because I'm getting deployed. It's there, it's infinite. It exists somewhere. I don't know where it exists, but it can be tapped. So that's what I'm trying to say. But again, we are in the blind. We are really trying to push the human understanding each in our different frontiers.

Dave:

One of the biggest learnings for me has been to accept that you can simultaneously be rational and irrational. You can be cognitive and non-cognitive, but to do it simultaneously on different levels. It took me about three or four years to wrap my head around that and just to recognize that I've got both of those. And what I had learned, because I actually studied artificial intelligence in my undergrad, and I had a big career in tech building stuff that's still around today. And I took the fully rationalist view, and it isn't very functional as a human being, but it's highly useful as a human being. So, I'm still figuring that one out. That how much of us is rational and how much of us is irrational. And I want your take on that. Are we first irrational then rational? Are we simultaneously both? How does all that work?

Hachumak:

I think intuition is the intelligence of the soul consciousness and binary logic is the intelligence of the suffering consciousness. Phrases like the enemy of my enemy is my friend or if you are not with me, you are against me are like Cartesian tables of logic. Minus plus minus and things like that. So that's how the

suffering consciousness sees things because it's easy to compartmentalize and easy to move as blocks. Squares, when I see people, when I see their containment of the [inaudible 00:53:11] of people, we are sitting on a ceremony and I'm checking all of my patients. Small group of four, five, eight, I see them inside of kiosks and those kiosks have different layering, different squarish tents. And in those layering, you can see screens or tapestries things that are going on in their minds about their past.

When we move to a different space, because the ceremony with the plant is actually structured, when you move to a different space, those squares disappear, and we touch other things about the containment of the heart. What is inside of the heart, not in the mind. So, you can allocate the squares better than circles. So, the suffering consciousness will always choose the binary logic. What we call rationality. But the ancient Greeks that were about, the fathers of reason, as we call them, they were also worshipers of gods, and they were believing in the epiphany and inspiration and things like that. So that part, I will not call it rational, I will call it something else. I like to call it the intelligence of the soul consciousness, because I don't have a word for it.

And I will reserve the concept of irrationality of another space of the suffering consciousness. It's not the articulated space of the suffering consciousness who is able to create all this world and all this technology, because it's able to express and work out perfectly on binary logic. I will call it rationality when your emotions bend your logic. And that's the worst feat of the suffering consciousness is when you change the past, you invent things, you lie, you make things in order to lie to yourself in order to feel better instead of facing a challenge. So that's irrationality. When you stop functioning in a way that can be related to somebody else, and you are just projecting your own [inaudible 00:55:24] of pain.

Dave:

Yeah. I've had a lot of employees and team members do that. They don't want to face whatever it is they're doing so they make up a lot of stories that they sure believe. And that's definitely irrational because people around them see it, always, eventually.

Hachumak:

Yeah. It's a result of the pain. And for me, it's the lack of training into the internal placement. Not to find the intelligence of your soul. I'm going to say something that might sound very controversial, but when I see traditional religion, that is really unpopular today and has done so many mistakes and every institution gets corrupted and everything. We all know that. But there were also great people trying to do good things for community inside. So, the fact that in traditional religion people are asked to pray one or twice per day and do some other practices like a fasting once per year, a pilgrimage a couple of times in your life, those practices are there for a very practical purpose, which is no different than shamanism. Shamanism is the core, the ancient archetype religion.

So those practices are there to help you stop one moment the drive of your suffering consciousness and suddenly stop and connect and look inside and be humble facing a greater power, call it the divine of the universe or whatever you want, and then try to connect with the people around you, your neighbors, on a particular way that is more healthy and is more humble. So those practices were put there as a small part of your daily routine or your weekly routine to try to balance and equalize things. But right now, we live in times in which we despise all those things and everything.

Look at the approach about the plants. The plants are becoming another tool for the suffering ego. What I want, the way I want, how I want it. And actually, what happens, and is extremely beautiful to see, is that when people go for that, and that's okay, they are very welcome, I will never say no. There's a few reasons why I will say no to somebody to come in for a ceremony with me, but not that

one. At the same time, they will work out those things. There will be so many amazing gifts that they will open up to a different angle of seeing life that might change also the priority thing as a bonus. The priority as a bonus. It's very beautiful to see. It's not me who does it. It's just basically the great spirits.

Dave:

Beautiful. One of the things that stands out about your new book, *Journeying Through the Invisible*, guys, if you're listening and you're looking for the title for it, you have a theme of respect. Respect for the jungle, respect for the plant medicines. And just a very, I'll say, clean vibe in the way you write about it. And part of your work is to protect the traditional ceremonies of ayahuasca versus have them be exploited. How do you go about protecting the right use of ayahuasca versus a misuse?

Hachumak:

Yeah. Thank you for that question because that's an important intention of the book. I don't want to tell people how to do things, what to do. In the jungle, even the jungle with Brazil, Ecuador, Colombia, our brother countries, there are so many nations that have different protocols and different ways. The great nations. In Peru, actually, the [inaudible 00:59:21] ethnicity is a great, very advanced nation with great pottery. Most of the protocols that they use that I see around, I think belong to them. Because simply people who learn from who was exposed to these, they have been replicating the protocols. Myself, I learn with more like a Northern, thing is different.

But the thing is that the plants are extremely fragile, talking about ecosystem. When those boats come to the jungle full of people for doing the plants, like thousands coming sometimes per month, people sometimes don't think from where those plants come from. There are a lot of very, very positive, well intended efforts to plant and breed the sacred plants. There's a lot of young people doing amazing experiences, but it's not enough. And so, I will tell you a reality that happens in my area.

There's a couple of communities, a little far away, and I know, I go there. I have some providers of certain plants and ingredients there that I use for cooking my medicines. They have become providers of a lot of very strong commercial lodges. And what I call a commercial lodge will be somebody who has a very strong rotation of people and does ceremonies with large amounts. The validity of this practice is that it was always done on a small scale. It cannot be overstretched because also, a medicine person may be able to perform some amazing things about the invisible, but we are not super humans, our reach is not infinite. I can follow up probably, the largest I have ever done is probably, once I did 13 people at the same time and it was huge and super exhausting to try to really keep all the bridges with everybody at the same time.

So those people who are doing 25, 30, 40, 100 people, 150 people. So that actually is, and I explained that of the book, that is a replication of a different concept. It's priest shamanism. When the purpose is to keep healthy the soul of a community. So, you give the plants usually on a more milder preparation, and then what you want people is to come together and have a mystical communal thing, because that's part of keeping the health of a community. And then so people connect and then they can have some messages and things and purges, but it's about holding people together. And it's beautiful as it is, but the purpose of that is not to dig into the trashcan of their suffering consciousness. It's not really to open the Pandora's box because then you need a very, more particular cozy, personalized approach. And that is done with very small groups because otherwise you cannot do it. You cannot open up an engine, have like a parking lot and work all the engine at the same time.

So that is what is called sometimes, I learned myself as warrior shamanism, [inaudible 01:02:55]. [inaudible 01:02:56] means, in [inaudible 01:02:57], a warrior. And [inaudible 01:02:59] has been spread a lot in the jungle too so it's a lot of common terminology. So that particular way of shamanism is

practiced usually by somebody who is not a priest figure in a community, is more like an isolated person. Kind of the cranky master that lives by the waterfall that doesn't want to be with everybody all the time.

Dave:

Those seem to be the most powerful. The large group, in fact, I had an opportunity to do that and my, whatever you want to call it, my soul, my energy said absolutely not. You feel called to do a plant medicine or you don't. And my nervous system says just don't do that. The downside's way bigger than the upside. And it felt very different. That explains it though because my experiences have been unique and custom versus large scale. But you're arguing there's a use for a large scale thing. It's just not the same experience.

Hachumak:

It's different. And naturally what happens is that, and I'm putting something on the book that I think a lot of my fellow Peruvian people are not going to like at all. And it's based on research. It's that actually the colonial times were so strong and so efficient to really intertwine with the original culture that a lot of the shamanism that is practiced today in Peru has strong elements of two things. The Catholic mass, so a lot of the priest shamanism that is done, and it's sincere, why not, but it's a different thing. So, it's a replication of what should be a traditional religious, probably medieval, ceremony. So, it includes a sermon, sometimes the shaman stops in the middle of the ceremony, the chanting of the drumming, and will give a speech about life and will talk about his opinions about life and how to conduct your life and your things.

But traditionally, it's not like that. Everything is telepathic. You say a few things sometimes extremely strong that have the effect of a leap in order to just help somebody to overcome something. If you say something. If not, everything is through vibration. To voice, drum, and rattles. Even before other instruments and even wind flutes and things like that. When I see myself in my visions, with my spiritual teachers, I am in an extremely archaic space. It's not the Incas, it's not the [inaudible 01:05:39], it's not the Mayas, it's really in times when everything was about bone, skin, stone, wood.

And that's why I think touches so much a very, very root archetype, and the language is based on that root archetype that I can work with people of so many different traditions. People who come to a ceremony and suddenly I see that they are so loaded with a beautiful charge of their ancestry, whether it's Middle Eastern, it's European Celtic, or African. So, I try to go to the root of the most primal definition of a human in archaic times.

And then the other thing that is also mixed in a lot of the ceremonies that are performed in Peru is Moorish, black magic of spirituality. Because the Spanish needed a lot of easy labor for a lot of things. They needed people who spoke their language. So, they imported in different moments over 300 something years that they had the colony, they had moments that they imported huge batches of Moorish people from south of Spain and the north of Africa. And these people came with their practices, came with their books. And a lot of the practices that are done, especially on the coast, in certain regions of the Andes, have a strong elements of medieval southern Spain magic. And why not? It works too. I'm not saying it's not valid, but it's different.

Dave:

It's different. And from what I can tell, the very, very early archaic shamanism, and this comes from some of the textbooks on it, it appears to have spread into the bone of faith or the pre Buddhist faith, which is very ancient shamanic. And then it spread and changed as humanity moved around the planet. But there was that common nucleus. And that's as far back as I've seen it traced. But it looks so different

when you end up in Mongolia now versus when you end up in South America. But there's enough that if you were to meet a Mongolian shaman, you guys would probably be able to communicate. Maybe not with the same language, but you understand the shamanic realms because it appears that they're relatively consistent, even though the techniques morph over time.

And I think that's normal and healthy, but it does offend some people because they think their tradition is untarnished, but I'm sorry, if you're human and you've been with people for thousands of years, we evolve. That's what we do.

Hachumak:

Yeah, it's correct. We evolve. It's like music. [inaudible 01:08:26] so many secrets and so many mixtures. For myself, I'm extremely pragmatic and I call myself a spiritual skeptic. I don't buy things that I hear even if they sound nice. I only speak about what I have experimented because I think we should contribute each other with our experiences to understand. So, I will not speak in languages and expressions that I have not understood myself, learned, or experienced.

So, what I think is that there is a universal language that can be assessed in different ways and as long as there are results, that people really get something, then it's all right. And then you have to make your own homework to talking about spiritual minimalism of [inaudible 01:09:21] and try to stay as close as the essence. Because once you have crops and you add roads and wrapping to the knowledge, you might fall into already creating false beliefs.

So, I try to stay as close to the force of life as I can. I can explain things because I have one foot in both worlds. I got a European education and I read something when I was young, but then my life took me somewhere else. So, I like to make the bridge. But it's not a bridge about creating new beliefs. I'm not selling a frame of knowledge. I'm basically helping people to connect with their soul with different tools, tools that I know. And then they will do their own homework after that.

Dave:

Well, thank you for writing the textbook for the homework that people can do. I really enjoyed your perspective on shamanism and on specifically ayahuasca and plant medicine. The fact that you heard from the medicine, "Keep it in the jungle," and that's what you do.

Hachumak:

Yeah. [inaudible 01:10:30].

Dave:

And I would encourage anyone listening who's thinking that you want to try plant medicine, you want to read *Journeying Through the Invisible* and consider what's there and consider what other techniques you might want to do before that to prepare yourself for it. Because there's a lot you can do. I think you've contributed to the field, and I want to thank you for being on *The Human Upgrade* as your first ever podcast.

Hachumak:

Thank you very much. It has been a wonderful conversation. Thank you very much.

Dave:

All right, guys, you can find this book anywhere books are sold right now. Journeying Through the Invisible and Shaman Hachumak, H-A-C-H-U-M-A-K, of course there'll be links on my blog and all that sort of stuff so you can find the book. If you want to take a walk on the wild side that's very approachable, this is the book for you. And if you're saying, I don't know anything about any of this, maybe it's about time you learn something about it because you're not going to be a highly effective biohacker or human being if you ignore the spiritual side of what you're here to do. And so that's part of what I'm going to be covering for you in the world of biohacking on the show. I'll see you on the next episode. Thank you.

You're listening to The Human Upgrade with Dave Asprey.