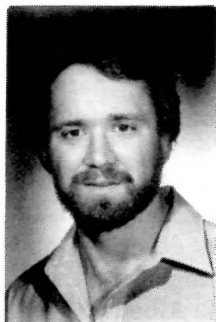


WANDERING IN SEARCH OF A SIGN: A Contemporary Version of the Vision Quest



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Summary

The vision quest was practiced in earlier societies, especially among some of the tribes of the Plains and Plateau Indians, as a method of gaining psychological and spiritual insight. The person would wander into the wilderness, alone, in search of a vision that would reveal a truth. Drawing on questionnaire data and the personal accounts of people who undertook a contemporary, modified version of the vision quest, this paper describes the essential ingredients of this practice. It explores the therapeutic qualities of wandering, relating self to world during the wandering, and attaining insights via the appearance of signs. The vision quest offers the opportunity to tap an archetypal form of consciousness that fosters individuation and activates the subjective experience of unity with the transcendental realm that nourishes the self.

In earlier cultures a method for attaining psychological and spiritual insights was the vision quest. A person would undertake the quest as a rite of passage into an adult identity, or to discover the meaning of or solution to a crisis that confronted the clan. For the spiritual leader of the group—the shaman or medicine man—it was a periodic ritual of receiving guidance, wisdom, and inspiration from the forces or beings that dwelled in the unseen realms

behind everyday reality. The person would wander into the wilderness alone, searching for a sign or vision, perhaps in a dream, that would reveal some truth. Deprived of food, water, and shelter, often for several days, the person self-induced a heightened need state and an altered form of consciousness. Hallucinogens or self-torture were sometimes included in the practice. The mixture of altered consciousness with an intense desire and expectation for discovery triggered an experience, or a series of experiences, that led to insight. Afterwards, the shaman or medicine man might help the person interpret the experience.

Various techniques and rituals for attaining insights into higher truths were practiced among ancient cultures (see Campbell, 1972, 1976). Variations on the vision quest ritual, as described above, played a particularly important role among some of the tribes of the Plains and Plateau Indians (Benedict, 1922; Albers & Parker, 1971). To discover the special powers that made a person unique among his tribe, or when confronted by disease, war, and death, the Indian would seek a guiding vision from a Guardian Spirit. In his widely read book *Black Elk Speaks*, Neihardt (1972) recounts the story of Black Elk, a Sioux warrior and medicine man whose visions foretold the downfall of the Indian nation at the hands of the white settlers. In a less well-known but equally poignant work, Brown (1974) describes his own vision quests to gain an understanding of the psychological and social implications of the clash between the Indian and white cultures—and of the ultimate fate of the Indian people.

Elements of the vision quest are visible in contemporary times. Themes about wandering and searching have often been the focus of popular literature—such as the “on the road” ventures across their homeland of Jack Kerouac (1955) and William Least Heat Moon (1982), and the travels to more remote or mystical locales, as in the journeys of Peter Matthiessen (1978) and Carlos Castaneda (1972). Even the common walk or drive by oneself “to have time to think” bears elements of the vision quest. The idea of setting off by oneself on a journey of discovery—of being the wanderer, the searcher—is a universal, archetypal theme that has surfaced in the lives of ordinary people as well as mythical heroes and great spiritual leaders, such as Odysseus, Siddhartha, and Christ. Similar to the vision searchers of earlier cultures, the person sometimes aims his or her quest towards universal insights

of a social, religious, or spiritual nature. For other people, the quest may be a more personal pursuit for self-understanding. However, the universal and personal insights are often intertwined: as revealed in Jungian theory and discussed also by Campbell (1972), the conflicts and strivings within the life of an individual are often rooted in archetypal themes. For Jung (1961), the vision quest was an ongoing exploration into these archetypal roots, a lifelong process of interpreting his dreams and visual fantasies—of seeking signs through meditation, during travels to remote cultures, and even in his journey through a near-death experience.

I became interested in the vision quest while teaching an undergraduate course on psychotherapy. Because the course emphasizes insight-oriented approaches, I was looking for a confidential, yet potentially effective and meaningful exercise for the students that could enhance their understanding of therapeutic processes and their own intrapsychic lives. One day the idea struck me that a modified, less intense version of the vision quest—a kind of self-directed therapy—might be the answer. The exercise also provided me the opportunity to study some of the therapeutic features of the vision quest and its underlying intrapsychic dynamics. It was introduced to the students as a voluntary assignment, and I encouraged them to consult with me—before, after, or even during the quest—if they had questions or needed assistance.

I gave the students instructions that highlighted key aspects of this ancient practice: (1) solitariness—they had to do it alone, and although they might meet people along the way, extended conversations should be avoided; (2) a wandering away from their usual environment, allowing intuition or “instinct” to carry them somewhere; (3) a wandering of thoughts and emotions to accompany the physical wandering; (4) self-reflection and self-questioning: posing to oneself, as a reference point for the wandering, either a specific question about an issue in one’s life, or a more open-ended question of an existential or spiritual nature, such as “Who am I?”; (5) an attitude of searching and looking, expecting a solution or insight into the question proposed, perhaps in the form of a purely internal realization, or perhaps, which I emphasized, in the form of a “sign” or “vision” from the world around them.

The quest lasted 4 hours, just a fraction of the time an Indian might have devoted to the endeavor, but a more realistic goal for the students. They kept logs of what transpired, which, in addition

to my discussions with them, allowed me to share and help them interpret their experiences. In their logs, I offered comments and questions designed to enhance their academic and personal understandings of the experience; some of my feedback resembled interventions I make in my psychotherapy work.

The year that I first assigned the exercise, the students (and, secretly, I) were skeptical about whether it would be effective. To our surprise, when they returned from their journeys almost everyone agreed that it had a significant impact on them—a result that encouraged me to write a preliminary paper that explored the psychodynamics of the vision quest (Suler & Genovese, 1988). Over the next 2 years I continued to collect data—including the personal accounts of students, colleagues, psychotherapy clients, and my own experiences (a total of over 50 vision quests), as well as objective questionnaire data from the students (see Appendices A and B).

This modified version of the vision quest obviously differs from the ancient practice in many respects—especially in the cultural/historical context and in the intensity of the altered consciousness induced. However, by studying this modified version we can gain insights into some of the important elements of the quest: the act of wandering, the relation of self to world during the wandering, and the signs and insights that occur along the way. These elements touch on universal humanistic and existential themes.

Wandering

People often sense a psychological hurdle over which they must jump before they can even begin the quest. Wandering away from one's routine lifestyle stirs a variety of subconscious feelings that may undermine one's determination to continue the quest. Searchers experience undertones of nervous anticipation and excitement about what might happen. They sense a vague anxiety rising from the feeling that they are on a journey with an unknown destination, that they are leaving behind and separating from the familiarity and safety of their everyday activities. Some experience guilt and doubt because our achievement-oriented culture does not endorse such meanderings. For those who conceptualize the quest as a task to be mastered, there is performance anxiety. The quest stands before the person as an archetypal reminder of the shaman's journey, and of choice and free will—ideas to which our culture

pays much lip service, but which, on deeper unconscious levels, as Fromm (1965) revealed, trigger existential anxiety.

One of my colleagues was working with a psychotherapy client who had a longstanding interest in myth and shamanistic rituals. They discussed the possibility of her undertaking a vision quest as a means of enhancing her progress in therapy. On the morning she intended to begin the quest, she experienced such intense anxiety that she could not leave the house. Agitated and distraught, she decided to conduct the exercise while remaining at home. Afterwards, what stood out in her memory was reading an apocalyptic newspaper article about world-wide devastation due to climatic changes. With her therapist, she described her fear of failing miserably at the exercise. On a deeper level it was a fear that her cherished ideal of being a wandering shaman might be false, unrealistic grandiosity, that her self-image might be devastated, leaving only depression and emptiness behind.

Although the searchers are instructed to carry with them a question or issue as a grounding point for their vision quest, their grappling with it rarely proceeds in any systematic, organized fashion. Those who do attempt to proceed systematically meet frustration and minimal success. The essence of the quest is both a psychological and physical wandering, a loosely structured free association or stream of consciousness and perception, not unlike that in meditative states and insight-oriented psychotherapy (see questionnaire items 1, 2, and 12). It is experienced as a kind of daydreaming, a relaxing of the mind, "a letting go of your thoughts and feelings," as one person described it. The searcher's attention drifts between observations of the external world and internal thoughts, feelings, and fantasies. Previously forgotten memories and dreams begin to surface and are punctuated with periods of heightened affect—depression, sorrow, anxiety, or elation (see items 14, 15, 16, 17, and 20). People often describe the feeling of trying to reach lost or hidden parts within themselves, of being more aware of inner conflicts and contradictions—as if the Jungian vision of the complexes and bipolarity of personality structure becomes clearer to them (see items 8, 19, and 23). One searcher, troubled and confused by the recent death of a close friend, sensed the archetypal intrapsychic polarity of reason and emotion:

I feel like I am telling a story right now. Like I am writing this to someone but I don't know who. I think it is the cool, rational side of

me talking to the emotional, irrational side of me. The rational side is saying that Margaret died for whatever reason—so let it go. The irrational side doesn't feel it's enough.

During the quest, unmoored from one's familiar physical and psychological surroundings, released from the routine tasks of everyday living, the entrenched boundaries of the self begin to loosen and unravel. Once the rigidities of personality structure relax, one is able to retrieve the freed, previously unseen pieces of self that bob to the surface of consciousness. Often, this loosening of defenses causes an activation of visual imagery, which is an important intrapsychic system for representing self experience (Suler, *in press*), and a powerful vehicle for the expression of archetypal themes. One searcher, for example, experienced vivid images from a past dream:

A face appears far off in the distance and grows closer and closer to mine. It is almost touching mine when I wake up out of breath. It scares me because it is the face of the devil. I must be feeling guilty about something. I try to push it out of my mind.

The wandering of the vision quest is a wandering of the focus of consciousness along the infinite axes of the intrapsychic world—and it leads the person to a fuller rooting in the self that is the source of that consciousness. Searchers often describe the experience of “stepping back” to look at themselves (see item 13). This stepping back into the origin of consciousness is a grounding in the “detached” self as described by Frankl (1967), the placing of the self in the noological space where existential meaning and purpose can be determined. In his analysis of psychotherapy and mystical states of consciousness, Deikman (1982) similarly described the “observing self” that is activated by the de-automatization of routine personality functions—the transcendent self, without boundaries, that can observe any thought, emotion, or process that constitutes the “object self.” So, too, the wandering of the vision searcher de-automatizes habitual patterns of thinking and feeling, frees the stream of consciousness, and grounds the person in the observing self that is aware of that stream. Zen philosophy states that to discover the core, true self that is without form or restrictions, we must leave behind the familiar ways of believing and perceiving—we must depart from our “old hometown” (Mountain, 1982).

Paralleling of Internal and External Worlds

Wandering during a vision quest is not chaotic or random. It is filled with meaning and intentionality. Consciously or unconsciously, people drift to surroundings that reflect their thoughts and feelings. At times, the paralleling of the internal world by the external surroundings takes the form of archetypal symbolism. One searcher walked back and forth across a bridge while questioning the decision to marry her boyfriend after graduation; another sat below a weeping willow tree while recalling her childhood experiences with a neglectful, emotionally distant mother. Searchers often feel drawn to a particular place (see item 5)—at times carried along almost involuntarily by an impulse without fully realizing why—as if being directed by a unconscious part of themselves. The visionaries of the Plains and Plateau Indians sought places that possessed spiritual and magical powers; the contemporary searcher seeks places that are powerful with personal meaning and emotion. For those concerned with the past—preoccupied by regrets, unresolved conflicts, and longings for something lost—the pull was towards old, familiar settings. Searchers exploring new realms of themselves ventured unto unfamiliar, and sometimes risky territories (see items 3 and 4).

The external world through which the person wanders—whether it reflects the past, present, or future—always provides a potential context for self-actualization. To discover special powers and abilities, the unique core of one's identity, the Indian searched for a vision from a guardian spirit. So too, contemporary searchers look to the surrounding environment for revelations about tapping the undeveloped potentials of their hidden selves—and the obstacles that block the way. At times the external and internal worlds blend into a remarkable mixture of reality and fantasy that reveals these paths and barriers to self actualization—a mixture that is known to fuel the creative process (Suler, 1980).

One searcher, who lamented the sacrifice of her artistic self in order to pursue a practical career, decided to break away from the trail in the woods. She followed a stream into an unfamiliar area, driven by the feeling that she was looking for something, that she needed to know where the stream stopped. When she discovered that it ended in an old, murky pool of brown water, she remembered a dream—a dream about being hunted as she explored a stream.

At that moment, while thinking about this dream, she heard gunshots in the distance. Terrified, she thought the hunters might accidentally shoot her, so she ran frantically through the woods until she stumbled upon a familiar road. Feeling stupid and angry with herself, she wondered whether she should have taken a chance by wandering from the trail in the first place.

Such surprising parallels between the internal and external worlds are reminiscent of Jung's (1951/1971) concept of synchronicity—the acausal, meaningful connection of simultaneously occurring psychic and physical events. While reading the logs written by the vision searchers, I often was reminded of the mystical notion of the unity and intersecting connectedness of self and world, of the representation of self in the world and world in the self. But not all apparently synchronous events are strictly acausal. The paralleling of the external and internal worlds is often a complex causal interweaving of these two realms. The searchers' states of mind lead them to certain locales, and those environs reciprocally alter their streams of consciousness, often directing the searchers to new, productive avenues of thought and feeling. The meaningfulness of these interconnected, apparently synchronous events may be clear to the reader of the logs, but not always to the searchers themselves. When searchers suddenly do realize the impact of an external event on triggering an insight—when the insight manifests itself in this event—they have received their “sign.”

The Sign

The instructions for the vision quest encouraged the searchers to be watchful for a cue or message from the environment. Something would happen or appear before them, precipitating a new understanding or insight into the question they had proposed to themselves. It was an expectation for a “sign,” similar to the Indian's expectation for a vision. Many people did report such events (see items 25, 26, and 29). The signs delivering the most impact were those that appeared suddenly, by surprise, catching the person off guard. It happened “out there,” but at the same time gripped one's intrapsychic world by revealing an important idea, memory, or emotion. An old man who passed by became the image of the father “who must have loved me underneath all that drink-

ing." A bird's song proved that there was hope for a failing love relationship. Seeing water flow around a dam symbolized the potential to overcome obstacles. A tree stump suggested that one was "stumped" in life.

The woman who felt troubled and confused by her friend's death undertook a series of three vision quests, several weeks apart, to help clarify her feelings. After each journey we met to discuss her experiences. During her second quest, while wandering through a cemetery, a sign suddenly came to her in the form of a bouquet of flowers sitting by a tombstone—a juxtaposition of life and death that caused her to re-live her friend's funeral, and which uncovered the clashing emotions of the mourning process: her feelings of abandonment, sorrow, anger, and guilt. That night, she dreamed of being on a vision quest along a beach when a strong wind blew her into the ocean. The undertow threatened to drag her down, but, suddenly, a stranger appeared and pulled her from the water. During our talk she interpreted the dream as being "saved from drowning in my unconscious thoughts." The dream vision revealed the intrapsychic impact of the quests, as well as her desire to be rescued—which was, in part, a reference to me, and also an important theme throughout her life. She spent her last quest walking around and around a traffic circle near her home, thinking about her life ahead, but reaching no definite conclusions—a sign that there were more issues yet to resolve.

For some searchers the meaning of the sign was instantly clear; it may have triggered a fresh insight or simply heightened their awareness of something they already vaguely knew (see item 27). Other searchers were struck by the feeling that the event was indeed important, though they were not immediately certain about how to interpret it (see items 28, 29, 30, and 33). As they thought about the sign during the remainder of the quest, the layers of its meaning began to unfold, sometimes facilitated by the appearance of new signs. Some searchers only realized their sign and its significance in retrospect, after the quest had ended. Similar to the role of the shaman in earlier cultures, I helped them explore the meaning of their visions. In many cases, I needed only to suggest what the sign might have been in order to trigger their insights. One searcher ruminated about her relationship with a hostile, apparently schizophrenic mother, her quest for independence, and her need to overcome problems by herself—yet she felt withdrawn

and lonely. I suggested that her sign was the turret atop a house which captured her attention at the same synchronistic moment that she heard the lyrics of a song playing on a distant stereo, "If I built this fortress around your heart." Her eyes flew wide open. "It's perfect!" she said. "It's me!"

Indian wisdom stated that the sign appears when the person merges and is one with the surrounding world (see item 7). Similar to mystical states of consciousness, the boundaries of the individual personality loosen, permitting an intermingling and dynamic interplay between the multidimensional facets of self and environment. The representations of self and world become more free, more mobile, enabling a projection of the world into the self and the self into the world. The sign is a crystallization of an unconscious aspect of self, as if an image from the environment is "borrowed" to symbolize a hidden aspect of self to be catapulted to the level of consciousness and insight. It is a transitional object (Winnicott, 1953) to which the self surrenders and fuses in hopes of moving itself through a healing metamorphosis. More powerful than simply introspecting and/or wandering, the entrusting of oneself to a sign relies less on conscious efforts and delves deeper into the unconscious. For some people, the search for the sign is a search for a stabilizing center of the self:

I need to get in touch with some part of myself which used to be safe and secure . . . to delve into that part of me I hope I haven't lost forever. I have to take it back with me.

Encountering a sign highlights a mode of experiencing the world that typifies the vision quest. Our everyday style of consciousness grasps the environment as a collection of things to be used or manipulated, or as things which use or manipulate us. But during the vision quest, the self and world are not at odds with each other. The relationship feels communal, mutually rejuvenating and creating. Rather than seen as a deadened or mechanical entity, the world is imbued with vibrant order, purpose, and meaning. Some searchers sense that a higher realm or state of being is operating through the medium of the environment. The sign may be experienced as a direct manifestation of this higher influence. In his studies of primitive religions and their rituals, Eliade (1959) described this as the experience of the "sacred," the realization of a higher, transcendent reality which penetrates this reality—a vari-

ation of B-cognition (Maslow, 1971) and sensing the "realm of the unseen" in religious experiences (James, 1902/1928). Though they are only distant inheritors of the ancient rituals studied by Eliade, the searchers during their quest sometimes feel this sacred quality of the environment and the transcendent forces that act through it. The sign may be considered a breakthrough of this higher realm, a concentration of sacred space into an "axis mundi," an absolute point of support and meaning that puts an end to anxiety and disorientation. As Eliade stated, it can reveal a solution to one's existential problems—and because it emanates from a transhuman world, it also can open one to universal truths that transcend particulars. It gives one access to the world of spirit.

Individuation and Union

The vision quest facilitates individuation, the process of striving towards wholeness, completion, undividedness, of rediscovering one's uniqueness. This process is multifaceted. The physical and psychological wanderings, punctuated by the manifestation of signs, enable unconscious components of the self to surface and begin integration into the personality structure. By recalling their pasts—a common theme in all the quests—the searchers engaged in the process of "anamnesis" (Eliade, 1959), the act of returning, remembering, and reliving one's origins to fulfill the ontological need for restoring and recreating the self (see items 9, 20, and 36). For many searchers, this return involved the need to recapture something that was lost—childhood innocence, according to the Indian tradition. The very situation of being by oneself, on a journey, and separated from home, stirred in the searchers feelings of loneliness and isolation, with a renewed appreciation of the importance of loved ones to their sense of self—but also feelings of being special, unique, of having endured an exploration and trial of self-identity (see item 35). So, too, the Indian, after completing the passage through the vision quest, achieved a new sense of pride and confidence. The fact that people can benefit from the vision quest with little or no assistance from an outsider, professional or otherwise, points to the existence of a natural, internal impetus towards individuation—the drive to self-actualize as conceptualized by humanistic psychology. The curative dynamics of the sign could not exist if not for this inherent ability to enhance identity

by immersing oneself into the world. The vision quest taps these internal potentials.

Paradoxically, integrating and rejuvenating one's sense of self during the vision quest is attained by momentarily losing the self to a condition of unity that transcends it. To retrieve hidden elements of one's identity—particularly via the encounter with signs—one must first merge with one's surroundings (see item 7). According to Indian tradition, the sign appears only when the searcher lets things happen of their own accord. As discovered by Eliade (1959) in his studies of ancient rituals and William James (1902/1928) in his exploration of religious experiences, one must relinquish the strictures of self-control and pass through a phase of self-abandonment in order to enter the transpersonal unity that renews one's identity. To discover one's true self, Zen states simply, you must "let go." So, too, Christ stated "He that loses himself shall find himself."

Nearly all the searchers, at some point in their quests, felt drawn to natural settings, such as woods, lakes, and rivers, representing an archetypal return to the origins of self. Merging with and losing oneself in these surroundings—a symbolic return to the womb—created feelings of oneness, peace, and contentment (see item 24). Identity is rejuvenated and highlighted by its immersing into and emerging from states of basic unity—an encounter with "boundary experiences" that underlie existential growth (Yalom, 1980). For the vision searchers, bodies of water especially conjured up associations of both the loss of self and rejuvenation, including the fear and temptation about entering a condition of undifferentiation. Searchers would stare dreamily into lakes, rivers, and oceans, losing themselves in the archetypal unifying and purifying powers of water. They also thought about drowning. Sooner or later, almost all the searchers reflected on the most basic existential truth about the loss of self—death. Yet these reflections, consistent with a Heideggerian "being towards death," provoked anxiety as well as fueled the process of individuation. For those searchers who felt inspired by the juxtaposition of old, decaying houses and new homes being built around them, or by a few flowers blooming in an otherwise neglected and dead garden, the world provided a sign that revealed the yin/yang vision of the harmony of life and death.

Conclusions

Each vision quest is unique. Each unfolds as a story with a variety of plots and subplots as subtle, complex, and intertwining as the themes in the individual's life. The periods of doubt, hope, curiosity, frustration, boredom, impasse, and bravery embedded in the quest are but microcosms of the phases through which the person passes in the course of a lifetime. Whereas many of the students experienced moments of anxiety, depression, or other negative reactions, only a few felt they needed to talk to me in person about it—and even then brief counseling seemed sufficient to work through the experience. In fact, people who explored these negative reactions in their logs or in discussions with me seemed to benefit most from the exercise. Although it is possible that people with significant underlying psychopathology might find the vision quest overly taxing, for most people, their own intrapsychic safeguards seem sufficient for tempering the experience.

Some searchers benefit from the vision quest as an opportunity for peak experiences more than others. Not everyone receives a sign or fully yields to the therapeutic potential of wandering, searching, and letting go. These individual differences can be explained in terms of the psychodynamic concepts of defense and resistance. They also reflect differences in the ability to tap and re-experience the consciousness of ancient peoples.

Practicing and benefiting from the vision quest do not require a belief in the realm of the transcendental; many searchers find the exercise worthwhile without sensing the presence of a transpersonal dimension. The personal experience of the "unseen realm" is but one of many potential links between the contemporary version of the vision quest and the ancient practice. Following the literal translation of religion, "religare," to "bind back," the vision quest may offer the opportunity to enter the archetypal state of consciousness in which one subjectively experiences the rejoining of the self to the transcendental source that nourishes it.

Future research should further investigate the therapeutic processes encompassed by the vision quest and how they compare to the features of psychotherapy. Many of the cognitive and emotional events during this modified version of the quest do resemble aspects of the psychotherapy process. The exercise might prove to be a valuable adjunct to therapy, once research clarifies when and

how the quest may be introduced, what clients might benefit from it, and how the clinician affects the exercise by providing guidelines and interpreting the outcome. As a tool for enhancing the awareness of one's intrapsychic life, as well as enlivening the motivation and ability to draw on internal therapeutic resources, the vision quest might also be valuable in the training of psychotherapists and in public education.

APPENDIX A

Items from the Vision Quest Questionnaire

1. I was able to let my thoughts wander.
2. I wandered a lot.
3. I went to familiar places.
4. I went to unfamiliar places.
5. I felt "drawn" to a particular place.
6. At times I was very aware of things around me.
7. I felt a "oneness" with things around me.
8. I felt I was trying to "reach" a hidden part of myself.
9. I thought about my past.
10. I thought about my future.
11. I thought about my present life situation.
12. I did not fantasize during the VQ.
13. I felt like I "stepped back" to look at myself.
14. I did not experience strong emotions.
15. At times I felt quite anxious.
16. The VQ upset me.
17. Generally speaking, the VQ was quite boring.
18. At first I was very skeptical about this VQ exercise.
19. I did not become more aware of my inner conflicts.
20. I remembered dreams or childhood events that I had not thought about in a long time.
21. I was really expecting a "sign" from the world around me.
22. I felt like I was "searching."
23. I did not have any insights into myself or my problem.
24. At times I felt a strong sense of peacefulness.
25. I did receive a "sign."
26. The sign caught me by surprise.
27. The meaning of the sign was immediately clear.
28. It took some time to understand what the sign meant.
29. I received several signs.
30. I understand my VQ better now as I look back on it.
31. After the VQ I felt burned out.
32. After the VQ I felt "rejuvenated."
33. As I look back on my VQ, I better understand my sign.
34. I would not like to do another VQ.

35. In my VQ I learned to appreciate myself.
 36. Durig my VQI tried to figure out my "life story."

APPENDIX B
Responses to the Vision Quest Questionnaire*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Total Agree (%)</i>	<i>Total Cannot Say (%)</i>	<i>Total Disagree (%)</i>	<i>Mean Responses</i>
1	94	0	6	1.6
2	77	3	20	2.0
3	77	0	23	2.2
4	40	0	60	3.4
5	72	14	14	2.0
6	97	0	3	1.5
7	71	20	9	2.0
8	72	14	14	2.2
9	94	0	6	1.5
10	97	0	3	1.4
11	97	0	3	1.3
12	20	6	74	3.8
13	86	6	8	2.0
14	23	3	74	3.8
15	60	3	37	2.5
16	28	6	66	3.8
17	14	6	80	4.0
18	57	6	37	2.7
19	11	6	83	4.1
20	66	8	26	2.4
21	63	11	26	2.4
22	86	6	8	1.8
23	3	6	91	1.6
24	86	8	6	1.6
25	69	17	14	2.2
26	57	29	14	2.5
27	51	26	23	2.5
28	37	17	46	2.0
29	43	26	31	2.9
30	83	11	6	1.9
31	37	3	60	3.5
32	57	12	31	2.6
33	74	20	6	2.1
34	3	20	77	4.2
35	66	20	14	2.2
36	72	11	17	2.2

*Response choices: (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) cannot say (4) disagree, (5) strongly disagree.

Total agree = % answering 1 and 2; Total disagree = % answering 4 and 5;
 N = 35 (27 females, 8 males).

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