

# Speak from the Soul, Hear from the Heart

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Picture this:

- the leaders of five European nations that are in the process of destroying each other have to begin a conversation that might lead to a workable peace process;
- the CEOs of ten of the biggest corporations in America have to agree to an approach that will merge these ten independent companies into three mega-companies;
- a Four-Star General and a politically-appointed Service Secretary have to construct a process that will define the future readiness of the United States Air Force.

The common element in all of these pictures was a simple but beautiful Talking Stick handcrafted for me by my friend, Ross LewAllen, a Santa Fe shaman, jeweler and artist. Ross spent over a month creating my Talking Stick and carved a variety of unique symbols and jewels into it. One of them, a Silver Eagle, represented what he believed was my Origin as well as my Destiny.

When he presented me with the Talking Stick, he told me that there were only two rules in its use: whoever holds the Talking Stick must Speak from the Soul and whoever is listening must Hear from the Heart.

While it is simply an attractive piece of wood, it has been magical. I began using it in my work and it always led to meaningful conversations that quickly got to the heart of the matter. At first, my friends and colleagues were surprised that a nuclear rocket scientist who spent his life trying to make a difference in a giant military bureaucracy would believe in such a thing. But Talking Sticks have been used for thousands of years when conscious, meaningful conversations were required.

The rules seem simple, but they are often very difficult to follow. Speaking from the Soul, Hearing from the Heart may be the only way to get beyond our busy little brains and all of the sensory inputs that get in the way of having Conscious Conversations.

And yes, with assistance from my Talking Stick, the leaders did find a way to start the Dayton Peace Process, the CEOs did create the three biggest aerospace companies on the globe, and the United States Air Force remains the most powerful military deterrent in the world.

But you don't need a Talking Stick to have Conscious Conversations, just Speak from the Soul and Hear from the Heart.

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