Goddess Awakening
The Rise of the Feminine Divine

edited by
Nikki Starcat Shields and Brent BlackLion Nelson
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Acknowledgements

We are so very grateful to all fourteen of our amazing contributors to *Goddess Awakening: The Rise of the Feminine Divine*. They gave freely of their time and energy, and were willing to delve deep into the heart of their own spiritual inspiration and to share it with us, and thus with you. Many thanks!

Once again, all our photos are by Geneva Nelson of G.E. Nelson Photography. We are eternally grateful to her for sharing her powerful and beautiful art. Thank you also to Bridget Shields, our favorite cover model. Our gratitude also goes to Susan Desantis, who loaned us the lovely dress used in the photo shoot. The cover photo and others we’re using to promote this e-book were taken at Bayview Beach in Saco, Maine.
Introduction

This is a time of great upheaval and change in human society. Across the globe, we witness struggle, hatred, racism, sexism, violence, and fear. Climate change accelerates, and the rate of natural disasters increases. Economic development overwhelms local, earth-centered practices and brings poverty to many, while enriching a small percentage of people. Political rhetoric is filled with negativity and bigotry.

At the same time, fundamental positive changes are taking place. There is less war and violence in the world than at any time in history, even though we are more aware of it via the global media. Awareness of the need for sustainability and environmental solutions is increasing. As traditional religions wane, personal spirituality is on the rise, as more and more people learn to live mindfully and make conscious choices about their beliefs and life paths. Grassroots movements grow and affect political policies in powerful ways. Globally, we are more connected than ever before.

What is going on here? The patriarchy, which has confined us in strict roles and expectations for centuries, is now in its waning hours. The backlash against women, people of color, and other groups reflects the death throes of this old way of being. As a species, we are beginning to recognize the need for balance, the need to free ourselves of old ways of viewing our world and one another.

Human consciousness is expanding. As we awaken, we learn to embrace the qualities of the Feminine Divine. We realize that for centuries we have collectively ignored some of the most powerful aspects of being alive. In our focus on duality, we have rejected the heart in favor of the mind. We now realize that in order to be whole, we must open our hearts and integrate these neglected values into our everyday experience.

The Feminine Divine gives us the ideals of compassion, creativity, holistic health, respect for diversity, communion with nature, connection, and collaboration. We seek these ideals in our daily lives, as well as in the new society we wish to build upon the ashes of the old. We look for the restoration of balance between the Feminine Divine and the Masculine Divine, a wholeness that will allow us to embrace our authentic nature as children of the cosmos.

The idea for Goddess Awakening: The Rise of the Feminine Divine came to us during the creation of Starcat’s current book-in-progress. She’s writing a user’s manual for those who are helping to birth this new awakening. It’s called The Heart of the God-

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In the process of writing the book, Starcat noticed how many inspiring women and men are already out there on the front lines, doing this sacred work with joy and grace, day in and day out.

We decided to reach out to this community of spiritual leaders and ask them what they do and how they do it. We wanted to access their wisdom and encourage more people to step into the conscious creation of this new society. We wanted to share not only the why, but the how, with you. The result is this powerfully inspiring collection of interviews.

Our fourteen contributors offer their leadership in a wide variety of ways. There are healers, teachers, writers, coaches, and artists. Some are parents, some travel the world, and they come from a variety of backgrounds. All of them have powerful stories to share. The themes that run throughout these interviews include an emphasis on deep inner awareness, a drive to move beyond old ways of being in the world, and the vital importance of community.

Perhaps not surprisingly, most of those who responded to our request for contributions were women. It makes sense that women, most of whom have been damaged in some way by living in a patriarchal culture, would be drawn to this sacred work. More and more women are living their missions by following their heart-centered callings in their lives and careers. At the same time, many men are also answering the call. They, too, have been damaged by our culture’s narrow focus and rigid expectations. Many of the men we see in our communities are not only embracing this new way of living for themselves, but also helping to support the women they love in becoming empowered leaders for change. We honor those of all genders who are doing this work.

Each of our contributors was given their choice of doing a phone interview with us, which would be transcribed later, or to answer questions via email. Thus the length of the interviews varies quite a bit. Yet each one contains powerful gems of wisdom that we hope will help to inspire you in your own awakening process.

As you’ll soon see, the awakening of the Feminine Divine touches each of us in different ways. We encourage you to read each of these interviews with an open heart and open mind, following the threads that resonate with you. The most profound thing that you can do to assist with this transformation of consciousness is to discover and follow your own spiritual callings. The world needs you, and that’s why you’re here in this time and place. Thank you for your unique contributions to the awakening, and may your journey be blessed.

Blessings and enjoy this magickal gift,
Starcat and BlackLion
Feline Dreamers
Embrace Your Shadow and Shine: 
an interview with Marin Bach-Antonson

Tell us about yourself and your passions. What makes you get out of bed in the morning, excited to get on with the day?

My greatest passion is living a wild feminine life and being a catalyst to help other women rise up! That is the honest truth. I’m passionate about speaking from my heart, sharing my story, listening for guidance and following the wild longings of my soul.

I’m passionate about the holiness of the womb. I’m passionate about women taking back the right-ness of their body, the value of their beauty, the magic of their blood and the rite of passage that is the natural birth process. I’m a passionate advocate for home-birth and homeschooling—both of which I have done with my own children.

I am crazy passionate about the power of ritual, ceremony and circle wisdom. One of my favorite places in the entire world is sitting in a sister-circle of heart minded, soul-centered women. There is nowhere I feel more at home in myself.

I am passionate about deep conversations, ecstatic dance, the awesomeness of books, a sky full of stars, redwood trees, dolphins, whales and I’m definitely passionate about good coffee!

How do you live your life in a way that reflects your deepest values and honors your callings?

The most significant way for me to answer that question is that I have learned to be truly, authentically vulnerable. I have learned the real meaning of INTIMACY which is coded right into the word: Intimacy - “Into Me You See.”

I allow people to see me now. All of me. My messy, my holy, my helplessness, my tender heart and my radiant soul-shine. I won’t make myself small anymore to make anyone else feel comfortable and I also won’t hide the fact that I sometimes still struggle with feeling like I’m enough.

I used to be one of those girls who wanted to rock an internet persona and wanted you to believe that I was strong, sexy, 6 figure-successful and spiritual all at the same time. And you know what, that was a mask. That was never me. Behind that mask I am gentle, soft, fragile, fierce and sometimes still desperate to feel like I belong.
Feeling like I'll never belong was an active core wound for me until I faced the pain of that wound and found my power.

The truth is when I was in 4th grade a group of girls called me out in the schoolyard and announced in front of everyone that I was not welcome to be part of their “group” anymore. I remember feeling like something shattered in my body that day. I was young and humiliated and raw. Without armor to protect me, I took in a crippling amount of shame. These were the cool girls in the class. The pretty girls. I decided in that moment at 9 years old that I was ugly and worthless and I’d never fit in.

It's been many years since that day in the schoolyard and I am proud to have done the inner work to re-claim my beauty and re-instate my self-worth on my terms. I belong to myself now without needing to “belong” to anything outside of myself. It has been the greatest shift and greatest freedom of my life to resolve the shame of that experience and take my power from those girls.

Today, I walk with core confidence and the only reason I have that is because I healed that core wound. I can thank those girls for activating that pain in me. When I was ready, I opened my heart to that pain. It wasn’t easy but it led me straight to my power. On the other side of core pain is always our core power.

Finding the wisdom in pain is another way I honor my deepest calling as a keeper of birth and womb wisdom.

I was a birth doula for eight years and now I am a mentor, a guide, a catalyst, a coach and some say, a spiritual “doula” for women moving through their feminine soul-initiation.

So in short, continually honoring my own pain instead of pushing against it; this is how I honor my calling. Instead of trying to heal or fix my pain, I just BE with it and see what it has to reveal to me. The wisdom is often transformational.

**How would you describe your spiritual path?**

My spiritual path is a path of soul and heart-consciousness, which is another way of saying that it is deeply feminine. My path is not one with rules to follow and texts to study, but rather a winding, curving, mysterious path like a labyrinth. It is not a path of outside authority, but rather an inner path of following my intuition and listening for inner guidance. It is a path of constant growth, evolution and unfolding into my truest self. It is a path of dancing with the shadow as well as communing with the sacred. It’s a path which puts the divine right in the core center of my being rather than outside of myself. The redwood grove near my home is often my church. The heart is often my temple. The ocean often sings the hymns that awaken me.

On my spiritual path, I honor that Source has many names and that everyone gets to choose which name feels most resonant for them. God, Buddha, Universe, etc... The name that feels truest in my cells is
Goddess.
Mother.
Feminine Divine.

I love naming Source in a way that mirrors ME as a woman. It makes me feel included, inspired and luminously happy to know my God in Her feminine essence. In my opinion, there is no right or wrong way to name Source. The most beautiful thing is whatever feels right and most intimate for you in your heart.

**What is your relationship with the Divine Feminine? Or with the qualities that She embodies?**

I’ll start by sharing the story about how my relationship with the Divine Feminine started. Back when I was 20 years old (I’m 44 now) I walked into a large open space in downtown NYC where I had gotten tickets to attend an autumn equinox event. I had been rushing to get there and when I did, the event was already underway. I literally stopped in my tracks when I arrived at the doorway. Inside was a large circle of women sitting on the floor. A gorgeous center altar graced the space and the room was filled with the beauty of candlelight and flowers. The women in the circle were softly chanting and there was a faint drumbeat that kept rhythmic pulse in the room. My whole body responded to what I was seeing! I had never witnessed a women’s circle before and I swear to you it was as if something deep in my cellular body remembered these ancient ways.

That was the moment my relationship with the divine feminine was ignited in this lifetime. I believe it has been a long relationship over many lifetimes.

Following that event, I enrolled in a 2-year long initiation process and the Divine Feminine exploded with grace and glory in my life! It was like waking up after a long sleep! I learned about the cycles of the moon and the rhythms of a woman’s body. I learned about Goddesses and ancient matriarchal cultures. The book *Women Who Run with the Wolves* became my new bible. I chanted and drummed and learned the art of holding safe, sacred space. I held circles for hundreds of women. I did blessing ways and mother initiations. Release rituals and moon gatherings. We raised cones of power and painted with our menstrual blood. We danced like wild women and waved our arms under the stars. I was finding my voice, learning my value, and discovering the sacred power of sisterhood!

The divine feminine had been dormant in my life growing up, having been raised by a mother who knew nothing of her own feminine energy. But after that night in NY, the Goddess was daringly awake and alive in me! I was so lucky to find “Her” at such a young age. It shaped my life, my work, my marriage and gave me permission to do “womanhood” differently than my own mother.

The irony though, is this. It would be many years before I actually understood what it meant to embody the feminine and be in authentic relationship with her. That came much later when I experienced my feminine soul-initiation in 2012.
My initiation was intense and all consuming. In short, I had to “burn” in her proverbial fires. I had to be brought to my knees. I had to be shattered. I had to dance with my shadow. The old me had to die in order to be reborn. I had to heal my inner patriarch and move through my core wounds in order to come home to my heart. I had to be emptied in order to be initiated to the true Feminine within myself.

It was the greatest blessing of my life. I thought I knew Her all those years before but I realize now that I didn’t. I knew Her in form only. After my initiation, She was activated throughout my cellular blueprint and in my DNA. I began to have mystical experiences with Mary Magdalene and Isis who guided me even deeper in my knowing.

This was the activation of my true feminine power and that is when everything changed in my life. All my struggle subsided. Success became easy. Clients flooded in. Money began to flow. Relationships became richer. There was no pushing. No forcing. I just allowed it all to flow and it did. It honestly did.

It was the beginning of living out-loud, on purpose and as the truth of who I am.

So to answer your question, this is my relationship with the Divine Feminine:

I am Her and She is me. I am receptive. I am red. I am still. I am soft. I am sacred. I am the creator and the destroyer. I am the wise woman and the wild woman. I am open. I am dark. I am mystery. I am the moon. I am Her and She is me.

I am juicy. I am raw. I am sensual. I am Shakti. I am not the conventional mind but the contemplation of deep truth. I am the creatrix. I am the Feminine. Holy and Whole.

I am medicine woman. Priestess. Catalyst. Conduit. I am a way-shower who walks in the world to help others stand in their power, reclaim their sovereignty, activate their DNA and also...remember.

**What happens when you lose your way? How do you get back onto your path?**

When I lose my way, I pray. I do ritual. I immerse myself in nature. I call upon a soul sister and ask her to help me see myself clearly again.

It can be hard to come back to center on our own. My soul sister relationships are the greatest gift of my life. They are relationships formed in the new paradigm, with a new level of consciousness.

One of my passions is that I want to teach women how to up-level their female relationships. Most friendships blossom because women find intimacy in shared complaints.

Did you ever stop to think about this?
It’s 100% okay for women to spend an entire lunch listing all the things they can’t stand about themselves and their life to each other. Yet it is totally out of the ordinary to share what we appreciate about ourselves and love about our lives!

I think it’s time we change this.

My soul sisters have the capacity to witness me as I grow. They expand me. They celebrate me. They allow me to be even more of who I am. These relationships will always get me back on my path when I lose my way.

**What tools and techniques do you use to stay on your path and shine your light brightly? How do you nurture yourself and your spiritual connection?**

My answer to this is somewhat ironic. I totally and fully practice embracing my shadow in order to shine my light brightly. To awaken, we must confront the unhealed pain of our past.

I make it a practice to say yes to my sadness. Yes to my loneliness. Yes to the feelings that creep up every now and again around the fear that I’ll fail. I say yes to ALL of me. I no longer abandon myself. I stay with myself when I am in pain. I gently say to the part of me that is in pain, “I am totally and completely here with you now.” I stay present. I practice patience. I make space for the pain.

I have come to understand what an enormous gift pain can be. Now let me just say that pain is different than suffering. Pain is inherent to life and especially to a spiritual path. Suffering is optional. Suffering is the story we make about the pain we are in.

I didn’t always have the capacity to honor my pain. Quite the opposite! I had been immersed in the self-growth movement for most of my life and one of the messages I downloaded early on was that emotions like grief, fear, depression and overwhelm were low vibrational states of being.

For years, I believed that it was my work to transcend and transform these negative feelings within myself. I tried desperately to "yoga" my loneliness. To "self-help" my identity crisis. To "juice fast" my vulnerability.

It doesn’t work. It doesn’t serve our highest good. It thwarts the evolution of our soul.

When we attempt to make ourselves feel better, we are ultimately abandoning the part of ourselves that needs us the most. Whether it be with a green juice or a pint of ice cream, turning away from pain only creates more pain.

I have learned that the most important ingredient for being a bright, beaming light in the world is self-love, and that starts with leaning into pain instead of trying to produce results that are different than pain.
My practice is simple yet profound. I repeat this love statement to the vulnerable part of myself that is in pain.

I say, “I am here. You are totally okay just as you are. It’s safe to feel this.”

I have learned that THAT is self-love!

I don’t say this to make myself feel better. I say it so the hurt part of me can relax into the pain. I have learned that the only way out is through. Emotion is meant to flow. Emotion is simply energy in motion. The word says it all. E-motion. The more we allow ourselves to relax and feel and let emotions flow the faster our bodies will be able to move through pain.

Yet the opposite was modeled for us and as a result learn to spend our whole lives avoiding painful emotions. We eat. We drink. We numb ourselves with TV. We use self-help tools. Most people relate to pain from the masculine paradigm. They either fix pain or try to flee from it. Nether serves our evolution.

Instead I practice relating to pain from the feminine paradigm. I allow myself to fully open to it, receive it, feel it and let it flow. Pain serves a purpose. When we truly understand that, wisdom awakens and our soul blueprints become activated.

**What message would you want to share with someone who is just coming into awareness of their callings or is struggling on their spiritual path?**

I would say this, similar to the above: struggling is not a bad thing. If you have a big mission or a deep inner calling, struggle is necessary. It is inherent to living your purpose, activating your blueprint and experiencing your feminine soul-initiation.

If you get anything out of what I share, please let it be this: Life doesn’t happen to you, it happens for you. The moment you realize that, all suffering comes to an end and your ascension process gets momentum.

So let your struggle work you and crack you open and empty you out! When you are empty, the divine can flow through you and only then can you be a true conduit for sacred service.

There are a lot of people out there today who believe they are here to teach, share their message and have a big impact but they lack something fundamental - HUMILITY.

Humility is the difference between a teacher with a spiritual ego and one who is has truly surrendered to the sacred.

Humility is the difference between someone who teaches what they have been taught and someone who embodies what they know.
Humility is the marker between someone who is still coming from their core wound and someone who has moved through it.

Your struggle brings you through the gateway of humanity. There is no other way. If you are struggling, take it as a sign that you are evolving and moving closer to remembering who you truly are. There is a Zen saying that captures this exactly, "The moment life brings you to the point you do not know who you are, so now, you begin to know yourself."

If life is a shit storm, let it be so. Surrender to the struggle. The struggle awakens the medicine of your soul. The pain brings you straight to your power. You are a wisdom keeper. To know your inner wisdom, you must crack through all the layers of the ego.

If you are truly ready to step through the gateway of the initiator Say to life: Shatter Me.

Hopefully it will!

**Share with us your vision of an ideal future – what does our world look like with the resurgence of the Feminine Divine?**

Oh! I believe it’s already happening! If you open to Her, you will find Her everywhere! She is emerging with ferocity. The heart of the world is opening fast and all the chaos and violence and racism and war we see played out in the media is simply the collective shadow. As the Sacred Feminine emerges, we are moving toward reintegration of that shadow so that we may experience sacred wholeness. It happens first in us individually. Then, as enough people move through the integration, there will be a tipping point and we will do it on a collective level.

Yes, the Sacred Feminine is rising and she is unstoppable. Just this morning I came across the most brilliant spoken word artist on YouTube. His art, his message, his energy - everything was in alignment with the emerging feminine. This brilliant young man’s name is Prince Ea. If you don’t know him, I highly recommend watching his videos. He is a conduit and a healer and his essence will expand your heart!

I see a future where more and more people fully step into their sovereignty and share their essence without holding back - just as this young man is doing.

He represents the new paradigm. There are so many young people like this. They are filled with energy and vitality and soul-fire. They won’t be forced into a job that doesn’t serve their highest good. They know they are here to speak their truth and live authentically.

Stepping into our collective sovereignty. Expressing our essence. Speaking our truth. That is the brightest future I can imagine. And it’s already on the way!
What roles will those of us on this path play in that future scenario?

In my opinion, our primary role is to fully commit to doing our own inner work so that we may remember our soul print and activate our DNA. When that happens we will remember who we are, what wisdom we bring and what we are here to share.

So many people are seeking to discover their purpose. Yet so many people have the whole thing backward. Again, they are coming into the conversation totally immersed in the masculine paradigm which is all about action and doing. No one will find their true purpose in that paradigm. First and foremost, you must awaken the feminine within and ascend to the new paradigm. There, you will understand so clearly that your purpose is not what you came here to do. Your purpose is who you came here to BE. The whole thing will make you laugh because it’s like a big cosmic joke.

Gandhi understood this when he shared, “We must BE the change that we wish to see in the world.”

Our primary role is to turn 180 degrees from focusing our attention outward and turn inward. There you will find your way home to sacred essence within you and all will be clear.

What steps can we start taking today to move towards that vision?

As mentioned above...do the inner soul work! You can start setting down the mask you wear and telling the truth to yourself.

Try this. Make a list and free write for a full 3-5 minutes filling in this prompt:

The truth is ___
The truth is ___
The truth is ___

Write it over and over and over without stopping or editing! There is no right or wrong. Just be open to letting your truth flow.

Here is an example:

The truth is I am tired.
The truth is I am scared.
The truth is I hate when I’m tired and I get those black circles under my eyes. I hate the black circles.
The truth is those circles make me feel vulnerable. It’s hard walking in the world feeling vulnerable.
The truth is I wear armor to protect myself.
The truth is I am so much more creative than I feel right now in my life.
The truth is I believe I can write a book someday.
The truth is I worry I won’t ever do it.
The truth is I am powerful.  
The truth is I am pretty.  
The truth is...etc, etc, etc.

Start there. Tell the truth to yourself. Get to know yourself behind your own mask.

No change or transformation can happen in our lives when we are fighting with ourselves. We must come into resonance with ourselves before anything can shift. If you are resisting who you are, where you are, what you do, why you are here, then you are wasting so much precious energy at war with yourself. You don’t need to like where you are, you just need to tell the truth about it so you can stop the fight and free yourself from your own prison.

This is the first step I take my clients through. It’s transformational to be witnessed in your truth, so I recommend finding someone you trust and sharing yourself in this vulnerable way with them. Vulnerability is power. It is the point where everything can change and new possibilities are born.

**What would you like to add, that we haven’t discussed yet?**

Thank you for the opportunity to share myself, my stories and my feminine wisdom.

The only thing I’d like to add is this blessing for anyone reading this. These are the words the Divine Mother showered me with to gift to you. As you read them, allow them to be directed straight into the heart of your younger self.

You are enough.  
You matter.  
You are important.  
You are worthy of everything that you want in your life.  
You are okay.  
It’s all okay.  
You are loved just as you are.  
You are loved no matter what has happened in the past.  
You are loved.  
You are loveable.  
You are worthy of love.  
You ARE love.

Marin is a Master Coach, Matrix Healer and Inspirational Catalyst in the emerging women's movement. She has over 20 years experience facilitating ritual, rites of passage and deep soul-initiation work for women moving through the ascension process and rising up into their feminine power.
In her business Rise Up Goddess, she helps women unleash the inner wild woman, reconnect with their authenticity, activate their soul print and embody their true purpose. Marin is the creator of cutting edge sisterhood programs like the abundant-goddess revolution, the body-love revolution and the self-love revolution programs. She specializes in working with women who are ready to live out loud, on-purpose and as the truth of who they are. In 2017 she’ll launch The Priestess Rising Initiation Program.

Connect with her at Rise Up Goddess, [www.riseupgoddess.com](http://www.riseupgoddess.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Riseupgoddess](http://www.facebook.com/Riseupgoddess)
Tell Your Story to the Dance Floor: an interview with Toni Bergins

Tell us about yourself and your passions. What makes you get out of bed in the morning, excited to get on with your day?

That’s always a good question, right? You know, I think I’ve just always been a very enthusiastic person. I really love life. I’ve definitely had my ups and downs, like everybody. But I really do love the experience of being in a body, and it’s taken me a long time to get to this place where I love being in a body.

What else gets me up in the morning? Well, I’m a mother, and I have two children who are in their teenage years. It’s easier now because they can do things by themselves, but they used to need me every minute of the day, so that was a big reason to get up in the morning. But really I just love to feel the experience of being and that is what gets me up in the morning right now.

Tell us more about the work that you do.

My work is more of an evolution of myself. I’ve been teaching a dance process, but it’s so much more than that. It’s about holding space for people and helping them remember who they are - the innate sense of themselves. My biggest teaching, whether it’s on the dance floor or as a mentor who helps other people in life, is that anyone can choose their thoughts and really resonate with what truly, truly lights them up. It’s about living our authentic self, not hiding out in these roles that don’t suit us, and not living these lives that don’t fit with what our true essence is.

I think a lot of people get stuck in these lives that they’ve chosen to live based on what was expected of them and what they were told to do. I’m a perfect example of that, and luckily I jumped off to the other train track before I got stuck in that regular “what you’re supposed to do with your life” kind of thing. That’s basically what I teach people, by the example of just being myself. It’s funny, people will sometimes say to me “oh, you’re so awesome!” and I’m like, “yeah, just being myself. I’m not any more awesome than you are, you just think I’m awesome because I look like I’m having fun!” (laughs).
I really do think that. I think that I teach people how to have fun. People will take my dance class, or they’ll come to my workshops, and they have their whole inner life kind of blown open. Sometimes their outer life even gets impacted, but one thing they always say is “oh my God, that was so much fun!” That has a lot of meaning because people have lost their ability to just be playful and experience all of their emotions. Whether they be difficult emotions, or joyful, ecstatic emotions, people want to feel, and that is why they keep coming back, because they want to feel something.

**How do you live your life in a way that reflects your deepest values and honors those callings?**

Well, I certainly have fun every day, no matter what. I usually keep a super positive attitude. I let myself feel. I have really great people around me that I feel safe with and can process with and who live this life on a deep level. I never let go of my mission. I’m definitely a hard worker. If you interviewed me like, two years ago, I would definitely have said I was a workaholic, in the best of senses, with my passion. But I’m trying to have more fun now, and not be so attached to my mission. I definitely am a mission-driven person who’s now trying to have more fun. Is that funny? (laughs)

**Your mission is to have fun.**

Right, my mission is to help people transform their lives, and to have fun, all at the same time.

I’ve learned so much from the people who come into my life, who want to join the JourneyDance tribe. I feel so lucky, because everyone who comes into my sphere is some kind of a seeker, with a passion to live to their highest ideals, live to their highest possibilities, to really break out of the box and do something different with their lives.

It might be that we’re at a cultural cusp where all of these people are in the right place right now. Even ten years ago, it was weird to not have a “job.” Now everybody is working and piece-mealing their lives together in these amazing ways, like a tapestry, as an art form, and that’s what I’ve been doing. I feel like now we’re much more in alignment with what we wanted than even ten years ago. I feel like there has been evolution in terms of life-changing possibilities.

As for living my values, I used to set myself up with a lot of intentions, and then wish that I hadn’t, because I had other things pop up during the day that didn’t meet my intentions. So now I set myself sort of a prayer, which is my own personal connection to Spirit – whatever you want to call it, Divine Source, guides, higher self – and I sort of roll into that each day knowing that I am on my path. “May today be a beautiful day on
my path, where I meet the right people, say things that are helpful and loving and supportive and beautiful, and may all my actions be in alignment with my higher self.” Something like that.

I have a sense of trust that I’ve developed, that I’m always on the right path. Nothing is really ever going to be the wrong thing to do, regardless of what it is that I’m involved in. I’m always me. I think being yourself is probably the most important thing that anybody could ever be. So that’s what I try to do, to always be myself and show up as that person in every situation, and try not to step into roles and places that I know are not me.

**You already talked about this a little bit, but how would you describe your spiritual path?**

I think my spiritual path is an eclectic spiritual path at this point. I’ve studied tons and tons of actual religious doctrines. I’ve read a lot of amazing works, from the Bible to the Bhagavad-Gita to the amazing people who are currently writing, to all kinds of spiritual paths that I’ve studied over the last 25 years. I remember when the first *Creative Visualization* book came out. I’ve studied people from Starhawk to Shakti Gawain, of course Eckhart Tolle, from everyone who’s current to all the way back to, like, yoga in the early 80s when it was a totally different thing than it is today.

My spiritual practice is definitely a combination of dance, meditation, personally inspired yoga, writing, and my own style of expressive art. It’s kind of this big combination. What I’ve done in JourneyDance, because I really wanted everyone to feel like they had a place to have a spiritual practice, was that I created this thing called Personal Practice where every morning we get together and we all do either art, writing, divination card readings, movement, dance, yoga, whatever it is that you want to do. The whole room is set up in this amazing way where everyone has a spiritual practice, all alive in that moment, all together, all different, whatever they are.

The key to it all for me is music. I do feel that music is very connected to my soul, my spirit. So I’ll pick music that will suit my soul. It’s kind of a strange thing to say, but music is my spiritual practice. Listening to it, making it, singing, moving to it, whatever. I think my spirituality is innate. I think everyone is innately spiritual, so it’s just sort of there in the way that I think about things. Creativity, I guess, would be it. And I like to say that weird is my religion.
I love that. I can picture that room with everyone doing their practices, that’s very cool.

It’s so fun. It’s so awesome. We have some sharing time, and read our writings and show our art. There are whole workshops I’ve created now based on this idea where there are hours of musical landscape and people doing their thing, whether it’s moving, writing, drawing, or whatever it is. They get so into it.

We forget that it’s that simple, to just tune in and connect with ourselves. What I teach from a spiritual practice standpoint is that all the emotions are part of your system, kind of like the Abraham style, but I teach it in a physical, visceral way on the dance floor, that it’s okay to feel. Whether you have to process grief, anger, resentment, all the things we have to process in life, it’s actually possible to meet with your higher self, with your inner wise parts of you.

I do that all the time, I ask myself “what would my higher self say right now?” if I’m in a situation that is really difficult. “What would my inner shaman say? What would my medicine woman say right now, and do I need this help?” I’m going in and accessing other parts of myself. Of course I have outer guides as well, people who I trust and call on as my support, and that’s really important. I think everyone really does need outer support and an inner life. It’s a combination. I have my outer support, I have a woman called my soul counselor who I’ve known for twenty years. She has her own complete life, but for me in my development as a soul, she’s been by my side and helps me really stay on my path of authenticity.

I’m also a Jew. I was born into a Jewish family and I have a Jewish background and a Jewish mind and a Jewish value system, which is very strong in that religion. The values and the morals have helped me as a foundation to be what I would call “a good person,” like being a good Christian or a good Buddhist or a good whatever. My parents were very into all of that, so that was definitely ingrained and conditioned in me as a child, to do good.

What is your relationship with the Divine Feminine? Or with the qualities that are associated with the Divine Feminine?

Such a hot, fascinating topic right now! I believe that we are all, well for me, I am a mixture of both the Divine Feminine and the Divine Masculine within myself. I feel like I am a fused being, I am a Shiva-Shakti fusion, that is who I am! (laughs). I have this whole access to my Shiva, to my intensity, to my masculine, to my force, to my effect on the world, like “Boom!” I am just there in that way. My Divine Feminine, I’ve been working on developing for years and years and years, my relationship to that mother,
holder, the space that I create, my softness, but yet with that same power and energy of creation. The energy of life force for me is like the Shakti, that is my Divine Feminine, that side of myself that is really the creative one that can hold the vessel long enough for it to be birthed, instead of just plowing into life without that reserve. There’s something really deep there to me.

To be totally honest, JourneyDance is 80 to 90 percent a women’s movement, it just is. At our last tribal gathering, we had an amazing group of men who are accessing their masculine-feminine blend in such an amazing way. But it is still 90 percent women coming into these events. And I say that in terms of the Divine Feminine rising, that there are so many people coming into the programs and the trainings because they are ready to step into their fuller expression, their sensuality and being in these bodies and being able to hold this loving, healing space. That’s what I really think, I think the Divine Feminine holds this loving, healing space, and that it’s happening more and more. We’re ready for that to really take hold and move in the world in a new way.

I think the Divine Feminine has always been here. There’s never been a time without it, it’s just that we’re talking about everything more now, everything is more accessible to us because we are more globally interconnected. Whether it’s via the collective consciousness or whether it’s via the internet, we are so connected now that we have to balance out the patriarchy and we have to move into this next phase of development. I think it’s happening right now as we speak, in our government, in this time period.

We’re very conditioned to be like the Divine Masculine everywhere in the culture of America - in this country that I know of, because it’s where I actually live. I’m sure it’s different everywhere, but here we are behaviorally conditioned. We’re taught that driven people succeed. All the masculine qualities get actual positive feedback. They do. And the glorification of violence...

I have two boys, fourteen and twelve year old sons. They love the superhero movies. It’s their thing. They’re adorable and I love them and I’m letting them watch it, but because they live with me, they know they are always going to get my side of the story. I said to them, “Oh, I hated that movie. That was just pure violence to me.” And they’re like, “Oh my God, it was so funny...” I’m like, “I don’t think it was funny.” We have all these discussions about how we’re conditioned. I chose to put my boys in alternative schools so there might be more potential to shift their conditioning.
To get a little more personal, what happens when you lose your way? How do you get back onto your path when you get knocked out, say by the movies, or whatever?

Oh, the news. That’s my biggest knockout, the news. Ugh – the news.

I feel it. I will let myself really be angry, and cry, and talk about it, and process it. I don’t go too far down the rabbit hole, because then I’ll be a mess. But I’ll let myself at least just have an emotional release. I know it sounds really simple, but when I’m off my path, if I try to get back on forcibly by being positive, I feel like I just fake myself out and I don’t really feel inspired. But if I really just drop in and say, “Wow, I’m not in a good place right now. I’m feeling extremely disillusioned by the world. I’m feeling sad. How could people do this to one another? Why?” I have to go there. I have to let myself dip into that and just touch it, touch the pain, the collective pain, my personal pain, or touch my grief, or whatever is happening. Then maybe write a little about it, or dance it.

Of course, that’s what I do, I dance everything. Dance my story. My famous kind of tag line that I’ve been dancing for the last 20 years is “tell your story to the dance floor.” So I tell my story to the dance floor and somehow I come back to my knowing that I’m part of something larger and that I’m here to keep that flame lit. I’m here to be the one, or one of the many, one of the ones who will always be able to find my way back to my inspired self.

And I do sometimes get uninspired. When you practice something for so many years, you have to - I have to re-invent it for myself every time I hit the dance floor. I have to reinvent my own practice every time I go to it, so that it has impact for me. If I’m not feeling it, I can’t teach. I can’t be the dancing shaman unless I am in that process 100 percent. That’s how I am. I don’t do it as an exercise, I do it as a practice, every time. So I’m bringing my own material to it.

The other day I was feeling very, very uninspired. I went for it. I played a song and said to everyone “What do you do when you’re feeling uninspired? Let’s see if you can make up a dance to this music.” It was really weird and funky, and we had a blast. I found my inspiration by connecting with other people in that moment and being a witness and seeing and being seen. It’s really amazing how non-verbal language does so much for me personally, in terms of how I get back on my path.
The next question is about tools and techniques, which you already talked about, but let me re-direct it to self-care. How do you nurture yourself to keep yourself going?

I sleep a lot (laughs). I love sleeping. I move a lot. I walk, I bike, I love to get my body moving. I swim, I dance, I spend as much time as I can at the ocean. I love the ocean so much. I wish I lived closer to the ocean – that’s something that I will do someday. I spend time with my family and have deep conversations. I have love in my life. I feel so blessed. I have such incredible amounts of love. And I have so many amazing friends, I can’t even tell you – I feel so blessed with how amazing my friends are.

I think it’s because I gave so much over all the years, that the people who really see me and know me and love me have become such important close friends in my life. They’re not people who are like the local neighbor who is my good friend, it’s people in my JourneyDance community who know the power of what we are doing together as a tribe and they are just there for me. I have an amazing tribe of support if I need them.

There are so many basics – we could talk about food, we could talk about taking a bath and writing in my journal and all that stuff, but that doesn’t seem as important to me to talk about in this particular case, because we’re talking about the Divine Feminine. It’s the community that has developed around me and that I’ve been a part of creating that’s really so nourishing for me. Making music with people is so fun to me, that’s my new favorite thing. Dancing with people, making music with people, this is my self-care. I feel like that’s what it is. I really feel like my career is actually part of my own self-care. When I’m on the dance floor with the people and we’re interacting, I get to be human, I get to experience myself in all of my weird parts, even more than in my daily life, where I’m much more taking care of the details of life. So again, back to the practice, that’s my self-care.

What message would you give someone who is just coming into awareness of their callings or is struggling on their spiritual path?

Well of course, the first piece of advice I would give is to dance! Get your body moving, express it in ways that don’t make sense. My biggest advice is to get out of the perfectionism box. That’s for everyone whether they’re in addiction, self-abuse, I mean, just get out of the perfectionism box, be weird and let that be okay. Being perfect and trying to do everything right is pretty much the downfall of us all. Of course, be lovingly weird. That would be awesome. Forgive yourself no matter what has happened in the past. You can make a new choice every day.
Listen to your thoughts and if they're not nice, and if you're being mean to yourself or if your thoughts are too harsh, or they're repetitive and you know it's not your true inner voice, cut them loose. Say thank you very much, and choose a new thought that feels better. One of my spiritual teachers says to me, “What would you prefer to think?” I love that question. “What would you prefer to think?”

If you’re highly sensitive and highly emotional, which is what most of us are and we’ve just numbed out, on the spiritual path we’re trying to reawaken. So let yourself feel. Even if it’s hard. Even if you have to cry for some time, and punch a pillow. Let the discharge happen, because after the emotional wave, there is peace. Listen to music that is pleasingly evocative, not harsh or too close to the edge or too much, but something that is evocative and will allow you to express yourself.

Really the biggest thing is to practice real, radical self-love. If the people that you’re surrounding yourself with are not in alignment with you vibrationally, you gently move in different directions. You do it really consciously. Find the people that you resonate with so that you can continue your reawakening. That’s really important for so many people who feel like they don’t have a place because they don’t fit into their world anymore.

I know it’s really hard. I mean, when I had my awakening, I changed my entire life on a dime. I’m sure I offended a lot of people, but luckily I was young and I didn’t care, but now I care. I was 23, and I was like “I’m outta here, I’m moving, I’m quitting this job, bye bye,” and I just left. I was living in New York City and there were tons of people there, so I don’t think anybody missed me (laughs). I’m being funny. Now I would say, really find resonant people, that community that feels good. Find the teachers that inspire you. Remember that we’re all human beings on the journey, and take what inspires you to grow.

**Give us a glimpse into your vision of an ideal future – what does our world look like with the resurgence of the Feminine Divine?**

First of all, there’s a new trust that has developed. There’s a new trust that pretty much everyone has got each other’s backs. We know more. Something opens up and we know more, and when we look at people, we see them. We see a person. We don’t see a million judgments pop into our mind about that person, we just see the person. That would be an amazing future. Just that little bit, that there was a little bit of trust, and that you could just look at someone and say “Wow, look at that person, that person is experiencing life just like me.” That would be amazing, instead of judging everybody and putting them in boxes and categories and labeling them and all the pain that is cre-
ated because of that. Whether it’s sexual orientation, religion, all of that stuff that we’re struggling with right now. It’s so painful, you know?

Knowing that if the Divine Feminine were to be surrounding us in these beautiful wide arms of the mother, and that we all come from this oneness place, we’d feel like we had a lot more friends. I hate saying things like “There would be no violence, there would be no poverty.” I mean, this is an evolution that will have to happen. I do believe that there will always be duality in our existence. So, it’s just finding the way that the Divine Feminine can just kind of swirl in, move the energy, make some shifts – because, the Divine Feminine is powerful, it’s big. She’s the Shakti, she’s the energy, so we want to breathe it in slowly and start to enliven from that.

I feel like if everybody was really living from an enlivened place, that would be awesome. I think that there’s so much numbness going on that needs to be shaken up. So that people can say, “Oh, wow, you know what, if I actually was not numb, what would I want to do? How could I contribute to this amazing society?” I would love an artful, creative, fun society, where everybody was an artist, themselves – whatever you want to call it, whether you’re an artist of technology, or an artist of writing, or an artist of food – everybody is an artist. That’s kind of my fun way of looking at it.

What roles will those of us already on this path now play in that future scenario?

I would say just keep being the incredible person that you are. Keep being the one who is helping others to awaken to that love that resides within themselves. Keep nourishing your own love that resides within and you’ll get to be one of those people who are a beacon of light. “That person is so fun to be with” or “I just love the way that person thinks!” It’s really an internal spark. Keep your internal spark going. Keep your fire lit and just keep being you, and that’s how we make the best impact.

I used to be very mission-driven, like “we’ve gotta have a purpose, we’ve gotta have a philanthropic focus, and why are we not doing more for the world?!?” The more I tried to do outwardly for the world, the more stymied I felt, and I was less determined. So I decided I just have to keep doing what I’m doing and being myself. Even my smallest contribution is having a ripple effect. I always say to people “You’re a butterfly! When you flap your wings, what message are you sending?” Just keep doing that. If you just keep being your own little lighthouse, it will be enough, that’s my hope. That is my hope.
That is so beautiful. You kind of answered this next question with that, but the question is, what steps can readers start taking today to move towards that vision? So, maybe, what little steps could they take in order to be the butterfly?

You already are the butterfly. It’s innate. So every thought that you think – I would say, really live that high ideal that you have. Live that creative vision that you have. Really. If you want to write a book that’s going to help people – like what you guys are doing right now, it is exactly what people need to be doing. You have a passion project, you want people to know more about this, you’re out there and you’re digging, you’re looking for people, you’re not just writing the whole book yourself, you actually reached out for a community to write this book with you. That to me is a perfect example of how to make this happen. What is that little drop that you want to drop into the water that sends a ripple effect? You’re doing it every moment.

For leaders, I would say just keep doing what you’re doing, collaborate more, get your words and your art out there. Let it be seen. I think being seen is huge. Let yourself be seen. As all those marketing people say, “don’t be the best-kept secret.” I think that it’s a funny phrase that marketing people use, but it’s great. Don’t be the best-kept secret. Be seen. Open the window a little bit more so that more people can see you, because you never know who’s ready for that next leap.

Is there anything you’d like to add, that we haven’t discussed yet?

I’m sure there’s a million things! (laughs). One of the things that I say to people when we’re out on the dance floor is: you are the prayer. Just remember that you are the prayer. There isn’t a particular religion that makes the prayer right. You, yourself are the prayer. So as you move through your life – your thoughts, your feelings, your breath, your body, the way you treat your self – this is the prayer. To remember that as we’re dancing, as we’re working, as we’re parenting, as we’re driving in our car (that’s where the ultimate shadow side shows up, by the way, driving in your car – but we’ll talk about that in a more comical interview)...

I tell people, “Whisper to yourself: I am the prayer. It is my breath, it is my body, it is my feelings, it is my thoughts.” We are that. We are that vibration of the thing that we came here to be. Everyone is uniquely individual, human, and the prayer. We give off electric current. We literally are impacting the consciousness and the people around us all the time.

So when I teach dance work it’s about having people realize the energetics of it. I don’t even really teach movement, I really teach energetics. I mean, there’s dance, and it’s
great, and everyone’s dancing around, but it’s really energetics. It’s about that. So I
guess I want to remind people, and to remind myself, everyday, that *I am the prayer.*
Ask yourself “What do I really want?” Come back, take a breath, re-evaluate. “Oh, you
know what? I want to handle this in a different way.” And hug someone who you
wouldn’t normally hug.

**Thank you so much.**

You’re welcome.

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Toni Bergins, MEd, has been developing JourneyDance™ since 1997. She has now
touched the lives of more than 75,000 people through her classes and workshops. She
believes that movement has a power to transform by bringing people back in touch
with their innate energy and creative wisdom. Toni has a light sense of humor, a deep
wild passion and authenticity that makes JourneyDance™ accessible to all. She has
produced a popular instructional JourneyDance™ CD, clothing line, and set of Love
Your Body! Love Your Life! cards. She has been featured in Yoga Magazine and Fit-
nessRx. Toni leads a growing team of over 500 JourneyDance™ Teachers internation-
ally and continues to offer classes and workshops worldwide.

Connect with her at JourneyDance, [journeydance.com](http://journeydance.com)
Tell us about yourself and your passions. What makes you get out of bed in the morning, excited to get on with the day?

At this point in my life, I’m blessed to have a loving partner and two beautiful sons who, together, represent quite the holy trinity of the sacred masculine (the Hunter, the Father, and the Sage). So, yes, I’m passionate about lover-hood and mother-hood, but, if I’m being honest, it is most often my sacred work that gets me out of bed every morning.

I’ve just finished writing my first book about wild woman spirituality (Woman Most Wild, coming from New World Library in Spring of 2017), and I’m slowly recovering from the immense, creative output that experience was…. I write every day. Writing is something I have to do, like eating and breathing, and I feel I have no right not to continue.

Long before I felt able to write about Wild Spirituality (when I was still writing long and fantastical novels primarily for my own escape and had yet to give myself permission to come fully out of the broom closet), my baby was the Living Mandala Yoga teacher training programs, and I look at this aspect of my work like my most mature, sacred work child. I will always love it, and this work has shaped the landscape of my entire life. Teaching aspiring yoga teachers to reframe yoga as a sort of feminine body prayer, supporting others in finding and honing their own sacred work, and designing rituals to mark healing and transitions is where a good deal of my passion lies right now; I do not see that changing anytime soon. I also paint and work with wool, but my passion for visual art tends to come in waves. I do my best to listen for the Mystery’s direction without losing my own sense of agency, and I stay passionate about my work by allowing it to evolve with me.

How do you live your life in a way that reflects your deepest values and honors your callings?

Years ago during meditation, I was told, in no uncertain terms, that my purpose in this life is to “help women be fearless,” and, while I would add to this mission nowadays by acknowledging the “fearless feminine” instead of holding my purpose as gender-specific, I still try to infuse that singular goal into all of my work. I try to live my life as an agent of change, and I try to be as vocal as possible about it. I did not come here to whisper, and no great, social dismantling will be sourced from quiet voices.
How would you describe your spiritual path?

I am a strong advocate for Wild Spirituality, which I know as the unapologetic fusion of sex to spirit, the embrace of nature as divine, and living in alignment with Earth rhythms. I attended a strict born-again Christian elementary school as a girl that, along with countless churches and endless Sunday school lessons, did some serious damage to my feminine psyche. I believe that the absence and/or subjugation of the divine feminine within most major religions is a still grossly overlooked mechanism of oppression; this exists within many Pagan paths also, and the presentation of a lone god as masculine is absolutely detrimental to a woman’s spiritual development.

I also hold a deep conviction that every woman resonates with the archetype of the Wild Healer. We all have an inner Witch who wants to be liberated, who wants to run naked through the woods and roll in the mud and brew healing concoctions and dance bare-breasted in the moonlight. We are all Her. We are all the wild Witch who is a feminine healer, and we are called, at this point in the global community's evolution, to bring Her out of the shadows where She was pushed, though not irrevocably trapped, during the hunts.

What is your relationship with the Divine Feminine? Or with the qualities that She embodies?

I hold a strongly Tantric perspective on the Divine Feminine. Not only do I see myself and all other women as embodiments of the Goddess; I see Her in all things. Everything is God-Goddess-Mystery. There is no holy and unholy. She is everywhere and everything, dark, light, and in between. She is all things that are manifest in our world, and She is cyclical. The Holy Feminine births, comes to fruition, then dies over and over and over again. She is constant only as she is ever-changing.

What happens when you lose your way? How do you get back onto your path?

I try, with all that I am, to be as forgiving of myself as I am of others when I lose my way. My go-to philosophy, which is much easier said/written than enacted, is that a woman’s spiritual practices will wax and wane as does the moon. In essence, we are supposed to “lose our way” from time to time, trusting that we will find the path again when we are meant to.

What tools and techniques do you use to stay on your path and shine your light brightly? How do you nurture yourself and your spiritual connection?

Oh, my Witch’s toolbox is well-stocked. The yogic sadhana, or regular spiritual practice, has been an invaluable tool for my spiritual development over the years. I was introduced to yoga at a very young age, thankfully, and it was and has continued to be my saving grace. As a teenage girl who held an intuitive knowing that body and spirit should not be separated despite every belief system into which I was indoctrinated citing otherwise, yoga practice offered me my first glimpse of the Holy Wild.
Every day, I engage in a form of whole body prayer, usually combining breathwork, kriyas, intention, and ritual. Sometimes I integrate spell-work into the practice, but I cast spells less often now than I used to. I try to use the sadhana time to be as sensually and spiritually present as possible; some days I’m fully there, and some I’m not. Some days, my sadhana lasts hours, and some days it is less than five minutes. Some days I’m working with a particular deity, but many days I am simply trying to honor the divinity within me. I tend not to resonate with any God or Goddess that feels external; if I can really feel him/her/it in my bones and know that particular divine essence as part of me, then there is a particular sort of magick to working with deity. I try to create the container for practice and hold space for myself without judging or having any real expectations. Both yoga and Witchcraft are practices; they are not religions, and they are exactly what you make of them at any given moment.

**What message would you want to share with someone who is just coming into awareness of their callings or is struggling on their spiritual path?**

I receive messages on a daily basis from both women and men who are challenged by the call to Wild Spirituality and concurrent absence of any external resources for support. I usually give them a few book recommendations then tell them they should not feel alone, that there are so many of us out there, and that their awakening is integral to the collective global awakening. Wild Spirituality is an intimate, personal pursuit; no one can tell you how to do it, and we wouldn’t want them to. Begin seeing the divine in yourself every day. Affirm that the Holy is not external, and let the re-wilding begin.

**Share with us your vision of an ideal future – what does our world look like with the resurgence of the Feminine Divine?**

This is a tough one. I believe that the resurgence of the Divine Feminine will not be a peaceful, quiet process. I believe, with all that I am, that the collective feminine is very angry, has a right to be so, and must vocalize and harvest this rage before the future we all desire can come to fruition. The qualities generally framed as feminine, such as passiveness and reception, will not serve us right now, and it is difficult for me to articulate what the ultimate outcome will be. Greater, pan-gender equality, yes. Fierce validation of the unique purpose held by everyone’s soul, yes. The acknowledgement of sexuality as divine, yes. Widespread environmental consciousness, yes. But first, we must rise and we must rage, with whatever resources we have been gifted, and we have to do it in a way that transcends individualism and violence. Feminine anger is holy, and it is the very crucible within which this new world will be birthed.

**What roles will those of us on this path now play in that future scenario?**

We have all been born into these bodies, in this time, for a reason. This is a pivotal point in human history, and our souls have designed this life for us in order to serve a greater purpose. I think everyone’s particular role is different, but if you harbor an intuitive understanding that the feminine divine is awakening now, then you have a responsibility to share that wisdom widely and loudly.
What steps can we start taking today to move towards that vision?

Look to your passions and your wounds; these are keys to your purpose. Reflect and record moments of “bhava” in your life, when your body, mind, and spirit were all yoked together in unified action; these moments are clues to why you are here, and we move toward our collective vision every time a human being, of any gender, honors their truth as a Holy Soul in our global community.

What would you like to add, that we haven’t discussed yet?

I want to encourage those who resonate with the Holy Wild, with the divine feminine, with yogic practices, and with witchcraft, to closely examine their spiritual beliefs, that is, the convictions held to be true about our universal connection to one another as human beings and to the natural world. Know that feminism rallies against oppression, and feminist spirituality should gift you with choices and not make you feel limited. Do not let your spirituality confine you in any way. Do not make your spirituality and sexuality sleep in separate beds; they were never meant to. Pray with your whole body, and let your bare-breasted spirit dance to the beat of your heart-drum every day.

Danielle is a long-time activist for Wild Spirituality and the divine feminine’s return. A multi-media artist, yoga teacher trainer, and energy worker, Danielle is on a mission to inspire women to be fearless creators of their sacred work. She is the author of the soon-to-be-released book *Woman Most Wild* (coming from New World Library in Spring of 2017). She holds the highest designation from Yoga Alliance as an E-RYT 500, is the founder of the fully accredited Living Mandala Yoga teacher training programs, and believes in holistic healing for the sensual, creative, and spiritual self.

Her work is grounded in holding space for women to harvest their inner Priestess through personally relevant movement alchemy, intuitive artistic practice, and divine feminine spirituality. Danielle leads women circles, Witchcraft workshops, energy healing trainings, and basic (200-hour) and advanced (300-hour) yoga teacher trainings outside of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where she lives with her partner Ryan and two young sons. She believes that all women alive today are meant to be instrumental in supporting positive social transformation through wild woman spirituality, reclamation of the name Witch, and the magick of sisterhood.

Connect with her at Living Mandala Yoga, [livingmandalayoga.com](http://livingmandalayoga.com)
This Is Why We Practice: an interview with Kimberly Moore

Tell us about yourself and your passions. What makes you get out of bed in the morning, excited to get on with your day?

Well, every day is new, all over again, isn’t it? Over the years I’ve become a big morning person. I like the quiet. I do my mantra chanting, I tend my altars. It’s really all about greeting the day, starting off on the right foot, making it all sacred. That’s how I start my day and get excited. I work from home, so I’m really lucky in that way.

In the “real world” I have a social media company, and I’m a food writer and recipe creator on The Hungry Goddess. My fun and my passion and my expression as a priestess of Goddess is the MotherHouse of the Goddess and the Mystery School of the Goddess. So, I tweet, I pin, I pray (laughs), I write, and I cook food, and that is what my day is. It’s pretty exciting.

It sounds like a lot of fun!

It is, it really is. I feel so grateful and blessed to have an expression in this world that really aligns with my soul and how I perceive my mission for Goddess.

How do you live your life in a way that reflects your deepest values and honors your callings?

It’s funny, when you look back on your childhood and think about how you’ve evolved to this point. For me, I was kind of lucky because my family never told me, “no, you aren’t feeling or perceiving or seeing or dreaming about...” the things I came up with as a kid, spiritually or metaphysically. That allowed me a real free reign to follow my soul path, and it really has evolved.

When I moved to Florida 23 years ago, I met my community, and connected with the community in a really deep way. Goddess is part of my life every day, every moment. I have more than 100 images of deity in my home. Altar-building is not only a passion, it could be called an addiction (laughs). So it’s like those visual cues, for me, are a way to really devote to and honor the Divine Feminine, although I have some male deities hanging around as well. I just recently moved back home to Delaware, a couple of weeks ago, so getting back in tune with nature up here, out of the heat of Florida, has really been an incorporation too, for me, of Goddess and nature and the world around us. To look at everything as holy is really something I strive to do every single day.
How would you describe your spiritual path at this point? You mentioned your mission, and if you want to talk about that a little bit, too, it would be great.

I am a priestess of Goddess, and I’ve been doing that for 21 years. So I do a lot of different things. My mission has changed over the years, in the expression, not in the devotion or the faith. I have certain deities and pantheons that I’ve really been called to work with, like the Greek. I do a lot of ancestral and beloved dead work with Hecate, the Greek Goddess. My creativity and my passion is all Shakti (laughs).

I am actually also in formal training for Lacumi, the Afro-Cuban religion, to become a priestess of Lacumi. I am a daughter of the orisha Oshun. That’s kind of added a fun spin to everything. So for me, I call it “planting Goddess seeds everywhere I go.”

I really love finding Goddess, and leading people to Goddess, as kind of an “aha moment.” I think that She is present in every manifestation of religion and faith in the world, and it’s really exciting to see the Divine Feminine making a true impact on people, even those within traditional structures. In fact, that could be some of the most exciting evolution of the Divine Feminine going on right now.

So, my mission is really “Goddess seeds – plant them everywhere you go.” Make it fun. Introduce people to that – especially women. I really enjoy working with women in particular, because Goddess is such a manifestation of who we are on a soul level. I think that for us to have successful lives and relationships and archetypal connections, it’s really important for women to connect with the Goddess within.

Yeah, it really makes you feel like you’re Divine as well.

And we all are, yeah, women and men. And, too, the men connecting with the Divine Feminine enhances their own relationships, not only with themselves but with women and children in their lives. It brings about a really powerful new paradigm in the world.

You talked about this a little bit, about being a priestess, but what is your relationship with the Divine Feminine and Her qualities?

Well, it infuses every part of my day (laughs). I kind of look at everything through a Goddess lens. I am really a very devotional person in my faith and in my expression of that. All of my practices are extremely devotional. I do a lot of research, a lot of writing, a lot of exploration, and practice. She’s just part of everything that I do. And He, sometimes, too. But really, Goddess is first and foremost. Whatever I’m doing, however I’m bringing to bear my expression in the world, She’s part of it. Founding MotherHouse of the Goddess has really been amazing. The reception that has been given to us and the evolution of it has been incredible. It’s exciting. Did I answer the question? (laughs)
Tell us more about the MotherHouse of the Goddess.

MotherHouse of the Goddess is...well, I kind of look at every ten to twelve year cycle, it tunes in with your Jupiter return, astrologically. My priestess mission changes, so in the early days I was very much a community priestess. I did a lot of work hands-on. I led rituals that ranged from 10 people to 300 people, all in person. I created a women’s temple, and then retired from it when I moved out of the state in 2005. Then I became more of a virtual priestess. I was doing a lot of traveling; I was living in Arizona, and London, and Utah. I also became a little bit more focused on my internal priestess journey. As much as we express ourselves in our communities as priestesses, I think then we need some time for us, to go back and learn and refuel.

So, MotherHouse, in the past couple of years, has become that virtual global priestessing. In the beginning, it was a place to put my writings, and some wisdom and teachings and experiences with Goddess. And practices – I think it’s helpful for people to hear what others are doing every day. It just kind of grew.

I knew I wanted contributors, and I began reaching out to a lot of Goddess women in different communities. We now rotate through sometimes up to 20 or 30 contributors. It’s been three years, and we’ve had a wonderful reception. We do Goddess Alive Radio, we do courses through Mystery School of the Goddess, with over fifteen instructors. We have a Goddess Full Moon Group, and a New Moon Group. Everything is done virtually, though. We’re really looking to reach out to women and men all across the world, and MotherHouse has been the vehicle to do that.

Let’s shift gears a little bit. What happens when, as we all do from time to time, you kind of lose your way? How do you notice that and how do you get back onto your path when that happens?

There’s a really great phrase that I always try to remember: “this is why we practice.” So for me, doing things like mantra and meditation and energy work and devotional tasks and rituals and ceremonies – these are all practices. Practice means something you do repetitively. One of the most potent results of practice is that when you hit the wall, and everything seems chaotic, or challenging, or stressful, or sad, our practices kick in for us. This is why we practice. We practice so that when those obstacles come up, we can shift ourselves. We don’t remain stagnant. We don’t keep wallowing in those sometimes-crazy emotions. Everybody does. When life throws you a curve ball, everybody does. But we don’t have to remain there.

I also follow astrology pretty carefully and closely. So sometimes I’m able to offer it up, to just say, “okay, the planets are crazy, I’m not.” (laughs)

I also find that in devotional practice that, the more we release, the more we offer it up to the Divine, and just say, “okay, you know, I can’t be in charge right now, I’m just going to give it up to You” – that sounds so easy, but it’s really, really difficult sometimes – but when we offer it up, even from a fetal position, and just trust, that Goddess is going to shift us. That Goddess is doing this, or these things are happening for a reason
that’s contributing to our karma, our evolution, our growth, even though it sucks in the moment. Hindsight is always great (laughs).

**You touched on these a little bit, and maybe you can go deeper. What tools and techniques do you use to stay on your path and shine your light brightly? How do you nurture yourself and your spiritual connection?**

Nature, for me, is huge. Being in natural surroundings, connecting with animals and trees and water and all of the elemental things that are provided to us so beautifully. I think that’s an amazing way for anyone to ground, center, focus, get back to our core. I use mantra a lot. I began a daily study and practice of mantra about nine years ago. Sometimes I do 108 Sanskrit mantras a day, sometimes I do 1008 or more – it depends on the day and what I’m doing. It’s a great way to start your morning, to really connect up to the Divine, activate your throat chakra, that communication and articulation, and I find that it really centers me in my heart to begin my day.

I do ceremony. Again, I love creating altars, I love researching new Goddesses or finding out new tidbits about Goddesses who I’ve worked with for a long time, and I really implement those very practically. I think ritual is a powerful way for us to learn positive intention setting followed by positive action. When we are really offering up our energies, our focus, and our intentions to Goddess, we are forced to be clear in ritual or ceremony, and use all of those sympathetic energies and tools that are important to you, whether it be your incense, or your malas, or your crystals. I love all of that, and it really enhances your focus. I think ritual and ceremony creation is important, because, again, it focuses us, it centers us into this offering that triggers some new brain patterns for us, and connections, and can have an extremely real-world impact on our lives.

**What message would you want to share, either with someone who is just coming into awareness of their callings, or maybe someone who is struggling on their spiritual path right now?**

Ah. Well, I’ll start with the struggling, because a lot of people do, you know? (laughs). So, there is this really amazing book that I read 23 years ago, and there’s a part of that which stuck with me. The book is *Voices of the Goddess*, edited by Caitlin Matthews. It’s an anthology of stories about priestesses and women who have come to the Goddess path and how they got there. Naomi Ozaniec, who is this amazing writer and teacher, made a comment in that anthology that has stayed with me forever. She said that just because we have been called, or just because we have accepted the role and mantle of priestess or priest, does not mean that our lives get easier.

In fact, sometimes they can get more difficult, because we can’t be fully in relationship with the Divine without empathy. We can’t be fully in relationship with our community, or in leadership, or as a guide, without empathy. Sometimes, crummy things happen just to give us that empathy. So that down the road, you encounter someone who is going through a very real struggle, and you’re able to connect on a much deeper level. That has always stayed with me.
So, with struggling, I think the message is to remember empathy, turn the focus on how it’s happening, and offer it up. Say, “I can’t do this alone,” and give it up. If you think about a little child with a toy that’s broken, and they’re huddling over the toy, going “it’s broken, it’s broken, it’s broken,” well, it can’t get fixed, can it, if you don’t give it to somebody? (laughs) Go get a new toy. I think that’s the really important thing. I’ve really been blessed with a lot of faith, and I get that confirmation back to me all the time.

And someone that’s first starting? Gosh, have fun! Explore, and be very, very open to signs, and omens, and portents. I love how the natural world will confirm things for us. Messages come from all areas. As I said, I just moved back to Delaware recently, and the second night we were in our new home, we pulled into the driveway and there was a red fox just standing in the driveway. It ran down the driveway and across the street. Red fox is very powerful for me, and it was like this welcome home, and a confirmation that I was really where I was supposed to be. Then the hummingbirds come in, and all these great things – my first nature walk here, I found a great horned owl feather. I really take these as clear messages from Goddess, to give me information and to give me confirmation. So, for people starting out, and even people already on the journey, just have fun! Be joyous, and look at the world with wonder, because when you do, wondrous things are reflected back to you.

Now we can kind of ride that little wave of energy...share with us your vision of an ideal future. What does our world look like with the resurgence of the Feminine Divine?

More kindness, more compassion. How about smarter thinking? (laughs) Smarter working. More respect. It’s been very interesting to see some of the pushback. As the Divine Feminine experiences this resurgence, and is coming in to change paradigms within traditional structures, and creating new ones, there’s pushback, right? Because we’re in this information age where we get news 24-7, from all over the world, we’re really being given an opportunity to practice discernment, and also to see where things are really happening in the world, and where the pressure points are. The pressure points give us more information about where the shifts need to happen.

I say kindness and compassion and respect, but I also believe that Goddess is immensely powerful and transformative. So it’s not always the Kwan Yin (laughs) that’s needed to come in. Sometimes it’s the Kali, with the combat boots and the hair on fire, and she’s pushing some very intense changes. So, I see a world where one in four women isn’t raped. I see a world where stay at home mothers are valued as much as the CEO of a business. Where the opinions, contributions, and power of women and all human beings are really valued. I think we’re in a pressure cooker at the moment, so it feels scary and intense. We’re in those grounds with Kali at the moment, and on the other side is Lakshmi, or Kwan Yin, the kinder, gentler side. But until then, Goddess goes to war. Lots of them.
What roles do you see those of us who are on that path now playing in that future scenario?

Education, leading by example, absolutely. The more grounded and focused that we are, and the more that we can reflect to others that grounding and focus, and that energy of Divine Feminine – it’s a potent way to break down the patriarchal structures. You live by example, by how you live your life and how you treat other people, and I think that sets us up to really be the voices and actions of Goddess in this world. I think also, to be clear about what your calling is. Some people may be led to more of the social justice, out in the forefront and making those changes happen. All kinds of leadership are required, so I think to honor everyone who’s bringing the light in is really, really important.

What do you think the steps are that we could take right now to help us get to that vision?

Education and communication. We’ve had a rough few months in our world. We’re kind of inundated with the news cycle, and stories of violence and hatred and awful things. My message, through MotherHouse and through my personal life, has been to stay in your heart. The heart is never going to lead us wrong. It’s a place where we can keep ourselves away from that violence, so we’re not overwhelmed by it, but also to just kind of be that lighthouse.

Again, I think people are led to do different things. As I said, there are people who are doing amazing jobs with social justice and educating all of us. So, those of us who aren’t on those front lines, I think our job is to disseminate the good, disseminate the positive messages, to make people aware and to educate. And be it. Really, really, be it. You can’t say, “gosh, I believe in a world that would be full of kindness and compassion,” and then go out and start trying to run people off the road because you’re pissed off.

We all have our moments, but I think that we have to be able to adjust ourselves, and really observe how we manifest in the universe, and how we stand in our hearts. What does your heart want? Does it want you to get out there with a bullhorn? Or does it want you chanting 10,000 mantras a day to bring in the light? Because both are equally potent and powerful.

A follow up question – you talked about how you have all these different contributors with MotherHouse of the Goddess. Collaboration is really an important value of the Divine Feminine. How do you nurture that in your own work?

I’m a Libra, I’ve got four planets in Libra, so I love collaboration (laughs)! I think that’s another powerful message for right now, that we don’t have to do it alone. When I talk to new contributors or instructors coming into MotherHouse, I always say, “together we’re stronger – and there’s enough for everyone.” I believe in an ecosystem that supports women and their creative juices, that caters to that and also makes competition a non-issue. It doesn’t need to happen. There’s enough for everyone.
When we all pull together and really acknowledge and honor all of these Divine strands – I simply love that throughout my week I talk to people all over the United States, all over the world. I talk to people who are following shamanic paths, and kitchen witches, and yoginis, and all of these women who are just shining their lights. To me, it’s so beautiful, and so cool, and so fun, that I just wish I had more time in my day, and another eighteen arms (laughs), so that we could do it even more. Growth is certainly on the list, upcoming. How cool is it that we can really look at and acknowledge all of these Divine strands, and how people are expressing themselves creatively, and in Goddess, in the Divine Feminine? It’s stunning.

It’s so exciting! Talking to people for this e-book has been so inspiring.

I can imagine! How fun. What a beautiful project.

Thank you. What would you like to add that we haven’t discussed yet? Is there anything you’d like to expand on?

I think, just to reach out to Goddess. She reaches back. Whenever we ask a question, whenever we make a comment, whenever we do ceremony or meditation, or even have a repetitive thought, there’s an answer. So just pay attention to the answers. They come in surprising and wondrous ways. Sometimes they come in very chaotic ways (laughs), but there’s always an answer. We just have to be open to it. And have some fun! Don’t be afraid to follow your heart or what is aligning with you.

I’m a woman with blond hair and green eyes who comes from a Germanic-Irish background, and I have worked with the orishas for eighteen years. Now I’m in training to be a formal priestess of Lacumi, an Afro-Cuban tradition. It’s a very unusual position, but I followed my heart, the orishas called me and I answered. I speak to women of color who work with the Celtic deities in ways that I’ve never experienced, even given my ancestral ties. Be open to it, be open to the magic and to what Goddess is calling you. She comes in so many forms, there is something for everyone.

Kimberly, thank you so much for being part of this, we’re really glad to have you.

Thank you, and so many blessings in the evolution of this! Thank you for including me.

Kimberly F. Moore is a Creative Catalyst and Mentor for Women; Shakti-Powered Entrepreneur; Goddess Priestess; Blissful Revolutionary; Writer; and Photographer. She offers coaching and online courses to promote the Everyday Sacred in women’s lives personally and professionally. Shakti is the female principle of divine energy and the power of Shakti is the creative source of the universe. All women have transformative, innate Shakti energy within them. Kimberly’s mission is to kindle the remembrance and union of Shakti energy and the Divine Feminine in women’s lives for empowerment, purpose, and radical bliss.
She is the Founder of the MotherHouse of the Goddess and Mystery School of the Goddess. Kimberly has been a Priestess of the Goddess for more than 20 years. Her areas of practice and teaching are focused on Goddess Spirituality, Comparative Mythology, Archetypal Psychology, and Ritual Practice. She has a special connection to the Goddesses from the Greek, Hindu, and Yoruban traditions, but has worked with many other Goddesses through the years. She is an Aborisha in the Lacumi tradition and a Daughter of Oshun. Kimberly lives in Delaware with her son and three kitties, surrounded by Goddess altars everywhere.

Connect with Kimberly at Mother House of the Goddess, motherhouseofthegoddess.com | ShaktiWomyn, ShaktiWomyn.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/KimberlyFosterMoore2
Breaking Down the Box: 
an interview with 
Marsha Stultz

Tell us about yourself and your passions. What makes you get out of bed in the morning, excited to get on with your day?

(Laughs) That is a great question, and most days I am truly excited to get out of bed and filled with passion because I get to co-create with people, with their Divine selves, with the Divine Feminine, all day long in my livelihood, which is such a blessing.

I have a healing practice – I do Heart Lotus Evolution work combined with polarity therapy, the Melchizedek Method, Reiki, and many other forms of healing – I’ve been doing this for a little over 25 years. What I’ve learned in doing this work is that really what my job is, is to hold a container that is safe and pure, and of beautiful vibration, and that enables people to do their sacred work with Source.

What I’m seeing on the planet professionally, and what I’m experiencing personally in my own life, and what I’m seeing in the lives of my friends, is a beautiful resurgence of connecting with the Divine Feminine, and even feeling an urgency to connect with that energy and bring it into the planet. As a lightworker, I feel it’s my co-creation with the Divine to really embody the energy of the Divine Feminine and to bring that in. I’m seeing my beautiful clients, who I call loved ones, doing that, not so consciously, but it’s just part of their healing process, to bring in that Divine Feminine. I would say the majority of my clients are women, but I have a tremendous amount of beautiful men in my practice as well, and I see them also deeply working with the Divine Feminine, and it’s just so beautiful.

Just to follow up a little bit, what would you say the urgency is about?

Well, Donald Trump is running for President! (laughs) The urgency is the state of the world. All the systems are falling apart. The Earth is being poisoned. Now, that’s just one side of a coin. There are also amazing things happening, beautiful things, healing things. But what we’re bombarded with in the media is all of the dysfunction in the world and how the patriarchal system is really beginning to fall apart at the seams.

It would seem that we’ve had the era of the matriarch, and we’ve had the era of the patriarch, and what we need is the balance, the merger, the sacred union of the Divine Feminine and the Divine Masculine. What is out of balance, I believe, is there’s too much masculine energy not being balanced out by the feminine energy. I’m not saying that men are the problem and women are the answer. I’m saying that in each individual, regardless of gender or genders within a person, we need to be in balance with the Divine Feminine and Divine Masculine within each of us, to bring balance to this
world. The old systems just aren’t working with the new energy that’s coming into the planet.

How do you live your life in a way that reflects your deepest values and honors your callings?

I’m very human, so I won’t be ascending at any moment before this interview is over, that’s for sure (laughs). I feel like my anchor, my True North, to use an analogy that’s well over-used, is meditation, and also yoga, and really consciously choosing to be present as much as I can. Again, I’m blessed because to do the work that I do, I have to be very aligned and in balance and in a very high vibration. And part of that balance is of the Divine Feminine and Divine Masculine within me.

I don’t have one of those jobs where you can be really off, and have the flu, and can still go in and bang out your job. I can’t do that, because a lot of my work is being psychic and being “on.” So I have to be really “on,” I have to meditate and do yoga and walk and be out in nature and laugh and play. I love dinner parties and music and dancing and singing and drumming. These are all things that I feel help me stay in balance with myself and able to do the work that I do, and able to have a joyous life. It feeds my passion.

How would you describe your personal spiritual path?

I started off as an angry feminist, and that brought me to the Goddess. That was in my late teens and early 20s. I’ve had some incredible teachers in my life. I’ve been very, very blessed to have some wise, balanced people in my life. I realized that I could be a political activist, I could be a feminist activist, but if I was doing that from a place of anger, that I was just bringing more anger and fear into the world. I learned fairly early that I didn’t want to be bringing that anger and fear into the world, so I deepened my commitment to being balanced and to being in a place of love. That brought me more deeply to the Goddess, and to the realization that it’s really about the balance of the Divine Feminine and Divine Masculine within me... Now I don’t even remember the question – what was the question?

Your personal spiritual path.

So, yes, that’s really it. It started off sort of political and then became spiritual, and it’s now... I love Buddhism. I love all faiths, and I find that there’s a lot of truth that runs through every faith that I’ve taken the time to study a bit. It’s really the dogma that tears it all down. I think there are many paths, one journey. I think that the paths that we choose are probably most relevant to the karma that we have, the past lives that we’ve lived. We have a particular leaning toward something that feels familiar from a past life, and it’s easier to get back there. I have a very eclectic practice. Like Rumi said, “my religion is love,” and the Dalai Lama says “my religion is kindness,” and I adhere to those two at this point in my life, and really try and foster that by living it.
What is your current relationship with the Divine Feminine and the qualities that She embodies?

I experience the Divine Feminine in the natural world. The water I drink, the shower I take in the morning, the fruit and vegetables in my garden, the flowers. I feel like that’s all the Divine Feminine. The energy of this planet to me feels very motherly and divinely feminine. I also feel like there’s a greater Divine Feminine aspect of, I would say, Source. You know, God, Goddess, Buddha, Krishna, Allah, your left elbow, I don’t really care what you call it (laughs), you know, that Source energy.

We live in a dualistic world – you’re probably never noticed that (laughs). To heal the duality, I think Source has to kind of break down into the Divine Feminine and the Divine Masculine, and bring that into balance in all beings. That allows us to sort of go into balance, into a unity consciousness of those energies, you know, unified, not separated. We’re not there yet – you’ve probably noticed that, too. I feel like because my work is so spiritual, that I sit in the heart of the Divine Feminine all day long, and that’s such a blessing to me.

I live in a really diverse little neighborhood, too. I’m surrounded by a lot of ethnic diversity. I have an Irish neighbor, I have Cambodian neighbors, I have neighbors from Afghanistan, I have neighbors from Japan, I have neighbors from El Salvador. We’re like a little United Nations here. And I identify as lesbian, and so there’s a tremendous diversity here, and there are a lot of different religions and ways of moving through the world.

Our house is kind of the gathering place for everybody in the neighborhood, and I feel like it’s because our home is like the heart of the Goddess. Whenever there ends up being a party in the neighborhood, or some event, everybody comes here. My wife Mindy and I go out in the yard to work, and all the little kids in the neighborhood come over. I feel like a lot of that is because our home is like a temple to the Divine Feminine, in how we live and what we hold, and I feel like we hold that to bring some balance to our neighborhood, because in that diversity it’s not always smooth sailing.

I love that. We’ll be right over! (laughs)

Come on over! (laughs)

So what happens when you lose your way? You said at the beginning that you’re very human, and of course we all are, so we all lose our way from time to time. What happens then, and how do you get back onto your path?

That’s a great question, and if you know the answer... (laughs). No, I’m just kidding. What I have learned over the years is that when I lose my way and I notice it, and I can get to a conscious place – because I feel like for me, losing my way is going unconscious. Whether I go unconscious in a fearful place about a current event – you know, like Donald Trump running for President, oh my God, what if? – or I witness some-
thing that takes me into my fear, takes me out of love and into my fear. I mean, basically that’s always it, right?

When we fall off the path we’ve fallen into fear. When I can get conscious enough to realize that I’ve fallen into fear – and usually it’s that I realize “I usually feel good and my heart’s usually open, and I usually feel great, and I’m not feeling that way right now, and I’m not happy about it.” It doesn’t feel good. I first of all try to not beat myself up for it, and I try to love myself through it. Because I’ve learned that nothing is forever, that I won’t stay there, I won’t be stuck there. The more I can inch my way back to being loving with myself, then I can get right back up on the horse and I’ll be fine. That’s really what I try and do, nurture myself.

I am a believer that we create our reality through how we think and feel. Most of what we think and feel is very unconscious, unless we’re trying to be really conscious about it. I feel like when I’ve fallen off the horse, I’ve gone unconscious with my thoughts, and as soon as I can get back to consciousness and be loving, then I can begin to create a more loving reality for myself. I’ve seen it happen a billion times in my life, so I trust that journey, and it brings me great comfort, that I can just love myself back.

You touched on this a bit earlier, but what tools and techniques do you use to stay on your path and keep shining your light brightly? How do you nurture yourself and your spiritual connection?

I meditate. I always try to meditate 20 minutes a day, because I’ll get into that “monkey mind” of thinking “oh, I only have 20 minutes, I’m a busy person, I don’t have more time than that.” But recently I’ve been doing an hour every morning. I’m not a morning person, so getting up at six to meditate for an hour often just makes me want to snuggle down and say “well, I’ll just meditate for 20 minutes, and I’ll sleep longer.” But I’ve been getting up earlier and meditating, and I’m astounded at the rewards I reap from the longer meditation. It’s undeniable. So I’m constantly amazed at the power of meditation. And yoga – I’m not like a 90-pound yogini – I really enjoy food – but I know that, like I need to stretch my mind, I also need to stretch my body. That’s really helpful.

Another thing that I do that’s really helpful for me, is to really try to embrace...if something’s bothering me – I hate to keep bringing up Donald Trump, but clearly his running for President has rocked my world in some ways, not in a good way – so part of my spiritual practice of staying in that place of love is to see him as a divine being in service to humanity, helping us to wake up to all the fear that is in the world. I try and take time every day to appreciate him and have gratitude for him, because I’ve learned a lot from him. So that’s also a really helpful thing for me to stay conscious and to stay on the path. It’s a great tool for me.

There’s a Buddhist practice called tonglen. I might not do it service in this explanation, but basically it’s sort of having an “enemy” where you sit in meditation and you allow their pain and suffering to pour through your body to better understand them and to
have compassion for them, and ultimately they are no longer your enemy. I find doing things like that extremely helpful.

Certainly, eating well and going light on the sugar and dairy and gluten and all of those kinds of things helps. Eating organic foods. I also find that teaching – I teach a lot of classes, and I find that it’s a big part of my spiritual practice because I feel like I really need to live what I teach, and be deeply committed to it, and integrate it. I always learn so much when I teach anything. So that’s also a great tool for me to stay on the path.

What message would you want to share with someone who is either just coming into awareness of their callings, or who is struggling along their spiritual path? What would you say to someone?

I would say, you are the Divine. Just breathe. And I would say, when you can put down your judgment, when you can put down your fear and just be love, then you can only thrive.

Will you share with us your vision of an ideal future? What would the world look like with the resurgence of the Feminine Divine?

Boy, I can’t wait for that day. But it’s coming. My vision is that we truly respect and celebrate diversity, that we’re not afraid of it. That if you do things differently than I do, that instead of my deciding you’re wrong, I decide, “Oh, that’s fascinating. Teach me about that.” Or, “Huh, that’s not my cup of tea but it’s clearly yours, and isn’t that fascinating? I see how that feeds your soul.” People will really be inspired to think outside the box and to live outside the box, and to maybe just break down the box and put it out for recycling (laughs). A world where we truly understand that there is enough, we have enough, we do enough, and that we get time to be creative.

I think creativity is such a huge part of the Feminine Divine. Having space to let that creativity flow through us – a culture that respects that, and doesn’t have a - you know, like in Bali, there’s no word for artist. Everybody’s an artist. It’s not that these people are artists and these people aren’t. Everybody is an artist. For that to be the way, if everybody gets to do their passion, it will all get done, because we’re so diverse. I think when we respect ourselves and we allow that creative flow, then we can respect it and allow it in others, and then we can respect it and allow it in the Earth and we won’t destroy it.

What roles will those of us who are on this path now be playing in that future scenario?

I think it’s kind of like the hundredth monkey. You know the concept? There’s a critical mass. Once a certain number of people – and they’ve actually done the science, and it’s a pretty low number, I think it’s like one percent or something, not very many people – are embracing the Feminine Divine and that creativity and that flow of Divine love and bringing that into balance within them, when enough people are doing that, that will become the norm. People will entrain with that. You know, it’s like when you set all the
metronomes at different speeds, they’ll eventually all sync up. When that becomes the common denominator – creativity, unconditional love, compassion, acceptance, living in love and not fear – it will be easier for people to do that.

Already – you know, yoga, 50 years ago, was something that people didn’t even know about, and now everybody knows about yoga, whether they do it or not, at least everybody knows about it. Meditation - your medical doctors are now recommending that you meditate – you know, take the high blood pressure medicine, but also meditate. These things are becoming very mainstream. As lightworkers, we really need to just put ourselves out there and not hide, but really shine our lights. Shining that light is not being in judgment and is allowing people their own path.

What steps can we start taking today to move toward this vision?

Just be love. Again, breathe, be creative, don’t hold yourself back. Just allow. The flow is there. The Feminine Divine is not something that we have to work hard to create. It’s right there. All we have to do is just breathe it in. Acknowledge it. Breathe it in.

Can you talk a little bit about how you allow it in? There’s so much noise going on, that it can be hard to hear that sweet voice inside, you know?

That’s so true. I think that most of the noise that’s going on is self-judgment and criticism. So when you take a minute and stop and just breathe, it slows those voices down. If you can just breathe enough to call it a meditation, then there’ll be a nanosecond where it stops. The more you can expand those little tiny places of quiet in between all the noise, you find that sweet energy that’s right there. I also think the more loving and tolerant we can be of ourselves – you know, it’s always an inside job. The things that we want out in the world, we just have to bring it home and do it inside first. So, literally breathing, I think, is the first step.

Is there anything else you’d like to add that we haven’t discussed yet?

I don’t think so. I mean, I have no idea what other people are saying to you, and I can’t wait to read this compilation of all the people that you’ve talked to, because I’m sure that there are lots of different ways. I think allowing people their authenticity is so important, but we can’t allow others to be authentic until we can allow ourselves to be authentic. So, you know, the breath, authenticity, creativity – I think we’ve covered it.

Thank you so much, this was excellent.

Thank you for doing this. It’s very exciting. I’m so honored that you wanted to chat with me about this.
Thank you for being part of it. We use your meditations to get in that zone and keep ourselves in alignment.

Beautiful. That makes me happy. I’m so glad. I can’t wait to see what you do with this. Love yourselves well!

Marsha Stultz is a healer, visionary, and facilitator of evolution. She has been co-creating with the Feminine Divine consciously for over 25 years. She is currently living in Portland Maine with her amazing wife and two cats, thriving in a private practice of energy work, teaching, and empowering others. She has created her own healing modality - Heart Lotus Evolution - and is now certifying people in this body of work.

Connect with her at Evolve, Inc., www.marshastultz.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/MarshaStultzEvolve
A Radical Self-Care Practice: 
an interview with 
Melissa Carter

Tell us about yourself and your passions. What makes you get out of bed in the morning, excited to get on with your day?

Well first, thank you so much for having me. I’m really excited to be a part of this project and to share anything that I can offer. What gets me out of bed every day, what are my passions? Well, right now I’m really on a mission to spread as much love and positivity throughout the world as I possibly can.

I’ve recently put all my stuff in storage and packed a suitcase, and traveled over to Europe. I’m traveling, offering talks and meditations, gatherings on sustainable self-empowerment, offering tools to get yourself empowered, to sustain that empowerment, and to lead from a place of purpose and contribution.

Right now my passion is about inspiring, traveling, being inspired, using the power within for the greater good, and knowing that this power from within is really ignited from a place of the heart and love, so it’s great that we’re talking about the Divine Feminine.

What a blessing to know that this power and the authority of that power can be used for such good, and to be a part of the shift that our society is going through, is something I’m really passionate about. I’m passionate about connecting. I’m passionate about seeing people get unstuck and get clear and get into their dreams, and seeing them succeed. I’m passionate about active living. I’m a very active person – I enjoy sports, I’m a bit of a jock. And I’m passionate about love.

How do you live your everyday life in a way that reflects your deepest values and honors those callings?

That’s a great question. I think that I try to stay as strongly connected within to my core values as possible, by taking radically good care of myself, always looking for the lesson in things, leading from a place of gratitude, and by really pushing myself to grow as a human being. Leading from a place of gratitude and love and knowing that I have to take care of myself to stay connected to that and to lead from there only.

How would you describe your spiritual path?

It’s been really interesting. I was raised Jewish, and it definitely gave me a foundation of believing in God. So it was a very religious foundation. My family really instilled in
me from the beginning that you do what you believe in and let nothing stop you from that. That love is really the only answer.

My mother, a Russian Jew, and my father, an African-American, got married. Back then, interracial relationships were not acceptable and as a family we definitely felt the gravity of that. My father converted to Judaism, and we were raised Jewish.

I’ve always definitely had a belief in God, but it wasn’t until I really stepped away and understood what that methodology was for me, in terms of what my connection to God was, and my purpose, and what God instilled in me, did I understand what spirituality was. It was when I was looking for what it was for me, rather than what was being told to me. My spiritual path began when I made space in my life to understand what made me feel connected to Spirit, to God, what made me feel connected to something larger than myself.

Once I understood this, I was able to start leading life from a very different place. Things started to slow down and become more meaningful. I started to feel more, I started to understand more, I started to connect more. My spiritual path has really been about quieting down and going within, and understanding what is meant for me and what my purpose is, rather than what’s being just told at me.

So spiritually, through meditation, prayer, and again, I’ll probably say this a million times in this interview, radical self-care, I’ve understood what my spiritual gifts are as an intuitive. I’ve understood what my purpose from a greater scale is, and what was meant for me and my path, and understanding that I have a path, I have a purpose. As long as I stay spiritually fit, I’m able to see what that path is clearly and stay connected to it no matter what happens.

What would you say your relationship is with the Divine Feminine, or with the qualities that She embodies?

I think when I’m connected to the Divine Feminine fully, it’s honestly when I feel most alive, and in my warrior strength, but in such a soft way, if that makes sense. It’s when I’m my strongest and my softest all at once. It’s the space I live in when I’m open and aware and grounded in my heart, and when I see beauty in all things, both dark and light. I feel creative and sparkly and my mind and body and spirit are fully in alignment together, and they’re running the show. I’m in a space of wholeness and balance. I listen more. I’m in the service of understanding, rather than being heard. I’m in complete trust that my spirit is the guide, and that my actions, and motives, and words are being led by something larger than me, and I’m slow to judge them and more open to compassion.

Again, I believe when I’m connected to the Divine Feminine, I’m able to be in my personal power, and to use it to serve and inspire rather than to exploit and use. My intuition is really driving how I perceive things and how I make decisions. I just feel fully connected. I feel the interconnectedness of human beings as a whole and that I’m con-
tributing to a greater good. I feel very, very connected to myself, my path, my journey, spirit – to everything.

That’s beautiful. What happens when you lose your way? How do you get back onto your path?

When I lose my way, it’s usually like – I have a coach in my life who will say, “I think your check engine light is on, Melissa” (laughs). When I’m disconnected from who I really am and my purpose, and when I’m starting to see from a place of ego or insignificance or lack, especially if I’m in a place of comparison, it’s usually that I’m not taking care of something for myself. I’m not getting enough rest. I’m not treating my body well and putting things into my body that should be put into my body. I’m not taking care of my thoughts. I’m working too hard. I’m allowing fear of being seen to prevent me from really connecting with people and showing who I really am.

I think I can get off-path when I’m not taking really good care of my mind, body, and spirit as a whole, when I’m being too extreme in one end or the other. Is my check engine light on? Do I need to refuel and recharge? The way I do this is I really get quiet. I get off the computer. I meditate. I take care of myself. I do a lot of self-talk, with love. I do loving-kindness meditations to myself, through my heart and out of my heart. I ask myself, “How do I feel? What do I need?” Most importantly, I answer the call. I think that’s most important. It’s so easy to ask “How do I feel? What do I need?”, but actually giving it to myself, that gets me back on-path.

This next question sort of leads out of that, and it’s the self-care question! I know that’s one of your passions, and I’m excited to hear your answer. What tools and techniques do you use to stay on your path and shine your light brightly? How do you nurture yourself and your spiritual connection?

As an intuitive life coach, part of my – I’m going to answer this from a business perspective, but this is what I use as my tool, so it’s the easiest and quickest way to explain it. I have a self-care system. It’s three tiers. There’s the Rainbows & Unicorns portion of it, which is the yummy, self-indulgent part of self-care. The rewarding, eating chocolate while you’re in a bubble bath (laughs), having a glass of wine and some cheese with friends, reading a really good, yummy book, sitting in the sun on the beach – you know, that really good, yummy indulgent self-care. Whatever that looks like for you.

Then there’s the planning of self-care. When am I planning on taking care of myself? When am I carving out the time to make this sacred space of care and intentionally putting energy around that? When am I meditating? When am I connecting? When am I going to go do some kind of movement practice? When am I getting in touch with gratitude? Am I on top of my calendar and my schedule so I don’t have to worry about anything that’s upcoming? So I’m already grounded in what I need to do.

And then there’s a portion of self-care that I really stand behind 100 percent, which is what I call The Icky. It’s the self-care that doesn’t always feel that good. It’s the self-care that you know you need to do, and there’s some resistance, but then once you do
it, you feel free. That’s, you know, creating boundaries, saying no, staying in rather than going out or going out rather than staying in, doing things that maybe we’re scared of. It’s the self-care that progresses you forward and gets you further connected with who you really are in your purpose on your path, but it’s not always easy. It doesn’t feel innate, because you haven’t been putting as much energy in that portion of your self-care as you have somewhere else. So you have to grow the muscle around that portion of your self-care.

I’m really a champion of the Icky self-care because it’s the one that gets you up-leveling, it gets you your liberation of self, it gets you free of your past, it gets you free of limiting beliefs. It’s the self-care that moves you forward. It’s the self-care that connects you with your spirit, and for me, with who I’m intended to be. When I’m not doing my meditation every day, or doing my rituals, sometimes to get back into the routine doesn’t feel good because I’m out of the routine. But I know it’s what I need. I know it’s what I need to get connected with who I really am and quiet any noise or any distraction or anything that’s keeping me unaligned. It gets me back into a space of connection with the Divine Feminine, connection with who I really am, and leading from that space.

Beautiful, yeah. Really concise, but really profound.

Well, thank you. But that’s it, right? It’s radical. It’s a radical self-care practice. As human beings, and people who are living in a mindful, conscious way, we have to be radically profound and concise, right? We’re part of something greater than ourselves and we’re trying to shift this world and make it a better place. If we’re putting all this care to do that into the world, well, we’re part of that, we represent that world, we’re a portion of it. Shouldn’t we be taking as good care of ourselves as we are of other things, because we’re simply a part of it?

What message would you want to share with someone who is just coming into awareness of their calling or who is struggling on their path right now?

I would share that it’s not going to be glamorous all the time. The truth is it’s going to be hard, that it’s going to be tough, that it’s going to have moments where it feels like freakin’ death, and that it feels like you’re confused and you’re lost and you’re not really sure of the way – but if you can get grounded in your faith and trust of yourself and what’s for you, you will get to the other side. This icky portion, this tough part for you, there’s a lesson there, waiting for you to learn it and to apply that wisdom to your life so you can move forward and continue to progress. You’re right where you’re supposed to be, even when it’s tough, even when it seems almost impossible.

For a very long portion of my life, I felt very disconnected from my spirit, my purpose and my path, and it was a very dark, scary time. I’m so thankful I went through that, because now I’m grounded in who I am, and so connected to what my purpose is, that I don’t know if I would be this connected or this trusting or of faith if I hadn’t gone through what I’ve gone through and learned the lessons I need to learn.
I would say look for the lesson, and apply that wisdom to your life, and know that you are not alone. Get involved in your community, let people guide you, get people around you that are smarter than you (laughs), and that will support you and love you. Know that no matter what, you are never alone. You are important. This world needs you. Everything you need, you have within you. Ask for the answers, ask for the clarity, ask for the signs. Stay a student, always.

Let’s do a little visioning. Share with us your vision of an ideal future. What does our world look like with the resurgence of the Feminine Divine?

I think it’s back to what I was saying earlier about operating from a place of personal power, and the authority of love guiding larger institutions for the greater good. Love and leading from contribution has infiltrated larger-scale institutions and systems, to allow us to operate from a place where we are sustaining our environment, we are sustaining our understanding of what’s needed to make this world a better place, and that we’re doing it. It’s not unconventional to operate from here – it’s conventional. The companies that are out there doing philanthropy are at the forefront. We’re able to understand our neighbors and live with our neighbors and each other in a more connected, compassionate way.

What roles will those of us who are on this path now play in this future scenario?

I think we’re the leaders in this. We’re the ones – this is why I go back to self-care. If we’re the leaders, and we’re in the forefront of this revolution of love and this revolution of the Divine Feminine, then we have to take care of ourselves in order to sustain any resistance that comes with faith and groundedness. It’s not easy, it’s not glamorous, it’s not all glory. It’s not what you’re going to see on pop TV – but it’s needed. It does make this world better. It does allow us to create a future for our children and for the future generations of this world, to live in a world that’s sustainable.

We’re on the forefront of a huge paradigm shift in this world. We need more people rising into who they can truly be. Now more than ever, this world needs people rising. We need people contributing to the greater good. We see all the hate, we see all the friction, we see the laws that are being made preventing us from being who we can be. We have to be the leaders in that.

Sometimes that takes de-programming, it takes understanding that we’ve been conditioned in a certain way. Sometimes you revert back to that old conditioning, but as long as you know and ask “Am I leading from a place of love or am I leading from a place of fear?” and “Which one is empowered and which one is dis-empowered?” you’re going to inspire other people to do the same, and liberate other people to do the same.

What steps can our readers start taking today to move toward that vision?

That’s a really good question. When I started embarking on my spiritual path, I used to work in corporate America, I was a music industry executive, I had all the name-brand
I was very much not who I am now. I was not connected to who I really am. I had an opportunity where my life had just basically crumbled, and I had a blank canvas. I looked at that blank canvas, and rather than letting that overtake me, I looked at this place of nothing and created everything. I think when you get to a place of nothing, you can create everything. I said to myself, “How do I want to feel for the rest of my life?” and I built everything else around that. Rather than “What do I want to do?” I said “How do I want to feel?”

For me, the first step was understanding, without attaching it to content, what my skill-set was and how I wanted to feel, and then blending the two. From that, you get this music industry executive who’s now an intuitive life coach. I understood that I like strategy, I like conception to completion, I like getting clarity on things, I like problem-solving, I like inspiring, I like motivating, I like, you know, I like actually being a little bossy (laughs). I took what my skill-set was, not attached to content, and then attached how I wanted to feel, and how I wanted to feel was inspired. I wanted to feel like I belonged. I wanted to feel like I was doing good. I wanted to feel that I was leading. I matched the two, and I created from there. So I think the first step is really understanding how you want to feel, and then what you want to create out of that.

Is there anything you’d like to add that we haven’t discussed yet?

I think what I want to add is that you are the author of your life, and who you choose to be in the driver’s seat of the narrative that you’re living out every day is either a dis-empowered version of you or an empowered version of you. The empowered version of you is the person that is connected to your Divine being of love and light. That being is empowered by staying connected within. Everything you need to be empowered, everything you need to live a narrative that you really want, is already within you. It’s just getting in contact with that, and connected with that, and having faith in that, and trusting it.

Slowly, little by little by little, staying in action with that narrative, and staying out of a dis-empowered narrative, which is fear and resistance and comparison and doubt and envy. The empowered narrative is love and gratitude and leadership and contribution and purpose. So that’s what I’d really like to say. We are in the driver’s seat of our own lives, and we are the authors of our own stories. At any time, you can recreate your story in any single moment, by choosing what narrative you want to lead from.

Like a choose your own adventure book.

Yes! Exactly.

That’s great. Thank you so much for this awesome interview.

Thank you very much for having me. I look forward to the finished product and to being a part of this. Thank you to you guys for doing this. This is needed, and it’s going to be a really great resource for people, so thank you for what you do as well.
Melissa Carter is the founder of "IGNITE WITH MELISSA", LLC. She holds an MBA and is a former music industry corporate executive turned Life Empowerment Coach and Intuitive Guide. After years of morbid obesity preventing her from tying her own shoes, depression, failed relationships, and a core belief system of not being "good enough," Melissa embarked on a 150-pound weight loss journey that inspired a career and life transformation. Melissa recreated her whole life from the inside out. Facing her deepest fears, demons, and past through her “Believe.Commit.Live.” process she rewrote and rewired her thought patterns, self-care practice and belief system that now supports her living a powerful life — a life of purpose, love, abundance, spirituality, and contribution.

She now pays forward what she believes is a second chance at life as a Life Empowerment Coach and Intuitive Guide. Through her three-step approach to life, Melissa is confident that you can transform YOUR life to be anything you want as long as you BELIEVE.COMMIT.LIVE. with love, integrity, dedication, spiritual intelligence, gratitude and, of course, a KEEP IT REAL and POSITIVE attitude.

Connect with her at Ignite With Melissa, ignitewithmelissa.com

Email: melc27@gmail.com

Join Melissa’s private Facebook Group committed to a daily conversation focused on empowered living, self-care, community and LOVE. Join the SUPPORT SQUAD: www.facebook.com/groups/1091252174227931/
Go Out and Live Your Dream: 
an interview with 
Nicole Fisher Draft

Tell us about yourself and your passions. What makes you get out of bed in the morning, excited to get on with your day?

Hello, my name is Nicole Fisher Draft and my business is Soul Archeology – I am an Alignment Coach and Mentor for women. My mission in life is to help women see how amazing, beautiful and significant they are, and to own their purpose and uniqueness. I have developed a curriculum called Soul Excavation where I take women on an intimate journey of themselves. We examine all pieces of self and lay them out on the table and see which ones need a little shining up and love, and what pieces you are done with and can let go of and fill that space with goodness, intention and love – a complete soul-consciousness.

I began my healing journey many years ago after struggling with addiction and no self-love or respect. One night as I was laying under the stars breathing my way out of an intense high I made a conscious decision to change the entire path of my life, quit killing myself slowly and to begin living fully. I created my own healing program that included journaling, energy work, meditation, ritual, connection to nature and the divine. Most of all I began feeling again and living inside of myself, not outside looking in at the hollow shell I had become. I made a conscious decision to make the most out of myself and my life.

After cleaning myself up I decided to go to school and become an Addictions Counselor, but halfway through the program I was bored out of my mind and wondering “why am I doing this?” This was not how I had healed my inner pieces or dealt with my addiction. I did it on my own terms and in my own way. I created a program that worked for my own individual needs. Shortly after leaving the program I was introduced to Life Coaching. I loved this approach and I could incorporate my healing process into my teachings. Hello! This was the moment when I began the process of laying out my healing journey on paper, reading old journals, meditating on my healing and looking for someone to help me make this a reality. I turned my healing journey into a process for others to use to dig deep within themselves and heal from the inside out.

My passion is guiding women on real, raw, loving, gentle, deep healing journeys – I lead online virtual workshops, in-person workshops in Michigan, retreats, and I am
writing my first book about my healing journey. I have fully embraced my work. Even though sometimes I don’t know where I am headed, I have learned to always trust in the guidance of the Divine and to continue on my path of learning and self-realization.

**How do you live your everyday life in a way that reflects your deepest values and honors those callings?**

Since making this commitment to healing I have found myself getting more solitary than I had ever have been before, solitary in a way that I am connected to the Divine but my interactions with others now is on a completely different level. My circle of friends is much deeper, more aligned and authentic. I crave deep connection and truth in my relationships. I used to live in a “surface” world. I no longer play there or choose to be a part of that world. I need relationships that feed my soul and heighten my vibration. I live my life from a place of authenticity, compassion and love. I need quiet time to just be; nature is what feeds my mind, body, soul and spirit. Going outside and feeling Her presence takes me to another dimension. Water is my healing tonic, Lake Michigan and Lake Superior are my life blood – their beauty and energy recharges my soul. Being in the presence of water brings me peace, balance and grounding.

**How would you describe your spiritual path?**

My path of spirituality has been a beautiful journey. I have had many teachers and am always looking for more; this journey is ever-evolving and beautiful. I love the beauty in learning from and listening to all views and thoughts on the Divine. I know that my God is an all-inclusive loving being full of LOVE. Does my God have a face? No. My God is an energy that is around me and within me at all times, my God is the wind – rain – air, my God is the Earth and everything that grows from Her flesh. My God is everything around me.

**What is your relationship with the Divine Feminine? Or with the qualities that She embodies?**

I have learned over the years that the biggest piece of this journey of Faith and Love is ultimate trust, knowing and love. The Divine Feminine lives in every cell of everything around me and within me. I see beauty in all things living, and I see magic in all things that have passed on. We are all one, we are just living separate existences for the time being and not one of us has the answer to what is next. So I live each of my days to the fullest and enjoy each moment to its entirety. And I love, I love with my entire heart.

**What happens when you lose your way? How do you get back onto your path?**

From time to time I do lose my way and wallow in the ways of the world, but I only allow myself to do this for a short time. When I see and feel this happening, I change my thoughts to gratitude and joy, I find the good in the moment and what is around me and what is happening within me. My heart is beating, my lungs are filled with air, I
have food to eat, fresh water to drink, money to pay my bills, I have a beautiful home, I have a man who loves me with his entire heart, I have a beautiful daughter who is my life light and I am blessed with two sons through my marriage to my husband. I am loved, full and whole.

**What tools and techniques do you use to stay on your path and shine your light brightly? How do you nurture yourself and your spiritual connection?**

Ritual is a big piece of my life. I love the intention and oneness it creates. I will build a new altar, light a candle, burn incense, turn on drumming music, sit in silence and listen to the Earth talk to me with her magical beautiful voice and breath. I get out my journal and free write the words from heart and soul, releasing it out onto paper, allowing the words to freely flow from my purple pen, creating balance and grounding in my mind and body once again. I am a big believer in energetic karma — what we put out we get in return and vice versa. I am a Reiki Master and Teacher and all that I learned in my teachings was beautiful, but what I have learned from being a practitioner has changed everything. The trust, connection and vulnerability that I experience when having a healing session with a client is so transformative and real, it is one of my biggest joys. Authentic connection and healing. Showing others the light within themselves.

**What message would you want to share with someone who is just coming into awareness of their callings or is struggling on their spiritual path?**

The journey of awareness, healing and spirituality is not some smooth path of transition and light. It can be a bumpy path that is full of questions, doubt and no clear answers. It is a path of awareness and growth like no other. The longer you embrace it the fuller and more rewarding it becomes. Be gentle... Seriously, be gentle with yourself. I have learned that the more I lean into and on Spirit the calmer I become and the clearer my mission and vision get for me to fully see. I need to be honest and completely vulnerable with myself. If I cannot be honest and vulnerable with myself, how can I expect any deep lasting change, connection with anything — with myself or others? Take your time. Life is not a race. Life is meant to be lived fully and for you to enjoy each moment of it — yes, each moment, even the moments that are not good. If you will allow yourself to lean into these moments you will learn the most about yourself and you will feel in these moments that you are never alone, if you will allow something bigger than you to accompany you on this journey of life.

Be gentle and take small steps. Nothing happens overnight other than mistakes and regret. You are here to live life to its fullest and flourish, grow and leave a mark — a positive mark, your individual unique mark that only you can leave.

**Share with us your vision of an ideal future — what does our world look like with the resurgence of the Feminine Divine?**

I often dream of a world that is based on compassion and love, a united humankind that lives in equality and for the common good of ALL. I believe in the law of attraction
and karma. I believe what I put out will come back to me. I believe that my thoughts shape my reality. So even in the times of fear and unknowing I go inward and I live from my heart center, my truth, my inner knowing — my intuition. I learned while I was going through withdrawal from drugs that my intuition is my best friend, she is me and I am her, we are united — we are one. If I listen to her and follow her wisdom I will live a life of love, compassion, unity and truth, a life that is a never-ending circle that will ripple out into my life and all that I encounter. Trust yourself and your feelings, they are yours.

What roles will those of us on this path now play in that future scenario?

I have been a healer my entire life. People have told me for years that I have a gift. I remember being told by a woman that I had a gift when I was a teenager, not knowing what she meant, but I always remembered her telling me that. As I lived more of my life I began to see it for myself and I began to embrace my gift of healing and love for all. I believe that all of us have special gifts to heal the world, but there are a select few who will step up to the plate and fully embrace our gift, the gift of spreading love, healing and light to all — sharing our tools that we have learned on our paths of life. Healers and believers see the good in all, we see the possibility and promise. We know that anything is possible.

What steps can we start taking today to move towards that vision?

The more we all unite and love one another, the higher the vibration will be for healing, love and clarity — a clarity that we are all one. We are all one, just wearing different costumes, living in different places, doing different things — but we are all the same. We were all created in the same way. We all start out pure and full of promise then we all begin interacting and living life. If we could all begin to interact in a way that we are all one, the world would shift and I believe that that is where the magic would happen. Unity.

Life is not always easy, but it is meant to be lived to its fullest, it is a gift - go out and live your dream! Take that trip, enroll in that class, sign up for that race, give that person you are interested in a call, have that conversation, eat that ice cream, give that hug, write that book, hold the door, share love with others, pay it forward, follow your heart!

You may stumble and fall a few times in life, but that is how we learn and become individuals. It’s how you rise from the fall. Do you let it define you and keep you stuck and numb? Or do you say, “fuck this shit,” and grow from the experience and find a new passion and zest for life and help others grow with the tools you have learned from your experience? The more we all do this, share stories, lift each other up and encourage one another, that is when the real shift in the Universe will happen. Embracing each other for our differences and loving each other for our individuality.
Get outside – smell the air, listen to the sounds, smell the flowers, dance in the rain and feel it on your skin, enjoy life, smile often, hug often, love fiercely and never give up on yourself. You are meant to be here at this very moment, embrace it and be you. Don’t be afraid of anything, you can do it – I know you can.

Nicole Fisher Draft is the owner of Soul-Archeology. She is an Alignment Coach and Spiritual Mentor. Nicole works with women to help them dig deep within themselves in a process called Soul Excavation, looking at all of the pieces that make them the beautiful individual they are; gaining clarity, intention, structure and love in everything they do. Nicole offers group programs, one-on-one intensive soul work, retreats and workshops. Nicole is a Reiki Master/Teacher, an affiliate of the Danielle LaPorte Desire Map program and successful entrepreneur. While attending college to become an addictions counselor, half-way through the process she decided to share her real-life story of healing and personal journey instead of the formal textbook teachings, then spent over two years creating Soul-Archeology and its offerings.

Nicole walked away from a life of a raging drinking problem, next to no self-respect or self-love, and a series of toxic relationships with men who weren’t worthy of her. Three years of addiction, abuse, and coming too close to death – the need to numb and suppress had taken over her life. She couldn’t stand feeling HER SELF and whom she had become any longer. In the midst of this chaos Nicole took a soul-cation and took back her power; she gained clarity – connection to the Divine – Her True Self. In her teachings she shares her journey and the pieces of her story that helped her arrive at the place she is at now: self-love, connection and contentment. Now that she has made it to the other side, her life passion is to share her story, experiences and healing journey with as many women as possible and to guide them on their own healing journeys and teach them that there are endless possibilities, choices, and options in life.

Connect with her at Soul-Archeology, soul-archeology.com
Lead With an Open Heart:
an interview with
Peter Dockendorf

Tell us about yourself and your passions. What makes you get up out of bed in the morning excited to get on with your day?

It’s a complex question. I don’t think we are here for a hot meal and some television. We’re at a great time of change on the Earth. I think we’re all here for a purpose and we all have our niche. The thing that gets me out of bed is the excitement of that, this great change that we’re going through. There’s balancing of the feminine and the masculine, culturally and within ourselves, which I think is really exciting. It’s a great time to be alive.

If you take a look at the news, maybe that opinion might change a little bit, but if you get outside of that fear-bubble that they create, you’ll realize that there are wonderful, wonderful things going on in this world that really are exciting and do instill that change that riles everyone’s passions up.

Can you tell us about your work in the world?

I have a practice called Quantum Roots. It’s a men’s practice. I use Reiki as a vehicle for the energy work that I do. I also bring in a lot of primordial Earth wisdom and other energy work along with that to help balance the Sacred Masculine. We’ve lived in a world where the masculine energies have been sort of a slash-and-burn mentality, extracting everything out of the Earth, extracting everything that we can without consequence. My practice helps and allows men to find a different framework for that to balance out their masculinity against the backdrop of the return of the Divine Feminine.

How do you live your life everyday in a way that reflects your deepest values and honors your calling?

I just try to lead by example. I try to lead my children, instill in them a greater appreciation for the Earth, a greater appreciation for the energies of the spirit that is within the Earth. I try to help them know that there is more than just what’s here and what they can see. On the personal side, that’s the way we lead our lives as a family group.

In the outside world, I do workshops at the house that are based on ancestral skills. We do a lot of friction fire, natural cordage, plant identification, native awareness, and general awareness around them as a vehicle to center people, to open their hearts to the communication that’s there, the heart-centered communication with the consciousness of the Earth.
How would you describe your spiritual path?

Meandering. Personally, I think that that’s too constrictive. I think “path” kind of leads somewhere, it has a start and it has an end. It’s in some ways narrowly defined. That path can wander a lot, but I still think that a “path” is a misnomer. It doesn’t explain it in the way that I see it.

So how would you do it? How would you say it?

For me, I have to stay in a heart-centered relationship with my surroundings and just be open to the things that pop up. Because if I start going on a path, I miss all the other things. If I am here and I am going on my path to there, I maybe miss some of the opportunities that might be off the path a little bit.

It’s hard to explain, but I try to live in the moment, in the existence that I am in and almost let it come to me. But just travel around and go in different ways that I am called to.

I like that. That’s like you’re centered and not on a linear trajectory. You’re centered and it all revolves around you.

I think I was on a path, at one point in time, and found it to not be really that fulfilling. It was like, “great, I am here, now I want to get someplace else.” I don’t think I really appreciated that maybe there isn’t a path.

What came to mind was that you are maybe the creator of a path, like you’re going through the wild, which is the universe as it is, and that you are perhaps creating this path for other people.

Yeah, it’s possible that every step that we take, we create a clearing, where you can explore other things. It’s hard to describe but I think I felt limited with it when I was trying to get somewhere. And now that I’ve let go of the destination, so to speak, or that this is the right way to go, and let go of that kind of restriction, it has helped me a lot to just go with the flow. Wherever we are going is where we’re going to be.

What is your relationship with the Divine Feminine or with the qualities that She embodies?

I’m a defender and a co-conspirator. We’re at an age where the Divine Feminine is coming to our consciousness. And like I said before, we’ve been a slash-and-burn masculine-forward energy. And as we come back to a balance between the feminine and the masculine, the sacredness of both and the divinity of both, we embody that balance.

In my practice, for men especially, we have unique challenges with the return of the feminine. I think for a lot of men there’s been kind of a knee-jerk reaction to that, where it’s going to emasculate us or we have to be more like women and embody the attributes of women. That’s just not true. With a healthy masculinity and healthy femi-
ninity balanced within ourselves, we have the structure and the innovation balanced with the wisdom to use that appropriately.

My relationship to the Divine Feminine is through the Earth, through experiences with nature, the consciousness that exists where we are. Where I am, personally, in the landscape and the greater aspect outside of that. I try to be mindful of what’s being communicated with me through that and I use heart-centered practices to do the listening. I use that communication through the heart to translate into my mind what is being said.

**What happens when you lose your way? How do you get back to your center?**

I think the first thing is that you have to acknowledge it. Acknowledge in an honest way what’s happening, why you’re off-center, why you’re off-balance, “how did this happen?”, without judgment of those reasons. Being able to identify the causation for what you’re feeling or what you are going through at that time, I think that is the biggest step. That can really help you get back to a centered place, with that acknowledgement.

One of the practices that I have is a really simple meditation practice. I sit in a place, sometimes outside, sometimes inside, it doesn’t really matter where you are, and I breathe in from my root chakra all the way up through to my heart. The heart center of the Earth, I believe it exists in a crystal iron core, the center of the Earth. I breathe in through that grounded energy into my heart and I try to expand the physical space of my heart.

And then through the next breath, I combine the heart-center of the Sun, connected to the center of the galaxy, through my crown chakra and through to my heart center and expand the space a little bit. Then after a few breaths like that, I do them together and continue to expand that space physically and energetically around my heart so there’s room for that energy to exist.

I keep bringing that in, and bringing that in, and I like to bring in the entities or the people or the situation that was causing the issue and just create space for that in my heart. To love it, to let it exist as it is and without judgment, with just compassion.

Sometimes I bring myself in as a child. I think we get hard on ourselves as adults. I bring myself in as a child and just love myself, as a child and as an adult and bring that through throughout time. That seems to work and is very powerful for me. Everyone needs to find a practice that brings them to center through compassion. And through that heart center – I think that’s the key for everything.

**Are there any other tools and techniques that you use to stay centered and shine your light brightly? Or some nurturing practices for your self-care?**

That’s the big one, that meditation is the primary. That seems to cover a lot of different things. I drink a lot of herbal tea that I blend myself, that nurtures energetically my
body but also gives me some minerals and things for the framework that my body can use to fight off colds and the funkiness that is going on out there. That for me is important. And communing with nature is a big one for me. I think if I can get lost in the woods a little bit and just experience the outside, that is significant as well.

**So what message would you want to send to someone who is just coming into awareness of their calling or who is having trouble with the path that they have created for themselves?**

You just have to do what feels right. Not all of us are here to be world famous TV commentators or authors or to run conferences or to be in the public eye. I think there are a lot of expectations that they put on themselves that they have to “do something.” That they have to be doing something, to be doing what their purpose is.

And for some people, doing those things is exactly what they need to be doing. I’m not saying not to pursue your passions, whatever they are, but I think there is a handful of people that do that and then there is everybody else. I think that the “everybody else” has a hard time putting down that “I need to do something, I need to be useful in someone else’s eyes.”

The biggest thing is to just take it slow. Again, we’re not on a path, we’re not trying to get somewhere or have to do something. It’s good enough to exist and it’s good enough to do what you think is right. Just right now.

**Let’s shift into some visioning. Share with us your vision of an ideal future. What does this world look like with the resurgence of the Feminine Divine?**

Well, I think it’s a pretty nice place. I think with the return of the Divine Feminine to our consciousness comes also the important balance of the Sacred Masculine. For me, it is in the framework of: how do men deal with this and how do we approach these changing energies and the changing of the ways that we interact with each other, with women, with our children, with the greater world?

Men too can be regenerative. We have the power of the Goddess within us as well. I also think that the women in our lives and the Earth deserve a healthy masculinity. The return of the Divine Feminine deserves a worthy consort. Men can embody that worthy consort and the Divine Feminine within themselves, to co-create, to be generative, caring stewards for the next generations.

We need to let our passions be guided by compassion. I feel that our heart always responds before our brain. Our heart always knows what we should be doing before our mind gets in the way of that. As men, it’s our charge to lead with an open heart, to not listen with our brains, ears or ego involved, but through the heart.

All of our existence is experienced through vibration. And with our heart closed, we can’t experience that vibrational information, there just isn’t room for it. And with an
open heart, we can. The open heart is the vibrational ear of our body, where all information comes in.

And as far as the resurgence and what the world would look like, someone asked me a long time ago to give a concrete example of the balance between the Divine Feminine and the Sacred Masculine. It was that the Sacred Masculine is like the riverbed: the bedrock, the rocks, the sand, the soil of a river. And the Divine Feminine is the water that flows, the generative wisdom and the creation of the water that flows through the riverbed. Without a balance of and equal appropriateness in value for each of those things, the river can’t exist.

In an ideal world, we need to ease back on this out-of-control masculinity. We need to infuse ourselves with the wisdom of the Divine Feminine to create the balance. And without the balance, we live in the world of the past. With that balance, I think that we can use the wisdom and the innovation together in a balanced way to combat the problems that we have now – pollution, environmental, social – and live in a world that’s not country against country, people against people.

We all have the divine within ourselves and if we can acknowledge that with each other, then I think it will be a much happier, nicer place. I think we’ll stop killing each other when we acknowledge that.

**I love that image of the river, the riverbed.**

Yeah, it’s a really powerful image. I think it really gives a concrete visualization. It takes it out of this ethereal thought process and gives you a visualization that is really powerful.

**What roles do people doing this work play in this future scenario?**

The roles of our choosing. Going back to our each having our separate existence that’s joined together, that doesn’t require us to be flashy about it, that doesn’t require us to do work on it. I don’t think it even requires us to be spiritual or anything like that. All that we need to do in our roles is to be true to ourselves, to exist in a balance, to seek our own role and not let external expectations drive where we want to go.

It’s hard, defining your role. I think it changes over time, it changes sometimes day-to-day. But I think you just need to be comfortable with whatever role that you feel is appropriate for you, and I think not pushing it.

**What steps can we start taking now in our everyday lives, to move toward that vision of balance and wholeness?**

I think the first step is to reconnect physically with nature. The Divine Feminine exists in the greenery of the woods, in the different shapes and the different ways that the Earth works. Part of my philosophy is the connectedness of the roots of the trees.
Now, there are some trees within their own species that will connect their roots together, and many trees will interspecially connect their root tips from one tree to another, transfer nutrients amongst themselves. And if you add on the mycelial map that’s also, even amongst the trees, that’s wrapped around the roots, that’s inside the cellular structure of the roots and of the trees. I think we all exist as one expression, one deeper experience through all the different things. Our individual selves are the trees, but we’re all connected deeply and appropriately and interdependently with everyone and everything else.

If you can reconnect with nature first, I think that’s a good step. If you can open your heart to nature, then it is easier to open your heart to other people. If you can find a way to understand that everything is connected, that every single piece of leaf litter, a blade of grass, a tree, shrub, all knows you’re there.

And as soon as you have intent to step into the forest, to convene with nature through the internet of mycelium (which is what I think that is, the internet of things), the mycelium just connects everything and touches everything, it lets everything know what your intentions are instantly, quantumly, the whole forest, the whole world knows what you are doing. If you come at it with an open heart, you might just get what you find, what you need, and what you’re looking for.

That’s the first step. That’s what I do, that’s what I recommend to people. And then go from there, wherever it goes. Whatever might come next. You might find a plant that intrigues you, or an animal that intrigues you. It might be the thing you need to consume or a thing you need to observe that will heal a certain part of your body, or that will heal you energetically, to unblock you from something that’s in the way.

Would you like to add anything that we haven’t discussed yet or more deeply? You have Quantum Roots, where I was reminded of the mycelia of the trees as connecting everything else – is that what you mean by the underlying spiritual essence of things connecting everything together?

Correct, it’s a metaphor for it, but in scientific reality everything in the forest is connected. The mycelium is out there, it’s full. I think there’s like 3 miles in a cubic centimeter, and that’s spread out throughout all the forest. And interspecially, and specially between the trees, they all connect their roots together. Enough so where a tree is on the forest edge, it gets a lot more nutrients than one that is in the denser part, and will transfer nutrients to those trees.

There was a study done where they put in isotopes in the mycelia because they were concerned that these Douglas firs that were in deep, deep shade in the old growth forests, how did they get the things that they need? They found that through mycelial transportation, the trees that were in the canopy transferred through the mycelium, nutrients to the undergrowth trees.

So, we think we have the impression that everything is separate in the forest; that’s a maple tree, that’s an oak tree, that’s an invasive species, that’s a thorny bush; they all
come at you in a different way. If you put judgment on each of those things – that’s a maple tree, we can get maple syrup from it, we can do this or that. The oak feeds the squirrels. But when you really look deeper into it, there’s not competition in the forest. There might be some small, territorial competition. When you really examine it, really look into it, there’s only cooperation.

This brings to mind the collective unconscious of humans. We collaborate without knowing it as well.

Yes, we’re all conspiring with collaboration for each other. Giving each other what it is we need and how we need it. So I use that as a metaphor. So I guess the metaphor is the Quantum Roots and translate that to the root structure in the mycelium of the greater Spirit that all exists within us and we’re expressions of different species, different trees, different roles that are all working together to create the forest. And without any one of those things, it’s incomplete.

Peter is many things, a husband, a homemaker, a father, a steward to nature and a student of the Divine Feminine herself. A former trained chef and nutritionist, he traded in the kitchen apron for a landscape where he could procure wild foods, strive to live off his own land and be one with ancestral skills that feed his masculine self-awareness. Over the last 9 years, Peter has dedicated his life to the balance of the Divine Feminine and Sacred Masculine as it pertains to men and how we pass on our knowledge, and generational baggage, to our sons.

As men, it is our charge to lead with an open heart and to listen not with our brains, ears and ego involved, but through the heart. All of existence is experienced through vibration. Opening of the heart is the vibrational ear of your body through which all information flows. If you listen carefully, you might just get the answer you seek.

Connect with him at Quantum Roots, www.quantum-roots.com

Email: healingherbs33@gmail.com
Tell us about yourself and your passions. What makes you get out of bed in the morning, excited to get on with the day?

I am a sense seeker, I love connecting with the world through my five senses and I view the body as an extension of the divine. This has been reflected in my life’s work, including the experience of being a dancer, a yoga teacher, an herbalist and botanical perfumer, a somatic psychotherapist and as a sacred beekeeper.

In regard to what gets me up in the morning, I would have to say mystery and the unknown. I enjoy letting things evolve organically and enjoy waking to see what flowers have opened, what dances the bees are doing or what progress or insight my clients might have for today.

How do you live your life in a way that reflects your deepest values and honors your callings?

I think that I have been blessed to have been able to do work that is spiritually and emotionally rewarding while at the same time being able to provide for my children. I believe that as an educator and mentor I have been able to help people to connect on a sacred level with the natural world and to help them to incorporate this more consistently into their lives, thus improving overall well-being on a physical, emotional and spiritual level. I believe that being in balance and feeling interconnection is a birthright and that in the modern world we have lost sight of what it means to be in harmony. The more I work with honeybees, the more I am reminded of that as they effortlessly work in cooperation with each other, the plants, the sun and all of nature.

How would you describe your spiritual path?

Nature/Divine Feminine has always been the consistent thread of my spiritual path. I recognized from a young age that I had conflict with more dogmatic spiritual traditions that often excluded the power of the feminine in their teachings. As a young child, I was exposed to Native American traditions and this spoke more directly to my heart and spirit. As a teen I discovered more European Pagan traditions and this expanded my understanding of the feminine role in spirituality. It was around this time that I began to practice herbal medicine and that only reinforced my belief in nature as a sacred healer and force of manifestation. As I matured I began to practice yoga, specifically more Tantric traditions which view the body as an extension of the Divine. This countered the more Judeo-Christian beliefs of the body as sinful and made me become more interested in ways that people could access Divine consciousness through the body, in-
cluding dance and other forms of sacred movement, drumming, and having a con-

nected experience with scent and taste.

**What is your relationship with the Divine Feminine? Or with the qualities that She embodies?**

I love the light and dark of the Divine Feminine and feel that it is during the dark
phases where I learn and grow the most. The dark goddess or Kali Ma type energy has
been a fierce and loyal teacher in regard to reminding me of the life, death, rebirth cy-
cle that nature depicts for us so beautifully. Every time I have surrendered to the letting
go process, whether it be the loss of a relationship or the loss of a hive, something
beautiful has shown up, not to not replace it per se, but to evolve into a new manifesta-
tion that serves me more deeply in the present.

**What happens when you lose your way? How do you get back onto your path?**

Because I am sense driven, I sometimes get overloaded, especially if I do not practice
good self-care, which for me includes eating well, exercising, creating new things and
being around healthy and spiritually-minded people. Being a single mother is exhaus-
ting and at times I struggle with the balance between honoring the role of mothering
and being a spontaneous, somewhat hedonistic gypsy.

During those “dark phases” I usually lose my creative fire, which makes functioning at
my day job as a mental health counselor a bit harder. Given that I am surrounded by
individuals in various stages of soul sickness, it can get hard sometimes to stay positive
and vibrant. I think at my age, however, I have gotten better at recognizing those shifts
and changes way before they become dangerous and I’m able to put the brakes on and
take some days off to reconnect and recharge. I am an introvert despite my role as a
teacher and presenter and will often seek solitude during these times in order to rebal-
ance myself and reconnect with the fire of the Sacred Heart.

**What tools and techniques do you use to stay on your path and shine your light brightly? How do you nurture yourself and your spiritual connection?**

Taking time to stay in relationship with the creative muse is my number one way to
stay on my path so that I can continue to inspire and share my light with others. Nature
and sacred movement have always been my two go-to’s for refreshing my spirit and
grounding during difficult times. I love good music and dancing around my house,
yoga, etc. I view the body as a direct conduit to the Divine Feminine. Due to the work I
do as a counselor I need to be aware of when I begin to feel negative, tired or cynical
and pull back by taking a day off or making sure that I am engaging in some type of rit-
ual. I think that our culture lacks healthy ritual, which is one of the reasons why people
turn to external forms of self-fulfillment, like addiction.

Ritual for me can be taking a walk, working in a present and meditative way with my
bees, or creating a new botanical fragrance. One of the things I like about botanical
scent is how it does not last all day, which forces you then to pause, anoint, and inhale at different points throughout your day. This act of taking healing botanical essences into your body combined with the act of deep breathing can have a profound affect on mood. I use solid perfume as it can be worn in beautiful lockets and carried with you at all times which makes it more enticing to pause and inhale.

**What message would you want to share with someone who is just coming into awareness of their callings or is struggling on their spiritual path?**

In my experience, self-doubt is often the loudest voice in the mind. The negative automatic thoughts become so entrenched in our daily dialogue that we often begin to think they are a part of who we are. In order to access Divine Inspiration one needs to make time to get into deep states of stillness and listen instead, to the voice that “whispers.” This I believe is the voice of truth and divinity that is always present and is trying to help guide us into manifesting our callings.

**Share with us your vision of an ideal future – what does our world look like with the resurgence of the Feminine Divine?**

I think that it’s important that there be an increase in compassion and an understanding of interconnection and how what we do impacts the world at large. I would love to see humans viewing nature in a way that is respectful and reverent instead of as a commodity to be deconstructed and sold off. Even as a beekeeper I see commercial beekeepers harvesting large amounts of honey and treating their bees with harsh chemicals and conditions even if it means the demise of some of their hives. We as humans have become egocentric and we forget that our survival is based on the survival of all of the Earth Mother’s inhabitants.

Those in line with the Divine Feminine are able to recognize that the earth is a living and fertile being that is in need of respect and reverence.

**What roles will those of us on this path now play in that future scenario?**

I think knowledge is power and those of us who are able to share this freely and openheartedly with others have the power to change the group consciousness. Helping to expand or shift perception can have long-term positive consequences for individuals and the planet as a whole. I love the empowerment piece of the work that I do as far as educating people about the importance of pollinators and the amazing healing potential of the green kingdom. People become so excited about being able to create their own remedies and gain compassion for the blight of the honeybee that they spread this information to their friends and families and change happens. I’ve seen it first-hand – someone may attend a lecture about bees and then sees me months later only to excitedly tell me how they have allowed dandelions to overtake their front lawn.

Additionally, we need individuals to step forward who are capable of bringing the sacred into the everyday. Those who can help people to create ceremony and find simple yet beautiful ways of honoring spirituality in all that we do.
What steps can we start taking today to move towards that vision?

Like I stated earlier, I think we need to create sensory-rich ritual in which we can celebrate the body as a sacred, fertile and creative womb. We also need to slow down and see the beautiful world around us. If people can begin to do that in their own personal lives it may help others to recognize that there is a different way in which to live on the earth. I have a friend who seeks out remote swimming holes and waterfalls in order to swim naked in the water; he makes this a regular practice and his work as a musician benefits from it. He is able to find creative inspiration in being alone in nature and connecting in a more primal way.

Therefore, whether it be hiking with a pet, anointing with living scent, or cooking with diverse spices and infusing love into your cooking…..anything can be a sacred expression of the Divine Feminine if we place that type of intention there. There needs to be a conscious shift from the mundane to the sacred…it is really the essence of what we call magic, but it is accessible to everyone through mindful intention.

What would you like to add, that we haven’t discussed yet?

I would like to add that I think we also need to honor the aging process as we examine the Divine Feminine. It is interesting that when looking at nature we honor things that are old – redwoods, ancient amber, sea turtles, stars, etc. But when we place that side by side with the human experience we appear as a culture to condemn the aging process and we have a mass market industry that seek to suppress it. I think part of honoring the Divine Feminine is recognizing the inherent life cycle of all life and respecting the wisdom that comes with many years lived as well as the beauty of silver hair and wrinkles.

Jenn Allen is an Herbalist, Botanical Perfumer, Sacred Beekeeper, Writer, Ceremonialist, and Mental Health Counselor, who is best known for her accessible and down-to-earth teaching style that weaves the hands-on techniques of the healing arts with the Sacred. She seeks to integrate traditional ceremonial practices with contemporary eco-psychological theory into a new paradigm model for mental health. At home, she stewards sanctuary space for her beloved honeybees and endangered woodland plants.

Connect with her at HoneyWood Herbal, [www.honeywoodherbal.com](http://www.honeywoodherbal.com)
Ignite Your Soul Fire: 
an interview with 
Gerri Ravyn Stanfield

Tell us about yourself and your passions. What makes you get out of bed in the morning, excited to get on with the day?

I get out of bed to see what will happen next in this chaotic human experiment of life on earth in these times. I wake to see who is channeling beauty and serving the power of art and where the inspiration lives today. I am one of the luckiest people on the planet. Through my classes, coaching and acupuncture practice, I get to train global revolutionary healers and hold space for people during their alchemical transformations. I write stories and create art to help us create the beginning of the world, not just the apocalypse fantasies that Hollywood is fond of making. I practice hope as a martial art. I repeat to myself, “every day is sacred.”

How do you live your life in a way that reflects your deepest values and honors your callings?

As a child, I was a jewel thief. I had a period in my early life when I stole jewelry, from people and stores. I was taught it was a Catholic sin to steal and that I would be punished. Now, I believe that my string of thefts was a cry for attention, a longing for beauty and a challenge to that God guy, to test whether or not he had enough eyes to watch me all the time. What actually happened was that I got caught stealing by someone that I loved and trusted. They told me that I hurt their feelings by taking away something that felt precious to them. Now, that affected me! I didn’t like hurting people that I loved. Ouch. Yuck. My empathy and integrity were born that day.

I do my best to live in a way that is honest, kind and connected. I only write emails that I would not be ashamed to have read out loud in public. I admit when I am wrong. I train myself in effective communication skills. I don’t start wars. I tell the truth.

I wrote a book about healing the world because sometimes, words are everything we have. In the practice of acupuncture, I learned to move blocks in the body, emotions and spirit through Chinese medicine. I have led trainings and workshops since 1996 and part of my calling is to get in rooms with divine human animals on the verge of great change and coax them over the edge.

I have a talent for seeing what is phenomenal about humans, sometimes even before they see it for themselves. I use my gifts to awaken the healing skills in others, because it is going to take all of us to mend this world.
How would you describe your spiritual path?

I believe that the Earth is alive. Every time contemporary science “proves” something that indigenous spiritual traditions have taught for centuries, I celebrate! I was trained as a research scientist so I love that world, but I find the most divine pursuits when I hang out with my right brain and communicate with color, sound, pattern, image and symbols.

I make sacred space wherever I can. To me, this is the essential definition of ritual. I love to recreate the modern version of the ancient priestess archetype in our world. I help folks discover what is holy for them. I have been making various forms of art and rituals on stage, in the treatment room, in the classroom and at large events for two decades.

I have been perplexed at the increased use of the word “priestess” in industrialized culture. To me a priestess describes someone who is in deep service to a community and to the planet, not just a pretty white lady in a white dress spinning around in the woods. Like love, the priestess must be rooted in action for the collective in order to be effective.

I am obsessed with the practice of alchemy over the last 4,000 years of human history. How do we truly transform? Whether it is from lead to gold or a caterpillar to a butterfly or a wound to a gift, change is something we have to understand. I love to say I am a cultural alchemist, because I seek the shining truth at the core of our species and urban consumer reality. Clearly, we have to sift through a lot of poison and rubbish to get to the true core of who we are, but alchemy says it all has value.

What is your relationship with the Divine Feminine? Or with the qualities that She embodies?

I was six when Raiders of the Lost Ark premiered in the theater and the scene when Indiana Jones got thrown into the pit of snakes made quite an impression on me. I dreamed that night of walking through a valley filled with snakes that did not bite but coiled around my ankles and frightened me. I wept and tried to climb out of the valley towards a statue of Mary high on a hilltop. I made it to her and knelt down, glad to be free of the valley. Then she opened her mouth and snakes came out of her eyes and mouth and she said, “I am this, too.” Um...okay? I didn’t know it, but it was my first meeting with the Divine Feminine.

I kept asking people why God was a guy – if he was all things and made everything, wouldn’t God be all genders too? Folks told me about the fall of Eve, that she shouldn’t have eaten the tempting apple that the snake gave her. Women always did shady things like this, so God definitely wasn’t a woman.

In high school, it came to my attention through studying Greek mythology that there were female deities too. And they weren’t all sweet light and motherly love, either. They were powerful, brilliant and sexy, just like I wanted to be. In fact, through research and
the work of Marija Gimbutas, I realized that most cultures throughout time have some version of the Divine Feminine. Many pre-industrialized cultures honored at least one female goddess archetype who loves, protects, gives blessings or birth, creates or destroys as She wishes.

I veered towards feminism, particularly eco-consciousness, placing value on relationships and eliciting the collective voice. I was called a “feminazi” in college when I began to notice and point out the not-so-subtle ways that sexism reared its head in my life. I had my ass grabbed as a server, was told I wasn’t skinny enough to be on camera for an interview, listened to a professor say that it was too dangerous for a woman to be president because she might launch nuclear weapons in a moment of PMS. I needed to believe that I had worth in a female body. I needed a model of the feminine that expanded my understanding of everything I could be as a woman.

I still rely on that expansive definition of the feminine divine for inspiration. In a world where young girls are sold as sex slaves, women make 79 cents for every dollar men make, and 90% of women in the US report that they are dissatisfied with their bodies, we need goddesses more than ever. The more images and stories we have of the Divine Feminine as strong, wise and sovereign, the more we believe in our own strength, freedom and wisdom. The more we can experience Her in all races, all shapes, ages and pronouns, the more we can honor women’s bodies and lives in every country. Right now, we need the Divine Feminine to rise!

What happens when you lose your way? How do you get back onto your path?

Now, when I am dissatisfied with me, I try to be kind to myself too. As I age, I have a better relationship with my mistakes and failures. They can be such amazing discoveries, if I actually listen to them instead of beating myself just for having them. I am also changing my relationship to my story of Not Enough, or Nuffy, as I call it. When I say I am not a writer or teacher enough, I am not talented enough, I am not polished or intelligent enough, I am not strong or beautiful enough, what I am really saying is that I am too afraid to stretch and reach for what I came here to do. When I say that I am not enough, I am listening to the voices inside of me that would say anything to keep me small, invisible and safe. This costs me everything that matters.

If I mess up and hurt someone, I apologize and do my best to make repair. I also just learned that when I get hurt, I push myself towards forgiveness of other people before I am actually ready. It’s a relief to just say “I’m not ready yet,” and let myself heal. I want to walk a more gentle path when it comes to the ways I miss the mark. My healing process often feels glacial but if I want it to be complete, it is worth the wait.

What tools and techniques do you use to stay on your path and shine your light brightly? How do you nurture yourself and your spiritual connection?

I must move my body everyday. Running, stretching, dancing, Qi Gong and hiking bring me mental health. Writing is a necessity; words help me discover what is true
about me and the world. And words are one of the first ways humans know how to connect to each other. I also love to teach, drum, sing, eat, make theatre, design ritual, lead meditations, have exciting conversations, drink wine and tell stories. For me, acts of creation are spiritual nourishment.

**What message would you want to share with someone who is just coming into awareness of their callings or is struggling on their spiritual path?**

1. Stop comparing yourself to others. It is a toxic practice that will deteriorate your soul.

2. Overwhelm is an important teacher. It shows up in your life to say: “Too many things are happening right now. Stop and pay attention!” So yes, stop what you are doing and break down everything into smaller bites. Some of the most wise words in the world are: one step at a time. You can generally do most of what you want, but you cannot do it all at once.

3. The answer is rarely to work harder. It is usually to rest, breathe, be kind to yourself, ask for help and then, with clarity, take the next step.

4. There is a tiny divine flame inside your heart that fuels everything you do. It only wants to dance and shine. It is your job to tend your heart flame when life gets cold and play with it as much as you can. Ignite your soul fire if it goes out. You are incendiary. Find your tinder. Strike the match. You are the only one who can make the spark.

**Share with us your vision of an ideal future – what does our world look like with the resurgence of the Feminine Divine?**

In our current industrialized culture, I see interlocking systems of oppression, like a web of lies, that tries to convince us that some humans have more value than others. I want us to unravel that web and reweave a world of justice and fierce love. My vision of an ideal future is that we renounce greed as an organizing factor and enter an age where we all have plenty and some to share.

I also imagine a world where many of the ignorant prejudices are finally eradicated, I mean, truly, no more homophobia! And in my version of the future, we stop killing people of color and we believe in the dignity of all beings. The Divine Feminine principles ask that we make our laws and social agreements from this belief. Making repair is part of the beloved community of justice that we seek.

I have heard tell of a Protestant colonist’s diary from the 1600’s that called the indigenous people of this land “lazy” and denigrated their work ethic because they only worked 30 hours a week and had lots of time to spend with each other in the forest. With a resurgence of the Divine Feminine and a greater value placed on relationship, we become content with less stuff and more time.
With the effects of climate change becoming ever more apparent, we would need to value healing over profit when it came to natural resources and non-human family members in our bioregions. I imagine Olympic-style contests with huge prizes for think-tank competitions of who can come up with the most sustainable, cost effective ways to mend the soil and disassemble the plastic gyres in the oceans. We will stop transcending the body and pushing it out of our way, but begin to embrace our full physical, sensual experience as spiritual. Our medicine will heal body, heart, spirit and land, as it should be.

What roles will those of us on this path now play in that future scenario?

It sounds too simple to be true, but the role you will play is to do the thing that you do well. If you don’t know what it is, ask your best friend or someone who has loved you a long time. When you do that thing you do, it heals every one of us. It is part of why you are here, the unique medicine that you bring to this time. And the gift you have to share is likely part of your deepest wounding, some initiation that you have survived. You have certainly made it through some kind of hell and you can show us how you did it, help us along, allow us to learn from your experience. Keep going.

What steps can we start taking today to move towards that vision?

In my book, *Revolution of the Spirit: Awaken the Healer*, I say that all revolutions involve what is sacred to us. What is the most sacred to you? Find out. Ask yourself what matters to you. Where are the places that you love and must not lose? Who stands with you? (Hint: they cannot all be friends with whom you get along!) To what cause do you or would you give your life force energy? What problem are you here to help solve?

What would you like to add, that we haven’t discussed yet?

If we keep playing out this strange binary metaphor that there is a kind of energy that is initiating, individual, logical and bright and we call that masculine, we must notice that we highly value that kind of energy in urban culture. We want to be active, YES people, we want to keep moving forward and make progress.

So to stay on that track, we then take receptive, relational, intuitive, dark energy and call that feminine. But we talk about angry moods as black moods, we talk about maintaining relationships as a female responsibility, we talk about the earth as dirty. So, to keep up with that metaphor, we don’t value the planet, people of color, or women’s bodies or work. We are taught that to surrender, become vulnerable, say NO or hold a boundary for something that is sacred to us is not a worthy way to live.

This doesn’t work. It never has worked. We are all so much more than one side of the metaphor.

It is scary to be visible as a woman. We carry that fear of witch burning in our DNA. We don’t want to be targeted, exiled, raped or murdered. We become frightened of our own power and potential. We play it safe, stay small. Don’t scare the men. Don’t show them
how smart you are. Don’t dress too sexy. Don’t be magic. Don’t write a book. Don’t do a TED talk. Don’t run for president.

This is a time for goddesses and men who are worthy of sharing community with goddesses. I imagine the Divine Feminine as an earth-based experience, honoring cycles of seasons, transformation, life stages and sacred limits. I pray that we find our home in our own bodies and with this stunning planet. I want us to collaborate in every way that brings us joy. I know that we can learn to make ritual together again and accept a multiplicity of forms for self-identified women to experience themselves as powerful.

Gerri Ravyn Stanfield is the author of *Revolution of the Spirit: Awaken the Healer*, a guide to liberate the healing super powers within each of us. She practices acupuncture in Portland, Oregon and works with Acupuncturists Without Borders to build world healing exchange programs. She designs trainings for emerging leaders and healers in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Asia and Australia.

Ravyn is a cultural alchemist, writing to transform the heartbreak of our times and reveal the gold in what seems worthless. She creates modern ritual art, combining music, poetry and performance to make contemporary offerings of the human imagination. She uses her background in trauma recovery, neurobiology, psychology, writing and theatre to coax more of the extraordinary into the world through the cracks in Western civilization.

Connect with her at Revolution of the Spirit, [www.gerriravynstanfield.com](http://www.gerriravynstanfield.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/GerriRavynStanfield](http://www.facebook.com/GerriRavynStanfield)
Tell us about yourself and your passions. What makes you get up out of bed in the morning excited to get on with your day?

I think one of the things that gets me out of bed in the morning is that this is just such a remarkable place. This planet is so precious and so beautiful. There are so many amazing beings on this Earth who are so filled with light and love and there’s so much to be grateful for. And at the same time, there are so many places where we have work to do, where we are still trying to figure it all out.

So I get up to smell the roses and appreciate a cup of coffee and I also get up because I really want to do my part to make it a better place. I want to help people learn how to make their lives easier and more delightful.

And the other thing that gets me up out of bed in the morning is that I have a dog that needs to get up and poop and pee.

Tell us about your work in the world.

I am a modern medicine lady. What I mean by that is I am kind of the person, when you’ve got something going on and you can’t quite figure out what to do, I’m one of those people you come to to try to sort it out. There are people who use terms like shaman, or high priestess, or something like that—I like to think of myself as the lady you come to when you need some help.

I’ve been working as an intuitive guide and doing healing work for about thirty years now. I started experiencing intuition and prophetic dreams when I was nine and I have been managing that ever since. Since 1997, when I got out of seminary, I started pursuing tattooing as a healing art and I have been doing medicine tattooing full-time since 1999. In addition to that I’ve been working as a spiritual healer and intuitive mentor. I particularly love to work with other highly sensitive, empathic women and the magickal kids that are coming into the world these days.

I basically support people so that they don’t have to suffer the way that I did when I was younger. They don’t have to spend their twenties, thirties or even their forties just struggling with being overwhelmed with too much information and just flooded with all the emotional stuff. A big part of what I do is work with people to learn how to take
psychic static and overwhelm and too much information and learn how to manage it so our abilities can go from a challenge to a real gift to be used in the world.

**How do you live your life in a way that reflects your deepest values and honors your calling? Because you’re an empath and overcame these challenges, how does that come into your life now?**

That comes into my life in so many different ways. One of the very, very first pieces of it is that I live my life with a prime directive of self-care and honoring my boundaries and my limitations. Honoring the fact that I am part of this Earth and I need to and deserve to be treated with the same precious care that every other piece or part of this Earth deserves. Self-care is a big important thing and gratitude is another way that always keeps me focused. Gratitude and appreciation are of deepest value.

For me, kindness is probably at the very root of all of it. I deeply believe approaching all people with kindness, even if I don’t agree with somebody, even if I don’t understand where they are coming from, even if I think they are a total bonehead, and especially in this current political climate, it’s easy to see people like that. I really feel strongly that having the desire to behold human beings, and to witness their experience, and to honor their process, and to make a connection is so crucial and so important.

My deepest values are really about authenticity and kindness and tolerance and sincerity, and acceptance. The willingness to move beyond my comfort zone and do the personal work and encourage and support other people doing their work so that we all can continue to grow and evolve.

**How would you describe your spiritual path?**

I consider myself a Universalist, in the sense of the way most people would imagine the word, in that I believe that the divine exists everywhere, is in absolutely everything, and that all we need to do is look and breathe and pay attention and we will experience that holy, sacred, incredible divine mystery in all things. At the same time, I am a Universalist in the historical sense of the tradition, from the Unitarian Universalist tradition. Universalists believe that there is no club that some people get to belong to so they will be saved. Fundamentally, to be a Universalist is the idea that we are all saved in God’s grace, that we are all saved in that divine love. There isn’t some sort of check and balance to say that you are welcome into the club, or you are welcome into heaven and the rest of you are excluded.

My path is very much that there a million different ways to see the face of God and touch the face of God, to breathe the breath of God and Goddess. It’s hubris for any of us to assume that we know something so indescribable, that’s so vast and so mysterious and so much greater than any human being could ever imagine being. My spiritual path is one of reverence, gratitude and desire to just bow before the divine and behold the divine in absolutely everything and anything.
When I am really on top of it, I’m even doing it when I am cleaning the cat box and when I am dealing with the dishes. And just really recognizing that everything is holy, everything is sacred, everything is precious.

**What is your relationship with the Divine Feminine or the qualities that She embodies?**

I’m inclined to start with talking about the Blessed Mother, and particularly the European tradition of worshipping the Virgin Mary. I come from, on my mom’s side of the family in particular, a long line of Catholics who worship the Virgin Mary. I was not raised as a Christian or Catholic but I was aware of that presence of the Divine Feminine and the energy of that comforting, loving, healing, compassionate mother. The one we turn to when we need nurturing, the one that we turn to when we need support, the one we turn to when we need healing.

When I first discovered the Divine Feminine, aside from knowing about the Virgin Mary and the Blessed Mother, and also I believed in flower fairies and mermaids and all kinds of magickal things from the time I was three years old, it was when I was about to turn twenty and my cousin, Tansy, who was also a magickal person, said to me, “you have to read this book, *When God Was a Woman* by Merlin Stone.” I was like twenty years old and I was in this stage where I didn’t have any answers and I didn’t know anything. I knew in my body about what I was, and I was magickal, but I didn’t know and nobody was talking about this. I read this book, and marked it up with my highlighter. I remember the first time I heard that people worshipped the Goddess and it blew my mind. It was just amazing.

Around the same time that this happened, I also saw The Dinner Party, this amazing art installation that Judy Chicago created back in the late seventies or early eighties. It was in Boston and my mother took me. My mother is a hard-core feminist and I was really lucky to be raised by this amazing, sex-educating, feminism-spouting woman. By the time I was twenty-one years old, I had a NARAL t-shirt that said “I’m Pro-Choice and I Vote.” My mom is just an amazing human being. She took me to see The Dinner Party. The Dinner Party is this series of thirteen plates on each of three different tables, with 39 different plates that represent all these different phases, stages and aspects of womanhood and the Divine Feminine.

I remember seeing this show and looking at all the work. At the end of this event, I said, “I’m dedicating the rest of my life to Her.” I will do everything I can for the rest of my life to make things beautiful for Her. And to speak Her name and to put Her out into the world and to honor Her. To let Her presence be known. That was the moment I knew my calling and I knew my purpose. I was here to serve Her. That was the wake-up call, the inspiration. That was the moment where I said, “I’m yours.” And I’ve pretty much been Hers ever since. I experience the divine as more gender-neutral than I did at that point and time, but I will always have a place for Her, and Her presence and majesty and amazingness.

That literally made me cry to say that.
What happens when you lose your way or aren’t feeling it? How do you get yourself back onto your path and back into connection with the divine?

What happens when I lose my way is I’m totally wonky, is I’m anxious or scared or cranky or I’m an absolute bitch to be around, like if you’re married to me. I lose my sense of direction or where I am going. Usually if I’m having that experience, it takes me a little while to go: “wait a second, something’s not right here, I feel really weird right now, I’m really scared, and I’m really swearing at politicians way too much right now or I just engaged in an argument on Facebook, that wasn’t a smart idea.”

For me, when I lose my way, first is feeling off balance and second is recognizing that I’m off balance. That’s the way to get back onto my path, that recognition of “oops I’ve slipped, oops I fell.” The next step for me is recognizing why I’m off balance. For example, if I’m off balance because of something physical, in my self-care, like I haven’t gotten enough sleep or I’ve been around people too much, or if I’ve been working too many hours, or eating shitty food, then the job is to go back to ground zero, to go back to center, to go back to eating simply, go back to sleeping more, to go back to my calendar and say, “you know, you might want to rearrange your schedule a little bit and cancel a few of these extra plans and ideas that you’ve got.”

If that is not what is going on, if it’s something I am really triggered by – an event in the world, or something that happened between me and somebody else – and I am just feeling off, then a way that I always get back on is a combination of working with other skilled practitioners who use energy healing, who use cranial-sacral work, who use acupuncture, who use massage, who use essential oils, who use Reiki or polarity, and those who use EFT and tapping. Tapping, which is something that I am a trained practitioner of, is something I use a lot to find my way back to my center. Even if I am not around anybody else, if I’m off balance, if I’ve fallen off my way, tapping is, in my experience, the thing that brings me back the quickest, the most efficiently and the most effectively pretty much every single time.

Something I’d really like to say about community and about turning to community is that I really believe that if you are serious about your path or if I am serious about my path, then I need to put my money where my mouth is. In my personal opinion, to be an effective healer, to be effectively walking a spiritual path, it is not done in a vacuum and it is not a DIY project. In the way that I value and believe in my ability to help others do their work, I feel it is imperative that I turn to other people for support, help, and guidance. And that I basically invest in my self-care in the same way that I invite other people to invest in theirs.

I see turning to community and asking for help and asking for support as a total non-negotiable. I believe we are a colony, that we humans are like nerve cells in a neural net. I am not an individual, I am part of something so much greater than myself, and I heal when I connect to the whole, not when I am adrift on my own, trying to figure this shit out by myself.
Yeah, that’s important to remember.

I think there’s a very fine line and balance between personal responsibility and ownership of our process versus isolation, not relinquishing control and avoiding vulnerability or asking for help AND giving away our power entirely. I believe that even in the Pagan community, as in many other places, there’s still a tendency to follow the allopathic path, the conventional route that holds the attitude: “doctor, fix me,” while simultaneously there’s the other side of the alternative world where there is a fair amount of “I can DIY this” or “I can figure this all out myself.” While I believe that we are all 100% responsible for our own paths, for our own choice, for our process, and really owning and claiming our choice to say yes to our growth and to our recovery, to say yes to our healing, I also feel that this is not something that is effectively done by ourselves alone.

Actually, I first really started to grasp this concept when I read a book by Sandra Ingerman about soul retrieval. One of the things she basically said is that we don’t fracture off or lose part of ourselves in a vacuum. It generally happens within community and within the context of other things. But because our soul goes on walkabout because of difficulties or experiences, the only way that we are able to be restored to wholeness is the support and intervention of others. In order to come home, we need a family to come home to.

That idea has really sat with me, and stuck with me and really resonated very, very deeply. We must allow ourselves to be loved and we must allow ourselves to be supported, and we must allow ourselves to be vulnerable to receiving support in order to go really far and to really transform ourselves. That’s something that I really believe.

That goes along with the Divine Feminine qualities of collaborating, and of tribe, and sisterhood and brotherhood.

Absolutely.

You touched on this a little bit already, but what tools and techniques do you use to stay on your path and shine your light brightly? How do you nurture yourself and your spiritual connection?

It’s so funny, my immediate answer is Game of Thrones! (laughs)

I would say that playfulness is really key, so I guess Game of Thrones is the idea of playfulness and time off and being able to do things that are just sheerly for the sake of amusement, sheerly for the sake of delight and enjoyment. And for the sake of inspiration – books and movies and programs and stories and things that remind me of the magicalness of this world. That’s something that really nurtures my spiritual connection and keeps me going.

As I said before, gratitude, and having an ongoing gratitude practice. Whenever I’m off, gratitude is one of my guiding stars. It’s in my homeward-bound constellation. So, focusing on gratitude and coming back to what I’m grateful for. I taught my husband,
when we first met, whenever he could sense that I’m off balance, I taught him to say “What’s the bottom line?” and I would say “God.” He would say, “And what do you do?” And I’d say “Breathe.” And then I would take in a deep breath. For me, breath is another one of those things that is a guiding star. Breath is the big, big polestar at the top of the constellation that’s saying “Come home, come home, be in your body, breathe, breathe, remember, remember. What are you grateful for? What’s important? What’s the bottom line?” I am not alone. I am part of something greater than myself. It is so much bigger than me. Just really remembering myself in perspective to the rest of it.

Part of this project is to reach out to those who are doing the work of helping the Divine Feminine resurgence in the world and who might not be aware of some of the connections, of all of the community that’s out there. So, what message would you want to share with someone who’s either just coming into awareness of their calling in this regard, or to someone who maybe is struggling on their spiritual path right now?

Awesome question. So, I think I’m going to talk to myself, like 30-plus years ago, and the first thing that I would say is: “Keep going. It gets better. Just keep going.” And I think that it’s really important to say: “You are not alone. There are so many of us on this planet who are like this. There are so many of us on this planet who have these sensitivities, who notice things, who are magickal, who feel the connection to the whole planet, and who know that there is more to this than watching Real Housewives of XYZ City or going to Applebee’s every single Friday night. There is just so much more to this world.” I want to say that when somebody doesn’t understand you, it’s because they don’t have the sensitivity to see the same colors and to experience the same degree of awareness that we do.

But they are the ones who lack the ability to see. We are the ones who can see. Please try to be compassionate. Please try to understand. They don’t get it because they can’t see it. We see something they don’t see. There are more and more of us, and you are part of something greater. Just keep your eyes open, keep going, keep looking, and keep asking the questions.

And keep breathing. I would also say to trust your instinct. Trust your gut. If something seems too good to be true, or there’s a part of you that goes “this person is full of shit,” chances are that they are. There are a lot of people in the spiritual world who are full of it. There are people in this world who have agendas that are about taking advantage, about doing things that are out of alignment, or they are just not necessarily as far along as they think they are in their own personal growth and development. Maybe they still have a lot of wounds they haven’t addressed or touched on. So if you get a feeling of “ooh, this is not my teacher, this is not the right person, I don’t think I want to work with this person,” or you pick up a book and it does nothing for you, put the book down, walk away from the teacher.
I’ve had that with a book, and then a couple of years later, I pick it up and it’s like “this is the perfect book!”

Yeah. With books for sure, and even sometimes I think with teachers, but with books especially, I think sometimes it’s just that we’re not ready or we don’t see something. But I do think when it comes to a particular teacher or guide or healer or mentor or somebody that you’re thinking about working with or who has a piece of information for you, sometimes you can take what you like and leave the rest, but sometimes it really is like just, “don’t go there, little buckaroo, stay away, because this is not the place where you’re going to get what you need.”

Let’s do a little visioning here. Why don’t you share with us your vision for an ideal future? What does our world look like with the resurgence of the Divine Feminine?

Hmm. So, I was at a workshop, many, many years ago. It was a two- or three-day event that Starhawk was running in Salem, Massachusetts, of all places. We did a lot of journeying and path-working, and we did a lot of going forward into the future and envisioning a world where the Divine Feminine really is accepted.

Then I had this vision of a place where everyone was awake to their emotional intelligence and everybody understood that they need to own their shit and really take responsibility within themselves and really be able to own, claim and recognize and speak to and take responsibility and heal what was going on with the help and support of others. I had this vision of where we lived in clusters, pods of communities, where there were groups of people that were put together in villages where we would collaborate to get our needs met. We would share resources, we would share tasks, and yet there was a great deal of room for personal space and personal time. They had technology that was beyond what we have now; electricity was ample and abundant, water was clean and flowing, food was growing with great ease and abundance, technology for health and healing was also very easy and abundant.

People functioned in these sort of nerve-clusters, interconnected, in this web of awareness and connection through technology and probably through increased telepathy and awareness so that we are functioning as a sort of web of awareness, a web of light across this entire planet. There was love, gratitude and appreciation and care and respect for all living beings, respect not just for living beings but respect for every single molecule and atom on this planet. Understanding that everything is divine and holy and worthy of having its place on this planet. It’s a place where humans are a part of the whole, however, they are equal to all other parts. That there is an understanding that all beings and all things have value and presence and significance and a voice.

What roles of those of us on this path now play in that future scenario?

I was discussing, at a talk I was giving a couple weeks ago, the idea of the hundredth monkey. When we hit critical mass, eventually there are these waves of awareness where all of a sudden, everybody understands something and everybody has the tech-
nology. Just look even at smart phones and the fact that twenty years ago very few people even had cell phones and now practically everybody has a smart phone. I believe that that is a hundredth monkey kind of thing. There is this wave of impact and awareness to the point where we hit critical mass and the scales tip and things really shift and grow.

I personally believe that we’re at the 87th monkey right now. I suspect that we’re not the hundredth monkey. I kind of have a hunch that it is not in our lifetime. I’m 53 right now and maybe by the end of my life the 100th monkey will be alive and the hundredth monkey phenomenon will happen. But my sense is that I am part of the group of the 87th monkeys.

And I believe our job is that we need to keep on doing the things that are going to tip the scale, that are going to tip the balance. I personally believe in the personal growth work and going in and really, really healing the wounds, healing the trauma, healing the triggers, healing the limiting beliefs, going in and healing the ancestral lines, going back and healing all of the victims of violence that run in our line, for all of the people who have been taken advantage of, or have taken advantage of. It is necessary that we do this work to clear the energetic stories, not only for ourselves, but to clear it for the lines that go back, and also for the generations that are yet to come.

I believe that by being one of these 87th monkeys that we will be teaching more and more monkeys how to do this until eventually that hundredth monkey is going to show up and this is going to become something that will be natural, effortless, easy. Where all of a sudden, everybody is going to have the ability to see the colors that now only a small percentage of the population can see.

**Starting where we are now, what steps can we take today to move us towards this vision?**

Personally there’s being ecologically responsible, doing what we can to walk gently on this Earth. There’s being mindful of our diets. Looking at our food, looking at the way we’re eating, looking at the ways we are caring for ourselves and our bodies and for our families. Putting our money where our mouth is.

Even doing things like not being sucked in by “click-bait” and not responding to it. Click-bait is the idea of something you are being baited to reply to, or respond to, where it is ultimately not for the highest good and not something that serves us.

Being mindful of where we are spending our money. Is my money going to something that supports goodness or supports life-affirming things or that supports the sustainability and the health of this planet? Or am I contributing to something that is not? I will say that sometimes you just have to accept that there is a lesser of evils and I am a believer that the lesser of evils is far, far less than the primary one. Sometimes you just have to accept and compromise.
I really believe that the steps that we can start taking today are within ourselves. We need to take 100% responsibility for our shit. We need to own our stuff. We need to look at what is making us tick, why are we doing what we are doing, where are we being unconscious, where are we being assholes. In what ways can we really, really up our game at being better people on this planet?

In my experience, ironically, more often than not, when I look at absolutely every emotion, often it comes back to love or grief. Anger is just grief avoided and fear is also in many ways grief avoided. I really believe that when you don’t know what else to do, turn to the most uncomfortable place, where there is fear, resistance or resistance. When in doubt, grieve. Go to the discomfort and sit with it. Create the space for our own discomfort.

I was reading something very briefly yesterday where someone was talking about the idea that we live in a culture right now where people are incredibly uncomfortable with the concept of death and especially uncomfortable with the idea of grief and suffering. We live in a culture where we do not want to be uncomfortable. They’d rather take a pill, they would rather watch a television program, they’d rather numb out with something. So, I really believe that the greatest gift that we can give each other and the greatest gift we can give ourselves is creating the space for the stuff that is uncomfortable and creating space for the pain. Creating a space where being uncomfortable is possible because I believe that in the same way a birth process is not easy and that if you’re going to give birth to a baby and not be doped up and knocked out on some kind of medication, basically completely missing it, which then has major consequences for the baby because they’re born basically anesthetized, dissociative, disconnected and not aware — in the same way that in order for a child to be brought into this world effectively, we want to do it with as little chemical intervention as possible, which means sitting through the discomfort. I believe that we are at the very beginning stages of a new world order and new world of transformation and change.

We are at a period where we are starting to feel the Braxton-Hicks contractions. We’re not in labor yet but we are going into labor. We’re in that end of the eighth month, the last two-thirds of the last trimester. We’re in that period where the birth contractions and the feelings are starting to happen and the baby is starting to drop. It’s also pushing on our bladder.

Our planet is almost to the point of reaching 9 billion people by the year 2050. And that is the number that people are theorizing is the amount that this planet can accommodate. That is the number of human beings that this ecosystem can accommodate without us getting overrun. Basically just having too many living beings on the planet to function. And so my sense of it is that in the same way that when a baby gets to that eighth month and they’re pushing on your bladder and you’re just so fricking uncomfortable that you just wish it were over, we’re getting there. In the same way that it is essential that we surrender to the birth process and that we find our way around the discomfort to the best of our ability, which sometimes means that it just fucking sucks and we just have to accept that it sucks and surrender to the fact that it is uncomfortable, I believe that that is where we are as a planet and that the longer that we avoid
this, and the more we do things to avoid it, and the more we try to run around and es-
cape it, the more intense it gets and the more resistance is building up.

I believe that the key is to surrender and to find calmness despite this and to accept
that even in the midst of this discomfort, we can breathe through this process and we
can birth ourselves into a new world. From that perspective, people like us, we’re the
midwives, we’re the doulas. We are charged with the ability to stay grounded and con-
nected to the Earth and to have ourselves so deeply plugged in that we are unshakable,
unflappable, unwavering in our ability to hold the space and to hold the calmness so
that when other people start feeling the contractions and start to feel the waves and
start to feel the fear that comes with that, we can provide a gentle, steadying hand and
say “it’s going to be okay, just keep breathing, we’re going to get to the other side of
this, it’s going to be alright. We’re growing. We’re changing. We’re learning.” And that’s
part of what’s happening right now.

That’s beautiful. As we wrap up, is there anything else that you would like
to add that we haven’t discussed or touched on yet?

Yes, I want to talk about the long game and perspective in the long game. I also want to
talk about the fact that as a cell of the body of the planet, that we are such a small blip
on the radar. And I think as human beings that we take ourselves way too seriously, we
perceive ourselves as having way more impact than we actually do. While as human be-
ings we do have the capacity to completely destroy ourselves, I sincerely believe that we
are not the terminal point on the evolutionary chain. While we could cause harm or
damage to this planet, I believe there is a resilience to life that exceeds anything that we
are capable of doing.

Maybe there are going to be setbacks as a result of the behavior of some human beings,
but in the grand scheme of things, we are growing, we are evolving, and we are learn-
ing. This is a million-year-old long game. Your life, my life, we are but a second in the
grand scheme of things and we matter. We truly matter, and what we do matters. And
this is about a long game.

Less than a hundred years ago, women did not have the right to vote. The Stonewall
riots happened in the late 1950’s. There were sodomy laws that just got repealed a cou-
ple years ago. Gay marriage is only recently legal in this country; as this book is
launched it is NOT even two years since it happened. Interracial marriage – people of
different colors were not allowed to legally marry one hundred years ago. Women
couldn’t even own property. There are so many things that have dramatically changed
in the last hundred years that we couldn’t even have imagined. Even in the fact that we
live in a culture where people are talking about child abuse, people are talking about
the fact that violating and abusing children is no longer acceptable, it’s no longer okay,
that these things aren’t all right. This stuff is changing.

Michael Moore, who I really love, had a whole spiel about angry white men. One of the
things that he really talks about right now is that the angry white men are on their last
stand, and they are kicking and screaming as they are trying to hold on, grasping for
straws. It’s like their fingernails are on the edge of the ledge and they are just doing every single thing they can and trying to make everybody else’s life unmanageable in order to try to hold on to something that they will not hold on to.

When I look at the long game I think about an article I read in the Washington Post that said that one-third of Millennials identify as less than 100% straight. There are all of these people that are seeing themselves on a spectrum, continuum, and there are all of these rainbow babies being born. There are so many mixed racial people are being born that this idea of white, heterosexual male supremacy – it’s just a matter of time before it can’t even exist because they don’t even exist.

Keep the long game in mind and that what we are doing is going to affect seven generations. My job is to do things that support and affect the seven generations ahead of me, not necessarily my generation. And this is really about actions that are sustainable and support the seven generations ahead.

I love the idea of the seven generations going forward and that every little thing we do going forward is blossoming. What is it that we are creating in our own individual lives and what is that affecting as we move forward?

Wil Wheaton is quoted as saying, “Don’t be a dick.” So bottom line, don’t be a dick. Pay attention to your behavior and do things that are nurturing and loving and supporting and kind. Don’t be a dick. Just because you are on a spiritual path, just because you’re Pagan, just because you’re magickal, doesn’t mean that you can’t be a dick. And I think that’s the thing.

I’ve seen plenty of people who are Pagan do boneheaded things too. So, if you do, if you act like a jerk, if I act like a jerk, then promptly apologize. As soon as you recognize that you did something stupid, take responsibility for it and say “I’m really sorry, I didn’t realize I was being such a jerk and please forgive me.” We must continuously do what we can to be better people.

One additional thing I want to share with you about this concept that I learned a long time ago. I was at a gathering called Sirius Rising, which is a gathering that happened before Starwood, which is a large, amazing, crazy event that happened near the New York and Ohio and Pennsylvania border. My friend was doing a workshop on the idea of being “otherkin.”

Otherkin means that you know you’re not human, you know that you are a magickal being, you know you are something other than just a human being. I regard myself as an empath and I’ve put out the call to the empathic tribe. I highly recommend watching the Netflix series sense8, where they depict those of us who are the next link on the evolutionary chain. That we are actually something different than the average “muggle,” different than the average bear. And that we are experiencing the world in a different way.
I definitely recommend the series *Sense8*, for the idea of being otherkin, being something different. That’s one piece of it. But in this workshop, my friend, Sadie Wolfkit-ten, she and her then partner talked about this concept of this word “deshtai,” which is an Elven word. It’s not even from this dimension. Deshtai is the idea of the perfect infinite. It’s the idea that the actions that we take feed the sustainability, feed the goodness, feed the lifeforce in a positive way. The goodness of lifeforce and the future of the lifeforce, the continuing line that goes forward.

Deshtai is also the idea of right action that comes with the awareness of, if I take this action now, does this choice support deshtai in the future? Does this choice feed deshtai? And deshtai is like this perfect ultimate, it’s the best possible outcome. Deshtai is both the destination, it’s the process, it’s the actions, and it’s the mindfulness of what it is, the goal of the highest and greatest good.

This idea of deshtai is about the seventh generation but it’s taking it to the level beyond this where we are always in el mundo bueno, never in el mundo mal. And always going towards this idea of that which feeds the perfect infinite, the divine, the holiest of holies, the blessed infinite and the blessed future.

When I heard this, it was so profound for me to understand this concept of deshtai, to hold the concept of deshtai, and to be reminded of deshtai, and so ultimately deshtai became and is my North Star. Deshtai is the name of the whole constellation. And that is where I need to be reminded to always turn back towards. Does this point to the deshtai? And if it doesn’t then I need to check myself before I wreck myself.

**Thank you so much. Wow, so inspiring. Thank you for being a part of this project to get the word out to more and more people!**

You are so welcome, and it has been such a pleasure. I must say that something lit up inside of me and it just feels like this, especially since we are in this amazing day two days after Lammas, one day after the new moon, moon and sun in Leo. I’ve been doing all this work telling people about how I really feel that, the moon and sun both being in Leo. Leo, in my opinion, is all about roaring and accepting your truth and putting it out into the world and singing what really matters to you.

The moon, being your heart and inner sense of self, is in one place and then your sun, which is your identity and how you move and function and work in the world, are on the same page and essentially at the same party with the same agenda, what an amazing thing you can do. So, timing wise, this particular conversation, this particular interview, could not have been more holy and the planets, certainly I think, really reinforced and supported us in doing this.
Jennifer Moore is an Intuitive Mentor, Spiritual Healer and Advanced EFT Practitioner who loves guiding empathic women to find emotional stability and transform Psychic Static to Inner Knowing so they can seize opportunities for success & joy. As an empath, Jen’s desire to help often exceeded her own sense of worth but with her devotion to the Goddess and use of various healing practices she released limiting beliefs about her value, purpose and sense of safety being visible in this world. Before discovering the tool of EFT, Jen often willed herself through resistance while struggling to meet other peoples’ needs at her own expense. With tapping and other tools Jen shifted chronic anxiety and overwhelm to create a thriving practice supporting women to shine.

Connect with her at Modern Medicine Lady, modernmedicine lady.com
Bringing Back Balance: an interview with Marie Deforge

Tell us about yourself and your passions. What makes you get out of bed in the morning, excited to get on with the day?

I am a spiritual healer and teacher offering services and classes in many different modalities. Many of my classes and healing sessions bring in the energy of the Divine Feminine, or rather bringing that out in myself and my clients and students. Helping women to see the divine feminine within themselves is a huge passion of mine; that is when I feel I shine and I don't care who sees it.

How do you live your life in a way that reflects your deepest values and honors your callings?

I always will first see the good in everyone and yes, there are times when I need to remind myself that there is a divine masculine and feminine within everyone, if you simply look for it. I honor my need for down time, time in the garden with my hands in the dirt and time for me to sit in circle with other women.

How would you describe your spiritual path?

Full of magick. Honestly, this spiritual path has been magickal for me and the more that I appreciate and experience new things along the way, the more life-giving it becomes. I'm open yet discerning, knowing when energetically something doesn't vibe with my own vibration - I simply move on to the next thing - no judgment needed, it's just a different frequency.

What is your relationship with the Divine Feminine? Or with the qualities that She embodies?

Oh my, what a beautiful relationship it is, the Divine Feminine comes through my heart and hands - whether it's gardening or painting or sharing many teachings. I recently facilitated a Divine Feminine workshop, the third in the series—called A Wild Awakening. In that workshop all the women were led on a guided meditation to meet their Wild Woman Self (just another name for the Divine Feminine in my opinion) and received messages and guidance. Every single participant's inner wild woman wanted creativity and lived her life creating and expressing herself with some sort of art (whether that was gardening, painting, writing, or dragon-tending).
What happens when you lose your way? How do you get back onto your path?

I get into gratitude. I speak to the flowers and the birds and butterflies. I get my hands dirty with dirt or paint, but mostly it's remembering that even though we all go through dark times and chaos and doubt, the core of who we are is divine and is full of love. The energy that runs through us all, loves us unconditionally and so much that it can take your breath away at a moment's notice.

What tools and techniques do you use to stay on your path and shine your light brightly? How do you nurture yourself and your spiritual connection?

Again, it is spending time in nature, and on my passions which are teaching, healing, gardening and art (I love to paint the Goddess). I implement techniques of Law of Attraction to manifest this magickal life and it is my desire to help others do the same. We are not alone and no one should feel that way.

What message would you want to share with someone who is just coming into awareness of their callings or is struggling on their spiritual path?

Always follow the path that makes you happy. If it feels "light" it is "right," meaning that if something makes your body feel light, pulled forward and almost giddy with excitement, you are on the right path. If something feels dense and heavy or anxious - move away from that direction. Your passion is your calling. Your passion is your spiritual path.

Share with us your vision of an ideal future – what does our world look like with the resurgence of the Feminine Divine?

Oh My Goddess! It is divine. Full of love, compassion and kindness for one another. Full of creativity and community. It is what she desires, for us to drop the bravado, to stop the need for superficial power and greed – it’s harming us and the planet. The Divine Feminine is bringing back balance.

What roles will those of us on this path play in that future scenario?

My hope is that those of us on this path work to bring that balance back and not take it to an extreme that would then again be unhealthy. There is a time for action and a time for rest. There is a time for a righteous battle and a time for love (more time for love). The Divine Masculine and the Divine Feminine together can bring us peace, love, compassion and enlightenment.
What steps can we start taking today to move towards that vision?

Kindness and compassion. Connection with others. Recently I’ve been noticing how connected people are with their cell phones. Driving down the street you see couples standing and each are on their phones texting or online. People come into stores and never put their phone away the whole time. I would love to see everyone leave their cell phone home for one day! Yeah, I know, that’s a pipe dream, right?

More circles for people on a spiritual path. I come across many looking for the right group of people to hook up with to discuss their spiritual experiences - so more of those getting started would be a great step forward.

What would you like to add, that we haven’t discussed yet?

I think men sometimes will feel left out when they hear about the Divine Feminine. We need more teachers that will let them know that the Divine Feminine is within them also and to help them figure out how to tap into their own Divine Masculine to be able to bring that into their relationships and maybe even into their businesses - the old ways of doing business just aren't working any more.

Marie Deforge is a Master Teacher Energy Healer in the healing arts of Shamanism, Usui Reiki, Kundalini Reiki, Crystal Reiki and Women's Empowerment workshops. Her website is www.MarieDeforge.com and she also enjoys bringing the Divine Feminine out in her artwork which can be found on www.WildSoulArt.biz. She began her spiritual path back in 2008 when she read The Secret and went from feeling like a victim in her life, to being a magickal co-creator of her world. She also fancies herself a Hedgewitch, combining all of her passions in a lifestyle that is soul nurturing to herself and her family.

Connect with her at The Marie Deforge Center of Healing Arts & Esoteric Studies, www.mariedeforge.com
We Are All in Each Other’s Community: an interview with Britt Bolnick

Tell us about yourself and your passions. What makes you get out of bed in the morning excited to get on with your day?

Thank you so much for having me. Such a great question to start out with. I think that in my work, not just the paid work, but the way that I’ve shown up in the world for the last 20 years, the constant theme has been about how to support women. I’ve done it in a variety of ways, but right now at this point in my life, it’s about how to support women in creating heart-centered businesses that allow us to feed our passions and show up in a way that we know we’re supposed to show up in the world, but also to build up enough financial stability and create enough income to become even more powerful.

The way that it shows up now is my business, In Arms Coaching, which really supports women entrepreneurs and business owners in building healthy, thriving businesses that also don’t compromise any of the other parts of our life. So we don’t have to trade being a present parent, or a loving, devoted partner, or our self-care in order to have a thriving business. The key has really been the passion that I have for supporting women in many different ways now, for so long. It’s really been a theme through most of my life.

How would you say you live your life in a way that reflects those deepest values and that honors your callings?

I like to think of personal and professional as all tied together. There’s that whole idea that personal and professional should be separate, and our personal life should be one thing and that our personal and professional should be completely separate. I think that’s an old, unhealthy holdover from the old patriarchal paradigm.

My values and my calling are a part of everything that I do, whether I am working or not. And I really like to meld it all together so that wherever I am, I’m showing up in support of the people around me. And that may be women and it may not be, but just to really remember to integrate all parts of myself.

So I am not just showing up in different places in different ways according to the situation or who I feel I am in that moment. That I really stay authentic all the time and show up by honoring my values, who I am, and what I stand for in the world. Whether I am standing in line at the bank or on the phone with a client or with my child and her friend, the key to me is reminding myself to be authentically aligned wherever I am. And who I am comes through in whatever way is appropriate in that situation, but I ab-
solutely bring my values and my calling into everything that I do, or I try to, in every part of every day.

I like the idea of the personal and professional life becoming one inte-
grated thing. You’re just one being doing all your stuff.

That’s a beautiful way of putting it, that’s exactly what I meant.

How would you describe or characterize your spiritual path?

I was raised Jewish. My father was Jewish and my mother had been raised Jewish for part of her life but didn’t practice any more. And while my father wasn’t very strict, he definitely celebrated the holidays. Which to me were really more about good food and being together with extend branches of the family. I didn’t get any of the religious meaning.

I went through a really rough adolescence, though it probably started when I was six or seven, and probably ended in my twenties. The salvation to that, to make a really long story short, was that I found Paganism. First I found Wicca – well, first I found all this creepy black magic stuff, and then I found Wicca, and I have some really cool stories that I will save for another time. I found Wicca and it felt a little too formal for me, and then I found more of a general Pagan, Goddess-centered path. I started learning herbalism with a mentor and found this amazing women’s festival, Where Womyn Gather. I started incorporating the Feminine Divine, and Paganism and Goddess worship and the practices associated with it, into my life. Which was like a life raft thrown to me at that point.

Would you be willing to share one story with us about that time?

My mother is a writer and she was working on a story about homeless people in New York City. She met a witch named Sharon who definitely did not stay within the realms of light and the practices of light and love. Sharon had a bizarre fascination with me. I was probably twelve or thirteen at that time. Sharon really fixated on me and did a number of things that made my mother very, very uneasy.

I hurt my foot one morning before school and my mother kept me home from school. Sharon called that afternoon and said, “how is Britt’s foot?” and my mother was like, “what are you talking about, Sharon?” She didn’t want to let her know that she was right, and said “she’s fine.” And Sharon’s like, “No she’s not. That’s not important, what’s important is that she hurt her foot thinking about black magic. And it’s a sign that she has to go to the light, she has to stay away from it.” And my mother was like, “whatever Sharon,” and she hung up the phone, and didn’t tell me what happened. She came into my room and asked me to remember what I was doing when I hurt my foot, and I remembered that I had stepped on a prong of my belt buckle, which was, of course, on the floor, as I was reaching for a book on black magic that I had taken out of the library, to bring to school.
What my mother didn’t tell me until my twenties, was that before she severed the relationship with Sharon altogether, Sharon said, “your daughter is going to be a very powerful witch - you have to help her find the light, because if she goes toward the dark, she’s going to be swallowed up.” My mother never told me that, but five years later when I found Wicca, my mother freaked out. She tried to tell me that I couldn’t read the books and that I couldn’t have anything to do with it and got really scared, until she realized that it was the light side.

So that’s a little story I didn’t know until years and years later, but it really did save me and it has really saved me raising a daughter when I found out I was pregnant with a girl. When I found out I was pregnant, I prayed that it would be a girl because I really wanted to bring her into all of the Goddess circles and Pagan circles that I was involved in and that were women-only. And it’s been really wonderful raising her as a Pagan. So that’s definitely cemented my practice, in part because I always think about her watching me and doing it so that she has this experience.

**What is your relationship with the Divine Feminine or the qualities She embodies?**

My relationship with the Divine Feminine is slightly informal and to me is really an extension of the relationship with myself. It’s sort of the place where in my mind, the Earth and spirit and myself all twine together. And in terms of the qualities, I really try to think about Her, for guidance and inspiration around unconditional love and around stepping into leadership even when it feels really difficult, actually especially when it feels really difficult. And remembering that knowing myself is the key to everything else that I do and remembering that the more I focus on bringing good into the world, the more successful I’ll feel.

So it’s like my personal and professional life are all wound together, really in just how I show up and in what inspires me to stay centered and focused. And keeping my guidance as much as possible coming from within and coming from the Earth and coming from spirit. So it’s a little ethereal, a little intangible, but it’s definitely wrapped up in how I take care of myself and how I manifest my energy outwards into the world.

**What happens in those times when you lose your way? How do you notice and how do you find your way back on to your path?**

Great question. Yeah, no matter what you’re practicing, there are always the dark times, there’s always the dark nights. That’s really when our practice is the most valuable. That’s one of the reasons that practice is so important, because if you have a daily practice or even have a regular practice, then it’s much more accessible to you when everything goes dark. Whereas if you try to cultivate it only when you need it, it’s a lot harder to connect with.

When I lose my way... It’s interesting because for the first part of my life, I really relied on external sources of grounding, of gratification, of validation, of comfort, of nurturing. That led me down some very difficult paths. I’ve learned in the second part of my
life to let everything come from within first, even if I still feel like I need it externally, to really find what I need first.

So, for instance, if I’m having a rough day, I might want to call a friend but I really urge myself to sit quietly for a few minutes first to see what I have to say to myself, or maybe choose a card from one of my Tarot decks and interpret it for myself. So I really know that I can get support externally after I look for it within myself.

When I lose my way, the first tool is to turn inward as much as possible, to varying degrees of discomfort, and really just to connect to what I know to be true and remember that. The second piece is really about support, so knowing what kind of support I want, who is my backup, who is in my tribe of warriors that I know have my back. And then to ask for whatever support I need. That is my two-fold path when I lose my way, to remember what I need to know and then to identify, ask for, and then accept. That’s actually three different steps, any of which I can sabotage – identify, ask for, and accept support back. Those are really my go-to tools.

Can you expand a little bit on that? What tools and techniques do you use to stay on the path and shine your light?

I vary. So what happens with me usually is that I’ll pick a practice. I’ll do it for a while and then I’ll forget and then I’ll do nothing and then I’ll think, “gosh, why do I feel like crap and all disconnected and ungrounded?” And then I’ll say, “oh, I let my practice go.” And so I’ll either pick my practice back up or pick a new one.

One of the tools that I love that I use to start my day is EFT, Emotional Freedom Technique, or tapping. I have two favorite EFT practitioners and I just use their videos. One is Brad Yates, who I love, and make no secret of my complete from-a-distance crush on, and the other is Jennifer Moore, who is amazing, ModernMedicineLady.com. She does some really great videos that you can find on Facebook or on her website. So I usually start my day with an EFT video, just to get grounded and also to work on any issue that I notice coming up. Like is there a scarcity fear, is there a fear that I won’t do what I need to be doing, am I feeling like I am not getting enough love? So I try to find a place where I am blocked and I’ll do a video around that.

Other tools are that I definitely dabble in include meditation. I haven’t found one that works really well for me, although I love affirmations. Sometimes I’ll put on a YouTube video of affirmations and just kind of walk around our yard, saying them out loud or sit quietly and say them out loud.

The other is definitely time to myself. I don’t know if that is a formal tool but I tend to get very drained being around other people, although I love being around other people. But what I’ve learned is that I need time and space, even if it’s fifteen or twenty minutes to curl up with a book, to just completely unplug. So those are three of my really go-tos for not just getting back on my path but for keeping my equilibrium going throughout the day and throughout the week.
To follow-up a little bit, how do you nurture yourself and your spiritual connection? Those are tools to get you back on track, but what about ones that nurture you?

One of the easiest ways for me to do it is, again this might be a mom thing, I don’t know, but it’s to remember that I really want my kid to have this. So I’ll pull out a deck of cards and ask her if she wants to use them. We have this festival that we go to every year with 300 women who have known me for fifteen years and have known her since she was in the womb, that we only see once a year but that we feel really connected to.

I’ve started doing New Moon circles, which you both know about, to sort of bring it into my home and give other women the space. We go back and forth on celebrating the New Moon. I’m marrying a non-Pagan who is very, very open to New Moon celebrations and intentions. I try to remember to bring it into our house, but because I have to be the person that brings it and initiates it, sometimes I just run out of steam or forget.

Another real key for me is connecting to other people who value the path and can help me to initiate. We have a friend who does a Full Moon circle, fire circle, every single month, so we try to go to those. I try to connect to like-minded people and to remember, even in a daily way, to bring it into my life, to step out onto the deck at night and look at the stars and look for the moon or to sing to my daughter one of the songs from the festival whenever I remember.

There’s sort of bits and pieces that I add in. And one of the biggest ones is just reminding myself when I need guidance, to tune in more and ask spirit and remember that I have this access line, this phone line straight to Her whenever I stop and make the intention to connect with Her and hear Her. So remembering and community are definitely important to me.

What message do you want to share with someone who is just coming into awareness of their calling or maybe they’re struggling along their spiritual path? What would you reach out and say to them?

Two things. The first is to look for support. When I first got interested in spirituality, the first thing I found was a Starhawk book. I read it and I was like, “Oh my God, there are people like me.” Just knowing that, even though I didn’t know any of them, was this brilliant knowing that there are people who believe what I believe and actually base their lives around it. And that was really wonderful.

If folks are getting this e-book, then folks are already on the right path. Following people like you guys, and people who inspire them, and people who are speaking the language they want to hear is absolutely key. There’s strength in numbers and there’s so much magick and inspiration. So absolutely keep doing things like subscribing to the things that you guys are putting out, Feline Dreamers, and looking up people like Starhawk, and other luminaries in the field. The first step is to really find support because it is out there. Find support, find inspiration, and find wisdom.
And the second step, always, is to use your inner wisdom about what feels right to you. Even back when I was a teenager and I thought for a fleeting moment that black magic was really cool, there was a part of my brain that knew that what really appealed to me was the empowerment, that I could use my energy to change things. But, I knew right from the start that the whole manipulative aspect of the dark arts, even things like love spells to make someone fall in love with you, that felt intuitively wrong to me on so many levels. A, I don’t think it’s right to ever manipulate people, and B, because if someone is head-over-heels for me, I want it to be because they can’t do anything other than think of me, not because I made them.

Really use your inner wisdom, because there is so much inspiration and information out there. Listen to yourself about what feels right and what feels aligned, and what doesn’t. Definitely avoid the pieces that don’t feel super aligned.

Let’s change the focus toward the future. Would you share with us your vision of an ideal future? What does our world look like with the resurgence of the Feminine Divine?

This is such a great question and I love envisioning this. The more of us envisioning it, the more likely it is to happen. This is definitely part of why I do the work that I do, because I really believe that women, and men who are connected with the Feminine Divine, are going to be leading the next wave. This is why I want all of us to be doing heart-centered work and have lots and lots of money, because I feel that we are coming back to what we remember. We’re coming back to the possibilities of how we can co-exist on this planet.

My vision of an ideal future is that we all remember that we are all in each other’s community and we treat each other like that. And I would no more dump garbage in the ocean than I would go take our garbage can and dump it on our neighbor’s lawn.

I was in line at the Boston Commons bathroom last weekend, and each line to the bathroom was like fifteen people long. And about six people back in the line, which wasn’t moving, was a man with a three or four year old boy, who was just clutching himself and jumping up and down and saying, “Daddy, I really have to go.” And his dad was saying, “I know, we just have to wait, we just have to wait.”

The women’s line was moving and the men’s line wasn’t. And the little boy started to cry and was like, “I can’t hold it, Daddy.” I was watching to see if anyone would do anything and no one did anything. I went over to him and said, “we’re next in line, can I take him into the bathroom for you?” And he was like, “Oh yeah, thanks.”

There were like twenty people who were watching that kid cry and didn’t do anything. My vision of an ideal future is one where we remember that that kid is our kid. Our communities are all tied together, no matter how big they are, and we have a responsibility to each other.
I think that the Feminine Divine is one of the vehicles that we’re going to ride in to get there. Where we remember that your partner is my partner, and your child is my child, then we have a responsibility to show up for each other and to extend a hand, in whatever way we can. Whether that’s bringing someone food for Thanksgiving because they don’t have any, or taking a crying kid into the bathroom because his line isn’t moving, that’s really my vision and that’s why I wake up every day and want to contribute.

**What roles do those of us on this path now play in that future scenario?**

I think two very important ones. One is the concept of magick, which at the root of its definition means to change energy. The first role is for us, the followers of the Feminine Divine and the rememberers of old days, is to remember that we have the power to make magick, we have the power to change energy and to start with our own energy. That’s where we always have to start with change.

And then the second path is to remember what it’s like to take responsibility for each other. I think that that is very much a tenet for those of us who are healers and wise women and wise men and magick makers. We remember that we have responsibility to each other. Not in a co-dependent, icky sort of way, but in a way where if you see something that needs to be done, or you see someone who needs help or you see something that needs a hand, you pitch in because it’s your responsibility as a human being on this planet.

Those two roles, I think are really important roles where we can be sort of at the head of the line, the people who bear the flags. Those are two roles that we can very easily step into and lead with.

**What do you think the next steps are that we can start taking today to move towards this vision?**

There are two that come to mind right away. One is to remember to take 100% responsibility for ourselves and our well-being. Start where we are, look at our own energy, look at our own relationships, look at our own finances, look at the way we show up every day for ourselves, for our families, for our community. That’s a really big step; that’s actually a lot of work. And in some ways, it’s the hardest work, but everything comes from that.

The second is to look at what we can do for our communities. With all the violence and the hatred lately between the communities of color and the police, people are like “this is so big” and “how do we change it?” and “the police are an instrument of racism from the very jump and are inherently pitted against communities of color.” I think when you look at that issue and any of the big, global issues, from that bird’s-eye-view, of course it seems way too big and way too unchangeable and way too rooted in history.

But then I was thinking, I live in South Portland, what if we look at what can we do in South Portland to foster connections between the police department and the communi-
ties of color? Can we do barbeques? Can we have police mentoring children of color? What can we do in Portland? What can we each do in our town?

When you start with that step – what can I do from where I’m standing? First of all, for myself, and then for my family, and then for my community? – it actually doesn’t seem that big because there are so many of us and if we all thought that way, there wouldn’t be these issues. There wouldn’t be this great split between our hearts and our spirits and then how we show up in the world. So those are a couple of concrete steps that I think that can start small enough to feel doable.

Let me just follow up – how do you balance in your life between taking 100% responsibility for your own life and your inner work with reaching out to the external world and helping it along in the small steps?

It’s hard because in order to take responsibility for yourself, you have to be very honest and have a really critical eye. By critical, I don’t mean inner critic, to beat yourself up or kick yourself in the ass, but more of an evaluation of “how did I show up in my relationship today?” If I have a complaint about my partner, how did I contribute to that? If my kid was being a real ass today, what could I have done differently or is there anything I would have liked to do differently to parent them? If my dog was acting up, have I spent any time today running her through some basic commands or exercising her?

It can even be something that you visit for five minutes in the morning. How do I want to show up in my relationship, in my parenting, in my pet ownership, in my work? And then at the end of the day, what do I love about how I showed up? What would I do differently?

Really turn a critical eye. It’s so easy to blame other people and other things. I just had a conversation with my fiancée this morning, where he was like, “well, you did this and it made me feel bad.” And I was like, “but you were a dick and I was just responding to it.” But then I was like, “oh, yes he was a dick, that’s true, but I chose to respond in the way I responded,” instead of saying, “what you did just bothered me, can you do that a little differently?”

In anything there is ownership, and the way that I balance the internal and where I stand with the external is to try to be very clean about my feelings. To be very honest about owning my piece in anything. If I have a fight with my mother over the phone, well I know who my mom is, so did I really have to pick a bone with her over how terribly behaved her Chihuahua acts? Couldn’t I have just left it alone?

And to just be very clean energetically with how you are showing up in the world and what part you can own because the beautiful thing about looking honestly at the things you can own is that those are all of the things you have control over. So instead of saying, “oh, we had a big fight because my partner was a real ass,” which is totally a lie—if your partner was an ass, that’s out of your realm of control, you can’t control another person. But you can look at your part in it and boom, all of a sudden there’s some of
that you could choose to do differently next time for a different outcome. So I think it’s a really empowering place to start with.

I also want to jump back to something you mentioned briefly earlier which was affirmations. I’ve heard you talk about using affirmations and being sort of like a crazy woman and saying them everywhere. I thought it was really valuable and wanted to hear more about that. What does that look like in your life?

When I am working with something really intently, and Nikki has heard me talk about this a number of times, I will either use someone else’s affirmations or I will craft my own. When I first moved to Portland and my daughter and I were really broke, my business was changing from life coaching to business coaching, which essentially meant I lost my entire community and had to rebuild another one and no money was coming in. I had an affirmation and it went, “This month I made more than enough money for everything that Bella and I need and want. I made more than enough money to save $500. I made more than enough money to pay off my credit card.” Those three sentences I would say constantly.

What Nikki is talking about is my example. I would say it in the shower. I would say it walking the dogs on the street. I would say it driving in the car. I would say it as I was cooking. I would say it more than a hundred times a day, those three sentences over and over again.

And then I would change it, so when I actually made enough money to pay off my credit cards, I would change it to, “…and pay all my back taxes.” And when I paid all my back taxes, I’d change it to, “…and have money set aside for next year’s taxes.” But I really make it something that just flows out of my mouth on a continual basis.

**And that’s very magickal because you are changing your own energy.**

Yes, totally, you’re changing your brain. This is the cool thing – it used to be only people like us who believed this, but there’s science behind this now. If you say something often enough, your brain will believe it. It actually changes what your brain thinks. Which is the working definition of magick, to change energy.

**It’s also accepting responsibility for what you’re putting into your brain. You’re watching the news, you’re reading the newspaper, all that stuff. That, in my mind, is sort of a bad magick spell, basically putting negative thoughts into your brain and that becomes part of you. How do you get away from that kind of magick?**

That’s such an important point, because thoughts are being put into our head all day long and it is really important to recognize that most of them should be from us, or at least should be conscious. One of the many, many reasons I left New York City with my daughter was because I was conscious of the assault on our senses of filthy-rich, six-figures on billboards and bus stop ads and magazines and walking down the street. I
was really conscious of what was going into our subconscious every day. Did I really want her that influenced by the media?

Portland is totally different. You don’t have vodka ads with women in G-strings. There was a gym that we lived around the corner from [in New York] that had almost explicit, 8-foot tall, bikini-clad pictures in all of their ground level windows, of women in thongs climbing over men. And we would walk by it every day on the way to her nursery school.

One of the ways is that I limit our media exposure. We moved to a place where it is not shoved down our throat. We don’t have a television. The kids watch lots of stuff on the computer or with Hulu, or whatever, but it’s very conscious and there are no commercials. We’re very conscious of what we bring into the house. We’re very conscious of the people we surround ourselves with.

I took my daughter as a child to nude beaches a lot because I think they are so beautiful because no one on nude beaches has a cookie-cutter model body and nudity is very desexualized. It’s one of the least sexual places, in my opinion, in society. And I thought it was really important to counter society’s garbage for her. So she grew up going to nude beaches.

I really try to be conscious about what we allow into our lives. My daughter is allowed to listen to any type of music that she wants, but she’s not allowed to watch the videos. And that’s been a rule since she was very little. So I do what I can to limit it and part of that meant moving to a part of the country where it wasn’t as forced down our throats.

We don’t watch the news. I get most of my news from Facebook, which is a self-selected community, sharing things that are generally important to me, and if not I block them out. Or NPR or something, and I am very careful when I allow news into the house. So, little things, but it does make a difference.

**Is there anything else you’d like to add that we haven’t touched on yet?**

I think what you are doing is so amazing because, and Nikki and I have talked about this before, at the pace that most of us live life, one of the first things to go is our connection to spirit and our self-care. And it really is foundational, it really is a lynchpin piece to how we show up in the world, how we even create our own reality, and our own belief system, and how we build community.

It can be really easy to poo-poo it: “I’ll connect to spirit when I have time, or I’ll connect to spirit when I have more money, or I’ll connect to spirit on my vacation in three months.” And it can’t happen that way. We really need to remember this part of ourselves and we need to remember to foster a connection to something bigger than ourselves, and something that connects us to every other kind of life on this planet.

It’s not really optional at this point. We are at a tipping point and it is crucial that we remember our ability to make magick and our ability to support and love and care for
each other if we’re going to continue living here. So I think that this is so important, what you’re doing and I am so excited to have people tuning into it, and reading it, and sharing it, and having their own conversations about what changes need to be made in their life. And how they can show up authentically with their connection to the Feminine Divine and share that.

Britt Bolnick is a successful business owner living a life she loves in Portland, Maine. She has traveled a path from financial scarcity to financial independence, building a 6-figure business she loves as a single mama working less than full-time. Britt mentors women who are 100% committed to building thriving businesses that create wealth without compromising your personal life OR sanity.

Connect with her at In Arms Coaching, [www.inarmscoaching.com](http://www.inarmscoaching.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/brittbolnick](http://www.facebook.com/brittbolnick)
Tell us about yourself and your passions. What makes you get out of bed in the morning, excited to get on with the day?

There was a time when getting out of bed was the worst part of my day. I had nothing to look forward to and every day repeated itself in a fog of wake up, eat, go to work, eat, zone-out, and sleep. It took me a long time to discover that there was more to living life than that. I realized that I truly wanted to be happy and my life wasn’t making me happy.

I never want to go back to being the person that just goes through the motions. Seeking happiness every single day is my passion. I’m in love with the little things. Those are the things that make a life.

I plan little things throughout my day so that I always have something to look forward to. Sometimes it’s nothing more complicated than a cup of tea, lighting incense before bed, or giving myself a few extra minutes in a hot shower. The little things have become the foundation of my life.

How do you live your life in a way that reflects your deepest values and honors your callings?

Two of my core values are authenticity and vulnerability. It’s something that I treasure in both my personal life and in the work that I do. There is so much beauty in being completely true to who you are, to being transparent about it, and to have people love you anyway. It’s so tempting to hide behind the masks of “I’m Okay” and “Has It Together,” but when you really show your true self to the people around you, so much magic happens.

I created my website as an exercise in vulnerability, transparency, and authenticity, and that experience has changed my life and hopefully the lives of other women. Allowing women to hold space for you, to see you at your worst and most broken, and to still feel loved and supported is part of what I love about the Divine Feminine. It is my honor to create space for that.

How would you describe your spiritual path?

I would describe my spiritual path as a representation of my journey as a person. It has evolved as much as I have. In the beginning I explored Wicca and Paganism and it was
very much about discovering my identity as a person and trying to connect with who I was without other people telling me what to be. There came a time when I started to yearn for something different. I started to explore many other religions and spiritual paths and that taught me a very important lesson that applies to all areas of my life: Do what feels good.

My current path is tinged with Eastern beliefs and philosophies but also incorporates my Mama-Earth-Lovin’ roots. I love chanting, meditation, and burying my feet in the earth. I pray with the names of ancient ones on my lips. I pray by letting my soul lead my body in dance. I pray with the beads on my mala slipping through my fingers. I pray by tending to my flower bed. I pray by lighting candles surrounded by a circle of crystals. Most of all, I pray by being kind to others, and to myself.

**What is your relationship with the Divine Feminine? Or with the qualities that She embodies?**

It took me a long time to connect with the Divine Feminine. I’m not a mother and there’s a good chance that I never will be. For a long time, that was my association with the Divine Feminine. I saw it as Mother energy, as a beautiful and powerful force of creation that was missing in myself and in my life.

Eventually, I uncovered that while that is part of it, there is so much more. The Divine Feminine is about seeing women as sacred and divine and exploring that connection in all of its facets. The energy that moves through me — compassion, nurturing, encouragement, and love with a dash of magic — that is what I live and that’s how the Divine Feminine shines out in me. We all shine differently. We all embody different aspects of Her.

I am in a constant state of creation. Each day that I wake up and focus on being my best self I am creating and re-creating myself, I am creating opportunities for love, I am creating words that touch other people. There is so much creation stirring in my womb.

**What happens when you lose your way? How do you get back onto your path?**

One of my favorite teachings when it comes to losing my spiritual path is from the singer Jai Uttal, “Pray for the faith to pray for faith.”

My own spirituality is circular and largely based on the turning of the seasons. I always feel a bit removed from my path in the summer but once autumn rolls around I find my way back. I’ve learned that riding the waves of the ebb and the flow until I’m ready to immerse myself in it again is the best way to deal with that wandering feeling. I always find my way back.

However, I’m never really far from my path no matter how far I wander. My path is such a part of my life that it’s always present and always waiting.
What tools and techniques do you use to stay on your path and shine your light brightly? How do you nurture yourself and your spiritual connection?

Self-care will always be the one tool that saved me in so many areas of my life. The mind and body are full of so many moving parts and when one of those parts is in distress the rest also suffer. Self-care teaches me to always take care of myself and in doing that it allows me to be able to shine without burning out.

Self-care always boils down to asking the question: What do you need right now? Then you do that thing. That’s what nurturing is, giving yourself what you need.

For me, I nurture myself by giving myself plenty of time to decompress and be alone when I’m starting to feel overwhelmed. It may feel counter-intuitive to take breaks or step away from something that I love, my path included, but what it is really doing is giving me time to re-center and re-calibrate so that I am able to do the work.

What message would you want to share with someone who is just coming into awareness of their callings or is struggling on their spiritual path?

Don’t ever stop trying to figure out who you are at the core of your being. When you discover your true self and what you really need from spirituality your path opens up in front of you. What do you need from spirit? Ask yourself that question and let it be your compass.

Spirituality provides different things for different people. Connection with yourself or others, daily practice, inner calm, tradition, structure, life lessons, morals and values, forgiveness, comfort, and answers. When you know where you want to go, it becomes easier to find the path to get there.

Become a spiritual explorer and your soul will find what resonates.

Share with us your vision of an ideal future – what does our world look like with the resurgence of the Feminine Divine?

My vision for the future is all about sisterhood. For so long we have forgotten the old and ancient practices of sisterhood and community. The Red Tents where women supported each other through menstruation, and after childbirth. The Red Tent has now become a movement to facilitate sacred space for women. Where elders share their stories and their wisdom, where young women share the heartbreak and pain of growing up.

We need more of that. We need to rediscover the wisdom that we have all been given to share with each other. We need spaces where we can speak our truth without judgment. We need safe spaces where we can go when we feel broken and know that we will be held, seen, and heard. We are so powerful together.
What roles will those of us on this path play in that future scenario?

We need to want that future, believe in it, and encourage others to believe in it. That’s hard for me. I’ve always been an introverted and solitary person. I’ve been guilty of saying that “I’m just not like other women.” I’ve said before that it’s just easier to be friends with guys. In doing that I create a divide that shouldn’t exist. I am closing myself off from what women have to offer and my own personal work has been finding my courage, letting go of my judgment, and embracing the women in my life.

What steps can we start taking today to move towards that vision?

The first step toward moving to a future where we embrace the Feminine Divine is allowing ourselves to practice non-judgment, toward both ourselves and others. There are so many things that we are conditioned to believe about each other and those judgments only serve to further separate us. We are all different and when we accept that rather than judge it, that’s when the future starts becoming a reality.

What would you like to add, that we haven’t discussed yet?

We are all meant to be lights in this world. Find what lights you up and you’ll shine with no effort and in doing so you’ll light the flame inside of other women. Embracing your feminine divine is a gift for yourself and also one that you give others.

Dominee loves to share her passion for creativity, magic, spirituality, and self-love with the world. Her goal in life is to help people realize that they don't have to be perfect to be worthy of love, to follow their big dreams, and to make a difference. She created her website, Blessing Manifesting, in the hope of showing other women that life doesn't have to be about despair, suffering, and self-loathing. You can learn how to love yourself if you commit to doing the work and make yourself a priority. Dominee resides in Oklahoma with her four cats, a well-used Netflix subscription, and more books than she’ll ever be able to read.

Connect with her at Blessing Manifesting, www.blessingmanifesting.com
Afterword

Thank you so much for reading *Goddess Awakening: The Rise of the Feminine Divine* and for being part of this consciousness evolution. If you would like to continue to connect with this thriving community, please visit us at [felinedreamers.com](http://felinedreamers.com) and visit with our divine contributors through the links they’ve provided. Please share your own inspirational encounters with the Feminine Divine with us.

Many Blessings to you!
Nikki Starcat Shields and Brent BlackLion Nelson
Feline Dreamers