

new love

a reprogramming toolbox for undoing the knots



Girl God Books

Trista Hendren and Arna Baartz

Art by Arna Baartz

new love

a reprogramming toolbox for undoing the knots

a girl god publication

by Trista Hendren and Arna Baartz

Art by Arna Baartz

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Dedicated to the Memory of:

Pat Graves

Linda Reuther

Audre Lorde

Andrea Dworkin

and

Mary Daly

"May the strength of all the Goddesses be with you."

—Mary Daly, in a letter she wrote to Audre Lorde

"I change myself, I change the world."

-Gloria E. Anzaldúa



Praise for New Love

“The title of this powerful book says it all. It truly is a TOOLBOX for undoing all the knots living inside us all from this long era of patriarchy. I am planning to offer this as a guide for a sacred women’s circle. *New Love* could easily be adapted to last more than 30 days, as each day offers so much richness to contemplate and incorporate. Grateful for this divine collaboration between these two powerhouse women! *New Love* will indeed awaken a new love in women the world over.”—Melia Keeton-Digby, author of *The Heroines Club*

“If you have an intention to embrace abundance and release yourself from self-limiting narratives, *New Love* is the perfect guide. Here’s to a new love that will transform not just women, but the very ground on which we walk.” —Elizabeth Hall Magill, author of *Defining Sexism in the U.S.*

“*New Love* is beautifully written and illustrated with artwork that blends in so nicely with the words. The quotes are reminders of our strengths, growth and wisdom, something we often forget as life and society challenges us. *New Love* allows the platform to free our minds and tune into ourselves.”—Alyscia Cunningham, author of *Feminine Transitions*

Praise for The Creative Warrior

“I need no excuse to reach for the felt tip pens and now I get to colour in the work of one of my favourite artists while exploring + healing myself, my creativity + my inner child in this book, *The Creative Warrior*. What Arna offers in these pages are a permission slip to play, to make mistakes and to celebrate your right to make a mark. Warning: once you let Arna and this book awaken your creative child, if you’re anything like me, you’ll find you will want to colour outside the lines on the page + in life too!” —Lisa Lister, author of *Code Red + Love Your Lady Landscape*

“What lovely invitations Arna’s words and drawings are—beckoning us to shimmy out of our adult shells and dance freely with memory, colour, dreams and desires. This is a beautiful book from an inspiring woman who keeps faith with the magic of our creative purpose and understands its gift for keeping us passionately engaged and alive!” —Melaina Faranda, author of *The Circle Series*

“Hand in hand with your inner child, *The Creative Warrior* invites you into the transformative world of play, joy and whimsy. Be ready to be delighted and empowered as you add color and embellishments to Arna Baartz’s stunning, evocative images—and gently guided in your artistic self-discovery through inspirational quotes, creative inquiries and suggested activities. A magical adventure of reclaiming your own creative warrior awaits you!”

—Karen Clark, author of *Tale of the Lost Daughter*

Girl God Books

Just as I Am: Hymns Affirming the Divine Female

What is a Hermnal? It's the collective sigh of our ancestral Grandmothers. It's a means of drawing us closer together as Sisters. It is a compilation of songs that affirms our Sacredness, apart from Man, and assures us that we are Sovereign Beings and Creatrixes, too. And it is our Love Gift of Gratitude to Mama.

Re-visioning Medusa: from Monster to Divine Wisdom

A remarkable collection of essays, poems, and art: by scholars who have researched Her, artists who have envisioned Her, women who have known Her in their personal story, and then also combinations of all those capacities. All have spoken with Her and share something of their communion in this anthology.

Original Resistance: Reclaiming Lilith, Reclaiming Ourselves

There is, perhaps, no more powerful archetype of female resistance than Lilith. As women across the globe rise up against the patriarchy, Lilith stands beside them, misogyny's original challenger. This anthology—a chorus of voices hitting chords of defiance, liberation, anger and joy—reclaims the goodness of women bold enough to hold tight to their essence. Through poetry, prose, incantation, prayer and imagery, women from all walks of life invite you to join them in the revolutionary act of claiming their place—of reclaiming themselves.

Inanna's Ascent: Reclaiming Female Power

Inanna's Ascent examines how females can rise from the underworld and reclaim their power, sovereignly expressed through poetry, prose and visual art. All contributors are extraordinary women in their own right, who have been through some difficult life lessons—and are brave enough to share their stories.

Hearts Aren't Made of Glass

My Journey from Princess of Nothing to Goddess of My Own Damned Life—by Trista Hendren.

How to Live Well Despite Capitalist Patriarchy

This book will serve as a starting point to challenge some of our societal assumptions, in hopes of helping women become stronger and breaking their chains.

The Girl God

A book for children young and old, celebrating the Divine Female by Trista Hendren. Magically illustrated by Elisabeth Slettnes with quotes from various faith traditions and feminist thinkers.

My Name is Medusa

The story of the greatly misunderstood Medusa, including why she likes snakes. *My Name is Medusa* explores the “scary” dark side, the potency of nature and the importance of dreams. Arna Baartz gorgeously illustrates this tale by Glenys Livingstone, teaching children (big and small) that our power often lies in what we have been taught to fear and revile.

Additional Offerings by Arna Baartz

My Abundant Universe—Prosperity and the Path of Least Resistance

The change from lack to prosperity thinking might seem impossible or out of reach. It can be a scary concept for many of us—but it can still be what we deeply need and desire. We only need to find a way to turn the switch from fear of the unknown—to expecting something different.

My Abundant Universe is an immediate experience—created to help you gain a deep understanding of what it takes to make conscious, positive change as quickly as is possible for you. In this book, we leap at the opportunity to explore our relationship to money. We take an unabashed look at the values we hold that either attract or repel prosperity. You will learn how to allow the Abundant Universe to turn your fear into an exciting prospect—full of potential and rewards.

Enjoy a simple and colourful perspective on financial abundance—as we open our hearts and acknowledge our natural state. Through art, quotes and intriguing suggestions, we discover we deserve to live a life of love, joy, and prosperity!

THE CREATIVE WARRIOR: A Colouring Journal for Adults to Awaken the Creative Child

So much more than an ordinary colouring in book; *The Creative Warrior* is a journey of personal empowerment. This book has been designed to awaken your inner creative being and gently connect you with your most satisfying and creative self. *The Creative Warrior* blossoms with encouraging quotes, numerous colouring sheets of unique images, suggestions, activities and insightful thoughts.

I Am Change

Using loving words and creative activities, *I Am Change* provides the tools you need to gently yet powerfully guide you into a new understanding of your world. With strategies to release addiction, dissolve drama and shift perspectives, you will learn to forge a personal path of well-being and prosperity. Coming soon!

The Animals Know It

The Animals Know It is a book designed to remind children of their empowered state of being. Complete with wisdom from the animals, bright, colourful images and colouring sheets to trigger the imagination—this book will entertain and delight.

The Sun is in my Mouth

A collection of words by Arna Baartz.

To see more of Arna's offerings, hop on over to:

arnabaartz.com.au

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Trista's Introduction

If you feel stuck in your life as a female, this is not an accident. There is nothing “wrong with you” and nothing that needs to be fixed. Rather, there are systematic and overlapping oppressions that hamper women and girls worldwide.

This toolbox is a means to help you break free of those oppressions individually, facilitating the release of the collective female consciousness from the indoctrination of inferiority most of us were raised with. In doing so, we hope to rattle the cage that women have been locked up in for thousands of years.

Mary Daly wrote:

“Clearly, there is no simple ‘one-shot’ cure for a lifetime of conditioning to dependence. Women can raise each other’s consciousness of it, and encourage each other to take the risks necessary to become free.”

In this toolbox, Arna and I will be sharing what worked for us over the course of many years. As they say in Al-anon, “Take what you like and leave the rest.”

If there is a tool that doesn’t sit well with you, put it aside. You may decide to come back to it later or disregard it entirely. There is no right or wrong way to “do” this workbook. If you hate it, scribble over it or rip out the pages and burn them. If it helps you, invite your friends and family to join you on this healing journey. We have tried to make everything as simple as possible.

“There must exist a paradigm, a practical model for social change that includes an understanding of ways to transform consciousness that are linked to efforts to transform structures.” -bell hooks

We believe woman-affirming art and literature are key components in this paradigm.

I began my own reprogramming journey with a wise old crone named Pat Graves when I became pregnant with my son in 2002. Pat was an unschooled, recovered alcoholic and non-traditional therapist of sorts.

When I realized I was pregnant, I knew needed to radically change my dysfunctional default behaviors. Several co-workers were making enormous progress in their lives and they all shared one thing in common: *Pat Graves*.

Pat was prickly. She was not an easy person and I rarely looked forward to meeting her—although I loved her tremendously. She was a no-nonsense sort of woman, who didn’t have time or patience to be conned. She called you on your crap and she would tell you in no uncertain terms when you were wrong.

She was just the thing I needed. After years of on-and-off therapy, she would often tell me, “You’ve come a long way kiddo, but you still have a l-o-n-g way to go.”

I continued moving forward on my self-recovery individually after my sessions with Pat were over. She provided the tools and the foundation that enabled me to change my life long after her time on Earth was up.

This toolbox is partially dedicated to the memory of Pat. I think she would be pleased with my progress—and, *more than anything*—that I am still working on it. She would be proud that I did not give up on myself.

So now it’s confession time. When we began this project, I ordered some of Arna’s Colouring Pages. I had wanted to order colouring sheets for several years but I never did. I never fully recovered from being a single mom with little or no child support. I always put my own desires off in favor of taking care of something for the kids. I also worried that I would never find time to colour them. But after debating it with myself for 3-4 weeks, I decided to order them!

I was thrilled to receive Arna’s package in the mail from Australia. I looked at the beautiful folder at least 10 times before I pulled the sheets out to colour. But when I did, I had this anxious, sinking feeling that I ought to be doing something else. Surely the kids needed something, the laundry needed to be done or I ought to work on a “more important” feminist project that benefited many women instead of just sitting around colouring.

In talking to other women, particularly mothers, I know I am not alone in this.

“In analyzing women’s thinking about what constitutes care and what connection means, I noted women’s difficulty in including themselves among the people for whom they considered it moral to care. The inclusion of self is genuinely problematic not only for women but also for society in general. Self-inclusion on the part of women challenges the conventional understanding of feminine goodness by severing the link between care and self-sacrifice; in addition, the inclusion of women challenges the interpretive categories of the Western tradition, calling into question the description of human/nature and holding up to scrutiny the meaning of “relationship,” “love,” “morality,” and “self.” -Carol Gilligan

So, while you may be wondering why we included coloring pages in this toolbox—it is for this very reason. We must learn as females that it is right, moral and good to care for ourselves, too. We only get *one* life. How many of us spend it in ways that are fulfilling?

“Your life is the one place you have to spend yourself full—wild, generous, drastic—in an unrationed profligacy of self.. And in that split second when you understand that you finally are about to die—to uncreate the world—no time to do it over, no more chances—that instant when you realize your conscious existence is truly flaring nova, won’t you want to have used up all the splendor that you are?” -Robin Morgan

Too many women are bogged down by expectations that *someone else* created for us. It is extraordinarily important that we prioritize our own needs and desires. Audre Lorde wrote: “If our history has taught us anything, it is that action for change directed against the external conditions of our oppressions is not enough.” We must begin to listen to our inner voices as well—and honor them.

There is an abundance of free material available online now. Even those of us who have struggled financially have been able to dig into many of these resources and change our lives. Toward the end of this workbook you will find a detailed list of additional tools as well as a plethora of suggested reading. If there is a point in the workbook that you want to explore more, check out the list of additional tools and suggested reading section—and feel free to use some of the blank pages to journal.

Recently, I had a period of sleepless nights where my head was spinning and my heart was racing. Finally, I began to recite Surah Al-Fatihah from the Quran in my head. I learned that if I did this a few times, I could change my thought patterns and finally fall back into sleep. I wondered if I could go further back into my Christian heritage and try this with passages of the Bible. I was curious if reciting Bible verses in English instead of the Quran in Arabic (which is not my native tongue or even a language I know well) would be equally effective. *It was.* My mind stopped spinning and I fell asleep.

But then I became irritated with myself. After decades of feminism and five years working extensively with the Divine Feminine, why was I still coming back to these patriarchal scriptures? Why didn't I come back to “Our Mother, Who Art Within Us” or “The Charge of the Goddess”?

My only answer is that our socialization as girls was deep and thorough. Many of us spent hours a day for a decade or more pouring over these scriptures. Nawal El Saadawi stated that “you cannot exploit people without controlling their brains.”

There are people who have memorized the entire Quran. I never went nearly that far, but growing up as a Christian I could recite hundreds of verses, many of which I can still remember without having picked up a Bible in more than twenty years.

We must be equally diligent about absorbing new texts that empower us as women. As Carol Christ wrote:

“Even people who no longer ‘believe in God’ or participate in the institutional structure of patriarchal religion still may not be free of the power of the symbolism of God the Father. A symbol’s effect does not depend on rational assent, for a symbol also functions on levels of the psyche other than the rational. Symbol systems cannot simply be rejected; they must be replaced. Where there is no replacement, the mind will revert to familiar structures at times of crisis, bafflement, or defeat.”

That said, I am not anti-religion. Both Christianity and Islam shaped who I am today. While neither religion suits me personally anymore, I deeply believe women have the power to transform themselves where they are *right now*, whether they are still practicing a patriarchal religion or not.

Mary Daly wrote that “Patriarchy is itself the prevailing religion of the entire planet.” It is my belief that patriarchy is the problem and not necessarily religion. I see religion as primarily cultural. We usually identify with the prevailing faith of where we are born. Religion can be good or bad. Unfortunately, it is often used as a *tool* of patriarchy to reinforce (male) dominance and (female) submission.

I believe that memorization, affirmations, new stories and any other means of changing brain patterns are critically important for women if we are to reboot ourselves from our subordinate status. As Glenys Livingstone wrote, “It is not female biology that has betrayed the female... it is the stories and myths we have come to believe about ourselves.”

We are always, it seems, working on “our stuff.” Going through this toolbox many times myself was both powerful and (sometimes) overwhelming. It brought up things I thought I had laid to rest. I took my own advice and read several of the books suggested at the end. At one point, I broke into sobs and cried for several hours while my husband held me. I released some deep-seated pain, and I came fuller into clarity and joy. I began to memorize many of the passages here and repeat them to myself day and night. I talked at length to my adopted sisters about our common experiences as women and girls. This helped me to set free some of the residual shame that was still hiding in my heart.

Take good care of yourself as you work through these pages. Many of us have stuffed our feelings, trauma, and abuse down for decades. Some days, you may want to throw this book out the window, but I do believe the words of wisdom from the foremothers shared here hold the keys for transformation and freedom.

This toolbox and my work on Girl God Books have become intensely important to me. As Rosemary Radford Ruether reminded us decades ago:

“We do not have thousands of years to unlearn the wrong patterns that were established over thousands of years. The exponential speed-up of these cumulative patterns of destruction means we have to both learn new patterns and put them into practice on a global scale within the next generation.”

The time to change ourselves—and the world—is now.

Trista



“The world is remade through the power of fierce women performing outrageous acts of creative rebellion.”

-Louise M. Pare

Arna's Introduction

First, I want to thank you for reading this. By doing this work you are literally changing our world, you are taking **All That Is** a step further in its evolution! You are a miracle, a warrior, a being of incredible, intelligent light and your determination to clean up your thoughts and create a peaceful, mindful inner world will have lasting, positive consequences for generations to come.

I like to think of the individual mind as the cornerstone of consciousness; from our vantage point in the eye of this delicious, terrifying, multi-dimensional tornado we have the ability to see, choose and create! From here, we can garner the power that manifests worlds!

A little note on **The Daily Thought**. We have included these little thoughts specifically; they are designed to confuse the mind just a touch to take you out of your programming for a second. Please don't be daunted if you feel uncertain as you read them.

Breathe into the daily thought and allow the fuller meaning to become clear.

The thoughts are for you to repeat as the day goes by—repeat, feel, breathe and allow them to work their mindful magic on you. Journal your responses to the thoughts and be amazed by your natural insight as they work with you to take you to a new level of personal understanding and deeper acceptance of the natural flow and flux of life.

The Daily Suggestion is about your physicality. We are often shocked out of our body when we are very small—discipline, abuse, unexpected noises, unusual circumstances and fear all contribute to physical disassociation. After the initial experience our thoughts then take over, keeping the wounds open and active. Take these simple suggestions and make use of them to bring yourself back to centre, to inhabit your body completely. Once here we are in a fine place for *feeling our feelings* and learning to engage with our inner being. The outcomes to expect from re-merging with the physical self are numerous: Understanding and recovering from anxiety, completely trusting our intuition and having the clarity to make perfect choices for well-being are just a few.

The core message of our book is to remind you to come back to the present, to fall in love with your physical vehicle, allowing yourself to open and receive the flow and nourishment of the universal energy that is who you (in totality) truly are.

This book is an exciting merging of vision, a three-way collaboration between Trista, myself and you. My art is a response to our collective desire to BE love, to listen to our inner being and to trust ourselves to move powerfully forward on a journey of wholeness. I hope you will enjoy contemplating it as much as I did creating it.

When I look at you I see myself.

Love,
Arna



“Progressive art can assist people to learn not only about the objective forces at work in the society in which they live, but also about the intensely social character of their interior lives. Ultimately, it can propel people toward social emancipation.”

-Angela Davis

How to Use this Book

What you get from this toolbox will be proportional to what you put into it. We wanted to create a gift for women where they could change their lives in as little as five minutes a day. We are dreaming of the collective impact of millions of women awakening and changing their lives together. That said, if time allows, you will reap more benefit from this toolbox by putting more time and energy into it each day. So, dig in, and dig deep!

Read the title, thought, suggestion and quote; contemplate the image. Articulate your responses in words or art on the pages, and feel free to move onto larger paper using crafty materials, collage, pencils, paint and so on.

Express your thoughts, your resistances, your insights freely—no one ever needs to see what you have written. Let it all out, find your peace, and begin anew with a fresh affirmation and intention. Allow yourself to change your mind. Allow yourself to be angry, to be happy, to be sad, to be whole.

Understand you never, ever get it wrong. Allow mis-takes... We are all growing, doing the best we can with what we know at any given time. Forgive yourself, allow others' opinions to fade away. Find your smile and stretch your body.

You may feel very triggered by this workbook in certain places. We are tackling some tough subjects, including rape and our victimization as women as girls. Be gentle with yourself as you address these issues. Take the time you need for yourself to heal. Take a walk. Talk to a friend. Enjoy a bubble bath. Drink plenty of water.

Laura Davis reminds us:

"The healing process is best described as a spiral. Survivors go through the stages once, sometimes many times; sometimes in one order, sometimes in another. Each time they hit a stage again, they move up the spiral: they can integrate new information and a broader range of feelings, utilize more resources, take better care of themselves, and make deeper changes."

If you get stuck, work on one of Arna's Colouring Pages or take a little break from the book.

We are always incomplete, an unwritten story, a beautiful program. Learn to enjoy the surprises and know you will survive emotions. Use this book as a key to unlocking your spirit and see it as the leading edge of a golden cliff... spread your glorious wings and FLY!

Please note that none of the information presented here is meant to replace advice from a medical, health care, legal and/or other professional. How you choose to act on the words herein is entirely based on your own free will.

Before You Start: Claiming the Month as Your Own



“i am mine. before i am ever anyone else’s.”

-Nayyirah Waheed

What do you want to accomplish with this book?

Daily Thought: I give the meaning to all I see.

Daily Suggestion: Hold your palms together, feel your own heat.

*“Every woman who heals herself helps heal all the women who came before her
and all those who will come after.” -Dr. Christiane Northrup*



“At first women were so incredibly strong and the bonds between and among us so indissoluble, that these tactics alone could never have succeeded. Our eventual subjugation was accomplished, as all seasoning is accomplished, by a lethal combination of brainwashing and terrorism.

It was the slow work of many, many centuries to tame us, to persuade us that this captivity, violence, and isolation was in our best interests, that it meant that we were loved and respected, that it was pleasant, that we liked it, that we wanted it, that we couldn't live without it, and—the ultimate doublespeak—that it was freedom.” -Sonia Johnson

“The transformative power of love is the foundation of all meaningful social change. Without love our lives are without meaning.” -bell hooks



Your Amazing Brain

Understanding neural growth and how your brain works.

When we understand how complex and amazing the brain is—and how much input we have in its development—we can begin to make informed choices and fundamental changes.

It has been scientifically shown that the plasticity of the brain is a true and valid thing.

Our brain is built of complex sets of cells called neurons and glia. One typical neuron creates numerous connections to neighbouring neurons, too many to count, and these neurons are the matrix of our vast nervous system. This is exciting, as it seems to hold within a metaphor for human connection and social interaction!

We are a pulsating, electrical source of the most amazing proportions.

The neurons in our brain grow and connect according to our focus. If our emotional/intellectual focus is placed on love and happiness, then we will grow the neurons to support this. The more we focus and grow these neural ‘trees,’ the more we will naturally seek ‘love and happiness’ in our lives, and refuse to settle for less.

If we refocus our brains, our choices will change accordingly, and life will look primarily like love and happiness.

Thoughts, feelings and behaviour are inseparable from our nervous system—which is why a ‘thought’ can trigger a feeling and vice versa; you may feel a feeling in your body that will suddenly remind you of a time or circumstance in your life, starting a thought process which, in turn, generates more emotion and further neural growth.

For example, the affirmation ‘I AM Beautiful’—along with the feeling of being beautiful—is the trigger for particular brain growth that ensures further feelings of beauty.

The more beautiful ‘feeling’ moments one experiences the more beautiful ‘thought’ moments one experiences—which trigger more feeling moments, which then trigger more beautiful thought moments... resulting in the neural growth that furthers more beautiful life experiences and so on.

It sounds more complicated than it is!

Simply put, by experiencing emotions that correspond with the intentions we hold, we are literally growing sets of neurons to support the manifestation of that intention.

Saying ‘I love myself’ without a ‘happy, loving feeling’ is practicing an affirmation and may get you more comfortable with the idea of self love, but ‘I love myself; I love myself’ doesn’t grow ‘I love

myself' neurons in the brain; inadvertently it can grow the neurons that support a feeling of 'must' or 'should' or 'resentment and resistance.'

You must find ways to envision self-love and feel self-love—even tiny, acknowledged moments of self-love. Watching and appreciating other's self-love can be eye-opening. Give yourself the time to feel the feelings that are standing in the way of your self-love.

As women, we are in a powerful position to embody self-love and lead our children and our communities by example.

It becomes the individual's duty to self, to 1) **Realise** that they are the only ones who can truly make the changes necessary for a successful life experience, 2) **Know** that it is possible to make changes, and 3) **Determine** the action that needs to happen to ensure positive and permanent change.

-Arna



Day 1: The Natural Desire to Change



“The visionary is the one who brings her voice into the world and who refuses to edit, rehearse, perform, or hide. It is the visionary who knows that the power of creativity is aligned with authenticity.” -Angeles Arrien

What are your visions of yourself?

What are your dreams?

What do you want to change?

Daily Thought: Nothing is meant to stay the same; change is natural.

Daily Suggestion: Study your skin on your hands, touch it with love.

“By creating a new mythos—that is, a change in the way we perceive reality, the way we see ourselves, and the ways we behave—la mestiza creates a new consciousness. The work of mestiza consciousness is to break down the subject/object duality that keeps her prisoner and to show in the flesh and through the images in her work how duality is transcended. The answer to the problem between the white race and the colored, between males and females, lies in healing the split that originates in the very foundation of our lives, our culture, our languages, our thoughts.

A massive uprooting of dualistic thinking in the individual and collective consciousness is the beginning of a long struggle, but one that could, in our best hopes, bring us to the end of rape, of violence, of war.” -Gloria E. Anzaldúa

Day 2: Your Beautiful Future ~ Envision the Dream



“Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.” -Harriet Tubman

What are the dreams you don't dare utter?

What is holding you back?

Who can help you accomplish your dreams?

Daily Thought: The future is your playground.

Daily Suggestion: Feel your feet on the Earth.

*"Our deepest wishes are whispers of our authentic selves. We must learn to respect them.
We must learn to listen." -Sarah Ban Breathnach*

Day 3: Conscious Creation ~ Make an Intention



“When women reassert their relationship with the wildish nature, they are gifted with a permanent and internal watcher, a knower, a visionary, an oracle, an inspiratrice, an intuitive, a maker, a creator, an inventor, and a listener who guide, suggest, and urge vibrant life in the inner and outer worlds. When women are close to this nature, the fact of that relationship glows through them. The wild teacher, wild mother, wild mentor supports their inner and outer lives, no matter what.” -Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estes

What are your deepest intentions for your life?

What does your wild woman look like?

Daily Thought: I bring life to the template that is my world.

Daily Suggestion: Notice the way words feel in your physical body.

“Most of us are taught from birth that we must look outside ourselves for the answers to any pressing question, including matters of our own health and well-being. We learn very early in life to give our power over to authority—to the teachers, doctors, political figures, and ministers/rabbis/priests who are the power-holders, the answer-givers. The entire structure of our society rests on the concept of power-over. And in submitting to outward authority, we often lose our sense of inner worth, inner power, spiritual authenticity. In reclaiming for ourselves and our children the concept of power-within, we can be wonderfully and dangerously subversive.”

-Cait Johnson and Maura D.Shaw

Day 4: Conscious Presence ~ Being Here NOW



“We have to learn now to live in the future that we are fighting for, rather than compromising in the vain hope of a future that is always deferred, always unreal.” -Mary Daly

How have you compromised in the past?

What are you no longer willing to compromise on?

How can you ground yourself in the present moment?

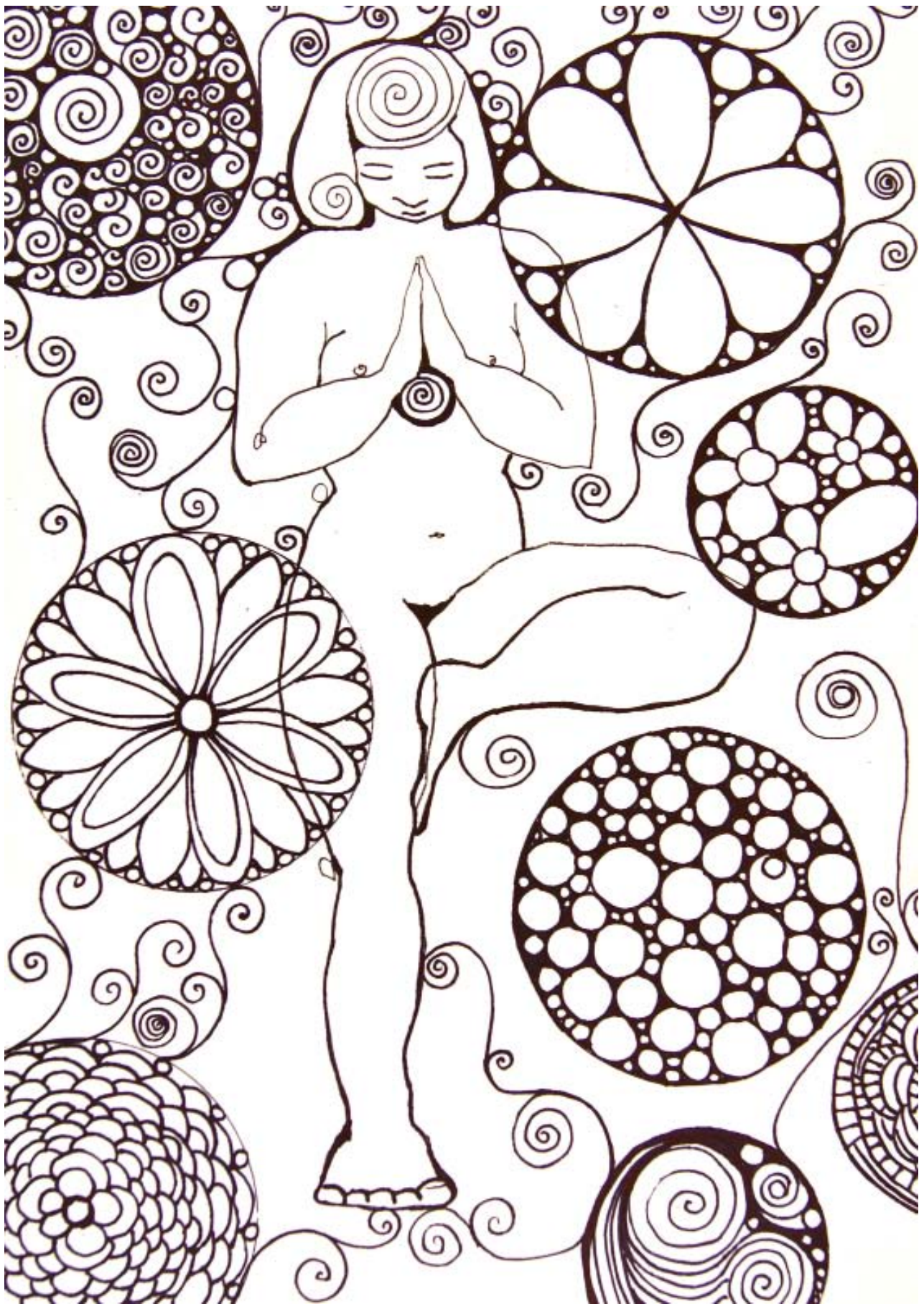
What futures can you imagine for yourself?

Daily Thought: There is only this moment.

Daily Suggestion: Feel the air touching your skin.

Enjoy the coloring page created for you by Arna on the next page.

“Every important social movement reconfigures the world in the imagination. What was obscure comes forward, lies are revealed, memory shaken, new delineations drawn over the old maps: it is from this new way of seeing the present that hope emerges for the future... Let us begin to imagine the worlds we would like to inhabit, the long lives we will share, and the many futures in our hands.” -Susan Griffin

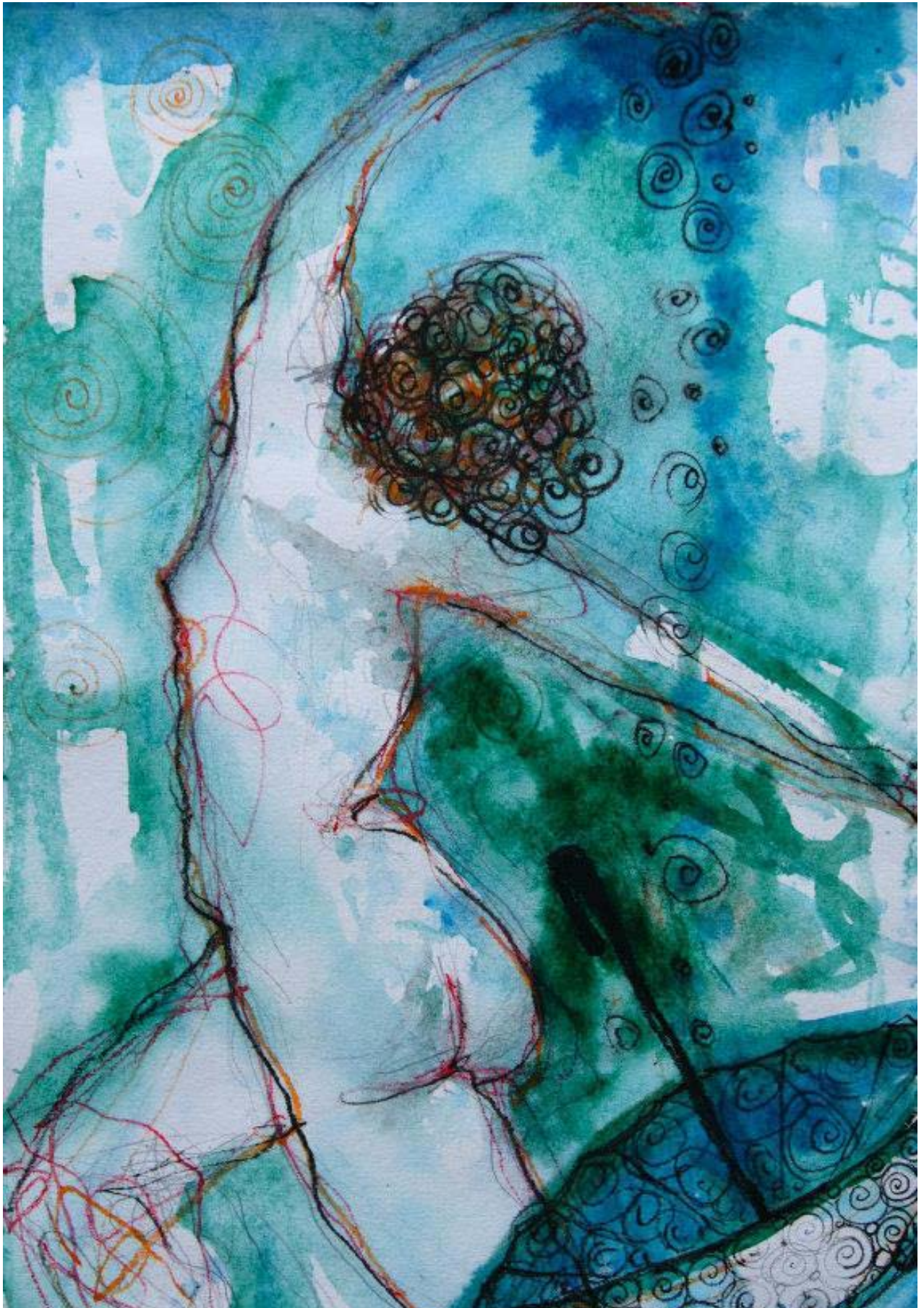


Day 5: Acceptance of What Is

The Thing Is

to love life, to love it even
when you have no stomach for it
and everything you've held dear
crumbles like burnt paper in your hands,
your throat filled with the silt of it.
When grief sits with you, its tropical heat
thickening the air, heavy as water
more fit for gills than lungs;
when grief weights you like your own flesh
only more of it, an obesity of grief,
you think, How can a body withstand this?
Then you hold life like a face
between your palms, a plain face,
no charming smile, no violet eyes,
and you say, yes, I will take you
I will love you, again.

-Ellen Bass



What are the things you have struggled to accept?

Is there anything you want to give up struggling with?

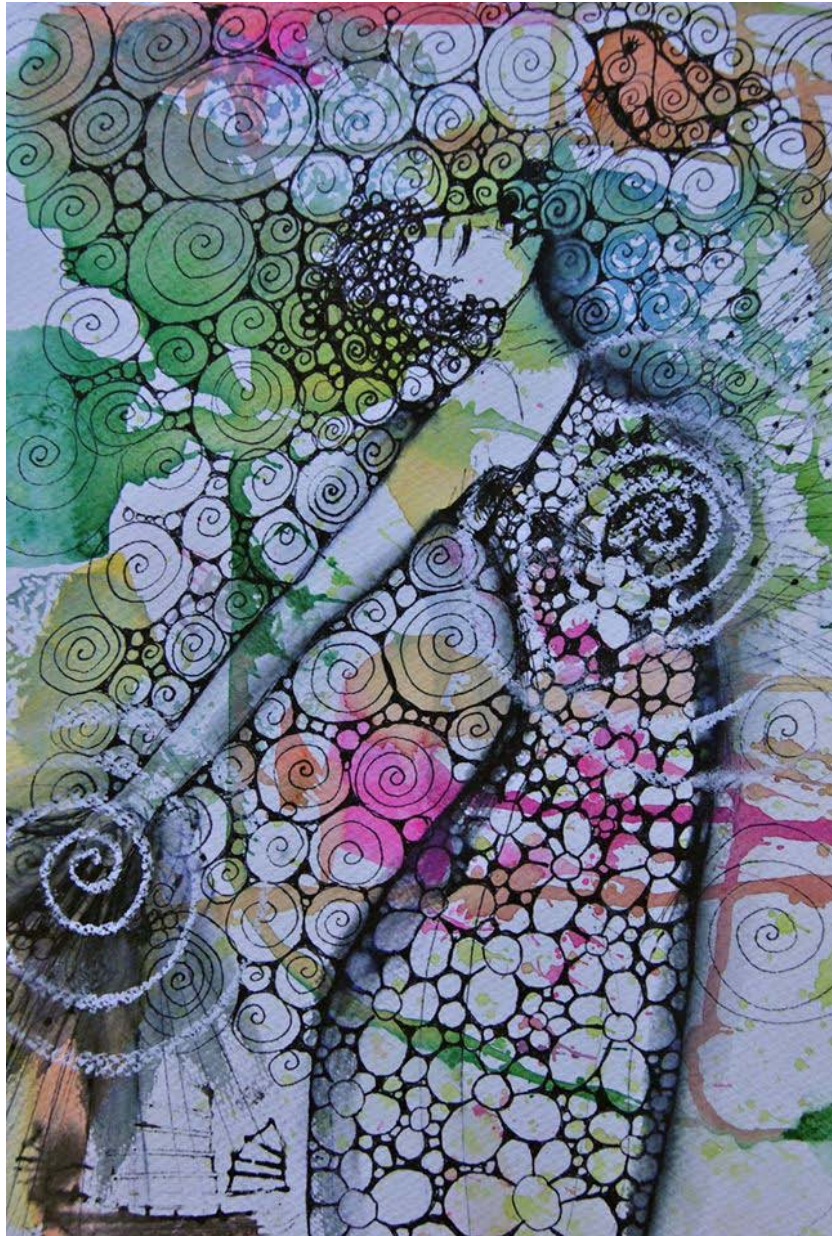
What does acceptance look and feel like to you?

Daily Thought: Everything is as it should be; nothing is as it seems.

Daily Suggestion: Observe your day unfolding; feel your reactions in your body.

“Most things will be okay eventually, but not everything will be. Sometimes you’ll put up a good fight and lose. Sometimes you’ll hold on really hard and realize there is no choice but to let go. Acceptance is a small, quiet room.” -Cheryl Strayed

Day 6: Every Fresh Breath ~ A Powerful Interaction



“Most of us live on a beggar’s ration of air. The average person inhales one pint of air per breath, while our lungs can actually contain seven pints when fully expanded. This is one of the reasons that the range and depth of our experiences disappoint our longings.” -Margo Anand

How often do you breathe deeply?

Does breathing scare you? If so, why?

What would breathing deeply mean for you?

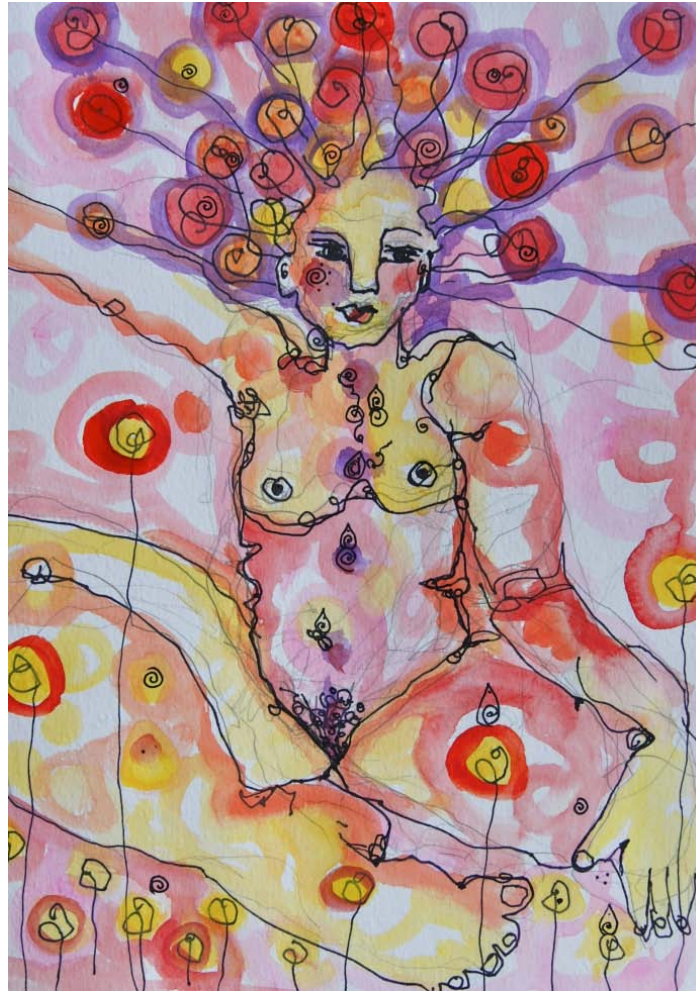
How can you incorporate breathing into your daily life?

Daily Thought: Every exhalation is a mini death.

Daily Suggestion: Feel life-giving universe enter your body; feel it leave and hold the space in-between.

“Daring to breathe is actually daring to live. As we all know, when we cease breathing, we die. As long as we are alive, the depth of our breathing determines the amount of life force we bring into ourselves. Given only a stingy amount of oxygen, our bodies, hearts, and minds will not function well.” -Sue Patton Thoele

Day 7: Kundalini Love ~ Releasing Tension



“Fire lives within us all; it is who we are. To know ourselves properly, we take responsibility for our power and connect more consciously with our far-seeing beingness. We are here to experience the contrast, reconciliation and emotional evolution that living on Earth brings. As we realise this, we open with the intention to remember and are gifted with bursts and sparks of intensity in our physical/spiritual system. Some might call this Kundalini energy—the beauty of All That Is.” -Arna Baartz

What do you do to release tension?

What else do you want to try?

What would your Kundalini Awakening look like?

Daily Thought: External tension begins in your mind.

Daily Suggestion: Stroke your body with intention; feel the pleasure of your own touch.

“Suddenly there was a release of beautiful proportions. For a millisecond, I heard the music of the universe—or I was the music of the universe. It was a harmonious, vibratory rumbling! It SOUNDED like a stadium of friendly voices but it FELT like a choir of angels. What I learned from that music was unsayable. I knew that time was an illusion, that body was spirit, that there is so, so much more—and, that we are magnificent! I do believe that it was an enlightenment experience that served to flush my system and open the doors of my mind.” -Arna Baartz



Day 8: Grace Becomes Us ~ Having Faith in Unseen Help

And the Great Mother said:

Come my child and give me all that you are.
I am not afraid of your strength and darkness,
of your fear and pain.

Give me your tears.

They will be my rushing rivers and roaring oceans.

Give me your rage.

It will erupt into my molten volcanoes and rolling thunder.
Give me your tired spirit. I will lay it to rest in my soft meadows.

Give me your hopes and dreams.

I will plant a field of sunflowers and arch rainbows in the sky.

You are not too much for me.

My arms and heart welcome your true fullness.

There is room in my world for all of you, all that you are.
I will cradle you in the boughs of my ancient redwoods and the
valleys of my gentle rolling hills. My soft winds will sing you
lullabies and soothe your burdened heart.

Release your deep pain.

You are not alone and you have never been alone.

-Linda Reuther, "Homecoming"



What makes you feel supported?

Do you feel supported now in your daily life?

How could you feel more supported? Is there a spiritual practice that helps you?

Daily Thought: The earth spins without my control; I am supported.

Daily Suggestion: Look up and out. Imagine the universe smiling at you.

“Whatever else you do, listen to your Deepest self. Love Her and be true to Her, speak Her truth, always.” -Sue Monk Kidd’s words to her daughter when she was leaving for college.

Day 9: Fear ~ The Nebulous Beast



“By the time we are women, fear is as familiar to us as air. It is our element. We live in it, we inhale it, we exhale it, and most of the time we do not even notice it. Instead of “I am afraid,” we say, “I don’t want to,” or “I don’t know how,” or “I can’t.”

-Andrea Dworkin

There are good and valid reasons for women and girls to be afraid. **Don't discount your gut when fear is appropriate.** That said, our socialization into fear often keeps us from doing the things we want and enjoying our full human potential. Explore some of your feelings here.

What is your: "I don't want to"?

What is your: "I don't know how"?

What is your: "I can't"?

What are you afraid of?

Daily Thought: Fear is just another story.

Daily Suggestion: Become aware of every fearful thought today; listen to the wisdom of your gut.

"When I dare to be powerful, to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid."-Audre Lorde

Day 10: Let The Victim Speak



“The victim who is able to articulate the situation of the victim has ceased to be a victim: he or she has become a threat.”

-James Baldwin

We live in a world that doesn't like the word *victim*.

The meaning of victim, according to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary, is:

- a person who has been attacked, injured, robbed, or killed by someone else.
- a person who is cheated or fooled by someone else.
- someone or something that is harmed by an unpleasant event (such as an illness or accident).

There is no shame in any of that. **The shame lies with the perpetrator.**

What comes up for you when you think of yourself as a victim?

How would it feel to name, claim and release your victimhood?

Articulate your victim-hood. You may want to create a separate Word document or journal – or one of the blank pages in this book.

Mary Daly wrote that “Women have had the power of naming stolen from us.” Take back your power by naming and claiming it all. Then, set it aside for now. You may want to share it eventually. **There is tremendous power in sharing our stories.**

You may also want to burn it—or rip it to shreds.

Daily Thought: When I look at you I see myself.

Daily Suggestion: Clench your fists, open your hands; feel it.

“What would happen if one woman told the truth about her life? The world would split open.”

-Muriel Rukeyser

Day 11: Emotions ~ Examine and Move On



“The past must be examined closely, I believe, before we can leave it there.” -Alice Walker

What thoughts do you have about the victim-aspects of your past that you wrote out yesterday?

What things in your past do you want to let go of?

How might you let go?

Daily Thought: Life evolves with the willingness to feel.

Daily Suggestion: Acknowledge your emotions and the way they move in your body.

"If our history has taught us anything, it is that action for change directed against the external conditions of our oppressions is not enough." -Audre Lorde

Day 12: Self-loathing and Other Unwanted Thought Forms



“Spiritual development for women, perhaps unlike for men, is not about surrendering self so much as coming to self.”

-Sue Monk Kidd

Many people abuse food or substances at one point or another. It doesn't mean you are broken, or an "addict"—it's just something to check yourself on occasionally. There are many woman-centered versions of the commonly used 12-Step Program. Patricia Lynn Reilly re-wrote Step 4 to say, "Turning a merciful eye toward myself, I inventory both my life-affirming and ineffective habits of behaviors, and identify the habits of thought that inspire them."

What are your life-affirming habits?

What are your ineffective habits and behaviors?

Is there anything that is concerning you now?

If so, what are you willing to do to change?

If you think you may have a problem with addiction, you might read some of the books by Annie Grace, Charlotte Davis Kasl or Patricia Lynn Reilly—or check out Women for Sobriety and She Recovers.

Daily Thought: Every thing begins as a thought.

Daily Suggestion: Remember your power; flex your muscles.

"Most important is that we not identify ourselves with such labels as codependent or addict, or get stuck in chronic recovery as if we were constantly in need of fixing. The goal is to heal and move on, embrace life's ups and downs, and move from recovery to discovery. Then we can break through the limitation imposed by hierarchy, work together for a just society, and free our capacity for courage, joy, power, and love." -Charlotte Davis Kasl

Day 13: Love your Female Body



“Your body is your own. This may seem obvious. But to inhabit your physical self fully, with no apology, is a true act of power.”

-Camille Maurine

We are so hung up on the body, hiding parts of us in fear—not just our vaginas either... our dimples our faces under makeup, our knees our arms... hiding hiding hiding things... come out come out wherever you are.

Which parts of your body do you love?

Which parts of your body do you hide or hate?

What might loving your body mean for you?

Daily Thought: I am a consciously created miracle.

Daily Suggestion: Imagine the inner workings of your body; be amazed!

“Where there is a wound on the psyches and bodies of women, there is a corresponding wound at the same site in the culture itself, and finally on Nature herself... It is not amazing that in our culture there is an issue about carving up a women’s body, that there is a corresponding issue about carving up the landscape, and yet another about the carving up of the culture into fashionable parts as well. Although a woman may not be able to stop the dissection of culture and lands overnight, she can stop doing so to her own body.” -Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estes

Day 14: Body Wisdom



“Body wisdom contains the essential truths about what matters most to a woman and ultimately to the human race as a whole. Body wisdom especially amplifies the inherent sacred relationship between a woman and the deep feminine.”

-Paula M. Reeves

What does your body want you to know?

Daily Thought: This body is made of intelligent light.

Daily Suggestion: Each cell is a tiny being awaiting your instruction—guide with love.

“Your body can be considered a reservoir of cellular memory, wisdom, and guidance. If you attend it, it can richly reward your journey with understanding about your deepest being and about the ways in which you might find healing and wholeness.” -Marion Woodman

Day 15: Undoing The Knots ~ Finding Clarity



“Daughter of Woman, your healing task is not to become a new, improved or changed person. Rather, it is to reclaim your natural and essential self in all its fullness. In the very beginning, you remembered yourself. You came into the world with feelings of omnipotence, not inferiority.” -Patricia Lynn Reilly

What were you like as a girl?

How are you different now?

Which parts of yourself do you wish you reclaim?

What are you done with?

Daily Thought: Resistance and clarity are two different vibrations.

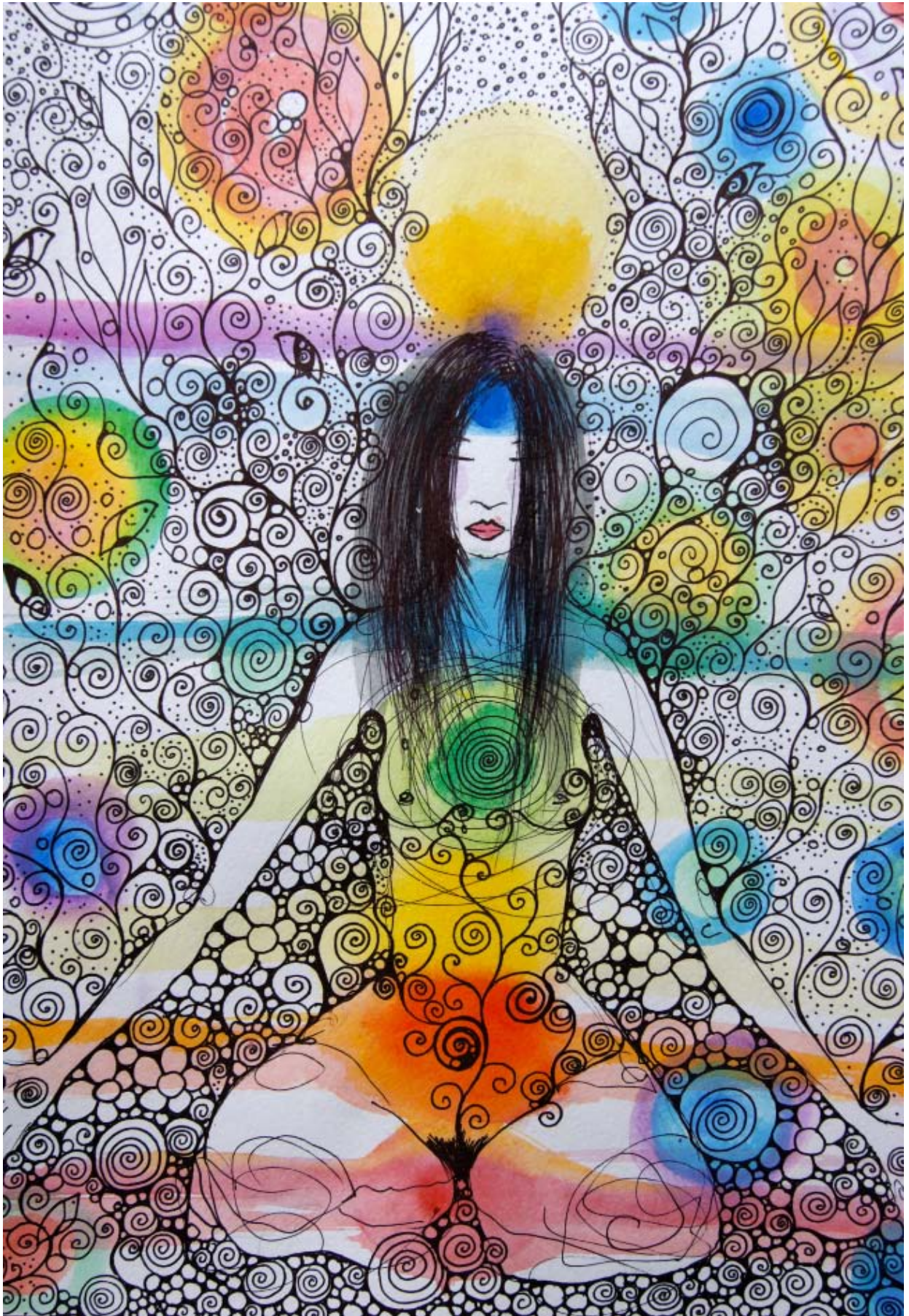
Daily Suggestion: Think of your problem; ask for a solution. Know you are answered immediately. Focus on the present moment; allow yourself to receive the answer. Let it come in its own way; acknowledge it out loud once you hear it!

*"I decided to start anew.
To strip away what I had been taught."
-Georgia O'Keefe*



Day 16: Healing Past Wounds

May your scars be washed in warm milk.
May your courage be carved on monuments.
May your tears grow into redwoods.
May your rage be a fierce wind.
May your sex be the open sky.
May your heart be a whole mountain.
May your stories become the logs.
that dam the flood of violence.
And the silence of wood
become the voice of power.
-Leah Korican, "Her Story"



What do you want to heal?

What has helped you heal other wounds?

What are the tears you need to cry?

Daily Thought: It is only my thought that keeps this alive.

Daily Suggestion: Every time you have a painful thought, breathe out and say, "Even though I feel this feeling, I choose to see through the eyes of love."

"Tears are a river that takes you somewhere...Tears lift your boat off the rocks, off dry ground, carrying it down river to someplace better." -Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estes

Day 17: Leaving Toxic Relationships



“All too often women believe it is a sign of commitment, an expression of love, to endure unkindness or cruelty, to forgive and forget. In actuality, when we love rightly we know that the healthy, loving response to cruelty and abuse is putting ourselves out of harm’s way.” -bell hooks

Are you happy with the significant relationships in your life?

Are there any relationships you want to let go of?

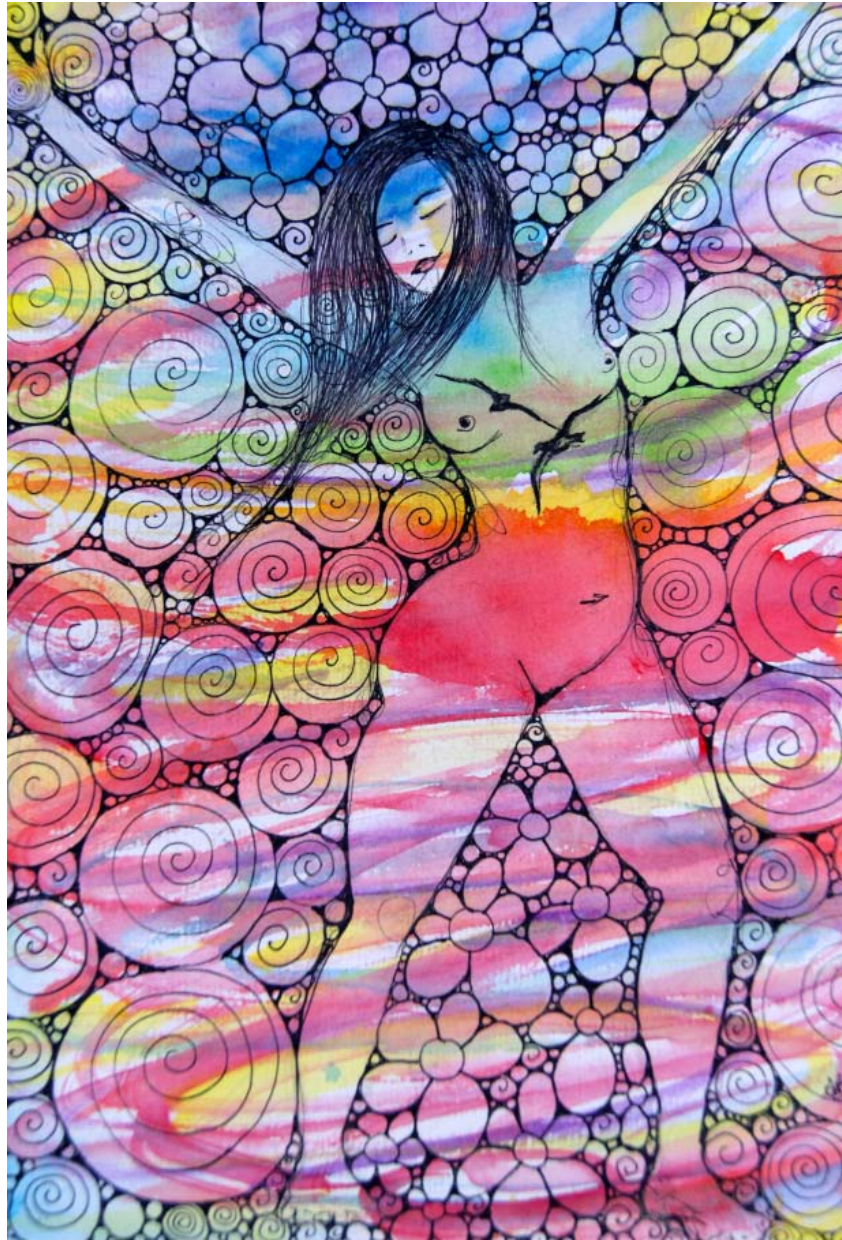
How might you sever these ties (safely, if applicable)?

Daily Thought: Self-awareness is power. Love yourself; right choices follow.

Daily Suggestion: Notice your statements and thoughts; be aware of any dishonesty. Positive change starts with personal integrity.

“How can someone tell you, ‘I love you,’ and then mistreat you and abuse you, humiliate you, and disrespect you? That person may claim to love you, but is it really love? If we love, we want the best for those we love.” -Don Miguel Ruiz and Janet Mills

Day 18: Deprogramming Socialization as Girls



“what’s the greatest lesson a woman should learn?
that since day one. she’s already had everything she needs
within herself. it’s the world that convinced her she did not.”

-rupi kaur

What are the things inside you that have been hampered by your socialization?

What do you wish to unlock?

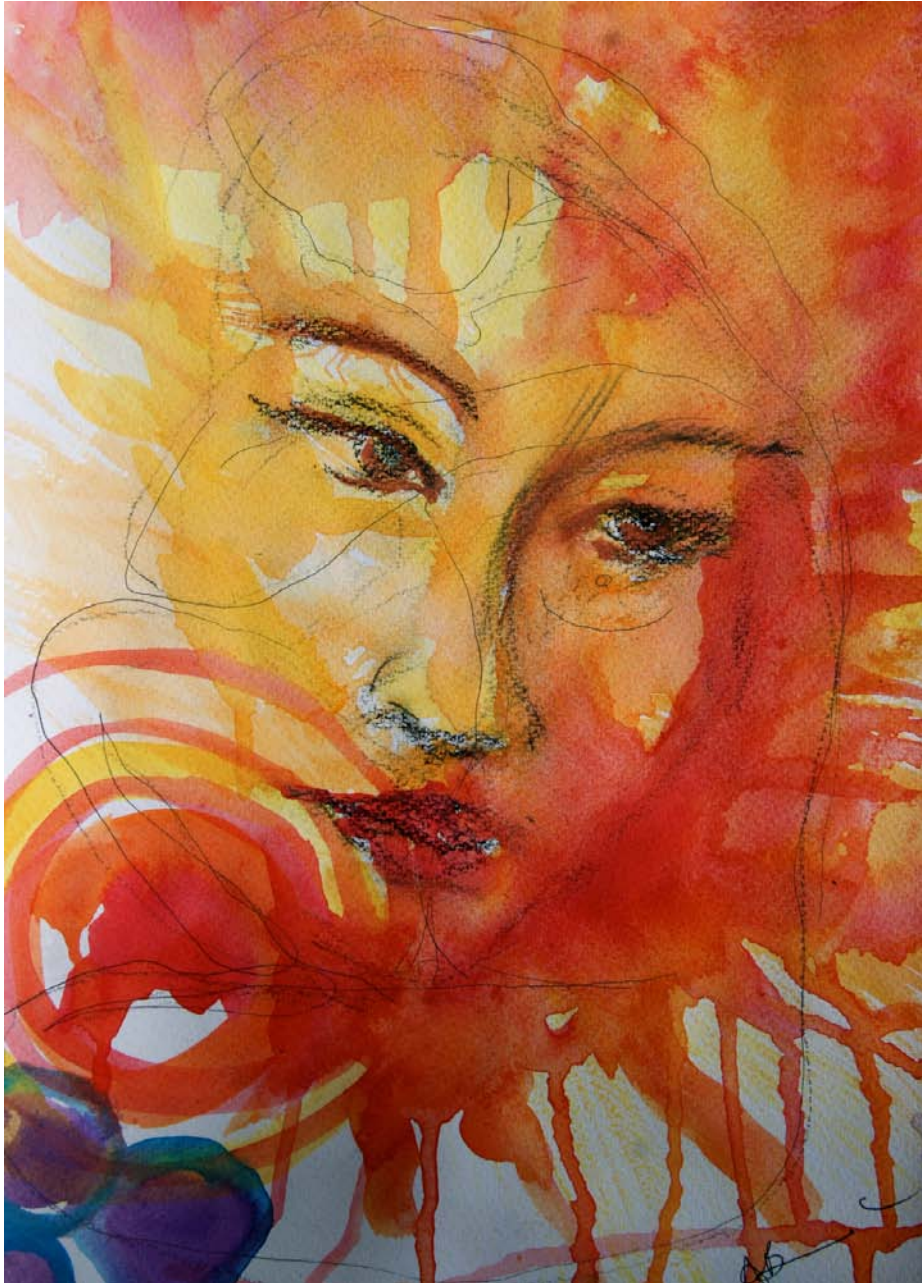
Who are you (*really*)?

Daily Thought: The Universe leans in the direction of well-being.

Daily Suggestion: Unveil your body; feel your feelings toward it. Acknowledge your fears, loathing and sadness; allow yourself to view with courage. Ask for help to change your perspective and re-program yourself. Find something beautiful about you and focus on it; make the beauty bigger until you are overwhelmed with love and hope.

*“You are a burning blue flame, a mother tongue and sacred fire; a love, a kindred rainbow—
you are the answer, the love, the completed sentence.” -Theresa Gale Henson*

Day 19: Undoing God as Male



“Images of the Goddess help to break the hold of
“male control” that has shaped our images not only of God,
but of all significant power in the universe.”

-Carol P. Christ

What does God/dess look like to you?

How might female imagery of God/dess changed your perception of yourself as a girl?

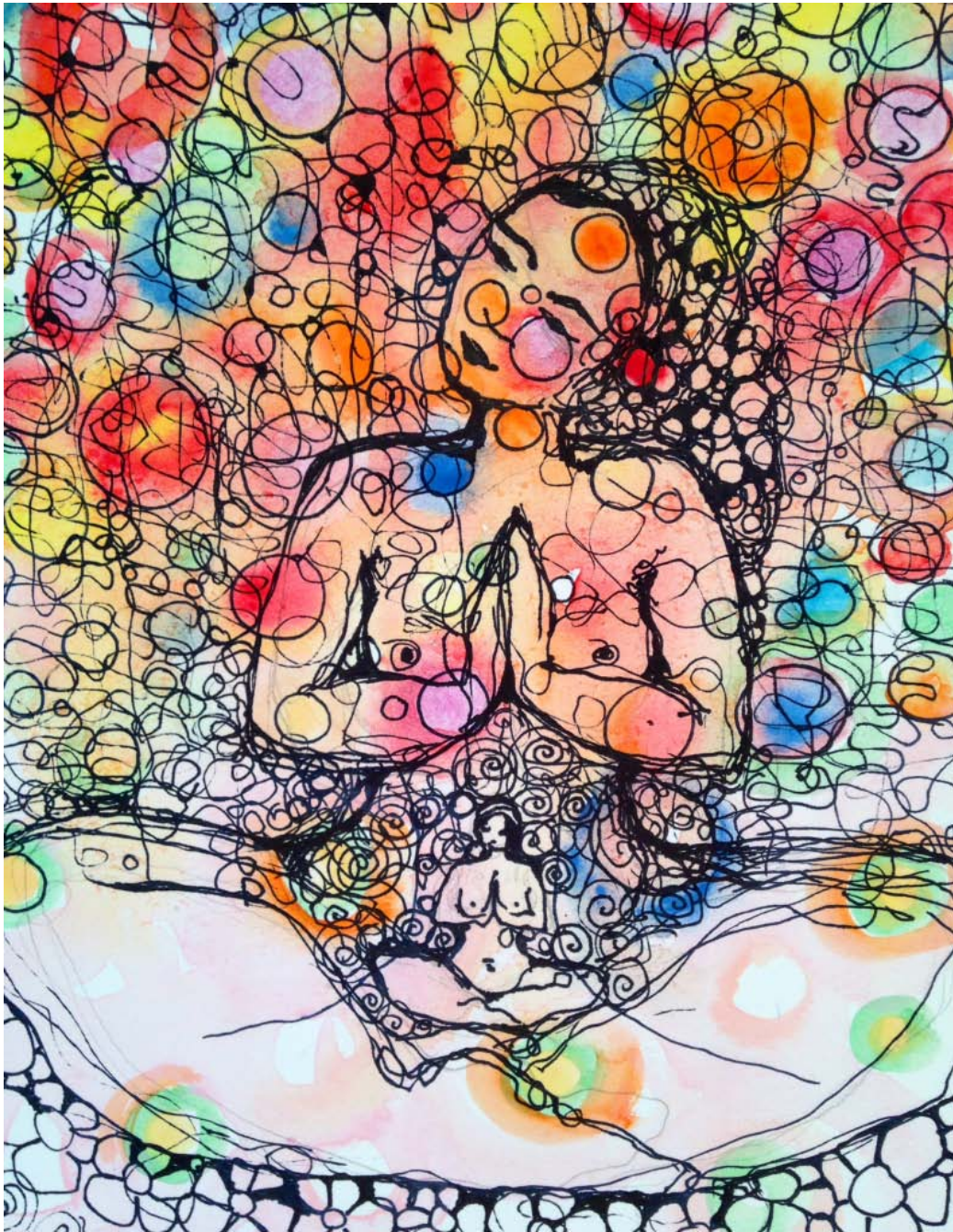
How might Goddess change your image of yourself and the world now?

Daily Thought: History is just a thought we all kept thinking.

Daily Suggestion: Say “I AM, and that is all that matters.” Repeat until it feels true.

“I am an expression of the divine, just like a peach is, just like a fish is. I have a right to be this way... I can't apologize for that, nor can I change it, nor do I want to... We never have to be other than who we are in order to be successful... We realize that we are as ourselves unlimited and our experiences valid. It is for the rest of the world to recognize this, if they choose.” -Alice Walker

Day 20: Embracing Goddess



“i found god in myself
& i loved her / i loved her fiercely.”

-Ntozake Shange

Can you imagine the divine in you?

Draw Her:

Daily Thought: Goddess/God resides equally within all beings.

Daily Suggestion: I am a balanced co-creator. Stretch your body, stand in tree pose. Acknowledge the goddess/god in All That Is. Plant a flower to bring your Goddess back to life.

“The Goddess reflects back to us what has been so missing in our culture: positive images of our power, our bodies, our wills, our mothers. To look at the Goddess is to remember ourselves, to imagine ourselves whole.” -Kathie Carlson

Day 21: Trusting your Intuition



“Teach me how to trust my heart, my mind, my intuition, my inner knowing, the senses of my body. Teach me to trust these things so that I may enter my sacred space and love beyond my fear and thus walk in balance with the passing of each glorious sun.”

-Lakota Prayer

How was your intuition suppressed as a girl?

What does your intuition or inner voice sound like?

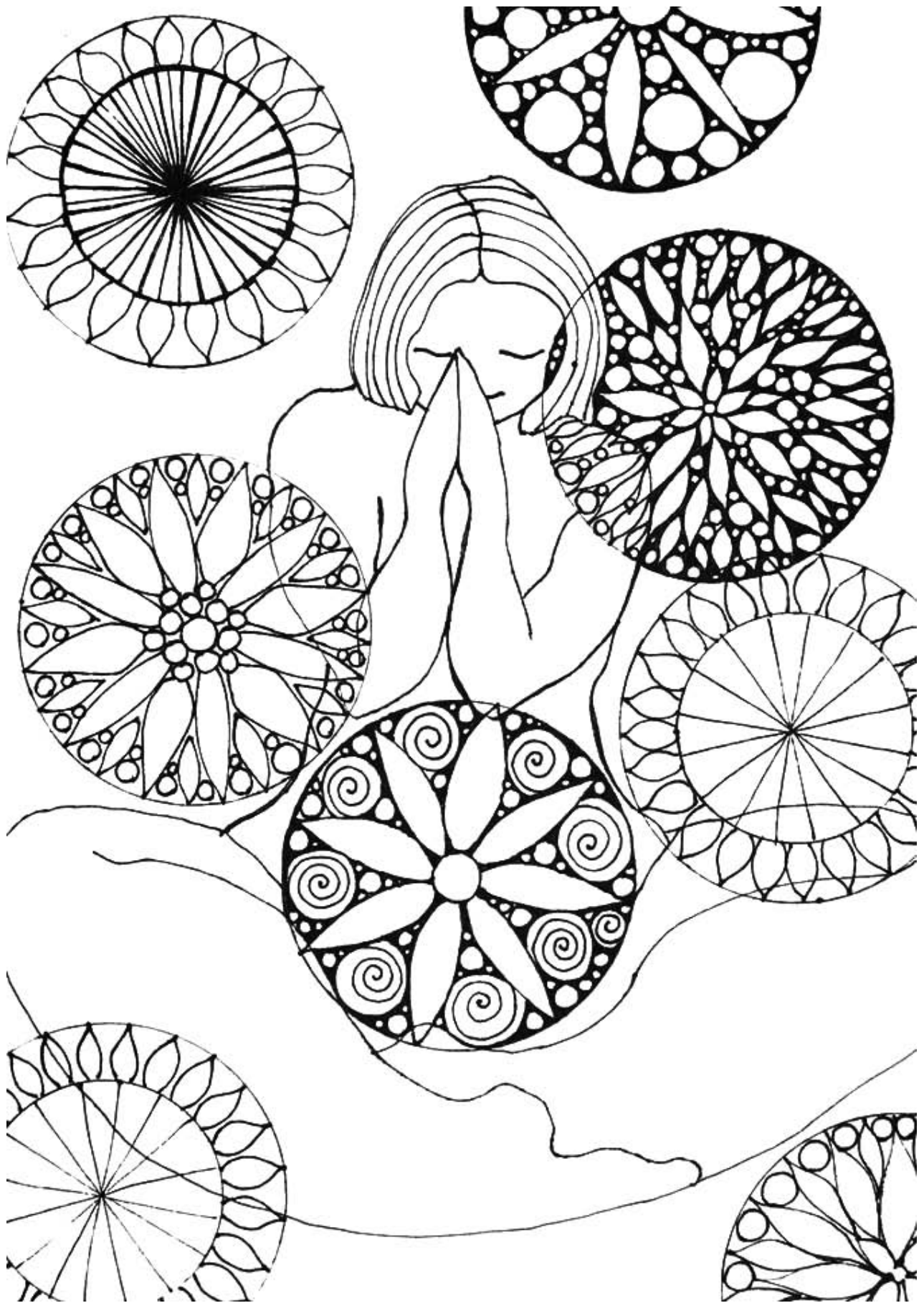
What does She want to say to you now?

Daily Thought: My inner being is aware and knows my best interests.

Daily Suggestion: Listen through your emotions. If they feel good move toward them; if they feel bad move away from them.

"In each of us, there is a little voice that knows exactly which way to go. And I learned very early to listen to it, even though it has caused so much grief and havoc, and I think that is the only answer."

-Alice Walker



Day 22: Menstrual Wisdom

“Women’s menstrual blood always was, always is of the essence of the creative power of the Great Mother. Blood is the physical counterpart of the mystical life force spiraling throughout the cosmos, nourishing the universe, sustaining its breathing in and out, its manifestations and dissolutions...While being deprived of ritual solitude while we bleed, we are also isolated from the communion of other women who are bleeding. Each woman must go through each life stage, transition, and crisis, in silent aloneness, unsupported by either ritual or the women’s group. This combination of meaningless isolation and lack of ritual solitude is the final patriarchal taboo against women—a major cause of mental illness, and a major barrier against self-realization. Thus was women’s ancient collective power broken. Women under patriarchy, isolated from each other and from themselves, could no longer threaten male dominance of “life,” or question male cooptation and imitation of our original female processes. This is why all patriarchal religions try to define menstrual and childbirth blood—the source of life—as a filth, a shame, and a crime. Because it represents the creative power of the evolutionary female. “She who,” as Judy Grahn said...”she who, with her blood, created the human world.” -Monica Sjoo & Barbara Mor



What messages did you receive about menstruation while you were growing up?

What do you believe about menstruation now?

If you are still menstruating, how does your period make you feel about yourself? (Otherwise, how *did* it make you feel?)

In what ways might you embrace your menses or help future generations do so?

Daily Thought: I belong here; this is my sacred space.

Daily Suggestion: Claim your space; feet planted firmly on the ground. Remember your feminine power.

*“Underneath the color of our skin,
all women bleed the same, red, deep,
ancient flow of life force. It is this power
what makes the blood that naturally
flows through a woman during
her cycle seem taboo.”*

-Marjory Meijia

Day 23: Finding Your Voice



“What are the words you do not yet have?

What do you need to say?

What are the tyrannies you swallow day by day
and attempt to make your own, until you will sicken
and die of them, still in silence?” -Audre Lorde

What are the words you do not yet have?

What are the tyrannies you swallow?

What do you need to say?

Daily Thought: Words carry vibration.

Daily Suggestion: Make sounds. Scream into the pillow or say, "I love you" in the mirror. How does this feel?

"Words should not seek to please, to hide the wounds in our bodies, or the shameful moments in our lives. They may hurt, give us pain, but they can also provoke us to question what we have accepted for thousands of years." -Nawal El Saadawi

Day 24: Changing the Unacceptable



“I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change.
I am changing the things I cannot accept.” -Angela Davis

What are the things that you can no longer accept?

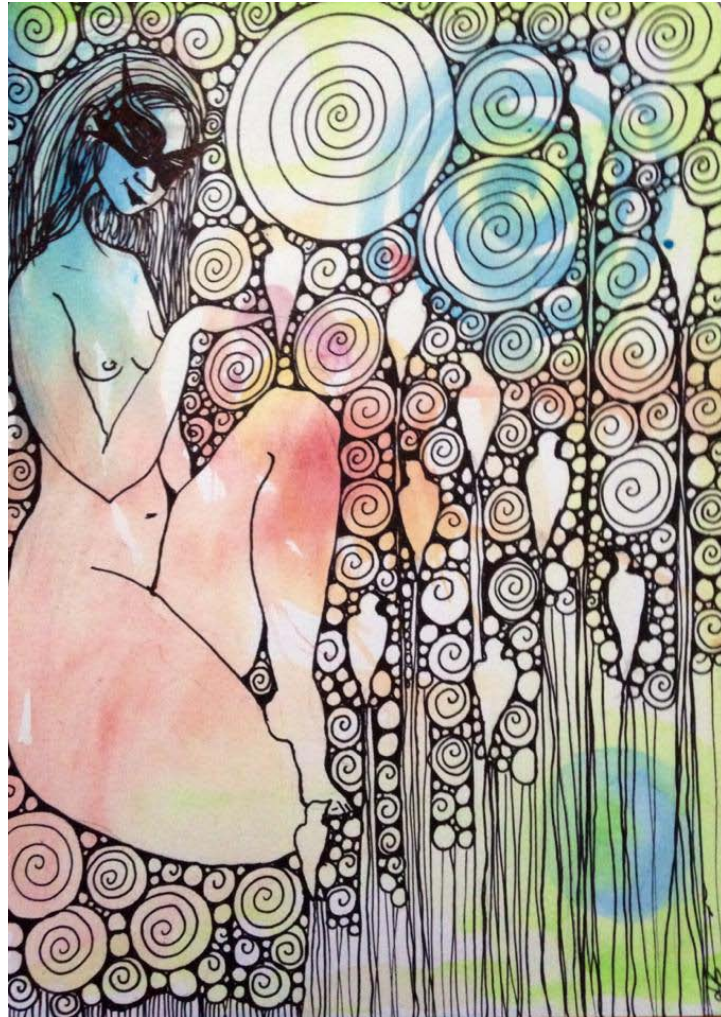
What are you going to change?

Daily Thought: I am willing to change and be free.

Daily Suggestion: Perception is powerful and personal. Note your own unacceptable behaviour: feel the feelings. Focus on what feels good.

“When we live from within outward, in touch with our inner power, we become responsible to ourselves in the deepest sense. As we recognize our deepest feelings, we give up, of necessity, being satisfied with suffering and self-negation, and the numbness which seems like the only alternative in our society.” -Audre Lorde

Day 25: Bewitching



“If you are a woman and dare to look within yourself, you are a Witch. You make your own rules. You are free and beautiful. You can be invisible or evident in how you chose to make your Witch-self known. Your power comes from your own self as a woman, and it is activated by working in concert with your sisters. You are a Witch by saying aloud “I am a Witch three times and thinking about that. You are a Witch by being female, untamed, angry, joyful, and immortal.” -Margot Adler

How do you feel about the word “witch”?

Do you dare to look within yourself?

How are you untamed, angry, joyful, and immortal?

Daily Thought: Everything moves under my touch.

Daily Suggestion: Become aware that the world is malleable. If you want something to change for you, first imagine it.

“The beginning of liberation comes when women refuse to be “good” and/or “healthy” by prevailing standards. To be female is to be deviant by definition in the prevailing culture. To be female and defiant is to be intolerably deviant. This means going beyond the imposed definitions of “bad woman” and “good woman,” beyond the categories of prostitute and wife. This is equivalent to assuming the role of witch and madwoman.” -Mary Daly



Day 26: Money ~ An Abundance Of

“My women’s lodge has been meeting for over fifteen years and we’ve talked about many topics, including aging and death. We spent several meetings telling our sexual history from beginning to end. With that topic we were all able to laugh and cry together as we discovered that the telling of these stories wasn’t hard to do. Then we decided to talk about money. In the first evening it was amazing to find that this group of very competent women had so much shame and embarrassment talking about it. We had no difficulty in our meetings about sex, or death. But money was hard to talk about.

There were tears as we told stories revealing how mystifying money was to each of us. Somehow, we hadn’t been raised to understand it. We had mismanaged our own money, lost money, and almost never asked for the amount of money we deserved for our work. There was guilt about having money, guilt about not having money. For middle-class women of our generation, talking about money had been a family taboo. We stayed with this subject for several meetings because it was so potent, and each time I dreaded going to the circle, thinking, “I really don’t want to face this.” After that, each woman in the group took various steps to get a handle on the issue. I know I did. Those circles changed our lives.” -Sedonia Cahill



Statistically speaking, women own very little of the world's wealth. This is no accident. Women also have been traditionally shielded from learning about money.

How do you feel about money?

Do you have enough money?

What positive steps can you take to be more financially abundant? How might you think *outside* the box?

Take some time to journal about your financial dreams for yourself, your daughter (if you have one) and for women and girls worldwide.

Daily Thought: The Universe knows only Abundance.

Daily Suggestion: Be aware of your absolute abundance of air, water and sky. Note the feelings; stay in abundance often.

“When I first saw the Venus of Willendorf many years ago, I was frightened by her fullness. In our society, we get the message that that kind of abundance is absolutely unacceptable. It took me awhile to embrace her. As the archetypal Great Mother, this incredibly abundant and revered woman often makes people uncomfortable. She is so large, sensual, voluptuous and ripe with the fertility of feminine energy and power. Our discomfort with her is a reflection of how we are raised as women... I love her now and see her as delicious and nurturing.” -Linda Reuther

Day 27: Embracing Sexual Energy



“There are many kinds of power, used and unused, acknowledged or otherwise. The erotic is a resource within each of us that lies in a deeply female and spiritual plane, firmly rooted in the power of our unexpressed or unrecognized feeling. In order to perpetuate itself, every oppression must corrupt or distort those various sources of power within the culture of the oppressed that can provide energy for change. For women, this has meant a suppression of the erotic as a considered source of power and information within our lives.” -Audre Lorde

Sexual abuse, rape (or the threat of it), and unwanted sexual attention is often part of our socialization as girls. Therefore, it can be difficult to embrace our natural sexuality as females.

In what ways has the erotic been suppressed in you?

What parts of your erotic self have you embraced?

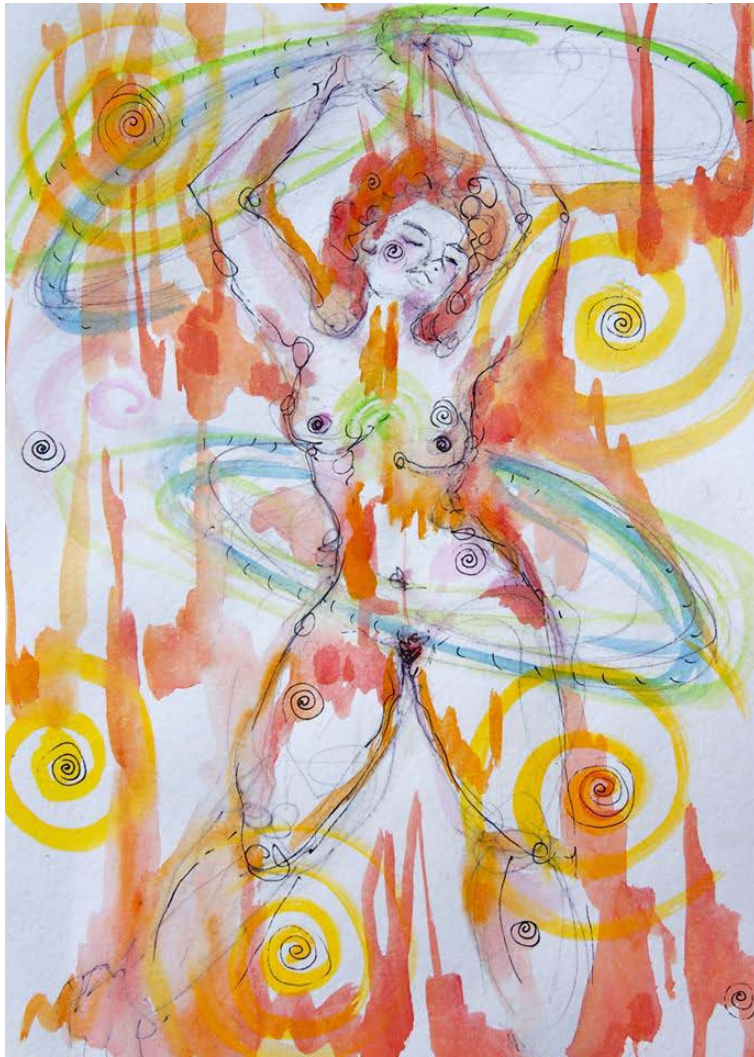
Which parts do you want to reclaim?

Daily Thought: The universe pulsates with the energy of life.

Daily Suggestion: Focus on your sexual centre. Feel, listen, and *absorb* the message.

“Dear World: If there is any one strategy I want to share with you it is that we must create spaces for people to fall in intense love with dreaming the world anew... make healing attractive. Make sunflowers militant. Make orgasms essential. Make dreams. Make dreams. Make dreams. Create. Amplify... in times of terror, wage beauty.” -Mark Gonzales

Day 28: Finding passion ~ Igniting Your Fire



“I will not die an unlived life. I will not live in fear of falling or catching fire. I choose to inhabit my days, to allow my living to open me, to make me less afraid, more accessible, to loosen my heart until it becomes a wing, a torch, a promise. I choose to risk my significance; to live so that which came to me as seed goes to the next as blossom and that which came to me as blossom goes on as fruit.” -Dawna Markova

What makes you happy?

How can you incorporate these things daily?

What are the things you want to do before you die?

Daily Thought: Within all things there is a spark of love.

Daily Suggestion: Put your hands on your fiery, belly centre. Breathe deeply; imagine it getting warmer.

“Women’s creativity has also been absent because of women’s subordination and the denial of her value. Rather than creating ourselves, we’ve often been content to be the muses to men, making their creativity possible. Sometimes when we have created, we’ve not used the mother tongue of our own soul but parroted patriarchal thought, turning out reframed versions of what we’d heard it saying... When we have spoken in our true creative voices, we frequently have been neglected, obscured, or overlooked.” -Sue Monk Kidd

Day 29: Community ~ We Are One



“Part of healing the wounded feminine and reclaiming feminine wisdom is for the women to reconnect, to come together as sisters with a common mission rather than stay isolated and reinforce a divisiveness which disempowers us all and weakens our efforts.” ~Jane Hardwicke Collings

Who are the women in your community?

Do you feel sufficiently supported?

How do you support your sisters?

What are your dreams for your community of women?

What are your dreams for women throughout the world?

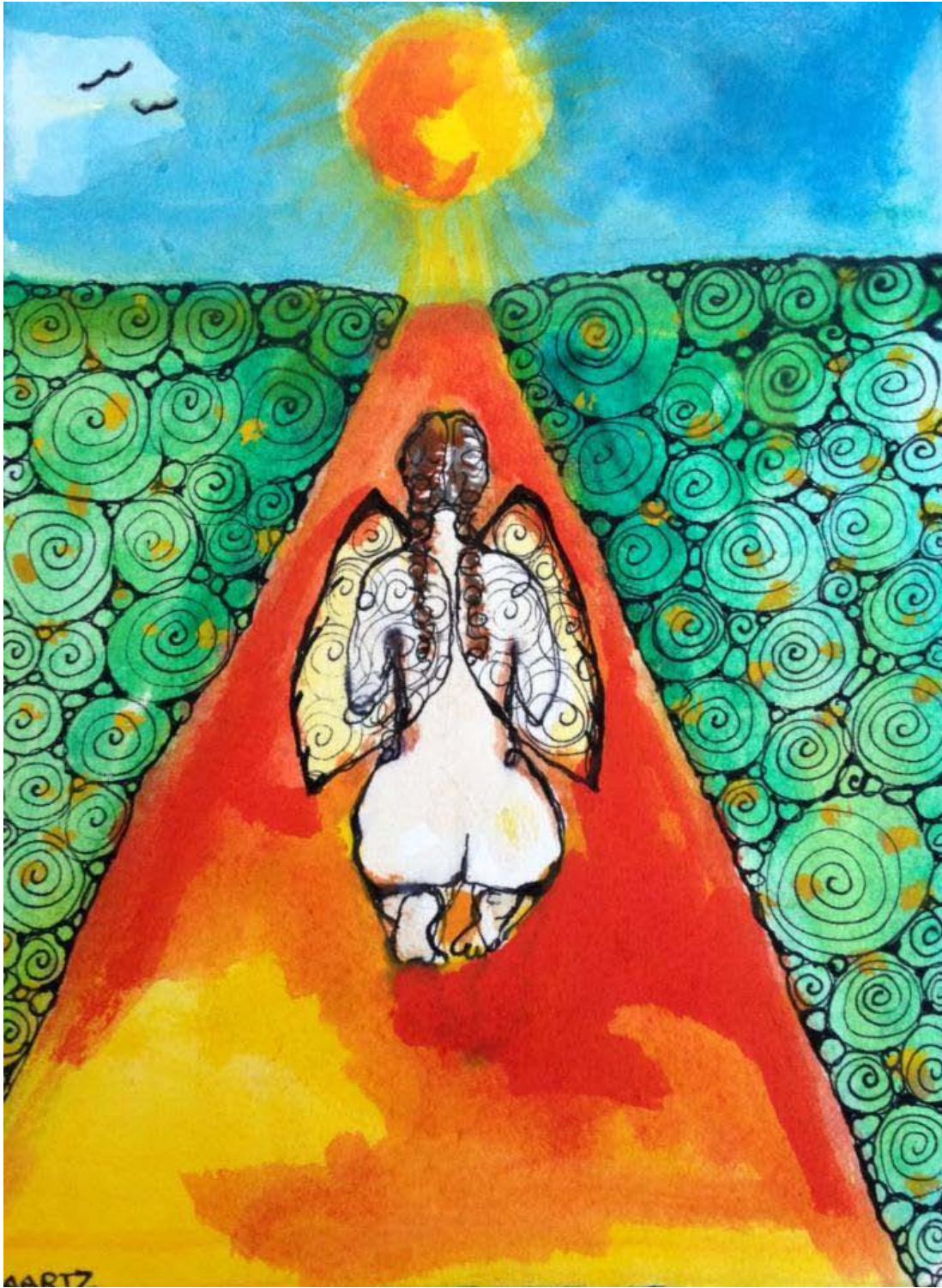
Daily Thought: My self-love affects my external world.

Daily Suggestion: Connect with your eyes.

“Only women hearing each other can create a counterworld to the prevailing sense of reality.”

-Mary Daly

Day 30: Change My Mind ~ Change The World



“Go out and change the world you live in.
It is the only world you have.” -Staceyann Chin

What changes do you want to see in our world at large?

What will you commit to do to change them?

Daily Thought: My thoughts have power.

Daily Suggestion: Clearly articulate the changes you need to make to your thinking.

“do not choose the lesser life. do you hear me. do you hear me. choose the life that is. yours. the life that is seducing your lungs. that is dripping down your chin.”

-Nayyirah Waheed

Closing blessing:

“May you never be subservient. May you never fall prey to fitting in. May you always swirl in all the directions the sacred winds want to take you. May you never hush your laughter nor your tears. May you breathe without restriction. May you show up every single day to the calling that is you and may you always know the courage of your heart.” -Fig Ally



This book is just the beginning of a healing we hope will spread around the globe.
Please come back to it occasionally and share it with your sisters and friends.



"One woman can change anything,
but many women can change everything."
-Christine Karumba

10 Simple Words Every Girl Should Learn

by Soraya Chemaly

“Stop interrupting me.”

“I just said that.”

“No explanation needed.”

In fifth grade, I won the school courtesy prize. In other words, I won an award for being polite. My brother, on the other hand, was considered the class comedian. We were very typically socialized as a “young lady” and a “boy being a boy.” Globally, childhood politeness lessons are gender asymmetrical. We socialize girls to take turns, listen more carefully, not curse and resist interrupting in ways we do not expect boys to. Put another way, we generally teach girls subservient habits and boys to exercise dominance.

I routinely find myself in mixed-gender environments (life) where men interrupt me. Now that I’ve decided to try and keep track, just out of curiosity, it’s quite amazing how often it happens. It’s particularly pronounced when other men are around.

This irksome reality goes along with another—men who make no eye contact. For example, a waiter who only directs information and questions to men at a table, or the man last week who simply pretended I wasn’t part of a circle of five people (I was the only woman). We’d never met before and barely exchanged 10 words, so it couldn’t have been my not-so-shrinking-violet opinions.

These two ways of establishing dominance in conversation, frequently based on gender, go hand-in-hand with this last one: A woman, speaking clearly and out loud, can say something that no one appears to hear, only to have a man repeat it minutes, maybe seconds later, to accolades and group discussion.

After I wrote about the gender confidence gap recently, of the 10 items on a list, the one that resonated the most was the issue of whose speech is considered important. In sympathetic response to what I wrote, a person on Twitter sent me a cartoon in which one woman and five men sit around a conference table. The caption reads, “That’s an excellent suggestion, Miss Triggs. Perhaps one of the men here would like to make it.” I don’t think there is a woman alive who has not had this happen.

The cartoon may seem funny, until you realize exactly how often it seriously happens. And—as in the cases of Elizabeth Warren or say, Brooksley Born—how broadly consequential the impact can be. When you add race and class to the equation the incidence of this marginalization is even higher.

This suppressing of women's voices, in case you are trying to figure out what Miss Triggs was wearing or drinking or might have said to provoke this response, this is what sexism sounds like.

These behaviors, the interrupting and the over-talking, also happen as the result of difference in status, but gender rules. For example, male doctors invariably interrupt patients when they speak, especially female patients, but patients rarely interrupt doctors in return. Unless the doctor is a woman. When that is the case, she interrupts far less and is herself interrupted more. This is also true of senior managers in the workplace. Male bosses are not frequently talked over or stopped by those working for them, especially if they are women; however, female bosses are routinely interrupted by their male subordinates.

This preference for what men have to say, supported by men and women both, is a variant on "mansplaining." The word came out of an article by writer Rebecca Solnit, who explained that the tendency some men have to grant their own speech greater import than a perfectly competent woman's is not a universal male trait, but the "intersection between overconfidence and cluelessness where some portion of that gender gets stuck."

Solnit's tipping point experience really did take the cake. She was talking to a man at a cocktail party when he asked her what she did. She replied that she wrote books and she described her most recent one, *River of Shadows: Eadweard Muybridge and the Technological Wild West*. The man interrupted her soon after she said the word Muybridge and asked, "And have you heard about the *very important* Muybridge book that came out this year?" He then waxed on, based on his reading of a review of the book, not even the book itself, until finally, a friend said, "That's her book." He ignored that friend (also a woman) and she had to say it more than three times before "he went ashen" and walked away. If you are not a woman, ask any woman you know what this is like, because it is not fun and happens to all of us.

In the wake of Larry Summers' "women can't do math" controversy several years ago, scientist Ben Barres wrote publicly about his experiences, first as a woman and later in life, as a male. As a female student at MIT, Barbara Barres was told by a professor after solving a particularly difficult math problem, "Your boyfriend must have solved it for you." Several years after, as Ben Barres, he gave a well-received scientific speech and he overheard a member of the audience say, "His work is much better than his sister's."

Most notably, he concluded that one of the major benefits of being male was that he could now “even complete a whole sentence without being interrupted by a man.”

I’ve had teenage boys, irritatingly but hysterically, excuse what they think is “lack of understanding” to [my] “youthful indiscretion.” Last week as I sat in a cafe, a man in his 60’s stopped to ask me what I was writing. I told him I was writing a book about gender and media and he said, “I went to a conference where someone talked about that a few years ago. I read a paper about it a few years ago. Did you know that car manufacturers use slightly denigrating images of women to sell cars? I’d be happy to help you.” After I suggested, smiling cheerily, that the images were beyond denigrating and definitively injurious to women’s dignity, free speech and parity in culture, he drifted off.

It’s not hard to fathom why so many men tend to assume they are great and that what they have to say is more legitimate. It starts in childhood and never ends. Parents interrupt girls twice as often and hold them to stricter politeness norms. Teachers engage boys, who correctly see disruptive speech as a marker of dominant masculinity, more often and more dynamically than girls.

As adults, women’s speech is granted less authority and credibility. We aren’t thought of as able critics or as funny. Men speak more, more often, and longer than women in mixed groups (classrooms, boardrooms, legislative bodies, expert media commentary and, for obvious reasons religious institutions.) Indeed, in male-dominated problem solving groups, including boards, committees and legislatures, men speak 75% more than women, with negative effects on decisions reached. That’s why, as researchers summed up, “Having a seat at the table is not the same as having a voice.”

Even in movies and television, male actors engage in more disruptive speech and garner twice as much speaking and screen time as their female peers. This is by no means limited by history or to old media but is replicated online. Listserv topics introduced by men have a much higher rate of response and on Twitter, people retweet men two times as often as women.

These linguistic patterns are consequential in many ways, not the least of which is the way that they result in unjust courtroom dynamics, where adversarial speech governs proceedings and gendered expression results in women’s testimonies being interrupted, discounted and portrayed as not credible according to masculinized speech norms. Courtrooms also show exactly how credibility and status, women’s being lower, are also doubly affected by race. If black women testifying in court adopt what is often categorized as “[white] women’s language,” they are considered less credible. However, if they are more assertive, white jurors find them “rude, hostile, out of control, and, hence [again], less credible.” Silence might be an approach taken by women to adapt to the double bind, but silence doesn’t help when you’re testifying.

The best part though is that we are socialized to think women talk more. Listener bias results in most people thinking that women are hogging the floor when men are actually dominating. Linguists have concluded that much of what is popularly understood about women and men being from different planets, verbally, confuses “women’s language” with “powerless language.”

There are, of course, exceptions that illustrate the role that gender (and not biological sex) plays. For example, I have a very funny child who regularly engages in simultaneous speech, disruptively interrupts and randomly changes topics. If you read a script of one of our typical conversations, you would probably guess the child is a boy based on the fact that these speech habits are what we think of as “masculine.” The child is a girl, however. She’s more comfortable with overt displays of assertiveness and confidence than the average girl speaker. It’s hard to balance making sure she keeps her confidence with teaching her to be polite. However, excessive politeness norms for girls, expected to set an example for boys, have real impact on women who are, as we constantly hear, supposed to override their childhood socialization and learn to talk like men to succeed (learn to negotiate, demand higher pay, etc.).

The first time I ran this post, I kid you not, the first response I got was from a Twitter user, a man, who, without a shred of self-awareness, asked, “What would you say if a man said those things to you mid-conversation?”

Socialized male speech dominance is a significant issue, not just in school, but everywhere. If you doubt me, sit quietly and keep track of speech dynamics at your own dinner table, workplace, classroom. In the school bus, the sidelines of fields, in places of worship. It’s significant and consequential.

People often ask me what to teach girls or what they themselves can do to challenge sexism when they see it. “What can I do if I encounter sexism? It’s hard to say anything, especially at school.” In general, I’m loathe to take the approach that girls should be responsible for the world’s responses to them, but I say to them, practice these words, every day:

“Stop interrupting me,”

“I just said that,” and

“No explanation needed.”

It will do both boys and girls a world of good. And no small number of adults, as well.

Originally published in Role Reboot. Shared with permission of the author.

Ending Verbal Abuse and Bullying by Mary Scully

In learning to confront verbal abuse and bullying for the purpose of ending it, we have to confront our attitudes about ourselves which come from how we're socialized. Women are most often the targets of insult because we're taught to be gracious, even affable in the face of indignity. Many men also get caught if they don't fit the stock character assigned to men. Men are taught to ward off abuse by using the stone-face mask, the Clint Eastwood "make my day" persona. And it works. But the problem is that it requires cocooning socially, holding yourself back from interactions with others, not being able to participate fully in social exchanges. If you like other people, that doesn't work for you, but the affable person is the most likely to be targeted by bullies because of their openness.

The most important attitude to disabuse yourself of is that in some way you invite abuse, that you're doing something wrong, or have some quality that makes others want to crap on you. You feel you have a sign on your forehead that says "victim" or "kick me." You may feel that way because you're so often targeted and in fact, many (including parents) will say outright you have a magnetic attraction for abuse. That's nothing but baloney and horse manure. **You don't have to do a damn thing to provoke an abuser.** It's more likely your charms and virtues that provoke them. Is it possible that sometimes you did or said something awkward, even stupid? *So what?* Welcome to the human race. To err is human and all that jazz. It doesn't mean you deserve insults.

There are particular psychological qualities that provoke bullies—like being easy-going and open. Or simply for being female. But there are also physical features that can make you a target: being short, especially for a man; being heavysset; having a prominent nose or ears; balding at an early age; a high-pitched voice in a man; a girlish voice in a women; being gay, effeminate or tom-boyish; the use of heavy makeup or no makeup at all; being "classically" pretty or not; having darker skin; having facial blemishes; having wide hips, prominent or small breasts. It doesn't take much at all for the bully to locate what you may feel vulnerable about and zero in on it for ridicule.

The repertoire of abuse includes snide put-downs; insinuating remarks; gestures like eye-rolling or elbowing; snickering contemptuously. Sometimes the insults are masked and all you can discern is the contempt behind the comment. That's the sniping style of bullying. *The rule of thumb in discerning if it's abuse or not?* If it feels like it. Never underestimate the power of gut reactions. Could be your body talking to you.

So in thwarting abuse the first thing to dump is the notion that you (as many will tell you) are "your own worst enemy." Rubbish! Nothing you do—unless of course you're an abuser—justifies anyone taking liberties with you. You have a right to demand respect and not be treated like someone of no consequence. Of course when you do that you will be challenging the rules of social power in a society based on misogyny and inequality. Well screw those rules. They've no right to preempt your dignity and self-respect or to deprive you of peace of mind for being a gracious loving person.

For a long while assertive training has been in vogue but as many have found out in employing it, it rolls like water off a duck's ass to many abusers because it depends on their good-will or belief they are reasonable—which they most often are not. And it requires pedagogical homilies explaining to them what's wrong with insulting you. **Leave their moral education to others.** Your sole commitment is the pedagogy that comes with kicking ass, with aggression training—to teach them in no uncertain terms that you will not stand for insults. Period.

Once again, attitude is everything in aggression training. With a commitment to yourself to live with dignity, you stand tall (even if you're only 5 feet tall), hold your head high, and learn the techniques for parrying the abuse.

Let me tell you a personal story about how I learned these techniques. When I first worked in a predominately male factory, the 6'4" union steward would come to my enclosed work station every night at lunch break for the sole purpose of sexually harassing me. He was extremely aggressive and offensive and I responded assertively: "Jim, I don't talk to you that way and I don't want you to talk to me like that. Blah blah blah." He waited till my speech ended and then continued his sexual suggestions. Not knowing how to stop him, I approached a fellow worker in frustration. He said to me, "What he's doing to you is a sexual assault and you need to respond to it aggressively. The next time he starts, you say to him **"Screw pal!"** I'd never spoken to anyone like that and I said so. My coworker said "If you want to stop the harassment, that is what you need to learn. I would be willing to fight that battle for you but if you're going to win your place in this environment you will have to learn to fight these battles yourself."

So I went home and spent a weekend in front of a mirror practicing saying "Screw pal" so it didn't come out in a whimper or with an iota of self-doubt.

When I went back to work I waited for the union guy to show up and when he did I worked up all the energy I could muster to blurt out, "Screw pal." I thought he'd snicker at me and I would be the fool. Instead he looked shocked and turned around and walked out. A monster was born that day and I've never looked back. And I never allowed him again to even look my way.

In exercising my new-found powers, I've learned one doesn't have to swear. It's perhaps preferable, though not essential, if you don't. Always keep your dignity and be true to yourself if don't like to use harsh language. Don't be afraid to use it either. The point of practicing that "screw pal" scenario is only to cop the attitude behind it—the attitude that doesn't cower behind self-doubt but comes out swinging. It's the attitude that renders power, not the cursing.

Don't give explanations. Don't bother to tell someone why you're offended. And don't look for just the right words. Eloquence and long-winded speeches are not an advantage. Keep your language terse; in fact make it as short as possible. Don't be afraid to blunder or stumble on your words. Just say **"Stop."** **"What do you mean by that?"** **"Are you talking to me?"** **"Go away."** And

always accompany your words with the evil-eye. Don't smile to soften the blow or they'll take it as equivocation. Don't be afraid to go overboard or ballistic either—like saying “Go to hell,” or “Get lost bucko.” Don't worry about issuing empty threats. More than once, I've told someone I had eight brothers and if he didn't stop harassing me, they would break every bone in his body.

If some physical or emotional feature of yours is often targeted, develop a stock phrase for rebuttal. For example, I'm 5'2" and often was teased for being short—something that never occurred to me I should be self-conscious about. An over 6-foot coworker once said to me, “I know how you little women compensate for being so short; you get big mouths.” I retorted “How do you compensate for being so ugly?” He didn't speak to me for 6 months and when he did the first thing he said was “Do you really think I'm ugly?” “No,” I said, “in fact you're good-looking. You've just got a big mouth.” Find a phrase like that and keep it short and sweet. No explanations. If they make fun of your nose or your ears or your color or your height—whatever—nip it in the bud the first time. Try never to let them repeat ridicule a second time.

If you don't get it right the first time, keep practicing attitude in the mirror. Don't hate on yourself, don't think you're one of those who just can't defend yourself. Don't ever sell yourself short or underestimate your indignation when it comes to bullying. It's all about attitude and a commitment to yourself that you will live in dignity, with the respect you're due.

The purpose of all this is not some quid pro quo of abuse. *Who the hell wants to spend their lives fighting or parrying off insults?* The sole purpose is to let abusers know you will not be hospitable, that you will make it difficult for them to humiliate you or any others. When you're old and gray what will still eat at you are the moments you let others run you around the block because you didn't know how to stop it. Humiliation takes a long time to heal because you internalize it and begin to believe that somehow you are responsible when someone treats you like crap. To speak coarsely: *screw that notion.*

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The Twelve Steps From a Woman's Perspective

by Patricia Lynn Reilly

Step 1: Caught in the swirl of my habits of behavior, I've lost touch with myself and my life has become unmanageable. I reach out for support. This is a brave action on my own behalf.

Step 2: I have come to believe in the deep wisdom of my own inner life. I stop flailing and am restored to the sanity of a loving and respectful relationship with myself.

Step 3: I turn my current situation over to the deep wisdom that flows in and through my life. One self-caring step at a time, I unravel my harmful habits of behavior and the thoughts that hold them in place.

Step 4: Turning a merciful eye toward myself, I inventory both my life-affirming and ineffective habits of behaviors, and identify the habits of thought that inspire them.

Step 5: In the company of trustworthy allies, I celebrate my life-affirming behaviors, accept responsibility for my ineffective behaviors, and make a commitment to my transformation.

Step 6: I am entirely ready to deepen my inner well-being by relinquishing negative habits of behavior and cultivating new thoughts to inspire healthier behaviors and outcomes.

Step 7: My life journey is orchestrated by my own inner wisdom. In the fullness of time, I am transformed at a deeper level of my being. I actively participate in this process.

Step 8: Certain that I love myself, I welcome clarity in my relationships. I acknowledge those who were hurt by my ineffective habits of behavior.

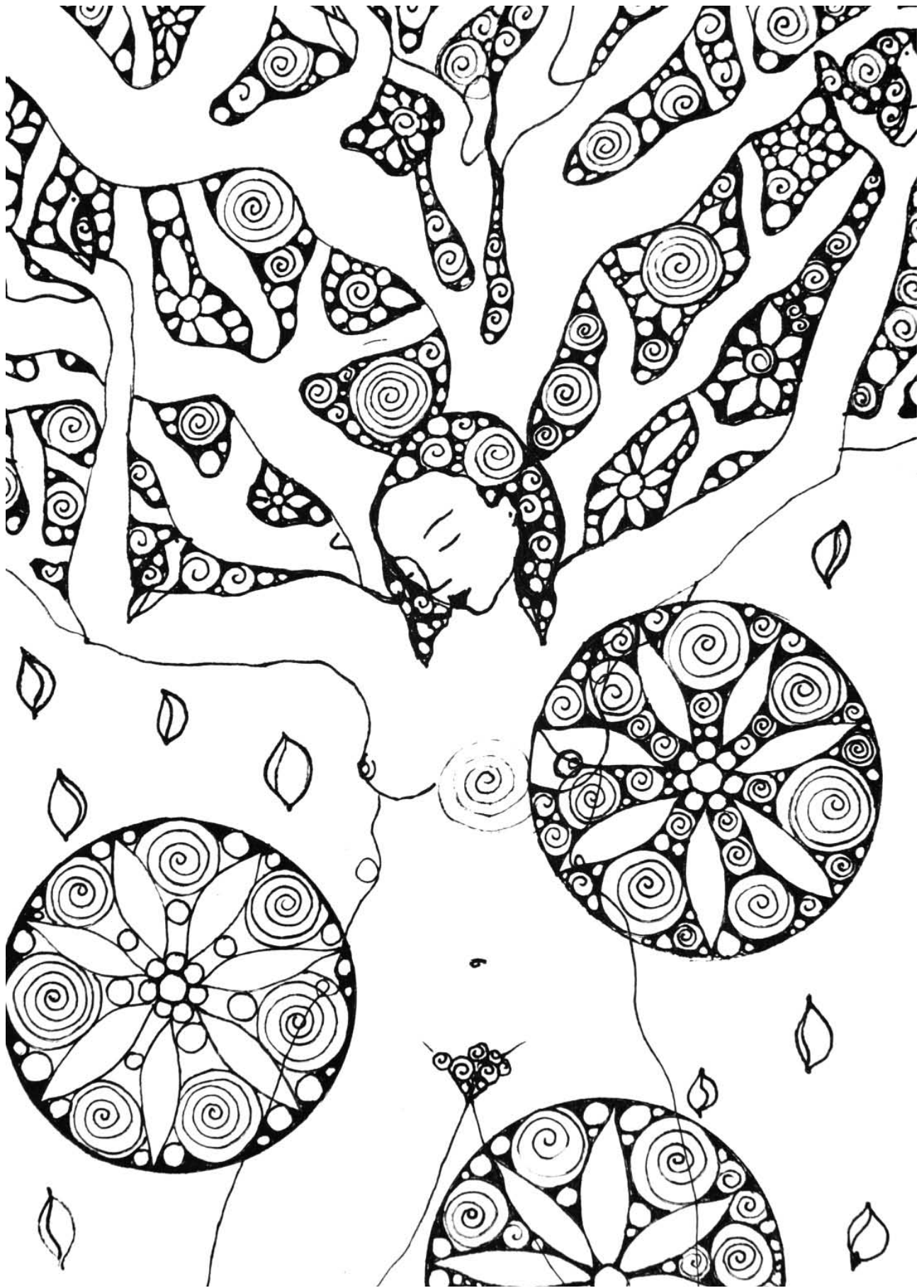
Step 9: Having forgiven myself, I take active responsibility by making amends to those I harmed except when to do so would further injure them or others.

Step 10: Choosing to be present in my own life, I acknowledge the gifts and challenges of the day, celebrate my life-affirming behaviors, and take responsibility for my ineffective ones.

Step 11: Through mindful reflection, I place myself in the stream of wisdom flowing through my life. I make conscious contact with my truest self and clearest thought.

Step 12: Having had an awakening as a result of these Steps, I practice these principles in all my affairs by living in harmony with my deepest wisdom, truest self, and clearest thought.

Excerpted from *A Deeper Wisdom: The 12 Steps from a Woman's Perspective*. Shared with permission of the author.



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Love,
Arna



“Goddess Creating the Universe”



Thank you so much for taking this journey with us!

If you enjoyed the experience, please consider writing a brief review on Amazon and/or Goodreads!

Be sure to join the New Love Group on the Girl God Books Facebook Page!

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new love - a reprogramming toolbox

New Love is a powerful combination of emotional and spiritual techniques for women who wish to move away from patriarchal thought.

This reprogramming workbook combines the wisdom of intentional visual art and inspiring words. New Love includes a mixture of compelling thoughts and suggestions for each day, along with a “toolbox” to help transform the parts of your life you want to heal.

New Love is perfect for women who feel a little stuck, uncertain, or in need of focus and support. This book will work effectively as an individual handbook or can be used in supported women's circles.



About Trista

Trista Hendren founded Girl God Books in 2011 to support a necessary unraveling of the patriarchal world view of divinity. Her first book—*The Girl God, a children's picture book*—was a response to her own daughter's inability to see herself reflected in God. Since then, she has published more than 40 books by a dozen women from across the globe with help from her husband, Anders; mother, Pat; and son, Joey. Originally from Portland, Oregon, she now lives in Bergen, Norway.

About Arna

Arna Baartz is an artist, writer, educator and poet. Her arts practice ranges in extremes from the creation of small and playful to large and serious. Most of Arna's work is an extension of her philosophical nature, bringing her gifts of personal insight and joy. Arna has won and been selected for many art awards including those of prestige and has had both art and words published extensively around the globe. Her first and favourite claim to fame however, was being held upside down and used as a paintbrush by Australian Artist, John Olsen. This fun was had at a workshop in St. John's Cathedral, Brisbane, 1973. Her writing and poetry has also been published throughout the world in a plethora of books, magazines and online forums. Arna is delighted to have the opportunity to create in this lifetime. Her art, words and poetry are transcendental to a degree and offer the intention of unconditional love and hopefully a little dab of inspiration to anyone else on a similar journey. You can find her work at arnabaartz.com.au



thegirlgod.com

