



The Feminine Fire

The divine creative force you hold within

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What is the Divine Feminine anyway?

In the last newsletter, I said that this issue would look at the idea of Shakti, Sophia, and Shekinah as the creative force within each one of us. In the meantime, however, I discovered I needed to tackle another idea first!

This realization occurred when my sister-in-law – a wonderful, spiritually focused woman – read the last *Feminine Fire* newsletter and surprised me by saying that when I talked about Shakti or Sophia or Shekinah, she got the image of a “goddess” in her mind. She *knew*, she said, that I wasn’t talking about a goddess, but the words triggered a picture of one and she had trouble getting it out of her mind.

Many people, of course, like to think of the Divine as a goddess or as the Great Goddess. And this is fine. Worship and love of the Great Goddess is as true a spiritual path as any other.

The Divine – Beyond Masculine and Feminine

That, however, is not what I mean when I refer to Shakti, Sophia, or Shekinah. But if the divine feminine, in this sense, is not a goddess or *the* goddess, what is it? And what does the answer to this question mean - in very practical terms - to our spiritual and creative growth? Before answering this, I need to say first that I believe the Divine – call this God, the Absolute, the Great Cosmic Spirit, or whatever name you want – is beyond gender. But I also believe this universal spirit *manifests* in our lives as the divine masculine and the divine feminine – especially in terms of the “divine within”.

In other words, God is neither masculine nor feminine – but the way we *know* the Divine is. Indeed, as the Taoists pointed out long ago, life as we know it is based on this masculine/feminine, yin/yang of being. Polarity is everywhere. (Even the Big Bang theory of universe says that the two very first bits of creation were positive and negative charges!)

In short, then, I think of the divine feminine as half of the ultimate divine Whole – a half that is

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neither less nor more important than the divine masculine. That said, I have to add that when it comes to creativity and creative expression the divine feminine has a very significant and in some ways more fundamental role.¹

The Creative Force Within

In fact, the divine feminine – in the form of Shakti, Sophia, and Shekinah – is the *source* of creative expression and creative inspiration. Now, this is a bold statement. (I can almost hear everyone from artists who are atheists to fundamentalists of all religions shouting it down!) And while I can’t provide all the evidence for it here that I do in my forthcoming book *The Divine Feminine Fire*, I can at least share a little information with you about Shakti that supports this idea and shows how we can use this information for creativity and spiritual growth.²

In the branch of Hinduism that brings us both hatha yoga and Tantra, Shakti is seen as the active, dynamic principle of the universe. Her counterpart, Shiva, represents the principle of “thought” or “consciousness”. Shiva, the polar opposite of Shakti, is completely still and unmoving. Shakti is power, force, energy, action. In this guise she is not only the force that creates our world and the whole cosmos, she is the force that propels

¹ More in future issues on the divine masculine’s role.

² It’s impossible to give an accurate description of Shakti in this space!

evolution – both the world’s evolution and our individual evolution.

In the ancient yogic texts, the name she is given when she is busy propelling each of us along our evolutionary spiritual paths is kundalini-shakti or simply kundalini. In this individualized, *embodied* form she operates as the life-force in each one of us. She can, however, spring into a more active or “intensified” mode. And when she does, she is – according to these texts – the force that brings about the state known as Enlightenment in the great spiritual teachers.

How We Can Use This

These texts also make the relationship between this kundalini-shakti and creative inspiration clear. They tell us, for instance, of yogis whose mouths are filled with words sweeter than honey and who have poetry dripping like ambrosia off their tongues.

In terms of what this means to our daily lives, the most important fact is the idea that this cosmic feminine force is *embodied* within each one of us. For this makes it possible for us to realize that this creative force is *accessible*! We are one with it. And in spite of the fact that we may be light years away from the Enlightenment she triggers in the spiritual masters, we can still tune into this great force within, we can focus on it, and – perhaps most important in terms of our creativity – we can begin to express it. There are many ways we can do this – two simple examples you can try are given in the “Creativity Exercises” on page four. Have fun. And may the force be with you. Wait. She already *is* with you!



Janine and “Sophia’s Dance”

Born on the island of Guadeloupe Janine Kinch’s paintings reflect the exuberance and sensations of the Caribbean that marked her early years. “Colour for me,” she says, “is a living language. My paintings are aimed at touching the senses and at evoking a spiritual reality beyond the visible world.”

TREASURE HUNT! Find the symbols. Roll your mouse over them and be surprised, delighted, and inspired!

News from the Muse

On Monday, March 3rd an extraordinary phenomenon occurred. Over 500,000 people sat down at their computers to take part in Oprah Winfrey’s ten-week, on-line “classroom” on Eckhart Tolle’s book *A New Earth*. One of the largest on-line events ever, within a week another one-and-a-half million individuals had joined in.

This has got to be one of the most hopeful signs I have ever seen! Two million people all willing to focus their energy on the theme’s of Tolle’s work – on “awakening”, on being in the now, and on transforming consciousness.

I find this so exciting because I believe no topic is more important to us right now than transformation of consciousness. Many spiritual people today believe we are in the midst of a critically important period of transformation. They also recognize that this shift in global consciousness can’t occur unless we are all transforming on an individual level too.

This individual transformation of consciousness is the underlying theme of my forthcoming book *The Divine Feminine Fire: Creativity and Your Yearning to Express Your Self*. One of the main difference’s between Tolle’s work and *The Divine Feminine Fire* is that it focuses on inspired creativity and the role of self-expression in our individual transformation. It also focuses on answering a critical question: How is this great transformation of consciousness occurring in us?

On the opening night of the “classroom”, I was absolutely thrilled to see that even Oprah seemed to wondering about inspired creativity and looking for an answer to this same question. In fact, she even started the class by alluding to inspired creativity as the source of Tolle’s work and asking: “How did this come to be? How did this come through you? To you?”

Tolle replies simply that it came from the Stillness. While this is an answer that reflects a profound truth, it only answers the question “where”. The answer to *how* this is occurring – and why understanding it is so critically important – can be found in ancient texts on hatha yoga and Tantra. And the answer is Shakti, the force that propels the world’s evolution and, in the guise of kundalini-shakti, and our personal evolution – the gradual transformation of consciousness that leads to Oneness. (Although there’s no room to go into detail here, for more on this – and on parallels with Sophia and the Holy Spirit – click here to receive my article *Hildegard of Bingen: Yogini in Nun’s Clothing*.)

Women Inspiring...

Dorothy Walters

Dorothy Walters is an extraordinarily gifted San Francisco poet who recently celebrated her 80th birthday. Her life has been filled with acts of quiet courage that make her a truly inspiring woman. She began by taking a Ph.D. in English at a time when women were not encouraged to enter higher education. As a university professor in the 1970s she helped to found one of the first women's studies programs in the United States and co-edited one of the first anthologies of poetry written by women. Dorothy also took it upon herself to mentor women whose education had been interrupted – often by starting families – and who wanted to return to university. Today women's studies programs are so common, women's literature so widely praised, and mothers in classrooms so much the norm that it is hard for us to realize how revolutionary Dorothy's actions were at the time and how much opposition there was to them.

But Dorothy has never let a little opposition stop her. Realizing early on that she was a Lesbian, she had the courage to embrace this lifestyle long before it had gained any kind of acceptance. And then in 1981 (as if she hadn't dealt with enough challenges!) she experienced a major spontaneous awakening of kundalini-shakti. During the many years of transformation and spiritual unfolding that have followed, Dorothy has been led by the promptings of her inner guru rather than any external guide or teacher. She has written about this spiritual journey with exceptional candor and moving honesty in her remarkable books, *Unmasking the Rose, A Record of a Kundalini Initiation (Hampton Roads)* and *Marrow of Flame: Poems of the Spiritual Journey (Hohm Press)*. Dorothy now devotes much of her time to helping others undergoing spiritual transformation, with special attention to those experiencing awakening kundalini.

For Dorothy, the act of writing is itself a spiritual exercise. She says, "In my view, we are now undergoing planetary evolution of consciousness, a shift of indescribable importance which brings great hope into these most difficult times. Poetry can help achieve this remarkable transition."

Increasing the Creative Inspiration in Your Life

Dorothy gets inspiration from her inner spiritual experiences, from nature and music, and from reading the work of poets such as Rumi and Mary Oliver and the ancient spiritual texts, especially those of the Kashmiri Shaivite tradition. If you want to increase the creative inspiration in your life, she says, "Do whatever works best for you to awaken your creative impulse: meditation, movement, reflection, reading, going into nature, dancing, being with friends, whatever makes your feel alive, joyous, filled with energy. Or, if you are working with the shadow side, then honor your feelings of pain and grief fully in what you write. Capture the spirit of the moment in what you create, whether you are touching on your deepest levels or describing something smaller, closer to home. Write or create what your inner self needs to express at that time, whether of joy or pain or humor or reflection... Don't worry about recognition and rewards. Take risks. Be true to yourself and maintain your connection to source. Above all else, be authentic.

A Cloth of Fine Gold

*You may think
that first lit flame
was the ultimate blaze,
the holy fire revealed.*

*What do you know
of furnaces?*

*This is a sun that returns
again and again, refining, igniting,
pouring your spirit
through a cloth of delicate gold
until all dross is taken
and you are sweet as
clarified butter
in god's mouth.*

Order Dorothy's books and find more of her wisdom and poetry at:

kundalinisplendor.blogspot.com



Creativity Exercises

Inspiration – Just a breath away

This basic creative visualization exercise is repeated from last month because it provides a very practical example of how we can tune into the creative force within: One way that Shakti manifests is in the life force known as *prana* or, more specifically, *prana-shakti*. When we do *pranayama* (breathing exercises) in yoga we are drawing this force in.

You can use this exercise to tune into the inspiration within or find solutions to difficulties in your life. Before you begin, have at hand, pen, paper, art materials, etc. If you prefer to begin with your own meditation technique, skip to step three. (If you are new at this – don't worry if unwanted thoughts flit through your mind, just let them flit back out again and return your focus to your breathing.)

1. Find yourself a quiet place and sit comfortably with your spine straight. Bring your focus to your breath and breathe slowing and deeply.
2. Relax into the rhythm of your breath; and as you go deeper within become aware of the yearning that lies e\deep within.
3. Turn your focus to this yearning and breath in and out with it. Slowly allow it to expand. Sit with it, breathing in and out, and see it rise slowly up and transform into a radiant white light.
4. See this rich, thick light fill you as it rises up and surrounds your heart.
5. With each beat of your heart the light intensifies until, enriched by the love held here, it becomes golden.
6. See this golden light moving up and then down your arms, through your hands, and out your fingers.
7. Open your eyes slowly and begin to write, paint, or play your musical instrument as this golden light of inspiration flows.³

Tuning in to the Wisdom Within

One of the simplest ways to tune into the divine feminine is to use creative visualization to create an image of her that is one you can easily communicate with. (If

you have never done creative visualization before rest assured that not everyone “sees” – the images will usually come to you through whatever inner sense is used when you imagine or dream.)

To begin have a pen and paper ready and use the steps in exercise one to enter that deep, peaceful space where you are filled with light. Sit for a moment basking in this light.

1. Begin to visualize with your mind's eye an image of yourself (if you are a woman) at a great age – an age where you have lived and learned so much that you have become a manifestation of Sophia, the divine wisdom within. (If you are a man, allow an image of the divine feminine within to take form.)
2. When this image becomes clear, see yourself sitting across from her and focus on her intensely. You may ask her questions or just let her words of wisdom flow out to you.
3. When she has finished, bring your concentration back to the light that fills you and see it moving gently upwards and, as you have in earlier exercises, see it rising up, moving down your arms, and flowing out your hand to the pen and paper and begin to write.
4. Later you want to turn your notes into a poem, a painting, a song, or some other expression of the Wisdom that lives within you.

In the next newsletter :

- Explore exactly *how* the divine feminine is working in you!
- Get inspired by the story of Britta – expressing her experiences of the Holy Spirit in poetry and art at 92.
- Do a creativity exercise to help you appreciate just how far you've come!



³ One of the first people to use the idea of drawing the inner light out for creativity was [Judith Cornell](#).

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