

Contents

Foreword *by don Miguel Ruiz* / ix

Preface / xi

Introduction / xv

Explanation of Key Terms / xxiii

Lesson One / 1

Commit to You

Lesson Two / 13

Align with Life

Lesson Three / 27

Purify Your Vessel

Lesson Four / 45

Ground Your Being and Free Your Past

Lesson Five / 61

Energize Your Sexuality and Creativity

Lesson Six / 75

Claim Your Strength and Ignite Your Will

Lesson Seven / 89

Open Your Heart

Lesson Eight / 105

Speak Your Truth

Lesson Nine / 119

Embody Your Wisdom

Lesson Ten / 135

Choose Your Path

Epilogue / 151

Acknowledgments / 153

Further Reading / 157

Resources / 161

Foreword

In *Warrior Goddess Training*, HeatherAsh Amara shares her experience as a teacher, friend, and guide, helping a new generation of women enter their own journey of inner transformation.

This book combines the wisdom of many traditions into one beautiful path. Consistent throughout these teachings is the understanding that an idea means nothing without a corresponding step toward action; therefore, this book is full of exercises that are designed to put you in touch with your divine self.

As you will soon see, the path of the Warrior Goddess was forged in love.

HeatherAsh Amara came into my life over twenty years ago as a college student who had so many questions about everything; so many that she took on many teachers in many traditions, including myself, and began her trek toward understanding. At first she wanted to understand everything that existed outside of herself, but all of her teachers pointed inward. So when her resistance to this direction ended, her trek to outward understanding turned into a journey of self-understanding. The pages that follow are the result of that journey.

The path of the Warrior Goddess is described in ten lessons. The first three lessons will help you center yourself and assess where you are, the next six lessons will guide you through a

path of personal transformation, and the final lesson invites you to live your truth as a Warrior Goddess in your everyday life.

I am incredibly happy to see that the young girl who walked into my class over twenty years ago has not only become a radiant a woman, a teacher, an author, and a Warrior Goddess, but most importantly, she has become an expression of unconditional love.

With this great work of art, let the words and teachings of this artist guide you to your own divine self and the blossoming of unconditional love in your heart. This is the journey of love that is the Warrior Goddess path.

In the Toltec tradition, the last step before an apprentice becomes a master is when the student lets go of the teacher as a crutch for support and learns to walk with the strength of her own will. The traces of her teacher's lessons may remain with subsequent steps, but what shines through is the wisdom of her own experiences. HeatherAsh Amara was once my apprentice, and now she is my peer.

Thank you, HeatherAsh Amara, for birthing this wonderful book.

—don Miguel Ruiz,
author of *The Four Agreements*
and *The Mastery of Love*

Preface

I was called to work with women many years ago, when I took my first college class called Women and Society and began to explore Earth-based spirituality.

Earth-based spirituality is any religion or tradition that at its center honors the Earth, nature, and all manifestations of life. Practiced by people all over the world, from Native American tribes to African shamans to modern-day scientists, Earth-based spirituality views the Earth as the Mother, the one who gives us life and nourishment and brings insight and wisdom.

Connected to the cycles of the Earth and sun, these traditional teachings honor light and dark, beginnings and endings, male and female, birth and death. Everything is included; all is sacred. As I immersed myself in studying different traditions, I found a deep sense of home in European shamanism and its teachings on honoring Mother Earth. The archetypes of maiden, mother, and crone and the different aspects of the Goddess inspired me to begin to love myself as a woman, rather than trying to be more like the male God and people (mostly men) who were held up as role models and guides.

In time I found teachers to guide me, and I was “drafted” to teach by the sheer number of women who kept coming to me, asking to learn. As women, we crave a female reflection of the Divine, and a spirituality that empowers us to connect

to our natural gifts of intuition, healing, and building community. This has nothing to do with being better than men, or wanting to lead separate lives from our brothers, or being special because of our biology. It is about honoring all of life: female and male, human and animal, plant and mineral. And it is about the magic that happens when we gather to empower ourselves as women, and to honor and be inspired by all the manifestations of the goddess in each other.

This book was birthed out of a year-long program I created in 1997 called Thirteen Moons, named for the thirteen new moon cycles in a year. Thirteen Moons was first inspired by my first two female teachers, Vicki Noble and Cerridwen Fallingstar, whom I apprenticed with. During that time, I filled up on the nourishment of women gathering together to unconditionally support each other.

Through Vicki I learned about the ancestral wisdom of women's intuition, healing, and amazing strength; through Cerridwen I was opened to intimacy and vulnerability with my sisters, aligning with the cycles of the seasons, and the healing gift of ritual. Thirteen Moons was also nourished by a small circle of my heart sisters from college, the Women of Yes, that met every week.

The transformative heart of Thirteen Moons came through my long Toltec apprenticeship and teaching partnership with don Miguel Ruiz, author of *The Four Agreements*. The Toltec were a group of ancient people who chose to come together in South and Central Mexico over one thousand years ago. They considered themselves "artists of the spirit." As don Miguel writes: "Find yourself and express yourself in your own particular way. Express your love openly. Life is nothing but a dream, and if you create your life with love, your dream becomes a masterpiece of art."

After three years of ardent study, I was able to integrate the core teachings of European shamanism and Toltec wisdom into my everyday life. I found a powerful balance of the two with the Thirteen Moons program, and I began teaching women this blend of Toltec warrior philosophy and European goddess spirituality to empower them to create positive change in their own lives.

And wow, did it work. In the first year of the program I witnessed sixteen women blossom like wildflowers after the spring rains. Within a circle that said YES to personal truth and authenticity, each woman pushed through the weeds of self-doubt and claimed her path. From finishing old projects to starting new careers, from clearing stuck parental patterns to starting a family, from healing sexual trauma to reclaiming her passion for life, each woman thrived.

From this first circle Thirteen Moons grew into an apprenticeship circle for women around the world. Our global hub via the Web reaches across all borders to connect women in busy cities and isolated towns to a circle that blasts open the doors of possibility and self-love.

Warrior Goddess Training is the newest expression of the Thirteen Moons teachings, simmered over years of experience and distilled in ten potently simple lessons. May they nourish your heart and soul to blossom as the Warrior Goddess that you are.

While I am the mama that birthed the initial form of Thirteen Moons and now *Warrior Goddess Training*, the teachings are from our grandmothers, our grandmothers' grandmothers, passed down verbally, recreated and reinvented by modern grandmothers and mothers for all women. I especially honor Madre Sarita, don Miguel's mother, for the many ways she has guided me in bringing the Toltec lineage teachings forward, even after her death.

Introduction

*I don't want to get to the end of my life
and find that I lived just the length of it. I
want to have lived the width of it as well.*

—Diane Ackerman

You are whole. You are powerful. You are divine.

When you read these words do you feel the truth of them ringing in your bones?

Or do you instead feel the muffling weight of self-judgment and self-doubt? Perhaps you have a deep-seated belief that you are not good enough, and as a result you have tried the exhausting process of seeking value outside of yourself throughout your life.

If you don't love and honor yourself with every fiber of your being, if you struggle with owning your power and passion, if you could use more joyful play and simple presence in your life, then it is time for an inner revolution. It is time to claim your Warrior Goddess energy.

As women, we are trained to seek our wholeness and value and to find love through others. Fifty years ago, we were told a husband and children would complete us—that was about our only option. Today, what makes us worthy might be a beloved, our career, or even following a chosen spiritual path. We rarely see ourselves as perfect just the way we are. We often base our

worth on who loves or doesn't love us, if we need to lose that extra five or fifty pounds, and if we can juggle three tasks simultaneously while keeping a smile on our face.

The new women's revolution is an evolution from being other-focused to inner-focused. When our attention is trapped by fearful shoulds, what ifs, and don'ts, we scatter our energy and struggle with knowing what is authentic for us. When we bring our attention back to discovering who we are on the inside—not who we wish we were or who we think we should be—we begin a sacred path of transformation toward our innate, authentic, embodied power.

This is the path of the Warrior Goddess.

Warrior energy is a combination of focus, dedication, purpose, and determination. Consciously bringing these things together gives us our power. When we harness our warrior energy we are confident, clear, and bring 100 percent of ourselves to each action.

Goddess energy is our creative flow: unconditional love, pleasure, passion, and wisdom. When we claim our goddess energy we live in joyful self-acceptance and self-respect, and we listen to our sacred inner voice.

So let's start at the beginning.

The irony is that the first step on this path is not about gaining some insight or attaining a new state of being. Rather, it requires you to relinquish some things that you have been holding on to for a long, long time. On a path of transformation, you must be willing to give up your false beliefs and self-limiting stories.

A story is something we tell ourselves and others to explain why we are the way we are. Our stories may be of inspiration, or woe and blame. Our stories might fill us with energy and enthusiasm, or make us feel helpless and victimized or angry

and defensive. The stories we tell that limit our expression and joy are filled with false beliefs and attachments that really do not serve us. The question to ask is this: Is my story causing internal and external drama, or is it bringing me peace and fulfillment?

Those inner voices that say “I am not smart enough,” “I am not pretty enough,” or “I am not outgoing enough” are the false ideas that are the bedrock for the limiting belief structure we hold. Many of us have been telling ourselves these stories for so long we no longer recognize them as stories; we accept them as facts. But nothing could be further from the truth!

If you are ready to stop clinging to your limitations, the first step is to let go of the belief that you are a victim or a martyr. If you view yourself as powerless and helpless, or believe you need to be something you are not to be accepted, these stories will rule your life and define your reality.

It is time to remove any mask or protective shell you are hiding behind to fully experience the world. You must be willing to openhandedly release the past and surrender up the future. Most importantly, *you must be willing to give up who you think you should be in favor of who you are.*

Let’s get you ready to be your beautiful, powerful self.

In the mythic story of the hero, a single man ventures out to find his fortune, combat evil, save a woman or two, and demonstrate his strength against all obstacles.

In the modern story of the heroine Warrior Goddess, a single woman ventures out to find herself, combat fear and doubt, reclaim her power and vibrancy, and demonstrate her strength of compassion and fierce love.

As twenty-first-century heroines, we have a cornucopia of obstacles to overcome and lots of demons to slay on our journey to release our true self. We live in a time when stress, self-loathing, self-abuse, and addiction are normal, and where

sexual, emotional, and physical abuse are all too prevalent. And while we are blessed that our grandmothers and mothers laid a pathway for women's liberation and personal freedom in the outside world by fighting for things like the right to vote, equal treatment at the workplace, and so on, many of us are still chained by trying to live up to standards, beliefs, and ideals that are not our own.

Warrior Goddess Training is about finding out who you really are and what you really want, and, armed with that knowledge, creating an external reality that authentically matches who you are on the inside.

As authors Carrie McCarthy and Danielle LaPorte write in their book, *Style Statements*, life starts to get problematically dull when we fail to look within, when we lose touch with our own sense of what feels right or wrong. When we feed ourselves a diet of ideas about success and happiness that other people have cooked up, then our genuine character begins to starve and we make weak choices about what we bring into our lives and put out into the world.

The shift from being other-focused to being inner-focused takes courage. It is easier to follow what we know, to stay safe in the familiar. But on the path of the Warrior Goddess, there is no one-size-fits-all template, no mold to follow, no get-out-of-jail-free card, no white knight to save you, and no realized master or loving guru or powerful shaman who will instantly awaken you to who you really are. This is one journey you will make alone, but, surrounded by supportive sisters and brothers, you will turn to face inward, clearing out any debris, noise, stagnation, or dullness to reveal the radiant jewel of you.

The good news is that it's never too late to become the real you. That's what the planet needs at this moment: you, 100 percent.

All around the world, women are stepping forward to invite back their authentic, creative, wonderfully unique selves. We are shedding the old, faded clothes of war, domination, competition, jealousy, and repression. We are rising like the sun, shining big and bright as the full moon. We are saying yes to the power of fierce love, compassion, constant authenticity, and vulnerability. These are the attributes of our warrior focus and our goddess joy.

Reclaiming this feminine authenticity doesn't make us more evolved than men, or better than our sisters who are living from their domestication rather than their essence. As humans we are all equal, all precious.

We are all whole. Sometimes we just get so lost in the fog of our own self-limiting beliefs that we need a guide to lead us back to the light of unconditional self-love and self-acceptance. This book is just such a guide.

Returning to the Circle

For thousands of years, in tribes and villages around the world women have come together in circles to share, to teach, to listen, to learn. The pulse of these women still beats within us. Their wisdom flows through time, whispering to us the song of female connection and beauty. We only need to stop long enough and put our ear to our heart to hear the call.

One beautiful example of women coming together for healing and learning was the moon lodge. As Native American clan mother Spider writes in her book, *Songs of Bleeding*: When women started to bleed, they left their homes and families to go to the sacred introspective space of the Bleeding Lodge. The Lodge was honored and respected by the entire community, for the dreams and visions of the bleeding women brought vital

survival information such as planting and healing knowledge and guidance on community relations. When there were questions that needed to be answered, the women would go to the Lodge and ask the Ancestors.

It was here, in retreat from daily life, that the wisdom of women was passed down and new insights and visions were shared for the benefit of the entire community. While many of these ancient ancestral teachings have been lost, they live within us still.

I see the wisdom of our grandmothers as a seed we each inherit at birth, patiently waiting to be unearthed and opened. This is our heritage, a coming home to ourselves and our circle.

As Starhawk, author of *The Spiral Dance* and one of the main inspirations behind the Goddess movement, writes,

We are all longing to go home to some place we have never been—a place half-remembered and half-envisioned we can only catch glimpses of from time to time. Community. Somewhere, there are people to whom we can speak with passion without having the words catch in our throats. Somewhere a circle of hands will open to receive us, eyes will light up as we enter, voices will celebrate with us whenever we come into our own power. Community means strength that joins our strength to do the work that needs to be done. Arms to hold us when we falter. A circle of healing. A circle of friends. Someplace where we can be free.

This book represents a sacred gathering of women healing, laughing, and growing. Within these pages you will discover the lessons of the Warrior Goddess. Each chapter is a pathway of discovery, awakening, and reconnection to your female roots

and community. Each word invites you to become the woman you are meant to be.

The first three Warrior Goddess lessons are foundational, designed to help you commit, align, and purify your being. The next six lessons are transformational, a guided journey to clean and vitalize the main aspects of yourself. The final lesson is inspirational, encouraging you to bring your light more fully into the world.

Each lesson is designed to help you shed the dull skin of old patterns and habits and emerge as the Warrior Goddess who is waiting within. Each lesson also offers hands-on practice you can sink your teeth into to continue the transformation in your inner and outer worlds. Many chapters begin with a personal story about the places I've struggled and the insights I've gained, the spectacular stumbles and the picking myself up and moving on. I do not pretend to be enlightened, spiritually advanced, or complete in my learning. I consider myself a determined Warrior and a sassy Goddess, a fabulous work in progress. I'm a woman, like you, learning, growing, laughing, and crying. I make mistakes. I step on people's toes. I get caught in fear and self-doubt. I still take things personally. Sometimes I feel invincible, sometimes I feel fragile and vulnerable. I honor and cherish all these parts of myself—even the ones I don't like so much. I hope that by the end of this book, you will also love your mistakes, laugh at your fears, have faith in yourself, and know the rich support of your sisters.

For additional support, at the end of the book you'll find a Further Reading section which lists supplemental books you can consult as you're working your way through each lesson. I also encourage you to connect with other Warrior Goddesses on your journey, so the Resources section lists all the places you can go on the Web to find other *Warrior Goddess Training*

readers around the world, plus additional resources for each Warrior Goddess lesson.

I'm excited and honored to be on this journey with you, a journey of claiming our fierce warrior self and embracing our divine feminine goddess greatness. May you open this door to yourself with the delight of a child unwrapping the gift they wanted most. The love, faith, and integrity you have been seeking await you. Let's begin by taking a moment to connect to all women around the world. Tap into the love of our female ancestors. Breathing in, draw in the strength and wisdom of the abundance of Warrior Goddess kick-ass females throughout the ages. Breathing out, release old ways of being to make space for your intuition, insight, and loving fierceness to emerge.

And now make a commitment to be fully, 100 percent YOU.

You are whole. You are valued. You are loved.

I see your wholeness.

I know your value.

I love you, just the way you are.

Welcome to the path of the Warrior Goddess.

Explanation of Key Terms

Before we begin this journey together. I want to explain some key terms I will use throughout this book to make sure we're all on the same page.

Agreements—Anytime we say yes to a belief or way of being, even if we are doing so unconsciously, we are making an agreement. Agreements can serve us, like when we make an agreement to stop eating food our body doesn't like, or they can hurt us, like when we accept other people's erroneous opinions as fact (racism and sexism are easy examples of this). Agreements can also be made consciously or unconsciously. A conscious agreement might be a contract you sign, a promise you make, or a goal you set. An unconscious agreement might be never singing or dancing because your mom or dad never sang or danced. When we are conscious of our agreements we can make better choices about which ones serve us and which ones we want to release.

Attachment—Any time we have an expectation or desire for how people, things, or events should be, we have an attachment. When we are highly attached we are grasping on to something outside of ourselves to feel safe. The stronger the expectation, the deeper the attachment, and the more we suffer when it is not met or when it goes away. As humans

we naturally attach to things that we love: other people, our houses, our pets. We also attach to things to define our self-worth: our youth, our job, our intelligence. As we find more stability and peace within, our external attachments start to fall away, and we are filled with more unconditional love and acceptance than fear, even when change happens.

Domestication—In the context of this book, domestication expresses the Toltec idea of how we are conditioned by the society in which we live. It's how we are taught to behave or to fit in, usually by the reward of acceptance or the punishment of withheld love. While domestication is important to pass on the framework and rules of the society we are born into, it often creates an internal split between who we are and who we are told we should be. When we choose to be what others want us to be, we end up being dissatisfied with our life, because we are not living from our authenticity, but from our domestication.

Earth Goddess Spirituality—Religion offers a scripture and a structure, a place of refuge in the form of a building and a community where we come together to celebrate the teachings of a prophet or culture. Spirituality is a conscious personal connection to the Divine, as varied as each individual. Earth spirituality treats the Earth, the elements (such as air, fire, water, earth) and the cycles of life as sacred and views God not as an outside being, but as the creative force that is immanent within all things. Goddess spirituality praises and takes inspiration from the reflection of the feminine divine, which is sometimes manifest in an all-compassionate figure, such as Kuan Yin from China, Mother Mary from Europe, and the Virgin of Guadalupe from Mexico, and is sometimes portrayed as a ferocious destroyer of illusion, such as Kali from India or Hecate from Europe.

Most Goddess traditions from around the world do not exclude the masculine, but see the divine principle as the Mother who unconditionally loves all her children, male and female. Riane Eisler, author of *The Chalice and the Blade*, sums this up well:

Data from Catal Huyuk and other Neolithic sites also indicate that in these societies, where women were priestesses and craftspeople, the female was not subordinate to the male. Although the sacred union of female and male was an important religious mystery, the powers that create and govern the universe were generally depicted as a goddess rather than a god.

European Shamanism—Pre-Christian, Earth-based spirituality flourished in what is now the British Isles and the continent of Europe. Shamanism is a global phenomenon that predates all major religions around the world, and it is a practice of direct revelation and healing through journeying and communing with nature. Sandra Ingerman, author of many books, including *Soul Retrieval: Mending the Fragmented Self* and *Yearning for the Wind: Celtic Reflections on Nature and the Soul*, writes:

Shamanism teaches us that everything that exists is alive and has a spirit. Shamans speak of a web of life that connects all of life and the spirit that lives in all things. Everything on Earth is interconnected and any belief that we are separate from other life forms including the Earth, stars, wind, etc. is

purely an illusion. And it is the shaman's role in the community to keep harmony and balance between humankind and the forces of nature.

European shamanism honors the four elements of air, fire, water, and earth; the cycles of the seasons and life; and in some traditions the triple Goddess: maiden, mother, and crone.

Toltec people and Toltec philosophy—The Toltec were an ancient group of indigenous people who came together over one thousand years ago in south and central Mexico to study perception. They are the builders of the pyramids in Teotihuacán, Mexico. After the Spanish conquest of Mexico, the Toltec teachings continued to be shared in secret, often passed down through families. The first Toltec teachings to reappear to a large audience were the teachings of Don Juan, through anthropologist Carlos Castaneda. Castaneda's many books, including *Journey to Ixtlan* and *Tales of Power*, inspired thousands of people to begin to incorporate Toltec wisdom into their lives. Author and teacher don Miguel Ruiz brought the wisdom of the Toltec to an even wider audience with his *New York Times* best-selling books *The Four Agreements* and *The Mastery of Love*. In the latter book, Ruiz writes, Toltec knowledge arises from the same essential unity of truth as all the sacred esoteric traditions found around the world. Though it is not a religion, it honors all the spiritual masters who have taught on the Earth. While it does embrace spirit, it is most accurately described as a way of life, distinguished by the ready accessibility of happiness and love. The word *Toltec* means “artist of the spirit.”