

The Feminine Fire

The divine creative force you hold within

Volume 3, Issue 2 – Summer/Fall 2010

Spread the Love! It Works!

Recently I saw a newspaper article that made a big impact on me. I wrote a blog about it and expected to forget about the topic, but I haven't. The original newspaper piece was about an extensive scientific study that has determined that emotions are just as "contagious" as germs and viruses are! The study tracked how people's moods were affected by the emotional states of people around them and concluded that happiness and sadness were definitely "catching." I loved this study because it can be seen as evidence for both how interconnected we all are and how powerful our thoughts are. (Although, admittedly, unless the researchers had mind/body/spirit leanings they probably wouldn't interpret the findings this way!)

But what the study really made me think about was the amount of fear and despair being generated by the many predictions – from Nostradamus to the Mayan Calendar – that the Earth is destined to go through a cataclysmic period of change. Gopi Krishna was another visionary who wrote about this. But he also made comments that indicated the severity of the changes and their effect could be mitigated by a spread of the divine feminine cosmic force he called Shakti. When he talked about this, or I read about it in his writings, I always visualized this as a wave of radiant white light and love that would wash away the cloud of darkness I could "see" surrounding the Earth.

This mental image has stayed with me, and virtually every time I get emotionally wrapped up in a discussion about how bleak things are, I have a sneaking sensation that I'm doing something that isn't quite right – that I am somehow contributing to the darkness rather than the light. The research just done on the spread of emotions certainly adds some credence to this feeling.

As I mentioned in my blog, this doesn't mean we should hesitate to discuss the world's serious problems or spread the kind of distressing information that spurs people to action – the way the wonderful

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organization Avaaz does. But I think it does mean we need to spend less time focusing on how bad things are and how horrible they are likely to get. This is especially true of the almost gleeful way some people recite present-day disasters as "proof" that Nostradamus and Edgar Cayce type predictions are coming true. (As an aside, I have to say that for the life of me I can't figure out why this seems to make some people so cheerful!!)

On the positive side, of course, this scientific study can be seen as evidence of what those of us in the mind/body/spirit movement have long believed – that we can spread positive emotions just by being filled with them ourselves. This thought in itself fills me with happiness and hope -- a joyous, buoyant sense that the spiritual awareness and concern for Mother Earth that we see growing all around us is a force that can balance out the darkness. And absolutely nothing has made me more aware of this spread of love and light than the story of **The Council of the Thirteen Indigenous Grandmothers**. For more about these amazing women and Jeneane "Jyoti" Pravatt's role in the somewhat miraculous formation of this council, check out Jyoti's story in this month's *Inspiring Woman* feature. She and the Grandmothers are all examples of how truly inspiring woman can indeed mover mountains! And note that the Grandmothers are appearing **Omega Institute** in Rhinebeck, New York, October 10-15 th this fall.

News from the Muse

A lot has been happening on *The Divine Feminine Fire* front. Although I already sent out an email on this, I just have to repeat the fact that it was #1 on the amazon.ca bestseller list this summer in the Spirituality/Feminist and the Spirituality/Goddess categories. It has also been doing well in those categories on amazon.com. And over the summer it was consistently in the top ten in the Goddess e-books category. (I have to say I love this! Goddess devotees with Kindles and Ipads! Isn't that a wonderful image? Shakti goes techno!!)

Some great word of mouth and some really kind reviews and interviews have helped this happen. A great boost was being able to read one of my blogs on Tapestry. It's on CBC Radio which – as you know if you're Canadian – goes across Canada and remains the most listened to station in the country. But being interviewed on web radio programs has also been great – especially because I have met such fascinating people and been exposed to some very interesting websites. There are so many wonderful women out there who are working to make the world a better place. These websites are worth checking out!

Tapestry – CBC Radio

Tapestry with Mary Hines – the September 12th show on **“Hope”**

Future Primitives

Podcast with **Joanna Harcourt**

Women's Radio

Podcast with **Sharon Riegie Maynard**

This interview will be posted starting October 20th. In the meantime you can check out **Sharon's site**

Explore Your Spirit

A blog interview with authors called Kala's Quick Fire with **Kala Ambrose**.

Kala also writes a column for **The Examiner** on spiritual and metaphysical issues.

Upcoming Workshops

Story Spiral

Creative Fire and the Divine Feminine

New York City
October 4th

Featuring **Kiana Love** and Teri Degler by webcam. For more info see the Facebook event page **“Creative Fire and the Divine Feminine”**.

About Face



A hands-on creativity workshop about you, about looking into your own eyes, and seeing the light within...

Sunday, October 24, 2010

9:30 to 4:30 pm

Toronto, Ontario

Information and Registration at **The Institute for Consciousness Research**

The Divine Feminine Fire

International Therapeutic Touch Post Conference all-day workshop:

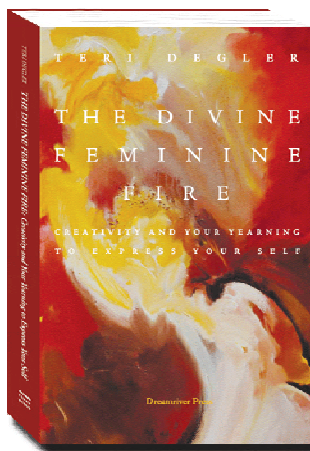
The creative and the healing power of the divine feminine.

November 8th

Sheraton Toronto Airport Hotel &
Conference Centre

Open to the public!! For a flyer email **Teri**

The Divine Feminine Fire: Creativity and Your Yearning to Express Your Self



Order your copy and save over 10%! Send \$16 US or \$20 CAN plus \$6.00 for shipping and handling to:

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Women Inspiring...



Jeneane "Jyoti" Prevatt

When I first laid on Jeneane Prevatt, PhD – or Jyoti as she's come to be known – it was 1990. She was standing on a registration table at a spiritual conference in California, trying to shout over the very loud rumblings of seven hundred extremely

disgruntled attendees –attempting to convince them that, since there was absolutely nothing anyone could do about the fact that the entire computer system holding all the registration information had failed, they should put their spiritual practice into practice and *just breathe!* People who have the honor knowing Jyoti today know that "Just breathe!" is a mantra she often repeats and one that has helped her overcome extraordinary odds and accomplish a number of seemingly impossible goals.

A major factor in accomplishing these goals has been her work on the Kundalini Research Network – not coincidentally one of the offshoots of that 1990 conference. KRN is an organization dedicated to uniting a wide array of spiritual groups and individuals who, regardless of other differences in doctrine or approach, share a common belief in the importance of discovering absolutely everything possible about the transformative spiritual energy known as kundalini in yoga and by names such as *jeng chi*, *dumo fire*, and *mana* in other spiritual traditions. For close to twenty years, Jyoti has served on the KRN Board of Directors with her husband Russ Park, PhD, a clinical psychologist who was one of the original founders. Their work on the Network has, among their other projects, led the formation of a worldwide spiritual community.

In 1990, however, Jyoti was just finishing up her doctorate in transpersonal psychology and was heavily involved in working with individuals who needed help integrating the profound spiritual experiences they were

having into their daily lives. But Jyoti wasn't just counseling these people, she was actively fighting for their rights, campaigning the medical and psychological communities to recognize the fact that profound spiritual experiences – although sometimes disconcerting and disruptive to everyday life – were part of a process of personal transformation and should not be mistaken for mental illness.

Jyoti's fighting spirit and compassion have deep roots. Her early work as a family counselor in Texas with troubled, neglected, and abused children and teens led her to become a passionate campaigner and lobbyist for improvements to the child welfare laws in that state.

As part of her on-going clinical training Jyoti spent two and a half years in the mid 1980s studying at the Jung Institute in Zurich, Switzerland. While there she experienced an awakening of kundalini. This profound spiritual experience began an intense fifteen year process of transformation and has led



Jyoti's husband, Russell Park

to life-time of deepening spiritual discovery. This journey has involved a spiritual pilgrimage to

Peru in 1988 and, a few

years later, a trip to India with Anandi Ma in order to study with the Sat guru Dhyanyogi Mahasudandas.

Part Cherokee, Jyoti has also been particularly interested in the teachings of indigenous peoples from different cultures. Over the years she and Russ have traveled the world meeting with indigenous healers and spiritual teachers, making connections with them, and discovering ways to combine these teachings with more traditional psychology. Out of this life-long search have come two spiritual programs (see: the website [Mothersgrace](#)) that they lead and that have, in turn, led to the growth of the of the international spiritual community they are involved in.

As impressive as these achievements are, what may turn out to be Jyoti's most extraordinary and far-reaching accomplishment is her pivotal role in the

establishment of The Council of Thirteen Indigenous Grandmothers – the group of indigenous elders from around the world that has been rapidly garnering international attention and gaining a worldwide following with its passionate message of the changes needed to save Mother Earth.

Unbeknownst to the individual grandmothers, the seeds of their coming together across the miles and the cultural



Grandmother Bernadette from Gabon, Africa

and language barriers, began in 1998 when Jyoti had a profoundly moving visionary experience. In the vision, a divine feminine form appeared and said, *“I’m going to hand you one of my most precious baskets, inside this basket are*

some of my most treasured jewels. These jewels

represent lines of prayer that go back to the origin of time. Do not mix them. Do not change them. Protect them, and keep them safe. Walk them through the doorway of the millennia, and hand them back to me. I have something we are going to do with them.”

In spite of being a deeply spiritual person, Jyoti has remained an extremely rational, down-to-earth “simple woman from Texas”, but this vision was so far beyond any type of ordinary meditative experience, she knew she couldn’t discount it and she certainly couldn’t ignore it. At the same time, however, it was extraordinarily humbling and her natural tendency was to downplay her role in receiving the vision – and what it might mean. What’s more, at first, she wasn’t exactly sure what it *did* mean. But soon she, along with other members of her spiritual community, began getting a sense that there was – somewhere in the universe – a circle of elder women that needed to come together. Then, a series of extraordinary synchronicities occurred that made the meaning clear.

The first was accompanying her adult children on a trip they were taking to Gabon, Africa. Jyoti had thought she was making the trip was for her children, but it turned out to have far-reaching consequences for her. Once there she met Bernadette Rebienot. A

master of the sacred Iboga Bwiti Rite and master of Women’s Initiations, Bernadette is known as a healer throughout Gabon and is so respected that she has even advised the president of Gabon. Just meeting this august personage was an experience for Jyoti, but when Bernadette told Jyoti that she’d had the same vision that Jyoti had had and that it was time to form this circle of indigenous wise women, it was an overwhelming experience for Jyoti.

The next stage of her journey made her realize that something truly extraordinary was afoot and that an awesome task lay ahead of her. This was a trip to the Amazon rain forest to visit with Maria Alice Campos-Freire and Clara Shinobu Iura, two indigenous healers, who Jyoti and Russ had known for some time. The two women were eager to hear what had transpired on the trip to Africa. Once they did, they were unequivocal: It was time to bring together this circle of indigenous wise women, and it was Jyoti’s job to do it. And do it now! Mother Earth was in desperate need of these women’s ancient wisdom.

Stunned, Jyoti says she not only had no idea how to begin, she thought, “Really, how am I, this simple woman from Texas, supposed to know which grandmothers the universe is calling.” Seeking answers, she spent hours in meditation until finally a vision of her own Grandmother came to her and



Grandmother Maria Alice from the rain forest in the Amazon

told her the “seed of it all” was about relations and that if she started there everything would unfold. This indicated to Jyoti that she should start with the strong relationships she had with the other members of her spiritual community. With their help, the names of sixteen indigenous wise women were

collected and sent letters. Exactly thirteen – the number that had always seemed to be ordained – responded. All were native women who were deeply tuned into their ancestral prophecies and who had had visions of their own about being part of a council that would be called together at a

critical time in history – a time when their ancient wisdom was needed for the survival of the next generations...

At their first meeting in New York state in October of 2004, the Grandmothers quickly agreed on a statement of purpose and formation of the Council that would be dedicated to bringing the ancient wisdom now so desperately needed to the world. October 13 2004 .

It was a momentous occasion for Jyoti and her associates. They had not only found the individual grandmothers and arranged for their meeting, they had raised the funds to bring them – along with their travelling companions and the necessary interpreters – together. Needless to say the costs – in terms of money, time, and effort – had been exceptionally high, and when one of the Grandmothers said she thought they needed to get together about twice a year and see each other's home countries, Jyoti's says, "I thought my heart was going to beat out of my chest!"

But with the power of prayer, perseverance, and Jyoti's continued admonition to "Just breathe!", she and her associates have managed to bring them together for face-to-face councils in New York, New Mexico, Mexico, and South Dakota. The Grandmothers have also travelled to Dharamsala, India to have an audience with the Dali Lama and to the Vatican where, unfortunately but perhaps not surprisingly, they were *not* given an audience with Pope Benedict – but did perform with great reverence and enthusiasm a ceremonial dance and ritual for world peace in Vatican Square.

Recently, an outstanding documentary on the Grandmothers' journey has been released. Entitled *For the Next Seven Generations*, it is directed by Carol Hart and narrated by Ashley Judd. The message in this film – and the very existence of the Grandmother's Council – is profoundly inspiring. The Grandmothers are creating a great wave of positive spiritual energy that is washing across the Earth and moving people to action. And they clearly have the potential for creating an even greater wave. But there is another message of inspiration and hope in all this that shouldn't be lost. Jyoti's experience and what she has been able to accomplish – with, she always hastens to add, the help of many others and

the power of prayer – stands as a potent reminder of what each one of us is capable of accomplishing.

International Council of Thirteen Indigenous Grandmothers

Mission Statement

We represent a global alliance of prayer, education and healing for our Mother Earth, all Her inhabitants, all the children, and for the next seven generations to come.

We are deeply concerned with the unprecedented destruction of our Mother Earth and the destruction of indigenous ways of life. We believe the teachings of our ancestors will light our way through an uncertain future.

We look to further our vision through the realization of projects that protect our diverse cultures: lands, medicines, language and ceremonial ways of prayer and through projects that educate and nurture our children.

Jyoti stresses the fact that she has not done this alone. Not only her husband Russ, but associates Ann Rosencranz, Darlene Hunter, Lynn Schauwecker, Debbie, Ogg, Roberta Sarnet, Carole Hart, Angelina Nasso, and others too numerous to mention who are part of the Center for Sacred Studies have made invaluable contributions.

For more information on Jyoti, Russ, and their work see [CSS Ministry of Prayer](#) and more on CSS's work with the [Grandmothers](#).

For more on the Grandmothers:

The Council of the Thirteen Indigenous Grandmothers

To order the film: [For the Next Seven Generations](#)

Photos of the Grandmothers were taken by [Marisol Villanueva](#). Check out her extraordinary photography!

Creativity Exercise

Procrastinating on Those Creative Projects? Try this...

Recently I was having an extremely difficult time beginning a writing project. The problem wasn't the flow of creative juices – I was coming up with extraordinarily creative ways to procrastinate! When I thought about all this procrastination and avoidance I couldn't quite figure it out. I love writing. I am frequently happier when I am writing than at any other time. Why was I avoiding it?

When I sat with this question for a while and let myself really experience what I was feeling, I realized it wasn't the writing I was avoiding but the "in-between time" – the time of transition when I would move from my outwardly-focused life activities to the quiet, inwardly-focused activity of writing.

I realized I *intensely* dislike those transition periods – and that this antipathy had been affecting me for years. When I thought about how many hundreds of hours being unconscious of this aversion had caused me to waste over the years it threw me for a loop!

Especially because I've known about how the difficulty transition times can cause for years. One of the first things I learned in the years I spent working with children with learning disabilities and ADD was how difficult those nebulous times when you move from one activity to another can be for kids. According to Mary Kurcinka author of *Raising Your Spirited Child*, the same can be true for the intense, independent, tenacious kids she calls "spirited."

Interestingly enough, these spirited kids are also highly creative. Knowing all this, you'd think I would have put two and two together and figured out that in-between times can be difficult for highly creative adults too.

So, next time you find yourself organizing your paper clips or jumping up from your desk or easel to run down and throw in a load of laundry, STOP!

Sit with the feeling. This is not easy! Trying to avoid this feeling was the whole point of running to the washing machine in the first place. However, when you do sit with it, I can guarantee you will make discoveries.... And one of them might be that the quickest – and possibly only – way to get past this

exceedingly uncomfortable zone, it to simply be with it...

1. The next time you find yourself avoiding your creative work, take a moment to sit in the spot where you usually do this work. Have the materials you use for your creative work nearby.
2. As always, create the mental space you need by filling yourself with white light. ([see exercise 1 in TFF Spring '08](#))
3. Focus for a moment on how safe and secure you are in this protective ball of light, and then slowly bring your consciousness to your body. Allow yourself to become increasingly aware of the sensations you are experiencing as you sit in this space.
4. If you are feeling totally comfortable reach for your creative materials – if you continue feeling comfortable, just get to work!
5. If, however, your edginess, your anxiety, your desire to do absolutely anything but your creative work increases, be still.
6. Sit with this sensation. Focus on it *in your body*. How does it feel? Where is it located? Does it stay put? Or move?
7. Simply be with this sensation. It may begin to dissipate. If not, bring your consciousness back to light and your breathing as in Step 2. Allow the light to flow upward, and outward.
8. Reach out to your materials and begin your creative work..

About Teri

Award-winning writer Teri Degler is the author/co-author of nine books including *The Fiery Muse: Creativity and the Spiritual Quest* (Random House of Canada). A long-time student of yoga philosophy and mystical experience, Teri is a widely experienced public speaker. She has taught workshops in the United States and Canada and has appeared on many national radio and television programs. For more information, or to book her for workshops, go to teridegler.com.

email: teridegler@sympatico.ca to sign up for the newsletter. Your email address will be protected!