

HER VOICE

by Mandy Adams

As a young woman I was fascinated to learn that there was a Goddess and that her myriad forms could reveal to me the many parts of myself. I was particularly struck during my travels to India where I observed that each Hindu Goddess had her own equal God as consort and her own accompanying power animal or 'transport'. I watched young couples offer flowers to yoni's and lingam's in temples there and saw a very different honouring of both the feminine and the masculine principles. It was a stark contrast to what I had been brought up with in my own British culture and it stirred something deep within me.

In my life I have experienced times of deep presence and during these cherished moments I have been aware of an inner voice inside of me. The voice is both gentle and powerfully loud - and now as I grow older it is becoming increasingly persistent. I have come to name this inner voice of guidance – Her voice – I hear it as the voice of the Earth / The Goddess because it is wise beyond my knowing. Often it reveals a certainty of my next steps, those that I need to contact and those that I need to spend time sharing with or learning from. At times it is accompanied by lucid dreams and visions of past, present and future colliding. At others it is friendly reminder to come back home to my own self-care and inner nourishment. Especially so when Life has propelled me far from my centre that there is a risk of separation or abandonment from Her guidance.

I have most felt Her presence when I am alone, in nature, am able to be still and especially during my menstruation. With others it is during group circle work where there has been enough trust, honesty and holding to each reveal our inner landscapes. In these settings I feel myself becoming whole again. I watch myself seeing each part of me come to life in the story of another. These parts I have often witnessed as the many faces of the Goddesses and Gods that I have come to know through out my life. I have a bone deep knowing that this is how we, as indigenous peoples, would have practiced to keep our tribes whole and to stay in balance with the Land that nourished us.

I am a woman whose family has lived in the same part of Cornwall, at the far South West of the British Isles, for as far back as records can

trace. My work has taken me to a deepening practice and understanding of the menstrual cycle. Here I can observe in my own body the cyclical rising and falling energy, which governs all living things on our beautiful Earth. This monthly rhythm that moves through us can be compared to the seasons of nature. Our menstruation likened to the drawing in and deep rest and visioning that Winter brings, our pre-ovulation likened to the emerging and newly sprouting energies of Spring, our ovulation akin to the high energy of Summer and full capacity to hold all that life brings and our pre-menstrum likened to the energy of Autumn's harvest, slowing down and preparing for Winter again.

These seasonal energies that govern us each month can also be seen as the life cycle of a woman. The Spring representing the Maiden or innocent, playful, loving and sexual part of ourselves. The Summer representing the Mother or nurturing, holding, warrior, destructive and creative part of ourselves. The Autumn representing the Marga or all seeing, high priestess, shamana, magically intuitive part of ourselves, and the Winter representing the Crone or wise elder, guide, companion and sovereign part of ourselves. All four quadrants revealing each aspect of woman as Goddess in her many forms.. Each week we encounter one of Her faces governing and speaking through us.

"Each Inner Season holds a key initiatory step, or stage, that works you month after month through your menstruating years in order to become and claim your full self" - Alexandra Pope and Sjanie Hugo Wurlitzer
"Wild Power – discover the magic of your menstrual cycle and awaken the feminine path to power" p.54

As I watch and consciously track which aspects of Her I repress or put away into shadow out of grief, anger or fear of claiming my full self. I seek the support of other women also watching their inner cycle and the outer expression of that cycle which they have created in their lives. I am convinced that as we each share how we hear Her voice throughout our monthly cycle, that we are restoring the way that indigenous peoples the world over would have met and practiced reverence for all Life.

As I close I am reminded of the young couples laying flowers on the yonis and lingams in the temples in India that I witnessed long ago. Women's bodies, and in particular menstruation, have long been shamed and held in taboo. Here in this shamefully despised, covered,

hidden and physically and emotionally painful place I have heard Her voice and in doing so I am finding the courage claim my own. May this commitment to restoring my cyclical nature flow over to my husband and in turn our three sons also.

Mandy Adams works as a Menstruality Educator offering Women's Workshops, Online Mentoring, Rites of Passage Ceremonies, and Pregnancy and Well Woman Yoga classes. She is also founder of Red Tent Cornwall and is an online mentor at Red School committed to supporting women awakening to their menstrual journey.

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<http://womensspiritualpoetry.weebly.com/goddess-book.html>

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