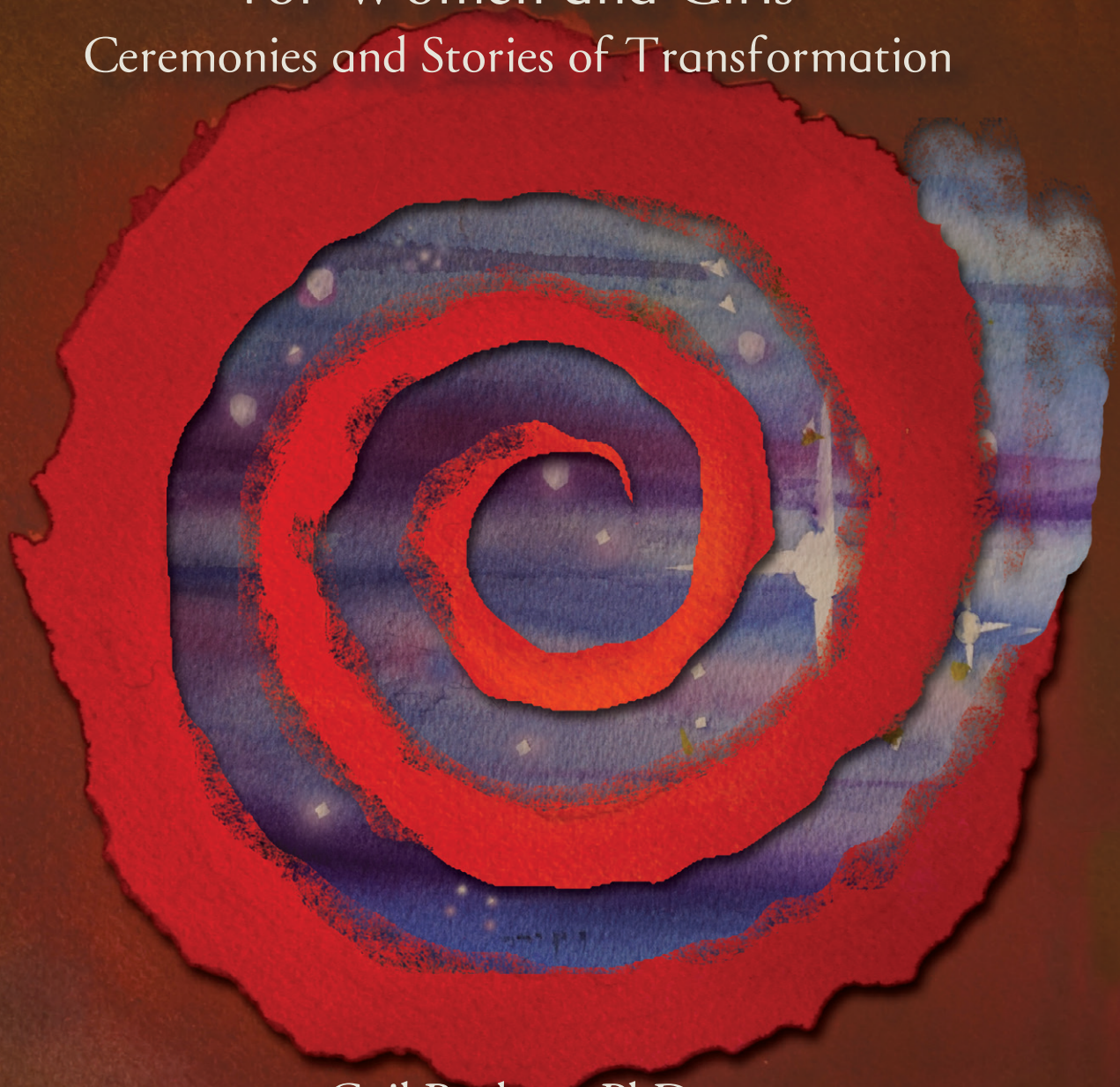


NINE PASSAGES

for Women and Girls

Ceremonies and Stories of Transformation



Gail Burkett, PhD

The Life Spiral



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Ceremonies and Stories of Transformation

Gail Burkett, PhD, author
Janis Monaco Clark, editor
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**Nine Passages for Women and Girls
Ceremonies and Stories of Transformation**

Children [Birth, Middle Child, First Blood]

Adolescents [First Blood, First Flight, Womanhood Bloom]

Adults [Womanhood Bloom, Deepening Womanhood, Elder Encore]

Elders [Elder Encore, Spiritual Elder, Death]

Categories: Rites of Passage, Women's Studies, Ritual, Mentoring, Developmental Psychology, Transformation, Women's Spirituality, Child Development, Anthropology

Dedication

Seriously, this book is dedicated to Mentors.

All Mentors.

Mentoring is the way forward and the change we need to see.

To help me understand something more about myself,

I am grateful to the Mentor Spirit I received from these glorious teachers:

Sharon Sweet, Rick Medrick, Susan Morgan, and Joe Meeker,

I thank you.

Honoring Recent Teachers

Clarissa Pinkola Estés said in her wonderful audio, *How to be an Elder*,

“We all know how to do Rites of Passage, it comes from inherent knowledge of ritual.”

In *The Water of Life: Initiation and the Tempering of the Soul*, Michael Meade said,

“Initiation involves an increase in knowledge, especially self-knowledge, as well as a loss of innocence.”

Expressed so well in this excerpt offered by **Bill Plotkin** in *Nature & the Human Soul: Cultivating Wholeness and Community in a Fragmented World* © 2008

“A rite of Passage, after all — even the most effective and brilliantly designed ceremony — rarely causes a shift from one distinct stage of life to the next. Much more often rites of Passage only confirm or celebrate a life transition that has already (although recently) been achieved by the individual, accomplished through years of steady developmental progress.

What happens between life Passages is considerably more important to the process of maturation than are the Passages themselves (and their associated rites). The primary work of maturing takes place gradually every day as we apply ourselves to the developmental tasks of our current life stage. Children and adolescents need help with these tasks — help from mature adults. And that’s precisely where we are failing our youth.”

Helen M. Luke found her way into my heart from one of the women journeying through *Soul Stories*. I am grateful for this gift from Laurie Evans and the gift of Helen Luke’s wisdom.

“Each of us, as we journey through life, has the opportunity to find and to give his or her unique gift. Whether this gift is quiet or small in the eyes of the world does not matter at all, not at all; it is through the finding and the giving that we may come to know the joy that lies at the center of both the dark times and the light.”

CONTENTS

INVITATION	10
BIRTH PASSAGE.....	17
The Intention: Creating and Assembling the Village.....	17
The Story: Grandmother's Glory	27
Gifts from the Elders: Birth Passage	40
NOTES for the Birth Passage.....	42
MIDDLE CHILD RITES.....	43
The Intention: Making All Rites Possible	43
A Story: Five Girls Welcome Middle Childhood	57
Gifts from the Elders: Middle Child Passage.....	96
NOTES for the Middle Child Passage	99
COMING OF AGE: FIRST BLOOD	100
The Intention: Gifting Women's Ways at Puberty.....	100
A Story: Millennial Girl's First Blood Ceremony.....	114
Gifts from the Elders: First Blood Passage	146
NOTES for First Blood Passage	148
FIRST FLIGHT	150
The Intention: Offering the Gift of Womanhood Training	150
The Story of Diverse Fledglings	186
Gifts from the Elders: First Flight.....	195
NOTES for the First Flight Passage	197

WOMANHOOD BLOOM.....	199
The Intention: Empowering Women for their Journey	199
An Honoring: Rachel's Story	246
Gifts from the Elders: Womanhood Bloom	256
NOTES for the Womanhood Bloom Passage	260
DEEPENING WOMANHOOD.....	262
The Intention: Becoming a Culture-Maker for the Village	262
Laura's Triple Initiation Story	302
Gifts from the Elders: Deepening Womanhood	320
NOTES for Deepening Womanhood	324
ELDER ENCORE.....	326
The Intention: Understanding Personal Wisdom Traditions	326
Now Her Story: Janis Monaco Clark	380
Gifts from the Elders: Elder Encore	394
NOTES for the Elder Encore.....	398
SPIRITUAL ELDER.....	401
The Intention: Enjoying the Longevity of the Life Spiral	401
Shirley Hardy's Story	429
Gifts from the Other Elders for the Spiritual Elder	437
NOTES for Spiritual Elder	439

DEATH PASSAGE.....	441
The Intention: Finding Consciousness in Life and in Death . . .	441
A Few Death Stories.	460
Gifts from the Other Elders Before Your Death	465
NOTES from the Death Passage	468
 EPILOG	 469
 AUTHOR’S BIOGRAPHY	 474
 EDITOR’S BIOGRAPHY	 476
 DESIGNER’S BIOGRAPHY	 477
 GRATITUDES.....	 478

Invitation

A little prayer: Please guide me most benevolent spirit world, angels and helper-beings. Please guide me animal, plant, bird, and fish kingdoms. Celebrating your wild heritage, I offer my gratitude for sightings, visitations, and the blessing of your company seen through tracks and signs. Please guide me friends, relations, and family, I owe my life and breath to you. I give thanks for all life not mentioned, seen and unseen, the standing and fallen trees, the mycelium running between as the virtual support systems of our Great Mother Earth. I feel the blessed support from our Moon and Sun.



Rites of Passage or Passage Rituals, what does this mean? A natural intersection where an internal biological clock meets a spiritual longing, this is often the case. After one round of seasons, everything feels different. With a language that is slowly returning to the culture, welcome each biological change and make a ceremony that marks your maturity; release old patterns of behavior so that new ones may find room to grow. Ultimately, Passage ceremonies celebrate accumulated change and growth. By marking the expansion of your body, mind, and spirit, personal evolution of your inner Genius is sparked to seek more of life—experiences, curiosities, and spiritual answers. A Rites of Passage ceremony is the springboard for a new quest on a timeline marked by your Soul. See the glossary, [here](#).¹

For the longest time, I held this question: How can we bring Rites of Passage back to the culture? It seems like such a simple question: Nothing is further from the truth, except there is hope.

The language has disappeared, so that is a big consideration. Fluency will take some time. Biological changes common to all people offer an entrance, these doorways belong to everyone. I love to focus a light on the generations who missed Passage Rituals, parents and grandparents: Through some catalyst of change, we did transform, we did have a personal experience with initiation. Generally, no one witnessed our change so no one else benefited and very often the catalyst came without invitation and we would not wish a repeat. Often ritual was completely missing. Rites of Passage ceremonies smooths out all this roughness and makes change a welcome event.

There is a way to harmonize with the Soul who guides us, by seeking change consciously, by listening for our original instructions, and by meeting a transformation with a ritual. This is the way of change. When we face the inevitability of change, cross a Threshold, and greet the tender new stage of life, change will feel harmonious. When we accept that maturity is desirable, it can happen by honoring our stories and by releasing our attachment to the past. With the Spiral of Life metaphor, we can know ourselves better and create a clearer vision for the journey ahead. When Passage Rituals are shared inter-generationally, the bridge rises naturally between the generations. I feel like a pioneering girl and woman and an Elder simultaneously.

The Life Spiral



Before we can talk about the Rites for each Passage, we must find our place. I am in the small space between Elder Encore and Spiritual Elder, a place of growth and excitement, a place of mystery and hope. I have carefully danced myself through a review of all of my stages which I personally consider an Elder's initiation; I unearthed the catalysts of change that created each Threshold and how new challenges were metaphorically represented by cobblestones.

I invite you to gaze into this Spiral and find yourself; find the members of your clan. I invite you to become innovative with me. There are stories to be told and ceremonies to be made.²

As I was taught about Rites of Passage, through academic circles, a

framework was provided which includes hearing a call from one's Soul, separating from one's ordinary life, facing and crossing a Threshold to wander alone in the wilderness in a seeking manner, and returning to a community ceremony of welcome and integration.³ What I call a portal is a liminal space of mystery, often created by ritual ceremony, a blended space for mind, body, and Soul to discover a new agreement. In cosmic terms, this may take a year, in women's terms, 13 Moons.

I am one of many now lifting up Rites of Passage for the culture because it's needed. I bow to the many others, gathered under one umbrella called Youth Passageways, all those bright thinkers with strong hearts are bringing Passage ceremonies to young people. This large group serves as the answer to my original question.⁴

Nine Passages is a book of stories with nine initiation ceremonies, including Birth and Death. It's a book of mentoring and offers many tools for moving a body with its Soul through natural biological changes. Each of the nine stages of development creates a seismic change longing to be noticed. Initiations are Soul-work that assists one's body coming more and more into consciousness of itself, Passage by Passage. Initiation ceremonies evolve the sense of self for all who attend and all who pay attention. This is a movement for Evolutionaries™.

Those who feel open to biological maturity as their birthright will resonate as kindred spirits. Anyone seeking personal evolution will resonate and will relish finding doorways. These women will not hesitate. Many Mothers will resonate with Rites of Passage offering the gift of maturity to their offspring even if they did not receive such celebrations. Perhaps out of a deeper knowing than even gentle kindness, seekers and Mothers will open this door for others.

Having enough research in me to satisfy me, I wish to show respect to the Medicine Wheel for bringing me through the past two decades. These ancient teachings have never remained buried for long, in fact, Earth Mother pre-

senting her seasons in harmony with the Sun helps the Wheel remain eternal. My muse has been nourished by an unimaginably long lineage of Grandmother Spirits who have watched over this work. Those nearlings woke me before dawn thousands of mornings to prepare me for the day when I could finally write this introduction.

With curiosity and readiness, with a global view and pregnant with these teachings, I have lived the challenge of personal development and of Passage ceremonies. Response to the urge to personally grow and evolve rises with each person's longing for fulfillment. I denied hearing the call until the pain was unbearable. Then, one dawn a decade after my Womanhood Bloom, a long line of elk walked past my bedroom window. The events that followed that miracle woke me up. Along such a circuitous route, I have learned to observe a reverence for our Great Mother, sweet Earth listens and holds and encourages. My preparation to create and now offer this work has come through long talks with my Council of Elders, women who have stepped up to offer their piece for this puzzle. Every Soul like the one who lives and breathes inside of you, holds the whole of this developmental span of life. Your inner circle is your tribe and your Village. Allow ceremony to join you together, with your soul, like a sacred marriage.

Mothers continue to give birth to both sexes of babies and in equal numbers. I do not plan a gender translation for this book at this time, but the biological changes may be interpreted. I grew from a baby girl into a big girl and finally a woman becoming and suddenly an Elder. It is a natural occurring phenomenon that I would write a book for women and our girls.

Best wishes on raising your children and raising yourselves.

First of Summer 2016, this comes with love, Gail Burkett

NOTES FOR INVITATION

1 Glossary for the Language of Passages:

Rites of Passage is time away from normal or mundane life, a time to be with spirit and Soul, listening for new instructions. In this liminal time, an altered state of being brings about true change.

An internal biological clock bundles an accumulation of life experiences which encourages a Threshold to appear. Allow resistance to fall away. Threshold is the moment, often an actual doorway, where you agree that change is unavoidable and desirable.

Spiritual longing is individually interpreted and usually most pronounced in silence.

Often an initiate needs 13 Moons to feel a new normal. This allows for comparison of old and new and for integration. After one round of seasons, everything feels different. Because we are women, change comes with our Moon cycles.

Biological changes occur under the science of ontology, unique to each person. Many psychologists use a 7 year mark, but ontology is not so rigid; e.g., my First Blood came at 13.5 and my Last Blood happened at 45.5.

Ceremony may be the trickiest of these terms, but gather a circle of friends (because they benefit), light candles on an altar, include meaningful symbolic treasures, sing songs, speak from your heart: What is inviting change, how do you feel, what do you hope for? You may be surprised to hear what you have to share; others in the circle may find their own longing to mark change.

Maturity is the most tested of any cultural measurement. Arrested development is extensive because communities have lost the habit of noticing and applauding growth and change.

Soul and quest, these terms are related and come with adolescent longings. If life is as luscious as your dreams, those longings turn into Adult and then Elder desires without ceasing.

- 2 If you have never experienced Rites of Passage for yourself, a great journey of a year may seem alluring. I wrote *Soul Stories: Nine Passages of Initiation* as an invitation for women over 30, often over 60, to find their change agents and experience a celebration of the many changes throughout their lives. I wish to honor Elders, circles of Elders, who will flourish with ceremonies in their years ahead.
- 3 Those early teachers included Arnold van Gennep whose *Rites of Passage* (1960) was posthumously published after his anthropological discoveries and treatise in 1905; Joseph Campbell's major works inspired the anthology *A Hero's Journey*, (2014, 3rd Edition); Mircea Eliade, *Rites and Symbols of Initiation: The Mysteries of Birth and Rebirth* (1994); Michael Meade,

The Water of Life: Initiation and the Tempering of the Soul; Martin Prechtel, *Long Life, Honey in the Heart* (2004), and one I have yet to study deeply, Bill Plotkin. These men all stand out as too important to not mention.

- 4 I am very pleased to stand with others who wish to uplift Rites of Passage ceremonies. Youth Passageways (.org) follows good council. So many spiritual rituals have elongated from Indigenous threads. Many of those did not lay down their threads as my Ancestors did; Indigenous Peoples are the original teachers and are being well respected by the efforts of this umbrella organization.

INTRODUCTION

NINE PASSAGES for Women and Girls Ceremonies and Stories of Transformation

BIRTH AND MIDDLE CHILDHOOD

Each of our lives span Birth to Death and may be viewed in four parts through these *Gifts from Elder Mentors*. The Soul indicators or maturity markers reveal the growth signs as Child, Adolescent, Adult, and Elder. We call these *Nine Passage* ceremonies *Gifts from Elder Mentors* because the rituals are offered generously to help Mothers and Grandmothers identify the markers of maturity and offer their children the ceremonies of Earth, Moon, and Sky to deepen our experience of being fully human. Rites of Passage ceremonies encourage personal evolution and the expression of our true Genius.

Biology actually determines all nine stages of maturity, changes common to each woman. Passage thresholds contain the drama and surprise of our lives. Rituals help the next stage unfold with grace and enthusiasm for what comes next.

In this *Rites of Passage Stories for Children*, we guide Mothers and Grandmothers of girls to see the pattern of development through a new lens. To review the days unfolding from Birth to Middle Childhood, let's begin with the holistic Mind-Body-Soul perspective, revealing a myriad of strengths

to look for in development. Biological changes occur daily making all of childhood a visual circus of change. Birth is filled with wonder, Middle Child Rites are filled with play, and First Blood is filled with promise and drama.

For the Child's Passages, we offer the voice of the Guide rather than Mentor. We do this because celebrating Passages needs a gentle re-introduction to the culture. We encourage you to form a village around your child; it takes a village to grow us into experts on parenting. Aunties, Uncles, Grandparents and adopted relations offer different aspects of expertise so each child receives all that is needed.

Childhood is a time filled with magical thinking and for strengthening family bonds. We become our true selves before Early Childhood is over. The first dozen years create the very foundation of our being and on these roots, a life is built. This surely puts tremendous pressure on parents and teachers. Adding the spice of ceremony and ritual to stories, we offer the guardians of girls the ability to see the whole of their developmental journey. Parents are invited to pay special attention to all who hold and love their children.

If a baby receives a special ceremony in her first year, she will have that story her whole life. If an 8 or 9 year old girl receives a ceremony to celebrate her new responsibilities, she will carry forward two ceremony stories and look ahead to her puberty celebration. This is the truth to making a celebratory life. Birth, Middle Child, and First Blood: These are sacred events in every life; they are Rites of Passage opportunities to bring community circles around your daughter.

Maybe there is no mistake the word Rites accompanies Passage. It can be interpreted as a 'right' as well. Rites of Passage are ceremonies of Earth and Sun and Moon. They bring together the people who already love this Soul to observe her development. A Passage ceremony offers a celebration of gratitude for the extended family, the community or village who guided this child. All

through life, Souls need to be seen. Passage ceremonies are vehicles of special moments of intimacy, as into-me-see. For her heart, a ceremony weekend offers moments of spirit that a girl will draw on for strength. In the psychology of anticipation, she will know the next ceremony is her right and she will look forward to it like reaching for her unknown greatness.

Live to Celebrate

Here is your invitation to bundle these Passages into memorable ceremonies. For little girls, the three celebrations begin with Birth, when she is a babe in your arms, a ceremonial story becomes her personal mythology. Before and after Birth, baby ceremonies also recognize Mother for her remarkable task of creation. When the Village encircles a newborn, a bundle of stories begins to shape a gift for baby to carry into childhood. Photos, stories, mementos, these belong in the bundle. Birthdays, holidays, Earth days, Moon days, these stories belong in her bundle.

Different relatives retell different parts of her story so a celebrated tiny baby grows into a little girl with her own mythological story which flavors Early Childhood. All of her birthdays, where a new number designates her development like rings on a tree, hold pieces of this unfolding story. At age 8 or 9, Middle Child Rites raise a girl's personal esteem when she sits in the center of a Women's Circle. She will never forget that feeling. Mother-Daughter re-telling of stories will form the basis of her personal mythology, her Birth and childhood story.

When an impressionable child gets noticed and celebrated for her life journey, her Soul begins to blossom and her sense of belonging fans out from her family to her community. When the natural time for Blood to flow, her Moontime arrives, her Soul demands that her parents see her with new eyes. The remarkable change agent of Blood is like no other in a woman's life.

For the whole village, these Passage ceremonies encourage the observation of maturity. Ask, what challenge will she rise to and how can that be celebrated? The indigenous heritage of these ceremonies is varied and rich; ask your friends and relations, what can be done for your daughter? We could say this is a missing ingredient in every young life.

All the days from Birth to Blood make up a vast pool of psychic wonder. The memories, the lessons, and the heart moments, filled with joy and tears, are the well of renewal and continuously dipped into as the water of one's life. For all the rest of life, the ceremonial days make up her reservoir of spiritual incentive.

Imagine the heart of this magic: If First Blood arrives at age 12, then 4,400 days make up the foundation of her life and childhood ends. The stardust in her Soul transforms into a deeper mystery with each Moontime. She learns cosmic language and begins to track her own moods, emotions, and rhythms. One hundred Moontimes before she leaves the nest, free with her personal curiosities, will teach her all she needs to know about womanhood. Those belong in the next bundle: Adolescence.



BIRTH PASSAGE

THE INTENTION: CREATING AND ASSEMBLING THE VILLAGE

I am singing a new lullaby, Welcome! Welcome! A Soul has arrived from her long journey, from his long journey. I clasp my hands together to feel the deep wonder of it all and celebrate this moment with Mother and Father. No greater magic exists on Earth than Birth. To the Great Creator and to the Source energy many call God and Goddess, may we bow our heads to feel the connection that binds us together as humans, the mystery we ponder when we take a few moments in prayer. I give thanks to be upright, to bear witness, to offer my love where it may be a salve, a welcome, or returned in joy.



Dear Mothers, Grandmothers, Aunties, and Mentors:

Every single child born to this world comes as a mystic to reweave the Village. This potential lives in each adult from our birth, the hope to reweave the Village. I see a local, slumbering capacity to fulfill our Soul's purpose as part of a greater awakening flowing like an underground river just beneath the surface of our culture. This is a fascinating time to be alive to welcome these

new little mystics and further awaken to ourselves.

I write to encourage you. I wish to teach rather than preach, so please interpret my intentions with your heart as big as mine. As an Elder, now, a tiny bit of wisdom is beginning to emerge. I have been studying ceremony and connection for twenty years and feel the various ways that hearts come together in harmony. Connection holds a charge, do you feel it? Always an opportunity to reach across generations, look for the connections between hearts and even to Divine Love and the spirit world. Little children are the most sensitive beings on the planet. To become more upright as people, this word, connection, needs to become one of our core responsibilities. Connection is what I do when I take excursions out on the land. I connect to Nature, I feel the intuitive messages come through my heart. Feel connection, feel your strong love, allow solemn rituals to shape you; this is what the beautiful child in your arms most needs and deserves.

Last year when I sat very still and quieted my monkey mind, I noticed Souls for girl and boy babies coming out of the Cosmos and into the astral layers above the Earth. My relations seven generations back, the Ancestors, also noticed the numerous Souls headed my way. I attended to this wonder-rush with daily prayers while each little babe was still in the womb.

What I know for sure, the birth of a little baby returns people to our most natural condition of wonder and awe, which feels like spirituality. If women and men designated as relatives, blood and adopted, are awake enough to encourage these tiny children, to coach them through teething and crawling, through walking and talking, to invite their natural Genius to emerge, this generation can and will change the world. We know enough to raise these babes as the mystics they are at birth.



Prayers Made Visible for Babies in the Womb

Looking up as they traveled through the etheric dimension, I made prayers visible for these wee womb-mates. At the Baby's Rock Garden, I often used their name and shouted, "Welcome!" over and over. As each one came nearer, their Soul began to attach to Earth and to the very moment of birth. By attending to one Soul and then the next with messages of 'welcome baby,' I began to change. Musing about the arriving Souls, I came to understand Birth to be the most dramatic of the Nine Passages; people in our Villages need to come in-close to celebrate.

Once I began welcoming this new generation, I found no way to stop. It was far too rewarding. With my own Greats- and Grands and my parents looking over my shoulder from beyond, we all welcomed this 7th Generation together.

The women who carried these babies created personal and varied womb experiences. Some Mothers-to-be worked a regular job right up to delivery, others did not. A few Mothers were quite sick while others remained vitally well. My expectant Mothers represented this cross section. I began to examine the prenatal days as one of the growth stages, susceptible to environmental influences of all varieties. Thankfully, for all new Mothers, a tremendous amount

Nine Passages for Women and Girls

of factual information is available for all their questions: The range of searches covers books, periodicals, and an entire online universe of mommy-blogs, social media, and neo-natal research. New Mothers-to-be: Begin at your local library, talk to experienced Moms, widen your search to make it relevant and current.



Granddaughter Kestrel, One Day Old

While a baby is developing, especially the second half of the nine-month womb term, the barrier of stretched skin to baby's newly forming senses is exquisitely designed for the babe to feel, hear, taste, and almost touch everything on the outside. Certainly when Mother places her palm anywhere around the womb-bowl where baby grows inside, baby can feel the delicacy of Mother's touch through the layers of skin. Baby can hear music, conversations, bird-song, and raised voices. This makes the baby's womb-world a receptive environment for wonderment and imprinting. All of this happens while the baby's Soul hovers nearby in the treetops and examines the story already running in the parents' lives.

All of my post-doctoral life has been devoted to coming-of-age and womanhood ceremonies.¹ Truth reveals—never have I been invited to be near a baby's birth. Imagine my delight when one tiny piece of all this watching and welcoming changed that for me.

The pain of birth is meant to be forgotten, it's meant to highlight the bond between Souls. What begins with labor pains and ends when the umbilical cord is cut is beyond miraculous. Every baby's story is unique as every Mother-Father story is unique. These are moments to tie up into personal story form, where Mother is heroine to herself, baby is the star-child and Father is best supporting actor. Baby will want to hear this story again and again. Embellish and polish, please; the rest of the Village wants to hear too!

Birthing and suckling, a newly born baby girl lies quietly, eyes closed, nestled in her Mother's arms. This scene repeats hourly for days on end, as feeding and mutual adoration create a bond between Mother and daughter. Take just a moment to consider the miracle of this babe who just moved from her watery-wet world out into an airy-dry world; for months she breathed with a cord, now she breathes God's air, every breath a breath of God. Each time I think of that first breath, I move easily to a state of unknowing the full measure of this wonder.

Body chemistry and psychology blend hormones, emotions, breast feeding, partnership qualities together with the new presence of baby for a unique state of mind known to experienced Mothers as mommy-brain. This new and confusing state can last for six months or more and is different for every woman. In addition to the relief of childbirth, emotional experiences are big, huge actually, and range from excitement and joy to anxiety, control issues, sleep deprivation, and fear. There is more, words do not express the continuous connection Mothers feel with this new life: It is all consuming.

While in this adoration interval, resting after birthing, creativity has been spent and Mother attends to the moment. No one can imagine this new baby's whole, creative life or the gifts that might have come with her Soul. Enjoy the moments, little Mother. There will be time later to consider the Soul and her Genius. Tend to those poopy diapers and rest. Light a candle and feel the calm of breath and the great joy of community. Men and women alike feel profoundly invested in celebrating this birth because Village life pulls from the ancient pool of ancestral memory, yours, mine, and ours together. We deeply feel all the generations drawing in. As time and nourishment will change this new wee Soul from baby to toddler to girl, parents and relations find themselves dazzled by the awe in these strong connections.

Throughout each child's early adventures, opportunities will rise to heal parenting wounds, to cast off "the spell of fathers and the curse of mothers."² New parents have this psychological and emotional work to do, to heal themselves, to discover their fractures and awaken to their own wholeness. A Genius-mystic lies in their arms and must not be crushed.

A long line of dreams unfold a woman's life journey to create her birth-scene; she uses her majestic creativity to blend visions and ideas from a wide assortment of relations. Over the next months, time after time, memories that tug on Mother will bring smiles and tears. Simultaneous healing occurs deep inside many wounded places, all the times where this new Mother felt a need unmet, a want unfulfilled. Miraculous as spirit, healing pours out of her like a salve for herself and her baby so the generations draw closer.



Baby's Soul Coalesces

WELCOMING BABY

At the time of Birth a welcoming ceremony to invite this Soul to remain here on Earth might be a dusting of cornmeal, like stardust, on her forehead. Bathe her feet in water to offer something familiar to welcome and invite her to stay. The glow of candlelight offers ambience. Almost any song, bird song, rattle-song, or a lullaby will harmonize with candle-lit wet feet. Beware of ceremonies that contain little or no humor, this little doll was delivered through hard labor and needs to hear laughter.

New Mothers believe they are ready for the baby when it finally emerges. In reality, every new Soul who arrives brings surprise. This is the presence of Soul, the part of a being that teases and holds dreams and offers complicated hidden purposes. We can hardly even speak about the reality that a Genius has just arrived. Holding another human in love and safety for an entire life-span seems too daunting, so we joke about 18 years of devotion. We remind each other the baby chose this scenario. We know nothing about how far back or how far into the future her choice might actually stretch.

We cannot know the age of the Soul who just arrived. We can't know in a scientific sense about reincarnation that may reach 100 or 10,000 years back, but we can open our minds to possibilities and be watchful. In the whole Universe, perhaps Earthlings are the only ones who count years. Wonderments, such as time and reincarnation, are barely spoken beyond the new arrival's "Old Soul" look. Still when our hearts are teased open the unknowable strikes us silent. Living in a scientific age which requires proof, many people feel uncomfortable talking about Souls coming to Earth in successive lifetimes, because everyone experiences the great forgetting. We simply know a mystic has arrived. Because we cannot know the specifics of the life journey that her birth initiated, the Genius-mystic must be honored for every possibility, every potential. Every time Grandmother or Auntie holds this babe, welcoming passes between our hearts, and we watch for gifts to emerge.

Every day as the child grows, any information and experience that touches passion will switch on remembering. Passion is our greatest clue, fly-

ing from one discovery to another. One of the driving forces of a little growing being is the searching, seeking, and finding purpose that will satisfy the urgent energy of the Soul. Even though it's wonderfully fun for adults to guess a child's destiny, most children exhibit early signs of their gifts.

Being open, we begin to query in ways that are not scientific, but befitting the mystic. Can we observe the hints about who just arrived? When I heard mythologist Michael Meade tell the story of Poder, I realized that science has nearly washed away mysticism and spirituality. The Mayan story of Poder is an old story of a midwife who received and safeguarded the boy-baby's gifts until the age of claiming. We who welcome a baby with all her gifts and blessings, may return to this mystical state in ourselves and remain open to all that is invisible. Can we be mirrors for children who begin to seek answers about Ancestors, origins, where they come from, and why they came?

I like to observe the positions of each planet at the moment of birth and use numerology for her given name and birthdate. I will take my clues wherever I can find them rather than wait 30 years for manifestation. These oracles, the I Ching and Tarot also, have much deeper roots than this age of pure science and proof. Using oracles with an open and curious heart may expand and enlighten our wonderment about the mystic in our midst and return each one of us to the realm of spirituality. Because I have felt a deeply personal resonance, I pray for openness to discover more about the Soul who recently arrived.

When life is steeped in ceremony from Birth, that foundation will sustain a reverence for all mystery as consciousness grows throughout life. Pull in your ceremonialists to help open and discover a sacred way to welcome baby. Do what comes through your imagination, it will be absolutely correct. Who knows how the Ancestors transmit your heritage. Follow intuitive threads, do not hesitate, and celebrate!

Like everyone, this baby's gifts will arise when she learns with all of her heart and mind to listen to her Soul. Each child will crawl, walk, and dance through thousands of days, giving to self and to others in her unique rhythm.

Each Soul attracts a unique bundle of lessons to be learned, some will be about resistance, some about acceptance. Every single lesson delivers a challenge instigated by her Soul. That mysterious part of each child, Soul, will use the fire of curiosity to clear the way through dreams and passions enough for motivation and action. Mother's molding begins to shape a self. Mother is especially influential through Early Childhood and through the Middle Childhood years, and the phenomenally valuable imprints before and just after age nine.

Forming a Village around each child causes everyone to look inward. Mothers and Fathers have sacred work to journey through any ceremonies they may have missed to update their own development. I feel a ceremony wrap around each chapter of my development story and feel grateful I have discovered the catalysts for change that initiated each new stage. This introspection has shown me how Rites of Passage weave continuously throughout life. Ceremonies bring the Village together to wrap a bundle of changes.

Fulfill your longing to belong to the Village, begin with your newborn babe. Life lived a sacred way with ritual offers something special, something less tangible and more satisfying so each person feels like a mystic and a Genius. I have learned this needs only deep quiet and attention. Attending to our Soul's urgent messages, we learn to care for our Souls and reconnect to the reasons we ask why!

Each new parent needs to focus one part of their fully capable brain on inner-personal growth and private memories. If there were things, events, raw emotions or triggers left over from a childhood long past, those need to be coaxed to the surface and examined. This is a wonderful process to do with a fully functioning adult brain. Doing this work prepares each parent for an adulthood or middle adult ceremony of their own, but do not rush this process. Reach for the manual, the guide I wrote called *Soul Stories*³ for assistance. Take the time to cull through the memories, to journal and art which past memories need adult kindness.

The dance is this—awaken, heal, do ceremony, and repeat.

THE STORY: GRANDMOTHER'S GLORY

This story-of-the-day includes the voices of turtle and otter, dragon and cougar, dog and eagle, horse and honey bee. These voices and many others gathered around a sacred fire in a great November snowstorm.

In so many ways, wee Souls make relations. My baby-relations came through sister's son's wife or husband's nephews' wives or adopted initiate-daughters. I love all the different ways we can become related. Tribes weave together in one twist and then another until the bond grows strong. Relations are simple sometimes, as in a straight lineage, but even then, the bond must be nurtured. Other times, like this story, unlikely threads found their way into my heart and I found myself woven inside.

Babies' little bodies gestated in wombs all across the land and spanned every season as 2013 melted into 2014. Three babies were born to nieces and five babies came to women who had been with me in initiation ceremonies. Babies are teaching me about the global culture; they continue to come to my adopted relations all around the planet. As surely as the Sun rises, I become related to anyone who stands in ceremony with me. Welcoming these babies helped me feel the Grandma energy; five births happened before our home baby arrived. My sweet neighbor and adopted daughter, Cassie was pregnant through summer and fall and extremely pregnant for most of the winter.

Cassie's baby has come near enough for me to touch and see and tell her whole story, the story of Kestrel. On the coldest day in February, the Moon crossed into Taurus high up in the dawn sky and showed regally as a half white orb beyond the tops of grand firs; it was then that Kestrel was born. I give great thanks for this babe and all her womb-mates who are still arriving to bring their gifts to the Earth. I hurried across the barnyard to welcome Kestrel and placed a smudge of ceremonial cornmeal on her Third Eye, so she would know welcome. This single word of love communicates belonging and comfort; we all want to feel welcome and at home. Love has many expressions. The day Kestrel began her life, her parents' story was blossoming love and the

great adventure of two lives twining. Kestrel became a major milestone in my life because I adopted her as my granddaughter.

In Hood River, Oregon, Kestrel's womb-mate, Amelina, was born four days later under a Cancer Moon. These girls will have ceremony in their lives and this Grandma's welcome.

Kestrel's beautiful Momma Cassie knew a ceremony would reveal itself at the right time. I wanted to connect the Blessing Way Ceremony offered by the Village Aunties; Mother Cassie also wanted a ceremony when she and baby would stand together as two whole Souls and Father Graham's arms could surround them both. Winter turned into spring and nobody could imagine a ceremony for Kestrel's first three months when she was the tiniest babe in arms.

Fully blooming springtime provided opportunity for parents to venture out across the landscape and consider all the imprints this child could absorb. My eyes spied stroller, sling, backpack as Mother and child or Father and child began exploring the natural world together. My digital album is filled with hundreds of photos; this is how Grandmothers behave in every corner of the world. When Comfrey burst forth in bloom, big furry bumble bees occupied Kestrel for a long time. That imprint is desirable, so are my visions of Graham standing in the fast moving current of Grouse Creek so Kestrel would grow to know water. At dawn, they were out in the ice-snow at the end of spring so Kestrel could learn about crisp air and ambient light.

To millions of grandparents everywhere, the mystery most apparent is the presence of Soul and the invisible gifts of potential each Soul carries from the stars. Grandmothers and Grandfathers have the advantage of this vision; like the acorn that sprouts, roots, and grows from one tree ring to another into a mighty and powerful oak, which spans generations. Every important imprint attaches to invisible neurons to help your baby's Soul remember herself. In the philosophy of spirit-moves-through-all-things, the bees and the water create connections inside baby's body and brain that will link back to this time when she was a wee babe in your arms.

As my Elder-self began to grow this Grandmother persona, I noticed that Kestrel taught me something very valuable. When summer turned to early autumn, she revealed personality traits like laughing out loud and reaching for me, melting away the crusty part of any day. As I watched her Genius, seeing places where a glimmer of her gifts began to emerge, I could see that she was growing into her skin. Just when she turned nine months, her strong determined personality became more insistent; Kestrel expressed her desire to be involved, to explore, and to learn on her own terms. Her hands made connections to everything. She engaged most objects with her mouth, taste was her main connection to the world. I peered into and saw her eyes making important connections to her neocortex. We were amazed at how Kestrel thirsted for everything. Finding space to talk about these growth phenomena while we played with her, we agreed that her Soul had fully arrived. Kestrel would soon leave her tiny infant self behind and walk in the world; the right time for ceremony grew near.

All through her infancy, she has been very funny, making people laugh. She insists we accept her invitation to play. When she hears me laugh out loud, she does too, almost like a call and response, we are laughing together. Kestrel quickly learned about the powerful tool in her eyes; being preverbal, she expresses her wants through her eyes and her reach. The expression of “I need” or “I want” with no words, began to shape her personhood and complex interactions began to develop. Mother Cassie taught her the meaning of ‘ouch’ and ‘sit down’ so smoothly, hearing quickly became a tool. Kestrel moved gracefully to this level of awareness where every one of her five senses engaged; that was the sign we needed. By this time, nine months out of the womb, Kestrel’s Soul had fully arrived. Cassie called for a Second-Nine-Month’s Ceremony to celebrate this first level of growing into a whole human.

Life expresses through us in colorful threads of people and events that we may use to weave our personal tapestries into stories. One strong thread we could see and feel with our hearts came from the dear friends and kindred spirits who lived in Oregon, a mere seven hour drive away. This thread began with

Cassie who met Kathryn and they became friends. Talking as friends do, they discovered they were both pregnant at the same time. The Soul-directed life of their babies meant these girls connected in the stars to be womb-mates for life.

In the summer season, Kathryn, Shane, and their baby Amelena had found me on the rocky bar listening to the wind and the water and playing with river stones. When all my senses are receptive, serendipity sings a clear Soul message. Shane engaged me to think about all the heart rocks I was finding: Were they gifts from some First Peoples of long ago? Why were there so many? While we examined big heart stones, I gathered their story pieces. These two baby girls, Kestrel and Lena, were born four days apart with very different birth stories. I knew these girls would walk into their woman-life as kindred spirits. Our ceremony plans wrapped like a lasso around Kathryn and her clan, we wanted to share the experience of this ceremony. We would make it happen for both babies, a double Second-Nine-Month Ceremony. The Village formed around Kestrel and Lena to add a new dimension in our tapestry.

Similar, but different, the High Mass Baptism in a cathedral for my Grand-niece Sloan was an outstanding ceremony full of drama and meaning. Many of my closest relatives were present and felt the long lineage of ceremony and deep blessing in our own Souls. I was struck by how the rituals had been practiced millions of times over the past millennia.



Birth and Baptism

AT HOME

Two Moms, Cassie and Kathryn, created an Earth-based ceremony around a central fire for Kestrel and Amelena. This welcoming and blessing ritual had also been practiced millions of times, but perhaps it was handed down rather than written down. We all declared our intention to hold our Circle around the fire, no matter the weather.

All the parts and pieces, logistics, altar pieces, people in the Village, even relations who could not come, appeared before us as a mosaic and fell into place when we spoke about them. Email and text, so well embedded in our cultural toolkit, connected us rather quickly like a shuttle weaving back and forth. Cassie was the communication queen for a month. At the very mention of ceremony, Cassie's mother Sue came for a long visit. I love this response the most. If I could have only one response to ceremony, hers is the highest: How

can I help? I feel very grateful for Grandma Sue because I relaxed about all the details and so did Cassie. A program outline formed to guide this Birth Passage ceremony marking the second nine months as Soul-arrival time.

I credit remote Elders for inspiration—Angeles Arrien, Michael Meade, Clarissa Pinkola Estés—who have plumbed the depths of initiation and ritual to explain our world; and Jon Young who has taught thousands about Nature connection.⁴ We bow to the great initiator of change, our own Souls. Academia has made human development a very deep and complicated discipline without ever mentioning Soul: This will always be true. We love that there is so much to know, especially the combined threads of Anthropology, Psychology, Child Development, Human Ecology, Brain Science, and the transpersonal extensions of these disciplines. No one can know it all. We can, however, be vigilant and interpret the Soul expression in those we love, including ourselves, and remain curious. We live in a time when our Souls emerge as the lead teachers. Mothers, Fathers, babies, hovering Grandmas, and every loving Village member, we are only required to slow down, watch, listen, and share stories.



Sacred Relations

When the car arrived filled with kindred spirits from Hood River, everyone stepped into the flow and all our plans began to feel Divine. From my Elder sanctuary, I came across the barnyard feeling excited and grateful the weather had offered a window of safety for this family. Maybe the best way to *be* with nine-month-old babies is on the floor, to join them in their world. The scene was hilarious, actually, with half of the adults rolling around on the floor giving focused attention to both curious, exploring infants. We observe a developmental edge in these babies who pull themselves up by the pant-legs of adults or by the furniture and let go. This ceremony would honor their similar and different birth-to-nine-month stories held by the parents, and celebrate the completion of the Soul's arrival for Kestrel and Lena.

The following ceremony day morning, I woke very early and watched the darkest outline of dawn reveal the Grand Firs and bare Cottonwood trees in relief against clouds. For our 11 a.m. gathering time, a crowd formed around the much needed fire to focus our attention. These babies had evoked deep emotional responses in each person around the Circle. Snow began to fall, lightly then heavily just as Grandma Sue provided a beautiful welcoming with words that centered our attention.

Sue invited everyone to give their burdens to the fire during this ceremony. Through the lineages of every person's Ancestors, the fire connected us to those guardian spirits. Making eye contact across this fire space, strangers became friends and we all melted together as relations. With clear intentions of our whole hearts, we formed a Village around Kestrel and Lena. Everyone had a story of connection to the parents and to the babes; threads of memory-moments rose in our hearts and we wove a strong new story tapestry of a Passage ceremony for two babies.



Ceremonial Smudge

Wrapped inside our winter coats, our pounding hearts held this wonder of high honor for two tiny Souls. Ceremony causes new relationships to form, everyone's heart to open, and ripples to spread, connecting other relations and other ceremonies. I can still see and feel us standing together in awe, getting covered in a heavy wet snow. No one in our culture is an expert in Rites of Passage, but everyone's heart really poured into this ceremony for Kestrel and Lena. A humble medicine man whose gifts derived from an old lineage in Peru, a relation to Lena who came from Hood River, stepped forward to smudge and bless each person. Dave cast a magic spell of quiet and respect as he invited the Ancestors to come to our ceremony while he fanned the wood-smoke over us, smudging the protective "holy wood" Palo Santo, to bring us good fortune.

Lena's mother Kathryn offered a song-sheet to soak up the snowflakes and sing along, *I hear the voice of the Grandmothers calling*.⁵ I thought about the women who taught me that song and sent them love. Cassie spoke a prayer of Thanksgiving for the spirit of the land and the company of her creatures. Kestrel's Aunt Debra offered her original Grandmother Song, which I cherish.

Uncle Daniel enlivened us with a call and response song of respect for the energies alive in the natural world. I led a ritual to invite the guardian ancestors of the seven directions and added my welcome to the very long line of Ancestors who watch over us.

From Joanna Macy, the Elder who created the *Council of all Beings* ceremony,⁶ we borrowed inspiration to bring blessings to these two babes. I felt grateful to borrow the muse of Joanna, who has led thousands of *All Beings* ceremonies to honor and to bring awareness to the animals who share Earth with us. For babies to feel most welcome on Earth, animals are essential companions. I pulled out a wadded wet paper and began with this quote from Thomas Berry:⁷

"We all possess a 'shamanic personality,' which can understand and speak for other beings. This personality is essential to our survival. It frees us from our self-centered culture-nature and dispels the trance of industrial civilization. The life-giving powers shaping creation from the beginning of time are still present within us, accessible through our imagination. All that is required is clear intention; it is like opening a door in the mind and walking through. It's an act of humility and generosity."

Four-legged critters, winged ones and all the sacred Others in the bioregion will be companions to entertain and educate these babes about the mystique of the natural world. Everyone standing around the sacred fire melted into an animal voice bringing a blessing for these baby girls of the Earth.

On land or water, Turtle dwells in two worlds, moves slowly and close to the Earth. She carries the powerful symbol of being buried as an egg, she is born of the Earth: Indigenous peoples say she is the symbol for Mother Earth. Turtle, ancient as the dinosaurs, displays a shell design of 13 Moons for girls to remember. Offering this blessing to sleeping babies, the Souls of Kestrel and Lena felt Turtle enliven their inner mystic self to receive all the blessings that followed.

Blessings from voices around the sacred fire offered potent words from

Others: Beaver offered the blessing of using teamwork to act on dreams; Otter offered feminine playfulness and intuitive Earth wisdom; and Dove offered peace blessings.

Energies shifted as the natural world stepped out of the fire and blessings gathered a life-force. Earthworm brought transforming blessings by attending to the precious soil and Deer and Elk people brought deep listening and double-love. The fierce nature of Song Sparrow blessed the babes with protection, which powerfully echoed through a second Otter, more protective, and not as playful as the first Otter. Two Horses, both real and fantastical, reared blessings on the babies with companionship and created an arena for the parents' blessings.

Draco offered the mystery of star-spirits and delivered Dragon blessings for the future. Feeling powerful, Cougar delivered focus and graceful dancing through life. There was a mention of Owl with the blessing of divine love coming from Dog. The Eagle's blessing offered patience and the majesty of living in the Now with the help of keen sight.

The second Horse came from dreamtime to offer a blessing of clairvoyant listening with the splendor of power and presence. Buzzing with so many blessings already, two Honeybees offered blessings of abundance and dedication for life, diligence and preparedness, and finally receiving joy for true work.

Others, present on an invisible outer ring of energy, also delivered blessings of unique diversity: Momma Moose and her yearling visit often and so do the less visible ones, Wolf, Raccoon, Dragonfly, Snake, Skunk, Salmon, Woodpecker, Grouse and many more bird species. Every bioregion is this rich and potent with animals' blessings left in every track and sign. I give thanks for this knowledge.



Womb-mates: Kestrel 4 Days Older than Amalena

WRAPPING THIS BUNDLE

These babies are now the leading edge of an energetic cultural shift to lift up Rites of Passage. I feel strongly that ceremony is for the Village as much as each child. Elders about to become Grandmothers for the first or the twelfth time can give the breath of life to this idea so that it may spiral all the way up through the generations. Elders who themselves were born as mystics also require acknowledgment with a sacred fire after one full initiation year.



Receiving Blessing: Kestrel's Mother Cassie

When she stands in ceremony with her Village, Mother begins to see clearly the Soul of her own creation. She is the one who says yes and makes lists, invitations, decides on the flow of events, and how to offer food to complete the celebration. Inside the Soul are multiple gifts, first to bring warmth and laughter, and later to shine as an evolving human remembering her purpose for coming to Earth.

So many blessings flow from this one Birth Passage, an emergence for Mother as much as for Baby. I have been gifted with the sight of two women receiving blessings for their babies while, for themselves, the sacred fire revealed the truth of Self returning strong and free. Cassie and Kathryn began to feel a rebirth of their Woman/Soul which peeked out of the nurturing/nursing Mother/Self. While one foot will remain steadfast and diligent, the other foot will prepare to step forward.

Everyone who dined on the gift of food offered in gratitude from these two Mothers, Cassie and Kathryn, realized the Second-Nine-Month Ceremony out of the womb was perfectly Soul-full.

Ceremonies and Stories of Transformation

My winter prayer shelters the star-seed of this Passage story and prepares to reach out to others. I pray that the Souls of all babies come to feel welcome. Each old Soul comes because the Earth and all of her inhabitants are in need of new gifts.



Lena's Mother Kathryn



Lena's Father Shane

Kestrel's Father Graham



GIFTS FROM THE ELDERS: BIRTH PASSAGE

As a babe in the womb, while our Soul is traveling from the stars, we are in the mystic-making part of the human journey; look forward to the exact moment of meeting our Soul incarnate. “From stardust” is a less than scientific answer: Mothers came along eons before scientists; ask any one of them where babies come from. Egg and sperm are cultural and biological answers, what is the spiritual answer?

Womb-time reflection serves to connect your Soul with your baby’s Soul from tiny origins. Perhaps her Soul brings essences from past lives, one of the next Passages may reveal more. With candlelight, celebrate that your spirit and your baby’s have a Soul essence, a harmony. You chose one another for this Earth journey. Your arms are filled with this teensy little being who knows but will need to remember that the two of you are destined to become mystics together from the lessons you learn, day by day.

Soul waits in the nearby treetops, double checking the choice of you as her parent, smiling about the landscape and the lay lines of the Earth for her birthplace. The alignment of the planets and the position of the Moon for the very moment of birth, your baby’s Soul chose all the proper channels of support for her life-long journey.

Consider this Soul, who came in **from the stars** to meet biology happening in your Mother’s womb. Yes, otherworldly. A stretch in beliefs, perhaps, still a phenomenally new way to think about what makes you, and your wee babe unique and magical beings.

We cannot know the age of the Soul who just arrived. We cannot know in a scientific sense about reincarnation which may reach 100 to 10,000 years back, but we can open our minds to possibilities and be watchful.

Do you know your **Ancestors**?

Does your family have birth stories? Do you know yours?

Mothers, Grandmothers, Aunties, perform a **welcoming ceremony** for your newborn with candlelight and music, sprinkle cornmeal. Invite the new babe to stay. Sing a lullaby of welcome, welcome!

Can you observe hints about the new Soul who has just arrived?

Will you observe the positions of the planets at the moment of Birth?

Promise to tell her **Birth story** at all of her birthdays so that at her Middle Child Ceremony, your daughter will tell it with you.

NOTES FOR THE BIRTH PASSAGE

- 1 *Gifts from the Elders: Girls' Path to Womanhood* (2004), still available on Amazon, was my first published effort for Mothers of girls, sourced from my research findings about Rites of Passage as my doctoral dissertation (published in June 2000). The pre-adolescent girl became my most loved specialty for a decade; as the girls grew, I found I also loved teen girls.
- 2 Michael Meade spoke these words, "the spell of fathers and the curse of mothers" in a long workshop about initiation, October 2013. He creates an atmosphere of mythology where truths emerge, often starkly. Ringing in these intriguing mythic tongue twists, there is often a hidden truth about personal relations. Truth is intimate to healing family dynamics and dysfunctions. How they ring for each person will be completely unique, but worth contemplating. Meade published the story about a child's gifts, a Mayan story about a boy-child called Poder in *Fate and Destiny: The Two Agreements of the Soul* (2012).
- 3 Mothers and Grandmothers may experience a guided initiation for themselves through *Soul Stories: Nine Passages of Initiation* (2015). Initiation in this culture is on a threshold of becoming mainstream, each person who takes a Passage journey steps us closer. I believe when Elders experience Rites of Passage, their Villages will begin to heal. The Spiral represents all nine Passages from Birth to Death.
- 4 These early influences, Angeles Arrien, Clarissa Pinkola Estés, and Michael Meade taught me so much about initiation and ritual. They each can be found through easy searches on the Internet. Jon Young, the father of the Nature Connection movement, received the gift of bird and animal language as a young boy and has spent his whole life developing this Nature Connection legacy for our post-modern world. He teaches how to be deeply engaged with all of the inner workings of Village life.
- 5 Voice of the Grandmothers is one of the Earth Chants shared widely in Women's Circles. It goes this way: I hear the voice of my grandmothers calling me | I hear the voice of my grandmother's song | They say wake up wake up, they say wake up wake up | Listen Listen | Listen Listen ... It can be sourced here <https://tribesofcreation.wordpress.com/2010/01/02/the-voice-of-the-grandmothers/>
- 6 I called on my original ceremony teacher, Joanna Macy, an Elder creative who, in language original to Deep Ecology, offered the Council of All Beings ceremonies around the world. Her website is equally wide and deep, every one of her teachings is profound. <http://www.joannamacy.net/>
- 7 Thomas Berry wrote *The Dream of the Earth* (1988) as a spiritual activist for the Earth, I pay homage to his beautiful words.

EPILOG

I advocate creating a more conscious and peaceful world by reintroducing an intergenerational practice of community initiations, Rites of Passage ceremonies for all ages and stages. I offer this book as an opening to the larger conversation we need to hold in our communities. In old initiation stories, rituals included death and rebirth; this may be why the long threads from our Ancestors' ceremonies were laid down on the ground.

Most people call the change which is so complete that the old self and the new self barely recognize one another, a transformation. Every person has this reflection, transformations happen to everyone living. Our culture could grow up considerably if we learned to simply celebrate the natural growth we see in all our relatives, adopted and related.



Ceremonial Life Spiral

At this planetary time, we are meant to call forth ancestral and blended traditions from several cultures and immerse ourselves back in nature to find our metaphors for change. I am only one among many helping to bring Rites of Passage and rituals of maturity celebrations back into our lives because it is

necessary to be seen and necessary to feel developmentally mature and whole. When a person is visible to family and Elders, our world is a much safer place than otherwise. It feels wonderful to be in a conscious community.

CEREMONIAL SPIRAL

Everyone can learn to see. Seeing into this Spiral of Life with my Elder eyes, I see nine distinct stages marked by biological development. More markers may be discovered, but I suggest we start where it makes most sense for everyone. The nine stages around the Life Spiral are biologically timed. Teaching awareness and ceremony for these stages of development feels urgent: The old self must give way to the new self with a small “d” death ritual.

Within extended families—aunts, uncles, parents and grandparents, nieces, nephews and all of our adopted relations—enough adult-power exists to get this started for the youngest ones coming up in your community. Babies must have a ritual that becomes part of their own mythology. Those who are seven will soon be eight, they are the ones we offer a Rites of Passage to next. There are many compelling reasons to welcome initiations for every biological and spiritual life Passage.