

January, 2007

Volume 7, No. 1

A LOVE AFFAIR WITH NATURE

Field Notes from a Flower Essence Producer

Part III: Meditations on Destiny

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I made the seven Destiny essences over a period of months and during this time, also received a series of meditations. Several destiny-themes emerged to give multi-dimensionality to the kit. I believe these meditations will expand users' imagination and help to deepen the work with the kit in many different ways.

The central force in our destiny is joy, the pure, manifest impulse of spirit animating all form. The first meditation outlines the four aspects of joy we explore throughout our lives. The second meditation looks at the creative process from a new perspective through the four phases of destiny's manifestation. The third meditation considers the four creative vessels in which we experience our destiny.

These writings are an invitation to engage actively with Gaia's energies while we respond to destiny's call in our hearts, minds, and bodies. Our personal destiny is part of Gaia's will to create beauty. Co-creating with the sacred earth, we joyfully reveal ourselves while Gaia shines in her full beauty.



Iris

Iris inspired a regal stature reminding us that we bear an invisible crown regardless of outer circumstances...

1. Joy's role in shaping destiny

*Joy is simple.
Savor it with every breath...*

*Remember the power of joy
and follow it as flower
steadfastly tracks the sun.*

The key to manifesting our destiny lies in embracing the fullness and complexity of joy. Rooted in the present moment, joy manifests in many forms of creative beauty and harmony. Excitement, unlike joy, is often based on anticipation or external stimulation. True joy rises within us from a well of peaceful stillness. Even in the most challenging circumstance we can find some element of joy.

When we allow ourselves to be touched by this energy of joy, a burst of radiance fills our bodies and we feel the goodness and wonder of Life. Taking the time to savor these precious moments is vital to receiving the full benefits of joy for its energy fills us at the deepest cellular levels. Stored in our bodies, the frequencies of joy establish the blueprint of our destiny. Every aspect of our lives can be guided by joy, for it springs from destiny's underground river and fuels our inner sun. Joy is the active force of love, inspiring our creativity, healing our bodies and minds, and blessing all our relationships.

Four Aspects of Joy

*Joy lives at the heart of creation,
its impulse destined to beauty.*

For our joy to be fully radiant and balanced, we need to invest in all four aspects of joy.

The joy of embodiment – being here in form

Like a plant's roots, the foundational level of joy comes through active engagement with our bodies. Movement, exercise, cooking and eating, touch and sensuality, gardening, and most things physical provide the means for our bodies to receive essential nourishment from the earth. Embodied joy also includes sound as a primary organizing energy. Sacred sound has the ability to shift material form into patterns of greater wholeness and beauty.

The joy of relatedness and interaction

The second aspect relates to active engagement in the world through ideas, work, commerce, and friendships. The joy of relatedness involves interactions of all kinds at the human level and also with commodities, for instance our creative projects and our work activities. Like a growing plant's stem and branches, the joy of connection offers stimulating exchange within our world.

The joy of accomplishment

The third aspect relates to self-expression and the creative maturation of our gifts. As we work our gifts in the soil of our body-souls, develop our expression through the dynamics of interchange, and accomplish our goals, we experience the fulfillment of our destiny in creative form.

The formless source of joy.

The simple joy of being encompasses every aspect of our lives. In times of stillness, we can touch the peaceful heart at the center of all Life. Without a deep, quiet connection with the formless source of joy, our lives will tend to be much ado about nothing.

When I got the information for the general use of the kit, I also received a personal report-card. I was told that I was weak in the joy of embodiment and I also failed to access the formless source of joy

sufficiently. When I thought about this, I realized it was true. Spending most of my time and energy on my work, I did experience the joy of accomplishment but I tended to be driven. I accessed intuitive information in meditation but I didn't take time to simply BE in the stillness. With these imbalances, my full experience of joy tended to be jerky and compromised. With this awareness, I am more deliberate about exercising, taking pleasure in my body, appreciating my garden, and tuning myself with sound. I have also found tremendous pleasure in opening daily to the current of joy in my meditations and being filled with life-energy in the stillness of the present moment.

II. THE PHASES OF DESTINY'S MANIFESTATION

*My rules are alive.
They hold your movement in the web.
Feel them in the seasons' rhythms
of slowed winter and energetic spring.*

Like the seasons, these four forces are constantly at work in our lives. Being conscious of the dominant force in and around us allows us to move through life with graceful ease.

Gathering

Throughout our lives, we gather experiences as the raw materials for our destiny. Our soul acts as a magnet, attracting us to the people, places, and opportunities that have significance for us. When we are free to follow our heart without fear or shame, we can gather what we need to manifest our destiny, and through creative work, we can begin to turn these raw materials into new gold.

Embodying

Embodiment is the process of owning what we have been attracted to and transforming it into something unique and creatively potent. As we give flesh to the ideas that resonate within us, we have to discriminate the dross from the gold by asking ourselves, "What is my creative work and what is part of someone else's path?" The embodying process shapes the gestating elements within us, intensifying our radiance, transforming us at a physical level. Digesting and assimilating what we have gathered, we gradually become what we love and thereby fulfill the physical part of our destiny.

Abiding

When we have pursued our desires with focused passion and brought our ideas into form, we hold a radiant power that influences our environment. This pure, raw life-energy takes many forms, manifesting as vibrant health and a deepening kinship with life. This phase of our destiny involves resting quietly in the abundant life-energy rather than using it for creative work. As we abide in stillness, our destiny begins to vibrate between our fully alive body-soul and the larger environment. While it may appear outwardly that very little is occurring, this can be a time of profound inner change. Think of a chrysalis: it looks like a dry leaf on the outside but within, the caterpillar is dissolving as the butterfly forms. Humming with life, our bodies are tuning to everything in and around us. If we can stay fully present during this phase, a process beyond our conscious comprehension can lead us into nother, richer phases of our destiny.

Sounding

Sounding is the active expression of our destiny in its fullest dimension. While worldly success offers some satisfaction, this form of accomplishment is a pale fraction of what we came here to do. Our full potential involves conscious participation in the living fabric of this beautiful planet, singing our world into beauty. The ways we do this are infinitely varied, each part contributing to a magnificent global symphony. Proceeding from the heart of stillness, our heart-felt sounding initiates a vibrating resonance within Gaia. She always responds to this quality of our expression with a rush of healing energy. We feel Her pulsing recognition of our destiny-song as a gentle surge of joy. Gaia delights in the realization of our destiny. Our radiant song is an integral part of Her fabric, the sacred web of Life.

Since I received this information, I have seen several examples of how important the abiding phase is in the creative process. We tend to be more familiar with the gathering and embodying phases of a creative process. As these aspects develop, we often feel a sense of fullness and power. The abiding phase invites us to hold this fullness and open to a greater mystery. Abiding is rarely comfortable, for it takes us into the unknown, yet this is the phase where we must develop the spiritual presence to surrender, and must restrain from pushing our creative accomplishments prematurely out into the world. As we open to the process of abiding, we never know what energies will greet us.

A friend told me about her strong impulse to build a cabin on her rural property. Thinking she would use the cabin as a music studio, she carefully dowsed where the building should go, saved money for the materials, and built it mostly by herself. Once it was constructed, she stepped inside and realized the cabin was not meant to be a music studio. "I don't know what it's for," she said, both confused and somewhat dismayed. I told her about the phases of destiny manifestation and suggested she might be in the limbo-like phase of abiding. "During this phase, you have a chance to let a larger destiny appear." She understood and immediately relaxed. Then she told me she had composed songs inspired by stars and stones. I saw her musical explorations were taking her into a deepening communion with Gaia. I have no idea what insights will come during this time of abiding, but now she is inspired to let her music be an integral part of Gaia's song.

III. DESTINY'S VESSELS

While we are on earth, we experience our destiny within different arenas. Imagine a set of ornate wooden Russian dolls, stacked within each other, from the largest to the smallest. Using this analogy, the smallest vessel is our body housing our soul; the largest is Gaia's body, containing all life on this planet. Between these two poles, we have the vessels of our creative expression and the arena of relationships within human society. As we live and move within these various vessels, we generate life-energy, nourishing ourselves and stimulating the environment around us. This is the heartwork of destiny, pumping within each vessel and pressing on the other containers in a process of creation.

Destiny lived in the body

*The pathways between us
are fewer than before.
Do not despair; we still can meet.
Our clearest path lies in your body.
Walk this way with courage,
and it will lead you Home.*

Destiny manifests through our body, our most intimate vessel. One of the primary reasons we came here is to explore the dynamic interplay between body and soul. In the womb of the body, we gestate all the creative ideas and energies of our dawning sense of destiny. Our bodies are affected by the creative thoughts and energies we engage in, and our experience in the world is affected by the body-vessel we inhabit.

Destiny articulated in creative life

*If you could see your full heart-song
your knees would buckle in awe.
Its radiance is a starburst
you came here to sound.*

Our second vessel is the creative arena where our ideas and inspiration take shape through a project, work of art, or creative endeavor. As we reveal ourselves through our creative actions, we begin to offer our unique legacy to the world.

Destiny expressed in social relationships

*Steer your way past humanity's debris.
Do not let the wailing snag you.
In a hundred lifetimes,
you could never fix it all.*

Human society is the third vessel where a great deal of our conscious attention involves relationships: communicating, giving and receiving love, and creatively interacting with our fellow human beings. This level also includes our connection with animals.

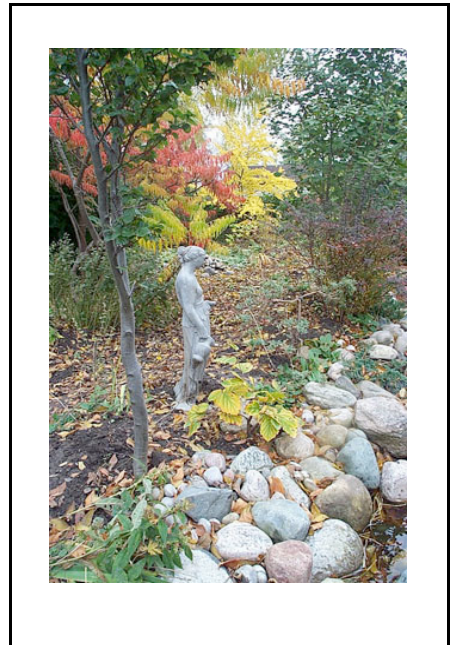
Destiny fulfilled within Gaia's body

*Through you I tune this beautiful world.
Your heart-song is a vast rainbow
coloring earth with its melodies.
I hunger for your heart-song.
Feed me with the varied colors of your love.*

The fourth vessel is within Gaia, the living earth. Within this vessel, we potentially engage the fullness of ourselves in co-creative interactions with the numinous aspect of the natural world. Currently, our connection with Gaia is for many people their most tenuous link: many live in a virtual world of technology, completely out of touch with the earth while others at the edge of existence in third-world countries are forced to deny their sacred connections to nature just to survive. Our interactions with Gaia are at a transformational tipping-point.

I explore my life within Gaia's body primarily in my garden. Beyond the obvious pleasures of designing the landscape and tending the plants, I love to sleep in a tent in the back of my garden on warm summer nights. Nestled in the cedars and close to the ground, I am held in Gaia's embrace and nourished in ways I can barely articulate. Coming indoors with parts of my soul awakened after an afternoon nap in the tent, I feel the confining limitations of the house compared to the aliveness of my garden sanctuary.

Another way I feel part of Gaia's body is by listening to the garden for its songs. Each morning, I slowly walk the circular pathway, observing the changes in the plants, feeling the weather, and listening to the birdsong. As I walk, I open myself to hear the garden's song rising in my heart. Humming the phrases that feel authentically related to the land, I walk until the song settles in my memory; then I go to my piano, play it, and write it down. Listening and receiving this way has deepened my communion with Gaia. I know this is part of my destiny work — to listen and receive the songs from the land.



WORKING WITH THE ESSENCES

I. Taking the essences in sequence

Initially, it is effective to use the essences in the order they were created. This approach will help you feel the patterns of your evolving destiny. Check intuitively (muscle testing might be helpful) for how long to use each essence. If you are not sure about how to check intuitively, you can take each essence twice a day for a week. Take a quiet time, preferably in the same space each day, to work with each

essence. Take 2-3 drops and read the definition. Sit quietly, focus on your breath, and let your energy drop into your heart. It is helpful to keep a journal of your insights and experiences. There is no prescribed time for this cycle; you may stay with one essence for three days, a week, or a month. Simply move on to the next essence when you feel complete.

All the essences will deepen your sense of joy. You can focus on the areas where you recognize some weakness or lack of development. Each essence will expand your understanding of the power of joy in your body, your relationships with others and interactions in the world, your accomplishments, and your connection with Source.

Used with a focus on each of the four destiny's vessels, the essences will expand your sense of being more radiantly present in your body, your creative life, your social relationships, and within the intimacy of Gaia's body.

Creating a specific intention

Before you embark on a cycle of working with the essences, it is helpful to create a specific intention to identify where you are and what you are seeking to manifest during this phase. Your intention can be at a personal body-soul level, in some creative capacity, in human relationships, or within the global environment. It is important to remember that Gaia's energy is present throughout all these levels. Your conscious focus and engagement with Her takes the co-creative work to another level. You do not need to work with a huge land-mass; our backyard gardens are a marvelous way to experience Gaia's energies and to participate in the cycles of creation.

Applications for the essences

Each essence can be adapted for use in the various stages of destiny-manifestation. Here is an example of how one essence can be used throughout the four phases. During the Gathering stage, *Weaving Sacred Threads of Connection* will help you attract the people and resources you need for your conscious destiny work. During the Embodying stage, the same essence will give you a greater sense of connection with your body, particularly if you include movement, breathwork, and/or sounding while taking the essence. In the Abiding phase, it will take you deeper into the heart of stillness and connection with Life. In the Sounding phase, *Weaving Sacred Threads of Connection* builds the network for the active transmission of your gifts into the world.

II. USING THE ESSENCES WITH CREATIVITY

To delve more deeply into the healing potential of the kit you can take the essences in sequence and do creative, introspective work. This can be done privately or in small groups. The following notes offer ideas about how to explore each essence. Let your own creative inspiration guide you.

1. Weaving Sacred Threads of Connection – seeing the Web *Weaving Sacred Threads of Connection* helps us connect with the oneness of all, to see our place and feel a sense of belonging.

Using this essence, take time to become aware of what you are connected to: past events, future dreams, special places, emotions, people natural elements, arts, etc. Do not judge your connections, simply be aware and gather these as elements of your life. These are the raw ingredients and indicators of your destiny. Everything is sacred. You could augment your



Allium

Uniting the symbols of the sphere and the wand, Allium integrates our sexuality with the earthy soul component of spirituality... the essence helps us honor and invite a radiantly creative sexual current within our bodies.

journaling with a collage, photographs, words, and the like for a more visual awareness of your web of connection.

2. Following Desire – *desire as fuel*

Following Desire frees us from unconscious enslavement to the world by assisting us to honor and listen to the pull of our souls' desire.

As you work with this essence, journal about your desires, including things you may have started and later abandoned. For instance, perhaps you wanted to play a trumpet but were assigned a flute in the high school band. Perhaps you loved a childhood activity but do not see how it applies to you now. This phase helps you retrieve conscious awareness of your desires. Gather them carefully and lovingly; do not dismiss or judge them. Your desires are the fuel for your destiny.

3. Preparing to Receive the Holy Fire – *building energy*

Preparing to Receive the Holy Fire helps us stay present to the increased energies of our own awakening destiny so that we do not feel overwhelmed by our own greatness or run off prematurely as the process intensifies within us.

This phase involves movement. Begin with stillness and music and gradually let your body move spontaneously. Movement can also be done in silence. Follow your body's will, observing with curiosity and wonder how it wants to express itself. You are building energy in your body. Take the essence again at the end of the movement. Sit and feel what has shifted in your body, pausing before moving into your everyday activities. This phase is helping you build the body-vessel to hold and nourish your own creative, spiritual fire.

4. Positioning Radiance – *stillness and preparation*

Positioning Radiance stabilizes us in the present moment, helping us be awake and aware of what is happening as our radiance develops and affects our world. After you are comfortable with movement, your experience of stillness will deepen naturally. This phase is not a time of action, though it can always be helpful to include some form of spontaneous movement and/or sounding.

During this cycle, allow images to enter your meditative times. In each session, welcome the image (sometimes this may be a phrase, a color, or a body sensation) and make note of what comes to you. You are increasing your internal radiance by inviting the elements that expand awareness of your destiny. The receptivity of this stage prepares you for moving deeper into your destiny.

5. Honoring the Shadow – *including our personal demons*

Beyond conscious awareness, our shadow includes the parts of ourselves that we would rather not see or feel. The essence, *Honoring the Shadow*, holds us steady as the elements needing to transform in us and in our immediate world come into view. It gives us the wisdom and compassion to view disease, failure, loss, and destruction as part of the larger story of humanity. Vital for our growth, this difficult step initiates a deeper commitment to our destiny.

As you work with this essence, journal about the difficulties and challenges you experience in your life. These elements are yours to transform. Do not analyze or judge yourself about these, neither dismiss their severity or pettiness. In other words, be compassionate with yourself. You may want to do another collage to make the shadow elements visible. While you may feel some emotional intensity in looking at the shadow, do not get overly tangled in your feelings. The opportunity is to see these elements as essential parts of your destiny. Shadow elements are life's raw materials needing transformation in you and the world.

6. Entering Stillness – *being present*

Entering Stillness invites a state of highly focused receptivity that often runs counter to our tendency to rush to completion when the goal is in sight. Pausing at this stage allows a conscious opening to the

unknown. In stillness, we can deepen our connection with Gaia and release the tendency to create solely from our egos.

During this cycle, make space in your day for holy stillness. This is a time of non-action and radical openness, a simple presence of Being. You are making space for some of the particular aspects of your destiny to enter by building a bridge through silence and stillness. You do not have to DO anything in the stillness of the void. For some people, being simply present can be the most challenging step of all.

7. Embracing Destiny's Joy – *singing your song*

Embracing Destiny's Joy links us to the pulse of creation. As we contain and move with life's energy through the various stages, the essence supports a surrendered experience of joy's ecstasy rippling in and through us.

Use the essence to help you access the deep currents of joy within your body. Take time to draw this energy up through movement, meditation, being in Nature, singing or any way that feels natural and life-affirming. As this energy fills you, sit in stillness and enjoy the sensations in your body. Then gradually allow yourself to feel where this life-energy naturally wants to move. How does it want to be expressed? Follow this with focused yet gentle attentiveness. Do not force yourself to do anything. When your actions feel complete, pause and notice how you are feeling. Take the essence again. This cycle is the active expression of your destiny. The world yearns to hear your song.

III. COORDINATING WITH GAIA'S DESTINY

Using the essences to coordinate consciously with Gaia's Destiny is recommended after you have gone through the personal cycle and are familiar with the essences from a body-soul level. As this work can be very intense, I recommend you do it only once a week to allow yourself time to integrate the information and energies that are generated.

This application involves meditation and chant. Use the essences randomly, accordingly to your intuitive perceptions. Being conscious of the elements in the cycle, take the essence initially to stabilize yourself. Then, consciously open a connection with Gaia through the corridor of sound. Stating your intention to connect with Gaia in a safe, protected way, chant on a single tone that resonates with your heart-chakra. Chant softly, listening to the sound and keeping your focus until you feel a vibrating resonance with the sacred energies of the earth. When you are fully connected with Gaia, invite an image, phrase, or body-sensation to inform you about your current connection with the earth. Record this for future exploration at the conclusion of the meditation.

As you move gently out of the meditative state, be sure to disengage from Gaia by acknowledging and thanking Her, then reconnect with your own body by doing something physical. Because connecting with Gaia at this depth can be overwhelming for your body, make sure you do not miss this step of reaffirming your separate earth-body. Over the next days, observe your world for signs that affirm and amplify your dynamic, interactive connection with Gaia.

*I reach for you, full of longing
For you to find your way.
My prayer is constant,
That you not turn away
From your pure and simple calling.
So many kingdoms, near and far,
Await your precious song.*

Andrea Mathieson trained as a classical musician before moving into her current work with flower essences in 1995. She is developing the Raven Essence project, a practical co-creative philosophy for healing humanity and working with the earth. Her publications include the *Raven Essence Manual — A Love Affair with Nature*, and *Gaia's Invitation, Poems from the Sacred Earth*. In her roles as flower essence practitioner and counselor, she offers individual therapy as well as courses and workshops for people wishing to expand their intuition and deepen their sacred connection to the earth. Grey Heron, her heritage home and remarkable garden in Maple, Ontario, just North of Toronto, serves as a retreat space for women. Andrea's website: www.ravenessences.com features a meditative journey for contemplative inspiration.

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The International Journal of Healing and Caring – On Line

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