

PSYCHOLOGY / NATIVE AMERICAN

SHARING THE TRUTH OF AN ANCIENT
FEMININE WISDOM TRADITION

Jamie Sams, a member of the Wolf Clan Teaching Lodge, brings us a powerful new method for honoring and incorporating native feminine wisdom into our daily lives. Combining a rich oral tradition—passed on to her by two Kiowa Grandmothers, Cisi Laughing Crow and Berta Broken Bow—with the personal healing and guidance she has experienced through her female Elders, Sams created *The 13 Original Clan Mothers*. Each of the Clan Mothers reflects a particular teaching, relates to a cycle of the moon, and possesses special totems, talents, and gifts that can help each of us cultivate our own personal gifts and talents.

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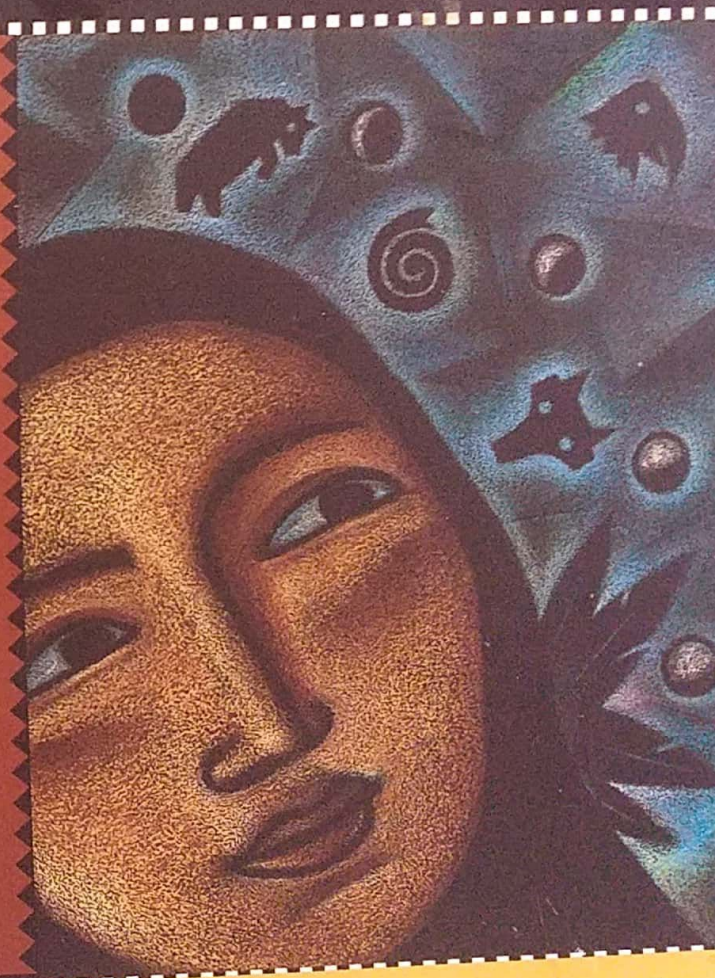


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JAMIE SAMS
THE 13 ORIGINAL CLAN MOTHERS

THE 13 ORIGINAL
CLAN MOTHERS

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S A C R E D
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D I S C O V E R I N G
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T A L E N T S &
A B I L I T I E S
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THE 13 ORIGINAL CLAN MOTHERS

**YOUR SACRED PATH
TO DISCOVERING THE
GIFTS, TALENTS, AND ABILITIES
OF THE FEMININE THROUGH
THE ANCIENT TEACHINGS
OF THE SISTERHOOD**



JAMIE SAMS



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For

Aida Hinojosa

who encouraged me to write,
seeing my heart's song through my words,



and to the memory of my
Ancestors of the Long Hair Clan

Mary Ross Sams

and her father

John Ross

of the Cherokee.

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Note to Readers



For those of you who are reading this book and find it confusing that so many names are capitalized, I would like to give a further explanation. In the Seneca language and in most Native American languages in the original form, certain words are holy or sacred to Native American People. These words are always capitalized in our written languages.

Until recently, few Indian writers were published and those who were, did not have a say as to how the manuscript was dealt with. HarperCollins has shown respect for my work, by printing it in our preferred form. For this kind consideration, I am deeply grateful.

In Native American culture, we see everything as being alive. Each living thing has a specific role as a teacher and family member. Everything on Earth, whether stone, tree, creature, cloud, sun, moon, or human being, is one of our relatives. We capitalize the names of each part of our Planetary Family because they represent the sacred living extensions of the Great Mystery who were placed here to help humankind evolve spiritually. We capitalize Traditions and Teachings because these words represent the equivalent of another faith's holy books.

In Tribal Traditions, we do not consider Grandfather Sun as a deity. We do not worship trees or rocks. We do, however, see the Eternal Flame of Love that the Great Mystery placed in all of Creation and we honor that spiritual essence. In the Seneca language, we call it *Orenda*. This is the spiritual essence or creative principle called the Eternal Flame of Love that is found inside of all life forms. There is only one Original Source and we call that Creative Source, the Great Mystery.

The Thunder Chief, *Hinoh* (Hěñō), is capitalized because of his role in bringing life-giving waters, without which we could not survive. Grandfather Sun and Grandmother Moon are capitalized because we see them as living beings. The Great Mystery gave them their missions of dividing day from night, bringing light and warmth to our world, as well as pulling the tides of our oceans. In all cases, the words that are capitalized are given respect because of the sacred missions they carry and the extension of the Great Mystery's love that they represent. We teach that all life matters and we honor the Medicines of all life forms as sacred extensions of the Great Mystery's loving plan.

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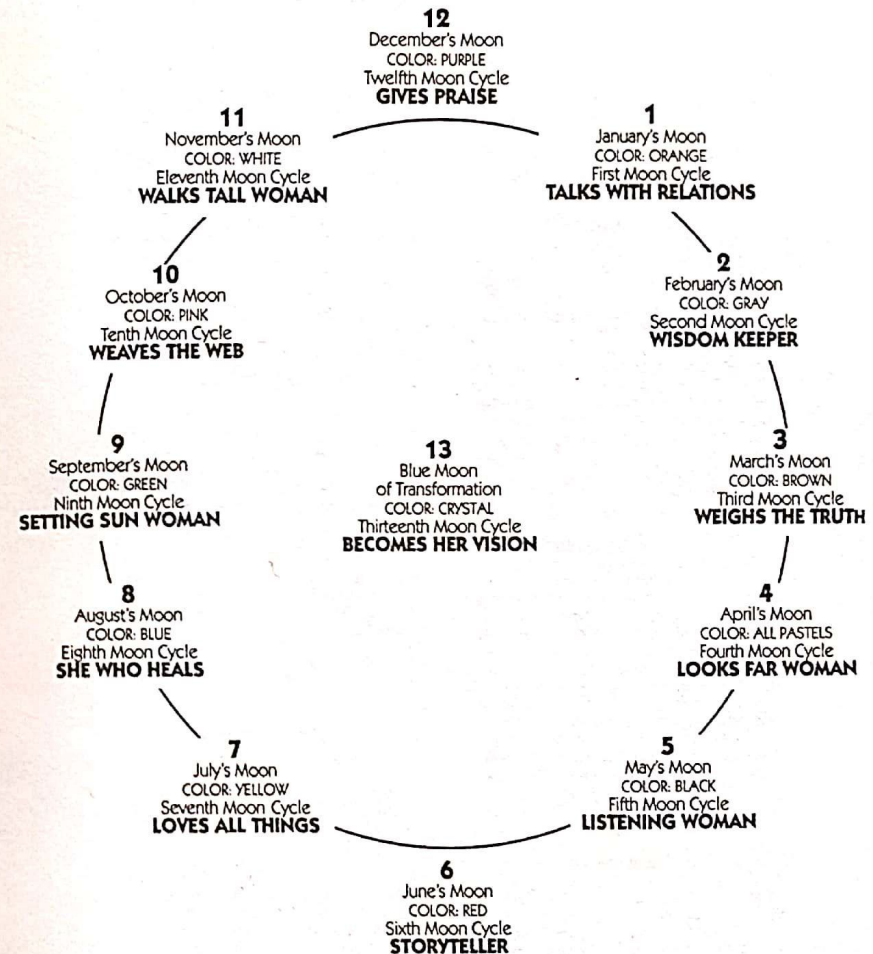
NIGHT WIND

*The night wind came crying,
Knocking at my door,
Squeezing
Through the cracks
In the ancient adobe,
Bringing the spirits
Risen from the bones
Of the Clan Mothers.
I listened.
I heard.
The talking drums and chants
Were riding on the wind.
It was time.
I donned my shawl,
Stole into the night
To dance,
To celebrate,
For the buffalo had returned.*

JAMIE SAMS
MARCH 26, 1992

THE MEDICINE WHEEL OF THE THIRTEEN CLAN MOTHERS

The Gifts, Talents, and Abilities of the Feminine Principle



1 TALKS WITH RELATIONS

The Mother of Nature
Keeper of Rhythm, Weather, and the Seasons
Guardian of the Languages of the Trees, Stones,
and Creatures ▲ The Maker of Relatives /
Keeper of Earth's Needs / Mother of the
Planetary Family
SHE TEACHES US . . .

How to understand unspoken the Languages
of Nature ▲ Kinship with all life forms and
how to enter the Sacred Spaces of others with
respect ▲ How to honor cycles, rhythms, and
changes of the seasons and weather ▲ How
to meld with the life force and rhythms in all
dimensions, learning the truths of each
How to LEARN THE TRUTH

2 WISDOM KEEPER

The Protectress of Sacred Traditions
The Keeper of the Stone Libraries and Earth
History ▲ The Guardian of "the Remembering"
and the Art of Memory ▲ The Mother
of Friendship, Planetary Unity, and Mutual
Understanding
SHE TEACHES US . . .

The Arts of Self-development and Expansion
How to access Planetary Memory, personal
recall, and ancient wisdom and knowledge
How to understand the wisdom that every life
form holds and its missions ▲ How to be
a friend and to restore friendship by honoring
the viewpoints of all life forms
How to HONOR THE TRUTH

3 WEIGHS THE TRUTH

The Keeper of Equality and the
Guardian of Justice
The Fair Judge of Divine Law and the Destroyer
of Deception ▲ The Mother of Truth and
Protectress of the Underdog ▲ The Mother
of Self-determination and Responsibility
SHE TEACHES US . . .

How to find the ability to respond and how to
be self-determined ▲ How to feed the
positive, not the negative, by using Divine Law
How to use equality with justice, being
accountable for our actions and words ▲
How to use personal integrity, ethics,
and values to find healing solutions
How to ACCEPT THE TRUTH

4 LOOKS FAR WOMAN

The Seer / Oracle / Dreamer / Prophet
Keeper of the Golden Door and the Crack in
the Universe ▲ The Mother of Visions, Dreams,
and Psychic Impressions ▲ The Guardian
of the Dreamtime and the Keeper of
Inner Potential
SHE TEACHES US . . .

How to understand our visions, dreams, feel-
ings, and impressions ▲ How to enter the

Dreamtime, go into other realms, and
through the Crack in the Universe ▲ How to
properly use our psychic abilities and gifts
of prophecy for humanity ▲ How to use
spiritual boundaries, psychic self-defense,
and respect those boundaries in others ▲
How to use our inner potential to become
healed healers
How to SEE THE TRUTH

5 LISTENING WOMAN

The Mother of Tiyoueh, the Stillness,
and Inner Knowing
The Keeper of Discernment and Guardian of
Introspection ▲ The Interpreter of Messages
from the Spirit World ▲ The Counselor and
Advisor / the Keeper of Hearing
SHE TEACHES US . . .

How to enter the Stillness and hear our heart's
small, still voice within ▲ How to find and
understand the Inner Knowing we carry in our
Spiritual Essences ▲ How to listen to the
viewpoints and opinions of others and the
voices of the Ancestors ▲ How to understand
body language and unspoken thoughts / hear-
ing with the heart
How to HEAR THE TRUTH

6 STORYTELLER

The Guardian of the Medicine Stories
The Keeper of Heyokah Medicine and Humor
The Teacher Who Teaches Without Pointing a
Finger ▲ The Preserver of Speaking from
Personal Experience and Truth
SHE TEACHES US . . .

How to teach through telling stories that con-
tain lessons ▲ How to balance the sacredness
with irreverence / using humor creatively ▲
How to speak from our experience without
judging others or being self-righteous ▲ How
to be a student in life as well as the teacher,
preserving the wisdom gained
How to SPEAK THE TRUTH

7 LOVES ALL THINGS

The Mother of Unconditional Love and
All Acts of Pleasure
The Keeper of Sexual Wisdom and
Self-respect ▲ The Sensual Lover / the Mother-
Nurturer / the Warmth of the Feminine ▲ The
Guardian of the Needs of the Family
SHE TEACHES US . . .

How to use respect, trust, and intimacy in all
relationships ▲ How to love all aspects of
our lives, lessons, sexuality, and physical
beings ▲ How to be a loving woman,
nurturing mother, sensual lover, and trusted
friend ▲ How to forgive ourselves and others,
developing acceptance and shunning
criticalness
How to LOVE THE TRUTH

8 SHE WHO HEALS

The Intuitive Healer / Midwife / Herbalist/
Keeper of the Healing Arts
The Singer of the Death Song and Keeper of
the Life and Death Mysteries ▲ The Guardian
of the Medicine Roots and Healing Herbs and
the Servant of Humankind ▲ The Mother of
Intuition / All Rites of Passage / Cycles of
Birth, Death, and Rebirth
SHE TEACHES US . . .

How to serve others with a happy heart, using
our healing abilities ▲ How to understand and
honor the life cycles of birth, death, and re-
birth ▲ How to believe in the miracles of life
through our connections to our Spiritual
Essences ▲ How to understand the Plant
Kingdom and the healing uses of all
parts of plants
How to SERVE THE TRUTH

9 SETTING SUN WOMAN

The Keeper of Tomorrow's Dreams and Goals
The Guardian of the Needs of the Next Seven
Generations ▲ The Mother of the Proper Use of
Will / Will to live / Will to survive / Will power
▲ The Keeper of Mother Earth's Resources and
the Guardian of Preservation
SHE TEACHES US . . .

How to preserve and use our resources with-
out wasting anything ▲ How to prepare for
tomorrow by planning today / Making and
meeting goals ▲ How to show concern,
dependability, and compassion through the
ways we live ▲ How to properly use our wills,
using our intents to provide for future
generations
How to LIVE THE TRUTH

10 WEAVES THE WEB

The Mother of Creativity / the Muse /
the Artist / the Creatress
The Manifestor of Dreams, Who Brings Visions
into Reality ▲ The Guardian of Life Force,
Who Teaches Women to Give Birth to Their
Dreams ▲ The Keeper of Survival Instinct and
the Mother of the Creative / Destructive
SHE TEACHES US . . .

How to use our desire to create and bring our
dreams into tangible forms ▲ How to tap
life force; using energy to build, change, or
manifest our needs ▲ How to manifest our
visions and give them life through our actions
and artistic talents ▲ How to create new
from old and how to destroy the limitations to
creativity
How to WORK WITH TRUTH

11 WALKS TALL WOMAN

The Guardian of Leadership and the
Keeper of New Paths
The Mother of Beauty and Grace and the
Keeper of Innovation and Persistence ▲ The
Role Model of Health, Physical Fitness, Stamina,
and Letting the Heart's Desire Take the Lead ▲
The Keeper of Personal Impeccability and the
Guardian of All Forms of Inner Strength
SHE TEACHES US . . .

How to be our personal best and still be
vulnerable and human ▲ How to keep our
bodies and minds flexible and in good health
through advancing and retreating ▲ How to
seek and find new paths to growing and
learning, leading through example ▲ How to
develop inner strength / How to attract and
release
How to WALK THE TRUTH

12 GIVES PRAISE

The Mother of All Acts of Thanksgiving and
Keeper of Abundance
The Guardian of Ceremony and Ritual / the
Keeper of Magic ▲ The Mother of Encourage-
ment and the Guardian of Celebration ▲
The Wisdom Keeper of the Art of
Giving and Receiving
SHE TEACHES US . . .

How to return thanks for the abundance we
need before it arrives, making space to receive
it ▲ How to celebrate every victory in life
with joy—ours as well as the accomplishments
of others ▲ How to use right attitudes to
create magical changes in the Self ▲ How to
create abundance through praise,
giving, and receiving
How to be GRATEFUL FOR THE TRUTH

13 BECOMES HER VISION

The Guardian of Transformation and
Transmutation
The Keeper of the Emergence of Spirit into
Physical Form ▲ The Mother of Alchemical
Changes and Rites of Passage into Wholeness
▲ The Guardian of Personal History,
Becoming, and Myth
SHE TEACHES US . . .

How to become our visions and own our
wholeness ▲ How to release the old Self
and step into the realized dream ▲ How to
honor the process that brought us through the
changes and transformation ▲ How to mark
the Rite of Passage into Wholeness and
celebrate the Vision we have become
How to BE THE TRUTH

Introduction



The story of the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers was passed to me through the two Kiowa Grandmothers who were my teachers in the early 1970s. Cisi Laughing Crow and Berta Broken Bow gave me a legacy, upon which I was to build my life. As near as we could figure, Cisi was 120 and Berta was 127 years old when I was a young woman of 22. Both of these Grandmothers were born shortly after the Trail of Tears in the mid- to late 1840s when their families, along with many others who refused to be enrolled and to live on reservations, traveled south to the freedom afforded in the mountains of Mexico. In the past twenty years or so, the Bureau of Indian Affairs of the United States government has tried unsuccessfully to reclaim these families by offering to enroll them and bring them back to reservations in the United States.

The Traditions that were allowed to live because of the refusal of these people to give up their connection to the Earth Mother are the basis of these stories. I am truly grateful for the wisdom of this Woman's Medicine and for the strength it took those Native American families to carve

out new lives in a strange land. Because of their persistence, these Ancient Teachings are still alive today.

I am very grateful that my first teacher in Mexico, Joaquin Muriel Espinosa, took me to Cisi and Berta, realizing that I needed to learn Woman's Medicine instead of insisting that I follow the male Warrior way. His insight has opened my life and path in ways I did not understand at the time. I honor the greatness of his humility and his desire for my best interests every time I see women following a male Medicine way, becoming confused and sometimes taken advantage of because they have not been trained to respect the feminine principle in themselves.

Many other female Elders have spoken to me of the Clan Mother stories of Woman's Medicine but were saddened that much of the history has been lost during the preceding generations. I have found great joy in being able to revive the history, which would otherwise be lost, and to share our Woman's Legacy with the world. As it was then, and shall be until we change ourselves from within, the Legacy of Woman and the Earth Mother is at risk. Our female and male roles in humankind stem from the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers who emerged as aspects of the Earth Mother and Grandmother Moon, because all things are born of the feminine.

To become a fully grown woman, which in Native American Tradition happens around the age of fifty-two, I was instructed to work on my personal journey by developing my personal talents and gifts, using the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers as role models. I was taught how to understand the Medicine of each of these ancient Grandmothers and how to relate to each as my teacher. Although

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I have many years to go before attaining my majority, I have come to love these Clan Mothers who have been my Spirit Teachers and I trust how they speak to my heart. The Clan Mothers were the Spirit Teachers of the female Elders who were my physical teachers in Mexico and have taught many spiritual lessons to the Medicine Lodges of Women for centuries. The Thirteen Original Clan Mothers represent the aspects of what I have come to find most beautiful in woman and in the feminine principle.

These Clan Mothers have taught me to see the beauty in my sisters and brothers of all races and creeds. They have comforted me when I was weary or in pain and have taught me how to heal myself. Grandmothers Cisi and Berta passed the gift of knowing the Original Thirteen to me, and now it is time for me to pass this gift to the Sisterhood of Humankind. This is not to say that the men of our Earth will not benefit from these Grandmothers, for the men are also the children who were born of woman and have a female side. Now, however, it is necessary for all women to know the legacy they have been given in order to heal themselves before they reclaim their roles of healing and nurturing others. In this manner, the wounded feminine aspect in women will no longer need to be hostile, angry, separatist-oriented, or manipulative in order to cover old pain. From this vantage point, women can then present the healed role models they represent, leading others through example, instead of through male conquest or competition, allowing our world to reclaim a new point of balance between male and female.

It was many years after receiving these stories of the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers that I realized that these Teachings were common to many Tribes and that bits and

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pieces of this legacy had been passed from the Black Lodges or Women's Medicine Circles for hundreds of years. The Beloved Women of the Cherokee, the Clan Mothers of the Iroquois, the Grandmothers or Wisdom Keepers of the Kiowa, Choctaw, and many others have heard parts of this legacy. I began to more fully understand how the Dreaming Circles of Women kept this legacy alive through the sharing of their visions and dreams.

Although this legacy is not from one particular Tribe or Nation but rather came to me from my two Kiowa Grandmother teachers, it belongs to all of the Children of Earth. I was first told these stories in Spanish since I did not speak Kiowa. I was told by Cisi and Berta that as I learned the lessons of the thirteen steps of the Woman Wheel, more understanding would come to me. In truth, the spirits of the Thirteen Clan Mothers have guided and shaped my personal progress as a woman for the last eighteen years and continue to teach me as I grow.

I have added some references to one or two of the stories that have been told to me by other Tribal Grandmothers over the years, having discovered that all the histories of the Earth have been very similar. The overall view of the story of the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers has been shared in the Black Lodges of Women all across Native America, but the Indian language words that I have used in this text are of the Seneca language because it is most familiar to me.

I asked the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers how I could best present their Medicine Stories. I was told that the Seneca Medicine Wheel with the Pathways to Peace and the Twelve Cycles of Truth could give me a blueprint or structure that would allow people to see the whole picture. I discovered that

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truth is found in every Tradition, and sometimes, the blending of those truths brings further clarity. So I have taken the liberty of placing the stories of each of the Original Thirteen Clan Mothers on the Seneca Wheel to show the importance of truth and peace in Woman's Medicine among every Tribe and Medicine Lodge.

The *Twelve Cycles of Truth* in our Seneca Teachings have been assigned to months for simplicity's sake. I have added a thirteenth Cycle of Truth—*Be the Truth*—in order to complete the Medicine Wheel of the Thirteen Clan Mothers. Because of the difference between moon cycles and the calendar months used in our modern world, I have referred to a moon cycle falling in a certain month. As we all recognize, moon cycles fall in more than one month, but I have chosen to adapt the simplest way of conveying each Clan Mother's essence to our present way of thinking. I prefer that those who follow the lunar calendar look to those cycles and dates for the correct moon cycle that each Clan Mother holds.

The shell of Turtle shows us that the Earth Mother gave us the first lunar calendar. The circle framed in the center of the shell has thirteen parts and is representative of the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers and their guardianship of the thirteen lunar cycles. The Sacred Turtle is the embodiment of the Earth Mother and as Turtle's shell protects her body, the Thirteen Clan Mothers and their lunar cycles, depicted on her shell, protect the Mother Planet and all living things. It is through connecting to these rhythms and cycles that this story cannot be considered a traditional legend particular to one Tribe, but I can assure you that it is Woman's Medicine gathered from all of the places *the Remembering* was held by Grandmother Wisdom Keepers.

.....

The basic story has been unchanged. The only additions on my part are the descriptive passages and some names of the Totems of each Clan Mother. Cisi and Berta described some animals with physical characteristics but did not use the modern names we know them by. The animals' modern names came to me via the Thirteen Original Clan Mother Spirits speaking to my heart and showing me their Medicines.

I have supposed that when an animal became extinct in one area of the world and was only physically recorded in petroglyphs, like the camels and mammoths depicted in North and South America, the oral legends of those creatures continued, but the actual animal became a mythical beast to those who had never seen one. I believe that this is one reason that Cisi and Berta would call the camel "the humpbacked four-legged of the desert who needs no water." Another example of this is found in the Paiute Tribe, which holds the Big-horned Sheep as sacred, even though most of these creatures were killed, like the buffalo, with the coming of European settlers. Petroglyphs of Buffalo and Big-horned Sheep still speak to our Tribes by carrying the sacredness of our Ancestors' Medicines.

The Thirteen Crystal Skulls are part of the original story and Tradition and were also spoken of by four other Grandmothers of different Tribes. To my knowledge, nothing has been written about the history of these Crystal Skulls based on Indian oral Tradition or history. I have put the information on the Crystal Skulls that I received from Cisi, Berta, and Joaquin's teachings in the part of this book's Conclusion, called "Entering the Council House of the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers."

For eighteen years my connection to the Medicine of the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers has grown inside me. Each new lesson presented by the Thirteen Clan Mothers has added to my understanding and has forged the trails to my personal growth. I have chosen to open these teachings and my personal vision in order to share the map of healing I have received. These Medicine Stories and Traditions are my Give-away to human beings everywhere, so that we may continue to dream the dream, and to dance the Dance of Creation, bringing inner peace and, therefore, world peace.

My Healing Quest Vision of the Thirteen Clan Mothers' Shields



The Medicine Shields of the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers are a part of the ancient legend that surrounds the life lessons and the gifts each Clan Mother gives to humankind. In the Americas, the lodges, palaces, and temples that carry emblems of Turtle are reminders to our modern world that the legacy of the Sisterhood is still alive. Whether carved in stone like the Turtle Temples of the Mayans in the Yucatan, or painted on frescoes in the Toltec and Inca places of worship, or carved in petroglyphs across North America, these emblems of Turtle represent our connections to the Earth Mother and her thirteen different aspects, the Original Clan Mothers.

Oral history tells us that each Clan Mother made a Medicine Shield that represented her talents, strengths, and abilities. These traits could be called on by anyone who chose to develop those same gifts within the *Orenda* of the Self. *Orenda*, in the Seneca language, is the Spiritual Essence that contains the Eternal Flame of Love where the Great Mystery lives inside all things. The *Orenda* houses the guiding light and the inner voice that teaches us our potential and our greatest capacity to love and to be loving.

In ancient times, to call on the spirit of one of the Thirteen Wisdom Keepers, a person needed to focus on the identity and abilities of that particular Clan Mother. To connect to the spiritual identity of a Clan Mother's Medicine, we need to Enter *Tiyoweh*. This discipline is the Indian way of calming the mind and sitting in the Stillness, to listen or receive. The ceremony of Entering *Tiyoweh* is always done alone, away from the bustle of daily activity. Then, the person uses focus to invite a particular Clan Mother into the fertile silence of her or his Sacred Space, allowing the purity of her or his heart to send the unspoken invitation. Since the Clan Mothers were never physically described, their Medicine Shields were often used as the focal point, held gently in the mind's eye. The person seeking the wisdom held by a Clan Mother was then able to allow the receptive side of her or his nature to be visited. This visitation was not from the Spirit World as with an Ancestor's Spirit but rather was an inward journey that rekindled the flame of the thirteen aspects of feminine transformation from within the female side of human nature.

Grandmothers Cisi and Berta were fine teachers and always told me that the Thirteen Clan Mothers never appear in the same manner or form to anyone seeking their counsel. By using the ability to appear as all of the faces of womankind, the Clan Mothers can touch and teach each individual in a unique way. This flexibility of form is important since equality is one of the foundations of their teachings. If they appeared in the same form to everyone, it would be too easy for us, as human beings with human limitations, to brag that some of the Clan Mothers' talents belonged only to a particular race or genetic line.

The Thirteen Original Clan Mothers came to walk the Earth in adult human bodies that did not age. I was never told why the Earth Mother chose to have her spiritual aspects embody the forms of fully grown women, but I suppose that the fragility and mortality rate of children during the Ice Age could have had some bearing on the decision. The ability of the Clan Mothers to possess bodies that did not become ill or age could be legend or could be fact—it is not for me to say. I was taught that when the Clan Mothers' missions were completed and they disappeared from the face of the Mother Planet, the Thirteen Crystal Skulls were left in their places. I have sought to understand their Medicines with my heart, not with my mind. I have been in the presence of a few of the Crystal Skulls and I know in the deepest part of my being that they hold the mind-set of the Earth Mother and the feminine principle on our planet.

In my personal eighteen-year process of living with the Clan Mothers' Medicines, I focused on developing my own abilities as I related to each one individually. For me, the culmination of this learning process has been in sharing these teachings through this book and in using my own intuition and creativity to make the Medicine Shields of the Thirteen Clan Mothers.

These Medicine Shields are actually tiny drums that represent the heartbeat of the Earth Mother. Coming out of each drum/shield is the mask each Clan Mother wears for me to see. Each Medicine Shield has three feathers at the bottom, representing the way I see the Spirit World and the Red Road of the Natural World come together in the heart of each living thing. Three feathers also represent the balance

of our male and female sides with the center feather holding the Great Mystery's love.

In September of 1991 on the Autumn Equinox, I went on my seventeenth Vision Quest with the purpose of completing some personal healing. Since 17 is my personal sacred number, I knew that my intent to *reclaim the love* would be honored. I had worked hard, prepared well, and earned the right to move forward. The rust that had gathered on my spirit from too much work and overextending myself had left me depleted and the magic of life had faded a bit. I had committed my love, time, and energy to helping everyone else and letting myself always be last. Consequently, I contracted cholera in April of 1991 and then double pneumonia in May. My body screamed, "No more!" I knew then that it was time to start reclaiming the love by committing to taking my Moontimes and days of silence that had been forgotten in my flurry of activity.

The messages I received from the Thirteen Clan Mothers during my rest and preparation time made it clear that I would be given the vision of each of the Clan Mothers' Shields and that I was to share my entire process of reclaiming the love with others. In order for me to do that, I must explain the way I have been taught Woman's Medicine before I discuss the making of the Medicine Shields of the Thirteen Clan Mothers.

Traditionally, in ancient times, women did not go on Vision Quests. However, the women of the Black Lodges did go on Healing Quests that were a part of the function of the Medicine Lodges of Woman. This type of quest is different, however, from the Warrior Way of doing a Vision Quest

because women hold their visions inside of themselves in the womb space. On the other hand, men, having demonstrative natures, must seek their visions through stopping all activity, food and water, or anything else that would keep their intellects in the way. To go beyond any limitation, the active male principle must be forced to be still. Through reaching the female side of his nature, the man is then ready to receive his vision.

My Elders taught me that women suffer enough during Moontime cycles, pregnancy, labor, and birth. There is no reason for a woman to suffer further, to prove her ability to compete with men, or to place the living treasure she represents in peril. Women would not place their children or the Earth Mother at risk, nor would they insist that a child should suffer to prove that he or she is worthy of love. The Great Mystery does not ask further suffering or pain of any woman. Womankind is already doing her part by giving birth to children, as well as giving birth to the dreams of humankind, holding the vision of abundance for the next seven generations.

For women in our White Buffalo Tradition, a Healing Quest supports and protects the role of women as Mothers of the Creative Force and takes a year of preparation. For the year prior to going on her Healing Quest, a woman takes a minimum of three days of silence a month, every month without fail. These three days of silence and retreat are during her Moontime but are not necessarily the full Moontime; her flow may last longer. If she is past her time of bleeding or has had a hysterectomy, she can choose to take this retreat time during full or new moon, depending on which moon cycle is most appropriate for her rhythms or feelings.

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During the monthly retreats, the woman visualizes opening her womb to receive the fertilization of the Great Mystery's love, giving life force to the seeds of her dreams. She opens herself to receive the Earth Mother's strength and nurturing to replenish her body. She opens her heart and mind to receive visions and creativity. Everyone's experience is different, but these times of retreat are often as powerful as any Vision Quest. The only activities are of one's own making during the Moontime retreat. No reading, no television, no recorded music with words, and no artificial input should intrude. It is fine to sing, drum, dance, return thanks, create poetry, art, and such, but to fill oneself up with anything but self-expression, thanksgiving, and/or receiving can be counterproductive.

Food and water are very important during this time of cleansing and retreat. Eating lightly and naturally so that the body has no attention on nourishment is of utmost importance. Hunger and thirst can really block a woman's ability to cleanse the womb and stay focused so that her mind is also cleansed of unneeded chatter. The Moontime is a time to be filled, fed, replenished, and nurtured. It is not a time to create any kind of stress for the body, mind, heart, or spirit. We go into retreat to receive, and anything that keeps us from receiving is a waste of energy and time.

After a year of taking this special time for the Self, it is clear to a woman that she can trust herself, commit to herself, open her receptive side, and be comfortable being alone. The rewards of this preparation are in finding the joy of connection to her Orenda (Spiritual Essence), her body's rhythms, the Great Mystery, her Totems, the Spirit World, Grandmother Moon, and the Earth Mother.

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The way I was taught to conduct a Vision Quest or Healing Quest for a woman, since women are naturally receptive, is to never disconnect a woman from the female elements of water and earth. Woman's role is to nurture, receive, and give birth. Therefore, on a Healing Quest, we must nurture all parts of the Self, receive the visions, and give birth to those dreams. A hut, lean-to, or single-person wigwam is made to sit on the outer edge of the woman's circle of stones that will represent her Sacred Space for three days. In the center of her circle is a smaller circle of stones that she will use for her campfire. This smaller circle for fire represents the Eternal Flame of Love the Great Mystery placed inside her Orenda. She will stay up every night and feed that fire, feeding the fire of Creation inside herself, and then sleep and dream during the day inside her hut.

A woman on a Healing Quest is given distilled or fresh natural spring water to keep the tides of her feelings high. The high tides of feelings bring forth the conductive nature of her intuition and a watery womb to receive her visions, giving them life. Just like a woman's fertility cycle, when the womb has gathered tissue and water in order to make the right environment for impregnation, the whole body is supported by the water she drinks. Lack of water in a woman's body can keep her disconnected from the natural female elements. Dehydration can also create hallucinations that do not serve the internal seeds of her visions, causing them to be dry-birthed. All seeds need water and earth to sprout, just as the seed dreams of humankind need these elements inside a woman's body in order to come to fullness.

Cisi and Berta also insisted on corn cakes being eaten during the three-day period. Two flat corn cakes, three to

four inches around, were eaten per day because the corn kept the body heat stored during the night and represented the element of earth in the body. If corn cakes are not available, cornbread, corn nuts, or small, fat, homemade corn tortillas will do. The water and corn do not distract a woman from the intent of the Healing Quest but rather support her system so that all four of the Clan Chiefs of Air, Earth, Water, and Fire are inside her Sacred Space. In her circle of stones, to assist her in her quest, the woman breathes the air, feeds the fire, blesses her body with the water, sits on the earth and eats the corn to feed her fertility—the kernels or seeds of the future.

After three days and three nights of giving thanks, singing, dreaming, and receiving her vision, the questing woman completes her journey by opening the East stone of her circle, saying final prayers of thanksgiving, and returning to camp. It is an honor for those in camp who have prayed for her success to return to their friend's sacred circle and retrieve her bedroll, drum, and other items from her hut. The Medicine Person who held the energy for the woman who was on the hill now welcomes her by smudging or smoking her body with sage and cedar, while the others are traveling back to retrieve her things. The rest of the completion process of the Healing Quest is individual, depending upon the attending Medicine Person's preference, training, and Tradition.

The entire process of taking a monthly Moontime in silence for a year and completing a Healing Quest is a major commitment to the Self that enables any woman to receive from the Earth Mother the same quality of healing and nurturance she gives to others. Needless to say, this type of

Woman's Medicine teaches women to honor and love themselves and their roles in life, and how to reclaim the magic of the feminine. After one Warrior Way Vision Quest, followed by sixteen Healing Quests, I can attest to the validity of the nurturing Woman's Way and the changes it has made in my life. I feel it is time for women to stop suffering needlessly and to reconnect with the Earth Mother, who is the source of all acts of pleasure.

Due to the nurturing way I was treating myself during my preparation time, to receive the joyous visions of the Medicine Shields of the Thirteen Clan Mothers was effortless. I was reclaiming the love of living, of being human, of being a woman; and I was rediscovering the magic and the joy that life had never stopped offering me. The shift in my perceptions brought me back to the ways of the Grandmothers, allowing me to feel them again.

"We come from the bones of our Ancestors," Grandmother Cisi's voice said inside my memory. Then I remembered Grandmother Berta telling me that any animal's bones give us the structure we need in order to learn the Medicine that particular Creature offers us.

I use animal bones to make spirit dolls that are my own Kachina-like sculptures of the Ancestors who come to me in visions. In ancient times, the toys of Indian children were horses and buffalos made from bones left over from dinner. That was the reason I decided to revive this traditional art form. I realized that I could take my own artistic endeavor further by making bone dolls of the Thirteen Clan Mothers. It was comforting to think that I would have the Clan Mother dolls near me during my healing process. The Thirteen Clan Mothers came to me one by one, while I gave

them a form by making a doll. As I walked the mountains and valleys in northern New Mexico, I found many of the bones I needed, and I traded for some of the others I would use. Each vertebra bone gave me the forms I needed for the masks of the Clan Mothers so that no labels could be placed on their identities. After six or seven dolls had been made, the spirits of the Clan Mothers instructed me to make bone masks and to affix each individual mask to the shields. Each shield represents the Medicine of a particular Clan Mother as she showed me the face or the mask holding the mystery of her Medicine. These Medicine Shields have become my personal map for reconnecting with the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers and the focal point I use to hear them with my heart. Every time Grandmother Nisa (Moon) came full, I was gifted with another piece of the beauty of Womankind that guided my personal journey in healing.

When we learn about the beauty inside us and complete the lessons of the feminine, we will have owned those Thirteen Shields of the Sisterhood as our personal protection and strengths. At that point, we will have become our visions. After completing these thirteen cycles of transformation, our next step will be to create new life maps for humanity, teaching how to use our creativity as healed healers, without wasting the Creative Force inside us on old limitations. We will not only be creating from the joy within us, but we will also be exercising our right to create effortlessly. When the human struggle, suffering, and pain are transmuted into the wholeness of planetary healing, the unified intentions and missions of the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers will be a reality.

The Beginning of the Legacy of Woman



After the destruction by fire that ended the First World of Love, the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers were created as the healing aspects of Grandmother Moon and Mother Earth, representing all that is beautiful in Woman. As parts of the Original Dream, the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers came to walk the Earth, forming the Sisterhood that bound all women together as dreaming counterparts in order to manifest the Original Dream of Wholeness on the physical plane. These seeds of inner peace were planted in the hearts of every human's female side. Today, this Original Dream of Wholeness is being nurtured in the hearts of women worldwide and is being birthed through their shared visions as they open their dreams to the light of love and build those dreams in tangible form.

During the making of this Legacy of Woman Dream, the feelings that would need to be shared among women in order for the Human Tribe to heal were sealed in the Earth Mother's tears. These tears were the Medicine that would transform the pain created when the First World of Love was destroyed by greed. The hearts of the Human Tribe had been wounded, and from those deep and jagged wounds, fear

and separation were born. The Two-legged Children of Earth no longer trusted one another and feared that they had been abandoned by the Great Mystery and the Earth Mother. It was for this reason that the love and compassion of woman was born.

It was then necessary for the Earth Mother's feminine aspects to be taken from the Dreamtime and allowed to walk the physical plane in order for human women to take their places as nurturers and Mothers of the Creative Source. The wholeness of woman that had its roots in the Spirit World and was connected to Earth through the Dreaming Circles of women, was birthed into the physical world in order to fulfill the promise of healing. This healing of the Earth Tribe's wounds will continue until the Original Dream of the Earth Mother is restored in the tangible world. Perfect peace and harmony, respect for all living things, love without conditions, truth as the ultimate guideline, and equality for all are but a few of the parts of the Original Dream of Wholeness.

Healing begins to take place on our Mother Planet through this original Council of Women, creating the Legacy of Woman, and allowing all women to find their roles in the Children of Earth's healing process. It was through these Thirteen Clan Mothers that the truth of healing was discovered: *When we heal ourselves, others are healed. When we nurture our dreams, we give birth to the dreams of humankind. When we walk as loving aspects of the Earth Mother, we become the fertile, life-giving Mothers of the Creative Force. When we honor our bodies, our health, and our emotional needs, we make space for our dreams to come into being. When we speak the truth from our healed*

hearts, we allow life abundant to continue on our Mother Planet.

Thirteen Moons pass every time the Earth Mother completes one rotation around Grandfather Sun. Thirteen is the number for transformation (although it has been maligned by many fear-ridden philosophies). As every year is completed, a cycle of transformation in the growth and healing process of the Earth Mother's children takes place. These cycles of healing and enlightenment bring forth the powerful aspects of the female principle every time Grandmother Moon comes full.

From the beginning, as life forms came to inhabit Earth, there was but one great land mass. This land mass was originally called Turtle Island because Turtle was, and is, the most fertile creature on Earth. The Two-leggeds were given the mission of preserving the fertility of the Earth Mother, who would provide for all of their needs if they honored the Sacred Space of all living things in the physical world. When this mission was neglected, with greed causing the humans of the First World to rape women and to pilage gold from the Earth Mother's body, the feminine was defiled. The Thirteen Original Clan Mothers had not yet manifested but were the Spirit World Guardians of preserving the fertility of the Earth Mother.

It was during that time of great pain that the Clan Mothers passed the legacy of honoring woman and preserving the Earth Mother to humankind. As these Clan Mothers came to walk the physical plane, they built a Council House in the shape of Turtle to be a reminder to all women that in order for the Children of Earth to survive, the

women must honor themselves and their true Mother, the Earth. These Spirit Ancestors of womankind came to walk the Earth in order to understand their Medicines, developing the strengths they needed to meet and overcome the challenges of being human.

The Thirteen Original Clan Mothers decided to forge the bonds of Sisterhood that would unite all women as one. This Sisterhood was based on a bond of blood that marked the cycles of fertility in women. These cycles of fertility are based on moon cycles of twenty-eight days between bleeding. To this day, women who live, dream, or pray together will have their Moontimes or menstrual cycles at the same time so that their wombs are open simultaneously, allowing the dreams of humankind to be planted inside and then nurtured as a group.

Every woman has the potential to birth the dreams of the Sisterhood whether she can birth babies or not. The womb space is the balance point of gravity in the human form and the power place of the physical realm found inside the body. Women who have had their wombs removed can give birth to their dreams and projects without having the physical organs. The Sisterhood welcomes every woman who accepts the roles that will honor all women equally and who will contribute her talents to the whole. Little girls become women, and a part of this Sisterhood, with the flow of their first Moontime. These young women mark their Rites of Passage into the Sisterhood by becoming Mothers of the Creative Source. In other words, as young women are educated as to their roles in womankind, they also contribute to the birthing cycle of the dreams that will shape

the future of our planet. The Sisterhood is responsible for teaching Woman's Medicine to young women before they mate and give birth to children of their own.

Through Rites of Passage and the education of young women, the Legacy of Woman is then firmly established in the hearts and minds of the future generations. Then, the old patterns of family and planetary dysfunction can be healed. These were the original aims of the Sisterhood brought to womankind during the Ice Age that followed the First World's destruction by fire. From that first Turtle Council House, all circles, wheels, societies, and clans of women were given birth. The Medicine Lodges, Dreaming Circles, Totem Clans, Sisterhoods, and all aspects of honoring the Mother Earth came from these Thirteen Original Clan Mothers. These Clan Mothers were not of any particular race, nor did they possess any particular belief systems that could limit womankind. They were the Mothers of all races and the healing aspects of womankind who then birthed the healing potential now present on our planet. The Knowing Systems that they represent are the Foundations of Truth that allow all women to be the Guardians of humankind's dream of achieving wholeness.

When these truths were passed to me in my twenty-second year of life by my two Kiowa Grandmother teachers, I asked Grandmother Cisi why the red race had been given the history of the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers. She told me that the red race was given the Guardianship of Earth Medicine and the mysteries of the Earth Mother. Grandmother Berta explained that many pieces to the puzzle of the Sisterhood were held by wise women of all races, but how those truths came into being had almost been forgotten as Tradi-

tions changed and eons passed. The blueprint of the first Medicine Wheel of the Sisterhood was passed orally through the Black Lodges, Moon Lodges, and Medicine Societies of Women in Native America in order for the Legacy of Woman to survive. The original wheel of the Clan Mothers was based on the thirteen moons of the year and had twelve positions around the wheel, with the thirteenth in the center.

The Medicine Wheel of the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers is based on the creed of "Life, Unity, and Equality for Eternity." Life is in the East of the Medicine Wheel where the day is born with the rising of Grandfather Sun. Life in the East teaches us that each new Sun announces a new beginning when life abundant is available, asking us to participate by using all our abilities. Unity is in the South where faith, trust, innocence, and humility begin the Earth Walk of physical life and where we all see as children. In the South, Unity teaches us that unless everyone wins, nobody wins. Equality is in the West of the Wheel where all our dreams are born and all our promises of tomorrow live. Equality in the West teaches us that our dreams will only manifest in the future if we honor the equality of every life form. Eternity sits in the North of the Medicine Wheel, the place of wisdom, and teaches us that all cycles of change and all lessons in truth will continue throughout time. Every lesson of growth brings us closer to wholeness, teaching that our spirits are forever a part of the Great Mystery throughout eternity.

Each one of the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers holds a part of the foundation of truth within the Legacy of Woman. These talents and abilities are woven from the hidden mysteries of Grandmother Moon and are reflected through

Mother Earth in the physical embodiment of woman. Each aspect of the Thirteen Clan Mothers carries a part of the truth and corresponds to the thirteen moons of the year. The first moon birthed the ability of *learning the truth* and applied that talent to all Relations, all worlds, and all mysteries. The second moon brought the gift of *honoring the truth* and applied that talent to self-development. The third moon birthed the ability of *accepting the truth* and tempered these lessons with taking on the additional responsibilities of justice, self-determination, and balance. The fourth moon created the ability of *seeing the truth* in all realms through dreams, impressions, and prophecy. The fifth moon gave birth to the talent of *hearing the truth* in the physical and spiritual realms, understanding harmony through listening. The sixth moon brought the talent of *speaking the truth* and with it came the lessons of faith and speaking with humility. The seventh moon birthed the ability of *loving the truth* in all things, therefore, loving all things for the truth held inside. The eighth moon spun the talent of *serving the truth* by being of service to others in all of the healing arts. The ninth moon brought the gift of *living the truth* into being, teaching dependability through living the truth today in order to preserve tomorrow for the unborn generations. The tenth moon gave birth to the talent of *working with the truth*, using all aspects of creativity in order to bring the truth into physical manifestation in a creative way. The eleventh moon wove the ability of *walking the truth*, showing how to lead through example, how to stand tall and "Walk Your Talk." The twelfth moon birthed the talent of *giving thanks for the truth*, being based in returning thanks for all that is received. Expressing our

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gratitude created all ceremonies connected to giving or receiving the abundant lessons and bounty of life. The thirteenth moon came forward to give the gift of *becoming the truth* that is the cycle of transformation; the regenerative nature of completion that then moves to a new beginning place, in order to enter the next cycle of growth. From these cycles of truth the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers forged the Sisterhood and the Legacy of Woman.

Every Clan Mother came to walk the Earth in order to honor the Legacy of Woman and to make the Sisterhood strong. As each one of these ancient Grandmothers took her place in the Sisterhood's Council, she was given a mission. Each was to develop all aspects of her gifts and abilities in order to discover her own Medicine. This Medicine would then be opened to all of womankind through the making of that Grandmother's Medicine Shield. Every woman who sought the truth of these Medicines could understand because each Medicine Shield spoke to her seeking heart through color, form, and concept. The mystery of each Clan Mother's Medicine Shield would have to be felt deep inside each female Two-legged before the Medicine could be called upon for strength during each woman's personal journey of self-discovery.

Like the Ancient Grandmothers who had walked those paths of discovering the Self before them, the ensuing generations of women were never given the answers but merely given a map, a guideline, allowing them to express their own uniqueness and to learn their own lessons in their own ways. The original Medicine Shields of these Grandmothers have long since vanished, but the Medicine still stands in unity. As the guiding light of the Sisterhood, the spirits of

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these ancient Grandmothers still sit in Council inside the inner Earth with the light of their Whirling Rainbow Dream coming forth as the Aurora Borealis.

The gifts that each moon and each Clan Mother represent contain the abilities of each, as well as how she learned the lessons of physical life, using her gifts in order to be in balance while meeting the challenges she faced. The lesson that still stands before the women of today is one that was understood in the hearts of every Ancient Grandmother. That lesson is exemplified through "*Life, Unity, and Equality for Eternity*." The Sisterhood was formed in order for womankind to be able to see all aspects of the Self as equal, all talents, male and female, as contributing to the whole. We are being asked to honor the gifts of womankind and to call on the strength of our sisters in order to discover ourselves. The circle will come full when every human can see the beauty within the Self, as well as in all others. The transmutation of competition, separateness, hierarchy, jealousy, envy, manipulation, control, selfishness, greed, dependency, old wounds, and self-righteousness must be accomplished before we will come to wholeness. These attitudes are the enemies of humankind and are found within the Shadow-self, rather than outside ourselves.

As more women take their roles in the modern world of corporations and business, they often find themselves losing touch with the feminine. This is almost expected since the corporate work force is dominated by men. The role models of the ancient Clan Mothers can assist these modern women in maintaining their sense of Self and enable them to become leaders through example rather than through competition, backstabbing, or conquest, but the

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challenge to accomplish these goals depends upon the strength of the Sisterhood. Women must support other women in a way that allows those who chose difficult paths to learn to call upon their sisters, maintaining the understanding of who they are and what they can become. In this manner we can also support the development of the female aspect in our male counterparts, and then pass the legacy of wholeness to all of our children.

The timelessness of the Medicine that each Original Clan Mother holds will apply to our world no matter how many generations pass, because these truths are eternal. We are the Mothers of the Creative Source. The fertile aspect of our nature comes through being able to nurture the truth found in our dreams and to feed our dreams, giving them life, and then to build dreams in the physical world. After those dreams are birthed, we then are able to share the skills necessary for others to do the same. This is a part of the timeless wisdom that our wisewoman Grandmothers of the Turtle Council House offer us.

In each aspect of the Original Thirteen, we find a part of the Legacy of Woman that will fuel the fire of our personal and unified creations. To share that wisdom with our peers and our daughters is to honor the ceremony called the Give-away. The Give-away teaches us to share the wisdom that was shared with us, passing it on so that for eternity, the Teachings, Traditions, and Medicine will live.

The Legacy of Woman and the bonds of the Sisterhood will never be broken even though some human beings insist on standing outside of that circle of love and compassion. Those who stand outside are not to be hated or shunned. They are the Children of Sorrow who have never known

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their true Mother. They are the product of families torn apart, riddled with dysfunction, unable to break the chains that bind them to their pain. Their hearts, which seem hardened, have never known the safety of transformative tears or loving arms and gentle healing. These children of pain and sorrow come from such profound woundedness that the only life they know is one in which they must defend their viewpoints because they fear that they are unworthy of love.

The Earth Mother loves the wounded, even as they rape her body and claim material possessions in order to assert their right to be. She offers them love and rest. Then, she offers to heal their eyes that cannot see, their ears that cannot hear, and their hearts that cannot understand. The Earth Mother's waters offer to wash away the memories of anguish and personal grief held in human hearts. We hear the voice of our Earth Mother through our female side. Women are being offered an opportunity to become living extensions of her love, by healing themselves. As healed humans, we may become pockets of safety where others, still wounded, can seek the tools to use in finding their own paths to healing themselves.

As women, we are continually writing the history of the Legacy of Woman. We cannot point a finger at men or each other without owning the pain of past generations who forgot how to give or teach human compassion. Our own family trees are filled with teaching situations and with tragic examples that may have blinded our own Ancestors to the value of truth as it is found in love. Now, the destiny of wholeness of the human race falls to the Sisterhood because all things are born of woman.

The Thirteen Original Clan Mothers are here to teach us how to become our visions and how to heal each other as well as our world. The women who have completed all the lessons on this Medicine Wheel of life have been called wisewomen, holy women, saints, or goddesses and have been given a thousand different names. These fully realized females have appeared in a million or more roles throughout time, and yet, every living woman is a potential role model for humanity. The women who have been recognized as role models were all born of the Earth Mother and learned the lessons of her thirteen aspects, the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers. They are all ancient Grandmothers who spun the webs of our present world to deliver their children from the dark night of the soul. They are eternal and they offer their strength to each of us, female and male, in the spirit of truth and in the name of love.

All of us, as Two-legged humans of Earth, are being asked to return to the Ancient Turtle Lodge that exists inside the shell of the Self in order to discover and rediscover the talents we hold. The fertility of our Earth Mother and All Our Relations depends upon how we heal ourselves. After we are healed, it is our task to create new maps of how to use the energy we used to waste on worry, hurry, pain, grief, and conflict, in order to create a unified world of peace. We discover the essence of our true Mother's desire for peace when the *h* is moved from the end of the word *Earth* to the front, spelling *Heart*.