

# *Sacred Feminine*

## *Archetypes*



Meloney Hudson

# **SACRED FEMININE ARCHETYPES**

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Edited by Barbara Ardinger

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# You Are Your Archetype: Archetypes Explained



Do you do things your friends wouldn't do? Do you ever wonder why feel so differently than your own sister feels about something? Do you admire a friend and try to be more like her and find it impossible?

At some point, every woman wonders why she is the way she is and judges herself for not being more like this person or that person. But when she tries to be or act different, it seems inauthentic and untrue to who she is.

Why is this so? And what can we do about it? The short answer is that you're influenced by an archetypal drive that is a part of your soul and psyche. The best thing to do is accept this influence and embrace it.

We are who we are because our soul and psyche are ingrained with patterns that influence our actions, perceptions, motivations, and ideas. These soul, or psychic, patterns are a part of our individual design.

Psychic patterns were recognized as far back as ancient Greece, when Plato theorized that mental ideas or forms were imprinted in the brain before birth. The ancient Greeks called the concept *archetupon*, meaning "first-molded." It translates into the English word *archetype*.

In the early 1920s, Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung began incorporating archetypes in his psychotherapy approach. He theorized that the archetypes exist both in the each individual's psyche and in the world at large as components of the "collective unconscious" that serves to organize, direct, and inform human thought and behavior.

Archetypes are common to all humanity and lay the psychic foundation upon which each individual can build her own experience of life. These archetypal inner-patterns are the unconscious and powerful forces that influence the way we act and feel. Understanding and working with our archetypes can help us grow into self-realization. When you explore the archetype(s) that most strongly influence you, you can find crucial insights into your soul.

Energy medicine pioneer Carolyn Myss describes archetypes as "your energy guides to your highest potential." Working with archetypes is a powerful way to understand your own personal drives, actions, and reactions and to use those aspects of yourself to create and live a more fulfilled life.

Archetypes can take on an infinite number of images, motifs, symbols, and patterns of behavior. There are, however, some notable, recurring models and images. Each model carries its own qualities and characteristics. Myths and fairytales, for example, feature archetypal characters, such as the Hero, the Damsel in Distress, the Villain, the Helper, and others. Archetypes can also be found in events (i.e. birth, death, initiation), common figures (mother, father, devil, angel), and common motifs (i.e. creation, apocalypse, etc.). Sometimes a cross-over of characteristics occurs among archetypes. For example, a Damsel in Distress may also possess characteristics of the Helper.

All archetypes can potentially reveal themselves at any point of our lives. They can be activated by a variety of things, including one's disposition, society, family, hormones, other people, unchosen circumstances, chosen activities, and stages of life. Sometimes one archetype may be replaced by another.

An important aspect of archetype exploration is the shadow, or the dark side of the archetype. The shadow is the unconscious aspect of the psyche formed by repressed memories, desires, emotions, and instincts. The shadow, which possesses qualities that contradict the light aspect of the archetype, presents itself as negative behavior that sabotages the way we wish to be or be seen. Recognizing your shadow is the first step to deep healing. Just

acknowledging its presence and understanding its source will help to transform it into a positive part of yourself. By the way, Jung considers the shadow to be the seat of creativity.

### **Sacred Feminine Archetypes**

This model of archetypes explores sacred feminine qualities. We explore thirteen different female archetypes that represent some of the most familiar personality types. Each archetype is represented by an assortment of sacred feminine figures, both divine and mortal. By examining the characteristics of each archetype and the sacred women who embody and represent those qualities, you may be able to identify the archetypes that most greatly embody you and are most likely to influence your life.

Determining your archetype(s) and understanding their influences can help you to accept your innate way of being. You can let go of self-judgement (and judgement of others, too) and begin to love and honor your own soul and self. When you embrace your uniqueness, you'll also feel less inclined to compare yourself to others because you'll appreciate the influence of your own archetype. You feel confident and proud of who you are. In situations where you question your actions and emotions, it's wise to think of your archetype and embrace her presence.

Recognizing the shadow aspect of your archetype is also an important aspect of this work. The shadow provides a strong foundation for healing and personal transformation. The appearance of the shadow, which often takes us by surprise and can trigger angst and strong emotion, can initiate deep introspection that often reveals unpleasant memories and repressed emotions.

### **Working with Your Archetypes**

When you're working with archetypes, journaling can be your most powerful tool. Writing is a very effective way of asking questions, channeling information, and receiving insights from your soul. Journaling can reveal a lot about you and is a powerful method of processing information and experiences that you might tuck away in your conscious mind. You can freely (and possibly fearlessly) analyze your emotions, experiences, and reactions to life events. You may think that you have the qualities of one archetype, but through journaling you may discover that you actually possess multiple qualities and archetypes. Journaling will help you understand and appreciate the vastness of who you are.

Writing to your shadow can be especially healing and transformative, particularly after she has appeared and left you in state of upheaval. While your emotions are still raw, communicate with your shadow and search for her source. Where did she come from? Express your deepest, darkest secrets and allow her to speak back to you. You may uncover or discover things you have forgotten or never knew about yourself.

You can honor and celebrate your archetype by placing images of the sacred women you most relate to on your altar. You can also post pictures of her in your work area or in other significant places. Feel gratitude for the archetype that rules you and for this is who you are.

This lesson is a very basic introduction to archetypes and barely touches the surface of your psyche. In serious Jungian analysis, archetype therapy can involve dreams, psychic phenomena, and more. Analysis is a true psychological therapy. If you're interested, you can embark on a deep study of archetypes at the C.G. Jung Institute, which is located in Los Angeles. Its library holds Jung's books and other works on archetypes.

## **My Approach to Developing the Sacred Feminine Archetypes**

While I am not a Jungian therapist or an expert in archetypal analysis, I do recognize patterns and am aware of qualities and types of people. As a spiritual person with a passion for Goddess spirituality and ancient women's history, and as a teacher of women's empowerment, I have a passion and a mission to help women understand their multidimensionality and magnificence. Sadly, through our patriarchal and puritanical culture, women aren't made aware of the magical nature of their bodies or of the strength of their souls. When they are introduced to new aspects of themselves, their self-esteem increases, their self-confidence rises, and their lives improve.

I created this work because I feel that exploring the sacred and corporeal aspects of womanhood, even though a non-scientific approach, contributes to self-love and self-appreciation. Plus, it's fun!

### **Ancient Women's History**

The archetypes shown on the following pages provide an introduction to ancient women's history. Our schools did not teach us the rich pre-patriarchal history of women, when the Great Goddess was honored around the planet and women were held in high esteem. Knowing women's history is a key to your empowerment. For this reason, *Sacred Feminine Archetypes* presents sacred figures you may have never known about. These figures will expand your awareness of the brilliant and powerful women who have lived in our hidden history. In this lesson, however, you will read only the most general overview of each sacred feminine woman. You're encouraged to continue your own research and discovery.

# Connecting with Your Archetype



Review the archetypal images that follow. Notice the ones that you feel most attracted to. After you've identified one, two, or more archetypes who best represent your patterns, you can immerse yourself more deeply into your journey of self-discovery by answering the questions below.

Grab your journal now and take time to explore your deepest thoughts as you write. This will help you develop a strong connection with your archetype(s) and help you honor and appreciate her/their influence on you.

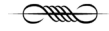
1. Who is your primary (i.e., most dominant) archetype?
2. Who are your secondary and tertiary archetypes?
3. Were you born with your primary archetype? Or did she develop within you?
4. If she developed, what events, people, or observations influence her development?
5. What do you like most about your primary archetype?
6. What do you not like about your primary archetype?
7. Has the shadow of your primary archetype ever appeared in your life? If so, how did or does she affect your life?
8. How has your primary archetype affected your life? (This can include positive and/or negative effects.)
9. In what ways does knowing about your primary archetype help to empower you?
10. Answer these questions also for your secondary and tertiary archetypes.
11. Is there an archetype you admire that you'd like to bring more into your life? If so, who is she and why do you want more of her?

# The Archetypes





## Mother/Nurturer



The primary focus and instinctual drive of the Mother/Nurturer is to provide comfort, care, and nurturance to her child (or child figure, who can be another person's child, a pet, an elderly person, or someone else). She is a physical, psychological, and spiritual caregiver, who is generous and giving. She is devoted, patient, and unconditionally loving. Her child or child figure is central to her existence, and nurturing and giving to others is her most fulfilling role.

**Shadow:** The Mother/Nurturer can become depressed if her need to nurture is rejected. She can be all-consuming and impart guilt when they try to become independent. She can also be abusive or abandoning. This drive can cause emptiness and depression if motherhood is not fruitful.



**Mother Goddess of Anatolia**

The Great Goddess, Creatrix of All Things, was worshipped by cultures around the world for thousands of years. She was worshipped for her powers to give us life, sustenance, and guidance.

One of the original portrayals of the Great Mother is a figure, dated to the 6<sup>th</sup> millennium BCE, and found at ancient settlement, Catalhoyuk. The Goddess appears to be giving birth while sitting upon her throne. Flanked by lion attendants, She embodies the ultimate power of womanhood.



**Demeter**

Greek Goddess of Grain and Mother of Persephone, Demeter was worshipped for her blessings of abundant crops. She was also sought for her nurturing love and for assistance during pregnancy and through motherhood.

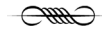
In Greek myth, Persephone was picking field flowers when Hades, god of the Underworld, snatched her and took her to his kingdom below. Demeter heard her daughter's cries, she searched for days without success. As Demeter grieved, the land became fallow, crops failed, and hunger prevailed. When Demeter and Persephone were finally reunited, the earth was renewed and became verdant again. During the year, Persephone returns to the underworld every fall, and as Demeter begins mourning the earth once again goes dormant. But in the spring, Persephone returns to Demeter restores the land's fertility.



**Shashthi**

Hindu goddess of marriage and children and benefactor and protector of children, Shashthi is also worshipped as a bestower of children to the childless, and regarded as the foremost goddess for blessing children. Before childbirth, Shashthi is worshipped to protect the welfare of the expectant mother. She is also invoked after childbirth on the sixth day of each month until the child reaches puberty, especially when the child is sick. Shashthi is portrayed as a motherly figure, often nursing or carrying as many as eight infants in her arms. Barren women desiring to conceive and mothers seeking to ensure the protection of their children will worship Shashthi and request her blessings and aid. She is especially venerated in eastern India.

# Wife



The Wife is relationship-oriented. Her identity and well-being depend on her having a significant relationship. She's committed to her relationship and will often do whatever it takes to keep it intact. Often, she's her partner's "right-hand" and supports his pursuits. Some wives are equal collaborators with their partners.

**Shadow:** Jealousy, self-sacrifice, servant qualities, loss of sense of self. Fear of being alone. If a partnership is not formed, this lack can cause depression and loss of self-identity.



**Nefertiti**

The Great Wife of Akhenaten (Egyptian king who ruled from 1353-1336 BCE). Because she was a woman of great strength and intelligence, she was considered more of a co-ruler than merely the wife of the king. Together, Nefertiti and her husband worked to convince the world leave their old gods and goddesses to follow one new god, Aten, the Sun Disc. In the spectacular artworks in the temples, Nefertiti is portrayed as working alongside Akhenaten. They had several daughters. Nefertiti appears in a great number of artistic works at the temples built by her husband to honor the new god.



**Hera**

Greek Goddess of Marriage, Wife of Zeus, commitment maker. Hera was worshipped as a Great Goddess long before the well-known pantheon of goddesses and gods was established. She was a beautiful, "cow-eyed" goddess, independent and dignified, holding more power than any god. Later Greek mythology portrayed her as the jealous and bickering wife of Zeus, her unfaithful husband who took many lovers and had numerous children out of wedlock. Hera often took vengeful and wrathful action against his lovers. She often sought seclusion on her own in deep depression. But in spite of it all, Hera remained faithful to Zeus, and thus personified monogamy and fidelity. Great temples were built for Hera, and Haerarian Games, women's sporting events honoring Hera, were held throughout ancient Greece. Also, annual marriage festivals called hierogamy, were held in which couples re-enacted the marriage of Hera and Zeus.



**Mary Magdalene**

Apostle, Companion, and Sacred Partner with Jesus Christ, Mary Magdalene is mentioned in the Bible and Gnostic texts as a significant figure in Jesus' life. She anointed his feet with her hair. Along with Jesus' mother and his mother's sister, she sat near the crucifix where Jesus was hanged. Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene when he resurrected. Passages in the Gnostic texts, *The Gospel of Philip* and the *Gospel of Mary Magdalene*, tell us that Mary was Jesus' closest apostle and that he spoke of things to her that he didn't share with the male disciples. Peter said to Mary, "Sister, we know that the Teacher loved you differently from other women" (*The Gospel of Mary Magdalene*). There is frequent mention in the New Testament of Jesus as the bridegroom, giving fuel to the theory that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene.

## Daughter/Child/Princess



The Daughter/Child/Princess remains eternally young in body, mind, and spirit. She fully immerses herself in the enjoyment of life and radiates optimism and good hope. She often sees only the good in things. She enjoys receiving nurturance and care from others.

**Shadow:** She is unable to grow up and accept the responsibilities of an adult. She is often helpless and dependent on others to take care of her, as well as powerless in the world, and often at the mercy of those who care for her. She sometimes feels trapped in her gilded cage. Not compelled to act for herself, she lets others act for her. Passive and compliant, she wants or needs to be rescued and taken care of. In the wounded child, unresolved trauma can often hinder development into adulthood.



**Princess Akhensenpaaten**

Egypt, Eighteenth Dynasty (ca. 1350-1310 BCE), third daughter of the Egyptian Pharaoh Akhenaten and his Great Royal Wife, Nefertiti. She and her two older sisters became the "Senior Princesses" and participated in many functions of the government and religion. Akhensenpaaten is believed to have been married to her father, which was not unusual for Egyptian royal families, and at the age of twelve, she gave birth to a princess, whom her father or another pharaoh may have fathered (records are unclear.) After her father's death, Akhensenpaaten, age 13, married her half-brother Tutankhamun (he was 8 to 10 years old). It appears that they had two stillborn daughters. Sometime in the ninth year of Tutankhamun's reign. When he died at about the age of 18, Ankhesenpaaten was left alone at the age of 21. Some records suggest she then married her maternal grandfather, Ay, and may have died during his reign, as she disappeared from history during this time.



**Kore Persephone**

Greek Goddess, Queen of the Underworld, daughter of Demeter and Zeus. Myth tells us that Persephone was a carefree girl who was abducted by Hades one day when she was picking flowers in the meadow. Hades took her to the underworld to be his bride. But she was resistant and inconsolable. When Zeus sent his messenger, Hermes, to save her, Hades willingly let her go. Before she left, however, he gave her pomegranate seeds to eat. Persephone was returned to Demeter, who was overjoyed. But because Persephone had eaten the seeds, she was compelled to spend one third of every year in the Underworld with Hades. The rest of the year she lived with her mother.

# Virgin/Independent



The Virgin/Independent represents the sovereign, self-sufficient qualities in women, but not necessarily sexual purity. Her preference is for autonomy with a focus on her mission. She is less likely to fall in love, and emotional attachments do not distract her from what is meaningful to her. She is not victimized. Goal-focused (their own goals) and logical thinking. Self-sufficient and competent.

**Shadow:** Distain or fear of sensuality. She can miss out on enjoyment because she's so focused on her goals.



**Artemis**

Greek Virgin Goddess of the Hunt and the Moon, Competitor, Feminist, and Protectress, she was a favorite among independent Greek women. Artemis was a true virgin, untamed by man, and widely held as a powerful embodiment of the independent feminine spirit. She hunted at night by the light of the moon, assisted those who needed help, and mercilessly punished those who offended her or hurt her loved ones. Once when a Titan attempted to rape her mother, Artemis suddenly appeared at her mother's side and used her bow and arrow to execute the aggressor. She also helped her mother during her difficult delivery of Apollo, and nursed her mother for nine days afterward. In ancient Greece, young women who were devoted to the goddess hunted regularly and remained virgins, like Artemis herself.



**Queen Elizabeth I of England**

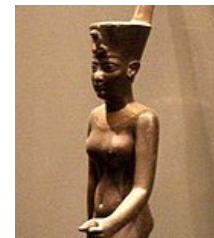
(7 September 1533– 24 March 1603)  
Elizabeth took the throne at the age of 25 and was praised as a heroine of the Protestant cause and the ruler of a golden age. During the Elizabethan era, England's national pride expanded, economic health increased, and a cultural renaissance blossomed with poetry, music, literature, and drama. Elizabeth navigated diplomatic relations with several countries and faced both victories and defeat. It was expected that Elizabeth would marry, but she never did, even though she had many suitors. It's said she was in love with a childhood friend, but for political reasons they did not marry. Elizabeth's unmarried status inspired a cult of virginity, and she was often depicted in poetry and portraiture as a virgin and/or goddess. In 1559, she told the Commons, "And, in the end, this shall be for me sufficient, that a marble stone shall declare that a queen, having reigned such a time, lived and died a virgin"



**Hypatia**

Greek world-renowned mathematician, astronomer, and teacher. She remained a virgin her entire life and declined potential suitors and.

Learn more about Hypatia in  
Careerist/Entrepreneur



**Neith**

Egyptian Goddess of Creation Hunting and War, who did not subordinate to any male.

Learn more about Neith in  
Warrior/Defender

# Lover



The Lover embodies love, beauty, erotic attraction, sensuality, and sexuality. Her sexual energy is a driving force, and she engages enthusiastically, oftentimes finding sexual intimacy closely related to a spiritual experience. She enters relationships of her own choosing and is never victimized. She maintains her autonomy, even while in a relationship. She expresses unbridled and exaggerated affection and appreciation of someone or something. The Lover often seeks intensity in relationships rather than permanence.

**Shadow:** She can be obsessive. Rejection can have a destructive effect on her physical or mental health and self-esteem.



**Inanna**

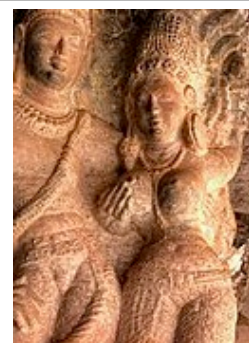
Sumerian Goddess of Fertility and Overseer of All of Life Who rejoices in the power and beauty of her vulva. Her hymns describe her passion for her lover, King Dumuzi. Her greatest temple was called Eanna, which was where her priestesses, priests, musicians, and dancers lived. Sexual priestesses, called Hierodules, performed sacred rituals in which sensual dance and sexual rites were performed. As representatives of the goddess and conduits of goddess energy, they were approached with great reverence to receive the blessings of the goddess. The monies given for these blessings went directly to the temple. Once every year, the king of the city-state and the high priestess of Inanna would come together in a sacred sexual ritual called *hieros gamos* that played out the marriage of the goddess and god to ensure the fertility of the land and abundant crops.



**Aphrodite**

Greek Goddess of Love, Beauty, Creativity, and Sensuality. Aphrodite embodies the form of feminine perfection and enthusiasm for lovemaking, Aphrodite's beauty, irresistible charm, and sexual energy caused humans and deities alike to fall in love. She is the wife of a mortal, and lover of several gods. Joyful with an ebullient laugh, Aphrodite helps one to forget about the worries of life. Women and men alike venerated Aphrodite for her blessings of love, fertility, and relief of a heavy heart or woe. Women prayed to her for her unabashed ease in her feminine physique and uninhibited exhibition of sexuality.

Later, the Romans adopted Aphrodite into their pantheon of goddesses and gave her the name of Venus, a goddess of love and sexuality.



**Rati**

Hindu Goddess of Love and Passion. She represents love, carnal desire, passion, lust, and sexual pleasure and is associated with arousal and the delight of sexual activity. Rati is the female counterpart, chief consort, and assistant of Kama (Kamadeva), the god of love. The word *Rati* also appears in title of the Sanskrit erotic work *Rati-Rahasya* ("Secrets of Rati"), which is said to contain the sexual secrets of the goddess. Her name also appears in the Sanskrit names of many sex techniques and positions, like *Rati-pasha* ("the noose of Rati"), a sex position in which the woman locks her legs behind her lover's back.

## Artist/Creatrix



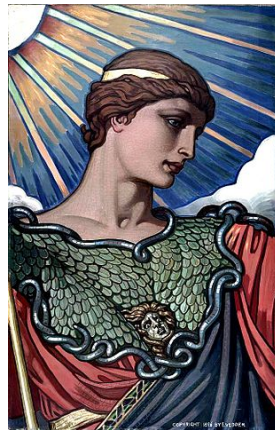
The Artist/Creatrix embodies a creative spirit with a passion to express what is inside and convert internal, creative energy into form for the senses. Creativity can be expressed in any number of media, including art, the written word, performance, and music, plus food, fabric creations, art installations, etc.

**Shadow:** She is often eccentric and has an offbeat nature sometimes bordering on madness. Her dedication to her art sometimes leads her to reject mainstream existence, which can often cause financial difficulty (i.e., she becomes the Starving Artist). Her challenge is to bring to life the vision in her soul. This can cause self-directed anger and depression.



**Saraswati**

Hindu Goddess of Music, Arts, Learning, and Speech. As the source of creative energy and expressive energy, she inspires beautiful songs, art, and dance that communicate one's true spirit. She represents all emotions and feelings expressed in speech or music. In India, Saraswati is worshipped and celebrated several times of the year at great festivals and *pujas*. Her powers are activated through mantras, and many people chant her mantra when they are in need of musical inspiration.



**Minerva**

Roman Goddess of Wisdom, Handicrafts, Poetry, the Arts in general, Commerce, Medicine, and, later, War. In one myth, Minerva's weaving skills are challenged by a mortal girl named Arachne. In a competition to prove their skills, they both weave glorious masterpieces. Because Minerva is a goddess, she declares herself the winner and turns Arachne into a spider. This is a cautionary tale for mortals to not consider themselves equals to goddesses or gods. Romans celebrated Minerva during a festival in March that was regarded as a holiday for artisans. In another holiday, in June, flute players, poets, and actors gathered at the Temple of Minerva to worship her and make votive offerings. This temple continued to be a center for the arts during the middle Roman Republic.



**Sappho**

Greek poet. Born around 630 BCE on the Greek island of Lesbos, she was a prolific writer of poetry. Most of her beautiful poems addressed her love to both women and men and describe intimate encounters with both, which suggests that she may have been bisexual. Her poetry describes dance, festivals, religious rites, military fleets. It was so rich and elegant that Sappho was held in high esteem by philosophers and teachers of Greece, and her poems copied and passed down for centuries. Sappho married a merchant and is said to have been headmistress of a girl's finishing school.

# Healer



The Healer is driven by compassion and the desire to ease the suffering of others. Healers attend to physical, emotional, mental, and/or spiritual ills and strive to help others return to wholeness, and transform their pain into healing. They're strongly intuitive and intellectually-driven to learn and develop their healing skills. Healers are often good listeners, highly intuitive, nurturing.

**Shadow:** Healers can become Fixers, even trying to fix those who aren't, or who don't perceive themselves as, ill.



**Merit Ptah**

Physician in ancient Egypt and the first women known by name in the field of medicine (though there were women physicians before her). She was immortalized by her son on her tomb as "the chief physician." At that time in ancient Egypt, the study of medicine was a worthy endeavor for women and men alike. Medicine encompassed prayer, natural healing, and the study of new treatments. She lived in the ancient city of Sais, where later there was a medical school. One of the earliest known medical documents, found in Egypt, called the Kahun papyrus (ca. 1900 BCE), addresses the diseases of women and children. Theories suggest that the document was written for women practitioners, for in ancient Egypt only women treated women's diseases.



**The Curandera**

The Curandera is a traditional Latin American native healer who possesses supernatural powers for addressing all illnesses, including mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual disorders. Curnderas link illness with evil spirits or a loss of spirit, and use their connection with spirit to heal. Their tools include herbal remedies, psychic healing, and ritual and prayer. Curandaras emerged after the Spanish Conquest of Latin America (16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries), during which indigenous tribes were converted to the Catholic faith. For this reason, many Curandaras include Catholic elements into their rituals, such as holy water and pictures of Christian saints.



**Hygieia (or Hygeia)**

Greek goddess of Health, Cleanliness, and Hygiene. Daughter of Asklepios, the god of Healing And sister of Panacea, goddess of the Universal Remedy. Hygieia protected the health of ancient Greeks, first in Athens, then in the rest of the Greco-Roman world. Hygieia oversaw fitness and wholeness of the body, including mental health. She is depicted holding a snake, the symbol of Asklepiion medicine. Statues of Athene and Hygieia stood at the entrance to the Acropolis in Athens as well as in temples dedicated to Hygieia that were erected throughout the ancient world. Statues of her stood at all major healing centers. Hygiene, derived from her name, is now considered central to preventive medicine.

# Warrior



Physically and psychically strong, willful, courageous, the warrior fights for justice and defends what she thinks is right. She is not motivated to use force to obtain possessions, power, or revenge, but rather to protect her family, community, justice, and her own rights. She can also be rebellious and will fight for change. Political and social activists are often motivated by their inner Warrior.

**Shadow:** She fights until victory, even if this means abandoning ethics. She can be indifferent to others.



**Neith**

The first goddess to appear in Egypt's recorded history, around the First Dynasty (3,100 BCE.),

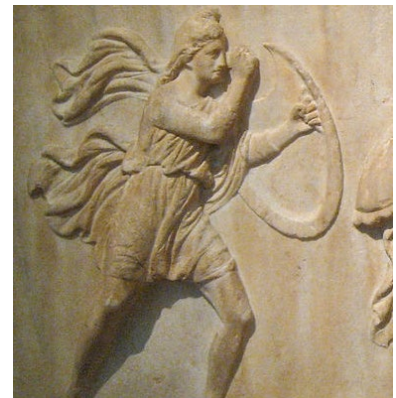
Neith was honored as the Protectress and was the goddess of Hunting and War who repelled foes and other evils. She was often represented wearing a crown and holding bow and arrow. She was also worshipped in Libya by a tribe called the Amazons, a society in which women were military and political leaders and skilled warriors. Neith was not subordinate to any male; later, she was seen as androgynous, with male and female attributes, a creator deity who constructed the world on her own. An inscription found on a temple quotes Neith as saying, "I am all that has been, that is and that will be. No mortal has yet been able to lift the veil which covers me." This can be interpreted to mean she is untouched and virginal.



**Durga**

Hindu Goddess of Protection who fights demons. This virgin warrior goddess is independent from any male assistant and stands poised for action at a moment's notice.

She destroyed the demon Mahishashura, who had defeated all gods by unleashing terror on the earth and the entire universe, and who claimed that only a woman could destroy him. Durga took him on. Calling on her divine anger, she fought the demon for nine days and finally, on the tenth day, killed him with her trident. Her worshippers pray to her for safety. Some of India's oldest prayers for safety were written to her name.



**The Amazons**

In Greek mythology, the Amazons were a race of women warriors who lived in Anatolia (modern-day Turkey) or Ukraine. They battled against the Atlanteans, Libya, and the Gorgon, and gained victory. In *The Iliad*, Homer describes them as "those who fight like men." They were expert equestrians, masterful with bow and arrow, powerful and independent and ready to fight at a moment's notice. Some say they removed their right breast, by cutting or burning it out, so as to use the bow more freely; this has been disproved. Amazon women may not have been mere myth, as archaeological digs in the southern Ural steppes of Russia, have unearthed the remains of what may have been warrior women.



## Careerist/Entrepreneur



Driven by her passion and devotion to accomplish, produce, and create in business or commercial activity, the Careerist/Entrepreneur possesses a pioneering, creative, visionary spirit with the energy and passion to accomplish it. She is very goal-oriented. She is most excited by challenge and is fulfilled by intellectual and creative accomplishment. She is also highly focused and is willing to forgo other aspects of life in pursuit of achievement.

**Shadow:** She can become a workaholic, lead an unbalanced life, and burn out. She often places her passion for work ahead of family, friends, and even her personal health.



### Enheduanna

Mesopotamian High Priestess of the Goddess Inanna, 2,334 BCE to 2,279 BCE. The daughter of King Sargon of Akkad, she became politically influential and is considered the first literary writer in history. She wrote beautiful poems extolling her love for Inanna, poems that were so moving and beautiful, they were copied over and over through the centuries to keep them alive.

She recorded the daily events of politics and religion and influenced the prevailing attitudes of the day.

Eventually, her fame power placed her in a position that was greater than the king's. She reigned over the world's first empire, which extended from the Mediterranean to Persia.



### Athena

Goddess of Wisdom, Crafts and Wartime Strategy. A logical and rational thinker, ruled by her head instead of her heart, Athena was independent and a virgin, though she enjoyed the company of men like Ulysses. She chose not to become emotionally involved in relationships with men so she could pursue her intellectual and creative passions. She was a successful strategist during the Trojan War.

Educated and accomplished, she was also a skilled craftsperson and noted as an expert weaver. In Rome, she was conflated with Minerva.



### Hypatia

Born in 350-70 BCE and died in 415 CE, Hypatia was a Greek astronomer, mathematician, and philosopher who worked in Egypt. At that time, she was a world's leading astronomer and mathematician and head of a school of philosophy in Alexandria. She was also a popular teacher and a voracious scholar. Her philosophy was non-Christian, and she followed the philosophies of Plato. She was also an independent woman who vowed to remain a virgin, although she was admired by many suitors. But a gang of Christian zealots considered her a heretic. They brutally murdered her by scraping her to death with sharpened oyster shells as she was travelling home one night.

## Pleasure Seeker/Hedonist



The Pleasure Seeker/Hedonist lives to enjoy the sensual pleasures of life, including food, drink, sexuality, and nature. Self-indulgence is the primary motivation of the Pleasure Seeker, who embraces the good things in life and often pursues extremes in pleasures and revelry. She finds enjoyment gratifying and it gives her a high.

**Shadow:** She pursues self-indulgences without regard for the health and well-being of herself or others. Her urge toward pleasure overrides logic and self-preservation.



**Kamala**

Tantric Goddess of Sensuality, Kamala is the power of pleasure, the spiritual force in our sexual and creative relations. She is a mother of benevolence who gives us every kind of blessing—spiritual, material—in every moment. She gives her devotees liberation, a sense of self-realization, and pleasure, luxury and all auspicious comforts.

Kamala connects us with the powers of pleasure, including sexual pleasure, as a spiritual tool, which includes the pleasure we experience ourselves and those we share with others. Full awareness during our experiences of pleasure can generate great spiritual growth and self-realization.



**The Maenads**

Ardent followers of the Greek god Dionysius, these women practiced ecstatic rituals to channel their god for purification and exalted joy and to embody his powers of sexuality, inebriation, and bliss. Groups of women traveled into the woods at night, drank intoxicating libations, and entered into frenzies of dance, twirling and spinning to the riotous music of flutes, lyres, and drums.

Sometimes a priestess led the dance with serpents entwining her body while the women (and the snakes) writhed in bliss. Some legends say the Maenads also ran through the woods in search of small animals to kill and eat. In later years, men participated in their ritual, and sexual rites may have been performed. The wild rituals of Dionysus magnetized the oppressed Greek women, who often snuck out of their homes for a taste of exuberance and freedom bequeathed by the god.



**Hathor**

Goddess of Music, Dance, Joy, Love, Sexuality, and Maternal Care, Hathor was one of Egypt's most beloved deities. She was celebrated with many festivals throughout the year. Hathor's devotees danced in celebration, leaping, clapping, and singing as they rejoiced. Musicians carried a musical rattling instrument called a sistrum to invoke joy and to chase away hunger, thirst, and sorrow.

Her priestesses imitated the goddess with erotic dancing and paraded in the streets, going from door to door to bestow Hathor's blessings on each resident. During her Festival of Drunkenness, devotees drank ritual libation, usually beer, to reach altered states of consciousness to communicate with Hathor and ask for her blessing. They also made love to celebrate this beloved goddess.

## Queen/Empress



The Queen/Empress possesses the spirit of royalty and is powerful and authoritative. She rules over her domain with certainty as to how things are to be done. She is a leader who strategizes to execute a vision. She often surrounds herself with a support system of helpers.

**Shadow:** She needs and expects others to support and serve her and her causes. She is protective of her personal power, can be arrogant and defensive, and often carries a sense of entitlement.



**Queen Kubaba**

Ruler in Sumer (ancient southern Iraq), Kubaba's name is the only female name that appears on the Sumerian King's List. Records indicate she ruled for 100 years, around 2500 to 2330 BCE. She is one of very few women rulers in Iraqi history. Kubaba's original role in society was an alewife who brewed and sold ale. At that time, tavern keeping was a respectable and common female occupation, and, in fact, some sacredness was attached to female alewives. Once she became queen, her city of Kish grew and prospered, and there are no records of war. Shrines to honor Kubaba were established throughout Mesopotamia, and soon she was identified as a tutelary, or protector, goddess. Later she became the principal deity in the city of Carchemish. Her cult was popular in Syria and Anatolia, where she became known as mother goddess Kybele. She was the prototype of Phrygian goddess Cybele.



**Hatshepsut**

As the first great Female Pharaoh, she ruled from 1473-58 BCE and was the daughter of Pharaoh Thutmose I and Queen Ahmes. During her time as ruler, Hatshepsut surrounded herself with outstanding administrators and intellectuals. Her reign as pharaoh was illustrious and positive. She was devoted to peace and prosperity, encouraged agriculture and trade, and established the first sea routes for trade. She also financed the art of creating of great statuary and initiated several building projects, which included many of Egypt's greatest temples, such as her own funerary temple at Deir el-Bahari. In many sculptures, Hatshepsut is depicted as the god Osiris; this was traditional for all pharaohs of the time. She is sometimes represented with a beard and a genderless body.



**Empress Suiko**

Born in 554 CE, she became the first reigning empress of Japan in 592 CE at the age of 38. While Suiko's father reigned as Emperor, Buddhism was introduced to Japan in 522, but it was during Empress Suiko's reign that Buddhism took hold in Japan. She encouraged Korean and Chinese artisans to create Buddhist sculptures for public display. She also financed the construction of Buddhist temples and monasteries, many of which still stand today. During this period of flourishing arts, now called the Asuka Period, hundreds of magnificent Buddhist sculptures and structures filled the Japanese landscape.

# Mystical Wise Woman



The Mystical Wise Woman is called to serve both the divine and the human. She understands the higher realms of existence and is able to tap into such mystical realms to receive divine insights, guidance, and prophecies, which she uses to support those around her. Because she has a sense of the mysteries of life, the Spiritual Wise Woman is often gifted in the mystical and sacred arts. She is a healer, teacher, counselor, and ceremony-maker who leads others to spiritual expansion and a richer spiritual life.

**Shadow:** Her shadow can lead to martyrdom and resistance to financial gain. She doesn't practice what she preaches.



## Nebatean Priestess of Al Uzza

A priestess serves as the mediator between the divine and the mortal. She serves both her goddess and the community. In ancient Saudi Arabia, Al Uzza, the Goddess of Springs and Water, was worshipped for her blessings of abundant water, fertility, and bountiful crops, all so vital for this arid region. Al Uzza's priestesses engaged in private rituals in which they chanted sacred words and burned incense to beseech the goddesses for rain, abundant springs, and fertile fields. Priestesses also officiated at public ceremonies and represented the goddess at funerals, weddings and births. They counselled those who were troubled and sometime offered oracular readings by reciting words channeled from the goddess. Priestesses were also knowledgeable herbalists and skilled healers and tended to temple business and financial affairs. Priestesses held high a position in society and were honored for their divine service. Al-Uzza's sisters were Al-Lat and Menat.



## Pythia

The Pythia, priestess of Apollo at Delphi, delivered prophecies, also known as oracles. Kings, emperors, and other powerful men from near and far came to the Temple of Delphi for the Pythia's guidance in matters of battle, government, and more. The Pythia's answers influenced the formation of Greek civilization, as her oracles settled disputes among city-states, but also provoked disputes and wars. A shrine deep within Apollo's temple was reserved for Pythia, where she, the seeker, and a priest sat together. Seated on the sacred tripod, Pythia chewed laurel leaves, drank the water from the sacred Kassotis spring near the temple, and breathed vapors rising from a chasm in the earth. When she achieved an intoxicated state to make contact with Apollo, the god spoke through her. She listened to the seeker's question, and in a state of ecstasy, delivered cryptic messages, which the priests interpreted and delivered in prose or poetic answers.



## The Shaman

Shamans have lived around the world for millennia. Both women and men were shamans, but most were women. It is believed that woman's innate intuitive gifts and nurturing instincts make her most qualified to carry shamanic powers to connect and interact with the supernatural realms to obtain answers and guidance for community issues. Shamans drummed and danced to enter an altered state of consciousness, then brought predictions and prophecies they received while in trance back to individuals and groups. Some shamans were believed to have shapeshifting abilities and transformed themselves into animals, such as wolf, owl or cat. Some had abilities to alter the weather. Shamans performed funerary ritual and escorted the deceased to the afterlife. They were also healers who used herbs and spiritual incantations to return the infirmed to health.

## Spiritual Devotee



The Spiritual Devotee's primary life purpose is to serve God or the Goddess and devote herself to spiritual practices, with the ultimate goal of enlightenment. She strives to ascend to higher, divine realms.

**Shadow:** But she can be ungrounded and disconnected from basic existence. She can have difficulty maintaining a job and can be emotionally withdrawn from others.



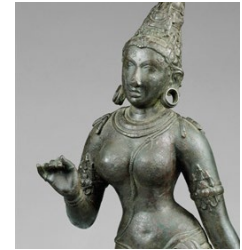
**Tara**

Buddhist Bodhisattva of Compassion, Tara was born as a mortal princess of a royal family who was devoted to the dharma (spiritual laws) and maintained a meditation practice. She aspired to become spiritually enlightened for the benefit of all beings. A monk told her she would never become enlightened as a woman, and that she should pray to be reincarnated as a man so she could then become enlightened. But she believed that gender has no role in enlightenment and pursued her practice with even more zeal and desire to assist all beings in a woman's body. After years of practice, she emerged as an enlightened being. She became known as Tara the Liberator and is the source of compassion and relief from bad karma. Some Buddhist traditions praise 21 forms of Tara, describing her posture, color, number of hands, hand gestures, expressions and more.



**Hildegard of Bingen**

This German Christian mystic, writer of theology, and composer of musical liturgy (1098-1179) was sickly as a child and claimed to have had visions of Jesus. Her parents placed her in a monastery, where she learned to read, write, garden, and tend to the sick. She continued to receive mystical visions and saw all things through the light of God as well as through her five senses. She believed she was instructed by God to write down the visions. In her works, later published in three volumes of theology, she wrote about the glories of women, which contradicted the common medieval view of women, who were portrayed as the cause of the original sin, and best when quiet. Hildegard became a Benedictine abbess and founded two monasteries. Because of her daily work in gardens with plants, she also became an authority on plants and plant medicine, and is considered to be the founder of scientific natural history and the first German woman physician.



**Parvati**

Hindu Goddess of Consciousness and Spiritual Growth. As a child, Parvati dreamed of Shiva, the masculine emanation of God Energy. When she became a young woman and was skilled in ritual and manifestation, she felt called to find Shiva. She was led to Mount Kailas where she found Shiva alone in a state of deep contemplation. Shiva awakened, and Parvati joined him in meditation. He was resistant at first, but together they entered a deep state of consciousness, much greater than the consciousness Shiva attained alone. Parvati became a part of him and sat with him for one year, during which she absorbed the secret rituals that other students spent lifetimes to learn. Shiva was so enamored of Parvati that when she asked him to become her husband, he agreed. Later, Shiva gave his beloved Parvati the highest mysteries of consciousness: Maha Nirvana Tantra.

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WellcomeCollection.org

# Image Credits

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### Anatolia Great Mother

Nevit Dilmen [CC BY-SA 3.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>)]

### Demeter

Demeter (with sceptre) and Kore (with torch), fragment of a votive relief, marble. From Rhamnus in Attique (probably from the Nemesis Temple), ca. 420–410 BC.

Glyptothek [Public domain]

### Shashthi

Goddess Shashthi in a temple ner Bagbazar, Kolkata

Arnab Dutta [CC BY-SA 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>)]

## WIFE

### Nefertiti

Nefertiti Bust – Berlin © 2005 Nina Aldin Thune

### Hera

The statue of Hera of the so-called Hera Borghese type; a roman copy of a Greek original from the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. Founded in Ostia in 1857 and exhibited in the Vatican Museums.

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### Mary Magdalene

By Peter Paul Rubens - Ermitage, Sankt Petersburg, Public Domain <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=3133530>

## DAUGHTER/ CHILD/PRINCESS

### Princess Akhensenpaaten

Artist's sketch: Walk in the Garden; limestone; New Kingdom, 18th dynasty, c. 1335 BC. Egyptian Museum Berlin, Inv. no. 15000 (donated by James Simon in 1920). *Information from*

By Photo: Andreas Praefcke - Self-photographed, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2131913>

### Persephone

Frederic Leighton - The Return of Persephone (1891)

Frederic Leighton, 1st Baron Leighton [Public domain]

## VIRGIN/INDEPENDENT

### Artemis

Artemis in a charriot drawn by hinds. Side A from an Boeotian red-figure calyx-krater, 450–425 BC.

By Painter of the Great Athens Kantharos - User:Bibi Saint-Pol, own work, 2007-06-15, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2270762>

**Queen Elizabeth 1**

Unknown artist

National Portrait Gallery [Public domain]

**Hypatia**

By Drawn by Jules Maurice Gaspard (1862–1919). - [1]. "Elbert Hubbard, "Hypatia", in Little Journeys to the Homes of Great Teachers, v.23 #4, East Aurora, New York : The Roycrofters, 1908 (375 p. 2 v. ports. 21 cm)", [Public Domain]

**Neith**

Louvre Museum [Public domain]

**LOVER****Inanna**

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**Aphrodite**

Birth of Venus

Sandro Botticelli [Public Domain]

**Rati**

6th century amorous couple on pillar top looking below in Cave 3, Badami Hindu cave temple Karnataka

Ms Sarah Welch [CC BY-SA 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.9>)

**ARTIST/CREATRIX****Saraswati**

Unknown artist

Metropolitan Museum of Art [Public Domain]

**Minerva**

"Head of Minerva". Painting of [Minerva](#). Oil on canvas, 125 × 80 cm. Painting was a preparatory study for the mosaic Minerva, which is in the Library of Congress, Jefferson Building, Washington, D.C.

By Elihu Vedder - Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, LC-DIG-ppmsca-10839 (digital file from original painting), Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2453578>

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Hermaic pillar with a female portrait, so-called "Sappho"; inscription "Sappho Eresia" ie. Sappho from Eresos. Roman copy of a Greek Classical original.

By Unknown, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1208766>

**HEALER****Merit Ptah**

First known female doctor

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**The Curandera**



Chemi Romero [CC BY-SA 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)]

### **Hygieia (or Hygeia)**

Hygieia- Rotunda of Altes Museum

Yair Haklai [CC BY-SA 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)]

## **WARRIOR**

### **Neith**

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### **Durga**

By ಶ್ರೀ ಶಿಲ್ಪಿ ಸಿದ್ದನ್ತಿ ಸಿದ್ದಲಿಂಗ ಸ್ವಾಮಿ (1885 - 1952) - ಜಗನ್ಮೋಹನ್ ಅರಮನೆ, ಮೈಸೂರ್ (Jagmohan Palace, Mysore), Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=36642862>

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National Archaeology Museum in Athens/

Sharon Mollerus [CC BY 2.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>)]

## **CAREERIST/ENTREPRENEUR**

### **Enheduanna**

Detail from The "Disk of Enheduanna" at the Penn Museum (University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology) in Philadelphia.

By Mefman00 - Own work, CC0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=48075773>

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Bust of Athena, type of the "Velletri Pallas" (inlaid eyes are lost). Copy of the 2nd century CE after a votive statue of Kresilas in Athens (ca. 430–420 BC).

By Unknown (Greek original by Kresilas) - User:Bibi Saint-Pol, own work, 2007-02-08, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1731943>

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By Drawn by Jules Maurice Gaspard (1862–1919). - [1]. "Elbert Hubbard, "Hypatia", in Little Journeys to the Homes of Great Teachers, v.23 #4, East Aurora, New York : The Roycrofters, 1908 (375 p. 2 v. ports. 21 cm)", Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=351775>

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### **Kamala**

Kamala/ Bhairavi1885–90, **India**

Metropolitan Museum of Art

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*Dance of the Maenads* by [Andries Cornelis Lens](#)

By Andries Cornelis Lens - Kunsthistorisches Museum, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=15110741>

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Naked female dancers in a painting from the Tomb of Nebamun, c. 1350 B.C., New Kingdom

By Ägyptischer Maler um 1400 v. Chr. - The Yorck Project (2002) 10.000 Meisterwerke der Malerei (DVD-ROM), distributed by DIRECTMEDIA Publishing GmbH. ISBN: 3936122202., Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=146256>

**QUEEN/EMPRESS****Queen Kubaba**

Relief of the goddess Kubaba , holding a pomegranate in his right hand; orthostat relief from Herald's wall, Carchemish ; 850-750 BC; Late Hittite style under Aramaean influence. Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Ankara, Turkey

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**Hatshepsut**

Large Kneeling Statue of Hatshepsutca. 1479–1458 B.C.

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日本語: 土佐光芳 English: Tosa Mitsuyoshi [Public domain]

**MYSTICAL WISE WOMAN****Nebatean Priestess for Al Uzza**

South Arabian – Stele with a Female Bust – Walters 2173

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Paestan red-figure bell-krater depicting the Delphic oracle sitting atop her tripod, circa 330 BC

By Python (as painter) - Jastrow (2006), Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=17236901>

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Painting of Buddhist goddess Green Tara by Prithvi Man Chitrakari done in 1947.

By Prithvi Man Chitrakari - own scan, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=15142953>

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Standing Parvatica. first quarter of the 10th century

Indian (Tamil Nadu)

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## About the Author



Meloney Hudson is an author, teacher of energetic arts for women, documentary producer, and advocate of women's empowerment. She's the author of *Sexy, Spirited and Strong: Becoming a Positive Energy Woman* and its companion workbook. She is a certified Ipsalu Tantra educator and the creator and teacher for *Positive Energy Woman* workshops, including *Yoni Yoga*, *Aphrodite's Secrets*, and others. Meloney is also the producer of *Rise of Venus: The Power of the Women's Spirituality Movement*, a short-subject miniseries for the web that features experts in the realm of women's spirituality and ancient history.

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