



Teresa
Enlightenment Journey

TERESA

Ego Thread 2

Soul Thread 4

Awareness 31: Cycle of Creation

800 Year Vow: Beauty Through Kindness

Qualities: TRUST, Acceptance, Unity, Joy,
Conscious Presence, Self Responsibility

Teachings:

Art for the Heart

Unified Being

Anatomy of the Ascending Body



INTRODUCTION

When first embarking on the path of A Beauty Way, I thought enlightenment to be something holy and apart from my life, something that would 'happen' to me at some time when I had earned it through diligent, dedicated work, something that waited for me to be 'ready.' But that was me still thinking in terms of separation, and all the striving and seeking of something so mysterious and serious and important seemed to keep it at bay.

Now I see enlightenment in a different way. Enlightenment is the process of living, is the journey I have been on forever. It is not something other, disconnected, or separate from everyday life, it IS the journey of life, the path of recognizing the sacredness of the mundane, experiencing what it is to be living in this world and universe, and remembering my connection to Divine Source. Not that it doesn't require diligence, dedication, and hard work, not that it doesn't have difficulties or struggles, but that these are part of the process of enlightenment, and they are transformed, transmuted, in the process of awakening. Each step on this journey brings me into more and more Awe and Wonder at the Beauty that is living life as a DivineHumanBeingInLove. I have great gratitude and respect for the revelation that unfolds, the perception that shifts, the heart that opens, and the world that is created by my, and our, growth in awareness and conscious presence in daily living.

Enlightenment can be experienced suddenly, but my experience of it is as a journey of steps drawn out over time, over my life, over lifetimes perhaps—points of light scattered over time that now string and blend together in a wholeness of IS. From my present vantage point, I can look back in my life and see that the guidance, the impulse and intent, the flow of evolution and growth, has been happening all along. Simple things that came up in childhood were part of a greater unfolding that was in process always, that reveals itself in profound moments of realization of the connections. For example:

I was 7 or 8 years old and had long hair that was difficult to comb out. I was always in agony, frustration and resistance over getting my hair brushed. At some point, I had a revelation that I could simply change my attitude about this and it would not be such a source of disturbance in my life, and I did. This was an initial step in learning about choice and the power of shifting my perception to create a new or different experience.

As a young teen in high school, I was embarrassed by my inability to do gymnastics. I just wasn't flexible or brave enough to accomplish even a cartwheel. Finally one day I simply prayed for help, prayed that I would be able to do a cartwheel—and I did! One perfect cartwheel. I remember how this impressed me—the power of prayer, the asking for and acceptance of help and, the willingness on the part of some divine being to be there for me.

In my early twenties, I was struggling with some new ideas about God and about myself as having power to create. I struggled with how believing in myself might be 'stepping on God's toes.' Could I really be a part of God? Was I important at all to the Creator? I was really contemplating and asking these questions, and a revelation occurred. In this revelation, everything was crystal clear for the moment. I was shown how everyone was an intricate, indispensable part of the whole that was the Divine, and the magnificence and Oneness of the Divine was not diminished by this in any way. It was a revelation of Unification in Oneness of all Being, and I knew it perfectly in my mind, I sensed it in my physical body, and I felt completely in ecstasy. Coming out of that moment, I couldn't

remember everything, but I kept a sense of each Being as indispensable and loved by the Divine, a part of what the Divine was, and I have always held great Hope for everyone and for the world because of this. And from this experience, I became more conscious of my path as a worthy being and a dream for others to experience such acceptance and love. Later, I recognized the revelation and instruction that this provided in relationship with my Qualities of Trust, Acceptance, Joy, Unity, Conscious Presence, and Self Responsibility.

GROUSE

When I first started my spiritual work in Sacred Reflections, I was introduced, on the phone, to Willow by Jane. I wasn't, or didn't know that I was, seeking a teacher, but I was in a place of great change in my life where I knew I needed to leave a very unhealthy, co-dependent relationship. Jane and I were in Santa Fe together. Willow talked to me on the phone and told me she thought I needed to work with her. She told Jane to teach me the Dance of Creation. She told me to find a totem there in Santa Fe. Jane showed me the Dance of Creation while we visited an ancient Kiva in Bandelier. I found a turquoise bird totem that spoke to me.

I went home and began to work with Willow as my teacher. Setting my altar and, learning about a Rule of Life, I began to develop a morning dedication. A couple months later, with guidance from Willow, I was able to walk away from that unhealthy relationship and begin living a new life, a life in community, connected with New Breed Healers, and doing very intense personal healing work. That beginning was 13 years ago.

The bird totem I purchased in Santa Fe, I later realized was a Grouse. Grouse came to me at the beginning of my being consciously present in my journey of unfolding awareness, and there are other totems that have guided me along my way. I am strongly connected to nature, and so it seems natural for me to be assisted in telling my enlightenment story through the totems that have come through to teach and guide me.

I learn from my world. The totems represent Earth connection—important to me for I had to get out of my head and into the humus of my Matter to follow the steps of my path, and to be able to listen to and recognize my inner knowing. “The totem’s consciousness is the essential spirit of the entire tribe of that species. It cannot be heard with the ears; it is a living spirit that aligns with a human being and speaks to that person’s inner knowing” (Samms, *Earth Medicine*, p. 146).

Art has been another avenue for me to listen to my inner knowing and let my soul play. About 5 years ago, I began doing soul collage. I created a collage of “I am the one who . . .”. Today, I have merged the collage images with Grouse in a painting. This painting tells a story of becoming conscious of being on a spiritual path, and discovering and beginning to express my Essential Being that hopes, believes in Love, has courage and the heart to be compassionate and dedicate myself to support well-being and Joy for self and others.

This moment of beginning a journey embodied my Acceptance and Courage to look at my own shadow, and to learn and heal. I trusted my heart that believed anything was possible and that things in my life would begin to flow more freely and easily. Taking on my own suffering in the beginning



moment lead me to be able to, in the later moments, have empathy for and the will to do and be in a way that can alleviate suffering of both self and others.

I also accepted a teacher, and this opened me to conscious awareness and acceptance of Guides and Counsel, both cosmic and human, and I began to learn to look and listen for and receive help. Willow, JiMi Tao, has been a steadfast Teacher and Guide from that beginning through my process of unfolding, and I am grateful. I am grateful for my Counsel and Guides who are also steadfast and true, and I am grateful for the totem guides that have shown up for me along the way.

Grouse has a spiral dance, and my journey is a spiral journey through the Ascended Wisdom Matrix. The spiral represents cycles, and I am born into Awareness 31 Cycle of Creation. Grouse Medicine is the spiral, how I use my personal power and connection to Source to inform my movement in the world, how I harmonize my dance with the cycles of Mother Earth, how I use my energy to meet my intentions and connect all my bodies.

RAVEN

Raven was the next totem Being to speak to my inner knowing and spark a leap of awareness. I was just beginning to walk A Beauty Way and, under Willow's guidance, I had chosen my qualities and was contemplating each one.

When I got to Joy, I was struggling. My mind would not let me even consider it. Joy seemed not an option; there seemed to be too much grief and loss to allow it in. Frustrated, I decided to take a walk in the woods and get connected to Earth and clear my mind. As I walked, my frustration only grew, until I became aware of Ravens cawing. I looked up and found myself in the center of a triangle made of three ravens on three treetops. They were calling to one another. Then one flew right above me, did a somersault in mid-air, and landed in another treetop. The second raven did the same, and the third. This play continued until I laughed with Joy. A revelation came—Joy is simple and present in the ordinary things of life. Joy simply IS. I could suddenly remember

many moments of Joy throughout my life. Raven awakened me to a new form that came out of the Void, where I didn't have to 'figure out' Joy; I only had to let the unknown speak to me.

This awakening was furthered some months later. I was alone and temporarily living in an apartment in town, having left that unhealthy relationship. I was grieving the loss and still trying to find what I would do, where I would live. One night, I was walking home in the dark. As I passed under a street light, my attention was drawn to a single leaf on an oak tree. The leaf was exquisitely lit and beautiful to behold. My heart felt as if it would burst with Joy. I knew in that moment that Joy and Grief always co-exist. One does not, cannot, cancel the other out.

In the black of the dark, I walked in the Mystery, in the womb of the Void, where everything mingles until the light reveals and births some new form. I was gifted a Divine Truth. I Am Joy. Joy lives in and through me. No matter what I experience, Joy is also, and always, present and available. This Truth sustains me.

KINGFISHER/OTTER/WHALE

Accompanying the continuing flow of Joy in my journey has been the remembering of playfulness and wonderful qualities of the Element of Water. Kingfisher, Otter and Whale have been key totems in this remembering.

I joined Kingfisher Clan for ceremony with Community at Blue Lake. Playfulness blossomed in me as I found I could easily and happily perform in our skit (appropriate since Kingfisher teaches us to enjoy life). I have always loved to play in water and actually draw nourishment from being in it and with it, much as



Kingfisher draws fish as food from water. Kingfisher, who can see both in water and air, helped teach me about seeing water as both reflective and transparent, revealing both the depths of being and allowing us to see ourselves and our world reflected back to us. It is a path I walk that has helped me learn to look at the world with curiosity rather than judgment. Kingfisher continues to show up in my life everywhere I have lived, and I feel kin to this Being.

I was part of Otter Clan for two ceremonies, and in both of those, I was also part of the Water Altar. Again, I was surprised at the playfulness that easily arose in me in our skits. Surprised because, like Joy, I had not found lighthearted playfulness to be easily or naturally present in me. Otter taught me how to play, and brought out my inner child, allowing new things to flow into my life. Like otter, I can play, have fun, be creative, quit worrying, and find new wonder in life. Otter also taught me about Unity—in sister- and brotherhood, family, community, and friendship. I believe Otter energy began to help me let go of jealousy and trust others and share the abundance of life with others.

Once, I was camping alone for a few days on the bank of the Smith River. One morning, as I was dancing the Dance of Creation on the shore, my back turned toward the river, I heard a lot of splashing. When I turned, there were seven otters swimming upriver. I watched as they played in the water and some got out to slide in the mud on the opposite bank. One guardian watched me closely the whole while. After some time, they regrouped and swam back downstream. It seemed they had come, drawn by the power of the Dance, just for me. I was so grateful for what they shared with me. It was a magic moment shared along the river of my life. Otter and Water and the Dance of Creation connected me to Magic in this experience.



Another time of opening to Magic occurred with Whale. At one of these ceremonies where I was part of Otter Clan and Water Altar, as a ceremonialist of Water Altar, I was entrusted to go with others from Community out to sea to look for whales. We carried with us a small vial of sacred water from ceremony that we would share with the sea and the whales as a dedication of community to help heal the waters and beings of our world.

We had been out for a while and there were no whale sightings. The boat was turning to seek elsewhere. We offered our prayers and water to the sea before the boat turned. Within a few minutes, whales were everywhere. They breached continuously all around the boat. They followed the boat and waved their fins at us. They were joyous and grateful, as were we.

Whale helped me waken deeper to Magic and Mystery and Miracle, to the importance of memory and remembering our oneness with each other and all of Nature in this world and universe. Whale helped me understand my/our connection to the Ancient Ones, the Responsibility to remember and sing our songs and connect with our Source, the Universal Mind of Great Spirit, and Self Responsibility for the shared healing of our world and all its beings, the continuing Co-Creation of what we dream and form together.

I remember when I was a teenager learning about the formation of babies in the womb. I was enthralled by the Magic of the moment of birth when the baby takes its first breath on its own from the lungs, changing from getting its oxygen from the blood of its mother through the umbilical cord. I so wanted to give birth, to be a vessel of this Magic. Now I am also aware of the sacred flow of the air through the spinal cord, the breath through the throat, the soul, the organ of self expression, soul incarnation, Source becoming its Human creation in order to experience Self. This teenage moment was one of those incremental steps in revelation of the truth—in this case, of self as a Co-Creator and participant in Magic and Mystery and Miracle.

BEAR/BULL/RABBIT

Teachers and guides and revelations come in many ways. One of those is in night dreams. Three totems came to me all together in two dreams. In the first dream these three came to me while I was walking with many women from many parts of my life. Bear, Bull and Rabbit were pure white and seemed to be blocking our path. We chased them away. Later, I learned that they were not there to obstruct or harm, but were really trying to help and get my attention, so I called to them, and they came to me in another dream.

In the second dream, I and these three helpers were taken deep inside a mountain into a cave. We were led by an elderly man who was the keeper of the cave and what it held. We traveled in a vehicle like a space ship, and the cave seemed ancient. The walls had stories depicted in drawings. Bear, having brought me into the cave, like into the Void, or into the deep recesses of my soul, where I could quiet my mind and awaken my inner knowing with stillness and receptivity, where I could find resources to nurture my soul and nourish my body, curled up and fell asleep, patiently awaiting the coming of the next cycle. Bull, was stable and calm, and, in the cave, became like a table, symbolizing abundance and manifestation. I had become humble enough to ask and accept the guidance and help that was being offered. I had asked the totem animals and the man what it was they were offering me, what I could take back with me. On the table of Bull were three overturned cups that had gifts for me. Under one cup was a map, under the second, a lottery ticket, and under the third, a man. My way was clear and I would have help to follow it, I would always be provided for, and the masculine to balance my feminine, to be my partner, would come. Rabbit leapt and hopped about the cave, showing me that I could move quickly, change directions, attune to the cycles of life, and so my journey could happen in leaps and bounds, and I could be fertile in my endeavors. And so I have had patience to wait, humility to ask and receive, and ability to take great leaps in unfolding.

Acceptance has been a continuing presence in my unfolding. Acceptance allows love to flow into, in, to and from my life. Therein lies strength. There, in

Acceptance, is where I reclaim shadow and honor my soul. There is the path to receiving the gifts, the wisdom, the revelations from Masters, Guides and Teachers. When I laid down my fear and trusted Bear, Bull and Rabbit, I could accept what was being offered.

With these profound totem dreams, I deepened my Trust in guidance, and deepened in trust and acceptance of my own worthiness. Years later, I deepened even more. Today, knowing and accepting myself as worthy has taken away the veils of my striving, doubting, confusion and excuses. Allowing myself to love deeply from a worthy place allows me to receive the gift of being Generous. I can mirror the Generosity of Source shown me in that cave. The giving comes not from what I have, but from the abundance that IS. Generosity of Self is willingness to share the abundance Source provides for All.

DEER

My Teacher, Willow, initiated me as a Medicine Woman. I have to remember that 'initiate' means to begin. Willow was trusting and following her guidance. I was trusting and following mine from her as I began my journey as a Medicine Woman. On that day, Deer appeared as a Medicine animal for me, and I look to Deer for guidance in my Medicine.

Deer is gentle with self and others. Deer takes care of others, recognizing Innocence and loving both the light and dark in people, loving people as they are. Deer has acute senses of hearing and seeing and is attuned to what is going on around her at all times; this attentiveness is Deer's protection. On my path, I needed to learn the lessons of Deer Medicine for myself, so I could then serve others in gentle compassion, and so my own safety and protection could come from attentiveness in Presence and not from aggressive self-protectiveness out of fear and distrust.



An important moment of enlightenment in that learning came when I found I could be called on my destructive behavior by my Teacher, and see that in a positive light rather than cower in fear and self-pity. I knew I was loved by her and was being given help and guidance to come into my full potential, not being told I was a bad person and unworthy. I wasn't being judged, I was being loved and gifted with a path to grow and heal. I was allowed to go into the Dark Night of Soul.

Dark Night of Soul is not about going into turmoil and agony, but is the "burning away all residue of encumbered suffering and memories of suffering" (Jimi Tao, *Cycles of Soul*, p. 6). It is letting go into the Void where all is dissolved, transformed, transmuted, and newly formed. Heavenly support transmutes suffering as I become more fully a BeingInLove, my highest potential, authentic. I dissolve into the flow of Water of this womb, as Light merges into the surface of the sea. I harvest fruits offered and let them nourish me in the deep recesses of my soul. I dream a new dream, enriched and informed by my past experiences, and lit with new meaning and expression by heavenly light. I Trust, as what is known dissolves, and what is unknown may become more clear, evident, merged with all else to create new form.

Through multiple steps in being called on, examining, and making choices to change my destructive behaviors of jealousy, self-protectiveness, arrogance, over-doing, and withholding, I became more and more welcoming of Dark Night of Soul, and more accepting of the teachings and help from my Teacher.

I learned the importance of Silence and Stillness of not doing, in which I receive great blessings and wisdom as gifts, and find rest from striving under the illusion that I was on my own and had to figure out life and earn my worthiness. I gained an awareness of listening with ears that aren't only my physical ears, for 'sounds' or languages that are sensed other ways and are formed by a myriad of beings and systems, many of which are unknown to me. I found my authentic self that was comfortable with the known and the unknown, awed and full of wonder at the Beauty that is our world and universe.

I learned to surrender into Oneness of Communion with a desire and a willingness to listen to, pay attention to, and join with others in play and work and the simple be-ing of daily life. And Compassion, that common passion for life and sharing life, awakened in me. I became kind in my actions.

I learned true Gratitude. Gratitude came in finding Unity within my self, with my Source, and with all others. The revelation of my youth came into fullness—no one is dispensable to the wholeness of Being. We are Co-Creators all. Gratitude came with finding the Sacred in the mundane, the Cherishment of living each moment in love with life. Gratitude softens my heart into the gentleness of Deer and fills me with a desire to be of Service to others and our world.

SPIDER

Spider came to me in both a ceremony and a dream. The community was doing ceremony on a farm in Rhode Island. The form for our ceremony was the yellow-orange spiral diamond of Soul Manifestation, Splendor, Strength and Beauty in Thread 9. Nine is the final number, the end of one cycle, with ten starting us again at one. This spiral journey through the cycles of Threads, Awarenesses, Directions, Elements, Qualities, etc. is the journey of the Soul, is A Beauty Way, is the journey of enlightenment, and is my journey. This journey is one of doing my soul work to fulfill my Soul Purpose, re-mem-bering and embodying the Unity of my Being—EgoSoul Unity, Unity of my Mental, Physical and Emotional Bodies, Unity with All Beings, Unity with my Source—and understanding that I am a Being that lives and walks between Heaven and Earth as complete and whole Presence InLove.

During ceremony, I was the keeper of the post in the West. All during our ceremony, tiny yellow-orange spiders were busy around that post. I found them significant because they were the color of our sacred geometric form.

Spider is linked with creativity. She weaves the dream of the world in her spiraling web. It is said she wove the first alphabet, and so is a keeper and teacher of language and writing. She teaches us how to weave our dreams into

reality, and walk the threads of our life in balance. At the time of that ceremony, I did not know all that the spiders signified, but I knew, and have remembered them, as messengers, teachers for me. This was a beginning of our relationship.

Years later, I have more revelation of their message. It was significant, I believe that they were in the West, the place of “the Strength Light of the West” (Awareness 18 Dark Night of Soul, a number 9 Awareness). The light of the West is sunset light, twilight. There is a refraction and scattering of light. Edges blur. Distinguished form dissolves. Strength is trusting as what is known dissolves, and what is unknown may become more clear, or be mixed with other matter to create new form. Divine and Human meet and merge in this time of twilight -two light- and Strength comes in this Union. In the West, in Trust I can allow self to dissolve into the darkness of the womb that will birth the next cycle. I can harvest the fruits of this season of the West and let them nourish me in the deep recesses of my soul. I can dream a new dream, enriched and informed by past experiences and lit with new meaning and expression by Heavenly Light.

I had a dream too of Spider. In the dream, she climbed up to my face and bit me on the lip. This was not an act of aggression, it was more like a kiss, or a blessing of her Medicine. The Word is important. Words are part of creativity. I have a gift to share, in words, in expression in creative arts. I have my own path to weave, and to weave with others. I have been gifted Wisdom, and it is to be shared.

EPILOGUE

Having left the long journey of strife—here in this moment in my Enlightenment Journey, I rest in Awe and Wonder of who I am and We Are. I am at ease moving through the continuing cycles of days, seasons and years, of Awarenesses in the continuous spiral dance of qualities and evolution, the descent of Divine to meet Human Ascension. I embrace my own movement in and out of the Mystery of the Void, allowing Divine to fill my emptiness and participating as a Co-Creator of our world as we dream and embrace New Vision,

new possibilities, new forms for our world, as we evolve our world. I rest unified, in Union with Great Spirit, the Mystery of me impregnated with Light of Essence. I am Cycle of Creation coming together in cosmic and physical self to Be a Vision and Image of Love. I sense this truth of who I am.

I am happy, and this is a happiness that is not about what happens or what I do. It is about what simply IS, and my ability to choose and express gratitude for the gift of my life, for the opportunities that life offers in any given moment, for the Beauty that blesses my life. I am whole. I am a gift to the Universe from Source. I am part of Source seeing Self. I remember who I am.

And I remember that we are all One, and all gifts to the Universe. My heart is open, and I desire to be of Service in Compassion to foster happiness and wellbeing for All Beings. I Trust what I am filled with to spill forth, shine out in form, in choices to act in Generosity, in Gratitude, tenderly, kindly, being a Blessing of Love and Compassion. I see the other and recognize their Beauty, their Purity, their Preciousness—the Essence of their Being, their Light. Every meeting is an opportunity for Cherishment. I live as Hope Becoming and Trust my life to be my teaching, my heart to find ways to actively be of Service. Blessed Be.