



Stone Circle News

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Unraveling the Meaning of Womanhood... by Jan Herrick

In a world where identities are as varied and complex as the stars in the sky, womanhood stands as a constellation of experiences, values, and narratives that shape and define individuals across the world. What does it truly mean to be a woman? This question is as ancient as humanity itself, and it continues to intrigue and inspire us. It invites us to delve deeper and explore the layers that compose the essence of womanhood.

At its core, womanhood transcends biological categories. It encompasses the physiological aspects of being female, but it stretches far beyond the confines of anatomy. Womanhood is a tapestry woven with threads of resilience, compassion, strength, and grace. It is the embodiment of nurturing warmth and unwavering determination, the gentle whisper of intuition, and the fierce roar of empowerment. This is the bedrock of womanhood.

One of the defining characteristics of womanhood lies in its interconnectedness with community and relationships. Women are the core of the home and the grounding of society. Women find fulfillment in fostering connections, whether it be through friendships, familial ties, or acts of solidarity with other women. Women's ability to empathize, nurture, and uplift others is a cornerstone of what it means to be woman. Women nurture their environments lending support and understanding that foster growth and mutual empowerment. This is also the cornerstone of Stone Circle, women supporting and empowering one another.

*Women have gathered in circles
since the dawn of history
for birthing,
to share story,
at cisterns for washing,
at fires for warmth,
at wells to draw water,
in embraces of profound joy,
in prayer, in rings of sorrow and
mourning.*

*With hands grasped, we gather our
collective wisdom, energies and
strengths binding us and guiding us
into the future. Each woman brings
her gifts, placing herself
as a stone in the unbroken circle.*

© Janet Herrick

Unraveling the Meaning of Womanhood cont...by Jan Herrick

Yet, all women are not the same. Womanhood is as diverse as the individuals who embody it. The experiences of womanhood are shaped by a myriad of factors including culture, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Each woman brings her own unique perspective, adding depth and richness to the collective tapestry of womanhood. It is through embracing this diversity that we can truly appreciate the many facets of womanhood, celebrating the countless ways that women navigate the world around them.

When we attempt to understand womanhood, we must acknowledge the challenges of societal norms and expectations that often dictate and constrain women's experiences. From the pressures of conforming to narrow beauty standards to the systemic barriers that limit opportunities for women in various spheres of life, the journey of womanhood is fraught with obstacles, prejudice, and even injustice. Yet, it is in the face of adversity that the resilience of women can shine brightest. Women continue to defy expectations, shatter glass ceilings, and pave the way for future generations of women to come.

Furthermore, womanhood is not confined to any one stage of life. It encompasses the innocence of girlhood, the self-discovery of adolescence, the complexities of adulthood, and the wisdom of old age. At each stage, women navigate unique challenges and experiences, drawing upon the strength and wisdom gained from previous chapters of their lives. Women learn from one another, and draw from the examples of those who stand as mentors, teachers, and guides, both family and friends, young and old.

The meaning of womanhood defies any simple definition or explanation. It is a fluid and dynamic concept. It evolves and adapts with the changing landscapes of society and individual experiences. To truly grasp the essence of womanhood is to embrace its complexity and honor its diversity. It is a narrative of voices that contribute to its rich tapestry and celebrates the resilience, compassion, and strength of women around the world. The meaning of womanhood continues to be revealed. May we strive to be committed to fostering a world where every woman can be free to thrive and shine.



Affirmation Corner, Keeping it Simple.....by Margie Gray

When I think about what it means to be a woman my head starts to spin. The words strong, compassionate, fierce, caring and creative all come to mind. Being a woman is all of these things and so much more. Rather than describe how women are all of these things I'd like to keep it simple today. All of these arise from LOVE. When we love our family we care for them and are fiercely protective. When we love our community we have the strength to stand up for what we believe. When we love ourselves we focus our creative energy to manifest all that serves us in reaching our potential.

- ★ I express my love of community in the stand that I take now!
- ★ I show my love for my loved ones in ways that are meaningful now!
- ★ I affirm opportunity and potential for myself now!
- ★ I am the embodiment of love in the world now!

We are strong, compassionate, fierce, caring, creative and so much more. When we come from that space of love it shines through us and we make the world better. We are an example of all we were created to be. We are one with the divine.

Cabrini...by Joanne Gizzi

As I intently watched "Cabrini", I thought, WOW, this film definitely relates to the newsletter subject of Womanhood. Angel Studios ("The Chosen", "Sound of Freedom") has given us another powerful and moving film, based on an incredible true story. As the underdog, Mother Cabrini defied so many challenges, but had the courage to forge ahead and not give up. She made many thought-provoking statements throughout the film. One of my favorite was to the Pope, "The world is not big enough to do what I want to do." I found the film to be uplifting and inspiring.....something that we need in this day and age. I encourage everyone to see it.

Cabrini is a new film based on the true story of Francesca Cabrini, who founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart and helped the poor in New York City in the 1880s. Cabrini, an Italian immigrant, witnessing disease and poverty in the slums of New York, was a pioneer of compassion and education. She embarked on a daring journey to persuade the hostile mayor to provide housing and healthcare for hundreds of orphaned children. The film stars Cristiana Dell'Anna, John Lithgow, and Giancarlo Giannini, and has received positive reviews from critics and audiences.



Prayer Circle

Kathi
Jody
Eleanor
Arline
Sonia
Dell

2024 Calendar

- April 20** For Women Only, 9:30 AM
27 In the Company of Trees, Saturday,
10:00 AM Mennello Park
- May 5** Dress Up Tea , 2:00 PM Jill's
18 For Women Only, 9:30 AM
- June 14** Inn at Cocoa Beach (5 rooms,10 ladies kingsize beds, reserved overnight)
15 Summer Solstice, Sat. Sunrise Cocoa
15 For Women Only, 9:30 AM in Cocoa
23 Anniversary Lunch at Seasons 52, Sunday, 1:00 PM
- July 20** For Women Only, 9:30 AM
20 Lunch after Meeting, 12:30 PM
- Aug 17** For Women Only, 9:30 AM
- Sep 21** For Women Only, 9:30 AM
28 Labyrinth Walk, Sat. 10:00 AM
Woodlawn, Lunch Panera Bread
- Oct 19** For Women Only, 9:30 AM
Nov 1 Dress Up post-Halloween and
Pot Luck Supper, 6:00 PM Nancy's
16 For Women Only, 9:30 AM
- Dec. 21** For Women Only, 9:30 AM
22 Winter Solstice, Sunday, 5:30 PM, Jill's

In the Company of Trees

Come join us on Saturday, April 27 (4th Saturday of April) at 10:00 AM under the beautiful live oak tree fondly named "The Forest of One" by our Stone Circle member Virginia Strait. This amazing nearly four hundred year old tree has grown on the grounds of the Mennello Museum since way before the Civil War.

We will meet under the giant old tree for readings and reflections and meditation, and the opportunity to take a meditative walk on the beautiful grounds.

Please bring a chair or a blanket to sit on, as well as a bag lunch and a drink for yourself. Water will be provided. Carpool will leave from the Publix parking lot by Kiki's off John Young Parkway at 9:00 AM. If you meet us there the address of the park is 900 E. Princeton Street, Orlando, FL 32803.

Please call Jan if you plan to attend and/or if you have questions.

May Dress-up Tea

Want a fun afternoon? Come to Tea and dress for the occasion. You can even put on that hat you have been saving in your closet. Save **Sunday, May 5th at 2:00 PM** and join us at Jill's home for afternoon Tea.

Please call or text Jan to reserve your place at the table. Suggested donation to offset expenses is only \$5.00.

Being a Woman ...by Dorie Croissant

The term "womanhood" sounds like an ancient title to me. For myself, I prefer to think in terms of adjectives and images that describe the aspects of being a woman. The feelings and understanding of this topic are personal to each and every one of us.

My growing up visuals of being a woman were obviously based on my mom and my grandmothers, aunts, teachers, and other adult women I encountered. Those visuals included hair styles and clothing and taking care of the home front. Back then, I never thought of what it **meant** to be a woman. Women were women. Girls were girls. I realize this sounds strange, so let me move away from the thoughts of my younger years and fast-forward to the present.

As an adult, I think more in terms of characteristics and qualities that help define women. I feel women are worthy and should be respected for their education, knowledge, and opinions. Standing up for herself. Making decisions for herself. Accepting herself. Valuing herself. Being confident and self-affirming. Being resilient. All of these qualities make a woman powerful. Women are typically social beings. They are giving and kind and have an enduring spirit. They are loving and strong and caring.

Being a woman is whatever you want it to be. I once read somewhere, "I am deserving of every sweet thing this world could offer." And as Helen Reddy's song exclaims, "I am strong. I am invincible. I am woman." There is a deep truth to each and every one of these values and characteristics that helps describe what it is to be a woman.

We are not all in the Same Boat! Or What is Womanhood to Me?...By Sonia Rubert Diaz

I started by making a list of characteristics that to me meant womanhood, such as kind, strong, resilient, talented in multitasking, smart, unique, bold and energetic. I even researched and read about x and y chromosomes distinguishing male and female, or rather, our sex - what reproductive organs you are born with- in the scientific and medical sense. I kept thinking "What is womanhood to me?"

On our way to Bushnell National Cemetery, we stopped to get gas and something to drink. We encountered a couple sitting outside the store, a tiny young woman dressed in tattered clothing, obviously homeless, and waiting for someone to help them. I THOUGHT "Wait a minute, is this lady following my perceived idea of a woman of being strong, beautiful, bold"? I was totally baffled at my perception and her reality. I certainly didn't know anything about this lady, her background, education, or circumstances. However, she qualified with the science and medical sense of being a woman and having her unique womanhood. I'm sure she must feel like all of us have felt of being defeated, estranged from family, and not beautiful. What a wakeup call!

My background is defined by some awesome women, very strong, kind and tender. My immediate family offered models of womanhood. Was I born into a blessed gang? My upbringing became part of my inner spirit of womanhood. Now, I realized that we are not all in the same boat, some of us are in a yacht while others are in canoes, or on a cruise liner while others have to row a small fishing boat. Nevertheless, regardless of our circumstances, we are all women, mujer, mulher, zena, kwinde, fille, laregazza, frauen.

Womanhood...by Amneris Delgado

Today is Easter Sunday and I was reminded at mass that it was a woman, Mary Magdalene, who was brave enough to visit the Lord's tomb. The disciples, a group of cowardly men, were nowhere to be seen since they had run away. It was Mary who went bravely to visit the Lord. She showed extraordinary courage and love in her attempt to face the guards standing nearby. I'm certain that she was questioned harshly as to why she was there. She would not be distracted from her mission to see her Master and Teacher. Mary embodies the brave, courageous, loving woman we all carry inside us. Today and every day we hear and see the stories of women all over the world who fight for what they fiercely believe in.

I could list the names of many women here, but let me just end with the name of Mother Cabrini. Her struggle for the impoverished immigrants is depicted in the movie "Cabrini". You will be moved and proud of yet another powerful woman like Mary Magdalene.

What Womanhood means to me...by Carmen Cruz-Venie

In Hollywood, the men, they write parts for women. Women need men, they need to be rescued. Womanhood is an unnecessary battle for relevancy and respect. This, believe it or not, is my youngest son Michael's perspective.

As many of you know, I was raised, mostly, by my father. Growing up, my household was different from my friends, nontraditional. Now, as an adult I see my father's guidance as a gift. He encouraged me to stand on my own two feet. As women we faced many struggles and challenges, I remember in high school, I needed to be smarter than the boys. I guess it was to prove something to them, it really was to prove something myself. There is an ideal expectation of how a woman should be, oftentimes, not practical.

There is not one specific definition of womanhood, but to me, it is being my own unique self. Following my own rules, if I want to cry, scream, curse (yes!) I do it. Embracing friendships and extending respect to everyone regardless of how they look and who they are. Being there for my family and friends in times of joy and sadness. Making a difference in this world and trying to make it a better place before I am gone.

Enjoying life. Truly, in balance.

You've got to be kidding?...by Joyce Elizabeth Farley Donovan, aka "Jody"

When I first read the theme of the newsletter , "What Womanhood Means to You?", I thought to myself, ...'..you've got to be kidding?' Just the question itself sent the thoughts from my brain into free-fall, I could write a book!

Instead of writing an article I'm just going to send a sentence or two, as Dorie has suggested at times.

For me, my womanhood (vs my childhood, my girlhood) was intrinsically, indelibly connected to 'my guy'! Many of you knew him well and knew him to be a 'fine specimen of manhood' (a phrase we used often in speaking of each other's 'hoods'.)

Quotes submitted by Melinda Vazquez

"I would like to be known as an intelligent woman, a courageous woman, a loving woman, a woman who teaches by being."...unknown

"I HOPE THE WOMEN OF THE UNITED STATES WILL AWAKEN TO THE FULL SENSE OF THE INFLUENCE WHICH THEY CAN WIELD IF THEY ACCEPT THE RESPONSIBILITY WHICH ALL POWER IMPLIES." ...*ELEANOR ROOSEVELT*

Nilsa Baez

"Behind every great woman...is another great woman." Kate Hodges

This quote reminds me of my mom. She was a great woman, wonderful, caring, funny, friendly, hard worker, loving, her family was always first, always willing to help, inspirational and much, much more in every possible way. I learned from her. I guess I'm also a great woman!

Jan Herrick

"Women belong in all places where decisions are being made.
It shouldn't be that women are the exception." - RBG



In The Company of Trees April 24, 2021

See page 4 for more information on this event



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Stone Circle operates as a nonprofit entity whose presence seeks to enhance the feminine milieu for women of the 21st century. We truly rely on the generosity of friends and those who participate in programs.