

HONORING THE SPIRIT OF THE MOTHER

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT
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This is the time of year we celebrate Mother's Day in the United States. The date varies around the world but there is a day dedicated to honoring motherhood in many places internationally. Mother's Day has been, for most people, about the celebration of the women who gave birth to us or, for the mothers, the children that were born physically. It's a small token to spend just one day of the year giving thanks for the fact that someone gave birth to you and cared for you. I've been through a lot of cycles of children growing up in my life, as many of us have. It is true that many people were not cared for by their mothers, and many people have cared for children who were not their children, and loved them regardless. I honor the spirit of the Mother wherever it shows up.

I want to talk about the essence of what mothering really is all about. I know many teenagers deliver babies and are given the title

of "mother." But that doesn't make them capable of truly being a mother.

When I think about mothering, I think about the holding of a process. As a birth mother, that process involves the raising of a child. There are many creative processes that don't involve physically birthing a child. Those processes need the spirit of the mother to be present for things to thrive. The spirit of the mother will maintain an atmosphere with other people so that something can be held and nourished and birthed from the essences that are in her hands. And then sustained after the birth. This is what mothering is about. And then I ask, *Can you hold the process of creation with another?* This is also part of the spirit of a mother—holding an atmosphere safe and cared for with other women. The delivery of a child bestows the title of mother. But most of mothering happens after the birth. This is true in every creative process.

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There are many ways in which people think of motherhood as a solitary job. I think of my responsibility as a mother as holding an atmosphere with other women so that the spirit of Mother God is known on earth. Mother God does not just take care of a few. Mother God takes care of all, holds the atmosphere and the essence of protection for the spirit of love and truth coming through things.

My greatest blessing is to find women who will do that with me. It is a great gift to find women who will hold a creative cycle and not sabotage or abort it, regardless of what's happening in my humanity or theirs, or in the humanity of the children we are responsible for. And sometimes those children are older than me. And sometimes those children are the creative processes we are holding together. There are projects that get unruly, just like human children. We can raise them in the atmosphere of love and truth as well.

I learned the essence of mothering at a young age. I remember going into my college financial aid office to make sure my application was filled out properly, and the woman who was in charge of the department said, "Would you work for me? Would you be responsible for this office?" And I thought, what just happened? I'm a student. There was something present in me that she recognized would or could hold and care for the office with her. There was a mutual knowing of the presence of Mother God in each other. I was

young but I had been trained well to be trustworthy and dedicated. This proved to be a great gift.

I'm sure many of you have seen the myriad of posts on Facebook, acknowledging the actual physical beings that were the mothers of those posting the messages. Many of my friends have posted them. I give thanks for the fact that they were born.

My own mother passed away only two weeks ago. I have received many kind notes saying, in essence, *She must have been an incredible woman to have raised a woman like you.* I give thanks for having had a wonderful and loving mother and for her teaching me how to care for things during a long process.

I've said many times that, as a girl, I always wanted to be like the grandmother on an American television series from the '70s, *The Waltons*. I realized that one of the things I loved about her was her steadiness in holding the whole family, the whole of Walton's Mountain, the whole community. She wasn't responsible for physically birthing those people, but her care for the wholeness, the wholesomeness, the sanctity of the people was present. She represented the purity and largeness of the spirit of the Mother. I knew that spirit could live through me too and she gave me hope that it was possible. I know it was a television show but things that are true are true. I touched something that has stayed with me all these years and continues to

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inspire me to ask myself, *Can I love and hold my family, my community that way? Can I assist others to do that as well? Can I invite another to do that with me?* That is my prayer on this Mother's Day.

There was a post on Facebook, a photo of a woman holding a baby on her shoulder, saying, "No matter how big my kids get, they'll always be my babies." I want to represent my deep love and respect for the

connection that happens between a mother and child. And I also want to call forth that true motherhood is allowing your babies to be people. It's allowing your projects to be born and to thrive. It's allowing yourself to hold a container with other people and bringing the spirit of Mother God, on this day and every day.

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