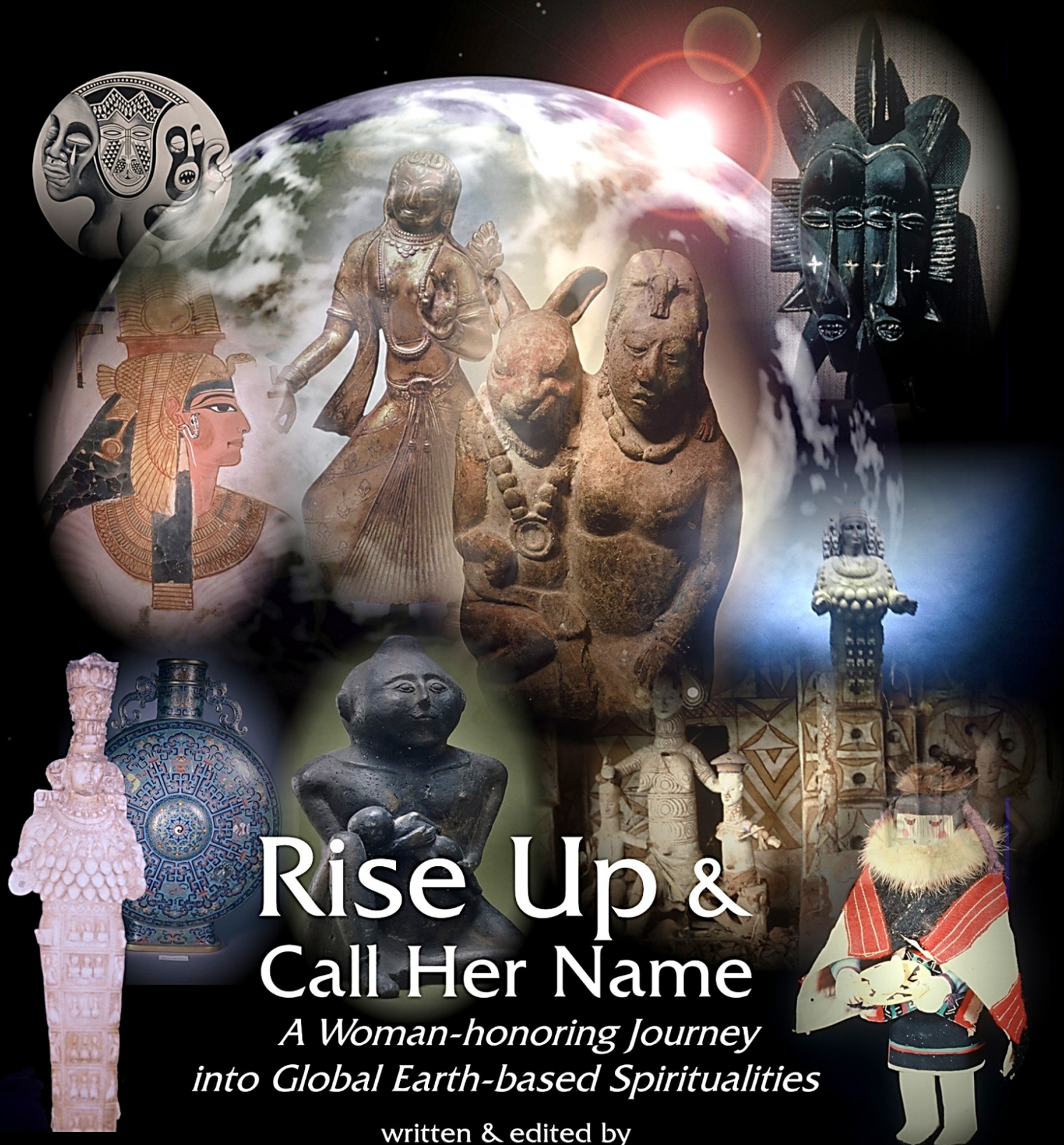


# OVERVIEW SNAPSHOTS



## Rise Up & Call Her Name

*A Woman-honoring Journey  
into Global Earth-based Spiritualities*

written & edited by  
Elizabeth Fisher

Rise Up & Call Her Name

# OVERVIEW SNAPSHOTS

## RISE UP & CALL HER NAME

***A WOMAN-HONORING JOURNEY INTO GLOBAL EARTH-BASED SPIRITUALITIES***

**by Elizabeth Fisher**

**In honor of MAYA ANGELOU** (April 4, 1928 – May 28, 2014)

**A brave, powerful, and inspiring voice who spoke despite adversity. May we all do so.**

***STILL I RISE*** (excerpted from her famous poem)

You may write me down in history  
With your bitter, twisted lies,  
You may trod me in the very dirt  
But still, like dust, I'll rise....  
Just like moons and like suns,  
With the certainty of tides,  
Just like hopes springing high, still I'll rise....  
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,  
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.  
I rise...I rise....I rise

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***The website [www.RiseUpAndCallHerName.com](http://www.RiseUpAndCallHerName.com) contains lots of information and additional articles related to the themes of this program. Check it out!***

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## WHAT'S IN THIS BOOKLET?

*For a full description of the components of this course, open the back cover of this booklet and read the flyer, including its reverse side.*

Key insights and helpful tools from the *Rise Up & Call Her Name* experience make up this booklet. These selections provide a taste of the wide-range of important spiritual and cultural material available in this course. Evidence of its impact well beyond the groups who undertook this journey is also included as well as links to related writers. The sections are:

***Two bulleted lists*** conveniently summarize: **earth-honoring beliefs** and the **process of taking a journey**.

***Map of the Journey*** provides a quick overview of the cultural aspects and places represented.

***Discoveries on the Journey*** Gathered together here, these summarize the material to be presented in each session. They appear in the *Leader's Guide* at the beginning of each session. By reading these in sequence and meditating on the images, you will experience the flow of the journey and can envision the activities that are included.

***Lasting Impressions*** summarizes the fundamental concerns of this program. Priority is given to the values of equality, compassion, nurturance, creativity, self-expression and contributing to the common good. Central are: exploring the meanings of process, and interconnection; and examining the interplay between diversity and individuality and overcoming racism.

***Spiritual and Cultural Sensitivity Notes*** Each session includes a note or two that highlights an important social justice consideration which arises when dealing with the cross-cultural material contained in the session, illustrating concern for accurate representation of social realities.

***A biography of Elizabeth Fisher*** and a listing of the *Thirteen Most Influential People in Women's Spirituality* which includes both Liz Fisher and Shirley Ranck (author of *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven*), provides an overview of this important and lasting spirituality movement, highlighting several other central authors and ideas.



## INTRODUCTION

*Rise Up & Call Her Name: A Woman-honoring Journey into Global Earth-based Spiritualities* was first published in 1995 and reissued in 2007 in up-to-date technological formats while retaining the original material. This booklet gives you a taste of what it is like to travel with the female divine in her many guises. We are reminded She can be outraged at injustices as much as She can understand and forgive.

Thousands of groups and individuals have taken this journey. It has become a **prominent feature of an international movement to reclaim the importance of diverse forms of the female divine** cross-culturally.

Knowing about the existence of positive female religious imagery can be a major revelation for those raised to believe male-centered monotheistic religions were the only possibility when looking for meaningful perspectives on ethical considerations.

**In 2013 a widely circulated list of the *Thirteen Most Influential People in Women's Spirituality*** includes both Elizabeth Fisher, author *Rise Up and Call Her Name* and Shirley Ranck, author of *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven*. It reads:

**Elizabeth Fisher and Shirley Ranck**—authors of germinal religious education curriculums focused on feminist spirituality and woman-honoring traditions, originally published by the UU Women and Religion program, their work with *Rise Up & Call Her Name* and *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven* continues to change the lives of women around the country by introducing them to a vision of what the world could be like if the divine was imaged as female.

These two programs, which are companion projects starting in the 1980s (*Cakes* was first published in 1986, revised 2005), **synthesize spiritual tools with information** from a variety of sources into carefully crafted multimedia sessions. Testimony abounds that these programs open doors to further creative efforts on the part of on-going group members and individuals who went on to exert lasting impact on their communities.

*Rise Up* also **explicitly uplifts the widespread occurrences of women in leadership throughout history** as fully engaged participants in the ethical,



## Rise Up & Call Her Name

spiritual and community concerns often reserved for men. Exploring the diverse qualities assigned to goddesses—while addressing modern day misogyny —quickly boosts the self-esteem of women and girls.

**Collaboration** throughout the development process makes this program uniquely representative of diverse wisdom. **Conversations with women from a variety of racial backgrounds informed the structure** and selection of material. Personal stories, creative writings, songs, and chants authored by numerous women (and a few men who appreciate women) have been included in the fabric of this experience.

The course is also about **social justice and advocating for full human rights for women**. It provides a method for honoring the real women who went before us, the ancestors who upheld justice. *Rise Up* implies taking action and *Calling Her Name* combines appreciating female honoring spirituality with valuing each person's – and especially women's – intrinsic worth and dignity. This is a powerful and much needed practice in these times of disrespect and violence toward women worldwide.

The name of this course ***Rise Up and Call Her Name*** is a chant composed by Carolyn McDade which is part of the ritual "Seeking the Goddess in Ancestral Faces" written by Adele Smith, an African-American Unitarian Universalist minister, as a tribute to the strong women leaders in South Africa and North America. (The ritual is in the African-American session of this course.) Smith reminds us that each of the women honored made sacrifices to express her individual truths. As part of this ritual, participants are asked to remember women who have inspired them, and call out their names as well. As the journey progresses, the honoring extends to all participants, as each discovers the power of her or his individual gifts and talents and how to express themselves effectively.

Perhaps it is time for you to travel with her and discover that She responds to our inquiries, dialoguing with us as we solidify key values which shape our actions.

*Elizabeth Fisher, Pacific Grove, California 2015*



## PRAISES FOR *RISE UP*

*The following comments from leaders contain reflections of the impact of this course. Valuable observations reveal what can be gained from leading and participating in this journey.*

**Rev. Gregory Stewart** is a former senior minister of the Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco and a seasoned religious educator teaching a range of materials over many years. *Rise Up* was taught in several congregations he served. He says: “What is most significant to me about *Rise Up* is the way participants are bonded to each other in and through the learning process. In every case, the use of *Rise Up* has led to on-going groups—some focusing on study, others ritual, and still others for personal support.

*Rise Up* has also served as a bridge between pagans and more “traditional” UUs within congregations I’ve served. When the need for pagan worship, rituals, and celebrations has arisen (and it always has, of course), I have often recommended that the exploration begin within the educational ministry of the church, as an adult Religious Education course—specifically, *Rise Up*. This opens up doors and increases everyone’s comfort level so that the exploration may continue through the worship, music, and outreach ministries of the congregation. Finally, the curriculum is simply so rich in the areas of pre-Christian and world religious approaches in theology/thealogy, and is presented in such an engaging way. Everybody will benefit from the spiritual and social transformation that the curriculum makes possible.”

\*\*\*\*\*

“*Rise Up* provided me with freedom, clarity and energy I have not known in almost 50 years since I learned to “be a woman.” *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven* highlighted the dilemma and that it was shared. *Rise Up & Call Her Name* gave me the imagery and the symbols: the strong, powerful female who is nurturing, compassionate and vulnerable. I am no longer empty and alone...not angry, not afraid. I am alive...I have a voice. This is my voice.”  
~ Rene Bond Collins, clinical social worker, participant in *Rise Up*



## Rise Up & Call Her Name

**From *Names of Endearment, Names of Love*, Sunday sermon preached by the Rev. Lilia Cuervo, First Parish in Cambridge, March 28, 2010**

“A major experience with the names for the Holy happened in seminary, where I received an invitation to attend, *Rise Up & Call Her Name*. This curriculum honoring the feminine side of the divine is an approach to Earth-based spiritualities. It is not only exciting but very enriching culturally and religiously speaking. It promotes ecological awareness and inspires hope by helping those participating, change many old paradigms about race, women, and nature, into new, healthier paradigms.

At first, however, I was very reluctant to attend a workshop about the Goddess. Although I considered myself quite liberated at the time, still, old fears of the consequences of deviating from the all-powerful, masculine image of God confronted me. Now, I feel ashamed confessing, that in my ignorance, I was convinced that anything concerning Goddesses or Earth spiritualities was a thing of backward and simplistic people. For me the most powerful argument against attending the workshop however was that it had taken me years to finally erase from my mind the idea of God as a man with a beard. I did not want to start thinking of the Holy as a woman with long hair and addressing her with feminine names.

I knew, however, that one important challenge that we Unitarian Universalists face is the free and responsible search for truth and meaning, wherever we can find them. Therefore, wanting to be open and responsible, I put away, at least momentarily, what I thought were insurmountable doubts and attended the workshop. It was exciting to learn that many women and men in my own Unitarian Universalist religion had already overcome the old patriarchal teachings and provided a loving mother and Goddess for themselves. I could do the same.

One of the first things that impressed me the most was the staggering amount of names given to the Goddess; 11,000 according to one account; another surprise was the qualities expressed by those names. The awareness of the existence of the Goddess and of her different names and attributes in



## Rise Up & Call Her Name

so many cultures, has added new dimensions to my spiritual life. It is enriching loving a cosmic mother in her different manifestations. I especially love her as Hecate, Isis, Kali Ma, and Kuan Yin. To this day, for me, the best effect from attending *Rise Up and Call Her Name* was that finally I could accept without a trace of doubt that, as a woman, I was not inferior to men, as I had been trained to believe. This for me was a huge source of inner peace and liberation.”

\*\*\*\*\*

“*Rise Up*’s innovative approach skillfully integrates a variety of spiritual and intellectual methods of exploration...a model for woman-centered programming.” ~ Dr. Elinor Gadon, author *The Once and Future Goddess*

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"I'm so glad you are re-issuing it. *Rise Up* remains one of the best works in the field." ~Dianne Jenett, Co-Director, Women's Spirituality MA Program at Sofia University, Palo Alto, California

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“This curriculum teaches itself it is so well organized!” ~ Andrea Paulson, group leader of *Rise Up* in Belmont, Massachusetts.

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“*Rise Up* has been an awesome learning experience. It is a truly wonderful program.” ~ Debbie Kirkland, Toronto, Ontario

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“*Rise Up* has been a huge help to me in understanding the Goddess and worshipping the Divine Feminine. Personally, I feel everyone should participate in the curriculum and form his/her personal relationship with the Goddess.” ~ Marvin Brown, Athens, Ohio

\*\*\*\*\*

“Thank you so much for this wonderful program. As a leader it is easy to follow and quite dynamic.” ~ Michelle Fischer, Atlanta, Georgia





## **EARTH-HONORING BELIEFS**

As we experience aspects of traditions that have honored the Earth as a teacher for centuries, we begin a profound dialogue with ways, people, and practices we may never have heard of before. This is a beginning—the first sentences in a continuing conversation with those whose cultures, practices, contemporary artists and thinkers have something quite valuable to say about how they experience themselves on the Earth.

***Rise Up*** is an attempt to delve into the following characteristics of these systems. Although during our journey we often explore these characteristics in connection with only one culture, these qualities and beliefs appear in many traditions that exhibit Earth-honoring beliefs.

- A spiritual journey has both an inner and outer nature.
- A healing power is often made available to us through honoring the female and the Earth.
- Spiritual communication is multi-dimensional.
- Sacred and secular worlds are one.
- Passive and active is not a true female/male dichotomy.
- Spiritual knowledge can present a key to fearlessness.
- Appreciating the process of life, death and rebirth, both in the physical and metaphorical sense, is central.
- Compassion is an important quality to develop.
- Direct experience of the sacred, sometimes called intuition, is of great value.
- When acting, it is important not to be attached to the outcome, but rather to be concerned with integrity.



## **BEING ON THE JOURNEY REQUIRES**

- Engaging from the heart in a way that is different from intellectual study alone
- Undergoing without always understanding or being able to fit what we see or feel into a predetermined explanation
- Seeing with fresh eyes and the ability to remember what it was like to learn something new as a child
- Accepting a partial picture with the faith it will become more defined later
- Being able to tolerate ambiguity without losing track of a sense of meaning
- Being able to, over time, build a more complete picture from blocks of experience
- Respecting what may seem strange, compared to what we normally experience
- Feeling rather than thinking at times
- Trusting the process of discovering and becoming
- Appreciating mystery
- Experiencing inner and outer journeys which stimulate one another
- Holding a belief that experiences on the journey contribute to realizing our full potential
- Understanding that encounters on the journey enrich us while sometimes demanding that we change our outlook radically
- Returning to our communities and working to communicate the truths we have learned is an important aspect of a spiritual journey.



## MAP OF THE JOURNEY

*Rise Up & Call Her Name: A Woman-honoring Journey Into Global Earth-based Spiritualities* is a journey of thought and activity. It uses various forms of art, dialogue and reflection to explore together what we believe and feel. It carries numerous qualities. Most important among these are:

- ✚ *Bringing awareness of the processes of nature into our contemporary spiritual life*
- ✚ *Nurturing self-respect in women and respect for women in men by making known the range of emotions and actions attributed to female deities and the respect accorded them in many spiritual traditions*
- ✚ *Expanding appreciation and respect given Earth-based spiritual traditions as well as the Earth-honoring aspects of several well-known religious belief systems*
- ✚ *Opening doors to cross-cultural interaction by fostering a respect for the richness of diversity*

Beginning the journey, we contact the Jewish/Semitic first wife of Adam, Lilith. We learn the lesson that many religions considered patriarchal may indeed have strong feminist roots as well. We also explore the inner and outer nature of a spiritual journey.

We learn the inherent worth of darkness by honoring the Dark Goddess Hecate from the ancient Mediterranean/Pre-Hellenic region. We encounter the three faces of this Goddess -- maiden, mother, and wise woman -- and begin to appreciate the processes of life, death and rebirth as central to existence, both in a physical and a metaphorical sense.

We next move toward Africa, the cradle of civilization. We become acquainted with the formative and central influences of black Africa in the highly developed Egyptian culture. We enter the temple of Isis, the ancient primal Goddess that was the source of much of the original Egyptian mythology. We consider healing power which is often made available through honoring the female and the Earth.



## Rise Up & Call Her Name

The stories of three Yoruban orisha that originate in West Africa next capture our attention. They are: Oshun, Goddess of the River; Yemaja, Goddess of the Sea; and Oya, Goddess of the Winds of Change. We dance to drumming rhythms as we begin to experience the multi-dimensional aspect of spiritual communication.

Following the movement of African people to the "new world," we experience aspects of contemporary African American culture. We honor the Ancient Ancestral Mother and the belief that the sacred and secular are one. The experience of improvisation is brought alive through the uniquely inspired method of Afro-traditional quilting.

Continuing our global adventure, we arrive on the Asian sub-continent and hear of the power of Kali, a Mother Goddess in India, and explore the creative power of Shakti, the feminine principle, which teaches us that passive and active is not a true female/male dichotomy.

Moving through Asia we stop in Tibet and China and meet the popular Goddesses Tara and Kwan Yin, becoming familiar with some of the female-honoring aspects of Buddhism and Taoism. These religions teach us that compassion is an important quality to develop and that direct experience of the sacred, which is sometimes called intuition, is of considerable value. Many of the teachings of these traditions also demonstrate that when acting it is important not to be attached to the outcome, but rather to be concerned with integrity.

Culminating our Asian visit, we arrive on the islands of Japan and encounter the Shinto Goddess Amaterasu and her lessons of self-empowerment. We learn from the tale of her withdrawal and then return to society that our impact on our communities can be significant even though, at times, it is difficult to accept the behavior of others.

Next we move toward Central and North America. We first land in Hawaii and contact Pele, the exciting Goddess of the volcano. Here we acknowledge the ties between ecology and Earth-based spirituality and consider how the processes of the Earth are held sacred by some indigenous peoples.





## Rise Up & Call Her Name

Arriving in Mesoamerica, we also meet the Goddess Tonantzin who is at the core of contemporary devotion to the Mexican Virgin of Guadalupe. We also discover the ancient Goddess Corn Mother and meditate upon the ways the fruit of our harvest becomes the seed of our future undertakings.

We next touch the roots of the First Peoples of the Americas through the stories and masks of a Lakota Sacred Pipe Woman. We discover the North American continent is steeped in ancient female-honoring traditions as we encounter the American Indian Goddesses White Buffalo Calf Woman, Spider Woman and Changing Woman. We also consider how sacred truths sometimes come directly to individuals if they are able to recognize them.

Knowing that we must return to our everyday lives, yet realizing how we have changed, we share what we have learned and explore where we wish to go from here.

## DISCOVERIES ON THE JOURNEY

The following thirteen pages, entitled *Discoveries on the Journey*, are the first pages in each session in the *Rise Up Leader's Guide*. Each features a narrative description of what is going to happen in the session, providing a quick overview of the session's structure. An image of a goddess from the area of the globe focused on in the session is included as well.

By reading these narratives in sequence and meditating on the images, you will experience the flow of the journey and can envision the activities that are included.





## SESSION ONE

### TOOLS FOR TRAVELING



### DISCOVERIES ON THE JOURNEY

During this curriculum, we will learn about a variety of cultural traditions that honor goddesses and esteem women. We will also become acquainted with some of the beliefs that are associated with these traditions and how varied spiritual practices stimulate personal inner journeys. During this opening session, we will explore what it means to take a journey to Earth-based spiritual traditions around the globe. This journey we are undertaking together will be both an outer and an inner one. We will begin to explore the tools of ritual and chanting that will aid us as we travel on the journey. We will also honor the valuable tool of study and consider how accounts of history and culture must be evaluated for sexist bias. Because woman-honoring religious imagery has often been devalued, we will together reclaim the first wife of Adam, known as Lilith.





## SESSION TWO

### BEGINNING THE JOURNEY



### DISCOVERIES ON THE JOURNEY

In this session, we will join together at the crossroads that are at the beginning of all journeys and use two more tools for traveling — personal sharing and guided meditation. We will share with one another what we bring from our own cultural heritages that give us strength and balance. We will meet Hekate who is the triple-headed goddess of antiquity in the Mediterranean, and learn about her aspect as the protector who guards the crossroads and offers wise counsel to those who acknowledge her. We will hear about a shift in cultural attitudes that makes honoring diversity a central value. A video collage introduces woman-honoring images from around the globe, many from centuries past. As we begin our journey to Earth-based communities, we will take a moment to reflect on harmful dichotomies that breed racist attitudes. A guided meditation brings us into contact with the owl as we undertake our journey to places where goddesses are often dark, like the Earth herself.





## SESSION THREE

### ANCIENT AFRICA



#### DISCOVERIES ON THE JOURNEY

Arriving in Africa, we first will meet Isis, the Great Mother Goddess, and practice nourishing one another. We will use the tool of dialogue to reflect with others on the implications of Afrocentrism, a philosophy that affirms multiculturalism. A variety of images suggests the significant role black Africans and women played in the development of Egyptian culture. We will see several Black Madonnas of Europe and hear interpretations that attest to the extended influence of Isis and Egyptian culture. We will journey into the temple of Isis and reflect on our wants and needs and take time to appreciate the power of healing. We will use the tool of art by drawing our reactions to our meeting with Isis and share them with one another.







## SESSION FOUR

### SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA



#### DISCOVERIES ON THE JOURNEY

In this session, we will explore the underlying concepts of a world view and cosmology that is embraced by some African religious traditions. We will experiment with another tool for traveling, the process of storytelling, which brings alive the Yoruban goddesses Oshun, Yemaya, and Oya. We will consider how dance is used in many Earth-based traditions as a tool to aid spiritual journeying and dance our own impressions of the energies of these three Goddesses.





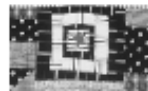
## SESSION FIVE

### AFRICAN AMERICAN



#### DISCOVERIES ON THE JOURNEY

On a brief return to North America, we will explore the cultural continuity that exists between West African culture and African American culture. We will have a chance to experiment with improvisation, a characteristic of both African and African American cultural expression, by learning about Afro-traditional quilt making and by creating our own improvisational patterns. We will also consider how the Afrocentric world view informs African American spiritual traditions. Two concepts — "the sacred and the secular are one" and the "outraged ancestral mother" — will be the focus of our dialogue, a group reading and a traditional song we will share.





## SESSION SIX

ASIA ~ INDIA



### DISCOVERIES ON THE JOURNEY

We next arrive on the Asian sub-continent where we will experience our own feminine power, or Shakti. We will see an array of images of female deities, many who continue to be honored throughout much of Asia today.

We will hear what some Hindus feel about the great Mother Goddess of India, Kali, who is loved by many. We will have an opportunity to reflect on our own feelings about darkness, fear and fearlessness, and take time to transform our fears and express our hopes.





## SESSION SEVEN

ASIA ~ CHINA



### DISCOVERIES ON THE JOURNEY

As we continue our journey through Asia, we meet Tara, or "She who liberates." A variety of visual images continues to reveal the wide range of female-honoring imagery emanating from this area of the globe.

Intuitive insight, so important to Taoism, becomes the focus of our exploration of this classic religious system. We take a few moments to consider the power of meditation as it is practiced in several religions of Asia. The quality of compassion, which is embodied in the Goddesses Tara and Kuan Yin, is given expression.







## SESSION EIGHT

ASIA ~ JAPAN



### DISCOVERIES ON THE JOURNEY

Our journey continues with a stop in Japan, where we will become acquainted with Shinto, a natural and spontaneous expression of Japanese spirituality. We will meet in a Kami Council of all beings to dialogue about how to bring the rule of peace and order to the Earth. We will hear the story of the Shinto Goddess of the Sun, Amaterasu, that reveals the power of her mirror, and chant in honor of her. We will also take a look at ourselves, reflecting on our strengths and what sources of empowerment we see deep within ourselves. We will hear the voice of an Asian American woman who shares with us her heritage as well as the path she has taken to discover her own unique strengths.





## SESSION NINE

### PACIFIC ISLANDS



#### DISCOVERIES ON THE JOURNEY

During this session, we will learn about the Native Hawaiian attitude toward the Kilauea volcano, which they know as the Goddess Pele. We will explore the meaning of sacred land and revisit what the land where we have lived means to us. We will consider together how we feel about natural phenomena that can be destructive to life. We will take an imaginary walk into a lava tube and reflect on the darkness which is called in some native legends "the great night that supplies."





## SESSION TEN

### MESOAMERICA

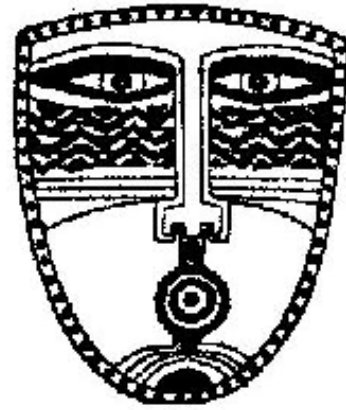


#### DISCOVERIES ON THE JOURNEY

During this session, we become acquainted with the diverse range of feminine imagery in ancient and modern Mexico and Central America which is also known as Mesoamerica. We will hear the story of the Virgin of Guadalupe and consider how, in Mexico, the legacy of the Earth Goddess of indigenous cultures, Tonantzin, lives on in some of the contemporary adoration of the Virgin. A Chicana reflects, through her own prayer, poetry and story on the meaning of la Virgen de Guadalupe in her own life. We will dialogue with one another about our views of the nature of goddesses.

We will also learn the important meaning of corn to cultures that have inhabited this part of the world for centuries and take time to dream about our own seed corn.





## SESSION ELEVEN

### NATIVE AMERICAN

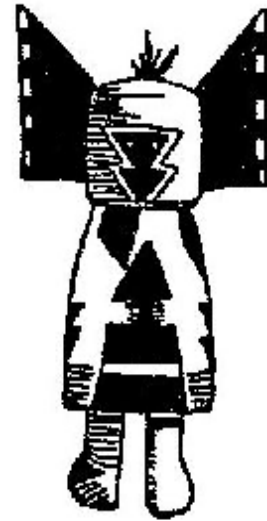


#### DISCOVERIES ON THE JOURNEY

As we move to North America, some of the beliefs and practices of the Lakotas frame our next adventure. The Lakotas are one of the first peoples who live in the center of the North American continent. We will begin by enacting a special honoring of the directions of the Earth. We will learn about the power of masks which are important to many Earth-based spiritual traditions. By viewing the masks of a Lakota Sacred Pipe Woman and hearing her words, we will consider the history and contemporary meaning of masks to Earth-based traditions. We will begin to make our own masks which will give us a chance to express, in visual medium, the personal impact of our journey. We will hear the sacred story of White Buffalo Calf Woman.







## SESSION TWELVE

### NATIVE AMERICAN



#### DISCOVERIES ON THE JOURNEY

During this stop on our Journey, we will hear a creation story focusing on Spider Woman, an important figure for many Native American peoples, and create a group web. We will view a selection of visual images from the four directions of the continent that show the power of the female in the cultures of the first peoples of North America. We will decorate the masks we created and attach them to hoops. We will also celebrate Changing Woman, a deity that is very closely connected to Spider Woman.





## SESSION THIRTEEN

### THE RETURN



### DISCOVERIES ON THE JOURNEY

During this final stop on our Journey, we will share with one another the healing power we have gained from our visits to Earth-based traditions around the globe. We will also share recent changes in our lives and how they came about. We will consider our next steps to further connect with the diversity of our own personalities and community. Finally, we will birth together our sacred bundles and masks which we will carry with us as we each make our Return from our Journey back into our communities.



## LASTING IMPRESSIONS

### FROM *RISE UP & CALL HER NAME*

Many themes are explored in *Rise Up*. The essential ones are introduced here; the longer curriculum provides extensive opportunities for exploration. When developing *Rise Up*, I encountered a wide range of attitudes within all cultures I reviewed. In addition to a focus on woman- and earth-honoring perspectives, I searched for aspects of varied traditions where a commitment to the values of equality, compassion, nurturance and creativity were openly expressed; and where a priority was placed on maintaining the common good as well as exploring individual spiritual growth and fulfillment.

#### **Honoring the Female**

Over the years, as I read and studied in the field of world religions, occasionally I would see a mention of a goddess. However, these mentions were minimal at best. Yet, thousands of powerful female religious images have existed throughout time all over the globe, a startling fact for most people raised on the male-only imagery of Christianity, Judaism and Islam, the three branches of western monotheistic religion. A dictionary published by Oxford University Press, covers 11,500 goddesses from locations all over the globe. According to the author, Martha Ann, who also contributed to *Rise Up*, this is just scratching the surface!

As I approached the task of crystallizing my vision of *Rise Up*, I discovered and uncovered essential aspects of Earth-based Spirituality, past and present, which honor the female divine around the globe. While *Rise Up* focuses on prominent goddesses from select areas of the globe, what is being explored is far larger than the lore of individual deities. When goddesses are not only honored, but are seen as powerful, they provide modeling for a wider variety of female behavior. This range of qualities creates a much richer array of behavior for women to emulate, and men to appreciate in women, and perhaps if they are able to overcome gender typing, in themselves.



### **Awareness of Interconnection**

Spiritual journeys are about all kinds of webs—linkages between ideas, impressions, feelings, and beings. These webs are not linear but multidimensional and multidirectional. Providing ways to bring awareness of these interconnected webs, which are the processes of nature, into our contemporary spiritual life is a chief purpose of this curriculum. In their healthiest forms, natural systems are complex, subtle, diverse and inherently beautiful. To respect this beauty and to feel a part of it is to be Earth-based.

Many contemporary ethical thinkers are also realizing the profound connections between attitudes held toward the female and those toward the natural world. A positive attitude toward nature encourages a holistic vision that respects all humanity—regardless of gender and ethnicity—while also valuing the multitude of life forms in the web of existence.

Numerous spiritual traditions, past and present, around the globe build their beliefs on a respect for these natural processes which exhibit interdependence. An active concern for the well-being of all parts of the web of existence is a central precept of the religious practices explored in *Rise Up*.

So often we are lead to believe success in life is more about human society and construction and not primarily about the processes of nature and protecting diverse biological systems. Today we are learning the harsh lessons of ignoring the realities of the planet we are a part of. To be Earth-based is to come humbly to the truths of nature and to seek to understand and live according to their dictates. Earth-honoring spiritualities find these positive and enriching, not obstacles to overcome or realities to dominate.

### **Past, Present and Future**

The new paradigm of interrelatedness has two faces, one that turns backward toward history, and one that looks forward to a fresh mode of living. For thousands of years, people the world over held a common belief: the Universe was alive. For this reason, continuity with the past is part of the new pattern. Earth-based spiritualities often reach back into history to a time when change was a part of the understanding of how the world works. We



honor natural based change when we speak the name of goddesses who embody natural processes. Honoring these goddesses also reclaims a sense of continuity upon which to base a future vision.

### **Process Is an Important Key**

I have found that goddesses are about process. For me, they are close to the Earth, rarely transcending the planet on which we live. Rather, they live *with* us, advising, not dictating—drawing us into an understanding when we are ready, showing compassion when all seems lost. They are fierce defenders of their people and powerful role models. They are not in contrast to gods but live among them. They are collaborators who need humans to work with them. In these times of trouble globally, goddesses are offering us wisdom. In the words of the Japanese American artist Mayumi Oda, “*Goddess is Coming to You; Can You Come to Her?*”

### **Why Multicultural Exploration?**

*Rise Up*, by opening some doors to cross-cultural interaction, is fostering a respect for the richness that diversity of all types can bring to us. The ability to dialogue with an emotionally open attitude that supports interconnectedness, while honoring maximum diversity, is crucial. By becoming more aware of the contributions of a variety of cultural traditions and racial groups that share Planet Earth, diversity can begin to take on its proper identity as a gift rather than a problem to be solved. It is my hope *Rise Up* will pique interest in continuing cross-cultural exchange that fuels outer exploration and inner growth.

### **Cultural Appreciation**

Another essential theme is the expansion of appreciation and respect accorded Earth-based spiritual traditions as well as the Earth-honoring aspects of several well-known religious belief systems. These cultures, which honor goddesses and respect the processes of nature as valuable teachers, venerate both continuity and change. They accept the primary process of nature which is birth, life, decay, gestation, rebirth and remember



## Rise Up & Call Her Name

that new life grows from the spent energy of previous effort. Shamanistic cultures and more traditional religious approaches that incorporate some of the wisdom that has been shared by peoples who observe and appreciate the workings of nature teach us to appreciate a wide range of phenomena we may not have considered previously. By appreciating we honor and respect these peoples, reversing some of the damage done to these cultures by attitudes that reduce sacred beliefs to superstitions.

### **Shared Values**

We must also be willing to recognize our similarities, especially in the important psychological and spiritual category of shared values. Affirming similarities as well as honoring differences creates the possibility of drawing people out of the continuing isolation of closed systems.

When creating this curriculum, I came to believe it is far more important to judge a person by their ethical intent than the particulars of their personal belief concerning supernatural forces or deities. Atheists can sit down next to deists, animists and monotheists can conceptualize the existence of spirit differently and still interrelate to the benefit of both. All that is needed is the ability to tolerate, even appreciate, a position that varies from their own, while agreeing to standards of fairness, equality and mutual respect.

### **Diversity and Individuality**

Individuality is a highly prized value in our society. No one wants to be treated as a representative of a group just because they are a particular color, ethnicity, or sex. But, what makes up our individuality, in some part, has to do with our roots and how we express and utilize the gifts of our cultural heritage. One challenge we face as North Americans is reconciling an appreciation for roots while developing our own unique individuality that is not bound or determined by our ancestry. Part of this challenge is also finding ways to enhance our individuality through contact with others who may spring from very different roots. How do we begin to enact our desire to accept and value a wide variety of roots as positive influences, while learning to interrelate for our individual and mutual benefit?





## **Global Community and Local Diversity**

Even though *Rise Up* takes the form of an international journey, this curriculum is both an international and a North American encounter with a two-fold purpose. One is to enhance our feeling of connection to Earth-based cultures on all continents so we can become more sensitive to global realities. The other is to tap into the variety of ancestral roots that form the contemporary North American community.

## **Multicultural America**

As we look to the future, North America will become even more multicultural. In reality, America has been diverse since its very beginning and is becoming more so. Currently, almost half of the American people do not trace their origins to Europe. (These people are concentrated in major cities across the country such as New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Detroit, Philadelphia, San Francisco and Los Angeles although other parts of the country are becoming increasingly diverse as well.)

Indigenous people are a small part of the population but a group that is reasserting its claims to its own identity and land-dwelling. By 2056, demographers claim most Americans will trace their descent to almost anywhere but white Europe.

*Rise Up* offers a unique perspective which is not often represented. The synthesis experienced when appreciation for diversity is coupled with women-honoring attitudes stimulates fresh understanding.

## **Overcoming Racism**

Racism and ethnocentrism are two of the most difficult topics to confront in an increasingly multicultural North America. Past injustices that continue to control the present social realities often block interaction. African American author Toni Morrison asserts that race has functioned as a "metaphor" necessary for construction of "American-ness." Morrison feels the myth of "American" is defined as white and does not allow for the diversity



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"American" should represent. As visibility of people of all races and ethnicities increases and opportunities to participate in society becomes more widespread for a variety of people, this definition of "American" is becoming more inclusive.

Still, it is almost as if, as racial diversity becomes more prominent, challenging long held assumptions about "the other," we are still lacking safe forums where our feelings about racial issues can be shared openly and resolved. This course provides multiple tools for opening up this conversation. Anti-racism work has also surfaced the need to confront and eradicate racism within ourselves, no matter what our DNA contains. One of the best ways to do this is to learn of the contributions so many cultures have made to our common heritage. *Rise Up* is a rich collection of these gifts which have enlivened all of our lives, often without acknowledgement.

### Is Guilt The Answer?

From the UUWF publication *Racial Justice: For Such a Time as This*.

***No one is born a racist*** Racism is not a genetically transmitted disease. It is a systematically transmitted disease. Think about how that word is constructed "dis" and "ease." This disease is in our culture and we incorporate it just as unconsciously as we breathe in polluted air. Our move toward racial justice is a move toward wholeness, toward health, toward becoming at ease with one another.

***Don't confuse guilt with responsibility*** Responsibility is our responding ability; it is taking responsibility for the world as we would re-create it. Guilt, on the other hand, robs us of the strength to respond because guilt undermines our self-esteem. Guilt is the glue that holds our painful emotions together and causes us to face change with despair or denial. Our self-love is our strength—the very strength we need to be responsible. Blame is pointless, but understanding helps us find reasons for our actions in the contexts of the situations and allows us to choose differently.



## **SPIRITUAL & CULTURAL SENSITIVITY NOTES**

Each session includes a note or two that highlights an important consideration which arises when dealing with the cross-cultural material contained in the session. These notes are for the leader's information and may be paraphrased for the group, if desired. They are also reprinted in the *Sourcebook* in the section that corresponds to the appropriate session, which gives participants another opportunity to be exposed to them.

### **Session One – Tools for Traveling**

Numerous feminist theologians in Judaism and Christianity are remaining within their traditions while seeking to reinterpret their stories and religious perspectives in ways that are both honoring of women and respectful of the earth. While this curriculum has a different focus, it is important to acknowledge the work of these scholars and appreciate the value of their efforts and interpretations.

### **Session Two – Beginning the Journey**

It is important not to draw any assumptions based on a person's appearance alone. It isn't accurate to assume that just because a person comes from a particular ethnic group, she or he has a special knowledge or identification with the cultural heritage or particular practices of that group. People want to be sought out for who they are, not who others stereotype them to be.

### **Session Three – Ancient Africa**

Africa is a complex and fast evolving continent. Because of this complexity and change, it is important not to over generalize about the cultures on this continent. It is also important to realize that some theologians, politicians and philosophers who draw their roots from traditional African religions and cultures refer to a Pan-African concept of intrinsic commonality among all African peoples, based on traditional worldviews, which transcends tribal and/or nationalistic uniqueness. When exploring beliefs of peoples who live on the continent of Africa or who live elsewhere because of the African



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diaspora but who trace their ancestry to Africa, it is also important to keep in mind the negative ramifications of colonialism and forced residence on other continents has had on traditional world views.

### **Session Four – Sub-Saharan Africa**

Since we are not initiated Yoruban practitioners, we are not invoking these goddesses but rather honoring the belief in them and their presence in several Earth-based religions. Stories that are told about these goddesses are often transmitted orally. The qualities and anecdotes used to weave the stories in this session represent the written reports of several writers. Some seem to attribute similar roles to a number of different goddesses, called Orisha (aw ree shah) in the language of the Yoruban (your ru ban) people. This may reflect the diversity of localized beliefs.

### **Session Five – African American**

Remember that African American culture is quite diverse. Much of the religious practice within the African American community is Christian, though many researchers have analyzed what they believe to be the African roots in the forms used to practice Christianity. It is also important to remember that we are concentrating in the journey of *Rise Up* on Woman-honoring and Earth-based qualities of all of the cultures we are visiting. We must also be aware that other qualities exist which are part of the total constellation of a religious practice.

### **Session Six – Asia ~ India**

Hindu goddesses are very much a part of modern India; still Indian cultural practices are all too often openly misogynous. Yet, many Hindu feminists still find these goddesses empowering. This can be confusing until we realize that these paradoxes are present in many cultures, and return to an emphasis on the values the *Rise Up* journey advocates. Then valuable cultural wisdom will not be lost when sacred images are used inappropriately; rather, the woman and earth honoring aspects of these ancient images will become available.



## **Session Seven – Asia ~ China**

Traditional eastern religious practices require much discipline. It is important to remember that people who spend considerable time carrying out religious rituals feel great reverence for all their religious activities. When taking part in any activity that relates to a traditional practice, it is important to honor the spirit of devotion more traditional practitioners demand of themselves.

## **Session Eight – Asia ~ Japan**

Asians who emigrated to North America and Asian Americans have historically suffered severe persecution. In addition to the better-known acts of discrimination, such as segregated housing and low wages, Asians have been banned from the United States by Exclusion Acts. Japanese Americans on the West coast were forced into internment camps during World War II, simply for being of Japanese heritage. In 1976, President Ford apologized to those who had been interned. In 1980, Congress admitted that a grave injustice had been done to Japanese Americans. The U. S. government in 1992 finally passed a bill paying Japanese Americans reparations for the injustice they suffered. Stereotypes, rather than respect and open exchanges, still characterize much interaction between Chinese and Japanese and those of other racial or ethnic groups. In the final session of this curriculum, Japanese American Grace Coan shares her views about the damage these stereotypes can cause.

## **Session Nine – Pacific Islands**

According to Native Hawaiian belief, only members of Pele's totem family can call her name, can ask for her help and have a right to her power. All others can only show her respect. Pele is a living goddess for Native Hawaiians who are related to her. They have protested geothermal development plans on the volcanoes for this reason. See the *Rise Up Sourcebook* for additional information on Native Hawaiian positions on industrial geothermal development on their Goddess.



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When becoming aware of indigenous people's sacred traditions concerning the land, it is important to educate yourself and others about the effects of past colonialist actions on the people who hold these beliefs sacred. It is also important to realize that in Hawai'i a struggle over who will govern indigenous people and who should have control of native lands has sparked an ongoing, complicated and intense debate. Information on the situation surrounding sovereignty (self-governance) for Native Hawaiians, and contacts that can be pursued for additional educational and action oriented materials are included in the curriculum.

### **Session Ten - Mesoamerica**

Many indigenous peoples have lived in Mexico, Central and South America for thousands of years. After the Spanish conquest in the fifteenth century, intermarriage among indigenous people and those of Spanish heritages became the legacy of many people who live in or were born in these regions. No word adequately describes this heritage since Hispanic and Latina emphasize Spanish ancestry without acknowledging indigenous roots. Chicana is preferred by some women from Mexico. This term carries a political connotation of pride in Mexican ancestry and seems to acknowledge the mix of indigenous and Spanish heritage. Even though all these terms have definite connotations, all three are used by peoples of Mexican and Central American heritage.

### **Session Eleven – Native American**

In much of Native American cosmology, there are strong female and male entities. Male deities often exhibit qualities that are not characteristic of dominant-culture males. For example, the four winds in Anpetu Winyan's poem are male. Marla N. Powers, author of *Oglala Women: Myth, Ritual, And Reality*, feels the relationship between the sexes is not quite the same among the Oglala [another name for the Lakota people] as in the larger culture, because there continues to be an emphasis on a cooperative relationship between the sexes rather than a competitive one. This attitude is





typical of many Native American peoples. She feels the Oglala demonstrate in their traditions that sexual difference breeds mutual respect.

It is important to be aware, especially when exploring Native American spiritual beliefs, of the often brutal treatment Native Americans have received historically at the hands of Europeans and others who came to North America. It is also important to understand that many social problems which occur in Native American communities (both urban and on reservations) can be traced directly to historical and often ongoing discriminatory treatment. Numerous Native American social services, cultural and social justice organizations exist that are trying to reverse this damage. Many welcome support. Included in the *Rise Up Sourcebook* are background essays and resources addressing these issues.

### **Session Twelve – Native American**

It is important to honor the uniqueness among native peoples. There are hundreds of Native American peoples, nations, or tribes on the North American continent, each with their own history, cosmology, culture and language. Just as with any informal group whose members have some characteristics in common, a variety of differing views on many important issues is often expressed. Modern native peoples are no exception.

One of the areas where native peoples express a wide variety of attitudes is concerning appropriate ways to share their sacred beliefs and practices. Being aware of these differences will make it easier for you to consciously determine if and how you wish to participate in Native American ritual activities.

In *Rise Up & Call Her Name*, we learn about a variety of Native American beliefs through hearing stories, viewing images, singing songs, and undertaking art activities, some of which originate with Native American artists and writers who have decided to publicly share their words and work. Others have been written by non-Indians who have studied Native American symbol systems and revere them. These activities are shared with respect for the underlying spiritual tenets they embody and impart.



## Rise Up & Call Her Name

Out of deference to the varying opinions about non-Indians participating in Native American rituals that are not lead by Native Americans, no Native American rituals are included in the sessions themselves. The practice of smudging frequently included in Native American ceremonies is described in the *Rise Up Sourcebook* for those who are interested.

### Session Thirteen – The Return

Now we are completing this journey which has been a beginning exposure to the Earth-based spiritual perspectives of a number of world religions. If we do not take an active interest in what's going on in the communities that embrace these cultural perspectives, however, we run the risk of acting like cultural colonialists. It is also important, however, to express our interest in others who originate from cultures different than our own in ways that allow us to be authentic. Otherwise our actions can be perceived as gratuitous which can undermine our otherwise well-meaning intentions. One of the keys to cross-cultural contact seems to be the making of an effort that challenges us but also allows us "to go at our own pace" so that the experience is one that builds mutual respect and ongoing connections.



Kitka Illustration by Catherine Rose Crowther, 1995



**Elizabeth Fisher** is the author and producer of two major popular educational programs, *Rise Up and Call Her Name: A Woman-honoring Journey into Global Earth-based Spiritualities* and *Gender Justice: Women's Rights are Human Rights*, focused on global feminist spirituality and international social justice advocacy.

Her experience provides a unique synthesis of:

- wide-ranging scholarship with an emphasis on women's history and social status;
- in-depth conversations with many women from varied social backgrounds;
- exploration of diverse spiritual beliefs which honor the female in religious imagery, narrative and iconography.

Her personal insights are informed by:

- participating for 30 years in the Women and Religion Movement, providing sophisticated programming which incorporates experiential techniques;
- facilitating groups as well as developing written materials and workshops on the Shared Leadership concept;
- advocating for political and social actions that protect and expand equal rights for women, minorities and immigrants globally;
- combining social welfare advocacy with exploration of ethical, spiritual and religious themes which support social equality and woman-honoring practices.

Liz's professional experience includes mental health counselor, administrator of legal services to low income individuals, and senior editorial and acquisition positions in major publishing firms. She holds a Bachelor of Arts (1969), University of Michigan, with major in Psychology, double minor in History and English; and a Certificate in Publishing (1986), University of California, Berkeley. Liz attended the University Of Connecticut School Of Law (1971-72), completing core legal education courses.



# Top Thirteen Most Influential People in Goddess Spirituality

<http://goddesspriestess.com/2013/03/29/top-thirteen-most-influential-people-in-goddess-spirituality/>

## See Number 13 – Elizabeth Fisher and Shirley Ranck

March 29, 2013 by [talkbirth](#) (posted at [Theapoetics](#) : Exploring the intersection between Nature, the Goddess, art, and poetry)

Earlier this month I was very interested to see a series of posts on [Raise the Horns](#) about [the top 25 most influential people in the birth of paganism](#). When I read Mankey's post, it reinforced my own conception of Goddess spirituality as having a distinctly different lineage and flavor than much of contemporary paganism. His list, while extensive, useful, and accurate, involves a distinct lack of Goddess scholars, highlighting to me that Goddess spirituality IS a different movement and isn't actually just a Goddess-oriented branch of contemporary paganism. Indeed, almost everyone on his list I'd either never heard of, not read, or don't enjoy their writing. I immediately started to draft a list of my own and came up with 13 women, which seemed delightfully appropriate. We in the Goddess feminist community have our own path, herstory, and lineage, one that really only began in the 1970's in direct connection to the feminist movement, rather than the pagan movement.

Not necessarily in a particular order, here is my own list of the top thirteen most influential people in the development and articulation of Goddess Spirituality as its own distinct path. (I've been scrambling to finish collecting my thoughts in time to post this list while it is still Women's History Month!) Only one of my own picks also appears on Mankey's list.

1. **[Carol Christ](#)**—this feminist scholar is the most skillful and intelligent theologian of the present day. Christ's influence on my own ideas and concepts has been profound. Her work is academic, focused, and deep, and she wrestles with heavy questions. I particularly enjoy her books *Rebirth of the Goddess* and *She Who Changes*. A brilliant, thoughtful, amazing writer, Christ's essay [Why Women Need the Goddess](#) remains, in my opinion, one of the most important and influential articles of our time.
2. **[Merlin Stone](#)**—author of the classic *When God was a Woman*, this professor of art history changed the landscape and understanding of ancient cultures and their relationship to the Goddess (and, yes she drew on the work of Murray and Graves, but moved into feminist theology rather than pagan practice).
3. **[Riane Eisler](#)**—author of *The Chalice and the Blade*, she made a significant contribution to the understanding of the history and development of patriarchy as well as offering a solution in the form of a partnership model of society.
4. **[Marija Gimbutas](#)**—scholar and archaeologist and author of several books chronicling Goddess figurines from around the world, including *The Language of the Goddess*, her work has come under scrutiny and criticism, but remains a potent contribution to the lineage of the Goddess movement.



## Rise Up & Call Her Name

5. **Starhawk**—the first of two on my list who bridge the gap between more “classic” paganism and feminist spirituality, Starhawk had a huge impact on the development of a female-oriented spiritual tradition. Her book *The Spiral Dance* was the first introduction to the Goddess for many women. In keeping with what I find to be a personal lack of **click** with a lot of pagan authors, I did not particularly enjoy *The Spiral Dance* and actually read it much later than most of the other books about feminist spirituality that I reference in this post, but regardless of personal taste, her influence on the Goddess movement is profound.
6. **Z. Budapest**—considered by many to be one of the first mothers of the feminist spirituality movement in the U.S., like Starhawk, Z’s writings are not my personal favorite resources because of their heavy Wiccan orientation, but they are undeniably classics in Goddess circles. Z has taken heat from many pagans for her position on transgender people.
7. **Patricia Mongahan**—recently departed author of Goddess-specific resource books like *The Goddess Path* and *Wild Girls*, Patricia’s writing is more practical and less scholarly/theology-oriented than some of my other favorite authors.
8. **Monica Sjoo**—radical artist, ecofeminist, and Goddess scholar, Sjoo wrote *The Great Cosmic Mother* and one of my other favorites, a critique of New Age spiritual paths called *New Age Armageddon*. Her classic and awesome painting [God Giving Birth](#) narrowly avoided ending up in Court on the charge of “obscenity and blasphemy.”
9. **Hallie Iglehart**—while less well-known and influential than some of the other women on my list, Hallie was personally very impactful to my own Goddess path, since her books were some of the first, personal and experientially-oriented Goddess-specific books that I read. She is the author of *Womanspirit*, a synthesis of feminism and religion, and of *The Heart of the Goddess*, a visually stunning collection of Goddess images and meditations/reflections.
10. **Cynthia Eller**—while Eller’s book focused on debunking the “myth of matriarchal prehistory” made her lose popularity among many in the Goddess community (see her clarifying comments [here](#)), her scholarly engagement with the complexities of articulating the concepts of feminist spirituality and of theology is challenging, illuminating, and offers the opportunity to dig deeply into one’s own perspectives. Her book *Living in the Lap of the Goddess* is a thorough exploration of women’s spirituality and the Goddess movement.
11. **Charlene Spretnak**—another rocking writer with a thorough grasp of the sociopolitical and cultural context, value, and purpose of Goddess spirituality, her classic anthology *The Politics of Women’s Spirituality* is one of the best and deepest explorations of the concepts, personal experiences, philosophies, and theologies of *why Goddess*.
12. **Karen Tate**—through her weekly radio show, [Voices of the Sacred Feminine](#), I would venture to say that Tate is one of the most influential and dedicated “Goddess advocates” of the present day.
13. **Elizabeth Fisher and Shirley Ranck**—authors of germinal religious education curriculums focused on feminist spirituality and woman-honoring traditions, originally published by the [UU Women and Religion](#) program, their work with [Rise Up & Call Her Name](#) and [Cakes for the Queen of Heaven](#) continues to change the lives of women around the country by introducing them to a vision of what the world could be like if the divine was imaged as female.





## Rise Up & Call Her Name

I find that feminist spirituality can be distinguished from paganism because of the inclusion of a core *sociopolitical orientation* and distinct sociocultural critique. Feminist spirituality to me is the **intersection of religion and politics**. It is *religious feminism*. It may or may not include literal experience of or perception of the Goddess, but it names the female and the female body as sacred, worthy, and in need of defense and uses Goddess symbols, metaphors, stories, and experiences as primary expressions of divinity and the sacred.

### Also deserving of mention are:

[SageWoman Magazine](#) (and her editors)—this specifically Goddess-women oriented publication is a treasure and a delight.

[Feminism and Religion blog](#)—daring to explore the intersection of religion, scholarship, activism, and community, FAR is not specifically Goddess-oriented, but includes Goddess scholars amongst their contributors and weaves a beautiful, living, organic tapestry of the multifaceted web of feminist spirituality in the present day.

***Molly Remer is the author of this list. Here is her interesting biography.***

*Molly Remer, MSW, ICCE, CCCE is a certified birth educator, writer, activist, and ordained priestess who lives with her husband and children in central Missouri. She is a newsletter editor, a breastfeeding counselor, a professor of human services, and doctoral student in women's spirituality at Ocean Seminary College. She blogs about birth, motherhood, and women's issues at <http://talkbirth.me> and about thealogy and theapoetics at <http://goddesspriestess.com>*

Her personal statement:

I am a doctoral student in women's spirituality at [Ocean Seminary College](#) and ordained as a Priestess with [Global Goddess](#). My roots are in birthwork and I find that this root is intimately tied to my interest in the Goddess and in feminist thealogy. I've began this blog as a place for me to share my musings on women's spirituality, thealogy, theapoetics, the Goddess, and a little touch of sociopolitical commentary. This blog also serves as a place for me to store readings/poems/prayers that I'd like to save for later or for future reference.

I am also a blogger at [Pagan Families](#) on Patheos and at the [Feminism and Religion website](#).

### ***Comment by Elizabeth Fisher about Molly. (one of Molly's thirteen most influential)***

*Molly is a woman who is much younger than the women she names as influences in Goddess Spirituality. While this makes sense, so often we are told that younger women do not know and do not care about the contributions of older women to any facet of the women's movement. Molly proves those observers wrong. Her commitment to being aware of the sociological as well as the personally empowering aspect of this movement is to her credit and to our betterment. I hope empowering women's spirituality practices are intergenerational whenever possible. This will add to their dynamic and stimulating possibilities.*





## Rise Up & Call Her Name

### DVD

“The *Rise Up & Call Her Name* video is a magnificent presentation of ancient and contemporary images celebrating the sacredness of women. Sampling the art of cultures around the globe, the production invites viewers to enter into the essence of spiritual traditions that honor women and the earth through the immediacy of color, shape, form, and symbol. This video is a splendid and significant resource for women’s circles, women’s spirituality study groups, students of art and cultural history, and artists working in any medium. All will find inspiration and affirmation for re-consecrating our womanhood in contemporary culture.”

~comment by Lisa Sarasohn, author of *The Woman's Belly Book*.

### MUSIC CD

This CD’s playlist, which coincides with the sessions, is a treat to listen to by itself. The selections tell a story of bonding between women, freedom seeking, and honoring of the Goddess in her many guises. Men seeking an understanding of values and images associated with the female divine will also feel empowered.

#### Chants, Songs and Instrumental Selections

1. Listen, Sisters, Listen by Nancy Vedder-Shulls 3:06
2. We Are Sisters on a Journey by Colorado Midwife Association 1:32
3. Old Crone of Mystery by Nancy Vedder-Shulls 2:20
4. Oomama bakudala babethandaza South African song 2:27
5. Rise Up and Call Her Name by Carolyn McDade 0:48
6. Ritual: Oomama bakudala babethandaza “Our mothers used to pray” 4:52
7. I’m So Glad Traditional African American song 4:26
8. The Dark by Mary Grigolia 5:49
9. Om Tara Tu Tara by Anna Kealoha 1:03
10. Kwan Zeon Bosai Center for the Dances of Universal Peace 3:35
11. Amaterasu by Nancy Vedder-Shulls 4:32
12. Ancient Mother Traditional Native American chant 1:11
13. Sacred Corn Mother by Lisa Thiel 3:00
14. The Earth Is Our Mother Traditional Native American chant 2:11
15. White Buffalo Woman by Lisa Thiel 3:57
16. Spider Woman by Starhawk 3:35
17. Rise Up and Call Her Name by Nancy Vedder-Shulls 1:22
18. Rise Up and Call Her Name by Mary Grigolia 0:39
19. Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me ‘Round Civil Rights song 2:12
20. Breaths by Sweet Honey in the Rock 3:48
- 21-23. African Drumming by S. Kwaku Daddy 9:46 (three parts)
24. Himalayan Bowls by Karma Moffitt 2:59

Total minutes: 69:17

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Hecate Triformus



**Celebrating 30-Year Anniversary in 2025!**

## **Rise Up & Call Her Name**

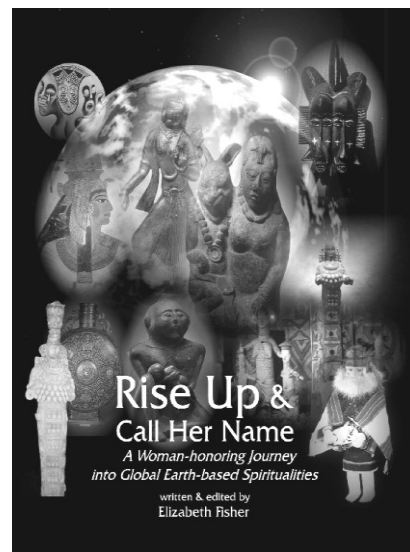
### ***A Woman-honoring Journey into Global Earth-based Spiritualities***

By Elizabeth Fisher

A journey through **sacred narratives** that honor the cross cultural female divine in Her diverse shapes, colors, and sounds, this course has been experienced by thousands of groups around the country and around the world since 1995.

***Rise Up and Call Her Name*** is a self-contained multicultural and multimedia 13-session course, made up of **4 components**:

- an in-depth, spiral bound **Leader's Guide**
- a comprehensive **Sourcebook** containing a wealth of related material, available in searchable PDF format with an index of key pieces
- a **2 hour narrated DVD** of goddess images and art in eleven segments with menu
- **Music CD of 24** songs, chants and instrumentals



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#### **OVERVIEW SNAPSHOTS**

**Key insights and helpful tools from the *Rise Up & Call Her Name* experience make up this booklet. These selections provide a taste of the wide-range of important spiritual, ethical and cultural material available in this course.**

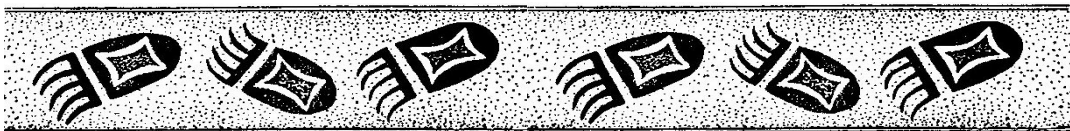


## Almost 30 years of use and counting

*Rise Up & Call Her Name* was published in 1995. A group of participants who took the class then and are still meeting in 2015 held a ceremony to celebrate what this course meant to them – a transformative, bonding experience that has been life changing. One person spoke of personal growth and the self-confidence she had gained; another was amazed by the number and qualities of goddesses around the world. The *freedom* the course gave her to revere female divinities and not be restricted to a patriarchal monotheistic god was noted. The class was *honored* as a consciousness-raising experience and a support group when leaving behind the childhood religions of Judaism or Christianity and moving towards something more *heart-felt* and *real* (bringing to mind *I found god in myself and I loved her fiercely* by Ntozake Shange). The ability to feel *at home* and connect to nature and the seasons of the year were also mentioned.

**This journey around the globe was crafted using varied approaches** to selected aspects of cultures, past and present, which display a reverence for the earth and a respect for the female divine in her many forms.

- The passion of these academic and literary works is reflected in the **Leader's Guide** and **Sourcebook**, which also serve as powerful research tools into varied earth-based spiritual practices.
- A **2-hour DVD** features stunning female images of the divine around the globe, both historical and contemporary. Woven into artistic and informative presentations, the 11 video segments can be individually accessed through a central menu.
- The unique collection of original and traditional chants, songs and instrumentals, available on the **Music CD**, provide the lyrical and emotive essence of this multifaceted exploration.



**Written in modular format**, *Rise Up* can easily be undertaken in shorter segments. The DVD and Music CD are especially useful for crafting shorter presentations. Selections are easy to find and play, as well as use independently from the longer course. As an individual experience, viewing the DVD and listening to the CD, which only takes a few hours, can open new and exciting possibilities for reflection and insight.

Through experiencing visual images, chants, creative rituals, movement, discussion and hands-on art projects, **circles of participants** or **individuals traveling solo** have the opportunity to develop fresh perspectives on qualities such as fearlessness, compassion, nurturing and the unfolding of personal spirituality.

**The RISE UP website ( [www.RiseUpAndCallHerName.com](http://www.RiseUpAndCallHerName.com) ) provides additional information and resources related to this fascinating journey into the sacred feminine around the world and throughout time.**