



# FIND YOUR SOUL'S PURPOSE

*Discover Who You Are*

*Remember Why You're Here*

*Live a Life You Love*

***\* Sneak Peek ~ Chapter 1 \****

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***By Janet Gonner***

# Find Your Soul's Purpose

*Discover Who You Are, Remember Why You're Here, Live a Life You Love*

by Janet Conner

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## Dedication

*for you,*

*because your soul wants five things  
and one of them is to serve a purpose,*

*and your soul knows five things  
and one of them is there is a divine Purpose inside you.*

*and for my Jerry who stayed*

*God speaks to each of us as he makes us,  
then walks with us silently out of the night.*

*These are the words we dimly hear:*

*You, sent out beyond your recall,  
go to the limits of your longing.  
Embody me.*

*Flare up like flame  
and make big shadows I can move in.*

*Let everything happen to you: beauty and terror.  
Just keep going. No feeling is final.  
Don't let yourself lose me.*

*Nearby is the country they call life.  
You will know it by its seriousness.*

*Give me your hand.*

Rainer Marie Rilke, *Rilke's Book of Hours*, I, 59  
Translation by Anita Barrows and Joanna Macy

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A Last Thing to Remember

## **A First Thing to Remember**

There is a Purpose inside you. There is a divine Purpose inside everyone. You knew it once. You knew it perfectly in the moment you made the decision to come here. You tucked your purpose along with your gifts and shadows and even your divine teacher into your heart and promised you would never, ever, forget. But then you were born and forgetting began. You still remembered the important parts when you were three, five, and seven. You felt a glimmer at eleven, perhaps even nineteen. But the memory got fainter and fainter as you got busier and busier creating a life. Degrees came. Careers came. Relationships came, and went, and came again. But the memory slept on in your heart. And now, when you get quiet, you feel something beckoning you to a richer kind of life, a life thrumming with meaning and overflowing with joy. It's not too late to remember that life. It's never too late to fall in love, once again, with the beautiful purpose you came here to serve. As you walk the sacred path ahead, you will remember the sacred purpose you carried into this world and your heart will leap in joyful recognition. But you will remember something else, something even more important: you will remember that your purpose is the Divine's Purpose expressed in and through and as the unique being that is you. It's a magnificent memory. A stunning memory. And it is waiting for you.

## A Preview of Your Sacred Walk

### The Purpose of Remembering Your Purpose

A profound journey awaits you on the sacred path. But before you take the first step, let's talk about what this journey is really all about. Yes, it's about remembering your purpose, just like the title says, but what is that? What is a purpose? In business the word *purpose* typically means the one thing, the one goal, the one outcome everyone is working to achieve. And if that goal is not achieved...well, that means we failed. You've heard *purpose* used so often in this win/lose, us/them, succeed/fail context that it's easy to slip into thinking your individual purpose must also be a goal, something to aim for, something to build, something to achieve. And if you don't achieve it—uh oh—that could mean you failed.

None of this is true. Your soul's divine purpose is not a goal. For most of us, it doesn't sound like a career or profession at all. And it's not *one* thing. A sweet surprise in this adventure is discovering that your soul's purpose is a whole package of things including gifts, talents, teachers, symbols, stories, even shadows, wounds, and woes. You will come away from this journey with your hands and heart overflowing with love for who you are and the life you have chosen. And here's a really important piece: you can't fail at this. You cannot fail at living your soul's purpose. You are living it right now. Perhaps in a slightly hidden or convoluted way that you don't quite see or fully understand, but you *are* on your soul's path. You just may not be cognizant of it. That's the purpose of taking this journey. It's all about remembering.

*Remember* is a most interesting word. We typically use it to mean recall or recollect. We visualize it as retrieving a piece of information that's lodged somewhere in the mind, like trying to remember a fact for a test. But in the medical world, *remember* means to return something to its original shape or form after it's been altered or deformed in some way. You can see this meaning emerge from the word itself when you hyphenate it: re-member. That is, reconfigure your parts—your members—into their original, intact,

whole condition. As you walk the sacred path, you will re-member yourself as you remember who you are and why you are here. You will recall the mystical truths you carried into this lifetime and, as they return to memory, the pieces of your story will reconfigure themselves back into your original form of wholeness, beauty, and divinity.

Here are some of things you will remember that will re-member you:

- You will remember the brilliant, wise, creative child who was—and is—you
- You will remember the many ways your gifts and purpose have shown up in your life
- You will remember your birth and all the choices you made around being born
- You will remember who you really are (Hint: The beloved of the Divine and a divine being in your own right)
- You will remember the mystical decree that brought you here and who said it
- You will remember your personal divine purpose
- You will remember your first womb, the cosmic womb from which you emerged into your mother's womb
- You will remember your gifts, including many you have long neglected and some you've not yet activated
- You will remember your shadows and their necessary—even beautiful—role in your life
- You will remember your unconditional yes to life—all of life
- You will remember how to step out of chronological time into infinite time and back again
- You will remember how to alter the past
- You will remember how to see through your two eyes—human and divine
- You will remember your holiest purpose—your role in revealing the divine Purpose of creation
- And you will remember how to live a life you can truly love

All these memories and more will flood into your heart and you will fall madly in love with who you are and why you chose to come here. And your re-membered self will be

ready, so ready, to hear and heed the call of your soul to love and serve a living purpose, a beautiful purpose, *your* sacred purpose.

### **Walking the Sacred Path**

You will experience all these rememberingings as you walk a very special path. I'll introduce you to the path in a moment, but first let's talk about *walking*. Walking is magical. When you put your whole body in motion, all your senses come alive. Your toes feel the texture of the ground through your shoes. Your leg muscles respond to the slant and curve of the road. Your arms sway in rhythm with your feet. Waves of color, movement, sound, and smell entertain your eyes and ears and nose. The breeze on your face, the sun on your neck—it all adds up to a symphony of sensuality. (All this happens whether you are walking on your feet or rolling in a wheelchair.)

And if you're willing to walk in silence—leaving phone, music, and companions behind—your *invisible* senses can join the symphony. Untethered from printed words, electronic screens, and commercial noise, your soul is free to meander—and meander she will—into new, exciting, uncharted territories. Writers and artists know this walking game. When we're stuck, we go for a walk. As our feet trod a *physical* field, our souls skip into a parallel *invisible* field where the inner eye sees beyond the trees, the inner ear hears beyond the breeze, and inner feelings explore beyond the horizon. None of this is conscious, but somehow, as if by magic, when we return to the studio, the desk, the instrument, we are alive with possibility and ready to get back to work.

My favorite name for this invisible field is the *Imaginal Realm*. I love this term because it sounds mysterious and exciting, yet playful. The name itself tells me both *how* to get there and *what* I'll find. *Imaginal* tells me that imagination is the door to the invisible. And *Realm* tells me that when I walk through that door, wearing my shoes of

imagination, I'll be in a special place ruled by special royalty—the Divine, the Mystery, the Transcendent by any and all its names. The Imaginal Realm is the soul's natural playground because the soul is transparent and this invisible world is transparent. In these invisible fields, your soul can experience what every individual wants and every spiritual tradition seeks: to be transparent to the Transcendent.

The term *Imaginal Realm* was coined by the brilliant 20<sup>th</sup> century French philosopher, theologian, and scholar of Islamic thought, Henry Corbin. As Professor Corbin delved deeper and deeper into Sufi mysticism, he noticed that Persian and Sufi literature often alludes to or describes a realm beyond ordinary consciousness. To understand Sufism and Sufi poetry, Professor Corbin realized you have to *enter* that realm; it's not sufficient to think about it or study it from afar. As long you keep your head and feet firmly planted in the concrete world of logic, judgment, and so-called "reality," the truth and beauty of the teachings of the mystics of Islam—and of all mystical traditions—will float right past you.

Henry Corbin's career-capping tome, *Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi*, is not easy reading. He is, after all, a scholar. But it delivers a sweet, easy surprise. It turns out it is not difficult to enter this rich invisible realm. It does not require years of spiritual preparation or practice. It does not require intellectually understanding all the complex theology of Sufism or of any tradition. To enter the Imaginal Realm you have only to engage the creative power of your heart and your mind—your imagination. With an active imagination, you can perceive what is not available to your five senses and conceive that which does not yet exist.

Corbin describes our human imagination as an "organ of divine imagination." This shouldn't come as a big surprise. Doesn't it say in Genesis: "God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them." (Genesis 1:27, *New Jerusalem Bible*) The Hebrew word translated as *image* in this passage is *tzelem*, from the root *tzel*, which means reflection. In the Greek Septuagint, the earliest New Testament, the word *icon* is translated as image. An icon is a simile, a

metaphor, a symbol of the divine. This means you are a reflection of the Creator—wired to imagine, to perceive, to conceive, and to create as the Creator creates, from the invisible. Watch a three-year-old at play and you are witnessing the human organ of divine imagination in all its wild, ecstatic, delicious glory. One of your most delightful realizations on the sacred path ahead, is that you are still that three-year-old artist telling magnificent stories, chatting with invisible people, and creating entire worlds.

Imagination may be your ticket to the Imaginal Realm, but that does *not* mean the imaginal is imaginary. It's not. Henry Corbin was clear that the Imaginal is not a made-up fantasy world that a person can conjure up like a science fiction novel. The Imaginal Realm is not an idea. It's real. It's actual. Indeed, it may be more real than our so-called "real" world. It can be seen, just not with human eyes. It can be heard, but not with human ears. Although our human senses cannot perceive this rich invisible world; scientific instrumentation can tell us something about its magnitude. When we look at a rainbow, we are seeing a minute fraction of the whole spectrum of colors. We can't see past violet, while bees and other insects see ultra-violet and beyond. Our ears pick up less than 1% of the amplitude of sound. We hear a range of approximately 20-16,000 notes or frequencies which are measured in Hertz (Hz). Dogs hear up to 45,000 Hz and the beluga whale hears up to 123,000 Hz! Dogs, porpoises, bats and so many other animals are having a rich conversation with a world to which our physical ears are oblivious.

As you walk the sacred path, you will experience this invisible world by activating your invisible senses. You may have heard these invisible senses called clairs. *Clair* is a French word meaning clear. Clairvoyance therefore means *clear seeing*; clairaudience, *clear hearing*; clairsentience, *clear feeling*; and claircognizance, *clear knowing*. Interesting, don't you think, that seeing what is *not* visible is considered more clear than seeing what the physical eye can see. Like imagination, you already have these invisible senses; you just may not have recognized them or exercised them. As you walk the sacred path in the Imaginal Realm, seeing, hearing, feeling, touching, and recognizing a lush invisible reality, your confidence in your innate clairs will grow until they become your best friends and most trustworthy guides.

*Imaginal Realm* may be a new word to you, but it's not a new world. You are already quite familiar with this world. You slip in and out of it every night. You call it the world of dreams. Have you ever had a dream so real, that come morning you were shocked to discover it didn't actually happen? In 2011, I dreamt a small owl flew around a room, landed on my right hand, and pierced my skin. It pinched for a moment, but I felt blessed that the owl had chosen me, and I carried it happily on my hand all night. When I opened my eyes in the morning, I looked at my right hand to see the puncture marks. They weren't there. I slapped the back of my hand, blinked, and looked again. When I still didn't see any holes, I put on my glasses and stared at my hand under a bright light. My interior senses *knew* that dream was real. I *heard* the whoosh of the owl's wings. I *winc*ed when it pierced my hand. I *saw* its brown feathers and *looked* into its golden eyes. I *smelled* its otherworldly scent. I *felt* the night breeze coming in the open windows in the room in my dream. As night progressed, the owl got heavier and heavier and I had to support my right arm with my left. That owl was *real*. And it was—in the Imaginal Realm.

In *Your Soul's Divine Purpose*, you will walk into this very real imaginal world, awaken your inner senses, travel in reverse chronological time, and step out of time altogether to encounter the Transcendent—all without going to sleep. All this and more will happen as you walk a very special path—the sacred spiral.

## **The Sacred Spiral**

The path you will walk to remember your soul's purpose is a spiral. Even if you've never given the spiral any conscious thought, your subconscious knows it well. You are surrounded by spirals at all times because the spiral is the blueprint of creation. Nature, time, and life itself are all spirals, repeating their circular path over and over and over, each rotation slightly different from the ones before and the ones to come. Have you ever closely looked at the leaves of an artichoke or the petals of a rose gently rotating around

the central core? Once you become aware of how much nature loves the spiral, you'll see spirals everywhere. Consider, too, day melting into night, sunrise to sunset and back to sunrise again; the pattern is the same, yet no two days are exactly the same. Or consider the earth rotating around the sun for a few billion years, yet no two years are identical. On a smaller, more personal scale, consider your breath. In and out, out and in, the river of life flows into your lungs, through your bloodstream and out again to return once more. You breathe over 20,000 times a day, yet each breath draws in millions of molecules of air you have not breathed before. From the tiny helix of DNA within your cells to the massive Milky Way above, everything in creation turns in a spiral shape. That's why the spiral is a *sacred* geometric form and the perfect path to remember your soul's sacred purpose.

You will engage your active imagination and walk a sacred spiral path of four inward-turning loops that gradually contract in size as you step back in time from your current self to your younger and younger adult self; to your teenage, child, and toddler self; all the way to your newborn, and even embryonic self. When you reach your human beginning, you will step out of chronological time altogether to experience your original self, your infinite self—your soul self. There, at the invisible point at the core of the spiral, in communion with the Transcendent, you will remember again who you are, where you come from, the divine purpose you chose to serve in this lifetime, and the joyous decree and unconditional yes that propelled you into this human life.

With all that and so much more in your heart, your re-membered self will step back onto the spiral and back into chronological time. As you walk the now outward-turning, gradually expanding loops, you will revisit your stories, seeing them through newly re-membered eyes, recognizing beauty everywhere you look. You will plant the seed of your soul's purpose and nourish it into full bloom. As you complete your spiral walk, you will look back in wonder at all you have experienced and learned about the deep nature of time, purpose, and identity. You will feel whole, holy, and complete. And life itself will be a radiant, magnificent gift.

## **The Seven Spiral Loops**

Here is a peek into the sacred spiral path ahead. Each loop and chapter has a particular purpose and focus. As you walk that loop, you will encounter several deep soul explorations designed to help you open to the wisdom and possibilities of that loop. To help you integrate all that you experience and learn, each loop ends with an invitation to walk a finger labyrinth tailored to the purpose of that loop. The labyrinth is an ancient, mystical tool that supports transformation, healing, and the awakening of insights into your path of service in the world. It's the perfect completion of each of the seven loops of this sacred spiral walk. Here is a brief taste of the wonders you will experience on the seven sacred spiral walks.

### **Loop 1—Feel the Spark of Longing and Open the Sacred Spiral**

Every adventure begins with the desire to go somewhere. You have the desire to go somewhere, too. But here's a little mystical surprise: that desire you feel doesn't come from you, or rather, it doesn't come *only* from you. You stand ready to walk the spiral path because you feel a spark of longing to remember your purpose. But that spark is more than simply wanting to remember your individual purpose. That spark is *the divine longing for the divine in and as you*. That reciprocal longing is the power that opens an imaginal point on the ground and reveals the spiral. As you step into that opening and walk the first loop, you will experience the beauty and mystery of the spiral form, acknowledge your sacred desire, invite your guides to reveal themselves, find a special talisman for your pocket, and ask a master-teacher to accompany you. You will leave the first loop carrying all the guides and gifts you need for your mystical adventure in the Imaginal Realm.

### **Loop 2—Listen to Your Soul's Stories**

On the second loop of the spiral, you will walk back in time watching a reverse movie of your life from the present back to childhood. Your soul will be your guide, stopping you occasionally to tell you your own stories. You may be surprised by the events your soul

chooses to visit. Several you might have even forgotten. But your soul knows the stories that carry echoes of your gifts and clues to your soul's purpose. As you watch your life as a virtual movie and look deeply into your own eyes in actual photographs, you will remember not just what happened, but who you were and what you loved, and you will fall in love again with the magnificent being who is you.

### **Loop 3—Honor Your Soul's Birth Choices**

After traveling back in time to infancy, you will stand at the threshold of your own birth. As you walk the third spiral loop, you will explore the meaning and beauty of the many choices your soul made at birth, and remember that it was your soul that made each one. Your *birth name* will invite you to discover its many meanings. Your *birth date* will reveal layers of information about your life purpose in the vibration of its numbers. Your *birth time* will invite you to breathe in again the energy of the heavens that you took in with your first breath. Even your *birth process* has much to teach you about how you handle change. You will leave this spiral loop in awe at the wonder and wisdom of your own birth.

### **Loop 4—Remember Your Divine Purpose**

On the fourth and final inward loop, you will complete your reverse journey through time, contemplating your embryonic life and even your conception. As you approach the final point of the spiral, you will ponder the big questions of life, death, meaning, and existence. After all you have experienced and remembered on your inward journey, you may be surprised at how your perception of these enormous questions has been altered by your sacred walk.

### **The I Am Point**

As you walk the 11-circuit labyrinth at the completion of your exploration of the 4<sup>th</sup> loop, slowly integrating all that has happened thus far on your sacred walk, you will reach the classic six-petaled rosette at the center. As you step onto the first petal, it will open to

reveal a tiny staircase, leading you out of time altogether and into the timeless, invisible point of incarnation, the *I Am Point*. Here, in communion with the Transcendent, you will remember who you really are and the divine purpose of your life. You will remember the many gifts and choices you carried into this lifetime. And you will remember something else: how to see through your *icon eyes*, both human and divine. You will even remember why you forgot your divine origin. Each memory will re-member you back into your original divine soul-shape. You will leave the *I Am Point* with a heart overflowing with love and gifts and a tender but powerful commitment to serve your soul's divine purpose. When your appointment at the *I Am Point* is complete, you will step back onto the petal staircase and into chronological time. As you exit the labyrinth, you will re-walk the fourth spiral, now moving in an upward and outward direction, cradling all you have remembered in gratitude and joy.

### **Loop 5—Re-visit, Re-see, and Re-Member Your Past**

On the fifth loop, you will again ask your soul to tell you your stories. But this time, when you revisit a scene, you will have the opportunity to change it—to *re-member* it—by choosing to act in greater alignment with what you now know is your soul's divine purpose. As you make new choices, you will change the vibration of that scene for yourself and for everyone in it for all time, past, present, and future. If that weren't astonishing enough, you will discover the most mysterious and powerful paradox of your entire walk: everything changes in the moment you see it as beautiful *as it was*. Don't try to understand this right now, just know that on the fifth loop you will experience and affirm one of the great mysteries of life.

### **Loop 6—Serve Your Soul's Divine Purpose**

On this loop, you will protect and nourish the seed containing your soul's purpose and gifts until the life that wants to be lived in and through and as you flourishes into full bloom. To support you in serving your divine purpose, the words and symbol of your purpose will teach you their sacred chant and movement and you will begin to incorporate your *Soul Purpose Mystical Prayer Practice* into your daily life. This loop is

full of practical steps and tools to help you bring your soul's purpose into full expression and live the life you came here to love and serve.

### **Loop 7—Live a Life You Love and Close the Sacred Spiral**

In this final loop, you will learn how to access the wisdom of your spiritual heart, your most reliable organ of alignment. Your spiritual heart lies at the intersection of the vertical flow of divine light and infinite time with the horizontal line of finite light and chronological time—you in this lifetime. Your spiritual heart is where the Divine I Am expresses in your small I am, the Divine Purpose comes alive in your individual purpose, and the infinite vibrations of love that you gathered into your re-membered heart in the Imaginal infuse your physical world with wave after wave of wonder, awe, and grace.

As you complete your sacred spiral walk, you will collapse the two points of the spiral—the opening point and the *I Am Point*—into one point, one dot, one round open door between worlds, and place it in your heart. Then, you will step out of the imaginal spiral and back into your tangible, physical world, carrying all that you need to live a life of service, wonder, beauty, and joy—a life you can love with all your heart.

### **Your Field Guide**

Does this walk in the Imaginal Realm sound almost too amazing for words? Don't worry, you don't travel alone. I'll be right beside you every step of the way, not as your teacher, but as your field guide. At the beginning of all my books and courses I always announce, "I am not your teacher." I know from years of leading the live global telecourses in the *Your Soul Wants Five Things* series that I do not have your answers. Furthermore, I don't think anyone else has your answers either. No author, teacher, therapist, or coach; no spiritual leader, minister, rabbi, or guru—no one—has access to your unique answers. They can't, because they're not you. They're not living your life. They're not tuned into your unique purpose, they can't hear the guidance of your soul's voice or see the presence of your personal guides; and they don't have access to the exquisite beauty and

absolute necessity of your special role in creation. This doesn't mean you don't have teachers. You have lots and lots of wise, loving teachers. Here are a few:

- Your life, your self, and your soul are your most immediate and intimate teachers. Want to learn something important? Look at what's happening in your life and ask your soul for insight.
- Your divine Voice on the page in deep soul writing is a teacher you've learned to—or are learning to—trust. My divine Voice, *Sophia*, has carried me and continues to carry me. I turn to her every day, and every day she teaches me something new.
- Guides, messengers, and angels are all around you, whether you recognize their presence or not. I could hardly miss mine. The morning I woke knowing I was afraid of my husband, an osprey flew into a tree in my backyard and stayed on the same branch day and night for eighteen months. The morning I put the house on the market, I stood under his tree, thanked him for watching over my son and me, and told him his work was complete. As I whispered, "You can go now," he opened his 5-foot wingspan a few feet in front of my face, and with a magnificent whoosh, flew off never to return. My story may sound dramatic, but I promise you that your guides and messengers are right in front of you, too. At least one is ready to enter your awareness and walk the sacred path with you.
- Your shadows, wounds, and sorrows are great teachers, too, though these are teachers you probably wish would go away and leave you alone. But the friction created as you struggle with the opposite opens doors you could not have found otherwise.
- Our world is full of profound mystical teachers, too. A whole pantheon of mystics and saints have walked their own sacred paths and left traces of wisdom in their poetry, writings, and living examples. In the first loop of the spiral, you will be

invited to discover that a long dead mystic can be a modern and very personal living tutor.

- The sacred texts of the great spiritual traditions are timeless teachers, too. Sit with the Upanishads, Torah, Pali Canon, Holy Bible, Qur'an, or any other sacred books and let them teach you in a way nothing else can. But know that these are not easily accessible teachers. It can take a lifetime to absorb even a measure of their wisdom.
- Paradox is another great teacher—one of the best and one of my favorites. Wrestle with a paradox and you wrestle with the Divine. Actually you can't avoid this teacher. Somehow paradox always pops up in life and onto the pages of my books.
- On this sacred walk, the spiral and the labyrinths themselves will be very important and beautiful teachers, creating a safe loving container for soul-deep explorations. You will learn more from them than perhaps any other source.
- You have one more teacher. One you may not have considered: your purpose. Your soul's divine purpose is the gravitational pull that brought you here and is now inviting you to step into the spiral. Your purpose is alive and vibrating with anticipation as it waits for you to remember and re-member yourself around it. Your purpose will teach you every step of the way.

So, you might well ask, what's Janet's role? If I'm not your teacher and I don't have your answers, what am I and what do I bring to this walk? For years, I didn't know how to answer that question. Then in 2013, I took a small group of deep soul writers to the paradise called Costa Rica. Every morning, we got in our little Turismo van for a new adventure. Whether we were hiking in the Montverde Cloud Forest or walking single file across hanging bridges high above the trees, or simply driving down the road, German, our guide, would stop to bring our attention to another wonder of Costa Rica. Thanks to

his attuned eyes and ears, we were blessed to see a perfectly camouflaged sloth creeping down a tree for its bi-weekly bathroom break and a bright red one-inch poison dart frog hidden behind six feet of foliage. German even got an elusive howler monkey to come out into the open by imitating its mating call. On our last day, German stopped a clanking tourist train so we could see not one but three quetzals, the bird with the impossibly long tail feathers. People travel to Costa Rica for years, decades even, to catch a glimpse of one quetzal and we saw three in one hour, including a pair building a nest. “How did you know to stop the train?” I asked German. “I heard the quetzal,” he said. He heard all the animals. He saw all the plants. His intense love for the flora and fauna of his country shone through his voice and his eyes. Thanks to German in Costa Rica, I finally know what to call myself. I am a *field guide in the fields of the soul*. As you walk the sacred spiral, I am right beside you, telling you stories of my own soul adventures, and stopping to point out the wonder, the mystery, the sheer beauty of the realms of the soul.

### **What You Carry and What You Leave Behind**

You don't need a suitcase or backpack on the sacred path. This road is light—literally; it's made of light. So before you begin, consider what would be a burden to carry onto the spiral and consciously put it down. For example, *doubt* isn't helpful. Doubt is a concrete stop sign preventing new ideas and possibilities from getting any closer. Put doubt down and pick up *wonder* in its place. Wonder weighs nothing and tucks perfectly in your heart. Next, put down *worry*. You can't take a wrong turn or lose your way on this path, so you might as well put down all those worry rocks and pick up *trust*. Trust is weightless. Like transparent butterfly wings, trust lifts you a little further with every flutter. The heaviest rock of all is *fear*—fear about what will happen, what will surface, what you'll see in your past or realize about your future. Fear is more than a rock; it's a boulder. Roll that big boulder of fear into a deep hole somewhere and pick up *love*. Love weighs nothing, yet love can lift and carry all burdens. Love will set you on the sacred path, carry you through your walk, and embrace you on the other side. This sacred path is the path of love.

Is there anything else you want to put down? How about feeling you're *not worthy*? There's a killer rock. Definitely put that one down. While you're at it, put down *anger* at yourself for not accomplishing whatever it is you think you were supposed to have accomplished by now. And while you're at it, put down anger at God and at life for not giving you what you wanted or thought you wanted. And please put down the belief you missed your chance to live your purpose and now it's *too late*. When all those have been removed, poke around a little more until you find the well-camouflaged rocks of *duty* and *obligation*. These can be difficult to find because they were ingrained in you by your family and your culture as the big important virtues of *self-sacrifice* and *hard work*. The soul, you will be happy to hear, is not interested in self-sacrifice and hard work; the soul wants to explore the mysteries of love. Keep putting down any and all rocks that stand between you and a life of love until you feel light and ready to walk.

### **Tune into Your Soul's Voice**

Did you notice that as you put down each rock, the volume of negativity in your head went down a bit? Those rocks of doubt, fear, worry, and unworthiness are loud. And they will not be ignored. When a small twinge of doubt or worry doesn't do the trick, the voices of doom get louder and louder until they seem to take over the entire internal conversation. Removing all those screaming rocks gives you a space to turn up the volume on the more subtle sounds emanating from your soul and your divine guides.

This is not a one-time fix. For most of us, it is an ongoing contest to see who controls the volume dial: doubt or trust, fear or love, doom or hope. It certainly has been for me. But I've noticed the more I tune out noise and interference, the more I can tune into the voice of my soul. There are many ways to hear that small voice. Here are several that have made all the difference in my life:

- **Solitude.** There is no substitute for solitude. Like a whale, each of us is called to explore a depth where no one else can go. You may deeply love others and relish their company, but the time comes when you must dive alone into the mystery, listen to the vibration of the deep, and feast on the food that is meant for you. Then, and only then, can you soar out of the foam to share your song, your discoveries, your joy. No one can walk this sacred path for you. No one can hear your soul's stories, or remember your birth, or experience divine communion for you. This is the journey of a lifetime—*your lifetime*. So give yourself the gift of time alone to dive into the mysteries of life and explore the wonder that is you.
  
- **Silence.** Everything in creation is a vibration. You are a tuning fork designed to respond in effortless coherence with all that resonates at your frequencies. But in a surround-sound world assaulting us with a relentless drumbeat of worry, need, and fear in advertising, political messaging, and disaster-of-the-minute media, your poor little tuning fork can barely vibrate on its own, never mind pick up the subtle vibrations trying to reach you. The simplest and kindest gift you can give yourself is silence—lots of it. This is not difficult. Simply turn off the TV in your home and the radio in your car. Do that and you will discover whole new hours of silence in your day. In the silence you will become aware of the angry volume and driving vibration of all the media you allow into your body. And make no mistake; those vibrations are penetrating your body. In the silence, you can begin to recognize the tender wisdom of your body and hear the subtle voices of guidance as you vibrate in alignment with the song of your soul.
  
- **Pay attention.** The soul takes nothing for granted. Nothing. Or as Robert Moss, the great teacher of active dreaming, said on The Soul-Directed Life radio show, “Nothing is nothing.” So that book that tumbled off the shelf, that hawk that perched on your fence, that lyric that popped into your head, that image of a friend you haven't seen in years, that feeling that something is amiss, that startling dream...it's all a story, and it's all communicating with you. But what does it mean? I can't tell you, but your soul can. Pick up the book and look inside. Speak

to the hawk and ask why it came. Ponder the lyric. Remember your friend. Listen to your gut. Explore your dreams. The world is personal. It is speaking to you at all times and it is speaking with a rich, multi-sensory, symbolic vocabulary. Pay attention and you will begin to learn her language.

- **Go outside.** Spend time under the sun and under the moon. Smell the perfume of mother earth, the salt of mother ocean. Feel the wonder of the wind, the rain, the storm, the peace. This magnificent world is your home for a few decades. And every spec of it is alive. Nothing, after all, is nothing. Which means the rocks and the trees are *something*. Step outside and listen.
  
- **Shift from seeking answers to seeking questions.** In my early deep soul writing days, I noticed that guidance came on the heels of asking a question—not the puny little “why me” questions I wanted to whine about, but the big juicy “help me understand” questions that I was afraid to ask, but could no longer avoid. I loved seeing guidance on the page, but I didn’t really understand the power of questions until I heard John Basil, founding director of the American Globe Theatre and author of *Will Power*, talk about Shakespeare in an interview with his coauthor, Stephanie Gunning. I stopped and stared at the computer when Basil said Shakespeare was the greatest dramatist who ever lived because he understood one thing...(dramatic pause): *answers fill you, questions open you*. Of course! We think we want answers, but what we really want, what we really *need*, are bigger, better, richer questions. Ask a big juicy question and watch as it sends a spiral probe into the universe and returns with a gift tailored for you in this moment. And don’t be surprised if your gift is an even bigger question.
  
- **Spend more time in theta.** Silence, solitude, time in nature, paying attention, and asking questions are all ways to slip out of high-stress fast-speed beta brainwaves and into the gentle creative brainwaves of the soul—theta. You may not have heard of theta, but theta has heard of you, and now she is beckoning you to spend more time with her. That’s what happened to me. I was completely unaware of

any relationship between deep soul writing and brainwaves for the first ten years of my soul writing practice. I first learned about theta when I interviewed Robert and Michelle Colt in 2007 as part of my research for *Writing Down Your Soul*. The Colts are consciousness coaches and I hoped they could give me some insights into why writing is such an effective spiritual practice. To help them understand what I was seeking, I described what happens when I'm deep in soul writing, and my attention is riveted to the page, and the pen starts to move with an energy of its own, flying across the page, dripping jewels of wisdom that clearly did not come from me. Robert paused for a moment, then said, "I don't know how you've done it, but you've trained yourself to enter mystical theta."

I had no idea what he was talking about, so Robert walked me through the four basic brainwaves starting with fast beta, slowing down to more and more focused alpha, and slowing down even further into creative theta, and finally into delta, the long, slow waves of sleep. To help me understand the impact of brainwaves, Robert explained that when we are worried, stressed, or hyper vigilant, we are in beta. When we are so focused on what we're doing that time disappears, we are in deep alpha, sometimes called *the zone*. And when we experience brand new ideas, breakthrough solutions, and true creativity, we are in theta. *Mystical theta*, he explained, is the rare and precious moment of communion with creativity itself, divine consciousness. These are the moments when the words on the page vibrate with such Truth and Love that I can only shake my head in wonder and bow my head in awe.

The difference between journaling and soul writing is the difference between self-reflection in alpha and divine dialogue in theta. Follow these seven simple steps in your writing practice and you will find yourself slipping out of alpha and into the theta brainwave state.

1. **Set your intention to access divine mind.** You do this by having a thought, taking a conscious breath, touching your third eye...any short action or word that

signals to your soul that you want to exit conscious mind and enter infinite mind. This step only takes a second or two, but don't leave it out. Desire sets everything in motion.

**2. Address the Voice by name.** Using a name confirms that you are having a conversation with something within you that is greater than you. (How's that for a paradox!) Over time, you will receive a special name, like a personal endearment between lovers; but for now, if you don't have a name, write *Dear One*, *Dear Friend*, *Dear Beloved*, *Dear Voice*... Don't be concerned if the name changes. For seventeen years I wrote to *Dear God*. Then in December 2014, Sophia, the feminine face of God, barged into my life and one morning I simply had to open my writing with *Beloved Vibration of Sophia!* (including that joyful exclamation point). This new name was the harbinger of a whole new divine relationship, and my soul writing is richer than ever.

**3. Write by hand.** It is possible to slip into theta on the computer, but it's not easy to stay there because your brain points out all the mistakes on the screen and pulls you back into conscious awareness and judgment. The entire point of soul writing is to get *out of* conscious mind, so pick up a good-sized journal—7" x 9" or larger—and write by hand. (I designed two journals for soul writers: *My Soul Pages* and *My Life Pages*.) Holding a pen, you can begin to *see* the presence of the Voice in shifts in handwriting, pronouns, word usage, and, if you speak more than one language, you might even experience a shift in language when the Voice writes. Writing by hand also allows you to *feel* the presence of the Voice in your pen, hand, arm, heart—wherever and however it makes itself known. Just as you and your divine Voice have a private name; you will slowly develop a private *signature*, so you know—and you know that you know—when your loving divine Voice is present. If you can't hold a pen, speak your divine dialogue to yourself or into the computer using voice-recognition software.

**4. Activate all your senses.** In our interview Michelle Colt said writing is the

most effective spiritual practice because it activates *three* senses: touch, vision, and hearing. Touch and vision are obvious. Hearing might be a surprise, but brain research shows that the parts of the brain responsible for hearing fire when we write. If you'd like to add ambient sound, you can play sacred chants or gentle music at a low volume. You can also get a Theta Music CD at [janetconner.com](http://janetconner.com) of music recorded at the same sine wave as the theta brainwave state.

If activating three senses makes writing the most effective spiritual practice, I wondered what would happen if I added smell and taste. I didn't want to leave smell behind. It is our oldest sense and our most powerful, capable of remembering 25,000 odors! I include my sense of smell by lighting a scented candle on my altar and dabbing essential oil on my wrists. From the very first day I invited my sense of smell into my soul writing practice, my writing deepened. (See Resource section for recommendations.)

The fifth sense is taste, almost as ancient and as powerful as smell. But taste was a puzzler. How could eating something possibly fit into soul writing? I took this question to the page and was quickly reminded of a Navajo healing ceremony I had attended years before. At the end of the ceremony, the blind shaman handed me a glass of water and told me to slowly and consciously drink the water, bringing all the prayers and blessings of the ceremony into my body at the cellular level. Thanks to Professor Emoto and his stunning photographs in *Messages in Water*, we now know that the molecular structure of water is affected by words and emotions. Following the wisdom of the Navajo, place a glass of pure water next to your writing chair, and when you finish writing, slowly and consciously drink the water, whispering aloud any guidance or grace that came through on the page. As you swallow, know that you are taking that guidance and grace into your body at the cellular and soul-ular level.

**5. Write fast.** In order to hear that still small Voice, it helps to tamp down the volume of all the other voices in your head. You've probably noticed that arguing

with them or telling them to shut up doesn't work. So instead of fighting with your controlling, advice-dishing, negative voices, get *ahead of them* by writing quickly. When you pick up the pace of your soul writing, letting handwriting, punctuation, grammar, logic, and sentence structure fall by the wayside, your crazy, messy, jumbled writing-sprint leaves all your old, stale, critical voices sputtering in the distance. And in that precious gap, wisdom, guidance, and grace can pour onto the page. Anytime you feel stuck, pick up the pace. Writing fast, by the way, doesn't mean gripping the pen. Hold the pen gently in your hand.

**6. Ask questions.** Questions are pure magic, not just in soul writing but in all of life. Why? Because everything begins with an inquiry. Nothing can change until you begin to question what is and ponder what could be. Ask lots of big open-ended questions on the page and watch what happens. And don't try to plan your questions. Just write quickly and the questions that want to be asked will surface. And they may well be questions you have been unwilling to ask. That's when the magic can really begin. (For much more on questions that work and questions that don't, see *Writing Down Your Soul*.)

**7. Be grateful.** No matter what happens in your soul writing, write *thank you*. Because you were heard. Think of that! You were listened to at the deepest level by a divine presence. And close with love, just as you would a love letter written to a human lover. My last words each day are *Thank you, Sophia. I love you! Your Beloved Daughter, Janet*.

- **Explore other ways to slip into theta.** When Robert Colt told me I had trained myself to enter theta while writing, I wondered if I could train myself to enter theta at other times. He explained that we naturally slip through theta every night as our brainwaves slow down for sleep and rise through theta every morning as we awaken, so I decided to see if I could expand my time in morning theta. As I began to wake, instead of getting up, I decided to lie perfectly still on the pillow with my eyes closed. Nothing dramatic happened the first few days, but as I

stayed longer and longer in that in-between space—no-longer-asleep, not-quite-awake—I began to recall my dreams, hear phrases or ideas, and see titles and images for my newsletters and books. In addition to passively waiting for creative ideas to come to me in the morning, I wondered what would happen if I actively asked. When UnityFM invited me to host a radio show, they told me to name the show. All the ideas I came up with felt flat, so the night before the deadline I asked for the perfect name as I was falling asleep and in the morning I clearly heard *The Soul-Directed Life*. I can't count the number of guests who stop my introduction to say they love the name of the show. I now consider lying in bed in the morning to be my richest "work" time. If you have to get up to an alarm, you can still create a space to receive the gifts of morning theta by setting the alarm ten minutes early. When it goes off, hit the snooze button with your eyes closed and lie still. You'll be amazed at how much creative juice can arrive in just ten minutes.

Morning theta can happen in the middle of the night, too. Before you get in bed, place a note pad with an open ballpoint pen at the top of the page on your nightstand. Then, if something bubbles up in the night, roll over in the dark and jot it down. Put the pen down *below* where you wrote, whisper thank you, and go back to sleep. When you finally open your eyes in the morning, you may be greeted by a page or more of theta kisses that would have dissolved into the ethers if you hadn't written them down. Some of my best editing and writing ideas are given to me in the middle of the night.

Once you recognize what the creative theta brainwave feels like, you'll begin to notice that you can slip into theta any time you slip out of active thinking. Meditation, soul writing, spiritual practice, prayer, and chanting are all theta-rich experiences. But so is taking a shower, driving a car, staring out the window, pulling weeds, or going for a long walk. Become best friends with theta and she will shower you with armloads of insight and creativity. (For more information on

writing in theta including a 45-minute teaching video, visit [janetconner.com](http://janetconner.com).)

### **A Blessing for the Journey**

The Imaginal Realm is ready. The spiral path is ready. Your shoes of imagination are ready and waiting for you. Your clairs are ready to walk with you in the invisible world. Whether you realize it or not, *you* are ready. You have divested yourself of some very heavy rocks, learned to tune into your divine Voice in deep soul writing, and experimented with other ways to slip into theta. You have everything you need to begin walking, except one final piece of preparation—a blessing.

A small group of deep soul writers travelled with me the summer of 2012 to sacred Blackfeet land in Montana. I wanted to offer them a special blessing to open our retreat, but nothing exciting was coming through my pages, so I got in the car and drove to St. Michael's Shrine in Tarpon Springs. For me, this little family-built shrine is holy ground. I always go there when I'm stuck or afraid or in need of big guidance. On that hot summer afternoon, I asked Michael in soul writing, "How can I bless this precious retreat group?" Out of my hands poured this short prayer. Perhaps it's the perfect blessing for you as you begin this sacred journey:

*I am here*

*I am present*

*I am open*

*I am ready*

In four short lines, this blessing moves you gently from becoming aware of where you are in space and time, to drawing you into a state of more active presence, to opening you to divine guidance, and then in the big finish, to supporting you as you step out in faith with the powerful mantra: *I am ready*. The Montana retreat group loved this blessing. We said

it every morning and before every activity. I love it so much, I offer it in all my retreats. And now, it's yours. Take it, or write your own blessing for the sacred journey ahead.

The Soul Purpose 2016 LIVE Course Begins May 24th.

~ Join Us! ~

