



Elderhood Initiation

From the Path of the Sacred Feminine

True elderhood is a decision to fulfill your commitments to the Divine during your remaining years on earth, to become accountable for living each day being the best that you are, and dedicate your life to the sacred growth of future generations.

—Reverend Misa, Guardian of the Water Bowl Ceremonies
and the Path of Sacred Feminine

Women's Water Ceremonies—Ancient Initiations for Women

Some years ago, ancient and nearly forgotten women's water ceremonies were brought to me and I was asked to share them with women around the world. Once done by Native women of the Northwest, the revival of these ceremonies has brought rain to a land of drought, balanced local weather patterns, and provided profound insights and dreams to women whose hearts were ready to hold messages from the spirit of the water.

The Grandmother spirits of the Northwest Water Ceremonies have asked me to share these ceremonies with women around the world. Water rituals have been done in cultures around this planet for thousands of years, and women have a profound and unique relationship to the sacred nature of water.

After hundreds, even thousands of years developing this path and its ceremonies, the Grandmothers know there is a power in these water rituals that unlocks mysteries and guidance we need today in order to bring harmony to a distressed planet. When we honor the water through these ceremonies, we bring balance to the weather and movement of the earth, into our personal, emotional lives and the lives of the members of our communities.

The Grandmothers of the Bowl bring us several ceremonies, including ceremonies for: the birth of a girl, initiation at a woman's menses, elderhood, death, and Full Moon. **The Elderhood Initiation Ceremony inspires a deep and meaningful journey into fully claiming genuine feminine power both in spiritual and physical realities.**

These ancient ceremonies call you to look deeply into the sacred water and within yourself to receive insight and guidance for your life, your future, and the future of the planet.

Elderhood Initiation

Elderhood Initiation at the Women's Water Bowl is available to women over 50 who have completed their menses, and are dedicated to the power of the feminine in its highest spiritual state and most committed physical state. While every woman becomes an elder simply because she grows old enough to be considered one, **only those women who commit to and assume the mantle of responsibility as an elder are initiated into the Women's Elder Council of the sacred Women's Water Bowl Ceremonies.**

The Candidate's Process

This is a unique opportunity to re-discover yourself as a woman of power. This Elderhood Initiation is not for the faint hearted. The very process of preparation requires deep introspection into one's emotional, mental, physical and spiritual beliefs. For a year or more before her Initiation Ceremony, a candidate heals wounds and regrets from the past, explores the nature of her current life and opens to spiritual guidance to discover the final three goals she will commit to completing before she dies.

Throughout her preparation, she will be asked to engage in regular meditation practice with the Creation Meditation. (Information can be found as a downloadable pdf at the New Dream website or at the New Dream Forums.) This meditation is the foundation of her work in entering into the Sacred Feminine, and defines her as one who knows how to hold compassionate space for the ongoing recreation of herself and others.

Prior to being received at the Water Bowl for her initiation, each candidate spends three days at a week-long ceremony in June called Spirit Quest in solitude and prayer with the Divine, her own spirit guides and the spirit grandmothers of the Water Bowl Ceremonies. When those three days are complete, she is received at the Water Bowl to share her insights and to make a

declaration of the three goals she commits her life to completing.

A Candidate's Personal Elder Council

Each candidate selects elders she knows to form her own life-long council. These special elders agree to support her and encourage her in meeting her three final life goals. These same elders are the ones who will determine if she is ready and worthy to accept the responsibilities of true Elderhood. When the candidate approaches the Water Bowl at the end of her three meditation days, she is met by the Head of the Elders Water Bowl Council, the Guardian of the Water Bowl Ceremonies, one previously initiated elder, and the elders she has invited to become her personal council.

At the Water Bowl, each candidate is questioned by the Head of the Elders Water Bowl Council and her chosen personal council members. The candidate must be able to demonstrate how she will overcome her personal obstacles in order to fulfill her sacred goals to the satisfaction of her personal council. **Once approved by her personal council and the Head of the Elders Water Bowl Council, the candidate is initiated as an Elder of the Water Bowl Council.**



The Candidate's Acknowledgement and Service as a Council Member

The Water Bowl itself is in the shape of a woman's womb. In the Elderhood Initiation each new Elder is acknowledged for the creative force within her that is no longer capable of bringing in new life through children, but is awake and alert as a wonderful spiritual presence of creative force for humanity and all life on Mother Earth. Acknowledging this power, the new Elder is honored and welcomed by the spiritual community present at Spirit Quest, celebrating her as an Elder of the Sacred Path of the Feminine (also called the Water Ways) Council.

After Spirit Quest, the Elders of the Water Bowl Council will meet regularly to continue supporting each other in their experiences with the Creation Meditation and the fulfillment of their missions, as well as identify ways to increase their positive, spiritual influence in their chosen communities.

By Special Invitation

Once initiated, if an Elder demonstrates an ability to consistently hold non-judgmental, compassionate space for herself and others, respects the Native tradition of the ceremonies, and continues to open to her limitless self through the Creation Meditation practice, she will be invited to participate in an annual Visioning Ceremony each winter.

Elderhood Initiation at SpiritQuest

Elderhood Candidates Process

Candidates engage in a special preparation process at the start of SpiritQuest. Candidates will be in a silent meditation quest for three days. Modest food and tents are allowed.

Candidates will be received by their personal council at the Water Bowl for review and acceptance as an Elder.

Candidates and all women will be invited to attend the Full Moon Healing Water Ceremony where you will be officially welcomed as an Elder.

Personal Elder Council

The members of each woman's Personal Elder Council will have /opportunities to be of service in the community and for you, as well as renew their own relationship to Mother Earth, community and Spirit by:

- Attending morning ceremony to offer their prayers for you
- Tend sacred fire (if requested by the head fire tender)
- Pray at the sacred fire for you at any time of day
- Participate in evening talking circle
- Attend periodic meditation and prayer circles throughout the week
- Hike
- Read
- Play Games
- Help with chores such as dishes, cooking and gathering kindling

Dress

In Native ceremonies, women wear skirts. (In my ceremonies, I personally make an exception if a woman is walking so strongly in her masculine energy that it

would be ludicrous or hypocritical to wear a skirt. I do not make an exception if it is simply out-of-the-ordinary to wear a skirt.) If it is cold you may wear leggings or polar fleece pants, underneath your dress or skirt. On warm days, I recommend shedding your underwear so you can feel the powerful and energizing connection between your body and the Mother Earth just as our ancestors did long ago.

For Those Who Aren't Experienced With Camping or Outdoor Ceremonies

I realize some of you have never camped or done outdoor ceremony. What a wonderful opportunity, in a safe environment with experienced campers who will be watching over you, to avail yourself of a deeper relationship with Mother Earth. Have you ever heard the spirits singing to you at night? Have you experienced a bird waking you up in the morning, just as you were about to forget a very important dream? Have you ever been so close physically and emotionally to Earth that you could actually hear her heart beating?

The mysteries of existence live in the Mother as much as they live in the stars. **The journey of re-discovering yourself includes knowing yourself as the child you are—a child of the Mother and one of the greatest models of Feminine Power is the Mother beneath your feet.**

I encourage you, if you have fears about camping, to transcend your fears about sleeping outdoors. Use it as an opportunity to discover an aspect of yourself that will change your life beautifully forever. **Welcome your elders to join you in this journey of claiming your feminine roots of power through deep, profound relationship with Mother Earth.** Those of us who know the Mother deeply will be there to hold space for you, so that her mysteries will be revealed around and through you.

Final Thoughts

In a culture, here in the United States, where Elderhood is equated with retirement and senior citizen discounts, it is exciting to revive a more honorable perspective of Elderhood. The ancient Grandmother spirits of the Northwest Water Ceremonies have graciously brought all women, in the U.S. and throughout the world, a means for bringing honor to the status of Elderhood. Along with that rightly deserved acknowledgement, comes a profound responsibility to use the power, wisdom and knowledge of Elderhood in ways that enhance life here on earth.

During these times, when Mother Earth is bringing into balance the ravages of human negligence, it is a perfect time to claim our influence as women of Spirit, to engage the energetic force of the water, the blood of the Mother and our own blood, in sacred ways, and to spend the last years of our life in humble, yet

significant service bringing balance to the planet through the thoughtful implementation of one of our most precious gifts—Our Feminine Energy.

Reverend Misa

Guardian of the Sacred Path of the Feminine and the Water Bowl Ceremonies