

The Circle of Nine: An Archetypal Journey to Awaken the Divine Feminine Within

Cherry Gilchrist

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Drawing on ancient tradition and modern experience, *The Circle of Nine* describes nine female archetypes and the ways women can utilize them to enrich their lives and strengthen their spirits.

Cherry Gilchrist's book is an intelligent exploration of these feminine archetypes, plumbing mythology, history, and personal experiences. It is straightforwardly organized, with a chapter devoted to each archetype: the three Queens, the three Mothers, and the three Ladies.

Chapters provide information on the core traits of their archetype in different times and in various parts of the world, followed by an idea of what both modern and mythological embodiment might look like and what related personal traits women might possess, such as an interest in crafting reflecting the Weaving Mother.

Ideas about each archetype in youth, maturity, and old age are offered: the Just Mother manifests in youth as a girl standing up to a bully; as a woman, she makes decisions confidently; as an old woman, she believes rigidly in her own opinions. Each chapter concludes with associated gifts, trials, and rituals (a gift of the Lady of the Hearth might be a talent for storytelling, for example).

Several pages of endnotes create a firm academic foundation, upon which is laid the author's metaphysical experiences of feminine energy and conjecture about how women might utilize the archetypes to improve their lives. Whether it be recognizing the role of the Dancing Lady as a reminder to accept change with grace and joy or embracing the endless strength of the Great Mother at times of birth and death, the book offers fascinating insight on how these archetypes are manifest in every woman.

The final chapter provides suggested activities to further explore the archetypes, including meditation, visualization, creative endeavors, and practical tasks. These are all easily accomplished, with room left to alter activities to work for any individual or group.

The Circle of Nine is an insightful and judgment-free examination of the feminine archetypes that offers an opportunity for self-exploration.

CATHERINE THURESON (July/August 2018)

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