



Episode 9: Celeste Yacoboni—how prayer becomes love  
Thursday, July 11, 2019

- 00:00:00 [music] You are not moving, you are being moved.  
You are not singing, you are being sung.  
You are not praying, you are being prayed  
Prayed at the speed of love.
- 00:01:08 Janet Conner: You are not moving, you're being moved. This is a radically different concept. You are not moving, you are being moved. You are not singing, you are being sung. And this one still always blows my mind, opens my heart, carries me away: you're not praying, you are being prayed. Prayed at the speed of love.
- 00:01:44 Every time, I get very teary over those words and hearing Carin and Dean and Timothy and *Sofia* play them. And I can't help thinking how different life would be if we all grew up, if I grew up not with this concept of, "You better say your prayers, young lady. Get on your knees. Time to say the rosary. *Wah wah wah wah. Wah wah wah wah.*"
- 00:02:13 Prayer was this obligation, and it didn't feel beautiful. It didn't feel like singing. It didn't feel like love. It didn't feel like love. It felt like obligation. I try to imagine if at the age of three, instead of that feeling of prayer being, "All right, now, Janet. You botched the words. Say this again," if instead this magnificent concept of, "Sweetheart, you're not praying, you're being prayed. It's the divine feminine moving in and through and as you that nourishes your body, embraces your heart," just think.
- 00:03:00 And I trust that everyone listening to *Praying at the Speed of Love* is turning to themselves first, their children, every child they know, their grandchildren and beginning to share this sweet, sweet but very deep mystical knowing that we are not praying, we are being prayed. That we're being prayed at the speed of love. I'm Janet Conner, *Prayer Artist*, and you have arrived at speed of love timing to the ninth episode, the ninth episode in my new podcast, the love of my life, *Praying at the Speed of Love*.
- 00:03:44 Now, I've begun to notice the number. I didn't really pay attention at the beginning. In this podcast world, people simply say, "Episode 1, episode 247," but thanks to Emma Kupu Mitchell, I have been introduced to the mystical vibration of numerology. And for years now, I've looked at the numerology of

words, the title of all of my intensives, my own personal vibration of the year I'm in.

- 00:04:20 I put that on my deep soul writing pages every day. I pay attention. So as I was writing my notes for this conversation today, I went, "Oh. Wait a second. Nine [laughter]." This is the last of the single digits, right? So nine is the number of fullness, of completion, of the divine feminine completing her circle. Think of it as the moon completing all of her phases.
- 00:04:49 We could not have a more perfect vibration for this very real conversation with a very real deep explorer of the essence of prayer, Celeste Yacononi. Celeste wrote a book that is a treasure on my shelves, *How Do You Pray? How Do You Pray?* I didn't realize when I first read her book... I think it came out in 2014, and I think I was a very early reader.
- 00:05:23 And I think that title, as always happens to me, I think it just sort of flew through the ozone and landed in my heart and planted a seed that I would be fulfilling how many years later in this podcast because I ask everyone now, "Oh. Tell us how you prayed as a child, and tell us how you pray now. And let's pray together."
- 00:05:53 This question, "How do you pray?" is so big. It's so big. I think it goes back to the beginning of time because, of course, we've been praying, humanity has been exploring the unknown, the mystery of death. The very first images we see that show us that humanity was wondering about what I call the mystic, the invisible is in their burial rituals.
- 00:06:29 Our burial rituals. And there were always these symbols and colors and stones and jewelry. They were honoring this mystery that they didn't understand then and I think we understand it even less well now, especially in the west. We just want to stick people in the ground and close our eyes and say, "Ah, I don't want to talk about it. I don't want to touch it. Nope. I don't want to even consider the possibility that I'm going to die."
- 00:07:05 When as somebody said, I think on this show... no, I think I heard Elizabeth Gilbert say it. I'm pretty sure I heard her say this on a video that so far, the one thing that has 100% provability—wasn't the word she used—but 100%: death [laughter]. Every single person has died, is going to die, and it's not just people. It's plants and mountains and seas and oceans and seeds and vegetables and animals.
- 00:07:36 Everything's going to die, and yet we won't do what our ancient mothers did which was to really explore and honor this great mystery of putting someone we love in the ground. So let's have a conversation with the magnificent Celeste Yacononi about this great question how do we, you, I, Celeste pray?
- 00:08:11 In this conversation, there's something waiting for you. I don't know what it is. Celeste doesn't know what it is. We are not planning. This isn't self-help where

we have three fabulous ideas for you. Idea #1. Now, do you have idea #1? I left that world, I don't know, a decade ago? Two decades ago? So Celeste and I don't know what words are going to come out of our mouths that are going to fly through the ozone and land and open your heart.

00:08:44 But the divine knows, and so let us begin this conversation listening to the voice of my precious Tibetan bowl. Let's listen as her song opens, yes, our physical ears but our non-physical ears, our subtle ears, the ears of our heart that we may hear what wants to be heard.

00:09:17 [the bowl rings]

00:09:31 Janet Conner: That was emphatic. She's still singing. So while she's still singing, welcome, Celeste, joining us from her home in New Mexico, right? No—

00:09:44 Celeste Yacononi: Yes.

00:09:44 Janet Conner: New Mexico. So Celeste this podcast, and as far as I know it's the only one out there even remotely like this, we're going to talk about our personal prayer lives. So would you tell us your story? How did you grow up? How were you taught to pray, and how do you pray now? Tell us your prayer story.

00:10:11 Celeste Yacononi: Oh, Janet. It's so good to be here with you and with everyone. And I love these questions. My prayer story. Well, I feel like I grew up praying. I grew up on six acres of land in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. My grandfather came from Italy and created this paradise. He had chickens and a goat and grew all of our vegetables and had fruit trees and flowers and roses.

00:10:48 And it was magnificent. There was prayer everywhere, beauty everywhere. And I would follow him around and my grandmother, and we'd collect the eggs and milk the goat. And this was life, and it felt so rich. I remember laying in the tall grasses, and the breeze would come through and move them. And it was fascinating to be with them in this experience.

00:11:24 And I'd look up at the night sky and see shooting stars and beauty all around me. I felt so full and so connected. I didn't even know it. There was nothing to be connected to. It was all me. And then I went to school. I went to a Catholic elementary school, and I learned how to pray in school, learned how to go to church and say prayers.

00:11:57 But I was very lucky because, early on, my mother taught me that I could pray in that church, but I didn't need the church to pray. That I could go pray on a rock. And that was exactly what I did, and even then I felt a sense of belonging to something much bigger than just myself or even the church or that idea.

00:12:28 So I've come full circle now. I'm right back at that belonging and that connection.

- 00:12:40 Janet Conner: You know what I'm beginning to notice. Nine conversations. This theme of growing up on a farm with animals, noticing the flowers, grandmothers, in your case, grandfather. That's Lāhela's story in Hawaii. That's Emma's story in York, England. This is so interesting to me.
- 00:13:10 And I'm wondering—we'll just have to explore this over a year or two years of conversations—if dropping into the mystic... which is the language that I like to use for the vast unseen, the mystical body, whatever you want to call it. I just love to call it the mystic. It's this fabulous, deep, invisible... well, this is where it all happens.
- 00:13:35 I wonder if perhaps children that have that untaught exposure just falling in love with nature, just falling in love with nature, you've already dropped into the mystic at two, at three, at five, at seven. I'm just wondering if perhaps you're so much more open. Would you like to hear about my childhood in a red brick apartment building in Chicago where, okay, there was a tree in the front yard and my mother had a bush in the back?
- 00:14:10 This was not... I am ashamed to admit this but I was so disconnected from that food is grown [laughter] that when I had to take a test to get into a private Catholic girl's high school—so I would've been 12 or 13 in eighth grade—one of the questions was, "Does steak come from an a) pig b) lamb c) cow," and I looked at that question and went, "What [laughter]?"
- 00:14:44 I was 12 years old and didn't... I mean, right? Steak came out of a package, a plastic package in the grocery store. Totally disconnected and maybe, I don't know, it's been a rockier road [laughter] for somebody like me that was disconnected from nature. And in my family, you pray on your knees, in the church, obeying the priest, *wah wah wah wah wah*.
- 00:15:13 So I'm jealous. That's all. I just wanted to say that God love your grandfather, and you're so blessed to have started that way and to be living that way and to have come full circle. And just hearing your words brings us all, we're all back in... I can see the wind moving the grasses, and I'm falling into the mystic just hearing your story.
- 00:15:43 Celeste Yacoboni: Well, we can't all grow up in nature. People do live in cities, and we have that opportunity to go hug a tree, to go out to the park, to go out and to take our kids out and do things in nature. We don't just walk out our door. It's a little more of an effort. But we can walk out our door and there's going to be some earth somewhere around there [laughter].
- 00:16:12 Janet Conner: Yeah, so that's just another thing that we can all do for our children, our grandchildren, our neighbors is even with that wee little patch... I think my backyard is 30 feet by [laughter] 25 feet. But I can put my foot on the

grass and honor it and bless it and share that with all the children, all my friends. I can look up at the night sky. I can look up at the night sky.

00:16:42 So how did you come to write this book with this evocative title, *How Do You Pray?*

00:16:51 Celeste Yacoboni: Well, looking back on that fertile ground where the vision for the book gestated, I was reading a lot of Rumi poetry and worshipping at altars of many different traditions. One morning, I woke up very early. It was still dark outside but the room was illuminated, and I heard those words, "How do you pray?"

00:17:22 And the voice continued, "Is it an hour a week at a designated place of worship, or do you take your prayers out to the streets? Do you pray like your parents, culture, or tribe, or do you have another way? Do you pray to God, or do you have another name or no name at all?"

00:17:48 Well, it went on and on and, by this time, I had pen in hand and I was taking notes. I was writing, and I knew that I was being called. After this vision, I sat and I sat all the next day. And finally, I had the words to share this with my husband. And I knew I was being called, and all the while, I was saying "Yes! Yes, yes, yes."

00:18:22 And I started asking. I started asking everyone. Started asking my friends and my family, my clients, everyone, "How do you pray? How do you pray? How do you pray?" And I'm still asking. It was years in the asking. And I became the keeper of the prayers, and eventually, it became a book.

00:18:50 Janet Conner: And what a book. Celeste was on my previous show *The Soul Directed Life*, and I hope you heard that conversation, but for anyone listening now that hasn't, this book has all these people, famous and less famous, answering the question put to them by Celeste, "How do you pray?" I'm just going to glance at a few names in the table of contents.

00:19:20 Brother David Steindl-Rast, oh. Sandra Ingerman, who I adore and will be on this show later this year. Kim Rosen, the magnificent poet. Donna Eden, the energy... everyone knows her for the energy healing. Sobonfu Somé, ooh, ooh. Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee, oh my god. I love Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee, and Patch Adams, the comedy guy.

00:19:52 And then it's so fun to see a name that you don't know and wonder, "Oh, I wonder how that person prays. I wonder who that person even is." Dr. Masaru Emoto, messages in water is in here. Alex Grey, the painter, the painter. And I actually found someone as a result of this book. I saw this name Reverend Cynthia Brix. "I wonder who Reverend Cynthia Brix is."

- 00:20:21 And I think because I looked her up in your book, Celeste, I ended up interviewing her husband when his book came out on belonging to God [laughter]. And so on. So this is fun. It's... I'm searching for an adjective. It's holy, it's holy. Rabbi Zalman is in here. Matthew Fox is in here. Who wouldn't want to sit for a page or two with all of these people and hear them talk about...?
- 00:20:52 So I'm realizing, Celeste, you're the reason this show existed, although when I first read it and when you first... I mean, it never crossed my mind that I was going to be doing a podcast called—could be called *How Do You Pray?*, couldn't it?—*Praying at the Speed of Love*. So all the listeners, there'll be a link. I highly recommend—on our Show Notes, there'll be a link—that everyone get a copy of *How Do You Pray?*
- 00:21:20 So you did this research, Celeste... the book came out in is it 2014?
- 00:21:24 Celeste Yacononi: 2014. Mm-hmm.
- 00:21:26 Janet Conner: Right? So that means you were writing it in '12, '13. So how—the answer has to be yes—how did writing that book and hearing from all these beautiful people about how they pray affect your prayer life?
- 00:21:44 Celeste Yacononi: It was so inspiring, of course. I didn't have an iPhone then. As I was collecting these prayers, they mostly came in through email, and I would come home from my office and get in front of my computer and see what came in that day. And quite often, I was brought to tears. They were so beautiful. And there are 129 different prayers. And a couple of them are certified atheists, and they're as prayerful as anybody else.
- 00:22:21 And it was just so beautiful. Continued to open my heart more and more. I had already been on a quest for the sacred and exploring myself, but these prayers really open and continue to do so. Every day, I open the book. It falls open to another perfect-for-that-day prayer, so that is really special.
- 00:22:51 But here's an example of how I pray. Summer solstice is very special to me because it's the anniversary of a four-day vision quest that I did many years ago. I was four days out on the land, fasting and sleeping out there and open to a vision. So every summer solstice, I go up the hill and sit and watch the sun move across the sky.
- 00:23:31 So this last summer solstice, I got up as I do every morning and light a candle because that candle lighting ritual opens another dimension. It opens something, the unknown, and I dedicate my day to the divine. Sometimes I call on guidance. I call in Tara, the Goddess of Compassion, or Mother Mary or Kuan Yin or Mother Earth or my own mother.
- 00:24:14 And kind of like a Tibetan prayer wheel that has the prayers written on it and you spin it and in that spinning it keeps on praying all day, that's how I feel my

dedication is. I dedicate my day to the divine, and it just keeps on praying the whole day. So on Summer Solstice, I walked up the hill and I made prayer ties.

- 00:24:49 Prayer ties are a beautiful tradition, a Lakota Sioux tradition, as well as some other First Nation People make prayer ties as well. And what you do is get a little piece of colored cloth, a little square maybe two inches by two inches, and then you get some tobacco, which is a sacred plant for the Lakota and other Native American peoples.
- 00:25:23 And you hold that tobacco in your hand, and I lift it up. I lift it up to Great Spirit, Great Mother and I ask for a blessing. And I put out that energy for my prayer, for what I am blessing with that tobacco, put it in my little square of fabric and tie it up on a string and do the next one and continue to do them and tie them on the same string until I have a very long and beautiful string of prayer ties.
- 00:26:02 And then I do a ritual of usually burning them or something or some way to give them back, burying them in the earth or a way to transform them. And so this day, I did that, and I laid on Mother Earth and was infused by her energy. While I'm doing that, of course, I'm looking up and watching the clouds move and write messages to me across the sky.
- 00:26:38 Crows came by and cawed, and I cawed back. And they circled around and circled me and, oh, it was quite an amazing communion. The sun was setting over the hill and I walked back down to the house. Because it was Friday, it was perfect that my husband Mark and I got to light the candles for Shabbat.
- 00:27:08 It was Friday, the Jewish ritual, the Jewish holiday of Shabbos, so we lit the candles and called in the Shekinah, the feminine, to bring us into this day of rest.
- 00:27:31 Janet Conner: Absolutely perfect. And the prayer ties that you are describing are exactly, exactly—red cloth, white cotton string, tobacco, salt for protection—the way my very first teacher taught us to pray. She was trained by Oh Shinnah Fast Wolf and Sun Bear back in the... I started taking Charlotte Starfire's Women's Spiritual Empowerment groups in '93.
- 00:28:04 And this was a radical... I only knew, even though I was no longer a practicing Catholic, it's all I knew. And so I still remember as she's teaching us to pray to the seven directions, teaching us to make the prayer ties, teaching us to pray outside, this was so radical. What do you mean pray outside? What?
- 00:28:27 And so I came home in my business suit, my navy blue pinstripe suit with the white silk blouse, and I stepped outside and for the first time prayed—I was like, "Okay, where's East?"—turning to the directions. And even that first time, praying outside under the moonlight, it felt so different. Praying outside is just unto a world... and so I came back to class with Charlotte, "What's next?"



- 00:32:16 Janet Conner: You know, you saying that is bringing back to memory that when someone asked Thomas Merton... now, the guy wrote 70 books. He was a monk. He was a master of prayer, and yet he's very clear—I haven't read all 70 but I've read half of them—he will not answer the question, "How do you pray?"
- 00:32:46 He won't teach you. He said, "I can't teach you to pray." And of course, this is strange for a good Catholic priest, monk. It's like, "What do you mean you can't teach anybody to pray?" But people will keep asking and asking and asking, so one day, somebody said, "But what is prayer?" His answer was, "Breath." That's it. That's it. Now, he died in '68 so Catholicism in the '40s... I think he converted in something like '41.
- 00:33:16 I don't remember the year he went into the monastery. This was just impossible to understand in his time period. And he became interested in Zen Buddhism and the Sufi traditions. He, just like you, just began to eat it all. And so you're reminding me that it all just comes down to that. That with every breath, with every breath... because you're not breathing, you're being breathed.
- 00:33:54 You're not breathing, you're being breathed. The first time I heard that concept—and boy, I didn't understand it at all—it was probably in a self-help book back in the '90s by Deepak Chopra, who originally was a physician. Came to the United States and was a doctor. And he tells this story—I couldn't tell you where because it's an old, old, old story—that he was present at a birth.
- 00:34:26 And the baby took its first breath and that was the moment for him. He looked at that baby, he looked at that breath entering the baby and that was the moment when he became Deepak Chopra, only he didn't know it. It took him a while to step away from the scientific training and begin to look at the mystery. But he said and this is, I guess, why he tells that story is because that was the moment he looked at the baby and wondered, "Who's breathing? Is the baby breathing or is the baby being breathed?"
- 00:35:08 So okay. Water is prayer, breath is prayer, the sun is prayer, the moon is prayer, the earth is prayer, Celeste is prayer [laughter], Janet is prayer, it's all prayer. This is why I'm madly in love with prayer in all her forms, all her expressions, all her great mystery. So what has come to me, Celeste, and it was a shock.
- 00:35:35 It happened because a woman in one of my prayer intensives who had been raised Orthodox fundamental Muslim and went through a lot of self-exploration in order to step away from that, and so she came to one of my intensives—I think it was a Ho'oponopono intensive—and of course, I used the word prayer. Lāhela and I refer to Ho'oponopono as a prayer, and this woman looked me in the eye on camera and said, "I hate that word."
- 00:36:09 I said, "What word?" She said, "Prayer. I hate that word." And I was shocked and also, of course, it's like one of the best things that ever happened to me because

that was the moment that got me to say, "Well, what is prayer? What is prayer?" When I call myself a *Prayer Artist*, when I offer prayer intensives, when I'm writing a new book called *Praying at the Speed of Love*, when I have a podcast called *Praying at the Speed of Love*... wait a second! What is prayer?

- 00:36:37 And I went to the Oxford English dictionary and burst into tears at the definition that's in the dictionary. So it came to me, "Oh, I've got to redefine prayer." And I'm still... this is an ongoing... I think it's actually going to be lifelong, but I'm perceiving prayer as love songs of your intimate sacred marriage. I'm perceiving prayer as sacred medicine. When you're describing those prayer ties, when you're describing the Tibetan prayer flags, that's medicine. That is sacred, sacred medicine.
- 00:37:12 And I see prayer as this intimate relationship with prayer itself. Prayer's alive. I refer to her as a river of love, and when you pray and you step into that river of love, you're in a relationship not only with prayer but with everyone who has ever prayed. Uh, it's kind of a big definition. And then the next definition for me is that it's a vibration of love. And then after Carin Vagle was on this show, episode six I want to say, and she said well, for her, prayer is knowing herself.
- 00:37:48 So I'm up to five definitions of prayer. What's yours?
- 00:37:55 Celeste Yacoboni: Well, I think it's infinite. I think we will continue defining. As we morph and change, prayer does. And prayer is being aware. So more than doing something, it's a prayerness, awareness, prayerness. It's being aware of the essence and the sacred in myself and all of life.
- 00:38:32 How do I pray has become how do I love? And rather than pondering the chaos and the confusion, I find myself opening to love in the face of it. You said something earlier: paying attention, paying attention. And that's what I'm talking about. Being aware and being mindful. We're talking a lot about mindfulness, too.
- 00:39:07 So it is the communion. It is the becoming, the belonging, the merging.
- 00:39:17 Janet Conner: You just did something that's very sacred to me, and that's bringing these two elements together that we have a tendency to separate. So like right now, all of our eyes in the United States of America are on the horrors of what's happening to the children at the border with Mexico. And I have a very strong political strain in me partly because my son was a political prisoner. I know firsthand the harm that an out-of-control government can do to us.
- 00:40:00 And I grew up in the radical right. Now, I know that, I know that, I know that. And so in a lot of spiritual traditions, a lot of modern people want to say, "Well, just leave that alone, just leave that alone, just leave that alone. Let's just focus on coming into wholeness, coming into bliss, coming into..." and I can't, I can't.

- 00:40:26 I have to put my eyes on what's going on and say, "No. No." That's the spiritual warrior's no. No, we cannot treat any child that way, not a child in a Japanese concentration camp, which America did, not a child in slavery, not a child in the Holocaust. We cannot do this. But what you just did—because I still struggle with that, "Okay, I'm really angry, and I'm praying [laughter]"—but you just connected the dots and said, "Bring love to what you see. See it, be aware, and now shower it with love. Shower it with unconditional love."
- 00:41:08 This is standing in the place of the divine, being her, and showering everyone with love. So notice and love. Not not notice. Don't put our blinders on, but notice and then love. And that's hard. That's hard. Now, this is when prayer gets hard. I think it's easy to go off in a corner and meditate and come into bliss all by myself.
- 00:41:38 It's much harder [laughter] to shower our world with love. So thank you. What you've done just now is sort of stitch. You've stitched together the whole. We don't have to choose. I can't choose. Maybe other people can, but I can't. I need to be fully present in this wounded world and pray in and for and with and as our wounded world, bringing love because my fourth definition of prayer is it's the vibration of love squared, right?
- 00:42:13 And you just said it. How did you say it so beautifully? How do I pray is how do I love? So thank you that you really helped me stitch my life and our life and our wounded world into wholeness, the wholeness of love. Wow. Yeah, take a breath. So on this podcast, we pray. We don't just talk about prayer. We actually pray. We pray together.
- 00:42:47 So how do you want to pray today? I mean, you're like the smorgasbord of prayer. You could pull out 180 different ways to pray and every single one of them would be so much fun. So choose one or two. How do you want to pray with all of the listeners?
- 00:43:04 Celeste Yacoboni: Well, in that theme of love, love, compassion, gratitude, and forgiveness, and that's Ho'oponopono. That is. I love you. I'm sorry. Please forgive me. And thank you. That covers a wide range, and I like to sing it because singing is the language of the heart.
- 00:43:33 And I find in singing, I expand. I expand my breath, my capacity to love, and my capacity to release and circulate. So I'll sing a little bit of it, and if you feel like it, join me.
- 00:43:59 *Ho'oponopono. I am so sorry. I love you. Please forgive me. I thank you.*
- 00:45:46 Janet Conner: That is such a beautiful chant. I find I have to move with it, so I'm thinking this is a great walking chant, right? I mean, I could just... I can feel myself walking, and if nobody else is on the trail, I could chant it out loud. And then when people are near me, if I want, I can be quiet again. It's a great walking chant. Did you write that? Where did you learn that?

- 00:46:12 Celeste Yacoboni: Well, it came through me. That was my mantra for a couple years. "I'm sorry. I love you. Please forgive me. Thank you," or either of those, any of those. And one day I was driving home from my office, and it came out in song with a big voice. It kind of took me by surprise, so I called a friend. And I knew they wouldn't be home, so I just wanted to record it on the voicemail just in case I forgot it or something.
- 00:46:45 But I never did and I recorded it. I have a CD and people buy it. And I open workshops with it and do gatherings and memorials and ordinations and all kind of things.
- 00:47:05 Janet Conner: So could the listeners have some of that in one of the prayer bags, please?
- 00:47:12 Celeste Yacoboni: That's a great idea. They certainly can.
- 00:47:17 Janet Conner: Oh, that's lovely. And got anything else? What are we putting in the prayer bag? Gifts from Celeste for everyone in the community.
- 00:47:29 Celeste Yacoboni: Well, we have some excerpts from the book. A beautiful package of excerpts that will be very inspiring.
- 00:47:39 Janet Conner: Oh, that's so lovely. Something to read and something to sing. How perfect is that? Thank you, Celeste. I'm already... that melody and the rhythm of it is in my body now. I'm still moving to Ho'oponopono. Oh!
- 00:47:58 Celeste Yacoboni: It's very catchy [laughter].
- 00:47:59 Janet Conner: It's fabulous. Thank you. You know what I'm going to do? I'm going to add the sign to it. My first career was teaching deaf children so, right? Thank you. I love you. I have to look up the sign for forgive. Yup. That's what I'm going to do, and I'll record a little video of it because, you know, then we get it completely in our bodies, right?
- 00:48:26 Celeste Yacoboni: I love that, yeah.
- 00:48:26 Janet Conner: So I'll teach you the signs for it, but I have to get out my... it's been a long time since I taught deaf children, and there's still a lot of it in my hands. My body will remember the signs that my brain doesn't, but right now, forgive isn't popping into my hands. So I've got my little dictionary back there, and I'm going to look up the sign for forgive and make a little video for everyone so that we can sing it—
- 00:48:53 Celeste Yacoboni: Thank you so much for that.
- 00:48:54 Janet Conner: —and move with it, sign with it. Oh, oh, oh. So Celeste, prayer is so alive in you. It's been alive in you since you were a child looking at

the wind in the grass. It's been alive since it [laughter] taught you Ho'oponopono in the car. It's alive in this fabulous book. Where's prayer taking you next?

00:49:19 Celeste Yacoboni: The Voice of the Feminine. It's a workshop series and an upcoming book. So to enhance your ability to speak from an empowered place of presence with compassion, clarity, and confidence. We'll learn new habits that support feeling visible, being seen and heard, and discover all kinds of interesting experiential skills and practices that will support this.

00:50:02 So I have a new website: [thevoiceofthefeminine.com](http://thevoiceofthefeminine.com) and it's just getting started. It's just up, brand new, and you can leave a message for me there or contact me at [celeste@thevoiceofthefeminine.com](mailto:celeste@thevoiceofthefeminine.com) and we can talk more about that. Lots of seeds are being planted for this, so we will see where it all goes.

00:50:33 And of course, I have my [howdoyoupray.com](http://howdoyoupray.com) website with lots about the vision and the book and ways to pray.

00:50:46 Janet Conner: And you do some live events as well? People could find the live events through [howdoyoupray.com](http://howdoyoupray.com)?

00:50:53 Celeste Yacoboni: Yes, and they're going to be listed on The Voice of the Feminine because we'll be coming together around this, too.

00:51:02 Janet Conner: Well, and nothing feeds me quite like this, the living presence of the divine feminine in and through and as me. The voice, the name for the divine for me... and in all of my intensives, in the book *Writing Down Your Soul*, I invite people to simply open to hear this special name. This is just like a human relationship.

00:51:34 You have these very special intimate names, right, that you only say to your beloved. Well, I am absolutely certain that the Beloved is kissing each one of us on the cheek with some sacred, very special, very personal intimate name. And for me, it's Beloved Vibration of Sophia! She's very clear. She likes that exclamation point.

00:52:03 And when you write it, when I write Beloved Vibration of Sophia!, every single morning, exclamation point, as I make the exclamation point, my heart just goes, "Ah." I mean, how unhappy can you be if you're writing Beloved Vibration of Sophia!? And every single person that talks to me in the previous show *The Soul Directed Life* and here, I can't plan these conversations, but it's always... it's this magnificent tapestry that we're all weaving together.

00:52:39 And I don't know it in the moment, but later something someone said, something they wrote in a book... well, when Tessa Bielecki was on *The Soul Directed Life*, I want to say two years ago with the reprint of her book *Holy Daring*... and I'm ashamed to say I didn't even know who she was, and I think she's the

reincarnation or Teresa of Avila. I mean, [laughter] you know, excuse me. That's Teresa of Avila back again.

00:53:11 Well, she said something on that show—and I want to invite her to come and be on this one—that speaks to... and I still am sharing it in everything I do. She said the divine by whatever name or nature that you perceive the divine, is three Ps. Present. So if you speak the name of the Beloved and you don't feel and know that she's here in and through and around you, hmm.

00:53:44 So the divine is present. Personal. This isn't some neutral... you know, that cranky God with the white hair and the white robe that's a little annoyed with you. That wasn't a personal god. That was a very external, very judgmental... the only person doing any movement in that relationship is you. You got to learn the rules. You got to obey the rules. You have to do something to somehow earn that cranky guy's approval.

00:54:20 That's not present, personal, and then the third P was passionate. Passionate. And for me, Beloved Vibration of Sophia is completely present around the clock, 24/7, in the car, in the bathtub, in this conversation, in my deep soul writing. She's so personal. She's mine. This is an intimate relationship, and she passionately loves me.

00:54:49 Celeste Yacoboni: Oh, I love that. And I heard that show with Tessa.

00:54:53 Janet Conner: Did you?

00:54:54 Celeste Yacoboni: Yeah. And she wrote about it in *How Do You Pray?*

00:54:59 Janet Conner: Oh! Well, all right. Now. Everybody [laughter]. We're getting that one out for sure. Maybe that's where I read it first, Celeste. She's in here? Oh, I love her so much. But think about that everyone, and she said, "If your god is not personal, present, and passionately in love with you, get another god."

00:55:26 Celeste Yacoboni: Right. Yeah, she's on page 93.

00:55:30 Janet Conner: 93. You know why she's on page 93? Because 9 and 3 is a 12. One and two is three. Three, complete creativity, the Trinity, right? Yeah, yeah. So thank you, Tessa, for dropping into my conversation with Celeste Yacoboni [laughter]. Thomas Merton dropped in. The only reason you don't have Thomas Merton in the book is he was long since dead. But isn't this adorable? And then my first teacher who taught me prayer ties, your teachers, they're all here.

00:56:02 Celeste Yacoboni: Yes.

00:56:03 Janet Conner: Right? They're all here. Your grandfather is here.

- 00:56:06 Celeste Yacoboni: Yeah. In the prayer field.
- 00:56:09 Janet Conner: In the prayer field, everyone is here. Oh. What a sacred conversation. If you're listening to this at my website, you're already there, but for anybody listening to it through all... you know you can get a podcast everywhere on the planet. Come to [janetconner.com/9](http://janetconner.com/9). It's that simple to find the Show Notes for this conversation, or just come to [janetconner.com](http://janetconner.com) and click on Podcast.
- 00:56:41 Here on the Show Notes page, you get to meet Celeste, the links to all of her websites. I'm so excited about [thevoiceofthefeminine.com](http://thevoiceofthefeminine.com). Click on the Prayer Bags and get her chant and the excerpt from the book. I've been taking copious notes, and I'll be sharing with listeners, "Try this on for size. Here are some things that you can do to begin to embody the ways that Celeste is teaching us to pray."
- 00:57:12 So as we say goodbye, Celeste, do you have a little final kiss for us?
- 00:57:19 Celeste Yacoboni: Love and blessings, dear ones.
- 00:57:23 Janet Conner: And here's my little thank you to Celeste. It's a snippet, just a tiny, tiny snippet of a longer prayer called "Sometimes I Pray," and this is the first prayer I wrote as a *Prayer Artist*. You started this conversation by saying that you said yes. Well, I was awakened in the middle of the night last February clearly hearing *Prayer Artist*, and my stomach went, "*Heh heh, heh heh, woah ha hoo ha*," because I didn't know what it was. But I knew it changes everything.
- 00:57:53 And so that morning, Sunday morning the 25th, I'm writing in my deep soul writing, and I said to Sophia, "Beloved Vibration of Sophia! I don't know what this means. I don't know what this means. I've never heard of a *Prayer Artist*, and I know it changes everything. And I'm scared. But if you want me to be your *Prayer Artist*, I will be your *Prayer Artist*."
- 00:58:23 Immediately, Celeste, this long prayer called "Sometimes I Pray" came through. I don't edit these. I just type them up. And here is just one little snippet that I hope speaks to the beautiful conversation we've just had about how we pray. It's the very end of the prayer.
- 00:58:48 Sometimes my prayers are potent.  
Sometimes my prayers are dust.  
Sometimes my prayers are fearless.  
Sometimes just whimpers in the night.  
Often I know I'm praying.  
Sometimes I do not.  
Is this a prayer?  
Or is this a life?  
Or are they the same thing?

00:59:23 Timothy Frantzich's Voice: This conversation in the mystic with *Prayer Artist* Janet Conner has been rated L.

00:59:33 [music] You are not moving, you are being moved.  
You are not singing, you are being sung.  
You are not praying, you are being prayed  
Prayed at the speed of love.