



Episode 17: Hallie Iglehart Austen—

The Goddess comes alive in you

Thursday, October 31, 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.
- 00:01:10 Janet Conner: You are not moving, you are being moved. You're not singing, you're being sung. And the most amazing line, probably the most amazing line of my life, is you are not praying, you are being prayed. This is 180 degrees different. It's radical from everything I was taught about prayer growing up. I was supposed to be a good girl, get on my knees, say my prayers.
- 00:01:39 No one ever... I don't even think any awareness of this was in any of the priests or the nuns or my parents—at least, I didn't pick it up—that when you pray, you are being prayed in your whole body, in your heart. And your mind is a pretty irrelevant piece of this. You are being prayed. Well, if you're being prayed, you really have to let go, don't you, of this is what I want to say and this is how I'm going to say it.
- 00:02:13 You've got to get out of the way, but I'm sort of ashamed to say that I was 70 when I finally received these words. I guess I was finally ready to hear, "You're not praying, you're being prayed [voice cracks]." And I say it every single day. It's an essential part of my daily opening spiritual practice and, as you can tell, every single time I say it it just takes my breath away. This changes prayer completely.
- 00:02:44 And that's why I guess I am saying I'm Janet Conner and I am a *Prayer Artist*. That's what it means to be a *Prayer Artist*, to get out of the way and allow the art of prayer to move in and through and as me. And you, the fabulous members of *Praying at the Speed of Love*, have arrived. You have arrived at what I love to call the speed of love timing to a very special episode in this, my new podcast, *Praying at the Speed of Love*.
- 00:03:20 We're at number 17, 17, 17. What is 17 to you? If you've been listening for a while, you've noticed that I'm beginning to notice the number of each of these episodes, and today it's number 17. So I got out the tarot deck because I didn't off the top of my head know what 17 is. I know that one and seven adds up to an eight, and eight is the infinity symbol and, therefore, obviously, this is wholeness.

- 00:03:54 This is heaven and earth. This is masculine and feminine. This is completion. This is everything. The eight is wholeness, completion, beauty. So I got out the 17th card and it's called The Star. And on The Star there is a goddess, a magnificent, naked woman, pouring one pitcher of water into a pond and one pitcher of water on earth.
- 00:04:31 I'm not a tarotist, if that even is a term, but I'm simply looking at the card and asking the card the wisdom of the card, not the physical piece of paper, but the ancient goddess wisdom that is in this mystical divination tool called the tarot. I'm asking this magnificent goddess to be with us. And I'll take a snap and ask the magnificent Jamee Thumm, our producer, to post that on our Show Notes page.
- 00:05:07 And then maybe you can tell us what the goddess is conveying in number 17. In this show—I want to say this for anybody that's joining us for the first time—this is a very radical, very different podcast. I call it a post-patriarchal prayer podcast. Go ahead and say that if you possibly can. Post-patriarchal prayer pod... see? I can't even say it!
- 00:05:34 But what we're doing here—and, as far as I know, there's absolutely nothing like it—we are having a very deep exploration of one topic, prayer, original prayer. Well, original means it's ancient, and original means it's brand new coming through you, through me, through my guests. We are all *Prayer Artists*. I was awakened in the middle of the night and told I'm a *Prayer Artist*, but you know what? The universe needs every single one of us to step forward and be a *Prayer Artist*.
- 00:06:04 And so every one of us is called to open to what prayer is really all about. Mystical prayer, mystical prayer like that figure eight that takes us back into the One Heart, the only heart, in the womb of our first and only mother, the goddess. In other words, prayer before patriarchy and prayer after patriarchy. For those of us... I mean, it has been 5,000 years, right?
- 00:06:33 If you grew up in any of the patriarchal religions, and almost everybody did, and even if in your family, religion wasn't a part of the soup, it is in the universe. It is in our government policies. It is in everything. It's everywhere. We have all grown up for 5,000 years under the constraints and controls and domination of patriarchy, for lack of a... that seems to be an all-encompassing term.
- 00:07:02 And under patriarchy, prayer has been stuck in this really tiny box, defining prayer as supplicating a distant male god to protect you and take care of you, following a set formula, particular words, particular times, particular rituals. Nothing in that definition is correct. Nothing, nothing. And we're all waking up to... not just me. I think we're all waking up to, "Gosh, prayer is this magnificent, delicious, powerful, transformational, alchemical... let's dive in!"

- 00:07:37 And that's what we're exploring on *Praying at the Speed of Love*. This exploration for me, once I heard *Prayer Artist* in my left ear, has just danced me. I'm not... it's not that Janet intellectually plans. I am being danced down these magnificent roads. And the most exciting one, in fact, I would say it's really the only one—there are just branches and rivers that go out from this branch—is the ancient goddess culture, pre-patriarchy.
- 00:08:08 I adore, as I'm assuming most of the listeners do, Merlin Stone, *When God Was a Woman*, oh. I like have to read that every six months. I love Merlin Stone. Marija Gimbutas, who spent her life... she's the one that woke everybody up to all of the appearances of the ancient goddess culture everywhere. Oh. I own all her books. I adore her. Demetra George, there's a woman that woke me up. *Mysteries of the Dark Moon*.
- 00:08:38 Dr. Christine Page, who has been a guest on this show. I love them all. But the first one, the first book, the first book that got me to go, "Oh, oh, oh!" is *The Heart of the Goddess* written by our magnificent guest today, Hallie Iglehart Austen. So in this 17th conversation, The Star, we are diving deep into the heart of the goddess herself, and we're going to meet her.
- 00:09:11 You have to get the book and meet her in a lot of forms, but we're going to meet her today in several of her magnificent forms, forms found in cultures absolutely everywhere on the globe. And she's returning. She's returning. She's returning. You wouldn't be listening to this conversation if she hadn't tapped you on the heart and said, "Listen."
- 00:09:42 Well, let's listen because somewhere in this conversation, the meditations, the wisdom, the words, the ideas, the colors that it emanates in your heart, somewhere in this conversation, there is something waiting for you. It's hovering right now in the air around you, and so let's listen as the voice of the Tibetan bowl calls us to open our real hearts, our real ears, the ears of our heart, that we may hear what wants to be heard.
- 00:10:22 [the bowl rings]
- 00:10:48 Janet Conner: She wanted to be rung three times because [laughter] the symbol of the goddess is, of course, the triangle. And so she wanted to wake up three ears of our hearts. So let me say just a few words about Hallie. I assume everyone has *The Heart of the Goddess* on their bookshelves. If not, effective immediately, this book belongs in your sacred, permanent library.
- 00:11:17 And the reason it belongs there is because Hallie Iglehart Austen began... now, think about this. She began studying ancient Greek language and mythology at 12, at 12. What were you doing at 12? At 12, I wasn't studying Greek. I knew next to nothing about mythology. So Hallie was a little bit ahead of the game here, and the goddess was waking her up very, very early.

- 00:11:48 She went to Brown, graduated, and then drove from England to Nepal. Just your average, run-of-the-mill, post-graduation adventure. She drove from England to Nepal and wrote a book about it, *Woman Spirit*. That was an essential early spark in all of the goddess literature, *Woman Spirit*. She has been leading workshops and rituals on the goddess, the sacred feminine, since 1974.
- 00:12:19 And she wrote the book. This is the essential book on the goddess, *The Heart of the Goddess*. Now, it first came out in 1990, but it was recently republished by Monkfish in a gorgeous, gorgeous, gorgeous new addition. And in perfect synchronicity, Hallie is also devoted to our sacred oceans. And this really matters today because what is the goddess asking of us?
- 00:12:48 What is the goddess asking of us? To heal our mother. We live on a blue planet. There is no life without the oceans. We came from the oceans, and we will return to the oceans. And so Hallie founded All One Ocean—all these links will be on the Show Notes page—All One Ocean, to protect our living oceans, to educate everyone about the danger of plastic in our oceans.
- 00:13:21 And, as usual, Hallie was just a little ahead of the curve. Now, everyone, I hope everyone, is looking at our oceans in horror and saying, "What can I do to clean our mother water, our mother oceans?" Hallie joins us from her home. Where else could it be but near the Pacific Ocean? Welcome, Hallie.
- 00:13:44 Hallie Iglehart Austen: Thank you, Janet. It's so great to be with you again and all of your listeners. It's really just a wonderful diving into a great pool of richness.
- Janet Conner: Oh, yeah. The community of *Praying at the Speed of Love* is so rich, so gorgeous, so hungry for these real conversations with real people about real prayer. So we want to hear about your prayer life. How were you, were you, introduced to prayer as a young girl, and how has your prayer life evolved?
- 00:14:24 Hallie Iglehart Austen: Well, like many of us, I was raised in a patriarchal religion that separated me from the sacred. So the prayers I remember from when I was a child were praying every night to God to protect the members of my extended family—I was fortunate enough to live, to grow up, in an extended family—so that was, I realize now, a form of *Metta*, which is a Buddhist loving-kindness prayer. So that's okay. I'm sending good energy even if I'm asking some omnipotent, removed, very punishing patriarchal god to protect them.
- 00:15:02 It's still a loving-kindness. And then the other prayer I remember is, every night before I'd go to sleep when I was about 12, I would pray... because I was told I couldn't... I was very near-sighted, and I was told I shouldn't sing in school because my voice wasn't good enough. I was told publicly not to sing. So I'd pray every night that I could see, that I could sing, and that there'd be peace in the world. So I realize looking back that's a nice balance. I had my personal prayers and, also, I was thinking about the world as a whole.

- 00:15:39 And I tried. I really, really tried to fit into that remote deity construct, but it didn't work. And definitely that trip overland from England to Nepal and back again, where I wound up in the Himalayas and I wound up meeting Tibetans and just admiring them so much and sitting in the mountains for a whole summer to wait out the monsoon, shifted me. I felt like something happened.
- 00:16:09 It was like I was, [my brain?], this scraped plane of my 16 years of academic training. But I still didn't know what was going to replace it. And now, I feel like, to me, prayer is action because everybody have a heart full, as many of us do, of caring and good intentions for all the suffering we see in the world.
- 00:16:42 And what I see is there's different forms of effective prayer. Prayer without action is maybe a third effective. Prayer with action is two thirds effective and, then, prayer with collective action is totally effective. And by collective action I mean getting together a group of people to write postcards to disenfranchised voters or joining All One Ocean to help clean up the oceans, something like that.
- 00:17:19 And, then, the prayer with action is working on your own. Long before I founded All One Ocean, I was picking up pieces of trash back in the '80s on the beach and, one time, I actually freed a seagull from some fishing line that was tied around its legs. I grabbed a stranger and said, "Hold this bird while I get this out." Something I had never done before. That was gratifying. But for me, then, it became every time I picked up a piece of trash, it was a prayer for a clean ocean.
- 00:17:54 It was a prayer for the dolphin or whale or sea turtle or bird that their health be good, that they be free, that they be able to raise their babies without feeding their babies plastic. And so I integrated the practical action of preventing that piece of plastic from winding up in somebody's stomach with the prayer of blessing for them.
- 00:18:22 So that's a big arc, but I think it's an arc many of us have taken. And I think the end of the arc, the rainbow, if you will that we're called to, once again now, as we were in the '60s some of us, is to jump into action. Not jump. I want to correct that. I feel really strongly that it's first you listen, and I can talk about that more. You listen or you look, and it's from a very centered place, and then you act with wisdom and compassion.
- 00:18:58 And, also, for all of us who were raised to take care of others, you act in a way where you're taking care of yourself as well. So that's my trajectory in a nutshell. And I have prayers, what you might call prayers. I have practices I do every morning, which are really important and a synthesis of different things I've learned over the years.
- 00:19:27 And I can share those if you like. So every morning, first, I connect with the universal *Qi* field because I'm a *Qi Gong* practitioner and teacher. And I collect that energy into my belly, my *Dantien*, and into my heart and into my head. So

this really helps me start the day being grounded. And then I do a practice where I give thanks for everything that I'm thankful for in that moment.

00:19:57 And then I imagine I'm at the end of my day, and I look back and give thanks for everything that's happened that day. So I set the intention for what I want to happen, having a great interview with you etc. etc. But I'm grateful for it. It's an added dimension of gratitude and of looking back as though it's already happened. And then I choose a time in the future, could be the next day, could be a week, could be a year, could be end of my life, and I feel gratitude for what's happened.

00:20:26 And, again, I think of particulars of what I want to have happened. So that's one part, and this only takes a few minutes. It takes shorter than it takes me to say it all. And then I invoke, which I can share part of this with us at the end in the prayer practice, is I invoke a particular goddess and I feel myself as her. And then I just put... whatever goddess I feel like I need that day.

00:21:01 Sometimes it's Guanyin, who we'll be working with later. Sometimes it's Artemis because I want to be feeling strong and out in nature. Sometimes it's Aphrodite because I really just feel like having a really nice, relaxed, feel good kind of day. Sometimes it's one of the Tibetan Daikinis who are just so beautiful and so powerful. So different people might be drawn to different ones. But I feel myself, I don't just envision, I feel myself as one of the goddesses.

00:21:34 And that's how I start my day and do my *Qi Gong* practice, which is then drawing all of the energy of the universe into embodying all of that.

00:21:46 Janet Conner: What a beautiful way to start the day because then when you are doing *Qi Gong*, you are the goddess. It's the goddess doing *Qi Gong*. How cool is that?

Hallie Iglehart Austen: Yeah, yeah. It is. It's great. And actually, yeah. I find the word goddess is useful to use right now as we're in this transition from patriarchy to a more free and healthier society, coming back more into balance. But ultimately, what we are is, to me, beyond gender. So when I do *Qi Gong*, I am energy. I am not necessarily goddess or god or anything in between.

00:22:28 Janet Conner: Just pure, original, source energy.

Hallie Iglehart Austen: Yeah.

Janet Conner: So when, how did you become so aware of the goddess in her gazillion forms and come to write this book in 1990?

00:22:50 Hallie Iglehart Austen: Well, in that I did have an advantage in my education, which was learning ancient Greek at the age of 12. And I read Edith Hamilton's book of Greek mythology, which is quite thick. It's like two or three inches thick. And when I was 12, I read it from the beginning to the end. And now, I start at the

beginning and I read it all the way to the end. I mean, I was just in rapture. In retrospect, I see those were all very patriarchal myths.

00:23:16 And some of them were relating to nature, which was sweet about the two old people who become a tree and the vine that grows around it. But most of them were about the more fragmented goddesses. And I felt like there was something behind that, and I didn't know quite what it was. And then, in the early '70s, I found the book *The First Sex* by Elizabeth Gould Davis, which was a ground breaker, then, talking about women as the original power or the female or the goddess.

00:23:50 And that began to turn me around, but it was also, it was that trip in 1970. It was going through fundamentalist Muslim countries and seeing how I was treated and the other women were treated. And then it was sitting in the Himalayas and, eventually, I synthesized the two at the urging of my mentor, who said, "You should put together your feminism and spirituality," basically.

00:24:21 And I said, "Oh, I can't do that," and she said, "Sure you can. You've had these experiences." And I was so excited. I taught a class, and I found out there were other women who felt the same way I did, that their body was sacred, the earth was sacred. We wanted to be in circle, not in a hierarchy. Now, you have to understand this was 1974 and nobody had ever heard of feminist spirituality, people I knew, or woman's spirit.

00:24:49 But I was so excited. I started writing an article about that, and it turned out there was a magazine just starting right then called WomanSpirit magazine. And it just grew. I think that growing up close to nature was strong for me, but it's like all of us. It wasn't like just this sudden goddess descended or ascended and I felt her.

00:25:16 It was deconstructing the patriarchal manacles on my heart and my soul and finding that other people were coming to the same thing. It was really... it was an idea the time had come, kind of maybe a natural arising out of the feminist movement. Although, certainly, at first, the political feminist movement resisted it and now embraces it, embraces the concept of honoring women's bodies, of seeing a deity that looks like us.

00:25:48 And that's so important, as women's bodies have been so degraded in this culture and still are, to honor our bodies and to celebrate our bodies and celebrate the natural cycles of womanhood and this incredibly miraculous power that women have to create a new being inside their bodies. My heart-daughter, Merileigh is two weeks from giving birth right now.

00:26:17 And I've been, even though she lives far away from me now, I've been tracking the pregnancy with her. And so when she lived in the Bay area, she worked with me a lot, so she's sharing with me the sacredness she's feeling in this experience that she's learned from me but now she's living it.

- 00:26:46 Janet Conner: Yeah, it's a whole other thing to think about it, and then this miracle is happening inside of you and could only happen inside of you. What you just said is like the heart, the essence, the spark, of everything that changed in my life. Because when *Writing Down Your Soul* came out, I was addressing in my deep soul writing, I would write, "Dear God," and I had profound... I mean, people love that book.
- 00:27:17 They love deep soul writing. I just didn't even know what I didn't know. I had no idea that when you address the divine as feminine, when you see the divine as feminine, I was flabbergasted, shocked, just cracked open to suddenly discover God fits in this body.
- 00:27:48 And with that everything changed. I don't think I would've been awakened and told, "Prayer Artist." I don't think any of this evolution that I've been so deep in could've happened if I were still using a patriarchal term. And I now find I can't even say the word. I just can't even say it. When I pray, the first thing I do is call in my Council of Love, which are some angels and Mary Magdalene and Mother Mary, the Black Madonna.
- 00:28:21 It's just automatic. There they are. We say hello first thing in the morning, and I bow to each one of them. And I know their names in English. We say that Michael, for example, is who is like God. That "el" at the end, like God. Gabriel, the Messenger of God. They are all of God. Well, one day not that long ago, I turned—Raziel is the first—and so he, although I think he's not a he anymore, is called the Wizard of God.
- 00:28:58 And I've been saying hello to Raziel and having him with me in my prayers for, I don't know, a couple years? I turned to greet him, to invoke him, to have him open the circle, and I couldn't, I couldn't, I couldn't say it. "Of God" would not come out of my mouth. Instead, I didn't plan this, out of my mouth came, "Raziel—I chant their names—the Wizard of Love."
- 00:29:31 And then I kind of went, "Oh that... hey." So I turned to Jophiel, who's second, and I intoned her name and said, "Jophiel, the Beauty of Love. Gabriel, the Messenger of Love. Metatron, the Teacher of Love." And I just went around and, then, when I get to Michael, who is the last one, I burst into tears because his name now is who is like Love. Well, then the big shocker was, because I'm in this circle, I found myself saying, "And Janet, the Artist of Love."
- 00:30:07 Well, now, ever since that experience, unless I'm saying it like now to explain, otherwise, that word G-O-D does not come out of my mouth. It can't. Instead, it's all love or the term you used a few minutes ago this core energy, this first energy, which is the spark that creates everything. And, for me, that word is love.
- 00:30:33 Hallie Iglehart Austen: Mm, beautiful. And that's it. I mean, love... I totally agree with you. Yes.

Janet Conner: But none of that would've happened if I hadn't felt, and I mean felt, her drop into my body, all the way down to my womb. Because when a woman is taught as a girl to worship this external male god, that's never going to fit. That doesn't in here. Instead, that's what keeps God... at least, for me, growing up in a very strict Orthodox Irish Catholic half-German household, God was over there, way over there, way up there, and a little pissed [laughter].

00:31:10 Like, you're going to have to work really hard to get that guy happy. He's not dropping into your body, so.

Hallie Iglehart Austen: That's a really essential point, and this is a way, I think, that we've been disempowered. And that works very well for the powers that be that we've been told we're not love, we're not god, we're not sacred on so many levels.

00:31:40 And, from my perspective, of course, we are. We just have to remember it and, then, we feel not just empowered. We feel just... the power just naturally flows from us. We become more our true selves, and we act fully on our behalf, on the behalf of those we love, and on the behalf of the world at large. And when I say the world, I mean the humans, the what we call animals, the trees, the plants, the rocks, the minerals in the ground, everything.

00:32:17 Because we realize we're all one. Just like that's why I called it All One Ocean. It's all one. We are all one, and that's what I think love is.

Janet Conner: So that goes right back to those three magnificent... thank you for the thirds. So the only way I feel that energy of love moving through me is to acknowledge that I am a divine being, here with divine love. That's what I'm here for.

00:32:46 So that's the battery so to speak that's getting me to take prayer action, to clean the oceans, to do whatever it is we're all called to do. It's her love, the divine moving in and through... and I keep returning to this. All my prayers now have this phrasing, this wording "In and through and as me, in and through and as us." Well, that gets right back to the divine being in me, in and through and as me.

00:33:24 So in your book, one of the reasons that *The Heart of the Goddess* is so woah is not just the pictures. Marija Gimbutas did a magnificent... I mean, you want pictures? Gazillions and gazillions and gazillions. Who knew that the goddess is popping out of the ground absolutely everywhere? But what you do is bring her a) into reality. Here's this magnificent, beautiful, evocative, but then you give us a prayer, a meditation, a poem.

00:33:58 Some way to be her. Not look at her on the page. That would just be like looking at the male god, like those, I think today, really creepy pictures of the old white guy with the long hair and the flowing robes way up there, deigning to look down on us. We've had plenty of that experience with religious art. You bring it into the

body. You bring it into our consciousness. So can we do that? Can we be a goddess?

- 00:34:32 Hallie Iglehart Austen: Yes, yes. We'll definitely do that. I do want to say that I think they're different levels of becoming the goddess and, certainly, looking at the images is super important because the images speak to our hearts and our guts. They bypass our minds. So when we see this beautiful African statue of the mother and child, we get something. And then if we read the text that I researched, which was the hardest part of the book to find this information about these images, we find out that those statues in those cultures, they're not just looked at.
- 00:35:11 They'll have oil rubbed on them, and they have paint maybe on them. And they're held and they're carried in processions. It's a much more relational experience, so there's the level of looking, just seeing. Somebody could get *The Heart of the Goddess* and just look at the gorgeous images from all over the world, which I wanted to do because nobody had done that. And, as far as I know, nobody's done it since is to collect images of cultures all over the world, I mean, Aboriginal and Native American and European and just try to get them all as long as they were just powerful and accessible.
- 00:35:53 Some of them aren't that accessible, so I couldn't include them. But if we look at the images, and then we can do a prayer or do the meditation that I wrote for each of them or that I brought from the culture. And then we can also learn the background which is so, so important. Like, for instance, before we get into becoming the goddess, for the Minoan's Snake Priestess from the culture in Crete, the goddess culture about 3,500 years ago, it's really important to learn that this culture lived in peace for 1,500 years.
- 00:36:29 And there are other goddess cultures that lived in peace for up to 1,000 years, and this is not that long ago. There's been a [inaudible] going around that the goddess cultures lived in peace. And this is an archeological fact, so we know that it's possible to be different as humans. So you would like to go through the embodying the goddess right now? Is that what you're suggesting? Yes? Okay.
- 00:36:59 So what I encourage you to do to is to, first, think of a goddess or let a goddess arise inside of you that you would like to bring into your life, into your being. And one that you can use if nothing comes up or if you want to go with this is Janet has posted Guanyin. Now, I'll say a little bit about Guanyin.
- 00:37:28 Guanyin is the goddess of compassion in Chinese culture, and this Guanyin is particularly beautiful. It's actually in Kansas City, so if you're around there, you can go see her. And she actually is a trans-goddess. She was male up until about the year 1000, and then she, after the period of one or two centuries, became female. So that's kind of interesting.

- 00:37:57 And she's seated in the Royal Ease pose, which is, if you can see the picture, you can try taking it now. She's got one foot up. So she's leaning with her elbow leaning out over her right knee, and her left foot is still down on the ground. This is called the Royal Ease pose. So imagine that you are in the pose of whatever goddess you would like to be. And I will connect us with the *Qi* fields, so you can feel the universe empowering you in this.
- 00:38:37 So in this pose—or imagine this pose if you're somewhere where you can't actually take the pose—and allow your energy to connect with the energy of the earth, all the way to the sky on the other side of the planet. Bring your awareness back into your body, your body as the goddess, and allow your awareness to travel through your body, opening up the top of your head and expanding beyond the roof, beyond the sky, into the vast starry darkness of infinite space.
- 00:39:13 Infinite space containing all potential. Keeping yourself rooted in the ground, inviting some of this infinite potential to travel down through space, through earth's atmosphere, in through the crown of your head and merge with the earth energy in your physical body so that you can embody whatever potential you wish.
- 00:39:42 Feeling yourself connected with the infinite ocean of energy all around you, centered in your goddess self. Feeling how it feels to be this goddess. What is the message that is being conveyed to you through this image that you've received?
- 00:40:14 What does it feel like to be her? Really feel her in your joints, in your bones, in your flesh, in your heart, in your mind. And take a look at your life from her perspective, or take a look at the world or just choose one particular issue that's up for you. And look at this issue, this situation, from the perspective of you as the goddess.
- 00:40:54 Allowing yourself to feel this wisdom, this love, inside of you, this power. And send your blessing out to loved ones and to your community and to the entire world. And receive their blessings back inside of yourself, feeling yourself once again as your chosen goddess or who has chosen you.
- 00:41:35 And slowly come back, slowly opening your eyes, and noticing how you feel, if you feel differently, and remembering what you learned from embodying the goddess in this way.
- 00:42:00 Janet Conner: That's a perfect companion to deep soul writing if you have your journal anywhere at hand because the message when she comes, the feeling... deep soul writing is a gorgeous way to capture because then you can come back and reflect and reflect and take it deeper and ask more questions. So it's a gorgeous marriage of the image, the meditation, the embodiment, and the wisdom.

- 00:42:36 Hallie Iglehart Austen: I really encourage people to do this whenever they can. And when I was writing the book, I did an enormous amount of research. It's a 200 book bibliography and, every day, before I'd sit down to write about a particular goddess, I would take the pose of the goddess. And I promise you, more information would come through.
- 00:43:04 Information that was coming directly from a source that was beyond the intellect and from whatever the artists were, for whatever these different cultures. Because a lot of what we're about, of course, is embodying, is coming into the body.
- 00:43:26 Janet Conner: I think your book was the first one that I read about this taking the pose, and this is what people would do for thousands of years, right? This was almost like a prayer teacher, a mystical teacher, right, to be her, to take her position. That's a whole... you're right. When I am...
- 00:43:57 There's a reason, right, that she has a particular... her legs are open, her arms are up, whatever the position is. And you can't intellectually grasp that. You have to be it.
- 00:44:11 Hallie Iglehart Austen: Yeah. Definitely. I mean, there's so much wisdom in our bodies. I mean, when people talk about the mind, our minds are in every cell of our bodies. Our memories are in every cell of our bodies. So to just think about something is not enough, I don't think. I mean, it's a good first step, but it's so much more powerful to embody that.
- 00:44:44 Janet Conner: And these are all, I'm flipping through the pages as I talk to you, they're in motion. They have movement. They have their arms open or they're dancing. Many of them are holding a baby, sitting on a throne in a very powerful position. Oh, this magnificent woman from North America 15th century. I'm not going to be able to pronounce it. Tazola... I stopped at one I know I can't say on page 19. She's giving birth.
- 00:45:24 Hallie Iglehart Austen: Oh, Tlazolteotl.
Janet Conner: What?
Hallie Iglehart Austen: Yeah, Tlazolteotl.
Janet Conner: Say it... how do you say it?
Hallie Iglehart Austen: Tlazolteotl ("Tlazilteeyotil"). I don't know. I think I've not got the accent quite right. But may I read the prayer to her, the poem to her?
Janet Conner: Yes.
- 00:45:42 Hallie Iglehart Austen: Because this is such a, again, talking about... and I promised my friend, my heart daughter, Merileigh, who's about to give birth, that I would read this as my prayer for her good birth and for all women giving birth

and for all people giving birth to a new world. This is an Aztec prayer to ease birth.

- 00:46:06 In the house of the tortoise chair, she will give birth to the pearl, to the beautiful feather.
In the house of the goddess who sits on a tortoise, she will give birth to the necklace of pearls, to the beautiful feathers we are.
There she sits on the tortoise, swelling to give us birth.
On your way, on your way, child, be on your way to me here.
You whom I made new, come here child, come be pearl, be beautiful feather.
- 00:46:45 Imagine living in a culture where that is... I just imagine these people around the birthing mother chanting this with music and just... I don't have words for it. But there's so much of that is in the book to help us remember what our True Human nature is and of all the cultures all over the world that do integrate prayer and sacredness and dance and art as an integral part of life.
- 00:47:18 There are many cultures that don't have a separate word for art. It's not separate. It's just, it's a part of your life, and in the same sense is our life is a prayer. Prayer isn't just something we do or occasionally... life is a prayer. I was just with a wonderful woman from India, Parvathy Baul, who's one of the Baul Singers, where they sing as healing. It's incredibly healing.
- 00:47:49 And she said, "My teacher said to me, 'Make your life prayer so that everything you do is a prayer, is an offering of great love.'" And I'd like to, if it's okay with you, Janet, talk about the listening part because I think in our young, outer-directed culture that's really important. Is that okay if I talk about that now?
- 00:48:17 So I first learned about listening from a teacher in Hawaii, Morna Simeona, who's no longer with us. And she was one of the people who made known, made accessible to people, the Hawaiian teachings of Ho'oponopono. And I was going to Hawaii for the first time. I was studying intuition, psychic studies, with someone and, then, my teacher said, "You're going to Hawaii. You have to go see this person."
- 00:48:49 I said, "Okay." And so I remember walking through the streets of Honolulu with my backpack, and I'd written Morna, ahead of time, a letter. This was in the '70s. You wrote letters. And she let me in, and she said, "Why are you here?" And I said, "I don't know. Helen told me I should come see you." So she gave me an assignment, and she told me to go three different places and islands and just sit and listen.
- 00:49:19 So I did. One was a big banyan tree at a hotel in Honolulu, another was the Kalalou lookout and then another was on Kaua'i and another a wall built by Menhune, the "little people" of Hawai'i. Anyway, but that opened me up to the idea of listening, and I think I'll tell the story about when I was sitting at the big

banyan tree. So I was into wearing white those days, yoga clothes, so I had my white yoga pants and my white tank top. And I was sitting crossed legged at the base of this big banyan tree in this big hotel, big fancy old hotel with my eyes closed and just meditating.

- 00:49:58 And I heard on the periphery these men come by kind of laughing and pointing at me, and I was in my 20's, then, still feeling pretty vulnerable. But what I was aware of was I was so centered in my listening to the banyan tree that they were just so on the periphery.
- 00:50:18 And I didn't open my eyes, or I didn't leave or anything. I just stuck by the banyan tree and, then gradually, they just went away. So that was part of my beginning training in listening. And, then, later I taught an ongoing course called *Listening to Gaia* because I realized it was so important for people to learn to just be on the earth, be out in nature, and just listen. Just listen. Just feel.
- 00:50:51 And I feel it's really important for us to listen or to just see, to witness what's going on before we act. So we're acting from a deep place. Of course, it's not that hard right now to hear what Gaia is saying. But I learned this from a Vipassana teacher, Gavin Harrison. He said it's really important to, if you see suffering, even if it's just for a split second, just look at it. Just see it and then you can act.
- 00:51:26 And, at the time, I was just beginning All One Ocean, and I was late to the sitting with Gavin because I was trying to finish writing up a grant proposal. And so I was late, and I realized when I sat in my place and looked at the phenomenon of ocean trash—this was even 10 years ago—and I realized it was absurd for me to spend an hour more writing a grant proposal and miss an hour of sitting with Gavin.
- 00:51:58 And that if I looked at the ocean trash situation and I thought I was going to solve it all by myself by spending that extra hour... I'm not putting down being devoted. I was very devoted, but we have to have a balance. And so I sat and I saw in my mind's eye the ocean trash situation, and it helped me bring some of that energy back to nurturing myself and taking care of myself.
- 00:52:27 Because that's the only way we're going to be the most effective is if we do the things that we need to do that take care of ourselves. And I also want to throw in play. I heard myself say once when I was tabling for All One Ocean, somebody was saying—this is about eight years ago—"Oh it's such a depressing topic." And I said, "No. That's why we have to have fun doing it." We dress up as mermaids, we do whatever. Because it's so depressing, we have to have fun doing it. So here is for fun in the healing of the planet.
- 00:53:02 And loving ourselves and one another as we do the sometimes nitty gritty work. Who wants to be picking up tiny pieces of Styrofoam on the beach? But we do it

out of love. Who wants to be writing letters to congress people or whoever? We do it because we care, because we love.

- 00:53:25 Janet Conner: What you just said is just vibrating in me so strongly that I have to like, woah. I created, not because Janet decided to do it, because I was ordered to create a prayer practice to close the American concentration camps that are holding, over 200 of them, God only knows how many children, who are simply fleeing death in Latin America.
- 00:53:56 And I was awakened... now, I think Mary Magdalene had a lot to do with this because I had just been talking about her, just reading her. Two guests on this show, Rabbi Tirzah and Elizabeth Cunningham both, two shows in a row, said how deeply they were feeling that we are replicating the concentration camps in Germany. We are replicating, we are creating a whole new generation of trauma, and we need to do something about it.
- 00:54:28 So the message was delivered, but Janet didn't jump on it right away. So in the middle of the night... now, I'm used to being whispered and it's almost every night, so I keep a yellow pad next to me in the bed because I hear things. The universe really has your undivided attention in the middle of the night and first thing in the morning when you're in that not awake, not asleep liminal theta brainwave state.
- 00:54:56 But this had never happened to me before. I was screamed at, very loud. I felt there was a masculine, so maybe it was Jesus and Mary Magdalene screaming at me so loud that my body lifted off the chair. "Prayer Artist, Prayer Artist, do something." "Okay! Okay!" So, man, I shot out of bed. And I stopped everything I was doing, called my web team, and we did nothing but create *They Are All Our Children*.
- 00:55:27 Now, do I really know what I'm being asked to create? No. The rest of it just had to come. The very first step, the very first step, is to look at pictures of the suffering. You have to... so if people go to janetconner.com and click on [I Want to Pray for the Children](#), there's a whole, big long page. But the first step, and it's hard, is to open a picture of this humongous camp in Denton, Texas.
- 00:55:58 And looking at it, you can see. I mean, it's bigger than an army barracks. You can see, oh my goddess, there are hundreds, thousands of people in there. And then the second thing is a map of the United States with push pins for all of the ICE facilities, and it is terrifying. So you want to go, "I don't want to look at that. I don't want to look at that," but step one is to gaze and gaze with love. So you just, you said it, that Gavin said if you see the suffering, you need to look at it.
- 00:56:35 Hallie Iglehart Austen: Yes, because sometimes just acting quickly or turning away is a form of avoidance. And I want to say that's why I come back to the

- seated Guanyin that I talked about before that you've posted. The important thing about her message for me and for all of us, I think, is that Royal Ease pose that she's in. She's got this one foot up on her chair and one foot down on the ground.
- 00:57:06 She is so centered. She is so grounded, yet she has this one foot on the ground. She's ready to act as needed. So she's not running all over the place just trying to take care of things, and she's not running away. She's not closing her eyes. But she is strongly at peace with herself, yet ready to act, to help.
- 00:57:35 And I think that is such a teaching for us in this time because it's just so essential to keep and treasure our well-being and our strength and keep coming to that. Of course, we sometimes feel the grief and we cry and that's appropriate. I mean, I've cried more in the last two years on an ongoing basis, and sometimes it's just cry of joy when I read about people who are crossing over a line to do something to help.
- 00:58:11 I mean, that's just such a relief. But this being centered, being grounded, and acting from that place and acting. Because we all know what's going on. Sometimes we can't expose ourselves to everything because we just, we become immobilized. But we all know what's going on, and it really feels good to do something. It's such a relief. It is such a relief because then we're connecting.
- 00:58:42 And we're affirming the possibility of restoring democracy, of healing the earth, of making it possible for all people to have equal opportunity. We'll all be much happier if everybody else is feeling better. So we're cut out for this, but I think we need to have fun and do it with a lot of love.
- 00:59:15 Janet Conner: Yeah, thank you for reminding us to play. That is play. She dances. She's doing a lot of dancing in your book. There's so much joy. The woman in birth is... there is a grimace. There is the pain. But, man, there's nothing but love. You can just see the incredible joy. The goddess, in general, just strikes me as a deity, a divinity, a divine presence of love, of joy, of celebration, of transformation, of opening her arms to take us all in. And the patriarchal god, no. It doesn't feel that way [laughter].
- 00:59:58 Hallie Iglehart Austen: Well, when we get a chance to really be with life, I mean, life is joyful. I mean, if we just can be in the moment and be in the world the way it's meant to be and was, has been for millennia up until 5,000 years ago, there's nothing but love and abundance and joy.
- 01:00:26 I mean, I really, I think this is so important because we're so... I've written a paper, which I really just came out of this thing that I was working with for a couple of decades, and it's the Protestant versus the Pagan inside of me. And we've been so indoctrinated by the Protestant ethic which is so... that's what I love about the goddess cultures and the Indigenous religions is they are much more joyful.

- 01:01:04 Janet Conner: Much. They're so much more joyful. Ever since the goddess arrived in my body, I scare myself. I'm dancing. I'm dancing around this house. I'm dancing in the kitchen. I'm singing. All my prayers are out loud. I no longer can just sort of think them or say them. I'm up. I'm moving. I'm clapping my hands. And there's all kinds of music now. And I was thrown out of choir too, so I so get that. But I can't help it. I'm dancing and I'm singing.
- 01:01:32 And I'm sure it's because she... this is what she's bringing us back to remember, and our bodies remember. Our bodies remember that we danced around the fire. Prayer wasn't in some building. Prayer was celebratory, dancing, singing, holding hands, turning and twisting, around the fire, under moonlight. How much fun can you have [laughter]?
- 01:01:56 Hallie Iglehart Austen: Right. Well, you know there are all these studies now that show that hunter gatherers were much happier than we are or still are. There's a few that still exist, "working four hours a day," but what they do as work is what we call hobbies. They're doing pottery. They're hunting. They're fishing. They're out gathering food [laughter].
- 01:02:24 Janet Conner: You're making me remember I had a conversation with the Masters and Teachers of the Akashic Record about my second book, *The Lotus and the Lily*. And I thought I knew what I was doing, and they yelled at me. They scolded me, and they said, "There's something very important missing in this book: celebration. Where's the celebration?" And I kind of went, "Where's the celebration?" So they put me under strict orders to go look at the Celtic tribes, and they're so funny.
- 01:02:53 They were saying, "You humans, you humans, you have totally botched holy days. You have totally botched celebration. Now, you've made it..." because most women just loathe, "Oh God. Here comes Christmas. I've got to decorate. I've got to buy. I got to do this. I got to do..." I stopped doing it years ago, and it felt so fabulous. I don't do any of that but for years carried the burden of dreading Christmas, dreading Thanksgiving, dreading Halloween because these are all work.
- 01:03:21 Well, they said, "Will you please look at what the Celtic tribes would do?" They would get together regularly, not just on some big holiday. And everybody, it was the community, and they got together to celebrate anything. "Oh, we got the seeds in the ground! Yay! Let's have a party." And everybody would sing and everybody would dance and everybody would make music and everybody would bring food. They just celebrated. "Look what we did!" And, three weeks later, a month later, "Oh, we..." whatever, and they just come together in joy to celebrate.
- 01:03:54 So I looked at my book and went, "Well, Houston, we [laughter]," so I stopped and added at the end of every single chapter, "Okay. Now, let's celebrate." And when we get together to do *The Lotus and the Lily* every year to complete the

journey of the year before and celebrate the coming year to come—it was their idea—we get out Slinkys, whether it's a real Slinky, which is fun to have, or you just do it with your hands.

- 01:04:25 And we move the Slinky back and forth because what they're teaching us is quantum physics. That there is... you can't say... they yelled at me about linear thinking about setting a goal and accomplishing it. They said, "No, no, no, no, no. No, no, no, no, no." You cannot separate the intention, the setting of the goal, from the completion. Just like you said you're already celebrating what, right? That's a Slinky [laughter].
- 01:04:53 So at the end of every one of our gatherings, we get this Slinky out and it's so fun. It's just fun. So I'm very grateful to get yelled at to say, "You've left the celebration out, dear. Get it in there."
- 01:05:06 Hallie Iglehart Austen: Well, you're reminding me, for five years, I was blessed to work with a wonderful woman who has since passed on but after... and she had really helped me get All One Ocean started too. After every difficult email or meeting or whatever, we'd do what we call the happy dance. So we would move in the middle of my office, "Yay, yay, yay, yay, yay!" So we'd work out the tension of our bodies and we'd dance around. So I highly recommend to all your listeners, do a happy dance whenever you do anything that merits—
- 01:05:39 Janet Conner: All right. That's how we're going to end this conversation. But first tell everybody what's in Prayer Bag #17. What gifts are you bringing?
- Hallie Iglehart Austen: Oh, yes, yes. I have two fabulous videos on my website, www.heartgoddess.net. And one of them is seven minutes long, and it's with music by Jennifer Berezan, with Sharon Burch, who is a renowned Native American singer as the soloist. And the video is all the goddesses from my book with this music, "Returning, returning to the mother of us all."
- 01:06:20 And so you see all the images. It's a wonderful meditation. It's had about 110,000 views, which my web person thinks is very exciting. And, then, the other is a two-minute video which is like a snapshot of goddess cultures, and it's some of the images from my book and my voice-over talking about the 1,500 years of peace of the Minoan culture and all the different aspects of what we can learn about our potential as being humans.
- 01:06:52 Because I do want to say what's super important is that what we've called masculine and feminine are not masculine and feminine. They are human qualities. And there might be a slight difference between women and men, but they're not what we've been raised to think they are. So we need to... that's why we need the goddess for maybe a few hundred years and, then, we'll come back into balance so that we can become what the ancient [inaudible] called True Humans.

- 01:07:23 So my [crosstalk] is a prayer for us to become True Humans. That's a capital T, capital H, so that we can live with respect and joy on this beautiful, beautiful, precious planet that we've been blessed to be born on.
- 01:07:45 Janet Conner: So we're all called to be True Humans. We're all called to be True Humans, how beautiful.
- Hallie Iglehart Austen: True Humans. Yes.
- Janet Conner: True Humans. That would be a great t-shirt. True Human [laughter]. The babies should all wear onesies that say True Human.
- Hallie Iglehart Austen: Yes, yes, yes [laughter]. That's great.
- Janet Conner: Or pregnant women could wear a shirt and across the bottom, True Human. Mm.
- 01:08:13 Well, you're helping us, the goddess is helping us, *The Heart of the Goddess* is helping us, this conversation is helping us birth ourselves as True Humans. And those pictures of Guanyin and the unpronounceable, magnificent—
- Hallie Iglehart Austen: Tlazolteotl.
- 01:08:31 Janet Conner: —yeah, giving birth, I'm going to make sure that they're on the Show Notes page, and maybe we could even include them in the transcripts. So if you're listening to this conversation on iTunes, Stitcher, Google Play, wherever you listen to it, do come and actually visit and come to the Show Notes page, janetconner.com/17, and there you get to meet Hallie.
- 01:09:01 There'll be links to her websites, All One Ocean, her books, a little prayer. The blue box. I've been copiously taking notes. I don't even know. I have way too much to put in that box, but there are some prayer activities that you could actually engage in in order to experience what we talked about because it is just like that statue. The object is to get this into your body, not just listen or hear about something or study something. So we'll make sure that you get both of those pictures, Guanyin and the magnificent Aztec goddess giving birth, on both the transcripts and on the Show Notes page.
- 01:09:42 And, then, make sure you, if you're not already, click on joining our Facebook community because Hallie's going to join us, and Hallie will be happy to talk to you about the goddesses that you are embodying, your questions, anything at all. Because we're not listeners. I try really hard not to say listeners. It's an old habit from having a radio show, but you're not a listener. You are a *Prayer Artist*. You are a goddess, god in... you're a True Human! That's what you are.
- 01:10:12 We are a community of True Humans, and *The Heart of the Goddess* is birthing us as True Humans. So I was going to close with an invocation to the Divine Feminine that's important to me, but I'm feeling, Hallie, like the perfect close is to

do our happy dance. So will you lead us in a... what shall we do to celebrate this 17th conversation in *The Heart of the Goddess*?

01:10:41 Hallie Iglehart Austen: Well, you've already started it. We should all do a happy dance. So wherever you're sitting or if you can stand up, is this okay, Janet?

Janet Conner: Oh, yeah.

Hallie Iglehart Austen: Yeah. Okay. So feel your feet on the ground, wherever you are, sitting, standing, even if you're lying down. Open up your arms. Move your hips, wherever you are. And visualize or imagine yourself doing this if you're in a position where you can't move, and do a happy dance.

01:11:08 You turn in a circle. You see the beautiful world around you, whatever it is. You do a happy dance, happy dance, happy dance! Yay!

Janet Conner: And how perfect because, as we say goodbye, as soon as you hear Timothy's voice say, "This conversation in the mystic with Janet Conner," right after that, everybody stay on for the replay of that magnificent song by Sofia.

01:11:39 They took the chorus, so to speak, of my prayer "Do You Feel That Breeze?" and turned it into music, so Hallie and I are going to say goodbye right now. But you are going to do the happy dance because you're not moving, you're being moved. I'll see you at janetconner.com/17 [laughter].

01:12:06 Timothy Frantzich's Voice: This conversation in the mystic with *Prayer Artist* Janet Conner has been rated L.

01:12:16 [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.