

International Women's Day, March 8, 2021

Birthing a New World with Rebecca Irby and Julie Harris

Rebecca: Hi and welcome to MidHeaven.Network. I'm Rebecca Irby, co-host and co-founder of MidHeaven as well as PEAC Institute. Today, I am so excited to welcome into the space Julie Harris of Riverbend Coaching. And today we are talking about the Reconstellation Lab. Julie, if you could welcome us into this space and give us a little more info about what we're going to be digging into today.

Julie: [00:00:33] So glad to be with you and everybody else today. One of the things I've been thinking about as we're entering this topic is the idea of our world being at a shock point right [00:00:48] now. And what I mean by a shock point is that the world has been configured in a particular way and a lot of things have been happening to disrupt that and shake [00:01:03] things up for a lot of people. When we think about the role of the Feminine in the world, the Feminine has been viewed in different ways throughout history and [00:01:19] one of the things that you and I have been talking about are: What are the opportunities right now? What are the opportunities now that things are getting put on the table, we're becoming aware of things that we haven't [00:01:34] been aware of before and so we're seeing some of the ways that the Feminine and women have been treated, that have been held down and kept out of our awareness [00:01:49] are coming up to be witnessed and for us to really think about like, how do we want to relate to what's going on right now? And so, you know when we think about things like [00:02:04] violence against the Feminine, right it can go to extremes. And so in this time when energy is being freed up and things are being disrupted, we have an opportunity to look at all the ways that the Feminine [00:02:19] has been honored and dishonored and to come into our own new relationship with it and bring these qualities into the world in a healthier way, and a more life affirming way, and a [00:02:34] generative way

Rebecca: Thank you for covering that I'm wondering if you could just explain a little bit what you mean by archetypes. I hear that word often [00:02:49] and I think it would be a great to dig into what we mean when we say that word.

Julie: Yeah, so in I think in pretty much every culture we see images of the Feminine, [00:03:04] you know, whether in Africa, in Egypt, or in India, in Asia or Ireland, right? Every culture has images and qualities that are transmitted through these images and stories [00:03:19] about the Feminine. And so we can think of them, you know, for anybody who is into psychology, Jung talked a lot about how there are these different qualities in the collective unconscious that we all can tap into. [00:03:34] And so these images and stories of the Feminine that we see across cultures are these qualities of our humanity that are expressed in a particular way and that we can learn [00:03:49] to embody and learn how they inform us.

Rebecca: Excellent. So today we're going to be not only talking about reconstellation but maybe digging into what some of these archetypes are. [00:04:04] I hear that you've got some images to show us which I'm excited to see and dig into what those are. So when we say reconstellation, I also [00:04:19] want to, before we dig into the meat of this, go through any words that people might not be familiar with. I know that "reconstellation," for me, was a brand-new concept, one that kind of drew me into this topic. I was like "ooh, what does *that* mean?". [00:04:35] So if you

could give us a little rundown on constellation, reconstellation, and what those concepts mean in relation to this topic.

Julie: Sure. So, when we think [00:04:50] about it in terms of human development and human beings, we come into the world like a particular kind of energy and not very formed, right? Like when you're a baby, there's this essential beautiful beauty about babies, [00:05:05] but that energy is not very formed. And then as we grow up our energy gets constellated in a particular way. So if you think of the sky and that word "constellation," right? It's organized in a particular [00:05:20] form, and as we get older it gets kind of fixed, right, like if we don't really work with ourselves and we're not constantly inquiring into ourselves and broadening our ideas [00:05:35] of who we are and who other people are, that constellation can get quite fixed. So the idea of reconstellating is coming into a relationship, really seeing how is it that I'm constellated now, and opening [00:05:50] up the lens, opening myself up to different ideas, and then reforming, recreating a new relationship to something. And so when we talk about the Feminine and we talk about the Feminine is not always appreciated [00:06:05] in the world. We may have kind of a fixed idea of ourselves, whether we're women or men, of how the Feminine lives in us, and we might have a relationship to that that's constellated in a particular way. What [00:06:20] you and I have been talking about is, how can we become aware of how things are constellated inside of us, and then through exploration and opening up that lens, re-forming our relationship [00:06:35] to the Feminine.

Rebecca: I love that. So it's not something just for people who feel like they're in a Feminine body or feel super-Feminine at something. I think all of us can [00:06:50] can look into and decide how we're going to show up in this space.

And I also really like the idea of understanding the energies that are needed in the world right now and an understanding that we all have access to [00:07:05] all of them and it's more about what the moment is calling for then who I believe that I am and how I show up in the world.. I think that's really fascinating thing to think about because [00:07:20] I don't think that that's how we really think about showing up in the world. We are like, "this is me, this is who I am and I am this person and this energy and I am in the world this way," and the world maybe sometimes is like "Hey, [00:07:35] I could really use some of this over here, I keep asking for it, and you keep bringing me hammers and I keep asking you for feathers. Miscommunication going on here.

Julie: Yeah. Yeah. [00:07:50] I love that idea too, because I think we also, as part of whatever our constellation of the Feminine is, we have a particular idea of it, and whether we think it's a hammer or feather or something else [00:08:05], the truth is that the Feminine is very faceted. And so when we'll talk about different goddess archetypes, some of them are fierce and some of them are sweet. And these are all faces of the Feminine, right? So even within the Feminine [00:08:20] there's kind of a multi-dimensional quality that we can have access to within the Feminine.

Rebecca: Yeah, that's so fun. I know I certainly feel very fierce and very sweet at times, all [00:08:35] in the same moment. So, it's nice to know there's some goddesses out there that can hold us in all of our facets.

Julie: Totally. and I think [00:08:50] a good place to start talking about this is when we talk about how the Feminine shows up through the body. So I've been talking about the Feminine through the body as having this overall quality of [00:09:05] Sacred Form. And when I think of Sacred Form, I think of something that is in alignment with life, something that is holding life as sacred, and showing up in a form [00:09:20] that generates life, supports life, and also reconstellates life when things have gotten out of alignment. If we think of one of the largest Feminine archetypes is Mother Nature, [00:09:35] the Earth, right?

She is nourishing and life-giving, and when things are out of balance, you have tsunamis and you have fires and things have to get destroyed sometimes in order [00:09:50] for new things to grow. And so that is a property of the Feminine; not only is it nourishing and generating life, but it also, the Feminine also [00:10:05] swoops in and makes things right when they're out of alignment.

Rebecca: Yes. It was a colleague of mine, and we actually started a new show, my new [00:10:20] co-host Natalia Bonilla, she mentioned to me when I was talking about working in the climate movement and a lot of the young people that we're mentoring and "saving Mother Earth" and [00:10:35] she stopped me and she was like "What are you talking about? Wait what? What are we talking about?" And she's like Earth, Mother Earth doesn't need anyone to save her. Like if anything, we need to talk about how we get [00:10:50] into a relationship that's generative, a generative relationship with Mother Earth, because right now we're not in a good place, and she's very angry with us sometimes, she's punishing us as our mother would when we're really bad, and if we're not careful [00:11:05] she might go overboard and just get rid of us and start over again, because she's been known to do that. And that's, she's like, we also portray Mother Earth in these really beautiful, sweet terms and she's like [00:11:20], think about your relationship with your own mother. It's not always sweet and rosy and puppies and rainbows, like most of the time it's actually not that at all. So even just our idea that we would have "control [00:11:35] over" and that we need to somehow "fix," I think is kind of the Masculine running amok, and mindset of yeah, like the fact that we would even have control?! [00:11:50]

Julie: Right, absolutely. Absolutely. And so a few years ago, I read this beautiful book called *Magical Child*. It's by a man named Joseph Chilton Pierce. I got introduced to the word "matrix," which of course we're all familiar with [00:12:05] the word matrix, but what I didn't realize is that the root of the word "matrix" from the Latin is womb. So, when we think of a matrix is kind of like this, you know an interconnected place where [00:12:20] something can grow, right? It's inherently fertile. And this is part of the Feminine.

Our first matrix *is* the womb, it's a place where something can be fertilized, and then when something does get fertilized, it has nourishment [00:12:35] for us to grow and it's a safe space for us to really explore ourselves. And then when we're born, our mother is our matrix, and she nourishes us and protects us and then as we grow up, the Earth becomes our matrix and [00:12:50] because we're grown-ups now, we still have a lot of access to nourishment and place to explore and play, but it's not quite that, you know completely safe space that we have when we're in the womb or when we're young with our mother [00:13:05] and so, the Feminine offers us these gifts, offers us this opportunity to grow and develop and nourish ourselves, but yeah, not

at her expense. The matrix needs to exist. That's [00:13:20] the foundational thing and we all have a need to stay connected to our matrix in one way or another so that we have that source of nourishment. I think also in line with what you're saying, if we think of [00:13:35] nature, it's a huge elemental force. It is *overwhelming* how powerful nature is and when you think of this idea of Sacred Form and the Feminine and childbirth, and [00:13:50] creating something new, these are huge powerful elemental forces – overwhelming, messy, lots of fluids, blood. And if we're not in line with “this is [00:14:05] how things get created and recreated,” if we have a reaction to that, we could feel angry or afraid or even disgusted. And then what happens is we cut off our connection with that matrix [00:14:20] and we begin to objectify it and think it's something that we can control and then any person or people who remind us of those powers, we might shame them or [00:14:35] we might be violent towards them and actually, Chilton Pierce has this really interesting idea that the violence we do to the Feminine whether it's sexual violence or violence in the earth, you know, like [00:14:50] raping the Earth, is an attempt, like a very misguided attempt to connect to the matrix. We've lost our life-affirming connection, so we try and exert control over it. And it's [00:15:05] out of alignment.

Rebecca: Yeah, a lot of rape is about control and power, not usually like sex or like sexual urges, it comes [00:15:20] from the urge of power. So it's very, yeah, I could see a very intimate connection between the urge to control and dominate the Earth [00:15:36] or those that remind us of the creative power of the Earth, being women. So many things to uncover if only we had many many many hours talk about it [00:15:52].

Julie: Yeah, and I think also when we're talking about the Feminine, one of the easiest ways into these qualities of the Feminine is through the senses. So the Feminine and the body has a very sensual [00:16:07] and invitational quality, and I was in India about four years ago, and when you go to the temples there is, you know, there's all these smells and sounds and you know, from what we read about ancient [00:16:22] Egypt, it's the same, it was like inviting us in to a place of sacredness. And so when we've lost our connection with the Feminine, one relatively [00:16:37] simple way is to come back into the experience of our senses, you know to really feel the touch and listen to beautiful music and I know you're doing this this show about [00:16:52] food, right, and like eat your food, really taste your food and smell it, and this brings us back into this alignment with the beauty of our form and other forms that we interact with, this is a simple [00:17:07] way to pause and come back into alignment with the Feminine.

Rebecca: I love that and being mindful and that's something that's like a big buzz words now, being mindful [00:17:22] and having these types of practices. And I think a really beautiful one that you were just mentioning is mindful eating, taking a few moments. It is actually quite hard to do for an entire meal. I've tried. [00:17:37] I'm not good at it. But I think for me small wins are important. So like five minutes of mindful eating, which for me is like a lot, but just that practice. [00:17:52] It's insane how much mind energy it takes to be mindful of what you're doing and not be distracted by everything else. But those types of moving meditations I find [00:18:07] fascinating and they're what I connect to deeply, that's a lot of fun. Well, we'll put some links up and you can join us next month, April 10th, to learn more about these rituals and get [00:18:22] to practice them with us in person. Well in virtual person.

Julie: Yeah. Yeah, and I think that word ritual is a really important word as well because you know when we're talking about sacred, were not just talking about like hmm [00:18:37] some kind of like pristine and refined thing, we're talking about a way of getting connected and making meaning with something right? And so whether we're talking about the ritual of gathering around food or [00:18:52] to dance and sing, you know, which are very much in that wave of Feminine, the Shakti, and having ourselves move with the world. And then also, you know when we come into the [00:19:07] heart space, you know human beings have all these rituals around grief and around celebration. Because we're also meant to be, when we're experiencing those strong moments of joy, [00:19:22] you know, somebody's getting married, somebody's having a baby, or deep sorrow, you know, somebody has passed, we create these rituals so that we can be with each other. And this is one of the things when we think of the Feminine and the [00:19:37] heart, the Feminine is with us, you know, as human beings in this world, we all suffer sometimes and we can't take away that suffering for people, for ourselves our other people, [00:19:52] but we can partner with that suffering and the Feminine does that.

In Egypt, there's the Goddess Isis and her sister Nephthys, and they're associated with funerals. You see them on the front and back of sarcophagi [00:20:07] and they also they have this role of during the moon cycle, right. the moon comes to full moon and then as it begins to wane, they weep. Every time it comes to full they begin to weep, because they know the only place [00:20:22] you can go after fullness is to begin to wane and come back to the new moon

And so there's this way that again, if you look into these Feminine principles or archetypes, that they're associated with these particular places [00:20:37] of our humanity and The Feminine partners with us in these challenging times and that opens our heart and makes us softer towards ourselves, more compassion, and softer with each other. [00:20:52]

Rebecca: I love it, such a beautiful explanation. And I can feel like I can picture it. This idea of ritual, [00:21:07] I'm really happy that you mentioned, because when I first started delving into spirituality and I entered that world through yoga, this idea of ritual felt like [00:21:22] it had to be like I would go look them up, and I had to know what the ritual was and how to do it. And what were the right words, and do I need a crystal and do I need a candle, and I don't think I'm doing it right [00:21:37] and as I've come to realize it's really, it's the act of making something sacred and what is important for me and you can certainly take somebody else's ritual and make it your own [00:21:52] but I think the idea being, it's what you find sacred and what you're bringing your attention to, what you're focusing on in that moment and that you're making something, whatever feels right to you that you're [00:22:07] putting a special time and marker on this space and on this event and that's what makes it a ritual and something that you will continue to do around that time and space because it's important, and understanding [00:22:22] rituals are things that we can create and they're things that we can also find, there's many beautiful rituals to join right, as well as finding what works for us.

Julie: Yeah. [00:22:37] And so this act of slowing down as you were describing with the food, right, that. slowing down and taking your time to make something sacred, to create a meaning for you. I think the Feminine [00:22:52] has something to say about this as well, because one of the things that we see in the Feminine is this idea of cyclical time that the Feminine is intrinsically connected to, the movement of the seasons, [00:23:07] the movement of the moon cycle, and this

idea that one of the ways time happens is cyclical, right? It doesn't only happen in this very linear pushing forward, "better," "more," "upwards" [00:23:22] kind of way. And so I think one of the things that the Feminine can teach us is how to slow down and be at the point in the cycle that we're at and not jump ahead somewhere [00:23:37] else or not wish we were somewhere else but to honor the point in the cycle of the seasons that we're at, and again, this is quite connected to food or if you're connected to people who are connected to slow food, it's about eating the food [00:23:52] that's in season in the place you're at right now and this is a way of having a relationship with the cycles. And I think it's a really important principle of the Feminine that again can get very [00:24:07] glossed over in our fast-paced world where infinite growth is valued, right? You know, it gives us a chance to slow down and say "what is actually of meaning to us" rather than [00:24:22] to imagine that it's just always in the future.

Rebecca: Right, that's really fascinating thinking about the Feminine, the slow food movement, and how that [00:24:37] is directly connected to climate change, or our fight with the environment. That just thinking about if we all subscribed to this slow food movement, [00:24:52] would there, you know the factory farming that goes on and the production of food and overproduction, overconsumption. Even in other first-world nations -- like America, [00:25:08] I don't think we really understand what we have created here. Most first-world nations eat, like -- "slow food movement," that's something that we had to create because the rest of the world just lives that way [00:25:23].

Julie: Right. I remember I spent my junior year in Scotland and I remember going to the supermarket for the first time and being shocked because the meat is sold in very little portions.

Rebecca: When I lived in Japan, you could only get strawberries [00:25:38] for like three weeks of the year and when things came into season, it was celebrated everyone was so excited, like "Oh my God, it's *this* season." And when I first moved I was like, "Okay, so?" and they're like, it's not [00:25:53] gonna, you only get it this time of year and like it just didn't, I couldn't comprehend and I would go to the store and I'd be like, wow, I can't get anything that I want whenever I want it? What is this? Where am I? Oh, [00:26:08] I am living in the world, in a planet where people understand the seasons are important and you shouldn't just grow food out of season and when you do, it messes up the entire environment.

Julie: So [00:26:24] there's a sort of humility that comes with being in relationship with the Feminine, and with being in genuine relationship with the masculine as well. And you know going [00:26:39] back to this idea of these huge elemental forces, right? There's kind of a humility when we see where we are in relationship to these forces, rather than thinking as you said that we're the ones in charge. [00:26:54]

Rebecca: Yeah, and that's a really important distinction, and what we're talking about: rebirth, the world that we're trying to create and again, as if we have that much [00:27:09] control, but yeah, I think it's important for us to understand the control that we do have, because we do have do have agency, so understanding what type of agency [00:27:24] we have and where that's the best directed and it always kind of comes back to Feminine wisdom or land-based solutions and just understanding the more that I dig into the Feminine [00:27:39] and like indigenous and land-based ideas, which always really lead back to the Feminine and it's this like really beautiful circle

and cycle and understanding that we are so incredibly out of balance [00:27:54] and that is the goal. So as we think about what is needed for the future, I think these conversations are going to be so incredibly important, to just have a greater [00:28:09] and deeper understanding of the fact that we probably need to slow down.

Julie: Yeah. Well and I think this is one of the things that we've learned from the pandemic, certainly what I've learned from the pandemic, to slow down and appreciate what's here. [00:28:24] Like I love to travel, and I certainly can't wait to go too far-off lands again, but during the pandemic I discovered, you know, I went to the Palisades Park on the edge of the Hudson and it was gorgeous. And I've been living here 25 years and I've never [00:28:39] been there, you know, and so it was like, okay. I'm overlooking the beauty in my own backyard and so yeah, slowing down and getting more connected to that and I think [00:28:54] too, I want to say that the world gets created as we are. So yes, can you and I single-handedly rebirth a new world? Unfortunately, no, [00:29:10] but..... if we rebirth ourselves then what gets created through us can be in alignment, can be generative, can be sustaining, and when we don't take that time [00:29:25] to check in with ourselves and work with ourselves, we will just habitually create what we've always created.

Rebecca: Yeah, I think that's a really beautiful reminder and one, when [00:29:40] another part of my life is now working with policy and writing policy and for the UN, there's a very large conference coming up and it's called the commission on the status of women [00:29:55] and I'm fielding a delegation and it'll be the first one where I'm bringing a group of women to the UN for this very large international conference and one of the things that we're [00:30:10] talking about is how that space is even created and the fact that it really feels like it was created just to give women a space to talk and talk about how [00:30:25] important women in the decision making is, but it doesn't feel like it actually translates into any of the policy being made and that you know, this was a space "for women by women," but it's not having [00:30:40] the impact that we want to see. They've been meeting for 65 years and where are the results of it? And then digging into it and understanding that it was created by the Security Council [00:30:55] and kind of created as a way to keep everyone happy, like, look, we gave you this space to talk and play over here but decisions are actually made over here.

[00:31:10] Yeah, there's just such a huge disconnect between what is, what needs to be done and these connections of how the Feminine and Masculine are at play and [00:31:27] what, as women, we can do to impact and have an effect on but also, understanding that it is going to be done in concert [00:31:42] with and again, we come back to balance and it's not something you and I can do alone, there needs to be the balance of the Masculine as well. So let's think about it.

Julie: Yeah. Yeah, and so, [00:31:57] I think that's a really good example of how perhaps the out-of-balance Masculine, a particularly militaristic version of security, it's doing its thing and [00:32:12] then sidelining the Feminine, like you guys go talk over here, right? And so what does security and safety really mean, and how does that incorporate our relatedness with other human [00:32:27] beings, right? And so if we were holding both of those issues, we'd be holding the Masculine and Feminine together.

Rebecca: Yeah, for sure. I think [00:32:42] one of my critiques of that space is that *everything* is siloed and not just this issue, but absolutely everything, so people are working on their issue and they're coming up with great solutions, but then when brought all back [00:32:57] together, nobody knows how to work together and none of the solutions have taken into account what anybody else is doing, so they don't actually work in the real world. It's a lot of a lot of planning [00:33:12] to meet, to talk about, to plan, to think about doing x y z.

Julie: Yeah, exactly. And so, you know coming back to the agency of the individual, you know, I think a lot of [00:33:27] what Jung talked about was not having these different parts of yourself siloed, coming into a space of wholeness within yourself, which means coming into contact with both the Masculine and the Feminine [00:33:43] aspects of yourself and again, which is why I think, certainly there are issues that affect particularly women *and*, if we're going to really reconstellate the world, all people need [00:33:58] to understand that there's a part of them that's Feminine and there's part of them that's Masculine, and when we privilege a certain part, if we privilege the Masculine over the Feminine, well, people who want to be in action in the world are going to dial down their Feminine, [00:34:13] because they've learned that that part of them has not been perceived as powerful or has not been given a seat at the table. Right? And so, I think part of what you and I have been talking about is giving [00:34:28] the Feminine a seat at the table and really getting to know her and what is she about, because we all have ideas and images of what she's about, but maybe we don't really know her intimately and maybe our ideas and images have been formed by [00:34:43] other people's prejudices or biases about the Feminine.

Rebecca: I'm pretty sure.

Julie: For sure, that's a true statement.

Rebecca: [00:34:58] Yeah, biases, they're endless, the number of stereotypes and biases against women and all of her forms, but [00:35:14] maybe this cycle, and I think about you know, we're talking about cycles, and I do know that there were other other points in history many, many, many moons ago when the roles [00:35:29] were reversed, you know, matriarchy was in charge and some of my research, it was kind of the extent to which men were subjugated [00:35:44] is the extent to which they have tried to overthrow the Feminine in this time and age

Julie: It's back to your point about balance, anytime somebody's life force is held down, [00:35:59] they're not going to be happy about that.

Rebecca: Well, yeah, and the reason that I bring that up and I think about it is because now as we I think we're coming to the pinnacle and things are shifting, right, if we want [00:36:14] to get to the place where I think everybody would like to get to, we have to be conscious of the fact that there is a really, there's a big, what do I say? [00:36:29] It's very probable that we will swing completely in the opposite direction and it would feel good and it would feel like there would be just cause to do so, but in doing so we then create the space [00:36:44] for it to happen all over again. So instead of looking for balance by recreating the same situations, but putting different people or different bodies in charge. Trying to [00:36:59] really think about what it means to be in balance so that we don't have these wild, the century-long swings of which sex is in charge

because if we take [00:37:14] the time to go back into history and look and understand, then we will see that it doesn't work. Yeah, so this idea of reconstituting and rebirthing is the idea of what true balance looks like between [00:37:29] both energies, because as you keep saying, it's in both of us, in all of us, and gender even in of itself is a spectrum and a construct. So where you fall on that and I think [00:37:44] as we have a deeper and deeper understanding of the fact that sexuality and gender are all spectrums, we will be able to also understand [00:37:59] the world that's in front of us right now a bit better, as people are starting, you know individuals are starting to come to that understanding that maybe their gender is not directly in line with what is considered a woman or what is considered [00:38:14] a man and as we understand this more it will be a lot easier. We won't need all of these words and ways to separate ourselves when we understand that it's just something that is in all of us.

Julie: [00:38:29] Yeah, and so this idea, which is very associated with this Feminine, of relatedness, it starts with being, with having a sense of relatedness with ourselves, and with really feeling into [00:38:45] how we embody different qualities and what our gifts are and how we want to bring that into the world. And yeah, we don't, we can't create a healthy world based on the subjugation of *any* people, right? It doesn't really work, it holds [00:39:00] down the energy, and so what we're seeing is this huge explosion of energy, people saying: I don't want to do this anymore, it's like "Enough!"

Rebecca: Yes, on all sides, everywhere. [00:39:15] People are like, okay, I've had quite enough and when looking at different ages, having entered a new age, and it is fascinating to me, as I said, getting into spirituality [00:39:30] more recently in my life, all of the different traditions of the world. Like this was a new age for all of them, in Japan, in the astrological world, in India and the Vedic world, and [00:39:45] all of these major thousands-and-thousands-of-year-old practices, for all of them, we have entered a new age and I think that that's a really -- I don't know much about [00:40:00] it. I haven't done any research on it. The very logical academic part of me wants to dig into it all and do a lot more studying, but the more heart and spiritual side of me is just "okay, [00:40:15] it must be, things feel different," as you said, everywhere across the board people are like "I don't want to do this anymore." So all right, how do [00:40:30] we not do this anymore?

Julie: Exactly Exactly. And so coming back to that theme of finding our own inner connections. finding our own inner power, and the more we can do that for ourselves [00:40:45] and join with other people who are doing that, then the more we have a conscious way to reconstellate and not to just accept the status quo and how things have been formed in the past.

Rebecca: [00:41:02] Well, breaking down of the status quo. I mean, I feel like that's the million, billion dollar question. Yeah.

Julie: So, [00:41:17] part of what we're going to be doing in this workshop in about a month is looking at our own status quo, right? Like all people get really comfortable. It's just a natural thing for human beings to do, we're [00:41:32] seeking homeostasis. We want to find a way that feels right and balanced for us. And the question is: are we awake? Are we finding a dynamic homeostasis? Or are we just shutting down to the default and [00:41:47] just getting through the day? And so, in this workshop, some of the language we used is: how to recognize the seeds of

what is in you that may be covered up by your status quo, [00:42:02] by what's been comfortable and easy for you and then, how do we transform those seeds? How do we help them grow into something more alive and more joyful and more expressive?

Rebecca: Yeah, and [00:42:17] I think the distinction between an active status quo versus just accepting what has been given as the status quo, [00:42:33] I'm glad we'll have more time to dig into that in the workshop because I think that that's an important distinction and one that you we could probably spend an entire workshop with just on that. [00:42:48] what that looks like and what that feels like.

Julie: If you or I or somebody who's interested in disrupting the status quo, we have to be willing to disrupt that in ourselves first and [00:43:03] really do that work and see what it creates because you know, it will put us in contact with things that are difficult but it will also put us in contact with our aliveness with more aliveness and then we have more energy to actually go down [00:43:18] out into the world. Like when we're caught in that kind of the heaviness of the status quo, it really dampens down our ability to participate in the world and we start feeling a lack of possibility that.

Rebecca: Yes [00:43:33] one thing I noticed and I've been really missing, I started practicing Brazilian Jiu Jitsu right before the pandemic, the very end of 2019 and [00:43:48] one of the things that I noticed and I loved was the more effort I gave on a daily basis, the more energy I would have the next day. So it felt like if I used [00:44:03] up every ounce of energy that I had then the next day, I would get a little bit more, but on the days where I would convince myself that I had worked hard enough and I deserved a break, then I would be even more tired. [00:44:18] It was really fascinating to see, when I was practicing on a daily basis, just the difference in the energy that I would have, and the practice of expelling all of your energy, and I [00:44:33] can say now, having not practiced in many many many months, and being pandemic and sitting a lot, I have so much less energy. So so so so much less energy [00:44:48] -- mental energy. physical energy. I've been now pushing myself to be like, okay, it's time to start moving again. It's finally above freezing. I went hiking yesterday, which was amazing, but just [00:45:03] -- our bodies are so fascinating, but just having not moved for a few months, even just walking, maybe a mile and a half two miles, which was nothing to me before, it was like [00:45:18] today. My legs are like, girl, what did you do? Like, how dare you move around? We've been sitting for months. What are you thinking? I used to run half marathons. And now walking a mile feels like a huge [00:45:33] stretch. It's crazy. And that's in the matter of months.

Julie: Yeah. Yeah. So I love that that idea that active engagement generates active engagement. Right? And so [00:45:48] we can do that with ourselves. And then also doing that in community is really powerful right? I think that's another effect of the pandemic is, you know, being more isolated. Just meeting people through our screens and you can [00:46:03] still do a really good group through the screen, but you know, there's something about bringing together many people where everyone's active engagement, sort of like the sum of all of that is greater [00:46:18] than t individuals.

Rebecca: Energy is real and it's exponential. When it's in the room, when you're in the room with more than one other person you can feel it when you're all doing the same thing. It's palpable, you can touch it. [00:46:33] You can definitely create some of that through the screen [00:46:49]

for sure. Yeah, and I think any -- one of the reasons mantras, I find them fascinating, there's a lot of energy and power behind them, people all over the world put [00:47:04] energy and space and time into them and I think the same is true at any point when people are coming together to focus on something. But it takes a little [00:47:19] bit more concentration and effort on each individual's part when you're not physically in the same room. When you're physically in the same room, it just happens because the energy is there and it's swirling around. Through the screen [00:47:34] it can certainly happen but it takes -- you have to think about it, which I think is really fascinating and I like that. It's a really fun part of learning about the virtual world [00:47:49] and doing this type of work there.

Julie: Yeah, and I think part of it, whether you're live or virtual, is the experience of creating an intention around a space. So, I have been in a lot of powerful virtual [00:48:04] spaces over the past year. And again, it's just a reminder of this theme we're talking about of how can we turn towards ourselves and work with our own energy? And then part of this Feminine [00:48:19] is the need to do it in community. It is the need to really be in the space of relatedness and respond. The Feminine is inherently receptive. And so [00:48:35] when we're in community, we're open and available to receive what's happening in the group and then we can respond with ourselves or with others. And so I think we can do that virtually [00:48:50] as well as in person.

Rebecca: Absolutely, so fun. Well, we've got about 10 more minutes. I wanted to ask the audience if they have any questions [00:49:07] If you're watching on one of the platforms, you can type in the chat there or if you're here live with us Zoom, you can type questions in the chat there as well. And otherwise, [00:49:22] was there anything else that you wanted to go over? Do we want to show some of the pictures...?

Julie: Yeah, we can show some of the pictures, it gives you the direct hit of what some of these qualities are that we'll be exploring.

Rebecca: Yeah, let's do it. [00:49:37]

Julie: All right. So this is Hathor. [00:49:52] She's an Egyptian goddess, and she's the Cosmic Matrix in Egyptian mythology. She holds the sacred space for things to be generated. And so, [00:50:07] when you think of this holding quality of the Feminine, I often do an exercise with her where I just invite you to gaze into her eyes and be received by her, to let yourself be received [00:50:22] by her and it's powerful to allow ourselves to see and be seen, even by what appears to be a statue. As human beings, we need [00:50:37] to be seen, that is an essential part of our development, and Hathor is one of the goddesses that helps us connect with that energy. We need to be seen first so that we can [00:50:52] see ourselves.

Rebecca: Mmm. That's really beautiful.

Julie: Yeah, and then this is Isis with one of the Pharaohs and again, you can just see this beautiful heart quality of the Feminine [00:51:07] of receiving and being fully available to another human being and really being in that quality of relatedness. And so you [00:51:22] might breathe into your heart here and just sort of notice -- what is this like? Another vision of that Feminine holding and receptive quality.

Rebecca: Very compassionate. [00:51:37]

Julie: Yeah, exactly. And then here, this is Sekhmet, she's another Egyptian goddess. She's a lioness. She's got a lioness head, as you can see, and she can be really fierce and also [00:51:52] quite tender and so you see here that she's holding hands with the Pharaoh. There's this quality of receptivity, but you know, she has that beautiful solar disk over her head and she has this incredible [00:52:07] dignity and power. Receptivity doesn't mean passivity. It doesn't mean a loss of energy, it's actually an active energy. And so I think this this image of Sekhmet is a good [00:52:22] way to see that.

Rebecca: I love that, receptivity is not passivity. It's the new code of the year.

Julie: Yeah, because it's, I think, why the Feminine sometimes gets dishonored, [00:52:37] like there's a sense that that's weak or passive and it's like, no actually, look at her. She's very present, and very powerful and also in relationship and we can be both.

Rebecca: We can do [00:52:52] this and if you cross her she will bite your head off.

Julie: Yeah, exactly. Exactly. Which brings us to Kali, who is more known for that capacity, and you know Kali, one [00:53:09] of the meanings of her name is “the black one.” And she stands for this deep darkness and shadow, which is both the unlimited potential, like if you think of the dark Earth, the place where something grows from, and also the Shadow, [00:53:24] the places where we usually don't want to look, don't want to pay attention to, and as we were talking earlier, so a lot of our life force and energy gets clamped down there. And so Kali reminds us to welcome in [00:53:39] even the unwelcome and she's quite a fierce goddess. And if you keep her by your side and you keep looking into the Shadow and looking into the shadow, you can integrate and process these energies [00:53:54] and if you forget about her, you know, she's going to come back and string your head up on one of these necklaces that surround her neck, right? One of the beads that's around her neck. So, [00:54:09] Kali is like that Mother Nature saying things are out of alignment, and I'm just going to come and whoosh – you want to keep that with you.

Rebecca: One of the things, over the summer, I had the opportunity [00:54:24] to visit some reservations and we were out in the desert and it never really dawned on me until I was in the desert how amazing the shadow is, and that when you're in the desert, the shadow [00:54:39] is where life is and you cannot exist without the shadow and anytime we would be walking and I would see a place like way in the distance where there was a shadow, and we'd like run over there and just like “Oh my God, it's so nice.” [00:54:55] That true understanding of how incredibly important the shadow is...

Julie: Yeah, I love that, we need the light and the [00:55:10] shadow and actually the more we can touch into the Shadow, the more we can show up in our life. There is a relationship between them and you can't have one without the other.

Rebecca: Right, and well, that was the [00:55:25] realization, I needed the shadow. That was where I could drink. that was where we could rest and eat, you get all of your power and energy in the shadow in order to be out in the light. The light [00:55:40] will burn everything up if you're not prepared for it, and you can't prepare for it in the light. You have to prepare for it in the shadow. Which wow, that's...

Julie: Yeah, like a very [00:55:55] visceral experience of it is what we're talking about here. That's awesome. Here's another Indian goddess. a Southern Indian goddess. One of her [00:56:10] names is Saundarya which means "the beautiful" and one of the reasons she's beautiful is because she's a mature woman who has integrated her anger and her fear, right, these, as we were saying, these normal [00:56:25] human qualities, the suffering that happens from being a human being, and she's in relationship with herself such that whatever has happened to her in the past is no longer a trauma for her. And so she becomes a [00:56:40] mature woman who is comfortable in her sensuality and showing up in her femininity and again, she's integrated her shadow. The blood-red sari, the [00:56:55] blood that's often associated with Kali becomes her sari, becomes something beautiful.

And so this is like another way of talking about this process that we're going through and that we're going to be working within the workshop [00:57:10] is when we can hold and look at these difficult places, then they can actually become our Beauty and our Jewel.

Rebecca: I love that and she's definitely incorporating. [00:57:25] it looks like three different goddesses. It's such a beautiful representation of my favorite Hindu goddesses so I was unfamiliar with her and I can't wait to go research more about her. [00:57:40] Yeah, but she's got Lakshmi, Saraswathi and Kali all in there.

Julie: Yeah exactly and again this idea that the Feminine is faceted. It's not just one thing but we can touch into all [00:57:55] these pieces of ourselves.

Rebecca: So beautiful.

Julie: Yeah, this is a Buddhist goddess Tara. She's the goddess of compassion. And yeah, just taking a breath here. Like when I look at her now with that greenery, especially [00:58:10] because we're coming out of winter here, it just makes me go "aaaah." And again, so that quality of just being received and having a place to rest that you were talking about in the desert, so important to find that.

[00:58:26] And then last but not least, oh no, this is not last but not least. This is Seshat. We could talk more about her in the retreat, but she is the head, the mind of the Feminine, you can see how she's got this antenna with these beautiful petals [00:58:41] and she's in relationship with the stars and then there's this little line of dots in front of her and this is like the different reigns of the Pharaohs and she's pointing to one of them and so [00:58:56] the mind of the Feminine, I call panoramic vision and it's a way to be oriented in time and space to all these different facets. Right? Like the Feminine is multifaceted and [00:59:11] we can be aware that they're all there, but also we do operate where we need to touch into what facet is emerging now

and what needs to come now and Seshat is one of the goddesses that helps us with that [00:59:26]

Rebecca: I love that, so great to understand not only do we have access to all of those facets, but we can call upon them. It's like a tool belt. Which tool do you need right now?

Julie: Exactly. [00:59:41] Exactly. And then this is my beautiful doggy and I love just this soft gaze. When we're thinking about the Feminine, and again coming back to this idea of holding and receptivity [00:59:56] and relationship, and animals are often a way that it's easy for us to connect with this quality and we don't judge animals for this quality. In fact, we revere it in them and we love the quality. And so, sometimes [01:00:11] it's easy to, with animals, to really understand what that transmission is about.

Rebecca: I love that right? Oh, such a cute pup. [01:00:27] Excellent. Well, we are out of time, but I thank you for joining us and I'm so excited for our workshop. Can you let folks know the name and where they can [01:00:42] sign up?

Julie: Yeah. Sure. So the workshop is happening on April 10th from 4 to 6 p.m. Eastern on Zoom and it's called Reconstellation Lab: Birthing a New [01:00:57] World and so we'll be diving much more deeply into a lot of the concepts that were talking about today and practicing with them, because talking is really important, but the way that you really begin to embody them is to practice with them. And so you can either [01:01:12] sign up on MidHeaven.network or on my website, <http://riverbendcoaching.com/workshops-speaking/>. So either place, and we're offering it on sliding scale between 20 and 40 dollars depending on what your budget is like and so you [01:01:27] pick and we will be really excited to see you and be with you.

Rebecca: Wonderful. Thank you so much, Julie. It's always such a pleasure working with you and getting to have these conversations. Thank you for inviting me into [01:01:42] this space with you and I will see you a little bit later. We have the Every Woman Matrix happy hour, speaking of matrices, Julie brought us that word and explanation and [01:01:57] we loved it so much. So WCAPS -- Women of Color Advancing Peace and Security tonight at 5 p.m. We have our happy hour. Julie is a part of our matrix. Please come join us, check it out [01:02:12] information is on midheaven dot Network. You can find all the info there. We won't be broadcasting it because it's a happy hour and we're going to be talking and hanging out, but all of the information of how you can join [01:02:27] us is on the website. So we hope to see you there. Thank you. See you soon.