

OPENING THE SENSES OF THE SOUL



HEALING INTO WHOLENESS
WITH NATURE'S VIBRATIONAL MEDICINE

SAMANTHA ORTHLIEB

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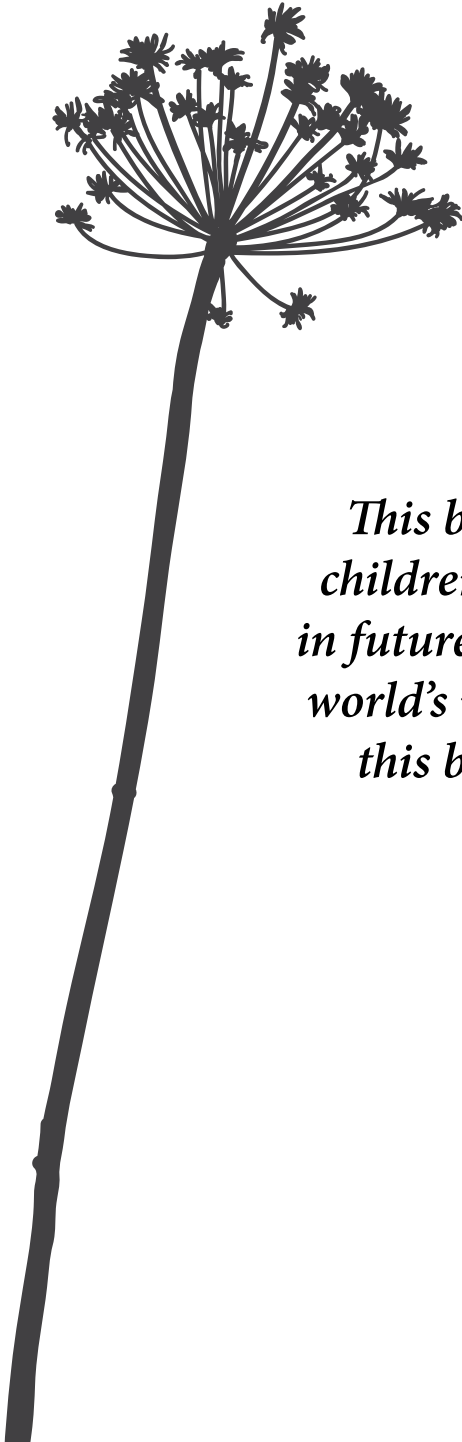
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This book is dedicated to my children and to all the children in future generations who are the world's vibrational light. I wrote this book to help keep them awake.

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CONTENTS

The Journey	xiii
Prologue	xv

PART I: HEALING INTO WHOLENESS

1 When the Body Talks, Listen!	21
<i>Healing with Vibrational Medicine</i>	23
<i>A Time to Heal</i>	26
2 Understanding Vibrational Medicine	29
<i>The Vibrational Field</i>	29
<i>Chakras and the Aura</i>	32
<i>What are Archetypes?</i>	33
<i>Chakras and Archetypes</i>	34
<i>Intention and Healing</i>	34
<i>Vibrational Medicine: Tapping into Nature's Intention</i>	35
<i>Accessing Our Inner Healer with Applied Kinesiology</i>	36
3 Healing into Wholeness	39
<i>Healing the Individual: Reclaiming the Co-Creative Masculine and Feminine Within</i>	40
<i>Healing in Romantic Partnerships</i>	47
<i>Healing the Global Community</i>	48
<i>Healing Our Children: Preparing Our Children for the New Paradigm</i>	50
4 Choosing to Heal	57
<i>The Journey to Higher Consciousness</i>	57
<i>The Healed Life</i>	58
<i>Choosing to Heal</i>	59
5 Messages From the Body: Insight into Our Health Challenges	63

PART II: OPENING THE SENSES OF YOUR SOUL

6 Balancing the Chakras and Healing Archetypes with Vibrational Medicine	79
<i>An Intellectual Framework for Healing: Consciously Supporting Our Process</i>	79
<i>Balancing the Chakras and Healing Archetypes</i>	83

<i>Working with Vibrational Medicine</i>	85
Senses of the Soul Elixirs	88
<i>Using Your Senses of the Soul Elixir</i>	89
<i>Dosages for Senses of the Soul Elixirs</i>	89
7 The Root Chakra	92
<i>Chakra One</i>	93
<i>The Victim Archetype</i>	93
<i>The Earth Mother Archetype</i>	94
<i>The Shaman Archetype</i>	100
<i>Vibrational Medicine: Herbal Ally of the 1st Chakra</i>	101
<i>Recipe for Healing: The Earth Mother Elixir</i>	103
8 The Sacral Chakra	106
<i>Chakra Two</i>	107
<i>The Prince and Princess Archetypes</i>	110
<i>The Sovereign Archetype</i>	111
<i>The Mystic Archetype</i>	118
<i>Vibrational Medicine: Herbal Ally of the 2nd Chakra</i>	119
<i>Recipe for Healing: The Sovereign Elixir</i>	121
9 The Solar Plexus Chakra	122
<i>Chakra Three</i>	123
<i>The Servant or Drudge Archetype</i>	124
<i>The Warrior Archetype</i>	130
<i>The Spiritual Warrior Archetype</i>	134
<i>Vibrational Medicine: Herbal Allies of the 3rd Chakra</i>	135
<i>Recipe for Healing: The Warrior Elixir</i>	139
10 The Heart Chakra	142
<i>Chakra Four</i>	143
<i>The Actor Archetype</i>	147
<i>The Lover Archetype</i>	149
<i>The Magical Child Archetype</i>	153
<i>Vibrational Medicine: Herbal Allies of the 4th Chakra</i>	153
<i>Recipe for Healing: The Lover Elixir</i>	157
11 The Throat Chakra	160
<i>Chakra Five</i>	161
<i>The Silent Child Archetype</i>	161

<i>The Prophet Archetype</i>	164
<i>The Muse Archetype</i>	168
<i>Vibrational Medicine: Herbal Ally of the 5th Chakra</i>	168
<i>Recipe for Healing: The Prophet Elixir</i>	170
12 The Brow Chakra	172
<i>Chakra Six</i>	173
<i>The Intellectual Archetype</i>	177
<i>The Sage Archetype</i>	181
<i>The Alchemist Archetype</i>	184
<i>Vibrational Medicine: Herbal Ally of the 6th Chakra</i>	184
<i>Recipe for Healing: The Sage Elixir</i>	187
13 The Crown Chakra	190
<i>Chakra Seven</i>	191
<i>The Egotist Archetype</i>	192
<i>The Guru Archetype</i>	196
<i>The Priest and Priestess Archetype</i>	201
<i>Vibrational Medicine: Herbal Ally of the 7th Chakra</i>	203
<i>Recipe for Healing: The Guru Elixir</i>	203
Conclusion	205
Appendix	207
<i>Appendix A: Quick Reference Guide</i>	208
<i>Appendix B: Glossary of Terms</i>	210
<i>Appendix C: Types of Vibrational Medicine</i>	214
<i>Appendix D: Additional Resources</i>	215
<i>Appendix E: Connecting Back to Mother Nature—A Guide for City Slickers</i>	222
Bibliography	225
Index	229
About the Author and Co-Creative Contributors	237
<i>Senses of the Soul</i> Products	239

The Journey

One day you finally knew
what you had to do, and began,
though the voices around you
kept shouting
their bad advice—
though the whole house
began to tremble
and you felt the old tug
at your ankles.
“Mend my life”
each voice cried.

But you didn't stop.
You knew what you had to do,
though the wind pried
with its stiff fingers
at the very foundations,
though their melancholy
was terrible.

It was already late
enough, and a wild night,
and the road full of fallen
branches and stones.

But little by little,
as you left their voices behind,
the stars began to burn
through the sheets of clouds,
and there was a new voice
which you slowly recognized as your own,
that kept you company as you strode deeper and deeper
into the world,
determined to do
the only thing you could do—
determined to save
the only life that you could save.

-Mary Oliver

Prologue

The Orchid

People tend to react negatively when you tell them you hear voices. Even into my early twenties, I never admitted it to anyone—not even to those closest to me. I worried about what others would think and so I learned to deny and ignore the messages I received. And yet, I knew that what I was experiencing was not just mental chatter: the information I received proved to be accurate more times than not. I trace these extrasensory and intuitive abilities back to my grandmother, a tiny, fiery Irishwoman who was born with a caul (a layer of skin over the face), thought to be the mark of someone with extraordinary psychic powers. She was raised to be a faithful Catholic and developed a special relationship with the Catholic saint St. Anthony, who she would consult frequently. Since her powers of perception were safely aligned with her faith, she was not seen as unusual. She used to call my mother up to relay messages from “Tony,” usually when our family was in trouble. Once when I lost my wedding ring, she told me it was in a dark wet place on the main floor of my house. I later found it in the drain of the bathroom sink, where my four-year old son had put it—perhaps his way of telling me my marriage was heading in the same direction.

Historically, there has always been a fear and condemnation of those with empathic, intuitive or psychic abilities. When Joan of Arc first heard voices she was considered a Saint, but it wasn't long before her abilities were perceived as a threat by those in power, and she was executed for practicing “witchcraft.” Even in my family, we never spoke about my grandmother's powers outside the context of her Catholic faith. I had a deep-rooted fear of persecution and have had a recurring dream where I am a Priestess or Medicine Woman being executed for my talents, powers, and healing abilities. When I told my Jungian psychologist about this dream, she dismissed it as part of the “collective unconscious”—she had little time for anything that could not be explained by science and psychological theory. Years later, however, I realized that this nightmare was a sign that I needed to face my fears and step into my power in my life and in my work. I needed to wake up, heal the masculine and feminine within, and let go of old programming. When I ignored this message, the dreams of being persecuted became worse—I would wake up in the middle of the night shaking, scared, and feeling pain in my body where I had been stabbed by my persecutor in my dream. Dreams are messages from the subconscious and superconscious that need to be embraced. When we ignore them they only intensify, disturbing our sleep patterns (and consequently, our sanity) until we heed their message.

While my grandmother talked with St. Anthony, I preferred to converse with plants

—or at least they preferred to converse with me. One memorable encounter occurred as I was reading my book on a lazy Friday evening a few years ago. I heard a small voice say, “You need to learn about me.” In close proximity to me were two orchid plants, one of which I had purchased for myself, and the other one was a house warming gift from a good friend. Orchids are elegant plants that will thrive with little care if the right conditions are present. I was told by the clerk at the garden store that an orchid was the perfect plant for someone like me: a busy, hard-working mom with two kids, two dogs, two horses, and countless other distractions and obligations. At the time I hardly looked like someone who could take care of herself, let alone a low maintenance plant. I had just gone through yet another break-up and reconciliation with my boyfriend at the time, and had moved into a new home on my own. He and I were talking about him moving in and my intellect, helped along by cultural programming, told me that this was the next logical step in the “woman-man” relationship. Growing up, I was one of countless young girls taught to believe that my sole purpose as a woman was to look after a husband and my children in exchange for financial stability and protection. My intuition was asking me to re-evaluate this belief and cautioning me against allowing my boyfriend to move in; I was torn. I stood in the plant store defeated, exhausted, and confused. In the end, I bought the orchid and went home.

It was this same orchid, with its five exquisite white flowers trailing down its stem, which decided to strike up a conversation with me. “You need to learn about me and let others know,” it said simply. Plants, unlike many humans, are direct and get to the point quickly. I could feel the pit in my stomach building, unsure about what was to come next. “Why?” I asked. “Because it’s time,” responded the Orchid. I sighed, turned away, and resumed reading my book in a futile attempt at a normal life.

A month passed before the Orchid spoke to me again. My boyfriend had moved in and already, after two weeks, things were not going well. We had both been on our own for too long, and the reasons underlying our previous break-ups had not been resolved. I was trying hard to ignore the obvious, still fixated on the idea of having a husband to create the family I believed I needed. Despite being financially stable and successful, I was convinced I needed a partner to thrive and literally survive in this world. This is what I thought would make me complete and peaceful, even after many so-called “failed” relationships.* I had yet to surrender to the reality that my boyfriend was, like the other men in my life, reflecting back to me the issues I needed to heal. My mental programming won over, as it had many times before, and I bulldozed over my soulful learning to try and make the relationship gel. The harder I tried, the more miserable and energetically depleted I became.

When the Orchid piped up for the second time, I knew I needed to listen. I sat

* Our culture teaches us that if a relationship ends, there is something wrong with us and that we failed. However, each relationship we have shows us a part of our inner self that we need to heal. This understanding gives us the freedom to stay in the relationships that serve us and leave the ones that no longer do; not all relationships are long term, especially as we grow and sometimes grow apart.

beside the plant and began to meditate. The Orchid told me that it would bring higher consciousness to all who honoured it. It told me I needed to open my mind and my heart so that I could hear messages beyond my earthly experience. As I closed my eyes and meditated, I saw one of the Orchid's white flowers expand, becoming larger and larger until soon it became a white space overtaking my mind's eye. I felt at one with it: there was no separation between it, myself or anything else. I knew I had to carry this peaceful experience of oneness into my everyday life. The Orchid urged me to let go of my fear, scepticism, and any beliefs that held me back. I needed to listen and learn without judgement, and trust that the rest would come to me over time. "It's time to stop hiding," said the Orchid. "It's time to teach others."

Soon after this epiphany, I began to research orchids. I learned that orchids affect many different vibrational energy centers in the body and are more diverse than any other plant species. There are over 20,000 naturally occurring species of orchids and they grow all over the world (except in Antarctica). Their existence on earth is debated to be between 26 to 112 million years old ("Harvard University; "Orchid Vanda Orchids Flower Cattleya Nursery Species"), a fact that speaks to their intelligence, adaptability, and tenacity. My research led me to discover an American company called Star Flower Essences that carried a wide variety of Orchid Essences from Peru. *Time to play*, I thought as I excitedly placed an order for my clinic.

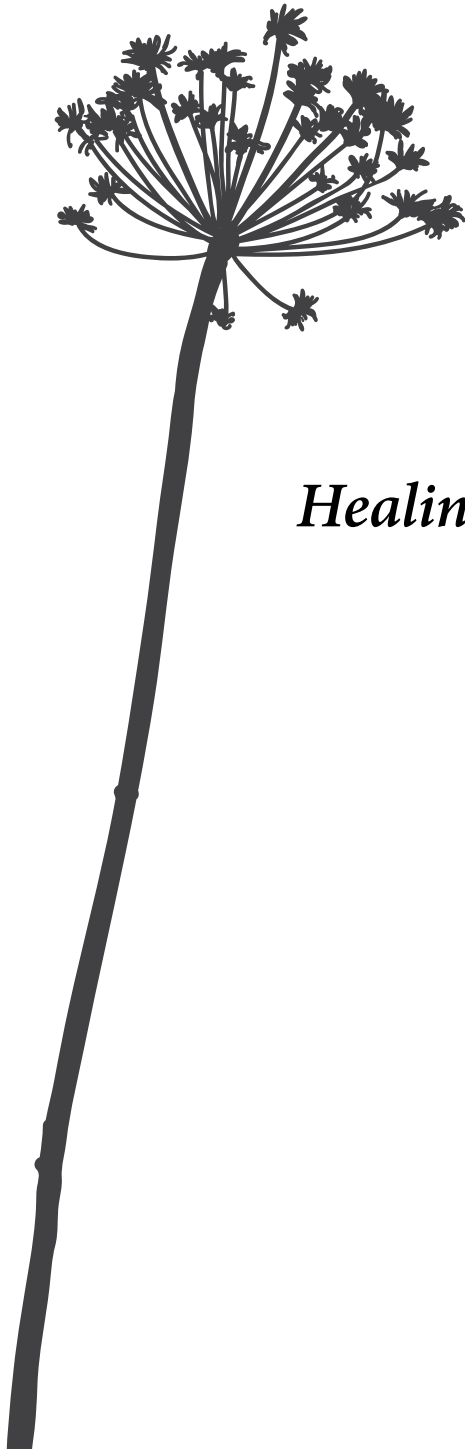
I looked forward to what these new flowers would teach me and my clients. Little did I know at the time that my chatty little orchid had led me to discover a whole new line of cosmic vibrational essences that would change the way I practiced natural medicine. On a personal level, these essences would also help me to balance certain aspects of my masculine and feminine self that were out of alignment, and to work more deeply with my intuition, my emotions and my soulful and spiritual consciousness.* In turn, I would be better able help clients who struggled in these areas. I would never have discovered the healing power of orchids had I not taken the time to listen to one.

Needless to say, since my first conversation with the Orchid, much has changed in my life and here I am writing this book. The first change, not surprisingly, is that I ended my relationship. I finally realized on a deep soulful level that I needed to raise my consciousness to help others, and that this calling was more important than having the culturally imposed version of the perfect family and living the many other roles I was taught to play. The relationship I was in was not in harmony with my soul purpose. I could not physically, psychologically, or spiritually do both—especially not after waking from the collective cul-

* Many people use the terms "soul" and "spirit" interchangeably. However, I understand them to be two very different concepts: The Soul is the individual energetic, emotive, and mental consciousness or essence that is unique to each of us and shapes our destiny on earth. In psychological terms, it is also our sense of Self. Spirit is our sense of universal energetic consciousness (The Universal Vibrational Field) that is made up of all the energy around us, including nature and the cosmos.

tural slumber I was in. It took much struggle and many relationships, but the needs of my growing newfound consciousness and soul triumphed over my outside programming. It was the last layer in a pattern for me that helped me see that I am most content and fulfilled when I am empowered and doing what nourishes my soul. And, if my support system does not reflect this or grow with me, then I need to change it and surrender to my higher calling. Trying to force another person's growth or hinder mine for the sake of a relationship only leads to illness and exhaustion. This applies to any relationship, be it at home, work, or with a stranger on the street.

The second epiphany I experienced was that I began to see the bigger picture of my connection to all living things, both the seen and the unseen. I saw even more clearly how each client that came into my office was a piece of me, and that in me they were trying to find a piece of themselves. On our human journey to empowerment we find the parts of ourselves that are asleep and need to be awakened in those who mirror them back to us. Most notably, it is the masculine and feminine balance within that we seek to heal through our relationships. All of this inner knowing reached an insightful climax and I felt compelled to write a book to share my story and my wisdom. As self-doubt crept in, I asked myself who would want to hear what I had to say. The answer came loud and clear: *What you say has value and needs to be heard. Say it and the rest will come.* And that was that.



Part I
Healing into Wholeness

1

When the Body Talks, Listen!

While I've always felt a connection with the plant world, I didn't always spend my Friday nights conversing with Orchids. I am able to provide my clients with the skills and knowledge I possess today through my experience with my own healing work, and coming to understand the symbolic and spiritual significance of illness. We all have our own trajectory for healing, and for me this process was instigated in my mid-twenties when I developed endometriosis.

On a physiological level, endometriosis is a female disease of the uterus, characterized by painful lesions in the endometrial lining that may develop due to retrograde menstrual flow and infection. On a symbolic level, endometriosis can be understood as a manifestation of insecurity, disappointment and frustration with the feminine. It is the manifestation of the low vibrating energy of blame, and a lack of self-love (Hay, 30). At this stage of diagnosis, however, my understanding of what was happening to me remained at the physiological level; the underlying psychological wounding behind my illness was buried well below the surface and I was happy to keep it there.

During this time I was working in Toronto at a large corporation in the marketing communications department. I struggled with feeling empowered as a woman in a profession heavily dominated by men. I thought I was as successful as my male counterparts, but in reality I had hit the glass ceiling in my position. I measured my success by how much money I made, who I knew and the clothes I wore. I tried to be as masculine as I could so I would fit into the box of corporate culture and be respected by my male colleagues. The men I worked with, however, constantly hit on me and made lewd remarks, which I tried to deflect the best I could. I feared being demoted and socially ostracized if I reported the harassment, and so I remained silent and kept up the appearance of being "one of the boys."

My home life was not much better. My common-law partner numbed himself with drugs and drank heavily to cover up his own inadequacy and fear. I also abused alcohol and consumed copious amounts of sugar in an attempt to cope with my emotions and insecurities. I was so numb to my inner pain that I had a miscarriage without even knowing I was pregnant. This was confirmed by a blood test later that week when I visited my doctor about my then undiagnosed endometrial pain. Instead of seeing this as a wakeup call, I saw it as yet another reason to resent the burden of being female.

Throughout this time, my periods were heavy and painful, both prior to and during menstruation. Before long, I was in pain more often than I was not. I visited seven doctors

over the next two years and got various diagnoses, but none of the medication prescribed helped with the pain. I lost the drive to go to work. My once cheerful phone calls to my parents started to become laced with emotion and despair. My relationship became strained as my boyfriend struggled to understand what was going on and how to support me. I tried in vain to keep up the facade of my life, but, in reality, I was breaking down and the walls of my carefully constructed life were crumbling.

Just as I was nearing rock bottom, I went to see a kind and compassionate female doctor—the last on my long list of doctors, and the one who finally suggested I might have endometriosis. At the time, little was known about endometriosis in the medical community, despite there being documented cases of it as early as 1899. There were only a few doctors who performed the laparoscopic surgery that was required to remove the lesions, and one of them happened to be in Toronto. When it was confirmed that I did indeed have the disease, I underwent the necessary surgery to remove the lesions. I remained pain-free for a year and in that time I tried to return to “normal” life. I resumed my marketing job and relationship as best I could.

During this time, I wandered into a health store one day and came out with my first cleanse kit. After cleansing and feeling noticeably better, I began to make long-term changes to my diet and learn about proper nutrition. I even took cooking courses offered at a local health food store. I had been a vegetarian since my years at university and I had always been drawn to natural medicine. For the first time in my life I gained mental clarity and my sense of self improved. I felt that I was in control of my health and it felt good. This was the beginning of my partnership with my body, a relationship that has taken me years to truly understand.

Unfortunately the sense of empowerment and health I was experiencing was short-lived. The pain returned, and it was worse than before. Unable to cope, I left my job (and my boyfriend) and returned west to Calgary. With the help of my parents I was able to see an endometriosis specialist in the United States and underwent a second surgery. This doctor mentioned to me that pregnancy was known to relieve the symptoms of endometriosis but cautioned me that the multiple surgeries I had undergone also made getting pregnant more difficult.

Once back in Canada and feeling better, I found another job with a large corporation as a Marketing Communications Manager. With this prestigious position at the age of 28, I thought I had finally made it. I told myself that this was the opportunity to prove my worth that I'd been waiting for. I was in charge of a 30 million dollar budget, had five staff members, and flew all over the world on business. As I continued to force myself into this corporate box, I turned to alcohol to numb myself from the lie I was living and tried to ignore the fact that my endometrial pain was creeping back into my physical body. During a business trip to Japan, I drank so much to mask my inner pain that I passed out. I woke up later in my hotel room, covered in my own vomit, only to discover that I had been raped

by a local business associate. I had hit rock bottom again and I was devastated. Amid the anguish and humiliation I felt, a light came on. I knew deep down that I needed to change my life or I would end up dead, either literally or figuratively. This was my wakeup call. Instead of numbing myself further, I chose to take the unknown path and lean into the sharp corners of my life learning. Six months later, I handed in my resignation, took a retail position in a health food store, and enrolled in a natural health college to study herbal medicine. (I later learned that my former co-workers thought this drastic change was the result of a nervous breakdown.) And while I did not know how I was going to make ends meet and pay my bills, that concern came secondary to my health and safety.

During the last three months of my corporate career I began dating the man who, a year later, would become my husband. He thrived in the corporate world, so when I felt the call to become a Master Herbalist, he reluctantly supported my decision to change career paths. Three years into our marriage, I had given birth to two beautiful boys and I eagerly embraced motherhood. I learned the power of being a tender, loving, and emotionally present mother—the healing of my inner feminine was just beginning. At around that same time, my marriage began to break down. Our respective career paths promoted very different values and ways of dealing with stress, and we began to grow apart. My soul felt crushed and we were both unhappy. We had lost sight of the feminine in each other and our relationship. I was miserable and felt that my life was a mess again; I was bewildered by what was happening to me. Bit by bit I started to realize that I did not love myself enough and that, once again, I was living a lie.

No stranger to wake-up calls, I made the gut-wrenching decision to leave my marriage. I finished my schooling and started to apprentice as an herbalist with a woman who eventually became my mentor. I was depressed and angry for two years over the ending of my marriage, but gradually I stopped the blame-game and forgave myself, my ex-husband, and others in my life that I had allowed to hurt me. I began to heal layer by layer, one step at a time. I knew that I had let my feminine self down by not valuing her enough, and I was deeply angry at my masculine self and men in general for my inner feminine wounding. My mentor taught me that I needed to heal all parts of myself and embrace my shadow self in order to heal and help others do the same. Over the next eight years as I became a skilled herbalist, I continued to work on healing myself. I worked to reclaim my power and my love for my feminine self, and to forgive the masculine. Though I now feel more whole than I have ever felt in my life, I know that healing is a lifelong journey. My dedication to my own healing is what enables me to show up for my clients and help them on their journeys.

HEALING WITH VIBRATIONAL MEDICINE

“Mother Earth, the Universe and everything in it, is the visible evidence of a self sustaining, self replicating, self initiating, self supplying Intelligence taking form in a spectacular display of diversity. All versions of it have the innate capacity for self creating a life which succeeds in all its choices, whether they be for our highest good or not.” —Rev Carole Carnes, Centre for Spiritual Living

As is the case with many people, my healing was jumpstarted by an issue that manifested on the physical level. I had become a master at tuning out the voice of my soul, but it was not so easy to tune out the excruciating pain I was experiencing in my body. Illness in the body is really illness on the soulful, spiritual, physical, and psychosomatic levels, and is often caused by cultural wounding, family patterns and trauma at a young age. Illness of any kind signifies a disconnection with one's inner self and with the universal vibrational field.

Though I was ignorant to this understanding at the time of my illness, the symptoms that manifest in the body, just like illness itself, can be a roadmap to understanding our underlying psychological and soulful/spiritual issues. For example, a red stye in an eye often signifies physical congestion of resentment and anger that is stored in the gallbladder and liver. In this case, the person is usually very angry at someone close to them that they cannot forgive. In most instances, eye issues correlate to repressed anger; the failure to release the anger impedes our ability to “see” with clarity and gain a new perspective. As another example, a skin rash can be symptomatic of repressed anger and feelings of powerlessness. The blood will become congested and a rash will form as a passive-aggressive attempt by the body to attract attention, and subsequently regain power. Rashes can also be a sign of a rigid, uncompromising belief system within an individual, often resulting from the build up of metal toxins in the body. The client refuses to see anything that does not confirm his desired version of reality. In my situation, endometriosis was symbolic of a blatant rejection of the feminine. I hated my body and myself; I was cut off from my feminine creativity, and felt powerless in my own life. I see these same themes play out in the reproductive health issues of many of the women who sit before me in my office (see Second Chakra), including those who suffer from premenstrual symptoms. Chapter 5 discusses in more detail some common physical health challenges and what they are trying to tell us.

When it comes to illness in our society, many of us experience feelings of victimization and disempowerment. Our modern lifestyle and our society's approach to medicine have taught us that we are not the experts of our bodies and that we must rely on external authorities to inform us of our reality and “fix” us. As a result, we do not trust our bodies and remain disconnected from our own internal knowing. Further, we are taught to suppress our symptoms and numb ourselves with pharmaceuticals at any sign of discomfort. It

is much more appealing to stay on the surface of our illness. And while we may feel symptomatic relief in the short term, these various numbing agents actually hinder the body from healing the core of the issue and keep us further disconnected from the messages our body and soul are trying to communicate to us. The symptoms are either driven deeper into the body thereby prolonging and exasperating the illness, or the disease will re-route itself elsewhere in the body only to surface at a later date in a different form. The failure to address the physical and psychosomatic blockages causing the symptoms and impeding the flow of life force or vibrant health in a person is a cultural issue, and happens in both conventional and natural forms of medicine.

Perhaps the most blatant example of this is how society has dealt with cancer. We have been trying to find a cure for cancer for over 50 years and have yet to find the answer. Cancer is the result of the suppression of toxins (both psychological and physical) in the body. In order to treat cancer, we need to remove the layers of suppression one at a time, and in doing so, remove the obstacles to healing this disease. We also need to address the possible causes of cancer on a larger scale, such as environmental toxins in our food and water supply which greatly increase toxicity in the body. It will take more than drugs to cure the disease. Cancer needs to be healed on an individual and global level; more money needs to be put towards prevention, not early detection or treatment.

Unfortunately, our Western quick-fix symptom-focused approach to healing only encourages the abdication of individual responsibility. And, it further separates us from finding our power through connecting to our body's own innate wisdom and that of Mother Nature. As I started my apprenticeship as an herbalist, I learned to address healing as a multi-level process and connect the dots between health on the physical, psychological, soulful, and spiritual levels of a person, myself included. I experienced the healing power of plants firsthand; as I worked with clients, I was simultaneously working on my own healing under the care of my mentor. I was continually astounded at how plants were able to move physical and psychosomatic toxins and bring to the surface aspects of the shadow self that were deeply buried so that one could safely and effectively work on healing them. The physical body would become stronger and healthier as a result. During my apprenticeship I was introduced to archetypes (see below) via the work of Carl Jung, Ambika Wauters, herbalists Mathew Wood and Eliot Cowan, and medical intuitive Caroline Myss. I began to see and feel how plants supported the illumination and healing of our inner shadow archetypes. I was fascinated and compelled to learn more about the capability of nature and her plant allies to return us to inner wholeness.

As an empath, intuitive, and clairsentient, I related to plants in a way that went beyond the strictly botanical and biochemical approach that was taught in natural health schools and in most textbooks. I picked up on the energetic healing properties of plants, but I lacked the framework to apply this wisdom to the healing of my clients. I was drawn to the Shamanic tradition as a way to study the energetic or vibrational aspects of plant medicine

and was prepared to seek out someone from this tradition and spend a great amount of time out in the wilderness. And while travelling to exotic places, performing indigenous rituals, and climbing mountains in search of specific plants appealed to me, it was not realistic. I was a single mother with a growing practice and health store to manage. As an alternative, I chose to integrate periods of field training with various other techniques and practices (see appendices) to access my inner knowing and connect with plant spirits. I have come to realize that plants do not need us to be deep in the wild to understand them, and nor do we need to travel great distances to connect with them. They will bring their wildness and intuitive wisdom to us if we place value on what they have to teach us and choose to let this wisdom into our lives. I learned to connect with plants (and since then, crystals and animals) anywhere at any time, whether in the daytime, dreamtime, my backyard, a park, or in my home. In a sense, I have become a suburban medicine woman. As my knowledge-base grew and I honed my intuitive gifts, I knew that I was supposed to stay in the city and use my wisdom of the plant world to teach others how to *Open the Senses of the Soul* and connect with their inner knowing and innate ability to heal.

A TIME TO HEAL

“Our ancestors cautioned that at the most distant point in our cycle, we would forget who we are—our connectedness to one another and the earth. They told us that we would forget our past. It’s precisely this disconnected feeling that seems to be the consequence of the cyclic journey that carries us to the far end of our galactic orbit. It’s also the fear that is spawned by such feelings that has led to the chaos, war, and destruction at the end of cycles past.” (Braden 6-9)

As the above quote suggests, we have forgotten who we are and why we are here. My own healing issues and the physical and psychosomatic issues of the thousands of clients I have worked with over the years have shown me that many modern illnesses and emotional/social malaises stem from our negative cultural and biological programming and a growing disconnection from Mother Nature. In essence, we have become impervious to the *Senses of the Soul*. The *Senses of the Soul* are the access point to our authentic selves: our darkness (or negative archetypes), our inner sparkle or light (positive archetypes), our passion, and our sense of purpose. This disconnection from nature has dulled the *Senses of the Soul*, relegating our existence to a superficial and externally-based reality, and we now find ourselves in an individual and collective healing crisis. We seek outside of ourselves, turning to materialism, goal setting, power-struggles, religious doctrine, and our cultural obsession with finding “true love” to try and return to a state of wholeness. On a global level, our oceans are dying. Many world economies are on the brink of collapse. Global

warming is real. Our food supply is contaminated, and the list goes on. The further we pull back from Mother Nature, the more difficult it becomes for us to tap into the *Senses of the Soul* so we can embrace all aspects of our being (the darkness and the light) and remember our purpose here on Earth.

However, there is a blessing in all of this: crisis is necessary in order for change to happen. The time has come for us to re-evaluate how we live and awaken to trust our inner power, to shift away from our heads and come back into our hearts to live with purpose in our current reality. Now, more than ever, we must heal. There is a vibrational change in the collective consciousness of humanity that is happening; our spiritual alarm clock has gone off and we are waking up to heal our deep human wounds. Wayne Dyer, Gregg Braden, Michael Ruppert, Lynne McTaggart, Bruce Lipton, and Dean Radin among others, have written extensively about this shift in consciousness.* Many of us are redirecting our external search for fulfillment towards an inner search for meaning and connection. We are now willing to consider things we would have previously dismissed in our old way of being, and we are consciously seeking to better ourselves and our planet. We are, as Michael Ruppert says in his documentary “Collapse,” gradually beginning a revolution of our thinking in soul and mind.

As we enter into this new paradigm of awakening, it is imperative that we open the *Senses of the Soul* so that we may understand our connectedness with all that is around us and reaffirm our partnership with Mother Nature. The challenge for many is finding a way to reconnect with Mother Nature in our urban, frantic, and often disconnected lives. In developing a relationship with the plant kingdom, I have found vibrational medicine to be a powerful tool to open the *Senses of the Soul*; it can help realign us with nature and restore our sense of wholeness in modern society. Plants embody a state of perfect balance: a plant KNOWS its purpose. It does not whine, blame or self-medicate. It knows its own value and why it is here, and it shines as brightly as it can in its surrounding circumstances. A plant is comfortable in its own stem and has strong roots. The vibration of a plant’s wholeness can give us the nudge we need to remember and live in our own wholeness. The spirit or divine wisdom of a plant can clear away the toxic thoughts and beliefs of our cultural wounding and connect us to our authentic self so that we can operate from a place of integrity, love, higher consciousness, and selfless service. Just as a plant grows freely in service and in harmony with nature from birth to death, it can help us reconnect with the co-creative feminine and masculine—terms not associated with being a woman or a man, but rather a set of properties and characteristics within all of us, women and men alike. By embracing our co-creative feminine and masculine along with healing our negative archetypical patterns (a collective storehouse of innate human behaviour and the root of much of our individual and collective unrest), we can move towards a brighter future and live with consciousness

* See Additional Resources for more information.

and purpose in each moment of our lives.

The information presented in this book reflects the knowledge I have attained from over 10 years as a practitioner in the natural health field. I do not think of myself as a special person, nor do I feel I am particularly gifted. However, as I took ownership of my talents and my faith in my intuitive abilities grew, so too did my connection with the plant spirits. Later on, I developed a relationship with crystals, and they offered themselves and the earthly intelligence they contain to my service of helping others. The wisdom of plants and crystals and the healing they offer is Mother Nature's gift to all of us. The longer I practice in my field of natural medicine, the more I realize how powerful plants and crystals are as healing allies for humans. I have realized that part of my soul purpose is to bring this knowledge and healing to others.

This book is designed to help you access your inner healer by connecting with plants and crystals in the form of **vibrational medicine**. Using the concepts of the vibrational field, the seven chakras and their corresponding archetypes, and the feminine and masculine, the following chapters will show you how to open the *Senses of the Soul* with nature's vibrational medicine. I have also done my best to share an array of techniques and strategies throughout this book and in the accompanying appendices to provide you with a toolkit of resources to draw upon at the various stages of your healing journey. It is my hope that in realigning with nature and healing ourselves we will be able to align collectively towards the healing of the planet.

2

Understanding Vibrational Medicine

THE VIBRATIONAL FIELD

Everything is energy, and the vibrational field is the dynamic and interconnected system that contains and directs energy in all of its forms. It exists on the individual level and at a universal level, a system (or many systems) within a system. In his book *Vibrational Medicine*, Dr. Richard Gerber (2001), a highly regarded expert in the field of vibrational theory, describes the vibrational field as it relates to the physical body:

“The molecular arrangement of the physical body is actually a complex network of interwoven energy fields. The energetic network, which represents the physical/cellular framework, is organized and nourished by “subtle” energetic systems which coordinate the life-force within the body. There is a hierarchy of subtle energetic systems that coordinate electro-physiologic and hormonal function as well as cellular structure within the physical body. It is primarily from these subtle levels that health and illness originate...these subtle energies influence cellular patterns of growth in both positive and negative directions.” (43)

Because we are part of this energetic system, we are affected by and impact the energy that surrounds us. It is this basic, but fundamental, premise that helps us to understand the principles underlying vibrational medicine (see below).*

Being aware of our vibrational or energy field and the energy of our surrounding environment is very important if we are to be in touch with our bodily senses and know when our outer reality is harming us (we normally only react to negative stimulus when it affects us on an emotional or physical level and have not learned the value of protecting ourselves energetically). Because it is difficult for my clients to conceptualize what their vibrational field feels like, many of them struggle with how to strengthen and protect this important membrane. Being able to sense our vibrational field and tune into how energy feels in and around us is like having our own built-in warning system that keeps us healthy and well.

* People who work in the area of vibrational energy and healing have developed various theories to help us understand these concepts, but we in the Western world are only just beginning to understand vibrational energy and how it affects us. Though we may tend to gravitate toward one theory or way of thinking about energy, we must not limit ourselves to a specific structure or set of ideas, because in doing so, we limit our potential as human beings and the ways in which we can help others.



How deeply do you want to live your life?

Now more than ever we are being called to step up to heal our wounds and reclaim our authentic inner power in service to the planet. In this timely discourse, Samantha Orthlieb draws on over a decade of clinical experience working with thousands of clients to explain how returning to Mother Earth in the form of vibrational medicine can be one of our most valuable tools in this process.

Opening the Senses of the Soul allows us to:

- *move past our harmful physical symptoms, patterns, roles, beliefs and self-serving, fear-based behaviours*
- *restore balance in our physical bodies and lives and release what no longer serves us*
- *reclaim our inner power and overcome our current cultural apathy*
- *open our intuition and awareness to enable us to be of service for the highest good of all*
- *flow with change and integrate new messages from the universal consciousness into our whole being*

Through exploration of the co-creative masculine and feminine, dominant archetypes, and the chakras, Samantha helps us to understand the underlying and symbolic meanings behind many common illnesses, and what the body is trying to tell us. Filled with practical tools, case studies, and remedy information, *Opening the Senses of the Soul* instructs us on how we can use nature's vibrational medicine to support us as we heal and reconnect with our soul's purpose. In doing so, we may be conscious co-creators of a sustainable and fulfilling future on this planet.



Samantha Orthlieb is a Master Herbalist and Vibrational Medicine practitioner. A graduate of Wild Rose College and the Academy of International BioEnergetic Sciences, she has also trained with Pacific Essences, Wild Earth Animal Essences, and Star Essences. In addition to running a natural health clinic, Samantha offers workshops and events to foster a greater awareness of healing consciousness and empowers individuals to uncover the healer within with the help of nature's medicine.

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