

APOLOGIES TO THE DIVINE FEMININE

(FROM A WARRIOR IN TRANSITION)

I apologize for my inability to distinguish the benevolent warrior from the heartless warrior, a reflection of my own confusion dealing with the battlefields of yore. When I opened my heart too wide, I was vulnerable to attack from warring factions. I was conditioned to believe that I had to stay rigid, focused, prepared for any eventuality, in the desire to protect myself and others from attack. But I went too far, and closed too tight, and eradicated the bridge between our hearts. I am seeing this now and I am sorry.

I apologize for my perpetual absence, a reflection of my own inner absence, my inability to connect from a heart jammed tight by unresolved emotions that I did not have the tools to work through. I still lack many of these tools, but I am open to their emergence.

I apologize for my inability to distinguish relationship from war. Like a warrior in enemy territory, I would sneak in and out of your life in the night, plundering and selfishly taking what I needed, then crawling back to the other side of the abyss with the spoils. I gave little back for fear that I would become vulnerable to attack. I had war on the brain and I could not see the river of love waiting on the other side of the battlefield. I now recognize that love is the antidote for the armoured warrior, but I could not drink the antidote in my driven state.

I apologize for not seeing you, my eyes blinded by congealed rage and unshed tears. If it is any consolation, and I imagine it is not, I could not see myself either. I saw only that which served my hyper-vigilance, my warrior focus. My mirror was a battlefield.

I apologize for my ungrounded materialism, my power driven tyrannies, my obsession with accumulation. Somehow I imagined that accumulation would protect me and those close to me, but I failed to recognize that it just perpetuated the madness. I also apologize for my egoic abuses, a reflection of my own misguided

ego, pumped up to deal with an inherently competitive world. I couldn't distinguish the healthy, confident ego from the cocky, unhealthy ego. I went much too far in the wrong direction.

I apologize for a sexuality that was objectifying and disconnected from the heart. I know you longed for real intimacy, a merging of our souls along the heart-genital highway. But there were too many defences around my heart, and no bridge could form between our souls. There were moments when your loving

ways freed me from my body masks, but I had no template to stand in that heart-fire. I am sorry for this, for I know that the path you longed for was the path to God.

I apologize for my horrifying acts of violence, a reflection of my own congealed rage, my own inability to distinguish real

enemies from friends. There are no words that can undo what I have done in those moments of madness. I know this, I do. I would hide my face in shame, but that won't make things better. I need to own my misdeeds, and then find a way to believe in my capacity to move from a more loving place. I call out to other male warriors to be accountable for the actions of our gender, not in a way that is self-hating, but in a way that is courageously self-honest and genuinely compassionate. The heartfelt warrior acknowledges the error of his ways, and has the courage to do all he can to make amends over time.

I apologize for my inability to develop a conscious relationship. You were right there with your beautiful heart on your sleeve but I was too attached to my individualism and afraid of this unknown terrain. I know the forests, the marketplace and the ways of the outer world so well, but my inner geography is foreign to me. You called me to a place I was ill-prepared to go, although I sensed, below the surface of my bravado, that you called me home.

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I am grateful for your willingness to believe that who I was in those rare moments of vulnerability was the real me. You were right- the real me lives inside of my heart- but a few moments now and then was the most I could handle. I saw you as dangerous, for in your presence I began to taste a surrendered way of being. Nonetheless, your faith in my goodness kept me going through many a battle, and restored my faith in life when I most needed it. You were the light at the end of a barbaric tunnel, and I am blessed.

I am grateful that you stuck with me through thick and thin, and I also understand those times you had to give up and let go. I now recognize that there is meaningful difference between a love-ship and a relationship. Love alone is not enough. Without a shared willingness to become conscious, there can only be frustration. I was so often impossible; clinging to my unconsciousness like a soldier clings to his weapons. I recognize the courage it took for you to keep your heart open in the presence of my resistance. You had every right to seek an authentic relationship, as your spirit was ignited in its presence. Your beautiful heart had every right to be met in its openness and willingness. I am grateful for the time you gave me, a moment's respite from the hiding places I mistakenly called home.

I am grateful for Grandmother, for no one saw my tenderness more clearly. I am grateful for Mother, for choosing to bring me into being and for nourishing my body until I could find my feet. I am grateful for Mother Earth, for grounding my expansion and enlivening my spirit. I am grateful for the Divine Mother, the real Mother of us all. I now feel her divine presence, so close. Fiercely compassionate, she was always right here, breathing life into me, holding me safe. I sit in her lap as she breathes me.

I look forward to the day when the only thing that ignites relationship is two souls calling out to one another, two soul-hearts beating in the same direction, a whisper of longing that bridges one essence to another. I want to want you not because it gratifies my ego, not because you are outwardly beautiful, but because your very presence invites my Godself out of hiding. I want to touch you with my heart on my sleeve, to know chemistry between us that is not gender identified, but that is essence sourced, love's liquid lava flowing from the heart to



the genitals to the great beyond. In this love-struck world, relationship will always be experienced as spiritual practice, a devotional expression of our God-self.

I had always believed that sensitivity is impossible to hold to in a harsh world. Yet in this moment, I feel sensitive, but without the fragility. I am still wearing armor but there is a shift in the direction of my intensity. I can linger in the heart-space a little longer than I once could, I am softening in places. After so many lifetimes with weapon in hand, a tenderling warrior is being birthed in the core of my being. He is confused, but he intuitively knows that this is the way home.

Please don't give up on me or my fellow warriors. Forgive us our misdeeds, or, at the least, be open to the possibility that we will change as the trail expands to meet our shifting intentionality. The day will come when our warrior spirit loses its harsh edge, and comes into alignment with benevolent action. Some of us are already there, and many more of us will follow. The road to transformation is dependent on a bridge between genders, a benevolent bridge that celebrates our differences with respect and kindness. That work must begin with healing the rifts along the gender continuum, working hard to heal the collective heart until one day we can stand on a bridge across forever, hands held together, hearts open and alight, embracing the sacred masculine and divine feminine living at the heart of us all. I will meet you there.

May you feel the love of the Divine Mother crashing down on your heartfelt shores, graciously lifting you up above the madness of the world, nestling you in the grateful arms of those you have nurtured. Those of us who have received your blessings may not always acknowledge it, but your acts of love have landed within us, growing us stronger and infusing us with love's light. Thank you.

A former criminal lawyer and psychotherapist, Jeff Brown is the author of "Soulshaping: A Journey of Self-Creation." Endorsed by authors Elizabeth Lesser and Ram Dass, "Soulshaping" is Brown's autobiography - an inner travelogue of his journey from archetypal male warrior to a more surrendered path.