

THE  
GREAT  
JOURNEY

EXPLORE LIFE'S LESSONS  
WITH THE PRACTICE OF  
DREAM ART THEATER

Dennis Klocek

With support from the Coros Institute

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Cover image: Jacob Boehme

The cover image is a plate from a book by Jacob Boehme entitled Aurora. Born in 1575 Boehme was a German philosopher, Christian mystic, and a radical religious thinker. A shoemaker by trade Boehme had an awakening in the spirit that prompted him to create a unique system of images and symbols that were later to influence Theosophical thinking. Boehme had original ideas about the Creation, the Sophia and the role of Christ. The cover image is entitled Earthly and Heavenly Mysteries. The theme, the polarity between the Divine and the earthly, is a key element in Boehme's philosophy.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This is a product of thirty years of teaching adults. I'd like to thank all those who came to the courses and workshops.

Dennis Klocek

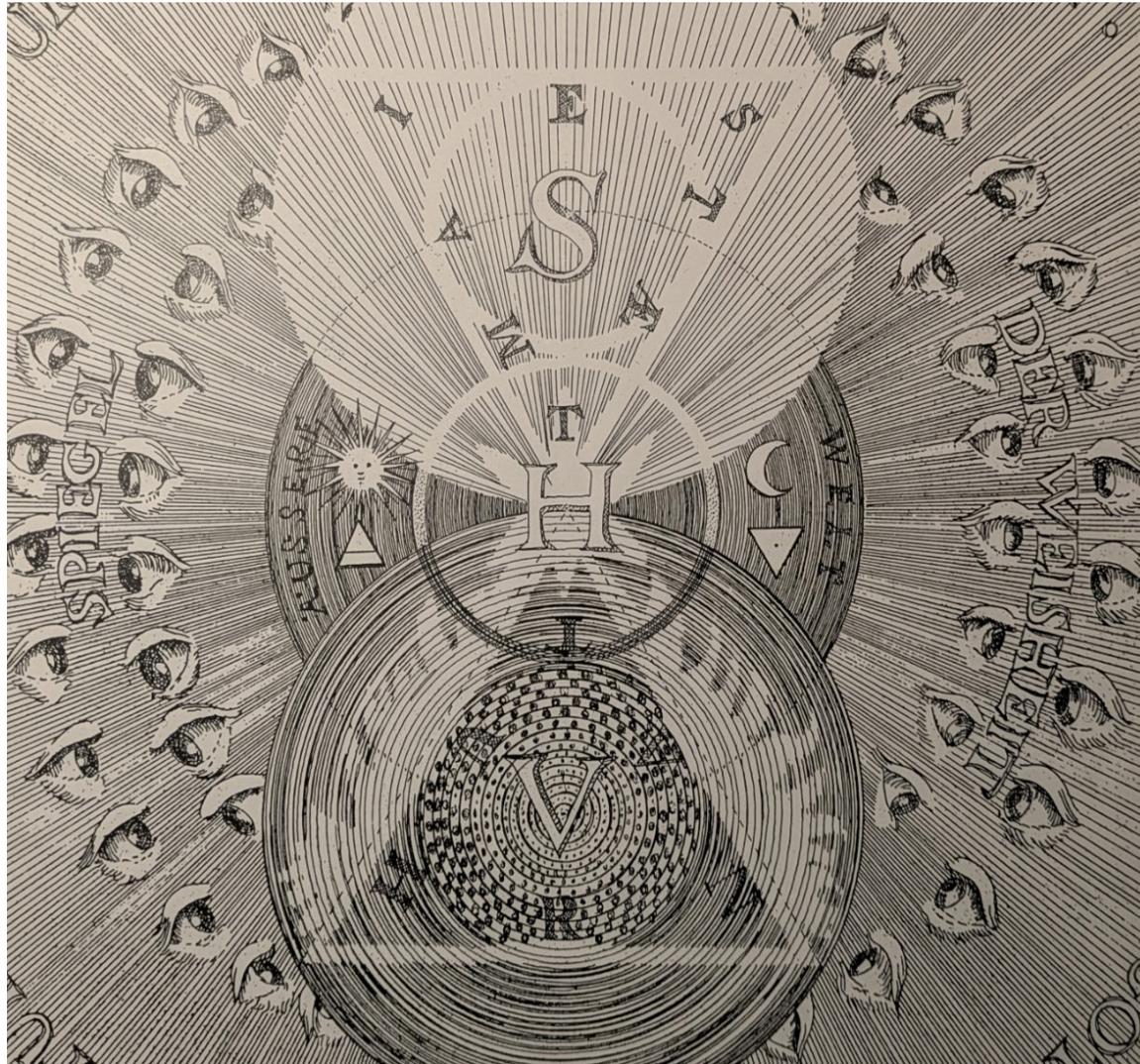
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## INTRODUCTION

*The eye in which I see God is the same eye in which God sees me.  
My eye and God's eye, are one eye and one seeing,  
and one recognizing and one loving.*

*Meister Eckhart*



*The image is a plate from a book by Jacob Boehme entitled Aurora. Entitled Six Points it includes includes mandalic polarities such as unfounded eternal freedom, an idea that is thought to be polar to God except (for) nature and creature. The ideal and the manifest are also represented as a polarity between wisdom and speech.*

This verse addresses the role of imagination in the process of healing. The reciprocating, tempering process between Divine realms and the human realm is the ultimate source of health in both body and soul. The philosopher Henri Corbin coined the term *imaginal* to describe the higher functioning capacities of the Persian poets. These God-soaked poets considered the imaginal realm to be a meeting place where their yearning soul could find Divine union through poetic inspiration.

In the esoteric language of Rudolf Steiner the imaginal realm symbolizes a hut built through spiritual practice. The hut is a self-constructed soul space that provides protection for those who wish to enter the abyss of consciousness between this world and the spiritual world.

Carl Jung taught that this abyss of consciousness is, in reality, a transcendent dream state peopled with symbolic figures that can be engaged in dialogue. The symbolic counsel of the spiritual beings found there is available to seekers, but they must first cultivate the functional ability to transcend the limitations of cognition that is limited by thoughts relating only to the physical plane.

Native peoples know that to enter into dialogue with the beings of the dream realm requires the cultivation of intense emotional forces that allow seekers to go on a quest to cry for a vision. In that waking dream state, spiritual totemic beings can provide healing counseling about gaining new directions for solving life problems.

For Meister Eckhart the sublime Divine imaginations that miraculously endow the physical body with the forces that enable it to constantly overcome the forces of death are the sources of seership. But that only occurs when the seer can unite inner, imaginative vision with symbols adapted from the wrought world. Then Divine love present in the miracle of the Creation can inflame the soul with transcendent perception. The eye of God and the eye of the seeker become tempered into unity.

The opening of the spiritual eye, the building of the hut, and crying for a vision all refer to the voluntary passage of the human soul into an interim psychological state where the key process involves the transformation of patterns of everyday life into emotionally potent symbols. In psychology this effort can lead to numinous experience, a sudden, unexpected linkage between a spiritual practitioner and a symbolic spiritual world. The symbols act in the psyche as tokens allowing access to a realm populated by higher beings both progressive and adversarial. The paradox of this union is that a numinous experience is certainly a real experience, but the revelations given there don't adhere to the rules of logic. Transcendence can't be explained by referencing physical laws. Esoterically this is known as *access to the symbolic plane*. It is a psychological balance point that is a blending or tempering of Divine and human consciousness.

The symbolic plane is a dream state that is constantly flowing in the soul even while awake. The goal of esoteric dream practice is to become aware of the content of dreams while awake and paradoxically, even when asleep. The alchemical saying "when asleep; be awake" addresses this transcendent state of mind. Physiologically this experience is reached in sleep by everyone during rapid eye movement (REM) dream states. Known as paradoxical sleep, REM dream states occur several times during the night and represent a blend of images that come from daily life but appear in contexts that defy logic. The clothing of dream symbols with uninhibited images from physical reality is an emotional healing process that occurs naturally. It is possible to gain deeper access to this level of healing through ritual practices designed to move the meaning of symbolic dreams closer to the awake consciousness. We could say a ritual of this kind is intended to harvest dream content. The processes in dream art theater are designed to help the soul temper or balance the relationship between awake and dream states. This constitutes a healing process known since ancient times as incubation.

~

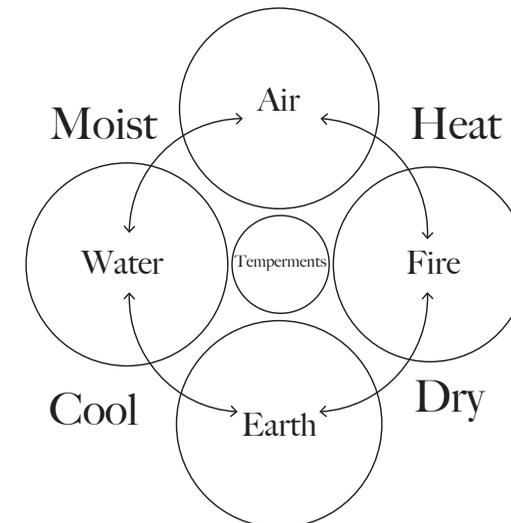
In the ancient world, the four elements theory was based on the sequential transformation of the elements earth, water, air and fire. This sequence represents what contemporary physics knows as the sequential four phases of matter. Earth element is the solid phase followed by water element as the liquid phase. Air element is the gaseous phase followed by fire element as the warmth phase. Physics teaches that phase shifts must happen in order for the elements to transform sequentially. Each phase shift requires a balancing of warmth states between a lower phase and a higher phase. The balancing of different warmth states is the key to phase shift.

Since ancient times this balancing of elemental phases was known as tempering. When one element tempers into another the maximum of a dynamic, healing potential is realized.

Placed on a mandala, the elements and temperaments reveal these dynamics. *Earth* element tempers with water element to produce *coolness*. *Water* element tempers with air element to produce *moistness*. *Air* element tempers with fire element to produce *heat*. *Fire* element tempers with earth element to produce *dryness*. The resulting four temperaments are cool, moist, warm and dry. Temperaments are the dynamics that transform the four elements.

A physical example of tempering can be seen in the simple alchemical act of making gravy. Temperamentally flour is dry and cool. Flour tempers in water by losing dryness to form a cool, moist slurry. Cool and moist tempers are adjacent on the mandala. But flour in water hesitates to release starch until it crosses over to the other side of the mandala and is warmed. Putting cool flour water into hot oil is poor tempering. The starch coagulates into clumps as water leaves the hot oil too quickly. Changing the sequence by first adding dry flour to warm oil creates tempering. Dry and warm are adjacent tempers on the warm side of the mandala. When warmth tempers the dryness of each flour grain, it becomes surround with oil. The oil tempered flour can absorb water slowly enough to form a starchy colloidal web we call gravy. Paying attention to the rhythm of tempering sequences produces lump free gravy. Paying attention to sequences is the key to entering the spirit world safely.

This simple example of attention to productive sequencing processes taken from daily life actually illustrates the hidden healing power available in ritual dream practice. For the soul, working to understand rhythmic tempering sequences that unfold over time in dreams helps to unlock hidden secrets about dealing with the trials and successes of daily life. By ritually studying symbolic tempering sequences that occur in our dreams, the inner eye of the imagination can be taught to see the laws of the symbolic plane. When that happens God's eye and the human eye meet in a mutual festival of understanding and love.



## THE HEART OF DREAM ART THEATER

The great gift of human beings is to tell stories.

To tell a story requires weaving memories of the past into narrative sequences that resemble the script of a play. Stories are like little scenes of a play that give the storyteller the sense that they have lived a life. Stories give continuity to our actions by allowing us to inwardly construct a narrative proving to ourselves that we have lived. Stories affirm our existence. But they can also limit our capacity for growth. Stories that stay only in the past have a dampening effect on the imagination that is needed to work ourselves out of troubles. This is due to a secret relationship between memories and imagination. Memory and imagination are two sides of the same coin. Memories are imaginations of things in the past. Imaginations are memories of something that hasn't happened yet. Imagination can be a source of healing when a person is habitually focused in the past.

This tendency to live only in the past is a root cause of illness in the present. Habitual memories are signposts from the past that affirm our existence, but they also prevent us from living more fully in the present.

The method of dream art theater is to find a way to bring the habitual memories of the past into the present. The creation of small artistic dream artifacts in the morning upon awakening creates the actors in an imaginative play. It is not necessary to remember our dreams. In this book, we will suggest creating the artistic dream symbol artifacts out of wax. The dream artifacts are an emotional condensate of our dreams. They are used to take a symbolic journey through life. To do this requires building the trust that the artifact represents an empathic aspect of ourselves that has the hidden soul power to bring healing into present difficult circumstances of illness, loss or conflict. To gain that more empathic state of mind it is necessary to release the imagination that is imprisoned in past memories. To do that is very useful to practice dialoguing with our dreams. Through bringing the content of dreams into the present moment, human beings can imaginatively construct a new story about who they are. The new story then acts to promote healing of difficult situations in the present life.

The script and staging of the imaginative play are adapted from traditional ceremonies and rites of passage. The stages of life were recognized in traditional societies as micro analogs of the seasonal passage of time. The seasonal passage of time was recognized as the action of the Sun in its daily and yearly cycles of nature. The movements of time experienced in the phenomena of a natural year were considered to be a great Divine

dreaming. The phases of the solar year were the macro analog of a micro human life. Human life had its origin in the dreaming of the great Creator of the world. Dreams were the realm where the human life and the Divine plan came together for mutual benefit.

Traditional healing often took place in ceremonies at night where the soul of an ill person could vacate the troubled vehicle of the body and make a journey to petition a spiritual benefactor. The journey was a quest for a vision, for an imagination of how to move a life stuck in past memories into a brighter future. This dialogue took place in the mutual realm of human and Divine dreams. Dream art theater is a contemporary adaptation of this traditional journey to petition the Divine realm for healing dreams.

Dream art theater takes these insights about dreaming and the symbolic life of the soul and brings them into a simple, workable daily process. Rather than waiting for rare moments of inspiration, the practice gives form to the small impressions that rise each morning from the border between sleep and waking. By shaping these impressions with the hands, giving them a word, and holding them again before sleep, we begin to recognize the patterns that quietly guide our moods, decisions, and relationships. This approach does not require dramatic visions or extraordinary states. It works with the ordinary material of daily life and uses it as a starting point for clarity and emotional understanding. In this way dream art theater becomes a practical method for engaging the inner life with steadiness and purpose, preparing the ground for the biographical work that follows.

We will start with core practices and concepts of dream art theater, then move on to using them to explore the Great Journey of life biography, ending with guidelines for understanding the dynamics revealed through the interactions of the symbolic actors on the mandalic stage.

## HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

A practical guide for beginning your Dream Art Theater journey

Dream Art Theater is a participatory practice. This workbook is designed to guide you step-by-step through the daily rhythm, artistic exercises, and biographical exploration that make the work effective. You do not need prior experience with dreamwork, biography work, or symbolic practices. Everything you need - explanations, daily exercises, questions, and reflective space- is included here.

This section provides a simple roadmap so you always know what to do next, how long each step takes, and how the pieces fit together.

### 1. THE DAILY RHYTHM

Each day has two moments:

#### Morning

1. Form a small wax figure (or drawing) based on your first dream impression or morning mood.
2. Listen to your heartbeat and notice the feeling tone connected to the figure.
3. Write one or two spontaneous words in your journal.

#### Evening

4. Review the day's wax figure and word quietly before sleep.
5. Hold them lightly in mind as you fall asleep (incubation).

This creates a gentle cycle that supports symbolic digestion and clarity over time.

### 2. HOW LONG TO PRACTICE BEFORE BEGINNING THE GREAT JOURNEY

Practice the daily rhythm for 7–10 days, forming one symbol each morning, or as long as it takes to generate at least 7 figures.

During this time you will:

- Build a “cast” of dream figures
- Begin noticing moods, themes, or patterns

- Prepare the soil for deeper biographical work

Once you have at least seven figures, you are ready to draw your mandala stage and begin the Great Journey.

### 3. MATERIALS YOU WILL NEED

- A small amount of modeling beeswax (recipe provided in Core Practices)
- This workbook
- A pen or pencil
- A quiet place for morning and evening reflection

Optional: colored pencils, small cards for drawing symbols, a dedicated dream journal, or a small cloth on which to place your symbol cast.

### 4. DRAWING THE MANDALA STAGE

The mandala is the stage upon which your dream figures will “act.”

You will be guided through this process in Preparing for the Play: Building a Stage.

It is suggested to draw the mandala freehand. Perfect circles are not required; intention and participation are what matter.

### 5. AUDITIONING YOUR DREAM FIGURES

After assembling your figures on the mandala, you will learn to:

- Sort them by mood motif
- Recognize Alpha (potential) and Omega (finished) qualities
- Select two figures to represent the polarity at the heart of your journey

This selection prepares you for the dramatic movement through the four directions.

### 6. THE FOUR ACTS OF THE GREAT JOURNEY

The Great Journey unfolds through four movements of life:

1. East – The Heroic Child (See Far)
2. South – The Star Child (Trust Life)

3. West – The Mature Adult (Look In)

4. North – The Wise Elder (Give Away)

At each direction, your Alpha and Omega figures ask simple, symbolic questions.

You journal a few spontaneous words after heart-listening.

Move gently, spending 1–3 days per act, or longer if needed.

### 7. JOURNALING PAGES AND WORKSHEETS

Throughout the workbook, you'll find:

- Daily Symbol Pages
- Mood Motif Grouping Pages
- Alpha & Omega Selection Worksheets
- Act-by-Act Question Pages
- Threshold & Integration Reflections

These pages allow you to keep all notes, sketches, and insights in one place so you can look back and see the unfolding of your symbolic biography.

### 8. MOVING AT YOUR OWN PACE

There is no correct speed. You may complete the journey in a month, or move slowly over many weeks. Healing, insight, and inner work benefit from spaciousness. Let your interest and intuition guide the pace.

### 9. COMPLETING THE JOURNEY

After Act Four, reflections on thresholds, soul needs, and soul powers help integrate the work.

You may choose to repeat the Great Journey later with new dream symbols, or revisit your previous results to deepen your understanding.

### 10. THE PURPOSE OF EVERYTHING IN THIS BOOK

The practices, symbols, moods, and questions work together to:

- Bring unconscious dream material into conscious life
- Support greater empathy and self-understanding
- Transform wounded or stuck places into insight
- Enrich caregiving relationships
- Reveal the deeper arc of your life's biography

Above all, this method reconnects imagination, feeling, and will - opening a space where healing dialogue with the inner world becomes possible.

## CORE PRACTICES

The following practices can be done over 7-10 days, to build up your cast of characters for the Dream Art Theater practice. Refer to the guide on the previous pages for the daily rhythm.

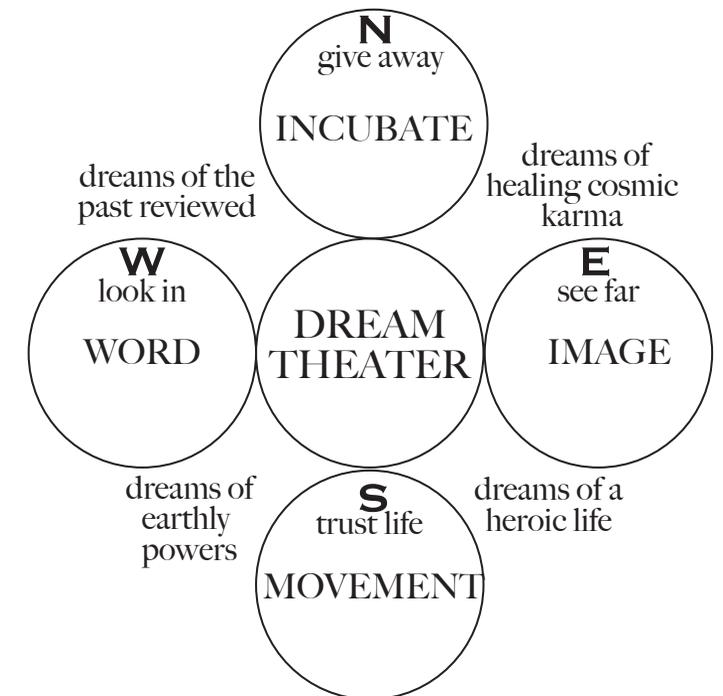
### CORE PRACTICE: FORMING DREAM SYMBOLS

Creating the cast of actors follows the traditional healing sequence of image, movement, word, incubation. In this practice of dream art theater you create the figures that will later be auditioned and moved through the inner stage work.

The process begins immediately upon waking. Create a small wax figure (or drawing on a small piece of paper) based on whatever image or impression first comes to mind. The formative movements of your hands used in shaping the wax stimulate inner feelings and activate the emotional centers of the limbic system, giving the day's work its starting point. Each figure you make in this way becomes one member of the cast.

After forming the figure, use the heart-listening practice (next page) to bring the feeling tone of the image into consciousness. In the quiet that follows, write one or two words as a spontaneous journal entry. These words capture the mood or symbolic gesture carried up from the dream life. As the days proceed, the journal becomes a record of subtle moods and meanings that accompany the dream symbols, providing a deeper understanding of the cast you are assembling.

In the evening, just before sleep, recall the imagery of the day, observe the dream artifact you created, and review the morning activity inwardly. This carries the work into the incubation phase and prepares the way for the next figure in your cast.



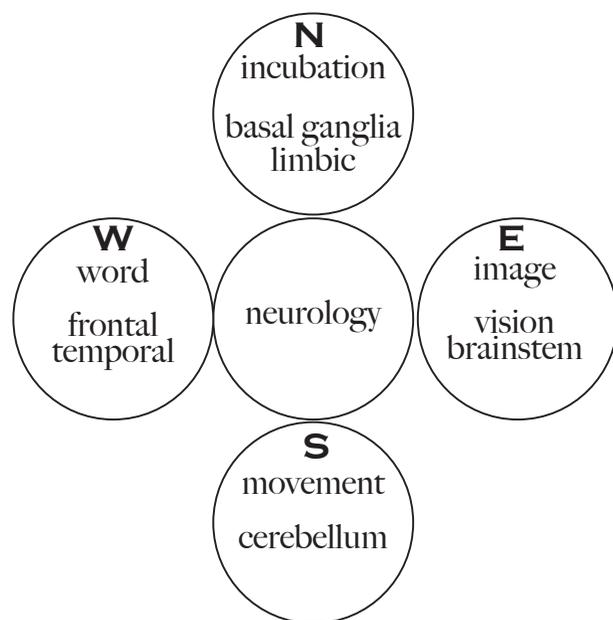
The goal of the dramatic journey is to gradually identify emotionally with the wax figures. As the journey unfolds deeper heart forces of empathy are increased.

This image/movement/word process activates and integrates many levels of neurology in a whole host of sensory integration impulses. These activities involve brainstem (neurotransmitters: dopamine, serotonin), cerebellum (movement), word (temporal lobe) and executive (pre-frontal cortex) function processes. It also integrates fragrance (olfaction in risk/reward nuclei) and image forming (colliculus/occipital vision nuclei) linkages that involve connections between the basal ganglia (thalamus), limbic emotional centers (hippocampus and amygdala) and the higher centers in the cortex involved in dreaming (pons, geniculate nucleus, occipital vision).

### WAX RECEIPE

The wax can be made by melting 1 cup of beeswax in a tin can in a double boiler then adding 1 oz.lanolin, and 1 tsp. lavender essential oil. When melted make a shallow dish from tinfoil and pour the liquid in to cool before using.

It can also be purchased at [soilsoulandspirit.com/modeling-beeswax](http://soilsoulandspirit.com/modeling-beeswax) (redirect to Amazon).



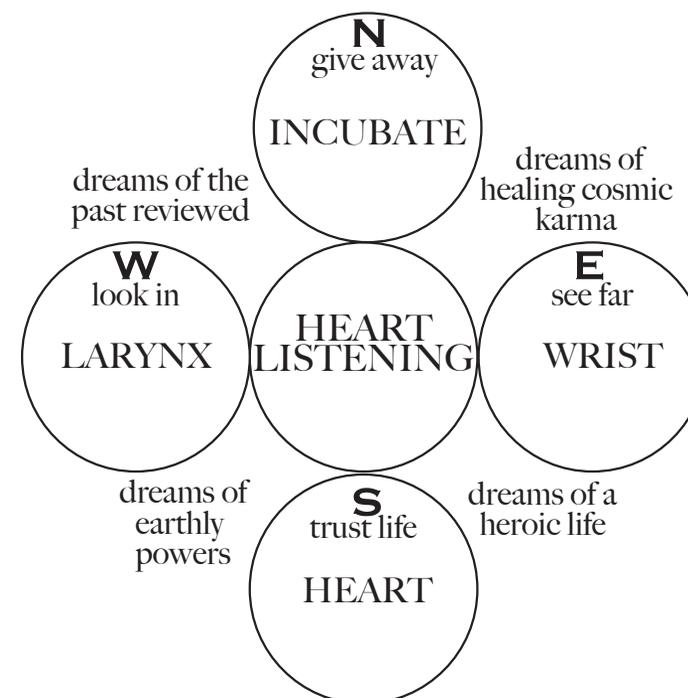
### CORE PRACTICE: HEART LISTENING

Throughout the dream art theater practice, there are times when it is helpful to connect with your capacity for inner listening. Listening to the heart brings feelings awakened by the dream into consciousness by quieting repetitive thoughts and opening the inner sense for subtle impulses.

Finding the heartbeat requires some practice:

1. Put the index and middle fingers of the right hand on the left wrist to find the pulse.
2. Move the same two fingers lightly to the heart area to sense the rhythm of the blood.
3. Then concentrate on the larynx and see if you can feel the rhythm in the blood flow of the neck.

These points of contact help to still the mind and deepen the capacity for inner listening. Then hold the dream in mind to listen for a resonant image from the dream to clarify. This is the moment when the feeling-tone of the dream symbol begins to clarify itself.



## CORE PRACTICE: JOURNALING

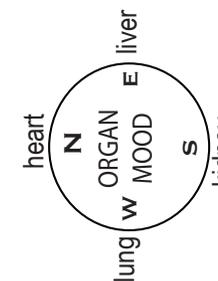
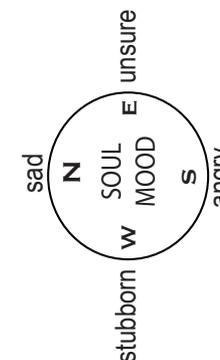
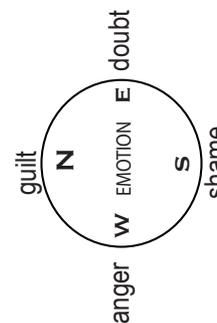
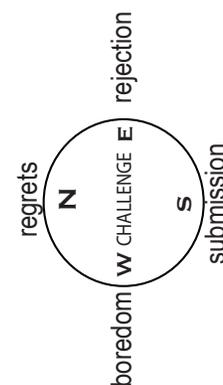
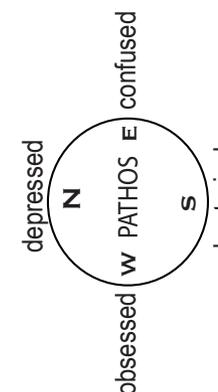
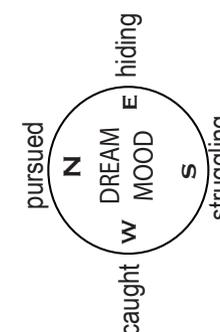
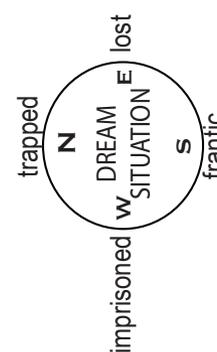
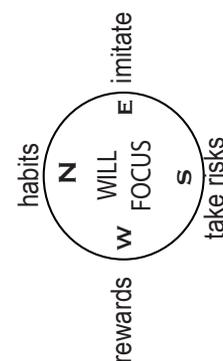
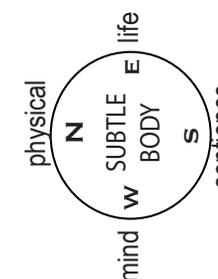
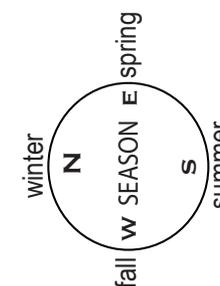
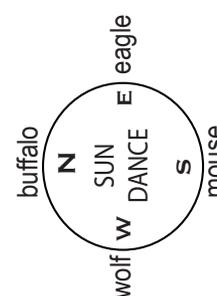
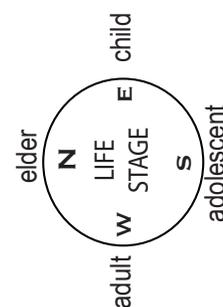
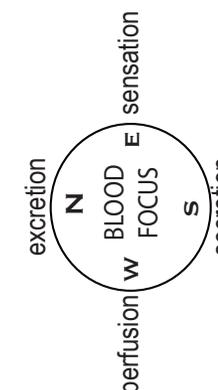
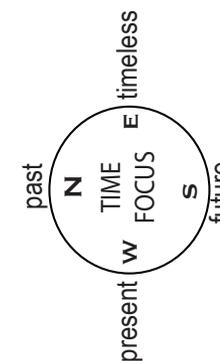
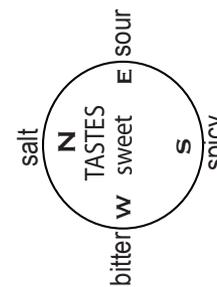
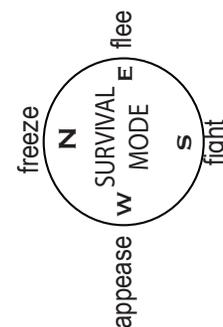
After finding the heartbeat and entering a quiet inner space, write a spontaneous word or two. The purpose is to give language - brief, symbolic language - to the feeling or mood that arose with the dream image.

Journaling a word after listening to your heartbeat is a method for harvesting any feelings or insights that arise while staying connected to the feeling life. Often questions expressed as a word or two with a question mark help to engage the heart in the journaling process. Making statements has a dampening influence on the heart. We are actually seeking better questions with this dream drama.

The symbolic word mandalas on the next page contain emotive words arranged in the four directions of the great wheel. Scanning them after making the wax figure can help in choosing a resonant word, but the spontaneous impulse is always preferred when it arises.

Your journal entries can also include the following sections:

- Dream content and date – A simple narrative of the dream sequences as remembered.
- Dream symbol made in wax – Notes or a sketch describing the small wax figure formed upon waking.
- Word choices for the dream – The spontaneous word or the word chosen from the mandalas.
- Feeling or mood experiences – The emotional tones sensed during modeling or while listening to the heartbeat.
- Karmic insights and synchronous or numinous events – Events in daily life that seem related to the dream activity, including meaningful coincidences or impressions that echo the dream mood.



## CORE PRACTICE: INCUBATION

Incubation is the step that connects the day's work with the dreaming activity of the night. In the evening, simply recall the wax figure, the feeling-word, and the mood of the morning exercise, holding them lightly in mind before going to sleep. This review allows the themes you are working with to settle below the threshold of consciousness, where the dreaming process can continue to digest and reorganize them. During sleep the emotional centers of the brain become highly active, and the unfinished impressions of the day are sorted, integrated, and often reshaped into symbolic images. By bringing clear, simple material to the edge of sleep, you give the dreaming process something coherent to work with. Incubation prepares the way for the next morning's figure and helps the whole sequence build from day to day in a steady, meaningful rhythm.

## DAILY DREAM SYMBOL WORKSHEET

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Sleep Notes (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

1. **Dream Content:** Simple narrative of the dream sequence as remembered.
  
2. **Dream Symbol:** Sketch or describe the wax figure you formed:
  
3. **Dream words:** Write the spontaneous word(s) that captured the mood of the dream.
  
3. **Feeling or mood experiences:** After finding your heartbeat, what feeling-emotional-tone appeared?
  
5. **Evening Incubation:** Before sleep, note any new impressions, shifts, or subtle insights:
  
6. **Karmic insights and synchronous or numinous events** – Events in daily life that seem related to the dream activity, including meaningful coincidences or impressions that echo the dream mood.

## DAILY DREAM SYMBOL WORKSHEET

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Sleep Notes (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

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- 5. Evening Incubation:** Before sleep, note any new impressions, shifts, or subtle insights:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
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## DAILY DREAM SYMBOL WORKSHEET

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- 6. Karmic insights and synchronous or numinous events** – Events in daily life that seem related to the dream activity, including meaningful coincidences or impressions that echo the dream mood.

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Sleep Notes (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

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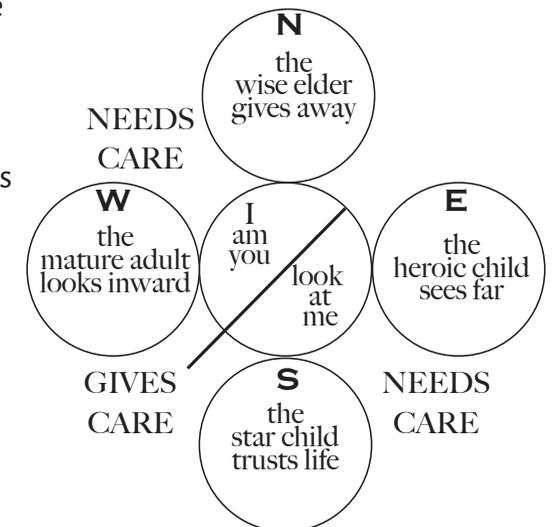
## APPLICATIONS OF DREAM ART THEATER

The daily practices of dream art theater create a steady rhythm for bringing dream impressions into waking life. Once this rhythm is established, the symbols that arise can be applied to the real situations that shape our days. Whether we are facing personal challenges, conflicts with others, or the responsibilities of caregiving and parenting, the mandala offers a way to understand the deeper moods at work. These applications show how the same simple gesture - forming, placing, and listening - can illuminate the movements of the soul in the practical circumstances of life.

### FOR CAREGIVERS

Young children need care and elders often need care. The role of caregiver can put a heavy emotional burden on the one who is caring for another. Having insights into the emotional state of the person who is being cared for can be a remedy for personal burnout for caregivers. This requires a shift from the *look-at-me* posture of early life to the *I am You* outlook of the adult.

Dreams play a huge role in making that shift. Dream processes are the initial source of deep inner feelings about illness, loss, loneliness, conflicts between people and a host of other challenges. Dreams introduce to the soul a symbolic drama of these feelings. Becoming more in touch with one's dreams can help to understand one's personal karmic relationships to others. This is stabilizing to those who are giving care to others. To aid this, finding dream symbols that represent inner feelings is a very valuable practice. Dream symbols can be brought into consciousness in the context of the phases of life seen in the mandala in order to be trusted to give reliable insights.



### LIFE CHALLENGES

When life presents difficulties, the soul is being tempered much like the elements shift from earth to water, air, and fire. Challenges arise when old patterns no longer meet new circumstances. Dreams often bring forward the emotional residue of these moments. By forming a symbol each morning and placing it on the mandala, the

soul begins to show where the difficulty truly lives - in early striving, in the need for resilience, in adult responsibility, or in the work of letting go.

Understanding where a symbol lands in the cycle of the four directions helps bring balance to the inner life. Each direction carries a soul need and a soul power that can steady us in times of trouble. Working with these rhythms allows life challenges to be approached as part of a larger sequencing process through which the soul learns how to move forward.

### CONFLICT

Conflicts with others often arise when opposing moods or unfinished experiences collide. Dreams present these oppositions as symbolic figures carrying the emotional weight of the situation. As these figures are formed in wax and set on the mandala, the inner polarity becomes visible. One symbol may show what is exhausted and blocked (Omega), while another reveals what still holds possibility (Alpha).

Allowing the exhausted/blocked figure to speak first acknowledges what has reached its limit. This softens reactivity and opens the way for the “potential” figure to speak from potential rather than pressure. Through this dialogue the soul begins the work of reconciling opposites, transforming conflict into a source of insight and renewed relationship.

### PARENTING

Parenting brings forward many layers of the mandala, for children move naturally through the heroic, star, and maturing phases. A parent's dreams often echo these stages, revealing both the child's needs and the parent's unfinished patterns from earlier life. When these dream impressions are shaped into symbols, they help clarify which direction of the mandala is being activated in the relationship.

By observing where the symbols fall, a parent can sense whether the moment calls for encouragement, resilience, boundaries, or release. This strengthens the ability to respond rather than react. Parenting then becomes not only care for the child, but also a practice of self-understanding, guided by the steady rhythm of forming, placing, and listening to the symbols that arise each day.

## PREPARING FOR THE PLAY: BUILDING A STAGE

Now that you have learned the daily disciplines of dream art theater, the next step is to prepare the setting in which your dream symbols will begin their larger journey. This setting is the mandala stage, an artistic space that holds the movements of the biography work that follows.

As preparation for the dream art ritual a good practice is drawing a mandala that represents the stage for the final ritual journey. The artistic practice of drawing circles freehand is very centering.

An old story about the renowned Renaissance painter Giotto describes his rise to greatness. He was born to poverty and as a boy his task was to tend the sheep alone up in the mountain pastures. He occupied himself by drawing circles in the dirt with sticks. He then made charcoal and practiced drawing circles on stones for endless hours. Eventually he could draw a perfect circle.

One day a priest from the village saw Giotto at work drawing perfect circles on the stones. At that time the circle was seen as a symbol of the perfection of God. The priest saw that this poor shepherd boy had a great artistic potential. Giotto was taken out of the pastures and schooled by the church painters. He later would become the transformative icon of early Italian church painting. He was the first to create a shift away from the strict artistic conventions regarding figures of the Middle Ages to the effusive humanistic flowering of the later Renaissance in Italy.

He did that by radically depicting the emotions of figures in his paintings. Through the practice of drawing circles he amplified a soul power capable of initiating a new way of seeing humanity.

Of course, we are not all Giotto, but the practice of drawing circles is a meditative act that is very centering. In dream art theater the mandala form is a stage composed of a large circle with four small circles placed in the four directions. This circular stage represents the totality of a human life. Since the most ancient times this form has been assigned magical, healing properties. In his clinical practice Carl Jung had each patient draw a mandala at the start of a session. The therapy was then based on doctor/patient conversations about the symbolic content of the drawing. Jung viewed the mandala as the “archetype of wholeness” of the self.

By having his patients draw mandalas in each session the artistic work enhanced psychological integration by helping to first identify, and then organize inner chaotic

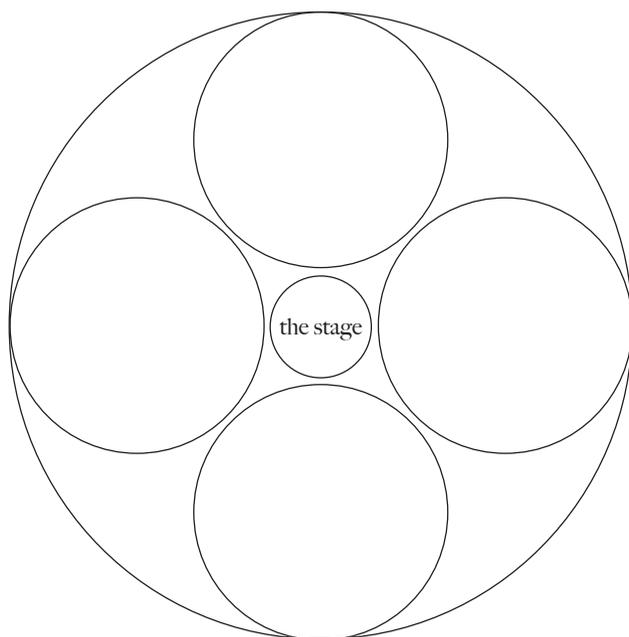
feelings. The act of creating a mandala provides a sacred space where people can safely process unconscious impulses that are creating disturbances in life.

Freehand drawing of a mandala is the best. A compass, inverted saucer or jar lid can make a perfect circle, but the goal here is not perfection. The goal is a feeling of progress through voluntarily subjecting the soul to artistic challenge. Freehand drawing a mandala as the stage for the great journey brings the mind, the heart and the hand into harmony. This is the true value of art.

Once the circles of the mandala are drawn, feel free to use the symbolic word mandalas on the following pages as inspiration to write words in the various directions to help anchor the path of your figures through the journey.

Creating little figures out of wax likewise is an artistic practice that can lead a seeker deeper into the mystery dreaming of the True Self. Forming haiku poems of symbolic words drawn out of the mandalic process is a healing art. Acting out a drama that empathically describes the symbolic journey of small wax figures through the archetypal space of the wholeness of life is a deep therapeutic activity. The hope is that by engaging these artistic challenges the well of imaginative perception is opened up to the soul seeking insights into life challenges. Artistic, imaginative perception of one's own life is the basis for true soul health.

With the stage prepared, we turn from daily practice to the broader arc of a human life. The Great Journey uses the same dream symbols you have been forming, but places them within the fourfold mandala that reflects the developmental tasks of childhood, youth, adulthood, and elderhood.



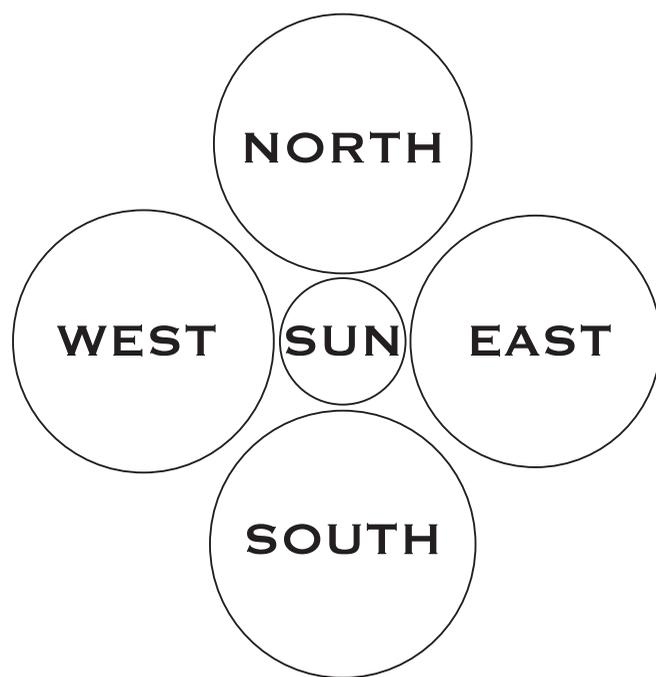
## THE GREAT JOURNEY

USING DREAM ART THEATER PRACTICES  
TO EXPLORE LIFE CHALLENGES

## OVERVIEW

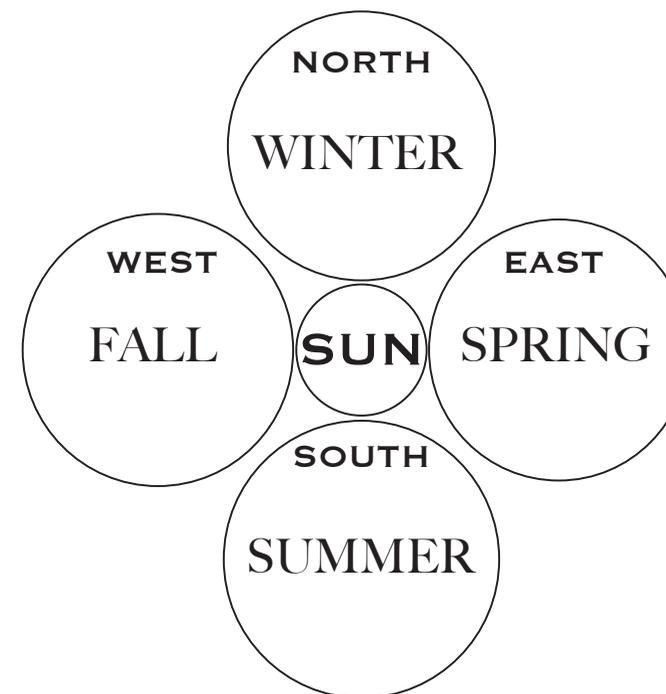
Dream art theater is a method for researching the potentials for understanding dream imagery. It is based in several traditional healing approaches to solving problems when life circumstances present strong challenges. It involves journeying through a symbolic mandala of the four directions, well known from the Sun Dance tradition. *Seven Arrows* by Hymenost Storm is a deeply spiritual work on that tradition. The four-fold mandala is seen as a soul journey through life. Mandalic sequencing provides an elegant stage for a theatrical dream journey into oneself. Symbols can be discovered in dreams that can be “auditioned” to act as players in the universal drama that permeates human life. Once found, dream symbols can then be “auditioned” to act on the stage of the mandala in a ceremony of self discovery.

Note that the sequence of steps in the lifelong, biographical Great Journey illustrated here, can also be found in the microscale of any soul journey, be it the challenge of caring for someone through a sickness, the cycle of a relationship, or even taking on a new job. Let your inspiration guide you on where to apply this practice.



## SEASONS

Dream art theater makes use of ideas found in traditional cultures such as Hawaiian Kahuna religion, or in the deeply insightful spiritual puppetry found in the work of Frank Fool's Crow. Similar ceremonial spaces are created in the healing forces sought in Navajo sand painting, Celtic seasonal festivals, labyrinths and most traditional ceremonials that symbolize a journey through the solar flux points in the year. These flux points in solar motion can then as actors who reveal inner symbolic aspects of the human soul. These ceremonials are each culturally different yet they all orbit around the mandala and its potential for creating ceremonial journeys highly useful for petitioning higher spiritual powers. Ceremonies that enhance connectivity between deep soul images and higher powers have traditionally provided a fruitful venue for emotional health.

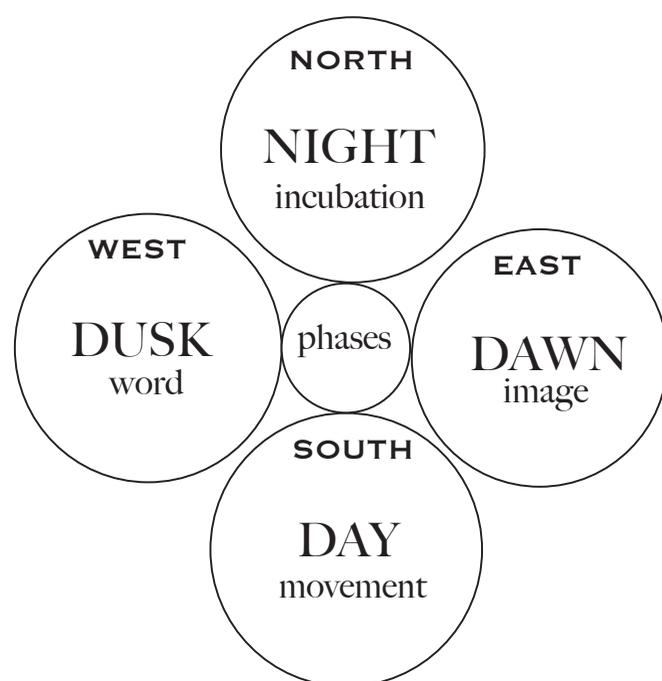


## PHASES

There are several phases in this work. They are image, movement, word, and incubation. These phases are the traditional sequences in healing ceremonies. They reflect the daily phases of dawn, day, dusk, and night of the solar motion.

In a healing journey, a symbol or image appears in the mind like the dawning of a new day. The image is thought to represent a question or petition to the spiritual world. In ancient Egypt a stranded fish hieroglyph would be engraved on a medallion to represent a disease process in the body. If the disease process had a strong soul element the hieroglyph would represent two upstretched arms hoping to receive a blessing. The choosing of a symbol is the phase of *image*.

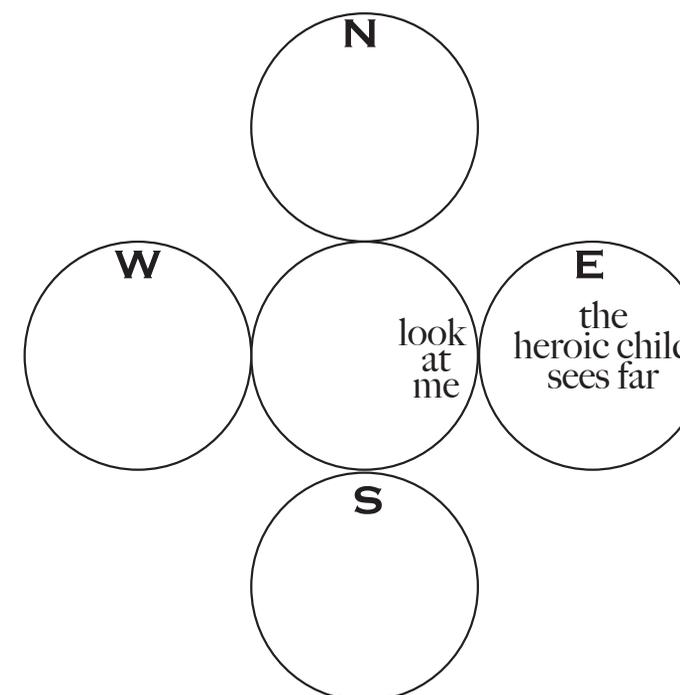
The image is then created through a series of *movements* (sculpting/drawing). A medallion or amulet would be engraved while reciting mantras or *words* to accompany the action. The medallion would then be worn by the petitioner during sleep or *incubation*. Traditional healers universally used the night to perform ceremonies designed to attract the attention of deities who could visit the petitioner with healing dreams. Healing centers for incubation were widespread in the ancient world. This is because at night the human soul is journeying in the spiritual world and is most open to healing inspirations from benign spiritual benefactors.



## HEROIC CHILD / EAST

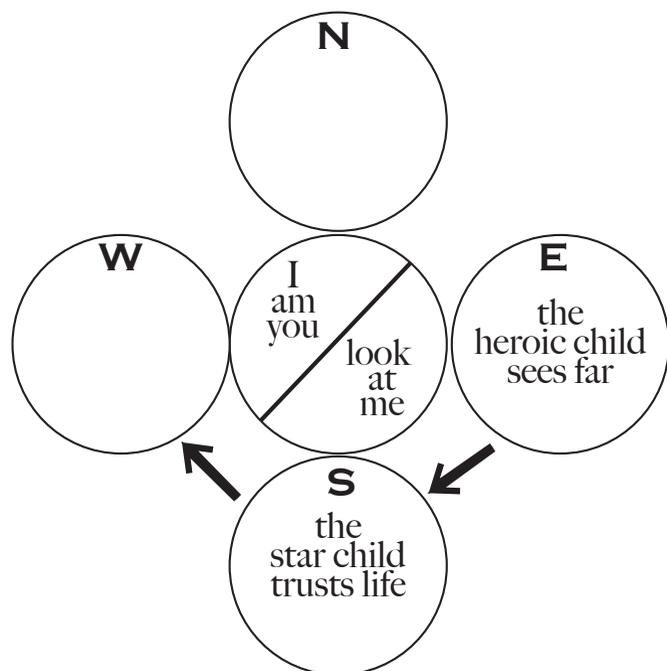
The stage for the drama is a four-fold mandala that is an extended version of the traditional four directions with inputs from traditional solar festivals, the festival work of Rudolf Steiner, the dream work of Carl Jung, and others.

On the mandala of the four directions, the place of the rising sun in the east is the domain of the young hero/heroine who has just descended from a higher world. This descent germinates a seed in time that requires the soul to form a dream vision towards an unknown future. This focus on the future is known as seeing far. It is both a gift and a wound maker for the incarnating soul. Aristotle called this soul phase the *pathetic soul*. Pathetic here just means a soul that uses pathos or drama as a primary means of being in the world. Jung called this phase the “hero(ic) child”. The heroic child in the place of the east dances the *look-at-me* dance and brings the new news to a weary world.



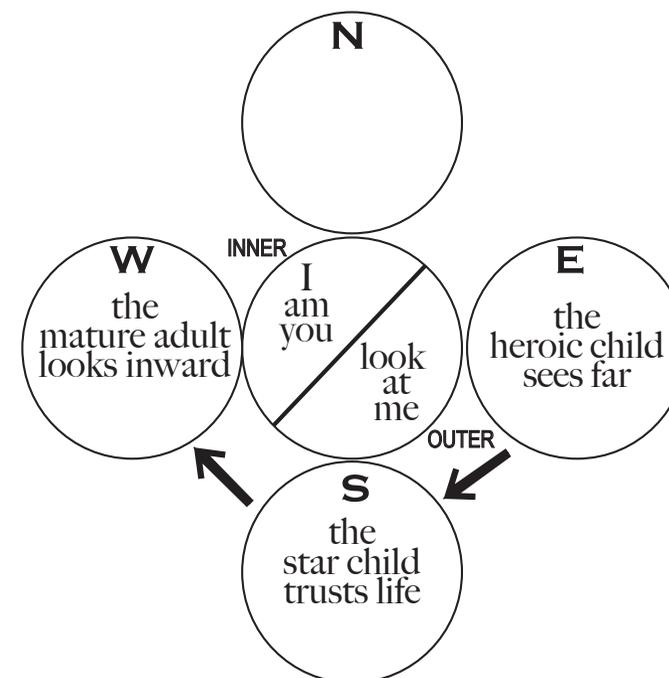
### STAR CHILD / SOUTH

The heroic child then has to journey to the south in order to birth the star child who must develop *trust in life* in the face of wounding experienced when the world rejects the heroic gesture. The star child must learn to be resilient and develop trust for all aspects that life has to offer. While the younger heroic child dreams of a future limitless welcoming world, those dreams often prove difficult to manifest. For the star child, learning to trust in all aspects of the present world both positive and negative. Trust is built by learning to make a plan and carry it out to a finish. Through this practice the star child learns to seek the trusting core star of the True self that can weather the storms of increasing maturity.



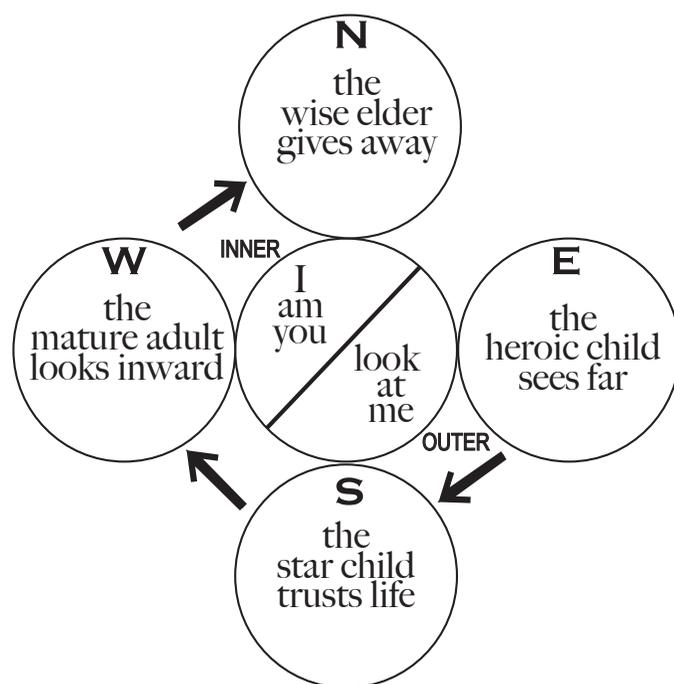
### OUTER - INNER / MATURE ADULT / WEST

Then, in another inevitable clockwise turn, the journeying soul enters the darkness of the west. This is a turn inward, a threshold passing into the introspective soul force needed to manage adulthood. Solutions to ever more complex human interactions now require looking inward to an uncertain self, to search for an authentic image of a future world. The west is the place of introspection. The challenges of adulthood generate a more potent darkening of the heroic, star crossed early dreams. The heroic dreams of impressing a persona on a receptive outer world, are no longer effective. In the place of the west, introspection into one's own inner life can meet outer challenges with flexible, creative, and interactive dream processes.



## WISE-ELDER / THE JOURNEY NORTH

The moving wheel of life makes a final northward turn, and arrives at the place of death. The reality of death is in reality the universal healing force of wisdom. Wisdom appears in the soul by resolving past hurts. The place of the north is the source of the universal task of giving away hurts that are no longer useful in life. When this is done the karmic knots that are the root of suffering can be eased. The challenging turn from starry adolescence into adulthood teaches that it is only by holding onto the thread of one's own inner life that the emotional need for recognition can be satisfied. Finally, in the place of the north, the maturing adult faces unavoidable limitations on both mental, and physical capacities. The stark wisdom of the north helps humans to decide what attitudes and beliefs are essential for maintaining life. When life forces fail, humans learn what must be given away to maintain an economy of means. The give-away of inessentials in the place of the north allows for a more graceful end-of-life transition. The ability to frame one's losses more consciously can help replace regrets with gratitude. Gratitude, even for trials, allows elders to give away blessings to others.

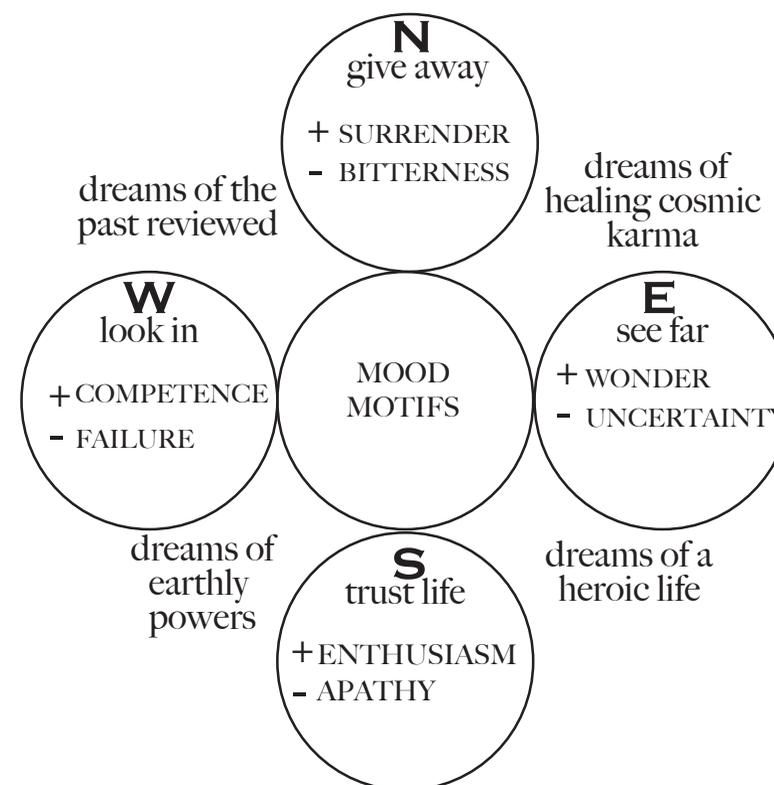


## MOOD MOTIFS

Mood motif is an expression Rudolf Steiner used to describe the primary consideration for understanding dream symbols. The details are not so important in dreams but the moods that dreams symbolize are very useful tools for resolving difficult soul problems. By placing each figure on the stage in a particular direction each day, a selection process is instigated that can lead to understanding the mysterious symbolic nature of dreams. Determining the mood motif allows you to notice trends within the grouping of the figures.

Place each dream artifact on the stage in what you think it is the appropriate direction, ask yourself:

- Does the figure represent a mood or feeling of dreams of a heroic future, or does the figure represent dreams of the past?
- Is the figure an image of something cosmic or is it more representative of earthly forces?"



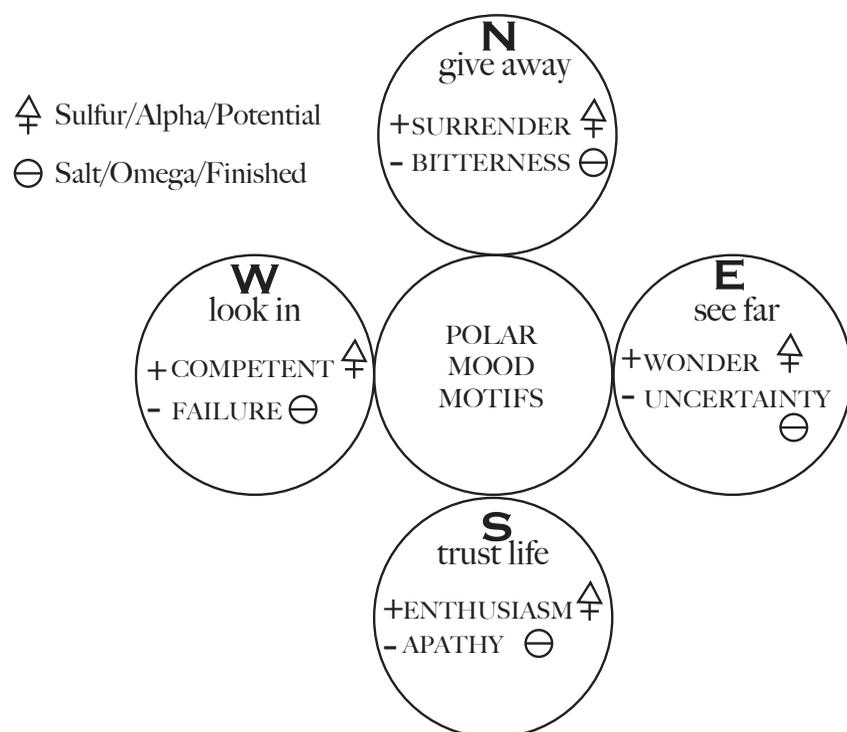
## POLAR MOOD MOTIFS

In each direction one mood motif is positive (sulfur/Alpha) and one mood is negative (salt/Omega). This can help give further understanding of what each figure represents for you. The goal is to deepen the emotional content associated with each figure so that you can empathize with each as they dialogue with the stage and each other.

Ask yourself for each figure if it has the mood that in your estimation expresses *something that is finished*. That is Omega. In alchemy the symbol for that kind of feeling is salt, a circle divided in half horizontally. Imagine Omega/salt mood as something like wanting ice cream. The first cone satisfies a desire. The second has less force of desire. The desire for a third one is a dead end emotionally. That end of the road feeling is salt/Omega. We could call the “salt” figures in that group, the tribe of the Omegas.

Then ask yourself is if what figure suggests feelings of *potentials for development*. Think Saturday morning at the beach, with endless possibilities for the day. In alchemy the symbol for that kind of feeling is sulfur, an upward pointing triangle resting on a cross. The sulfur figures are the tribe of the Alphas.

For examples in the charts we will symbolize Omegas as the salt sign and Alphas as the sulfur sign to demonstrate the action of polarities in the drama of self-discovery.

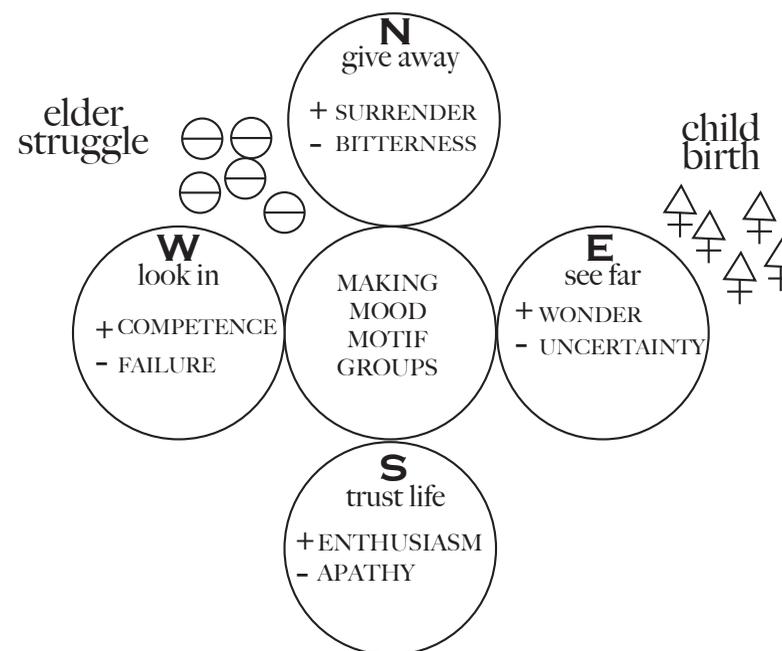


## MAKING MOOD MOTIF GROUPS

Grouping the motifs shows which emotional themes are active. When you have made at least seven little figures and assembled them on the stage the next step is to “audition” them. The method is to find the mood motif that the members of a group of figures seem to share in common.

In past times when people sowed grain fields by hand they sometimes recited the rhyme, *one to rot, one to grow, one for the sparrow, one for the crow*. That means they expected only one seed out of four to come to maturity. This selection process for feelings is like that. Deeper, hidden feelings that are at the root of soul challenges are mixed in with less important soul issues. The deep ones sprout into neuroses and the others pass away in the daily round.

It may be that you are giving care to an aging parent who has lost capacity for independent life. Your deep feelings about that would most likely generate a cluster of dream Omegas in the place of the north. Or it may be that you have just welcomed a new child or grandchild into your family then there may be a cluster of dream Alphas in the place of the east. There are many possibilities in this process. This first part of the audition is just to take stock of the general tone of the soul moods of your dreams by noting where the figures tend to cluster.





## CHOOSING TWO CHARACTERS

Next, the audition seeks to pare down the cluster of feelings to concentrate them into a best Alpha figure and a best Omega figure. The two figures will then become symbolic actors that, in your feelings, best represent the Omega and Alpha moods that emerged from your dreams. The two chosen figures will then, as actors, represent the functional polarities of life (*this has potential*) and death (*this is finished*).

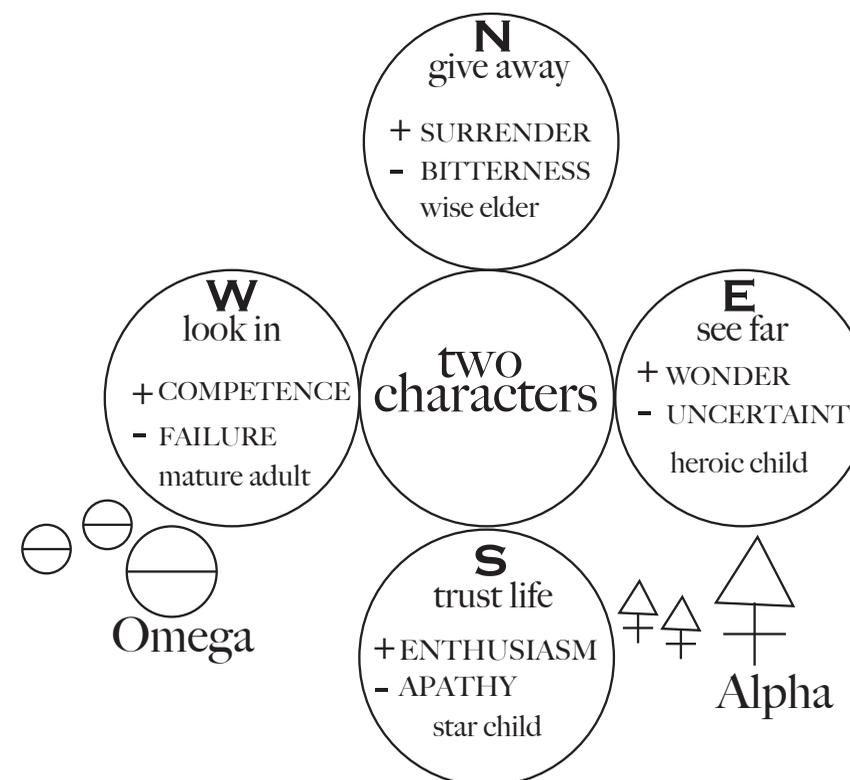
To choose the best figure requires separately evaluating the feelings generated by each one. The heart listening practice and your word journal can be of assistance here.

The illustration depicts the Alpha of the *trust life* group in the south. They represent feelings of enthusiasm. The Omega represents feelings of failure in the *look in* group of the west.

In the illustration each positive gift is paired with its negative reflection. To wonder at the mystery of life is a gift that can also lead to states of uncertainty. A trusting enthusiasm for life's opportunities can reverse into apathy when life proves to be indifferent to the enthusiasm. Gaining competence as an adult can lead to a sense of failure when what has been mastered becomes obsolete. Surrendering to the necessary limitations that life imposes on a human has the potential for engendering bitterness at the action of fate.

Best actors, both positive and negative, can also come from one life phase. The task is to pare down the cluster of actors to two representative figures.

Once chosen, an Alpha figure and an Omega figure will be the two actors that together go on the symbolic journey through the four stages of life.



### PROCESS:

1. Review your symbols
2. Identify their mood motifs
3. Group them
4. Identify potential Alpha/Omega
5. Select your two actors

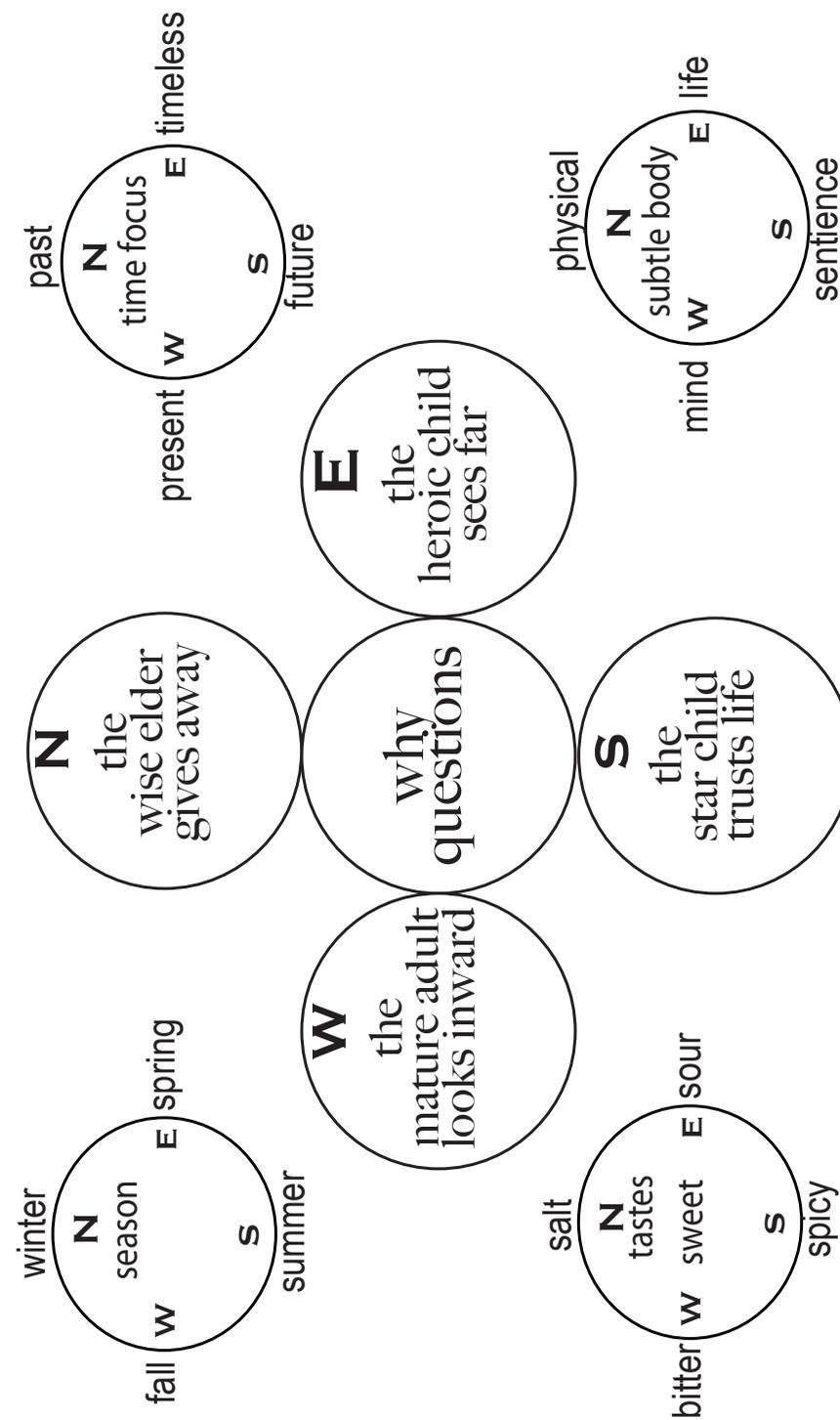
## WHY QUESTIONS

The script for the play/journey is composed of simple questions asked by each actor at each place. There are no answers, but the questions are used to prompt the formation of more symbolic words. Statements stop the flow of feelings that need to gradually be extended to the figures who are moving through the mandala. The questions are designed to be simple. One-word spontaneous responses are best.

The movement of the figures in the journey is like a puppet show or board game. For continuity and simplicity, the processes for each figure are the same except for the order in which they speak. Omega always begins. Omega speaks first because the work begins by acknowledging what is finished, exhausted, or no longer serving. This clears space for Alpha to speak from possibility rather than pressure.

This detail of the negative one speaking first is taken from the protocols of indigenous vision quest ceremonies. In those rites of passage, after a person has an encounter with the spirit, a counselor will first tell them what they lack to become more whole in the spirit. The seeker is then sent out to listen to their heart. Then the seeker is brought back to the one giving counsel who suggests to them what could possibly be good things to adopt in the future to deal with the next part of life. They are given a chance to renew their vision.

At each stage each figure will ask three questions that address the soul functions of thinking, feeling and willing. The questions are intended to stimulate a feeling of those soul forces in a particular phase of life. Alpha and Omega questions are not always the same but the questions center on the challenges and tasks present at each phase of the drama.



## FIRST ACT - HEROIC CHILD

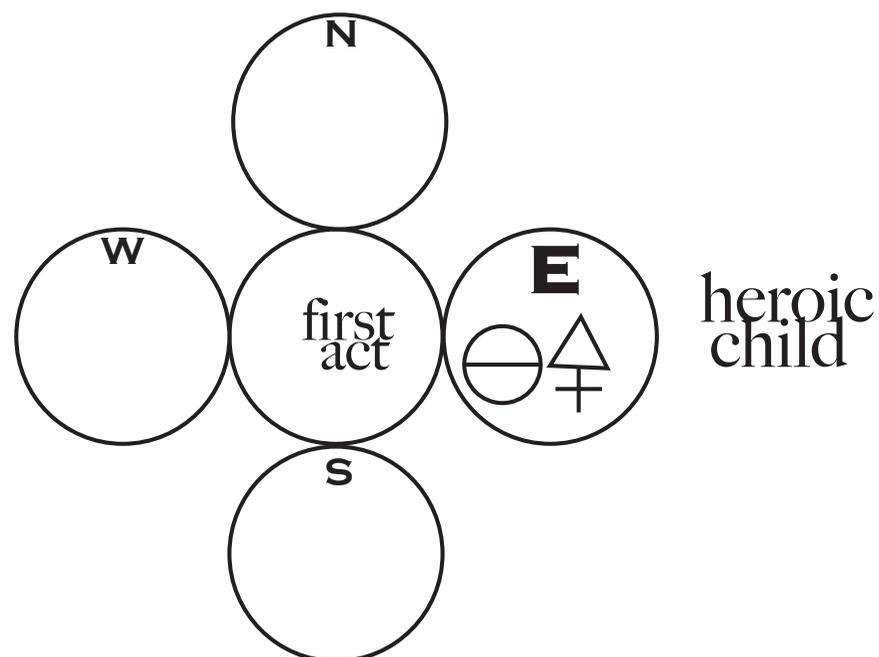
To open the play both actors, Alpha (+) and Omega (-), enter the mandala together from the east, the place of the rising Sun. This entrance onto the mandalic stage symbolically represents a birthing from a previous incarnation. In the place of the east the power is to be able to see far into the future.

Placing the two figures on the board in the place of the east starts the action. A question is first asked by the Omega figure. How did my early thinking impact my heroic child? This is followed by heartbeat, then journaling. The same question is asked by the Alpha figure. Then heartbeat, and journaling.

Then, still in the heroic child place of the east, a second round of questions is asked. The Omega figure is first to ask a question. How did my early feelings negatively impact my heroic child? Then heartbeat and journal. For the Alpha, How did my early feelings positively impact my heroic child? This is followed by heartbeat and journal.

Next the Omega asks, how did my early activities negatively influence the confidence of my heroic child? Heartbeat and, journal. Then the alpha figure, how did my early activities positively influence the confidence of my heroic child?

This finishes the act of the heroic child on the great journey. The images, questions and words of the first act are then recalled in the imagination before sleeping. This incubation sets the stage for the movement of the two actors to the place of the south.



## ACT 1 - JOURNAL

### Thinking

- How did my early thinking impact my heroic child?

+ How did my early thinking impact my heroic child?

### Feeling

- How did my early feelings negatively impact my heroic child?

+ How did my early feelings positively impact my heroic child?

### Willing

- How did my early activities negatively influence the confidence of my heroic child?

+ How did my early activities positively influence the confidence of my heroic child?

Evening Incubation Notes: Any insights, emotional shifts, small symbolic echoes, or subtle impressions:

## SECOND ACT - STAR CHILD

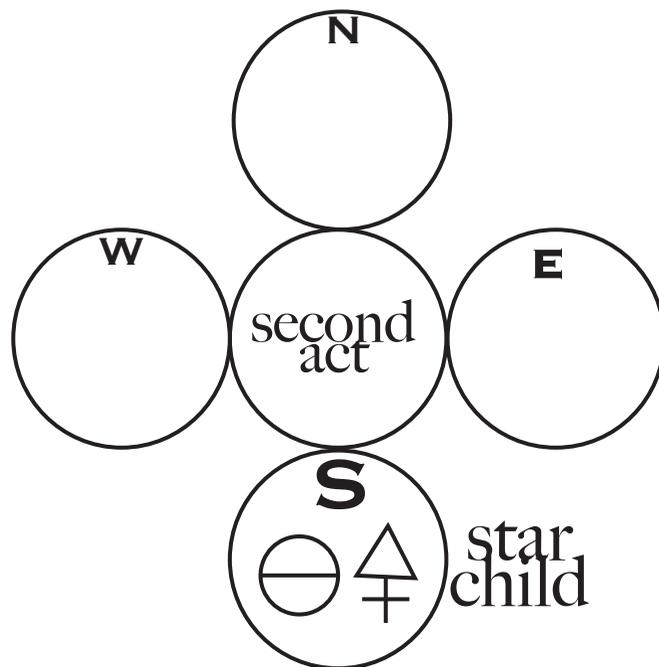
Together the two figures move to the place of the south, the place of *trust in life*. The same sequences of the figures asking questions takes place at the place of the star child.

First the Omega figure asks, what role did my negative thinking play in my search for my star. Heartbeat, then journal. Then the alpha figure asks what role did my positive thinking play in my search for my star?/ Heartbeat, then journal.

Then the omega questions, what influence did my negative feelings have on my star child beliefs and expectations? Heartbeat then journal. For the alpha, What influence did my positive feelings have on my star child beliefs and expectations? Heartbeat, then journal.

Then the Omega, how did my habits negatively impact my star child? Then the Alpha, how did my habits positively impact my star child?

This completes the journey from east to south. Both places use the look-at-me heroic, star crossed approach to problem solving. The images, words and movements are then reviewed in the imagination before going to sleep. This incubation sets the stage for the third act.



## ACT 2 - JOURNAL

### Thinking

- What role did my negative thinking play in my search for my star.

+ What role did my positive thinking play in my search for my star?

### Feeling

- What influence did my negative feelings have on my star child beliefs and expectations?

+ What influence did my positive feelings have on my star child beliefs and expectations?

### Willing

- How did my habits negatively impact my star child?

+ How did my habits positively impact my star child?

Evening Incubation Notes: Any insights, emotional shifts, small symbolic echoes, or subtle impressions:

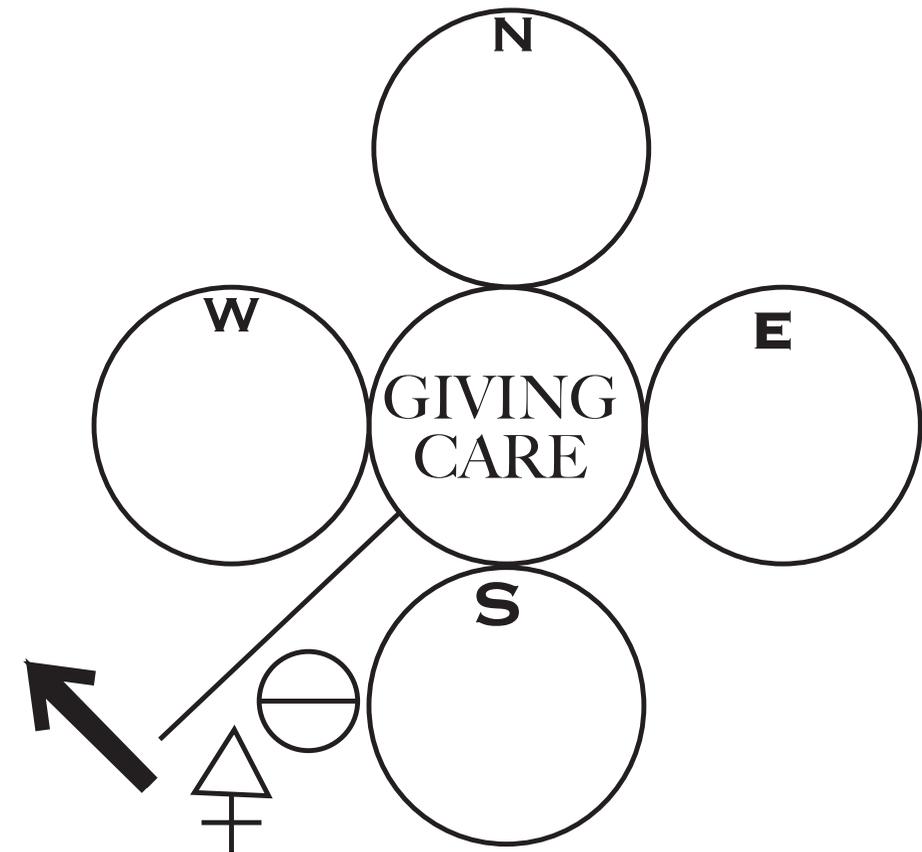
## GIVING CARE TO OTHERS

There are different names for an unhealthy tendency to unconsciously carry over heroic, star crossed childhood attitudes into adulthood. Names such as Peter Pan, the sleeping princess, puer aeternis (eternal child), the golden ass, the donkey prince, and imago (adult child) point to a stalled individuation process that needs the forces of metanoia (change of thinking) and transcendent function (Jung) to make the turn from soul ripening into soul maturity. That turn requires moving the impulses in thinking, feeling and willing away from an expectant mood.

To mature, the search for the soul perspective must turn from *look-at-me* to *I-am-You*. Adults must learn to authentically give-away the fruits of their own thinking, feeling and willing, essentially their inner life, for the benefit of the world. That includes giving attention not only to partners, family and kids, but also corporations, authorities, social dynamics around power and wealth, and ultimately the reality of giving away one's life to the inevitability of death. The move from the south to the place of the west requires the metanoia that changes resentment of past wounding events into compassion for others who are also wounded. This requires a different script for the two travelers, Alpha and Omega.

As the figures take the next clockwise movement from south to west they cross a boundary as they follow the sun into the dark, introspective mood that often includes a dark night of the soul. Introspection becomes a path to self-recognition that reverses a consumptive, paralyzing need to be recognized by an indifferent world. The individual must now make repeated attempts to autonomously recognize the True Self that can truly serve others without the expectation of reward.

This is the role of the caregivers of the world, the wounded healers. Caregiving is not transactional or sympathetic. Its is empathic. That means that the caregiver must refrain from taking on the affliction of another in order to better serve them. The empathic approach is to identify in myself what the other is suffering without blame or feeling the need to be the "healer". An empathic person knows that those who are suffering must ultimately heal themselves with the help of higher powers. The empathic person simply acts as a guide or midwife to the rebirth of the suffering soul.



## THE THIRD ACT - MATURE ADULT

In the place of the west an introspective Omega asks, how did my thinking in the past give form to my thinking habits in the present? Heart beat, then journal.

Alpha asks, how did my thinking in the past create the habitual way that I think about the people around me in the present? Heartbeat, then journal.

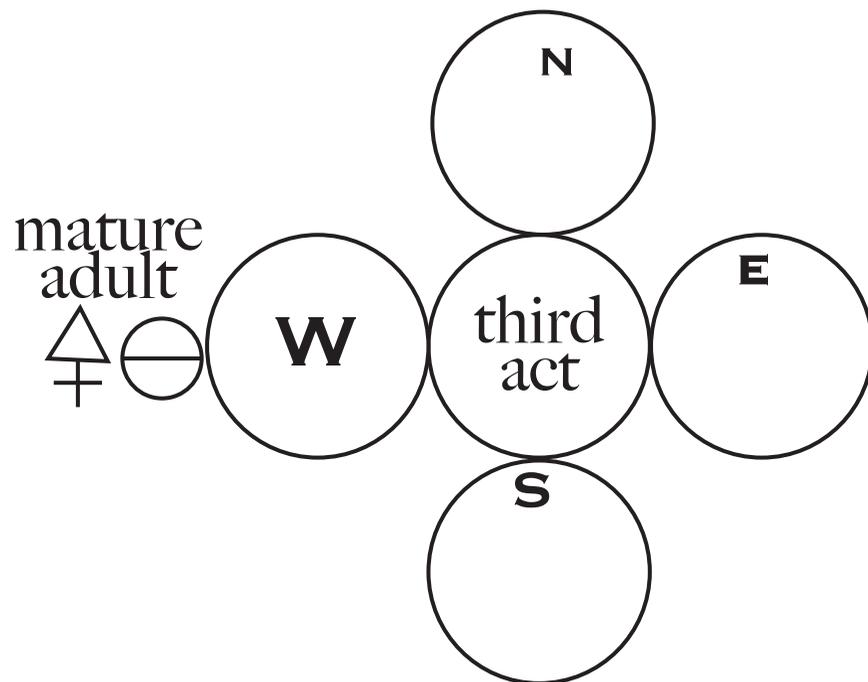
Omega asks, how did my feelings in the past form the basis of my feelings about myself now? Heartbeat, then journal.

Alpha asks, how did my feelings in the past form the way that I use feelings to engage with others in the present? Heartbeat, then journal.

Omega then asks, how did the way I used my will in the past lead to the way I approach work tasks in the present? Heartbeat, then journal.

Then Alpha asks, how did my impulses of will in the past form the way that I use my will to interact with those around me in the present? Heartbeat, then journal.

This completes the action of the place of the west, the place of *looks within*. The images, words and movements are now reviewed in the evening before sleep. This incubation sets the stage for the entrance into the place of the north.



## ACT 3 - JOURNAL

### Thinking

- How did my thinking in the past give form to my thinking about myself in the present?

+ How did my thinking in the past form the way that I think about others in the present?

### Feeling

- How did my past feelings form the way I feel about myself in the present?

+ How did my past feelings form the way that I feel about others in the present?

### Willing

- How did my will impulses in the past form my present ability to work at tasks?

+ How did my will impulses in the past form the way that I now work with others?

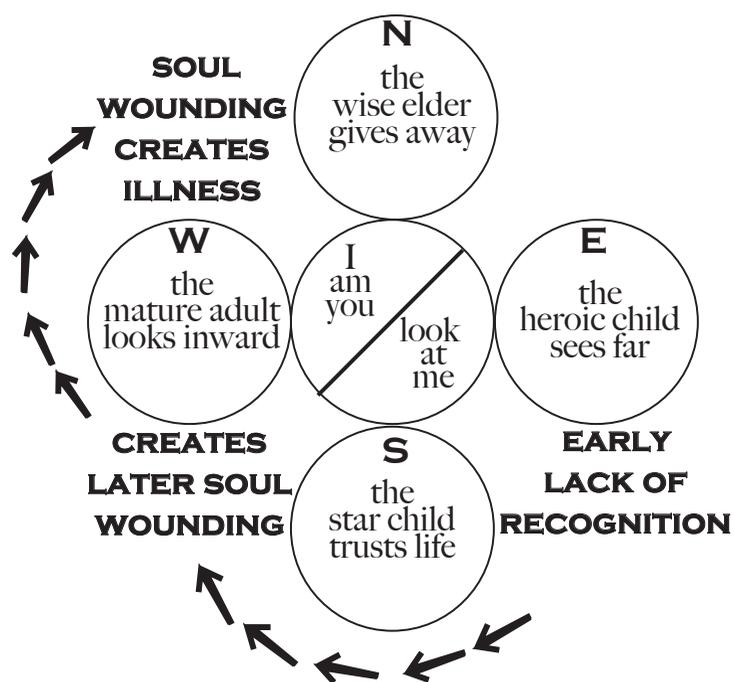
Evening Incubation Notes: Any insights, emotional shifts, small symbolic echoes, or subtle impressions:

## THE WOUND

Before the journey continues northward, it is necessary to acknowledge a central truth of adult life: the ideals and expectations carried from youth do not always survive contact with the realities of the world. This encounter leaves its mark. The Wound describes this turning point and prepares the ground for the wisdom work of the northern direction.

As a person matures into adulthood the *look-at-me* personality structure is tempered through the sufferings and setbacks experienced as an integral part of daily life. The submission of a starry, heroic dream mission to the transactional values of a shallow, generic world is a primary source of the existential wound of the adult. When unbalanced, this wounding is the primary source of illness in both the soul and the body of an individual. But the personal wounding process also creates imbalances and stress in the contemporary society. Jung described this wound as the regrets of an individual soul for having apparently abandoned the uniqueness of its individuality in order to be compliant with outer authority. He felt that the function of transcendence was the most important, healing power in the search for individuation. The transcendent function is the ability to personally reconcile opposites in the psyche. Essentially this is the primary function of dreams and the dream symbols found in them.

Acknowledging the wound softens the passage into the North, where wisdom arises through giving away.



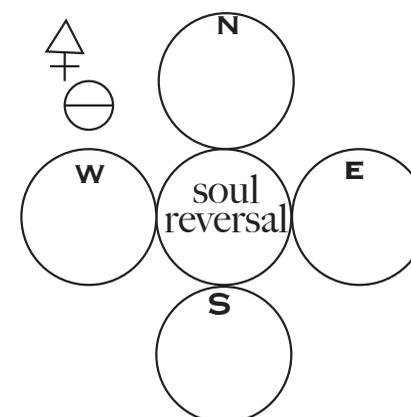
## SOUL REVERSAL

To complete their journey, Alpha and Omega must again follow the Sun clockwise from setting in the west to the darkness of the place of the north. The north is the place of the wisdom of giving away, the place of death.

The focus of the spring and summer of life is to identify the cosmic task needed by a human entering a new incarnation. The focus of the fall and winter in human life hinges on the wounds that were created in the look-at-me striving of the first part of life. Hurts, resentments, regrets, guilt, anger at not being recognized, are setbacks that create a field of karma that can either make old age a bitter prison or an opportunity for new spiritual insights.

Journeying through the place of the west to enter the place of the north requires a strong reversal of the *look-at-me* attitude. The events of adulthood give opportunities to realize that suffering is given to people to enable them to awaken through an *I-am-you* consciousness into the soul life of another person. In the places of the west and north a recalibration of the earlier approaches to life is needed. Our suffering as human beings may take different forms but they represent a universal theme that unites all of humanity. The feeling that we are separate from each other is actually what we all have in common.

In the first part of life the past is composed of memories of life in the spiritual world. The future is a limitless unknown. Later, in adolescence the past filled dreams of youth are remembered. There is a border crossing when entering the second half of life that is composed of memories of the obstacles met while growing. In the second half of life there is a necessity to realize, through introspection, that the early dreams created soul dilemmas that are working to limit me in the present. This realization is amplified by the limitations imposed on the soul in the place of the north, the place of wisdom.



## FOURTH ACT - WISE ELDER

In the place of *give-away* in the north the human being meets the power of limitation. Death presents the ultimate limit to life.

In the place of death, Omega asks, how does my present thinking limit my ability to direct my thinking to correct an error? Heartbeat, then journal.

Alpha asks, how does my present thinking allow me to accept the ideas of another? Heartbeat, then journal.

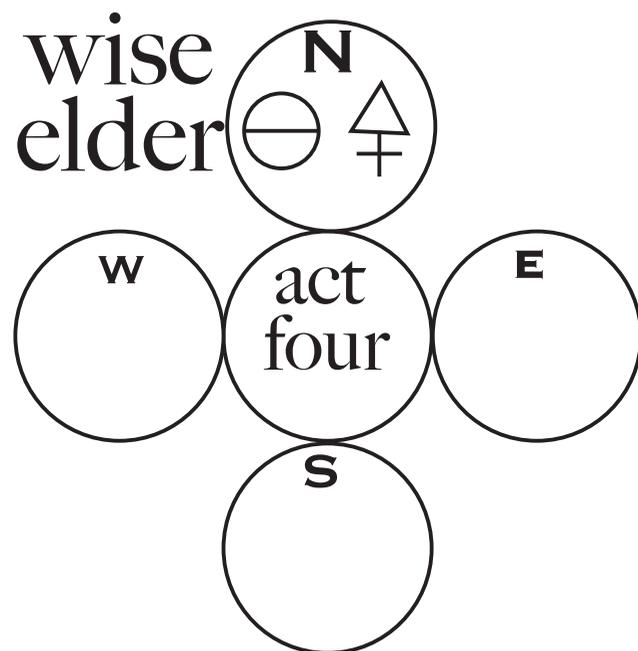
Omega then asks, how are my present feelings limiting my habitual approach to solving problems? Heartbeat, then journal.

Alpha then asks, how are my present feelings limiting the ability of others to approach me with their own feelings? Heartbeat, then journal.

Omega then asks, how does my present use of will limit my perception of alternate outcomes to difficulties? Heartbeat, then journal.

Alpha asks, how does the way that I presently use my will limit others in expressing their own will impulses? Heartbeat, then journal.

These images, words and movements are now reviewed in the evening before sleep.



## ACT 4 - JOURNAL

### Thinking

- How does my present thinking limit my ability to correct an error in my thinking?

+ How does my present thinking process limit others from freely sharing their ideas with me?

### Feeling

- How are my present feelings limiting my ability to control my feelings in the present?

+ How are my present feelings limiting the ability of others to share their feelings with me?

### Willing

- How does my present use of my will limit my ability to perceive alternate outcomes?

+ How does my present use of my will limit the ability of others to work with me?

Evening Incubation Notes: Any insights, emotional shifts, small symbolic echoes, or subtle impressions:

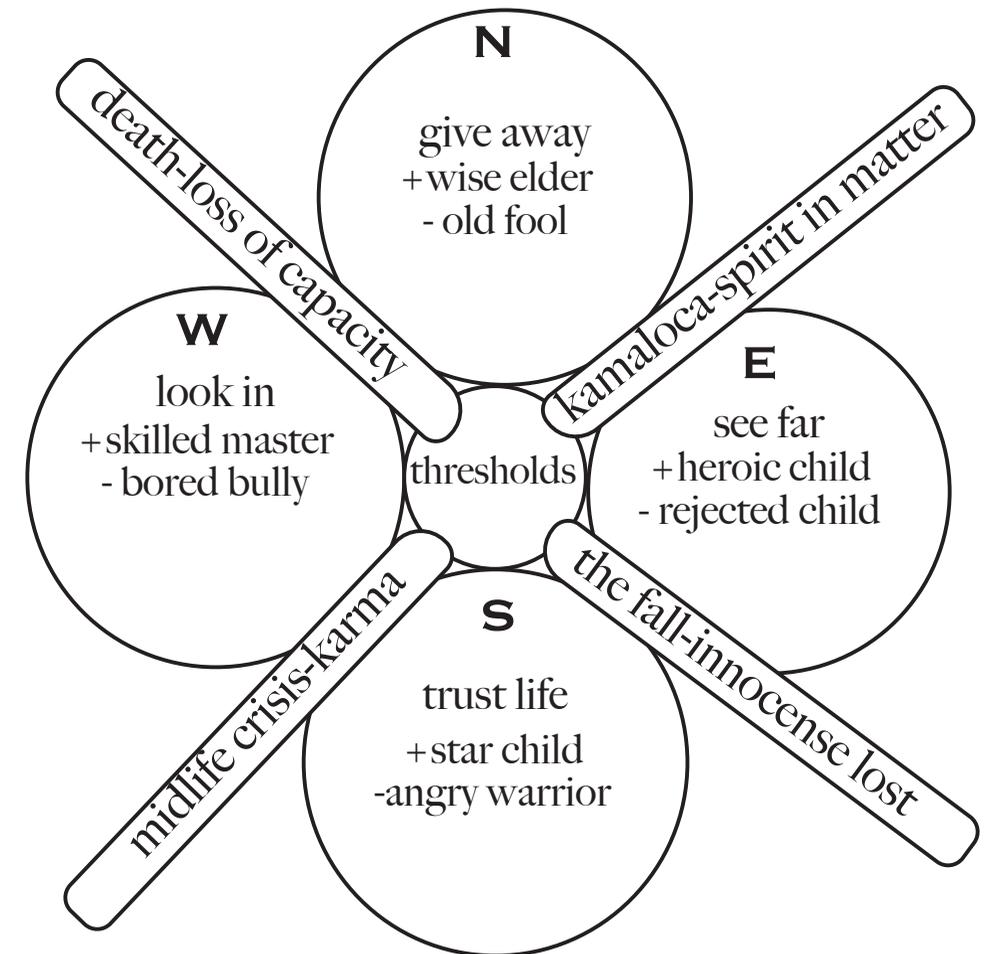
## THRESHOLDS

The following sections help you understand the developmental forces operating beneath your symbolic journey.

It has long been recognized that there are certain thresholds in human life that require socially created rites of passage to navigate successfully. Sacraments like baptism or marriage or shifts from adolescence to adulthood like quinceanera (fifteen years old) mark these points in life. Typically baptism is a rite of passage for newborns. It is intended to help the soul navigate from the spirit into matter. This is useful for the soul to soften the shock of suddenly being in a body and for the cleansing of the memories from the past life in kamaloca (the location of desire) known in some traditions as limbo. Those memories of desires from a past life are cleansed at the threshold of birth into a new life.

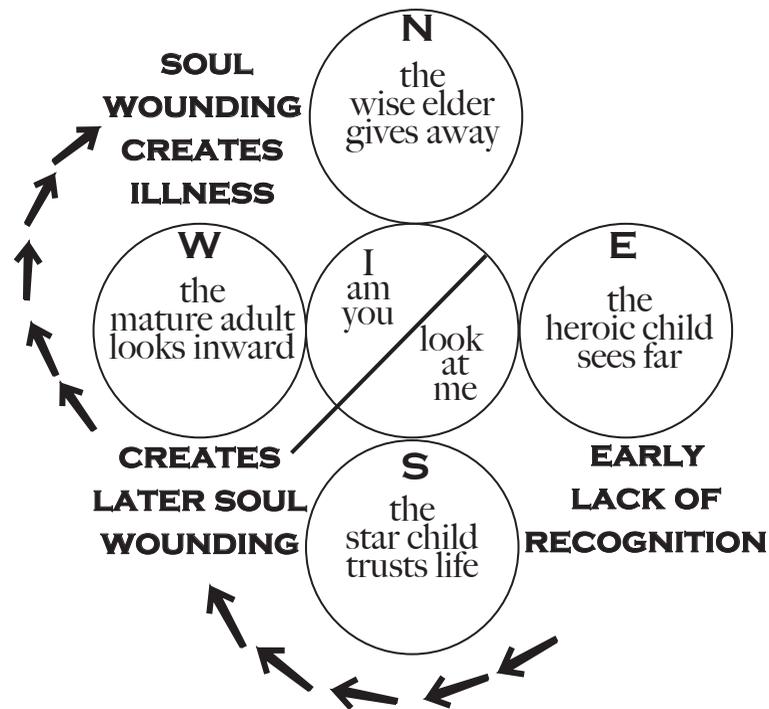
The next threshold is the nine year change known in some traditions as the fall from grace. The unconscious innocence of childhood is left, and like Adam and Eve, the young child has its eyes opened and sees its own nakedness as it falls rejected, into the confusion of preadolescence. The awakening to the rejection of a shallow world continues through young adulthood that can engender in the soul an existential anger that can result in a warrior frame of mind. As adulthood makes increasing demands on the balance in the soul forces a mid-life crisis brings is the next significant threshold to be encountered.

Due to setbacks and failures the karma of an incarnation can turn a person who has struggled to master a skill set into a bored bully when they garner power over others. The final threshold is the loss of capacity either mentally, physically, emotionally or economically as the shadow of death becomes not just a possibility but an inevitability. Approaching this threshold can turn the soul into a wise elder or an old bitter fool.



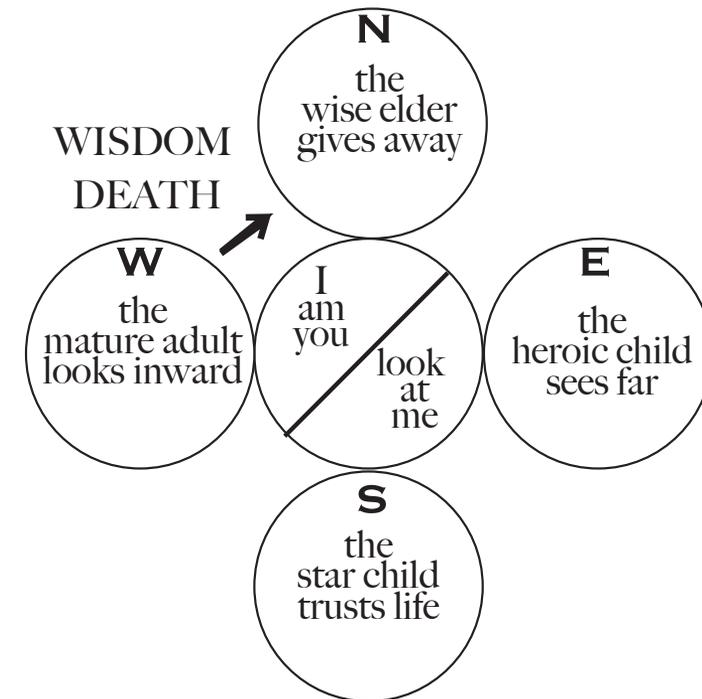
## THRESHOLD: THE GREAT DIVIDE / CHILD-ADULT

A divide in expectations exists between the enthusiasm of the heroic child and the star child on one hand and the introspective, mature adult on the other. Kahuna wisdom says that a young person who has not yet matured is dancing the look-at-me dance. The belief is that the world needs to *look-at-me* because I am bringing the future of the world into being. When healthy, Rudolf Steiner calls that belief a sense of the karmic mission. That is the reason for having a reincarnation. Carl Jung calls that belief *my song*. I come into existence to sing my song of individuation. The heroic child and star child experience the urge towards unique individuation and selfhood. That urge continues through adolescence into early adulthood. When healthy the urge to individuation is truly a gift to the world. When unhealthy, that same urge creates individuals who lack the empathy for others that is needed to evolve all of humanity in progressive future directions.



## THRESHOLD: DEATH

To survive the wound requires assessing the risks and rewards of the look-at-me dreaming processes. For the maturing, more introspective soul, the original mission of incarnation stays the same. But the way to achieve individuality shifts from expectation of recognition from the outer world to introspective recognition from within the soul itself. That is amplified in the great teaching of death, the place of the north. The self-centered focus on recognition from the world has to be shifted from the habit of seeking attention. The new task is to learn to give attention. That is the wisdom of give-away. Without that shift, any long-held resentments of the unrecognized child hamper soul maturity processes and lead to the development of adult bullies, liars and thieves. Death, that all humans must face, is the place where a person can learn once again to become their True Self and redeem their sense of mission. This is fundamentally achieved in the socially redeeming, transformative role of the caregiver.



## THRESHOLD REFLECTION WORKSHEET

### 1. Child → Youth Threshold (The Fall / Loss of Innocence)

How did themes from Act One or Two appear in your early-life patterns?

What wounds or gifts from that period resurfaced during the journey?

### 2. Youth → Adult Threshold (Midlife / Karma / Reversal)

How did you meet expectations, disappointments, or reversals in Act Three?

What did your Omega figure show you about past patterns?

### 3. Adult → Elder Threshold (Giving Away / Limitation)

What limitations became visible in Act Four?

What inner resources or wisdom became available through your Alpha figure?

## SOUL NEEDS

To meet the challenges of each threshold the soul has needs that are appropriate to the particular phase of life.

The young child needs from those souls it meets a mood of support for efforts to become an independent person. Independence is a two-edged sword for a young child. He or she wants to be free to do whatever they want to do but there is also need for protection from the world when things don't go so well.

The adolescent needs capable and moral models in the people around them to let them experience that mastery of things in life is possible without resorting to apathy or anger when dreams fail to materialize.

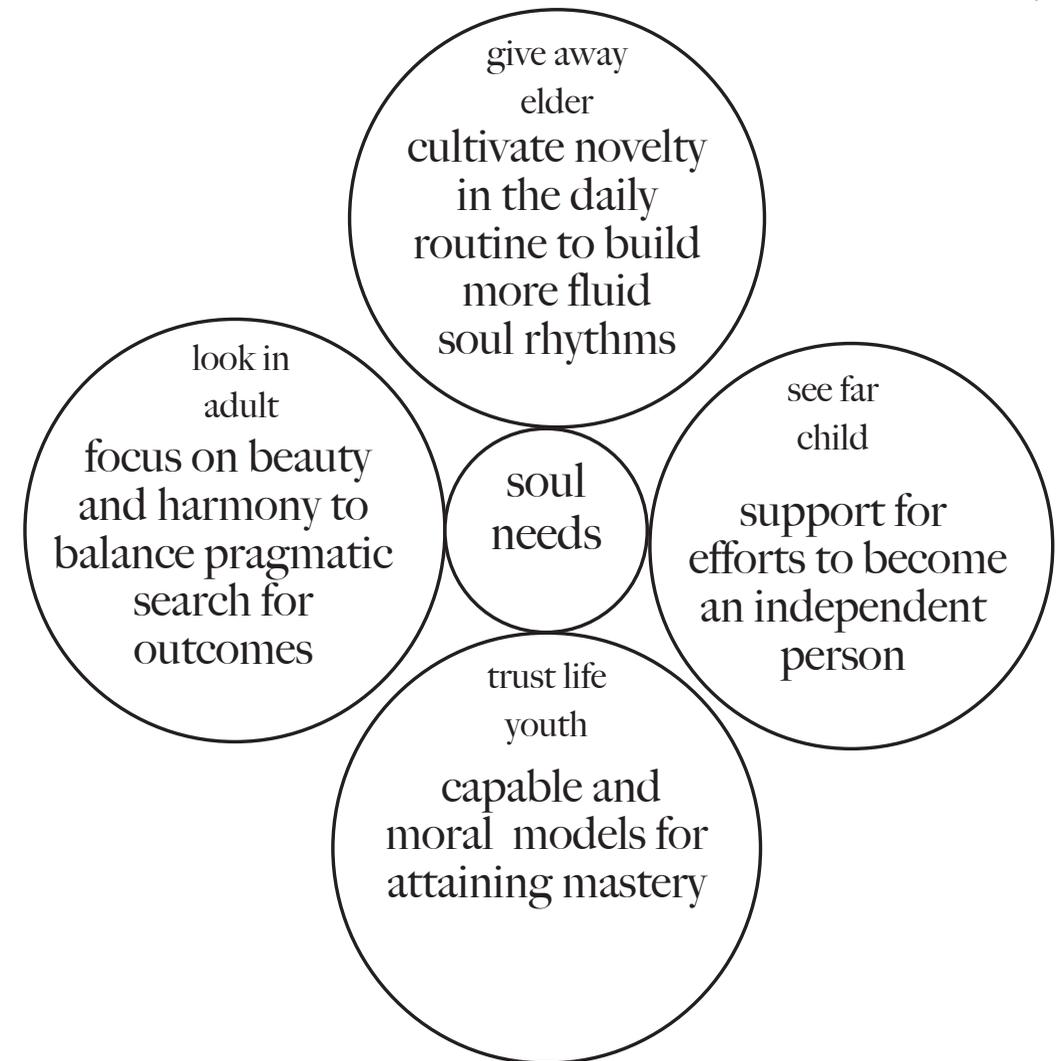
The adult who has managed to evolve skills that promote success in the outer world then faces a challenge in the boredom that comes with compliance to outer more pragmatic expectations of the work a day world. The focus on pragmatism that hassles a soul into boredom or depression in the adult needs to be tempered by activities and interests that promote harmony and beauty as values. Creative activities teach that expectation of outcomes needs to be balanced with enjoyment of the process of discovery even when the outcome is less satisfying than what is expected.

Once the demands of daily life are eased by old age the needs of the soul center on consciously promoting activities and interests that bring novelty and a sense of adventure into the daily life where capacities are clearly becoming limited. Novelty and the unexpected give to life a deeper sense of flow and rhythm that prevent bitterness at lost capacities from dominating the consciousness.

## REFLECTIONS

Which soul needs are most active for you at this time?

- Support in forming independence (Child)
- Trust and resilience (Youth)
- Harmony and beauty balancing pragmatism (Adult)
- Novelty, play, lightness (Elder)



How did these needs show up through your symbols or journaling?

## SOUL POWERS

If they are allowed to blossom, the innate powers that are available to each phase of life can balance out the challenges.

In the child an innate creativity at the novelty and wonder of life is the true power of the human being. This is the underlying thread of the True Self that is available at all stages of life. It is evidenced in the great attraction that newborns and toddlers exert on mostly everyone. That attractive creativity is needed because of the need for the child to attract support from others.

As the person matures into adolescence the childhood creativity is transformed into a capacity for youth to attract allies. Adolescents and young adults gravitate to allies who understand the challenges encountered in a common search for autonomy.

At mid-life the power shifts from creativity and novelty to mastery of skills. That mastery enables the adult to mature into a person who is capable of assessing the risks and rewards of potential actions in order to avoid setbacks during times of challenging life circumstances.

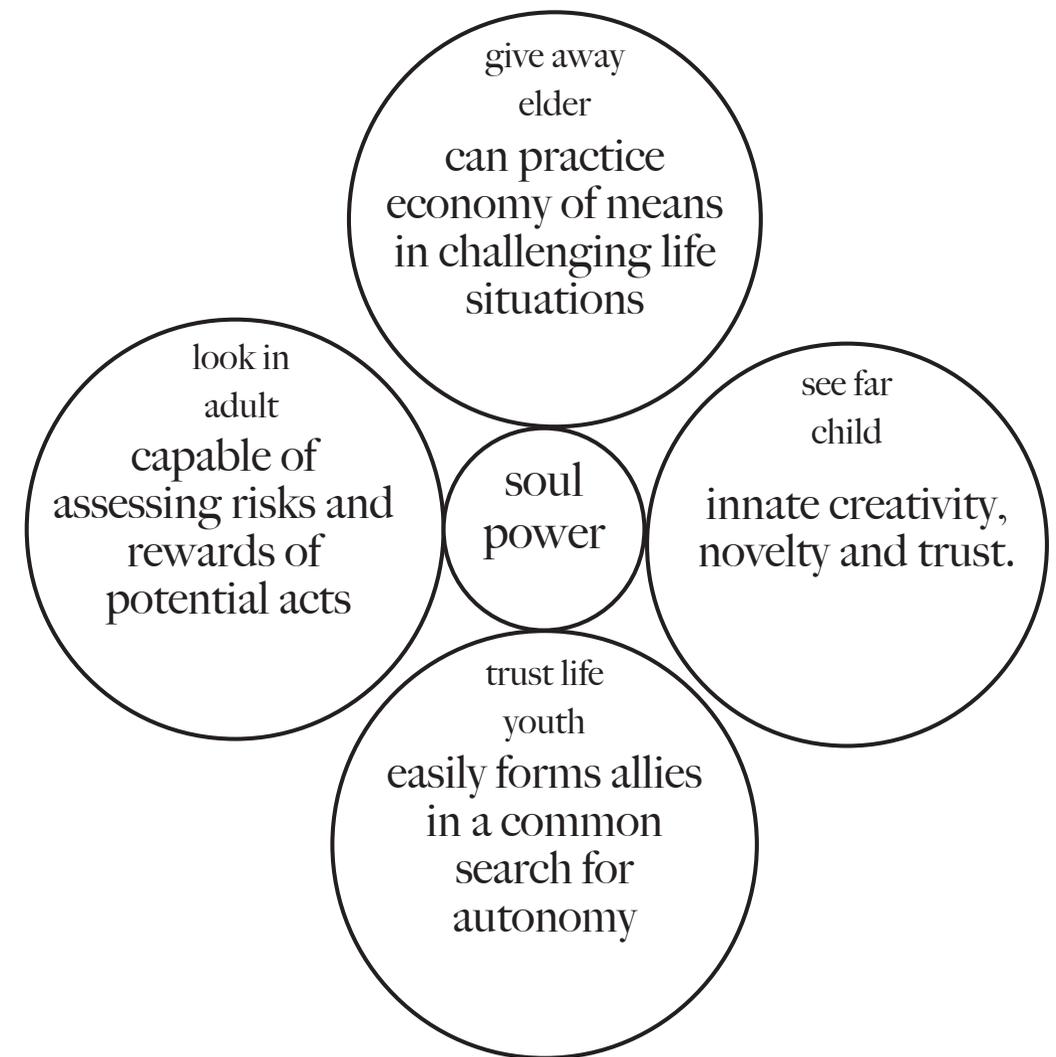
When developed in adulthood the ability to assess risk and reward outcomes allows the elder to practice an economy of means when life challenges become amplified due to limitations of wealth, health and dwindling relationships often present in families and friends of the elderly.

At the root of these transformation is the fundamental creativity of the spiritual human, the True Self who has incarnated in order to make right the karmic debts owed to the cosmos and to those who were on earth with oneself in a past life. The purpose of karma is to create a more radiant human True Self capable of living a spiritual existence in a spiritual world.

## REFLECTION

Which soul powers are emerging or needing development?

- Creativity
- Forming allies
- Mastery and discernment
- Economy of means and wise limitation

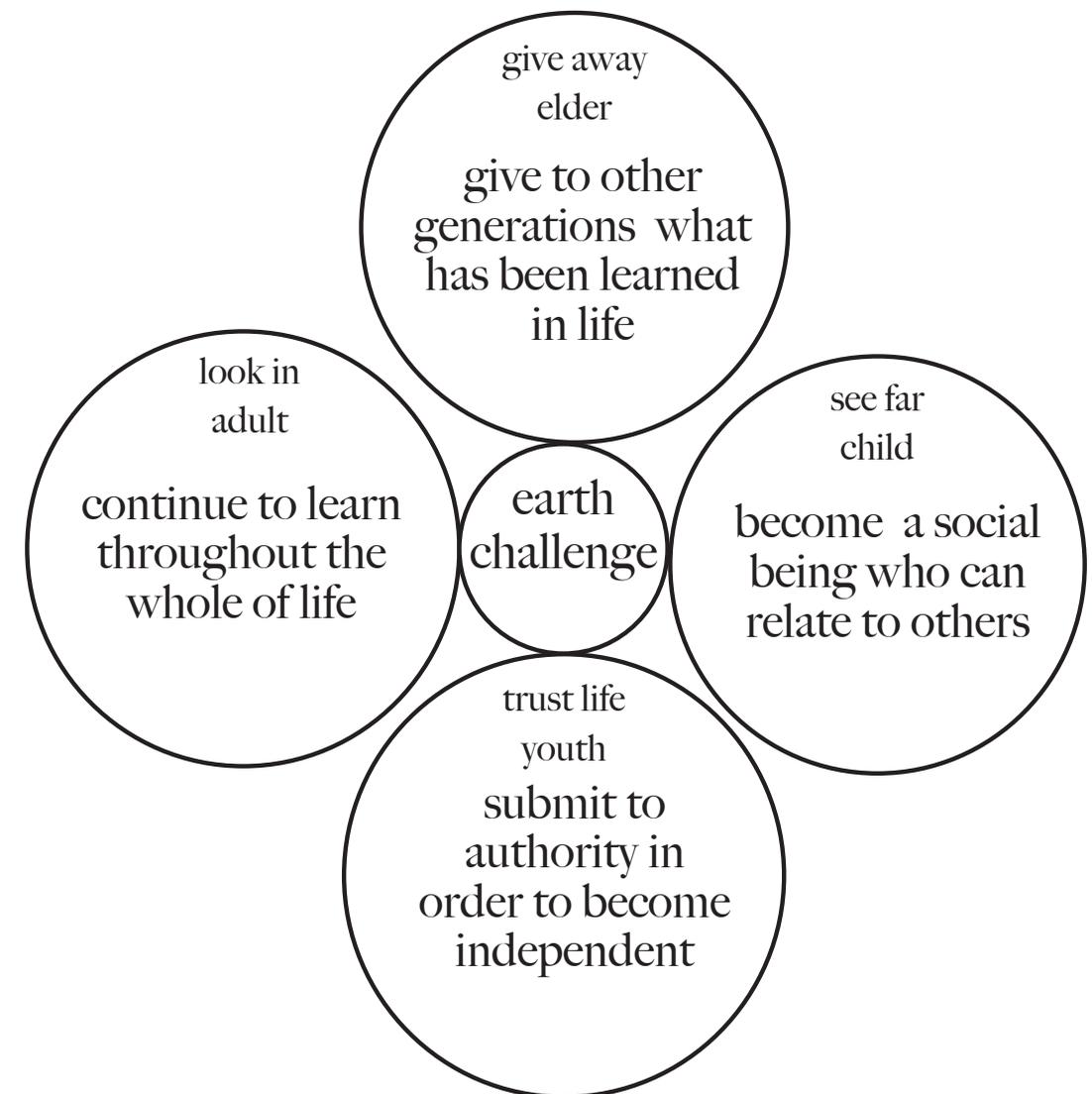


How did the journey illuminate these powers?

## EARTH LIFE CHALLENGE

Incarnation involves challenges designed in the cosmic balancing to enable humans to progress to higher states of consciousness. The child is challenged to become a social being, the adolescent is challenged to submit to authority, the adult is challenged to strive to continue learning throughout the whole of life and the elder is challenged to share with younger generations what has been learned through the process of living on the earth. Meeting these challenges in each phase enables a human to resolve conflicts with others and within the self. However, meeting these challenges is not an easy thing. The person needs to become more aware of how their own needs play into the needs of others and how those needs are a shifting tableau of emotional events.

This process is designed to maximally engage neural circuits between cognition, emotion and the will. The connections between movement centers, mesolimbic emotional centers, brainstem neurotransmitter ganglia, language processes, pre-frontal executive centers, pons and occiput relationships and the abundant linkages of the basal ganglia to most of these areas are all engaged in these simple exercises. The collection of words is a journal of the journey through the mandala. The words can be “auditioned” also in ways similar to the wax figures by using the mandala of the four directions to parse out mood motifs from the words. The goal of these activities is to open a door to a safe, imaginative and highly personal path into the world of dreams where all humans go to rest and rejuvenate from the trials and disappointments of an increasingly uncertain world.



## FINAL INTEGRATION JOURNAL

1. What did the Alpha and Omega figures ultimately teach you?

2. What surprised you most during the journey?

3. What wound, threshold, or reversal felt most significant?

4. What are you now able to “give away,” and what do you wish to cultivate?

5. What next step in your biography feels ready to unfold?

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