

Explaining My Unexplainable Work with Women

Written by ALisa Starkweather in July of 2006

This marks six years now amidst 23 years of women's empowerment facilitation since I began this international women's initiation with two other women. From my woman spirit to yours I want to share about this work but it takes me time usually to get into the heart of it. This predator/ prey/ victim/ perpetrator/ power/ disempowered work is a language of its own at first so bear with me. In the end we recognize our present work around this. Whether you are drawn here as a path or simply want to know what is happening in the women's world of empowerment work, here is my message to the women who are on womanstrength vibrations.

What is Women in Power? This is a fierce women's initiation that is both a safe and challenging container for our healing work. Most of us have internal voices that can be critical, judgmental and even annihilating that we battle with on the inside. And the hardest situations occur when this energy can sometimes by accident leak to the outside of us hurting our loved ones and ourselves. Or we are on the look out for where these dark energies may want to hurt us from our past experiences and waste our valuable energy in a kind of vigilance to keep ourselves externally safe not realizing that it comes from an internal predator scaring us inside as we look for it mirrored on the outside. Many of us are just plain scared in a world that is filled with war and violence of our anger and anyone else's. And yet, it is all around us and within us. What are we going to do in the place where we can have more of our power as women in the world and find some gold in our dark places? This has been one of my life contributions to face our dilemma straight on. It is true descent work but when we come out of it, we are more whole than ever. Whoever thought to look for our goodness in the darkest of all places?

Women in Power is a safe ritual container where we as women are able to explore and heal some of our darkest shadows. It is where women work on that strange shaming place we sometimes have going even in our best selves where we feel shamed because we judge ourselves as bad, so we act really good and believe still that we are bad. How do we rewire here? Sometimes it comes by grace and sometimes we need a place to work with it among the amazing company of other women. But not in the way we've been doing it. It's okay to be the bitch here you always thought you were, on purpose now during the initiation. But imagine too that it is also a place where you are safe. Curious, huh? And it is a place where the darkest shadows, the most violent rage, the deepest grief and the most brilliant and authentic joy surfaces. ??? I am not kidding.

I've got to be one of the luckiest women in the world to see the miracles that happen here for women. It is brave and courageous work ~ it is gut work, it is real. It is a place that we don't need to apologize for our power and is held with the integrity that in your core you are good once you don't need to fight so hard the knowing of just how bad you could be if you finally revealed the worst of it. If this is confusing to you, it is no wonder because shadow is the place where we have disowned something that we do not want or choose to recognize in ourselves. Then it becomes projected onto others because we fear it in ourselves. Women in Power is about coming home to it all and owning the worst of ourselves to finally get to the best of ourselves.

The work is facilitated by six skilled Shadow Work facilitators and as many as twenty women on staff for up to 30 participants. It happens only a few times a year, but women from all over the world have participated. I am an original co-founder of Women in Power so you can look at my website and my profile as I am over twenty years in now with women's empowerment, ritual and community based work.

The work is true liberation work in the most glorious ways. It comes from the premise that at some time in our life we make a vow never to be like the one that hurt us. Smart thinking. But in doing so, we are sometimes left with some interesting backlash that resembles with our power throwing the baby out with the bath water. We can be left with the only archetypal energy that we see as good, kind, giving, and that is what we name here is as prey energy because it often lacks an energy that can confront, stand up to, and be powerful in the face of large energies. Instead it can be sacrificial of one's gift for the benefit of all. Or sometimes we make a vow not to be like the one we judge is weaker (prey) and then we end up in a place where we are missing our more vulnerable aspects of self, too, although we are able to be strong and guarded warrioresses.

In Women in Power, we tease apart what we judge as healthy and unhealthy aspects of archetypal predator/prey circuitry that interrupts our fuller choices of what is possible at any given moment when we face life situations in order to give you your innate power to be both powerful and vulnerable again. This includes what we are doing with our sexual energies as well. Any place actually that you are not freely able to express or be the powerful woman that you were born to be are given the opportunity of 360 degree choice again about what you want to do and who you are.

But first we need to revisit sometimes our past to find out about that original vow that we made when we lost something of our power. We've done the inner child work and maybe laid some boundaries down as warrior to our perpetrator(s) but hardly ever have we journeyed to the place where we OWN the inner perpetrator, inner predator that stalks us on the inside even with our vow not to be like that. Here is where we see women re-establish safety from internally and come to a place where she can revel in her power in all ways as she chooses, allowing her innate goodness and not her fear that she is really "bad" to the bone be what leads her life. This lurking fear often is the driving force for us to be good. Let's redefine good and be "good" at being our authentic selves where we are also powerful, giving, courageous, strong, brilliant and bold. Huh? Are we ready for that?

The work is a rare container to do the kind of deep work that we've been waiting for but maybe we either haven't seen it or we haven't been ready. If you want to know more, go to www.womeninpowerprogram.com or my listing under events. The weekends fill with a waitlist most of the time. However we take this on, it is time for the women to acknowledge that perhaps we are far more powerful than we have ever allowed ourselves to be out of fear. Women, this kind of fear that has kept us less is no longer protecting us but limiting some of greatest expressions of love that are needed now in this world. However you come into becoming all of who you are, may you have the courage to take the risks to set your self free.