

Mothering The Wild & Becoming The Bad Daughter

Howl for Me, Wolf-Woman!

with *Danielle Dulsky* & *The Urban Howl*

Howl for me, Wolf-Woman!

First, I just want to say THANK YOU for all that you do here. This column has helped me so much and I know it's helping so many others.

My question – I have a horrible relationship with my mother. She wasn't around much while I was growing up, so it's taken me a lot to forgive her and to work through and express a lot of anger. I feel like I've made great strides in my life to heal from what feels like rejection, but as I've grown, I feel like my mother hasn't, and at times I become judgmental towards her, and irritated by what feels like ignorance and denial on her behalf. I want to have a relationship with my mother, but the boundaries I have to draw in order to just feel OK around her are huge and feels like so much effort, that sometimes I can't be bothered to do so. When I speak to her or are around her, I don't feel like I am myself – I'm this other version of me, one that is hard and protected because I don't want to get hurt again by her. Do you have any ways in which I could shift this or look at it in a different way?

Thank you,
Mother-Wounded

Dearest Mother-Wounded,

Your story, your mother-wound, is one shared by many awakened, wild women. The medicine I have for you is the same healing salve I have slathered on my own mother-wounds time and time again, and I hope it offers you some comfort despite the complexity of its ingredients.

Firstly, I consider the wild woman's relationship with her mother a great teacher, for it casts a dim candle's glow on our hunger for the feminine divine. We have all been orphaned by the loss of the Goddess, but it is those who are drawn to wild spirituality who have come to demand Her presence, rage against the machine of patriarchal religion, and howl mournfully like lost cubs who cannot find their den-mothers. Because we truly cannot fathom what the soft-breasted comfort of a gender-equal society feels like, because we can only sense Her absence, we are affected by the collective feminine ire born from spiritual matricide. In essence, there are few mothers who can fill the gaping void left in their daughters' hearts because that void cannot be filled by a human presence; it is a black-hole, spiritual void with aching walls, and it can only be filled with the holy feminine.

All of that being said; I am not in any way suggesting that all mothers deserve reprieve for any and all soul-crimes committed against their children, and I do consider much of what you are describing a crime against the soul. Any time anyone suggests you are not who you say you are, they are discounting the merit of your soul's growth. You worked damn hard to become the soulful creature you are, and your mother is still clinging to an outmoded version of her daughter. Mind you, I believe we all do this to a certain degree; it is human to want those we love to stay exactly the same, for every time a bit of the red, raw soul ascends into the ego, every time true growth occurs, there is a chance we will be abandoned. Not knowing your mother's shadows or deep wounds, I would

suggest that at least some of her ill-treatment of you is born from the companion fears that you will leave her (a) and that she will not know who she is once you are gone (b).

In my own work, I have begun to frame all outmoded relationships as "the garden," as in Lilith's Garden of Eden; these were contexts within which you felt very safe for a time but, however slowly, these spaces began to invalidate your very identity. You have grown, but your garden has not, thus you have no choice but to leave the too-small life. A wild woman will not be forced to wear ill-fitting masks of "good daughter," "obedient wife," or any other superficial roles which discount the depths of our feminine worth. Your mother is not your "garden," but your relationship with her is. You say you feel as if you are another "version" of yourself when you are with her, and this is a clear sign that the relationship must change if it is to survive.

All relationships, those born from blood and otherwise, will live through a necessary respite if they are genuine. It seems you have already done a lot of work in communicating your feelings to your mother, and I do not know how receptive she would be if you were to demand space. I will say that you should not feel guilty for gifting yourself with a necessary distance from anyone, including the one who birthed you into this world, if they are carving their wounds into your skin. No one was born only to be a teaching tool, and if you feel your relationship with your mother is an obstacle to your further liberation than do not hesitate to sever communication for a time. The conflict you are describing is likely not serving either of you, and perhaps such a severance is an act of compassion as well as one of self-preservation.

All women are wounded, and our task in this life is to support one another as much as we are able. However, that support should in no way conflict with our soul-work. You were born to do great things in this life, my love, and I promise you your soul's purpose extends far beyond your mother-daughter

relationship. Ask yourself this: If my soul hand-picked my mother to be in my life for a reason, to support me in fulfilling my life's purpose, what would that reason be? Perhaps her absence when you were young was of pivotal importance, for it highlighted your resilience and fortitude. Now, if your mother's soul had done the same, hand-selected you to be her daughter for a reason, what would that reason be?

The Mystery is beautiful, for we are not meant to know all things. We are not meant to have constant night-vision and see into any and all relationship complexities. I do not know why your relationship with your mother is a conflicted one, but I do not that the strongest women in my life all have severe mother-wounds. Consider that your mother's absence when you were a girl reflected the bloodiest wound affecting all of humanity, that is the loss of feminine, soulful authenticity, and your mother is affected by this same wound.

So, too, demand to be called by the names you have given yourself, my love, for you worked tirelessly to uncover your authenticity and you deserve nothing less. Howl so loudly that the glass of your most fragile, most confining relationships shatters, then choose when and how you will, together, craft a colourful mosaic out of the pieces. I recommend reading [Circle of Stones: Woman's Journey to Herself](#) for discussion on the collective mother-wound and how all women are affected by Her loss. By the light of the waning, 13th moon, know I am howling with you.

Much love,
Danielle

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