

When the Call Grew a Body

Responding to the Matriarch's Call — Essay One

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The Beginning

When I look for the beginning of the first *Journey of Inquiry*, several beginnings wave back at me.

One begins in a season of letting go.

One begins with a poem.

One begins in my body, in a passage into elderhood for which I had few cultural maps.

And one begins with a simple inner question: *What are you waiting for?*

Apparently, beginnings are not always as interested in orderly chronology as I would like to be when writing.

Together, these moments became the ground from which *Matriarch on Tour — Journeys of Inquiry* could emerge.

A passage of transformation

Before there was a journey, there was a time when much of what had given shape to my life was changing. I was exhausted, at times even depressed. Familiar forms were falling away, and the experience was deeply painful.

Perhaps you know such a season. The life you have known no longer quite fits, while the life that may be emerging has not yet shown its face. You are somewhere between the familiar and what has not yet revealed itself—a space of not knowing that holds you while what is emerging takes the time it needs.

I wanted to understand what was happening. I wanted to find my way through it. Yet deep down, I knew: there was nothing here that needed fixing, resolving, or made better. This was an invitation to stay with it.

So I did.

I stayed with the pain in all its stages, from small to large. I stepped toward the experience, bowed to it, and let it work on me. Surrender, for me, became an active relationship with what was happening: a willingness to listen before I knew what I was listening for.

What helped me was remembering what many of us know and can so easily forget when we are in pain:

> Even the most difficult passages can hold a gift we cannot yet see.

I kept reminding myself: *Be patient. There is something here for you to learn. Let it reveal itself in its own time.*

Elderhood entered through that passage, without ceremonial fanfare or a helpful instruction manual.

At first, it carried stillness and paralysis. Ordinary life continued around me, while I felt held inside a sphere where very little seemed able to move. I sensed that something profound was happening, even when I had no language for it. Our culture offers few living maps for a conscious passage into elderhood while our contributions to life are still unfolding.

Maybe you have known a threshold like this too: something has already changed within you, while your language and your life are still catching up.

> Then the stillness changed.

What had felt like paralysis opened into an explosive bodily experience of liberation. It was visceral: I could bow and let go of old patterns, energy moved again, and body, mind, heart, and spirit came into a new alignment. My entire being, it seemed, had waited patiently enough.

The passage had unfolded gradually, and it also carried the force of a rite.

I began to understand elderhood as a threshold of consciousness. Age is part of that threshold, and its deeper invitation concerns how we inhabit what life has given us. What have we lived long enough to know? What has become ours to offer? Where is that offering invited? How do we continue learning as we offer it?

I wonder what arises in you when you hear those questions.

For me, these questions opened a generative unknown. They touched purpose, livelihood, contribution, and the shape of the years ahead. They asked me to listen with my whole body.

The loving and powerful elder

During this time, a poem[1] came through me. It gave voice to what had guided my life and work for many years—the unification of Love and Power—now speaking through the threshold of elderhood.

The Matriarch I am coming to know holds these qualities in one presence. Her Love carries warmth, dignity, care, and deep relationship with all of life. Her Power carries clarity, agency, protection, responsibility, and the capacity to act. Their unification becomes palpable in Her.

This has become central to how I inhabit and embody my feminine elderhood. Wisdom asks to be offered with Love. With Power, it discerns, takes a stand, and takes form—all in service to life. Stepping more fully into my feminine elderhood has opened a whole new field of possibilities for embodying my purpose: *The Unification of Love and Power.*

I began to sense the elder as someone who listens for where her wisdom is invited and steps toward those invitations—toward people, places, and questions where what she has lived may become a meaningful offering. Her authority grows from lived experience, continuing inquiry, and relationship.

> She offers what has become hers to offer, while remaining willing to be changed by what she encounters.

The poem allowed this voice to become audible in me. It felt ancient, intimate, and newly mine: the voice of a loving and powerful feminine elder.

Perhaps you know the surprise of meeting a voice within yourself that feels both new and deeply familiar. You hear it and think: *Ah. There you are.*

A Call that wanted to travel

From this new ground of feminine elderhood, I could finally turn toward a beckoning energy I had felt for some time without yet knowing how to meet it. It revealed itself as the Matriarch calling me to inquire, listen deeply, and respond to Her.

Through this inquiry, I came to understand the Matriarch as an archetypal presence, alive as a possibility within all of us. Her Call reaches into how we are, how we act, how we relate, and how we participate in what is becoming. She invites us into new and very specific embodiments of being, doing, and becoming together.

As I worked on the Matriarch's Call website and spoke with people close to the inquiry, another possibility began to gather around the Call. A sentence formed inside me:

> You do not have to come to me. I will come to you.

This one touched something deeply familiar. I have a nomadic heart. I love meeting people in the places where they live, feeling the texture of their communities and cultures, and discovering what becomes visible when an inquiry enters a particular landscape and constellation of relationships.

I was also carrying a strong longing for embodied presence. So much of my relational life and work had unfolded through screens. Online spaces had allowed real intimacy and connection across distance, and I felt hungry for the dimension that appears when bodies share a room: the warmth of a hug, the presence of a hand, silence held together, food around a table, movement, tears, laughter, and the subtle communication that passes through a circle before words arrive.

Perhaps you have felt that longing too—the wish to meet beyond the little rectangles on a screen and discover what becomes possible when our whole selves can enter the room.

During this time, Creativity spoke through my spiritual journalling practice, JournaLogue, with unmistakable directness:

What are you waiting for?

Begin.

Creativity, as it turns out, has limited patience for my wish to understand everything before I take the first step.

The idea of traveling with the inquiry brought these currents together. I could go to people in their own places. We could gather around the Matriarch archetype and discover what wanted to become visible there. The inquiry could move, encounter, listen, and take form through relationship.

The phrase *Matriarch on Tour* carried an immediate spark. People's faces often lit up when they heard it, even while the form itself was still emerging.

The name also invited precision. *Matriarch on Tour — Journeys of Inquiry* names the wider sphere. The inquiry into the Matriarch archetype goes on tour. I travel as the source and initiator of *Matriarch on Tour*, finding place-based collaboration partners with whom I enter the inquiry alongside the people who gather. Each Gathering becomes its embodied form in a particular place.

This distinction matters to me. It honors the Matriarch as larger than any one person. It also allows each *Journey of Inquiry* to be shaped by the people, relationships, questions, and places that receive it.

Recognition

When I remember what this emerging possibility felt like in my body, the word that comes closest is *recognition*. The first *Journey of Inquiry* gathered what I already loved and longed for: travel, cultural curiosity, meaningful relationship, embodied presence, archetypal inquiry, and the wish to offer what life had been teaching me. The form appeared, and something in me knew it.

The Matriarch's Call remained the wider field; *Matriarch on Tour* became its first embodied expression. The Call had already grown a body through my own passage—through letting go and staying present, stillness and liberation, and the claiming of my feminine elderhood. Now it was asking for another kind of body: a journey, a sequence of places, circles of women, shared practices, and living encounters whose meaning none of us could know in advance.

I said yes.

I could not yet see the four Gatherings that would follow, the relationships that would give them form, or the many doors that would open along the way. Nor could I know how generously the journey itself would meet me.

What began as my response to *The Matriarch's Call* soon became relational. Invitations arrived. People rearranged their plans, opened their homes, offered places to gather, and stepped into collaboration with extraordinary trust—several of them before we had ever met in person.

> I followed the Call, and the world responded with generosity.

That response gave the first *Journey of Inquiry* its relational body. It is where the story goes next.

With love,

Christiane

1

The Matriarch's Call

I move with kinship, never conquest.
I arrive like weather—quiet, ungovernable.
A soft insistence shaped by decades of listening.

You might not notice me at first.
I join without spectacle or announcement.
But if you pause long enough,
you'll feel the temperature change.

I am the one who waits—
for willingness.

I don’t carry answers in jars.
I bring the slow medicine of unlearning,
and the patience to stand
at the doorway of your unraveling
without flinching.

I have walked barefoot across landscapes of loss,
to learn their shape,
to honor their wisdom.

I carry stories with no endings.
Questions with no obligation to resolve.
I speak with my hands open—
sometimes holding,
sometimes letting go.

I offer presence
as invitation.
To witness.
To soften the illusion
that we are separate from
what breathes through everything.

I speak to the trees as kin.
I take advice from shadows.
I no longer ask the sun for light—
we sit together,
old friends
with nothing to prove.

I gather those willing to risk
being changed by encounter.
Who know that true power
rests in devotion.

We weave
to remember:
this has always been a web.

Come.
Bring your ache.
Bring your questions.
Bring the part of you that never fit the mold.

I will meet you at the edge,
where wild things still remember
how to trust
what comes undone.

The story continues here:

The Call Becomes Relational