

THE SOULWORK PROCESS™

A Comprehensive Primer *By: Cadie Selah, LAc,
MSOM*

Welcome to the Journey Inward

"Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will rule your life and you will call it fate." ~Carl Jung

You have already taken the most courageous step—you've said yes to the journey inward. This primer serves as your map, your compass, and your companion as you navigate the sacred territory of your own transformation. The Soulwork Process™ is not a destination you arrive at, but a way of walking in the world that becomes woven into the very fabric of your being.

PART I: THE FOUNDATION OF SOULWORK

What is Soulwork?

Soulwork is the inner work of making the unconscious conscious. It is the work of self-mastery and it is the process of transformation as we make contact with our soul.

This work turns your gaze inward—an inverted paradigm from the status quo. We journey into our inner landscapes, building our transformational skill set so that we can effectively be in relationship with what we encounter along the way.

We use our conscious "outer" material—like our physical symptoms, our anxiety, relationship or work challenges—along with the motivation of our desires, to uncover the unconscious material running the show from behind the scenes.

The Alchemical Way

Alchemy has been practiced by ancient Egyptians, European hermetic mages, Eastern Tantrics, Chinese Taoists, Buddhists, and countless animist-shamanic cultures throughout the globe. In this context, alchemy is spiritual in nature, using the metaphor of turning base metals, like lead, into gold.

In Ancient China, the symbols for alchemy are:

- **Lian** - refine or practice
- **Jin** - buried gold

- **Shu** - skill, art, technique perfected over time

So alchemy is a refinement process that includes buried gold, and it is necessarily a practice, skill, and art that happens over time. It's not linear, but there are specific tools, skills, and practices that support your unfolding.

As Michael Meade says: *"The gifts are near the wounds. In order to get to the gifts you have to go near the wounds. Our genius is hiding behind our wounds."*

This is alchemy as a healing path. Our gold—gifts, genius, dreams—is down in there with the hot black mess of our wounds. These wounds show up as illness, pain, and life challenges, which become lifelines or laser beams to the underworld realm of the subconscious.

Old traumas live here and shouldn't be feared, but welcomed (through skill building) as "parts" of you coming home from the land of the wound...

The Truth-Telling Path

Soulwork is truth telling. Radical honesty with yourself and others about your feelings, your desires, your pain... releases you from the self-imposed (but unconscious) blocks we meet in our everyday lives.

when we are honest, we have the courage to look at and feel what is difficult - not only within ourselves, but also in our relationships.

We humans fear sensation... we collude with the ego's determination to only have the good sensations and to run from the "bad" ones. So we hide the truth. We avoid, dramatize-in-order-to-avoid-the-real, and suppress sensations, feelings, and the felt sense of our full spectrum experience.

We create a narrow box where we keep experiencing the same thing over and over—because we like the safety, comfort, and convenience of "predictable and known."

The Three Levels of Desire

What are your goals and visions for your life? Are you clear about what you find important in life? Do you feel passionate about things and what are they? Accessing the 3 levels of desire supports you to enter into a more whole version of yourself and where you are going.

Human-Level Pursuits: Physical, mental, and emotional health, happiness, money, free time, better relationships, fulfilling creative life and work.

Higher Spiritual Desires: To be of service, to leave a legacy, mystical or spiritual identity, divine connection and embodied experience of Love, to live our dreams—the destiny or purpose for this incarnation.

Soul Desires: The soul would like to encounter the entire spectrum of human experience fully... to meet the pain, the grief of loss, the terror of the unknown... the darker side of why you are here in a body—to learn, grow and experience it all.

Soulwork is building the inner capacity to honor and love all these levels of desire.

PART II: THE MANDALA OF TRANSFORMATION

The Sacred Geometry of Your Journey

The mandala is a sacred symbol representing wholeness, unity, and the cosmos. In The Soulwork Process™, we work with two interconnected mandalas that create the complete map of your transformation:

- **The Mandala of Self-Mastery** (your inner landscape)
- **The Mandala of Practices** (your toolkit for transformation)

These mandalas are not separate—they are interwoven aspects of the same sacred geometry, each spoke supporting and strengthening the others.

The Mandala of Practices: Your Five-Fold Path

SOMATIC PRACTICES *Focus: The Body - Foundation of All Other Realms*

The body is the foundation of our soma, which is the gateway to all other realms of our being. Here we cultivate the "felt sense" and the willingness to feel full spectrum sensations that life brings.

When you are in contact with your body, you are in contact with your sensations. These sensations are your communications with life around you. When you are in communication with life all around you, your world expands. You become more responsive to the "others" in your field, begetting deeper relationships, empathy, and expansiveness that allows life to "work on you."

SHAKTI PRACTICES *Focus: The Energy Body - Understanding Ourselves as Energy*

Here we integrate the quantum with the energy body mastery wisdom of the ancients. We cultivate our Vital Life Force Energy, which is also our kundalini serpentine energy, our erotic-sexual energy, and weaves into understanding and interacting in the "other reality" or spirit world.

This practice teaches you that you are not just a physical being having a spiritual experience, but an energetic being learning to master the dance between form and formlessness.

SHAMANIC PRACTICES *Focus: The Mystical - Cosmic, Eternal, and Inherently Magickal*

We access the unseen dimensions of the world, often symbolically portrayed cross-culturally as the World Tree of upper, middle, and lower worlds. Here we cultivate animist relationships, shamanic techniques, ritual and ceremony, and spirit-guided healing.

This is where you remember that you live in a relational, multi-dimensional universe and learn to work with the unseen allies and wisdom that surround you.

pSYCHE PRACTICES *Focus: The Mind's Myriad Parts and the Resource of Self*

Who is doing the thinking and feeling? We explore essence qualities and archetypes, cultivating unconditional loving presence and the inner witness to re-parent and integrate unprocessed material and redirect outdated coping behaviors from our past.

This is the realm of inner parts work, shadow integration, and the cultivation of the loving inner parent who can hold all aspects of your psyche with compassion.

SACRED EARTH PRACTICES *Focus: Rewilding and Building Elemental Resiliency*

We build authentic contact and relationship with the natural world, cultivating intimacy with Earth Spirit and all our relations—specifically the non-human beings that dwell here with us. We make contact with self, spirit, and goddess through immersion and regular inhabitation within natural and wild places.

This practice remembers that healing happens not just within us, but between us and the living world of which we are part.

The Mandala of Self-Mastery: Your Inner Landscape

At the center of your transformation mandala sits the essential truth: everything you need can be found inside of you. Your consciousness-body-soul is a portal to everything. "I am in the universe and the universe is within me."

Each spoke of the practice mandala cultivates a specific aspect of your inner landscape:

- **Somatic Mastery:** Embodied presence and sensory wisdom
- **Energy Body Mastery:** Vital life force cultivation + subtle perception
- **Mystical Mastery:** Spirit reality connection and shamanic sight
- **Psychological Mastery:** Inner witness and loving self-relationship
- **Earth Mastery:** Wild wisdom and elemental attunement

PART III: THE 9 GATEWAYS TO SOULWORK

The Palaces of the Heart

The 9 Gateways are based on the 9 palaces of the heart. They are the landscape in which you enter your inner work, using the symptoms and patterns that show up as guideposts along the journey.

The 9 Palaces of the Heart are:

1. **Health**
2. **Wealth**
3. **Career**
4. **Relationships**
5. **Travel**
6. **Children/Creativity**
7. **Home**
8. **Prosperity**
9. **Wisdom**

When we decided to take form in a human body, we signed up for soulwork in these palaces. Your soulwork is going to be different from the

next person's. Some folks have great careers but messy personal lives. Others have soulmate love but constant health struggles.

We all "get worked" in different areas and have strengths in different palaces. This connects to your elemental constitution, as each palace corresponds to an element.

The Holistic View of Each Gateway

For each palace, we examine:

- **Physical/Physiological aspects**
- **Mental/Emotional aspects**
- **Spiritual and Ancestral aspects**
- **Sexuality/Creativity aspects**
- **Social, Environmental, or Global stressors**

Gateways as Portals to Prima Materia

There is something in alchemy called the "prima materia"—the primal material, the base "mother" from which all things came. The gateways are not the prima materia but are the portals to it.

The prima materia is the chaos or darkness from which light was born. The darkness and chaos we find in the underworld—the below, the place underneath, the unconscious. These gateways are like shamanic doorways

to other realities, namely the underworld reality. This is the soul's descent to transmute our inner darkness (pain, trauma, shadows) into light.

The deeper you go into the dark soil with your roots, the higher you rise into the upper world of the light.

PART IV: THE PRACTICE OF TRANSFORMATION

Grit, Grace, and Grok: The Three G's of Soulwork

GRIT: The blood, sweat, and tears of the soul's path. The nitty gritty, get down on your knees and wail your heart out. The pain we must feel, the grief we must touch, the discipline we must willfully orchestrate, and the sensations of life we must bear on the path.

GRACE: The "workless" part of the path, where we get to just receive. The healing practitioners, mentors, teachers, medicine people and guides that work on your behalf. The grace of the Divine, spontaneous healings, the moments where Grace simply lifts the burdens. This comes through ceremony, ritual, shamanic states, random strangers, good luck, star alignments, simply being in nature.

GROK: To understand intuitively and holistically; an embodied knowing that transcends just the logical mind but also includes it. The soul's intention for deep learning. The embodied knowing of ourselves—our true divine nature while in a body.

Working with Physical Symptoms as Doorways

Our physical symptoms and discomforts are doorways into soulwork. Even minor irritations or seemingly straightforward illnesses are portals to patterns, emotions, and stressors that are **READY** to be healed, released, or transmuted.

Energy follows attention. The quality of your attention matters. When we turn towards our pain and illness instead of running away, we take the first step to opening a door that leads to transformation by accessing the *prima materia*—the darkness and chaos below our conscious awareness.

Physiological Patterns: Traditional medicines like Chinese medicine and Ayurveda understand the body in terms of elemental, cosmic, and nature-based patterns. Two people might have different symptoms but the same pattern, or the same symptoms but different patterns. By treating the underlying pattern imbalance, harmony is restored.

Working with Mental-Emotional Patterns

Feeling the Feelings: There is a difference between "being emotional" and "truly feeling." Our emotional life is a product of our past. To live in the present, which allows for infinite possibilities, we must address our past.

Sometimes the only way through is to cry, grieve, weep, or rage.
Sometimes we just can't bypass the feelings and nothing will get better until we face that emotional pain.

Feeling is warrior work. Instead of trying to get away from harder feelings, we must run toward them. As we get close enough to the "monster," it transforms into something wonderful, beautiful, healing... or all three.

Common Emotional Gateways:

- Anxiety & Depression
- Negative & Critical Thoughts
- Shame spirals
- ADD/ADHD
- Various "Diagnoses"

Remember: emotions are energy in motion. Once we move them, we heal. These are not permanent states—they are visitors on the journey to your inner darkness, where light is born.

Working with Ancestral Patterns

When you feel passion arise knowing that healing your ancestral patterns is "root medicine" that ripples out, you're answering a calling. Stewardship of your bloodlines is sacred work.

Awakening to and tending your ancestral patterns—both gifts and wounds—HEALS your current life challenges while creating healing for your ancestors and future children in your bloodlines. Releasing the burdens of the past is possible and is a gift for the Earth.

PART V: THE RITUAL CONTAINER AND ANIMIST FOUNDATION

Living in an Animist Universe

Animism is the pre-colonial paradigm of many nature-based, magical, indigenous, and shamanic cultures that live in a world where all things in Nature have soul or spirit, are intelligent, and can be communicated with.

An animist worldview makes the world way less boring, way more compelling and magical—in both an enchanting way and a romantically spine-chilling kind of way.

There is a place of belonging in an animist world, where your soul essence, finely tuned sensitivities, and visionary gifts have a place—where your idiosyncrasies make sense and life holds robust, rich, reverential meaning.

Ancestral Connection as Medicine

Being available to the ancestral field, followed by enacting ritual practices and wisdom teachings for intergenerational healing, can have tangible and positive effects on your personal challenges and illnesses.

It can also heal the more elusive pain and wounds of isolation, fragmentation, loneliness, depression-without-a-cause, and the hidden grief of loss (intergenerational loss of our land, home, ways of life, and people).

Whether you consider yourself an empath or not, all folks have the capacity to attune to the "field"—the relational energetics of our world, including subtle energies. Returning to this innate capacity is revolutionary and healing for our ancestral lines.

The Fabric of Ritual

Ritual creates sacred time and space for transformation to occur. It's the container that holds us as we journey between worlds, between who we were and who we're becoming.

"Rituals are the formulas by which harmony is restored." ~Terry Tempest Williams

In our ritual containers, we:

- Create safety for vulnerable exploration
 - Honor the sacred in the mundane
 - Connect with ancestors and guides
 - Allow for spontaneous healing and revelation
 - Practice new ways of being before integrating them into daily life
-

PART VI: TRAUMA, HEALING, AND HEALTH TRANSFORMATION

Understanding Trauma as Transformation Gateway

What most people don't realize is how tangible health "transformations" become when we address them from a trauma perspective. (And when I say health, I mean physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and relational.)

Trauma from early life and development is linked to our physical and mental health as well as life outcomes as adults. The ACE Study (Adverse

Childhood Events) is peer-reviewed research linking childhood trauma to adult onset of disease, chronic illness, and social/relational issues.

Trauma can interrupt our attachment—our ability to feel love, connection, belonging, safety, and to form healthy relationships later in life. All of life is built on relationships.

The Direct and Indirect Approach

DIRECTLY: We practice-in-real-life, studying and self-helping our way to better relationships (and therefore everything else) with communication skills, adulting skills, attunement and presence skills, centering and grounding and listening skills.

INDIRECTLY: We heal our trauma bodies through:

- Somatic orientation experiences and nervous system regulation
- Energy body and soul repair
- Ancestral and family of origin healing
- Creation of ritual/ceremony in community

Much of trauma healing is learning "transformational life skills" and getting resourced. This process is deeply soul satiating (and can actually be fun, hilarious, blissful).

PART VII: THE FEMININE PRINCIPLE AND WOMEN'S HEALING

Why Ritual, Embodiment, and the Deep Self Matter

The deep self gives us access to that inner knowing where we make decisions and derive wisdom for our life's path. This leads to a more present and pleasurable existence.

A feminine-led path is slow medicine—potent in small doses and life-changing over the long term.

Restoring the Feminine Ray

Merlin Stone talks about the parallel between women's rights and women's rites. We are wise to unearth the ancient roots of women's power and women's particular affinities to:

- The body/embodiment
- Creatrix energy + fertility in all aspects
- Intuition, higher seeing, and mystical states
- Working with subtle energy/Shakti
- Cyclical rhythms

The balance the world needs is leading with the feminine principle (yin/magnetic), which includes:

Going Slow: Recognizing true transformation takes time, practice, and integration. We need slow medicine that allows our heart to sync up.

Heart-Centered Living: Focus on "relating" skills. How do we communicate with love and effectiveness? Relationship as equal to or more important than task.

Sensuality and Softness: Without sacrificing strength. Softening and opening to vulnerability takes courage and inner strength. When we are sensual, we're connected to our senses and the pleasure of being embodied.

Nature as Source: When we harmonize our brainwaves and energy body with Earth, we open to the underlying support and fecundity available to us.

Recovery from Colonization

We are all in recovery from colonization, toxic patriarchal values, and aggressive-linear thinking. Those who are called are "rehabbing" and restoring relationship with a more feminine-led way of life.

We are coming "home" to our source when we begin to live by honoring all the energies in the world—cultivating an ANIMIST way of life where we're in working relationship with other beings, not just humans: the rocks, trees, rivers, eagles, deer, and not only seen beings, but unseen ones—ancestors and many other spirit beings.

PART VIII: THE SEVEN ARCHETYPES OF TRANSFORMATION

Your Inner Council

As you journey through The Soulwork Process™, you'll activate and embody different archetypal energies. These are not roles to perform but aspects of your authentic self to cultivate:

1. The Tracker/Detective/Mindfulness Maven

We watch, we witness, we bring love and compassion. This is your inner scientist, gathering data about your patterns with curiosity rather than judgment.

2. The Mystic and High Priestess

We find our authentic way to pray, meditate, and commune with the

Divine. This is your direct line to the sacred, your capacity for transcendent experience.

3. The Inner Visionary

We don't force, but allow vision to arise through clear intention. This is your creative imagination, your ability to see beyond current reality.

4. The Queen Sovereign

We are not passive, we are not aggressive, but we assert ourselves. The middle road, the holding of paradox—both at once. This is your mature feminine power.

5. The Humble Apprentice/Neophyte

We seek help and support from professionals, nature, and the Animist Divine. This is your beginner's mind, your willingness to learn and receive.

6. The Inner Creatrix

We step into responsibility as creators of our lives, as artisans of our experience. We no longer push away our power but ingest it, releasing the victim mindset.

7. The Healing Warrior

We run toward the monster instead of away. We have the courage to feel everything, to go into the dark places where our gold is buried.

PART IX: PRACTICES TO BEGIN AND DEEPEN

The Healing Coherence Practice

A unique blend of somatic shaking medicine and heart meditation for cellular rewiring

The marriage of chaos and coherence creates a doorway into the healing field. Through this practice, we learn to dance between structure and freedom, finding our natural rhythm in the field of all possibilities.

Set-Up:

- Private space where you can move freely
- Cushion or chair for seated portions
- Water nearby
- Optional: heart rate variability monitor

Phase 1: Heart-Field Activation (5 minutes)

- Sit comfortably, spine aligned, hands over heart center
- Breathe: Inhale 5 counts through nose, brief hold, exhale 10 counts through softened mouth
- Focus on gratitude or appreciation expanding from heart
- Continue until you feel warmth in chest

Phase 2: Quantum Shake Release (7 minutes)

- Stand with feet hip-width apart, begin gentle bouncing from knees
- Let shake move up through belly and chest
- Allow arms to float and shake naturally
- Permit head to gently release tension
- Key: Follow body's natural shake rhythm while maintaining heart focus

Phase 3: Heart-Shake Integration (3-5 minutes)

- Gradually slow shaking, return to seated position
- Hands on heart, return to coherent breath pattern
- Feel the heightened energy field around your heart
- Notice tingles, warmth, expansiveness, colors, insights

Daily Soulwork Practices

Morning Attunement:

- Upon waking, before reaching for phone, place hands on heart
- Ask: "What does my soul need today?"
- Listen for the first impulse that arises
- Set intention to honor that need

Symptom Tracking:

- Notice physical sensations throughout the day without trying to fix them
- Ask: "What is this sensation trying to tell me?"
- Journal patterns you observe over time

Evening Integration:

- Before sleep, scan your body from head to toe
- Acknowledge any places of tension with gratitude
- Send breath and love to those areas
- Ask your dreams for guidance

Working with the 9 Gateways

Choose one palace/gateway that feels most activated for you right now.
For the next moon cycle (28 days), track:

- Physical symptoms or sensations related to this area
- Emotional patterns that arise
- Dreams or synchronicities
- Ancestral memories or family patterns
- What this gateway might be trying to teach you

Journal your observations and notice what themes emerge.

PART X: THE REALITY OF SOULWORK

No Guarantees

There exists no stamp, no official seal, no obliged guarantee. This is the raw edge of old school. As in real life where there are no promises. Only a prayer. Sometimes hope. And fortitude.

What we are talking about in this realm of soul involves no voluminous vows of lucrative business, nor even an anxiety-free life, not even any change at all... at least not visible by the common eye.

But I can promise: You will be changed forever. From the inside out.

The ways of soul do not substantiate any particular outcome guided by your ego. Outcomes are more like states of being, and those states of being create experiences that may or may not look like what you originally set out to accomplish.

The soul has its own agenda and takes you to places beyond good or bad, to realities that are integrated longing, places where shame meets love.

The Paradox of Self-Mastery

The paradox is that you have to find your own way in the work. Part of the work is returning to your inner knowing. No one can tell you how to do it and no one can do it for you.

But there are natural laws to know about, transformational tools and practices to master, teachings from those who have come before, who have done the work, and know a thing or two.

Self-mastery is at the heart of soulwork because everything you need can be found inside of you. Your consciousness-body-soul is a portal to everything.

The Long Game

It's not gonna be on your ego's timeline. Results are sometimes "different than imagined" or hoped for by the onlookers of your soulful titrations.

We might travel long distances before we see the blossoming of our hard-earned work. The path of the soul is work as much as it is grace.

Even though we might sometimes feel like solo sojourners, we are never alone. As we learn to make the invisible visible and the unconscious conscious, we move together.

Those who choose to enter the perilous and intimidating flow of soulwork are held in that river for as long as we can bear the satiation that accompanies hard work.

The rewards turn out to be so much more than our goals and dream life. It's a state of being while in the process. It's a loving presence, a cultivation of sensing like you were born for. When you stay, you meet Love over and over and over.

PART XI: YOUR SOULWORK JOURNEY

Remember: This is a Way of Life

The Soulwork Process™ is not an appointment you have to go to—it's a way of walking in the world. It becomes the atmosphere you carry, the lens through which you see life, the ground upon which you stand.

When done consistently, it becomes embodiment. A person who carries this atmosphere has a certain "smartness" in the magnetic sense. The contours of the soul adhere more beautifully to the contours of the body.

This embodiment creates a different orientation that unfolds behaviors, responses, mental understandings, relationship skills, and healthy

risk-taking that is starkly different from someone who purely lives in their "head."

Integration as Daily Practice

Integration is the act of weaving into the core integrity of your being the fragmented, forgotten, or exiled parts of self that bring you closer to consciously knowing your True Self.

Every challenge becomes an opportunity. Every symptom becomes a teacher. Every relationship becomes a mirror. Every moment becomes a chance to choose consciousness over unconsciousness, love over fear, presence over absence.

Your Magick Lives Within

Your magick and power are found by going within. This is the secret sauce of alchemical transformation.

One of the most powerful aspects of this work is the focus on cultivating inner resources. We begin with focusing on the gateways to our deeper material—the challenges, illnesses, issues, ego desires—because this is human and because the modern mind is conditioned to want goals, efficiencies, and end results.

But the soul doesn't work like this. We need attunement to GOAL AND PROCESS. It's the atmosphere, attitude, and the process itself that is as important (or more important) as the end result.

The mystical experience is an end in itself. It is soul-fulfilling, self-fulfilling, satiating, and transformative no matter what the content or outcome.

THE INVITATION TO WHOLENESS

You are here because some part of you recognizes that the old ways of being are no longer sustainable. You've answered the call to dive deeper, to do the real work, to meet yourself in all your complexity and beauty.

The mandala of your transformation is already complete—it exists in potential, waiting for your conscious participation. Each practice you engage, each gateway you explore, each moment of truth you speak illuminates another facet of who you truly are.

This is not about becoming someone new. This is about remembering who you've always been beneath the conditioning, the wounds, the fears, and the limiting beliefs.

The universe is waiting for your full expression. Your ancestors are cheering you on. Your future self is calling you forward.

All that's required is your willingness to keep showing up, to keep feeling, to keep choosing love over fear, consciousness over unconsciousness, truth over comfort.

The journey has already begun. Welcome home to yourself.

"KNOW THYSELF"

In the ancient mystery schools, this phrase was inscribed over temple doorways as an invitation to the greatest adventure of all—the journey inward to discover the infinite cosmos that lives within you.

May your soulwork be a blessing to all beings. May your healing ripple out to heal the world. May you remember your true nature as both human and divine.

Ready to begin? [Explore more here...](#)

With an open heart,

Cadie

