

Gen Y Shift

Sera Beak

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Ben: Good evening or good morning, everybody, depending on where you are in the world. Welcome back to the Gen Y Shift series. This is Ben. I'm very happy to be with you all again for our first July call which was pushed back a bit with all the holidays. I'm so happy to be with you and to have our wonderful guest here tonight.

We have Sera Beak on with us who is just a wonderful woman. I've heard so much about her through mutual friends and just people raving about her depths and her radical nature and her authenticity. I'm just looking forward to the authentic depths we can go to in this next hour. So thanks so much for joining us.

For those of you who aren't familiar, Sera is a Harvard-trained scholar of comparative world religions. She spent a lot of times traveling the world studying spirituality. She's the author of *The Red Book: A Deliciously Unorthodox Approach to Igniting Your Divine Spark*, and is a speaker, a teacher, a mentor, and the host of the conversation series of the radio show, *Shootin the Spiritual Shit*.

So Sera, it's a pleasure to have you on. Thanks for being with us.

Sera: Thank you for having me. It's so good to be here.

Ben: Absolutely. You and I were just chatting before the call about some things I had heard about. I just wanted to start with that, about where you're at in your life right now. You were just reflecting that you've been in what you call the "red tent" for the last two and a half years and scaling back your work life. I just wanted to hear about what that means to you and what that was like and how that came about.

Sera: Yeah, thanks for starting with that question. It's a big one. I'm still, you know, finding words to describe what it is. It started about three years ago, but actually I took steps about two and a half years ago to just really take a look around my life and to just see what felt truly aligned with me and my soul. This was based on the fact that I had really had what I call a rouge awakening.

The fact that although I had been talking about spirituality and studying it and I had a book out and I was traveling around and I was creating a film

about it, it was a real essential piece in me that had not fully embodied, not only just the material that I was so passionate about but really a piece of my emotions. It goes by many names, but I think one of the more common ones is the soul.

So when I woke up to this about three years ago, it was a real, real, real big shock to my system, and that led me to an intense internal journey that's definitely still going on, but it required the real pulling away from anything and everything that would distract me or confuse me or just get in the way of the step. So that's really where I've been. I'm fighting and really I think helping to instigate and deepen this and enliven the process is the fact that I've been writing a book.

I was actually contacted by my publisher before all this went down to write another book in a similar vein to my first book, *The Red Book*. It's a little bit more of a self-help spiritual book about other people, other women to be redvolutionaries. When all the shit hit the fan of going into my red night and going into the red tent, I started to experience severe writer's block. Every time I would sit down at the computer, I would start to write in the way that I used to write and it was like myself was just telling me, "No, enough is enough," like there was actually something else that I needed to be writing about, but I didn't know what it was.

So part of the red tent also was for that purpose. I think this is common for many of us whenever we're being pulled into and pulled from a creative project. There's these places inside of us that really need to be pressed to even more of who we are and gets squeezed out. But for most of us, because we haven't already pressed those places and it's a really good reason, we have very strong resistances to being that transparent or taking that next step and offering another piece of our soul to the world.

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So that was really, really true for me, and it is definitely something and still in this process with. But I have very recently finished the rough draft of this book. I can tell in the red tent that the curtain is slowly beginning to open and becoming more out into the physical world. It just feels very natural and organic. I know that's the next part of my journey. I've gotten my ass so really kicked within the red tent, and I know the other half of that is going out and experiencing everything that you do when you start immersing your soul into the world in a more direct way.

So I'll always be in the energetic red tent. That's a space inside me and of me where I really commune with the divine essence of myself whom I call the "red lady." So it's really with her that I know I'm supposed to be with

for the rest of my life, and I don't know where the hell she's leading me or what anything is going to look like, but I'm just following step by step right now.

Ben: It's beautiful. I think that's so true that your time in the red tent and your time connecting to your soul may be a bit more prolonged or more intentional than most people would do, but it's certainly feels like a universal necessity to really take that time and to go deep.

Something that strikes me as you're speaking about it is the abstract idea of we can connect the spirit and all the light and all the divinity. We can go into the underworld and connect to the soul. If you relate to that idea, I'm wondering, what did you feel your relationship was to soul when you were doing teaching before this period? I'm wondering how people can peel back some of the layers of when would I take that time to really do that intentional and go within? Certainly, in some sense, you're saying it's just listening to ourselves and taking it step by step.

Sera: Yeah, that's an excellent question. One of the realizations that I had about three years ago that really smacked me up the head was that I was an undercover spirit addict. So I was someone that had been focusing or practicing and leading and immersing myself in many practices and I guess philosophies and teachings over the years that were more spirit-based and more transcendent, more ethereal. It's definitely more of the love and light crowd type elements.

What's funny about that and this is something that I think is really true for many people and it's sort of paradoxical but sort of not was that since I was a child, I was born a wild child, and I was seriously attracted to the unorthodox, to the transgressive, to the messy, to the dirt, to the blood, to the real mess of the human experience. But part of my passion was because I was actually the part of me that really needed to heal.

So my rouge awakening was like wow. Even though I've been speaking about soul which, as you mentioned, is more of the underground and deals more directly with our shadow and is less the love and light ethereal and more like a slow, bloody, muddy crawl, shooting and flying off. You're really sinking down and in and in and in. So I think that was part of the wake up was like I know all this. I've been talking all this for years. It's something I passionately believe in and has been intuitively attracted to, but I still hadn't gone all the way there.

So what I had to start looking at was mostly the unconscious material. Most people say we're really conscious about 10% of what's actually truly running us. So I had to start really looking out what was the other 90% of me which was huge, deep, intense fear and terror of being alive, of being

human, of being female, of the feminine. I had to look at that. Part of me realized, yeah, so I was attracted to and massively in love with more of a feminine spirit.

Yet, all of this passion and great projects and things I was doing and workshops and practices, it was just sort of like throwing a bunch of roses on top of the ground and expecting them to grow into rose bushes. I just kind of was possible until I really went in and started looking and weeding my inner garden.

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So I've noticed also which I think many people has that because I was really immersed in the mainstream spirituality arena professionally and part of what this woke me up to in my rouge awakening was how immersed the mainstream of spirituality is with spirit. Most people that I began to look around and see, I was like, "Wow, our whole culture is incredibly addicted to spirit." It's not even addicted. It's just also many people. Most religions and practices contain more of a masculine consciousness, and most of them emphasize directly or indirectly a spirit-based path.

So it's not really our fault all the time because this is what most of us actually know to be spirituality. But what I realized and I know many others that there's a whole other half to that cosmic pie. Sometimes it's referred to as the feminine. Sometimes it's referred to as unique self. There's a whole bunch of different terms, the soul, et cetera. But it was that second half I had to really get intimately with and close with internally.

Ben: Yeah, that's really beautiful. I love that. One piece you just mentioned is this 90% that you weren't connected to you and the fear of being human, the fear of being feminine or female. I'm wondering, what are some of the ways that you've dived into those fears and liberated them in some way? It sounds like there has been some liberation or some deeper discoveries through the exploration. I'm wondering how specifically you've gone about that.

Sera: Yeah, a lot of this has been through the red tent where almost every morning my lady just -- she and I chill on my red velvet couch, and I'm like "Where to?" She guides me and we go places within myself and part of my multidimensional being I would say. So it's both soul work and also multidimensional work because the fear that I hold and I would venture to say many people hold isn't always just based in the soul and isn't always just based on this lifetime, isn't always just based on this dimension.

So a lot of the work that I feel like I've been doing is kind of like multidimensional soul retreat, but what that requires at least for me -- and I can't really dare to speak for everyone because I'm still in that more personal process with it -- but I have to face it, I have to see it, I have to feel it, I have to claim it, and I have to embrace it. It's not about changing it or fixing it or even figuring it out. But more often than not, there's just a place of such other compassion when you come across that part of yourself that's been fragmented due to fear, and you start understanding a story around it or not a story around it but just the reality around it.

So the embrace of that is really I guess the main practice for me, and it shows it differently each time, how it's going to happen, but it does have to be faced and it does have to be felt.

Ben: Yeah, absolutely, absolutely. So a number of things are coming to mind right now that I'm really appreciating, one that I wasn't expecting which I would love to go towards because it feels most alive and juicy right now is what you're mentioning the red lady, and what I'm hearing is this is a deep relationship with some sort of guide that you have or guidance. I don't know how often you talk about this in your public life, but I don't feel like, especially with young people in spiritual circles, the idea of guides and guidance is described beyond just the idea of getting intuitive hits.

I feel like it's something that's coming up to my life more and more. So there are actual -- whether there are beings or there are guides, there is help beyond me. I'm wondering if you could say more about that or how you experience it and how you relate to it and share it with the world.

Sera: Yeah, yeah, thank you for bringing that up because that's really it for me. My relationship with my lady is it. She, Red, has been with me since I was younger, really as a child, but I didn't really recognize her or know her.

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She revealed herself over the years really cleverly and really beautifully through the actual color of red, but she would use any medium in front of me. Since I was a child I was just fascinated and madly in love with the divine and wanted to read everything I could and study everything I could about religion and mystical traditions, I started to notice that the elements within these traditions or non-traditions that really lit me up, that just really explode in my heart like myself come alive more often than not had some sort of red aspect to them either directly they would.

For instance, with the Persian poet, Rumi, Hussam-e, his mystical companion has said, "You've shown up wearing Red." Ikkyu, the Zen mystic, he always talked about this idea of the red thread of passion. What I began to notice over the years was that red is related to these certain qualities like the unorthodox, the mystic, the erotic, the transgressive, the feminine, the wild, aliveness, Eros. I started noticing those over the years. I call them the divine wings that the wings just sort of like anting up and anting up and anting up.

What began to happen was she began to wink through again any medium in front of me. So when I was studying Hindu, there was Kali who came in with her red tongue and then it was Mary Magdalene when I went over in some of the Christian mysticism. It's like she would trail me and poke through whoever was in front of me not negating these incredible beings and deities but waving at me through them. So I began to notice and really question, who is this? What is this? What is this incredibly loving, fiery feminine presence that is everywhere and keeps leading me to places?

So that was really a huge question for me, for most of my life. The big like shockaroonie which was that I guess shocking to other people who knew me was about a year ago through a real intense series of events in my life which really had me face a lot of inner dragons and made me have to claim like really standup and claim red. I didn't know what it was. Why am I being forced to claim red? What is this? What is this? I was actually cleaning parrot poop off the floor of my living room because I have a potty mouth parrot, and I had this experience that was just like, "Oh!" like so "Duh!" but so profound and so full-bodied.

It was like discovering I had a left arm. That was like, "I'm the red lady." I mean she's a bigger part of me. She is actually my essence that she is in such a -- what some of you would either call higher consciousness, I would say deeper consciousness that she often appears to me as an external goddess, and that was also part of the problem is that that's just what I assumed she had to be. She couldn't be or I couldn't be a part of a little skinny, freckly Sera. I could not be this red divine presence that was with me for so much of my life.

So that actually is sort of required. I mean there are many, many, many, many factors that led up to that and unfolded after that. So I'm definitely just like skipping those and just anchoring with that piece. But how to relate that to other people is that it is not a belief to me. It is not something woo-woo. It is so real the fact that we are being guided, not just by our own essence who I firmly -- that's my gig. My gig here is just to remind people there's an absolutely amazing profound essence that is constantly reaching towards them like in every avenue in their life

through any medium possible to remind them who they are and where they came from and what they're here to be.

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Cultivating this relationship with their own essence to me is the sweet spot. That's where everything is. This divine reciprocity with their own being is the most extraordinary experience, and something that I feel is also surprisingly the most organic and the most natural that most of us just haven't really been taught to go there to those degrees. We think of deities or just guides that are separate beings.

While those all exist in, at least, my universe and they are so important and they play huge roles in guiding us and helping us in our daily ordinary lives, this I personally feel should be our primary relationship. It is through falling in love and remembering with our own divine essence that I feel like we start to be able to be truly capable of falling in love with everyone and everything in us as a universe. So it's like the coolest love story that we've all agreed to be a part of.

Ben: Absolutely. I really love that. What I feel as you're speaking about this is the transmission that comes through or begins to come through as you speak about helping people remember who they are and remember why they're here, remember what their essence is because one of the questions that comes up to me is related to the teaching side to your work or to your expression in the world and how you go about helping people get to that place, helping people connect to their red and connect to their essence.

I'll just be curious to hear how you approach that, and also how you want to speak to people who are listening right now.

Sera: Sure. I'm not entirely sure what it's going to look like. Whenever I ask her, she just shows me an image of she and I like slow dancing together. My sense is that the more each of us shares our unique experience and expression and relationships with the divine and that was divine to us, it's a natural encouragement for other people to get curious about their own unique expression and experience and relationship.

I do know that part of the shift for me was that years ago, for instance, with the book that I was supposed to write, How to be a Redvolutionary, one of the things that really became very clear on this journey and especially with the meaning of my divine being was this is my divine being. It's actually connected to but different than yours and different than the next person's. I know this goes against a lot of traditional beliefs that this is real. I can only speak from my own experience, and that

absolutely like earth-shatteringly beautiful, uniqueness is something I am in particular devotion to.

So I'm less interested, I'm actually not interested in getting anybody in my red ship. I'm interested in who is your being? How is your unique expression able to offer the beauty and the gift that it holds for this planet? You might be yellow, you might be big polka dot, or you might not have any color, or you might not be masculine or feminine, your essence, I have no idea. I'm so much more interested in getting to know people's greater beings, not people's beliefs, not just their traditions, not just what they think the universe is about which is all wonderful, but I'm also just so voracious for their particular flavor.

I think some of the stuff that I find myself noticing that I might gently question or nudge with people is that when I see that. I think one of the things is now I'm much more aware when people are not speaking or coming from their greater being, but are maybe speaking or coming from somebody else's greater being or a teaching they've had or a belief they have.

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So sometimes there are ways to point that out or to just sit with it. I mentioned this before, but I really noticed the level of resistance we have to our own unique being, not consciously. Consciously, we're like, "Oh, yeah, bring it," but unconsciously, the level of resistance is something that I've really learned to respect and to understand that there is really not a seven-step process for this. There's really not step practices.

The soul's trajectory on a cosmic level is so distinct and so precise. So I'm more in awe of the fact that I know for me when I let go of so much or I would say everything that I have been taught to the extent that I could, that was when things started really moving faster for me. It was almost like my soul is like, "Oh, my God. You freed me from the self-help spiritual shackles, all these belief systems, and ideas, and theories, and practices."

Now, I can start really showing you how you are a unique being, moves and grooves and loves this universe. It might not look the same day today, and it might not look like the next person's, and it might not fall into a tradition, but it is yours. So that I'm more interested in these days.

Ben:

Yeah, me too. What I'm hearing in that is I imagine like a 25-year-old who's listening right now who's just getting into personal growth and just getting into spirituality and hears these ideas, listening to my higher being and connecting to my essence or "I don't have a red lady. What do I do? How do I move forward?" What I'm really getting in your words is like

the other trust we can have in our soul's trajectory and that if we can just continue to show up and be present and feel and be authentic with what's arising and within us that all seems to unfold.

Sera: For sure. I know it. I see it, that our greater being and our soul and our essence is dropping hints all around us. So you don't have a red lady. You have a very particular being that so deserves your attention and some love and some quality time. The cool thing is it all it takes is just looking around and saying you're ready and asking for it to turn up the volume in your life and get ready for a crazy ass ride. Sometimes it is pretty fast, and sometimes it's just, "Oh, my gosh! I've known this."

This is actually that part of me that I've always felt and seen and known in my hearts of heart. It's not something foreign. It's not something I have to go search for so much. It's more like just sort of taking off some of the lenses that might have been preventing me from really seeing and acknowledging and reciprocating and allowing that embrace to happen.

So this second book that I just finished, it really shows how this happened for me, that there's enough information on it to really help people see how this is also happening for them in their own way. There's so much more natural than I think we give it credit for, and so much less wow wee and fancy than our minds might want it to be or hype it up to be.

Ben: Yeah, that's great. This is a change of trajectory, but as I'm thinking into these idea of more and more people connecting in this way and surrendering to their life in this way and following their soul's journey deeper and deeper. I'm curious how you view this, if you view this at all, in terms of planetary human race scale.

At The Shift Network, our mission is helping evolve consciousness through all of our courses and media and things like that. It's kind of a paradox as people are all on their own journey as a way to support that. But I'm wondering in your travels and in your connections with different teachers and with all your students and readers and all of that, if you feel like there is any type of quickening occurring with people being more connected and more dropped in in this way.

Sera: Yeah, oh, yeah, yeah, everywhere. Everywhere I look, I just see so many people beginning -- this phrase I know it's so overused, but it's really true, beginning to wake up more and more and more and wake down more and more and more. It's astonishing and the synchronicity of how it's happening and the way it's happening and the numbers of people it is happening with is something really exciting and really extraordinary, and without a doubt that's how we're all helping each other.

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There's no way I think even have connected to my red lady in the way that I have if it wasn't for all of the incredibly brave souls out there that that have come before me and that are also right now doing their own conscious work to connect with their souls and their greater beings. So I think each time we take that step in our own direction, we're creating this really vast and powerful and supportive energetic pathways for the rest of us.

So I just feel like since there's a lot of that going on is there are things that just really accelerated. Just on a basic level, the planet just freaking needs of. It's just time. It's like everything just feels the sort of bullshit around maybe some of the spirituality arena or some of the self-help arena. It just can't fly as much anymore.

I mean it's trying to, but I think there's just a push for the real. There's a craving for the actual lived, embodies, authentic essence because we all sense and we all know from our own experiences that that is the only thing, the only way. That change is really going to start happening on this planet.

Ben: Yeah, beautiful and very true. In the midst of that then I'm curious. You spoke into it quite a bit actually with being in the red tent where you're emerging now. I'm just wondering in your own evolution, how would you describe your current growing edge with where you're at now having gone through what you've gone through the last two and a half years? What is it that is your constant meditation? What is it that you feel like you're coming up against as you step into the next expression of who Sera is?

Sera: Sharing this publicly. I mean I'm sure everyone can tell who's listening to this call like my voice has been shaking all the time. I am a shy being, and I experienced tremendous stage fright. I'm not someone that is consciously seeking to be out there. I'm a hermit, so I know the edge for me is actually daring to reveal more of myself publicly and daring to be with her publicly. So that is a huge massive, massive edge for me, and it brings up so much fear and so many things and so much that I've been working on really for lifetime. It's all sort of up right now.

Again, I don't think this is uncommon at all for many people. I do know I sent other colleagues that I love to be speaking, I love to out there, and just really thrive on that. For me every single time I'm asked to do something publicly, it takes an enormous -- if it resonates with me and it feels in alignment with my soul and so it's a yes for me, it takes an enormous amount of courage to be like, "All right, let's do it" because I

know what I'm going to have the space by doing it, but I also know that it's the only way for me to grow and learn.

I can't do it just alone in the right time. Because it's my edge, I know I need to go towards it because it's a fear. I know I have to really, really, really face it even if I'm shaking and stuttering and sounding awkward and all of that, that's part of it. Something that my lady is very, very, very clear about is that this is not only an ultimate healing for me to reveal myself with her publicly, but it's also a healing and teaching for other people because she never is like, "Get out of the way so I can come through." Anytime I try to abandon ships, she grabs me and brings me back in because I'm like, "I don't think so."

She wants us both together. There is a true healing in the witnessing and the experiencing as a woman who is still in the process and probably will be for the rest of her life of really embodying her being. This relationship that I have with her is a relationship. It's not a one-way street. The witnessing of both of us being present, for instance, on this phone call is the real healing and the real teaching.

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Ben: Yeah, I so appreciate you. I won't expect anything less. I so appreciate you being so authentic with the nervousness and the shyness that comes up. Actually, I breathe easier in hearing that level of authenticity. I think that there's so much to learn in you sharing that.

As you're saying, I'm just thinking about so many of us. I imagine most of the people on this call who are young and drawn to this conversation, drawn to this work are people who are learning how to express more and more of their truth and more and more of their spirit and more and more of their soul in the world. To have you share the fear, the shyness that comes up and your willingness to just continue and step forward is beautiful.

Actually, I would love to mine more from that and speak to what are the fears that come up when you imagine stepping out and speaking and sharing more just for the sake of all us learning and examining ourselves.

Sera: Yeah. Thank you, first of all. On one level, the conscious ones are what if I screw up? What would people think? Will I somehow mess up this gorgeous essence that I'm a part of by trying to communicate in a way that doesn't really honor it or it confuses people or it harms people or hurts them?

I was raised in the mid-West in a wonderful family, but we're all serious people-pleasers. I think there's a level there too for me because a lot of what red is can be or can sound or can appear or can feel unorthodox to different social, political, spiritual ideals and traditions.

I think there's a real fear of a backlash or a fear of being misunderstood. Also because I have a potty mouth and a dirty sense of humor, there's also that fear that people will get the wrong idea and think that somehow my potty mouth and my dirty sense of humor are somehow separate from the divine or demeaning it in some way or I'm being crass or disrespectful. That's so, so not where I'm coming from but that's a fear.

I think again what's not uncommon is that there's a whole host. I'm more conscious of them now, but they were unconscious, just full-bodied somatic fears. Five minutes after I find the first contract to write the red book, both of my hands broke out in these like Freddy Krueger-like burns, like. They looked like they had been severely burned.

It was so strange. I didn't really know what was going on. I got some help with it later. Again, I'm not trying to get woo-woo on people and people can believe in this or not believe in this, but a lot of my work the past years, when it has been appropriate, my lady has had me look at a particular lifetime where what I have done or the work that I have tried to communicate hasn't been well received. I think this is so freaking common.

Even if people totally dismisses and don't believe in past life, what I would encourage people to take seriously is that for a human being to really claim their own divine sovereignty and to speak out loud about their own unique spiritual experience and expression has not exactly in history been welcomed on this planet with like a spot in Good Morning America but more often than not with bonfire and not the fun kind. So even if we don't believe in past life, that's a part of our cultural and cellular and ancestral memory. It still affects every single one of us in some very strong and some very surprising ways.

Sometimes definitely our personal word, we have our own little nuances with it that it's often just to set a lot of compassion on all of us because we're also sort of bumping heads against a very thick, energetic and spiritual and social and political program that has been like, "Shut the fuck up."

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So you got to take that seriously if you're actually going to start speaking the truth here. It's internal, but there's also a lot of external resistance to

being themselves. Every single one of the great ones in the past hit it. We don't even have to look at the big fancy names to know this. We can also just feel it within our bodies.

So for me in particular every time I get up in front of a group, it's hilarious. I'm like, "I know this people are amazing. I can feel their hearts. I see their smiles." And yet from my body, it still feels like I am up against the firing squad. So I usually just shake like crazy for the first half of the talk. I just have to let it. I just have to tell people this is going to happen. I will be okay. My voice is going to sound like a ten-year-old boy on meth, but I'm going to do it. I'm still going to offer what it is I can offer.

Part of why I think this is so important for all of us, I know it has been for me, is because in my experience, especially with the divine feminine, she does not want us to divorce our humanity from our divinity. You do not have to suck in your spiritual belly around her. You can really let it all hang out with. I think that's a real healing for all us. You don't have to be this perfectly put together like self-help like yoga, meditative, drinking wheat grass every day. You don't have to. If that feels resonant, go ahead. You are fully encouraged to be the mass that you are as well and those are divine.

By allowing both of those to be present, then I also have found in my own experience is that it creates such a container of compassion that then we are able to work with our "issues" and things that maybe you do want to be healed that much easier. We are not trying to fix them or self-help them away or perfect them. But we're just like, "Yeah, I got some serious shit going down, and I have a valid reason for going down. I need to pay attention and learn and push myself and challenge myself and really, really hug myself, like hug, hug, hug this." Usually, shit starts changing faster after that when we stop trying to hide it or resist it.

Ben:

That's great. I really appreciate a few of the distinctions you have there around the fears that come up culturally because of history. What's coming to me right now is just really big acknowledgement of the stand I feel in you for sharing your process as you're in it. I think it's said again and again. It's kind of a cliché at this point about how self-help and personal and spiritual growth teachers present themselves as being all put together. It feels like a new thing for teachers to be out and share their process and share their message and share their shit. In the midst of that, the divinity and the perfection still shines through.

So thank you for doing that, first of all. Second of all, what I actually love to do in this moment is open up the line to questions from people. So if you are on the phone, you can hit 1 and we can call on you. You can ask

your question. If you're on the webcast, you can go ahead and type it in and we're happy to share it out.

I actually saw one come in as you were talking which is saying, "Related to what you just shared, I feel a real fear of relaxing into my divine feminine as if it's just too vulnerable and not to be that in the world. I'm wondering what you might recommend so that I can relax deeper into my essence?"

Sera:

That's a great, great question. I just want to honor that question because it's so important. It is such a big one because as we all know the feminine hasn't had an easy time on this planet and being that vulnerable with our feminine being and our feminine body on this planet, it takes an extraordinary amount of strength. My deep knowing is that I'm speaking specifically to women right now that if you are in a female body, the strength is there because you are in a female body. The strength is there because you are feminine, you are female.

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My sense what I know I have learned is that I can't fake being strong. What I can do is cultivate this relationship with her. The more I do, the more I start listening or at least allowing myself to be willing to listen to her, to look for her, to ask for her guidance, to welcome her more and more into my body and into my being. There's a very natural strengthening that starts happening, a very natural intuitive way of moving through the world.

So you start to know through your body-soul being when it is actually appropriate and safe for you to be open and vulnerable because I'm not of the belief that you have to be that constantly in public. I think there's a huge wisdom around knowing when to share and reveal and when not to, but it usually comes from that intuitive body-base knowing that takes a little bit of time to just get familiar with. You also learn to practice where you're maybe out at a party or you're walking down the street or you're having an intimate conversation with someone and you will start to notice that your body is just relaxing and opening very naturally.

You're actually feeling the safety swirling around you and actually giving you a straighter spine. It naturally opens your heart. It naturally opens your voice. It naturally opens you. Then you might start noticing someone comes up to you at a party and there's a natural closure and just to pay attention to that and not try to force it back open and not try to shut it down but just paying attention to that. So it's a real moment by moment practice and curiosity and inquiry. I also know that it's also being willing

to embody and share and to show that being vulnerable is an enormous act of strength.

Since so much of this planet is appreciated and then you're very familiar with more of the masculine ideas, strength or perhaps more of the -- even as we were talking earlier, self-help idea, you have to be this disembodied, radiant, juicy woman all the time or it's just like, "Give me a freakin' break," like just to be yourself. That will start to naturally teach you where to open, where to close, but it will also help remind other people that might get tweaked around a woman being that vulnerable because it doesn't register a strength to so many people. But if they felt into it, they would see that it takes enormous, enormous amount of strength. But again, it's a natural strength, the strength that's cultivated just by hanging out with yourself.

Ben: That's great, Sera. Thanks. We got some more questions for you on the webcast. Again, if you're on the phone, hit 1 if you want to ask a question. I see the people on the phone are a little shy. So we'll stick with the webcast for now which is great. We have a question saying, "What are your prayer rituals? I find talking to the divine so difficult, yet I feel like I need it so bad?"

Sera: Another great, great, great question. I'm trying to think about some rituals. The first thing I can just feel that I actually just want to say is that in my experience each one of us has a very natural way of communicating to the divine. It might look incredibly different than somebody else's, but it's going to feel really natural. It's going to feel like, "Oh, yeah, this is how I do it. This is what feels right." That can actually be of course through speaking, praying, meditating, dancing, moving, joking, bathing -- the whole gamut is there.

I know for me personally something that was very powerful was that when I was in graduate school I was given -- it's what The Red Book, my first book was named after, but I was given a red journal. I decided not to treat the journal as something that I would just fill up with my daily musings or my intentions or things like that, but I knew it was supposed to be for something different. I didn't know what it was.

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One night I just got quiet. I didn't do any technique. I just rolled out a little bit on my couch and a voice arose from my depth. It said, "Come forward, closer still till closer has meaning no longer." My ego was like, "Who the hell is that?" My body, heart, soul was like, "Oh, my God." I'm actually beginning to speak. I'm actually remembering my own native red

tongue. I'm actually hearing the voice of my own being in my body for the first time.

It was really natural. It was nothing woo-woo. It was nothing metaphysical. It was nothing fancy. It was just these words. There was such an intuitive knowing that this is the me as me. This is the divine speaking through and as me. There's just no doubt about it. It wasn't an external being. It was me. It's so familiar. For most people, when they start just taking a little bit of time each day and even like five minutes and even they if think they're completely imagining it, making it up, if their intention is really to hear their own voice, the capital V, it will start showing up.

For me writing it has been great. I know for other people sometimes it's singing it or it's actually even just like moving with it. You'll know it's you because your whole body will open and it will feel like you're scratching an itch you've had since before you were born.

I also know that communicating with the divine takes place in a circle. So it's also going on outside of us through these divine wings and through feelings and through noticing synchronicities. I really feel that each one of us, like I said at the beginning, has a very distinct and unique way to communicate with the divine. It's like cultivating that language and getting curious about it and keeping a journal and noticing like that number keeps showing up for me or that feeling keeps showing up for me when I see that and just paying attention, like being a student of your own life and just studying it a little bit.

Soon you'll start to notice, if you haven't already, that there is this language, there is this communication that's constantly going on. It will be different for each one of us, but I think the willingness for that to happen, to lose our expectations around what it has to mean or what it needs to look like or how it's supposed to sound is important as well and just the real gentleness because for most of us the relationship with the divine is dysfunctional, like any relationship. Sometimes it takes a little bit of us being willing to open that much more to it even if we feel silly doing it.

I'm not sure if that helps too much, but I hope it helped a little.

Ben:

Yeah, I think it did. That's great. Beautiful. I think we have time for one more question before we end. Let's see. This is a good one off the webcast. "I feel an impulse for my career to be an expression of sharing my journey and spirituality with the world, but I don't understand how to actually make that a viable career. I don't want to put my energy

elsewhere to make money but don't see the way forward. Do you have any advice?"

Sera: Not yet. No, I really empathize with that question. I know for me I let go of a lot of money and a lot in my career by choosing this particular path. I really don't know financially how I will be supported. I do know that what has become very much the priority and the most important thing for me is to hang in alignment with us, like I learned the hard way. It is part of your soul's path to share your spiritual journey publicly, then that's what you do. If you have to go work at the café or mow the lawn or whatever in order help support that, you do it.

I think these days it's a little confusing because there's so much information about how it's supposed to be well-paid, and some of it is great and totally all about people getting paid what they're worth and realizing their abundance and dropping all the old school spiritual poverty vows and that's awesome. But I also think we've gotten a little out of balance with it. When you are coming from the soul, you really start to realize the soul definitely wants us to be safe and secure and nourished and abundant and happy.

But the true support is really staying as close as we can to our own soul's journey. I just trust that what needs to happen in terms of supporting ourselves financially does show up. It has for me, and I know it will continue. But I don't have the big huge answer. I honestly think sometimes that that whole cliché like you just do what you love then you automatically get paid, again I think there's a shadow side to that, and I think we just have to be really careful around that.

Ben: Thank you. Let's see. Would you have time for one more?

Sera: Sure, sure.

Ben: So let's just push the edges at 6:00. This final question is asking, "What are some ways to let go of old beliefs and negative lessons learned early in life so that new positive ideas can come in?"

Sera: I'm not going to be able to answer than one too well. My process with it really feels distinct. What I can say is that I know there are wonderful processes out there that do work directly with recognizing where false beliefs or negative beliefs are located. So what I can say more generally is that go towards those processes or practices or create one yourself that really helps you sense and locate exactly what the belief is.

I know for me I end up writing it down. I also located in my body and in my energy field. Sometimes just the location of it and just the

acknowledgment, the ID, ID'ing it is hugely healing. The aspect of actually working it out of our systems, I just have to say, is so unique to each system. So if there is something that resonates out there via a book or a class or a teacher, "I'm about this. I would definitely go towards that which resonates."

As I said before I know for me a huge part of it has also been about the embrace of it. So not so much like shopping it out of my system but actually bringing it into my heart system. Often when I do that, it's not like it completely goes away all the time although some of them do, but it's almost like it starts nestling into the rest of me and stops being a major player. And because it changed places, that new space is open from more positive belief and experience to enter.

So even just setting your intention for that to happen, to locate a negative belief, to be given the guidance about how you're supposed to actually work with it, and then to set your intention for it also to be not necessarily replaced but to also welcome a new more positive belief and experience. Yeah, I think that's probably all I can really say about that right now.

Ben: I appreciate and I want to reflect back how you started with "I don't know if I have anything to say about this," and then you dropped in and this fountain of wisdom comes out. So thank you for opening in that way.

Well, Sera we're at 6:00, and it's been such a pleasure to talk to you. Thank you so much for who you're being in the world and coming on here and sharing a bit of it and just big time cheerleaders of your journey from afar. So thank you for that.

Sera: Well, thank you so much, Ben. It has been such a joy and so fun talking to you. Again, thank you for what you are creating for all of us, both those of us that are guests on your show and those of us who get to hear your show and it's just really so much cheerleading for you right back because it's just wonderful. The space that you've created to, I know for me, allow me to be myself on this show just speaks wonders. So thank you.

[1:00:01]

Ben: Thank you. Big, big hug. Awesome. So to close, I just want to let everybody know that our next conversation will be on July 30th, and we'll have Ocean Robbins on who is wonderful, fantastic man with a lot of passion and purpose and beautiful stories of his work out in the world and also his work with his two young autistic boys to share. He's just had a beautiful life journey. So I'm excited to have him on.

So wishing you all the best in your evening and the rest of your day, and we'll see you back here soon. Have a beautiful, beautiful night, day, life. Thanks for being here. Bye.

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