



The Impulse of Life

The Impulse of Life has a heartbeat—it is alive—it works on humans to create change at particular times in our lives, such as birthing, getting our second set of teeth, puberty, falling in love, pregnancy, menopause, decline of life force energy, and death. For girls reaching puberty, the hormonal influx that begins to change her body turns her attention outward for reassurance. Changes in girls' bodies visually disconnect them from the world of childhood and begin to identify them, in the eyes of others, with images of women and standards of beauty. Yet, they are not yet women. Nor are they children. They are in between and uninitiated.

While in adolescence, an element of play still exists from childhood when a girl becomes preoccupied with trying on different hats with little or no commitment to a role. While she yearns to be accepted by her peers, she looks for models to emulate. The media bombards girls and young women with commercial images that make them question their appearance and doubt their self worth. The natural turbulence that occurs at this stage of life is a sign that a doorway has opened to awaken her to the “impulse of life” where sudden and unexpected transformative events appear. Experiences such as illness, an accident, loss of a loved one, parents’ divorce, addiction, and assault can change her view of life irrevocably. She may question who she is and where she fits into the world and how to navigate it.

In her search for a model of womanhood to guide her, a girl or young woman may discover conflicting expectations about what it means to be a woman. When she is not seen or supported by women mentors or elders who can reflect back her true sense of self, she may act too quickly believing that she is old enough to make adult choices. Or, she may wither, feel lost, and resist any part of adulthood because she fears growing up. With no elders to guide her, a girl experiencing a tumultuous event can change her awareness and take action that doesn’t reflect who she truly is.

Initiation into Adulthood

To move into young adulthood in a meaningful way where life's challenges are honored and supported by wise elders in a ritual setting, deep learning and wisdom is possible. Through her experimentation and life experiences, a girl may become aware that she needs guidance and is ready to learn, to build competence, and to discover who she truly is. While there are programs available through education, mentoring, and youth development that offer instruction and guidance, initiation offers a unique process that effectively supports the transformation that is meant to happen at this natural stage of life.

The wisdom of our distant ancestors, as seen in all the traditional cultures of the world, viewed initiation as vital to their survival. They recognized the special spiritual energy that exists in young people as they move within this "impulse of life", and they knew that this latent energy needed to be catalyzed to complete the transformation that enabled the adult to emerge. Initiation generates just the right amount of energy to produce that transformation. Although indigenous cultures embraced initiation as a natural part of entering adulthood, Sacred Fire Community Lifeways is among a few organizations that are reviving initiation in our modern culture. We acknowledge that initiation into adulthood is a sacred act that relies on Spirit to guide the work.

Sacred Emergence: Initiation into Adulthood for Women

Sacred Emergence is an initiation into womanhood that lays the foundation for heart wisdom to teach and deepen self-awareness. The initiation process guides the candidate to recognize herself as a physical, emotional and energetic presence of a woman, as well as a spiritual expression of the sacred feminine with an inherent gift to create. As she develops a new relationship with herself, others, and the world, an initiated woman will have gained competence to make a new commitment to life and to offer her gifts.

When all components of initiation are brought together and put into play, the mind begins to cooperate with the heart and enables it to lead. An initiated woman will recognize an inner knowing that inspires different action than someone who is uninitiated. With the support of mentoring, and a social and community network available to her before and after the initiation process, she will find it far easier to meet whatever challenges lie ahead and to take her place as an adult with a new role and responsibility in the world.

In our 11th year of offering Sacred Emergence, we are proud to say that nearly 50 young women have been initiated through Sacred Emergence. Many of them have stayed in touch with us as friends and some have supported this program through outreach and staff support. We celebrate their lives as they share their gifts, launch their careers, marry, bear children, and explore the world.

Our invitation

The window of opportunity for initiation into womanhood is critical during the tumultuous “Impulse of Life” stage when transformative events call girls and young women to wake up and seek guidance. This doorway opens at puberty and closes at age 25. We invite girls starting at age 16 and young women to consider this vital act of courage toward self-discovery and to move their life forward in a very conscious and determined way. While we live in turbulent times in an unbalanced world, initiated young adults who honor their hearts’ knowing and have gained wisdom are the best hope for a balanced future.

The next Sacred Emergence will take place July 7–14, 2019 in a wilderness setting, and will be led by ritual leaders and a support staff of elder women and initiated young women who hold a sacred container for this special women’s work to take place.

Applications are accepted year-round, and due for next year’s ritual by January 19, 2019.

To receive more information and request an application, please contact us at sacredemergence@gmail.com. For more information, visit our web page, where you’ll also find links to our quarterly newsletters: <http://community.sacredfire.org/blog/sacredemergence/>

In the Spirit of Womanhood,

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Women’s Initiation Council
Sacred Emergence: Initiation into Adulthood for Women
A Sacred Fire Lifeways Program