

Athena – Father's daughter, Goddess of War & Crafts

These researches are based on Jean Bolen's book 'Goddesses in everywoman'.

With Athena, a Virgin Goddess, we go deeper into the feminine Archetypes of independence and free spirits. Like Artemis, Athena is outgoing and pro-active but her focus is more intellectually tuned. She is the Goddess who is most comfortable in the company of men and actually identifies herself with them. Her bright intellect and her strive for being among successful men makes her a 'father's daughter.' Athena women seldom have a best girlfriend and are hardly seen within women's circles.

When a young girl with a dominant Athena character is taught not to show off her intelligence as men would be intimidated by her, she may stop aspiring to reach the goals she could have fulfilled in a more supportive environment. To stay healthy and feel accomplished throughout her life, it is crucial for an Athena woman to liberate herself from any inhibiting comparison with Persephone (innocent girl), with Hera (perfect wife) or with Demeter (nourishing mother). Instead, she needs to follow her call for knowledge, to challenge her intellect and find ways to apply her strategic skills for interesting projects.

Let's have a closer look to this Goddess who unites the beauty and wisdom of a woman with the determination and goal-oriented strategy of a warrior:

Mythology

Athena's entrance into the company of Olympians is a dramatic one. She springs out of Zeus' head as a full-grown woman, wearing flashing gold armour with a sharp spear in one hand and emitting a mighty war cry. She always considers herself as having only one parent, her father. She seems unaware of her mother Metis and never officially acknowledges her. Athena represents the protector, advisor, patron and ally of heroic men. Besides championing individual heroes and being the Olympian positioned closest to Zeus, Athena is herself with patriarchy.

Athena – the Archetype

Athena is the Goddess of Wisdom, War and Crafts. She is like Artemis, a virgin goddess, dedicated to chastity and celibacy. Athena is the beautiful warrior goddess, protector of cities and her chosen heroes. In wartime, Athena presides over battle strategy and in peacetime over domestic arts. She is often represented with a spear in one hand and an owl in the other, symbols for war and wisdom.

Positive aspects

An Athena woman is curious, seeks information and wants to know how things work. She values rational thinking and stands for the domination of will and intellect over instinct and nature. She is capable in coping with reality and takes the necessary steps to move forward to improve a situation. Logical thinking, planning and executing are skillful qualities of the Athena character. She thinks clearly with ease and comes up with winning strategies and practical solutions on her own. As the Goddess of Crafts, Athena unites vision, planning and mastery of crafts along with the patience to create them. Typically, the Athena woman is in good health and rarely affected by hormonal changes. She has no mental conflicts and is physically active and remains an energetic practical woman throughout her life.

Shadow aspects

Dominant Athena characters lack close women friends. She is not very tolerant with dreamers and idealists, and is seeking the company of powerful, successful men with influence in society. Like Artemis, she is absorbed in what she is doing and lacks sexual passion and romanticism. Therefore marriage is likely to be more a companionable partnership than a passionate union. Empathy, compassion for vulnerable feelings or spiritual values do not really exist for a woman who is ruled by Athena. Therefore it is very difficult for an Athena mother to deal with either sons or daughters who are easily moved by feelings and idealism. An Athena woman is ruled by her head rather than by her heart and is often disconnected from her inherent feminine intuition.

How to balance a too strong Athena character

If you identify yourself with Athena and are missing sisterhood, sensuality and playfulness, apply the following practices:

Body

- Awaken your sensuality through belly dance, sensual oils & sexy underwear
- Complement your physical activities with a nourishing Yin Yoga practice
- Practice opening breathing exercises for your Heart Chakra

Mind

- Reduce the planning, organizing and doing
- Let go of Self-Control
- Invite more women from other archetypes into your team
- Allow yourself to dream and be non-rational

Emotions

- Connect with your heart, ask yourself what you “feel” rather what you “think”
- Meet other women outside of business or network circles
- Invite playfulness into your life: playing with children, pets,
- Invite Persephone (playfulness & innocence) and Aphrodite (sensuality & love) aspects into your life

How to activate Athena in your life

If you lack discipline, structure and willpower you may want to integrate the following practices:

Body

- Start a daily vigorous physical activity
- Practice Power / Asthanga Yoga
- Apply Kapalabathi Breathing (energizing Pranayama)

Mind

- Practice focused concentration (Meditation & appropriate reading)
- Establish a daily time schedule and stick to the structure
- Train your self-confidence while being with men

Emotions

- Connect with your intellect rather than being taken away by your emotions
- Become aware of the fluctuations of your emotions and thoughts (meditation)
- Join activities that awaken logic, intellectual skills

