

APHRODITE – Creative Woman & Lover, Goddess of Beauty

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

Aphrodite, Goddess of Love & Beauty, is placed in a category all her own as the *Alchemical Goddess*, a fitting designation for the magic process or power of transformation that she alone has. As the alchemical goddess, Aphrodite shares some similarities with the other two categories, yet she is intrinsically different from both. For her, relationships are important (vulnerable goddess) but not as long-term commitments to other people. Instead, she seeks to consummate relationships and generate new life, which is expressed in her unlimited talents as a creative woman. At the same time, she is able to focus on what is personally meaningful to her and to become totally absorbed in it; nobody can divert her away from her goal (virgin goddess).

The quality of consciousness associated with Aphrodite is unique. Jean Bolen compares this 'Aphrodite consciousness' to theatre lighting that illuminates the stage. This special lighting helps us to be emotionally transported at a symphony, or to be moved by a play or by the words of a speaker. Our feelings, senses, impressions and memories are drawn out of us in response to what we see and hear. Aphrodite's magic consists in being fully present in what she does or with whom she is which gives those around her the feeling of being special. Basking in the glow of her focus we feel attractive and interesting as she actively draws us out and reacts in a loving or affirming way rather than critical and judgmental.

As Jean Bolen witnesses in her own work as a psychotherapist, these qualities are often found in good therapists, teachers and artists. While being absorbed in listening or creating, mostly with full attention and compassion, their minds are actively working in a receptive way, stimulated by their absorption in the other person or in their creative work. When an Aphrodite woman becomes absorbed by who she is with or by what she is doing, she loses track of time – a characteristic that Aphrodite shares with Hestia.

Let's have a closer look to this Goddess, who is also associated with a strong sexual drive and the power of passion that can, if expressed, put a woman at odds with standards of morality:

Mythology

Aphrodite, Goddess of Love and Beauty, whom the Romans called Venus, is the most beautiful of the goddesses with a graceful and sensual body. In one version of Greek Mythology, Aphrodite is born from the union of the sperms of Uranus's cut off genitals and the foam of the sea. When she emerges from her oceanic conception as a fully grown goddess, Eros (Love) and Himeros (Desire) escort her to the Olympic assembly of the gods where she is received as one of them. Unlike other goddesses who have chosen neither their mates nor their lovers, Aphrodite is free to choose. She selects Hephaestus, the lame god of craftsmen, god of the forge and rejected son of Hera. Although she has many affairs and many offspring from her numerous liaisons, their marriage represents the union of beauty and craft, out of which art is born.

Aphrodite – the Archetype

The Aphrodite archetype governs women's enjoyment of love and beauty, sexuality and sensuality. She impels women to fulfill both creative and procreative functions. Just as Aphrodite the lover may proceed serially through many affairs of the heart, Aphrodite as a creative force may involve a woman in one intense creative effort after another. When one projects ends, another possibility arises that fascinates her.

The Aphrodite archetype creates a personal charisma, which is independent from physical beauty. Many rather ordinary-looking women with Aphrodite qualities attract others with the magnetic warmth of their personality and their natural, unconscious sensuality. These women often provoke their objectively pretty sisters to ask the question: "What does she have that I don't?"

Positive aspects

An Aphrodite woman is sensual, passionate and has an electric field, a magnetism that is often described as "sex appeal". She is usually not jealous or possessive herself and has often a wide circle of women friends (no 'Hera' women!) and acquaintances who enjoy her spontaneity and attractiveness. A woman who identifies with Aphrodite is often an extroverted woman with a lust for life and a fiery element in her personality. She likes men and draws them to her with her attractiveness and seductive attentiveness. Her warm and attentive mode of relating is often misread by men who mistakenly assume that she is sexually attracted to them.

Whenever Aphrodite consciousness is present, energy is generated: lovers glow with well-being and heightened energy; conversations sparkle; thoughts and feelings are stimulated; something new is created; transformation becomes possible. Aphrodite is a tremendous force for change. Through her flow attraction, union, fertilization, incubation and birth of new life. This can happen on a merely physical level (like having a baby) or on a creative level. With the positive qualities of Aphrodite, a mother draws out a child's feelings or abilities in such a way that the child feels beautiful and accepted.

Shadow aspects

An Aphrodite woman easily falls in an out of love and is challenged in attaining an enduring monogamous relationship. A woman who identifies with Aphrodite acts on sexual desire without considering the consequences. She gravitates toward men who are not necessarily good for her or to her, unless other goddesses have an influence.

The qualities of men of her choice are often creative, complex, moody and with a lack of responsibility. An Aphrodite influenced woman enjoys being the center of attention and the sense of power that comes with her sensuality. Therefore she can stimulate jealousy and fear of loss in many women who see their men reacting to her with increased animation.

When an Aphrodite woman is raised in an atmosphere that condemns sexuality in women, she may attempt to downplay her attractiveness and consider herself bad for having sexual feelings. If she acts the part so well that she splits off her sexuality and sensuality from her consciousness, she will lose touch with a major part of her real self and thus lose her vitality and spontaneity. Guilt and conflict over expressing her Aphrodite nature can lead a woman into heavy depression and anxiety.

How to balance a too strong Aphrodite character

If you have a tendency of changing often relationships or other commitments or you feel addicted to being the center of attention, apply the following practices:

Body

- Meditate (going inwards & focusing)
- Go out of the house without taking extra care of your physical appearance
- Practice sports that bring the attention inwards (meditation, Tai Chi, Chi Gong, Martial Art)

Mind

- Recognize your addictive behaviour regarding sensual & seductive patterns
- Cultivate consciousness for the reactions of others
- Stay committed to relationship and projects

Emotions

- Practice discretion when being in groups
- Signal your unavailability, set clear boundaries
- Make wise choices BEFORE you act on sexual desire
- Invite Hera (commitment) and Athena (intelligent awareness) into your life

How to activate Aphrodite in your life

If you lack sensuality, absorbed attentiveness and creativity in your life, integrate the following practices:

Body

- Dance, start Belly dancing, Ecstatic dance, Contact dance
- Bring extra attention to your body
- Use sensual oils, sexy underwear, flattering materials
- Move in a sensual way throughout the day

Mind

- Become fully present when being with somebody else
- Encourage and support others in their dreams and visions
- Make your choice with whom you want to spend time (private, job, social)

Emotions

- Explore your Creativity
- Practice your extrovert part, go out, become comfortable being in groups
- Feel wild, free, sensual and dance through life
- Share your light, sparkle and beauty (inner & outer) with those around you

**"Aphrodite - help me to love my body
& share my light with others"**

