



August 6th, 2023, 8:05pm Central

THE SACRAMENTAL PHILAUTIA (SELF-LOVE) CEREMONY IN CELEBRATION OF MARIYA GRAESTONE

A poem: The Time of The Awakened Woman, by Dr. Shefali ~

*There comes a time in the life of a woman,
When she discards her old ways like tossed shoes in the garbage;
When she shreds her list of "shoulds" and obligations;
And when impossible expectations are burned in an incinerator.*

*There comes a time in the life of a woman,
When the approval of others,
once jewels,
now turn to pennies in her sock;
When the hunt for another is now replaced by a hunt for herself;
And when parental tentacles of tradition no longer define her truth.*

*There comes a time in the life of a woman,
When her desire to fit in with the crowd dissolves;
When her manic compulsion to be perfect vaporizes;
And when her obsession to be voted popular eviscerates.*



*There comes a time in the life of a woman,
When she simply says "no more";
When facade, artifice, and guile leave her nauseated;
And when righteousness, dogma, and superiority repulse her.*

*There comes a time in the life of a woman,
When she no longer fears conflict but faces it boldly like a lioness;
When she guards her authenticity as fearlessly as she guards her babies;
And when she drops the role of savior,
knowing she can only save...
herself.*

*There comes a time in the life of a woman,
When she no longer cowers in the shadows of her unworthiness;
When she no longer plays small so others can feel big;
And when she swaps the role of victim for the role of co-creator.*

*There comes a time in the life of a woman,
When she unabashedly and boldly occupies her ultimate sovereignty;
When she finally feels ready to claim her space in the world;
And when she redefines compassion as unequivocal self-love.*

*There comes a time in the life of a woman,
When she finally releases her childlike dependencies on others;*



*When she dares to rewrite a new mandate of living for herself;
One that says:*

*I release unworthiness and fear.
I divorce servility and passivity.*

*I divest inauthenticity and enmeshment.
I end the pretense of being someone I am not.*

*And from now on I declare,
I will ascend into my highest power.*

*I will embrace my greatest autonomy.
I will celebrate my deepest worth.*

*I will embody my fiercest courage,
and manifest the most authentic me.*

The time is now.

*I am ready
To awaken into my renaissance.*



With a resounding YES, I give thanks to Dr. Shefali for those exquisitely resonant words.

The number 43 has long meant "love" for me, and for my 43rd birthday, as I complete my 43rd tour around the Sun this very minute, I address you all with humble gratitude for being here to witness my vows - to Love, Honor, and Cherish myself.

This is actually somewhat of a vow renewal, as I first made such promises roughly 15 years ago. And then just a few years ago, I realized I had strayed from myself, so I set on a path to return to me and go even deeper, to the ultimate Unconditional Self-Love.

It has been an amazing journey, with so many layers of unhelpful protections shed along the way, and so much freedom and empowerment gained. Today is really a culmination of massive amounts of inner work, and a celebration of my personal triumph over Self-Doubt.

As a formal declaration of what I'm stepping out of and what I'm choosing to embody, this is the sacred commitment I am making to myself today:

From this day forward, I shall contribute to the betterment of the world by ensuring that my own oxygen mask is securely in place at all times, and by prioritizing my own well-being and nourishment - mind, body, and soul - so that I may show up fully resourced to support the empowerment of compassion in all whom I encounter.



I promise to carry and express Adoration, Admiration, and Appreciation for my unique qualities.

And I vow to practice devotionally:

ACCEPTANCE of what is, **including my perfectly human imperfections**;
APPROVAL of my Truth, including my limits, desires, needs, and delights; and
ALIGNMENT with my core values and grand goals.

With this ring, that contains my birthstone, I will remember my vows.

Henceforth, I shall never again shrink, contort, or abandon myself.

I will love, honor, and cherish myself - always and in all ways.

I am the love of my life.

