



Foreword by Sandra Ingerman

PAINTING THE LANDSCAPE OF **YOUR SOUL**

A journey of self discovery

Damini Celebre

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PREFACE

Being Creative

Creative energy is as vital as breathing. Engaging your creative energy is healing. Being creative brings joy, spontaneity, and carefreeness back into your life, so you can examine and remove limits you have put on yourself.

Embark on a journey that will take you through a process of remembering, rebalancing, and realigning YOU, so that you can be the authentic expression of the alive being you came here to be. *Painting the Landscape of Your Soul* allows your unconscious, intuitive muse to speak to you with paint to paper.

The explorations in this book will engage your creative muse so that you may explore your personal roadblocks, begin to change limiting self-beliefs, and bring into balance the many layers of your energetic being. You will experience a juicier, more alive, zesty you.

The purpose
of art is
washing the
dust of daily
life off our
souls.

—Pablo Picasso

Creative healing starts from the outside, then moves deep inside. As healing, balance, and harmony shift your energetic fields into alignment to greater authenticity, True, then moves back to the outside. All the while, your creative healing realigns your energetic system and integrates your vitality, projecting your true self back out to the world.

This process is not about learning a new art technique, but the desire to live fully, the courage to listen deeply, and letting your creative muse guide you with color, shape, and form. The best thing about this is that no experience is necessary. Plus it's fun.

A map of a creative healing journey

What makes *Painting the Landscape of Your Soul* unique is that it takes you on a healing journey using the creative process as the foundation for self-discovery and self-realization that invites your authentic self to emerge.

This book is a step-by-step journey of empowerment; engaging and reawakening your innate creativity while reclaiming your inner self with paint on paper. This book incorporates trusting your intuitive voice with deep, underlying principles of healing, such as energy medicine and shamanism.

If we want the world to be different we need to start with ourselves first.

An abstract painting featuring vibrant, swirling colors of red, orange, yellow, green, and blue. Two prominent vortex-like structures are visible, each with a bright, glowing center. The overall composition is dynamic and energetic, with thick brushstrokes and a sense of movement.

CHAPTER

3

Intuitive Creation

Learned skills—like math, cooking, painting, or music—depend on mind and muscle memory.

When we create from an intuitive place; we do not respond from a learned muscle memory in our minds. We respond from our bellies, our guts, and our hearts. When I invite you to paint from your heart, your gut, I am asking you to listen; listen deeply to the sublime place inside of you, and respond to any feeling that arises.

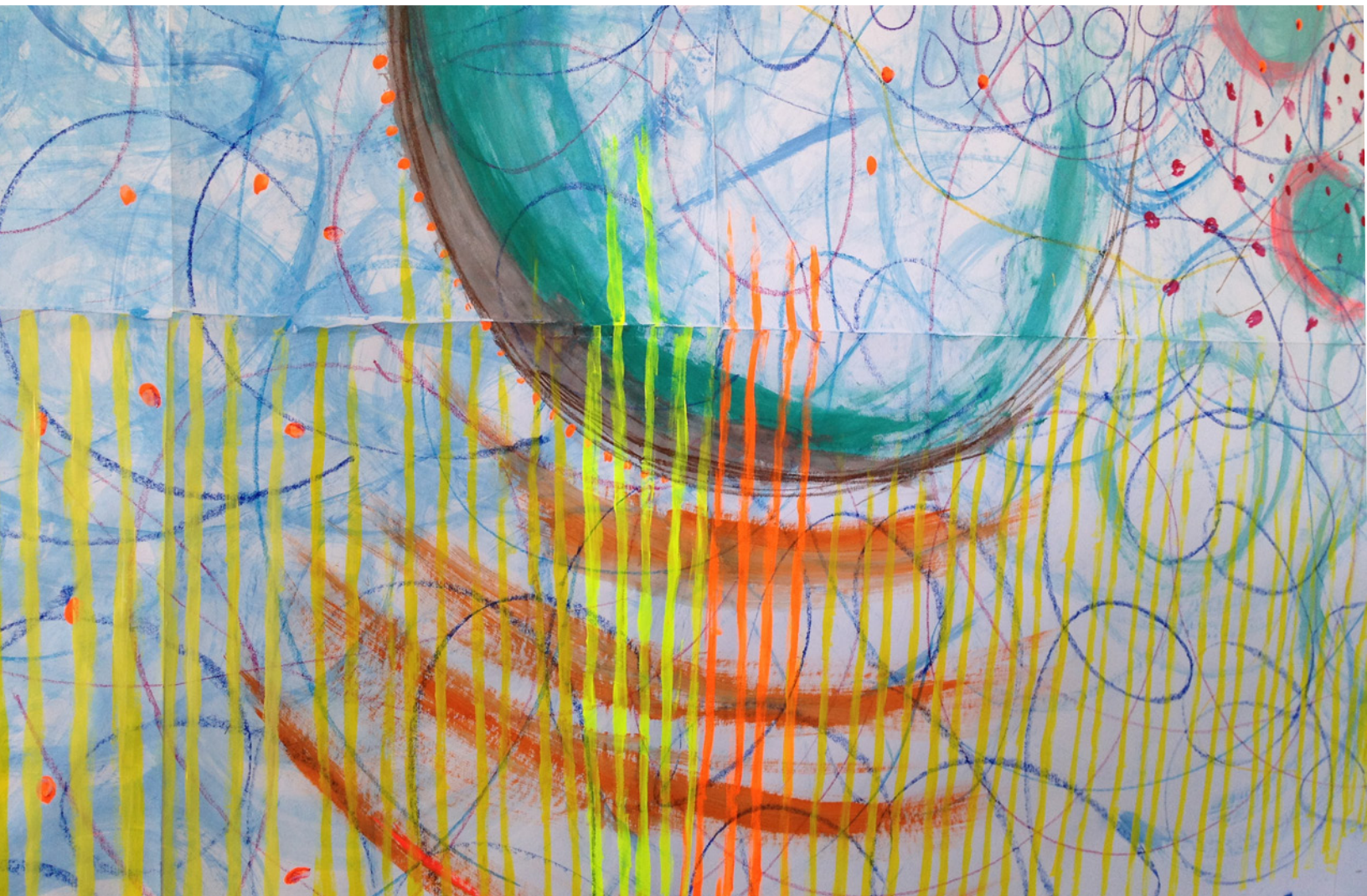
Spirit: Painting from the heart

Our heart, a big muscle the size of a fist, resides in the center of our chest. It is that blood-pumping, oxygen-moving, life-producing organ that keeps us alive. Yet, our physical heart also has to do with our emotional feelings: Love, joy, heartache, sadness, elation, infatuation. This heart is the vessel of the spirit, the house of feelings, all governed by the heart chakra, which circulates and tends all those feelings throughout our *bodymindspirit*.

The heart's archetype is the sovereign queen or king, a benevolent ruler who cares deeply for all that happens in the queen/kingdom. So the care of the heart is paramount to the survival of the queen/kingdom/us. The subtle body heart is neither full nor empty. It is a sacred space that allows all emotions to move through it without holding onto any of them. When emotions get stuck,

the start of illness, or *dis-ease* begins. How does it create illness you might ask. Spinning, spreading, and tending slows down. The sparkle in our eyes fades, our breathing becomes shallow, and we begin to fade away. Whatever we name that heartbreak—whatever story we attach to that event—the fact remains that our heartbreak starts to restrict the flow of vitality through us. Our body adapts and we repattern our behavior to the point that sometimes we don’t even notice.

When we paint from the heart, we allow our feelings, emotions, and stories to just flow, being aware or unaware of them, but allowing the joy of movement to start rebalancing and to enliven us again. We accept all the parts of us that we creatively bring forth, allowing the spinning, spreading, and tending of the heart to keep us fully alive.



Mind: The critic

The critic? What does it mean to face the critic? We all have an inner critic. It’s what keeps us within *safe* limits of societal norms. That is all fine until we have a growth spurt. Then our critic tries to limit us, to keep us in a box, and to prevent our personal growth.

We admonish ourselves by saying “I can’t do that because . . . “

Because why?

You will be... too loud...

Too big...

Too full of yourself...

What would it be like to be really *full of yourself*?

Marion Williamson said it so well—

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won’t feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It’s not just in some of us; it’s in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

— Marion Williamson, *A Return to Love*

The critic keeps us from manifesting the glory of our light in the world. How do we recognize the critic? Knowing when the critic is present can be difficult. It's especially hard when we confront a deep-seated limiting belief. The critic can be elusive! Consider this scenario: You are happily going along, painting, writing, and feeling *full* of yourself. Then it starts... hmmm... maybe it's time for a cup of tea, a snack, wondering what is happening to the weather right now. Then you walk away — and the critic wins.

You walk away and take the pressure off of what might be a personal moment of growth; the critic survives and stops your shell from cracking open a bit more.

Sometimes the critic shows up as:

Oh, I should just stay where I am. Life is okay. Why try to change it? My job isn't so bad. That's why they call it work! And it pays the bills. Why dream a big dream, it just might not pan out — I will retire in say, twenty-five years. I can do what I love then! I'll keep myself small and under the radar until then.

And so our bodies respond. Do you feel your energy deflated? Do you feel your breath slowing down? Your blood stilling and your pulse weakening? The light in your eyes dimming?

You can die a slow death with the critic. You attribute it to age, or to a change in your life circumstances. And before you know it you have learned not to notice the color of the leaves, the song of the birds, the cry in your heart.

The catalyst for change has been neatly tucked away in a dusty box on the top shelf behind a book. Critic 1—you 0.

10 Roots and Bones!

Then one day, a photo or painting or poem catches your attention—your breath quickens, and your eyes start to shine and *your creative vital energy* starts to call you out into the living again.

The critic keeps you small and safe, but that is not how and why we came into this life. We are bright, shiny spirits in human form here to enjoy the gifts of being in *body*. No matter how you bring it out: Dancing, painting, singing, or communing with nature. We are here to grow, shine, and explore this wonderful life.

Gut reaction: instinctual visceral emotional reaction to a situation.

The first step is to recognize and acknowledge the critic. Know that it has kept you safe, and that it is part of you and your growth evolution. When you see the critic, honor it and bow to it, then put it on the shelf and move forward.



SECTION THREE

Creative Alchemy

Before enlightenment —
chop wood and carry water.
After enlightenment —
chop wood and carry water.

—A Zen Proverb





This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine.

— Harry Dixon Loes

CHAPTER

9

BE BRAVE— Releasing What Is in the Way

If you are afraid of an alligator under your bed, you might discover that it's a friendly alligator—a creature who just wants to help you become more fully yourself. Or it might simply be a forgotten sweater. Either way, you can tap into blocked energy by shining a light on your fear.

Creative healing

One of many things the intuitive creative process can show you, is what is keeping you from being fully present in the world. It is essential to look at those bumps, blocks, and stories that hold you back from growing, changing, and shining your light.

Creative healing happens when you shine a little light and demystify those blocks, paint them, and allow the creative process to help move and integrate that life force back into your body. The good news is you don't have to rip the Band-Aid off an old wound over and over again

or tear down your entire defense system to learn and bring back all the various parts of yourself. All you need to do is allow and trust your inner creative self to be your guide.

Letting your intuitive self lead the way, you can explore a belief pattern that is ready for change at a pace that is comfortable for you. When you mix the intuitive creative act with attention, curiosity, and acceptance to unblock old stories (speed bumps), healing can happen.

Here is an example: As a child you had a spot in your room that was dark; your mind made up all kinds of scary stories about it. Then one day the light shone in that area, and you realized it was just like the rest of your walls and floors. Or you got brave enough to shine a flashlight in the area (during the day of course), and what you feared was no longer scary.

Perhaps some really scary things have shown up in your life. Maybe you are afraid to look at them, or you simply want them to go away. The beauty of letting your intuitive self be the guide is that your dark scary, places show up only when you are ready, and always in little chunks that you are capable of processing and integrating. Allowing a little light into those places brings awareness and healing. *I call this creative alchemy.*

Invite your creative muse to bring light to the shadow parts of yourself. Light and awareness lets you transform and integrate those hidden parts of yourself, creating wholeness. Consciously or unconsciously, you recognize aspects of your shadow self, and, as you recognize and accept those shadow parts, they are transformed from dark, heavy, and dense to light and true.



Alchemy—the act of transforming base dense ideas/matter into light/gold.

Our energy body holds a blueprint that our physical body mimics. As we follow our intuitive creative self, we clear those old holding patterns and release blocks. The result is that our physical body rebalances, bringing lightness to who we are, remembering our true-self vibration. With each discovery, we change our dense old body vibration and embody our true, higher, brighter vibration. It feels natural and right when we come home to ourselves.

Under all the layers of expectations and self-impositions is a fully alive, unique you waiting to come home.

Meet your shadow self

One of the most profound gifts of this work is the opportunity to look at and explore parts of yourself that you usually are afraid to acknowledge. When we don't look at those parts, they tend to leak out unregulated: hysterical crying, flying-off-the-handle rage, sinking to the depths of depression, being a bit too pissy, over-controlling, overly accommodating, or way too polite.

Going back to what we have explored, your shadow self consists of those parts of yourself you have put away, because you don't want other folks to see them. It is often our young self that labeled that part *bad*. Now as your adult self, it is time to reclaim all of your parts. *Let's go a step further and deeper.*



Have you put away:

- A strong part?
- A magical part?
- A sweet soft part of you?
- The part of you that says no and means it?
- The brutally honest part of you?
- The part of you that is just too big, loud, or out there?

Your intuition will show you the one part of you that wants to be a conscious part of you again. That part needs the most healing at this moment. That part is ready to be seen and brought back into the fold of your everyday self



CREATE

RECOVERING PARTS FROM THE DARK

Set up your space. Close your eyes. Take a deep breath in, and ground yourself. Welcome in the Elements and your guides. Ask for a foundation blessing and write those on your paper, or hold them in your heart.

Sit for a few minutes in front of your paper. Know in your heart that you will be calling back a part of you that has been hidden away in your shadow place because you didn't feel safe enough to show that part to the world. Your intuitive creative self knows the shadow part that is ready to join you. Trust.

Set up your painting space. Create your sacred space. Ground yourself.

- Ask for a foundation blessing.
- Close your eyes and breathe into the sweet spot in your heart area.
- Feel your breath moving in and out of you.
- Feel your heartbeat.
- Feel the place where your body meets the earth.
- Feel yourself being supported by the earth.
- Now ask your all-knowing intuitive self for a color, shape, or form that will start a conversation to welcome back an essential part of you.
- Pick up your brush and follow the energy.

With one brushstroke at a time, creative alchemy happens. Your intuitive self will lead the way to a more integrated you.



If you hear a voice within you say ‘you cannot paint,’ then by all means paint, and that voice will be silenced.

—Vincent Van Gogh

A Ceremony for the Saboteur

Critic, saboteur, your mind—are all names for the energy that sidetracks you or completely distracts you from the matters at hand. There are a multitude of reasons why this energy exists in your life, but mostly it’s to keep you safe. This energy is part of you, just like the bright, shiny, happy parts that you show the world. Like all other parts of you, this energy must be accepted for you to live as an authentic whole person. That also includes the potentially bratty, grumpy, snippy parts of you. To ignore those denser shadowy parts of yourself is like not recognizing the left side of your body.

Are you ready to meet your critic/saboteur and love her/him fully? Bringing the invisible to form. *Write* a physical description of your critic/saboteur, including things like what it looks like, is wearing, what

she/he/it often says to you. Be as detailed as possible. Create an image of your critic/saboteur. Invite the energy of your critic/saboteur to speak to you via color, shape, and form. Don’t direct the dialogue. Let your wise, intuitive self be the intermediary.

Bringing the critic/saboteur into form can help you have a better understanding of energy that holds you back and to recognize it when it overrides you.

Honoring your critic/saboteur is as vital as honoring the creative part of yourself. You may think that your critic would critique everything, and would not have a soft side. The critic is always trying to keep you from stepping into “unsafe” territory. It is always on high alert, which is an exhausting job. Inviting your critic to rest while you paint gives you more space for creative expression and gives your critic a rest, too. While you are in this intuitive creative womb, you are safe, safe to explore your inner worlds. You don’t need your body guard (critic) with you. Tell it that you are safe and will be fine on your own for a while.

Let your critic/saboteur know it can join you again when you are done painting (if you want). Putting the critic away for a while and letting your defenses down for a bit allows you to see, receive, and experience the learnings that show up, without the defensive knee jerk response that is often the critic’s first reaction. To grow and change you will need to give your critic a vacation, a leave of absence, or a new job, so that you are no longer being held back.



ENERGY EXERCISE

Honoring ceremony

Imagine your critic/saboteur in full detail. Imagine a shelf high above your creative space. Then imagine a box filled with soft and beautiful things— things that your critic/saboteur would just love. Invite your critic/saboteur to go and rest in the box for a while. Think of it as a spa for your critic, a place it can rest and step away from its lifelong project of keeping you safe.

Take a deep breath and let your body relax. Feel the space in your body that the critic/ saboteur resides in. This may be one area of your body, several spots, or an overall layer around you. Acknowledge all of the hard work that your critic/saboteur has done for you—how it has kept you safe all these years. Tell your critic that you love it. Dance a dance of love for it, write a poem to it, sing a song to it, honor it.

Invite your critic to take a break, and name a length of time that feels right for you. Tell your critic/saboteur that you are much stronger and wiser than when it started protecting you. Imagine your critic/saboteur snuggling down into the box and falling asleep. How do you feel when that energy is sleeping? Just notice. All relationships are reciprocal. You might have needed the critic/saboteur as much as it thought it needed to protect you. Just notice.

Send you critic/saboteur lots of *love*. After all, it is part of you, and honoring all parts of you is essential to living a full authentic life.



praise for the book

Damini Celebre draws from her background in Art, Shamanism, Acupuncture, and Energy work, to create the next evolution of Process Painting. She has created painting exercises that spark soul work—bringing you toward your authentic self.

This deep work is made accessible through easy-to-understand language and personal stories.

— **Lynn Miller**, MA, Expressive Arts Therapist author of *SpiritArts, Transformation through Creating Art, Music and Dance*

In this wonderfully wise and playful book, Damini Celebre invites us to join her in radical subversion: forego the finished product for the process of creation, refuse to get lost in our stories and stay with the energy and mystery of color, shape and vibration. She understands the power of the creative imagination to heal and develop us when we can stay out of its way.

The exercises are fun. Damini keeps us company with her wit and gentleness and prepares us to elude the obstacles that arise when we exercise intuition and creativity.

—**Emma Mellon**, PhD, psychologist, author of *Waking Yours Dreams*