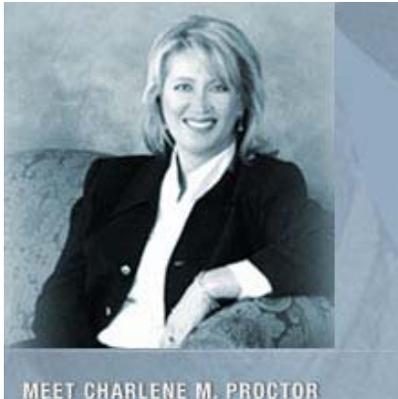


Getting To Know Your Network - Member Interview



MEET CHARLENE M. PROCTOR

This week: Charlene Proctor

March 2, 2005

Q: When did you realize you wanted to be a writer?

A: While working on my Ph.D. in the 90s, I spent years in academic research for highly technical areas. Getting a research degree really trains you to write because the academic style is very demanding and forces you to think through argumentation and logic. At the University of Michigan, you can't pull the wool over anyone's eyes because your job is to add new knowledge to your field. You are expected to contribute. Although the pressure to create seems contrary to the intuitive response a writer needs to channel good material, it provided the discipline I needed to produce. So, even though I no longer write and publish my field, my take away value as a writer was self-discipline, being able to meet deadlines, challenging myself to produce something of value, and contributing something to the world. To write any subject matter, those are feelings that you revisit over and over again. They just feel good. These are skills that are applicable to whatever your soul work might be.

Q: How and when did you make this dream a reality?

A: In the university setting, especially when preparing research for peer reviews, there is usually a small group of worldwide researchers in your field who are interested, and qualified, to make sense of your material. I finally reached a point where I could no longer permit my ideas and voice to reach such a small audience. I felt my words with such passion; it seemed I would burst if I did not find ways to disseminate them, which is the true curse and glory of being a writer. You need to write, and be read, to feel the joy. At some point, a writer needs to be validated, no matter the genre, because our greatest pleasure resides in having someone read our material and changing their mind or influencing their life. I find this aspect of writing extremely powerful. So, my decision to shift into writing inspirational material was clumsy at first but, like learning

anything, you get a better understanding of your audience as time goes on. One of my goals is to make my lessons very comprehensive, and offer a good balance between intellect and emotion.

Q: What's the most important lesson you've learned so far in your writing career?

A: Never, never allow an editor or publisher to challenge your confidence level. And never seek validation from publishing houses. Take the feedback and criticism over your work that resonates with you and leave the rest behind, and keep on keepin' on. Before I self-published, I spent 3 years writing, submitting proposals, dealing with agents, and re-writing manuscripts to please one potential editor over another. By the time I was through, the work had little to do with my original intention. I've even had agents who tied my ideas up for 2 years because they said they would work with me on fine-tuning a proposal for books to be circulated amongst publishers, and then put the project aside to collect dust. There is so much wasted time with this scenario. Life is too short for such angst. If you work with anyone in the publishing industry, you should first realize that they are financial houses and they must back books reflecting mainstream culture. In other words, what will sell well, quickly, and with the smallest marketing budget possible. It is not necessarily a validation of your writing quality or a subject you are proposing that merits the attention of thousands of readers.

Q: What are you working on right now?

A: The success of The Goddess Network Press. As a result of my experiences with the publishing industry, I decided to self-publish these first 2 books: *Let Your Goddess Grow! 7 Spiritual Lessons on Female Power and Positive Thinking* and *The Women's Book of Empowerment: 323 Affirmations that Change Everyday Problems into Moments of Potential*. That means I am completely responsible for footing the publishing services costs, developing an integrated marketing strategy, and all the other elements a big publishing house must complete in getting books to the market. We even had to hire a business consultant to handle the budgets, and help assemble the distribution channels. We will sell it online and through Amazon until September of 2005, and then add bricks and mortar bookstores and catalogs if the books achieve traction in the market. All our energy right now at our office is dedicated to this function.

Q: Name some authors or books that have influenced your writing life in a positive way.

A: Of course, it all changes as time goes on. Today, on women's feminist literature and for keeping me philosophically on track, I believe Patricia Lynn Reilly's books on female deity and women's self-empowerment helped me to solidify belief in my material. Timothy Freke and Peter Gandy, for *The Jesus Mysteries* and *Jesus and The Lost Goddess*, opened my mind considerably to the power of religious myth and the origins of Christianity. They also exemplify championship writers: 2 academics who can write intelligently, crafting something so imaginative yet well defended and make it completely understandable to a mainstream audience. And Eckhart Tolle for *The Power of Now*. A great example of going completely on the automatic, intuitive response from the divine source--and telling simple truths that affect millions of lives.

Q: What have you recently read or what are you reading right now that you would consider an outstanding work?

A: I've been doing some research on brain science because I believe that the way we neurologically process information and translate it into behavior has everything to do with how we process our experience on earth. Science now tells us that the brain is more flexible than originally thought and we do have the power to change the way we react to our environment, hence creating a perception of a happy and productive life. Since I write about consciously creating your day, and how to change your life by changing the way you think, it provides me with plenty of ammunition for my theories. Currently, I am reading *Why God Won't Go Away: Brain Science and the Biology of Belief* by Andrew Newberg, et al., and *Molecules Of Emotion: The Science Behind Mind- Body Medicine* by Candace B. Pert.

Q: What excites or ignites your soul?

A: Seeing someone reach their full potential, especially if I have had a hand in helping them achieve greater awareness of the divine power within. I also light up when I see evidence of the Goddess, or the Divine Feminine pushing through the layers of our society and culture to make Her awareness known in the form of movies or books. *The DaVinci Code* by Dan Brown and *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd is evidence of Her making an appearance. I believe it is only through restoring balance between both elements of the Divine within ourselves that we will see it manifest in the world, in the form of happier relationships, a balance of power between men and women, and in healthier, more productive organizational structures. It's my passion and I hope to be writing many books addressing this topic in years to come.

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Charlene M. Proctor holds a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Michigan and provides guidance through everyday complexity with female imagery and positive thinking. She is the founder of The Goddess Network, Inc., an organization for women who want to discover the feminine principle within. Her lectures, workshops and electronic programs reach a worldwide audience daily. Although Charlene has penned numerous papers on the subject of simulation, organizational learning and recycling technologies, her material written for a wider audience gives her the greatest pleasure. [*Let Your Goddess Grow: 7 Spiritual Lessons on Female Power and Positive Thinking*](#) and [*The Women's Book of Empowerment: 323 Affirmations That Change Everyday Problems into Moments of Potential*](#) have been her two current and best-selling works. She lives with her husband and two teenage boys in the Detroit, Michigan metropolitan area. E-mail her at tgn@thegoddessnetwork.net

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