

The Spiral Dance

(excerpt from **Partnering with Nature**)

Catriona MacGregor

If you would understand the Invisible, look carefully at the Visible.

-Talmud

One sunny June morning, more than a decade after my experience with the sacred tree, I stood on a high ridge overlooking four rounded hills covered with golden grasses. The bright hillsides were dotted with groves of coastal live oak, coyote brush, and California bay trees. The gentle wind, filled with the delicate freshness of the Pacific Ocean twenty miles away, cooled the back of my neck. A small flock of western bluebirds flitted above the tips of the golden grasses. As I watched them land on the ground in a small, sociable grouping amongst red fescue grasses, a brilliant shimmer of silver caught my eye. Looking up, I saw an osprey about three hundred feet above my head. With its long, tapered wings and gleaming body, it looked like a cross suspended in the sky. Held securely in its strong talons was a newly caught fish. The brilliant silver flashes were the reflection of the sun's rays on the fish's gleaming, still-wet scales.

The alive fish was moving its tail back and forth as if swimming. It was held aloft with its valiant head forward, its eyes staring into the great innocence of the sky. For an instant, I felt pity for the fish; however, the osprey did not carry the fish off in a straight line to its nest, but flew in a slow-moving spiral of expanding circles. It gave the fish a majestic ride over the green and gold hillsides, over the doe and her two spotted fawns, over the long-eared hare standing up on restless hind legs, and over the wonderstruck woman and her dog.

In that moment, the osprey's act seemed no less grand than if I was witnessing first hand the discovery of the Holy Grail. The "sacred vessel", now held aloft so triumphantly, shone its brilliant silvery light into my soul. My consciousness was instantly lifted beyond the everyday to a vision of a grander sphere. My spirit soared with the osprey and the fish and my perception shifted, as I now saw what the fish saw—the body of the Earth revealed. Such a marvel so far beyond the fish's oceanic dreams, and so far beyond my own experience, that I, like the fish, entered a previously unimaginable place. On that morning, the Creator and master alchemist transformed me, as I witnessed that spiral flight.

The osprey continued to circle around for over twenty minutes while I stood entranced on the ridge below. During this time, the image and meaning of the spiral was integrated into every cell of my body. As I made my way home, the impression of the spiral stayed embedded in my mind. It seemed that everything I looked at—each blade of grass, each tree branch, and even the trees very trunks—rose up from the ground as joyous spirals moving before my very eyes. I felt the dynamic motion of the spiral move as a gentle yet powerful force upon the earth. It was as if I had seen the wizard behind the curtain, the magic that gracefully weaves itself through all existence...

The spiral is one of the most powerful and beautiful patterns in nature. Spirals are everywhere, from luminous spiral galaxies ablaze in dazzling colors to the tiny spirals at the tips of our fingers. The spiral is simultaneously a structure and a movement. As a dynamic movement, the spiral can be creative beyond measure, or devastatingly destructive, as exhibited by tornados or tsunamis. As structure or design, Spirals are the form that animate and inanimate things take. The fact that the spiral form is found throughout the great diversity of life and beyond, speaks strongly of an underlying unity in the universe, that is shared among all creation...

It is the spiral that connects us to every other life form on Earth. Of course, the blueprint for all life on Earth exists in a spiral! Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA), which contains the genetic instructions needed to create the components for cells, proteins, and RNA molecules of life forms are shaped as a spiral. ..Within the spiral exist the deepest secrets of Creation. ..

The predominance of the spiral in the physical world is echoed in the invisible, energetic, and spiritual worlds. ..Since the spiral is the intrinsic pattern of creation from which all things grow and evolve, spirals are frequently displayed in ancient drawings, sculptures, and other works of art found around the world. The spiral is often found at many sacred places around the world. For example, the spiral is a favorite sacred symbol of the Maori in New Zealand; it is also found in sacred uses in Africa and its form is carved into the ancient rocks at New Grange, Ireland. ...

The spiral itself is infinite which links it to the Creator, who is also infinite, and yet, the spiral is also found throughout the Universe in all “limited” life forms. Thus the spiral, in effect, is capable of going from the physical realm of the material world to the world of spirit and ultimately the birthplace of all creation. Thus, the spiral unites us with all life, with the Creator and ultimately within our deepest selves. ...When we attune ourselves to this subtle dance of creation, we enter a sacred realm—we find our own Holy Grail.

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Catriona has been a voice for animals and wild places all her life. She leads Vision Quests and Nature Quests to help people connect to nature and their own unique path in life. Her latest book is **Partnering with Nature**. The work is a simple book with a powerful message that illuminates the fact that our connection to nature, animals, and the earth is a vital part of our existence. This book speaks to anyone who senses a void in their life, and to anyone who wishes to make a difference in transforming our environment. She is also the coauthor of **Healing the Heart of the World: Harnessing the Power of Intention to Change Your Life and the Planet**, along with Carolyn Myss, Jean Shinoda Bolen, Masaru Emoto, Fritjof Capra, Thich Nhat Hanh, et al.

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