



# THE WAY OF THE WILD WOMAN

10 Steps to Bliss  
in the Bedroom  
and in Everyday Life

By Rebecca Pillsbury

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# The Way of the Wild Woman:

## 10 Steps to Bliss in the Bedroom & in Everyday Life

### By: Rebecca Pillsbury

**Have you ever looked upon another** woman and thought, "I wish I could be more like her"? What was it about her that made you envious? Sometimes it is her structural beauty, or her fashion sense, or some other aspect of the physical self. More often, however, I believe what we notice and admire is her "essence."

There's something about her that howls, "I am woman." It's a quality I like to call "wildness." It is something beyond the body, beyond the mind. It is the total expression of her soul. Sometimes, it is her sheer confidence; the way she holds herself up, the gaze with which she looks upon you. She's not afraid to show herself fully, or to see you deeply.

Often times, it's her lifestyle. She's willing to follow her heart, to chase her dreams. She may travel alone to an exotic country, just for the thrill of adventure. She may start a business, or fill the world with her art.

She may dress in a way that challenges cultural norms, or dance in a place where movement is unexpected. She may talk to strangers on the bus, or in line for coffee.

Whatever it is, she does something that surprises you. Something extraordinary. Something wild.

But she doesn't do it for you.

She does it for herself. Because that is who she is.

However, she may not always have been that person. Or maybe she was as a child, but she later had to remember and relearn who she really was.

This guide is meant as a tool to help you remember who you really are.

After following these 10 steps you, too, will be a "Wild Woman." Or perhaps I should say, remember that you always were...

# 10 Steps to Becoming a Wild Woman

## Step #1: Surround yourself with Wild Women

**Who we spend our time with** greatly influences who we become.

There is an unfortunate sense of rivalry among women in our society that leads us to compare, critique, and compete. This cultural paradigm often isolates us and keeps us from bonding with other women who are much more like us than we dare to believe. Instead of looking upon other women with judgement or envy, choose instead to view them as teachers, mentors, friends—people who can help lift you up, or lead you to discover the greatest version of yourself yet to be created.

You can begin by telling the women who you “wish you could be more like” what qualities you admire in them. I have personally experienced the chain reaction that can occur simply by taking this one small step.

Let me give you a personal example. I was at a blues bar not long ago, where a group of dancers had gathered at the front of the stage. I noticed a woman that I initially looked upon with envy. She was beautiful, by multiple definitions of the sense. I noticed my socialized reaction to judge and compare. She was confident, sexy; she had invested time into looking good that night—something I don’t often do for myself. I realized that the source of my judgment was envy. I envied that she owned her appearance. It was clear that she’d dressed up because it made her feel good. Why didn’t I allow myself that pleasure more often? Instead of holding that envy in my heart, however, I transmuted it into a compliment that I offered her. Her face lit up, and her exuberance and warmth extended out to me. That one small step led to a deep and authentic conversation. She shared that she was recently divorced, trying to own her sexuality again after a period of intense repression and shame. Wow. We had a lot in common after all. We agreed to meet for coffee later that week to continue our conversation.

This woman has since become a dear friend of mine. Interestingly enough, she later told me that when she saw me across the room that first night at the blues bar, she felt envious of me. What a different path our relationship could have taken. Rather than tear each other down in a catfight of female competition, we decided to lift each other up through compassion and collaboration. We learn from each other. Inspire each other. Empower each other.

**Girls compete. Wild Women empower.**

When we make the effort to truly know another—to approach our relationships from the heart, rather than from the ego—it becomes clear that we are one.

Never in my life has this concept been more apparent than, after years of living stuck within my own sexual shame and repression, I finally started seeing a sex therapist and joined a Women's Group.

Here is an excerpt from my memoir, [Finding Ecstasy](#), on how I came to learn that we're never as alone as we think we are:

## Excerpt from [Finding Ecstasy](#), Chapter 12: Breaking Fertile Ground

I JOINED A WOMEN'S therapy group called How's Your Sex Life? Eight weeks of sitting in a circle with other women, discussing our sexual problems. It was a wide spectrum of women—married, divorced, never married, straight, gay, bisexual—but we were all there for the same reason. Sex was hard. I was terrified to speak up those first couple of weeks. I had not told many people—not even all of my sexual partners—that I had never experienced orgasm with a partner. We went around the circle and were encouraged to share as much of our story and reason for being there as we felt comfortable sharing. I knew that for me to get the greatest benefit from the group, I had to say it. "Hello, my name is Rebecca, and I've never had an orgasm."

My heart was racing, and my mouth was dry. But I said it. And do you know what? No one looked at me funny. No one even flinched. And from that point on, talking about sex was so much easier. After eight weeks of discussing everything from desire, seduction, sexual shame, fear, power—and yes, orgasm—I felt there was nothing I couldn't say anymore. At least not within this group of women.

I couldn't get enough. I joined three more groups with more specific focuses. Each group consisted of about ten women—all different ages, professions, and sexual histories. I looked around the room at all these beautiful women. It struck me that if I had been introduced to any of them at a party, or worked with them, or had seen any of them walking down the street, I would have never assumed that they didn't have active, thriving sex lives. Oh, the assumptions we make, I thought. These groups were a huge turning point for me. I had felt so alone on my journey toward accepting myself as a sexual being and had carried all of this shame inside of me. Now, I had a safe place to practice its release. And by all of us practicing using the same voice of transparency and vulnerability, we found that we were not alone—but rather, were all one. So often we focus on our differences, but what if we focus on our similarities? Aren't we all struggling to figure out this whole "human experience" thing?

**So what about you?** Is there an area of your life you're feeling alone in? Shameful about? I can guarantee you, there are others feeling the exact same way.

You can make the choice—right here, right now—to do something about it. Research women's groups online. You may be able to find some through [www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com), or through a local therapist. If you're not yet ready to speak out in public about your struggles, find an online forum you can participate in.

Another way you can surround yourself with "Wild Women" is to start your own monthly gathering of strong female friends, or advertise in your local community and hold meetings at a coffee shop.

No matter what route you choose, remember to join in solidarity, not in competition. It is not by trying to be better than another, but by trying to be a better person than you were yesterday that makes a Wild Woman.

## Step # 2: Let go of what no longer serves you

**Now that you know what it feels like** to be around Wild Women, you may realize that some of the relationships in your life are holding you back from expressing your own wildness.

This could be your life partner, your work colleagues, your friendships, or even members of your family. The relationships worth maintaining are the ones in which you can be your authentic self. Relationships that stagnate you, or that don't support you in your growth, have got to go. Their absence will make room in your life for the ones that do.

It can be a very difficult decision to distance yourself from people that have been in your life for a long time, particularly those you have known intimately. It is important to trust your inner guidance as to who is important to remain in your life, and who you need to gracefully let go. I learned this lesson the hard way...but it's a lesson I'll never forget.

### Excerpt from *Finding Ecstasy*, Chapter 15: Letting Go With Grace

ALMOST EXACTLY A year later, I was finally able to admit that my relationship needed to end. The turning point came when I began my first reread of *Conversations with God*. The books had been lying quietly on the bookshelf, dormant in my mind but present in my soul, over the past five years. Actually, to be honest, they were lying on our toilet shelf—having been placed there by yours truly as a subtle message to Sam that he'd once said he'd read it (I knew where he did his best reading). Turns out it was me that needed the subtle reminder.

The first eye-opener was the concept that relationships with others are about yourself: what can you give, what parts of yourself will you highlight. I realized instantly that all that energy I'd been investing in the relationship had been an effort to hold on to Sam out of fear of losing him. By doing so, I was simultaneously giving up parts of myself in order to complete his picture of who he wanted his partner to be and holding him to my own standards of who I not only wanted my partner to be but thought he should be. The author's theory suggests that we worry about the self only—an idea that runs contradictory to what most of us have been taught—so that the soul may experience the highest form of self. We spend so much time thinking about what the other is doing, thinking, wanting, expecting...when none of that should matter. It only matters what we are being. The highest form of you becomes the highest form of me; the highest form of me becomes the highest form of that person over there—because we are all one.

...Rereading these books allowed me to conceptualize what I had glazed over in the past. I had allowed limits to be placed on my soul, and I had imposed them on my partner. Instead of holding each other back, partnership should be used as a tool for each person's soul to reach its highest potential. The partners could recognize that their growth together may be intended to last a lifetime or perhaps only a few months. Reflecting on my own relationship, I now understood that it was appropriate for us to remain together only as long as we grew together. Sam and I had exhausted all attempts to stay together, and our growth had hit a wall.

So, what would love do now? I realized that love would let Sam go—let us go. It was not fair to either of us to ask us to be something we weren't. I wished for him complete joy

and happiness, and I knew he could not find that within the partnership that we had created.

**It's not only people you may need to let go of.** It could be ideas or beliefs you have about yourself, the world around you, or God or a higher power.

As women, we've had an abundance of societal expectations and assumptions projected upon us by the media, religion, schools, and our families, designed to weaken our wild nature. What takes years to build up, can take years to break down—but it doesn't have to. We can actually decide in a moment to move from what others have told us is the truth, to what we know is our personal truth. Because here's the thing—all truth is subjective. What is "right" for one person is not necessarily "right" for another. Imagine the powerful effect on our relationships—and our governments—if instead of arguing, we agreed in advance to both be right. The only decision point therefore, is to determine what the other's truth means for us. It may become clear that two people need to go their separate ways. Or, it may just be that they each have to step into the relationship with new agreements and new goals. You may both be greatly enriched by your differences in the end.

And what about God, or a higher power? Has what your faith taught you kept you stagnant in fear? Or does your spiritual practice—whatever that looks like to you—fill you with joy and love?

**The deepest truth always comes from love, not fear.**

Letting go of people, beliefs, and who you've always been takes a LOT of courage. But it's what a Wild Woman does.

## Step #3: Spend time alone

**Change takes not just a lot of courage, but a lot of energy.** You're going to need to nurture yourself in preparation for your new way of being in the world.

When was the last time you took time purely for you? Especially if you have children or others in your care, this can be an easily forgotten concept. But it's necessary. In fact, you can't take care of others to the best of your ability, if you haven't first taken care of yourself.

Start slowly—carve out time for a short nap or meditation. Indulge in a hot bath—use salts, essential oils, or candles to make it a special event. Once you've mastered the art of finding time you didn't think you had, expand your time alone to a full day. Go for a hike in nature; pack a picnic lunch and a book and indulge in all that space. Remember what it felt like to be a child—only yourself to worry about, only that particular moment.

If you truly want to feel empowered, spend the night outside, under the stars. Camp for the weekend, all by yourself. Fear will likely arise, especially if you're not used to all those wildlife noises. But after you've woken up to the early daylight, you will feel so brave! You may even feel newly inspired to go on an even grander adventure...

Have you ever dreamed of traveling to another country...alone? Have you known someone or heard stories of other women who have traveled around the world by themselves? Did their courage fill you with a twinge of envy? If so, that's a sign that it's something you have to do.



## The emotion of envy is the voice of the soul, whispering your next step.

In my own personal experience, and the experience of countless other Wild Women, the most powerful life-changing experience was to travel abroad alone. Changing your environment, your routine, and the culture in which you reside automatically changes your brain pattern, and often your beliefs.

And don't think such an experience is only for single women. I have a happily married friend who credits the strength of her relationship with the experience of a period of time apart. Her and her husband regularly take time to travel alone; recently, she spent a month in Vietnam, while he rode his motorcycle across the United States.

Many women only dream of doing such things. The media instills us with fear of all the things that could go wrong—things designed to tame the freedom and independence of women. But I can tell you, that although there are certain extra precautions a woman must take when traveling alone, there are also extra reasons to feel at ease. The kindness and generosity of the human spirit never shines so bright than when recognizing someone who needs help—especially when that person is alone and female. If you have read Cheryl Strayed's memoir *Wild*, about her experience hiking the Pacific Crest Trail as a single female, you'll remember how male hikers with whom her path crossed stood in awe at the lengths strangers would go to make her feel comfortable—they did not experience the same thoughtfulness and generosity. The fact that this book was so "wildly" popular says a lot about the psyche of women—we ache to express our inborn nature to be wild.

We are trained to see strangers as threats, but my intuition has never steered me wrong. They are more likely looking upon your courage and aspiring to be more like you. More wild. So take that bath. While you're soaking, ponder what else is possible...

## Step #4: Get to know yourself (Mmm hmm. Down there.)

**I don't know about you, but after years of indoctrination** from my religion, school, and society in general, I thought that even looking at my female parts would send me straight to hell. Sexual repression is a terribly sad byproduct of the shame and guilt that is placed upon women in our society. To not be sexual enough is to be prude or frigid, to be "too" sexual is to be a slut or a skank. Don't even get me started on referring to sex as "dirty"—or menstrual blood, for that matter.

To be a sexual being is to be human, and there are a variety of ways that this inherent quality can be nurtured and expressed. Again, what is "right" for one person may not be "right" for another; it is up to you to decide what being a sexual woman means to you.

If you don't know what that means to you—or if you aren't fully comfortable expressing that part of yourself yet—a good place to start is by learning about yourself.

When was the last time you really looked at your genitals? I mean really looked—studied the color, the texture, the shape of your labia, the characteristics of your clitoris. Do you know them intimately? And not just how they look and feel, but what gets them aroused?



Maybe you're already a queen of masturbation...but if you're like me, this is something that took years and a whole new mindset to get comfortable with.

## Excerpt from Finding Ecstasy, Chapter 13: Homework

THE THERAPY GROUPS weren't all in-session work—we also had homework. The kind of homework that most people indulge in without having to be told to do. I, however, dreaded my homework. I had always been such a diligent student that I went for extra credit every chance I could. And here I was questioning my therapist: "Really, Ms. Johnson? Do I have to?"

I had to masturbate.

I had privately indulged in the practice as an innocent child, but as an adult I had grown to completely ignore that the opportunity existed. It seemed like a waste of time. I'd rather be soaking in a warm bath, reading a good book. Eating chocolate. Working on my connection with a partner who wasn't me. But now, I had carefully laid out instructions to explore myself, using various techniques and...toys. I had to go shopping. ...I settled on the FingO, a mini vibrator on a ring—easy to hide inside a purse, should one need access to a pick-me-up at any time of day. I was told by the salesclerk they were quite convenient while driving—and that being stopped at a red light would never be more fun. A bigger investment was a stainless-steel kegel exerciser (which could double as a dildo). Throw in a bottle of Sliquid, and I figured I was all set for a night of serious study.

I was to gradually ease into this new world of self-pleasure. I checked out *The Passion Prescription* by Laura Berman from the library, which includes a wonderful outline for a ten-week progression for the aspiring empress of sex and masturbation. Week one began with an anatomy lesson. I had never even really looked down there. Even when washing myself, I did so with my eyes averted. Good girls don't look down there, I still thought. Mirror in hand, I explored the layers and textures I had not yet become familiar with and compared them with the diagram in the book. I was somewhat bored, and somewhat fascinated with what I found. I remembered something about this in sex ed class in the fourth and sixth grades. Our homework at the time, however, certainly didn't encourage us to apply what we learned to our own bodies.

I braced myself for week two: masturbate at least once. What a drag, I thought. This will be a waste of time. But I committed to following the steps. I reached for my FingO and began to tease myself. It felt...nice. I fought the urge to consider a minute or two sufficient practice, and I allowed myself a good twenty minutes of exploration before declaring, "All right, glad that's over with."

Reporting back to my women's group later in the week, I proudly stated that I had completed my homework. Naturally, they were curious how the experience went for me, and when I shared that it was simply "okay," I was met with further questioning as to what particular toys I'd used. My response was followed by everyone's exclamation that I needed something more intense. The Magic Wand and Betty Dodson's video *Celebrating Orgasm*. Now that was an experience. The video showcases five different women as Betty led them to orgasm during private, hands-on coaching sessions. All of them used the Magic Wand.

Thus began my extensive research into the realm of self-love. I explored Dodson's work, including her classic, *Sex for One*, and *Viva la Vulva* and Julia Heiman's *Becoming Orgasmic*, all the while practicing with new toys and techniques. (By the way, the Magic Wand is a powerful thing.) All of these resources led me to accept and appreciate my sexuality and helped to normalize the act of self-love.

**If you already know how to please yourself, great!** How about experimenting with new ways to please yourself? And if you know what you like, but your partner does not, can you teach your partner?

It can be an uncomfortable position to be vulnerable in this way. But it's just another step to demonstrating the Wild Woman that you are.

**It takes greater inner strength to admit our fears than to keep them hidden.**

## **Excerpt from Finding Ecstasy, Chapter 13: Homework**

A GENERAL PERCEPTION is that exposing our vulnerability—our fears, our inadequacies, our limitations—makes us appear weak. In reality, it takes greater inner strength to admit our fears than to keep them hidden. Often, we hold back from exposing the most intimate parts of ourselves because we aren't familiar with the most intimate parts of another. It takes great courage to break through this barrier that may exist in our relationships and stand strongly while declaring, "I'll go first."

When we do go first, a heavy burden lifts not just from our own shoulders but most likely from the shoulders of the person we opened up to. I've often found myself hearing, "I've never told anyone else this, but..." as a safe space is created for friends or lovers to embrace their own vulnerability, and perhaps release their own shame. Our own vulnerability hence becomes a beautiful gift to another.

One of the places embracing vulnerability can have the biggest impact is in the bedroom. Through my women's group, I learned that it is okay to ask for what I need. Whether it is to be touched in a certain way, in a certain place, for a certain duration...or even to say no when I really didn't want to be touched at all, there is no need to feel embarrassed or ashamed. Yes, I may risk feeling hurt or disappointed by my partner's response, but a greater risk is never getting what I really want. And I may discover that my current partner isn't actually capable of giving what I want. Again, that can be an extremely scary realization, but at least knowing that puts me in a position to make better choices, more aligned with my own soul. And soul choices always lead to greater happiness in the end.

## Step #5: Love your body fully

**You may have discovered some surprising** (and marvelous!) things as you went through step #4. However, if you experienced fear or judgment about touching yourself, this may have been a very difficult step for you. If emotional trauma arose, you may want to consult a professional therapist to help you process and move through it.

Perhaps this step came naturally to you; maybe it's not an area you're stuck in. Did you notice yourself, however, making judgements about your body? Did you think it looked "funny," or "weird" or "ugly"? Then you still have work to do, my friend. A Wild Woman fully inhabits and accepts her body—I'm talking the size and the structure, the lines and the wrinkles, the smell and the feel. Heck—maybe even the taste, if you want to go there! You occupy it, so you've got to own it.

The first step in moving past self-judgment is to notice your thoughts as they arise. If you're like many women, self-criticism may be so common place, that you don't even notice how often you do it. Negative self-talk may come when looking in the mirror, "Ughh. My skin is so oily!" It may come when trying on new clothes, "I look soo fat in this." Or it may come when someone offers you a compliment, "I love your curly hair!" "What? It's all over the place today!"

For me, a major step towards becoming a Wild Woman was made when I learned to just say "Thank you," when someone offers me a compliment. Don't follow it up with a single "but"! Don't even feel compelled to return the compliment—just let it sink in. Allow yourself to feel the warm and fuzzies. That's the reason the compliment was given, in the first place. Here's another question: how do you feel about menstruation? Have you been taught that it's "dirty"? If you're like me, I still sometimes feel uncomfortable purchasing sanitary napkins from a male clerk. Damn all that early mental conditioning!

These negative ideas and emotions can manifest into physical ailments. Years of not thinking of myself as a "real" woman actually contributed to the suppression of my menstrual cycle. I was on the birth control pill for ten years, simply because my Western doctor had insisted I needed to have a period—even if it was artificial. But after all of the personal growth work I did, I realized I needed to get to know my body in its most natural state. If I continued to stay on the pill, I would continue to mask an underlying issue that had not yet been revealed. Irregularities or discomfort in our bodies are meant as warning signs that there's something larger we need to pay attention to. If we mask those symptoms, we mask our body's wisdom.

Without the pill to regulate it, my period, when it did irregularly show up, would last up to two weeks and be accompanied with the worst cramps I'd ever experienced. I finally went to see a doctor. She recommended an ultrasound, which showed that I had a condition called PCOS (polycystic ovarian syndrome). Guess what the recommended treatment was for the condition. The birth control pill.

Though I found an abundance of information about PCOS on the internet, I found much more value within Christiane Northrup's *Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom*, which a friend who worked in the healthcare field recommended to me. A greater gem for that time of my life could not have been found.

**A woman's body is a wondrous place. Take the time to truly know it.**

I learned that these cysts are actually underdeveloped eggs; my body was not even ovulating. Northrup described the resulting disorder as extremely complex due to its deep connection to a woman's emotions, diet, personal history, and beliefs about herself. Northrup wrote that negative feelings about being female, as well as feelings of subordination or inferiority, can create stresses in the body that manifest in the suppression of ovarian and menstrual cycle functioning. This process is, in essence, an attempt to prevent becoming a fully mature woman.

Instead of claiming this physical "disorder" as part of my identity and as a lifelong condition, I followed Northrup's advice to try to make peace with my femininity and sexuality. I now recognized the inner battle at play, between my innate nature as a woman and my ingrained belief that I wasn't already a woman. I implemented my new personal goals to read literature that celebrated the feminine spirit, to watch more movies with strong female leads, and for the first time in my adult life, to form solid bonds with other women. I also sought support from professionals.

It's incredible what can happen when we change the ideas we have about ourselves. Amid all of the shifts I made about my sexuality, physical changes began to happen within my body. My period started coming regularly. I had never reverted to birth control pills, as my Western doctor had advised. I instead started tracking my cycle, using the methods described in Toni Weschler's book, *Taking Charge of Your Fertility*. With daily tracking of my basal body temperature, cervical fluid pattern, and cervical position, I accurately predicted days of ovulation, and therefore menstruation. I believe that even this simple awareness and appreciation for how my body works created a safe space for my body to perform its natural functions. Now that I was ovulating regularly, the ovarian cysts disappeared on their own. Through this experience and the research I conducted, I learned that we have way more control over our own fertility than the medical industry and the media would have us believe. It's sad, but true, that there lies much more profit in having us believe we need to spend thousands of dollars on birth control pills, IUDs, vasectomies, and various methods of artificial insemination. Western medicine does have its place, but it's a shame that it's not customary to be told of the strength of alternative options.

I came to appreciate the power I have over my own body, as well as the grandeur of the female body; we are designed to function so intricately and exquisitely—and no one had ever told me.

I greatly encourage you to do your own research on the female body. When you do, I suspect you'll no longer view its functions as "dirty," but rather downright incredible. You won't be able to help falling completely and madly in love with yourself!

## Step #6: Cultivate the spirit

**Our culture places heavy emphasis** on the development of the mind and the body, but often a spiritual practice gets neglected. When was the last time you made direct contact with your soul? There are limitless ways you can do this; some people meditate, practice yoga or a martial art, or attend a faith gathering. Others do so in more subtle ways—go for a walk in nature, journal, or play a musical instrument. One of my favorite ways to connect with my soul is to put on some blues music and dance like wild in my living room.

Anything that gets you in touch with your innermost being and makes you feel ALIVE is a spiritual practice. If you have trouble determining what it is that makes you feel most alive, try to remember what you loved to do as a child. Was it painting? Horseback riding? When we are young, our truest nature is less masked by societal conditioning.

Most often, I conduct this practice in private moments alone, however if moments alone are difficult to regularly find, it's possible to connect with oneself spiritually when surrounded by people and activity as well. In fact, I have received great pleasure from sharing the connection

I have with my spirit with unsuspecting strangers. Sometimes, this occurs when I'm having those "wild" dance sessions in my living room—more than once, a passerby has caught a glimpse of my charade through the window. Rather than feel embarrassed or stop dancing, however, I continue to let my creative impulses fly. It often gives one joy to witness another person experiencing joy, so why would I take that away from someone? It may also inspire someone else to join in...

## Excerpt from Finding Ecstasy, Chapter 20: A Silent Teacher

I FOUND A quiet spot about one hundred yards away where I could practice yoga. Even a year ago, I would have been too shy to practice in public. I knew I was being watched in the bustling park, but I was able to set that knowledge aside and retreat within myself and the moment. All I could see were the trees in front of me and the hill down below. I was so engaged in the practice, I didn't even hear Boris behind me, taking pictures as I moved through the poses. When I later saw the pictures, I realized he'd been there for a while. I conceded that he must have found those moments beautiful; he was inspired to leave his group of friends and quietly capture them.

I felt blessed. I'd offered another the experience of beauty—a connection to the Divine. I hoped I was an example that we all have this available to us. Returning to the group after my practice, I saw Jakub had turned his blanket to lie and face me. He too had shifted his source of entertainment away from the group and focused in on my movements.

"You're good," he stated with conviction. "You did all sorts of weird things."

Alex laughed at Jakub's professional opinion. "You're a real yoga expert, aren't you?"

I was just glad that another person was intrigued by yoga. Maybe he'd find it a useful tool for himself one day. I realized then that practicing yoga in public is actually the best place to practice. Like all things in life, what I do isn't about me, even though I must speak and act only to honor my own truth. It's about all those who are touched by what I do, who I am. If strangers can see me practice, and see the peace of my being, they will recognize what I was doing as one path to finding that peace and likely want that experience for themselves. What a great gift we can offer the world, simply by being ourselves. I realized then that I was already a teacher. We all are.

**Even though cultivating a connection** with your spirit alone is incredibly important, it is also important to take time to connect with the spirit of another. The most obvious way to spiritually connect with a partner is through sex (especially tantric sex, the practice of slow and mindful sexual union), but there are ways to experience deep intimacy with a partner in non-sexual ways. A powerful outlet for this that I have found is through partner dancing—specifically, blues dancing.

## Excerpt from Finding Ecstasy, Chapter 24: A Three Minute Love

I WAS SO GRATEFUL for the opportunity to expose others to blues dancing, as it had been such an important outlet for me over the years. The joining of body, mind, and spirit in connection with another, in response to a style of music that for me, evokes such passion and pleasure, has been instrumental in my journey. A good blues dance looks and feels like making love. Often without even knowing the other's name, two bodies can communicate a significant history of intimacy and attraction. Time and again, I've heard blues dancers share stories about having had their lives transformed by

this feeling of intimate connection—to a partner and to their own body—that the dance offers them.

Dance, if we allow it to be, is really a physical expression of our personality, our sensuality, and our soul. When we draw from that energy, we are able to cross boundaries with another human being—our dance partner—in a vulnerable but safe way. It's an opportunity to practice falling in love without expectation or attachment. Your partner simply asks that you show up authentically and share your spirit—for three minutes only. For the physically inhibited, there is no awkward moment of questioning, "How long do I hold this hug?" The answer in dance is always simply, "Until the music stops." It's really a meditation. There are few other times that everything else in my world falls away. Dancing gets me there instantly.

## Step #7: Get naked

As children, we think nothing of getting naked and frolicking about on the beach, around the living room, and in backyard sprinklers. We were born with no embarrassment or shame around nudity, but somewhere along the way, our culture decided we need to "cover that stuff up." My challenge to you is to find ways you can rediscover the freedom of being in your own skin—not just in the comfort of your own home, behind closed doors.

You could start at home though. Have you ever cooked naked? Of course, you get to decide what feels appropriate to you if you have children or other members in your household, but surely you can find time when no one else is home to experiment with this idea. If you're living with a partner, arriving home to find you whipping up a meal buck naked—especially if it's out of character for you—can be highly stimulating and exciting. If you really want to have fun with this, incorporate aphrodisiacs into your meal (oysters, chili pepper, avocado, and salmon are popular ideas).

But let's take this to another level. Have you ever gone skinny dipping? There is something so wildly exhilarating about being naked in the sea—not to mention, doing so when you're "not supposed to." One of my favorite memories is from a women's weekend I organized on the Oregon coast, in celebration of my 30th birthday.

### Excerpt from Finding Ecstasy, Chapter 14: Partner Practice

WE WEREN'T ALL TALK during the weekend retreat, however. The house we rented was right on the beach, and since it was a cold and rainy November, standard Oregon autumn fare, we pretty much had the beach to ourselves. After so much talk about sexuality and celebrating our womanhood—not to mention my thirtieth birthday—we took it as a sign that we should perform some kind of ritual. Obviously, my wine-soaked friends declared, that should be to swim naked in the icy waters of the Pacific Ocean, in broad daylight.

We counted down from five, rapidly stripped naked, and ran screaming into the icy water. I had never experienced such a sense of freedom and release. The sheer frigidity of the water gave me permission to allow my voice to be heard. I screamed like hell, partially because it was so damn cold, but also because it felt so damn good. I had stifled my inner wild woman for so long that it was magical to stand out there, in the ocean, in my most wild, natural state. I was free as the whales, and I felt just as large, for I was not just my body—I was spirit.

If getting naked where “you’re not supposed to” is something you’re not yet ready for, there are an abundance of clothing-optional beaches and soaking pools to explore around the world. The first time I went to a hot springs resort that was clothing optional and co-ed, I had a lot of anxiety. My former conditioning was resurfacing: “Creepers and sexual predators go to places like this,” “People are going to judge my body,” “Strangers are going to be admiring my partner’s naked body.” From fear, to insecurity, to jealousy, a whole gamut of emotions arose.

But once I arrived at the resort and took in the energy, it was clear that the people there were very much in their own world. At least at this particular place, people went there to meditate, be in nature, and reconnect with themselves and their bodies. I felt silly for having created a story in my head that it had to be a big deal to be naked around strangers. I was amazed at how natural it felt to be soaking in a tub with a small group of people I’d never met, in our most natural state. If we did talk to one another, the conversations were—if not the same we’d have when fully clothed—extremely real. When you strip away (literally) the surface layers that keep us hidden and bound by conformity, what’s left is a much more authentic version of who we are.

Another idea to practice celebrating your naked body is to hold a boudoir or nude photography shoot. This doesn’t have to be professional—you could even have your partner take photos (they will likely love this idea!) You don’t even have to do anything with the photos—the experience itself can be highly liberating and rewarding.

For the cover of my book, [Finding Ecstasy](#), I did an art nude photography shoot in which I danced in the studio, and outdoors. I climbed trees, leaped through fields, rolled in leaves... the smile on my face in those photos said it all: it feels so damn good to be naked in nature! So what are you waiting for? Get real. Get wild. Get naked.

## Step #8: Give yourself grace—and others

**We’ve already talked** about loving our body fully, but what about the rest of you? Going through some of these exercises may be bringing up triggers. Were you resistant to trying any of these suggestions? Explore your beliefs and try to figure out why. Some of these beliefs may go back to childhood—a particular experience or lesson that taught you not to do something, or not to be a certain way. Explore those teachings—did they come from your own personal decision to agree to a particular rule or belief, or were they passed on from your parents, and perhaps their parents before them? This is how growth stagnates and people—and cultures—get stuck. If the world functioned properly as it is—if there were no war, no rage, no poverty—then being “stuck” wouldn’t be so bad. But I think we can all admit we are not where we say we want to go.

**Change begins within ourselves.**

Practice eliminating all negative self-talk from your daily experience. Thoughts like, “Gosh, I am so stupid,” “I can’t do this,” or “What is wrong with me?” have no place within the mind of a Wild Woman. If you notice these thoughts come up—that’s the first step to changing them. You can replace such comments with, “Oops. Glad I learned not to do that again!” “What would I have to learn to be able to do this?” or “Why am I really asking this question?”



## Making closed statements stops growth in its tracks. Asking questions inspires new solutions.

And don't get angry with yourself if you slip up. Keep at it—it gets easier with practice. One day you'll hear someone else's negative self-talk and realize, "Oh wow. I used to do that, too!" Send that woman some love—she probably needs it.

Remember that it's not just yourself you need to offer grace to. It's everyone you come in contact with. We never know what their experiences are, what kind of day they're having, or how much pain they're in. A general rule I live my life by, is that a person's judgment says a lot more about them than it does about you. By this standard, I never take anything personal.

Of course, we don't need to put up with poor treatment either. But if you do confront someone regarding something that felt hurtful or disrespectful, remember to soothe your words with peace. They may not be ready to hear what you have to say, but all you can do is speak your truth and let them decide what that means for them. You become their teacher, just as they have been for you.

### Excerpt from Finding Ecstasy, Chapter 25: Reality Hits You Hard, Bro

CONVINCED WE WERE headed in the right direction, we could now walk peacefully along and take in the sights and sounds of this delightful college town. Or so I thought. I remember laughing boisterously at something while stepping down into the street, when I was shaken out of my blissful state by a bicyclist coming up behind me shouting, "Get out of the fucking street, you idiot!"

Ooops.

"Sorry!" I attempted, but he was already long past me. I forgot, once again, that traffic—bicycles included—would not be coming at me along the left side of the street. I felt the natural tendency to react with hurt or anger at his words, but I knew I had the choice of allowing the incident to impact my day—or even my moment—in a negative way, and I didn't see any benefit to that.

I'll choose to see it with humor instead, I thought. I mean really, is it even possible to hear "fucking" said with a British accent and not find it humorous? The choice was really that simple. Of course, the ego will often try to interfere with, "Hey! He was rude!" or "He's right. I am an idiot". But in any case, we are in control of our experiences, and I wanted to return to the state of bliss I'd been in before the interruption. If we practice this freedom of choice regularly, it gets easier and easier, to the point where it is second nature. Therefore, all of these people who challenge us, or seemingly wrong us, are actually our greatest teachers. For how can we practice being peace without experiencing adversity?

**Remember as well--give yourself grace** if any of these exercises are hard for you. Skip some of the ones you're not ready for and come back to them later...but do come back to them. If you avoid what's hard, you won't come in contact with your true state of wildness. And if you get stuck—don't be afraid to reach out for support. You don't think Wild Women got there on their own, do you? They likely have had any number of teachers, mentors, and loved ones cheering them on, guiding them, and holding them up when they feel like giving up.

# Step #9: Give thanks

I believe this to be the **single most important tool** for attracting the wild life you've always dreamed of.

**A Wild Woman gives thanks not just for what she already has—but for what she has yet to receive.**

It is incredibly important to develop a regular practice of gratitude. I highly recommend keeping a daily gratitude journal. An example of how this works is described in this excerpt:

## Excerpt from *Finding Ecstasy*, Chapter 21: Mojo and Miracles

"THERE'S ONE MORE thing I want to quickly show you," I said.

"I've been keeping a gratitude journal every day for the past couple of months." I fanned through the pages to show him the numerous lists. His mouth gaped open in astonishment.

"I read this book *Make Miracles in 40 Days: Turning What You Have into What You Want*. It teaches that when we consistently write down what we're grateful for, even when we're not feeling grateful—especially then, actually—miracles start to happen."

He was intrigued and nodded his head in agreement.

I continued, "Announcing gratitude for things you want, as if you already have them, is a powerful tool for manifesting your desires. We're even to write specific things we're not feeling grateful for—without trying to figure out why we could be grateful for them. Simply writing them down in a spirit of gratitude shifts the energy around it. For example, look—I wrote, My debt! Yay! Woohoo! almost every day."

His eyes scanned the rest of my list. I let him read the page, but then I turned a little embarrassed. "Well, you're actually on some of these lists."

He remained silent for a few moments. Then, he moved closer to me on the bed and hugged me. One of those hugs that sends radiance through every pore of your body. It said, "Thank you" in a much more beautiful way than words can alone. I have learned that words are the least effective form of communication, as they can easily be misconstrued. Feelings, however, are a great transmitter of truth.

This practice truly has made miracles in my life. Here are some prompts to get you thinking about what your gratitude list might look like:

"Thank you for leading me to my true purpose in life."

"Thank you for the abundance of wealth in my life right now."

"Thank you for connecting me to my soul mate."

Take a moment to combine the writing of each statement with emotion—for example, if it's

something you don't yet have, picture yourself having it now. What does it feel like? What does it look like? How does the rest of your life change when you have it? Smile and let that sensation sink in.

Something really powerful happens when we commit to a regular ritual of gratitude. Try it—for 40 days keep a list, and see if your wildest dreams don't come true!

## Step #10: Give back

Have you completed all of steps #1-9? Congratulations! You are now a bona fide Wild Woman! Now, do you remember one of the key lessons from Step #1?

### Wild Women Empower.

Yes, we have come full circle. Now that you've achieved Wild Woman status, it's important that you share what you have learned with other women. Help others recognize their own potential. Share your journey—with your friends, your family (your daughters, if you have them!), and even with strangers. Remember to tell other Wild Women what you admire about them, and if you see women who are struggling to remember their true nature, remind them. Point out the strengths of your co-workers, "I saw you doodling during the meeting. You're a really great artist. Have you ever thought about creating artwork to sell?" or "I can see you have quite the green thumb; you take such great care of your plants. Have you ever considered working in horticulture?" Be creative; introduce ideas that take people outside the realm of conformity.

Sprinkle seeds as you go about your life...I even love to leave "anonymous love letters" in my wake (it's not just me—it's a global movement: [www.globalloveletters.com](http://www.globalloveletters.com))

There are so many ways we can empower, inspire, and uplift. When you share your wild, authentic self, others dare to dream of what is possible for them.

You can even begin by telling your friends about this E-book—or dive deeper into these topics by reading *Finding Ecstasy*. Or, if you're feeling really inspired, you can write your own book!

**Whatever you do...be yourself.  
Be a Wild Woman.**

## About the Author



**Rebecca Pillsbury** is the award-winning author of **Finding Ecstasy** and an adventurer whose soul purpose is to empower and uplift others.

She is known for unabashedly revealing her own vulnerability so that others may feel safe exploring their own.

Rebecca currently resides in Portland, Oregon, though you may not find her there year-round—a vagabond spirit cannot be tamed.

Look for her instead at [www.findingecstasy.com](http://www.findingecstasy.com) or [facebook.com/storieswithsoul](https://facebook.com/storieswithsoul).