

'My inner wild woman saved me'

When **Amanda Collins** faced the ultimate threat, instead of running, she fought it head on

Pain, frustration and confusion tore at me. 'Why her?' I cried, angry at the universe, at the injustice, at everything.

It was 2009 and my soul sister, and a true earth angel, Clare, had been diagnosed with cancer.

But while Clare seemed to have accepted that she wasn't going to recover, I refused to admit there was a possibility she would die.

I became impassioned with the idea that she could be cured with healing, holistic therapies, the right foods, acupuncture, reiki...

I wanted to try everything I could. 'You're going to get healed and we are going to write a book about this,' I told her.

But, in the end, Clare was right.

Six weeks after her diagnosis, she passed away. I was heartbroken, my sorrow physically hurt, and it made me realise something, too.

While you can work to raise your vibration through positive thought and acts of self-care, it doesn't mean you have control over everything, because there is a higher power, a much bigger vibration at play that you *can't* control – your destiny.

A dark void

The year after Clare died was challenging. I missed her so much.

She was one of the very special people I'd met when I'd moved from my native Ireland to California in 1999, aged 21, in a hope of finding my wings and meeting my 'tribe'.

Clare and I travelled through China together, learning Feng Shui and then, back in America, I worked with individuals and companies helping people to harness positive energy in their lives and workspaces.

I had so many special times with a truly special person.



I decided to create a positive future for myself

But if losing her wasn't enough, while grieving for my dear friend, the American economy took a downturn and my husband and I lost our home.

We had to move into a much smaller place and things were tough, but they were about to get even tougher.

Primal protection

One day in 2010, I came home from an early morning yoga class, walked into the house and dropped my bag on the floor, not realising I hadn't closed the front door properly.

Suddenly, a man came in behind me and attacked me in my sitting room.

As he pulled at my clothes, there was no doubt what his intentions were.

I struggled with him, my nails raking at his face and, somehow, I managed to break free.

Throwing myself across the room, I tried to climb out of the window, but he grabbed me again.

As he threw me to the floor, his hands throttling me, one thought entered my head.

This is your time, Amanda.

Then, I felt it, an immense strength rising up from within me, strength I didn't realise I had.

I felt the wings of angels around me and I saw Clare – she was there with me!

'You can do this! Rise up,' I heard her say.

In that moment, I knew this man wasn't going to beat me.

With that, a blood-curdling scream, the like of which I'd never heard before or since, came out of me.

Scrambling to his feet, my attacker ran from the house.

Grieving and healing

Although there was an investigation, my attacker was never caught, and I was left to come to terms with the fact he was still out there and what had happened to me.



Goddess work has been part of my life's path



There are many sacred and powerful sites in Ireland

First came the denial. 'He didn't do anything. I am fine,' I'd tell myself.

But I wasn't – I was too scared to even have a shower in case the man got back into my house and crept into the bathroom.

We got a dog, to guard the house, and I had counselling for post-traumatic stress disorder.

To not feel safe in my own home was so hard. You can't heal if the basic need of feeling safe isn't met.

Then came the anger, the grief and pain.

Why had this happened to me? I started questioning myself. Was there something I had done to attract his behaviour? Yet, I also felt full of heartbreak that one human would want to do that to another.

Then came forgiveness.

Although I couldn't picture the face of the man who had tried to rape and strangle me that day in my living room, I was able to pray for him and that he wouldn't do anything so awful to anyone else.

And with forgiveness, I was reminded of what



Try it now!

Grounding tree meditation

Try this exercise to centre and strengthen yourself

Find a position you feel comfortable in, either standing, sitting or lying down, and then consciously place your mind in the present moment.

Now, closing your eyes, move from the external world to your inner self, a sacred space.

Take a deep inhale and exhale while visualising filling your body with light.

In your mind's eye, visualise a tree - be it an ancient oak, a magical hawthorn, or strong Baobab, it is the perfect tree for you.

'Send energy deep into Mother Earth'

On your inhale, send energy deep into Mother Earth like the roots of your tree. As you exhale, send your branches up to the light, feel rooted as your energy rises up to Source.

Allow your tree to gently move with the winds of life and with every inhale and exhale, soak up your inner tree's wisdom and guidance.

'Losing Clare made me realise we each have a destiny'

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Back in Ireland, where I have found peace and happiness

I have a daily practice of sitting with my back to an ancient oak tree in the nearby woodland and aligning my chakras. The energy of that tree is so healing.

I sit there in silence and work on whatever needs to be acknowledged emotionally, spiritually and mentally.

My life couldn't be more different from those years spent in America, but I couldn't feel happier and I know this is where I am meant to be.

My spirituality has flourished and I realise now that my time with Clare, losing my house and being attacked weren't *bad* things.

Losing Clare made me realise that we each have a destiny in life. Hers was heartbreakingly short, and mine was to face my own life lessons to become the person I am now. Accepting what happened to Clare and myself and my response to it means I can fully live my life at last. Without what happened to me, I wouldn't be where I am today.

✦ More info For details of Amanda's online courses, visit amandacollins.com

I had learnt from losing Clare – we don't have control over everything in our lives, but how we respond to what happens can mould our future. We can work with our destiny, not fight it. If I could accept what had happened to me and learn to move on, I could create a positive future for myself.

Phoenix rising

I made a promise to myself. What was really important to me was that I didn't just get on with my life as if nothing had happened. Instead, I wanted to dedicate myself to healing and empowering myself.

I immersed myself in Goddess work, I grew my business and had two beautiful children, Patrick, now seven, and Neave, five, and I moved back to Ireland.

San Diego was lovely, but still a concrete jungle compared to Wexford and I wanted my children to grow up in the Irish countryside, like I had.

No fewer than five generations of my ancestors have lived within 50 miles of where I am now, and my parents are just up the road.

There is such magic here, so many sacred sites where many still go to practice rituals, making the power of these sites so potent.

Where I live now is in the heart of beautiful countryside, there is a sacred mountain, a fairy fort over the road from me and a sacred well that I visit daily. I take the children there and me and Neave chant beside the well. Sometimes it's as if the water sings along to us it bubbles away.

Healing wounds

The surrounding forest is a beautiful place, too, for meditation and to forage for nettles – to make tea – and other herbs.



Sacred water ritual

Feel purified and healed through the power of this cleansing element and the light of the sun or moon

Gather some rainwater, or water from a river, stream or well.

Place the water in a glass or chalice, then set the container outside under the sun's rays or in the light of a full moon. Leave for 24 hours.

Then drip some of the water onto your hands and feel the divinity of the water

and how it weaves all life together.

Place your fingertips in the water and reach your hands towards the sky,

'I purify my entire being. I am a clear vessel of love and light'

palms upwards, and bring them all the way around your body, taking in your entire energy field, finishing up at your feet as you say, 'I purify my entire being, I am a clear vessel of love and light.'

Finally, bring your hands to your heart chakra and visualise yourself sending the energy of love and healing out to the world. ✨