

Dear Editor/Producer:

Some call her the divine feminine. Others call her Goddess, Kuan Yin, Mary, Pachamama, Shakti, and The Mother. Bestselling author Sara Avant Stover calls her SHE, as the author of **The Book of SHE: *Your Heroine's Journey into the Heart of Feminine Power*** (New World Library, October 15, 2015), she guides women to a powerful new understanding of and appreciation for every aspect of femininity.

“Your feminine soul, which I call your SHE, contains your deepest source of personal power, inner wisdom, and authentic expression,” writes Sara. “We spend so much of our lives focusing solely on our material realities, forgetting that we all carry a spark of the divine within us, that most of us never come to truly know our souls.”

**The Book of SHE** provides women with a road map for what Sara calls The Heroine's Journey, which merges psychology and spirituality into a path that leads to psychological wholeness, empowerment, and ultimately, full female realization. While Joseph Campbell's “Hero's Journey” was conceived in 1949 with primarily men in mind, Sara's gender-specific map of the Heroine's Journey is designed with the unique twists and turns that initiation into empowered womanhood in modern times entails.

“We need a model for true, feminine empowerment now, because the world is changing quickly. We desperately need a coherent road map to inwardly navigate these massive shifts,” writes Sara. “The feminine journey is relational, cyclical, and alchemical — *not* linear and logical. If we continue to view our cyclical crises as failures, we will always feel like we're missing the mark. We will continue to feel the longing to unite with the Sacred Feminine within us, but we will never arrive there. SHE will stay in our heads, in people and images and pursuits outside of us, never entering our hearts, wombs, and cells.”

**The Book of SHE** turns the current paradigm for success and empowerment on its head, and reminds women that everything in their outer world is based on the unseen, inner one. “By changing the inner, we change the outer — *not* the other way around,” writes Sara. “Through relinquishing our chronic busyness, we open up the space to increase our capacity to be present and truly enjoy this precious life.”

Please consider doing a review, excerpt, or mention. **Sara Avant Stover is available for interviews.** Please contact me at 415-884-2100 x18 or [kim@newworldlibrary.com](mailto:kim@newworldlibrary.com) if you'd like to schedule a time to speak with her.

Onward and upward!



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## THE BOOK OF SHE

### *New Book Helps Women Understand and Embrace the Heart of Their Feminine Power*

The feminine soul, which bestselling author Sara Avant Stover calls SHE, contains a woman's deepest source of personal power, inner wisdom, and authentic expression. In her latest release **The Book of SHE: Your Heroine's Journey into the Heart of Feminine Power** (New World Library, October 15, 2015), Sara helps women understand and embrace the SHE within them.

"We're all living at the tail end of a long, patriarchal dominion, where more is always more. Reason rules above all else. Black and white. Good and bad," writes Sara. "However, by living in this way, we are all still walking around as little girls in women's bodies. According to the old way of thinking, we're supposed to live in a very linear way: get our periods, get married, have a baby, live happily ever after. Yet when we force ourselves into these ideals, we are inevitably disappointed."

**The Book of SHE** provides a road map for what Sara calls The Heroine's Journey, which merges psychology and spirituality into a path that leads to psychological wholeness, empowerment, and ultimately full female realization. While Joseph Campbell's "Hero's Journey" was written in 1949 with primarily men in mind, Sara's approach is a template specifically designed for modern women and includes five parts:

- Part 1 – **Preparing for the Journey** – Building a strong, safe container and getting clear on what it means to live a SHE-centered life
- Part 2 – **Descent** – Facing the shadow and dialoging with inner critics
- Part 3 – **The Initiation** – Unveiling the sacred heart of real feminine power
- Part 4 – **The Ascent** – Rekindling the capacity to create magic
- Part 5 – **Homecoming** – Blessing the world with innate gifts

"This template of a woman's path to complete empowerment as the Heroine's Journey offers us the means to live from our hearts," writes Sara. "It reminds us that we find true success only by continually turning our conventional minds toward the contemplation of deeper truths, while being fully present to all the moments of our own lives. This journey grounds us in the holiness of our female bodies and teaches us that it's exactly through our failures that real, liberated womanhood can be born."

#### **About the author**

**Sara Avant Stover** is the author of *The Book of SHE* and *The Way of the Happy Woman*. A pioneer in contemporary women's work, she's the creator of the world's first Women's Yoga Teacher Training and leader of I Heart My Moon Cycle, Reversing Our 'Curse,' The SHE School, and the SHE Retreat. She has been featured in *Yoga Journal*, *Newsweek*, and *Natural Health* and on ABC, NBC, and CBS. Visit her online at <http://www.thewayofthehappywoman.com>.

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**The Book of SHE**  
An interview with author Sara Avant Stover

SARA AVANT STOVER, yoga and meditation instructor, bestselling author, and founder of the Way of the Happy Woman®, has uplifted tens of thousands of women worldwide through her retreats and online programs. She lives in Boulder, Colorado. Visit her website: <http://www.thewayofthehappywoman.com>.

**Q: Who is SHE?**

**A: SHE is the Divine Feminine, or the Feminine Face of God, in all of Her colors, flavors, and textures. Some know her as Mary, others as Kuan Yin, Tara, Shakti, or the Mother. SHE is available to all of us, all the time. But,** living in a world that's mostly cut off from its connection to the sacred, most of us have lost the eyes to see Her, the ears to hear Her. Today, **it's a rare woman who has truly met Her.** SHE also lives *within* each of us through the intersection of our humanity and our divinity. This intersection lives in our bodies—down in our bellies. Here lives our intuition, inner wise woman, or our feminine soul. All of these are also names for our SHE. Through regularly **turning towards Her for guidance**, we become *whole* women. In our outer lives, **SHE then takes the lead—rather than our** small, **ego-bound** selves—guiding us into lives of fulfillment and authenticity.

**Q: You share a lot of very personal, vulnerable stories—things that most women would prefer to keep a secret. Why did you write this book?**

A: I wrote the book that I most needed to read. As a dedicated yoga and meditation practitioner for twenty years, as well as an avid student of psychology, I reached a major impasse when I was writing my first book, *The Way of the Happy Woman*, several years ago. An old eating disorder from my college years resurfaced, along with strong bouts of anxiety and insomnia. These were all things I thought I had healed through the wellness practices I shared in my first book. Only through working very closely with a couple of my female teachers, and drawing on a lot of self-study, was I able to gain the perspective that these challenges weren't a "failure." They were the opening to my next leap in empowerment, the start of my own Heroine's Journey. The practices I wrote about in my first book made me strong enough in body, mind, and heart, to be able to hold my younger self's addictions and afflictions, and then to heal them at their root level. Through mentoring other women, I started to see that many of them were going through similar rites of passage, while erroneously viewing them as shortcomings. I vowed to share my story to help those women—and all women—to view our struggles as stepping-stones to our unconditional happiness, wholeness, and empowerment.

**Q: The subtitle of your book is “Your Heroine’s Journey into the Heart of Feminine Power.” What is the Heroine’s Journey? And how does it compare to Joseph Campbell’s Hero’s Journey?**

A: Joseph Campbell was an American mythologist, writer, and lecturer from the mid-1900s whose Hero's Journey maps out a singular, central narrative of becoming, found woven throughout diverse religions, regions, and times. The stories of Moses, Odysseus, Christ, and Gautama the Buddha follow this mono-mythic structure, as do more modern pop culture adventures such as *Star Wars*, *Indiana Jones*, *The Matrix*, and *The Wizard*

*of Oz.*

While an authentic “being-ness” lives at our core, amidst all the bumps on the roads of our lives, we women can very rarely live from our wise depths. And today, while women are rising into power at greater rates than ever before, we need to ascend to our heights not as pseudo-men. We’ve tried that and it leads to burnout and unhappiness. Instead, we need to succeed, fully at home in our womanhood. It’s time for our own road map for empowerment.

Since men and women are so different in so many ways, our journeys to empowerment must also be different. We need to take into account our major life transitions—menses, motherhood, and menopause. We run into problems—in classrooms, relationships, work spaces, health care, and spiritual practices—when we assume that both sexes are fully the same and fully equal. Yes, we are equal. We are both human beings worthy of health, freedom, and happiness; yet our bodies and neurology cause us to perceive and experience the world in vastly different ways.

Our worldly advances can be dangerous if we don’t understand what it looks like to truly triumph through our distinctly feminine rites of passage. We’ll live in shame and secrecy about the very initiatory transitions that, if brought into the light, could deliver us the power that is our birthright.

**Q: Do women have to consciously choose the path of the Heroine’s Journey, or is it something that happens to everyone?**

A: The Journey comes for all of us, in various degrees during different stages of our lives, whether or not we’re aware of that or whether or not we think we’re ready! If we remain ignorant of the terrain of these rites of passage, when we’re in the midst of a major life transition—the death of a loved one, financial challenges, an illness, addiction, divorce, or menopause—we’ll flounder. In resisting what’s happening and judging ourselves for our perceived failures, we’ll only suffer more.

When we stay awake to the entire arc of the Heroine’s Journey, we see that the present crisis is the doorway into a new life, and a more whole expression of ourselves in the world.

I invite every woman to become intimate with the Heroine’s Journey, so that when hers comes, she’s prepared and can walk it with sovereignty, courage, and proper support. Doing so will tip the scales from living a life of regret to one of radical fulfillment.

**Q: Your first book was called *The Way of the Happy Woman*, and you titled the introduction to this book “The Dark Side of *The Way of the Happy Woman*.” What do you mean by the “dark side”? And why is it an important part of the spiritual journey?**

A: We live in a dualistic world. Every day we experience good and bad. Pain and pleasure. Gain and loss. Light and dark. To deny one half of these polarities, while craving and clinging to its opposite, is delusional. This only causes strife.

The “supermarket spirituality” that has become very popular in recent years exacerbates this delusion by advocating that we only seek the light. In doing so, we deny our darkness by transcending it. Then, our “dark side,” which holds all of our childhood wounding, starts to turn against us. It sneaks out in disruptive ways—uncontrollable anger, narcissism, addictions. We see this very often in monasteries and yoga schools, where practitioners earnestly try to perfect their humanity by escaping it and merging with the light. This is *not* spirituality. It’s spiritual bypassing.

The remedy is not in escaping our darkness; it’s in merging with it. A tremendous amount of creative energy is locked inside our “Dark Side.” It holds our vulnerability, wonder, vitality, and child-like enthusiasm. If we don’t tend to it and heal the wounds within it, instead of liberating us into a life of joy, our darkness will haunt and torment us.

The magic that pours forth from the integration between your own dark and light sides is *always* only euphoric, beatific, and an expression of divine perfection itself.

**Q: In the book you write that the most common question you got asked about *The Way of the Happy Woman* was “What is the one thing every woman can do that will have the biggest impact on her happiness?” What is that one thing? Do you have tips for how women can make that a part of their lives?**

A: Sit in silence and meditate for ten minutes, first thing in the morning. During this pocket of mindfulness, silence, and solitude, she notices what’s happening in her body, heart, and mind. She checks in with her soul, her SHE, for guidance for the day. Without this time, she will override her own needs and be driven by the agendas of others. Over time, this mindfulness needs to extend throughout the entire day, helping us to remain heroines, rather than victims, to the circumstances of our lives.

We also need to make sure we’re getting enough sleep. If we’re not sleeping well or enough, everything starts to fall apart. About seven to nine hours is what we really need to thrive.

**Q: I love the section of the book where you write about the importance of women embracing and working with our monthly cycles. What do cycles have to do with the Heroine’s Journey?**

A: Our bodies, emotions, and spirits are tremendously sensitive to the rhythms of life. Reclaiming nature’s rhythms, as they live in our own bodies and hearts, is what can heal us. They’re what can heal the world at large, too.

It’s not sustainable to go full throttle day after day. We need cycles of blooming, maturation, decay, death, and rebirth. We need the full circle of life for true happiness to take root within us. Light is the other side of dark. Birth is the other side of death. And happiness is the other side of sorrow. One can never exist without the other.

These cycles also mirror the Heroine’s Journey. Scripted into our own DNA, through our hormones, we traverse through a Heroine’s Journey each month. We experience a

challenge (PMS or peri-menopause), surrender to it (menses and menopause), and are then reborn into a new expression of ourselves (ovulation). These rhythms of death and rebirth need to be brought into the center of our lives. We need to work with them, not against them.

Even within the feminist movement, we ignore the power and splendor of our cycles. It's time to wake up to the truth that our cycles are the cornerstone of our womanhood and hold the key to our greatest power.

**Q: You have an unconventional perspective on feminine power. How do you define this?**

A: We can't be powerful like men are because we're *not* men. Feminine empowerment is always right under our noses yet always eluding us because we think it's a flaw rather than a strength. It's so obvious and natural that we keep missing it. Claiming it requires a completely different orientation and approach than the one we're all currently using.

Our power as woman rests in our sensitivity, vulnerability, receptivity, capacity to create new life, and, above all, in our ability to love unconditionally.

Love. This is the power that changes lives—and the world.