

From Hollow to Whole

Healing the Distorted Feminine

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Introduction: The Hollow Queen

The Hollow Queen is an archetype of the distorted feminine, rich in empowering insights we can apply to our own lives.

In today's world, we hear an awful lot about toxic masculinity, and even more about reclaiming the feminine. Sometimes it seems that we've gotten the wires twisted along the way and come to understand that masculinity = bad and femininity = good.

Of course, this is untrue. There are healthy and distorted versions of both the masculine and the feminine, and regardless of gender we can each work to develop healthy traits within ourselves. I explore these concepts of polarity in some detail in my free training *The De-Armoured Leader* which you can access at madeleineeliza.com/leader

This ebook focuses on the traits of the distorted feminine, which can sometimes be tricky to spot in ourselves and in others. We are going to break down 8 key traits of the Hollow Queen below, with examples and space for you to reflect on how this plays out in your own life.

Yearning for Fullness

From a tantric perspective, the feminine yearns to be full. This is the essence of Shakti, the feminine principle, who represents movement and flow, all that is manifest. She yearns for fullness while the opposing masculine principle, Shiva, yearns to be empty. He represents pure consciousness, stillness, all that is unmanifest.

This yearning for more, this desire to open ever deeper into love, is an inherent part of the feminine experience. It is not something that we need to squash or deny; in fact we are most empowered as women when we can embrace and surrender to this aspect of ourselves.

The big question is: how do we fill ourselves up?

The Healthy Feminine

The healthy feminine understands it is her responsibility to fill herself up, and is able to do this. She holds herself with deep reverence. She is connected to her body, her intuition and her sense of purpose, and prioritizes self-care and pleasure.

She maintains healthy boundaries to avoid energetic leaks, and does not fall into the trap so common in our culture that encourages women to constantly over-extend in service of others and neglect our own needs.

The irony is that when we prioritize ourselves and fully claim our own radiance and vitality, we are sooo much better equipped, both to care for the people we love, and to do the work out in the world that matters
- because we're no longer running on empty.

The Distorted Feminine

In contrast, the distorted feminine aka the Hollow Queen has an inner sense of emptiness and unworthiness. She desperately yearns to be full, but because she is unable to fill herself up, she is constantly looking outwards to get her needs met.

There are 8 key patterns at play here, outlined in detail below.



Pattern 1: Seeking approval and validation

Because the Hollow Queen has a deep sense of unworthiness, she seeks approval and validation from external sources. This can include relationships - family, friends, and romantic partners; via overwork; or via unhealthy social media use. It is a very disempowering pattern because when we are desperate for external approval, we are more likely to tolerate unhealthy relational dynamics, or to become very destabilized if we lose an external factor (job/ relationship etc) which we are using for validation.



Pattern 2: Intense focus on appearance

While beauty and radiance are inherent aspects of the feminine, ideally we source these from within. Because the distorted feminine does not have an inner sense of her own beauty, she intensely focuses on external appearances. This can look like fixating on perceived bodily flaws, low self image, obsessive diet or exercise patterns, or attaching all of her value to her appearance and external beauty.

Pattern 3: Controlling the aging process

The healthy feminine is fully embodied in each stage of life whether she is maiden, mother or crone. The distorted feminine meanwhile, is perpetually trying to remain a maiden, with an intense focus on anti-aging products and procedures, and fear and anxiety around getting older and looking her age. This is an unfortunate byproduct of the culture that we live in, which has taught women that our value lies in our youthful beauty.

Pattern 4: Seduction and bewitchment

This is a relational pattern which particularly speaks to the distorted feminine relationship with the masculine. Rather than building authentic intimacy, she uses tools of manipulation and deceit to orchestrate relational dynamics where she feels in control. This can often spring from a deep-seated sense of inadequacy, which creates a fear of being truly seen. The antidote to this pattern is not only doing the inner work to reclaim our sense of self worth; it also requires that we practice vulnerability with our romantic partners.

Pattern 5: Vampiricism and codependency

This is another relational pattern more common in established / longterm relationships. If we experience an inner sense of emptiness, it therefore follows that we will use the people closest to us to fill ourselves up. This can include being an energy vampire, taking advantage of our partner's good nature, turning every conversation towards ourselves and our problems, constantly creating conflict and drama, acting like a martyr, avoiding accountability; and codependency, where we are emotionally reliant on our partners.



Pattern 6: Saviour complex

This is a tricky pattern which can emerge in relationship not just with intimate partners but also with parents, siblings and friends. The saviour complex is where we derive a sense of self-worth from helping others; where we believe that others are in need of our help and can't necessarily help themselves. And so we over-mother, or smother, the people we love. This not only completely drains us energetically and keeps our attention constantly turned outwards instead of filling our own cup; it also disempowers the other person, because they internalise the message that they can't solve problems on their own.

Pattern 7: Competition and patriarchal status

In this pattern, the distorted feminine obediently follows the rules of patriarchal capitalism, understanding that her worth is defined by economic means and her ability to climb to the top of the corporate ladder. This is where the sister wound comes into play, because patriarchy pits us against each other: it is a zero/sum game where if you win, it means I lose. Some of the patterns that might emerge here are backstabbing and undermining other women, gossip, friendships that feel inauthentic or lacking in trust, feeling threatened by another woman in her radiance, or alternatively, feeling that you have to play small and be a victim in order to be accepted by your sisters.

Pattern 8: Addiction

This final pattern refers to the ways in which we use external substances or behaviours to artificially fill that sense of inner emptiness. Common examples include food, alcohol, drugs, shopping, TV, and social media. This is closely related to the autonomic nervous system and the window of tolerance, and the ways we can use these addictive tools to artificially regulate ourselves, instead of using more healthy self care practices which actually fill us up from the inside.



Healing the Distorted Feminine

For many of us, these patterns are very familiar because we have grown up witnessing feminine distortions in our mothers and female role models. We live in a culture that sets women up to be disempowered, burnt out, and disconnected from our erotic and creative power.

But it is entirely possible to heal and change. To reclaim our vitality and radiance, and move into healthier forms of feminine expression. Where we have a deep sense of our own worth and divinity, where we know that beauty comes from within, and we understand that when we fill our own cup first we are sooo much more empowered to serve those we love, and to fulfil our purpose. Let's look at how we do this.

Moving from Hollow to Whole: Reflections

The first step to shifting out of this distorted feminine archetype and into a healthier feminine expression, where we fill ourselves up from the inside, is to notice which of these patterns are currently running in your own life. I invite you to spend a few minutes journaling each day for a week, noticing where you spot any of the behaviours outlined above.

Moving from Hollow to Whole: Practices

BOUNDARIES

Are there any relationships in your life which have characteristics of codependency, saviour complex and/or sister wounding? Are there any places where you might need to set some new boundaries? What would this look like for you?

SELF CARE

Make a list of self-care or pleasure practices that fill your own cup and increase your sense of self worth and radiance. Some examples include:

- taking a bath
- painting my nails
- buying fresh flowers
- getting a massage
- self touch / self pleasure
- taking 10 minutes to dance in the morning
- taking time to read my book with a cup of tea
- creative work like painting, knitting, baking etc

Once you have brainstormed a list of activities that fill your cup, schedule in at least 3 of these into your week.

Moving from Hollow to Whole: Practices (cont)

REGULATION TOOLS

Take some time to reflect with radical honesty on any patterns of addition in your life that pull you out of true regulation. For example, getting home from work and immediately pouring a glass of wine and scrolling social media.

Next, brainstorm a list of practices/tools you already have, that you know help you to regulate more effectively in those moments. Eg:

- call a friend
- walk around the block
- do 10 minutes of yoga / stretching / breathing / meditation
- use fascia balls or a foam roller
- water the garden

Write some if/then statements so you have a plan for vulnerable moments, eg

IF I get home from work stressed, THEN I will take a brisk walk outside

IF my Mum triggers me on the phone, THEN I will call a friend

IF my kids are pushing my buttons, THEN I will have a quick stretch

It can help to journal on these experiences afterwards, to celebrate your success and help build those new neural pathways!

GUIDED AUDIO MEDITATION

If you'd like some additional support I have a free 10 minute guided meditation designed to help heal distorted feminine patterns and call your energy back to your centre. You will receive the link along with this audiobook or you can access it [here](#).

Further support

If you have any further questions or feedback, or you'd like support in working through some of these blocks in your own life, you can reach me at hello@madeleineeliza.com or on Instagram @madeleine.eliza

I also have a podcast episode on this topic, titled "The Hollow Queen: Victimhood & the Distorted Feminine" which you can find on the Madeleine Eliza Show wherever you get your podcasts.

With love,
Madeleine x

