

Aphrodite

Preparations before WiP

So this year you are Aphrodite. Take a moment to think about the Aphrodite inside you. Who is she; what does she love; how does she move; what does she wear? Allow your own Aphrodite to speak to you. She is in each of us. Each year's version of Aphrodite may look very different to that of previous years because each woman is unique. This may take you some time to think about.

Trust that you need to take this time and ask for support and guidance from others who have played the role to help you come to a powerful place where you feel her alive in you.

What to wear

You need to bring your own costume for this role. The key is that you wear something that YOU feel sexy and sensual and comfortable and womanly in. That's the most important thing: who is Aphrodite for you? You may feel you would like to show a lot of your body, or be naked and in your natural beauty, or you may choose a wrapping of or some other attire that evokes her in you.

Reach out to women who have played her before and talk through your ideas to bring them together in your mind.

What to consider

The facilitator who will weave the poetry while you play Aphrodite may ask you about your Aphrodite and what it means for you in order to reflect your vision within their dialogue for this piece. For example, is it about healthy body image, pleasure in sex, celebration of the vagina, freedom from shame? Have a think

what brought you to ask to play this part. What is your story?

What message do you want to convey to the women present?

What to bring

Your outfit and any accessories you need. You need to bring lots of lovely grapes/ maybe strawberries...and some mixed nuts/ seeds/ raisins. There are bowls there, but if you have something beautiful to put them in bring that too. And a vase of flowers. If you would like to claim back the fruit and nuts as expenses save the receipt and complete an expenses form. Also, any other items you want to bring to make your domain gorgeous... cushions, feather boa, candles, lights, ornaments etc.

Preparations at WiP

Go to the Goddess Realm as soon as you hear the participants being drummed to snacks. Change into costume in the Goddess Realm. Bring a bag to put your black clothes in and give to the Co who will take all bags to the materials room where you will get changed again after the session. One of the facilitators will come to you, once you're all dressed and in position, to answer any questions and help you get into role.

Remember that when you are in role in the Aphrodite corner you may need to wait some time before the participants arrive. Take this time to centre, get in touch with your Aphrodite. Before and after you play your piece you are still Aphrodite and participants will be casting an eye to you, so stay in role.

The Aphrodite piece

As the Initiates enter, you will be lounging seductively in your

domain... maybe eating grapes. The Initiates will be invited to wander around a little. You can make eye contact with them, but don't smile overtly. This can be a challenging archetype for women, so they may be nervous to look at you or challenged by your presence. Stay centred and breathe.

Then when it is Aphrodite's turn and they approach your area, stand up and maybe dance, move gently to the music. The key thing is less about you looking or acting 'sexy' and more about you being authentically in your body and the initiates seeing you feeling comfortable and confident. If you feel comfortable you can make pleasurable sounds.

Then follow the lead of the person who introduces you. They will invite the Initiates to do pelvic floor exercises, which you should do too. They will be invited to touch themselves... their breasts / their body, which you lead, too. Then they will be invited to receive nourishment from you. You may want to feed them grapes, as there is something quite sensual about that. Offer them strawberries/nuts, etc.

Women can find this a hard archetype to approach... so you can track that. Look for who is hovering at the back. Maybe smile at them, encourage them (gently and without embarrassing them). As they move to the next Archetype, bid them farewell, with some gesture. Enjoy every moment of being Aphrodite and model this healthy pleasure and joy to the women.

The Aphrodite piece

[music – track #1 or #3 from Vas – In the Garden of Souls]

And now we turn to Aphrodite, who holds your sexual longing in your body. Your Aphrodite might look different for you. Stand up in your sexuality and your sensuality. Those of you who came to get your sexuality and your sensuality back, come right up. The part of you that says “I want what I have. Not what she has. What I have.”

The first thing to get in touch with is your own body. We have been hurt there. Where we are numb or where we can feel it. Whether we misuse it or have been misused by it. And how has it served you to not have your sexuality? And what’s at risk now to know her as he lives in you.

Feel her juices flow. You might even want to feel yourself as a woman with breasts – but under your shirt. Feel them under there. Boundaries are good.

And now we’re going to do something together – we’re going to do a few Keegles together. Pull up and squeeze. It took me awhile to figure out what Keegles are. Let whatever comes up for you be there. Embarrassment. Reticence. Shame.

[Aphrodite teaches women to dance and begins dancing among them, feeding them grapes and nuts.]

Devour. Taste. I invite those of you who haven’t been fed to step forward and take a taste of this food. Who are the women who are here to reclaim their sexuality or sensuality?

Take the time now to honour Aphrodite – to honour the Aphrodite inside of ourselves, to own her inside of our own bodies. And where we have been hurt, find healing. Reclaim that orgasmic energy as our right. Pleasure is possible. Pleasure is beautiful. Each of us is whole just as we are. Each of us is beautiful just as

we are.

When the facilitator indicates that this section is finished, settle in your area again.

The facilitators will indicate when it's time to leave quietly, which is just before the initiates do the meditation to find their animal name. Go get changed and return any costumes that you've borrowed to the materials room.