

THE MAP: How to Take the Journey



EarthBodyBoat was built to hold the We of Us and the chaos often felt within the creative and healing processes—the messiness of breaking out of “normal” structures and habits.

Our bodies show us that we are each miraculous structures and containers for infinite consciousness. The structure of this book has been designed to mirror that truth. The layout shows the multiplicity of a moment or an idea: It's never just one voice, but many perspectives, whether inside one human being or out in the world. This is shown by the demarcation of different spaces on each page—the left and right columns and the middle.

You can read these spaces as Spirit on the left, Soul on the right, and Body/Art in the meeting place of the middle. Or you can read them as the younger self on the left, which is bound by linear time; the Crone self on the right, which shifts along seasonal cycles; and the present-time self in the middle, which lives between dimensions.

These voices sometimes blend and are not always easy to keep in their separate spaces. They certainly influence each other. Sometimes a voice knows itself as a uniquely separate I, unaware of other aspects of self. Other times a voice understands how all three share one body and become We. There are probably a dozen more voices inside, but these three were most prevalent during the creation of this book.

Reading this book may be a neurodivergent experience for you. If its many elements seem overwhelming at times, We invite you to pause and puzzle out the connections between them, or surrender to their flow, or just be in the place of confusion that is sometimes a seed for growth.

You are welcome to read *EarthBodyBoat* like any other book—but We invite you, if you choose, to find your own journey through an embodied approach to reading. Offering these practices to you, the reader, is a contradiction. We trust you will find your own way, knowing that our bodies and intuition are full of wisdom. Each person is capable of serving as our own teacher/healer, and yet the majority of people living in the dominant Western culture have been conditioned away from knowing how to access our natural intelligence.

We offer some practices called “scores”^{6,7} throughout these pages with humility, and encourage you to experiment with a childlike mind of playfulness and curiosity. Let these activities be a jumping-off point, a door into your own knowing. While time is a presence throughout the book, you are welcome to hop-scotch to different points and come back to these activities later . . . or never.

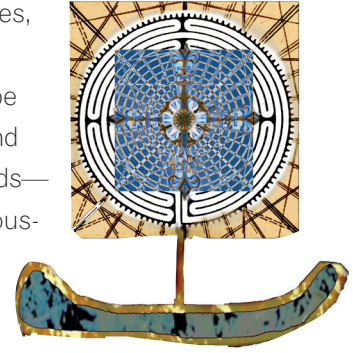
Scores are, in simplest terms, a list of activities to be done in a chosen place and time. Throughout this book, you will find scores that give an opportunity to pause and be with yourself, your soma. You also will find at the beginning and ending of *EarthBodyBoat* an opportunity to ritualize your experience of reading this book.

EarthBodyBoat

This is a book that is also a boat and a nest for all of Us to travel through.

Shape-shifter. As Earthbodyboat, this is sometimes one's personal nest; other times, a larger sense of one's Earthly body. As *EarthBodyBoat*, it is a book for all of Us to travel through. Depending on what is needed in the moment, Earthbodyboat can be a place of birthing, comfort, home—or a passage to death, drifting, and Mystery. It is the vessel that carries us through and into many lands—externally and internally—through the altered states of Consciousness of limitless Universes. It is the vessel that carries the stories and woundings of Ancestors and Earth; a vessel to be remembered, honored, and treated as a friend, companion, and sacred being.

When we created the image on p. x, the sense of our bodies as a boat started to sink in or rise from unconsciousness to clarity.⁸ And with that we reflected on our two Ancestral lines: the Nordic line of deep fjords and the Lithuanian Baltic line of rivers and trees. Boats are the natural expression of these lands. Perhaps these early vehicles were designed to also honor the human capacity to shape-shift, and the journeys we take with the spirits of serpent, deer, wolf, and winged ones. We grieve for how boats were enslaved as the vehicle that spread the disease of binaries to the so-called "Americas."



Body Warrior

This is the place of body where art lives.

Here is art in which Ahjo processes it all and aims to find a way to connect beyond themselves to the wounding of our world. Ahjo's art arises from their body/soma, where all is integrated and lives between different dimensions of time. It takes form as an Elemental Creature beyond gender. In becoming a lover to this self, we join others in becoming Earth guardians. As we learn to surf inner landscapes of body and Consciousness, we can't help but protect and contribute to the health of the external Earth, demolishing binaries and the wall between inner and outer.⁹



Eternal Queer Child **This is the place of Spirit.**

Here is a young wounded self who expresses those doubts and fears we all walk with. This voice has internalized the judgments of teachers and people of authority, has succumbed to the general malaise of patriarchal/hetero-normative conditioning, and is ruled by a linear timeline.

The more feminine Ahjo's Nature practice became, the more it was necessary to call forth an external expression of masculinity as protector. He often appears as less developed and whiny, and has a tendency to disappear into numbness. One of the cures for this self-hatred has been to honor the masculine self as gay and femme-identified. The positive side of embracing this youthful, mischievous, femme queer masculinity is that its self-criticalness is transformed into a more mature mind that thrives on diverse ideas and is able to express good judgment with greater objectivity and empathy. Finding meaning in visions and art, the flame of Spirit begins to arise as Ahjo's liberated, wild, queer, non-binary self.



Crone **This is the place of Soul.**

Here is Crone's voice. It is strength and intuitive wisdom accessible to all beings ... if one is quiet enough to listen. Crone offers an experience of time and wisdom based on cycles of growth and death.

While the word "Crone" is associated with the feminine, she is beyond the restrictions of gender-binary thinking and is rooted in the ancient, self-autonomous goddesses such as the Bearded Goddess, Baba Yaga, and Kali. Crone challenges concepts of femininity, teaching us to claim inner authority and the power to self-stimulate and create. In one of Ahjo's image edits, for example, Crone showed up masturbating with her own phallus, shared here as a prayer of inspiration for all to remember these ancient wisdoms as gifts, rather than curses of shame. Can Crone's gender be a Mystery or ever-changing even as they are forever lovers with the feminine?

We think so. We know so.¹⁰