

Series Introduction

“Here’s to strong women. May we know them. May we be them. May we raise them.”

Anonymous

A Spirit Mama is any woman who knows deep down that her unbreakable spirit, her magic and her soul are the most important part of who she really is.

This book series was born during an interesting time of my life: When I started writing, I was a mother to a beautiful 3-year-old boy called Everest, and was trying to conceive another child. Among the incredible joy that having a child brings, Everest had decided to not sleep for the first 20 months of his life (literally waking up four to five times a night). He brought my exhaustion to a level I never knew existed and broke all my previously well-oiled methods of staying in control, managing my life, being cool and spiritual and having all things figured out! Most days, he thought his name was Never-rest instead of Everest!

I had quickly gotten pregnant with him at the age of 40. That was, surprisingly, the easy part as I hadn't bought into people telling me it was going to be difficult! My spiritual path had been in 1st place before, so I was familiar with wanting to be more conscious in all that I did. I had been on a path of awakening, self-responsibility, silence, meditation and retreats, reading voraciously and doing whatever it took to feel closer to my supposedly Divine nature and serve the world in some small way. Applying that practically to work and relationships was hard enough! Staying on the path when I was pregnant, giving birth or being a parent, this was something I had no experience in. My journey was neither easy nor filled

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with answers, and the answers I needed weren't in a readily available book recommended by fellow moms.

I continued to be challenged and broken open, and my heart continued to be stretched when I started trying for baby #2. I had miscarriages, eventually tried in vitro fertilization (IVF) and had to face myself, my grief, my partner, the world and, of course, the Divine during the journey of trying for another child.

Before we jump in together any further, let's define a few words for the purpose of this book series.

I define the spiritual journey to be an inside adventure, about the heart and soul. Spirituality is what's on the other side of the limited mind or scared and fragile ego. It's about being aligned with something greater, something within that never changes when everything on the outside constantly does.

It's not my intention to show any preference for any one or more religions in my writing. Bring your own faith or spiritual practice and continue to use whatever words you use to encapsulate the concept of the Divine—be that “the Universe,” “Life,” “Grace,” “Light,” “Source,” “God,” “Higher Forces,” or some name that is familiar to you, or “Supreme Love.” If you don't have any specific wording or spiritual path, then don't worry about it. Whether you do or don't, it doesn't matter: Use what's true to you to describe that which is loving, comforting and guiding you.

I'll share my description with you, as I know words such as “God” or “Spirituality,” or concepts such as “a Divine Plan,” can come with a heavy burden for many who grew up without an all-loving notion of what that meant—myself included. I'll be using “God,” “Spirit” and “the Divine” interchangeably because, to me, they're just different doors into the same room. Similarly, whenever I use the words “mother” or “father,” think of the primary caregivers in your life, whoever they may be.

The term “Spirit Mama” is a call to any woman that senses there is something bigger going on here. That perhaps we are more than just these incredible physical bodies and more than just human beings. Conception, pregnancy, birth are much more than just physical miracles.

These books are an invitation to trust the flow, trust the guidance, trust your own inner amazing self and Higher Self, whether you feel it comes from a greater Source or not. You don't need to be or do anything spiritual to find yourself welcomed and at home in these books. On the contrary, you'll have a feeling of being seen, heard and understood just as you are. Seeing the spiritual side of things is more of a journey about finding truth

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and resting in that truth than about the exhausting alternative of having 100 more things to judge yourself by, do, change or fix.

So how do you integrate spiritual principles into the essence of what it means to become a mother? Is it possible to view conception, pregnancy, birth and the early years of parenting as a spiritual journey? Traditionally, we tend to view these realities through practical, physical and emotional lenses. Fertility challenges, morning sickness, hours in labor, breastfeeding issues, sleep training and crying remedies are the norm of most books. While these are all important topics, I found that the spiritual aspect of having a baby has either been forgotten, misunderstood or is simply unknown. Where it *is* alluded to, it's commonly limited to discussing meditation or recommending yoga classes to stay fit or get back into shape. And yet, there are women all around the world who are waking up to the importance of bringing a more mindful and conscious approach to all aspects of motherhood. Surely you're one of them if you have picked up this book.

For the past few years, I've interviewed experts of all kinds—moms, dads, gynecologists, pediatricians, fertility specialists, doulas, spiritual teachers, midwives—to gather information and suggestions on how to conceive, be happily pregnant, give birth and parent while remaining on a spiritual path. While my personal experience makes up an important part of this book, the wealth of knowledge of these experts and other parents is the heart of its content.

This book series is the handbook I would've wanted to have along the way of my fertility, pregnancy, birthing and parenting journey. It's the experience of a community holding each other, holding the souls coming into the world and holding up hope for the world. More specifically, holding the hope that a more conscious way of bringing up children is possible.

The *Spirit Mama* series is an intimate account of what it's like to choose to have a baby and raise a child in a way that deeply honors the essence and spirit of both parent and child. Ask yourself: If you could do everything that moms and expectant moms do but in a way that sees it all through a spiritual lens, what would you be doing differently? *That's* the driving question of this book. It's also an intensely practical book that's easy to read and accessible, even if you have little to no experience in the world of personal growth.

During the time prior to conceiving all the way to the child's second year, it's crucial to lay a foundation that sets your child on its way, reminding it of how loved, safe, protected, guided, important, good enough and

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wanted it is. This is also the most beautiful time for a woman to remind herself that all these facts apply to her too!

Why bother with being more conscious? Or courageously doing some of the inner work to uncover the blind spots and programming of the mind that prevent the full expression of your heart? Because, deep down, every parent I have ever met wants to raise a happy and conscious child who's prepared for life. This book series is an invitation to understand and let go of the obstacles to conceiving and raising conscious, empowered children.

When so much of what we think and do is automatically determined by our crazy minds, it makes sense to pause and actually decide whether we want our minds to be the ones making decisions. When you fight with a spouse, it's your mind that's fighting. When you criticize yourself, it's your mind that's criticizing. When you feel sad, not good enough or scared, it's your mind feeding you that negativity. When you've faced yourself in a deep, honest, loving and forgiving way and you truly know that you aren't alone, you'll feel radically different. Relief, freedom and a new connection will be your compass, not only in your role as a mother but also in all the roles life asks of you in the present and in the future.

This book series starts by covering the essential times of early motherhood: fertility and conception, pregnancy, birth and the first few weeks, and then the early years. Please get the book or books that apply to you currently. Each book is structured to have short, easy-to-read paragraphs covering the key themes that emerged during my interviews. The themes are below, and they apply to every stage of your journey:

- Top-Level Check-In
- Your Physical and Medical Well-Being
- You & Your Partner*
- Taking Care of Your Body, Mind & Soul
- The Fear & Worry Corner
- Loving Yourself
- Challenges
- Your Environment
- Things to Try
- Spiritual Wisdom

(*The reference to a partner is not a requirement. This journey is also encouraged if you are choosing to have a baby by yourself or in a different way.)

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These books will take you deep into yourself, your relationship with life, a partner, your own parents, your fears, your questions around safety and choices and the ultimate need to surrender and let go. They'll also give you a wealth of knowledge, out there wisdom and practical information on things to try, things to know and things to practice before making important decisions during this most incredible adventure! These books will make you laugh, cry and sigh with relief that you aren't crazy and you aren't alone, that it's okay to be totally out of control and not know what you're doing, that it's okay to have moments when you feel that you can't stand your husband or partner, yourself and even your beloved baby!

You'll experience a range of potentially new, and sometimes contrasting or surprising, emotions. The early years of motherhood, from 0 to 2 years, are magical, miraculous, misery-inducing and marvelous! You'll navigate the highest highs and potentially the lowest lows. You'll love your child and also wonder if you can send it back. You'll love your partner (if you have one) and wonder what on earth you've gotten yourself into.

Your body will be different. Your relationship will be different. Your whole life will be and look different. While so much of motherhood is intuitive and instinctive, the biggest learning curve is that there really are no guidelines to follow. As you'll see, you'll be your own guide following your instinct and your baby's intuition as much as possible.

These books are based on accounts from hundreds of women (and some men), and you'll find that some parts will mirror your own experiences and that others will be very different. This is entirely expected as no two mothers or children are the same. You (and your partner if you have one) are the authors of your own chapter—to be guided by Spirit and the intuition you were blessed with. As for the challenges, the Universe gives us children for us to learn, grow and love in a way we never did before. It's a journey of great discovery, one of digging deep into the soul and emerging a better human being.

My invitation to you is to include the depth of your heart and soul into every aspect of being a current or future mom. It's an invitation to break open, be totally human, be your messier (yet truer) self, celebrate your joy and remember our role as Spirit Mamas: to co-create, with Spirit, children who desperately need us to remember our and their spiritual nature.