

2024 AURA STORIES

INVESTING IN WOMEN AS DRIVERS OF REGENERATION



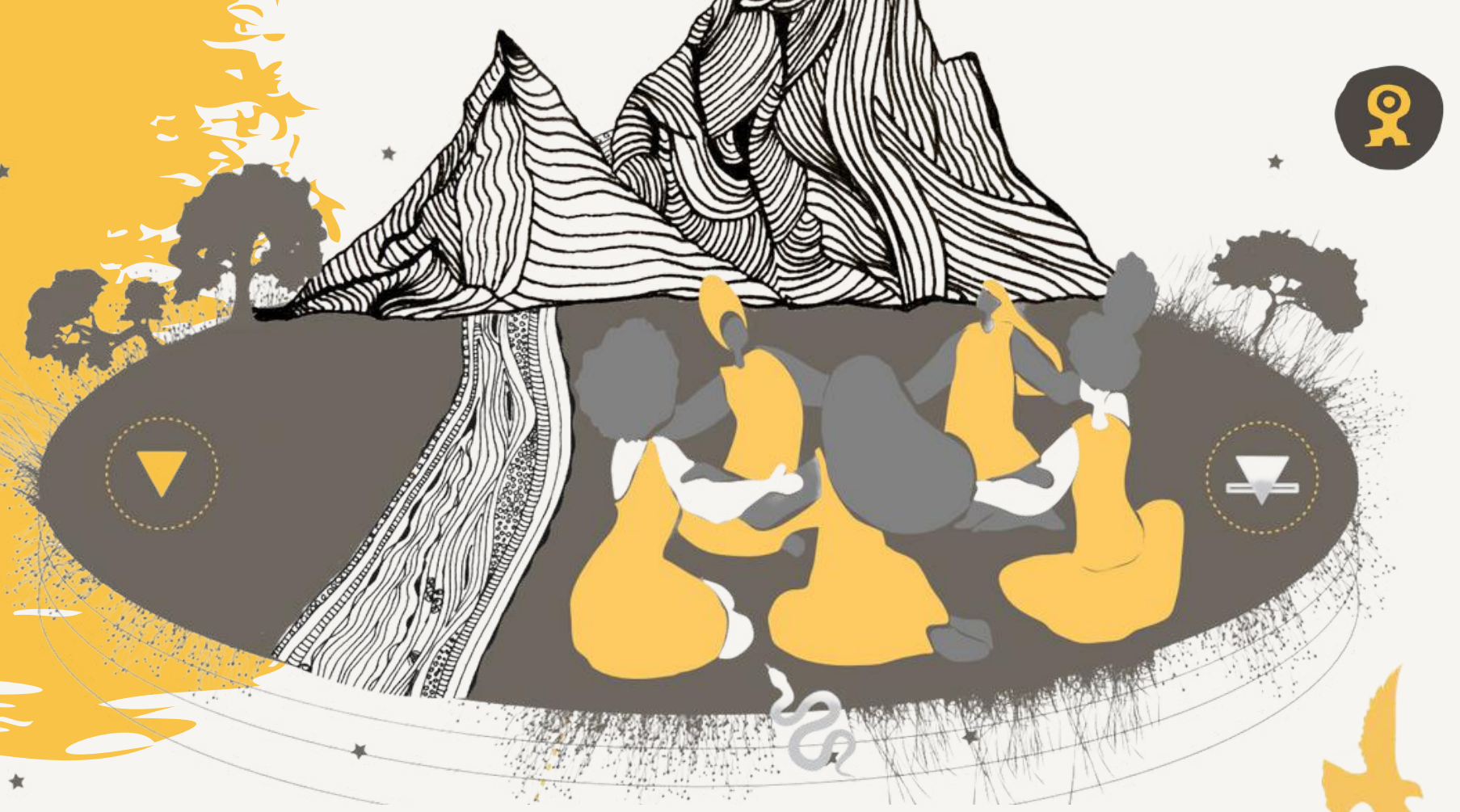


**We are either going to have a future
where women lead the way to make peace with the Earth
or we are not going to have a human future at all.**

— VANDANA SHIVA

Environmental activist, food sovereignty advocate, ecofeminist

We welcome you to reimagine
individual and collective action
through nurturing the feminine



Welcome to Aura

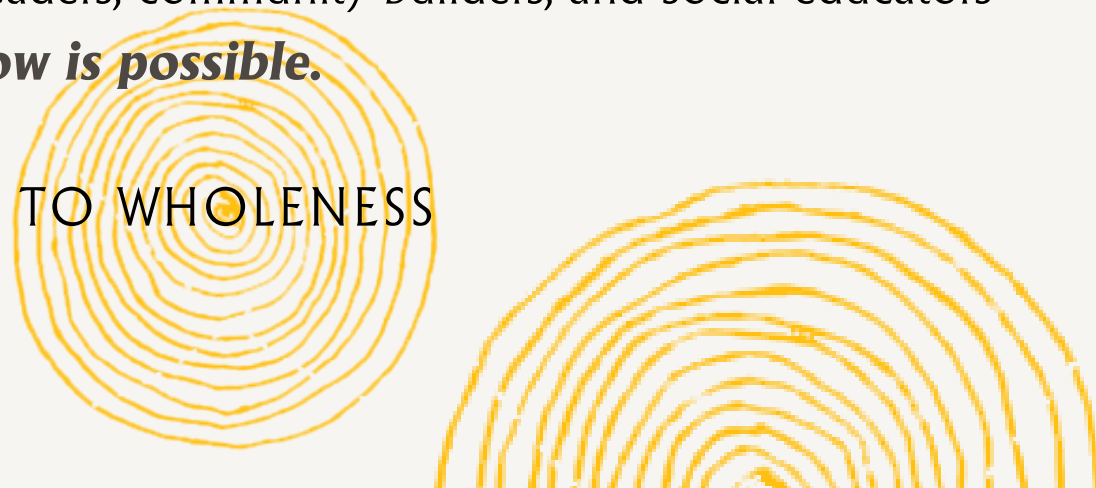
Aura is one of Be The Earth's original programmes, **reclaiming women's wisdom as a transformative force for regenerating systems** — where all life can flourish.

Imagined into being by Renata Minerbo and Eve Annecke, it is an open-source methodology that nurtures the holistic development of women leaders and their communities through a feminine-centric lens. Rooted in care, it supports experienced activists, Indigenous leaders, community builders, and social educators shaping ***the more beautiful world our hearts know is possible.***

IN A POLYCRISIS, AURA GUIDES US BACK TO WHOLENESS

It fosters inner growth alongside cultural transformation. It replaces paradigms of domination with systems of abundant connection to the natural world.

At its heart, Aura embodies Be The Earth's mission: strengthening regenerative economies that support all living beings. By focusing on women — the source of life — it builds the foundation for inner, organisational, and community leadership, **essential for true regeneration.**





AURA METHODOLOGY

We hold women in circles, an ancient tool for healing, collaborating & belonging



Gift culture fosters reciprocity & generosity, offering unconditional support; inspiring others to pay it forward

We celebrate interconnected life in all beings

Strengthening the capacity for women to own & use their voices for individual & collective growth

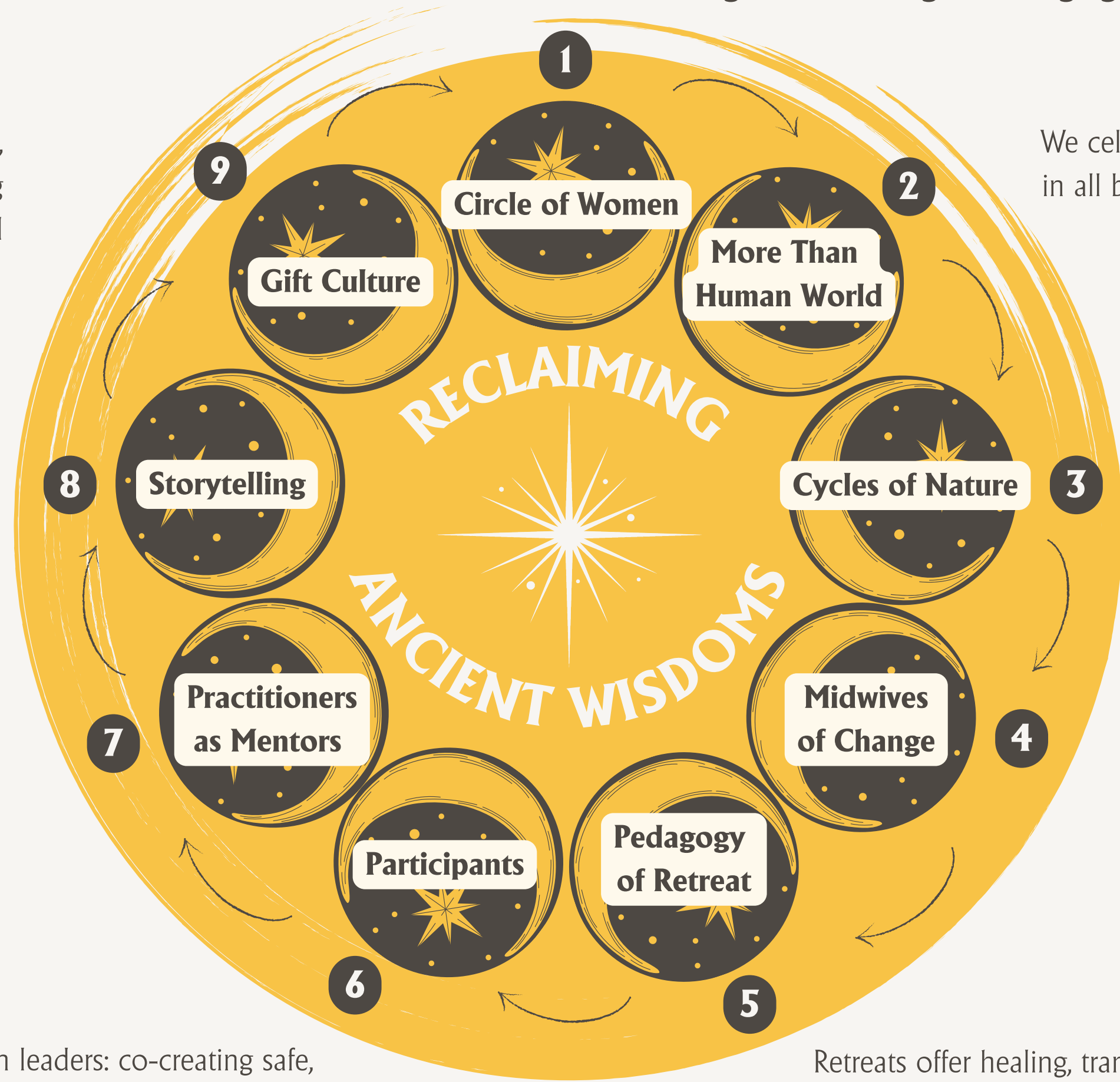
Living in harmony with nature's cycles, we honour moon phases, seasons & Earth's wisdom

Practitioners guide healing through embodied practices, addressing trauma, sexuality & equity

Midwives nurture transformation, facilitating with ancestral wisdom & weaving journeys of growth

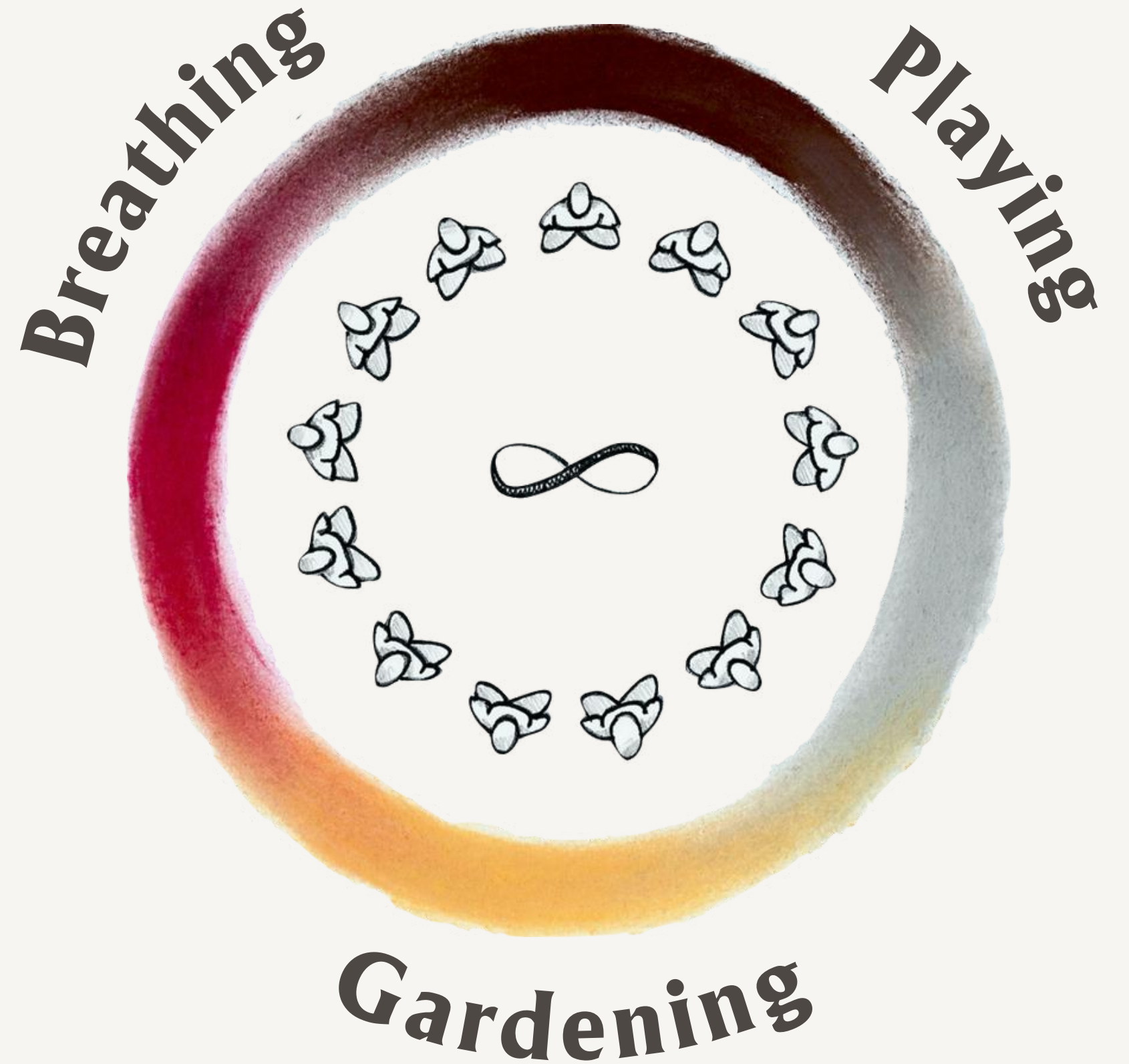
Our participants are women leaders: co-creating safe, abundant & transformative spaces for change

Retreats offer healing, transforming, and community: birthing new patterns through sacred connection with nature & self





**Three key themes weave
through all modules:**



Aura Offshoots

As we continue to evolve Aura's methodology & further its regenerative capacity, it has grown and blossomed into different offshoots.

AURA FELLOWSHIP

The heart of Aura, the Fellowship is a sanctuary for female activists, community leaders & social educators honouring the often invisible labour of women driving change. It provides financial support, mentorship & transformative experiences. The Fellowship has taken different forms:

- AURA WORLD: A 2-year circle with 9 activist women from UK, Brazil & South Africa. This was our first online circle beginning in 2020
- AURA VALLEY: Held in 2021, a one-year circle with nine single mothers & community leaders from the Dwarsrivier Valley, South Africa
- AURA FELLOWSHIP BRAZIL: Launching March 2025, 18 months
- AURA FELLOWSHIP SOUTH AFRICA: Launching March 2025, 18 months

AURA POCKET RETREAT

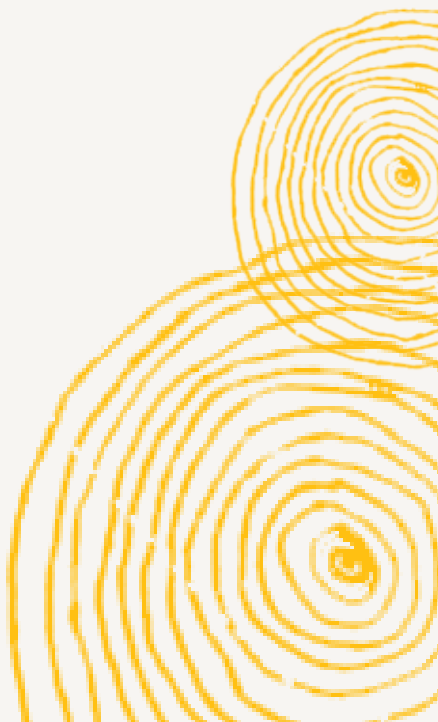
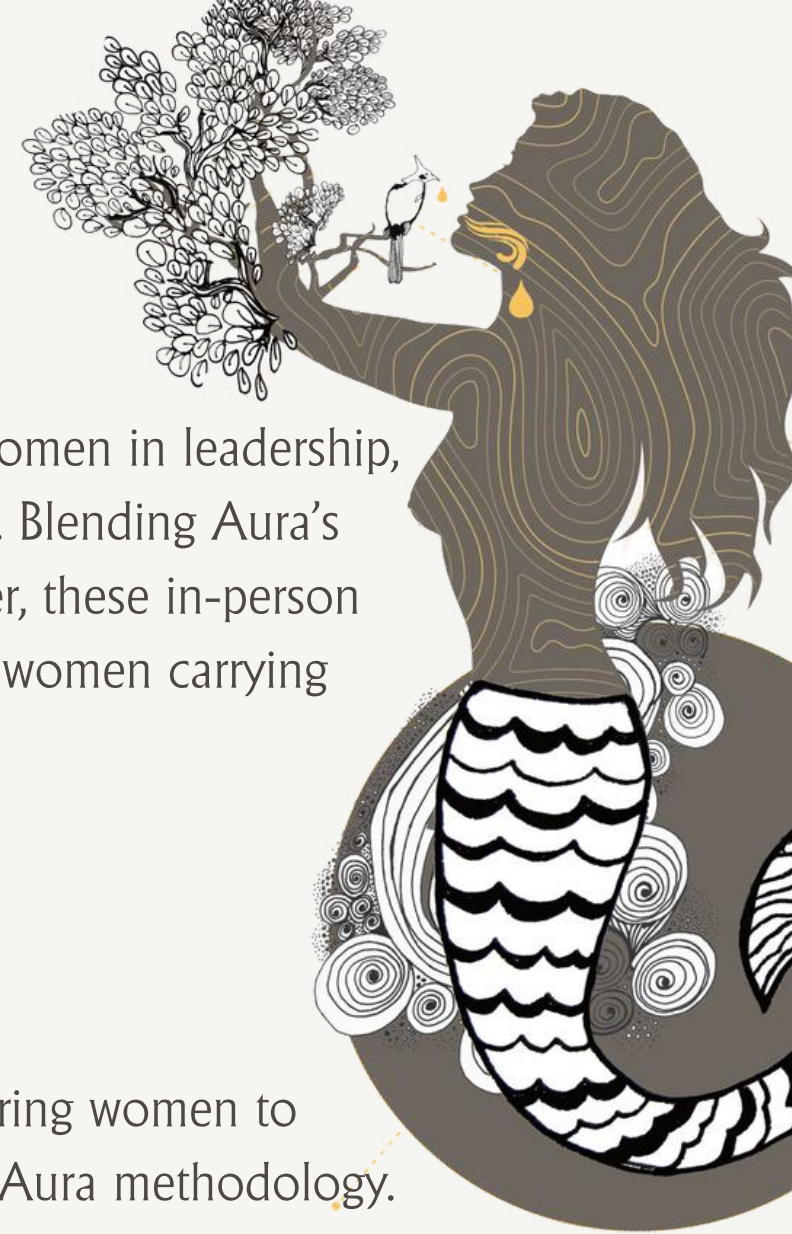
A three-day retreat for entrepreneurial women in leadership, offering rest, creativity, and reconnection. Blending Aura's methodology with nature's healing power, these in-person experiences provide joy and renewal for women carrying immense responsibility.

FACILITATING THE FEMININE

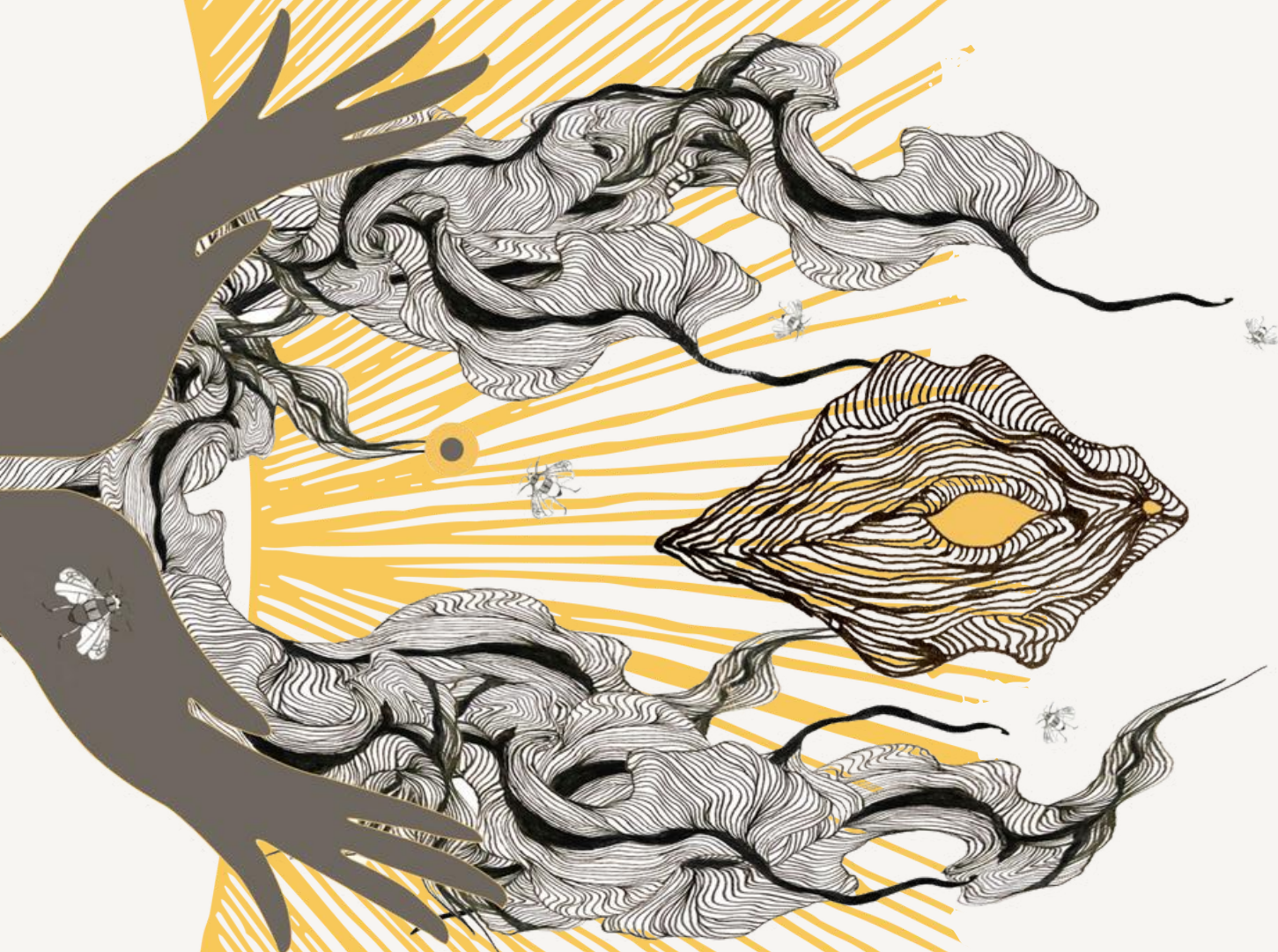
A five-day retreat-based course empowering women to lead their own circles and retreats using Aura methodology. Evolving from a nine-month online course in 2023, the programme has nurtured two cohorts in 2024, inspiring new leaders to carry this work forward.

AURA CIRCLES

Launched in 2024, Aura Circles enable graduates of Facilitating the Feminine to establish their own women's circles. These "midwives" receive a microgrant to create spaces for healing, connection & regeneration.



Our 2024 Aura Circle



When I joined, my life felt empty: I didn't have much beyond my children and my work. Aura gave me a safe space where I could begin to find my purpose and discover who I really am.

I remember one time, we were all sitting outside, sharing our stories and tears. I opened up about how I feel alive at school, but empty when I get home. I told them, "At home, I feel like nothing exists, that I don't exist. I'm alone, and I cry alone." But that time, I said it without lots of tears. Within our circle, I felt change.

Aura helped me see that my passion is helping others, especially women who've been broken or abused. Women who question, "Why am I here? Why am I in this relationship?" **Now, I can be that safe space for other women.**

KAREN

How has Aura transformed your relationship with yourself?

At first, if I'm honest, I didn't want to join Aura, I thought it was just a bunch of hippies! I joined the first meeting: it changed my whole life. I had never been comfortable with myself, but now I am. Hearing other women's stories changed my heart. You always think you have this big mountain on your shoulder, but when you listen deeply to others, you realise everyone is going through so much — and just look at them! They're beautiful, incredible women.

Aura made me love myself, and feel comfortable in my own body — that's the most important thing.

PATRICIA

Aura reminded me that I am an individual in a collective. That in order to be healthy, powerful and inspired in my collective actions and practices, I need to be well cared for and valued.

RENATA

I now know how to shift the trauma we deal with everyday. I understand it has a purpose. Before Aura, I was lost in the darkness without knowing what it meant; the lessons and seasons behind it.

I joined Aura because I felt broken, and now I work with broken people, including alcoholics. I'm an alcoholic myself: a grateful one.

I've been sober for over 2 years now. When I joined, I wasn't sober — Aura helped me through that. Now, in the midst of all the chaos and trauma, I see so much beauty.

MELINY



It has helped me in understanding that not everything has to feel heavy or burdensome; it has helped me see the world more lightly.

I now see the importance of appreciating beauty, feeling it, and promoting it — even in activism.

CLAUDELICE



It has changed a lot. I hadn't fully recognised the political dimension of my work with women and mothers as activism. To me, it was urgent, necessary work — simply my job.

I have also been gifted with a network of new activist friends from different parts of the world. Having people to share the challenges and exhaustion of activism with has been so valuable — it brings a healthier balance to this work. It's also inspiring to learn how other activists approach different issues and develop solutions, expanding my own repertoire.

FABIOLLA

How has Aura shaped your view of activism?

I never really saw myself as an activist — more of an advocate. I worked within organisations, focusing on workshops and processes, rather than being on the front lines or rallying for policy change (although I did this when it was necessary).

Aura shifted my perspective, showing me that activism is something that you do on a day-to-day basis. It's not just picketing on the streets; it's something you can incorporate as a daily practice — the small actions we take every day.

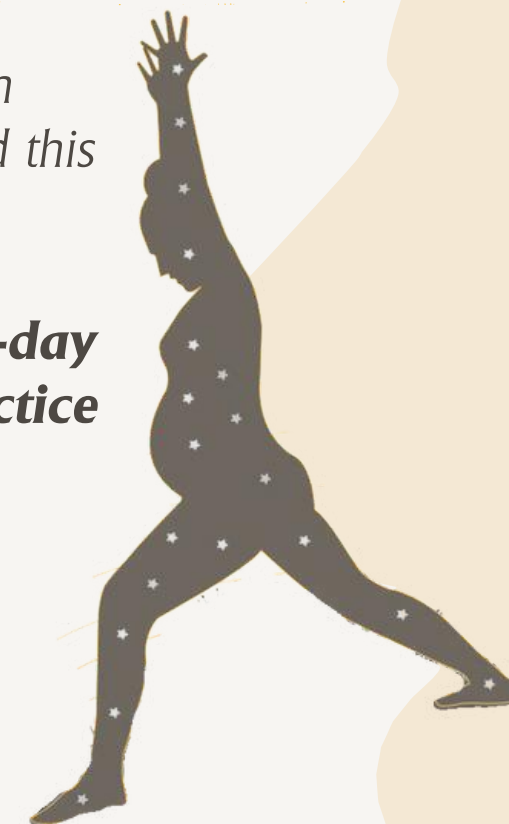
This shift helped me see activism in the choices I make and every little thing I engage with.

DONA

I got sick and had burnouts many times and felt frustrated to not be able to give more, do more, solve more issues.

So I deepened my perspective on how self-care and well-being are essential to be able to serve others and to further the causes that I stand for.

FLAVIA



I remember when I used the pottery wheel for the first time. The instructor told me, “You’re too preoccupied about being dirty”. Every moment I’d dip my hands in the bucket and start again.

It struck me: to learn anything, you have to get over your fear of messiness & mistakes. That moment stayed with me. I realised how perfectionism & the way we show up professionally, without mistakes or blemishes, is such a barrier to true learning.

I cried, I want to cry now, and grieved all the years I was trying to be perfect instead of just trying to be present.

MUSA

Imagine witnessing the transformation of others: it has the same effect of you. Sharing this transformative work in a group is so powerful.

ROSS

I remember one session, someone shared that circles are “both treasure boxes and oracles”. I thought that was an amazing way to put it. When we sit in a circle with other women, we bring both our baggage and our treasures.

We create an oracle: envisioning together why we are here and what we want to create for the future. This was a big aha moment: especially powerful coming a week before I held my own circle with 12 other women.

LUCIA

An experience from Aura that felt transformative?

During one circle we discussed patriarchy and matriarchy: it completely opened my mind and turned my understanding upside down. In college, I’d learned to view everything as opposites, which often left me feeling uncomfortable.

But in that circle, I realised that matriarchy isn’t simply the opposite of patriarchy — the spaces between them aren’t so clearly defined. I remember thinking, “Oh, wow!” **Up until then, my knowledge was shaped by a very different reality, so this was truly mind-blowing.**

DANIELE

Facilitating my own circles, where I train women farmers in the Amazon, has been life-changing. Today, we are a community of over 60 women from diverse regions, gathering every four months to connect, grow, and care for each other.

In our circles, we’ve broken the silence, fear, and shame.

We’ve incorporated techniques to identify bodily reactions to trauma and fears. Together, we’ve faced these challenges with care and affection.

CLAUDELICE

What touched me most & transformed my view were the stories the women shared. There are stories that I will never forget.

I make a point of remembering them from time to time, because they inspire and strengthen me.

RENATA



Feminine wisdom is to keep offering care & support without forgetting about ourselves and the value we deliver.

It's important that women keep nourishing and supporting each other; we accept each other's vulnerabilities; we value ourselves as professionals & communicate limits without feeling guilt.

It's important we keep trusting the power of supporting each other — we grow stronger together!

FLAVIA

In today's culture that overshares and promotes hyper-visibility, feminine wisdom feels like the art of working in the shadows, of resisting the temptation to be seen, of moving quietly.

It's about being present without the need for attention. To exist without a hashtag.

MUSA

To me, feminine wisdom means understanding what's happening in the world, while also learning new ways of being within the world. It's about women always standing by each other — not to judge, but to support and accept one another fully.

Embracing different ways of being, that's what the feminine has taught me, and doing so within a circle of solidarity & friendship.

PATRICIA

What does feminine wisdom mean to you?

*Feminine wisdom means seeing beyond the surface and perceiving what isn't immediately visible. **When I was able to open this so-called "third eye", it unlocked an awareness of hidden structures I had never seen before.***

Now, I can clearly see these barriers that society tries to obscure from us. Once I can see them, I can overcome them and create change.

DANIELE

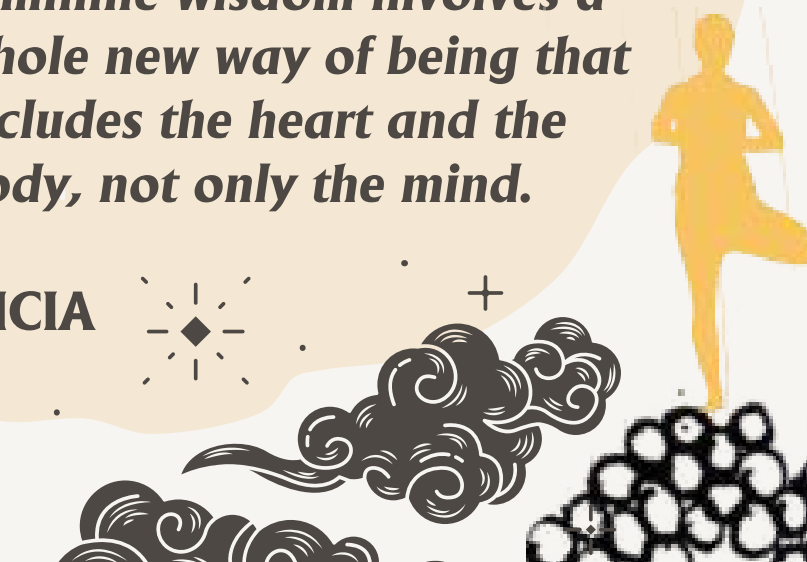
The feminine questions single answers.

In the West, we have a very linear, scientific approach to life: if you want to achieve this result, take these steps, and measure the impact in this way. There's only space for the rational.

But the feminine allows room for complexity, contradictions, and other dimensions of life. It challenges this linear, objective, rational view of the world. It engages spirituality, subjectivity, vulnerability, sorority, and recognising our multiple identities in the everyday.

Feminine wisdom involves a whole new way of being that includes the heart and the body, not only the mind.

LUCIA



Sometimes being part of a group isn't so easy: sometimes it can be uncomfortable. But you will learn that this is an important part of the process.

PRISCILA



Your pain can become your power: mine has been so beautiful. I use it now to be the best that I can. Trust that your pain will do the same for you.

MELINY

Don't think too much about it, just accept the invitation: you'll amaze yourself. Go with an open heart, because you'll discover someone new within yourself when you cross over this bridge.

DANIELE

Although it's cliché, "trust the process", but always be in a reflective mode. Don't just trust and let go completely; actively engage and reflect. There's always room for improvement, something to be shared or to learn. Instead of just receiving, be actively engaged in giving back. It's a reciprocal process.

Those were the moments I learnt the most: when some of the women pushed the edge even further within our circles. These deep inquiries are part of the daily activism we engage with to create systemic shifts, where there are cracks in the system. Sometimes they are subtle, and start in small circles.

DONA

Embrace the magic in all the rituals. Make time for everything, even when life tells you there's no time.

Keep it simple but make it simply magical, even if you're overwhelmed by the demands of a woman's life. Dress up, adorn yourself, go in your most beautiful and comfortable clothes. Be fully present.

FABIOLLA

Focus on the body. Quiet the mind. Feel it on your skin, taste it on your tongue. Put your bare feet in the mud. Focus on your posture, on how your waist feels, on the tightness in your shoulders.

Hear your body. Switch off the cerebral: focus on your body's reactions to life.

MUSA

Know your worth. It doesn't matter what others think or say about you. Know your inner beauty and your inner strength — because when you truly know yourself, you can face any challenge in the world.

Embrace this experience wholeheartedly. It will transform and change you forever.

KAREN



Advice for another woman starting her Aura journey?



Read the full Aura stories:



[“Activism is a Daily Practice” – Dona Geagea on Working with Glitches in the System](#)

[“Aura Taught Me To Love Myself” – Patricia Abrahams on Embracing True Self](#)

[“I Realised I Was Going to Break That Curse” – Meliny Swartz on Her Transformative Aura Experience](#)

[“In Diversity, We Create Deep Change” – Priscila Fonseca on Shaping New Futures](#)

[“It Unlocked an Awareness of Hidden Structures” – Daniele Custódio on the Power of Feminine Insight](#)

[“Now, I Can Be a Safe Space For Other Women” – Karen Sameuls on Rediscovering Purpose](#)

[“Regeneration Lets What Needs to Die, Die” – Lucia Nader on Regenerative Activism](#)

[“Self-Care as Activism” – Flavia Ramos on How to Nourish Feminine Wisdom](#)

[“That’s Why I Live Within Women’s Circles” – Fabiolla Duarte on The Magic of Rituals](#)

[“There Are Stories I Will Never Forget” – Renata Laurentino on Aura’s Transformative Power](#)

[“To Exist Without a Hashtag” – Musa Gwebani on Quiet Power & Rediscovering Play](#)

[“We Feel Fear, But We Don’t Use It” – Claudelice Santos on Defending Amazonian Communities](#)



With heartfelt gratitude to our external supporters and funders, including Deborah McAulay, whose generosity and belief in Aura have been vital to the success of this programme.

We would also like to acknowledge that all our Facilitating the Feminine Retreats have a scale of payment to ensure diversity and inclusivity.

For more information about supporting this programme and contributing to its ripples of regeneration, please contact Renata at: renata@betheearth.foundation





**“Teach one woman to garden
and the whole neighbourhood gets courgettes.”**

— UNKNOWN PROVERB



Be The Earth
FOUNDATION