

The Girl in the Red Boots: Making Peace with My Mother
Imageries For Healing

#### Introduction

Show me a daughter who hasn't felt wounded—temporarily or permanently by her mother... and I'll be surprised. In the many years I worked on my memoir, *The Girl in the Red Boots: Making Peace with My Mother--* whenever I mentioned the title of my book, just about everyone I spoke with seemed to want to share at least one distressing event with me about his or her own mother!

This doesn't surprise me: the mother-daughter relationship is one of the most important—and complicated in the lives of most adult women. It's intense, tenacious and complex.

if your relationship with your mother is uncomplicated, you may be simply fortunate. You may have unfinished business with someone close to you, and the principles in this book will apply to not only your mother but all other important relationships. Grudges, glitches, misunderstandings, and unhealed wounds often linger, creating distress and disconnections in many relationships. Often we let these disappointments go, hoping they will disappear. Generally they don't disappear, but fester, pile up and create new mindfields of misunderstanding. When relationships disappoint us, reaching out and making peace requires only a few essential ingredients: patience, perseverance, curiosity, commitment and hope.

This small book was born as I put the final touches on *The Girl in the Red Boot: Making Peace with My Mother*. In the months since publication, I have done innumerable workshops using these imageries. Now, I have compiled these imageries and hope to inspire your reflections and your own inner work. Feel free to contact me with any unexpected surprises, jolts or mysteriescontact me via my website, <a href="www.judithruskayrabinorphd.com">www.judithruskayrabinorphd.com</a> or at jrrabinor@gmail.com.

### #1. Welcome to Womanhood

| mother. Find one that strikes you, and look at it closely. Notice the expression on your mother's face. What is she wearing? Notice her clothing. What is the background of this picture? If it is outdoors, what is the weather like? The light? If it is indoors, what furnishings do you see? If there are other people in the picture, how is she relating to them? As you contemplate her at this particular moment in her life, be aware of what she is feeling. |
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Imagine that you are searching through a box of old photographs, seeking a picture of your

#### #2. The Secret

| secret from you? How did you feel when the secret was revealed? If nothing comes to mind, perhaps a secret you hold has emerged. Think about a secret you keep or maybe have kept. Focu on the feelings that come up. Where does your body feel that secret? What is the sensation it causes in your muscles? What feelings and associations arise? |  |  |  |
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# #3. Becoming a Therapist

| We all carry pain. Our muscles hold on to feelings and memories. Can you locate emotional particular areas of your body? Sadness? Anger? Hunger for connection? Breathe deeply into any of your hurt places. Inhale deeply, exhale completely. Nothing to do, nowhere to go — just notice what happens in your body when you breathe into the places where emotions gather. Does the breath soften you? Or do your muscles tighten as you breathe? How does being with pain impact your body? |  |  |  |
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# #4. Love, Marriage, and Divorce

| Passover, or the Fourth of July. Imagine your mother sitting at the holiday table, pregnant with you. How does she feel about her pregnancy? Who is at the table with her? Who is missing? Take a moment to breathe into the image. Feel that primordial connection to her, that connection with her that defies language. |  |  |  |
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# #5. Mother-Daughter Complications

| Think about a story you have told repeatedly about your mother, whether it is about something humorous, tragic, or difficult, or a moment of happiness between you. Imagine telling it again, to someone who is listening attentively. Notice how you feel in your body as you tell this story. What does this story tell you about the mother who raised you? Why do you like to tell it? |  |  |  |
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# #6. Making Peace

| activity, like paying bills or washing dishes, and just gazes into the middle distance or out the window. She is unaware you are watching her. What observations do you make of her in such a moment? What do you imagine preoccupies her? Is she daydreaming? What is on her mind? |  |  |  |  |
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#### #7. When "When" Is Now

| Imagine that your mother is standing in the doorway of a room you are seated in. See her searching. She is looking for you, and when she finds you, she wants to come in and sit by you. How do you feel in your body as your mother spots you? Have you made eye contact? If so, what's that like? Check in with yourself. Do you look at her with a welcoming gaze, or do you turn away? How do you feel about her coming into the room and sitting beside you? |  |  |  |
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# #8. Retelling Our Stories

| Create a ritual for yourself and your mother, whether it's lighting a candle, making a small altar of keepsakes, or writing something to or about her: a letter, a poem, or just a few words. Be as creative as you like. Whether your mother is living or dead, the point is to honor the way she lives on inside you. |  |  |  |
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#### The Final Imagery

Imagine that you are searching for a photograph of your mother that has something important to tell you. Take your time as you flip through pictures-- and notice what you see: the shades, the shadows, the messages. Pay attention to whatever feelings arise. Absorb all you can: the nuances, the backstory.

Your mother is the most important woman you will ever know. Your mother welcomed you to womanhood.

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### Conclusion

| I hope these imageries have been of help to you on your journey. You may want to take a moment to note any impressions, assumptions or questions you want to continue explore. |  |  |  |  |
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