

WFWP USA: Rooted in Radiance: An Awaken Retreat in Shrewsbury, MA

Mika Deshotel
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The first 1-day Awaken Women's Retreat in Massachusetts was held in Shrewsbury on Sunday, May 17th. Twenty-two women (and three male support staff) spent the day together at the Worcester Family Church meeting hall. The gathering included women of varying generations, with a few mother - daughter pairs attending together. One couple and new parents-to-be, Angelika and her husband, Taka, attended the Retreat together as support staff. Their presence added a "homey" touch to the event. Three women from WFWP Maine attended together, giggling and chatting together at their table whenever they were given the chance to. One Brazilian woman who is new to Women's Fed, Angela, was grateful to attend and also shared about an event she had attended the day before. She wanted to stress the importance of women's events like these and how valuable it is when women can come together in such a positive and uplifting way.



HerTribe Education Director, Dr. Mika Deshotel, was the main presenter, speaking on topics related to inherent divine feminine qualities of Heavenly Mother, finding confidence in our respective seasons and

cycles as women, and journeying toward true womanhood together as sisters. Each session included an opportunity for reflection, pair and table sharings, and a chance to offer thoughts and experiences amongst the entire group. In addition to the presentations, participants were encouraged to go deeper in exploring the divine feminine qualities they embody. Following a presentation on four female "faces" or archetypes, the women were given the chance to choose from an assortment of beautifully printed worksheets further exploring the inner Lover and Mother archetypes. These worksheets ranged from letter writing prompts and journaling, to simple and fun activities exploring one's likes and dislikes.



The afternoon included a tasty catered lunch by Honeygrow, followed by many opportunities for the women to get crafty, including making flower rings out of pipe cleaners, bouquets with an assortment of fresh flowers, and canvas painting with watercolor pencils. The Retreat offered an infusion of activities for creative self- expression, including drawing, writing, making paper crowns, and even song. By the end, the women concluded their program, adorned with rings and crowns and waving multi-colored scarves, to the song "We Shall be Known" by MaMuse. These were symbolic gestures to help every woman feel that they had been initiated into a sacred sisterhood, seeking to become fully embodied and integrated as true women. One woman was so delighted with the variety of creative outlets commenting that just when she thought it was time to get serious, another fun activity came along. Another mentioned that she felt like she was partaking in a "heavenly playground," being given the opportunity to let go of current stressors and burdens for a time.



Beyond the content presented, one of the most valuable aspects of the Retreat was for women to be given precious time to share and discuss their experiences at tables and as a larger group. Many women commented on the value of coming together as women. One participant, Mari Kudo, summed this up with her reflection, "Beyond generation, origin or any difference, women getting together empower each other. We should have this kind of meeting more often, even [on a] small scale." Another participant reflected on the value of setting aside intentional time for retreats like this one: "We need to take time to reflect, assess where we are, and where we want to be. [We] cannot just keep going without stops along the way to make sure we are on the right path."



Events like the One-day Awaken Retreat are meant to invite women to take some time for self reflection and hopefully inspire them to know that there is a sisterhood ready to support them as they move forward on their journey. Hopefully this year's Retreat was a spark for regular HerTribe gatherings in MA going forward.



Reflections:

"I feel the importance of gathering as women and women of faith, who are in various stages of life. The retreat was a nice time for self care and reflection, as well as connection to our deeper selves, Heavenly Mother, True Mother (Mother Han), and one another. Thank you"

"I feel I received something uplifting and encouraging, providing me more fuel and love for facing the next step in the journey." - Eika Jung

"This was a gift and renewing." - Cynthia Myers

