

## Stowarzyszenie kobiet Dakini

About the circle

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Our meetings, relations and work together reflect the structure of a circle, which assumes partnership and equality. When we sit in a circle we discover how similar we all are, how much we need each other to change our life and the world we live in. When we sit in a circle we co-create the space in which each woman can reveal the truth about herself not fearing judgement or exclusion, she can see her reflection in other women as if in a mirror, she can let go of illusions and false perceptions of herself. We support each other in self-development and spiritual search, in solving problems of everyday life, in birth and death, in parting with old stories and beginning new ones. We learn how to be with each other as sisters, not competing, not comparing ourselves with other women.



In 1999 we laid our first stone healing circle (laying stone circles is a very old tradition, known in many indigenous cultures) following guidelines from Grandmother Twylah Nitsch – a shaman of Seneca people – brought to Poland by her disciple Danuta Oaogeno. It was the beginning of the Circle of Truth, a community of women who wanted to part with their old story, with the role of a victim in life, to be reborn, to heal their life and their relations with other women as well as men.

We strived to regain our female power and our ability to evolve and change. We wanted to feel that we are not alone – we have a common Mother, Ancestresses behind us and we are surrounded by sisters.

The members of our community took part in a ceremony – an initiation – when they symbolically entered the womb of Mother Earth and were reborn as free women, who choose themselves, their souls and bodies and everything they represent now and can become in the future. The basis for this mysterium, this rite of passage, is the myth about Demeter and Persephone: a mother who never abandons or betrays her daughter and a daughter who always finds her way back to the mother. Every summer another initiation took place (there were seven altogether), every year newly reborn women joined the Circle, where an ongoing work took place – it concentrated on healing and restoring respect to everything that was hurt and debased in femininity. The more we trusted our experience, the less constrained we felt by stereotypes and patterns of behaviour describing who a woman “should” be. We replaced “expert” advice and “moral” guiding with the joy of discovering our femininity together.

We found immeasurable support and inspiration in our Ancestresses’ wisdom, which we accessed through traditional fairy-tales and myths, and also found in the book *The 13 Original Clan Mothers* by Jamie Sams – telling stories of thirteen leaders and teachers of mankind, who were daughters of Mother Earth and embodied Her medicine. In their teachings, which have been passed on through hundreds of generations of native American women, we encountered a lot of our discoveries and values. It showed us that female wisdom and spirituality have universal roots and that women of all times and places can access them.

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Our quest led us onto the forgotten path of female spirituality, whose foundations are: love and respect encompassing all forms of life, acceptance of passing and flow of time and celebration of its inherent rhythm: birth – life – death – rebirth. The symbol of this rhythm is the circle, which is also the structure of the female spiritual path, honouring equality and the right of every person to realise themselves regardless of sex, race, sexual orientation, denomination or economic situation. The circle reminds us about connection and interdependence, about various relations which exist between people and all living creatures: animals, birds, trees, stones, celestial bodies and others, whose names we don't know yet. The awareness of interdependence results in the care for the wellbeing of life as a whole, it offers a broader perspective free of anthropocentric bias and selfishness, encourages us to discover and develop all gifts we possess.

The Circle grew, developed, flowered. And then inevitably, after bearing much fruit, it began to wither. The first cycle of our work came to an end. Some women went their own ways and these who feel that their path is that of daughters of the Earth are preparing to establish the Circle of Sisterhood in its mature form.

Our leader and founder of the Circle of Truth is Anija Miłtuńska, who, by constantly undergoing changes, shows us how not to fear change in our own life and what it means to live in harmony with ourselves and our own truth. Anija teaches us how to find the seed of healing in the most difficult situations. She leads us to our spiritual Ancestresses and Ancestors, she awakens the wisdom of the witch in us.