

A Pagan's Path to Meditation

10 Meditations for Yoga and Nature Lovers

Val Rogers

Art Work by Linda Tracy

Music by Kyle Pickard

(Available on Audible)

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Find out more about “Val’s World” at ValRogers.Net

This book is dedicated to time.

Your time.

I believe that this is the right time, the right place, and the right space for you to lean into the words and experiences that await you on these pages. Will you take the time?

FOREWORD

Valerie has a very unique connection with divine source energy. She moves through life as an open channel, curious and playful as she opens herself to new experiences, surprises, and delights. I met Valerie in the late 1990's in the context of academia, but it was during a group past life regression session years later that our spirits meaningfully connected. We sat in lotus position on overstuffed orange and yellow pillows, eager to see what tales our super conscious would tell us on a warm summer night.

Years later, I was looking for what I thought would be a simple voiceover talent for a series of meditations I had written. I contacted Val asking if she did voiceover work, and she confidently answered, "Of course!" A day later, she sent me an audio file of her bringing one of my meditations to life with her soothing and melodic voice, my mind and body relaxed, drawn in by her hypnotic tones. From that day on, I handed her the proverbial pen and said, meditate and write whatever you sense and feel. And complete magic happened.

Valerie has created some of our most innovative meditations for our meditation app company Cloud9 Online. Valerie remains in service to humanity, putting words to the powerful and healing vibrations of spirit and of Mother Gaia. Valerie modeled the way for our other writers. "Don't think, just feel" and she lives her life exactly that way, trusting her intuition that is always there to guide us down our best path.

I'm delighted to see her ministry continue with what will certainly be her first of many books with divinely channeled words that heal the mind, body, and spirit. A Pagans Path to guided meditation holds you by the hand and takes you on a magical journey into the soul, the sacred space where we are one with source and most at home. The Pagans Path will help anyone who reads it to feel the ease and grace of connecting to source through meditation.

Enjoy your journey, namaste!

~ Delanea Davis - author of *Rune Reading Your Life* & CEO of Cloud9 Online
c9ohealth.com

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INTRODUCTION

At the heart of all Pagans is nature. Not just the beauty but the destruction, too. Not just the light and joy but the darkness, too. And not just life but death. Pagans have an innate way to pinpoint balance in a quick and precise manner. It can be a blessing and a curse. Often, people who feel a lot—a lot of energies, for instance—are drawn into the mysteries of a Pagan path. People who sense outside the traditional five senses are creative and logically empathic, and they can also be curious about the Pagan path.

But what does it really mean to be Pagan? As you might guess, there is no one correct answer. I could just as easily ask what it means to be a woman? Or man? Or brother? Or mother? Based on our own paradigms—our own experiences and interactions with the world—our answers would be uniquely ours. Sure, there are broad strokes of understanding that being a woman holds certain characteristics and qualities, just as being a mother does. Whether we know it or not, we all have traces of energies that build our understanding of what being a woman (or man) means to us. A deep resonance is within us that encourages and encompasses all energies. Even though I am a woman, there are traces of male energies within me. Even though I am not a brother, there still are traces of “brother” energies within me. Whether they are dormant or fresh, I still contain energies of what brother means to me.

In my personal practice, I tend to follow, like a mantra, the Wiccan Rede: “An’ it Harm None, Do What Ye Will.” It is a basic principle for me to stay focused in understanding that my actions, behaviors, habits, and my words can affect those around me. Yet, we are human, with human feelings, so this may be nice on paper, but in practice it can be challenging. For instance, we all know we should be kind to others. That sounds simple and easy. Yet when we are hurt emotionally or physically, it is not so easy to express being kind in the moment. Have you ever been fired from a position you love, or been hurt deeply by the words of someone close to you? Instant reaction is what we express. What that instant reaction looks like can be rooted in fear, or love. Often, we tend to defend ourselves. We can lash out. Being kind to the person who inflicted that pain on you is not an easy mindset to demonstrate. Yet, that is exactly the mastery of the Wiccan Rede: the react instantly with kindness, peace and love no matter what has or is happening to you in the moment.

Humans are the highest level of consciousness on Earth. And being at this high level, we are given gifts every day in every way that allow us to feel the energies around us. We are connected to the “all there is” (and naturally, “the all that is not”).

Often, we do not connect with the energies that naturally surround us because we are busy doing human things. Work, family, our beloved pets, and hobbies. Busy, busy, we are. Making and doing busy things.

Muses & Insights

My first semester in college, my English professor taught me a valuable insight that I still carry today. He said, “The word ‘thing’ can always be replaced with another word. So, mean what you say, and say what you mean. Don’t use the word ‘thing’ as an excuse to be lazy. Find another word to represent that ‘thing.’”

One definition of thing is: *“An object that one need not, cannot, or does not wish to give a specific name to.”*

“That’s just the nature of things.”

-On the Nature of Things by Titus Lucretius Carus
(written around 60 BC)

If I chose one word that could describe nature, I would choose the word “balance.” To me, nothing exemplifies balance more than nature. It is acutely expressed in all living creatures as well as in the Elements of Water, Earth, Air, and Fire. All living creatures face life and death every day. The lives of many insects, plants, and animals depend upon the very death of others. Nature has been recycling for millions of years. The waste of living plants, insects, and animals provides essential nutrients to other plants, insects, and animals. There could be no life without the opposite—death. Pagans have a deep understanding of this concept.

In investigating nature, life and death are ever-present. Just look at the roadkill, the squashed ant on the ground, or the hunting owl at night. Animals rely on death to live. We humans tend to have it a bit easier. We have learned to create great comforts in our lives to avoid the topic of death and to focus primarily on the “living” aspect of being human. Perhaps if we spent

a little more time contemplating and honoring death, we would be able to enjoy life a bit more.

Balance is also seen in the natural Elements that are at the core of Wicca and Pagan practices. Below is each Element and a brief description of its relationship to the cycle of life-death-rebirth.

- Water: Water is the relational direction of West. It is a powerful Element that exemplifies the word “clean.” Whether coming from the skies, the Earth, or our own bodies, Water purges, cleanses, and refreshes.
- Earth: Earth is the relational direction of North. The solidness of the ground. Humans have used the physical Earth to create all material items that have first been manifested in our minds. And yet, rot and decay are needed for new growth to thrive.
- Air: Air is the relational direction of East. Stale Air is stagnated and not necessarily easy nor healthy to breathe in. Fresh Air, provided by breezes and wind gusts, whisks away the old dust and debris to provide room for flourishing new growth. It is like nature’s vacuum.
- Fire: Fire is the relational direction of South. It is the Element of transformation and is considered a cleansing Element to make way for the new. Through heat and purification, newness can arise. Burning is associated with new life, like controlled forest fires make way for new growth.

We cannot live without these Elements. They are ever-present in us and around us. This book contains six meditations related to these four Elements. The first meditation is an introduction to the four Elements. Following are meditations on Water, Earth, Air, and Fire. The last meditation in the Elements series is a conclusion on the four Elements. They can be used individually or in a group practice.

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There are several ways to allow this book to touch and work with you.

1) **Read the Meditations to Yourself**

Read the meditations silently to yourself. Find a quiet time that is all yours to claim. All that is needed is about ten to fifteen minutes. Read slowly. You do not need to rush through the passages. There is no conclusion of a story to finish. As you read, allow yourself to breathe in when you read the words. This will naturally aid you to begin relaxing. Open yourself to really think about the words and what they may mean to you. Be inspired by them. All thinking and connecting can be inspiring if we are in the right mindset to receive the messages we hear. Get ahead of yourself and set your intention to be inspired when you read these pages.

2) **Read the Meditation Out Loud**

Reading out loud takes more outward energy and sets that energy into motion. While you read out loud to yourself, read slowly and carefully. Be thoughtful about your approach. If something does not quite make sense, or you stumble among the words, be inspired to rewrite your own words that resonate with you. Each meditation will guide you and encourage you. At the beginning of the meditation, you are instructed to "close your eyes." Obviously, as you read the meditation you cannot close your eyes, but you can visualize yourself as relaxed with your eyes closed. You can lean into your muscle memory of what it *feels like* to have your eyes closed.

I often find it pleasing and peaceful to have my earbuds or headphones on with light meditation or spa music playing. This allows my pacing of the reading to be slowed. Read gently without rushing. Try and absorb each word in your own style of contemplation.

3) **Write About the Meditation**

Using your own words is a powerful, magical exercise. It allows energy to flow from you, through you, and out of you. And then, you can reread and recreate the aspects all over again. A bit like doing the same puzzle again, yet the picture is slightly different the second time you create it.

Take each meditation individually and begin a journaling book. Be sure to include the date, time, and where you are at the top of the

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATIONS: BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Each meditation is accompanied by an illustration by artist Linda Rondeau Tracy. These are original illustrations done in soft pastels. Pastel paintings are different from watercolor paintings in that watercolors are inherently transparent, and pastels are inherently opaque. Being opaque, I believe, allows for further depth and interpretation for you to create an intimate experience. The illustrations are meant to enhance your meditative experience. These pastel paintings spoke to me as a perfect fit for this book on meditation because of their common theme of nature.

Before each meditation begins, I have provided a few “Muses & Insights” to describe the connection between the illustration and the meditation from my eyes in my moment of experience. These are meant to be used as inspiration. I encourage you to seek your own explanation and create your unique connection to the illustration as it relates to you in your moments.

Each time you read and reread these meditations, you may discover something different. For instance, you may notice something you didn’t see before in the illustration that now speaks to you. Or maybe you are inspired to create your own illustration to match your feelings at the moment. Go for it! Create, paint, draw, and color outside of the lines. There is no “one-size-fits-all” to experience the illustrations and meditations.

ABOUT THE MEDITATIONS: BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Before you begin, I recommend the following:

- ❖ Find a quiet place. Any place where you know you will be undisturbed for at least ten to fifteen minutes. It could be in your car parked in a parking lot. It could be your bedroom or even the bathroom. The truth is, it doesn't matter where you are as long as you feel comfortable and secure. Many people choose to sit in an upright, strong position, either with their legs crossed or sitting in a chair with their feet firmly planted on the ground. Others find lying down relaxing and comfortable.
- ❖ Set your intention. Setting your intention does not need to be a huge act of fanfare. All you need to do is state either out loud or to yourself, "I will make this time mine." Alternatively, you can set a clearer intention on a question or issue that you are grappling with. Perhaps you wish to have clarity over a work problem or guidance on how to deal with a spouse or one of your children. Set the intention out into the ether and ask for it. It could sound something like, "I am now surrendering to the answers I need to know to help me become clearer on _____. " Fill in the blank with your own personal challenge.
- ❖ Each meditation is in a separate chapter. Each meditation has a carefully selected original nature illustration to accompany the meditation. Use this visual to your advantage to stimulate energy within yourself. Either before or after you read the meditation, really look at the picture. What do you see? What moves you? What disturbs you? How does it make you feel? Use a journal to chronicle your impressions, insights, and feelings. This will help you to build upon your experiences as you keep enhancing your personal growth journey.
- ❖ Each meditation will begin with the title and a few sentences describing what the meditation is about. This is intended to ground you in the meditation before you begin.

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CHAPTER TWO

The Power of Your Thoughts

Setting the Intention

Life is busy. We are busy humans doing busy “things.” The intention of this meditation is to bring us back to the simple concept that we are what we think about. Since we are often “so busy,” our minds rarely get a chance to rest. To chill. To take a break from the noise. This meditation can aid us in resetting our goals. In reforming and reconnecting to what is important to us.

Illustration: Muses & Insights

When thinking about how our thoughts create and interact with our experiences, I often imagine a bubbling stream of Water gently gliding over rocks and sticks. Where does that Water go? Where did it come from? This drawing, to me, embodies the essence of our wandering thoughts. In the background of this illustration, titled “Hop River State Park Trail,” you see the solidness of the bridge. This represents the solidness of the Earth we live on. Our guidepost. Our touchstone. While our thoughts can be meandering by us, we are always connected to our bodies and grounded in the “here and now.” When we have negative thought patterns, we can get stuck on the rocks, the sticks, all the debris blocking us from flowing. That can compound the challenges we face every day. By releasing these negative thoughts into the flow of the Water, we can begin to ease into a more peaceful, positive mindset. While the rocks and sticks may always be there, so is our choice to flow around them.

Peaceful blessings to you!

Welcome to the power of your thoughts.

You have dedicated this moment in time as your sacred time. Your sacred space to feel safe, secure, and loved every day in every way.

The flow of energy that is here is constantly shifting, moving, and changing... within...and without.

This is your time to connect with the power of your thoughts. Your voice. Your life. Your change.

In a sitting position, with your eyes closed, take a deep breath in and release it.

Feel how it moves inside you as you breathe in again.

The Air is cool.

So free.

So pure.

This is your Air.

Breathe deeply.

It fills you more.

Now, let it go.

(pause)

What you think, you create. It's massive and incredible. Yet, in the same breath, it's minuscule and can be seen as completely insignificant.

But it is always there.

It is all thoughts.

There may be people in your life that influence you. Some may encourage you to share your thoughts with them.

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CHAPTER THREE

Protection Meditation

Setting the Intention

Sometimes, we may feel that we are entering into a situation where others may attack our spirit and wellness. This meditation focuses on our strengthening power which will protect our inner core. It is meant to repel energies that may harm us. This meditation will guide you through a short, relaxing exercise that calms the mind, allowing the spirit to call forth the white light energy that will form a strong, loving barrier around us that will last as long as we desire.

Illustration: Muses & Insights

Imagine yourself coming back from a long, hard journey. You are tired. All you desire is the peacefulness of home. The comforts of your space, friends, and family. When you look at this illustration, which Linda has titled “In Winter,” what do you see? A cabin. A snow-covered scene with a tree in the forefront. A sunset? A sunrise? The horizon is curved, resembling the protection of a mother’s womb. The forefront of the fence and the tall pine tree that glistens with fresh snow is our guidepost to find home. The place we feel safe. It is cozy, well-lit and welcoming. The added layer of snow protects the Earth below like a warm blanket that is placed around our shoulders after a long journey. The energies represented here are positive, pure, safe, and freeing.

..some pages skipped....



CHAPTER SEVEN

Elements: Earth Part 3 of 6

Setting the Intention

Water, Earth, Air, and Fire are the natural Elements that swirl in and out of our lives every day. Yet, they are always constant. Learning more about how each Element is present in us can create a positive effect on our body, mind, and spirit. Understanding the Elements can be helpful in healing and in creating balance within us. This meditation explores the Element of Earth. Earth energy grounds us in our prosperity, wealth, bodies, and our home lives.

Illustration: Muses & Insights

Everything that has ever been produced and created by humankind has come from Earth. Our Earth is not simply a sphere rotating in space; it contains all the materials necessary to physically create our desires. The Earth has provided us with gifts that we can use to manifest our thoughts. It is inspiring to ponder the endless wonders of what our Earth can and has been able to give us throughout our history.

This illustration titled “Twin Trees” represents Earth in its simplicity. Reaching into the twilight skies of a cool midwinter’s scene, these two trees stand tall. Perhaps they are a little weathered by the elements of rain, snow, and wind, but their roots that reach into the dirt of the Earth’s crust provide a sanctuary of strength from which they pull energy in order to express who they are to the world outside. This is the power of Earth.

Peaceful blessings to you!

Welcome to your meditation on the powerful Element of Earth.

You have dedicated this moment in time as your sacred time. Your sacred space to feel safe, secure, and loved every day in every way.

The flow of energy that is here is constantly shifting, moving, and changing... within...and without.

This is your time to connect to the natural Element of Earth. Direction of North. If possible, sit facing or acknowledge where North is to you right now.

In a sitting position, with your eyes closed, take three slow deep breaths in—and release them.

(pause)

As you take a deep breath in...think about the energy Earth brings into your life.

Are your feet firmly planted on the ground?

Do they feel solid? Or rocky and unsteady?

Earth energy connects us to our physical surroundings.

Our bodies...

Our homes, gardens, families, and our wealth.

Take a slow, deep breath in through your nose...feel it fill your physical body...hold on to it...

And now, let it out through your mouth.

Become aware of your body and how it feels.

Focus on your flesh...muscles...and bones.

Go ahead and stretch. Roll your shoulders...turn your neck, arch your back...flex your feet and hands. How do you feel?

(pause)

In every wondrous moment of our physical existence, gravity pushes us down to be connected to the Earth.

Journey with me now as we experience the Element of Earth.

Take a breath in...and let it go.

You find yourself walking in a damp, dense, dark, deep forest. It is rich with the smell of Earth. You know and understand this smell. In an intimate and primal sense, you know this smell. It feels familiar and safe.

To your right, you see four deer quietly walking the forest ledge. They are not bothered by you, nor you by them. You sense and feel these forest animals and creatures as a part of you.

As you pick your way through the lush forest floor, you come across a large old tree. This is the largest tree you have ever seen—its bark is rugged. Scarred with decades and centuries of weathered stories. Its base is immense. Touch the bark and feel its worth...its steadiness.

Take a breath in...experience this massive wonder...and let it out.

(pause)

You sit on the ground with your back against the tree. You see its twisting, mighty roots ebb and flow out of the ground all around you.

As you marvel at how deep those roots must be, you become aware of the solidness under and around you. You start to feel more and more like a rock that cannot move. You are at peace with this stillness. It feels relaxing and, in a tranquil, mysterious way, it feels good to sit quietly.

You become richly aware of this tree...you are one with the tree. From this tree, you feel the extension and profound connection of the Earth within you.

Take a breath in...holding onto it for as long as you can before gently letting it go.

You have become Earth...you have melted into the tree.

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(pause)

Notice the timelessness. You see before you all the living creatures and gifts of nature speed past you...hundreds of years...thousands of years...they change in the forest.

Yet you, you are unmoved by this passage of time.

(pause)

In a moment not bound to time, a spark of loving, pure light gently shines directly at the top of your head, on your crown chakra...you remain molded into the tree, and yet you can *feel* the strength and amazing beauty of love and energy as it opens up your understanding of your own spirituality. Your own existence to yourself.

Can you feel it?

You are enlightened and free and full of love from this energy washing over your head. The light moves to your brow, your third eye chakra, where you are opened to see all that is surrounding you. Your perception is heightened, and you become keenly aware of what your next steps will be. It is all-knowing and simple. It is energizing yet at the same time completely peaceful and soft.

Can you feel it?

The light now begins to glide down to rest on your neck, your throat chakra. It changes color and swirls from calming white to deep indigo, purple to blue. You are still connected solidly to the massiveness of the tree, and yet, you know you can still speak your truth as you see. This light opens your voice so you can communicate to the world your goals and your desires.

Can you hear your voice? Can you feel the power?

Take a slow breath in now...hold it...hold it...hold it...and now, let it go.

As you release your breath, the light shifts and gently glides down over your shoulders and upper arms and rests at your chest, your heart chakra. The light swirls with beauty and colors you have never experienced or seen before. It settles on a warm, glowing green, pulsing with love and sincerity. You instantly feel appreciation and heartfelt gratitude for all the wealth you have

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CHAPTER TEN

Elements: Conclusion Part 6 of 6

Setting the Intention

Water, Earth, Air, and Fire are the natural Elements that swirl in and out of our lives every day. Learning more about how each Element is present can affect our body, mind, and spirit. Understanding more about the Elements can be helpful in healing and in creating balance in us. This meditation is the concluding segment of the four Elements. It provides a brief review of each Element. This conclusion meditation can be used separately, to reconnect to the energies of the Elements, or as Part 6 of 6 in the Elements Meditation Series.

Illustration: Muses & Insights

It was important to me to select one of Linda's pastel images that felt different from the others when concluding the Elements Meditation Series. This illustration titled "Peeking Through" displays all four Elements working together. Here you see a stalwart tree with branches reaching and twisting alongside an oceanfront or lakefront. It observes, like a watchtower guard, the horizon of the new sun dawning. The waters, representing the direction of the West, indicate some turbulence perhaps caused by the wind, the Element of Air. The waves of the Water allow the visual of the sun (Fire) to be carried along the tips to quietly rest on the secured shoreline that is the Earth. The ebb and flow of the tide caresses the body of our Earth as easily as the wind may blow and as trustworthy as the sun rises and sets.

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Earth is...being.

Solid ground. Home is my sanctuary...promises are kept...commitment is met.

The tree of life in the forest.

Deep roots, a strong base, reaching branches...all connected...to Earth.

Take a breath in now—smell in your mind's eye the essence of Earth and walk its sturdy path.

(pause)

Those born under the zodiac Sun signs of Capricorn, Taurus, and Virgo are Earth signs.

Even though you may not be born under this sign, the Element of Earth plays a part in each of us.

The chakra associated with the Element of Earth is the root chakra, located at the base of your spine. Our wealth, treasures, and the foundation which we build our lives upon all represent the power of Earth.

Feel the stability of Earth under your feet now as you breathe easily in...holding your breath...and releasing it.

Now, let's turn to the Element of Air. Direction of the East and rising sun.

Air is...thinking.

It is intellect.

Knowledge and schooling.

It is researching answers and seeking honesty and authenticity that aids us in understanding the world around us...Being transparent and true to oneself is paramount in the Air energies.

Take a breath in now—and imagine the smell of a new book...you are now being open to new ideas...new thoughts can be created out of “thin Air.”

(pause)

Those born under the zodiac Sun signs of Aquarius, Gemini, and Libra are Air signs.

Even though you may not be born under this sign, the Element of Air plays a vital role in igniting our passions into action.

The chakra that represents the Element of Air is the heart chakra, located at the center of your chest. It oversees our lungs, heart, circulation, skin, arms, and the upper back. I sometimes think the throat chakra also incorporates strong Air Elements, as Air is about clear communication and speaking your mind in an intelligent manner.

(pause)

Thinking outside the box, studying and understanding the way of the world, being “thought-provoking,” and clearly communicating with others are all characteristics that represent the power of Air.

Take a breath now, and the Element of Air fill you...and let it out.

Now, we explore the Element of Fire, direction of South.

Where Water is feeling...Earth is being...and Air is thinking...

Fire is...doing.

Passion. Transformation...creating...goal-setting...being a leader and being sure of your desires.

It is a spark. It is smoke. It is an ember. It is a flame. It is ash...all making dreams and deep desires come true with Fire.

Take a breath in...and let it go...

Those born under the zodiac Sun signs of Sagittarius, Aries, and Leo are Fire signs.

Even though you may not be born under this sign, the Element of Fire is still present in us in the form of our deep, burning desires.

The solar plexus chakra, located just above your belly button, is often associated with the Element of Fire. Here our power and self-confidence reside.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Val Rogers began her journey of spiritual truth in 1995 after the passing of her mother from breast cancer. Her mother, Joan, was fifty-five years old. At that time, Val was recently married to her high school sweetheart, Scot, and was twenty-four years old. At a complete loss of understanding of why her mom passed and what happens to us when we die, she began her serious quest for spiritual knowledge. She read anything and everything she could get her hands

on while exploring and participating in all avenues of religion, personal growth, self-help, women's groups, and spiritual quests.

In 1996, her friend, Barb Nangle, gifted her Neal Donald Walsh's Book *Conversations with God*. His books continue to serve her today as a grounding rod and guidepost to inner growth. She is a constant student—and teacher—of personal growth and spiritual awareness topics and issues. She is particularly drawn to nature and the natural cycle of all living entities. She is a firm believer in the triad of the spirit, mind, and body and uses meditation to balance everyday challenges and demands. She has written and recorded over seventy original meditations for the MediMind Meditation App, which is available at the App Store on all Android and iPhones.

Born under the Aquarian Zodiac Sun Sign, Val embodies the characteristics of the Air sign: creative, energetic, fun, positive, crafty, poised, and innovative. She confidently expresses the introvert and extrovert personality traits and considers herself a balanced blend of a “left-brained” and “right-brained” thinker-feeler.

An accomplished vocalist, writer, arranger, and entertainer, Val has performed for tens of thousands of troops as an esteemed member of the USO for the United States Department of Defense. She continues to perform regularly throughout New England for our veterans as well as for non-profits and at

private and public events. She has a deep appreciation for spending time performing in assisted living, veteran centers, and senior centers across the state of Connecticut. She owns Val Rogers Entertainment, LLC. and co-owns the band Red Satin, a high-energy twelve-piece band based in central Connecticut.

Valerie holds a B.S. in communications and a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree from the University of Connecticut. Her professional career expanded over three decades working first in an environmental non-profit and then later in higher education administration. She has now embraced her destiny to create the life she wants where music, nature, and the health-wealth mindset meet.

Val lives in Northeastern Connecticut and is a proud mother of two young men, Quin (United States Marine Corp) and Cole. She resides on her family farm property with her high-school sweetheart husband, Scot, their many chickens, two rescue dogs, two rescue donkeys, hundreds of Christmas trees, and countless weeds in her beautiful gardens.

Find out more about “Val’s World” at ValRogers.Net

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



Linda Rondeau Tracy is originally from Willimantic, CT. She earned a B.S. in music education with a concentration in voice from the University of Connecticut and an M.S. in music education from Central Connecticut State University. She is a retired music teacher, having taught choral music in eastern Connecticut in the Tolland and Windham public school systems for thirty-four years. She was also very active

as musical director and choral director for several years for the Windham Theatre Guild in Willimantic, CT. She is the creator and artistic director of the a cappella ensemble, *Take Note!*, based in Mansfield Center, CT, which was formed in 2003. The ensemble focuses on community outreach and has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars, performing benefit concerts throughout eastern Connecticut and beyond, for those in need.

Linda began exploring the world of painting around 2013, when she took an acrylic painting class at her local community center. During one of the painting sessions, the teacher had the class experiment with soft pastels, and Linda was hooked! She liked having direct contact with the paint in stick form and having her hand be the brush. It seemed to create a more personal connection with the art. From then on, she began her journey as a pastel artist, seeking out lessons via the internet and latching onto the teachings of accomplished pastel artists. She has been able to devote more time to this passion upon her retirement from teaching in 2018.

Linda lives in Storrs, CT, where she and her husband, Kevin, raised their two boys, Connor and Brandon.

ABOUT THE COMPOSER



Kyle Pickard's love of music began at the age of 10 when he first picked up an instrument and was able to make sound with it. That sound wasn't exactly pretty, but it was all he needed.

His pursuit in the creative craft led him to playing multiple instruments including the flute, guitar, and piano, which then led to learning audio recording & production. He has created dozens of cover songs and original compositions as well as worked on hundreds of projects for other artists.

His talents and interest now expand to telling stories using video as well as the inner world of composing. Kyle has an amazingly natural gift to blend left brain and right brain activities into one wholeness. He has worked with hundreds of companies and artists to carefully create and

deliver their vision. From video drone work to in-studio voice over production, to symphonic orchestration to visual production, Kyle aims for excellence in every project he takes on. Kyle's easy going yet probing manner allows for focused free flow in the creative realm when working.

Kyle met Val in 2017 when she was recording her original guided meditations for Cloud9Online (MediMind) and he was tasked in producing the final versions for the App stores. Their partnership grew into a solid friendship of countless hours of discussions on the meaning of life and how to keep aiming for excellence in their creative passions. It was a natural easy fit for them to work on this audiobook together.

He recently merged his experience with audio production and creating apps into a new app called Flowscales, which provides customizable, immersive soundscapes that aid in focus, relaxation, rest, and stress relief.

A lover of nature and a seeker of balance, Kyle holds a Bachelor's of Arts degree in Music and Sound Recording from the University of New Haven. He lives in Nashville, TN where he continues his professional and personal creative journey. He works with the Nashville Symphony Orchestra.

You can follow Kyle on Instagram here: @KyleLPickard

“Val Rogers has created a collection of meditations for the beginner and adept. Through colorful imagery, she takes us into the heart of the earth’s elements. The artwork reflects the beauty and energy of each meditation offering “the beauty way”, where we delve into our relationship with the earth, her elements all leading to self-transformation, deeper personal insights for everyday living, and most of all strengthening our interconnectedness to this beautiful planet. This worthy collection enhances our daily practices and is one that will be used often.”

~ Judith Dreyer, MS, author of *Navigating Your Dream World*
judithdreyer.com

“If you have been hesitant to give meditation a try, do yourself a favor and read this book. Val’s ability to de-mystify meditation makes it approachable and accessible to everyone. Her step-by-step approach to settling into the subtle body is brilliant ... how she blends the four elements, goddess magic and beautiful art with her guided meditations is an extraordinary way to guide the mind toward stillness.”

~ Sara Daves – author of *Manifest Like a Goddess*
saradaves.com

“Linda Tracy’s paintings perfectly complement the meditation practices in this book, evoking qualities of peace, serenity, and oneness. Each work was carefully chosen and skillfully woven into the fabric of the meditation it accompanies with an interpretation by the author. Ms. Tracy’s art makes you FEEL what you see by opening your heart and mind to the realm of the possible.”

~ Cheryl Chase - Meditation practitioner and art enthusiast

*“The pastels of Linda Tracy chosen by author Val Rogers to accompany *A Pagan’s Path to Meditation* have a dream-like quality that invite the viewer to step into the painting, feel the mist, bathe in the tranquility, muse and explore the many paths of beauty available to the meditator.”*

~ Dr. Dara Blackstone, Music Professor & Conductor

“A longtime admirer of Linda Rondeau Tracy’s art, I was moved to see it married with Val Rogers’ beautiful guided meditations. To be asked to focus on, for example, a snow-covered cabin in Linda’s artistry is hardly a challenge. It’s a joy to imagine the warmth and welcome she’d conjure inside. Or the adventure of a bubbling stream. Or the downy protection of a feather.”

~ Sue Leroux, Meditator, Writer