

# Sera Beak Helps To Ignite Your Divine Spark

BY DIANE COHEN

**SERA BEAK, AUTHOR** of *The Red Book: A Deliciously Unorthodox Approach to Igniting Your Divine Spark* (aka *The Red Book*) likes to “disturb the universe.” Her gentle and alluring voice speaks in Divine. Divine wink. Divine spark.

And, if you don't naturally string together seductive, sexy, sassy and spiritual, then read *The Red Book*. You will never view spirituality, or yourself, the same way again! Beak gives spirituality a fresh and refreshing makeover.

“This book is a match; your life is the kindling; and you are the fire,” writes Beak. While her subject matter is serious, she takes herself lightly. Her playful and pithy manner is delightful. She will entice you to connect—if you haven't already—to your own divine spark and personal purpose.

This “spiritual cowgirl” has started a spiritual “Red”-volution. And, it's only for women

(and men) who are willing to break the rules. In her first book, Beak, a Harvard-trained mysticism and comparative religion scholar, shares her zany, 12-year world tour of things spiritual.

Her pilgrimage crossed several countries. She lived in India, where she worked at the Mother Teresa Home in Calcutta. While in India, on her 21st birthday, she met the Dalai Lama. In Turkey, she danced with whirling dervishes. Her exploration also included studying comparative world religions at Harvard, working on anthropological field trips and chatting with mystics and mainstream religious people.



Photo by Mark Morford.

Beak did all this and more to discover, develop and define her own sense of spirituality and self. And, she encourages you to find yours, too.

From looking at her, you'd

never guess that this trim, 28-year-old woman with movie-star looks (straight, long brown hair, glowing skin and sparkling blue eyes) was “obsessed with God since an early age.” When



she was eight, for example, she tried to convince her friends that "God would turn a seed she had planted into a full-grown flower by the next morning." Although she was unable to "prove God's magical existence" when a flower did not appear the next day, she was able to derive a valuable lesson when "a three-year-old neighbor suddenly appeared, holding a flower in her chubby little hand!"

In a telephone interview, coincidentally during Holy Week, Beak confesses, "When I was growing up, I wanted to be a priest. People would say, 'You mean you want to be a nun.'" She continues, "No, I wanted to be a priest. I wanted to perform the actions like marrying people as does a priest. Ironically I'm doing that, officiating at wedding ceremonies, now!" Beak is a "priestess," a title she's given herself.

Beak dedicates her book to her grandparents, one a Catholic and the other a Jew, who influenced her spiritual exploration and witty sense

of humor. She says she never expected to write a book. Sad about her grandfather's death, her sister gave her a red journal to record her thoughts and feelings. Although it took some time to get used to it, Beak did start writing in the journal. "At first, I wrote about what it was like to write in a journal. After grad school, during slow times, when I was sitting in my cubicle at an office job I didn't have the skills for, I would write in my journal," she says. "My boyfriend at that time was a writer. He read what I had written and encouraged me to turn it into a book."

The seeds for her worldwide exploration of her spiritual beliefs were planted in the sixth grade. During confession, her priest squelched her excitement about the "freedom and responsibility to explore spiritual possibilities." This led her to leave Catholicism. Her parents encouraged her to "explore and find out what she did believe in." Doing nothing was not an option.

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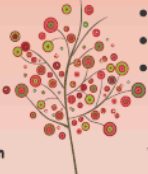
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When asked what advice she'd give "spiritualistas" embarking on a similar journey, Beak says vehemently, "Please, please, please trust your intuition, your gut. It's easy not to trust yourself, especially with so many outside sources telling you differently. There's little valida-



tion. Balance seeking out external authorities and trusting yourself. Stay open-minded. Use discernment. Trust yourself." Today, you can call and get advice directly from Beak. Visit [www.serabeak.com](http://www.serabeak.com) for more information.

Women and men of all ages are reading The Red Book. Beak initially targeted 20- and 30-somethings "to encourage other young women. Their voices need hearing. [It is most] important for them to share their personal stories. This [The Red Book] is my story." She adds, "Create your own story and path. And remember, the red is to remind people of their

freedom to create their own unique connection, experience and expression of the divine, no matter what tradition, or that of their parents, or what a priest, rabbi or guru has told them."

I hope this inspires you to go forth and find "your own shebang." Decide where you'll look for it. Choose your color or keep red. Make yourself, and possibly the world, a little better. 

Diane Cohen is a writer and coach in Northern Virginia. She can be reached at: [DianeLCohen@verizon.net](mailto:DianeLCohen@verizon.net).

Diane attended Sera Beak's "Redvolution" workshop at the National Cathedral's "Sacred Circles: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality 2009" in Washington, D.C. Visit [www.nationalcathedral.org/learn/sc\\_workshops2.html](http://www.nationalcathedral.org/learn/sc_workshops2.html) to find out information about 2010's Sacred Circles event (not available at press time).

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