


PLANET: MARS

SIGNS: ARIES; SCORPIO

Glyph: 

Key words and qualities: Desire; energy; eros. The path of desire, which says, "All desires are pure, if we distill them back to their original intention." The gods did not place desires in our psyche for them to be thwarted or disappointed, but rather as an incentive to growth. Desires are our instructional blueprints of the possible.

Color: Red

Metal: Iron

Physical body affinity: Sexual organs

Day of the week: Tuesday (from *Tiw*, the northern European name for Mars; *Mardi* in French)

Festivals: Vernal equinox, Halloween (autumn's version of May Day)

Way of honoring: By honoring desire. We honor Mars by answering the question, "What do we desire?" By working with desire, we begin to understand the interrelatedness of all things. We cannot pluck a strand of creation without causing the whole to resonate. All desire must take into account the well-being of the whole.

Shadow, when not honored: Anger; violence; heartless sex; war. Jung said, "Fanaticism is always shouted-down doubt." This reminds us that if we violently suppress our desires or doubts (which are merely counterdesires), we will become externally violent. Thus we mistakenly fling ourselves out of accord with the erotic pulse of life, missing the whole point and all the fun. But it's never too late to find the beat.

MARS



THE POWER OF FIERCE COMPASSION

The rule of no realm is mine, but all worthy things that are in peril as the world now stands, those are my care. And for my part, I shall not wholly fail in my task if anything passes through this night that can still grow fair or bear fruit and flower again in days to come. For I too am a steward.

J. R. R. TOLKIEN

Mars is the god of desire: eros, feistiness, aggression, heat, and action. We draw upon Mars for courage, dynamism, passion, and kinship with life. Conscious kinship is made manifest through active participation in heroic endeavor. When adventure calls, Mars says, “Yo!” or “Woof!” Mars reminds us that spiritual life is not some passive, safe, wimpy, trust-fund tour; it is a bold, active, heroic, and completely engaged adventure. Arousal is necessary if we are to be able to take appropriate action. As with all of the planets, we must fully possess our Mars, or else others will kidnap Mars’ desire and harness it to the lumbering oxen of war and violence.

It is important to remember the Eternal Tabloid Headline: “Mars Never Killed Anyone.” Actually, the god of war *almost* never

killed anyone; he did kill one person, the rapist of his daughter, for which he was acquitted by the Athenian court (so he doesn't have a rap sheet).

When we dance with Mars, we enter the realm of fire, where qualities of bravado, boldness, courage, and forthrightness are forged. Fire is generous; it is "no more depleted by sharing its radiance than a candle by lighting many lamps."¹³ In spring, Mars' fiery spirit quickens and emerges from the frozen earth. Mars' time is the vernal equinox, which is the beginning of Aries.

Saint Patrick's Day, March 17, is within days of the vernal equinox, identifying him as a Mars hero. One day at the beginning of spring, Saint Patrick was invited to a wine-tasting dinner (actually a wine-testing dinner), where he was given a cup of poisoned wine. He raised it to the light, and the poison rose to the top. St. Patrick blew the poison off as though it were froth, quaffed the drink, and toasted everyone in good cheer—whereupon the presiding Druid elders acknowledged him as a true Mars initiate.

Every spring, this story takes place in each of us when the winter poisons rise. We must blow them off by holding our glasses to the light. A really self-possessed Mars toasts his would-be poisoners with swashbuckling bravado and good cheer. (Freud once muttered in exasperation that the Irish were the only people who could not be helped by psychoanalysis. But, hey, if you can blow poison off your drink, what do you need with a psychoanalyst?)

Mars thrives on adventure, action, hot peppers, and spice. Canadian humorist Stephen Leacock could have been speaking of newborn Mars when he said of one of his characters, "He jumped on his horse and rode madly off in all directions."

Mars has stamina, a word derived from the Latin *stamen*, which means the thread of life woven and then cut by the fates. Stamina implies that we do not have to accept our allotment. We can lengthen and thicken our life's thread through training and frisky endeavor. The word *stamen* also refers to the masculine sexual

organ of flowers. Indeed, we access Mars' raw vitality through the instinct of erotic attraction, our desire to participate in the creation of life. In springtime, Mars energy wafts through the air as pollen. According to Louise Hay's studies of the metaphors of malaise, many people's allergic reactions to this form of Mars originate in their belief that the world is hostile and they do not have the necessary power with which to survive. By cultivating our heroic Mars, we should be able to toast our adversaries, redeem the world, and clear our sinuses.

THE INITIATION OF INVITATION

Mars needs heroic assignments. Without an inspirational goal, Mars gets frustrated, angry, and attracted to trouble like a bored teenager.

Mars continually surges through us in the form of hormones of instinctive desire, but especially when we are adolescents. At this time we seek erotic expression, need a heroic quest, and particularly need the invitation of wise elders to join them in some heroic endeavor. Most preindustrial cultures understood and honored these needs—not through rules and prohibitions, but through codes of honor; not through exclusion, but through invitation. "Please come join us in this endeavor," wise elders would have said to the young people of the village. "The community needs your vitality so that we can have enough to eat (or build a school, protect the village, create Stonehenge)."

Modern society is bereft of rituals of invitation to Mars, so strong in young people and in those who have identified with this god by serving in the military. The predominant message we give to young people and veterans today is "Get lost, we don't need you"—a counterinvitation to exile, exclusion, and, by default, crime, homelessness, malls, and video games. But in fact we do need them; we need everybody. There is much heroic work to be done: bridges to be rebuilt, forests to be replanted, cities to be revitalized, children to be cared for.

Instead, conventional life is so devoid of the heroic, leaving many grown-ups with so little enthusiasm for what they do, that they can't, with a straight face, invite their children to join their life. ("Come, join us in the office! Wear a suit and tie! Shuffle paper! The bottom line is the god we serve! Yay!")

Years ago I worked with delinquents as part of a team comprising an art therapist, a dancer, a drummer, and a storyteller. I was smuggled into this state-sponsored program as "the symbolist." My job was to say, "Okay, you guys are bad. But there's an honorable way of being bad, called the Path of the Warrior." At first my teammates and I thought that this was an idealistic but futile exercise. But the kids proved us wrong.

After initial, appropriate cynicism on their part, they responded with hunger, enthusiasm, and creativity. They had been mythologically starved, yet soon proved themselves mythologically gifted. They found their power animals and spiritual allies through guided reverie. They concocted their own heroic tales, painted them on shields, then danced their dreams. One kid, the baddest of the bad, said that his power animal, a serpent, lived one hundred miles beneath the surface of the Earth. This was an eerily apt image for someone so wary. "One day the snake saw an eagle soaring high above," he told us, "and knew that they had once been one thing and that they had to get back together for the sake of all creation." We were all blown away—this kid had not been reading Jung, and yet the eagle-serpent archetype, a key feature in the mythologies of many cultures, was alive and well in his inner-city self.

We taught these kids how to make prayer sticks: first find a stick and two feathers, then bind the feathers to the top of the stick with colored yarn. While winding the yarn around the stick, imbue the stick with prayers. Always start off with green for grandmother growth, then use red for the energy of Mars, yellow for the communication skills of Mercury, black or indigo for Saturn's self-possession, purple for Jupiter's opportunities, iridescent streamers

for Neptunian vision, mad bits of whimsy—tinsel, shells, beads for Uranian sudden change and insight, blue-green for Plutonian transformation, and so on.

The kids made fabulous art pieces of their prayer sticks. We then took them to the woods, where the kids planted their sticks in the ground. The feathers gave their prayers wings. Sometimes their prayers were simple—they wanted to get on better with their mothers or pass a test. When their prayers were realized, they understood that they had power to determine the outcome of their lives that had nothing to do with money or economics. This power came from their own heroic spirits wedded to the invisible realm of spiritual allies.

MARS AS HEROIC PROTECTOR

Mars is the heroic, questing impulse to protect self and others. Out of this desire to protect grew the ancient warrior cult, which was so widespread that it is impossible to list all of its manifestations. At the very least, it included Celtic, Greek, Slavic, Roman, Teutonic, and Nordic people, as well as most of the populations of India, Persia, and China. They all worshiped Mars as their predominant deity between 1800 B.C. and A.D. 1000.

The Amazons worshiped Mars as well as Artemis, his female counterpart. Recently, skeletons of women who were bowlegged from riding horseback were discovered in Kazakhstan. Each was buried with an iron dagger on her right side, a quiver with forty arrows tipped with bronze on the left, as well as swords and bronze talismans. (Iron and bronze are sacred to Mars.) Evidence of their non-violent deaths indicates that these women were trained and armed not necessarily for the sake of battle, but to protect their herds and grazing lands. Evolved Mars is a protector more than an aggressor.

What are we willing to fight for, to preserve and protect? When Mars protects the community, it is positive, but when Mars serves the ego, it is destructive.

The positive warrior cult of the Celts was embodied in the hero-king who only made war in the service of protecting the community. The exemplar of this philosophy is King Arthur. The mission of the fellowship of his Round Table was nothing less than the salvation of the world through the diminution of violence.

There is a rumor that King Arthur did not die, but went to the Vale of Avalon, the domain of the feminine. There he rests, waiting to be summoned by us, hence his title "Once and Future King." Perhaps he will bring with him the ancient Mars to dance with the reemerging Venus, for in the ancient world, Aries-Mars was a defender of women. When we throw out the dominator scripts and give up our desire to be controlled by or to control others, wild playfulness emerges—a kind of Mars, puppy quality.

True Mars energy is nonviolent strength. It is compassion delivered on the arrow of craft, with tyranny as its target. Mars vanquishes not through destruction but through transformation, bringing its transformed opponent back to life. A young hero in the movie *The Never-Ending Story* is tricked by an evil empress into using all but the last one of his magic wishes. He says to the evil empress, who intends to destroy the whole world, "I wish for you to have a heart!" This delivers both the empress and the world from her small, evil desires. We honor our Mars so that we, too, may have the wisdom to wish that our enemies have a heart.

In response to displays of insensitivity to something that deserves protection—a child, a psychotic person, an animal, a tree, a beautiful old building—Mars rises up and roars like a force of nature, even in very mild people. In the language of the gods, this is a healthy response—the Mars part of us is not meant to be entirely polite.

Every unworked aspect of our nature invites the shadow warrior—the person who can really get one's goat, the perfect antagonist. Shadow warriors always want to seduce us into fighting over what they want, thereby distracting us from the true focus of our

rage, not to mention sapping us of energy needed to pursue other goals and desires. Mars says, "Do not surrender the terms of combat to others."

ACT YOUR RAGE

Most of us tend to express anger inappropriately because we were brought up in a culture that is not on friendly terms with this god. Rather than saying "Act your age," Mars says "Act your rage." Freedom lies not in suppressing fierce emotions, but in guiding their acceleration. If you are irritable, make it bigger—get angry. If you are angry, get enraged. If you are enraged, get outraged.

We cook rage into outrage not to intimidate but to inspire. Outrage is inclusive: "Aren't we all outraged at this?" It can unify us and contribute positive focus to the community. We say to angry Mars, "It would be unwarranted for you to explode at the rude bank teller. Find the real target of your rage." (Bertolt Brecht, in *The Threepenny Opera*, has one of his characters ask, "What is the robbing of a bank compared to the founding of a bank?")

If our outrage is directed at an entire system, we can tap the Neptune-Uranus energy currently available to us and consciously create a new myth. Ursula K. LeGuin, in a *New York Times* book review of Marina Warner's *Six Myths of Our Time*, said that we must work to eliminate the primitive warrior myths that dominate television, games, and much of popular fiction. "Slaying monsters, controlling women, still offers a model for the emerging hero's character. This feeds the warrior definition of him as a man. Fantasies, today, offer a quick compensatory power, but they pass on no survival skills, either for working or family life." She invites us instead to speak of the tales "about poor boys and little foxes, who weaponless, through intelligence and high spirits, outwit the monsters and bullies." Such narratives would "offer the imagination an alternative, a world where the determinist ethic of 'might

makes right' gives way to a vision of variety, subtlety, possibility and change." True survival skills would reflect ancient Mars' foxy, crafty nobility.

THE LOVE AFFAIR BETWEEN MARS AND VENUS

The key to acting our rage in a positive way is always through Venus, through art. In all mythologies, Mars and Venus have a secret love affair. The universe is a Mars-Venus dance. In the tarot deck, the Emperor is Aries. He is shown presiding over a landscape that is barren without Venus. If he remains alone, he holds to his self-destructive course.

Chango, the Santería Mars warrior-king, gets away with all kinds of shenanigans; but never with the Venusian Oshun, over whom he cannot presume to have rights. Whenever he is in the grip of pompous bravado, she enters the room. He cannot help but bow to her, and his crown tumbles off his head. Chango/Mars and Oshun/Venus remind us that there is a play and counterforce to every energy.

In a wonderfully complex novel, *The Marriages Between Zones Three, Four, and Five*, Doris Lessing delineates the necessity of the Venus and Mars relationship. The Empress of Zone Three is very Venusian. In her realm, everything is lovely and harmonious—vegetarian, precious, and tasteful—with New Age music wafting everywhere. She receives word from the guardians of the universe that she must descend to Zone Four and marry the Klingon-like, meat-eating, crude, vulgar Emperor, who is unadulterated Mars. The encounter is profoundly and usefully disturbing to both the character and the reader because it is just like dating. The novel expresses the view that relationships are not necessarily for mere ego happiness. Actually their function is to contribute something necessary to the evolution of the universe. Good relationships are good for the world, and are therefore an arena in which antagonisms are worked out.

In Lessing's fable, the Mars zone had become too crude and primitive. Divorced from Venus, with no ideals and nothing to protect, Mars had simply degraded into belching and brawling. Similarly, the Venus zone had become effete and too cute, pretty, lacking the fierceness of beauty. Both realms had become undynamic. They had to meet in an appropriate dance of antagonism so that the universe could evolve.

On a trip to Cuba, I saw fantastically passionate congo dances in which the dancer takes her rage and the rage of the community and expresses it ritualistically, making the rage beautiful. This transforms her own frustration and that of the community into energy available for positive re-creation. Fire, fueled by passions, needs a container, so we need to give our Mars ritualistic expression. The relationship of Venus and Mars is crucial, giving birth to the art form of desire.

THE ART FORM OF DESIRE

The Qabalistic tradition, called the Path of Desire, teaches us to honor our desire as a blueprint of what we are meant to do, to be, and to have, as well as how we can fulfill our desires. The gods did not place desire in our hearts and in our psyches in order for those desires to be thwarted. Martian desire often needs to be cooked in Pluto's cauldron to distill its true nature. Then desire leads us to destiny. Mars insists we honor desire. Mars would say that pornography is a distorted expression of a perfectly pure desire for eros and exoticism. Let's cook it back and give it fresh expression. Whenever we confront anything negative in our personal lives or the larger social world, we ask, "What did this want to be before it became toxic due to being suppressed?"

The single most important question Mars wants us each to ask ourselves is "What do I want?" The answer is the energetic rudder that guides our life's course. All too many of us are rudderless, thus passive and vulnerable, for want of asking ourselves this question.

We can learn how to get what we want through visualization, through feeling our way into it, through following desire as a path of self-education. Innumerable disciplines teach us how. Simply concentrating on an image of a desirable reality for several minutes a day invokes its manifestation. Also, enveloping ourselves in the feeling of successful outcome magnetizes us to its realization.

This is actually not a path of selfishness, because as we get what we want, our desires become increasingly informed by the Venusian truth of the interrelatedness of all things. Rather than wish for the humiliation or demotion of a shadow opponent (say, a miserable boss), we wish them well so they may be whisked away to circumstances that make them so happy they no longer need to be tyrants. Once our desires mature, they encompass the well-being of the whole of creation, and become less and less selfish. (Attention, doubters: please call your Venus on the white courtesy phone.)

ANIMAL ALLIES

Mars instinct is like a wild pony to which we must sometimes give free rein. "Now the Gods, ascending, knew not the way to the heavenly world, but the horse knew it," says the Satapatha Brahmana.

In a marvelous Celtic tale, the hero-prince Conn-Eda is given a "shaggy little horse" who guides him on his heroic quests as long as he lets the reins fall loose on his pony's neck. The All-Knowledgeable Bird tells him, "Cast a ball of iron before you, which your horse will follow and he will also tell you everything else you need to know."

They follow the ball through innumerable harrowing adventures, overcoming giant serpents and leaping over flaming mountains. After each death-defying ordeal, Conn-Eda describes himself as still being "half-alive." The little horse encourages Conn-Eda by saying, "If you are alive *at all*, I feel assured that you are a young man destined to meet supernatural success and benisons."

Conn-Eda owes everything to his loyal, brave little horse, who

has not only carried him, but has been his wise guide and companion, as well. To ensure Conn-Eda's survival of the final harrowing trial, his wonderful horse ally says, "Now you must kill me and skin me and wear my hide into the fairy realm for protection. But shoo the carrion birds away from my carcass. And later, return and pour the magic salve All-Heal on my remains."

"I could never kill you," protests the prince.

"Well, then, son of the great western monarch, if you refuse to follow my advice on this occasion, I tell you that both you and I shall perish and shall never meet again," replies the horse. "But, if you act as I have instructed you, matters will assume a happier and more pleasing aspect than you can imagine."

So Conn-Eda kills his loyal pony. He has never felt greater pain than at the loss of his animal friend. Weeping, but following instructions, he shoos away the carrion birds, and pours the All-Heal on the corpse. The remains come to life, assuming the form of the handsomest and most noble young man. This young man, released from a terrible spell, is the heir to the fairy realm. We are told that "the two embraced in an ecstasy of delight."¹⁴

This tale contains many Mars motifs. The iron ball—a symbol of Mars, and therefore of desire—follows gravity and rolls to the center of all things, leading Conn-Eda and his horse to the fairy realm. Since everything revolves around the center of gravity, the fairy realm contains the secrets of planetary orbits, the ordered dance of the spheres. Thus, desire brings us into sync with the rhythm of the cosmos and makes us its heroic agents.

Conn-Eda survives and emerges victorious by accepting instinctive guidance at all times from the shaggy horse, the bird, and the iron ball. The successful hero heeds all advice—from animals and wise men, as well as women. Paracelsus concurs: "From time to time, you must consult old women, gypsies, magicians, wayfarers and all manner of peasant folk . . . for these have more knowledge about [wise conduct] than all the high colleges."

Just as the pony says to Conn-Eda, "If you are alive *at all*, I feel assured that you are a young man destined to meet supernatural success and benisons," the sweetness of our own instinctive Mars reassures us at the darkest moments of fatigue that if we are "alive at all," things will work out. Mars' enthusiasm for life has a heartening confidence that our minds often lack.

Until the moment when he must kill his loyal pony, this prince has never done anything cruel or unjust. He has been a paragon of virtue and is therefore, in the Martian ethos, not ready to rule his kingdom. Mars teaches that we are vulnerable in the outer world to anything we do not know in ourselves. Mars says that we can only truly fight evil in the outer world once we have transcended our own innocence.

But the pony does not really die—he is released from a spell. There is no death, but only transformation.

We have bestowed upon animals the role of our Mars, our necessary, wise animal instincts. They are guides who lead us through all kinds of difficulties. When they die, they are no longer there to comfort us in our hour of need. Perhaps this is why the deaths of our animal companions feel so infinitely sad in a way that those who have not formed any animal alliances miscomprehend as "sentimentality."

I had two wonderful cats who traveled with me for over eighteen years, encompassing many difficult transitions. They had witnessed it all, offering comfort and presence. When the Burmese cat died, his lifelong Siamese companion merely sniffed at the corpse with little interest and no apparent distress. A friend of mine said, "Ah, that's because she knows that death is an illusion." And yet later this cat did grieve, sitting on the grave of her companion and falling into a deep depression. She did not grieve over death, but over loss. I promised her, when she was in deep decline, that if she would stay with me for a few more years I would write this book. She rallied for several more years of joyful life, surrounded by surrogate kittens

who treated her like a revered granny, until she was more sure than I was that I could fulfill my promise. Here's to you, Miss Kitty.

We access the best aspects of our Mars through our alliance with our animal friends. In a pact of mutual evolution, they help us to reclaim our innate Mars enthusiasm and curiosity about the natural world. In turn, we give them our love. Naturalist Henry Beston said, "Gifted with extensions we have lost or never attained, living by voices we may never hear . . . animals are not underlings, they are other nations, caught with ourselves in the net of life and time."

ENERGETIC RECIPROCITY

Just as Conn-Eda needed guidance from his magical horse, in turn the horse required assistance that only Conn-Eda could provide. Both characters had a daunting destiny that could only be fulfilled with help from the other. The gods need us as much as we need them; we work for and alongside each other.

A quirky story about the energetic reciprocity between the human and divine realms comes to us from Mesoamerica. The Hui-chol Indians tell a marvelously strange story about the journey of the souls of the deceased. The soul must trudge along to the garden of the dead, carrying with it a bag filled with the genitals of everyone it had ever made love with during life. Periodically tiring, the soul attempts to hide its burdensome bag on the side of the road, prompting a divine voice to chastise, "You wanted to enjoy yourself in that other life, now you must carry all of that on your back to arrive here."

Upon finally arriving at the dancing ground of the dead, the soul is welcomed by a cheering crowd of ancestors gathered around a central fig tree bursting with ripe fruit just out of reach. The soul must then reach into its bag of genitals and toss each at the tree, knocking down the fruit. A festive feast ensues.

"This inspired little story conceals a profound belief that human (for lack of a better term) 'energy' is needed by the divine world as much as divine energy is needed by the human."¹⁵

This story has intriguing twists and ambiguities. At first we might think it is telling us the soul is being scolded by Irish priests for past pleasures. But rather it is saying that after a hard journey, past pleasure creates a feast for the spirit world. Apparently, the dead depend upon the erotic life of the living. One implication is that all liaisons—all energetic, erotic encounters—are eternal. Although the extremely promiscuous may not make it to the garden for quite a while, there is no moral judgment implied by the story, but simply a practical question of how large a bag we can haul.

CAUTIONARY TALES: EATEN BY LACK OF SHADOW

Mars not only has an affinity for Aries and springtime, when we feistily emerge into light, but also for the autumnal introspection of the Scorpio season. Scorpionic Mars loves the dark. Without darkness for balance, Mars' expression is limited to hyper-yang Aries' adolescent belligerence.

A study done at the National Institute of Mental Health in the mid-1990s looked at why women's hormones fluctuate in response to seasonal change while men's do not. To examine this anomaly further, the researchers re-created preindustrial lighting conditions—not using *real* lava lamps, but by creating an environment in which subjects would only be exposed to as much light as the sun naturally gives. Under these conditions, the men began to respond hormonally to the shifting light mimicking seasonal change. The study concluded that men are completely thrown out of whack hormonally by artificial lighting. Women, by contrast, not only track with the Moon (the twenty-eight-days of the menstrual cycle), but also with the shifting light of the sun, even through artificial lighting.

Mars invites us to view science as metaphor. Artificial lighting eliminates the necessary darkness, literally and symbolically. François Fourier, an early nineteenth-century Utopian, said that in any ideal community we must acknowledge and accommodate the

passion for the dark, for intrigue. This is good spiritual advice, especially for men. If we have eliminated the dark, men can only express their Mars in an Aries manner, which by itself is unchecked adolescent militarism, patriarchy duking it out with itself. We must bring back the dark Mars-Scorpio who thrives on intrigue and introspection. In practical terms, the implication is that men should spend less time under fluorescent lights, in the shadowless, unnatural environment of work and competition, where power is erroneously considered to be self-generated.

The Scorpio Mars understands that power comes *through* one rather than *from* one. The Arthurian knight Balin refuses to return the fairy sword that holds power beyond his control. The sword gives him superhuman strength, but each heroic act he performs with it is coupled with disaster. Balin's willful belief that he is the source of the power inevitably leads him to kill "the man he most loves in the world." He destroys his brother, himself, and the world, and thus creates a wasteland. The hero who mistakes heroic powers for his own is doomed to wander alone in the void. This is the shadow of the cowboy and his ethos of rugged individualism and "progress," the unrelated male who creates a literal wasteland of gum wrappers, overgrazing, annihilated indigenous peoples, and heartbroken women in the wake of his linear drive westward. A healing antithesis is to be found in the South African word *muti*, which simultaneously means "power" and "medicine."

TRY THIS AT HOME: HEALING THE WASTELAND

An astro-mythological colleague, Wendy Ashley, tells the story of a man who was a bitter Vietnam vet. He could not find a way to heal his Mars. He went to men's groups, but quit, saying, "Nah, they're just circle jerks." Finally he decided to return to Vietnam with other vets to restore the wasteland by rebuilding the temples that they had bombed.

Neptune is called the higher octave, or more selfless expression, of Venus. Just as Mars' dance with Venus channels aggression into art, so Mars' dance with Neptune channels aggression into healing. Neptune reflects a reversed mythology, transforming Mars from destroyer to creator. In Chinese martial arts, the identical pressure points in the body can be used for killing or healing; intention determines the effect.

The Vietnam veteran's journey reminds us of Ulysses building a temple to the god who had been oppressing him. Here the hero rebuilds the temple he has destroyed. To heal our Mars, how would we rebuild something that we have destroyed?

Anger without action is merely "tantrum yoga." Mars says to initiate. Get fired up. Breathe fiery red color into your whole body and the sphere around you. Summon your fierce energy by saying, "I am willing to take on the next stage of my heroic quest, whatever it may be." Make something good happen. Go find the Grail.