

'Priestess Entrepreneur' gives spiritual business advice

There's nothing quite like starting out the new year with a new book.

Cindy Morris' "Priestess Entrepreneur" has been sitting on my bookshelf for months, the bright pink cover beckoning me to pick it up.

Pink is an appropriate color for the Boulder author's 243-page rather mystical take on business ownership. It's pretty much the polar opposite of those business management tomes written by the big boys — Jim Collins (also of Boulder), the late Peter Drucker, Michael Porter and so on — who are all, well, boys.

Although Morris writes that everyone, both women and men, "holds within us the essence of Priestess energy," she clearly directs her book toward businesswomen.

The book is written in a charming chatty style and is mostly comprised of anecdotes about her own business and businesswomen she knows (using thinly veiled noms de guerre).

It's also liberally sprinkled with spiritual guidance like this: "The Priestess Entrepreneur blends the creative, vision-driven force of the entrepreneur with the powerful, intuitive essence of her connection to the Divine."

Morris weaves her tale of opening, managing, growing and eventually outgrowing and selling her business, the European Flower Shop (still open for business in North Boulder under the ownership of Christina Sutcliffe), in and out of

the other women's stories, sound small-business advice, a little bit of psychotherapy and a lot of aphorisms about the spiritual growth possible through business ownership.

My favorite chapter, and the one that clinched the for-women-onlyness of the book, is "Who Died and Made Me Mother?" about dealing with employees.

In it, Morris asserts that women who own businesses tend to act motherlike toward their employees and to work out issues of how they were raised through their employees. "... Much of how you run your business will be an unconscious reflection of how your family functioned and what role you played in the family system," she says.

Next to that quote I scribbled, "Do men think about work this way at all?" Would Collins et al go the family route in their discussions of competition, finance or management? I think not.

In fact, elsewhere in the chapter, Morris says women tend to be "codependent bosses," meaning they are over-involved in the lives of their employees. "It's a woman thing," she writes. Bingo!

Part of the issue, according to Morris, is how our mothers raised us. They were likely "self-denying over-givers, and since the work-

place tends to mimic the home environment, chances are you will act out similar behaviors in your workplace."

The way to get over it, Morris says, is to acknowledge that "our souls crave balance and peace," be aware of our patterns and empower ourselves to change. "By identifying and acknowledging these pat-

terns the Priestess Entrepreneur exposes this emotional wound to the healing light of consciousness."

I also enjoyed chapter nine on customer service, where, Morris discusses achieving nirvana (my phrase, not hers) through the challenge of dealing with customers. "... Every contact with a customer was an opportunity to work on my own spiritual growth. My personal goal was to uplift each customer, to have him leave the shop not only feeling better about his flower shop experience, but feeling better about himself ..."

Again, spiritual fulfillment through customers — sounds pretty girly to me.

When I talked with Morris after finishing her book (a fast, fun read, if a bit touchy-feely), she said didn't intend it to be gender specific. One of her early reviewers, a retired male obstetrician, "thought it was totally right on," she said.

After selling the flower shop six years ago, Morris went on to write, consult and practice astrology.

But her favorite thing is working with small-business women because, "They do business in a whole different way," she told me. "They run their businesses like their families, so they are emotionally involved."

It's this way because, unlike men, women don't have wives taking care of the situation at home. "Women integrate their lives in a different way. You can't compartmentalize. Unless you are wealthy enough to have a staff, you're going to have to balance everything."

Right now, besides working on book distribution (she's not yet at the break-even point after self-publishing), Morris is working on a couple of projects.

One is creating a deck of priestess cards. It will be a little bit like "Priestess Entrepreneur," but be more focused on living a more spiritual life, Morris said. "You wouldn't have to own a business to use them." The 36-card set will have quotes like "Only you know what is in your heart."

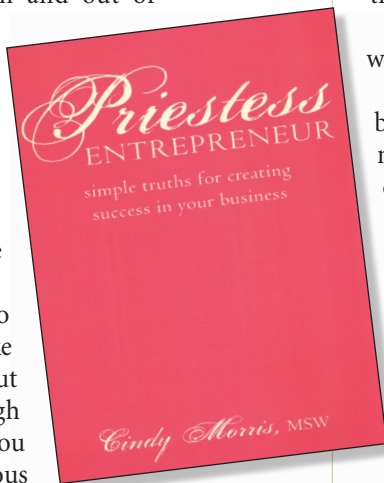
She's also writing a book about bringing ritual in daily life, "So you create more of an intentional life," she said.

"Priestess Entrepreneur" costs \$19.95 and is available at the Boulder Book Store and through Cindy Morris' Web site at www.priestessentrepreneur.com.



EQUAL TIME

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