

**Shrink Rap Radio #101, July 22, 2007, The Bitch, the Crone, and the Harlot  
David Van Nuys, Ph.D., aka “Dr. Dave” interviews Susan Schachterle**  
(Transcribed from [www.ShrinkRapRadio](http://www.ShrinkRapRadio) by Susan Argyelan)

**Excerpt:** *I began to feel invisible. I began to feel as if... You know, people used to look at me; people used to notice me; and suddenly, it seemed, they were looking through me, as if I wasn't there. And I found that people were less and less often asking what I thought about things and being interested in how I felt, and all of that. And it's a very bitter pill, and you know what I have found, David, is that “invisible” is a word that has been used by virtually every woman I have interviewed and/or worked with in this area in this country and also from other cultures, as I asked them to tell me specifically what it was like for them to be middle-aged.*

**Introduction:** That was the voice of my guest, Susan Schachterle. She's the author of the 2006 book, *The Bitch, the Crone, and the Harlot*, in which she presents a compelling new version of the possibilities for women at midlife. For both men and women, she believes that we have only scratched the surface of the power and possibility inherent in the human mind and heart. As the Director of the Ahimsa Institute, she has spent over two decades assisting individuals and organizations to find and implement their inherent power, wisdom, and joy. She's worked with a wide variety of organizations, including the government of Singapore, Ticino International Women's Club, and the Los Alamos National Laboratory. She says her work is based on her fierce and unwavering belief that just about everything is possible for just about everyone, once they focus they focus their energy in the most appropriate and powerful direction and align their internal images, goals, and self-talk. In her work, Susan uses an array of tools, including Thought Field Therapy (TFT) and neurolinguistic programming (NLP), to ensure that her clients can access their own natural excellence in any situation. Now, here's the interview.

**Dr. Dave:** Susan Schachterle, welcome to Shrink Rap Radio.

**Susan Schachterle:** Thank you so much for inviting me to be here.

**Dr. Dave:** Well, it's lovely to have you. And I have a copy of a book that you've recently written called *The Bitch, the Crone, and the Harlot*.

**Schachterle:** Yeah.

**Dr. Dave:** That's a fairly in-your-face title.

**Schachterle:** (laughs)

**Dr. Dave:** How did you come to use such loaded words as “bitch,” “crone,” and “harlot”?

**Schachterle:** Well, it's a great question, David. I chose those words because those are three words that have been used throughout history to denigrate women. But when I thought about the kinds of women who typically get labeled with any of those words, I realized that they each carry great gifts, and I talk about those gifts at length in the book. Each of those types carries gifts that are very important. Now, they may not be using those gifts well, and they may have a self-serving intention behind their behavior, but the gifts are there nonetheless. And I wanted in this book to be able to create archetypes based on the gifts contained in each of those types, rather than on the negative designation that they've had historically.

**Dr. Dave:** Okay, well, as we get further into our discussion, we'll take a look at both the negative associations and the gifts that you refer to. I'm curious, though – was there another title that you considered along the way?

**Schachterle:** No.

**Dr. Dave:** No? That was the one, huh?

**Schachterle:** That was it.

**Dr. Dave:** Okay. Now, the subtitle is Reclaiming the Magical Feminine in Midlife. So I guess that begs the question, what *is* the magical feminine that you refer to? And if it's being reclaimed, when and how did it get lost?

**Schachterle:** You know, that's an excellent question, David. The "magical feminine" referred to is the combination of a profound and extraordinary kind of power that really only becomes available to us at midlife, and is available in very specific ways to women. It refers also (inaudible) a combination of the power of wisdom that happens at a very profound level, and again, is only truly available to us at about the midpoint of life and beyond, and a kind of sensuality that is not just limited to sexuality but is a matter of learning to live with the senses so open that we become a great deal more aware at the midpoint of life. So that is the magical feminine. And in terms of, or in response to your question about how that gets lost...

**Dr. Dave:** Yeah.

**Schachterle:** ...why it needs to be reclaimed, it gets lost, I believe, as we move through the first half of life, living according to criteria that are largely external in nature. And in the process of doing that, we typically neglect the development and the refining of those three qualities I mentioned within ourselves. So at midlife, when those largely external criteria are pretty much irrelevant, that's when we must begin reclaiming those elements that are inherent in us and are our birthright.

**Dr. Dave:** So I take it then that you are working under the assumption that young women start out as a kind of magical child. In childhood, there's a magical innocence or spontaneity that's lost in the process of becoming an adult?

**Schachterle:** Absolutely. If you watch a baby or a toddler, one of the first things you'll notice is great exuberance, great curiosity.

**Dr. Dave:** Yes.

**Schachterle:** And unbounded joy.

**Dr. Dave:** Yup.

**Schachterle:** As we grow, as we move through life – especially in that first half of life when, as I've already said, the criteria by which we are evaluated by others are pretty much external – we lose sight of that curiosity and that exuberance and that joy. We get burdened by all those other things that relate to those external criteria, and we lose sight of those things.

**Dr. Dave:** Okay. Let me ask you if maybe there's a brief passage in your book that you could share with us, just so our listeners get a feel for the texture of the book.

**Schachterle:** Sure. I'd like to read to you just a couple of paragraphs from the section about the Crone.

**Dr. Dave:** Okay.

**Schachterle:** And you know, David, "crone" is a word that generally speaking, if you can even find this in the dictionary, is understood to mean "withered old woman." But as I researched the word and began writing this passage, I was quite surprised at what I found. Let me read you a couple of paragraphs.

*I recently researched the word "crone" and was surprised to learn that its original meaning was very different from its current definition. The most commonly accepted definition is "withered old woman," a definition based solely, it seems, on the physical. However, in the 14<sup>th</sup> century (the earliest application I could find) "crone" meant "cantankerous or mischievous wise woman." Such an interesting and disempowering journey we've taken, in the minds of those who create such definitions, from cantankerous and feisty to withered and old. Consider the impact of this shift in meaning: Who has more power, the woman who is feisty and mischievous or the one who is old and withered? And which one might be found more threatening?*

*There is an entire world left out of this "withered old woman" designation – a world that, at midlife, we must explore. In a number of ancient fairy tales, reference is made to the "wise old crone," the older woman whose wisdom, insight,*

*and healing power were sought by younger people who had not yet developed their own. In these stories, people in need went to those who had been alive long enough to find the magical Divine nature within, and generally those were older women. Young men were sought for their physical prowess, and young women for their ornamental quality and child-bearing ability; but when the need to understand, to intuit, and to heal arose, everyone headed to the wise old crone's place.*

**Dr. Dave:** Wonderful. That really gets us right into the heart of the book. Thank you for sharing that reading with us. Let's take a step back, and let me ask you, what was the inspiration for writing the book?

**Schachterle:** Well, several things inspired me, David, and one of them was that as I moved into midlife myself, I began to realize that people had started calling me "ma'am..."

**Dr. Dave:** Oh, boy. (laughs)

**Schachterle:** (laughs) ...and... the "m" word. "Ma'am" (inaudible). "Ma'am" was what you called my mother or my grandmother. I had always been "miss," or "Susan." But not "ma'am." And at first, I dismissed it. I figured I was just running into ultra-polite people who probably called all women "ma'am," but the more situations I was in where more and more people would look me up and down and then call me "ma'am," the more I had to realize that – acknowledge to myself - that at midlife, things do change. Whether we want them to or not, they will change. Another thing that moved me to write the book was that I've had a counseling practice for over 25 years, and in the course of that time, I have worked with hundreds of women who were either being moved toward midlife or were already in the throes of midlife. And I noticed that the highest percentage of these women – although they were educated and bright and articulate, and sometimes very accomplished – when they began thinking about themselves as middle-aged, they started to change. Their energy began to wane, they began to lose interest in adventure, they began to lose interest in their sexuality, they began to lose curiosity and joy, and they began to say things like, "Well, you know, I am in my fifties, and I just don't have the energy I used to have." Or, my favorite was, "Well, back in my day..." as if they had only had a day or a specific period of time during which life belongs to them. And they were (inaudible), and beyond that period of time, it was pretty much over, and they were intended to sort of fade away. And the interesting thing was that these remarkable women were starting to fade into the woodwork of their own lives...

**Dr. Dave:** Hmm...

**Schachterle:** ...at the point in time at which they knew more than they had ever known.

**Dr. Dave:** Mm-hmm...

**Schachterle:** They had accumulated more experience than anyone younger. They had met more challenges than anyone younger. They had more to offer than they had ever had. But because of the way they were thinking about themselves, instead of bringing their gifts to the world, they were beginning to sort of wrap it up and wind down and fade away. And the other thing that moved me, David, was that in my research I found that in this country alone, there are more than 40 million women between the ages of, let's say 40 and 65, depending on how you want to designate midlife. And my guess is, from my work with women and my own midlife experiences, that a high percentage of those millions of women are not actively bringing their considerable gifts to the world. That means a massive resource available to a planet that is desperate for transformation is not being tapped into effectively. I wanted to do whatever I could to help change that.

**Dr. Dave:** Yes, yes. So part of what I take from what you've said is that this book comes not only out of your own personal experience, but also draws upon your work with other women.

**Schachterle:** Oh, yes, and not only women in this country. I have looked at women from other cultures, I have interviewed many women from various countries, and I hear the same sorts of things...

**Dr. Dave:** Yes.

**Schachterle:** ...as they move into midlife.

**Dr. Dave:** Yeah. I can relate to what you're saying even as a man. And I know the pressures are worse for a woman in terms of age, but I do have to throw my hat in the ring and say that I have experienced some of what you're talking about, even as a male, although I think it is worse for women when it comes to age.

**Schachterle:** Well, I'll tell you, David, I don't know if it's worse; I know it's different. Men go through very similar changes at midlife. As a matter of fact, I talked with my publisher about the possibility of doing a sequel specifically for men in midlife...

**Dr. Dave:** Interesting.

**Schachterle:** Men do go through the same things, but they respond differently. And I've had several men contact me and say that they had read the book, and although they knew it was written specifically about women, that they had found many parallels in the book to their own midlife experiences, just as you have said. This is universal human stuff.

**Dr. Dave:** Yes.

**Schachterle:** Men and women do it differently, but it's human stuff.

**Dr. Dave:** Right. Right. You know, although it's about a different stage of life, your "ma'am" story brought back to mind something that happened to me when I was – I think I was about 16 or 17 years old, and I was at an ice-skating rink. And a little kid skated up to me and said, "Sir, would you help me tie my shoe?" (laughs) You know, and I was a teenager!

**Schachterle:** (laughs)

**Dr. Dave:** And it was the first time anybody had addressed me as "sir!"

**Schachterle:** And how did that feel when that happened?

**Dr. Dave:** Well, it felt strange, you know? It really did.

**Schachterle:** Yeah.

**Dr. Dave:** Because I didn't feel like a "sir" yet.

**Schachterle:** Yep, yep...

**Dr. Dave:** And so it was the... That kind of marked the transition from one stage of life to another.

**Schachterle:** Absolutely.

**Dr. Dave:** Yeah. Sort of like you're talking about. Now, you've sort of hinted that a good measure of the book came out of your own midlife crisis, of somebody addressing you as "ma'am." I think in your book, you go a little bit more into it. Is there more that you can share about what you went through at midlife? What was the crisis and the transition for you? I like to get personal; I hope you don't mind.

**Schachterle:** Oh, not a bit. No, (inaudible). Well, I think one of the things that happened for me – as I talk about in the book, there was a relationship break-up that was so hugely impactful that it really required that I look at myself in deeper and more honest ways than I ever had before. And that was, perhaps, an opening into some of the things that I was going to have to work with when it came to my own midlife experience. I think that one of the things, also, that has been most, most telling for me when it came to dealing with what midlife means is something that I mention a lot, I talk about a lot in the book. And that's the fact that I began to feel invisible. I began to feel...

**Dr. Dave:** Mm-hmm...

**Schachterle:** ...as if... You know, people used to look at me; people used to notice me; and suddenly, it seemed, they were looking *through* me, as if I wasn't there.

**Dr. Dave:** Yes.

**Schachterle:** And I found that people were less and less often asking what I thought about things and being interested in how I felt, and all of that...

**Dr. Dave:** That's a bitter pill to swallow, isn't it?

**Schachterle:** It's a very bitter pill, and you know what I have found, David, is that "invisible" is a word that has been used by virtually every woman I have interviewed and/or worked with in this area in this country and also from other cultures. As I asked them to tell me specifically what it was like for them to be middle-aged, all but two of the women I have interviewed – and I mean, I'm talking about hundreds of women here – have used that word. And they would go on to say as I just said – you know, people used to look at me and now they don't, they don't care what I think, I'm no longer considered hip or cool, I'm not current. It's as if I have outlived my usefulness.

**Dr. Dave:** Hmm, hmm...

**Schachterle:** Now, what a desperately sad way to feel! But sad not just for the women feeling it, but also for everyone else, because when any segment of the population is not bringing what it's intended to bring to life, then we all are affected by that. And as I worked with these women, and then as I dealt with my own story of invisibility, I began to realize that this whole issue of being invisible happens when we try to live the second half of life the same way we lived the first. So, as I said earlier, the criteria that are applied to us in the first half of life are largely external. They have to do with physical appearance and sexuality and childbearing ability, and how much money you make, and where you work, and all those sorts of things. And when we reach midlife, a whole lot of that has shifted. And those criteria are no longer relevant, and if we continue to try to live our lives according to them, we're going to fall on our faces, and we're going to feel invisible because we're not fitting the criteria that the rest of society is applying to us. Does that make sense?

**Dr. Dave:** Yes, it does. And as you were describing it, Susan, I had the image of an egg. And it occurred to me that in the relationship loss that you suffered and the insult of invisibility, it is like the egg suffers a shock that cracks it, and then there's something that can emerge. And so often there are things that happen to us in our lives that at the time, seem to be tragedies – something that we would never wish for ourselves – and yet it can be the beginning of an opening for new life and for transformation.

**Schachterle:** And that's a wonderful way to express that, David. And you know, whether those things are opening for something extraordinary to emerge, or whether

they are opening for desperation has to do pretty exclusively with how we choose to understand to interpret, and therefore respond to, whatever it is that's happened.

**Dr. Dave:** Exactly. We're at a critical choice-point.

**Schachterle:** I'm sorry; go ahead.

**Dr. Dave:** I was just saying, exactly, that we're at a critical choice-point at that juncture, and it's really up to us.

**Schachterle:** That's exactly right, and at a certain point in my own experience, I had to decide, how am I going to show up in the world?

**Dr. Dave:** Mm-hmm...

**Schachterle:** In this midpoint and at the second half of my life? I mean, am I willing to be one of those middle-aged or older women who beings to look like she's exhausted and the life's just been sucked out of her, and she's resentful, and she's got no sense of purpose or direction, and figures that she pretty much no longer matters. Am I willing to show up that way for the entire second half of my life? Or, am I going to do it differently? And I was faced with that choice. I had to really decide. I could do that, or I could continue to try to live the way I had lived when I was 20 and try to continue to live up to those external criteria...and pretend I was still this perky young thing. Or, I could acknowledge who I truly was becoming and step so deeply into that experience that the power and the wisdom and the sensuality and the awareness it brings could become a way of being for me.

**Dr. Dave:** Very nicely said. Now, in the book you refer to the Bitch, the Crone, and the Harlot as archetypes. What do you mean to suggest by referring to them as archetypes?

**Schachterle:** Well, I'm referring to them, David, as – we could call them symbols. We can also call them models; that the Bitch, for instance, representing power – internal power, not the power over others. And possibility is a role model, an example for women for how that power and that possibility can be lived and applied – implemented – at the midpoint of life and beyond. The Crone, then, is symbolic of, or a role model for, the wisdom and insight that happen at a profound level in a woman when she reaches that midpoint of life. And, the Harlot is a demonstration of what is possible for a woman who chooses to learn to live with her senses so open that she is constantly taking in more information than most other people. And, she so surrounded with and filled by sources of grace and joy that she is available to a kind of, hmm... I'm not going to say "ecstasy" because I think I don't like the word, but joy. She is available to a level and degree of joy that not most people don't ever touch on. These archetypes are examples for us; they are demonstrations for what is possible.

**Dr. Dave:** Okay. Well, you actually devote a full chapter to each of these female archetypes. So, let me ask you to step through them and give us a fuller explanation of each of the three, starting with the Bitch.

**Schachterle:** Okay.

**Dr. Dave:** For example, you suggested that there's a negative side and there are gifts associated with each. So, take us through the Bitch.

**Schachterle:** Sure. The negative side of the Bitch as sort of the street-level, garden-variety Bitch, is somebody we've probably all known. These are women who are often stepping on people's toes, hurting feelings, doing damage, and often have a very self-serving intention behind what they do. But when we look at them, we cannot deny that they are women who know how to make things happen.

**Dr. Dave:** Mm-hmm...

**Schachterle:** They know how to shake things up, how to create change. But, if they're doing it with a poor intention, then they can (?) leave damage and destruction in their wake. The archetypal Bitch – with a capital “B” – is the woman who, at midlife, has established her own extraordinary personal power, to the point at which she is focused on taking action and making things happen that are for the greater good – no longer doing things that are simply self-serving. The Crone, as I read about –

**Dr. Dave:** Wait. Before you go into the Crone, so it seems to me like part of the distinction, then, between the two ends of the continuum of the Bitch – the negative end vs. the positive end – is that your positive archetypal “big B” Bitch is wielding power consciously, whereas the small “b” street bitch is doing it unconsciously.

**Schachterle:** More consciously but with a very self-serving intention.

**Dr. Dave:** Okay.

**Schachterle:** Yes, intention is huge with each of these archetypes.

**Dr. Dave:** Intention...go ahead.

**Schachterle:** We all bring with us into life the seeds of this power, this wisdom, and this sensual awareness, but we often don't learn to use them with intention. And so, they are often random and arbitrary in our lives. Each of these archetypes has learned to live with deep intention. A good example of the archetypal Bitch would be Mother Teresa.

**Dr. Dave:** How so?

**Schachterle:** A little bitty woman, obviously not using her sexuality or her fashion sense to get what she wants...

**Dr. Dave:** Mm-hmm...(laughs) Right!

**Schachterle:** ...was able to walk into anyone's office and ask for money or whatever it was that she needed for her cause. Her power was such – her internal power – was such, and her focus on what she wanted to create for the greater good was such that, as I understand it, no one ever said “no” to Mother Teresa.

**Dr. Dave:** Hmm. Wow.

**Schachterle:** And she got what she needed wherever she went. And, she was just an extraordinary example of this archetypal Bitch energy – a power that is undeniable and that is focused on the greater good.

**Dr. Dave:** That's a great example. Okay, you were going to move into the Crone and I cut you off. So go ahead now.

**Schachterle:** That's fine. I read about the Crone a bit and typically now, the word isn't used a lot. But when it is, it generally has a very negative connotation. When I ask people what comes to mind when they hear the word “crone,” they say, “witch,” they say, “old hag,” they say, “ugly, withered, evil, scary.” But as I read about it a few minutes ago, that's not all that the word meant originally. The Crone – the archetypal Crone – is the woman who, at the midpoint of her life, has accumulated and – at the same time – uncovered in herself a depth of wisdom that goes far beyond intelligence or knowledge or education, or any of those things. This is a wisdom that originates from a much deeper place. This is the woman who automatically looks beyond the surface of whatever's going on. This is a woman who, rather than reacting to whatever is happening in any situation – and often reacting defensively or with hurt feelings, or taking things personally, or whatever – she has learned to quickly go beneath the surface manifestation and ask herself, “What else might this mean? What else could be happening that's leading to this situation or this behavior?”

**Dr. Dave:** Mm-hmm...

**Schachterle:** She quickly, in her wisdom, looks at any situation from a variety of angles, so that her perspective on what's happening is expansive and very complete. And from that perspective, she is able to respond in any situation in a very different way than she would have if she had simply reacted emotionally to whatever was happening. This woman sees beyond the surface, hears between the lines – all of that, and her wisdom is typically a quiet and very deep wisdom and sight.

**Dr. Dave:** I get, once again here, I'm hearing a quality of awareness that that's key in both the Bitch, as we talked about it, and the Crone. And you're probably aware that the word "crone" is partly derived, or related etymologically to "crown." So, what you're describing, in a way, is the "crown" of wisdom or the "crone" or "crown" of wisdom.

**Schachterle:** Absolutely. Yes, yeah, that's a lovely way to understand that. Thank you.

**Dr. Dave:** Yes, so let's move on to your third archetype.

**Schachterle:** So, the third archetype is the Harlot, and the word "harlot" is not a word that is commonly used anymore, but for a very long time, was. And, "harlot" is an ancient word for our current word, "whore," or "slut." And the Harlot, the harlots were generally – or often, anyway – courtesans in kingdoms and tribes where their job was to provide a variety of kinds of comfort, typically to men in positions of power and authority. And, they typically were known for their sexual, the sexual work they did and their sexual prowess. But, these women were carefully, carefully trained in the art of comfort, as I said. And, in order to be able to be providers of many kinds of comfort, they had to also learn through their training how to live with their senses open. Because information around them was so important, in terms of their being able to decide what actions to take, how to respond to what was happening and that sort of thing, they needed to be aware in a deeper way than other people were aware. The archetypal Harlot is the one who has learned the value of trusting her senses and opening them wide, so that whatever situation she's in, she's noticing the subtlest of things – all of which tell her something more about the current situation. You know, it's through our senses that we all process information, that we learn. Without awareness through the senses, we don't know (inaudible). But, it's so easy for most of us with the rigors of life and all the demands on us to allow our senses to be muted, and to forget to notice those subtle things that are so informative and that are also sources of passion and curiosity and excitement and comfort. So the archetypal Harlot is very aware through her senses of what's going on around her, and what that means is, she's constantly well-informed, she understands more about most situations than other people because of her awareness, and that means she can make better choices and take more effective action. It also means, as I mentioned earlier, this is a woman who is very available to joy because she has not lost her exuberance and her curiosity.

**Dr. Dave:** Mm-hmm...one of the images that comes to mind for me as you talk about this sort of "courtesan" archetype is the medieval Japanese geisha...

**Schachterle:** Absolutely.

**Dr. Dave:** ...and remembering the novel by James Clavell, Shogun, in which that tradition is very powerfully portrayed. How are women's power, wisdom and sensuality different from that of men?

**Schachterle:** Well, it's an interesting point and one that I think is so important for all of us, and certainly for women at midlife to understand. Men tend – and I'm sure there are exceptions to this – but men tend to be wired to think in terms of action and information. Women tend to be wired for connection and relationship. And so, when women are stepping into their power and their wisdom and their sensual awareness, they will tend to experience those things and to implement them – to integrate them into their everyday experience in terms of how those three elements, power, wisdom, and sensual awareness, impact their relationships and their connections with other people. And so, the use of those three elements in their lives will show up most effectively in terms of how they relate to others, how they create and sustain and cultivate connections that are meaningful...

**Dr. Dave:** Well, that's certainly –

**Schachterle:** ...with how they... I'm sorry?

**Dr. Dave:** I was just going to say that certainly rings true to me, what you're saying, and I'm not all offended by the way that you characterize men as being largely oriented towards action and – now what was the other one? Action and information.

**Schachterle:** Information.

**Dr. Dave:** And women being more oriented towards connection, really fits with my experience.

**Schachterle:** Well, and I think it's an absolutely brilliant system. I mean, if we have one gender very focused on gathering information, and on the basis of that information, taking action, and the other gender focused primarily on connecting and creating relationship, we've pretty much covered all our bases. That's as long as we learn from each other...

**Dr. Dave:** Mm-hmm...

**Schachterle:** ...and we all understand the value of the gifts the other brings.

**Dr. Dave:** Right. Right. Now, one of the things you discuss is that women's relation to their own sexuality changes somewhere around midlife and that sex may be less important, or have a different meaning. What can you tell us about that?

**Schachterle:** A different meaning.

**Dr. Dave:** Okay.

**Schachterle:** Absolutely. Sex as such can become even more important at midlife.

**Dr. Dave:** Mm-hmm...

**Schachterle:** But, it becomes more important because it becomes a vehicle for a different kind of expression. With hormonal changes that take place at midlife, one of the things that women often notice and are distressed about, frequently, is what they see as a loss of libido. They don't find themselves any longer as lusty as they were and as interested in sex that goes on all night and all of that, as they might've been when they were younger. But, when women have stepped into these three archetypes I'm talking about, what they can begin to find is the joy they take in sexual encounters, because at midlife the tendency is to only have sexual encounters that have a meaning beyond that. Younger in life, there may be brief and much less meaningful encounters. But what women can find as they step into these archetypal energies within themselves is that they now can bring a level of power, a level of insight, a level of sensuality to their relationships that they simply didn't have access to when they were younger. And so, sex, then, becomes this tremendous vehicle for expressing connection, for expressing longing, for expressing true intimacy – the intimacy that comes from opening one's own soul to another. And that is stuff that happens only as we get, as we become more seasoned in life and have a much deeper perspective. So, it can be a source of a whole new kind of joy and excitement, and a deeper level of passion not based strictly on hormones, but based more expansively and comprehensively on who we are and on our great desire to connect.

**Dr. Dave:** Sounds good to me – sign me up. (laughs)

**Schachterle:** (laughs)

**Dr. Dave:** It seems like indigenous cultures have traditionally given more of a role to elders, so that the elders didn't move into this place of invisibility. And, in your book, you refer to a Hopi prophecy that states, "When the grandmothers speak, the earth will be healed." What's your understanding of that?

**Schachterle:** I'm so glad you've brought that one up, David. That, I think, is such a lovely, lovely prophecy and so powerful. This prophecy speaks to me on many levels, and it tells me three very important things. It's such a simple prophecy: "When the grandmothers speak, the earth will be healed." Very direct, very straightforward. And, what it tells me – the three things it tells me that I think are so important – are first, that it's feminine energy that is healing energy. That does not mean that men can't be healers. We all carry both feminine and masculine energy. I think what it means is that it's when those who do the work to access that healing feminine energy within and learn to bring it into the world, when they do that work, they are the ones who can become healers. This prophecy also tells me that it's older feminine energy that is healing energy. You'll notice that the prophecy doesn't say, "When the teenage girls speak, the earth will be healed." It specifically says, "When the grandmothers speak..." When those who have been around long enough to fall on their faces over and over and have to get up and keep

going; those who have suffered loss and pain and who have also experienced love and passion and joy and hope; those who have established an awareness of the sacred energy of the earth and of the energy and power of the Divine realm – when *those* people, who finally are at a point at which they have this great wisdom and power – when they speak, then healing becomes possible. And finally, what this prophecy tells me is that it's when those who carry that power – the grandmothers – unite, when they come together, recognize all these elements in themselves, recognize it in each other, and unite behind causes and concerns that they feel very concerned about – they share a mutual concern and a mutual desire to heal and to transform – when they come together in that energy, then healing becomes inevitable. I mean, the prophecy says that when the grandmothers speak, the earth *will* be healed. It doesn't say *might* be.

**Dr. Dave:** Mm-hmm...

**Schachterle:** It doesn't say *could* be; it says *will* be. So the issue is, women finding these things within themselves, recognizing each other, coming together to merge those energies, and commit together to whatever it is they feel needs to be transformed on the planet, and then moving across the planet as a kind of entity that is simply undeniable and undismissible, that's when this planet can heal.

**Dr. Dave:** Okay. Beautiful. This certainly is a timely message given that the baby boomers are moving, you know, are becoming this large demographic swell.

**Schachterle:** Yes.

**Dr. Dave:** And, this really speaks to baby boomers, I think. And indeed, it taps into the kind of energy that other people are noticing now. This generation is not content to just kind of roll over and die.

**Schachterle:** Oh, exactly! And thank God for that!

**Dr. Dave:** Yes. (laughs)

**Schachterle:** You know, when I think about, as I mentioned earlier, more than 40 million of women in this age group just in this country – when I imagine those 40 million women coming together, linking arms and moving across the planet as a sort of a tidal wave of power, wisdom, and the sensual awareness – I mean, it's mind-blowing to me what is possible, what can be done on the planet when that happens. And, just as a quick, a quick example of just a small and personal way that this can begin, a friend of mine gave a copy of my book to the mother of a friend of his. She's in her 70s, I believe. She read the book – apparently was a very meek and mild woman – read the book and said to the young gentleman who had given her a copy of it, "You know, I read the book and decided I've never found the Bitch in me, and it's time."

**Dr. Dave:** Hmm.

**Schachterle:** “And so, when my husband and I went to a restaurant last night, there were people at the table next to us who were being very loud and boisterous and bumping into us, and all sorts of things, being very disrespectful. And normally, I would’ve just sat there and been resentful, but I wouldn’t have done anything. But I remembered the Bitch. And, I stood up, and I went over to the table and told them we were trying to have a pleasant dinner and would they please rein it in and be more respectful of the people around them?” And she said they *did*...

**Dr. Dave:** Wow.

**Schachterle:** ...and she went back to the table and just felt extraordinary because perhaps, for one of the first times in her life she had found that place of power to speak up for herself, to respect herself and her situation, and to call that respect out of other people. She was absolutely elated. Now, imagine 40 million people – women – in this country, finding those archetypes within themselves and waking up on all of those levels and beginning to bring those things across the planet. It’s astonishing.

**Dr. Dave:** I think that’s a great place for us to wrap it up with that statement, so Susan Schachterle, thanks so much for being my guest today on Shrink Rap Radio.

**Schachterle:** David, thank you so much for inviting me. I enjoyed this.