



DK HILLARD

Author • Artist • Founder
of Soul Woven

Media & Conversation
Portfolio

*Conversations about identity, creativity,
embodiment, spirit,
and belonging more fully to our own lives.*

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Bio



Making has always been the primary way I've found my way through life. I painted, wrote, worked with fabric, and followed images that appeared before I knew what they meant. Often the work seemed to know where I was going before I did. A painting made sense years after I finished it. A poem pointed toward a place in my life I hadn't reached yet. By the time I recognized what it was showing me, I was already standing there.

That became especially important through the years when so much of my energy went into surviving. Illness changed my body. Relationships ended. People and animals I loved were lost. Parts of my life disappeared, and with them went identities I had believed were mine.

Through all of it, I kept making.

My spiritual life grew alongside it. Dreams, intuitive experiences, and later sacred ceremony often arrived before I knew what they were preparing me for. Over time, I saw that the art, the writing, the spiritual experiences, and my life itself were not separate paths. Each was bringing me closer to the same question:

Who am I beneath everything I learned to be in order to survive, belong, and be understood?

That question reaches all the way back to childhood. I was highly sensitive from the beginning, aware of things beneath the surface that weren't always spoken or acknowledged. In a family where much of the harm was hidden, I learned early to doubt those perceptions and to look to other people to tell me who I was. I became invisible to myself in the process, seeing myself largely through others' versions of me.

For years, I kept looking outside myself for the answer to who I was. Other people's perceptions carried more weight than my own knowing, and I shaped myself around the need to survive, belong, and be understood. Eventually, those identities became too tight to hold me. The more aware I became, the harder it was to remain in a life that depended on them. Releasing them has been a long and often painful process, unfolding through illness, loss, relationship, creative work, and ceremony.

Eventually, the life I had lived and the work I had made began to reveal themselves as part of the same journey. That journey became the ground for my books and, over time, for the larger body of work I now call *Soul Woven*.

Today *Soul Woven* brings together my writing, visual art, textiles, Soul Portraits, and the conversations that grow from them. What began as my own search has increasingly become a way of meeting others in theirs, especially at the places where they are questioning who they have been, what they have been carrying, and how much of their life has been shaped by someone else's version of them.



The Journey



Looking back, I can see my journey in three movements: remembering, embodying, and living.

Remembering

Remembering Myself: A Journey Through the Threads of Time was the first time I gathered the fragments of my life into one place. Art, poetry, memory, spiritual experience, old wounds, and moments of knowing that seemed unrelated began to reveal how closely they belonged together. The book allowed me to see the woman those pieces had been showing me for years, long before I was ready to fully claim her.

Embodying

Recognition changed me, but it didn't finish the work.

The Fire and the Thread: A Living Chronicle of Descent, Initiation, and Embodiment was written from inside the years that followed. Illness, grief, ceremony, loss, and the unraveling of identities I had relied on for decades, brought my body into the center of the journey. The story I knew intellectually was still living in muscle, nervous system, exhaustion, desire, grief, and memory. I had to meet my own life there.

The book follows that descent as it happened. There was no clean arrival and no distance from which to explain it. By the end, the question had become much simpler and much more demanding: *How do I live as who I am?*

Living

That is the chapter I am in now.

For the first time, the work is less about finding myself and more about creating a life that reflects who I am. That reaches into everything—how I care for my body, how I create, the work I choose, the relationships I remain in, the space I take up, aging, beauty, desire, rest, visibility, and the ordinary decisions that quietly reveal whether a life truly belongs to you.

I'm not standing outside this chapter explaining it after the fact. I'm living it.

And that may be the most interesting part of the journey yet.

The Work

Soul Woven

Soul Woven is the name I gave to the thread running through everything I create. The form changes—books, paintings, textiles, Soul Portraits, writing, conversation—but each begins in the same place: a desire to give form to parts of our experience that can be difficult to see, name, or trust.

The books hold the story. *Remembering Myself* gathers the pieces of a life that were leading me back to myself. *The Fire and the Thread* follows the descent that brought that remembering into the body. Together, they trace the movement from remembering, through embodiment, toward shaping a life around who I am.

The visual work has been at the heart of my creative life for decades. Painting was one of the first ways I learned to listen to myself, long before I had language for much of my experiences. I have always worked intuitively, following color, image, gesture, and form as the painting unfolds. Often I only see what a painting was showing me years later, when I find myself living it. The work has changed as I have changed, but painting remains one of the deepest ways I know to enter what cannot always be reached through words.



Soul Portraits emerge intuitively through color, form, texture, and image, revealing something of the soul essence of the person in front of me. They often give visible form to qualities a person has sensed in themselves for years but has not yet fully seen. For me, they are a way of looking beyond the familiar identities we carry and meeting something more essential.



The textiles bring the work directly to the body. They include *Soul Wraptures*, *Bubbe Medicine Blankets and Pillows*, *Spirit Medicine Pillows*, and other pieces made to be lived with, touched, wrapped around you, rested against, and carried into the ordinary intimacy of your life.

Cloth has always held meaning for me—its weight, softness, texture, color, and the way the body responds to being surrounded by something beautiful and comforting. Some pieces are about being held. Some are about rest, warmth, sanctuary, or simply the pleasure of having something deeply tactile and beautiful close to the body.

Together, they are another way I work with the experience of safety, belonging, beauty, and being fully present in your own life.

The writing and conversations are where the work continues to move outward. I write from the life I'm living now, and increasingly I find myself meeting other people at the thresholds in their own lives—when old identities are falling away, when they are questioning whose expectations they have been living by, or when they are ready to trust more deeply who they know themselves to be.

Working with others has grown naturally from my own journey. I use every thread of my creative work as a possible way for someone to encounter themselves differently. A textile can give the body a tangible experience of being held, safe, or cared for. My writing and the sharing of my own life can create a moment of recognition in someone else's. A *Soul Portrait* or creative process can reveal aspects of a person they have sensed but never fully seen. Retreats and conversations offer another kind of space—one where they can listen more closely to themselves and discover what is asking to emerge.

These forms are all part of the same work for me. I draw from art, cloth, story, intuition, creative process, and lived experience, using whatever thread is most alive to support another person as they uncover, recognize, and begin to inhabit more of who they are.

For me, these aren't separate practices. They are different ways of entering the same human territory—through story, image, the body, beauty, creative process, and conversation.

Where Our Conversations Might Go



The most meaningful conversations for me are the ones that move beyond a polished version of transformation and into the places where change is actually lived—in the body, in relationships, in creativity, and in the choices we make when the old ways of being no longer work.

- **When you stop asking others who you are.** What changes when you stop measuring yourself through other people's expectations and begin making choices from your own sense of who you are—not as an idea, but in the ordinary details of your life.
- **What happens when your life itself becomes the creative work?** For most of my life, making helped me find my way through what I was living. Now the boundary between the work and the life feels much thinner. How I inhabit my body, the choices I make, what I create, how I love, what I release, and where I place my energy are all part of the same creative act.
- **What the body remembers.** Years of survival don't remain only in memory. The body carries exhaustion, grief, fear, longing, pleasure, and the consequences of the lives we have lived. My experience of illness profoundly changed the way I understand healing, strength, and the relationship between body and spirit.
- **What your creative work knows before you do.** My art has often revealed parts of my life before I consciously recognized them. Painting, poetry, writing, cloth, and image have been ways of listening as much as ways of creating—and sometimes they have known where I was going before I did.

- **Who remains when the roles fall away?** Roles, relationships, work, health, appearance, and the ways we have learned to belong can all change. Later life has brought me into a deeper question of who remains when the identities that once organized a life begin to loosen.
- **The body is not separate from the sacred.** Ceremony has been an important part of my life, but some of my deepest spiritual learning has happened through illness, grief, beauty, clothing, food, animals, desire, art, and daily life. The sacred became much more real to me when I stopped treating it as somewhere else.
- **Every thread can become a doorway.** I use many forms—story, art, textiles, Soul Portraits, creative process, retreat, and conversation—to help create experiences where another person may see, feel, or recognize themselves differently. There is no single doorway into that kind of change.

The Heart of These Conversations



I come to these conversations without a formula or a finished answer. My life has taken me deeply into the questions themselves. Again and again, life has stripped away identities shaped by survival, belonging, and other people's expectations, bringing me closer to the woman underneath all of them. My body has carried that passage in ways I could never separate from the rest of my life. Loss, creative work, and spiritual experience kept taking me deeper, changing my relationship to myself and to the sacred.

What matters to me is honest conversation—the kind that can move beyond the polished story and stay with the places where life is complicated, uncertain, painful, beautiful, and deeply human.

Those conversations feel especially important in our later years. By then, the distance between the life we've lived and the life that feels truly ours can become much harder to ignore. I know that territory intimately. Identities that once helped me belong, succeed, or stay safe eventually became too small for who I was. Letting them go changed the way I inhabit these years—the choices I make, the room I allow myself to take up, and the freedom I now feel to belong fully to my own life.

Creativity is inseparable from my life. Whether through painting, writing, cloth, or image, the work has often revealed parts of myself and my life long before I was ready to claim them. Art has carried me through some of the hardest years and has also led me toward places I might never have reached through thought alone. That trust in the creative process shapes how I meet and support others on their own journeys.

That same kind of listening runs through my spiritual life. Ceremony has been part of it, but the sacred often reaches me in quieter ways—a truth my body insists I hear, a moment of beauty that stops me in the middle of an ordinary day, grief moving through every heartbeat, or the gaze of an animal, where I feel my own ancient, eternal presence in the same way I do in nature. Even food, cloth, desire, and the choices I make can carry that same depth. Over time, I've come to know the sacred as something woven through the life I am actually living, and I know it through my body.

Perhaps most of all, I'm willing to speak from inside the unfinished places. I don't need every difficult passage to become a lesson or a story of triumph. Some of the deepest changes in my life have taken years to reveal their meaning. I love conversations that can stay with the complexity of being alive, especially when there isn't a neat answer at the end.

For me, that's often where real connection begins. It matters deeply to me—in relationship, in nature, around animals, in my own inner life, and with spirit. Between people, that connection is deepest when we know we are truly safe and seen exactly as we are. I feel most alive when I'm fully present in that kind of connection.

Whether I'm writing, making art, sitting across from someone, or simply paying attention to the life around me, it's at the heart of everything I do.

Selected Writing & Features

My writing has appeared in magazines, anthologies, and collaborative publications exploring identity, embodiment, creativity, healing, and the ways life changes when we begin listening more deeply to ourselves.

Featured Work

Hanna Magazine

Longtime contributor and featured writer

My work has appeared in Hanna over several years through articles, interviews, and features exploring identity, creativity, embodiment, and the deeper threads of my life and work. Recent pieces include *When the Past Begins to Speak* and *Living in the Between*, along with a four-page interview on *Soul Woven*. In October 2026, I was also featured as both a writer and back-cover artist/author.

Vitality Digest Magazine

Regular contributor — selected articles include: *The Waiting Field*, *The Body as Vessel*, and *When the Body Stops Cooperating*.

Success Savvy Magazine

Regular contributor — selected articles include: *The Authority That Comes After Everything Falls Away* and *When the Life You Built No Longer Feels Like Your Own*, and *When a Woman Stops Outsourcing Her Worth*.

Becoming an Unstoppable Woman Magazine

Regular contributor — selected articles include *The Power of Self-Inhabitation*, *Redefining Unstoppable*, and *The Phoenix Embodied*.

Anthologies

My work also appears in collaborative books including *EmpowerHER: Global Shift to Women Success*, *Becoming an Unstoppable Woman – The Rise of the Phoenix*, *Becoming An Unstoppable Woman: Rise of the Entrepreneur* and the forthcoming *Women of Power*, where my personal writing joins the voices of other women telling stories of resilience, identity, transformation, and lived experience.

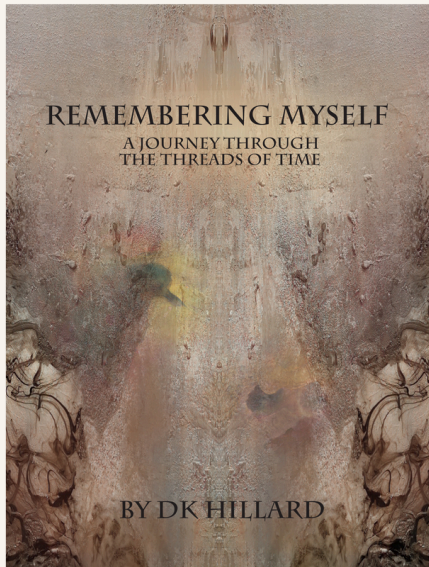
Ongoing Writing

The Journal at dkhillard.com

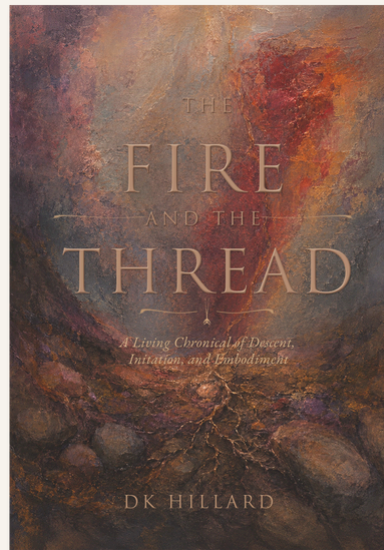
I write regularly from the life I am living now—about identity, embodiment, creativity, aging, self-trust, the body, and the ordinary experiences that keep showing me what it means to belong fully to my own life.

I Invite You to Connect

My work is still unfolding, and so are the conversations that grow from it. I welcome honest, thoughtful conversations that leave room for depth, curiosity, and real human connection.



Remembering MySelf
Available now



The Fire and The Thread
Forthcoming December 2026

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The conversations I value most begin with curiosity and go wherever the truth of the conversation leads.