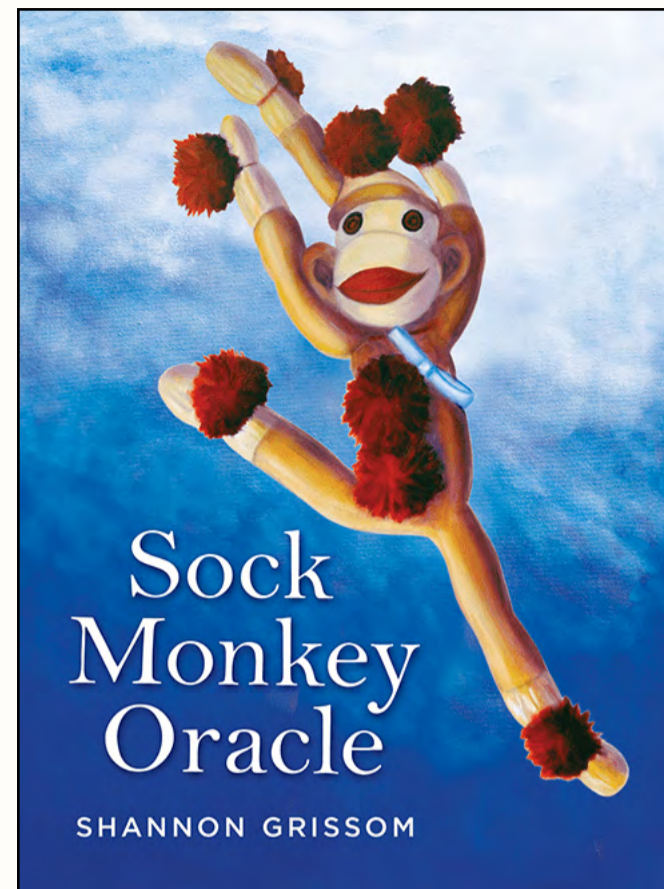


FROM ZERO TO 60

Dancing with My Guides

By SHANNON GRISSOM,
Author and Artist of the *Sock Monkey Oracle*



As I launch the *Sock Monkey Oracle* card deck, I reflect on my relationship with my guides and how they are such an integral part of my life. But, there was a time when I did not let my guides lead. In fact, we didn't even dance. And I sure wasn't going to tell anyone about them.

Anyone!

As I began to pen this article, I asked my guides for help in its creation. This is how they responded:

What if you just let us write the entire article? Can you let go? Can you trust us?

Um, I think so.

What do you mean you think so? You let us write the Sock Monkey Oracle! You also create art by showing up at the easel and asking us to paint. What's the difference? Surrender. It's that simple.

Okay. I'm handing over the keyboard and mouse:

We first came to you when you were a child. In the beginning, we were part of your everyday reality. Then, you told your parents about us, and that didn't go over very well. Your parents said we did not exist and to stop making up things. You took considerable stock in their words, so you decided we could not play together anymore.

And *poof*, just like that, we were gone. There was no further direct contact from us for a very long time.

We were only a hazy memory by the time you entered high school. But we were still around and tried to reach you in nonthreatening ways.

For example, you heard us in song lyrics or when we called your name in

warning. You felt us via body sensations, like sore throats when you did not speak your truth or stomach aches when you couldn't digest a situation.

We were also there in uncontrollable giggles at inopportune moments. By the way, we enjoyed those giggles immensely.

In your mid-twenties, your sister-in-law introduced you to the world of metaphysics. Inspired by her intriguing lifestyle, you began to study tarot, oracle cards, psychics, mediums, and the *Course in Miracles*.

Julia Cameron's daily "Morning Pages" activated your practice of automatic writing.

It was then you started to believe that make-believe was not frivolous. Instead, you realized that make-believe was necessary to create a new reality.

Your return to us had begun.

By your mid-thirties, you were in full swing, and that's when we started to appear in your paintings.

We know we scared you when we first came, so much so that you were relieved when you sold your first channeled piece. The artwork was so alive, so disconcerting you couldn't wait to get it out of your studio!

We look back in retrospect and smile at your significant changes. You went

from fear to your current daily practice of approaching the easel and asking us to paint with you. We are so glad you are finally comfortable with us.



By your 40s and 50s, the metaphysical world was a way of life.

Still, you didn't tell too many people about your proclivities. Those close to you knew that you just "knew stuff."

Patrons commissioned portrait work as you were able to capture both the likeness and the spirit of the subject.

Yet, you still didn't speak of your lifestyle as you wanted to fit in with the general population.

Didn't you realize that most people already knew who you were?



Your series of whimsical sock monkey paintings started to emerge during that period.

You really blossomed once you let joy become part of your daily expression.

The sock monkey paintings, which also led to a children's book, original music, and videos, were a fantastic vehicle for the reemergence of your whimsical self.

We love that we helped you laugh aloud as you created them.

Now in your early 60s, with the debut of the *Sock Monkey Oracle*, you have finally emerged from your metaphysical closet.

You also don't care who knows how silly you are.

Doesn't that feel great? It's got to be a lot less stressful to own who you are. Sure, some folks will drift or even rift away, but the remaining ones will love you for you.

That's all from us.

Any parting words from you about how you hope to inspire others to ignite their own playful energy?

Yes! I wasn't sure you would let me get a word in edgewise!

First, get quiet and ask your guides for

help. Then, if that doesn't work, get noisy and ask again.

Second, it's never too late to chart an inspiring course. All it takes is the decision to do so and creating the action steps in the direction of your dream.

Finally, search every day for something that makes you laugh. Once you have that vibration humming, try tapping into your guides. I've found that joy is the quickest way to tune in to them. Once you've begun to dance—by all means—thank them, and let them lead.



SHANNON GRISSOM didn't discover painting until she was 33, but once she discovered this hidden passion, she was hooked and driven. By 1999, Shannon was able to leave her day job and began to create art as a full-time business. At 46, Shannon self-published her children's book *Monkey Made of Sockies*, along with a line of licensed merchandise, including a coloring book and the popular Monkey Made of Sockies golf club headcovers that have been carried on tour by several LPGA pros.

Shannon is an award-winning artist, television producer/host, author, and songwriter, and she just launched an online creativity school called Painterly. Learn more about her work with sock monkeys at:

SockMonkeyOracle.com