



The Guardian

Purpose: Defender, Protector, Keeper

This doll represents a witness who supports you through this process. It will reflect protection, guidance, hope, possibility, and encouragement. The Guardian will be a symbol of permission to do the work that follows. She will contain positive input and encouragement as you travel on this creative journey. Once she is completed, put her where you will be creating the other dolls, as she will be a reminder that you are moving through a healing *process*. Always keep her present.

Your Guardian holds all your inner healing tools:
Your ability to love unconditionally.
Your ability to support, cherish, listen, and understand.
Your ability to forgive, be kind, be joyful, and be playful.

Here's what previous students have said about the Guardian:

The guardian is a constant reminder to me to look at the lighter side of life and she stands next to my bed so I see her first thing every morning.

The guardian doll, which is my favorite one, showed me the warmth that I am. It opened a place inside of me that I didn't know existed. She is beside my bed and provides much comfort and protection.

The guardian doll is showing me how to love myself. My little girl self. That she is always present and we have a lot to give each other.

This doll is most often in the form of a guardian angel, a grandmother, an ancestor, a spirit guide, a totem animal, or a compassionate mother earth. She is often a nurturing and loving image.

Then again, Debi (pictured to right) came up with a guardian monster:

I remembered that I didn't play with dolls, that I had a ton of stuffed animals . . . my protectors. So my monster is composed of several animals, with human hands, holding my baby self. We are looking at each other with love and gratitude. Both emotions seem to be coming out of both of us. I'm so happy to get to keep him. He feels very protective and loving and is now so real. I can picture his smiling face whenever I need to. It almost feels a little silly to think that it matters but I feel so strongly that he is real. When I look at him I feel so emotional. The little, hurt baby_ me is comforted and relieved. Relieved to be alive. Relieved to have made it into this world intact. Relieved to finally have somebody or something there for me always.



The Guardian
Barb Kobe

I never allow anybody to make a shadow doll their first time. I believe that a student first needs to evoke the help of the Compassionate Mother or a similar positive archetype.

Cassandra Light
Way of the Doll



Debi's Guardian



Gurudevi
Erika Cleveland

Erika's Guardian, Gurudevi. This doll helped her through a move from Connecticut to Washington, DC. It wanted crystal and to be wearable. It has the face of an eagle and chakra crystals along its spine. (Picture to left.)

When I thought again about what I needed for a guardian, I knew immediately what she was going to look like. I drew her image in pencil. She was going to have the face of a bird, and was meant to be worn with the harness over the shoulders. She has crystals hanging down to hang over the wearer's head. This time, though there were technical challenges, the whole process of making this doll went quickly.

Jessie, an online member living with breast cancer, wrote about creating her Guardian:

Well, today my Guardian doll finally decided to make an appearance. YAY!!! Quilts and wrapping up were definitely part of her, as well as safety and security . . . so I went to my stack o' stuff and began to plunder. I'm very happy with her and I see a lot of symbols coming forth. The outside of her robe is a piece of crazy quilted material I saved from my absolute favorite shirt that I wore until the holes were just too big. The inside of her robe is lined with a starry sky material, for infinite possibilities that I have in my life. Her body is a piece of wood from my family farm, back in WV. I made her face very peaceful and without hair. At the moment, hair represents something to hide behind for me, so I left it off. No hiding here. LOL No hair either! Well, there are a few tiny baby hairs beginning to make their appearance . . . Inside her robe, hugged up and safe is a green nest. Nests are safe places for fragile things and places for new beginnings. The nest is sitting on a moss covered rock, again from the family farm, a place where I have my foundation, but new things have grown from me since leaving, hence the moss. I'm sitting in the nest and I have room to put things that I need to call into my life or things that I need to work out. I do think this lady is something special and I have a lot of talking/ journaling to do with her.



Jessi's Guardianj
Open and Closed

It's so nice to be feeling human again. I am thinking much more clearly and I think there are big things ahead in the near future. I'm so happy to finally be getting immersed in the [healing] doll process. It is such a powerful way of being/ doing. And when things click, watch out! It's magic! So many things came up with my Guardian doll that I didn't realize until after she was almost complete. It was just WOW! Barb, I get what you meant when you said just follow the process and it will happen. Once I stopped trying to make things work, everything just fell into place. I am so loving this!



***I learned that these dolls are tangible expressions and emotions, full of honesty and true intent. They are us, our core being .
Medicine Doll class student***



DebAnn's Guardian of the Hidden Heart is created from a yellow cone, symbolizing the yellow sun, radiating light outward. Her Guardian has no feet or legs; she is grounded, anchoring her, and stabilizing her. Her "breast plates" are eye patches her mother, Georgette, had when she had cataract surgery a couple of years ago. They represent the warrior-like Amazons of the ancient-who battles for her and gives her strength to fight.

She is encircled and encrusted with various Czech glass beads. The Czech glass harks back to her Maternal Grandmother, Anna, who came from Czechoslovakia after WWI and was her closest friend and confidant as a child. DebAnn believes her Grandmother is always with her, as is her Mother. Her arms are also Czech beads, held upwards in the praying position sending up prayers. On her front are the words "Love", "Live", "Believe", the most important things the doll reminds her to always do. At the end of "Love" is a small heart nestled in among other beads, mostly hidden symbolizing her hidden, buried, trapped Spirit of Self. All of the beads are strung on a copper-like wire and all the parts are connected with that wire. It connects all parts that make up the whole and hold the Guardian together, making one from many parts reminding DebAnn that her whole self is the result of many things, not only the bad/negative.

DebAnn's favorite part of dollmaking is the face, the most expressive and freeing part; soft sculpted in cloth, painted detail. She says, "my faces don't come out "pretty" by most standards, but I think they are me at least in a symbolic way." The face is mounted on a vintage button, giving her a sort of halo. It came from Kay, a dear, now deceased friend, who was in many ways like a second mother to me. Kay was a very strong and self-possessed woman and watches over me. On top of her head is a butterfly (almost all of my dolls have a butterfly somewhere on them, if only a stamped image on the body). Butterflies have long represented the ability of an entity to possess both strength and fragility. In the last couple of years they have also come to represent the Spirit/Soul. So a small, silver butterfly bead sits on top her head, my Spirit, ready, waiting to take off and soar free.

If you study Tarot cards, the Guardian is the Magician, the one who is always focused on her intent before moving through a life process. You may want to add a pocket on your Guardian doll to hold a written statement of your healing intention.



Guardian of the Hidden Heart
DebAnn, Medicine Doll participant





Shekmet
Christine Harris



True North Guardian
Barb Kobe



Come to me dear Spirit Angel. Cleanse my Soul of this Fear.
Guide me to toward the healing light
so I may let go and live in peace.
Barb Kobe



Guardian Bird
Barb Kobe