

Journal Entry/November 16, 1992/12 p.m.

I stayed up late last night reading as usual. That's nothing new for me. Get me in a good book and I'll lose sleep to read it. Actually, I'm researching for my non-fiction writing assignment. I think I'm going to write on fashion and clothes. I'll gear this to the teenagers since teenagers are always interested in clothes. The book I was reading is called Metamorphosis by David Kibbe. I discovered my colors years ago and I found out I'm a winter and that's revolutionized the colors I wear. In the book Color Me Beautiful, the author touches upon image identity and how important that is to look sharp. In other words, knowing your colors is only half the battle. You also need to know how to dress to complement your body structure, hair texture and facial features. This is where image identity comes in. I knew about the five basic image identities which are: Romantic, Classic, Dramatic, Natural or Gamine. I put myself in the romantic category after experimenting for several days with lines and shapes in my clothing and how they seemed to look on me. However, I was never sure of what my REAL identity was because I could see myself looking sharp in other clothing. After skimming through the book Metamorphosis for several days and taking his self-test, I've decided I'm a "soft natural." I'm fairly confident I've diagnosed myself accurately since I put considerable thought into this BEFORE I ever read this book. I've been exposed to these concepts before in my books on color. He said the key to get an accurate portrayal of yourself is to be as objective as possible when you take his self-test in the book. I tried to do this. Anyways, here is the description of the "soft natural." I bet I'm right.

SOFT NATURAL

(Natural with a Romantic undercurrent)

Prime Celebrity Example: Natalie Wood

Your position on the Yin/Yang scale is: *soft Yang with a Yin undercurrent*. Physically, you are basically angular in bone structure, although this is softened by a fleshy body type and full facial features (eyes, lips, cheeks). Innately, you are spontaneously direct, open, logical, fresh, and totally unaffected, although this is softened by an artistic sensitivity and a radiant charm that is wonderfully appealing.

You will definitely want to read both the Natural and the Romantic sections of this book, and you will find yourself identifying at times with elements of each. However, please remember, you are not an equal combination of the two categories.

Always bear in mind that you are a Natural first and foremost! Your Romantic undercurrent should be used in small doses to soften the overall effect of your appearance in a very creative and artistic manner. It is *not* a substitute. It is an *addition* to express that extra bit of Yin that is present in your being.

To express your soft Yang/Yin undercurrent *total essence*, we want to develop an appearance that could best be described as: Fresh and Sensual Lady.

Your silhouette is soft, flowing, and unconstructed, composed of relaxed lines with soft edges (at the neck, waist, and hemline). Shoulders may be broad and padded but never sharp. Asymmetrical or irregular geometrics that have rounded edges are equally effective shapes with which to work. The waist should be defined, although loosely so, as opposed to tightly cinched.

A loose, uncluttered approach to *detail* expresses your fresh femininity quite succinctly. Draped necklines, soft cowls, silky camisoles, supple belts, flared hemlines, etc. are your best basic foundations for combining the clean look that is soft without being fussy. Too much ornamentation such as excess gathers, tucks and trim is overly busy and priggish for your free-spirited essence. Any tailoring or detail that seems as though it would *restrict* your mobility or creative expression will make you appear very staid, rigid, and stuffy. Traditionally tailored suits and old-fashioned frills are no-no's--that is, unless you want to look like a maiden aunt from the turn of the century!

Accessories should be on the light-weight and delicate side, without being overly ornate or trimmed. Yet at the same time your creativity will cry out for special touches here and there. The trick is not to overdo it! You are a Natural, after all, so a little goes a long way on you. One special piece, perhaps a beautiful supple belt of suede with an ornate Navajo Indian buckle, will be just the right accent to express your inner creativity without overpowering the fresh and simple appeal that is the centerpiece of your Image Identity.

Because there is an earthiness that comes from your soft Yang basis, anything tactile is excellent on you. Soft textures--such as slubbed fabrics, handkerchief linens, raw silk, fuzzy knits--are very good clothes when kept to the lightweight side and used in an unstructured silhouette.

Likewise, your jewelry is most effective when it has some texture to it, as well as the feeling of having been hand-designed and created. The look that suggests the spirit of an artist is embedded in your necklace, earrings, or ornate wrist cuffs is simply a fabulous way of evoking your wild passion and warmth. Again, just remember to keep a touch of the delicate and the ornate evident in shape, detail, and finish.

Both your hair and makeup should be creative, fresh, and soft. A moderate to longish hairstyle is best, and it should always be layered for freedom of movement. Blunt cuts will be boring, and geometrics will be harsh and severe. For the same reason, a "fresh face" with touches of soft color is the makeup that will complete your head-to-toe look most appealingly.

This is the best way for the world to see your refreshingly disarming combination of creativity, warmth, sensitivity, and aggressive pragmatism. The key to clearly expressing your essence in your appearance is by combining your artistry with your freshness--both are vital for us to understand your unique nature.

Without the underlying foundation of simplicity, aggression, and direct logic, too much artsy-craftsy excess becomes irritatingly odd and negatively offbeat. Since your power comes from a soft frankness that is unquestionably effective, excess in any form tends to obscure you rather than express you. On the other hand, too much simplicity without the very special creative touches here and there for "spice" will be dull and lifeless! Without the careful cultivation of your warmth and artistry, we tend to criminally underestimate your abilities, and look right past you to someone who seems more willing to express herself.

When you allow us to know you as a very direct, pragmatic, and active individual who is also charming, innovative, and sensitive, your star quality will shine through most effortlessly!

Your unique essence is so refreshing, when clearly evident, we'll never want to let you out of our sight--and if we have to, you'll certainly always be present in our hearts! To the rest of the world, you simply seem to have it all. Once we see you, we deeply long to be included in your life!

SOFT NATURAL CHECKLIST

YIN/YANG BALANCE

Soft Yang with a Yin undercurrent.

SHAPE

Assymetric and irregular curves (elongated ovals, wide circles, ellipticals, etc.) Relaxed geometrics with rounded edges. Easy swirls.

AVOID: Sharp geometrics. Wide, chunky, and boxy shapes. Plain, symmetrical shapes. Overly ornate shapes.

LINE AND SILHOUETTE

Unconstructed silhouette with shaping, particularly at

waist. Relaxed lines with subtle drape and flow, particularly bias cuts.

AVOID: *Wide, shapeless silhouettes. Sharp, severe silhouettes. Symmetrical silhouettes. Fitted silhouettes.*

FABRIC

Soft textures with a plush or slightly rough finish. A tactile feeling is very stunning and evocative of your freshly feminine and artistic essence. Weights should be light to moderate so fluid movement is possible. Anything wrinkly, nubby, slubbed, or loosely woven is excellent, particularly in a daytime, suited look. Shiny fabrics may be worn with ease in the evening, but should be left aside for day, except for slight sheen of texture (such as shantung). Deep pile (velour, suede, boucle, knits, etc.) is excellent, as is buttery-soft leather.

AVOID: *Stiff fabrics. Flat surfaced fabrics. Overly flimsy fabrics.*

DETAIL

Detail should be loose, relaxed, delicate, slightly intricate and very creative. Any detail that suggests either a bit of the antique or the earth is excellent.

Shoulders may be extended and padded, but should not be sharp or stiff.

Necklines should be loose and soft, not closed, restricted, or fussy (simple draped necklines; soft cowls; soft, notched collars; clean lapels; shawl collars, etc.).

Waist should be defined, although loosely. There can be a slightly blousy effect at the waist, with the top draped over the waistline, or a slightly dropped waist as long as the silhouette is fluid.

Gathers and folds should be deep, full, and soft.

Sleeves can be full and flowing or gently tapered at the wrist with a minimum of detail.

Trim should be delicate and antique (shirring, applique, etc.).

AVOID: *Sharply tailored detail. No detail. Overly fitted and fussy detail. Animate, "perky" detail.*

SEPARATES

An obvious use of separates is excellent for you. Be sure to keep an artful blend of textures, colors, and patterns.

Jackets: Jackets should be unconstructed, soft, and always showing the waist (but not necessarily *emphasizing* it). This can

be a jacket that is shaped through the waist, or it can be a jacket that is unstructured and very lightweight or flimsy, so that it drapes around the body but still reveals the waist. Shoulders can be extended and padded, without being crisp, and the length can be shortish if the jacket is shaped through the waist, or longer (top of the thigh area) if it is belted or unconstructed/boxy. Jackets that are not shaped or belted must be very draped and fluid, and should be left unfastened.

AVOID: Severely tailored jackets. Long, heavy jackets, whether constructed or not. Cropped bolero jackets. Flouncy jackets that are overly fitted and trimmed.

Skirts: Skirts should have a soft outline. Full or flared skirts that are flat in the hip area are excellent. Straight skirts that are lightweight, draped, or slightly tapered are also good.

Straight skirts have an even hem and are worn short, no longer than the bottom of the kneecap. Full skirts have an uneven hem and are worn long, mid calf and below.

Slits, kick pleats, button fronts, plackets, etc., are all fine, as are bits of intricate detail (shirring, draping, etc.), as long as they're not restrictive.

AVOID: Long, straight, pencil-slim skirts. Overly fitted skirts with excess trim. Symmetrical skirt (i.e., A-lines).

Pants: Pants should be lightweight and slightly draped, with a bit of soft detail or ornate trim (gathers, shirring, soft pleats). Legs may be softly straight, draping about the ankle, or slightly tapered and pegged.

AVOID: Severe, man-tailored styles. Wide, shapeless styles. Plain, symmetrical styles. Overly fitted styles with fussy trim.

Blouses: Blouses should be soft, draped, and slightly loose and billowy or clingy. Detail should be slightly antique and intricate, but should not be fussy and overdone. Open necks are best, particularly if draped, and camisoles are also good. The more detail there is, the more unconstructed the blouse should be. Sheer fabrics are excellent (voiles, batiste, etc.). The shinier the fabric, the less detail there should be.

AVOID: Stiffly tailored blouses. Severe blouses. Fussy necklines. Shapeless blouses.

Sweaters: Soft knits that are luxurious to the touch. They

can be either lightweight and silky or thick and deep, just as long as they don't ever seem rough. Slightly long sweaters are nice, if they are somewhat clingy and reveal the body (particularly the waist) underneath. Cropped or fitted sweaters should be thicker (boucle, cable-stitched, etc.), and any detail (shirring, draping, etc.) should be low on the body and loose. Trim such as applique, jewels, beading, etc., should be slightly antique or softly abstract in shape. Skinny, ribbed knits can be fun, especially in dresses that you belt.

AVOID: *Heavy sweaters that hide the body.*

DRESSES

Dresses should be soft and flowing, but at the same time loose and unconstructed. They should either loosely define the waist in full, flaired silhouettes, or be very draped and clingy in a straighter silhouette. Detail should be low on the body (shirring, gathers, applique, sparkly trim, etc.) as opposed to high, or framing the face. A slightly antique approach to dresses is also possible, but keep them loose and billowy instead of fussy and overly fitted.

AVOID: *Severely tailored styles. Plain, symmetrical styles. Wide, shapeless styles. Overly fussy styles. Crisp, fitted styles.*

COLOR

Your use of color should be vibrant and rich. Brights and pastels form the basis of your wardrobe, but soft neutrals with a little vivid accenting can be very elegant and exciting in beautiful textures. Dark colors will be too stark if you don't break them up. Use them primarily for accents or for color combinations. Bright and soft color combinations work best, as opposed to starkly contrasting ones. For example light/bright or bright/dark combos are softer on you than light/dark ones. Wild color combinations (bright/bright) of opposing intensities are fun, particularly for your casual clothes.

AVOID: *Dull, monochromatic schemes. Head-to-toe dark schemes.*

PRINTS

Prints should be softly rounded shapes, abstract and flowing. They may be either watercolor-blended or very electric and vibrant, as long as they are slightly irregular and have soft edges. Size should be moderate to slightly large.

AVOID: *Small, symmetrical prints. Severe geometrics. Overly intricate prints. Animated, "cute" or "perky" prints.*

ACCESSORIES

Shoes: Should be tapered in shape and slightly delicate in style with little or no trim. An open-toe, sling-back, or "bare" look is best. The shape may also be angular if the heel is very high and narrow and the toe is very tapered. Feminine flats with little trim.

AVOID: *Extremely angular, heavy styles.*

Bags: Should be moderate in size. Shape may be slightly rounded with little or no trim, or softly geometric with slight gathers or intricacy to soften. Antique bags are excellent for evening (small and beaded). Moderate-sized, unconstructed "pouchy" styles are also good.

AVOID: *Crisply structured bags.*

Belts: Should be wide and supple, either soft leather or suede, or exquisite fabric. Buckles should be intricate and slightly antique, with sparkles or beading for evening especially lovely.

AVOID: *Stiff belts.*

Hats: Should be soft and floppy (i.e., picture frame) or rounded and clean (i.e., crisp-brimmed straw). Detail should be soft (antique ribbons, lace, or flowers). Fur hats are soft and fluffy.

AVOID: *Severe, man-tailored styles. Small, symmetrical styles. Small crisp caps.*

Hosiery: Flesh-toned stockings are best for an elegant daytime work look if you wear a suit. Opaque stockings in light shades are soft, and you may definitely contrast the stocking with the hemline if you wish. Bright and textured stockings are excellent for fun. Dark stockings are for evening only and should be very sexy and sheer, with lacy textures or exciting sparkles!

AVOID: *One long line of dark color (too dull and matronly on you).*

Jewelry: Your jewelry should be delicate in workmanship but

highly creative in effect. Unusual materials, particularly crystal, hand-wrought silver, leather, intricately carved leather or stone, faceted glass, and any piece that looks as though it was designed by an artist is wonderful for you. "Wearable art" suits you best, ranging from wild and funky pieces with feathers, faux jewels, and sparkles to ornate Navajo Indian turquoise to elegant mixtures of opals, diamonds, and platinum! It must be both highly original and slightly intricate at the same time. Very simple antique pieces are also quite appropriate, especially for very dressy evenings, but always make sure there is at least a touch of sparkle and a bit of dangle!

AVOID: Severe geometrics. Stark, avant-garde pieces. Minimal, "no jewelry" looks. Small, symmetrical pieces. Heavy, chunky pieces.

EVENING WEAR

Simple shapes with an easy flow. Drapable fabrics. Plush fabrics. Slightly sheer fabrics. Glitzy trim. Loose waist detail. Soft necklines.

Flowing gowns with flared skirts
Pouffy cocktail dresses with fitted tops and flouncy skirts
(long or short)
Evening sarongs
Evening separates (blouses, sweaters, etc.)
Draped pants
Antique lace dresses

HAIR

Hair should be soft and free. A loosely layered cut, giving the hair a slightly tousled and softly sensual look, is best.

Perms and processing are appropriate if needed to add body and soft curl. Length should be moderate to long.

AVOID: Severe, geometric cuts. Blunt-edged, symmetrical cuts. Boyishly cropped hair. Overly ornate and stylized hair (except for evening styles, which should then be highly original and very witty).

HAIRCOLOR

Hair color should be rich, natural, and soft looking. It should not look as if you color your hair. If you choose to do so, make sure the effect is subtle, not drastic. Subtle lowlights, cellophaning, or henna is the best type of color for you.

AVOID: *Boldly theatrical colors (blue-black, platinum, or straw-yellow blond, fiery red, etc.). Overly lightened hair.*

MAKEUP

Your makeup is crucial to pulling your head-to-toe appearance together. It should be a fresh face with only a hint of soft/bright color, styled in a watercolor blend. A touch of frost to the eyes, very rosy and rounded cheeks, and soft and glossy lips finish your fresh and feminine loveliness to perfection. In the evening, sheer sparkle may be added at will (but be careful that it remains fairly translucent).

AVOID: *Heavy contouring (too stark). Dark colors--smoky eyes, deep lips (too severe). Neutrals (too tired and aging). "No makeup" look (too dull and matronly).*

SOFT NATURAL CELEBRITIES

The following list is meant to help give you a clearer picture of what a Soft Natural can be when she is visually defined. It is not meant to suggest that the women included always dress to their best advantage, so please be careful when you view pictures of them. Because each human being is truly an individual, all Soft Naturals have unique qualities that set them apart from everyone else! Therefore, concentrate on discovering the continuity that ties these celebrities together. I think you'll find that they each share a *very soft, fresh, and enchanting physical beauty, along with an essence that is creative, charming, and filled with a sensitive appeal.*

Natalie Wood, Carole Lombard, Goldie Hawn, Judy Collins, Sissy Spacek, Molly Ringwald, Terri Garr, Stephanie Powers, Liv Ullman, Kelly McGillis.

Why have I typed all this out? I may send it to my relatives and it might help them to buy me appropriate presents for Christmas and birthdays. As far as the celebrities above, I haven't heard of half of them. However, I am fairly certain that my assessment of myself as a soft natural image identity is right on the nose. The other image identities are: dramatic, soft dramatic, romantic, theatrical romantic, classic, dramatic classic, soft classic, natural, flamboyant natural, gamine, flamboyant gamine, and soft gamine. I also feel it is very important to emphasize that I need to wear my colors, too. When I wear my winter colors IN COMBINATION with my soft natural image identify then I look MY

VERY BEST. Natalie Wood is a winter as well as being a SOFT NATURAL. So she is my IDEAL model for dressing example.

Well, I'll hold onto this until I get some income where I can dress like this to the fullest. I have many clothes right now that will work for me. My mother has excellent taste. She has been buying me clothes that fit right in with this image identity.