

YOUR GUIDE TO WORKING WITH
THE LUNAR CYCLE



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to your easy guide on how to work in sync with the lunar cycle and in turn, flow through your life with effortless ease...

Trust that the reason you picked up this short book, is because something is calling you to make a change in your life. We all experience this at some point, an unknown calling to something new, something to bring us out of the rut we may find ourselves in, or something to reach the uplevels of our lives as we find ourselves at a stand still. Well, this could be your sign from the universe to start paying attention to that bright glowing ball in the sky.

La luna, the moon, the omnipresent planet in our solar system that causes the rise and fall of our oceans tides. She is fascinating isn't she? (I refer to her as she due to her feminine energy). I remember as a child always finding myself looking for the moon in the sky. I would sit and stare for long periods of time when she was fully shining, in awe of how beautiful she looked and how big she must be for us to see her so clearly, it was probably then that I felt a connection to the moon, what I didn't know at the time was how great of an effect she had on me and how incredibly transformational it could be to work with her to bring flow into my life in all of her beautiful phases.

INTRODUCTION

As women, we are cyclical beings, naturally and spiritually. We have menstrual cycles which are very similar in length to the lunar cycles. Working in tune with a menstrual cycle is unfortunately something that a lot of modern women do not have the luxury of doing. Be that due to having health issues, being on hormonal birth control and therefore not having a true monthly cycle, having gone through the menopause or due to identifying as a woman but not having a womb. This is where I was fascinated to learn that the similarities between the lunar cycle and a woman's menstrual cycle could easily allow women to get back in touch with their cyclical and intuitive nature. This isn't to say that you should only use your menstrual cycle and ignore the lunar cycles all together, I love to use both in my daily life, with the lunar cycle I use it as a spiritual tool to connect with the universe and also to allow a cycle of setting new intentions for my goals ahead, evaluating and changing them, and then letting them go if they aren't working or reaping their rewards if they do. This applies to my work life, personal life and spiritual life.

It's my belief that when we open ourselves up to new ideas and possibilities, a whole new world can open up to us right before our eyes, ways of living that we never considered before and in turn, could change our lives for the better.

I hope that these pages can give you a little insight into what it means to work with the moon and how you can implement small changes to work with her too. Pick and choose from this guide the parts that feel good to you and don't be afraid to make this practice your own,

LUNAR FACTS

- The lunar cycle is typically 29.5 days in length, similar to a calendar month but it doesn't fall on the days that our months begin and end.
- In 2013, in a study carried out by Basel University in Switzerland, a professor concluded that "The lunar cycle seems to influence human sleep, even when one does not 'see' the Moon and is not aware of the actual Moon phase.
- There are 8 main phases of the moon: new moon, waxing crescent, first quarter, waxing gibbous, full moon, waning gibbous, third quarter, and waning crescent.
- The Moon is said to be 4.5 billion years old
- It is a misconception that the Moon gives off light when actually it is reflecting the Sun's light.
- Because tides are related to the gravitational pull of the Moon, more tide activity occurs during a full moon.
- Before it was given a new meaning, the word 'lunatic' was used to describe people that were believed to be affected negatively by the phases of the moon, the term is now used to describe people who may suffer with mental illnesses and can, to many people cause great offence.

MOON PHASES

In this chapter, I will explain the 8 phases of the moon, and we will delve into how to work with 4 of them, I find this an easier way for beginners to integrate working with the moon into their daily lives, this is also how I personally like to work with the moon phases.



MOON PHASES



New moon

Let's begin with the new moon, this phase is definitely one of the most powerful of the 8, the new moon symbolises the beginning of the lunar cycle. We are unable to see the new moon phase in the sky as the side of the moon facing the Earth at this time is not receiving any sunlight.



Waxing
crescent

The waxing crescent moon is when we begin to see a sliver of the moon being illuminated. The term "waxing" here means growing or expanding.



First quarter
moon

The last quarter moon or half full moon is when she is half illuminated, this one is fairly self explanatory, you'll find as you read on you will begin to see where this is going...



Waxing
gibbous

The waxing gibbous phase is when the moon is closest to being full, she doesn't quite form a full circle.



Full moon

The full moon is when the moon is fully illuminated, this phase marks that we are halfway through the lunar cycle.

Quick tip: If you live in the Northern Hemisphere, the part of the waxing moon that is in shadow is on the left, and when the moon is waning, the shadow part is on the right. If you live in the Southern Hemisphere, the shape is reversed; the shadow part of the waxing moon is on the right, and that of the waning moon is on the left.

MOON PHASES



Waning
gibbous

The waning gibbous is when the moon starts to lose her full form again, the term "waning" here means to shrink or to decline.



Last quarter
moon

The first quarter moon phase is where the moon looks half full again, however this time, she is becoming less and less illuminated.



Waning
crescent

Finally, we have the waning crescent phase when we can only see a slight portion of the moon, this is the phase just before we can no longer see her and she becomes the new moon and marks the beginning of the new lunar cycle.

Now that you have a basic understanding of the moon phases, we can begin to delve deeper into the 4 step cycle that I believe is the best way to work with the moon. Remember, working with the moon can be an incredibly intimate spiritual practice or something you just use as a reference to help you with the cycle of new ideas and projects, you don't have to have a spiritual practice to be able to enjoy this 4 step process. Regardless of your beliefs, this practice can bring a flow into your life that you may not have been able connect to.

THE 4 PHASE CYCLE

The 4 phase cycle to me was a way of reconnecting to my femininity, returning to being a cyclical being and allowing a lot more ebb and flow into my daily life. Using this cycle can bring a lot more structure to your life without it feeling like structure at all, it feels a lot more like being in tune with nature and a natural rhythm.

The 4 phases that I chose to focus on are as following:

- New moon
- Last quarter moon
- Full moon
- First quarter moon

Many others who work with the lunar cycle choose to do so in many different ways, following the 4 phase cycle will be an easy introduction on how to begin your connection with the moon. I will make it simple, clear and concise so that with time, you can build your practice and add in anything that feels right for you, or even remove elements that you may not agree with.

There are many ways that you can find out in which phase the moon is currently in. You can search online, make sure to note your location in the world as the phase could vary in dates. There are apps that you can download on your smartphone that can tell you the phases. Or, if you're lucky, on a clear night you can just step outside and see it for yourself.

WORKING WITH THE PHASES NEW MOON

As previously mentioned, the new moon marks the beginning of a new lunar cycle, this is a very important step in the cycle as it is a reset, a new beginning. You will not be able to see the new moon in the sky as she is hidden, this symbolises a retreat from the outside world. Now I'm not telling you to stay inside lock your doors and hide from the outside world. It is simply a chance to return to your true home, your mind and your body, go inward, rest.

An incredibly powerful thing to do on a new moon is to perform a new moon ritual. Keep reading for more information on how to set up a new/full moon ritual.

The time of a new moon is a time of new beginnings, a great time for manifestation. It's where our ideas stem from. If you are just starting a new project or you are thinking of doing something new, use this time to meditate on your ideas, journal, rest, allow your mind to explore all of the possibilities of the new project, habit or goal you are working on. It isn't a time to go full force into your goals or ideas, more a time of building the foundations, taking your time and being gentle with your mind & body.

It can be a very exciting time for most, as I know when starting a new goal or project can be! It is however important that you enjoy this new moon energy, don't go full force into making a start on things physically, once the waxing crescent moon arrives this is the perfect time to do this, to make a start on your goals and get the ball rolling. However, just for now, relax, tap into your creative nature and just think of all the different ways you can achieve said goals. Start preparing yourself mentally for the next steps you are about to take.

Great things to do during this time would be to practice some calming yin yoga, make lists, write down your ideas, meditate and rest. This time in the lunar phase we can liken to the menstrual/bleed phase in a women's cycle. Rest & retreat. Slow down. Plant the seeds.

WORKING WITH THE PHASES

FIRST QUARTER MOON

When you transition to the first quarter moon, you will have transitioned through the waxing crescent moon as mentioned before. The waxing crescent moon is a time when it's exciting to make a start on your new goal, its when all of your plans start to bloom as you are taking those first steps towards achieving your goals. That is a time to go for it and put the work in, By the time you reach the first quarter moon, at times you can begin to see your excitement fade momentarily. This is the perfect time to overcome procrastination and is where the true hard work begins, it's a time of pushing forward even when you may not exactly feel like it.

Don't mistake this for continuing something that doesn't feel right for you, but know that there is a time for evaluation of the project, now is not that time so ask yourself; can you push through the feelings of boredom or disillusion to continue that bit farther to achieve your goals?

The first quarter moon is a great phase for working on your will power and your strength, build your energy with nourishing foods and go for those powerful workouts.

A very important thing to learn about this phase in achieving your goals is to not beat yourself up about wanting to give up, or maybe you have given up. It's a time to forgive yourself, understand that this is a normal part of this cycle, it happens! The best and most transformative thing to take from this is to gain the ability to forgive yourself for taking a break or maybe skipping that day you needed to work on something but then getting up and trying again. You might need to keep forgiving yourself over and over until you finally reach the next phase of your goals, however if you can push through, you will really start to build on your will power and and your strength to push through things, even when you really, *really* don't feel like it.

This is a great time to do some meditation and think about why you wanted to start working towards this certain goal in the first place, tap into how you will feel once you achieve it. Remember too that yes, there can be things in your way and obstacles that you will face, however most of the time, you are the only thing in your own way.

WORKING WITH THE PHASES

FULL MOON

Before we arrive at the full moon we pass through the waxing gibbous phase which is when our plans will be in full swing, the reason I am acknowledging these phases too is because they do play a part in the cycle, however I find it easier to focus on the main four and to see the waxing and waning phases as transitions.

The full moon is the phase most people are most acquainted with. When she lights up the sky and many people from around the globe gaze up in awe. The energy of a full moon is very powerful, often it can cause sleep disturbance, mood changes and overall heightened emotions or senses. With the heightening of emotions, the full moon does not discriminate, whether you are in a good place mentally, or maybe not in the best headspace, either can be magnified by the effects of this particular lunar cycle.

The full moon is the phase of your cycle where you can stop and evaluate your plans, you can sit and look through the progress you are making towards your goals. It's at this stage where its great to shine a light on the things that may not be working for you at this stage and making small changes. The full moon brings everything to the surface, good or bad. Think of her in the sky as a huge spotlight, showing you everything for what it truly is and really allowing you to delve into the ins and outs of your work.

It's most importantly an incredible time to reap the rewards of your progress, you may not have achieved your goals just yet, but it's a time to celebrate the hard work you have put in to get you to the point you are at now. It's also very nourishing to use this time to be grateful for who and what surrounds you in your life currently; staying grateful for what you currently have opens you up to all that you could receive in the future. Remembering that whilst having goals and aspirations in life is important, but also learning to be fulfilled and happy with what you already have will transform your life.

Due to the incredible energy of this very important phase in the lunar cycle, it is good to steer away from making life changing decisions for example; moving home, getting married, you know... the BIG stuff.

One of the most powerful things to do during this time is to complete a full moon ritual which I will delve into once we have spoken about the last phase.

WORKING WITH THE PHASES LAST QUARTER MOON

The final phase of the lunar cycle is the transition from the waning gibbous moon to the last quarter moon. Once you have celebrated your work and have enjoyed reaping the rewards of your efforts during the full moon, it's time to look back into all of the parts of this cycle that didn't quite sit right for you, or just simply did not work for you.

It is a time to release and to let go. This could be anything that isn't serving you and doesn't ring true to what brings you happiness and peace in your life. There are many things that we can let go of such as: a strategy that isn't working to reach your goals, an old job that drains your life force, negative self talk, letting go of unhealthy eating patterns, finally calling it quits on a relationship/friendship that isn't good for you or your happiness, etc.

The key thing to remember here is that if something isn't working for you, or overall just isn't good for you or makes you feel really negative, you can let it go. Life is too short to hold on to things that aren't good for us and do not bring us joy.

Once we transition into the last quarter moon, we create extra space in our lives for all of the things that do bring us joy and help us towards becoming the person we have always wanted to be. Making these changes in our lives and creating that space gives us the opportunity to grow and to move forward as human beings, if we do not allow change and space into our lives we stay stagnant, unable to see past old problems, unable to live in the present as we continue to dwell on the past.

Right now especially, is a very important time for us to live in the moment, we do not know what may wait for us around the corner, planning and working towards future goals is a positive thing,, however being anxious and allowing those plans to bring fear into your present moment is not what we are aiming for here. By working with the cycles of the moon you give yourself time to create new beginnings, reevaluate and make change, let go of negativity and allow rest and rebirth. Knowing that you have the space and the time to work with each of these moments allows you to stay present and to stay mindful as you know that you will carve out time for change.

The last quarter moon is a fantastic way to look back on all you have, or may not have achieved this lunar month with gratitude and be excited for the next lunar cycle to begin.

NEW MOON RITUAL

- Create your altar/sacred space.

Tidy your living space, find a cosy corner and set up with all of your favourite spiritual tools; crystals, flowers, oracle cards, statues, candles, etc .

-Grounding

Take time to meditate on the energy of the new moon, practice a new moon yoga flow or do some moon salutations, do any activity that will ground you and centre you for the ritual.

-Cleansing

Burn sage, incense or oils, take a ritual bath with flowers, cleanse your crystals in any way you like; sage, water, sound vibration. Do a mind dump in your journal, let all of your thoughts go onto the paper.

-Set intentions

Make a gratitude list, write down some positive affirmations for the month ahead, make a vision board, set goals that you would like to achieve.

Pro tip: Setting your intentions onto a small piece of paper and keeping them at your altar or your fridge, is really helpful to remind you of your goals throughout the month.

FULL MOON RITUAL

- Create your altar/sacred space.

Make any changes you wish to make to your altar now, replacing flowers, changing crystals, pull new oracle cards.

-Grounding

Take time to meditate on the energy of the full moon, take some time to bath in the light of the moon outside, ground yourself in nature by going for a walk, or a swim.

-Cleansing

Burn sage, incense or oils, take a ritual bath with flowers, cleanse your crystals outside to soak in the moonlight. Doing another mind dump in your journal is always a good thing to do at this stage, it even helps to do it daily!

-Letting go

Reevaluate your previous intentions and see what is working for you and what isn't. Create a gratitude list of all the rewards you have received since the new moon.

Write down on bay leaves or pieces of paper things that are no longer serving you. Safely burn the leaves or the paper to allow a full and final release.

Pro tip: When beginning your ritual you can light a candle, you can blow it out to close the ritual.

FINAL WORDS

I truly hope that this small book has helped you in any way, I created this guide to share my knowledge that I have gained over the years whilst working with the moon.

Connecting to your inner self will create so many new pathways for you in your life, you will start to invite joy, connection and compassion into your every day practices. Having this anchor to keep you in check with a monthly cycle can be the most transformational thing you will ever do. It certainly changed my life and I have no doubt that with time, perseverance and an open mind it can change yours too.

Not only is working with the moon important to connect with your inner self, it also connects you to nature and the elements all around you. Have you ever found yourself gazing up at the night sky, surrounded by stars and looked at the moon in awe? This is because it is calling you, calling you to the cosmos.

We are all cosmic beings, we are all one and we are all connected, know that you are on your own journey and it is your decision to take these words and do with them as you see fit, choose what sits right with you and leave what doesn't.

Thank you so much for reading this book, I wish you all the best on your journey through life.

Ciar x

