

JOURNALING BY THE MOONLIGHT *A Creative Path to Self-Discovery*

Facilitator Training Program



Module Eight

The Waning Crescent Moon: Managing the Ebb and Flow

We cannot be happy if we expect to live all the time at the highest peak of intensity. Happiness is not a matter of intensity, but of balance and order and rhythm and harmony.

~ Thomas Merton

Dumping Out the Clutter

Imagine for a moment, walking into a cluttered room and being surrounded by STUFF. You don't know where to begin or how to sort through it all. It can feel overwhelming - and it can be a real energy-zapper!

The same is true in the mind. When we walk around with rambling thoughts and no way to sort through them, we feel cluttered. We feel drained. We feel confused - and probably frustrated.

Setting a timer for five minutes and writing from a point of "*What's going on?*" - or - "*What's in my mind right now?*" - gives you an opportunity to clear the mind of clutter.

And often, when we're clearing the clutter - just as we do in a room, we run across a "*keeper*" - a nugget of thought or wisdom that is worth holding onto.

Using a journaling technique called the "*Mind Dump*" - allow yourself to clear your mental space, making room for new thoughts and perspectives to enter with no specific intention. Set a timer - and write for five minutes (or ten minutes if you're feeling bold).

After you "*dump your thoughts*" - take a breather, then return to your writing with a highlighter. Read through what you wrote and notice what jumps off the page.

What is your nugget? What is worth keeping?

Moonlight Musing

Let's take a moment to do a check-in.

Over the last two months, you've taken deep and rich dives into your inner psyche. So it's completely normal to have intense feelings at this stage.

Close your eyes, take a deep breath, and check in with your *Inner Goddess*.

What emotion are you feeling right now? Excitement? Satisfaction? Overwhelm? Frustration? Fear? Perhaps a combination of all of these?

Take some time to check in with yourself and honor how you're feeling right now - and write about it in your journal.

What's Clogging Your Emotional Energy?

During your check-in, were you feeling overwhelm, frustration or fear? If so, take a moment to ask yourself why. What's going on?

Being honest with yourself is key. In order to understand emotional energies that feel dark, it's important to understand why they're present. What purpose are they serving?

If you're feeling overwhelmed, is it possible that you're moving too fast? Or is it possible that you have too many ideas floating around - so many that you can't even get started?

If you're feeling frustrated, is it possible that you're not moving fast enough? Or is it possible that you're not at all connected with "*the self-discovery process*" - and you're only looking for "*quick results*" right now.

If you're feeling fearful, what is the fear about? Is it a fear of failure? Is it a fear of being judged? Or could it be a fear of success?

Whatever emotions you're feeling in the present moment, allow them to be what they are - and choose to understand them so you can get to the root of the clog. It's important to stop and take notice - and "*be*" with the emotional energy that's holding you back from moving forward in a truly authentic way.

Could it be a pattern that keeps you in the spin cycle?

Moonlight Musing

Take a deep breath - and release it slowly. Do this several times until you begin to feel your body relax.

Now close your eyes and allow your *Inner Goddess* to come forward. Ask for her guidance in helping you understand these emotions - and listen to what she has to say.

What is this energy all about and where did it come from? What's the trigger?

Take as long as you need in order to fully receive the answers from your *Inner Goddess*.

Then ask yourself, "*What do I need to shift or release in order to move forward?*"

Take a few minutes to write about this in your journal.

Managing the Ebb and Flow

Humans aren't machines. We don't have a constant source of power from which we draw upon - to perform complicated functions all the time without breaks. Rather, our power supplies (*our energy and emotional levels*) dip and rise with each hour of the day - and even wax and wane on a much larger level. We either find ourselves in periods of great motivation and energy - or in periods where we just want to do what we need to do in order to survive - and nothing more.

As women, we're accustomed to changing direction at any given moment. Many times we're okay with it - and we just "*go with the flow.*"

But there are other times when we feel the resistance kicking in, muttering under our breath, "*Not again - not this time.*"

When we refuse to listen to our cycles of high and low emotional energy, we make things worse, not better. If our energy and emotional levels are off balance, we may find ourselves falling off track as our inner voice cries out for pause.

When this happens, we need to listen - and go with the flow. If we feel a need to stop, we should stop. It may be the universe's way of telling us we need a breather.

It is important to manage the *ebb and flow* of energy, emotion, and motivation - both on a daily basis and a long-term basis. When you manage these cycles rather than ignore them, you are far more productive. But more importantly, you're happier too.

In astrology, the moon rules our emotional being. And in science, it has often been said that the moon plays a key role in the *ebb and flow* of the ocean and in the cycles of nature.

So how do our emotions affect the *ebb and flow* in our lives? And how can we manage the two so that they work together in a positive way?

As we go through the *ebb and flow* of life, it's important for us to reach a point of acceptance for "*what is*" - while holding on to our bigger vision. This is where the *art of surrender* plays a big role.

Once we connect with ourselves emotionally - and understand how we may react to any given situation, we can respond accordingly and with great accuracy.

Moonlight Musing

Imagine yourself taking an evening swim in the ocean. The light of the moon is reflecting on each wave as you float along with “*what is.*”

Relax and take in several deep breaths and ponder the ebb and flow of your life as it is right now.

As you think about the connections you’ve made with your *Inner Goddess*, how can you authentically express this in your outer world?

And how does this expression support you on an emotional level?

When something around you is out of your control, how do you naturally respond? And when something is within your control, how do you naturally respond?

Ponder these questions in your journal.

Focus and Flow - and Create and Adjust

When we're designing our lives, there's a great deal of focus on the *bigger vision* and the many parts of it - getting clear on our direction, our relationship with self, our ideal tribe, our creative projects, our support team, and our inner and outer intentions.

We put our energy on *focusing and creating*, then we step back and watch it flow. Then we return to it, make observations, adjust it if necessary - and let it flow again.

We desire the commitment and clarity which comes with focus, but we don't want to hold on so tight that we can't be open to adjustments. Flow helps loosen us up, keeping us open to new ideas and insights. And focus keeps us grounded in our larger vision.

When we create something, it's always good to have a “*test run*” so that we know whether or not adjustments need to be made. This is the beauty of imperfection. When we mix it with a little courage and confidence, all kinds of great things can happen.

And we'll never know how great we can be, if we don't put ourselves out there.

Moonlight Musing

What are you willing to "*put out there*" for a trial run?

Are you ready to roll the dice and try something new - knowing that you can adjust it, if necessary?

Take some time to ponder the various aspects of your personal and professional life.

Where are you willing to try something new - or to approach something from a different perspective? And are you willing to do it without being completely ready?

Are you willing to "*put it out there*" - even if it's not *perfect*?

Contemplate these questions and make a few notes in your journal.

The Moon Sign in Astrology

As we touched on in *Module One*, the **moon sign** represents a person's emotions, instincts, and the unconscious. It's an indicator of one's instinctive reactions - becoming the personality you keep hidden from others until you develop a comfort level with them.

The **moon sign** is a direct line to your *Inner Goddess*, allowing you to spontaneously feel and express joy as well as react to things that may cause you to feel discomfort or dissatisfaction. It's the part of you that enjoys the little sensualities of life and it's inextricably linked to the reactions you have to your environment.

Also in astrology, the meaning of the moon can be esoteric. It stands for infancy, childhood, your dreams, memory, and your past – creating your inner psyche. A person's moon sign personality is often expressed in dreams – both daydreams and sleeping dreams.

Because the moon holds dominion over the emotional sphere, it can influence your receptivity to others and also how others feel about you. That's why a person's moon sign is especially important in love relationships. And for mothers, this love carries over to our children.

Scientists continue to study the moon's power over plant life, tides, emotions, fertility, menstruation, and biorhythms. And astrologers continue to find new and subtle ways in which the moon influences our daily lives, particularly in the area of emotion.

Moonlight Musing

Review the meanings of your **moon sign**. How does it help you understand your emotional make-up?

Considering all that you've been through in your life, does the description of your **moon sign** correlate with the emotional reactions you've had along the way?

Now imagine for a moment that you're the **moon** in the sky, looking down on the world through your emotional lens. How do you see the world? How do you feel about the world?

Now zero in on your immediate environment. Through your **moon sign** lens, how do you emotionally connect with your current environment? Is there an emotional element missing? If so, describe the missing element.

Take a few minutes to record these thoughts in your journal.

The Waning Crescent

The **waning crescent moon** phase sheds light on *"how we manage the ebb and flow of life."* It brings enlightenment at a deep level. It's a time of conscious growth, clarification of values, and the surrender to a new future.

Rebirth can occur during this phase and playfulness can come forth. This is when the moon diminishes from a sliver to the darkness of the new moon. It's a time of completion, inward-looking, and planning for the next phase in our lives.

The **waning crescent moon** is receptive and releasing. It's about letting go of the past and turning our thoughts and attention toward the future. This phase involves a connection to the intellectual body, giving us a form of detachment – which will allow us to give an objective view toward the scenarios and the options in our lives. This moon phase magnifies our awareness of what was and what is to be.

The energy of the **waning crescent phase** is stimulated by hearing our own voice – both inner and outer. This voice carries the promise of our future.

Liberation from the past must be attained in order to begin a path of consciousness and clarity. The function of this moon phase is to clear out old patterns in preparation for a new life cycle.

Withdrawal from the outside world may be necessary during this time. It's a time for dreaming and quiet contemplation. It's a time to be with ourselves and to listen to the voice within.

This can be a really productive time. It can be good for the fermentation and incubation of ideas, the processing and analysis of big decisions, and other various background functions that don't take much energy, but do take time for the mind to really resolve the missing pieces.

It's important to manage *the ebb and flow* of energy, emotion, and motivation, both on a daily basis and a long-term basis. When you manage these cycles rather than ignore them, you are far more productive. But more importantly, you're happier, too.

During this moon phase, pay attention to your own *ebb and flow* of energy, emotion, and motivation - and make note of it in your journal.

Moonlight Musing

As you retreat from the outside world and begin your quiet contemplation, take a deep breath and release it slowly. Do this several times until you begin to feel your body relax.

Now close your eyes and allow your *Inner Goddess* to come forward.

What do you need to release? And what do you choose to take with you into the next phase of life?

Take a few minutes to ponder these questions and make note of your thoughts.

Gratitude Journal Writing

If you're finding yourself challenged by day-to-day issues, it's helpful to remember what is going right in your life. It's also helpful to look at life's challenges as opportunities - and ask yourself, "*What are the gifts in this?*"

This is where **gratitude journaling** comes in. Working with the *law of attraction*, this journaling technique helps switch the focus from the negative to the positive.

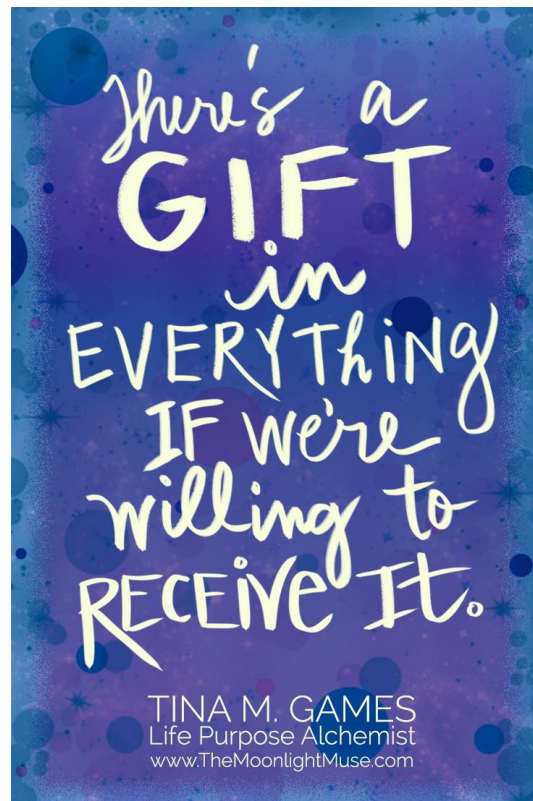
Have you ever noticed that some people seem to be able to maintain a positive attitude, regardless of what's happening around them? Like everyone else, they can appreciate the good times. But they also have the ability to focus on the positive in the face of some pretty negative events. They see the good in difficult people, they see the opportunity in a challenging situation, and they appreciate what they have, even in the face of loss.

A **gratitude journal** is a way to consciously call attention to the things that we are thankful for each day. By focusing on gratitude, we become more aware of these things, thus creating a positive shift in our thinking.

As inspirational speaker and best-selling author Wayne Dyer says, “*When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.*” It’s all about perspective!

And after several days of **gratitude journaling**, our mindset starts to change, shifting from a “*glass half empty*” to “*glass half full.*”

Fortunately, a positive attitude *can* be cultivated with a little practice. Although we are born with specific temperamental tendencies, the brain is a muscle - and you can strengthen your mind’s natural tendency toward optimism if you work at it.



Keeping a Gratitude Journal

One of the best ways to cultivate *gratitude* is to keep a **gratitude journal**. Not only are you combining the benefits of journaling with the active adoption of a more positive mindset, you are left with a nice catalog of happy memories and a long list of things in your life for which you are grateful. This can be wonderful to read during times when it’s more difficult to remember what these things are.

Most experts agree that it takes 21 days to develop a new habit – and with the help of your journal, you can be well on your way to transforming the way you look at things.

For the next week, I invite you to focus on the following things:

1. *Look for things during the day for which you are grateful. Make mental notes throughout the day. Notice how the concept of keeping a gratitude journal shifts your focus toward looking for more positive things.*
2. *For the next seven days, record five things you're grateful for each day - big or small. Perhaps it's a baby's smile, a flower in bloom, or the smell of a freshly cut lawn.*
3. *Begin every day with the intention that you will "look for the positive angle in all things". View obstacles as opportunities for appreciation or as gifts for the lessons learned.*
4. *Focus on the wonderful things in life, in order to attract similar encounters in the course of the day. Use positive energy as a magnet to draw even more positive energy. And note these attractions in your gratitude journal.*
5. *Personalize your gratitude journal by adding clippings, photos, quotes or verses from magazines (or other sources). Tuck them inside your journal - and allow their energy to swirl throughout the pages.*

How Do I Record My Gratitude?

If you're a list-maker, take your journal and list five things you are *grateful* for every day. Morning people will find this easier to do first thing in the morning (writing about the day before) while night people will find this easier in the evening, perhaps before bedtime (about the day that has just ended).

For the storyteller in you, try writing about the best things that happen to you each day - perhaps writing a descriptive paragraph about each event . Again - morning people will do this in the morning (about the day before) and night people will do this in the evening (about the day that is ending).

If you don't enjoy the act of writing, try drawing an image of some kind that reflects the good in your day. You may even want to choose a journal or a notebook with unlined pages and create a one-sentence or a one-word description for each drawing that you make. Allow the description to reflect the beauty in the drawing. And if you'd prefer to collage instead of draw, that's fine, too. At the end of your journaling period, you'll have a beautiful collection of *grateful* illustrations or a collage of *gratitude*.

Moonlight Musing

Before you begin recording life with **gratitude**, take a moment to write a special dedication to yourself.

What's your intention for this journal? What would you like to see as the outcome?

As an example, I have used "*I dedicate this journal to all the wonderful possibilities that stem from living a life of **gratitude**. May I continue to be blessed on my journey to live a more abundant life.*"

Now, on the first blank page of your journal, write your dedication - and make sure to date it.

And close the dedication, "*With love and gratitude*" - and sign your name.

The Ripple Effects of Gratitude

Can you imagine a world where everyone showed **gratitude**? If someone did something kind for you, you'd probably give them a warm smile and say *thank you*. And if you were having a bad day, someone else might take time out of his or her life to comfort you, making you feel better. And these acts of kindness would probably prompt you to do the same thing for someone else

Like a skipping stone in a pond, acts of **gratitude** have the potential to create a *ripple effect*.

Have you said *thank you* to someone today - to show how **grateful** you are for them? It seems like a small thing, but it can have a huge impact on your life and the life of the person you're thanking.

Here are a few ways you can express your **gratitude** (either to yourself or to someone else):

1. Maintain a gratitude journal - List five things that you are *grateful* for every day.

2. Send a thank-you note - Either to yourself or someone else. It's nice to get a little note thanking you for something you did, so why not send one to yourself? Perhaps you can thank your body for being in good health or thank yourself for being in a happy mood. ~ And for someone else - send a thank you card, a little note, or an email expressing your thanks. It can go a long way (remember the *ripple effect*)!

- 3. Give someone a smile or a hug** - When you're in the grocery store, smile at the cashier. When you see a friend or loved one, greet them with a hug.
- 4. Do someone a favor** - Without expecting anything in return, do something nice for someone. Actions speak louder than words - and doing something nice is a wonderful way to show *gratitude*.
- 5. Give someone a list of all they've done that you're grateful for** - Take five minutes and make a list of 10 (or more) things you love about someone - or things they've done for you that you appreciate.
- 6. Acknowledge someone publicly** - Who doesn't love public praise? Find a way to acknowledge the contributions of someone by showing your *gratitude* in a public way. Perhaps you can write about them on your blog or write a special "*letter to the editor*" of a local newspaper or newsletter - or make a special public announcement of some kind.
- 7. Say thanks, even for the negative things in your life** - When things go wrong, when we're not happy, when people are mean to us, when we are worn down by the million slings and arrows of everyday life - we don't want to say thank you. But in truth, this is the time when it matters most. ~ Take a moment to stop and close your eyes, and find things to be thankful for - your health, your family, your job, the roof over your head, the fact that you'll have a next meal, the beauty of the world around you, the good people in your life, your new computer. Whatever you can think of, be thankful for them and express that *gratitude* somehow. Realize that all is not bad in this world - and be happy for that.



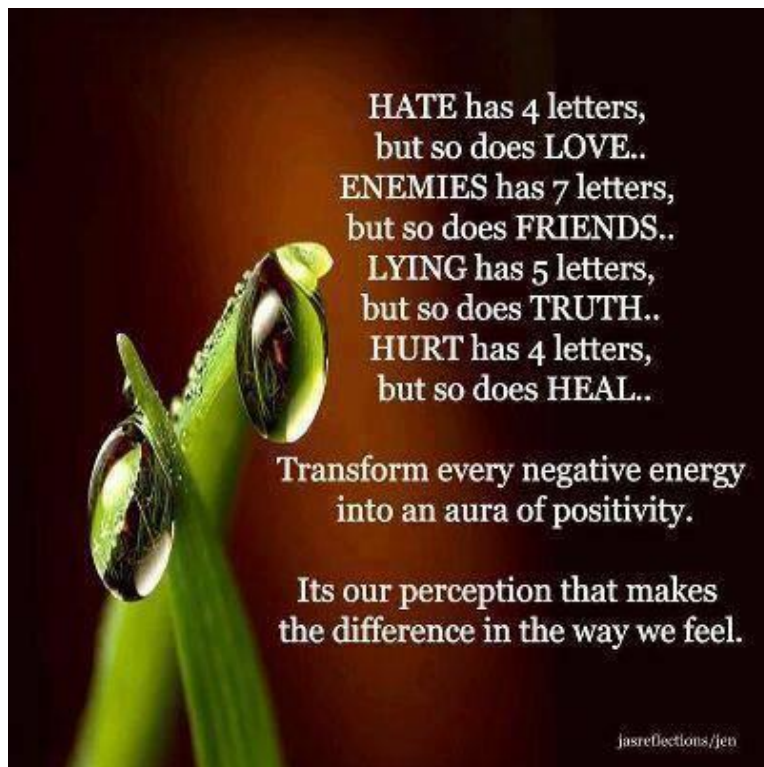
Continuing a Gratitude Journal Writing Practice

One of the amazing aspects of *gratitude* is that its high vibration works with both the wanted and the unwanted. When we give thanks for the negative aspects of our lives, the high vibration of *gratitude* helps us release energies surrounding the negativity. And on the other end of the spectrum, *gratitude* increases the strength and potency of the aspects that are positive and wanted. This makes the process very easy - give *gratitude* to everything, and everything will naturally sort itself out.

You can change your life by always giving *gratitude* for what you have - taking the focus off of what you don't have - and watch your life transform into your heart's desire. The high frequency of *gratitude* accelerates the emergence of your new reality. The river of *gratitude* transforms all in her path leaving depths of unwavering joy.

For example, if you continue to live with worry over money, you will continue to face the same money issues because that is the vibrational energy that you're sending out. By focusing on what you desire regarding your relationship with money, you begin to spin *gratitude* around your money issues that are more positive, thus allowing more opportunities for money to flow into your life.

To continue this wave of high vibration, take five minutes every day to record what you are grateful for. This will keep the door of abundance open as you look at life through a "*glass half-full.*"



Making a Commitment to Yourself

All serious relationships require commitments. The same is true in your relationship with self.

When we make commitments in our relationships, we set intentions to honor them by carrying through inspired-actions. What actions will you commit to - in order to honor your **sacred relationship with self**?

When you enter into any intimate relationship, you're either "*all in*" - or you're not. So in a relationship with yourself, choose to be "*all in*."

Think about the old adage, "*How you do anything is how you do everything.*"

As you move into a more **conscious relationship with self**, understand that there's always an *ebb and flow* in life - and you may catch yourself moving back to old patterns of self-neglect, even self-abuse, from time to time. When this occurs, simply be aware - and choose to change the pattern. Allow yourself to shift into a new vibration that matches the transformation that you are creating.

Moonlight Musing

Take a moment to ponder how you handle the "*ebb and flow*" of your relationship with self.

When you feel yourself being pulled back into old patterns, what will you choose to do?

What have you learned from this module that will support you in staying with the flow of energy that's moving you forward?

In your journal complete this statement, "*If I feel myself being pulled back into an old pattern, I will change the direction by _____.*"

What will you do or say to yourself in order to change the direction?

Take some time to reflect on this in your journal.

Working with the Journaling by the Moonlight Card Deck

In the *Journaling by the Moonlight* card deck, you'll find six *Waning Crescent* journaling prompt cards. Take some time to review these - and work with each of the prompts.

You can start by picking one with a message that is resonating with you in this moment - or shuffle the six *Waning Crescent* cards and trust the universe to pick the right one for you.

Also, from a facilitator's perspective, be thinking about how you can adapt the prompts for your intended audience.



Sharing Your Work:

As you work through the *Moonlight Musings* for this module, please share any insights, ah-has, comments or questions via the **Waning Crescent Moon** discussion thread in the *Moonlight Cafe Forum*. This is where you'll receive guidance and support as you work with the content, journaling prompts, and creative exercises.