

JOURNALING BY THE MOONLIGHT

A Creative Path to Self-Discovery

Facilitator Training Program



Module Four

The Waxing Gibbous Moon: Connecting with Your Ideal Tribe and Attracting the Right Support

Somewhere, there are people to whom we can speak with passion without having the words catch in our throats. Somewhere a circle of hands will open to receive us, eyes will light up as we enter, voices will celebrate with us whenever we come into our own power.

~ Starhawk

Honoring Our Sense of Belonging

Journal therapy pioneer *Kathleen Adams* writes in her book, *Scribing the Soul* - "*Humans are tribal people.*"

Yes, we are. It explains the human need "*to belong.*" And in periods of pain, darkness, and disconnect – it is imperative to make that connection with one's **tribe**.

No one understands a feeling or a situation any more than someone else who has been through it – or who may still be going through it. This is what creates a shared connection.

If you've ever felt disconnected or on the outside looking in – you know how it feels to not belong. American poet *David Whyte* references this feeling in his collection of poetry, *The House of Belonging* - where he approaches this deep-rooted human desire in an artistic and eloquent way.

As you continue on your creative journey of life, think about who you can share your joys with, cry your tears with, and who (or what) will give you the space "to be you" without any form of judgment. There is no need for perfection in a *circle of support*. This is a place where you can be your most vulnerable and still feel loved and appreciated for who you are.

Somewhere, there is a **tribe** waiting to welcome you with open arms and to receive you with an open heart as the creative soul that you are.

You belong. We all belong. This beautiful planet isn't just for a chosen group of us. It's for ALL of us. We ALL have a place in this world.

Moonlight Musing

As you ponder your own **tribe**, consider these words of American writer and activist, *Starhawk*:

"Somewhere, there are people to whom we can speak with passion without having the words catch in our throats. Somewhere a circle of hands will open to receive us, eyes will light up as we enter, voices will celebrate with us whenever we come into our own power."

What do these words evoke in you?

Can you imagine a circle of people who truly honor you in the highest light possible - and who are there to support you when you feel dark?

Take some time to ponder what a "*circle of support*" means to you.

The Waxing Gibbous

The **waxing gibbous moon** phase brings light to the connections in our lives - and to the strength of our support systems.

As the moon circles the earth, the earth circles the sun. It's a natural support system – and one that we take for granted every day. The moon depends on the earth's orbit for survival. And the earth depends on the sun for survival. Each one plays a part in creating a larger *support system*.

Take a look at the moon when it transitions from a **waxing gibbous phase** to being completely full of light. We see an almost full moon, with only a dark crescent waiting to be filled with light.

What do we need in order to close this gap of darkness, bringing ourselves into full light? Who can we count on to help us create safe and sacred space - and to support our "*circle of light*?"

It's a perfect time to ask yourself:

- How well-supported do I feel, both personally and professionally?
- Where could I use more support? What type of support do I need? And how comfortable do I feel asking for this support?
- What relationships do I have in my life that need more attention, perhaps even healing?
- Are there relationships in my life that have run their course? Am I ready to let go of these relationships in order to move on?

Because humans are *tribal people*, there's power in numbers, particularly when the numbers involve a group of like-minded souls who are supportive and appreciative of one another.

We have a natural need to connect, so we often find ourselves being drawn to those who "*get us*." We feel good when we're with these types of people. They support us in our everyday dreams and they breathe life into our bigger vision - for ourselves and for the world at large.

Moonlight Musing

Take a moment to reflect on the quote from Starhawk (referenced earlier).

Do you have this kind of support in your personal life? Do you have this kind of support in your professional life?

Finding Your Tribe

During my first year of motherhood, as I suffered through what could have been labeled postpartum depression - which I now think is a layer of what I call "*maternal depression*" - I ached for someone else who could truly empathize with the pain that I was feeling. It took a good two years for me to make a connection with other mothers who "*had been there*" or who "*were there.*"

In that gap of time - before I met *my tribe* - I remember feeling like it was just my son and me against the world. It was an overwhelming feeling that totally overpowered me and sent me on a spiral into darkness. And it wasn't until I met *my tribe* that I started seeing the light again.

My "*spiral of darkness*" brought a deep sense of pain into my life - a pain that no one else around me could understand. But my journal held that pain and allowed me to take a long hard look at it. And when I did, I started to see the little bits of *light*. And through the *light*, I started seeing this pain in other mothers. It was then that I realized - I wasn't alone.

In those moments of *light*, I felt inspired because I knew there was a community of like-minded women who felt the way I did. All I needed to do was connect with them.

It was this experience that has been the guiding force of the work I do now. And when I think back to that dark time in my life, it gives *light* to my **life purpose**.

I would never be where I am now, had it not been for that experience. As painful as it was, it became the very foundation that I needed to create *my unique tribe* and to go forward with a heart filled with empathy and compassion - and a strong desire to help other mothers emerge from the darkness of their own emotions.

So when I came to the point of writing my book, *Journaling by the Moonlight: A Mother's Path to Self-Discovery*, I wanted mothers to realize that every human transition begins in darkness and gradually moves into light, where we get a glimpse of what is possible. And then we retreat, to ponder the many ways we can manifest these possibilities into reality. This requires deep work, where we step into our own truth and into our own power – and where we can emerge in the most authentic way possible.

Each and every one of us has the power to create great change in the world. And this change has the most impact when we begin with ourselves – looking in the mirror and honoring the person who is staring back.

Imagine for a moment a pebble thrown into a pond. It creates a ripple that goes on and on and on. When we're living life with complete authenticity, we're subconsciously giving permission for others to do the same. We're truly at our best, creating powerful change for ourselves, our families, our communities, and for the world at large. It's all part of what I call the *legacy ripple*.

Notice who is part of your *legacy ripple*, both in the role of giver (supporting you with wisdom and inspiration) - and in the role of receiver (being a recipient of the gifts and wisdom that you are being called to share with others).

Moonlight Musing

If you're able, take a walk outside and find a place where you can connect to nature. Make yourself comfortable in this space – maybe on a park bench or a picnic blanket, or on the end of a pier with your legs dangling in the water or sitting on a rock in the middle of a flower garden. Wherever you are, however you're sitting, take a long look around you and breathe in nature's wisdom.

Now close your eyes. Inhale deeply and exhale slowly – and imagine the sound of beating drums. Feel the rhythm of these drums and listen carefully for the wisdom of the Native American elders coming to you in the form of thoughts. And with these thoughts, they present you with members of your tribe.

Who do you see? Do you know these people? Are they in your life now? Or are they people you are meeting for the first time?

Are any members of your tribe animals? What types of animals are represented in your tribe?

Notice how they all seem to understand you. They seem to feel your pain. They seem genuinely interested in your well-being.

What wisdom do they bring to share with you?

When you feel ready, open your eyes - and in your journal, describe your tribe and share what wisdom they have given to you.

How Healthy Are Your Current Relationships?

Using the earlier orbit analogy, imagine yourself as the earth and the emotional relationships in your life - including your relationship with self - as the moon. And imagine that the sun represents your true potential in this world - what it is you are here to create and to BE in this life.

In order to live up to your potential, it's imperative that you give yourself the gift of healthy relationships, including your relationship with self.

There's a common saying, "*How you do anything is how you do everything.*"

If you apply this to the relationships in your life, how healthy are they? Are they supportive? Do they support your heart's desire? Or do you feel judged or often criticized?

And how healthy is your relationship to self? Do you love yourself enough to believe that you are fully capable of achieving anything you set your mind to? Do you love yourself enough to allow yourself to believe that you can have your heart's desire?

As we look at the moon (in this case, the relationships in your life - including your relationship with self) in its **waxing gibbous phase**, we see it with three quarters of light. We know that the potential for healthy relationships is there. And by giving "*life*" to that potential, the moon becomes full and rich in color - and something that is extraordinarily beautiful.

Moonlight Musing

Picture the magic that a healthy support system can bring. And imagine what you can bring to your relationship with self - giving it the love and support that it needs in order to beam with full light.

What relationships do you currently have with others that are fully supportive? And which ones are not?

And what needs to shift within you, so you can engage in a "*love affair*" with yourself?

Take some time to ponder these questions in your journal.

Attracting Your Circle of Support

When the universe is connecting on all fronts, the *law of attraction* is apparent and we can begin to see the synchronicities in our lives. This is when the creative manifestation begins. We begin to meet the right people. We begin to find ourselves in the right places at the right time. And doors of opportunity begin to open.

With a strong *circle of support*, we can minimize any stress and anxiety that may get in the way of staying true to our authentic self. When a feeling of overwhelm or depression occurs, a call to a trusted friend or a family member can make all the difference.

But how can we recognize when we're connecting to the right people and the right scenarios? How do we know that we're on the right path? Can we ask the universe for signs?

This is when we need to be as specific as we can about what we desire in our lives. The more specific we can be, the more we're able to make the right connections.

Moonlight Musing

Who would you like to attract into your *circle of support*, both personally and professionally?

Think about what you need on a personal level - and make note of it. Then begin to think about the types of people who could support you in these areas.

Perhaps you already have them in your life, but could use more time with them?

Or maybe you're lacking this kind of support? If so, who could you attract that would provide this type of support? Is it one person - or is it a group of people?

Be as specific as you can so you can begin manifesting exactly who you need in your *circle of support*.

Now think about what you need on a professional level. To assist you with this, I've added a visual map in the group forum under the *Share* tab in the *File Cabinet*. You'll find it in the *Additional Resources* file - titled "*Your Creation Team*."

Take a look at each of these areas and begin to think about who is already on your team - and where you could use some more support.

Once you get clear on who you need to attract, both personally and professionally, make note of it in your journal.

Creating Your Circle of Support

Putting together a circle of support provides a pillow for comfort and protection. This circle can consist of anyone (or anything) who can "*have your back*" in a moment of crisis. It can include loyal friends, devoted family members, close colleagues, a trusted doctor or therapist, your place of worship, your dog or cat – and your "always there when you need her" journal.

As you continue on your journey of self-discovery, think about who you can share your

joys with, cry your tears with, and who (or what) will give you the space “*to be you*” without any form of judgment. There is no need for perfection in a *circle of support*. This is a place where you can be your most vulnerable and still feel loved and appreciated for who you are.

The key to eliminating anxiety, stress, overwhelm, and depression is to know what resources you have available – and how to use them when the need arises. Like the light of the moon, the path becomes clearer when we recognize the strength of a support system.

Moonlight Musing

Think back to the tribe you described earlier. Now it’s your turn to call them into your *circle of support*.

Imagine yourself standing in the center of this beautiful, nurturing, and loving circle.

Call each tribe member, one by one, into the circle and tell them what you need – and ask for their support in honoring your authentic self without any judgment.

Make a list of your support circle members and record them in your journal. And make a note beside each name, listing what it is that you need from them in order to feel fully supported.

Then decorate this journal page in a way that brings a peaceful feeling of support to you.

Identifying YOUR People

Now let’s shift our focus to business. How does knowing who your **tribe** is apply to business?

Have you ever watched a show on television or read an article in a magazine and thought, “*Wow! They’re talking to me! They know what I’m thinking! They get me!*”

Then you find out that the person on TV or the person writing the article has written a book or has created a workshop, and you think, “*I need to buy the book. I need to be in the workshop.*”

This is the power of knowing who your **tribe** is - which in business means the “*ideal audience*” or the “*ideal clients*.” It’s the feeling of connecting with a group of people who understand your language and who see the value of what it is you have to offer. You have what they need or desire.

When you discover what (and who) makes you excited, motivated, and inspired - you can build your business around that passion. And when you take the "who" - and determine what their challenges are and what their dreams are, you can package your solutions to help them. If you can do this, you are more likely to show up fully and take the inspired actions necessary to build a serious business.

When you've taken the time to fully understand your ideal client, perhaps even walking in his or her shoes, you can begin to build your niche - your target audience.

Moonlight Musing

Ponder the following questions, then write your answers in your journal:

What group of people do you feel most *called* to serve?

What group of people do you feel most *passionate* about?

What group of people do you have the most history with? Think back to your unique experiences, both life experiences and professional experiences. You can refer to your "*My Gifts*" map for a few clues.

What's unique about you that sets you apart from others?

It's important to note that your ethnicity, your religious affiliation, your professional expertise, your personal story, any disabilities or special challenges – any of these will set you apart from anyone else, giving you a door to an audience that someone else may not be able to open.

Tightening Your Niche

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines *niche* as "a place, employment, status or **activity for which a person or thing is best fitted.**"

You will naturally work better with a certain group of people - over all other groups of people. You will probably see a need for your products and/or services everywhere, in many different groups - but there is one group that will fit you like a glove.

There are two ways to niche – by group and by expertise.

To niche by group, keep in mind that the more targeted the group, the easier it will be for you to communicate effectively with them. You'll be able to understand and speak their

language. For example – your niche could be women entrepreneurs - or it could be women entrepreneur massage therapists. ~ Do you see the difference?

When you niche by expertise, you instantly start narrowing your focus because you become a specialist (expert) – and specialists always make more money. As a specialist, your expertise solves a very specific problem for a specific group of people.

Moonlight Musing

For the moment, think of yourself as an expert.

Take a look at your answers from the above *Moonlight Musing*. Then reflect on your own life journey and the life experiences you bring to the table of business.

Do you see any threads of similarity? If so, make a note of it.

Now complete this statement:

I show _____ (*your potential niche group*) how to _____ (*your potential area of expertise*).

Write this statement out as many times as you need to - with the different groups you may be feeling called to serve.

Then take a step back and look at what you've written. Do any of the statements jump out at you - more than the others?

Are you able to identify one niche group and one area of expertise? If not, circle (or star) the statements that feel the strongest to you. And ponder ways that you may be able to merge them together.

Sharing Your Unique Gifts

Who are you going to share your unique gifts with? What group of people can benefit most from the gifts you have to offer?

Think back to what it is you are passionate about. And think about your unique life experiences. Now add your natural talents - and take a look at all of it, as a whole.

You can refer to your "*My Gifts*" visual map for this exercise.

Who is it that will be drawn to you because of your "*personal tapestry*" (a collection of everything that is unique about you - your "personal patchwork quilt").

Think about the many people you have worked with over the years - both professionally and as a volunteer. Who stood out? Who did you enjoy working with most? And what was it that made you get along so well with them?

Moonlight Musing

Think of five clients or five professional colleagues or five volunteer partners - with whom you have really enjoyed working - and list their unique qualities (or write a descriptive paragraph about them).

What was it about them that you liked? What was it about your relationship with them that worked? And what was it about the work you did together that made you feel successful?

Take some time to write about this in your journal.

Interviewing Yourself - as the Potential Client

If you've been having a hard time choosing which group to work with, take another look.

It might be staring you right in the face!

Keep in mind the law of attraction - *like attracts like*.

Look for how your *ideal client* is the "before" picture – in your own before and after story.

Think about your life journey - and what has brought you to this moment in time.

What is it about your own journey that triggers an excitement about working with others?

Think about this quote for a moment, "*The life you live is the lesson you teach.*"

How much does your ideal client resemble you? Is it possible that YOU are your own target client?

For now, let's pretend that you are – and like a reporter, let's set you up for an interview.

Moonlight Musing

Interview yourself as the client. Dig deep inside your inner being and answer the following questions. Then record your answers in your journal.

What keeps you up at night worrying? What are the top 3 things you worry about most?

What is the biggest struggle you experience on a daily basis?

What has been the biggest challenge to date - personal or professional?

When it comes to your life (or your business) what makes you angry?

What goal have you not been able to reach?

What is the biggest improvement you could make in your life?

Activating the Law of Attraction

There is a group of people you are meant to serve. And it is up to you to discover who they are and how you can help solve one or more of their biggest problems.

As you begin to gain clarity about who this audience is and how you can best serve them, it is important that you be as specific as possible when stating your intentions to the universe. Remember the power of the law of attraction - which we touched on in the last module:

1. *Know what you want.*
2. *Ask the universe for it.*
3. *Feel and behave as if the object of your desire is on its way.*
4. *Be open to receiving it.*

See yourself doing what you love with the people you most want to serve. See them responding in a positive way to your message and your offerings.

See them through eyes of gratitude, both in the giving and receiving of appreciation. They appreciate you - and you appreciate them.

Believe in your own unique magic - and embrace the gifts you naturally bring to others.

Notice how you inspire and empower others!

Moonlight Musing

Listen to the audio recording titled, *Ideal Tribe* - located in the forum *File Cabinet* under the *Visualizations* file. This special visualization is designed to help you connect to who it is you're meant to serve and what it is that you will be offering to them.

Once you have experienced this visualization, make a note of any words, images, colors, feelings, or other details that came to you.

What did you see? What did you hear? What did you feel?

What do you now know - that you didn't know before?

Where has the fog been lifted?

Take time to write about all 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 *Waxing Gibbous* 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 *Waxing Gibbous* 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.



And to guide you into a gentle and supportive energy, I've added a special visualization called *From Your Mountaintop* in the forum *File Cabinet* under the *Visualizations* file. Take some time to listen to this visualization as you begin to work with the journaling cards.

** Please note that this is a previously-recorded visualization from my **Moonlight Business Visioning Circle**, so please disregard what might feel like an abrupt ending (where I bring you back into your present state of awareness). Once you have returned from the visual journey, allow yourself to be gently guided to the Waxing Gibbous cards.*

Sharing Your Work:

As you work through the *Moonlight Musings* for this module, please share any insights, ah-has, comments or questions via the **Waxing Gibbous 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.