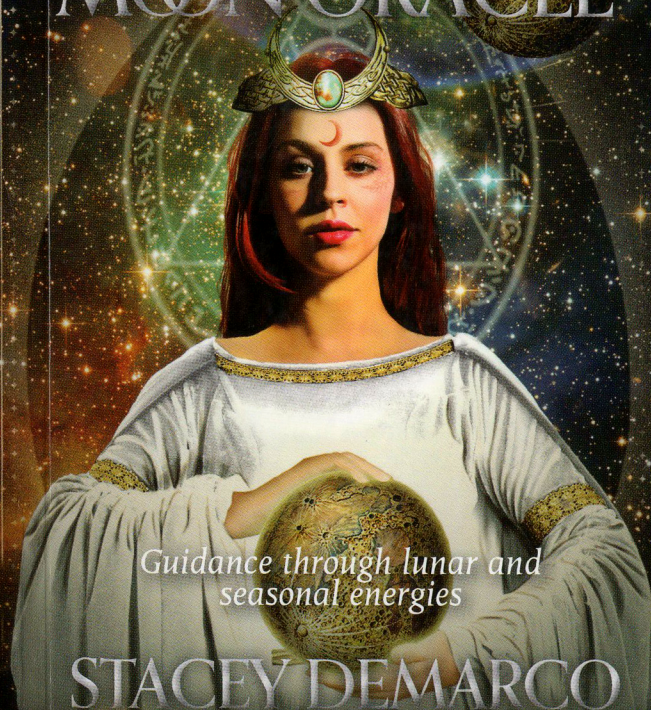


ROCKPOOL
PUBLISHING

Queen of the Moon Oracle

Stacey Demarco

QUEEN *of the* MOON ORACLE



*Guidance through lunar and
seasonal energies*

STACEY DEMARCO

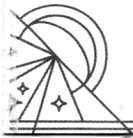


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This oracle deck is dedicated to Bev and Ted

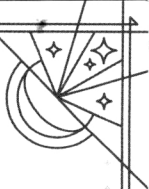
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Preface



I have been writing about the moon and the wheel of the seasons for a long time, and practising as a pagan (someone who practises Earth-honouring spiritual pathways) for even longer. Of course, the lunar energies are a big part of my workings, as it was a big part of the workings of our ancient pagan ancestors from as far afield as the Arctic through Europe and into the jungles of South America to the original Australians and the Polynesians of the Pacific.

Even as a child I was fascinated by the big orb in the sky, and I would lie barefoot and carefree upon the soft grass in my garden, surrounded by my dog and cat, waiting for moonrise. I would be eager to see what the moon's shape would be and if I could see the 'man in the moon', the smiling grey face my parents had pointed out to me. On the nights where there was just a glowing sliver of moon, I would still stay out until my parents called me inside, almost hypnotised by how the moon's shape would play against the sparkling night sky. Sometimes if I was really lucky on a brighter evening and if I was very still and quiet, I could see all the creatures of the night such as owls,

possums and fruit bats come out to play.

When I got a little older, I discovered there were gods and goddesses of the moon, through ancient myths and art. Not just someone living there like the man in the moon but, better than that, these deities could help us transform ourselves just as the phases seem to do. These amazing queens, kings, gods and goddesses led by example and encouraged us to partake in that same energetic magic.

So I find myself, decades later, barefoot under that same moon. My wonder hasn't diminished; if anything it has grown, for now I have direct experience of just how beneficial aligning myself to the gentle circle of the seasonal and lunar cycles can be.

I am reminded to release what I don't want, to not carry burdens, to rest and restore in the dark and waning cycles. Then, I follow the magnetism of the energies and plan, grow, reach, attract and create in the waxing and full cycles. The ritual, the rhythm, this riding of flow has brought me better health, a sharper yet calmer mind, more creativity in my work and an ability to appreciate that good things take time.

I hope this oracle deck will be a useful tool, a catalyst for positive change and a way to plug into these magical yet natural cycles, and that you will experience the positive power of the moon just as I have.



Introduction



What is it about the moon that makes it so special? What is it about the moon that has fascinated humans almost since we gained consciousness and rose up on our hind legs? What is it about that silver orb in the sky that captures and affects us spiritually, mentally and physically?

Admittedly, it could simply be its beauty – the stunning spectacle that awaits us, especially when it is full and round. A full moon always seems to elicit gasps of approval, however, I believe her enduring effect is significantly more complex. After all, we know she is hugely powerful in many ways!

We are moon-influenced animals even if most of us don't go howling under it. We know the feminine fertility cycle matches the length of the lunar cycle – twenty-seven or twenty-eight days – and that more births occur on full and dark moons. Just as the moon influences tides and other bodies of water, why wouldn't she influence our personal bodies of water considering we are made mostly of it? Why wouldn't this effect then influence everything from our weight to our moods, even the growth of the

foods we eat since plants are reliant upon moisture levels in the soil?

Within long-held knowledge, it's believed that the moon impacts our psychic abilities and our unconscious mind (and so therefore our dream states) in a number of ways. The unconscious is the part of the mind that directs us towards our goals and dreams; it's where ideas pop from and where creativity is based. As it is particularly susceptible to symbology, it can be affected by the power of the constant cycle of the moon.

The honouring, or at least the symbology, of the moon weaves through many spiritual practices, from Islam to countless indigenous beliefs through to contemporary paganism.

With its never-ending cycle of renewal and its strong energies of extroversion and introversion, the moon provides us with deep connection and a seamless expansion of our psychic powers. Many psychics take advantage of the fullness of the moon to further open and expand their talents and reach wider parameters. Others use the more introverted, gentle yet deep energies of the dark or new moons to deepen their craft and explore things such as astral travel.

Below is a summary of the phases of the moon, and the influences each phase brings to our unconscious and more sensitive psychic selves.

Full moon

- The moon is full in the sky.
- Full energy!
- Often a time when people find it hard to sleep or sleep extra deeply.
- Dreams are often more vivid and easily remembered.
- Should you set intentions during this moon it will give you high-impact results, and is perfect for attraction spells of any type.
- Great time to explore finding your true path and purpose in life.
- Psychic skills are often heightened.

Waning moon

- The moon is growing smaller in the sky; after a full moon and before a new moon.
- Energy is reducing.
- Good time to set intentions with the purpose of getting rid of something that no longer serves you or reducing an obstacle.
- Great time to give up a bad habit, for example, any addiction, any limiting or negative belief.

New or dark moon

- No moon visible in the sky.
- Traditionally a time of introversion and rest.

- Good time to set intentions that ask for peace and creative flow.
- Experienced practitioners can use this deep energy for powerful healing.
- Psychic skills are often heightened.

Waxing moon

- The moon is growing larger in the sky; after a new moon and before a full moon.
- Energy is growing and expanding.
- Good time to set intentions with the purpose of growth and moving towards something you desire.
- Wonderful time to ask for more money, more positive relationships and better health.
- Wonderful for prosperity spells.
- Perfect for asking for bodily vitality, a pay rise, a new job, more recognition.

Most of us would have heard that the moon – in particular the extremes of the cycle, that is, full and dark moons – affect our daylight activities in a variety of ways. While science still debates among its own communities whether these impacts are measureable or real, spiritual people have known for many ages that the lunar cycle does indeed have an impact on us.

Science, for example, has determined that the Earth's geomagnetic field varies according to the moon

phase but has neglected to study the same effects on the human body and any talents we may have.

However, it's the body's reaction to the more intense light of a full moon that perhaps has the greatest physiological effect. In ancient times, night was naturally dark as there were no electric lights, so it was easy to allow the body to work in simpatico with the lunar cycles. This is more difficult now and our bodies find it hard to adjust.

When we dream we are experiencing deep REM sleep. If you are disturbed by the strong light and energy of the full moon, you may well wake in the middle of the dream and remember it more readily than you would normally. You might also either not sleep as well or more deeply during the extreme moons, which can impact on the quality and quantity of your dreams. Many shamans choose the full moon for journeying, and it is said that the Amazons ran wildly to exhaustion during full moons in order to cleanse and purge their spirits. Modern witches use the full moon as their Sabbath time, and certainly many do prophetic dream work during both this phase and that of the Dark Moon.

Even if some people find it hard to accept the metaphysical impacts of the moon, we know more and more modern people are choosing to connect with it. The media now heralds every visible eclipse,

and every super moon is a time to go out with your buddies and a picnic blanket to observe. Consciously or not, we get joy out of watching something so beautiful and beyond ourselves. Here is something still wonderful and awesome, and that can only do us jaded techno-junkies a whole lot of good.

Author's Notes

- I created this deck based on the 27.3 day Sidereal cycle, the time it takes for the moon to complete one orbit around Earth. I rounded it up, as many witches do in their practices.
- However, some readers may be aware of the 29.5 day Synodic month which is the time it takes for our moon to complete one cycle of phases from its starting point, that is, new moon to new moon, counting the second new moon.
- In astronomy there are eight key phases: New Moon, Waxing Crescent Moon, First Quarter, Waxing Gibbous Moon, Full Moon, Waning Gibbous Moon, Third Quarter Moon and Waning Crescent Moon.
- In most witchcraft traditions the lunar cycle begins on the Dark Moon (the Void), which is why this deck is created the same way.



How to use the cards



If this deck is to be used for divination, I suggest first you dedicate or bless your cards; I have included a small ritual on page 16 if you do not already have your own in mind. This enlivens the cards and connects you with the energy of the seasons and the moon, and with the intention of the deck itself.

Second, spread the whole deck out on a table or the floor or, better still, the Earth! Breathe deeply and relax. Allow your gaze to soften, and see which cards seem more attractive to you. Which ones jump out at you or call to you in some way?

I call this the pantheon technique. These may well be the moon phases or aspects of the deck that you need to integrate into your life right now, or the themes that can most assist your growth at this time. You will be attracted to them, and the card may almost jump into your hand.

Pay attention to those cards and take action if it is indicated.

Third, notice that there are three kinds of cards in the deck:

1. **Lunar cycle cards:** a full cycle from the Dark Moon and back (cards 1-28).
2. **Seasonal lunar cards:** based on the First Nations' Lakota namings. These are Native American terms that have been passed down from generation to generation, entering into popular culture in the early eighteenth century (cards 29-40).
3. **Other lunar-related cards:** including deity and astronomical cards (cards 41-44).

The deck is designed so you can use all of the cards together for your guidance, or just pull from the lunar alone, or the lunar and seasonal alone: it's up to you.

Finally, you might also wish to try some of the following techniques of divination and oracular tradition.

One-card divination

This is inspiration and divination in its simplest form. Take a breath, ask for guidance as you shuffle the cards and simply choose a card. You may even choose to do this daily, as did some of the ancients.

Meditate upon this image; let it speak to you. Use this card as a guide for today.

Full moon three-card draw

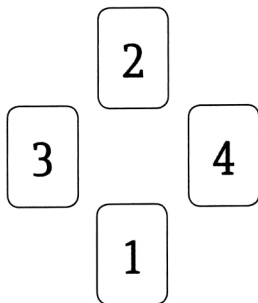
As the feminine is most tied to the moon symbolically, try consulting this spread as the moon rises, at nightfall or at midnight.



Card 1 is the heart of the issue or question. **Card 2** is the challenge. **Card 3** is the solution.

The four elements spread

I like to link the four-card spread to the four elements.



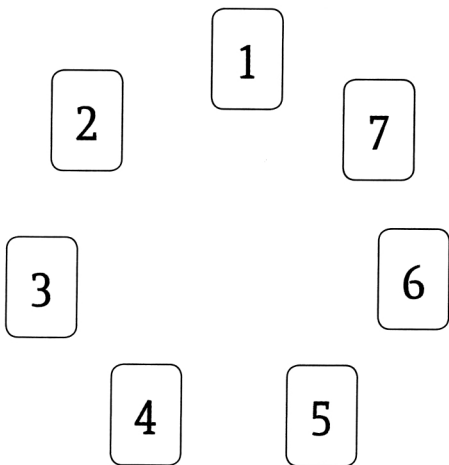
Card 1. Earth: what is the true issue?

Card 2. Air: how can I solve it via intellect/communication?

Card 3. Fire: what emotions can I bring to or release from this?

Card 4. Water: how do I move/flow on from this issue?

Traditional seven-card spread



Shuffle and place seven cards in a circular shape.

Card 1: the situation as it is.

Card 2: what caused the situation.

Card 3: what obstacles are in the way to resolution.

Card 4: what will happen upon resolution.

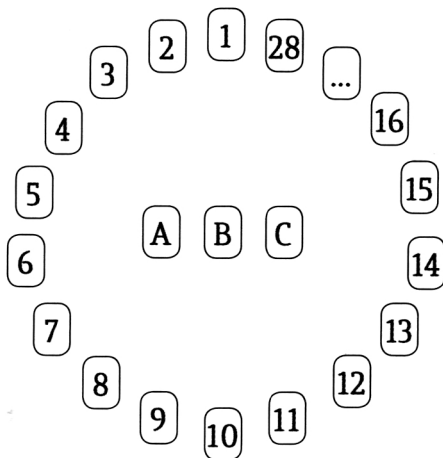
Card 5: an action to resolve.

Card 6: an action to resolve.

Card 7: an action to resolve.

Change does not happen merely by chance. Taking even a small action towards our resolution or intended outcome signals to the divine that you have agreed to this co-creative process, and as such that you are serious about this desire.

Full lunar cycle spread



This deck is designed so that you can lay the cards

down in a large circle to view the whole cycle of lunar phases at once. From card 1 Dark Moon through to card 28 Waning Crescent 5 you have a full lunar cycle.

Lay the cards out in order, leaving the space in the middle free. Light a candle and allow your mind and eyes to relax.

Take in the whole lunar cycle, understanding its flows and its rhythms, the way it waxes and wanes, the way light and dark balance themselves in a continual cycle.

Shuffle the remaining deck. Ask your question clearly in your mind.

Choose three cards and lay them in the space in the middle of the circle of cards.

Card A: the most important thing you need to understand about the question posed.

Card B: the most important action you need to take to improve the issue or to have a positive outcome.

Card C: indicates the learning and wisdom at the heart of the question. This is the positive consequence of taking action.

Seasonal spread



Take out all the cards from card 29 Wolf Moon through to card 40 Long Night Moon: these are the seasonal moon cards. This is a great spread to use when you want to know the timing of something, for example, 'When will I find a new partner?' 'When is the right time to move?' 'Will it take a long time for me to complete this project?'

Take a breath and hold your question in your mind. Try not to be anxious or concerned. Shuffle the seasonal cards and ask your question.

Card 1: represents the positive aspect of your issue.

Card 2: represents the difficulty or barrier inherent in the request.

Card 3: gives you an indication of timing. Each seasonal card roughly represents a lunar cycle/month in time. Card 29 Wolf Moon in this deck represents January; Card 40 Long Night Moon represents December.

Dedication for Your Cards

If you can, get outdoors. This can be by the sea, upon the Earth or up in the sky!

Burn some bay leaves, sage or frankincense.

Allow these to burn and smoke fragrantly.

Throw some salt (sea salt is best) upon the pack and say: 'I cleanse, I renew, I protect.'

Light a golden candle and say:

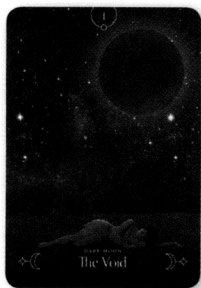
'I ask that the universal power of the moon, the Earth and the seasons bless me and these cards. These honour you, I honour you.

'I ask for guidance and truth, awakening and clarity, and the strength and courage to make changes should I need to.'

Pass the pack through the smoke of the herbs, saying:

'I dedicate these cards to my and the greater good. May only good enter here. And so it is!'

If you like you can make your first divination knowing the higher energies have heard your dedication and will respond in kind.



1. Dark Moon

The Void

Your time to rest and reset is here. Release all that does not serve you; stop resisting. The void is a time of possibility, not just darkness. There is nothing to fear in letting go of negative patterns and habits, so let go of the old.

'I freely release what I no longer need.'

While the Full Moon – full attractive power – gets all the publicity, the Dark Moon – which offers the infinite possibilities of a clean slate – is just as powerful in its own way.

The Dark Moon often looks like just a darker piece of the night sky, and in some cultures the way it appears harkens back to the idea of the 'void'. It is a place of unknowable secrets, a state of 'everything and nothing' or a place to prepare or rest before moving on. To me personally, there is a relieving restful quality about this darkest moon that allows pondering and decisions about what we can jettison before making fresh plans for the New Moon, which is the next day.

If you find yourself resisting the Dark Moon, it is usually a clear sign that you are being stubborn about letting go of something that is old and not serving you in a positive way any longer. Often that is a fear or pattern that was created to protect you in some way. However, now it is outdated, yet you are still carrying it or acting it out. Know that this moon is powerful, but it is also incredibly gentle in the way it helps you unravel what actually is so you can embrace the fresh start of tomorrow.

Relax, reframe and think about how much better your life will be without that bad habit, fear or pattern. Get very clear about the possibilities of this transformation and what it will give you in real terms.

This is the power of the Dark Moon: it is the optimum time in the cycle to release the old and cut the cords of relationships and traumas that deserve no time and attention in your present.

Companion stone or metal: jet.



2. New Moon

Beginnings

You are offered a fresh start; your journey is beginning. Take the first steps towards something new. It is time to place emphasis on your health and well-being.

'I accept and rejoice in renewal and beginnings.'

There is something incredibly poetic and even romantic about that tiny sliver of silver that is the New Moon. After the waning cycle and depth of the Dark Moon, here is appearing in the sky, incredibly, a crescent of the finest light. Almost a scratch upon the blackboard of the universe, here is the evidence that even after the darkest night light returns again.

The crescent of the new moon is an ancient symbol that stretches back to ancient prehistory. There are cave drawings featuring crescent moons, sculptures of goddesses with crescent-mooned diadems, and the goddesses Aphrodite, Hekate, Diana, Artemis, Inanna and many central Asian female deities were often depicted with new moon symbology. Go back even further into Neolithic cave

paintings, where moon (and sun) symbology features, with no phase more commonly being depicted than the new moon.

When the New Moon appears in the lunar cycle, we are gifted with a new beginning and a fresh start. What we have identified as useless or unneeded any more has been released in the void of the Dark Moon, and here waiting is a new chance. Here we get to renew our lives and feel free enough to risk trying again.

Whether we are asking for a fresh start in relationships or a new love, or are heralding the actioning of intentions such as better health, a new business or the start of a new project, riding the New Moon energy will assist us.

Many creative people start new works on a new moon and I personally as an author like to begin all my new works on this phase, even if 'beginning' means simply typing up a cover page or outline. The most powerful of new moons for new starts traditionally are within the season of spring.

Companion stone or metal: celestine.



3. Waxing Crescent 1

Realisation

With self-awareness comes realisation. Knowledge is power. Self-examination of your role within a situation is important.

'I have timely self-awareness and act upon my realisations.'

As we move into the early waxing cycle, light begins to shine upon the shadows, illuminating what is. This is the beginning of a powerful process: realisation.

When we decide to really examine our lives without fear or favour, it can be hard; this is, no doubt, an act of courage. We might not like what we discover, after all, yet without self-awareness and the will to act upon those realisations (whether we perceive them as negative or positive) we do not get to change and grow.

The realisation that we have a pattern, a bad habit or a behaviour that is causing us pain is a powerful position, even though we may feel worry and pain round this discovery. We can then take personal responsibility to change our situation since

we know our current position. Knowing ourselves more completely enables us to accept ourselves more readily and to dare to love exactly who we really are.

Companion stone or metal: aventurine.



4. Waxing Crescent 2

Acceptance

Acceptance of the current situation is the first step to change. The past does not exist, the future hasn't happened; there is only right now.

'I accept where I am and who I am, right now.'

When we examine our lives and engage in some truth telling, we are often confronted with 'what really is'. This realisation is powerful, but often we reject this truth if it is too hard to bear or we are afraid of accepting something so difficult.

Each of us at some time has dodged our blind spots and then had the illumination of 'what actually is' eventually confront us. What we do next is crucial: do we accept exactly where we are, no matter how painful or confronting, or do we retreat back into our illusions and remain stuck or unchanging?

Choosing to accept ourselves fully and the position we are in enables us to take that next step towards growth. When we can plant our feet solidly into the earth and say: 'Yes, here is exactly where I

am and I accept this fully', then we can take the next steps confidently, honestly and powerfully towards where we now wish to head.

Accepting where we are right now in its fullness allows us to also accept that there may be some chaos in our change before there is full order again. This can be an exciting feeling rather than one that generates fear if we hold our new intentions clearly.

Companion stone or metal: lepidolite.



5. Waxing Crescent 3

Growth

Reject stagnancy; to get unstuck, take action. The choice to grow should be made. Expect growing pains when making huge changes in your life. Change is a natural part of life and cannot be pushed against forever. Change should have aim and purpose. Be courageous, you will blossom!

'I choose growth.'

Think of a willow tree. Willows often grow on the sandy banks of highly shiftable and changeable rivers, yet they reach huge sizes, successfully growing and holding fast in an unpredictable habitat. How do they do this?

When you see a young willow on the banks, for a long while it just looks like a feeble stick. It may have a few branches and leaves, but at first the trunk will be fine and flexible rather than robust. What we don't see immediately is the root base.

The willow spends a lot of time establishing a veritable root city under the surface. These roots are long and strong and very numerous, finding their way

into many nooks and crannies, holding onto rocks, other established tree roots and anything that can help with their stability. These roots go off in all directions, thus securing their position just in case the Earth begins to shift. Then and only then, once these root networks are established well enough, does the willow put its energy into further growth.

The trunk begins to thicken and widen and harden and travel upwards to the sky. However, as they grow the branches have little of the trunk's supportive thickness; they have instead the instruction that they must be flexible. Flexible means they can turn with the sun and survive punishing winds that might threaten to topple the rest of the tree. All of this growth is done with purpose and a divine strategy.

The waxing lunar cycle calls for growth, but not growth without aim or purpose. When we understand our current position, accept it and decide to change, we will naturally grow as people. We might experience some 'growing pains'; after all, transformation of any kind is rarely completely easy and trouble free. Having a strong intention of what the results of our growth will be helps with gaining the courage and resilience to move forward with our growth and into the eventual blossoming of our true self.

Companion stone or metal: charoite.



6. Waxing Crescent 4

Self-love

Radical self-love is necessary. Empowerment starts from the inside out. Do not compare yourself to others: start your change

with focus and love of self.

'Every day I bring radical self-love to body, mind and spirit.'

Sometimes we feel we are not enough. Sometimes we are even told we are not enough by our own voice, the voices of others and our culture. Not smart enough. Not pretty enough. Not powerful enough. Not talented enough. Not good enough at what we choose to do. Not ambitious enough. Not experienced enough. Not curvy enough. Not thin enough. Not glamorous enough, not porn star enough, not enough of a lady. And as a result, all of this makes us not love ourselves enough.

Then there is the opposite: that we are 'too' something. Too tall, too short, too fat or too thin. Too wrinkly, too pimply, too old, too young. Too quiet or too mouthy. Too noticeable. Too opinionated.

Too much trouble. Too much, full stop. Is it any wonder that many of us feel such self-loathing or dissatisfaction with the self?

Please just stop. Put your blinkers on. Breathe. Be with yourself. Do ritual. Speak to the goddess (or whatever energy floats your boat) and ask for help.

Yes, indeed, listen to any or all of the crazy misdemeanours that your mind may throw at you, but then hug these untruths like a crying puppy and soothe the reasons they are there. Know that you are doing the best you can right now, that you are *not* your past and you can soothe yourself and, most importantly, *you can move on*.

Know that this comparison craziness is just a diversion from knowing yourself really well and discovering amazing, delicious aspects of yourself that are entirely satisfying. Focus on you, not others, and discover where you really might like change, if anywhere or anything, for your own personal benefit, not for some outward measure of 'enoughness'. True power and happiness comes from the inside out, like an unfurling spiral. Woe is the person who relies on the opinions of others to gain happiness and self-measure.

Choose radical self-love. Choose you.

Companion stone or metal: rose quartz.



7. Waxing Crescent 5

Nourishment

Choose to nourish your mind, body and spirit. Feed your values. When you are jealous or envious, it is a sign of what you are actually hungry for. Pay attention to your health.

'I choose to nourish myself.'

All of us have a set of values that are as individual as our fingerprints. Sometimes we aren't sure what they might be if asked, but unconsciously we know. How do we know? Because if our values are not being met or lived, we rebel. We get angry, sad, depressed, irritable or stuck or we take the chaotic choice in our decision-making, and commonly our relationships and life are not harmonious.

An example of this might be someone who has a strong value of honesty being asked to manipulate the truth every day in a sales job, or someone who highly values peace being surrounded by loud, drama-filled people who are just the opposite of peaceful.

Meeting our values and living by them is a sure way to nourish our being. We feel more complete and fulfilled if we are able to do that.

Additionally, it probably isn't an exaggeration to say that the Western world is obsessed by food for the wrong reasons. Food is often used as 'pain relief', with many people over-eating due to anxiety or pain. Food becomes a diversion rather than something that is nourishing or even simply enjoyable. Learning to nourish bodies purely to give them what they really need is a key to mental and physical health.

Companion stone or metal: emerald.



8. Waxing Crescent 6

The Path

The way is open for you; the path is illuminated. Begin the journey now. Respond and take action. We must be courageous and move forward.

'I am open and responsive to the opening of the way.'

When we accept where we are, acknowledge what needs to change to grow and begin to love ourselves more completely, the direction of our lives begins to change. We often decide we want to follow a more authentic way for ourselves, and our desires become more aligned with the needs, wants and values of our true selves.

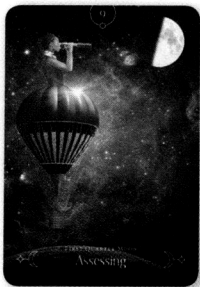
Imagine we are lost in a dark forest and can hardly see: there is no visible path and every way looks exactly the same. We feel burdened by shadows, and are not sure we should even move because we are so paralysed by fear and uncertainty.

Then, the sunshine somehow breaks through the clouds and leaf canopy and there ahead is a path, illuminated in golden light. It is clear now,

the direction we should head. The path is not only visible but it is inviting us forward and so, instead of just standing there, we can't wait to step on it and move forward.

The path is lit and now it is time to walk upon it.

Companion stone or metal: pyrite.



9. First Quarter Moon

Assessing

It is time to assess your current position. You must make sure your blind spots are revealed and that you are honest with others and

yourself. Sometimes the hard decision is the best decision. You should be able to assess and move quickly based on that assessment.

'I am enjoying moving and choosing, moving and choosing.'

You have begun your journey and now it is time to assess where you are and what to do next. You have made a decision; you have worked and walked the path for some time, and yet you understand that in every journey it's a wise action to check the map!

Sometimes we go along a pathway and we keep going even if it seems like that way is no longer the right way for us. Sometimes we feel we have gone too far to turn around and so we settle on a journey and destination that doesn't really suit us or satisfy us. However, if we had just had some courage we

could have reassessed as we went and perhaps ended up somewhere else, somewhere better.

Now is the time to look carefully at all aspects of your life, especially the areas in which you have set some intentions or goals. Ask yourself: Do I still want these things? Do I still want that same end result? If the answer is 'no', ask yourself what you can do to maintain momentum and head towards what you now desire.

Although it doesn't seem terribly glamorous, assessment has a high pay-off for us if we bother to do it well. Doing it well means we really look, and look hard, at how things are going. All of us have some kind of blind spot so it's worth exposing this by consulting a trusted friend or finding where negative repeating patterns are and looking for the cause. Shining a light on a blind spot and taking action to shift it is one of life's big catalysts for change.

Companion stone or metal: azurite.



10. Waxing Gibbous 1

Discernment

Take care in your choices now. Look carefully and judge wisely. There may have been something difficult to see, something that has been obscured, but now it has been revealed to you. Examine it closely.

'I take my time to be accurate and precise in my discernment.'

When you get some years on you, hopefully the time you spend moving and choosing upon this earth brings you some kind of wisdom. Some of that wisdom will be bred of hindsight and perspective.

All of us, if we are engaged in life, make good decisions and poor ones. Sometimes we make spectacularly bad ones. All of us get hurt, hurt others, learn, forget, fall over, fall over again, get up ... but, hopefully, we *grow*, we change. We are able to spot where our sore points are and fix them if we so choose. We are able to take a good long look at what

is painfully recurring in our lives and deal with it.
Yes, baby, deal!

The secret here is discernment: *real* discernment, really making it a priority to take time to ensure acuteness of judgement. Really looking at the fine print before you buy!

Instead of taking things on face value or rushing into surface judgements, take your sweet time to form friendships and business relationships. Put your energy output into perspective, looking at evidence instead of only just believing. Feel and *act* when you are being trodden upon, or having your boundaries overstepped or when something doesn't quite feel kosher. Ask clarifying questions and really listen to the answers offered, then act on the reality.

That is growth. That is real pattern busting. That is the gathering of wisdom.

Note: Waxing Gibbous Moons. This is the first of the Waxing Gibbous Moons. The overall themes of this part of the moon cycle are action and will.

Companion stone or metal: yellow jasper.



11. Waxing Gibbous 2

Fear

The time for courage is here. Fear is only useful if it teaches you something. You must examine whether your fears are old or new, useful or unhelpful. Fear blocks flow.

'I am courageous.'

If there is one thing that stops people from fulfilling their dreams, or even getting things done that they want done, it is fear. Experiencing fear is built in, a chemical part of the way our brain works to protect us. Emotions such as fear cause the production of a whole raft of body chemicals that give us the best chance of coping with situations that need our attention to survive.

There is a healthy kind of fear, the kind that warns us to keep out of a dangerous situation or stay clear of someone who instinctively makes us wary. However, it would be a rare person who does not have at least one fear that does not serve them, a fear that is unrealistic or untrue, or perhaps based on an outmoded

experience or something that is buried so deeply we only see the symptoms rather than the fear itself. Most fears have been formed with the positive intent of protection. We need to separate that intention out and deal with it in a more resourceful and less destructive way if we are to create ease and flow in our lives.

Fear has many names. Covert ones are envy, jealousy, co-dependence, procrastination, bullying, people pleasing, disconnection. More overt ones are avoidance, fear of failure or fear of success.

There is, however, a kind of antidote to fear, and it is courage. Fear will put up an initial resistance to courage, but it has no real long-term power against it.

While we can be fearful and courageous at the same time – and I think courage contains a mighty big dose of fear – we can choose to face that fear and flow through it until we fear less and then eventually become fearless.

The process isn't always graceful. It isn't always impressive, because it may be slow and deliberate steps we take. Taking these steps isn't always easy: an understatement! It isn't always apparent to others, so it should be about us measuring how far we have come and not worrying about what anyone else thinks. Comparison is useless. Courage is powerful no matter what form it takes.

Companion stone or metal: aquamarine.



12. Waxing Gibbous 3

Boundaries

Judging what you need and what you don't need allows you to place healthy boundaries. You teach people how to treat you. Judge what is healthy and right for you with clarity and care. Simplify.

'I can say yes or no with authenticity and clarity.'

In times of sickness or, say, the presence of very strong emotions such as grief, we often naturally simplify. We cut out all the extras that are too hard or too complex at that time. We might not take up an invitation to an event we might have to 'work' at attending. We might only watch a film we know uplifts us. We might only want to see or communicate with friends we know and trust to understand, love and support us, warts and all. We might only choose to spend the depth of our heart and time with a few people rather than many, and we become vastly sensitive to those we now discover take their unfair share of our energy.

We might also look to our body more compassionately and eat nourishing foods to heal it, do comforting things for it to recover more easily or just decide to rest it completely. If we are healthy people, we naturally action a kind of simplicity and a set of boundaries to protect ourselves so we can give ourselves some space to heal.

What if we did this all the time? What if we more consciously chose more simply and specifically for the benefit of our own mind, body and spirit? Yes, life is complex, but it can be richer and more enjoyable if we pare back what is 'negatively extra' and choose a more deliberate and authentic path. We don't need so much fluff and people pleasing and running about madly, and fast food and fast fashion and gossip and hard-core Olympic level scheduling and stress. We just don't. Look at what you chose to do last time you were forced to simplify; if it was a positive choice, maybe that could be your starting point for something better today. This judgement you made was for you, and it worked.

Not all judgement is bad or to be avoided. Every single one of us judges every day: we judge what brand of washing powder to buy among many; we judge what TV show is good and what isn't. We vote, which is a judgement on trust. We have a legal system with a 'judge'. We judge what we will accept

and what we will not. If we don't, we do not have values nor do we have boundaries (huge issues for some).

To simply focus on your own experiences and not look outside yourself for justice may all be very nice for gurus, but for those of us who want to be the change they wish to see, I judge, happily, that certain things are unacceptable. So I strive to change those things. People judged that slavery wasn't right and involved themselves in change, even to the extent of waging war. People judged that whaling wasn't right so it's been banned in most countries. We judged that apartheid wasn't right and people died to change it. One brave man, Nelson Mandela, was jailed for decades as a result. Boundaries teach people how to treat us, and this is a kind of positive judgement.

Companion stone or metal: obsidian.



13. Waxing Gibbous 4

Will

Decisions require action. You are in control of your own decisions and life, no one else's. Passion and will determine a great proportion

of your success. You will persist. You possess free will, which means you should focus on yourself first and avoid placing your will over another's.

'I have the will to make the changes I need.'

'Will' feels like a very old-fashioned concept. In a modern world where it seems like everything is geared up to be as easy as possible or there is always someone else to blame, the idea of placing our personal will persistently into something seems quaint.

When we decide we are going to change something in our lives, let's say a particularly negative pattern or bad habit, breaking the old way we do things can be difficult. The change requires a concentration of our will. We may want the change, but it is our will that insists we stay on the path to that change. To be wilful means we have the power

of control over our own actions, and that will fires up the persistence we need to get what we want.

Contrary to popular belief, in witchcraft traditions practitioners do not interfere with another's free will. This means we do not cast spells upon people to influence their behaviour. How do we get what we want instead? We cast on ourselves in line with our will, focusing carefully on what we would like in our lives instead. For example, instead of casting a spell to get back our ex-boyfriend who doesn't want us by influencing his will to love us again, we more ethically cast upon ourselves for our ideal partner. This way, we don't interfere with his free will and, if the ex is our ideal partner, he will return to us freely. If not, we have attracted someone new and better for us. Either way, win-win!

To use our will productively, we should assess what we really want and make sure this is what we want to reach for.

Companion stone or metal: hematite.



14. Waxing Gibbous 5

Focus

You must focus on the task at hand right now. There is no room for a scattergun approach. Put on the blinkers and do not listen to gossip or negative people. If you make a mistake, it is your mistake to make. Do not waste your focus. Do not split your attention into too many pieces.

'I have a laser-like focus that serves me well.'

What we place our focused attention on matters. Placing our undivided focus on something means we are more likely to take action on it. We are more likely to finish something we wish to complete if we focus on it; we are more likely to plan and succeed in our achievements should we take the time to focus on how. Even something as simple as eating a meal is more enjoyable if we take the time to focus on just that – eating and all of its sensory rewards.

What hinders focus? Diversion, and it is often diversions we set for ourselves or that we allow. When we are afraid of our own growth or greatness

we may procrastinate. We might place drama in our own way. We may even focus on everyone except for ourselves, and never have the time to do the things we set for ourselves. Our heart's desires therefore never come to us.

We might allow the opinions of others to get in the way, letting the criticisms and values of others affect us. This is useless. We need to forget about the gossip or opinions of others, about what our society says. Instead, turn your focus to you and what you are doing. Pay attention to you. You!

We need to focus instead on what feels so deeply good to us, what we really want and what we want to place our laser-like focus upon, and soon it will be ours.

Companion stone or metal: carnelian.



15. Waxing Gibbous 6

Action

The time has come to take action. Let go of your paralysis. Let go of your burdens, step by step.

'I am responsive and ready to take action.'

Sometimes we are afraid to move forward; this is natural. Change can be difficult, and if we have been hurt or have failed before we are anxious about what may happen if we instigate change. Maybe, we think, it's easier and safer to just tread some water for a while.

Instead of taking joyful action towards the things we truly desire, such as the writing of a book, undertaking study, accepting a new job or seeking a better relationship, we balk, we freeze, we do not take the steps we could. And so we remain stagnant, we don't grow.

This moon phase encourages us to embrace action. Action is part of our humanity. We are not made to hide and refuse to blossom.

Companion stone or metal: rhodonite.



16. Full Moon

Power

Step into your true power. Shine brightly. Do not hide who and what you are. The time is right to attract big things for yourself. Ancestral energy is important. Open your mind to larger possibilities. Big magic can be wrought!

'I have power, it is real.'

Go outside on a clear night and look up. Hopefully you'll see the stars a-twinkling. If you are really lucky you might see the swirling Milky Way spilling across the darkness. And then, there she is, the big Full Moon, unmistakeable in her glory and power.

She moves the Earth itself, stabilises it into orbit. She releases and pulls the seas. She is the object of devotion, the inspiration of poems, the realm of goddesses, and she has witnessed the very first of us rise up on two legs and venerate her.

Generation after generation, we have stood barefoot under the same moon, wishing, setting intentions, dancing and drawing her graceful power.

You are made of the very swirling matter that is the stuff of stars. You are pure possibility, changing constantly, renewing and transforming. Take this moment to recognise that power and rejoice in it, for your next step is the precursor to your future self.

Companion stone or metal: moonstone.



17. Waning Gibbous 1

Self-reflection

Be curious about your own nature. Choose to turn inwards to quietly contemplate who and what you are and want.

The more you know about yourself, the more you are able to steer yourself well. Know what you believe and why, yet be open to the development of new beliefs and ways of being.

'I am not afraid to look deeply at my "self" in all aspects.'

Both scientists and spiritual practitioners believe there is much benefit to be had in self-reflection. The process involves us thinking about what is happening, how we react and make sense of it. It exposes our strengths and weaknesses and gives us information to make changes if we choose to. It gives us a small respite in the busyness of life and allows our brain to make some sense of the chaos we experience each day.

As self-reflection is something we all would benefit from doing, why don't we do it? First, self-reflection requires us to slow down somewhat and turn our awareness inward, something that does

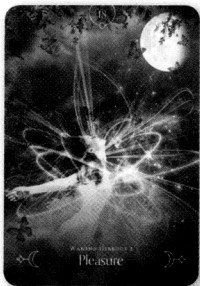
not come naturally to some and especially not the highly extroverted. Starting small and maybe getting assistance with someone else as a guide can solve this.

Second, some people are not sure exactly how to self-reflect and so do not try. To change this, examine the various ways to self-reflect during a regular five-minute recap of the day as you commute home or before dinner. Sit quietly and think about all that has happened and your reactions to it on this moon every moon cycle. Record how you feel each day. There are many ways to self-reflect, and one will suit you.

Third, some people self-reflect, but when they do they don't like the feelings of vulnerability, anger, guilt or even defensiveness this incurs. Why go there when it isn't pleasant? Here is where we grow our self-responsibility. Short-term pain will certainly be worth long-term gain if we do not ignore the elephant in the room. A regular practice of self-reflection allows us to intercede before problems get too big. We can, for example, catch ourselves before something gets way out of hand, we can apologise and make amends to someone for our mistake, we can catch negative patterns and stop them in their tracks.

The theme of waning gibbous moons, of which this is the first, is the process of self-reflection and building resilience.

Companion stone or metal: tiger's eye.



18. Waning Gibbous 2

Pleasure

Are you taking life too intensively or too seriously? The time has come to call in the pleasures of life. Seek light-heartedness at this time.

Focus on what would make you happy. Schedule in activities you find pleasurable.

'I open myself to the pleasures of life.'

In our search for a better life, something happened along the way. We forgot how to find real pleasure in what we do rather than just being diverted from the everyday. Life can be overwhelming, and our rational minds seem to need every available minute of our time to be able to cope with its demands. Pleasure has taken the back seat, or there is a pattern of it now forming destructive tendencies such as binge drinking rather than simply having a wine or two with friends.

A big part of pleasure is letting go. This does not mean surrendering or giving up; it simply means handing over of all our administration, stress and

worries for a time and immersing ourselves in something joyful. When we don't allow ourselves to experience pleasure, whether in the form of laughter, play, sensuality or the development of skills, we remain less than whole and feel a wanting. No fun actually makes us dull indeed! Over time, we are much less effective in our emotional and work lives if we do not experience regular doses of pleasure.

Our ancient ancestors knew the importance of pleasure in the forming of a healthy mind, body and spirit. There were gods and goddesses dedicated to happiness and the pleasures of life, such as the Egyptian goddess Hathor. The temples of Hathor were joyful places full of songs and beauty. There were even small temples placed in her honour outside other major deities' temples so that people could be in a happy and contented mental mood before entering to worship. The Egyptians clearly believed that having a positive or relaxed state of mind assisted in having a positive spiritual connection.

Companion stone or metal: turquoise.



19. Waning Gibbous 3

Balance

Seek balance. Extremes of anything are rarely healthy or useful. There may be an over-reaction that has caused the issue. Ground yourself

and allow your strength to rise from there. Be aware of where the imbalances in your life are at present.

'I seek and maintain healthy balance in my life.'

Working with the lunar cycle on a regular basis helps us actually experience the flow and balance of nature. The moon shows us the gradual and peaceful process of waxing and waning and the phases of perfect balance within. Our bodies, our minds and our human spirit seek balance, yet perfect balance is almost impossible to achieve.

Think on this: if we try to stand on one leg and balance ourselves, no matter how good at balancing on one leg we may be it is a kind of dance, is it not? The large and small muscles in our legs adjust to keep us upright, always moving, never perfectly still. The rest of our body is also performing a myriad of

adjustments: a little to the right here in one moment, a little to the centre there ... The point is that balance is a process, something we can actively seek if we are wise. We need to know when we are unbalanced so we can return to homeostasis.

It is useful to know where our imbalances lie and to make a decision about moving towards a more balanced version. Self-reflection helps identify this: when we are 'too' something (working too long, thinking too fast, eating too much), we need to be honest with ourselves so we can identify this quite easily.

Allowing ourselves a more considered and balanced view invites a true peacefulness into our lives, something that many people crave in this incredibly busy and chaotic world. Balance allows us to understand that 'overwhelm' isn't a place we want to visit, let alone set up home in.

Companion stone or metal: bloodstone.



20. Waning Gibbous 4

Beauty

Beauty is like medicine: it can heal even the most broken spirit. Beauty is everywhere in nature: just look! Beauty comes in many forms and we can choose to find it; I love how I look. Rid yourself of clutter and what you find disagreeable.

'I see beauty everywhere and it raises my vibration.'

One of the high needs in my life is that of beauty. I need to be exposed to what I find beautiful often to be at my best. You might find that a strange need but it's far from uncommon, especially among creatives and artists.

Beauty to me isn't lots of make-up or fancy skin care, or society's current beauty ideal. For me, beauty is nature and having things I find beautiful in my environment. I look around me as I write, and I can see the inky dark clouds racing across a violent sky and the birds riding the wind and it's beautiful! On my desk is a small piece of glass a friend made for me and a small bowl full of summer frangipani. My

feet rest on a hand-woven carpet of desert colours and my toenails are painted a shimmering turquoise, my favourite colour. All of these are expressions of beauty to me. They raise my mood; they give joy to my eyes, my heart and my mind. Everyone can experience beauty every day if they choose to look.

One of the important differences between the ancient pagan and the modern idea of beauty is that the old ways state there is a need for the core of the self to be developed and strengthened to enable and foster true beauty. This is an important two-way double punch, as there is a strong mind-body connection when it comes to both beauty and vitality. Yes, while it is acceptable to use therapies that treat or beautify externally, it's equally important to stop bad habits detrimental to health that will interrupt the good you are doing. For example, you could be using the most effective treatments on the market to nourish your skin, but if you can't give up smoking there is a finite level of health that your skin can achieve.

The unbalanced first-world ideal of beauty is at its zenith right now, with more people than ever before undergoing and normalising plastic surgery and injectable chemicals. Everyone has an individual right to decide how they wish their body to look and adopt an idea of physical beauty, however, it's the source of the influence that is worrying. Who told

a woman who has altered her appearance that there was something wrong with her face/eyes/smile/ expression in the first place? Who had the audacity to say 'You are not enough?' because she had some smile lines?

Think about that. Who is making women, in particular, so fearful? Who or what wants you to question yourself and the very essence of how you interact with the world and why? Who wants you to be the same as everyone else and less of who you are: society? Some marketing guy for big cosmetics? A retouched spokes-model?

Real beauty is hypnotic, yet in reality has less to do with youth than it does with the spirit coming through the skin. The word 'charisma' comes from the Greek 'karis' and 'ma', meaning the spirit shining through. Each of us possesses a unique beauty, one that gives us confidence if we recognise it. Each of us is desirable, each of us perfectly formed to be what we want to be. But should we become too obsessed by the external – something that is, after all, fleeting – we may become unhappy and chase an ideal that is impossible to uphold.

Companion stone or metal: larimar.



21. Waning Gibbous 5

Resilience

Making mistakes builds resilience. I have learnt my lessons from the mistakes I have made. I stand strong. I am an adult and I act with

self-responsibility.

'I am strong and resilient.'

As we stretch and expand towards our intentions, we will most likely meet resistance or – wait for it – make mistakes or fail altogether. This is where resilience, confidence and our inner will come into play. We might ask ourselves: how much do we really want what we are going for? Does what we want align with our needs and values? Are we really devoted to having it? Do we think we are enough? Do we have the strength to keep going?

While all of us at some time have to go through periods of imbalance and difficulty, even of suffering, it is important we learn to grow and rely on our resilience. This is true power from the inside out. Building our reserves of resilience, this ability to

stand strong and bounce back, is something that has at its heart wisdom and learning taken from experience.

Having resilience allows us the solidity and yet the freedom to grow and to take that leap to the next level. It allows us to reach higher, with a stability that makes things less risky and allows us to create with a bit more pleasure.

Remember: mistakes are simply information gathering. That's it. The less drama and guilt and shame you attach to them the better. The experience of failure or mistakes is simply one of learning. That is all.

As we move around the lunar cycle and in life, we can see how things may have occurred before and that we have experience in how to handle them. Even if we don't have direct experience, we can build resilience as an insurance policy against being devastated by the opinions of others. While someone might say something nasty about us, when we compare this to what we know to be true about ourselves it truly is no great hurt and really just a piece of information gathering.

Companion stone or metal: azurite.



22. Waning Gibbous 6

Wisdom

Wisdom is more than mere knowledge. There may be something you aren't seeing and need to research more thoroughly. Wisdom is gathered, but it takes time. Learn from your experience. You might wish to ask the opinion of a wise mentor if you are uncertain.

'I use my knowledge and experience to make wise decisions.'

It is often said that the body has its own innate wisdom. If healthy it just knows what to do, and does what it needs to keep us alive and moving without thinking too much about it. Most of the time we aren't aware of trying to keep our heart beating or of breathing when asleep.

Similarly we have this innate reasoning system, intuition, that allows us to get answers or receive information without conscious thinking. It's that 'feeling' or 'hunch' of information or insight that is just there. Some people believe this is the wisdom we

receive from the gods, the very spark of the divine voice that is left within us. This is a very old kind of wisdom that sits in a very old part of the brain.

Then there is the gathering of knowledge and experience and what we discern and learn from this. If the result has acuity, if it is successful in the real world and good in sense and perception, it's most probably wise.

The getting of wisdom takes time usually, and we can be impatient for it. We might cut corners and not see the role we take in our own poor decision-making. To me, though, as modern people we have millennia of wisdom to assist us. Human history has some very wise people starring in it – and some not so wise – so we have plenty of examples from which to learn. Gathering wiser people around us is in fact one of the wisest things anyone can do! We cannot always know it all, and a wise mentor or friend can not only save us from a poor decision but also demonstrate how to be wise if we aren't quite there yet.

Companion stone or metal: fluorite.



23. Last Quarter Moon

Gratitude

Be where you are and be thankful. There is always something to be grateful for no matter your suffering.

Gratitude raises a lower vibration to a higher one. Do not allow yourself to be surrounded by too many negative people. Life is conspiring for you.

'I joyfully turn my attention to what I am grateful for.'

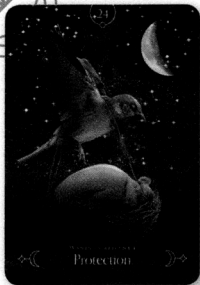
As we enter the last quarter moon on the lunar cycle, the energies begin to turn towards surrender and release. To let go of what we no longer need, it behoves us to pay attention to what we have right now, both positive and negative.

This attention paying and focus allows us to wisely discern and to be grateful for all of it. Yes, all of it. Because the nasty stuff, the stuff that is making us suffer right now, it already happened and we can take wisdom from this. However, now it's going (Waxing Crescent 4 and the Dark Moon are going to sort that for you) and what we have left is the good

stuff, and frankly most of it is going to be great.

Taking some time out on this moon to list a few things you feel grateful for will raise your vibrations and banish any resistance you have to ditching old outmoded patterns. Doing this also turns your powerful focus away from a story you may have started to believe of 'everything going wrong' or that 'life does terrible things to you'. Gratitude is a balancer; in fact, it normally tips the scales to the positive.

Companion stone or metal: ocean jasper.



24. Waning Crescent 1

Protection

Your higher power (however you describe this) is a loving and protective energy. You are loved and protected. Identify your fears; you can protect yourself better. Trust in yourself.

'I am loved and protected.'

As the lunar cycle comes to the last set of crescents, in this case the waning ones, we know that the Dark Moon is close and so is the fresh start of the beautiful New Moon.

Here is our chance to let go of our resistance: surrender and let go! To do that with confidence, we may feel that we need some support from the universe (or whatever we believe our higher power to be). That support can take the form of feeling protected from whatever might happen and helping us get the courage to release what needs to go.

Witches and other pagan practitioners who use the lunar and seasonal energies are often asked to assist people with spells, techniques and even talismans of

protection. These darker moons and the Dark Moon itself provide a great time to create and cast for this purpose. An easy way is to plug into the Earth, raise that benevolent and loving energy and turn to the four directions, asking each direction to shield and protect you in your endeavours. Then, finally, connect with the moon herself, with you as a conduit in the middle, brimming full of power and confidence.

Trust in yourself to do what you need to do.

Companion stone or metal: black tourmaline.



25. Waning Crescent 2

Resistance

Familiarise yourself with how resistance manifests for you, the overt and the covert. If you continue to have doors slammed in your face, turn around; there will normally be an open door. Procrastination is just another kind of fear. Move forward with confidence and persistence.

'I flow through resistance and I am in control.'

There are two kinds of resistance. The first type we encounter when we keep getting obstacles placed in our way or our way is blocked. For example, we try to get a particular job in a particular field, but no matter what we do it doesn't happen. This is external or overt resistance.

Covert resistance, which occurs when we say we really want to do or complete something but feel resistance not to, is somewhat sneakier. All forms of procrastination fit in here, writer's block being a classic example. When we want to do something but get distracted and don't do it, or we just can't seem to

engage our will enough, that is covert resistance.

When we want to get rid of a bad habit, an addiction, an old pattern – in fact, anything we are thinking of releasing for the Dark Moon – and feel resistance in doing so, we have a big dose of covert resistance.

We must battle the second kind of resistance like we would battle a crafty and terrible enemy. We must raise our shields and sharpen our swords and have a strategy to remove the resistance. In fact, we must flow through it.

It's a battle we might have to fight more than once, but we will be resilient and vigilant and fight it we will; for when we win (and we will win) the rewards are great.

Why do we resist the things we say we want? Sometimes we don't really want those things. Most times, though, we are frightened about what might happen if we do get what we have asked for. What will people think? Will we lose our friends and family if we rise? Will it all be for nothing if we try and fail? But we must be wilful and we must have courage. We must repeat to ourselves: 'This is what I really want for me. *Yes, I am worth it!*' And then we stand up straight, put on our crown of sovereignty of our own lives and go to battle.

Companion stone or metal: red jasper.



26. Waning Crescent 3

Surrender

Surrendering doesn't mean giving up. Let go of what you no longer need. Stop being so stubborn about holding on to aspects and behaviours that don't align with who you are now. Stop struggling.

'I let go, I surrender my struggle, I allow the universe to work through me.'

It took me a long time to realise that surrendering was a positive thing. Now, don't get me wrong: I don't mean the 'giving up' kind of surrender. I mean the 'Okay, it's time for me to hand this over' type of surrender.

For those of us who are highly independent and used to doing things quite ably on our own, admitting we need assistance or that we might indeed have to let something go for our betterment can be challenging.

Letting go and surrendering admits or exposes a vulnerability or two! To surrender, we may need to show our underbelly. We may need to admit we got it wrong, made a mistake, grew a bad habit,

surrounded ourselves with people that are not good for us. It can make us feel raw in our realisation.

Remember: this moon phase is dark and beautiful. It casts a protective shadow that allows us to be as wide open as we need to be to do our work. We reveal safely to only the divine and ourselves, and then the light returns.

Companion stone or metal: orange calcite.



27. Waning Crescent 4

Release

Let. It. Go. It is time to release anything that does not serve you. Old negative habits do not engage you any more as the pay-off is not enough.

You are ready to make room for bigger, brighter, more aligned things.

'I freely release what I no longer need.'

There is a pay-off if we decide to finally release something we no longer need. The pay-off is as individual as you are, but there will be a universal feeling of making space for something new.

The secret to effectively releasing what no longer serves you is, in fact, knowing that the pay-off will indeed be worth it; which makes it super important to know what that positive pay-off may be. For example, giving up a habit such as smoking, which we know is detrimental to your body in that it is cancer causing (among many other nasty things), has pay-offs. What the most important pay-off is for you may be different for someone else who is giving

up the habit, but it needs to be clear to your mind, body and spirit. You might give up so that your body feels healthier generally, or so that your children and those around you aren't exposed to the smoke and chemicals, that you live longer or that all that money you are wasting on cigarettes could be used for something that is more in line with what you really want such as travel or a home – all of which are real pay-offs for which it is worth releasing the habit.

In magic, in particular in spellcraft, the art of release after raising power is vital to its effectiveness. Should we raise power without sending it out to the universe or dieties in a focused way, it remains stagnant or stuck. This can cause us to feel overwhelmed.

Companion stone or metal: smoky quartz.



28. Waning Crescent 5

Peace

Peace of mind is one of the greatest gifts we can give ourselves. Refuse drama and do not freely engage with people who use drama as a weapon. Stop fighting; allow yourself to rest for a while. When we let what we no longer need go, we make room for peace.

'I choose to create and hold peace. I allow this to ripple out into the world.'

We are an anxious bunch, us modern folk. We are constantly stimulated or not stimulated enough, we find it hard to sleep (insomnia is at record levels in the Western world), and for some we self-medicate with food, devices, drama and work. We seek peace, but we don't know how to go about it particularly well.

Peace can begin with a series of decisions we make, for example, we can decide we can't control everything. Shock! The ancient Greek Stoics had a great strategy here, advising a split of your issues into 'I can control this' and 'I have no control over this'.

Think about the most pressing and worrying issues you have right now or the situations that are giving you the most sleepless nights, then break them down into pieces and place them under the correct heading. Be honest and discerning.

What you will find is that most of your situations or issues are under the second heading. The Stoics advised that the things listed there deserve no more of your attention because they are actually out of your control. Wow! However, the things under 'I can control this' are important, and you must action these to the best of your ability. These are those things you will influence and where you will glean the most change. While this seems a simple system, I promise you it will give you far less to worry about and instantly more peace.

We can be more focused and mindful about what we are doing in real time. We can place ourselves deliberately in sessions in quiet, beautiful and peaceful environments. We can learn what for us brings our body rest and peace. We can choose to not do the head miles of worry. Worry is, after all, chewing gum for the mind – not really nutritious in any way, but something to do.

When we let go of what we no longer really need peace floods in, taking up this old space and healing it.

Companion stone or metal: amethyst.



29. Wolf Moon

Hunger

Feed the good and hope within you. There will always be a lean part of the cycle. Prosperity will come. Do not let your hunger blindly dictate your actions entirely.

'I recognise all that I hunger for.'

An old and wise Cherokee (of the First Nations of the US) is speaking to his grandson about life. The young boy asks his grandfather: 'It is said, Grandfather, that everyone has two wolves within them. The first wolf gives darkness, despair and hate and jealousy and sorrow. The second wolf gives light and hope and helpfulness and kindness. Yet, Grandfather, I feel them fighting within me. What can I do?'

'My small son, these two wolves will always fight and they will fight within each person. You are no different,' said the grandfather.

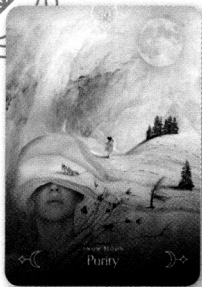
'But,' said the boy, 'Grandfather, which wolf will win?'

And the grandfather answers: 'Whichever wolf you feed.'

We must be careful about what we nourish and feed within us. If we give abundance to the aspects of the self that can harm others and ourselves then we cannot truly thrive. Having no limitations upon these behaviours and patterns hurts us and starves the higher and finer parts of our selves that will bring us more happiness. To ripple that happiness to others is part of why we are on the planet as humans.

We must also recognise that in life, just because it is a cycle, there will always be leaner, less abundant or less bright times. Yet we have built our resilience and self-trust for times like this, and we know we are both loved and protected. The cycle will soon turn to less shadow and more bounty.

Companion stone or metal: amazonite.



30. Snow Moon

Purity

Look for the simplest and cleanest solution. Understand your motives for doing what you are doing. Be as clear as possible in your communication.

'I know why I do what I do.'

The word purity now seems to have a kind of loaded moral quality. Any time I mention the word, people mostly think about how it's used in religions or in morals. For example: the purity of virgins, the purity of no sex before marriage, the purity of celibacy, the purity of bloodline of certain extreme right-wing groups. No wonder we use the word with some trepidation.

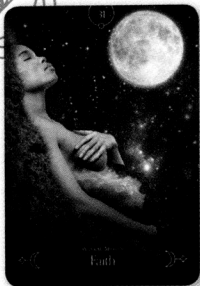
The purity I refer to here is the purity of the silver moon on the unmarked snow. The simple purity of intention that nature demonstrates. The purity of clean water in a mountain stream. The purity of one single purpose.

The Cambridge Dictionary defines this kind of purity as 'being clean or free from harmful

substances', and I guess in our world – so full of pollution and damage to the environment – that may well be hard to find. However, the ancients looked at the cycles that brought ice and snow as a sort of reset button, a time when everything lay fallow for a while and brought with it a kind of simplicity. These times were hard, but if we were prepared for them we would survive.

There are good reasons to strive for a kind of positive purity in our lives. Being precise with our language and as clear as we can be in our communications means fewer miscommunications and misunderstandings in our relationships and work life. Keeping our intentions pure and untainted with lower energies such as jealousy, revenge or unworthiness as much as possible means that our motivations are purer and not muddy in their reasoning.

Companion stone or metal: clear quartz.



31. Worm Moon

Faith

Fertility and abundance now return. Things will get better. Growth has started. Hold on to your dreams in adversity.

'I know all will be well.'

It is in the darkest times that we find it hard to see the light. It is hard to see, when things seem hopeless, how we can ever feel hope again. When things seem to fail, it is really difficult to draw up our resilience and stand up again.

We learn by observing the seasons that the light does return. The barrenness of winter turns infinitely and surely into spring. The ice melts. The days grow longer and the nights grow shorter. Warmth and fertility slowly return to the land.

It is hard to have faith in ourselves and the universe. (I actually think faith is the real 'F' word!) Faith requires us to let go of our anxieties and have trust, perhaps in something we can't actually see yet.

Having a more complete faith in yourself and a higher power to lead you to your greatest good is a solid intention. While having a rigid blind faith

does not serve us, it is important to hold on to our dreams and intentions and to focus on the outcome. To do this without taking note of what is happening around us can be folly. Our ancestors would observe nature carefully, looking for the signs of new life and fertility, altering their hunting or planting to best take advantage. Yet they knew that the ice would melt and the soil, damp and ready, teaming with worms, would receive their seeds.

Companion stone or metal: lapis lazuli.



32. Egg Moon

Trust

Trust yourself. Develop self-trust and joy will follow. You can rely on your own capabilities. Begin to plan carefully for the future.

'It is the beginning and I trust myself in all things.'

Apart from the trust we might develop spiritually with our higher power, self-trust is the basis of all other trust. Self-trust is a surety that we can rely upon ourselves. That our decisions are valid. That we ourselves matter. That knowing ourselves combined with trusting ourselves leads to better, more-informed decisions about all aspects of our life, including career and relationships.

Self-trust is far more than a flashy show of confidence; it is deeper and farther reaching than that. It is security at the very core, that no matter what, our wisdom matters and it is best. It allows for flow and for faith in oneself and the way you do things moving and choosing in the world.

Self-trust is a full acceptance of self. As accepting one's self becomes easier, thus self-trust will begin to shine. This gives great momentum to anything we choose to tackle or do.

Our ancestors saw spring, the great thawing, as a new beginning. They would walk the marshes and plains and find newly laid eggs. More than just a symbol of fertility and new hope, the eggs meant that the worst of the cold was over and that new life really was here. The Egg Moon was a time of celebration and rejoicing.

Companion stone or metal: iron.



33. Flower Moon

Blossoming

Do not give up; you have planned for this. Take no notice of what others think or say about you. Open and rise. Someone around you may be jealous of your success; mark your victories.

'I joyfully blossom and I feel no fear.'

In the country in which I live there really aren't a lot of meadows, that classic kind of gently rolling open space often between a forest or mountains. This kind of space whispers to you: 'Here, rest a while. Lay down, my friend, it's soft!'

The first true meadow I saw was in Yosemite National Park in the United States. It was early spring; the snows had pretty much stopped, and nature had taken her opportunity.

In front of me as far as I could see was a green meadow of grasses covered in blossoming flowers. It was so beautiful it almost made me cry. I just stood there for a long while taking it all in. It felt so hopeful and new and joyful, so I felt hopeful and

renewed and joyful.

I walked into the meadow and was soon surrounded by this blossoming. The flower fragrance drifted up with the breeze; there was a dusting of pollen on my clothes; I could hear the contented buzzing of a few insects. In that moment, I was so grateful to be part of the meadow. Anything seemed possible here.

There is a time to blossom. We plant seeds (physically and metaphorically) so they will blossom into what we intend. Perhaps the journey has been a long and hard one but we shouldn't give up, especially if we are close.

Fear is usually the thing that prevents flow and blossoming: fear of failure, fear of success, fear of change, fear of what people think. I could go on, but know if we can release the useless fears and begin to enjoy our growth and eventual blossoming, it will all be worthwhile.

Companion stone or metal: ruby.



34. Hot Moon

Extremes

Learn how to handle crises with calm and resilience.

Seeking balance is superior to seeking extremes. There are better ways to handle conflict than rage and outrage. There

may be someone who seeks to disrupt your business or life in some way; this, too, shall pass.

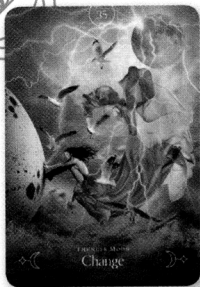
'I handle extremes with grace, yet I seek balance in all things.'

Most of us have experienced extremes of weather: boiling hot days or the freezing of snow and ice. You certainly know you are alive, because the sensation can be so overwhelming or stressful on the body. The Hot Moon appeared in the hottest time of the year, where the days were longest and the rains less frequent.

Similarly, we can experience extremes in life: deaths, job losses, relationship breakdowns, true fears, big conflicts, booms and busts ... and, yet, this is life. Our situation can change quickly for better or for worse.

The Hot Moon challenges us to build our resilience and reserves of wisdom and calm for those times where things are at their extreme. It reminds us that developing grace under pressure is worth its weight in gold and that even these extremes, in time, will pass.

Companion stone or metal: sunstone.



35. Thunder Moon

Change

Accept change. Life, like the seasons, is about change. Take advantage of change energy. Plan ahead.

'I welcome change and I ride its energy.'

One of the great truths in life is that change is constant. It is unavoidable and we can resist all we want, but nothing truly stays the same. It is better then to prepare and even direct change by setting intentions and building our personal power from the inside out.

Seasonally, there are times of the year that have at their essence a profound sense of change, usually the shoulder seasons of autumn and spring. It is at these times of year we can feel more easily the shift between one season and another.

In autumn, the nights grow longer and there is a chill when darkness falls that wasn't there just weeks before. The breeze that blows is no longer balmy. The birds we have been watching all summer seem to have packed up and left, and in their place

new species appear to strut their stuff. We begin to dress with more layers and we may even hunger for different foods. All these are signals of change. In spring, it's all about waking up and warming up, and the opposite happens. All these are signals of change.

This moon shines down upon the winds of change, the clearing storms, the electric crackle of lightning and the boom of thunder echoing across the valley. There is great energy to be channelled in such a time and to be focused towards riding change with joy and ease.

Companion stone or metal: serpentine.



36. Green Corn Moon

Patience

Enjoy the journey, not just the destination. The time has come to learn patience and avoid the lure of instant gratification. Slow down. Take your time. Things are happening, you just can't see it yet. Be loving and patient with your body.

'I take my time to enjoy the journey.'

Patience is a kind of faith in foreseeing. We might see the seed, but we foresee the flower. We might see the books on the table, but we foresee the degree at the end if we read them. If we think physically, we might feel the pain of a hard workout but foresee and have faith in the muscle and fitness levels we will build. Patience is a way of experiencing the process of fruition.

For some of us, we choose what is quick and easy. We may choose activities we know we will be good at. These require no big process, no great challenge over time and so no great achievement even if we are good at them. More difficult is a kind of patience in mastery where the skills or learning take time to accrue, and

this is where the beauty of patience is born.

When we truly realise the power of patience we understand the power of gaining something incredibly deep and imbedded rather than the quick hit of instant gratification. There is great power in going slow. There is also the lifelong benefit of the power of trusting that you can hold a focus for a time for something big.

For some of us, learning a physical skill enables us to fall in love with our bodies again, seeing it change and try over and over. We recognise its magnificence in all its weirdness, wonkiness, strength, weakness and inherent wisdom. We get to feel the process and the miracle. And if our body doesn't quite get it and we run out of patience, well, nasty self-talk is the last thing I would throw at it. After all, my body is not my enemy. Instead, I throw compassion and trust at it: the compassion that it is doing its best right now, and the trust that it will get me to where I want to go – even if that is 'eventually'. I've learned to be patient!

The Green Corn Moon encourages us to watch for growth and enjoy patiently the journey of growth. While we may not yet be at fruition, we are on the way.

Companion stone or metal: jade.



37. Harvest Moon

Fruition

As the seasons turn, there is always a time when all the potential of the spring beginnings is manifest. The crops grow tall and are ready to harvest, and they have done this from a fallow field into which we have planted seeds. The trees have flowered and now there is fruit to pick. It is time for the harvest.

'I welcome the joyous fruition of all the intentions I set.'

When we are able to bring something to fruition, whether it be a planting, a project or a change in ourselves, it is the perfect time to celebrate all that we are grateful for and to mark our achievement. We may have worked very hard to bring this new situation into reality. We may have been patient in the way we have worked over time and sacrificed much to make it happen.

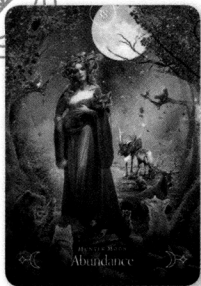
The Harvest Moon is the time to be happy about our success and to share it with others. Our ancestors would dance and sing, and have community festivals of thanks, all to celebrate the fruition of all that hard

work and to thank the gods for their assistance.

These times of high energy are also times to really focus on your body, as they can be quite taxing on our systems. If we don't take care, it is often the time we can get ill.

This moon normally falls on the moon closest to the autumn equinox in the northern hemisphere.

Companion stone or metal: garnet.



38. Hunter Moon

Abundance

Take advantage of this time of abundance; it is all around you. Possibility and opportunity are everywhere. You are open and responsive to the abundance around you.

There is enough for everyone.

'I am abundant and I am surrounded by opportunity.'

The Hunter Moon is the traditional moon of plenty. It was when game was at its most plentiful, so the people would not go hungry. The moon was large and bright in the sky, and in some cases deep orange, and there was a great deal of light to go hunting well into the evening.

Our ancient ancestors couldn't just go off to the supermarket to buy what they needed to eat: meat didn't come on trays wrapped in plastic! Eggs were gathered. Warm clothing was made from skins of the same animals that were hunted for meat. Nothing was wasted.

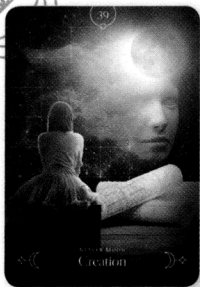
This abundance was part of a cycle just like any other. It wasn't present all the time, so this time

of the year was to be taken advantage of while the going was good; the barrenness of winter would soon return. Hunters had to be prepared. They had to have their weapons ready and their tracking skills honed.

As modern people, we are less used to these natural cycles of plenty and barrenness because most of us have stepped away from growing food and the natural environment. However, these cycles are still there, even if we are not a part of them consciously.

This moon normally rises in October in the northern hemisphere and so was before the winter snows.

Companion stone or metal: citrine.



39. Beaver Moon

Creation

You can create your own destiny. Be industrious. Every creature on Earth creates. You should welcome the process of creation. Save money and time. Have a reserve.

'I am a mighty creator/creatix. It is my birthright to create.'

There is a good reason for the saying 'busy as a beaver', for the beaver is truly an industrious animal. Not only do they create sophisticated architectural lodges (their semi-submersible homes), but they change the course of rivers and waterways through strategic damming. They create new environments for themselves and other animals.

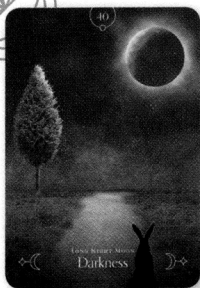
Like the beaver, we too can create with industriousness and vigour. Everyone is creative, not just those who are considered to be creatives such as artists, designers, musicians and writers. We all can be encouraged to think more creatively, to solve problems outside of square solutions, to invent new ways and to imaginatively break new trails.

This moon is the moon of taking action. Our

northern hemisphere ancestors at this time would be preparing for winter. They would be preserving food, preparing skins, gathering medicines, strengthening their homes if they were not nomadic and preparing to move to better hunting grounds if they were. Anyone who didn't work hard at this time would likely suffer greatly for it when winter came.

The time to take action is now.

Companion stone or metal: chrysophase.



40. Long Night Moon

Darkness

You are entering a time of introversion, a leaner time or a time to turn inward to plan and strategise. It is time to do shadow work, which will

bring big dividends later on. Release what no longer works for you.

'The darkness needs to be there as much as does the light.'

One of the earliest human fears is said to be a fear of the dark: we fear what we can't see, and we fear what may be hiding. In reality, the dark is as important as the light. In nature, there are many nocturnal animals that go about the business of living under the moon, not the sun. The darker times of the lunar and seasonal cycles signal a time to naturally turn inwards, to stay close to home, to look closely at ourselves and to plan for the light.

In the northern hemisphere, the Long Night Moon usually occurred in December around the winter solstice. This is when the nights are indeed long and the hours of sunshine short. It's cold, and

people would begin to be snowed in.

It is during these long nights we can begin to do our shadow work, undertaking the self-reflection needed to identify what isn't working for us and what might be causing us pain. This could be a bad habit, a destructive pattern, a recurring useless fear or anything that holds us back from being the best we can be. Once we see these aspects of our selves in the dark, we can simply decide whether they must go. We can decide to release them once and for all.

We get to transform!

Companion stone or metal: onyx.



41. Queen of the Moon

Sovereignty

You have sovereignty over your own life. Act with grace and confidence. You have the ability to unite disparate people and views should you

choose to do so. The buck stops with you. You are powerful; act like it!

'I reign over my own realm.'

Goddesses of the moon are one of the oldest kinds of Feminine Divine and feature in mythologies from almost every corner of the globe. From Diana of ancient Rome and the Greek Artemis to the Semitic Astarte and Hina from Polynesia, the link with the Feminine Divine and the lunar planet and cycles is a strong one. These goddesses in all their myriad of forms were extremely powerful, and demonstrated to women that they, naturally, had power as well.

We should strive to be the powerful queens of our own domain. Women especially have been socialised to defer, to keep small, to be quiet and to hold a very twisted kind of service that borders

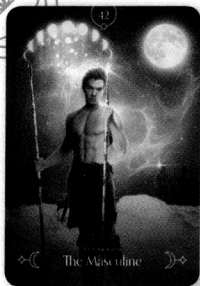
on servitude. While in many first-world countries women can choose to be what they wish to be on paper, women still experience inequality in most countries in areas such as wage disparity and an imbalance of the numbers of women in government or in high-level board positions.

However, what has been accepted in the past is not what will be accepted in the future: a new queendom is coming!

When we reign over our own lives, it is us that take on the responsibility for our own change and decisions. The Moon Queen knows that we, just under the divine, are our own rulers, and as such the buck stops here. Therefore, it is worth us investing in growing our own self-awareness, our own self-trust, self-care and self-esteem in real and practical ways.

We must, as any queen would, set firm boundaries to protect our queendom and those who are under our protection. This does not mean we become cruel rulers; we should always aim for benevolence, fairness and a great love for all (as well as ourselves). It *does* mean we may have to push against those who do not respect our line in the sand.

Companion stone or metal: platinum.



42. Lunar God

The Masculine

It is time to step forward and lead. Be the leader in your own life. You have more power than you think. It is time to formally learn more: enrol in a course or learn a new skill.

Offer your protection to someone weaker than yourself. Take steps to improve your health and vitality.

'May the positive attributes of the masculine align with me.'

While lunar gods are rare – usually their realms are the solar – they are conspicuous when they appear.

The Australian Aboriginal deity of the Wanaruah tribal area, Baiame, encourages us to observe the laws of the land and to appreciate the beauty around us. Baiame is depicted with having big eyes and no mouth, teaching us that sometimes beauty does not need to be spoken about, just witnessed with the eyes of our head and of our heart. The Norse god Mani (the moon himself) teaches us to be wise and about the passage of time. The Mesopotamian Sin shows us how to ask about the future and how important it is to protect the weak. There are many more.

The traditional positive attributes of the masculine such as strength, physical vitality, power of will, shielding and protection of the weak are important for anyone to adopt, no matter their gender or orientation.

Should you pull this card, it is asking you to step up: into your power, your uniqueness, and offer your guidance to those who may need it.

Companion stone or metal: black opal.



43. Blue Moon

The Unexpected

No matter how well you plan, there is always room for the unexpected to occur. Build your resilience, as rare occurrences can happen. A visitor you have not seen in a long time may re-enter your life.

'I trust in myself and in life.'

In old farmers' almanacs, a blue moon was described as the third full moon in a season that has four full moons. The newer and now more accepted description is that a blue moon is when there are two full moons in one calendar month. Either way it is a rare occurrence, and has inspired the saying 'once in a blue moon' when describing an event or behaviour that only happens rarely.

The energy and power of the Blue Moon can be best taken advantage of by setting intentions on these moons of things that you really want but have never felt could happen. I refer to big wishes: the almost miracle stuff we would be both delighted and surprised about if it manifested. After setting

blue moon intentions, though, don't sit there hoping it will just happen. Try to take clear practical steps towards these big, seemingly far-away intentions and help the universe along.

Some of us love surprises; some of us don't. But I don't think anyone can go through life without sometimes having the unexpected happen to them. While some professions in particular, such as the military and medicine, try to plan for everything that could go wrong, life sometimes finds a way to outsmart the most thorough of plans. This is simply life! Although it is important for us to know where, how and why we are travelling down a particular path, we should always make room for and expect the unexpected.

Companion stone or metal: benitoite (a very rare blue gem).



44. Super Moon

Attraction

You can be magnetic to others and attract the good things in life. You can repel what you no longer wish to attract. Be ready for opportunity. Avoid extremes that might cause negative imbalance in your body or mind. Think of connections greater than yourself.

*'I can attract what I wish and repel what
I do not.'*

A super moon is a full moon that is the closest distance from the Earth in its revolutions. It is also referred to as a 'perigee' moon. The Super Moon looks huge in the sky and, being so close to the Earth, it influences the oceans more than usual, causing more extreme tides than are normal.

These changes in gravity and force are certainly noticeable, and for most people who follow the cycles of the moon and do magical workings aligned with them it is the energy of super moons that is most important. If a normal full moon gives us an opportunity to have rocket power under our

intentions, a super moon greatly magnifies this energy into a supernova.

If we are growing we all want to attract experiences into our lives. This can be positive relationships, a lifestyle that suits us better, clarity, love, prosperity, creativity ... the list goes on. Equally, we also perhaps wish to be able to repel the experiences we don't want. It is important, then, to not just know what we want, but to be able to recognise what we don't!

Attraction isn't just about what we accept, but also how we discern. Blindly attracting everything we think of into our lives rarely makes us happy, but being focused about it does.

This card also suggests that we think globally and for the 'whole'. If you are making intentions on the Super Moon, include one for the planet.

Companion stone or metal: magnetite.



About the author



Stacey Demarco is The Modern Witch. Passionate about bringing practical magic to everyone and inspiring people to have a deeper connection with nature, Stacey has been teaching witchcraft for over 20 years. She is the author of the bestsellers *Witch in the Boardroom*, *Witch in the Bedroom*, and *The Coffee Oracle*, all translated into many other languages. She is the co-writer of *The No Excuses Guide to Soulmates* and *The No Excuses Guide to Work and Purpose* with medium, Jade-Sky. Annually, her *Lunar and Seasonal Diary* is released both in the southern and northern hemispheres.

Stacey is the founder of Natureluster, which educates and works to help reconnect people to the health-giving power of nature. Stacey is an animal activist, ethical beekeeper and dedicated adventure traveller. She lives in Sydney by the beach with her husband and furry companions. She provides private consults as well as teaching workshops and leading the popular 'Wild Souls' Naturelusting retreats nationally and internationally. Learn more at www.themodernwitch.com

About the illustrator



Kinga Britschgi is a Hungarian artist who has lived with her American husband and son in the United States since August 1995. Apart from her wonderful family she has two big passions in life: art and linguistics (and teaching both). Although possessing a degree in fine art, she began her career as a language teacher and went on to gain a Masters in Bilingual Education.

Kinga has been involved with digital art for many years, working with Photoshop and other Adobe products since 2002. She creates commercial graphics for many clients, which she enjoys immensely. Her works are regularly published in industry standard and other magazines such as *Advanced Photoshop*, *Photoshop Creative*, *Practical Photoshop* and *Digital Studio*. One of her images, 'Midsummer Night – Titania', was chosen as part of Adobe's official marketing campaign for their Creative Cloud project, appearing on Adobe's website, posters and in magazine ads. She has also had her works published in digital art books.

Kinga loves surrealism, magical realism and dark whimsy, creating 'story pictures': figurative pictures with seemingly realistic elements that often result in surrealistic, mysterious images with lots of layers of meanings. For more of her works, please visit kingabrit.wixsite.com/kinga