

The Pink Moon



ATTUNE WITH NATURE

Pink Moon Objectives

Governed by LAKSHMI to cultivate the unified expression of intellect and sensitivity for authentic creativity.

- Lakshmi Altar
- Earth & Mother Archetype
- The Unified Expression of Intellect & Sensitivity
- Attune with the Rhythms of Nature
- The Sacred Marriage of Inside & Outside
- Your Elemental Ishta-devatā
- Ritual of Choice
- Fertile Creativity
- Radical Peace

Table of Contents

1.....	Peace Invocation
3.....	Peace Warrior Letter
4.....	Pink Moon Overview
6	Attune with the Rhythms of Nature
10.....	Week ONE Lakshmi
16.....	Shopping for Lakshmi Ritual
23.....	Week TWO Mother
37.....	Week THREE Earth
57.....	The Yoga of Eating
64.....	Week FOUR Elemental Ishta Devata
72.....	Full Moon Contemplation

Peace Invocation

ॐ द्यौः शान्तिरन्तरिक्षं शान्तिः
पृथिवी शान्तिरापः शान्तिरोषधयः शान्तिः ।
वनस्पतयः शान्तिर्विश्वेदेवाः शान्तिर्ब्रह्म शान्तिः
सर्वं शान्तिः शान्तिरेव शान्तिः सा मा शान्तिरेधि ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om Dyau Shantir Antariksha gwam Shanti
Prithvi Shantir Apah Shantir Oshadhayah Shanti
Vanas Patayah Shanti Vishwed Devah Shanti Brahma Shanti
Sarvagwam Shanti Shantireva Shanti Sa Ma Shantir Edhi
Om Shanti Shanti Shanti

May there be Peace in Heaven, May there be Peace in the Sky,
May there be Peace in the Earth, May there be Peace in the Water,
May there be Peace in the Plants, May there be Peace in the Trees,
May there be Peace in the Gods in the various Worlds, May there
be Peace in Brahman. May there be Peace in all things.
May there be Peace, indeed, within Peace itself, showing me the
Peace which grows within me.
Om, Peace, Peace, Peace.

This mantra is a favorite lullaby that I sing to my daughter
each night as she falls asleep. It has become a living mantra within
my heart that I summarize in this way:

**May peace which defies comprehension pervade the entire
earth. May all Creation reflect the wisdom that peace begins
within me.**





Soul Artist | Peace Warrior.

Thank you for joining me on this journey.

Last month, we began identifying the path of Middle Way Activism, taking a stand of compassionate social action from our meditation seat.

April invites you to remember your intrinsic connection to the planet. When you extend compassion into the natural world, you become a warrior for peace, engaging a mission that must not be ignored. Environmentalism is not simply a fad; it is an essential undertaking. Once we become awakened to the divinity within all things, ecological choices become a daily ritual of honoring the God/dess. They have the power to heal personal wounds and inspire creativity.

I invite you to discover the Archetypal energy of Mother Earth; to continue to identify your superpowers and apply them to the cause of global sustainability.

One Love,

R.R. Shakti, PhD

Pink Moon *Overview*

Spring continues to dawn in April.

The April Full Moon is often called the pink moon. The color recognizes the wild phlox, which is one of the first flowers to bloom in North American spring. Pink also represents the fertile womb. This is a time for honoring the generating power of the Mother Archetype, for detoxification and creation.

This moon is sometimes called the Sprouting Grass Moon.

The sunshine, this month, will bring the magnificent colors of green back into the landscape in regions where wet snow has covered the winter ground.

The soil is still rich with Kapha moisture, but the strong rays of the sun will soon begin to warm things up.

This is precious time for communing with Nature. Get out and witness the new growth happening all around you.

Allow yourself to be inspired to tend your own psycho-spiritual seeds of development.

...and beyond your personal growth, the feminine principle beseeches you to protect the fertile abundance of the planet.

This month's focus will explore new possibilities for ecological sustainability and attuning yourself with the rhythms of Nature.



Ravi Varma

Attune with the Rhythms of Nature

(Sacred Marriage of Inside & Outside)

The sacred feminine is beckoning humanity to attune our intentions, activities, and choices with nature. Honoring the natural rhythms of our bodies, we come into the presence of God/dess. We empathize with the unity of Earth. Yoga provides a wider perspective of Reality, expanding consciousness to realize that the human experience exists within a field of psychic relationships. We are one among many interdependent living things. The traditional focus on the ego/Self relationship, with its emphasis on the individual psyche and culture, is expanding to contemplate the soul of the entire world.

We must recognize that “the rhythms of nature underpin all of human interaction: religious traditions, economic systems, cultural and political organization. When these human forms betray the natural psychic pulse, people and societies get sick; nature is exploited; and entire species are threatened”

– Steven Aizenstat, “Nature Dreaming”

This betrayal, with its corresponding maladies, is happening now.

Mark Tercek, President of the Nature Conservancy, stresses the point that “the environmental challenges the world faces have never been greater or more complex” (global.nature.org).

He outlines the most important ecological issues in the world today; concerns that must be addressed for our Earth to survive. He lists these three: climate change, healthy and balanced food production, and sustainable development, which includes the maintenance of clean land and water.

What is being asked of us now is to create an alignment between human nature and the rest of the natural world—a mandatory alliance for the health and survival of all who live on planet Earth. We must attune to Nature—align our desires with her needs—because we are born and sustained through her cycles. If we destroy her, we destroy ourselves.

In his work, *Green Yoga*, Georg Feuerstein calls for an embodied approach to environmentalism, one that includes daily practices of sustainable efforts that reflect ecological awareness. He provides a comprehensive outline of practical things you can do to make a positive transformation in our world (142-148). Incorporating these daily actions into the ongoing cycles of nature, they become rituals of non-dual awareness. When you nurture the sacredness in nature, you honor the creative life force within you—the divine feminine dancing at the center of your heart.



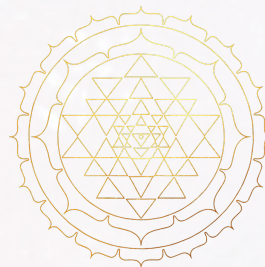
All nature has a feeling: woods, fields, brooks
Are life eternal: and in silence they
Speak happiness beyond the reach of books;
There's nothing mortal in them; their decay
Is the green life of change; to pass away
And come again in blooms revived.
Its birth was heaven, eternal in its stay,
And with the sun and moon shall still abide
Beneath their day and night and heaven wide.

John Clare (1793-1864)

**"Our planet is a lonely speck in the great
enveloping cosmic dark. In our obscurity, in all
this vastness, there is no hint that help will
come from elsewhere to save us from
ourselves."
— Carl Sagan**

"Nature" is what we see—
The Hill—the Afternoon—
Squirrel—Eclipse— the
Bumble bee—
Nay—Nature is Heaven—
Nature is what we hear—
The Bobolink—the Sea—
Thunder—the Cricket—
Nay—Nature is Harmony—
Nature is what we know—
Yet have no art to say—
So impotent Our Wisdom is
To her Simplicity.

Emily Dickenson



The harp at Nature's advent strung
Has never ceased to play;
The song the stars of morning sung
Has never died away.

And prayer is made, and praise is given,
By all things near and far;
The ocean looketh up to heaven,
And mirrors every star.

Its waves are kneeling on the strand,
As kneels the human knee,
Their white locks bowing to the sand,
The priesthood of the sea!

They pour their glittering treasures forth,
Their gifts of pearl they bring,
And all the listening hills of earth
Take up the song they sing.

The green earth sends its incense up
From many a mountain shrine;
From folded leaf and dewy cup
She pours her sacred wine.

The mists above the morning rills
Rise white as wings of prayer;
The altar-curtains of the hills
Are sunset's purple air.

1 *Week ONE*

1. *Build Your Lakshmi Altar*
2. *Invocation of Lakshmi*
3. *Shopping for Lakshmi Seasonal Ritual*
4. *Re-align with the Rhythm of the Earth*



For April, I replaced the Tara images on my altar with a depiction of Lakshmi and a photo I took of my teacher, Sreedevi Bringi, who embodies the sweet energy of the Earth Mother for me.

While Kali symbolizes the creation and dissolution of life's ongoing cycles, Lakshmi is the vision of pure abundance and radiant fullness. Therefore, I use abundantly flowering plants to adorn my altar, these days, instead of loose flower petals.

The Goddess of abundance and beauty was born from the ocean of milk. When the *asuras* (demons) and *devis* (gods) churned the frothy liquid in search of *amrita* (the nectar of immortality) Lakshmi rose up from its depths.

The *Ashta-Lakshmi* (eight manifestations of the Goddess) bestow eight forms of abundance—prosperity, longevity, knowledge, strength, reproduction, and power. *Mata* (mother) Lakshmi stands on a fully opened lotus holding lotus buds—symbols of beauty and fertility. Her four hands represent the four human endeavors: *dharma* (right path), *kama* (desires), *artha* (wealth), and *moksha* (liberation).

Elephants accompany the goddess. They represent strength and action in alignment with one's *dharma*, which leads to material and spiritual prosperity.





Invoking Lakshmi

- Live flowers & plants
- Jasmine, sandalwood, frankincense and amber.
- Milk & honey
- Ghee
- Gold jewelry
- Rose quartz, ruby, emerald
- Pink, red, and green
- Bath/water rituals
- Swimming
- Nature retreats
- The number 8
- "Shopping for Lakshmi"



Shopping for Lakshmi

Suppose you are shopping to find the perfect gift for the person who has everything. ...who, in fact, IS everything.

What would you give the Universe?

Mystic teachings seek to remind us that every person is an expression of the universal Infinite, and therefore, each of us is a divinely unique reflection of the "universal everything." The archetypal image of Goddess Lakshmi embodies the abundance of the Earth and the richness of life's miracles. She carries this message for you:

तत्त्वमिस = "Tat tvam asi" = "You are that..."

As a Soul Artist, you seek to remember your Self as one with creation and its Source.

You look for the beauty in all things. You take a deep breath and remind yourself that you have everything that you need.

And if you are like me, you often forget.

When we forget ourselves as infinite, it is common to reach for material possessions to help us "remember who we are."

Shopping can feel like recovering our lost selves for a moment.

Parents who have extended their energy into their children, for instance, or those with demanding jobs may feel a sense of "lost self."

A trip to the department store, or shopping online, can help you experience a sort of ego-retrieval:

You find an item you like and you declare, "Now THIS is me!"

Sometimes appreciating beautiful things can, in fact, remind you of your infinite connection too, especially when you celebrate beauty without attachment or aversion—when you experience it with the eyes of the witnessing soul. You remember the intrinsic beauty within you. Remember, You are That.



"Shopping for Lakshmi" is a regular household ritual that allows my family time to connect with each other and the Earth. At other times, I take a walk alone and "go shopping" as a way of reconnecting with my natural creative power. It is a ritual to remember simple abundance and the rich treasures of my every day life.

Deepen your experience of interconnectedness by "shopping" outside in nature. Turn this activity into a contemplative practice or a community ritual. Make it a weekly event.

Take a morning or evening hike and observe your surroundings, celebrate the glorious beauty that is freely expressed all around you in Nature. Choose one thing (a rock, a leaf, a shell, a flower, a pinecone, etc.) that speaks to you as a reflection of your own beauty within. Bring it home with you and place it on your alter. Allow this "shopping for Lakshmi" to be a ritual in recognition of Self—the universal aspect of you that is beyond all space, time, and form. Celebrate your true nature as one with all of creation.



Meditation

The Lakshmi archetype is the aspect of you which is universally abundant, rich in infinite Love. Enjoy every exquisite nugget—both big and small—of the Earth’s beauty as a deeply cherished gift to your Self.

Let each gift be a reminder of who you really are.

Tat tvam asi

You are not just the voice of the Earth. You ARE the EARTH.

You are her voice, eyes, ears, hands and heart.

You are, in fact, the complete emanation of the Universe itself—an expression of cosmic creative power.

As you admire the beauty in the night sky, you are the stars gazing back at themselves in wonder. You are an animation of the exact same life force that animates the entire planet.

Your life is the gift.

Tat tvam asi

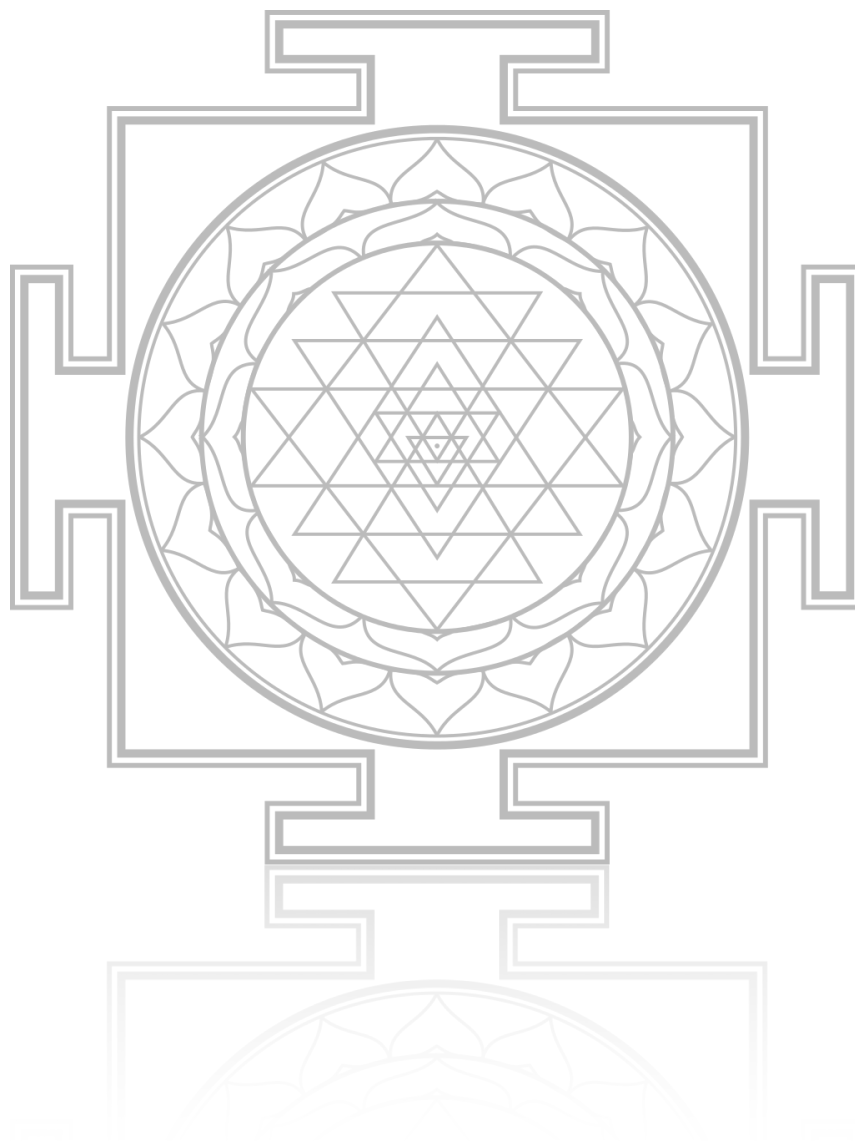


Soul Questions and Actions for Week ONE

Ask yourself:

1. How can I celebrate Nature this month?
2. How can I celebrate myself as Nature?
3. What is my favorite gift from planet Earth?
4. What does Laskhmi have to offer me at this time?

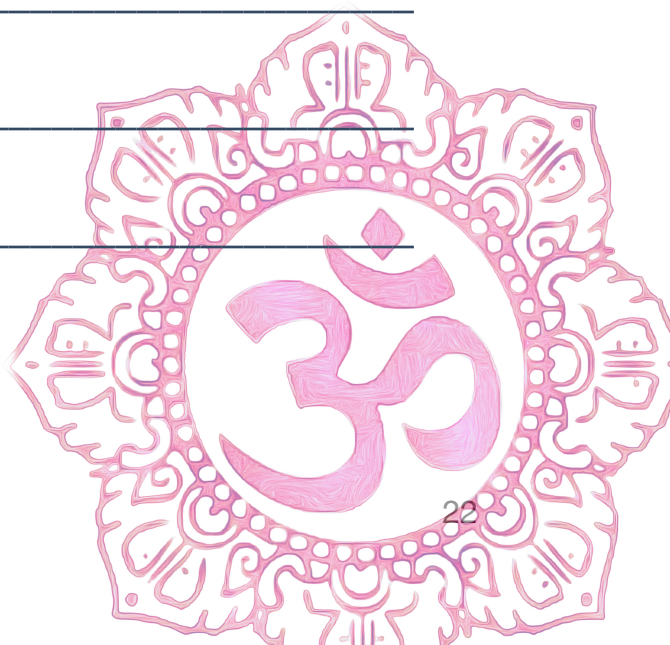
5. Build your Lakshmi altar indoors.
6. Go shopping for Lakshmi, bringing Nature to your altar.
7. Spend 20 minutes in meditation at your altar each day.



***“Abundance is not something we acquire.
It is something we tune into.”***

—Wayne Dyer

reflections



2 *Week TWO*

1. *Mother Archetype*
2. *Invoking Mother*



Introduction to Mother

Some historians believe that primitive cultures worshiped Nature as a Mother, a life-giving nurturer and sustainer.

They honored her as a destructive force too, one that redeemed through the ever-renewing cycles of death and rebirth. Those early civilizations understood the Mother's character through myth. They related to her power with ritual.

Since the rise of philosophy, the western world has positioned intellectual thinking against ritual, logos against mythos, reason against emotion, and spirit against nature.

The Biblical account of creation posits God the Father as a singular creative energy. Nature falls prey to sin and is therefore corrupted, disgraced. As a result, the western world has metaphorically posed father against mother.

*As Joseph Campbell explains in *The Power of Myth*, "The mother gives birth to [one's] nature, and the father gives birth to [one's] social character" (182). With human nature viewed as sinful and social character considered paramount, the move toward salvation has been an exodus through the common era from the primal mythos of Mother, to the rational, social order of a Heavenly Father. Mythos parading as logos, this idea has championed the thinking of philosophers and theologians for centuries; inspiring art, influencing the attitudes and behaviors of nations, and propelling humanity toward 'civilization.'*

Perhaps in its fervent movement toward civilization, however, humanity has left something inescapable behind. As Carl Jung wrote: "The more civilized, the more unconscious and complicated a man is, the less he is able to follow his instincts. His complicated living conditions and the influence of his environment are so strong that they drown the quiet voice of nature" (117).

Today, the Earth is calling for a reconciliation between Spirit and Nature. She is heralding a return to the Mother.

Mother is an Archetype

Crumpled in a hospital chair, I'm looking at my mother in the strange soft light of a heart monitor. She is fast asleep as fluids drip, drip from plastic bag to tube and a respirator keeps time, ironically slow as I ponder how fast it all goes. I am recalling old times: childhood, holidays, summer at the lake. I am also thinking about recent conversations. This day has brought a pandemonium of talking faces—nurses, doctors, family, strangers—uttering a muddled cacophony of prayers, consultations and advice. Now quiet settles around us, just me and my mom. Here, in the dim stillness, I realize what has been missing all along.

The Mother.

At times like this, when insecurity, confusion, and tender emotions chase my inner child like ghosts, I always pick up the telephone and call my mom. When life bears down with the heart-breaking weight of human mortality, I yearn for her nurturing touch.

The greatest calm, the best relief, arrives out of her fierce grace and unconditional love—her support and sanity. She rocks me gently with her wisdom and sings lullabies of truth. Who do I call now? Who is the Mother when mother is ill: silent and tangled in tubes?

Mother is an archetype. Mother energy extends far beyond any one persona. She is a vital pulsation that gestures through Nature, from the subtlest phenomenon to the grandest expressions of life. She is the matrix from which all things manifest. The health and integrity of psyche, both individual and collective, is dependent upon its relationship to the Mother principle.



The Soul of Nature

The hospital campus is surrounded by wooded trails. I step outside to get fresh air and find myself quickly shifting from a world of technological gadgetry and modern made machines; into a realm of soft, organic matter. I turn my emotional attention to the trees and earth and sky. Nature's soul becomes tangible. She is breathing. Inhaling deeply, the nutrients of air revitalize my body and mind.

Inside the concrete walls, my mom is accepting vital sustenance through tanks and tubes. Monitors act like a surrogate mother, keeping track of her natural functions. But outside, Nature is breathing me. Her breath is effortless and natural. I am a human animal; and as such I encounter the natural realm as it speaks a language my heart knows well. I curl up into the Earth's lap and accept her warm and nurturing embrace. She rocks me gently with her wisdom and sings lullabies of truth. Here, in the grass, I realize what has been missing all along. The Mother.

Nature is more than the scenery surrounding humanity. She is more than bio-chemical constructs and elemental forces. Nature is coursing with the dynamism of animation. She is en-souled with living character, which is both intrinsic and relative to one's relationship with her. That relationship is fortified by myth. Myth brings you into direct relationship with the mysterious universe and its myriad phenomena. It awakens you to the magic of being alive on the planet. Myth engages a dance of intrigue and imagination. It is also the living truth. The stories of your heart speak profound wisdom—the essential mysteries that underlie religion and science—the realities that transcend time and space.

With symbol and metaphor, the archetype becomes meaningful. Personifying Nature recovers her soul. The myth of Mother Earth honors her as more than a resource, more than a source of economical goods and gain. The aesthetic of her patterns, even her ravaging wrath, becomes a play of soul. When we hear the story of the Earth, we remember that her essence is entwined with the soul of humanity.

The Mother Nature Myth

Humanity subsists from the natural forces of the Earth, just as a child survives only with nurturance from the mother's womb. Like Gaia in Hesiod's Theogony, she is identified as a great Mother, the primeval source of all. In the Greek Demeter, she is the goddess of the fields and grain—the cycles of the seasons. She may be as graciously protective as Changing Woman, the nurturing Sustainer of the Navajo.. She may be as fertile as the Hindu Lakshmi or as fierce as Kalī, who destroys all things to make way for something new.

Just as a plant appears above ground before withering away at the end of its season, the Source of life is both invisible and inescapable. We see the blossom which grows, then withers and decays. Through it all, the rhizome remains beneath the surface in the mysterious matrix of creative potential. The mythic Mother governs all three phases in a continuous cycle: birth, subsistence of life, and death.

It is springtime in the forest. New buds and shoots, in their vibrant green, are detectable everywhere, if one stops to look. Reaching to touch a golden twig, I notice the back of my hand. It is starting to show signs of age. Veins and wrinkles now mar the skin's surface, where once plump pink stretched smoothly. My hand resembles my mother's hand. Together, we are aging, vulnerable to the decay of nature. Yet underneath it all, a matrix—a breath taking, life sustaining, mystery—promises another spring. Nature is the Mother of this paradox. She is both the material matter and the mystery below. When I surrender to her ongoing cycles, I know a serenity beyond comprehension. She is the soil that nourishes my soul.



The Rape of the Mother

A long-standing patriarchal hierarchy has deprecated the value of nature. Social mythology overtook nature-oriented mythology until the soul of Mother became condemned. She has been blamed extensively, by both religion and society. The feminine principle has been viewed as the source of sin and shame since the fall of man. Whatever the mar on society—the syndrome or pathology—it may be traced back to the wicked blunder of Eve.

The hospital coffee shop is a liminal space between the inside and outside energies. There I sit, warming my bones with a cup of soup. At the next table sits an elderly gentleman, stooped and wrinkled. He is probably someone's great grand-father. He gives a crooked, toothless smile. "I like your dress," he says after a moment. His comment snaps me into a long-forgotten self awareness as I quickly gaze down to recall what I am wearing. It is a modest sundress, the skirt's hem grazing the tops of my feet. "Thank you" I manage back, feebly.

"Girls these days," he continues, "in their short, short skirts...It's no wonder there is so much sexual violence when they insist on dressing like that." I am stunned, speechless, as our eyes hold for a moment. He just smiles his approval of my modesty, as if what he has insinuated is the most obvious, natural truth. This Mother-blaming, feminine debasing story is his truth, his myth—an old, wrinkled, decrepit man of a myth. His attitude toward the feminine reflects a cultural manner of speaking about Nature that denies her of intelligence. Her wisdom cannot be seen for the blinding seduction of her commodity. Her accessibility is interpreted as an invitation to possess her assets. This story cannot serve society anymore. Nor can it serve nature, as she is slowly raped and depleted of her resources, simply because it is possible to do so.

The Reunion

Returning to Mother means reunion of masculine and feminine energy—within our individual psyches, our social communities and our relationship to the Earth. Returning to Mother means honoring the sacredness in Nature. It is a psycho-spiritual journey toward wholeness as together we seek to live in alignment with the planet's rhythms. The Mother presents healing for the rift that can still be seen in our modern culture between men and women, earth and spirit, psyche and nature. She is recognized as God/dess: the essence of God in all things.

My grandmother enters the hospital room with a look of serene inner knowing. My mother's face lights up, then crumples into a sob. Hers is the familiar face that laughed at my childish antics, the same that sternly scolded my stubborn will. Now this face looks vulnerable and tired. My mom reaches for her mother. She needs, just as I need. No matter how much time passes, babies are always babies and mommies are always mommies. The two women, fleshy and grey, invite me into their generous embrace. It smells like home. Four generations rock gently as I slide my hand to my round abdomen. Here my unborn daughter rests nestled in the womb. Mother energy passes now from my mother's wounded, weary body to my own fertile one.

The Mother is an archetype that crosses gender and expands boundaries. She is too abounding to fit inside one personality and too dynamic to be measured. The Mother remains steadfast in her nurturance and unconditional love. And she is so much more. As nature, she is in constant evolution, expansion, and cyclical generation. She changes as the moon changes, pulsing with the rhythms of the tides. And because she is energetic, dynamic and transformational, she remains accessible to every member of humanity, as we continue to evolve in our equality, expanding our awareness. The Mother beckons us to remember her.

Everyone needs the Mother.

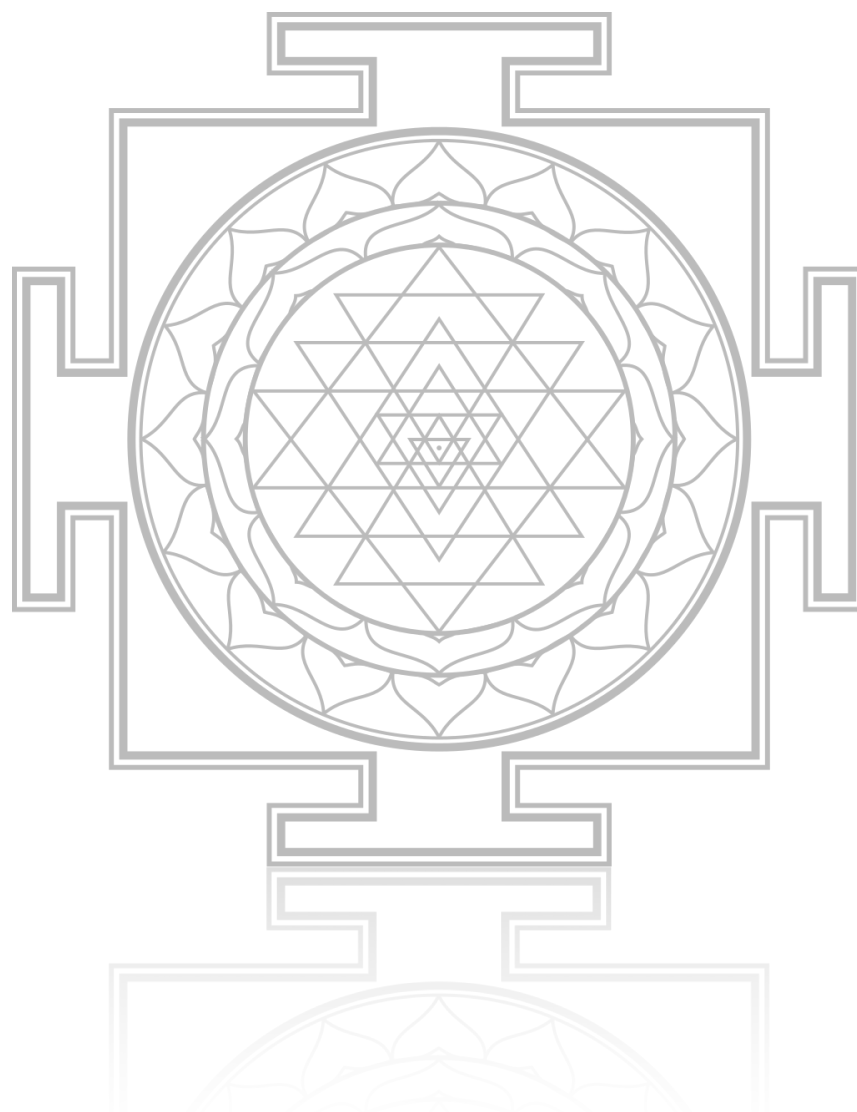




Soul Questions and Actions for Week TWO

Ask yourself:

1. What is your relationship to the Mother Archetype?
2. What qualities does she hold for you?
3. Where do you find "Mother" in Nature?
4. How do you express yourself as "Mother?"
5. Find a quiet, peaceful, and secluded place in Nature to create a nest (or womb) big enough for your body.
6. Sit or lay down in your nest and experience "Mother" with all of your senses, including your imagination.
7. Write your reflections.



“We are born to live in the love that permeates all life”
—Marion Woodman

“And forget not that the earth delights to feel your bare feet
and the winds long to play with your hair”
— Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet*

3

Week THREE

1. *Sacred Earth Activism*
2. *Eating as Ritual*



*Sacred
Earth
Activism*

The feminine side of our being is slow, spontaneous, natural, and receptive. She accepts life as it is without delusion. In the wisdom of nature's seasons, she does not waste any part of creation. Every process contributes to the dynamic cycle of life, death, and rebirth.

As whole beings, we must fearlessly face the present danger of climate change and shift our cultural values. Rather than an idealized notion of perfection and immortality, our consciousness must recognize the importance of dissolution and decay. The entire cycle of nature must be honored in order for her vitality to be sustained.

The gods of manufacturing, consumption, and waste must yield to the new ideals of recycling, distribution, and organic compost. The reclamation of the divine feminine must include Sacred Earth Activism.

Sacred activism includes facing the truth of climate change without delusion: making empowered choices that contribute to planetary health. Georg Feuerstein's outline in *Green Yoga* provides many opportunities to contribute to a conscious consumerism (142-148).

It begins when you make a list of all the things you use daily and clarify what you truly need. When possible, buy second-hand products from local sources. Specifically look for products without packaging. Use only recycled paper and water bottles. Say NO to every plastic bag that is offered to you. Carry reusable bags to hold your goods. Choose ecologically non-toxic and efficient options for your home. When it comes to environmental activism, there is a best option for nearly everything, from light bulbs and cleaning products to floor tiles and paint. Make your environment a constant reminder of the sacredness in nature.

Honor mother earth by living your entire life as a ritual of non-dual awareness: You are Nature. Nature is You.

What is being asked of us now is to create an alignment between human nature and the rest of the natural world—a mandatory alliance for the health and survival of all who live on planet Earth.



A person is sitting on a wooden dock by a river, holding a teal reusable water bottle with a bamboo lid. The person is wearing a patterned shawl and light blue jeans. The background shows the river and dense green foliage.

Reusable Water Bottle

Only around 10% of all plastic water bottles get recycled. The other 90% take thousands of years to decompose.

Cloth Napkins

If everyone in the United States used one less napkin each day, we would save over a billion pounds of napkins from ending up in landfills.



Vegetarian Diet

It requires 2,500 gallons of water to produce one pound of beef.



Cold Water

Use cool or warm water, instead of the hot cycle, for your laundry and you will save the energy comparable to 100,000 barrels of oil a day.





Home Grown

Grow your own food whenever possible.



Hang Dry

Save money, energy, and your clothes when you hand them out to dry.

Buy Local and Secondhand

Support your local economy and reduce greenhouse gasses created by imported goods.



Cute Coffee Cup

Buy a reusable mug that cuts down on waste and keeps your beverages hotter, longer.



Compost Scraps

Composting is easier than you think and has a huge positive impact on the planet.



1968/159/2014	Ref	MINT
14	Size	100X100X3-5CM

Matches

Strike a match, not a lighter to
burn your candles.



Online Bill Pay

Reduce the amount of waste for
paper statements.



MacBook Pro

Non-Toxic Cleaning

Check the ingredients to eliminate toxic chemicals in your cleaning supplies and toiletries.



LED Light

If every household in the US used just one eco-friendly bulb, it would reduce the pollution equal to removing a million cars from the road.



Reusable Straws

Over 138 billion straws and stirrers are thrown out to landfills each year. Skip the straws and coffee stirrers or use environmentally friendly replacements, like bamboo or metal.



A person wearing a green t-shirt, blue denim jeans with rips, and white sneakers is holding a white tote bag. The bag has text printed on it. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Tote Bag

The environmental cost of
plastic and paper shopping
bags is just too high.
Carry a tote.



Shorter Shower

Every 2 minutes you
cut from your shower
can save ten gallons of water.

The Yoga of Eating

FOOD AS RITUAL

Your body's metabolic rhythm directly connects to the earth's cycles as you take in food and eliminate waste. Mindful eating is a practical way to give to the planet and commune with God/dess.

When you establish a sacred relationship to the foods you eat, you become awake to the needs of your body and the earth.

Consequently, you recognize the value of composting uneaten food back into the earth: you reduce food waste. You realize the value of purchasing locally grown, seasonal, organic foods whenever possible and may even be inspired to grow your own, if garden space is accessible to you (Feuerstein, *Green* 144). Fast food becomes less appealing to your appetite while fresh food becomes more attractive.

Eating is an act of sustainability for your own body and the world when done with such reverence. There are several steps to becoming more ecologically (and spiritually) conscious of your relationship to food.

1. First, slow down. Practice dirga pranayama (the three-part breath) before you eat to prepare your body for digestion. Take your time and enjoy a healthy relationship with your food as you eat it. Delight in all the sensations that accompany eating—smell, sight, texture, and taste. It is important to chew thoroughly and feel relaxed to facilitate proper digestion; if you eat in a rush or under stress, your sympathetic nervous system will inhibit full breakdown of food.

2. Eat as a celebration. Even a mindful process of setting the table and preparing your meal can become a beautiful ritual.

3. When tuning into these natural rhythms of your body, it helps to record cravings and cycles in a food journal. Take note of the foods you eat, when you eat them, and how they affect you. Start to notice patterns: do you crave certain tastes in the winter or consistently need a snack at a certain point? Ayurveda (science of life) corresponds particular tastes with certain seasons, digestive activity with specific times of the day. With deliberate awareness, you attune to your own unique patterns, needs, and habits.

In time you and your body will speak the same language—the language of the earth.

Eating consciously not only makes your body more active and vibrant, but also more awake to divinity within. Cognizant of your inner divinity, all other actions, choices, and relationships become infused with this grateful desire to contribute, sustain, and heal Mother Earth.

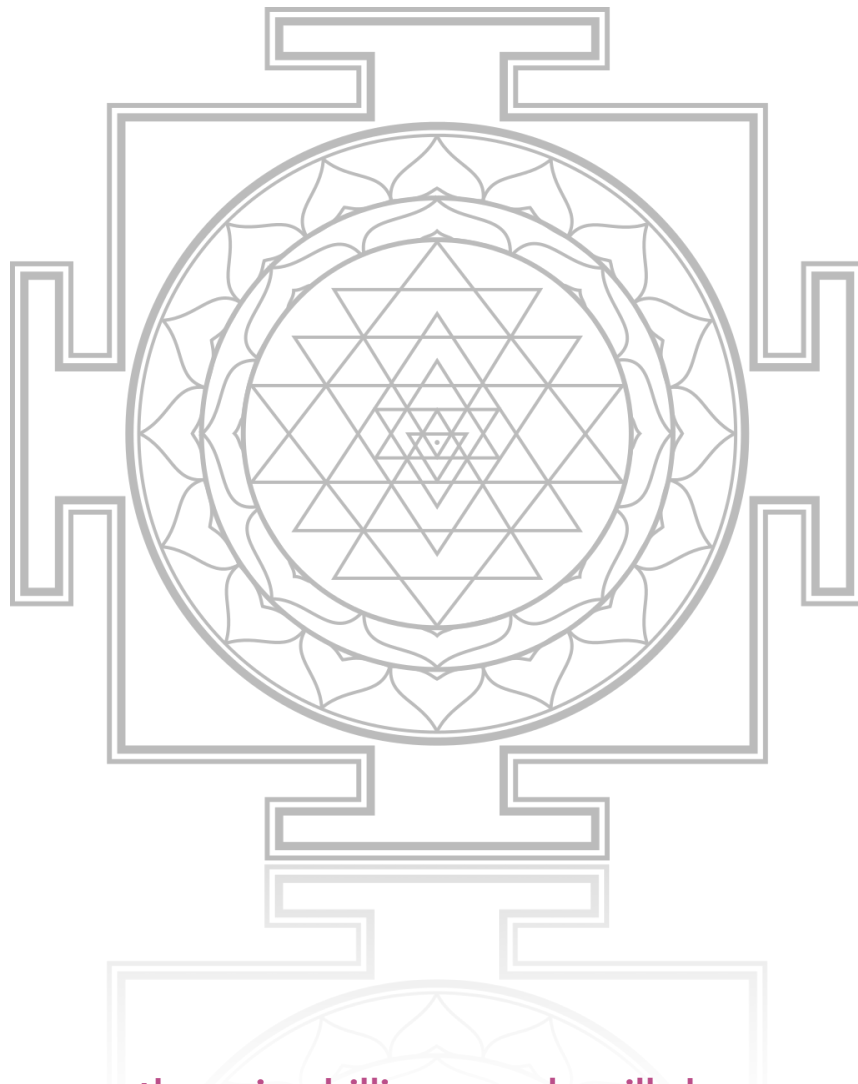
You become a participant in planetary sacredness.





Soul Questions and Actions for Week THREE

1. List 10 things you already do to sustain the Earth's resources.
2. List 10 things you know you could do better to be a Sacred Earth Activist in everyday life.
3. What plastic products do you use that could be replaced with more sustainable materials?
4. What cleaning supplies can you replace with environmentally friendly options.
5. Record what you eat this week and when/how you eat it.
6. Notice any trends or eating habits and contemplate their value.
7. Commit to eating more mindfully, as a celebration of life.



“Soon, more than nine billion people will share our planet. Increasing demands for food, water, energy, and infrastructure are pushing nature to its limits. The impacts of climate change are touching down everywhere we look”

~ Mark Tercek, *The Nature Conservancy*

“Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed.”

— Mahatma Gandhi

“From mother's breast to sacred rites our physical, emotional, and spiritual stress is answered with food. For it is through eating that we are reunited with nature.”

—Edward J. Dumke
The Serpent Beguiled Me and I Ate

“The magic ingredient we put into every dish is Shakti or Divine Energy. Food is treated as God because it contains the essence of life, a conscious energy that nourishes that same energy in you. The cook who seeks God in himself or herself while preparing food, cooks from a special place and adds Shakti to the food.”

—Anne Saks and Faith Stone
The Shoshoni Cookbook.

4

Week FOUR

Claim Your Elemental Ishta Devata

EARTH



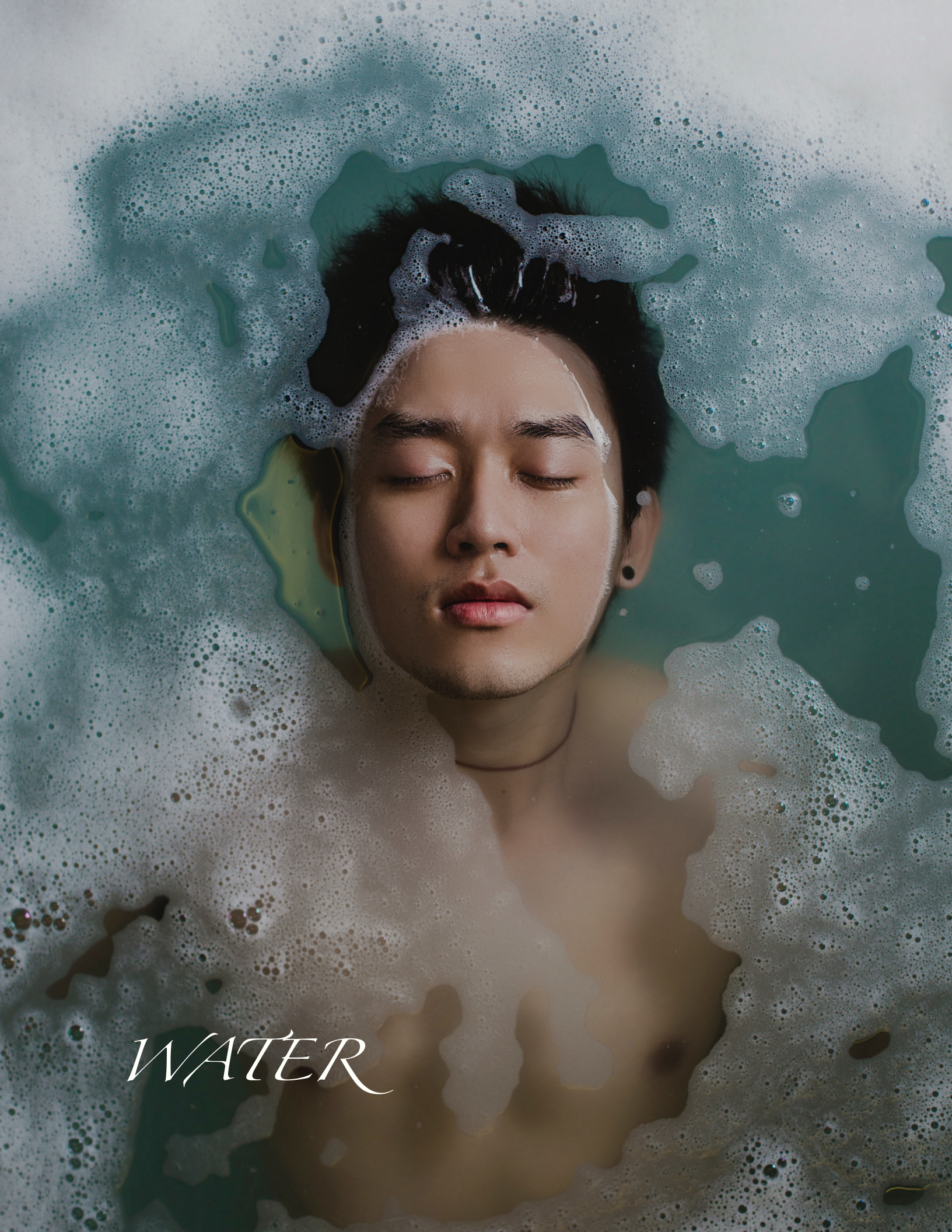
Elemental Ishta-devata

**Your Ishta-devatā is “an intimate experience of connection to life”
–Shiva Rea**

While Tantrik texts present many beautiful anthropomorphic visions of deities, you may choose an elemental experience of divinity in nature. Trees, rivers, flowers, the stars—everything in nature is animated with the divine light, and may become a personal symbol to bring you closer to the experience of Reality. Each of the elements provide archetypal qualities for personal connection with which you can interact and discover healing transformation. The element of earth presents cohesion, constancy, and support that you can relate to in a time of instability. Water might remind you to soften, slow down, look within, and “go with the flow.” The personality of fire provides warmth, activation, or clarity, while air inspires you to be creative, adaptable, and expressive. You can invoke each element with ritual.

Abhyanga

Abhyanga offers a nurturing practice for connecting with the earth element. It is a ritual of honoring your *dhatu*s (body tissues), and nourishing their structural integrity, health, and purity. The practice includes massaging your entire body with careful attention to your joints and specific marma points associated with subtle energy centers in your body. A ritual of massaging your feet brings awareness to the point of sacred connection, where your every step kisses the earth.



WATER

Water Ritual

Water is my elemental ishta-devatā, and yet one of my most challenging ecological practices is conserving water. Bathing gives me a sense of deep connection to Reality. I feel grounded, centered, and inspired simultaneously. Water for personal cleansing accounts for an immense amount of the world's water consumption, so I try to keep showers short. Instead, I enjoy a weekly water ritual of bathing. Using oils, candles, and pranayama practices to invoke all elements, I close my eyes and pay homage to the waters of the earth.

We need water.

According to the USGS Water Science School, as much as 60 percent of the human body is water (water.usgs.gov). This same water cycles through absorption and evaporation into the air around us and then rains down into the oceans. In this way, the water in our bodies unites us with the entire planet.

Trataka

Trataka is a ritual to invoke the fire element and embody its sacred power. You gaze at a flame and then internalize your gaze to envision the fire within. Sit comfortably in front of a candle or a small fire. Consciously honor the qualities of fire cultivating gratitude for its warmth and illumination. With relaxed focus, settle your gaze upon the flame. Remain relaxed, with minimal blinking and complete your focus until a spontaneous meditative state arise from within you. Slowly close your eyes and turn your attention inward. Visualize an inner flame at your heart. Repeat this process, honoring any feelings that arise.

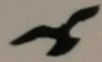
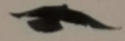
FIRE



Breath Inspired Vinyasa

Pranayama practice brings conscious awareness to your breath—the air element as it circulates life force in and out of your lungs and all around you. Pranayama may be conjoined with conscious vinyasa (asana posture series), by instructing conscious attention on the flow of the breath in each movement. A simple vinyasa transitions from Tādāsana to a forward folding position called Uttānāsana. Begin in Tādāsana, (mountain pose) and bring your awareness to your breath. Inhale, lifting your arms overhead. Exhale, softly bending your knees “to the point of comfort,” fold forward at your hips. Place your hands on the floor in front of your feet or on a block, if necessary. Relax your head and shoulders. On your next inhale, raise arms and torso together to form a straight line parallel to the floor. Strengthen your leg muscles to support you as you rise to standing and lift your arms overhead (Whitwell 176).

As you practice this flow from one asana to the other, coordinate your movements to your breath. Maintain a steady pace. Feel air fill your entire body as you inhale, reaching upward. Enjoy the feeling of emptying the air out of your body as you fold forward. Slow your movements to explore a rhythmic and steady pace. Cultivate gratitude for the air element as a vehicle for prana and the divinity within. This ritual is opportunity to experience God/dess breathing you.



AIR

When you honor the elements in these ways, you become deeply connected to them. You become concerned with their purity and conservation. In his work, *Green Yoga*, Feuerstein offers daily practices for ecological action and preservation of the elements:

- Plant trees.
- Drive fuel efficient vehicles, carbon neutral vehicles when necessary, otherwise walk, bike, carpool and use public transportation.
- Use less water.
- Spread the word.
- Encourage political leaders, businesses, organizations, family, and friends to take peaceful action.

Each of these is a measure of sacred activism and inspires a new awareness of not only the earth on which we live, but the earth within.



Once you begin to attune your rhythms to the rhythms in Nature, however, you find that she has been waiting all along. God/dess restores humanity to the healing power and deepest wisdom of the earth's cycles. Marion Woodman writes:

Anyone who has labored to release the Goddess from the darkness of centuries of abuse has returned from the excavation with a paradox. She who is dead is alive. All we have to do is open our eyes an extra sixteenth of an inch, and there she is, dancing in every apple blossom, in the song of every purple finch, as well as in the flames of passion that we call life. (Dancing 28)

There is a universal consciousness that pervades all of nature. We are reclaiming the immanent divinity of God/dess.

The feminine face of God is Love present within all matter.

"She looks us straight in the eye, and though her love may manifest as rage at our self-destruction, she's there"
– Marion Woodman, *Conscious Femininity*

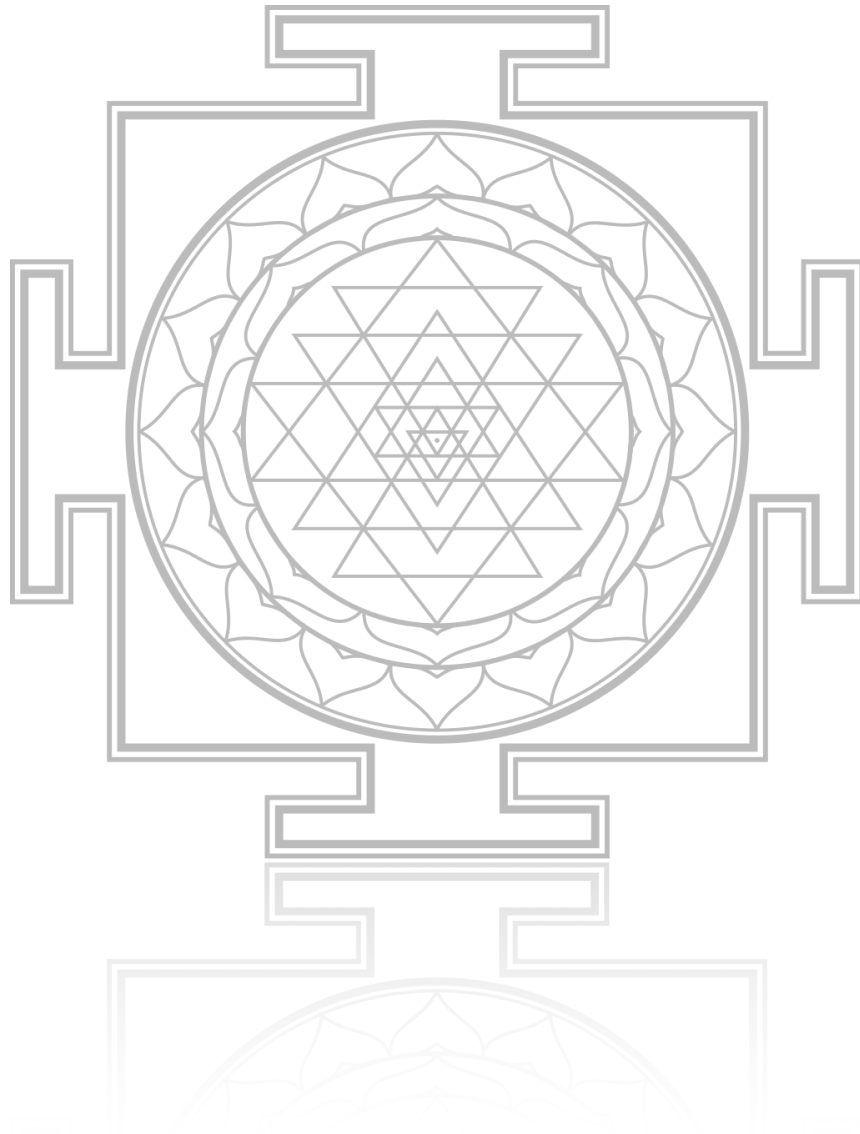
She is the light in a rose bud, the feeling of energy in a tree. She is the love that animates all of creation.





*Soul Questions and Actions
for Week FOUR*

1. What is your elemental Ishtadevatā? (With which element do you most resonate?)
2. How do/can you honor the elements in daily life as a ritual of gratitude and connection to the Earth?



**"Earth's crammed with heaven...But only he who
sees, takes off his shoes."**

— Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh*



Fertile You.

You are the creative power of the Cosmos.
You are aligned with the generating rhythms
of the Earth.
Now, what are you creating?



Pink Moon *Review*

The work of the Pink Moon invites you to...

- Build Your Lakshmi Altar
- Invoke the Abundance of Lakshmi
- Create Seasonal Rituals
- Re-align with the Rhythm of the Earth
- Realize the Mother Archetype
- Step into Sacred Earth Activism
- Eat with Mindfulness as a Celebration of Life
- Claim Your Elemental Ishta Devata

You are the...

- Fertile Power of Goddess
- Expression of Mother Archetype

You are the Soul Artist.

- Review the materials you have received so far.
- Document the progress on your Soul's Creative Project.
- Remember Your Feeling Desire for this year and
- Check in to make sure you are following that compass.

Join the next Full Moon Community discussion.



