



The Wolf Moon


RUNNING YOUR WOLVES

Wolf Moon Objectives

- Activate Your Courage.
- Run Your Wolves.
- Illuminate your shadows.
- Identify your limiting stories.
- Sing new songs over old bones.
- Transform your prima materia into psycho-spiritual gold.



Table of Contents

1.....	Welcome Letter: A Dive into the Deep End
2.....	The New Moon
3.....	The Full Moon
4.	Wolf Moon Overview
5.	Week ONE
6.	Building Your Altar
8.....	Songs & Bones: The Story of the Wolf Woman
11.	Soul Questions for Week ONE
13.	Week TWO
14.	Shadow Suppression: The Big Bad Wolf
16.	Kālī Invocation
17.	Kālī and the Shadow
18.	Kālī Devours the Demon
20.	Inanna’s Descent: Journey Through the Seven Gates
23.....	Kundalini and the Seven Gates
25.	Running Your Wolves Gate One: Sahasrara & Death
28.	Meditation: This is it.
29.	Soul Questions for Week TWO
32.	Week THREE
33.....	Running Your Wolves Gates Two & Three: Regrets
38.....	Meditation: Say What You Need to Say.
39.	Soul Questions for Week THREE
42.	Week FOUR
47.	Running Your Wolves Gate Four: Anahata & Alchemy
49.	Meditation: Illuminate Your Maha Shadow
51.	Soul Questions for Week FOUR
54.	Wolf Moon Review
55.	Further Study



A Dive into the Deep End

Thank you for joining me on this Eleven Moons journey.

The first three months of the year are considered the Kālī Moons. They provide considerations for **RESTORATION & STRENGTHENING** to support your deep **SHADOW WORK** and **CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICE**.

This is powerful and important work. It takes an immense amount of courage and self-compassion. At the same time, unwavering courage and unconditional Self-love are developed through this practice. You must actually do the work to experience the rewards.

Throughout the coming moons, there will be opportunity for deep introspection. The calm of the new moon provides time for that. At those times, you will be offered contemplative practices and Self care guidance.

The full moon, on the other hand, is ripe for the experience of being in community. Join the LIVE community calls for deeper interpersonal connection.

I have poured my heart into this work, and I'm grateful for your full participation and responses.

Please stay in communication with me and our community through the comment feed at the bottom of each page of your content, online; and through our private Facebook group.

...and contact me, personally, anytime with your questions and ideas at shakti@rrshakti.com.

One Love,

R.R. Shakti, PhD

The New Moon

Our culture tends to value "full" over "empty," but if you are always full, you will never have room for something new.

Each month the new moon invites you to release, surrender, empty, and turn inward to discover the infinite potential within you.

Build your altar and tend your inner fire.



The Full Moon

The full moon invites you to celebrate your wholeness in community or with an expression of gratitude. Dance, sing, explore, create. Share your insights, gifts, and embodied beauty with your world.



Wolf Moon *Overview*

If you live in the Northern Hemisphere, it is winter time. Generally that means colder, shorter days. The dark stillness of January provides a month for inward-turning contemplation and restoration. Hibernating animals and germinating seeds, beneath the Earth's winter, all gather strength for the coming spring. The frozen landscape is motionless. The year ahead is like a snowy white mountainside, clean and ready for fresh tracks.

Take time, within this quiet opportunity, to establish new daily rituals.

How will you develop your courage this year?

Where is there room for deeper compassion in your life?

What will you create?

Begin by journaling your ideas, intentions, and revelations for the year ahead. Discuss these ideas with your friends and loved ones. Connect with the Kālī Moons Community. Remember, in the quiet darkness: You are not alone.

Death accompanies every new beginning. The bitter-sweetness of life's transitions parallels what we find in the "dead of winter"—bitter cold, yet sweet serenity. The dissolution of life in winter is an essential part of the creative process. This dissolution is just like the work of the Goddess archetype, Kālī, who brings destruction for the benefit of healing and transformation. Kālī dares you to bring the unconscious into consciousness. Courageously demolish limiting stories and world views—personal myths that no longer serve you so that you can realize your Self as whole.

The Kali Moons practice of Running Your Wolves is a contemplative exploration of your shadows through the journey of the seven chakra gates.

This work combines the descent of the Sumerian Goddess, Inanna, with a Jungian interpretation of Chakra Psychology. It invokes the courage of Kālī to integrate your shadows into your conscious awareness. And it employs the wisdom of La Loba, the Wolf Woman, who sings over old wolf bones to bring a new creature to life.

You will be asked to examine your personal myths around each chakra archetype. As you tend your shadows at each gate of your Wolf Moon soul work, recognize what aspects of your personal myths are the bones and which aspects are the songs.

**You are the bone collector and the sage/singer.
And you are the wolf to be set free.**

1 *Week ONE*

1. *Build Your January Altar.*
2. *Listen/Read the Story of La Loba, The Wolf Woman.*
3. *Contemplate Your Soul Question: "How Do I Want to Feel?"*
4. *Establish Your Feeling Desire.*
5. *Clarity the Songs & Bones-the Myth of Your Feeling Desire.*



Build Your January Altar

Your January Altar is a place to draw upon your courage for shadow illumination and integration. It is a sacred space for beginning this journey of Eleven Moons.

Items for your altar:

- A photograph or image of someone or something that reminds you of your courage
- Incense to invoke the Earth element
- A small water vessel
- An oil lamp or candle
- Frankincense essential oil
- A singing bowl, bell, or tingsha chimes

Other supplies for the Wolf Moon journey:

- A journal and pencil
- yoga mat
- yoga bolster
- meditation cushion or designated, comfortable seat



Songs & Bones
The Story of the Wolf Woman



photo: Brad Orsted

La Loba (The Wolf Woman)

Myth is story that gives life meaning. Personal myths are the stories of your own life—the stories that build and support how you view the world around you and who you think you are.

You begin composing your personal myth with your very first cognitive memory.
...and you continue to write it throughout your entire life. It can harm or it can heal, but everyone has a story.

You become your most empowered Self when you realize that you can consciously rewrite your story whenever it no longer serves or inspires you.

This mindful and creative practice provides your life with rich meaning and can turn even the most difficult scenarios into events of purpose.

The story of La Loba, the Wolf Woman, illustrates the value and malleability of personal myth. La Loba is a wild woman, a crone, who once and forever, lives deep in the wilderness of Pueblo territory. She is a bone hunter. She gathers scattered wolf bones and meticulously reassembles them, like putting together a magic puzzle. And when an entire skeleton is assembled, La Loba sings over the bones until the creature is re-animated with life force power.

In archetypal stories, all the characters and symbols are aspects of your own heart/mind and personality. They provide messages that, when you listen, bring more meaning to your life.

Consider the most important stories of your life.
What aspects of your personal myths are like bones, unbreakable, unchanging facts—the raw data collected from your past. These bones are the real and observable experiences that make up the foundational details of your memories.

What aspects of your personal myths are like flesh—the malleable tones of meaning or purpose that you have attributed to the facts.

You are the bone collector and the sage/singer.

How have you developed your life's stories—enfleshed your bones with songs?

In what ways do those developments empower you?

In what ways do they limit you?

The question is: Do your personal myths still serve you?

Do they inspire you to be your best self?

Do they supply you with gratitude, courage, and LOVE?

Or are you ready to reassemble your bones to create something new?

We will use this contemplative "Songs & Bones" practice as we journey through Inanna's Descent. But for now, suspend the drive to act. Resist any urge to establish a New Year's Resolution.

Do not move forward until you have spent time with the Soul

Questions for Week ONE:



Soul Questions for Week ONE

Ask yourself:

"How do I want to FEEL in the year ahead?"

Write your answer in one word: _____

We will call this your "feeling desire."

Then, listen to the story of La Loba provided in your Eleven Moons module online. Consider any limiting personal myths that have settled around your feeling desire.

What is the limiting story that arises with this desire?

What are the bones of that story?

What is the meaning you have created around the story?

Are you ready to sing a new song over those old bones?

2 *Week TWO*

1. *Meet the Jungian Shadow*
2. *Meet Kālī | Learn her japa mantra for invocation.*
3. *Meet Inanna*
4. *Begin Your Descent | Enter the First Gate*
5. *Listen & Practice | This Is It Meditation*

Shadow Suppression: The Big Bad Wolf

Everything that is of value, everything that is of light, has a shadow side. This is the dance of duality—the experience of living in the manifest world of phenomenal things. Pure light pours forth infinitely until it comes into relationship with an object. Then the light is both obstructed and reflected. On one side of all created form is a luminous reflection of pure light. On the other side is shadow.

Psychologist, Carl Jung, posited psychological shadows as all the personal character traits and tendencies that you find undesirable and try to hide from yourself and others.

Shadows are not necessarily bad. It is only when you suppress your shadows that they become monsters. They become like the “big bad wolf” devouring your Self Love and, with it, your capacity for true compassion. Suppressed shadows often take the form of over-inflated egos or Self-defeating stories. They eat you up inside. As a defense mechanism, you project them onto others whom you then perceive as the enemy—the devil, the witch, or the evil “other.”

Suppressed shadows wreak havoc on your psycho-spiritual ecosystem, causing physical, emotional, and spiritual imbalance that can destroy your joy, your creative power and your relationships. Shadows must be attended to. They must be recognized as part of the whole of your psyche. Then, you may become a Soul Artist, choosing how to integrate your shadows in a way that awakens your creative freedom.

A Real Life Story:

An illuminating TED talk given by investigative journalist, George Monbiot, in 2013 reveals that because of their bad rap, wolves became critically endangered in Yellowstone National Park. Their absence caused a disturbing imbalance to the wilderness eco-system that was destructive to the natural landscape and the creatures within it. Once the wolves were re-introduced to the wilderness, and allowed to run free, the landscape recovered and began to flourish.

Similarly, you must embrace the shadows of your internal “psycho-system” to realize wholeness. You must let your wolves run, while mindfully integrating them into the whole story of your human experience. Your shadow stories actually have an important place in your life, once you identify their bones and courageously-creatively-express their most meaningful and liberating songs.

***NOTE:**

Throughout this work Self is capitalized to distinguish it from self. Self with a capital "S" connotes the wholeness of being, which includes both ego-consciousness and the unconscious levels of the psyche. Self is synonymous with "soul."

The self (without capitalization) is used for the persona or ego-identity which does not include the unconscious materials of the psyche. The self is the expression of conscious personality traits, preferences, and experiences. It is synonymous with your "ego."

Kālī Invocation

Featured Story

"Kālī Devours the Demon" from the *Devī Mahātmya*

Awareness

Courage & Protection

Altar Stone

Black Obsidian

Essential Oil

Frankincense

Bīja Mantra

क्रीं KREEM

Kālī Mantra

ॐ क्रीं काली

Om Kreem Kālī

Kālī Invocation

ॐ क्रीं कालिकायै नमः

Om Kreem Kalikaye Namah

Māhā Kālī Invocation

ॐ क्रीं कालिकायै नमः

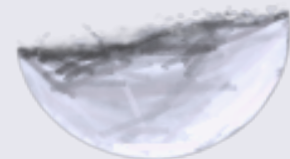
Om Kreem Kalikaye Namah



Kali & the Shadow

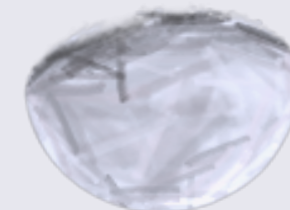


Happy New Year as we celebrate an ending and a new beginning...all at once!

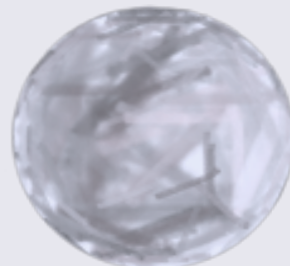


The Hindu Goddess, Kālī, is an archetypal symbol of this transformation.

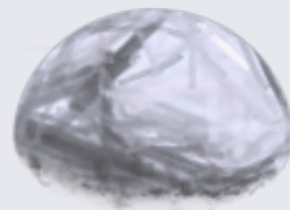
She represents dissolution and change and teaches us that death is the portal to rebirth. Kālī is the face of Nature where creation and destruction dance in ongoing cycles.



Kali is the dark mother who challenges you to be courageous, autonomous, and liberated. The force of Kālī's nature is feared...only because it cannot be controlled. The patriarchal and political powers of our culture tend to demonize whatever it cannot control—to diabolize what will not conform.

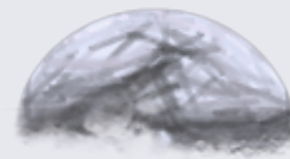


Kali emboldens you to stand firm in your truth, to rest completely on the wisdom that resides deep within; to be clear, strong, and independent.



Shadow work is an important aspect of becoming confidently autonomous in that deep wisdom.

When you do your shadow work, you relinquish your shame, insecurity, and fear. You acknowledge and embrace your entire being. You attend your wounds as a way of honoring the ongoing cycles of birth, life, death, and rebirth. You cut cords of attachment, aversion, and limiting stories. You have nothing to prove and nothing to hide. You can fully own your wholeness. Your courage is contagious. No one can shake your Self* Love and your compassion spills forth on everyone you meet.



Like Kali, you become completely liberated and cannot be controlled by external forces as you sit with poise in the equanimity of death and rebirth.

Kali Devours the Demon

In the *Devī Māhātmya* of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāna* (a fifth century text devoted to the many forms of the Goddess) Kālī appears out of the third eye of the Great Mother, Durga, when she is summoned to defeat a horrific demon. This monster, Raktabīja, is a hideous symbol of ego delusions. He possesses a gruesome power that whenever a drop of blood falls from his body to the earth, it becomes a duplicate of him—a clone. No gods can conquer this daunting beast.

The Goddess, in her many forms, battles against Raktabīja. The *Mātrikās* (little mothers—archetypes of the Goddess) clash with all the Raktabīja clones, but they continually replicate until the entire world is suffused with demons. The world is finally saved when Kālī comes forth to drink up all the blood from Raktabīja's injuries so that no more drops can fall to the earth. She devours all the clones and consumes all of Raktabīja's life force until it is integrated into her own being. The demon falls cold and lifeless to the ground. This story is rich in shadow symbolism.

You must have courage to face the wholeness of life, including the “messiness” of your greatest wounds and shadows, in order for them to be truly healed.

The archetype of Kali within us gives us that power. When our wounds remain in the depths of our unconscious, they become shadows. When they are continually suppressed, they turn into demons. They are like wild wolves that have been ignored and caged. In their rage to be free, they become monsters. When your shadows are recognized and integrated into your whole Self, they lose their destructive powers over you.

The work of the Wolf Moon is a dive into the deep end of psycho-spiritual transformation. It is a call to devour the demons that lurk in the unconscious shadows—simply by bringing them into the light and integrating them into your wholeness.

This course is an opportunity to run your wolves with creative courage.

Running your wolves means allowing your unconscious shadows to play in the light of consciousness.



"...without an understanding of the relationship between destruction and creation, death and rebirth, the individual suffers the mysteries of life as meaningless mayhem alone."

- Marion Woodman
The Pregnant Virgin

Inanna's Descent

Journey Through the Seven Gates

"From the Great Above the goddess opens her ear to the Great Below..."

That line initiates the story of Inanna's descent into the underworld. The epic poem begins when the Sumerian goddess of the upper realms (the earth and the heavens) hears the call of her sister, Ereshkigal, the goddess of the underworld.

Ereshkigal, ultimately, is Inanna's own shadow beckoning her into the nether regions, below. She is like the she-wolf in the shadow, hungry and crying in desperation. That is what wolves do. They cry out at the light of the moon. Wolves need to run; they need to feed to thrive. They must be active and satiated to survive. If a wolf is captured, starved, or beaten down—that wolf becomes a monster, a demon. Ereshkigal is in mourning at the death of her husband. What she deeply desires is to simply be heard. She is the symbol of the shadow wound that longs to be tended.

Like Kālī's defeat of the demon, Inanna's story is a call to recognize and hold the shadow. It is not a popular suggestion in our culture: to realize unconscious content. Instead, we want to quickly escape the depths of darkness. We want to transcend into a space of higher reason.

But we mustn't forget that there is a deeper wisdom, too. A wisdom that resides within the depths of the human experience.

There is wisdom in the wounds.

In order to experience the balanced connection of higher and deeper awareness, we must descend and tend the wounds.

We must open our ear to the great below—to heed the call into the underworld.



So this is the story of Innana.
She hears the call and heeds the call...and she goes!
But before she goes, she dresses in her best vestments.
She adorns herself with jewelry, makeup, and ornaments.
She is regal, presenting herself in her best ego persona.

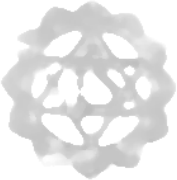


Descending, she comes upon the 7 gates to the underworld.

As she approaches the first gate, she is stopped by the gate-keeper, whose name is *Neti*.

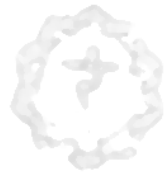


Now, this is a Sumerian story from as far back as possibly 3000 BC and so the word "neti" is presumed to be from the Sumerian language of the time and its meaning would come from then and there.



But for the Sanskrit language (the language of yoga), "neti," is a word of negation.

"*Neti, neti, neti*" is a way of saying "not this," and "not that."



It is a concept that is used in Vedanta and Buddhist philosophy and practiced to strip down the delusions of ego and the persona...

and get to the root of the soul experience.



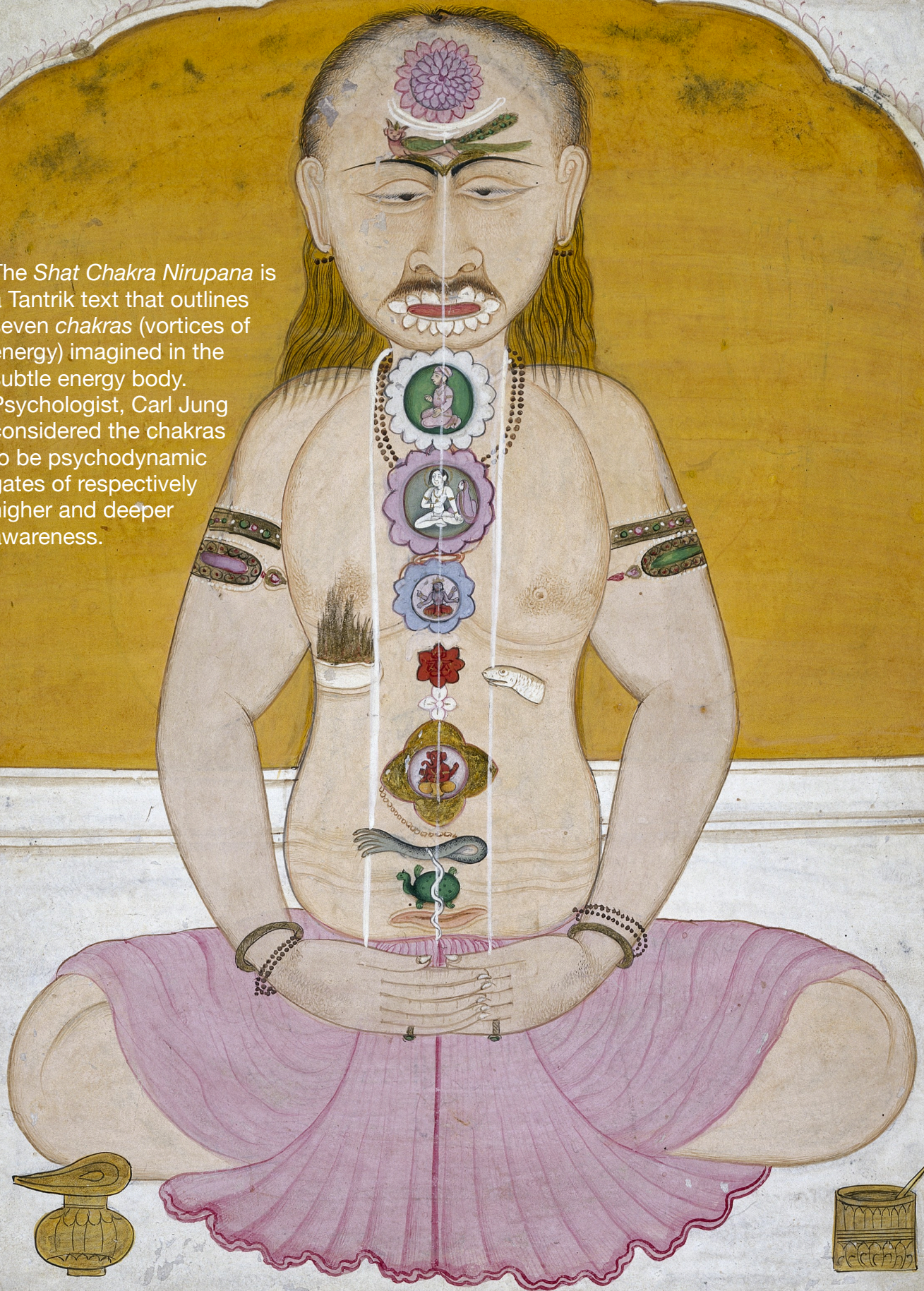
And this is just what Neti, the gate keeper, stands for.

As Inanna approaches, Neti demands that she remove her beautiful clothing and jewelry. One by one, through each gate, he takes off her hair adornments. He washes her face, her hands, and her make-up...



eventually stripping her bare so that she enters the underworld, completely naked, vulnerable, and open...

The *Shat Chakra Nirupana* is a Tantrik text that outlines seven *chakras* (vortices of energy) imagined in the subtle energy body. Psychologist, Carl Jung considered the chakras to be psychodynamic gates of respectively higher and deeper awareness.



Kundalini & the Seven Gates

The mystical secret of Tantrik yoga is that the archetypes of transformation are metaphors for the *subtle body*—a meeting point of psyche and the physical body. Jung experienced the subtle body as a place where the mind and body “touch and do not touch” (CW 8, 418). It is the energetic undercurrent which animates all life.

The subtle body is the nexus of union where yoga takes place.

By the time Jung had adopted his concept of the subtle body, the idea had already been introduced to the West by means of yoga scholars, such as that of Sir John Woodruff who compares the subtle body with the mind in his translation of the *Shat Chakra Nirūpana* (56). These teachings express yoga as a psycho-spiritual awakening.

The subtle body is the energetic field of *prāna* (life force). Prāna is circulated through *nādīs* (conduits or channels) and *chakras* (vortices or hubs). All life is sustained by this circulating *Prāna Shakti* (life force power) which is imagined as a feminine archetype of creative potential. Prāna Shakti animates your body and influences your mind. She is the *kundalinī* (the unconscious aspect of infinite creative power). She is the latent realization of Self.

Yoga is the reunion of all dualities to realize your wholeness of being. To the Tantrik traditions yoga is, metaphorically, the sacred marriage of *Shakti* (creative power) with *Shiva* (infinite consciousness). Yoga is the alchemical *conunctio* of nature and spirit, the union of body and soul. Wholeness is realized as your unique creative potential in full participation with the Source of Life. In the terms of Jungian Psychology, wholeness is remembered when you integrate the contents of your unconscious mind into your conscious awareness. You must go down into the matrix of matter, down into the core of the unconscious to face the shadows which lurk in its depths. This takes tremendous courage. But it also activates tremendous courage. And it is worth it. Because within the depths, you discover your true creative power. Your divinity comes to light. *God/dess* is revealed.

God/dess means the essence of God in all things.

Teachings of non-dual Tantra beckon you to remember your intrinsic creative power.

Tantrik practices invite you to be, simultaneously, a conscious witness to the world around you as well as your inner responses to it. Meditation from the Tantrik perspective is not evasion from the world, but full participation with it.

As Marion Woodman writes in *Conscious Femininity*: wholeness is “not just a blissed-out state. It involves an awareness of the energy of the rock and the love in the bird, the tree, the sunset. An awareness of the harmony of all things, an awareness of living in the world soul” (83).

The ultimate aim of non-dual yoga is to become awake while living in your body-while enjoying the natural world.

In the *Shat Chakra Nirūpana*, the kundalinī becomes concentrated within the *sushumnā nadi* (the energy current along the central axis of your spine). Seven subtle chakra exist along this pathway, unfolding as portals into psycho-dynamic awakening.

Chakras are archetypal, symbolizing psychological qualities and shadows. Each chakra expresses a natural element: earth, water, fire, air, and ether.

The descent of Prāṇa Shakti as the kundalinī is something like the descent of Inanna leading us through the seven gates into the depths of the unconscious. She then *ascends* into the revelation of psycho-spiritual wholeness.

Your subtle body, therefore, becomes a metaphorical bridge between the physical body and the soul. The chakras are realized as psychodynamic gates between limited ego-consciousness and your deeper awareness of your infinite creative power.

Let's Begin

It is time to begin the descent into the seven gates.

- **Examine your personal myths around each chakra archetype as you go along.**
- **Take time to tend your shadows at each gate.**
- **Recognize what aspects of your personal myths are the bones and which aspects are the songs.**
- **Have courage and compassion to let your wolves run free by singing a new song...rewrite the stories that no longer serve you.**

A PERSONAL SOUL STORY

Driving along a stretch of Colorado highway in 2002, my tires hit black ice and my old Dodge conversion van went careening over the side of the mountain into a frozen river, 50 feet below. As I realized what was happening, I fell into an instant sense of deep peace.

In that moment, I completely believed that I was going to die. I also knew, beyond any doubt, that whatever was going to be destroyed in that car crash was not truly me. I realized that I am more than my body...more than my mind. I became something infinite.

"Dying" was absolutely painless. Waking up on the riverbank...now that hurt! But the pain was exquisite. It meant that I was alive. The world literally looked brighter and I fell deeply in Love with the human experience. Every day, from that point on, would feel like a gift.

In Sanskrit there is a term: *Abhinivesha*, which means "clinging to life." *Abhinivesha* is a *klesha* (affliction or cause of suffering) because the truth of life is that any moment could be your last. Yoga teaches that the witness within you lives on forever. When you identify with the infinite Reality within, the promise of death becomes a beautiful part of the dynamic cycles of existence.

I mean, think of what it would be like if we all lived in this particular human form forever:

Would life still feel meaningful?
Would we be driven to accomplish anything?
Would our relationships remain precious?
Where would we find sacredness?

It's funny how the fact of temporality is what gives life its meaning.

Once you fully embrace the truth that you are going to die, then it is time to finally decide: HOW DO YOU WANT TO LIVE?



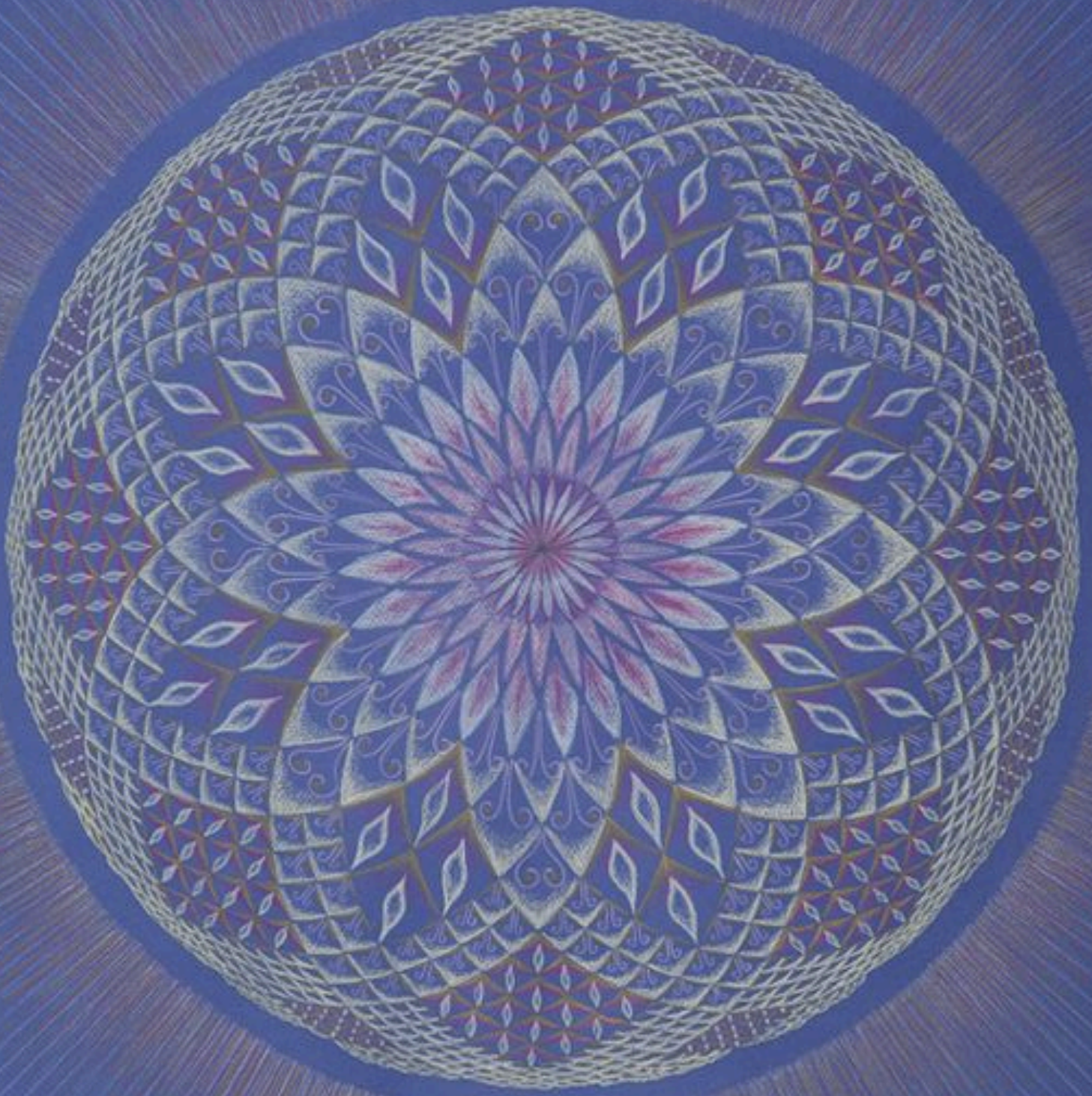
The first gate that we come to on the journey to the underworld/unconscious is the *sahasrara chakra*.

This energetic vortex is located at the crown of the head. It is said to be the point where life force enters the body upon birth and where it departs the body at death. In our mythic journey, Goddess enters here at sahasrara, as Neti instructs Inanna to remove her glorious crown. It is the first gate from the heavenly realms into the human experience.

As Neti greets Inanna at gate one, we can imagine him asking her to strip away her attachment to life; to embrace the fact of death. This is the first realization that leads to a deeper, more meaningful experience of living...a more complete capacity for compassion.

In the United States, our cultural relationship to death is strained, at best. In general, it seems we suffer from deep denial and suppressed fear. It is not something we often talk about in a healthy, embracing way. On one hand, we glorify gore with gratuitous horror movies. On the other, we strive for eternal youth and longevity. The courage of Kālī guides you into the first gate as you ask yourself:

- 1. What is my biggest death story/experience?**
- 2. What are the bones of that story?**
- 3. Is my current relationship with death different from what I was taught to believe?**
- 4. What will I miss most about being alive?**
- 5. Do my beliefs around death serve to empower my experience of life?**
- 6. What in me needs to die, in order for something new to be born?**
- 7. How can I embrace death in a way that brings deeper meaning to my life?**



These are some pretty big questions.

Sahasrara is a pretty big chakra.

It is imagined as a 10,000 petaled lotus that opens to the universal Reality.

The shadow of the Sahasrara chakra is found in the Yoga Sutras as one of the five afflictions called abhinivesha klesha, or clinging to life.

Perhaps there are bones around your chakra stories here—real and factual experiences that have influenced your relationship with death. Perhaps you have a song that can create something useful, something dynamic of your fears.

Please spend time with your personal myth in honesty and Self-love. Know that you are not alone and reach out for others when you need to connect.

Meditation | This is it.

Once I was sitting on an airplane. I had a middle seat, far in the back, between two very large people. The plane was delayed on the tarmac for de-icing. We all sat stuffed inside for an hour and 48 minutes with no movement and no A/C. There were several babies on the flight. They were all crying at once.

We were sweating. It was stinky. I was beginning to get an overwhelming bout of claustrophobia.

I wanted to tear off my clothes, jump over the seats, and escape through the over-wing exit!

Then, I spontaneously fell into the following meditation:

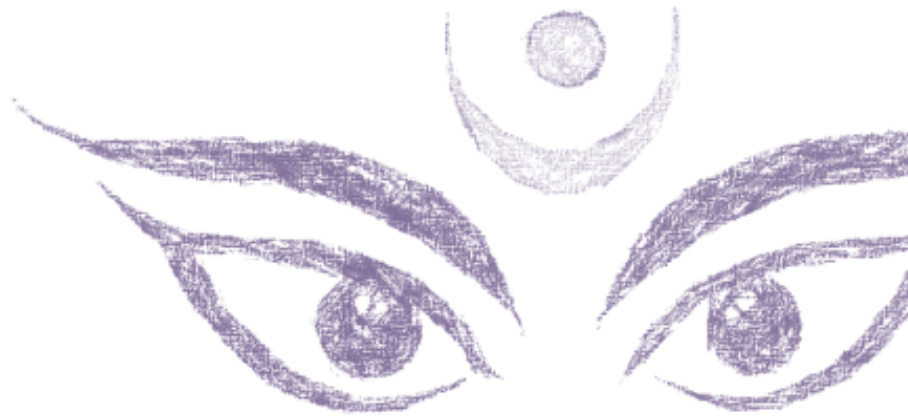
Wherever you are in this moment, close your eyes. Feel all the sensation of your body and environment. Listen deeply to all the sounds. Awaken to the present now. Imagine that this moment is all you have; that you were dropped into this experience for this very temporary moment in time and then you will return to the infinite cosmos once this moment is over.

This is it.

When I opened my eyes, the faces of all the people on the airplane were inviting. The sound of babies crying became the most beautiful sound. The feeling of my neighbors skin touching my arm was a welcome sensation; a feeling of connection to humanity. I struck up a conversation with my neighbors and found them delightful. The entire experience became a gift. And, of course, it was temporary.

In those moments, we realize, the inevitability of change is a true boon of Kālī's LOVE!

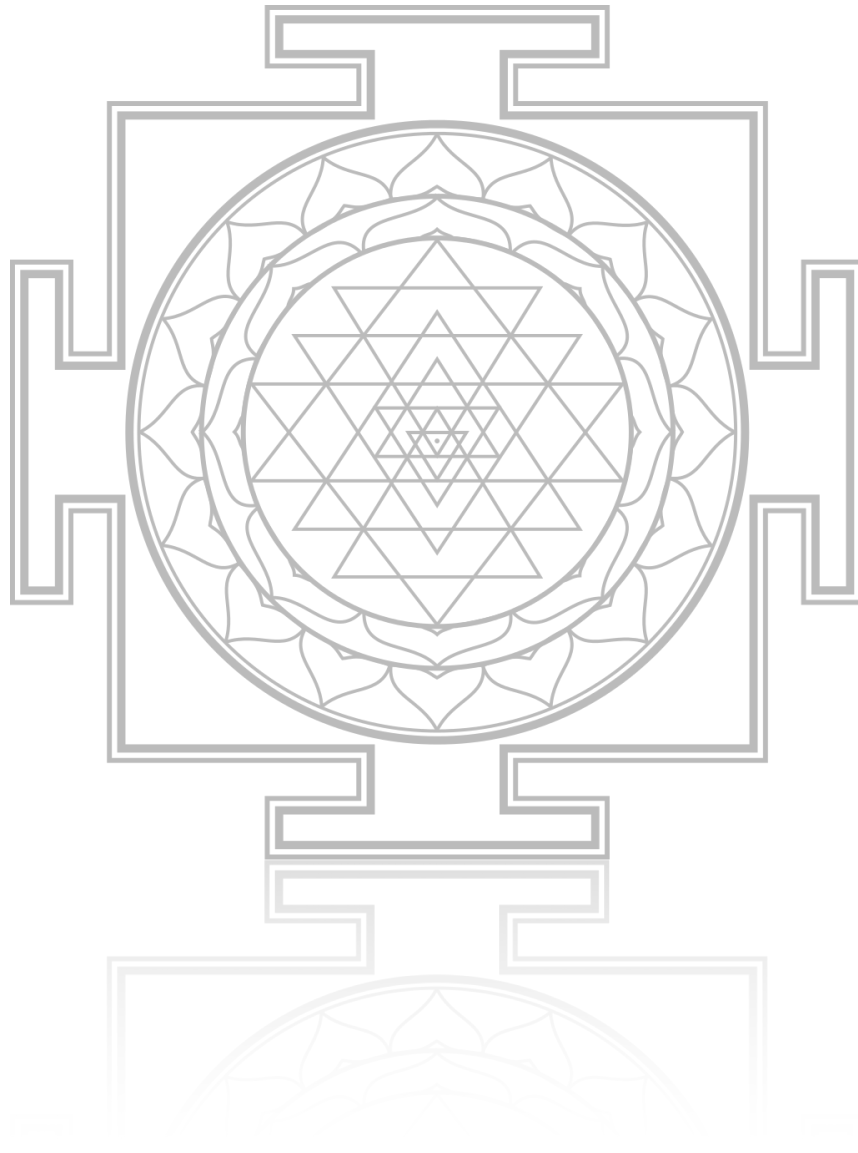
Because guess what...This IS it! This moment truly is all that we have.



Soul Questions for Week TWO

Ask yourself:

- 1. What is my biggest death story/experience?**
- 2. What are the bones of that story?**
- 3. Is my current relationship with death different from what I was taught to believe?**
- 4. What will I miss most about being alive?**
- 5. Do my beliefs around death serve to empower my experience of life?**
- 6. What in me needs to die, in order for something new to be born?**
- 7. How can I embrace death in a way that brings deeper meaning to my life?**



Once you fully embrace the truth that you are going to die,
then it is time to finally decide: HOW DO YOU WANT TO LIVE?

3 *Week THREE*

1. *Enter the 2nd & 3rd Gates.*
2. *Meet Sara Blakely.*
3. *Confront Your Regrets.*
4. *Honor Your Past Mistakes.*
5. *Say What You Need To Say.*

GATES TWO + THREE

Ajña & Vishuddha Chakras

“No Regrets!”

It’s a popular sentiment...

but truth be told, we are all haunted by memories of choices and conversations that did not go so well. It is a valuable skill to reframe your disappointments—to sing new songs over old, dry bones. It is also crucial, however, that you don’t put up defenses against your learning experiences, thereby completely missing opportunities to grow.

Attachment to your mistakes can take form as embarrassment or denial. Only when you compassionately embrace the truth of your failures can you experience deep and lasting peace
...and transformation!

“No Regrets” | A Real Soul Story

Sara Blakely is the youngest self-made billionaire, responsible for the creation of the fashion undergarment brand, Spanx. In an ABC news interview, she shares one of the secrets behind her success:

“We would sit at the dining room table at night and [my dad] would say, ‘O.k. kids, what did you fail at today?’”

When she confessed her failed attempts, like: “I tried out for a sport and I was horrible at it,” her dad would reward her with a ‘high-five.’ Sara learned that to “fail” has nothing to do with outcomes, but it has everything to do with whether or not she tried. To fail means to not try.

I would add that to fail means to deny your disappointments—losses, mistakes, and regrets.

It is important to maintain an open attitude of humor and humility. It doesn’t work to say “no regrets” if this mantra is coming from a defensive place of deep shame or egotism.



You must face your disappointments honestly, so that you can reap the insight they offer.

The goal is NOT to make no mistakes.

It isn't even the goal to have no regrets.

The goal at the second gate is to develop a deep insight that comes from embracing your failures and recognizing your missed opportunities.



The second gate is AJNA CHAKRA, which governs insight and clear vision. It is said to reside at your third eye center within your subtle body. This gate, where dualities unite, leads directly to the third gate, the VISHUDDHA CHAKRA. Vishuddha governs clear expression and purification at the level of your throat.



Within the *Shatchakra Nirupana*, expressed in psychological terms, these two chakras connect your insight to your communication.

Regrets generally involve missed opportunities. People regret what they did NOT do more often than something they did. Regrets have to do with lacking insight and failing communication.

You didn't see what was coming.

You envisioned things going a different way.

You didn't communicate your full truth.

You did NOT say what you wanted or needed to say.

When you courageously hold your biggest regrets—I mean, wear them like a badge—you become increasingly more aware of what stops you short of your full potential. When opportunities arise, you are equipped with balanced vision. You do not have to repeat the same habitual patterns from a limited perspective. You can make new mistakes and add them to your amazing repertoire of growth experiences.

Honor your past mistakes, so that you may go on to make new ones.

In the Sumerian poem, Neti removes Inanna's necklaces at the second and third gates. We can imagine the gatekeeper at Ajña and Vishuddha chakras, demanding that we release all attachments to past mistakes—that means letting go of the threaded beads of both embarrassment and denial. We begin by declaring what is true.

- 1. Is there one big mistake that haunts you when you say “no regrets”?**
- 2. What are the bones around that mistake?**
- 3. What is the song you sing to give your mistake meaning?**
- 4. What would it look/feel like to completely own your regret with compassion?**
- 5. What self-defeating stories contributed to your mistake or missed opportunity? What self-defeating stories accompany it?**
- 6. In what way is your biggest regret connected to how you speak your truth?**
- 7. What has previously remained unspoken that you are NOW ready to say?**

Meditation

Say what you need to say.

Mindfulness means becoming more awake in the moment. From a place of awakened awareness, you can feel more confident in your truth. In turn, you become more relaxed in your choices. You can trust that you are making decisions from a place of unified, or balanced, consciousness. You can say what you need to say from a place of courage and compassion. Then, when you declare that you have “no regrets,” it is a celebration from a deep place of surrender. You have nothing to hide and you have embraced wholeness.

Begin your practice in a comfortable seat. With your eyes open and relaxed, feel your whole being. Become aware of all your sensations beginning with your ears, skin, eyes, taste, smell. Then close your eyes and feel into your inner being. How are you feeling at this moment? Recognize that your emotions are a mixture of happy, sad, uncomfortable, excited, confused. Allow your self to embrace those feelings that include your deepest disappointments—feelings of lost opportunity or regret.

Imagine assembling all the bones from stories of past mistakes. These bones must be fully assembled in order for a new creature to be born, whole.

Tell your story out loud: What do you regret? What is your biggest disappointment? What do you wish had gone differently? What self-defeating stories contributed to your mistake or missed opportunity? (You can write out your bones in the space provided below, but you must also speak your truth, in full voice. This will help to move stagnant energy.)

Once you have clearly spoken your disappointment, it is time to discover a new song.

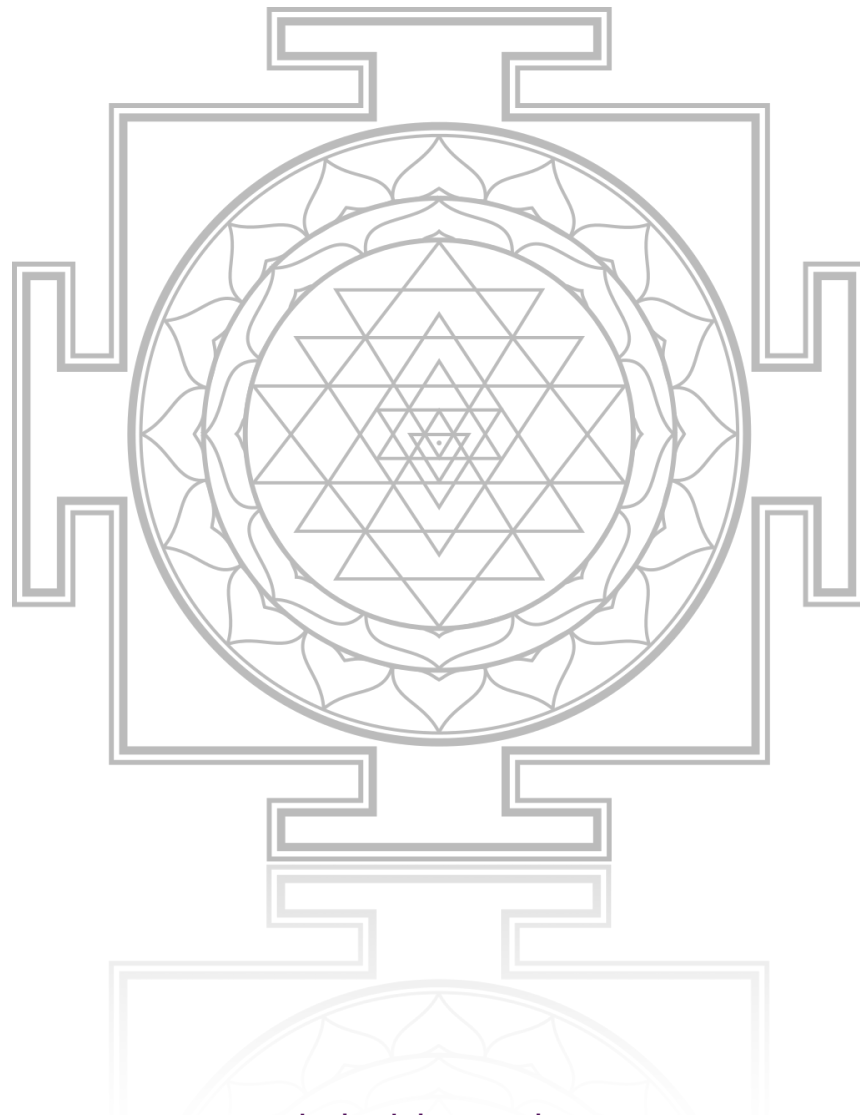
What are you ready to say, with courage and compassion, that has not yet been spoken?



Soul Questions for Week THREE

Ask yourself:

- 1. Is there one big mistake that haunts me?**
- 2. What are the bones around that mistake?**
- 3. What is the song I keep sing to give my mistake meaning?**
- 4. What would it look/feel like to completely own my regret with compassion?**
- 5. What self-defeating stories contributed to my mistake or missed opportunity? What self-defeating stories accompany it?**
- 6. In what way is my biggest regret connected to how I speak my truth?**
- 7. What has previously remained unspoken that I am NOW ready to say?**

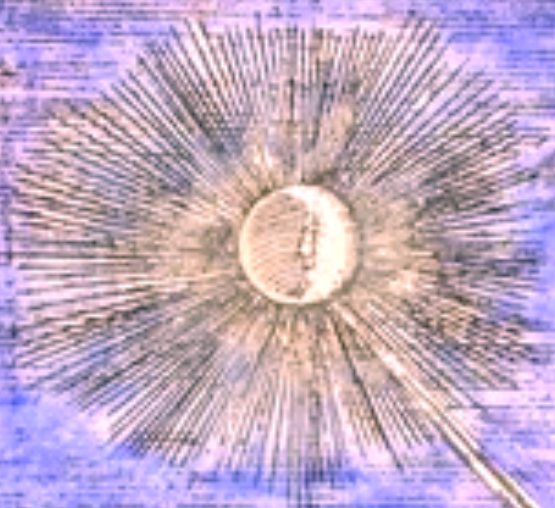
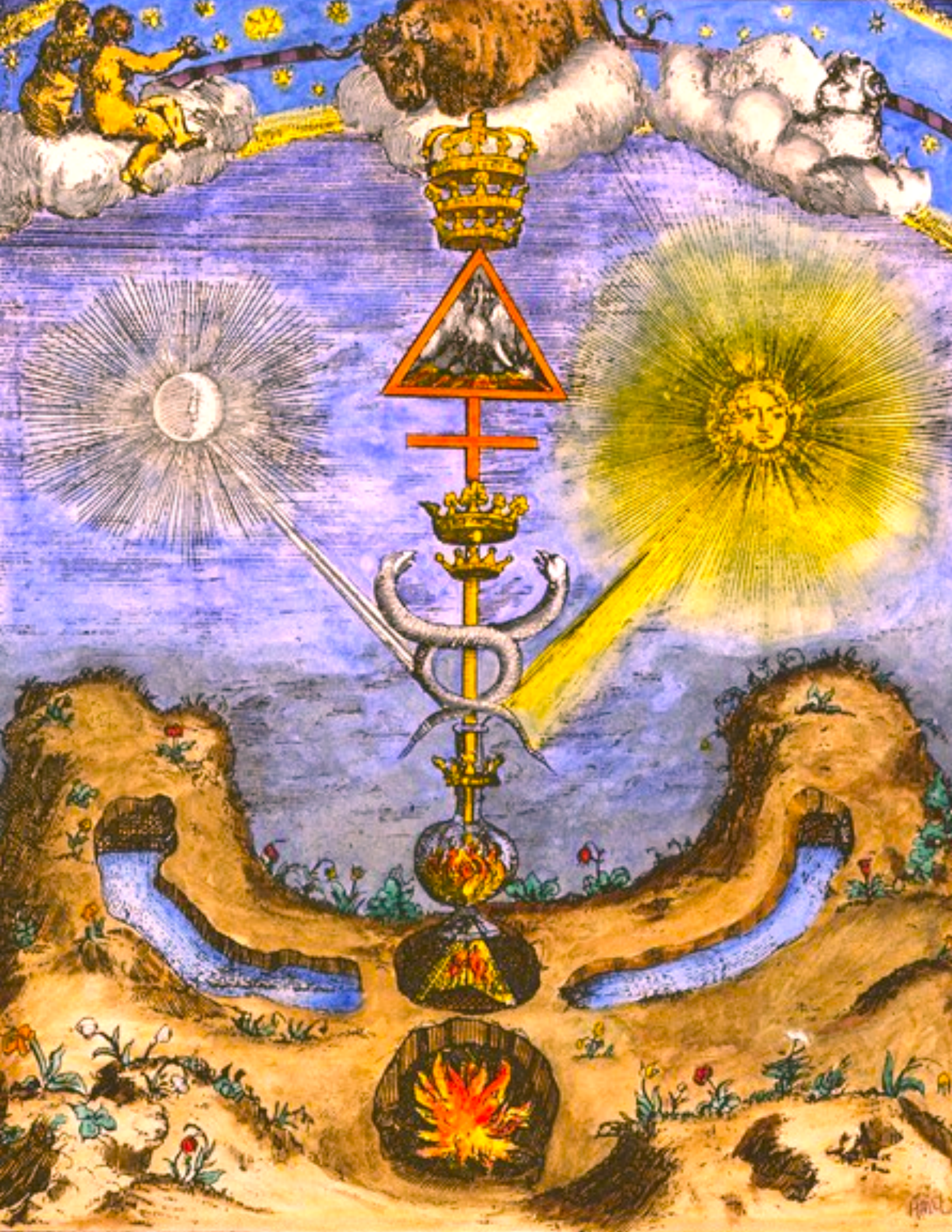


When you courageously hold your biggest regrets—I mean, wear them like a badge—you become increasingly more aware of what stops you short of your full potential.

4

Week FOUR

1. *Journey Review*
2. *Introduction to Alchemy*
3. *Watch Maha Shadow Video*
4. *Listen Maha Shadow Meditation*
5. *Illuminate Your Maha Shadow*



JOURNEY REVIEW

As you approach the fourth gate at the heart center (*anahata chakra*), it is crucial to honestly review the journey you have traveled so far.

1. At the first gate you entered into the arena of shadow, simply by taking the first step into the awareness of life and death.

The *sahasrara* chakra at the crown of your head is said to be the portal into the experience of being human. At gate one, you were invited to examine your relationship with death in a way that makes life more meaningful.

2. Then you traversed through the shadows of *ajña* and *vishuddha* chakras.

The second gate at your third eye center (*ajña*) and the third gate at your throat (*vishuddha*) demand you to look at your regrets—moments in your life when you lacked insight and may have experienced failure or disappointment as a result. It came to question: “How does lack of insight correspond with miscommunication?” “What are you ready to say that has not yet been spoken?”

If you have not seriously contemplated and fully expressed these considerations, please review these gates before moving forward. In order to experience your deepest, most complete, wholeness you must find the courage—give yourself full permission—to move through each gate.

By engaging this shadow work and “running your wolves,” you transform your suppressed emotions into creative power.

**You become an *ALCHEMIST*,
transforming the *prima materia* of your shadows into gold.
You reunite opposites at your heart center to remember your Self as
whole.**





REBIS

51

GATE FOUR | Anahata & Alchemy

(Illuminate Your Maha Shadow)

The image, above, is laden with alchemical symbolism. At the center, the king and the queen have merged into one being. They represent the *coniunctio* (sacred marriage). Their union represents the alchemical equivalent of *yoga* (union), or psycho-spiritual wholeness. Wholeness of Self is realized as deep peace, lasting Love, and true freedom...even within the conflicts of real life.

Alchemists sought the *philosopher's stone* which was imagined as mystic gold. Not literal gold, the prize of the alchemical *coniunctio* is a whole and balanced Self.

**“The alchemical secret was not a substance but a state of consciousness,
a perception of the archetypal level of reality.”
(Edinger, *Ego and Archetype*, 205)**

The ultimate goal of the alchemist is to recover the lost state of original wholeness that leads to optimal wellness and creative power. The “philosopher’s stone” represents a recovery of the rejected shadow within the psyche. As such, it becomes the producer of psycho-spiritual gold—the pure and radiant symbol of the radical freedom that unfolds from psycho-spiritual integration.

Alchemical imagery depicts a quest toward realization of Self.

Just like images of goddess Kālī, symbols of the philosopher’s stone represent eternal paradox. One example is the the tail-eating snake, or ouroboros, featured below. It is the symbol of the *coniunctio*—where the end cycles into a new beginning. It is the marriage of all opposites: the sun and the moon, fire and water, the conscious and unconscious, masculine and feminine, matter and spirit, Self and “other,” light and shadow.

**The philosopher’s stone represents the realization of your wholeness.
It is running your wolves so that they may transform into stories of liberation.
It is integrating your shadows,
and awakening to the infinite creative power that resides within you.**

The union of opposites is realized in the *anahata* (unstruck) chakra at the center of your heart.

At this fourth gate, the heartbeat—the unstruck sound—represents a spontaneous pulsation of contraction and expansion.

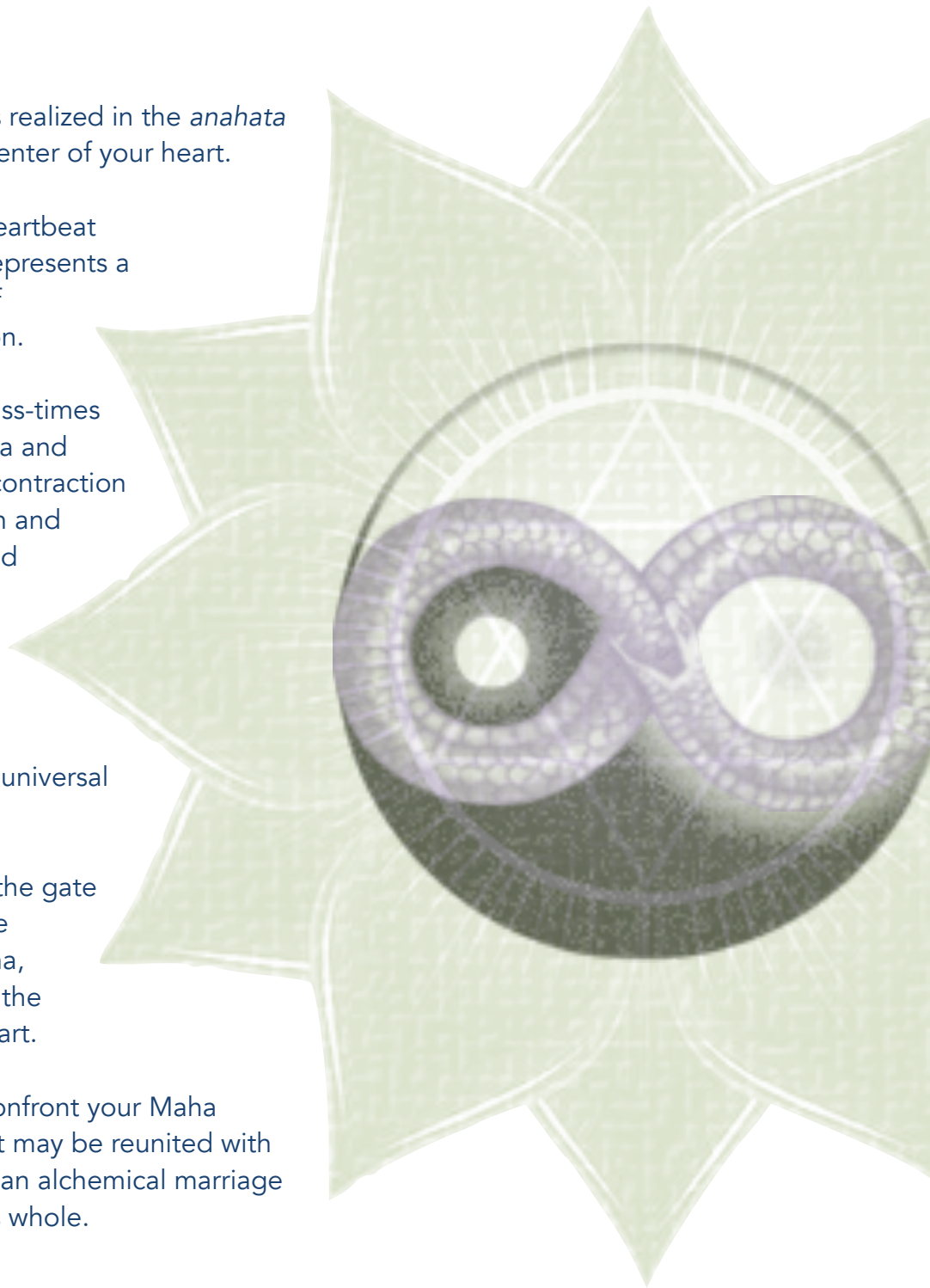
It reflects the ongoing pass-times of the Tantrik deities Shiva and Shakti, in their dance of contraction and expansion, revelation and concealment, creation and dissolution. Their's is the dynamic play of consciousness.

It is a sacred marriage of opposites.

It is a play of cosmic and universal LOVE.

At the fourth gate, Neti (the gate keeper) demands that the Sumerian goddess, Inanna, remove her breast-plate, the armor that guards her heart.

Here, you are asked to confront your Maha (grand) Shadow, so that it may be reunited with your Maha Personality in an alchemical marriage to remember your Self as whole.



Meditation | Illuminate Your Maha Shadow

Your Maha Shadow is like the alpha wolf. It is the biggest, most powerful shadow within you at this time in your life. The Maha shadow may transform as you encounter it in various ways. It will, however, maintain some grip on you—Self-limitation, shame, and/or projection— until it is allowed to completely run free into the light.

Finding your Maha Shadow begins by examining the things that you admire most about *ego persona*. That is, all the personality traits that you like best about yourself. All the qualities you want others to see in you.

If you were to describe yourself in an autobiography, you would most likely mention your favorite characteristics. These qualities make up your persona. Your persona is like a mask. The harder you cling to it, the less authentic you become. The stronger you deny your opposite tendencies, the more powerfully those shadows will retaliate.

Below is a writing meditation. Begin in a comfortable seat with a pen and your journal. Engage in the practice of “first thought, best thought” style of journalling, whereby you allow yourself to freely express whatever flows from your mind when you answer the following three questions:

1. What are your top five favorite personality traits: qualities you like about yourself? Circle the three that are the most important to you—those you identify with most strongly.

2. What are the opposite qualities of your three favorite personality traits? For each one, imagine someone accusing you of having that quality. For example: "You are a liar," or "You are selfish." Which of the three accusations stings the most?

3. To which of these qualities are you most averse? Which makes you say things like: "That is not me!" "That person obviously does not know ME!" "I could NEVER be that way."?

Your Maha Shadow is the one quality that you deny the most.

Bringing your Maha Shadow into light is a foundational step in transformational development.

The alpha wolf must be courageously, patiently, and compassionately approached. It must be embraced and integrated in order to realize wholeness of Self. Until then, you will hold limiting stories of judgement or shame within your psyche. And you will most likely project your shadow onto the world around you. People will continue to "show up" in your life as "carriers" of these traits until you face them within your Self.

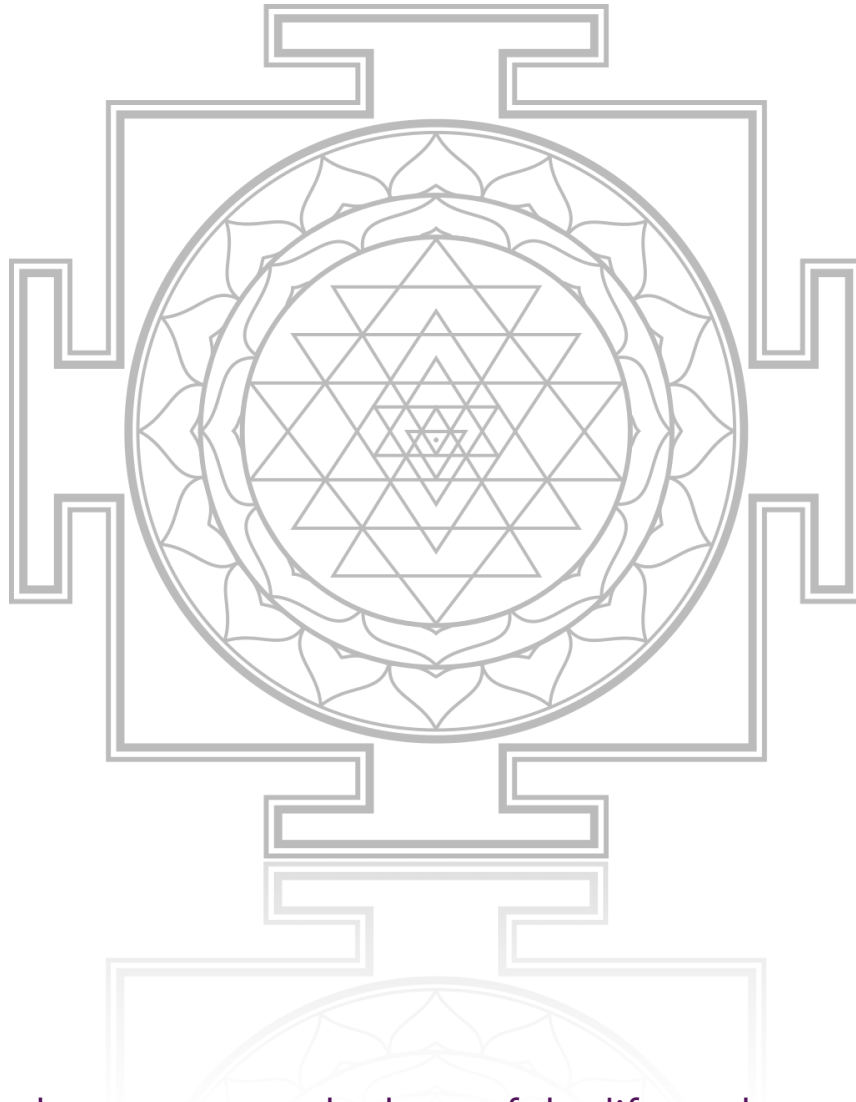
This week's Soul Questions will help you uncover your Maha Shadow.



Soul Questions for Week FOUR

Ask Yourself:

- 1. What do I tend to most often criticize or judge in others.**
- 2. Do I tend to attract a single "negative" quality (or family of "negative" traits) in friends and partners?**
- 3. What were the personality traits that I most disliked in my caregivers as a child? ...My mother? ...My father?**
- 4. Did my caregivers gossip or judge anyone for their particularly "bad" qualities? What were those traits?**
- 5. Did my caregivers consider any of my qualities "bad"?**
- 6. What are the story bones that identify my relationship to being "bad."**
- 7. What is the song that I have sung around those old bones?**
- 8. If I could sing a new song around my Maha Shadow-one in which the shadow's quality became helpful, productive, and positive-what would that song be?**



“The shadow may carry the best of the life we have not lived.
Go into the basement, the attic, the refuse bin.
Find gold there.
Find an animal who has not been fed or watered.
It is you!! This neglected, exiled animal, hungry for attention,
is part of your self.”

~Marion Woodman

(quoted by Stephen Cope in *The Greatest Work of Your Life*).

Wolf Moon *Review*

The work of the Wolf Moons seeks to...

- Activate Your Courage.
- Run Your Wolves.
- Illuminate your shadows.
- Identify your limiting stories.
- Sing new songs over old bones.

You are the...

- Bone Collector
- Sage Singer
- Demon Slayer
- Gate Keeper
- ...and Alchemist

You are the Soul Artist.

- Review the materials you have received so far.
- What songs of limitation have you been singing lately?
- Are you ready to bring a new creature to life?
- It is time to realize your true feeling desire.

Join the next Full Moon Community discussion.



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