



MAKING NEW AND FULL MOONS SPECIAL

It's lovely to have others with whom to share your New or Full Moon rituals. Some believe that the effects of collective rituals are superior to what you can achieve alone. Particularly at the Full Moon, gathering with others can be quite powerful. Some of my students participate in monthly Full Moon circles, and sometimes these circles dissolve, as dynamics in the feminine realm often drift and shift. The Moon is constant *and* changeable—the feminine expresses through both of these qualities.

Many of us are solo practitioners. We design the ritual. No one forces us to keep the commitment. If we dishonor it, we have only ourselves to answer to. The Moon won't complain. She understands that we're sometimes constant and sometimes changeable. But the Moon *will* reward our attentions. And that's the great jewel enticing us forward. The Moon brings something to us. By connecting to her, we'll see our lives improve. We will feel healthier, more balanced. When we regularly drink the elixir of New and Full Moons, we assisted into becoming more whole.

We really don't need to do anything to make New and Full Moons special. They already are. What we need is to develop the proper containers in which to gather this energy. The container can be quite elaborate—a ritual preceded by a sacred bath and performed in special attire with chant or song, invocations of the elements, and deeply mulled intentions at the center. Or the container can be no-frills—you take ten minutes to check in with yourself. But you do something to raise the experience out of the ordinary flow of your life.

Creative play can help you channel, stretch, and enhance the special energies of these lunations. You'll find suggestions in every playbook for approaching these turns with conscious playful attention. Yet the Moon also rules domestic chores and ordinary things. This is another important practice. This is one of the secrets in my "7 Secrets to a Successful Moon Practice": linking mundane activities to the Moon's cycle can bind you just as sweetly as ceremony. I started with replacing the kitchen sponge at every New Moon. Now I also

clean and defrag my hard drive. I renew my altar and give the house a deeper-than-usual cleaning. At the Full Moon, I give my dog her once-a-month heart worm medication. In other words, I use the Moon's calendar, rather than the Julian calendar for my important once-a-month routines. This is a quiet but effective form of synchronization.

Water Practices

One of my favorite ways to synch up with Luna is by charging Moon Water on Full Moon nights. This is just one of many ways to "draw down the Moon," a pagan practice of ceremonially calling the Moon into our lives and hearts. Full Moon water is Moon-charged water, divine for drinking, spritzing the house, and nourishing plants.

Here's how I do it: Sometime before going to bed, I bring a jar of purified water outside and place it under the beams of the Moon. I take a minute to get quiet. Then as best as I can, I tune into the fullness of the night. Over the jar, I circle my hands clockwise nine times, then counter clockwise nine times. Joining my thumbs and forefingers, I make a triangle shape. Through this shape I imagine Moon energy pouring into the jar. Then I leave the jar out in the moonlight, but make sure to retrieve it before the morning sun changes the energy.

The beauty of a regular practice like this is that you don't have to be a super priest or priestess every month. You just have to show up. Some Full Moons my heart is more open than others. Sometimes it's cold and I want to hurry back inside. The variation in my performance is to be expected—and enjoyed. A simple regular practice like this helps us to keep track of ourselves.

Making New Moon Magic with Solarized Waters and Oils

This is a traditional water practice long favored by alchemists and natural magicians. Performed at the New Moon, it's a way to gather and preserve the special vitality of the time. We do this by charging pure oil or water with the Sun's beams. I love these New Moon waters. I can feel their charged energy long after the New Moon has passed. What's more, they hold the particular vibration of each New Moon sign.

If you perform this practice at each New Moon, you'll eventually have a collection of waters that vibrate to the qualities of every zodiac sign. Or—as I eventually discovered—it's much better to actually use them rather than collect them! Drink the solarized water, run solarized oil on your skin, or spritz the air for healing and inspiration. Uses for these solarized elixirs are as boundless as your imagination. Use a minimally processed oil, like virgin olive, sunflower, or sesame, to create a healing potion for the parts of the body ruled by each sign. I encourage you to at least once add this practice to your moonplay. Your playbook will let you know which healing properties are favored that month.

DeCluttering Practice

The Moon teaches us to gather—and how to release. As you learn through your playbooks, I recommend the alchemy of de-cluttering, especially during the Dark Moon. This is a great way to boost your start at the New Moon, as it facilitates the release of stuck energy in your psyche too. A clean space invites new movement and creativity. A cluttered space stifles it.

If you want to attract more desirable experiences, say metaphysicians, then beautify your space. Make it more pleasing, and the same will become true of your life. This is a principle of Feng Shui too. We live in a holographic universe—there is a patterned connection between the parts and the whole. So, just as the planets in the sky reflect and influence your life, so does the condition of your home. When you consciously make changes to your home, using ritual and focused intention appropriate to the New Moon's placement in your chart, you can make magic happen.

My colleague Simone Butler has done some fabulous research on New Moon Feng Shui rituals (visit her website: <http://astroalchemy.com/books/videos/>). Simone asked thirty friends to perform rituals with focused intention, linking the houses in their chart to the rooms in their home. She discovered that such rituals have a powerful effect—especially those done during eclipses!

Your playbook will tell you each month which house of your chart is being triggered by the New Moon. Then you need to find out which room in your house holds the greatest potential for making magic happen. To do this, use the “Bagua” (the grid you'll find in the New Moon section). Sketch a map of your home (preferably on tissue paper) and place this map over the Bagua, lining up house 1 (the career sector) with your front door. If your house has two stories, you can use both floors. Don't worry if the sectors don't line up perfectly—they flow rather than form discrete boundaries. Use your intuition if you're confused. Since the Bagua has nine sectors (or “guas”) and the chart has twelve houses, there is some overlap.

These rituals can be simple or elaborate. But first, declutter. Then bring in something beautiful. Create an altar where you place your focused intention (write this on a piece of paper). Call in the Invisibles—your guides and angels or Great Spirit. As you ask for help from above in line with your intentions, perform a simple ritual using the four elements: fire (candle), earth (stones or crystals), water (a bowl of water), air (music or something scented). Then watch for the results!