



The Eight Phases of the Moon

• an organic rhythm of life •

by *Cassandra Leoncini*

In particularly unpredictable times it helps to have an honest, organic frame of reference. The keen-witted novelist Douglas Adams, infamous for his sardonic quips, advised the would-be cosmic hitchhiker “Don’t Panic” and “Don’t Forget your Towel.” Sage advice back in the day, but in 2022 we’ve got a surfeit of panic and who can afford new towels?

Nevertheless, our constant Sister Moon still waxes and wanes on a regular schedule. You don’t need a towel to tune in and certainly there’s no need to panic, except for the occasional total eclipse that’s visible across the entire North American continent. (Heads up, the next big one is April 8, 2024.)

The latest theory about our Moon’s formation is that 4.5 billion years ago when the solar system was newly formed, a Mars-sized rock slammed into the Earth and Luna broke free. She began her orbit only 14,000 miles away but she’s been drifting farther ever since—she’s now 239,000 miles distant.

She is indeed our Sister Planet—many astro-physicists refer to the Earth and Moon as a double planet. We always see the same side of the Moon, not because she doesn’t rotate, but because Earth’s rotation and the Moon’s are exactly synchronized. And, the reason we can observe total eclipses is that the relative diameters and distances of Earth, Moon and Sun create that perfect visual experience.

So let’s hear it for Synchronicity, and the eight profoundly symbolic phases of the Moon that we get to experience, for free, all around the planet, every 29.5 days. [Of course the lunar/solar magnetic/gravitational effects on Earth are not just symbolic—they are physically measurable. But hey, I’m a symbolist, not a scientist.] Here then, are the perennial eight phases, each one about 3.7 days long.

New Moon: It’s Seed planting time! All manner of seeds! What’s your focus for the month ahead? Anchor yourself to the Full Moon that will shine its light in two weeks’ time and imagine that fertile fullness in your belly—what would you like to see illuminated, or give birth to? Note, this applies to all genders.

Crescent Moon: About three and a half days later, the waxing Crescent rises and sets just after the Sun. The Crescent phase represents our Seed beginning to break open underground—a tiny seedling unfurling, orienting, seeking purchase with its roots and directing its top end toward the surface. Our focus is gaining substance, though we may face some resistance. After all, it is easier for all concerned if we do *not* grow and change. A natural truth—no all seedlings survive.

Half Moon: A week after the New Moon, we’re half way to Full. This waxing moon phase is represented by the Seedling now breaching the surface, it’s grown above ground—*Praise Be, I see the Light!* The days are a rush of expansion and *Aha’s!* and positive energy.

Gibbous Moon: Almost there, 3½ days before Full Moon our seed vision is nearly ready to flower but, what if? What if we didn’t get it right? What if we don’t have what it takes? What if we’re not ready? Performance anxiety belongs to those whose Flower truly matters. It’s all good.

Full Moon: Two weeks after the New Moon, your Seed discovers fulfillment—it’s time for sustainable harvesting. First, of course, you must recognize what it is you’ve actually manifested. Second, it’s always best to have help with the harvest. Make it a party of those you love and trust. Call in your troops, cook up a feast, whistle while you work!

Disseminating Moon: Ah now, the moon is waning and how are you going to express your gratitude for what you’ve reaped? This is when we share the wealth. Because our good fortune is never meant for us alone—it multiplies as it’s shared.

Waning Half Moon: A week after the Full Moon, this phase is called the Crisis in Consciousness, for good reason. Your work since the New Moon is now complete, the plant is returning its life force to the Earth. It’s time for critical consideration and integration. How did you fare? What did you truly accomplish? What might you have done differently? We’re not beating ourselves up, we’re learning. And might I add, we’re learning so that we can *adapt and evolve*.

Balsamic Moon: The final phase, as the waning crescent dims and shades to black, this is the most potent of all. This is where we give it all back to the Earth. We let the distilled knowledge/wisdom we’ve gained go to ground as compost. There it fertilizes the Earth for, what else...the next New Moon Seed. It’s the perfect time to go into Silence and clear our energy field.

And then we begin again. The beautiful, organic renewal process of our Sister Moon and her eight phases is the signature of our own monthly cycle. Whether we participate consciously or unconsciously, there is no separation between our Earthborn bodies and our Earthborn Moon. That natural wisdom is always right there for us, within and without.

Best of all, this holistic, eight-fold cycle can be applied to any natural timeframe. Twenty-four hours, or one year, or, in astrological timing, 29.5 years. But that, dear reader, is another story.