



The Wisdom of the Waning Moon

Elizabeth: [00:00:00] Hello, and welcome to Everyday Unicorn, the podcast that helps you harness your magic for greater success in work and life. I'm your host, Elizabeth Hope Derby. I'm a mom, a recovering perfectionist, and a longtime leadership and business coach. In this podcast, I'll teach you the secrets of everyday leadership and how to leverage your brand of magic to supercharge your clarity, confidence, and joy.

No more trying to fake it till you make it or twisting yourself into knots so you can fit inside other people's expectations. Whether you're running a business, evolving your career, or just trying to find a balance between being a parent and an actual person, it's time for you to start living your version of success in the office, on the playground, and beyond.

Starting now, you get to make every day a bit more magical just by being you. So [00:01:00] let's get to it.

Hello and welcome back. I am so glad you're here. Today, I am going to talk to you about some lessons I've learned from the waning moon and the moon cycle in general. This is something I have written about extensively on my blog and in my newsletters, as well as on social media, so if you have not, seen those, you can check it out on my website, ElizabethHopeDerby.com.

I go into significant depth about the moon phases in general. In fact, I even have a PDF workbook you can download that is all about helping you map your month against the moon cycles and using those intentionally to help you create a more intentional, peaceful, [00:02:00] flowing, fulfilling use of your time.

So today I'll just talk briefly about what the moon cycle is, and why I care about it, and then I'm going to get more deeply into the waning moon specifically.

So, like most people, I grew up thinking that in order to accomplish something, I needed to take a series of action steps to make it happen. This feels pretty obvious. If you're any kind of strategic thinker, which I am, then when it comes to

problem-solving, you're going to think about how do I navigate past whatever barriers stand in the way of me getting the thing I want.

And then you're going to take those steps, and if you can't take those steps quickly, you're going to maybe beat yourself up, or you're going to look for a smarter solution, or you're going to feel stuck and frustrated. You know, I'm reminded of my toddler when he is playing with his train set, [00:03:00] and he can't get a piece of the track to fit in the other piece of the track. And he works at it, and he works at it, and then he can't get it and he just, gets so frustrated visibly, audibly, and I relate because I've had that experience a lot.

And I think most of us approach goal-getting and happiness creation from this perspective of what steps do I need to take to get to where I want to go? And more specifically, what actions do I need to take to make it happen?

If you have a goal to feel less stressed at work, for example, you may think of things like I need to make a to-do list, and I need to come up with a time management software or program for myself. I need to do more meditation and I need to blah blah blah.

And it kind of becomes a laundry list of tasks that you [00:04:00] have to do, which, if you're trying to feel less stressed in general, it's gonna stress you out. And so that's the problem with focusing exclusively on the stuff we have to do as a person and the solution to achieving what we want. What does any of this have to do with the moon?

Well, I want to talk to you about something I learned from my study of moon cycles and how to work with those in an energetic capacity, as well as in the realm of personal development. It is actually a way to mitigate some of the stress that we cause ourselves by focusing so relentlessly on stuff we have to do.

And it's all tied up in the waning moon cycle. So very briefly, before I get into what this magical concept is, I just want to talk about what the moon cycle is, why I think it's relevant to us as people who live on planet Earth and not the moon. And, just [00:05:00] how it works in general. So people paying attention to moon cycles is an ancient practice when historic peoples were looking at the sky and trying to make sense of things.

It was like, you could see the sun, you could see the moon. Those must be really powerful entities, right? And to a certain degree, I think that's still accurate and relevant. We just don't put total faith in how planetary movement and celestial body movement influence our lives. We're aware that there's more going on than that.

But the influence of the moon as a creative, energetic, sort of intuitive, and inspirational factor in our lives, I think is still totally relevant. And to me, it's very cool to think, hey, here's this natural body that's part of the world far outside my control. So much bigger than me. When you really stop and think about it, it makes me feel pretty small [00:06:00] and I can relate to that in a practical way.

I can connect with that distant celestial body to not only think more critically about my own ways of navigating through the world and my own decision-making, but I can also feel closer to the forces of nature that exist both inside me and outside me that maybe I don't pay attention to in my very technological and intellectually driven lifestyle, right?

So when I first began hosting Women's Circles, I was really taken by the fact that you, meaning me, meaning most people who host women's circles, have an affiliation with the moon. The moon is seen as a feminine object. It represents the feminine as a symbol. And when it comes to hosting women's circles or [00:07:00] gatherings for people who are women-identifying it is this object that it's this body that people connect with. And I thought it was really interesting that the moon moves through these phases that we can see very clearly in the night sky every night, as long as it's clear. You can look up, and you can see what's going on with the moon and how it's changing.

And because the moon changes in a way that's longer term, it's over the course of approximately a month, as opposed to the sun, which we see change every 24 hours approximately. And it's not even over the course of 24 hours, it's just crossing the sky. That's a pretty quick and straightforward transition, whereas the moon is longer term, slower paced, the evolution is more obvious because it's slower, but it's also more significant.

We see how it waxes, and it wanes, and if you're not familiar with those terms, waxing just means it gets bigger, [00:08:00] waning means it gets smaller. And so, right, we see that every moon cycle, the moon goes from being essentially dark, like we can't see it, to just a sliver, to a half a moon, and then eventually a full moon, then back to half a moon, then back to a sliver, and then dark again.

And that's the moon cycle. So why is that relevant to productivity, motivation and inspiration? Well, if you study the way that people relate to moon cycles as a template for energetic behavior, intention setting, ritual creation, and habit formation, you find out that there's a different energetic signature associated with each phase of the moon, meaning the dark moon represents a different energetic quality than the full moon.

And a waning moon that's just a sliver has a different [00:09:00] energetic signature than a waxing moon that's nearly full. Each of those snapshots in time, each of those days, represents a different kind of quality that you can choose to embody in alignment with what the moon is doing. And I think that's pretty cool.

It's almost like, hey, here's this natural template for how you can attune your own thinking and decision-making and behavior to something that is slower-paced, more rhythmic, and more natural than a lot of the artificial structures that we've created in terms of, oh, you know, we should just be moving fast because it's January.

January's winter. Most people don't really want to be moving fast in January, but that's how we're structured. And it can feel counterintuitive to our bodies, to our

animal bodies that want to rest, right? I think the moon is neat as a template and organizing structure because it provides a sort of more intuitive, I [00:10:00] think, way of moving, and it's slower, which is great.

You don't have to get everything done in a day. You don't have to be the sun. You don't have to race across the sky. You can take a month to do something. It's really okay. And if you're looking at the cycle of the moon as a template for your behavior, your energetic focus, how much energy you put toward things, and what kind of energy you put toward things.

Like I said, the moon cycle is broken up into a couple of phases, and each one of those phases is associated with a different type of focus. Are you doing a lot? Are you not doing as much? Are you imagining and getting quiet? Are you kicking ass and getting a ton of stuff done?

Like, how high are you cranking the volume on your productivity? How high are you cranking the volume on your rest? Those are all sorts of questions that the moon cycle will pose for you if you choose to approach it that way. And it'll [00:11:00] give you some instructions for how to live. And it's pretty cool.

So again, if you want to download the workbook I've created to help you do that, so you don't have to do any of this research yourself, you can go to my website and get that. And actually, we'll link it in the show notes too, so you can just download it right there if you want to. That would be easier since you're listening to this.

Okay, so with all that said then, let's focus on the waning moon specifically. This is the second half of the moon cycle where the moon seems to be disappearing from the sky. You've had the full moon. You probably know what a full moon is. You've probably heard of full moons, even if you're completely unfamiliar with moon cycle stuff.

You know, full moons, it's like, oh, people get wild on full moons, right? Werewolves become werewolves, and, lots of babies are born, and people have more accidents, and full moons are just this maniac time, but it is certainly the stereotype.

And what happens after the full moon then is things start to chill out. The moon seems to disappear from the sky because the shadow of the earth is [00:12:00] blocking the moon, right? And the moon from our vision. And what that whole second half of the moon cycle really represents, doing less.

Doing less in the sense of paying attention to where you have created, or you are experiencing internal obstacles that may take some action to move past. It's less about you doing things to make shit happen and more about you removing barriers so that you can receive what is naturally designed to reach you.

So I'm going to explain that again just in case that didn't quite make sense. The first half of the moon cycle is about laying action plans, taking steps, kicking butt, making things happen. It's about building bridges and stepping [00:13:00] stones and putting yourself out in the world to meet whatever you think is waiting for you or whatever you want to receive more of. It's you really putting yourself out there and rising to meet the world, right? Going out into the world. That's when you're going to social events.

That's when you're putting yourself out there: launching your new dating app profile, submitting your resume to a lot of job descriptions, pitching yourself to a lot of, new clients, having sales meetings, or whatever. It's like, you're going out there, you put yourself out there. The waning moon phase is much more about sitting back and not doing so much external facing work, but actually slowing down enough to look at where you may be blocking yourself from receiving what's already [00:14:00] naturally headed toward you.

It's essentially a built-in phase where half of every month is dedicated to self-inquiry. And dedicated to saying, hold on, are my action-driven strategies even working for me? Is this practical? Because listen, if you're selling from a place of desperation and anxiety, and not leading with the value you provide but leading with your desire to have someone outside of you pay you money to save you, that vibe is a turn-off for a lot of people, right?

So the second half of the moon cycle, the waning moon, is really your opportunity to say, oh, wait a second, maybe my energy is off here. Maybe I'm blocking myself from receiving people taking me up on my offer to work [00:15:00] together, or people saying yes to what I'm selling because I'm too desperate.

Yikes. You know, if I hadn't really slowed down and looked critically at my own behavior, I might not even be aware of the fact that perhaps I'm coming across as a bit needy, and therefore it's a little yikes for people because they don't want to save me. They want me to help them from a confident and calm place because that's what we expect from our service providers, right?

People don't really want to be treated like a number or a bottom line. So maybe I shouldn't approach my potential clients like they're a bottom line. Maybe that's not working for me. Does that make sense?

As an example, you see how different that is to most of the if you just do more you'll get more sort of advice that's out there because I think we all know that just because you do more does not mean you will get more. You can be the most productive MOFO on [00:16:00] planet Earth and that does not mean you will get everything you want. In fact, I think most of us who've dealt with burnout in our lives have fallen into the trap of working against ourselves because of the various social and cultural pressures that are put on us. And that we put on ourselves, believing that the path to success is simply about doing more, and it's not. It's about doing more in ways that are aligned with our values, in ways that are an energetic match for what we ultimately want to create.

And so that is the wisdom of the waning moon. The waning moon is the time, the second half of the moon cycle after all that frenetic activity leading up to the full moon, crescendoing with a full moon, then it's your time to take stock of everything you've done and say, okay, if I just take a beat, reflect, listen inside and ask myself, what are the barriers to me receiving what I [00:17:00] want?

Maybe one of those things is you're dealing with avoidance or, you know, not doing enough for whatever reason. I have certainly had many moon cycles where my biggest challenge is that I'm indulging in a kind of avoidance of the things that scare me or the things that I'm projecting will exhaust me or whatever.

There certainly, it can be that you're just not taking enough action, but sometimes it's things like, oh, I'm being too impatient. Or I'm being too desperate, or I'm being too hard on myself. I'm not treating myself like a person. I'm treating myself like a robot. I am trying to push through burnout as opposed to taking care of myself.

And you can't create more of what you want from a place of complete exhaustion. You know? Of course, you can push through exhaustion. You will recoup your energy eventually, but only if you make time for it, right? Like, I'm now thinking of newborn life. There's not really a whole lot you can do when you're [00:18:00] sleep-deprived, constantly nursing or bottle feeding or pumping or all of the above.

Plus trying to keep up with the house. Plus trying to function as a person. Plus if you have other kids, right? Oof! Let alone have a job. But that's the reality of newborn life. However, you have to prioritize refueling. You have to say, what's keeping me from getting out of survival mode and into thriving?

It was pretty obvious, right? There are a lot of factors there. And it is a season, it is temporary, but you have to prioritize sleep. You have to prioritize self-care, even if that just means taking a shower, right? Eventually you will have more free time, and it won't be so spartan, but the point there is that even if you're in circumstances that feel very trying, time will help generally.

I mean, not always, but time will help. But the other thing that will help is you removing as many barriers to receiving what you need as possible. [00:19:00] And unless you take the time to do that, you will be like most people, and you will get caught up in the push, push, push, do, do, do, more, more, more energy that seems to persuade everything.

You'll have a to-do list that's way too long, and you won't be looking at the quality of your actions, you'll only be looking at the quantity of your actions, which is a recipe for disaster. So the wisdom of the waning moon is tremendous. The wisdom is really about giving you internal spaciousness, helping you become the person who's able to receive what you want.

Yes, you still have to do stuff, but you get to do it from a place of connection, awareness, and alignment with who you want to be in the world and what you

ultimately want your life to feel like. If you want to feel abundant, fulfilled, calm, and satisfied, then it's worth taking the time to remove the barriers to your [00:20:00] feelings of calm and abundance to the degree that's available to you.

If only it's, hey, you know, for the next hour, I'm going to pretend. I'm going to pretend that I have plenty of money in the bank, and I'm going to pretend that I had a great night's sleep, and I'm just going to be at peace with where I am so that I can do this work from an energy of abundance and calm because that's what I want more of in my life.

Right? Like, you get to decide that and do that. Even if it's just temporary, the more you practice it, the more you will project it. And the more you project it, the more you connect with the other people and projects and opportunities that are in alignment with that kind of energy, which will bring you more of what you want.

Also, it puts you in a position to notice the things that vibe at that level with you, right? Like you're training your perception, essentially to pay attention to other things that feel calming, that [00:21:00] feel abundant, not from a place of, oh, everything's falling apart and this is my magical solution, but from a place of, oh, I am whole and complete and happy inside of myself.

And this feels really good and really true to me, this opportunity outside of myself. So I'm going to pursue that. So that's a taste of the wisdom of the waning moon. If you want to go deeper into moon cycles, download my workbook, which is linked, and I hope that this brings you an opportunity for reflection, for peace.

Even if you never check in with moon cycles, you can still do this. You could spend 10 minutes at the end of every day, or the beginning of every day, or once a month, or once a week, whatever feels good to you. Just check in with yourself around this question of what are the barriers to me receiving what I want?

What are those internal barriers? What's the instruction for me around letting go or becoming more [00:22:00] intentional about how I spend my energy so that I can align with the vibe of what I really want? What's the thing that needs to go? It's not about doing more. It's about doing more of the things that feel right to you in a way that feels right to you.

So enjoy that. Enjoy that practice. It's really restorative and helpful and ideally will eliminate some of the clutter and confusion and overwhelm from your to-do list; ultimately it gives you less to do. So I hope that this is helpful as always. I love hearing from you. So don't hesitate to share this if it's useful for you, or reach out to me via my website.

I hope you have a great day and a wonderful waning moon.

Thank you for tuning in. I hope today's show helps you remember that every day can be extraordinary and that you, my friend, [00:23:00] already are. If today's

episode was inspiring or useful to you, hit subscribe so you don't miss an episode. If you want to go deeper, you can hire me as your private coach or as a workshop leader for your organization.

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