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## TEN TIPS FOR NEW MOON RITUALS THAT GET RESULTS



**By Simone Butler**

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Because I was born near a New Moon, I've always been partial to that dark, quiet time of month. While other folks get off on beating drums at the Full Moon, I prefer to turn inward and do ritual two weeks later, when the Sun and Moon meet for their hidden, monthly tryst.

At each New Moon, we plant seeds for what we want to grow in the next 30 days. This can be literal, in terms of initiating new activities, important calls or meetings. Or it can be symbolic, by creating rituals that help to ground our intentions. Through ritual, we engage with forces greater than ourselves. We harness the powers of fire, earth, air and water to bring magic to our lives and create what we desire.

### **Why does ritual work?**

Ritual focuses thought and emotion in a laser-like way to harness the creative power of intention. And, by using scents, music, crystals and candles, we engage our sensory nature and subconscious mind—which is like a playful child. Once you're captured its interest, it will then go to work to manifest your intentions (unless you have strong beliefs that might interfere with having whatever you desire).

By doing ritual, we also connect with powers greater than ourselves. Some see these forces as otherworldly—angels, guides, God or Goddess—but they can also be experienced as your own Higher Self, animal totems or Mother Earth. The key is finding what resonates with you, and gathering meaningful representations of that. If you feel pulled toward the eagle, for example, surround yourself with pictures and statues of that creature to tap into its fierce but detached medicine.

### **Some suggestions for tuning in to the elements:**

- If fire turns you on, get a fire pit and do ceremonies to burn, release and rejuvenate.
- If it's earth that you crave, plant a garden or bring lots of live plants into your house.
- If air speaks to you, hang a bird feeder to attract hummingbirds, or put up wind chimes.
- If water is your draw, invest in a hot tub or a pleasantly gurgling fountain.

## Adding Astro Feng Shui to the mix

New Moon rituals are especially powerful when performed in the gua, or sector, of your home that matches the astrological energy associated with the New Moon. My book, “Astro Feng Shui: Making Magic in Your Home and Life” ([www.astrofengshui.net](http://www.astrofengshui.net)) shows you how to synchronize different parts of your home with your intentions at astrologically auspicious times for creation.

For example, if the upcoming New Moon is in the sign of Virgo, you’d be working with the Health gua, or center of your home. The color is yellow; the element, earth. At the New Moon, you might add a yellow plant in a ceramic pot to a table in or near your Health gua. Then, you’d light a yellow candle and affirm your intentions for better health—physical, emotional or financial—at the New Moon.

With or without Astro Feng Shui, you can still create effective New Moon rituals. In 30 years or so of practicing ritual, I’ve developed some tricks based on trial and error. For example, I remember years ago, at a Capricorn New Moon gathering, trying to raise a Cone of Power to send our intentions skyward. Capricorn is very dense, grounded energy—and the Cone simply would not take flight! If we had done a more earthy ritual, such as burying something in the ground, it might have worked better.

Another time, while doing a ritual at the ocean under the Pisces New Moon, it began to rain. How appropriate for a water moon! Our ritual was cut short, however, because most of us failed to plan ahead. If we’d been armed with raincoats or umbrellas, we would have been able to enjoy the wild, windswept evening without becoming wet and chilled. So the first step in ritual is: Be prepared.

## Additional tips for New Moon rituals that get results:

1. **Illuminate and bless:** Lighting candles is a primary element of ritual, as the flame symbolizes your inner light. This simple act sets sacred space—and creates your own private temple. And, gazing at the lit candle will help you focus your mind and intentions. Different colors symbolize different energies, so you might choose a red candle for action and energy, green or purple for abundance, yellow for health, white for purity and spiritual awareness, and pink for love. It’s also good to burn some sage or incense to bless the space in which you are working. My favorite is Nag Champa. Once you’ve set the space, go within, breathe deeply and center yourself. This will synchronize your body and mind and to harness power for ritualistic purposes.

**Ritual for setting sacred space:** Make sure you are in a place you will not be disturbed, and turn off your phone. Burn some sage or light your incense. You can play soft music if it helps you relax; otherwise, just sink into the stillness. Sit in a chair or on the ground, and begin to breathe deeply. Imagine there’s a cord extending from your pelvic floor all the way to the center of the earth. As you breathe in, bring the Mother’s grounding, healing energy into your body. As you breathe out, release any tension or distracting thoughts. When you feel ready, light your candle. Call on your guides, favorite deities or ancestors to be with you, and thank them for their help.

- 2. Call the directions.** In many ancient traditions, it's customary to cast a circle after grounding and centering, to protect and enclose the ritual participants. The directions are invoked—East, South, West and North, usually in that order. The meanings of and imagery associated with each direction vary; for instance, the Native American tradition calls upon Mother Earth and Father Sky, and tobacco and corn meal are used as offerings. In the Celtic, or Wiccan, style that I practice, we associate the directions with different animals and spirits than the Native tradition does. Yet both achieve the same result of uniting heaven and earth within our hearts. Because my ancestors come from the British Isles, I resonate best with the Celtic style. You should practice whatever tradition feels most comfortable to you. The following ritual for calling the directions is in the Celtic style. Feel free to make it your own. The words don't have to be exact—the spirit is what counts. You can do it alone, or with a group.

**To invoke the directions:** Stand facing each direction as you speak, and hold your hands out to give and receive blessings.

Spirits of the East, the rising Sun and the winds that blow. Hummingbird energy, the color yellow. Cleanse our minds that we might receive insight and inspiration. Hail and welcome, Spirits of the East!

Spirits of the South, of passion, fire and creative inspiration. Feline power, the color red. We give thanks for your fierceness and childlike enthusiasm. Hail and welcome, Spirits of the South!

Spirits of the West, of cleansing, healing waters. Dolphin energy, the color green. Bless us with the nurturing power of the womb and the ability to give birth. Hail and welcome, Spirits of the West!

Spirits of the North, place of quiet, stillness, and earth. Owl energy, the color brown. Bless us with patience and the ability to follow through on our intentions. Hail and welcome, Spirits of the North!

Spirits of the Above and Below, thank you for joining us today. May the God and Goddess unite in our hearts, and work through us to bless this ritual. Hail and welcome, Above and Below!

At the end of your ritual, be sure to thank and release each direction.

- 3. Affirm and visualize:** Here's where you declare what you want the ritual to achieve. It's important to be precise and positive: "Thank you for bringing me the perfect health practitioner who will help me heal my shoulder." Or, "Thank you for my healthy, happy shoulder." (Instead of: "Please help me get out of pain.") The more specific you are, the likelier you are to get results. Whether you've written down your affirmation beforehand or prefer to come up with it in the moment, be sure to speak it out loud. Then, close your eyes and imagine that the change you're asking for has already happened. For the ritual to work, you must feel that you have

received your manifestation. Visualize the specific circumstances that will unfold when your intention bears fruit. Here's an example:

**Ritual for healing:** Light a yellow candle (preferably in your Health gua at the center of your home). Ground and center. State your specific intention for improved health, i.e. "Thank you for helping me release whatever is standing in my way of being slender and healthy. I give thanks for a comfortable and easy 20 pound weight loss by July 1." Picture yourself in your bathing suit, feeling terrific. Imagine someone approaching you, telling you how great you look. Smile and thank them. See yourself enjoying a healthy meal, or running on the beach. Claim this feeling as your new reality. State, "My desired weight loss has already occurred, and for this I thank the power within me." Then extinguish the candle.

4. **Get real.** There's no point in performing an elaborate wealth ritual in which you invoke for a million dollars, if you don't believe you can attract it—or that you deserve it. You might not even be able to manage it once you got it! True abundance is something to *be*, not to seek out. Yet in a wealth ritual, having a realistic monetary goal to focus on is very important. Instead of just stating that you want more abundance, say something like, "I am thankful that I'm now earning \$5000 per month." Wealth starts as a feeling of gratitude for all you possess. Gratitude for the abundance around you—the rain falling from the heavens, the love of your dog or cat, your heart that's been beating all these years, keeping you alive. Once you start relaxing into a feeling of abundance, riches of all kinds will naturally gravitate to you.

**Ritual for abundance:** Get a healthy green plant and a purple candle. Write down your specific monetary goal on a small piece of paper. As you light the candle, read your goal out loud, then bury the paper in the plant. As you water the plant, give sincere, passionate thanks for your blessings. Do this each time you water or feed the plant, and your abundance will grow. To add extra potency, you can do this ritual in your Wealth gua, the far left hand corner of your house from the front door. It can also be done in the yard outside that gua.

5. **Create a morning altar.** It's very centering to begin each morning at your altar, honoring the deities, totem animals and your own Higher Self that guide you every day. This is how you create a relationship with the Divine. Choose items and pictures that represent the spiritual guides closest to your heart. Your altar should have candles, incense, crystals or anything else that feels sacred to you. Because you honor them on a daily basis, your guides will be more inclined to pay attention when it's time to invoke for something special, say a new relationship. But you have to let the process take its time. Let's say you've been affirming for a mate since last year. Yet your 'other half' has still not arrived. Be patient: Maybe a lucky Jupiter transit has to come around and trigger a relationship point in your chart. Perhaps you're supposed to be focusing on another area of life, such as your health or career, before you're ready for a relationship. As long as you're not seeking someone to save you or fueling your intentions with desperate hope, your dream will eventually come true. Give it over to Spirit and wrap the outcome in perfect timing.

**Ritual for love:** Place an image of a happy couple on your morning altar or in your Love gua (far right hand corner of your house). This can be a picture of you with your current partner, or a magazine cut-out of a couple having fun together. Add a vase filled with fragrant pink, red, or white flowers. Inhale the intoxicating floral scent, and breathe into the *feeling* of being in love. Do this consistently, to draw more love to you. Be sure to change the water and flowers on a regular basis, though!

6. **Incorporate the element of the New Moon.** If you're doing a ritual under a fire New Moon (Aries, Leo or Sagittarius), you may wish to do a fire ceremony at the beach or in your backyard. If it's an air New Moon (Gemini, Libra or Aquarius), make sure you write down your affirmations and intentions. Doing your ritual in the fresh air would also be appropriate. For a water New Moon (Cancer, Scorpio or Pisces), try to be near a lake, stream or ocean. Or, do a divination ritual such as water scrying (see the Pisces New Moon chapter in my book). For an earth New Moon (Taurus, Virgo or Capricorn), bury something symbolic of the past, plant seeds in the earth for what you wish to grow, or lie on the ground outside as you state your intentions.

**Ritual incorporating the elements:** I'll use a fire New Moon (Aries, Leo or Sagittarius) as an example. Go to a fire pit at the beach or park, or stay in your own backyard and use one of those ceramic or metal fire pits found at Home Depot. Take with you something you're ready to let go of and burn—perhaps a token from an old lover or symbol of a profession you'd like to put behind you. Bring a bundle of sage and a paper on which you've written your intentions for release, and what you intend to create to replace what's leaving. Once you've got the flames going, gaze deeply into the fire until you feel ready. Then light the sage and smudge yourself with it. Ask the power of fire to help you purify and let go. Then read what's on the paper aloud, crumple it up and throw it in the flames. Now you're ready to start anew.

7. **Do ritual in sacred places.** Some of my most effective—and memorable—rituals have been performed at power spots like Sedona, where I used to live. When doing ritual on sacred ground, you're utilizing the power of Mother Earth as well as the ancestral spirits of the land. Once I hiked to a remote spot in Sedona's Boynton Canyon and sat on the earth, pouring out my heart to the Mother. After a few moments I heard a voice, giving me a clear answer. Another time, on a hike at a Malibu canyon with a friend, lightning struck nearby as we buried symbols of our past and invoked for a new beginning. That's Mother Nature speaking! Of course, She can speak to you in your garden, too. The important thing is to put your feet on the earth on a regular basis.

**Outdoor Ritual: Rock-Seeing.** Find a special, secluded spot in nature. Look for a rock that calls to you. As you sit on the earth, meditate on the rock for a few moments. Let the nooks and crannies of the rock speak to you. Perhaps you'll see an image of a sheep, like I did recently on a visit to Sedona. As I breathed in the sheep's nurturing energy, a wave of healing washed over me. This ritual can be done at any time, not just the New Moon. Use it

whenever you need an answer to a question, or you'd simply like to experience the healing power of nature.

- Honor the ancestors.** Set up an ancestor altar (preferably in your Family or Helpful People gua) to stay connected to your lineage and those you've loved, even if they weren't blood relations. Showcase pictures of those to whom you feel a positive connection, perhaps with mementos that belonged to them. Grandma's lace tablecloth, Dad's reading glasses or Mom's perfume will make this altar special. I regularly light candles at my bookshelf altar in my Family gua, to ask for my loved ones' blessings and thank them for their help. As described in the ritual that follows, you can also 'feed' the ancestors their favorite food and drink—an ancient method of keeping the Spirits happy. Particularly powerful days to honor the ancestors are the Cancer New Moon (the date varies each year) and Nov. 1, the Day of the Dead. On Nov. 1 last year, I set the dining table in my recently renovated family home for my mom, dad, aunt, uncle and me—using Mom's china. I served Mexican food from a local place my folks had loved, and poured tequila for all of us. To the sounds of Frank Sinatra, we toasted my new home as I spoke to each of them in turn. It was a truly profound ritual—I cried through most of it!

**Ritual to honor the ancestors:** Create an ancestor altar, with pictures of your dearly departed. Light a candle (green is good, but any color that feels right will work). Pour libations for each of them (Dad's favorite beer in his special mug, Aunt Mary's favorite tea in her china cup), and thank your ancestors for their blessings. You may wish to request particular favors, such as Grandpa's strength to overcome an obstacle, or your deceased husband's help with finding a new mate. If you'd like to do a more elaborate ritual, cook or buy a special meal and put each guest's picture next to their place setting. (Note: a token bit of food on each plate is sufficient). Place the candles in your nicest candle holders, and light them in honor of the attendees. Don't let this ritual spook you; the ancestors are waiting to be asked for their help, and they love to be recognized. You may also want to play music that they loved during the meal, or read from a book that was meaningful to them.

- Do mini-rituals throughout the day.** In Tosha Silver's wonderful book, "Outrageous Openness: Letting the Divine Take the Lead," she suggests many small prayers and affirmations you can say throughout the day, to align yourself with divine will and get out of your own way. Silver states something provocative for an astrologer: "I think that if an action is offered completely to God, you can do it *any* time." She tells a story about the great yogi Paramahansa Yogananda, who was in the habit of requesting his astrologers to determine the *least* auspicious day to start a world tour. Then he would intentionally begin the trip at that time to prove that a positive outcome could occur if one is aligned with Spirit. Still, until we attain yogi status, it's wise and helpful to get in sync with the New Moon energies and other astrologically favorable transits. And on astrologically difficult days, frequent mini-rituals enhance the flow and keep your spirits up. Getting into the habit of turning over even the smallest details to Spirit can revolutionize your existence. It takes some practice to get into this mindset of surrender, but is so worth it!

**Ritual for aligning with Spirit:** Silver starts each day with the following intention: “Today the Divine will show me the way. I’m open to all messages, signs and omens. I’ll move as if there’s a force of love waiting to aid me in every area of my life, big or small.” Then if she encounters an obstacle or a delay at some point, she’ll affirm, “My life is unfolding in perfect timing. All delays are beneficial. I’m always at the right place at the right time.” As you experiment with these small, ritualistic intentions throughout your day, you’ll feel much more relaxed and in the flow.

10. **Stay flexible.** You may have a ritual all planned out, but when the time comes, you’re just not feeling it. Or, circumstances might intervene to delay or change what you’d wanted to do. It’s important to surrender to what is. One time an Astro Feng Shui client got stuck in a traffic jam and was unable to get home to perform her ritual at the exact time of the New Moon. So, she just sent her intention to the heavens, and trusted that it would be heard. She could also have waited until she got home, since the New Moon energy remains potent for a day or two. Another time, a psychotherapist friend was all set to do her ritual, when a client unexpectedly appeared. My friend ended up channeling the New Moon’s power into counseling this grief-stricken man, helping greatly to ease his pain. Later, she realized she was performing her true work at the New Moon in her Career gua—and that counseling this man *was* her ritual.

**Simple, last-minute ritual:** Let go of any expectation or feeling that you blew it with what you’d intended to do. Align with this moment and get centered and quiet. Close your eyes, and say an affirmative prayer regarding your New Moon desires. Know that it is done, and give thanks. Remember that it’s all about intention—and you can’t get it wrong!

Enjoy your rituals – and remember to keep them simple and fun. Aligning with the Divine should be something you look forward to, rather than simply another chore to perform. Also, be open to the form in which your manifestation may appear. The Universe often has its own ideas of how to bless us. If you invoked for a raise and instead got a great offer for debt reduction, give thanks! If you wanted a mate and the Universe sent you a darling new pet, give thanks! Positive developments always lead us in the right direction; even seemingly negative events can clear the way for our good fortune to come through. Be grateful for whatever results your rituals produce, and you’ll continue to be richly blessed.

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