

# Grandmother Moon

by TONI GILBERT ASN, MA, ATC

One winter evening, as I looked out the east window of my Oregon home, my consciousness focused upon the beauty of the full moon nestled in soft clouds. It was an ancient cosmic scene, and this night, the evening pearl was balanced between two tall fir trees – dark silhouettes that were the most perfect of frames. In order to get more “into it,” I placed a pair of high-powered binoculars up against the window and looked again. I saw much more than before. Up close, the misty clouds slowly moved around the firs in a gentle embrace that seemed magical, like the mist was rolling forth from the moon to all of Nature. At the same time, I felt a gentle, loving feeling that seemed to emanate from the scene I was witnessing. My educated mind told me this was a reflection of my own feminine. (Who cares? Be still my thinking mind.) I stood for a while, wonderfully transfixed.

At a first glance, the craters on the moon resembled the frozen flowers of my winter garden, lovely symmetric skeletal patterns that tell the story of their organic structure. Of course the moon’s history has been much different, struck repeatedly and scarred but still traveling solidly on her nightly path. She

is certainly a fitting symbol and metaphor for the feminine at this time in our collective history.

Later on that night, I looked out the window again. The moon was high overhead and still peeking from behind softly moving, wispy clouds. My husband and I keep our home dark at night (with a few low intensity lights) because we enjoy the darkness and find it a welcome change to the light of day. In the dark, we can fully rest and meditate. Visitors may come and go, benefiting from the darkness as well. Remembering my Nature experience earlier in the evening, I felt a need to sit in the moonlight coming through the east windows. I pulled my wooden rocker to the most beneficial placement and sat down. Instantly, I felt the energy of the moon upon my body, and I felt nurtured as I closed my eyes.

In my imagination, the mists that I saw earlier in the trees now gently surrounded me...ever so softly. At the same time, I felt the maternal nurturing energy of the moon slowly surround and embrace my small self. I thought, “This feeling can only come from a mature feminine source: the grandmother.” I knew that my interaction with the moon was causing me to project

my personality traits both refined and primitive. I took advantage of this healing moment to breathe in the healing energy of the moon and send it throughout my body – on the out-breath negativity was released. Again and again I breathed deep and sent the energy to various parts of my body for nurturing. When I felt done, I sent a prayer of gratitude to Grandmother Moon for lovingly reflecting so that we, the grandchildren, might see our way through the shadows of our developmental nights.

At the end of my evening, I took a hot bath in a beautiful and fragrant room. Candlelight played off the honey-toned tiles and lit up the murals on the wall that display the actions of ancient herb and flower gatherers. As I slid in to the clear clean water, I felt like a queen entering my bath. It was one of those “life is full of simple pleasures and I can’t complain about a thing” type moment. “Ahhhh, self-care,” I thought, “is all about honoring the vessel of the everlasting spirit; the spirit of life itself.”

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## Holistic Self-Reflection and Self-Care

Self-Reflection and Self-Care is a core principle of holistic nursing (see p. 2, Core Value 5. “The nurse’s self-reflection, self-assessment, self-care, healing, and personal development are necessary for service to others, growth/change in one’s own well-being and understanding of one’s own personal journey.” (AHNA & ANA, 2013, p. 8). Self-healing is a significant goal of holistic nursing.

In order to understand how to be an instrument of healing, we must undertake a personal journey. This journey not only involves the outer world but also meditation and contemplation of the inner life. We endeavor to integrate self-awareness, self-care, and self-healing into our lives by incorporating practices such as self-assessment, meditation, yoga, good nutrition, energy therapies, movement, art support, and lifelong learning (AHNA & ANA, 2013).

American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA), & American Nurses Association (ANA). (2013). *Holistic nursing: Scope and standards of practice* (2nd ed.). Silver Springs, MD: NursesBooks.org.