

The Power of Menstruation

By Alexandra Pope

Do you suffer from menstrual problems? Do you dread getting your period every month? Maybe you think of it as a curse or something you just put up with. Or could you be one of a growing number of women who are waking up to the power of the menstrual cycle and using that knowledge, not only to heal their bodies, but also, to be more creative and empowered in their lives.

The menstrual cycle is a hidden resource in a woman's body that, once tapped in to, can become the means of a rich, psychological and spiritual exploration. A woman can open to inner forces that illuminate, guide and support the unfolding of her life journey—this can help her manifest her goals, fulfil her creative calling and deepen her spiritual nature.

1 RECOVERING THE POWER

There are two distinctive movements of energy in the cycle—the first is one of growth, leading from menstruation to ovulation. This is a natural movement outwards, away from an intimate connection with your inner self to a refocusing on your outer work and others. This growth phase is about asserting your will and going out to create and shape your

life. The second impulse of energy is from ovulation to menstruation. This gradually draws you back deeply into yourself again. This second movement creates more sensitivity and permeability, giving you greater insight, a capacity to sense into the complexity and depth of things and, in so doing, to mature.

You move from a singular focus to multi-focal awareness, channelling and managing much more tension and, therefore, creative potential.

In the growth phase, you have a natural clarity about what needs to be done and the focus and motivation to do it. As the cycle turns and you enter the second half, it is less about producing and more about sorting and refining what you have produced. You have a different kind of energy and motivation—an insight into what is working and what isn't and a drive to sort it out. Gradually, this may give way to a feeling of letting things be, that fully takes over once you bleed. Don't be fooled that this letting go is somehow a waste of time. On the contrary, you should think of it as a time of potentiating what you do. By allowing things to just be for a while, something happens. Other forces can come in, whether it is support from others or your own deep wisdom that offers insights and clarity. As you pull back, you create the literal and psychic space for these things to emerge.

At menstruation itself, a woman can potentially enter a more expanded consciousness, experiencing highly charged altered states that can be ecstatic and visionary.

The key to unlocking these inner talents is awareness and respect for the changing rhythm of your cycle. Chart it on a daily basis and get to know your own distinctive pattern of mood and energy over a whole

menstrual month. The changing moods are like different sources of power that you can learn to draw on to manifest a more fulfilled and creative life.

2 DISCOVERING YOUR 'HOT SPOTS'

The more you pay attention, the more you will discover hot spots—times of more intense feeling. Whether pleasurable or challenging, these days are moments of power. You'll find hot spots for such things as causing trouble—a good thing—that's the moment when you're not censoring yourself; high productivity; least tolerance or, conversely, a time of feeling very magnanimous; a high time for partying or the secret time for dreaming or getting guidance; the darkest, most alone time; and the time of most tenderness when you can experience exquisite intimacy, including with your beloved. Make a mental note, or mark them in your diary, especially if you find yourself caught out by the challenges of your hot spots. And then capitalise on them!

It is possible to transform your experience of menstruation from pain to power. Restoration of the wisdom of the cycle is deeply healing and enlivening. You will find stress can fall away and this alone eases symptoms. A greater kindness towards yourself will seep in and you may experience more motivation to do whatever it is you need to heal and achieve your goals. As one woman said, "I have been filled with new energy, hope, inspiration and power. I seem to be getting more out of each day and feel happier and thankful to be alive and in charge of my destiny and life choices."