

We have had numerous requests at UTFAV for information about a Traditional pamphlet series and how it can help survivors of Domestic Violence. Please see this as a starting place on your road for healing and recovery ~ The UTFAV Team

## Grandmother Moon Teaching

Native people understand that everything in Creation has spirit. The plants, the trees, the water, the wind, the rocks and the mountains have spirit. The sky worlds, including the moon and other planets, have spirit. All of these are part of our first family, the natural world.

The moon is called Grandmother Moon, in the Anishinawbe world; we referred to her Nokomis our Grandmother Moon. Great respect is given to her. For a woman who has experienced domestic violence or sexual assault it is important she know the power Grandmother Moon which can give her healing and balanced energy.

Women can ask Grandmother Moon for direction in life, for wisdom, and for help for her children and others. Some teachings say that when the moon is full, women can ask Grandmother Moon to give them energy. Around the full moon, women on their moon time become very intuitive. It is an opportunity for women to take time for themselves to help foster their intuition and to have strong dreams.

Grandmother Moon controls all female life. Much of the water life spawns according to the cycles of the moon.

When the moon is full, women may participate in a ceremony to honor and

seek guidance from Grandmother Moon. The ceremony can be simple. A woman can sit on the ground and ask Grandmother Moon to replenish her body with new energy. She takes water with her when she asks the Moon to bless her. The water then becomes her medicine.

## Grandmother Moon Ceremony

Ceremonies are held in many communities every full moon to honor Grandmother Moon and all of female life. It is held either on the Full Moon or two days before or after the Full Moon, depending on the teachings given to the women in a particular community.

Women may gather in a circle, from the youngest to the oldest, representing the life journey from infancy to old age. They drum and sing. Water is prayed for and shared. Tobacco and cloth is placed in the fire, along with the sharing of feast food. The women pray for the cleansing of the earth, as the water, the lakes, rivers and oceans, constitute women's responsibility. Their prayers are for continued life.

## Recognition of the Moon in the Calendar

The cycles of the moon determine our yearly calendar. The changes that come with each passing moon indicate the times for planting, harvesting, hunting and gathering. In the Anishinawbe calendar the names of each month include the word 'moon' and reflect the close connection between the cycles of the moon and the plant and animal life on Turtle Island. The

names of the Moons vary according to Tribe and what is taking place in their region.



Gichi-Manidoo-Giizis (January)

- The Great Spirit Moon

Namebini-Giizis (February)

- Sucker Moon

Onaabani-Giizis (March)

- Moon of the Hard Crust Snow

Bebookwedaagimag-Giizis (April)

- Moon of the Broken Snowshoes

Waabigoonii-Giizis (May)

- Flowers Blooming Moon

Ode'mini-Giizis (June)

- Strawberry Moon

Aabita-Niibing-Giizis (July)

- Midsummer Moon

Manoominike-Giizis (August)

- Rice Harvest Moon

Baatebagaawang-Giizis (September)

- Drying Up Leaves and Plants Moon

Binaakwe-Giizis (October)

- Leaves Falling Down Moon

Gashkadino-Giizis (November)

- Frozen Over Moon

Mnidoo-Giizoons (December)

- Moon of the Little Spirit

## **Grandmother Moon: The Female Energy**

It is said that Grandmother Moon watches over the waters of the Earth. We see this in her regulating of the tides.

Grandmother Moon controls all female life. Much of the water life spawns according to the cycles of the moon.

Just as Grandmother Moon watches over the waters of the Earth, it is said that women watch over the waters of the people. Water always comes before new life.

### **Moontime**

It is said that Grandmother Moon is especially close to women because she governs the woman's cleansing cycle, the natural cycle of menstruation known as the moon time. The moon cycle, is a gift to women. It is a time to cleanse her self mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually and to prepare for new life. It is considered a time of power, second only to the ability of the Great Spirit to give life. That is how strong that power is. Some teachings say that when women are on their moon time, the Creator comes closer to them.

When women are on their moon time, their power is at its strongest and this is acknowledged in that they do not prepare foods or medicines, take part in ceremonies or use the pipes and other sacred items.

The moon time is a ceremony of life for women and a time for renewal and reflection. It is a time for women to rest, relax and to take care of themselves. In some families all the chores are done by other family members. It is a time for women to think about themselves, their families, their relatives and pray for anyone they think needs help.

### **Honoring First Moontime**

In the past, when a young woman had her first moon time her aunts or grandmothers would take her to a small lodge where she would be close to the natural world. The young woman is sacred at that time. She is now able to give life. She would be given the teachings about her new life from her mother, grandmothers or aunts. She would be taught about her role as a woman in the community. This is also a time for fasting and learning about the beauty and strength of women. Some women also go on a berry fast at this time, honoring life and our sacred berries. These ceremonies still exists with Tribes and families keeping this traditionally. All women are to be respected and honored.

***For any questions about Grandmother Moon offer tobacco to your tribal elder or spiritual leader. Megwetch.***

*Information shared in this pamphlet was used with permission from Anishnawbe Health Toronto <http://www.aht.ca>*

## **Grandmother Moon Teaching**

### **Uniting Three Fires Against Violence**

*Helping and Healing from all Directions*



Uniting Three Fires Against Violence  
531 Ashmun Street  
PO Box 1836  
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan 49783  
(906) 253-9775  
WEB [www.UTFAV.org](http://www.UTFAV.org)

This project is supported by Grant Number 2009-EC-S6-0010 awarded by the Office of Violence Against Women, US Dept of Justice. Points of view in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position of policies of the US Dept. of Justice.