

Using the creative gifts of the menstrual cycle

We don't usually think of the menstrual cycle as a cycle of different types of creative ability. More often we tend to expect to have the same abilities throughout the month, accepting the odd mood swings of the pre-menstrual phase as something we just have to either live with or fix. Our expectations have been coloured by a long history of male-dominated society, and we expect to be like men - to be consistent throughout the month.

It's no wonder that women suffer so much stress in modern life; their energies - physical, mental, emotional and creative - are forced into a structure which is masculine and far from the natural pattern of the female cycle. And what we miss out on are the extraordinary gifts of the menstrual cycle.

So what are these creative gifts, when do they occur and how can we use them to enhance our lives and express our femininity?

The concept of creativity is not limited to creating a symphony or a masterpiece; creativity covers problem-solving, creating good relationships, friendships and family. It involves organisation and pattern building, as well as creating feelings of well-being, nurturing and building a home. Creativity is in the small things and in our self-expression.

Through the monthly cycle we go through four main phases of creative energy. When we notice these changing energies and adjust our lives to live in harmony with them, we have an amazing opportunity to be creative and achieve success in many different areas. For example, you may find that although you don't think of yourself as being good at writing, during your pre-menstrual phase you may suddenly notice a gift for words. This doesn't limit you as a writer, it gives you a wonderful gift every month which you can use in your work or home life to help bring you success.

The four phases of the menstrual cycle are the **pre-ovulation phase** before we release an egg, **ovulation** when the egg is released, **pre-menstruation** and **menstruation** when we bleed. Each phase flows naturally into the other, and just as your body goes through these changes so does your creativity.

The creativity of the pre-ovulation phase is mental, and offers us a time of mental clarity and focus. During this time, we're able to organise easily, to plan for the future, to develop new ideas and to hold many pieces of information in our mind at the same time. This is a fantastic time to understand complex issues, to learn something new, to structure projects, and to plan and research future events or goals.

One warning though; don't attempt to solve relationship problems in this phase, as you will be quite detached emotionally and may come across as un-empathic as you focus on the solutions and not people's feelings!

The time to discuss and create solutions to relationship problems is in the ovulation phase. Our creative energy slowly changes from a mental focus to a strong



emotional focus. We have the ability to be creative in relationships, as we are more able to empathise with others, offering us team leadership skills and project support skills.

We are able to create the foundations and stability that teams and projects need to succeed. In the home, we have the ability to create strong family bonds as well as reaching out to others. This is the time to listen to your family and the people you work with and to create feelings of validation, appreciation and self-worth. Do things to bond with your children or to support the team of people you work with. Re-create relationships with people by meeting up and going out.

After ovulation, we enter the pre-menstrual phase. We tend to ignore the first two phases, but if we have a rough time during the pre-menstrual phase we may find it difficult to see it in positive terms. The pre-menstrual phase is an enormously creative and powerful phase and many women express frustration and stress because they don't know how to work in harmony with these sometimes overwhelming creative energies.

At this time it's so important to do something! Write down the ideas which come to you, or share them with someone. The more you give form to them, the more ideas will flow. Brainstorm problems or new ideas at work and amaze your boss with inspired out-of-the-box thinking.

The final phase of the cycle offers us a more spiritual creativity. Our creativity changes from intense inspiration and the need to express it, to a quiet reflection. This phase offers us the ability to create a deep relationship with the Divine Source through the spiritual and religious traditions we follow. By re-creating this relationship every month we're able bring the peace and oneness we experience into everything we do throughout the month.

By focusing on our inner realms we also create awareness of ourselves as being more than just our bodies, thoughts and emotions. This is the phase to meditate, to look at our values and attitudes and those of the people around us to see if they meet the desires of our soul. With this deep overview perspective, we're able to make decisions about life and work and create the goals we can plan in the pre-ovulation phase.

Just for a moment, imagine that you could live your life in a way that was in balance with the different creative energies each month. Imagine the impact having these abilities would give to your problems and challenges, dreams and goals!

Obviously we don't live in a society which supports this, and sadly, because of this, business and organisations use only a small percentage of the creative abilities women have to offer. But we can work in small ways with our creative energies. We can use the pre-ovulation phase to plan our work for the month, we can make sure we support and communicate with our family and work colleagues during the ovulation phase, we can use the pre-menstrual phase to brainstorm, and the menstrual phase to assess and review.

Perhaps what we should be saying when people ask us to do things is 'Sorry can't do it now, but I'll be in a better position to do it next week!'



Find more articles and resources from Miranda Gray on her website:

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to find out more about the gifts of the menstrual cycle.