



Now, take a moment to note anything you felt, heard, sensed, or saw that brought you insight, clarity, or peace ...

## Introspection

Like the moon, our experiences of the light waxes and wanes. Through the exploration of darkness, we can find courage. We do come to understand the world in new ways. When we open ourselves to a lunar spirituality, we begin to feel God's presence around us, guiding us through things seen and unseen.

- ⊕ How is your life experience like the moon in regard to light?
- ⊕ How would shifting your attention and intention to the dark places in life open you to feel God's presence?

## The Path Begins

“It seems clear that eliminating darkness is pretty high on the human agenda – not just physical darkness but also metaphysical darkness, which includes psychological, emotional, relational, and spiritual darkness. Most people do not know what they mean by darkness except that they want to stay out of it.”



- When you read the word “darkness,” what images, feelings, or thoughts come to your mind?
- Are they positive or negative?
- What is your earliest memories of darkness? Is it positive or negative? Why?
- How do you think your upbringing affects your response to the idea of darkness?

## Table Sharing >



Darkness is short hand for anything that scares me – that I want no part of – either because I am sure that I do not have the resources to survive it or because I do not want to find out. If I had my way, I would eliminate that fear from my life and the lives of those I love. At least I think I would. The problem is this: when despite all my best efforts, the lights have gone off in my life (literally or figuratively, take your pick), plunging me into the kind of darkness that turns my knees to water, none the less I have not died. Instead, I have learned things in the dark that I could never have learned in the light, things that have saved my life over and over again, so that there is really only one logical conclusion. I need darkness as much as I need light.



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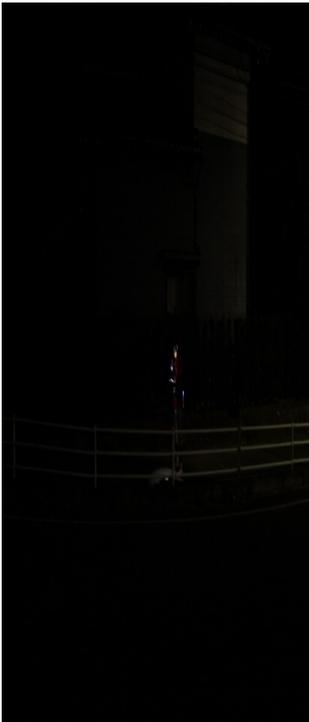
- ❖ I have been given the gift of lunar spirituality, in which the divine light available to me waxes and wanes with the season.
- ❖ The moon is a truer mirror for my soul than the sun that looks the same way every day.
- ❖ More is in store for me if I learn to walk in the dark.

Affirmation:

It is true that the days of your life are not easily divisible into good and evil, spirit and flesh. Some of the best things that have and will happen to you in the darkest places and some of the worst in well lit churches. Your body has been the source not only of great pain but also of great pleasure. Experience the world as a place of wonder as well as brokenness. It is ok if you have had a hard time warming up to any kind of salvation that divides reality into two and asks you to forsake the bottom half. It is time to explore a truth; pairs exist in balance, not opposition. Consider, what would light be without dark? Who knows spirit without knowing flesh? Is anyone altogether good or evil? Where is the church that exists outside the world?

The first step of learning to walk in the dark is to give up running the show. Next, you sign the waiver that allows you to bump into somethings that might frighten you at first. Finally, you ask darkness to teach you what you need to know. Let darkness guide you, and you will soon have new companions as brave and curious as you are about the nightlife of your soul. Remember God does not turn over the world to some other deity at dusk. Even when you cannot see where you are going and no one answers when you call, this is not sufficient proof that you are alone.

Closing:



Acquainted with the Night  
Robert Frost

I have been one acquainted with the night.  
I have walked out in rain—and back in rain.  
I have out walked the furthest city light.

I have looked down the saddest city lane.  
I have passed by the watchman on his beat  
And dropped my eyes, unwilling to explain.

I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet  
When far away an interrupted cry  
Came over houses from another street,

But not to call me back or say good-bye;  
And further still at an unearthly height,  
One luminary clock against the sky

Proclaimed the time was neither wrong nor right  
I have been one acquainted with the night.