

# Discover the Cycles of Life: Nurture the seeds of your past, flourish in the present, and harvest a brighter future

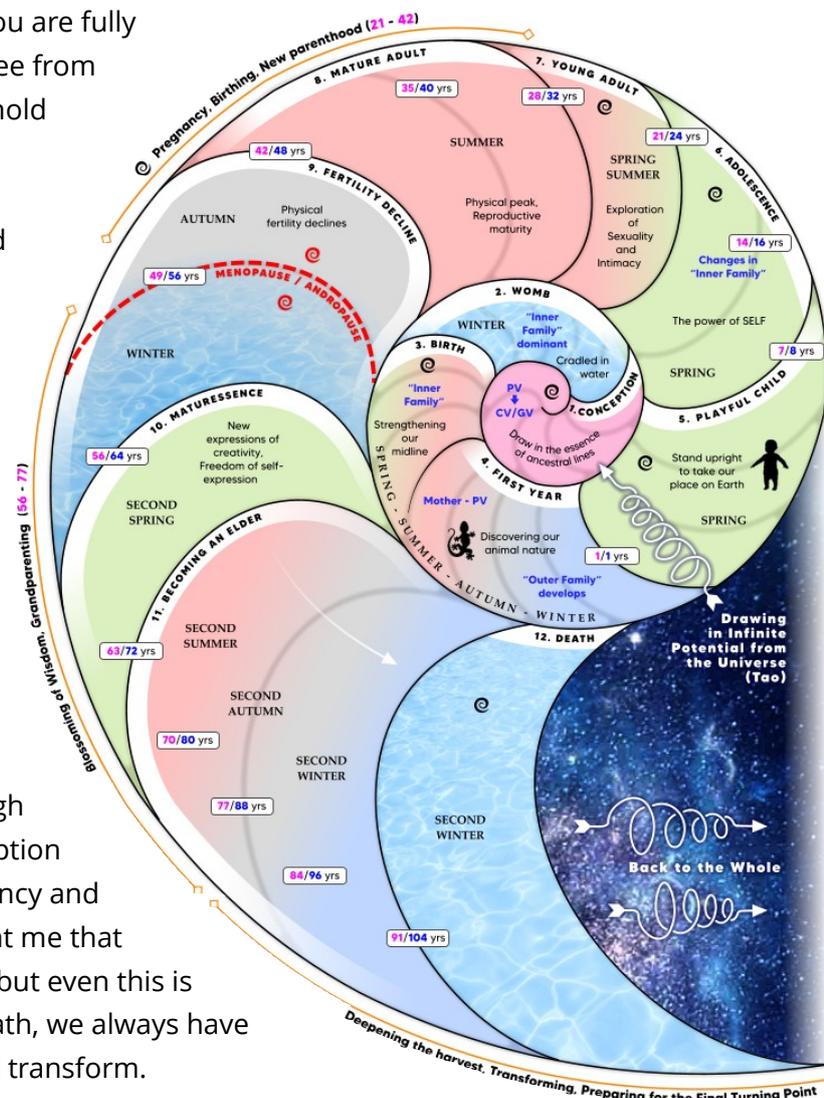
Imagine living a life where you are fully present in every moment, free from repeating old patterns that hold you back. A life where challenges feel manageable, your body supports you, and you feel deeply connected to yourself and the world around you.

What if you could heal your past to reshape your present and create a future filled with growth and balance?

For over 40 years, I have explored how to support myself and my clients through all stages of life, from conception to death. My work in pregnancy and birth during the 1990s taught me that this cycle is our foundation, but even this is not fixed. Until our final breath, we always have opportunities to change and transform.

I want to share the wisdom I have gathered about life cycles and provide you with practical tools to connect you with your body's natural rhythms. While my work is inspired by ancient Chinese approaches, you don't need any prior knowledge of Traditional Chinese Medicine. My practices are designed to integrate seamlessly into daily life, making it possible to nurture your well-being and embrace change at any stage. These include movement and touch-based practices, breathwork, and meditation to help your energy flow well.

Core to my work are the Eight Extraordinary Vessels. They are more powerful than the 12 meridians of Chinese medicine, which govern our daily cycle. The Extraordinary Vessels support the 12 meridians and form the foundation of our being, guiding our growth, fertility,

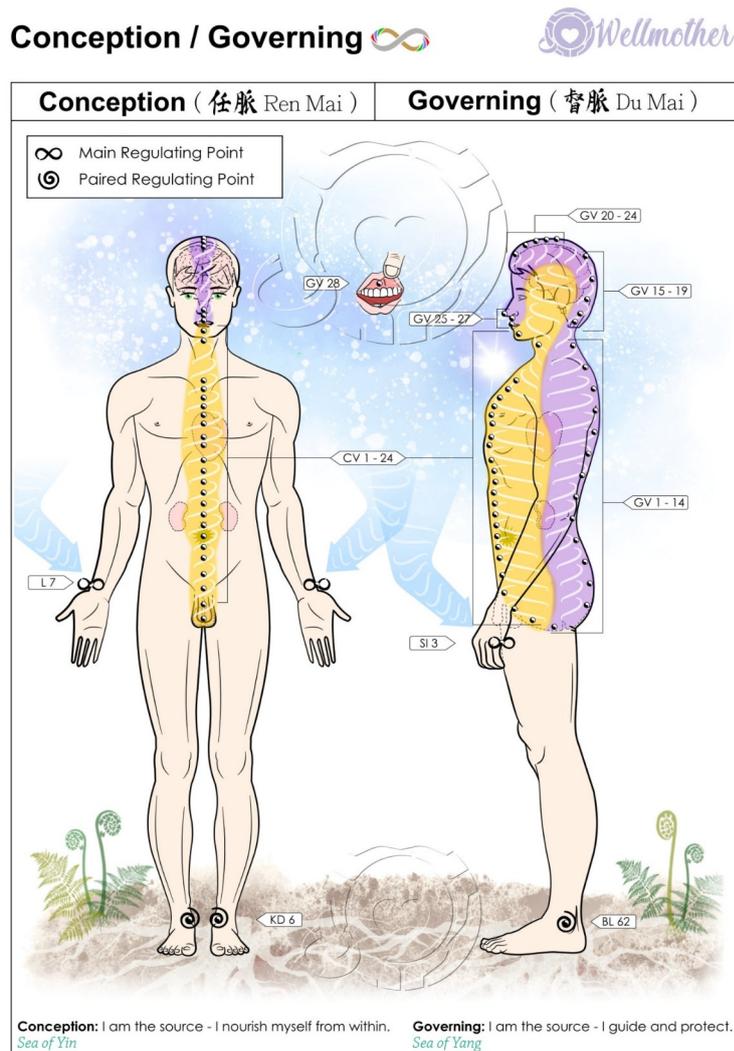


and aging. They oversee all the cycles of our lives. By working with them you can support your energy to flow more smoothly.

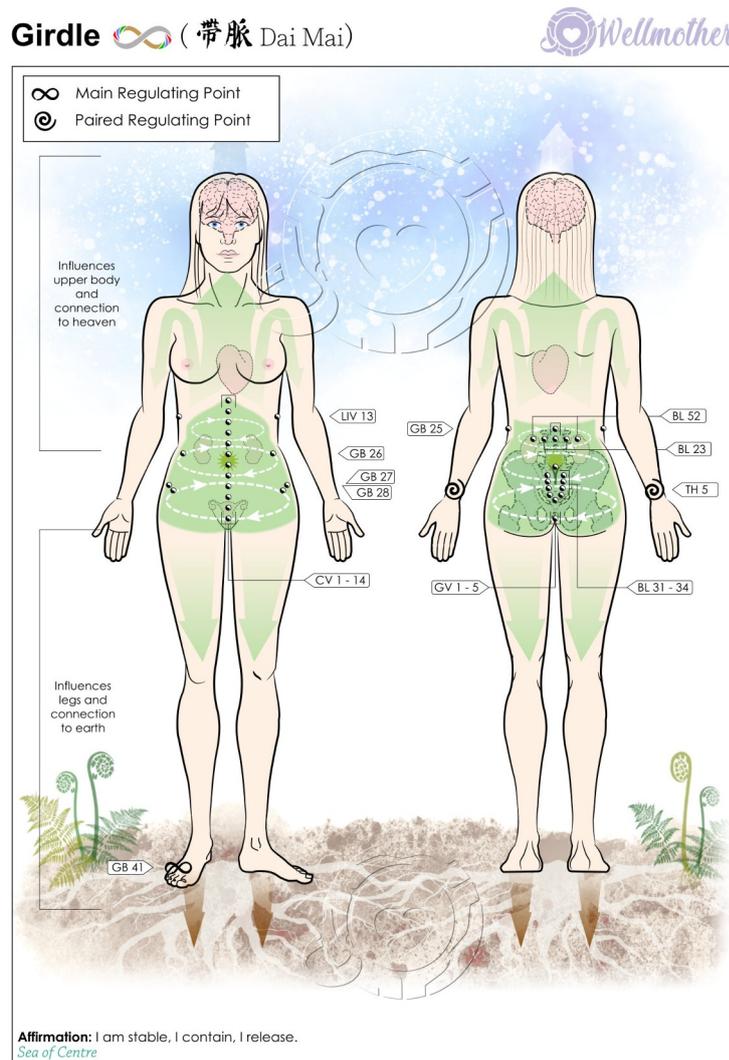
In the following pages, I introduce you to the **Cycles of Life**, a powerful framework for understanding the natural rhythms that shape our lives. From birth to death, our bodies and minds evolve in stages, each offering opportunities for transformation. By embracing these transitions with awareness, compassion, and understanding, you can unlock profound healing and personal growth.

## Your life cycles and turning points

The Extraordinary Vessels regulate our brain and reproductive organs, two fundamental organs which are not in the 12 meridian system which are core to regulating our life cycles. The first two run through the front and back midline of your body – between your brain and your perineum: Governing and Conception. The other six emerge from them. They are the Chinese equivalent of the chakras.



One Vessel that is simple to access and gathers them altogether is the **Girdle Vessel**:



I have many videos on my YouTube channel about them:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLRyKR6A8Bqdbzvqs9guKwvPHQa4i-02VH>

## Discover the Cycles of Life

Life is often portrayed as a straight line—a trajectory from birth to death, from point A to point B. But in reality, life unfolds in cycles. Like a spiral, each stage builds on the one before, and every ending marks the start of something new. By exploring the cycles of life, we can shift from seeing time as something we’re running out of to something we’re continuously evolving within.

Cycles remind us that nothing in nature grows endlessly or remains static. There is a rhythm to everything: moments of activity are balanced by periods of rest, just as moments of

growth are balanced by times of release. This cyclical perspective allows us to embrace change with grace, understanding that even challenges are temporary and serve a larger purpose.

**Why this matters:** Viewing life as cyclical helps us cultivate patience and resilience. We understand that a more restful, introspective phase (like "winter") isn't permanent—it prepares us for a new beginning. Similarly, we learn to release expansive phases (like "summer"), knowing they are part of the natural ebb and flow.

## Exercise for Awareness

Reflect on your current phase of life. Ask yourself:

1. Am I experiencing a season of growth, reflection, rest, or renewal?
2. How might this phase be connected to what came before and what's ahead?
3. Are there phases of my life which I have enjoyed more than others?

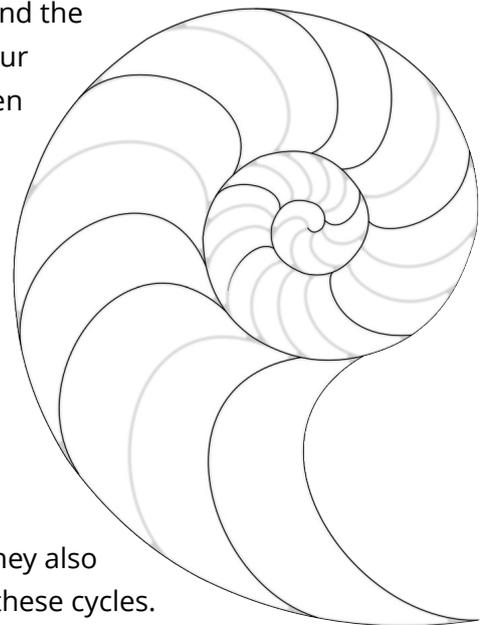
By recognising where you are in your personal cycle, you can approach life with greater intention and acceptance.

## What Are the Cycles of Life?

Modern society and medicine are beginning to understand the profound influence our environment has on us. Unlike our ancestors, we no longer live as closely to nature and often override natural forces. While this has benefits—such as maintaining warmth in cold weather—it also comes at a cost. Many people today are overstimulated, sleep-deprived, and experience burnout, conditions our ancestors rarely faced.

Ancient wisdom acknowledges that human life is influenced not only by the daily cycle of the sun, the 28-day lunar cycle and the annual cycle, but also by planetary movements and longer rhythms. While early civilizations sought protection from nature's extremes, they also recognised the importance of working in harmony with these cycles.

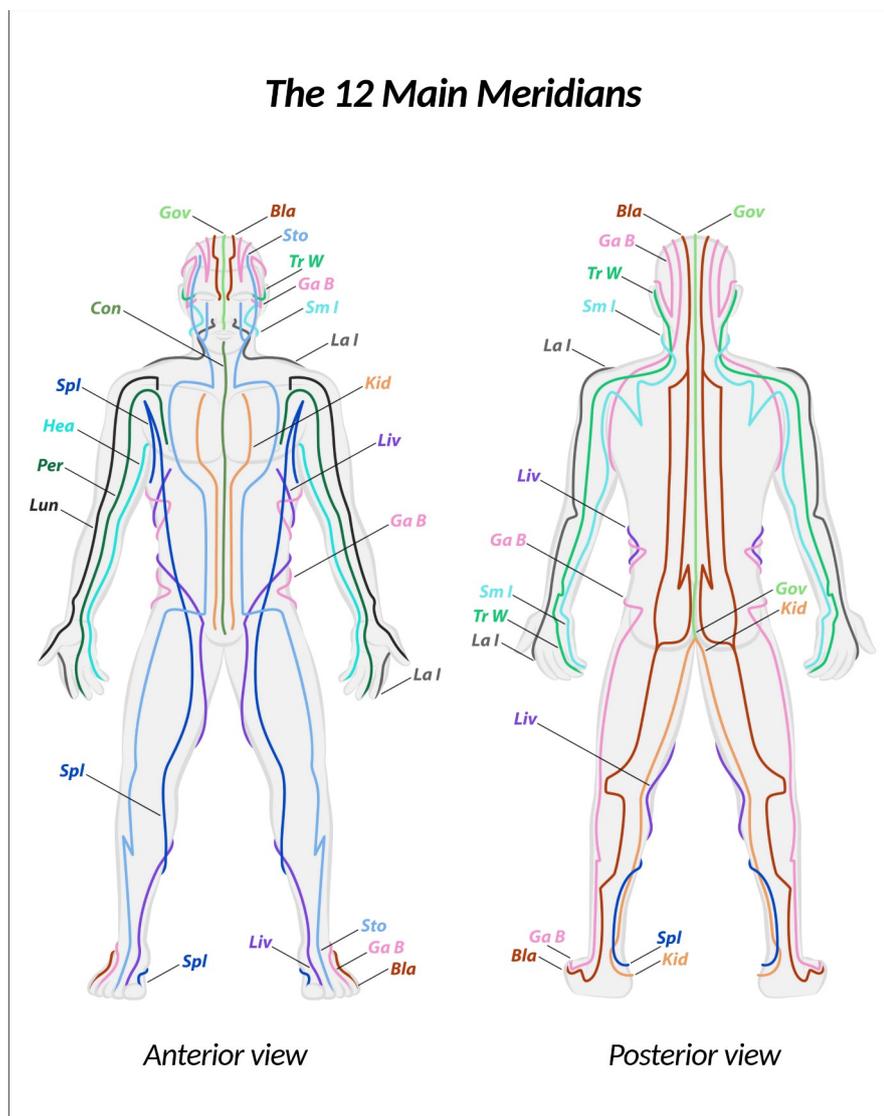
The cycles of life mirror the natural rhythms of the Earth, the moon, and our own bodies. Understanding these patterns helps us navigate life's transitions with greater ease and purpose.

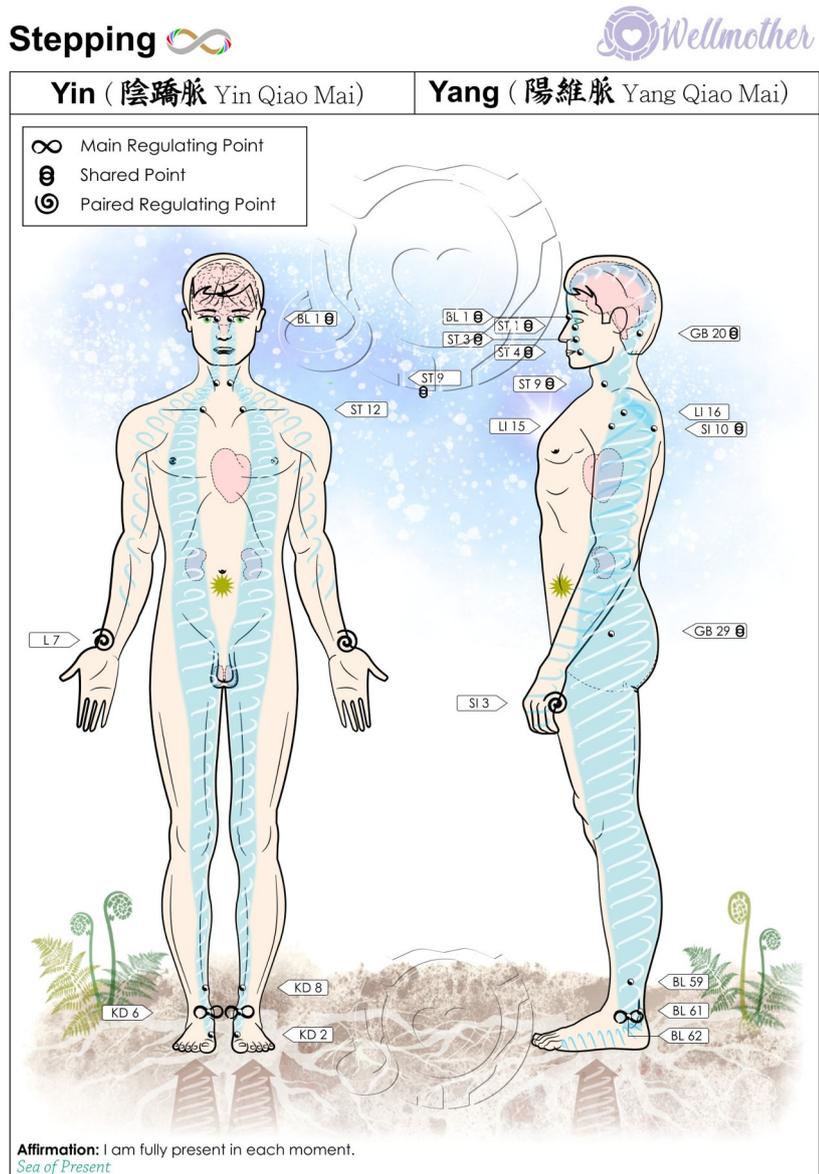


## Ancient Chinese Wisdom on Life Cycles

The Chinese understood various life cycles and their impact on health and well-being:

- 24-Hour Cycle:** This is the cycle of day (Yang) and night (Yin). It is regulated by the 12 meridians of energy that run throughout our body (Lung, Large Intestine, Stomach, Spleen, Heart, Small Intestine, Kidney, Bladder, Triple Heater, Heart Protector, Liver, and Gall Bladder). These meridians influence different organ functions throughout the day. Within the Extraordinary Vessels it is the Yin and Yang Stepping Vessels which are the overall regulators of the 24 cycle – our circadian rhythms. They help us adapt to the current moment.



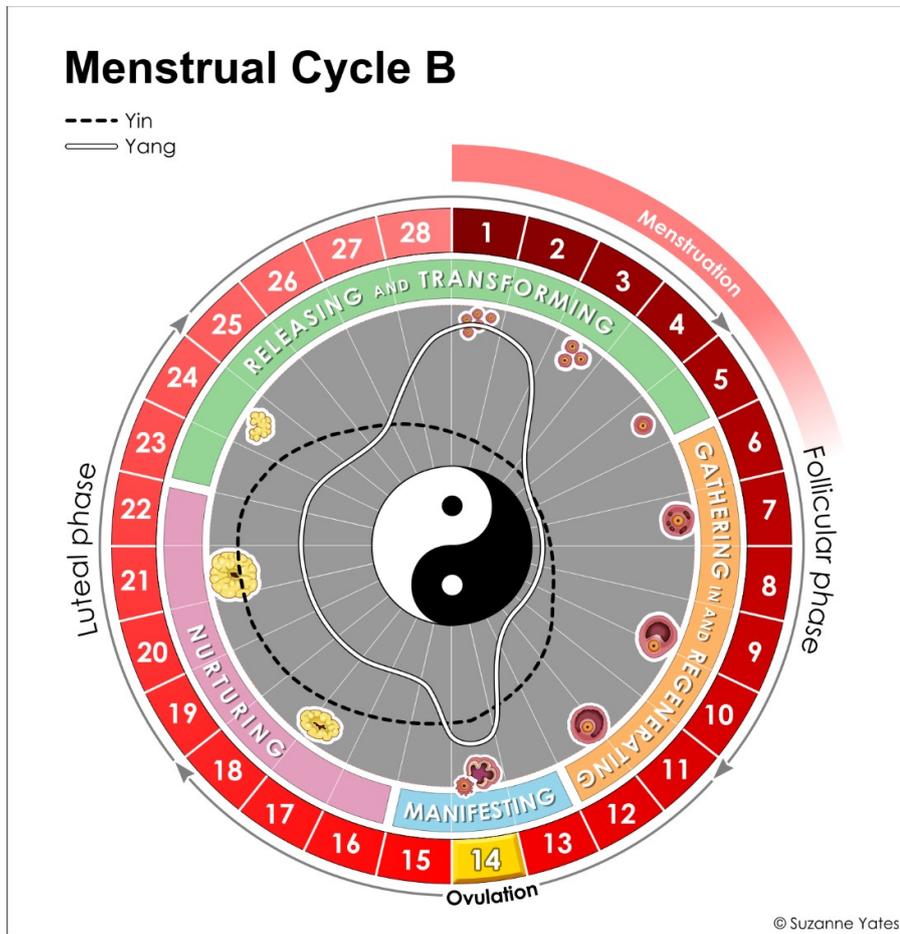


- **Tip:** Align with your natural energy flow by resting when tired and being active during peak energy hours
- **Tip:** Try this exercise for the Stepping Vessels to help you connect with your daily cycle: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WnM94DS70WQ>

Here is a video explaining what these Vessels are: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qbc76pVO6HU>

- **28-Day Lunar Cycle:** Connected to the menstrual cycle and emotional rhythms, this cycle is guided by the Eight Extraordinary Vessels, as it reflects the movement of Essence. Essence is our energetic DNA transmitted at conception. It supports growth, maturation, fertility and ageing and your eggs or sperm are expressions of it. Essence is modified by our environment (epigenetics). The Extraordinary Vessels regulate your brain, kidneys, and reproductive organs, influencing your hormones and your fertility. Hormonal shifts regulate the menstrual cycle, supporting egg

development and the womb lining. Changes in these Vessels initiate menstruation at puberty and bring it to a close at menopause.



Here is a video I made on the energies of the menstrual cycle:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vyTElhkKGmg>:



The gifts of each phase of the menstrual cycle prepare women and men for other phases of their lives:

Phase	Quality	Life Phase	Vessel ∞	Season
<b>Menstruation</b>	<b>Releasing and Transforming</b>	Birth, rebirth, the menopause. Men - ejaculation.	Girdle ∞ opens to release Penetrating ∞ and Blood and Essence into space.	Spring (Yang Wood) → Summer (Yang Fire) → Earth (Yin/Yang) → Autumn (Yin Metal) → Winter (Yin Water).
<b>Follicular</b>	<b>Gathering in and Regenerating</b>	Postnatal. Deep rest. Rest between birth contractions or after orgasm. Men after ejaculation.	① All ∞ draw back to Conception & Governing ∞ axis. ② All ∞ and energies low (Blood, Qi, Essence, Yin/Yang) and gradually increase.	Winter (Yin Water) → Spring (Yang Wood).
<b>Ovulation</b>	<b>Manifesting</b>	① Releasing our potential. ② Open up to welcome in something/one to help you grow, early stages of sexual arousal. ③ First stage of creation, conception of sexual arousal.	Yang surge: Girdle ∞, supported by Governing, Yang Linking and Stepping, releases egg/Essence.	Spring (Yang Wood) → Summer (Yang Fire).
<b>Luteal</b>	<b>Nurturing</b>	Pregnancy, parenting, mothering ourselves and the earth. Consolidating a project, building a nest, Men - maturing sperm.	All energies build. Penetrating ∞ at its strongest around Day 22. Yin more dominant.	Summer (Yang Fire) → Earth (Yin/Yang) → Autumn (Yin Metal) → Winter (Yin Water).

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- **Tip:** Honor the ebb and flow of energy, creativity, and introspection throughout the month.
- **Tip:** Connect with the key words for each phase of the cycle and see how they resonate with you and explore the different phases of life they relate to

## The yearly cycle of life: Four Seasons

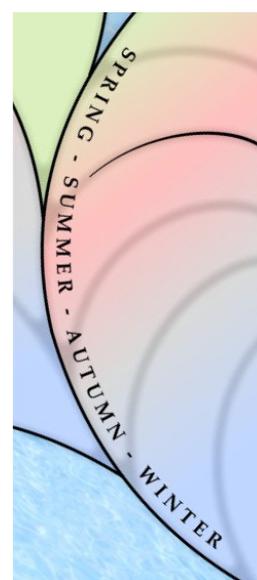
**Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter** reflect the changing energies throughout the year, but they also reflect changing energies during the menstrual cycle and, as we will see, longer cycles in our lives.

Like day and night, each season expresses an aspect of the changing nature of Yin and Yang, represented by an element. Earth facilitates the movement between each season.

**Winter** is the most Yin – water with its moist, cooling qualities (night).

**Spring** is Yang rising out of Yin winter – wood with new leaves pushing through the Earth.

**Summer** is the most Yang – expansive fire with its qualities of heat and dryness (day).



**Autumn** is after expansion is complete and the process of moving back to Yin begins again - metal is the gathering in at harvest time: a condensing process creating gold ore and other precious metals

## 7- and 8-Year Cycles: Governed by the 8 Extraordinary Vessels

The seven year cycle reflects the cyclical movement of Essence for women and the eight year cycle for men. These are the rhythms of our growth and ageing and include important "turning points" – birth, standing upright, puberty, reproductive and sexual expression, ageing and dying.

- **Tip:** Honour the passage of time through your body and reflect on the seven or eight year cycles of your life.

## Explore the nature of the Eight Extraordinary Vessels

**The Hidden Powers of TCM:** How the Eight Extraordinary Vessels can transform your life:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OFwJ8wvLHZo>

## Four Core Cycles of Life

### Spring: Beginnings, Growth, and Potential - the foundation

- **Key Themes:** Growth in the womb. Birth, childhood, and early development.
- **Connection:** Spring represents new beginnings—a time of potential, hope, and fresh energy. Just like seedlings sprouting after being planted, this phase corresponds to conception, life in the womb, and our earliest years.
- **Reflection:** How we are nurtured during this time sets the foundation for the rest of our lives. If this phase was marked by challenges (e.g., a difficult birth or lack of emotional support), these patterns may echo throughout our later years. But even as adults, we can revisit this phase to "replant" seeds of strength and healing.
- **Link to Other Phases:** Spring influences the quality of our "harvest" in autumn (adulthood) and the resilience we carry into winter (ageing). The quality of care and nurturing in our early years directly impacts how we experience adulthood. Early patterns, both positive and challenging, can be revisited and repatterned to support us in later stages.

## Summer: Maturity, Vitality, and Expansion

- **Key Themes:** Adolescence, young adulthood, and peak vitality.
- **Connection:** Summer is a time of flourishing—when life is vibrant, energy is abundant, and the seeds planted in spring grow to full bloom. This stage corresponds to adolescence and young adulthood, where we explore our identity, develop independence, and set the course for our future.
- **Reflection:** This phase often involves significant "turning points" like puberty, first relationships, and the pursuit of passions or careers. It is a time of high energy but also potential burnout if not balanced.
- **Link to Other Phases:** The vibrancy of summer shapes the strength of autumn's harvest. If we overextend ourselves in summer (e.g., neglecting rest or self-care), it may impact the resources we have as we move into the next cycle. Balancing energy with rest in this phase is key to long-term well-being.

## Autumn: Harvest, Reflection, and Wisdom

- **Key Themes:** Adulthood, parenting, and maturation.
- **Connection:** Autumn represents a time of gathering the fruits of our labour—whether in the form of career achievements, family relationships, or personal growth. It is also a time for reflection as we assess what has worked well and what may need adjustment.
- **Reflection:** Autumn often coincides with significant life transitions, such as parenthood, mid-life changes, or shifts in priorities. It invites us to let go of what no longer serves us (like falling leaves) and to focus on sustaining what matters most.
- **Link to Other Phases:** The harvest of autumn depends on the seeds planted in spring and nurtured in summer. By letting go of what no longer serves us during autumn, we make space for new growth in the next spring. Reflection during this phase creates the fertile ground for transformation and prepares us for the inward focus and rest required in winter.

## Winter: Rest, Renewal, and Transformation

- **Key Themes:** Aging, death, and the end of cycles.
- **Connection:** Winter is a time of deep rest and transformation—a phase where we slow down, look inward, and prepare for new beginnings. In life, this corresponds to our later years, where we may face physical changes, reflect on our legacy, and prepare for the ultimate transition of death.
- **Reflection:** Winter invites us to embrace the wisdom gained from previous cycles and to find peace with endings. It teaches us that rest is essential for renewal, as even the harshest winters give way to spring.

- **Link to Other Phases:** Winter's rest is not an end but a preparation for the rebirth of spring. The lessons and wisdom gathered here inform the seeds of the next cycle, whether in this life or beyond. The stillness of winter is a reminder that endings are natural and necessary for beginnings.

## Reflection Exercise

Take a moment to reflect on the seasons of your life:

1. Which "season" of life are you currently experiencing?
2. How does this season feel to you—are you aligned with its energy, or do you feel resistance?
3. Looking back, can you see how previous seasons have shaped where you are now?
4. What seeds would you like to plant for the next spring in your life?

Understanding and embracing the cycles of life allows us to move through transitions with greater grace, knowing that every phase has its own unique purpose and wisdom. By seeing your life as a cycle, you can find meaning in every moment and draw strength from the interconnections that sustain you.

## Turning Points: Navigating Transitions in Life

Life's turning points are thresholds between cycles. These moments of transition – whether joyous, challenging, or bittersweet – carry profound significance.

## What Are Turning Points?

Turning points are moments when the flow of life shifts, requiring us to adapt, grow or change direction. They often occur when one cycle ends, and another begins.

Examples of Turning Points:

- The transition from adolescence to adulthood.
- Graduating from school or starting a new career.

- Becoming a parent or caregiver.
- Facing a health crisis or losing a loved one.
- Retirement or entering the later stages of life.

## Why They Are Important

Turning points disrupt routine but also open the door to transformation. They may feel uncomfortable or uncertain, but they are opportunities to realign with your true path.

## How to Navigate Turning Points

1. **Pause and Reflect:** Ask yourself, "What is this transition teaching me?"
2. **Let Go of Resistance:** Change is inevitable; resisting it only creates more imbalance.
3. **Set New Intentions:** Embrace the opportunity to plant new seeds and move forward with clarity.

