



Autumn

Living the Cycle

When we become interested in the rhythm of the seasons, we start sensing how our internal rhythm can follow them and move through the year in relationship to the cycles of nature.

In Autumn, we are stepping forward into the season, more deeply into the darkest months of the year. In many traditions in the Northern Hemisphere, this is a time to honor the ancestors, the fertile darkness, and to practice gratitude.

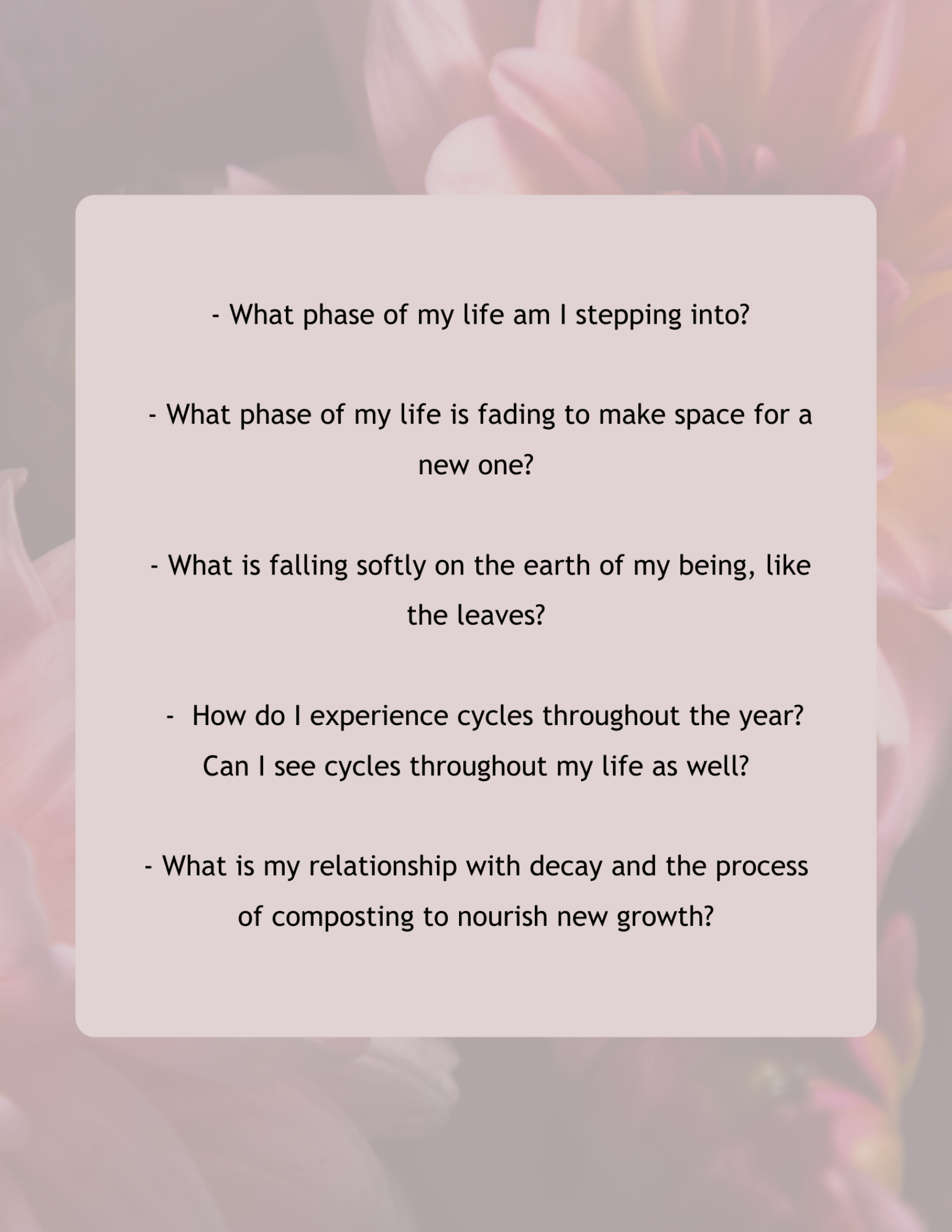
This time of year is rich in inspiration, imagination, and nourishment for the deepest parts of ourselves. Let's slow down and find more time to rest so that we can connect with our creative imagination and let the natural world be reflected in us.

Questioning

Questions are keys that open internal doors. They hold possibilities and can lead you to a deeper reflection on your personal stories.

Write the question(s) that seems the most pertinent to you in your journal, and then write your response. The most pertinent questions resonate and inspire you. Keep writing for ten minutes without stopping, and let the flow of your thoughts take over, even - especially - if you drift away from the initial inquiry. If you drift away, trust the path your writing is taking you on.

The heart of personal development exploration is to find the right questions that take you deeper. Instead of finding answers, think of finding **responses**. While an answer is definitive, a response is dynamic, generative, and widening. It has movement and shows you a different direction.

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- The background of the image is a soft-focus photograph of pink flowers, likely tulips, with some petals visible in the foreground and background. The overall tone is gentle and natural.
- What phase of my life am I stepping into?
 - What phase of my life is fading to make space for a new one?
 - What is falling softly on the earth of my being, like the leaves?
 - How do I experience cycles throughout the year?
Can I see cycles throughout my life as well?
 - What is my relationship with decay and the process of composting to nourish new growth?

Writing Prompts

- After a period of growth comes a time for rest. During this restful time, what I create in myself is...
 - I connect with my ancestors by thinking of..., smelling..., tasting..., and being in a place that...
- If I were to write a letter of gratitude, it would be to (list three persons and write a letter to each of them over the season). If possible, send it to them.
- I am in the season of Autumn in my life. It has both beauty and grief, has the colors of..., and is announcing...
 - In this Autumn season, I take time to prepare for Winter. In my home, it looks like..., in my body, it looks like..., in my relationships, like...

Navigating Discomfort

Some questions, prompts, or images can make you uncomfortable. If that is the case, I suggest you do not start with that question/prompt but keep it close. When you are ready to spend some time with it, write in the form of lists: what you feel in your body, where the discomfort is, and what images, words, or memories come to mind. Then do your 10-minute writing and start with “This question makes me uncomfortable, it feels like...”.

“No one is ever ready,
and no one is ever done”

Lara Vesta - Year of the Dark Goddess.

Autumn Birthday

If it is your birthday this season:

Make a list of the most nourishing and realistic things you can give yourself. Keep it simple. It can be a bath (with your favorite music, candles, bubbles), a long walk alone in a place you love, going to a coffee shop with a friend, taking a class/workshop, getting a massage, getting cozy with a new book for an hour...

Plan to do one thing from your list the week before your birthday, one (or the same) on the week of your birthday, and one (or the same) the week after your birthday.

Schedule it in your calendar. If you don't live alone, let your people know that this is your special time and you will be available to them before and after, but not during that time.

Francine Bonjour-Carter

I am a multidisciplinary human.

My work is rich and grounding and addresses the many layers that make us who we are (emotional, physical, psychological, and relational).

Through somatic awareness, mixed media art, stories and myths, archetypal work, and journaling, I take others through the journey of reconnecting with their deeper self to live a life rooted in beauty, authenticity, and meaning.



I am French, have been in the USA since 2006, and live near Philadelphia with my husband, our two children, a howling dog, a curious kitty, a few snakes, feral honeybees, and a wild garden.

FrancineBonjour.com

Journaling as a Portal

