

:: Francine Bonjour-Carter ::



Release Ritual

Timeless ritual for modern life.

This guidebook and ritual are here to support you in your life, which is a journey of transformation. You can work with Release Ritual once a year, once every season, or anytime you find yourself in a transition and need a clear structure to process it.

We live fast-paced lives in a society that moves away from sacred and intentional practice, but we are not entirely disconnected from it and can bring it back. A ritual is both timeless and out-of-time, it is always available and requires only one thing: your intention.

By focusing and making space - both physically and emotionally - for this Release Ritual, you can reconnect with a way of living centered around listening and around the quality of your presence. This ritual brings structure to your process and helps you create a reliable container for transformation and a clear way of committing to what you seek.



Release comes from the Latin *relaxare*, which means to enlarge, to widen, to loosen. There is a real sense of space associated with this word, and by releasing something, you literally make more room in yourself, a relationship, or your life. To have more space can be an opportunity for having more movement and clarity - and enjoy the spaciousness - or for bringing in something new that you have not experienced before.

The four foundational pillars of Release Ritual are:

- Identify what you are releasing
- Create your Altar
- Find your Mantra
- Practice daily for 11 days (at least 10 minutes a day)

I invite you to connect to your life experiences in a non-linear way and see yourself connected to Earth as one of its inhabitants. **The process of releasing is the most natural of all:** you can imagine leaves falling from a tree and being composted to produce rich and nourishing soil, seeds being released by plants once they approach the end of their life cycle, or animals shaking and making sounds to release stress and tension to reset their nervous system. We, as humans, have forgotten how to incorporate releasing practices in our lives, and now is an excellent time to bring them back.

In the following pages, you will start by identifying what you are ready to let go of, what story or belief is ripe for release, and then create your altar and craft your ritual. The concepts are the same for everyone, yet the ritual itself will be unique for each person because the structure allows your personal experience to shape the process and fit your needs and personality.



For eleven days, you will come to your altar (the time you spend there is up to you and can vary) and recite your mantra out loud daily. Using your voice and sensing how it changes is a very powerful and important part of this ritual.

During this practice, you will involve all your senses and deepen your relationship with yourself on a somatic, spiritual, and psychological level. Your full presence will be a changing factor in your daily experiences because you will bring more intention and attention to your life through this ritual.

This is a process of reclaiming,
being seen,
being heard,
and inviting aliveness and freedom into your life.

What is ready to be released?



In order to grow anew, some things have to die and make space for what is coming in. I invite you to reflect on what is ready to be released in you right now.

If you have more than one thing in mind, you will want to sense which one is fully mature and ready to be laid on your Release altar:

You might write them on pieces of paper, turn them around, hold your hand above each other, and sense if one feels warmer or tingly.

You can go through your list, imagine doing your release ritual with each and choose the one that feels clear and right.

You might say each of them out loud in a phrase that calls action like "I want to release _ _ _ _ " and sense the one that resonates best or sits with power in your voice.

Examples of what you can release:

- an old belief about yourself
- shame
- guilt
- a relationship dynamic that does not work (anymore)
- a fear
- an opinion about what it means to be a woman/man
- a way of thinking: judgment, victimhood, inferiority, superiority...
- lack of self-worth

Any expression of who you are in that space of intentional release will help the process to open and flow: you can dance, journal, free-write, draw, cook, and/or sing your release.

Think about it with curiosity; invite the unfamiliar in your work.

Prompts for finding what to release:

- I am dissatisfied in my relationship with _____, the way I _____ needs to change.
- In the past, I believed that I was _____ but today I know this is not true: I truly am _____
_____.
- When I am grounded and centered in myself, I know that the way I _____ has to change.
- For others to see that I am _____, I must let go of _____.
- I would feel so much more free if I could stop _____. The first step toward this is to let go of _____.
- The way I feel around _____ keeps me small and away from expanding in my life. I will feel more full and present in myself by shifting my thinking about _____.

Connecting with Snake



Snake is the queen of transformation. She excels in using her senses differently when the shedding process starts and moves naturally through it. She becomes quieter, her activity slows down, and her whole system focuses on shedding the old skin. The shedding - called ecdysis - is part of a process of growth, it is not an isolated event but the visible part of a whole (mostly invisible) cycle that happens overtime.

Because it is related to growth, a young snake will go through ecdysis very often (once a month), and an adult snake between two and five times a year.

Snake is our guide for our Release Ritual, and first we must connect with her through a guided visualization.

During this journey, you will meet with Snake and she will give you more information about your process of release. You will pay attention to details and sensory informations that can contain important messages and support for you.

In this journey, if anything feels too intense for you, you can say, "this is too much for me, please give me your message in a more gentle way."

The Audio of our Guided Journey to Snake is on the webpage:
<https://www.FrancineBonjour.com/releaseritualcourse>

You can also call for Snake and her messages in your dreams and set an intention to connect before going to sleep.

“Don't expect your teachers to be human.”

Martin Shaw - Scatterlings.

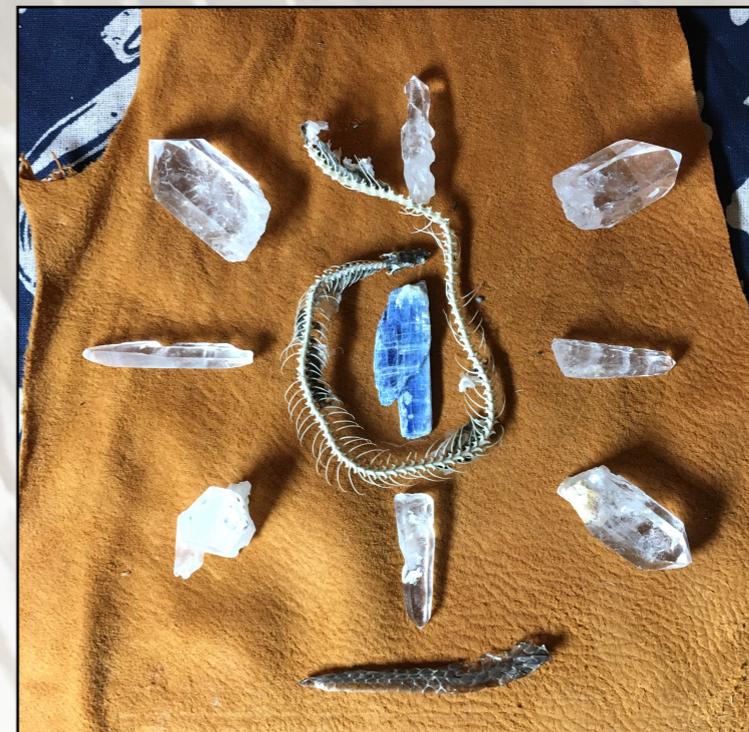
Creating your altar

Your altar is a specific space that expresses and holds your intention. It is a very personal creation that you can set up in many places: on a shelf, a table, a corner of your desk, in a tiny box, outside on the grass or patio, under your pillow. It can be as simple or as sophisticated as you want it to be.

What is important is what you want to express and invoke through your altar, how it represents you, and what energy it will hold as your partner in your release process.

For this particular ritual, we will be working with Snake, and any imagery of Snake is a good start. If you have access to shed snakeskin, even better! *If you feel strongly called to shed snakeskin and do not have any, you can contact me.*

I encourage you to prioritize focused meaning over quantity and keep things simple. That being said, if a big altar is meaningful and important for your process, go with it - it is essential to listen to what wants to move through you.





Start by cleaning your space and gathering your objects (images, stones, crystals, flowers, words written on paper, Tarot/Oracle cards). Cleaning is an important step that allows you to set up your sacred space and call in new energy.

I work clockwise when I build an altar (and counterclockwise when I close it), I place my objects starting in the center or in the East, and move around the four directions.

You might want to have your image of Snake or your piece of snakeskin in the center for this ritual.



Finding Your Mantra

Your mantra holds your release, and you will say it daily for eleven days in front of your altar. It comes from your heart, travels toward your throat, and carries your intentions through your voice, which you convey to the world via vibration.

Be very clear with your mantra and keep it simple. Include a declaration that reflects what is coming out of the release (*I stand tall and strong, I have clarity in my heart, I am now free...*) to set your intention and call in the change you want to see and the transformation you want to initiate.

Adding a phrase like "*on all levels of my being*" is helpful to carry your release to the dimensions of yourself you are not consciously aware of.

Once you have found your mantra, say it out loud and sense how it feels, how it resonates in you. The more you will practice, the more you will embody your mantra and give it fullness. Be open to the fact that your mantra can change and evolve: once you are centered and grounded in your daily ritual, you might change or add a phrase, replace a word, speak it in another language.

Allow yourself to move with the process.

Use any of the examples on the following page as an inspiration, as they are, or mix them up.

Write your mantra on your journal or on a piece of paper that you will keep on your altar.

Every time you come at your altar and recite your mantra, first take a moment to sense your breath, your pelvis, your spine and your throat. Envision your inner space as a vessel for your voice and your words.

Inspiration

I am done being small, and from all levels of my being
I let go of what constricts me.
I stand tall and strong with clarity in my heart.

I have seen, pulled out, and cut what holds me back.
Now I release it from all levels of my being, and I walk
clear and free on my healing path.

I am not a victim anymore and release victimhood from all
levels of my being.
I am now free to rise and soar,
And I am thankful for the learning.

Every situation can help me see the truth in my heart and
be more authentic.

I let go of the false beliefs that kept me away from my
heart and fully embody who I am.

Unworthiness is what I am releasing.

I am ready to shed this old belief from all levels of my
being and make space for self love and trust.

No longer willing to suffer, I release shame and guilt
from all levels of my being
and invite pleasure and growth in my life.

Grounded Practice

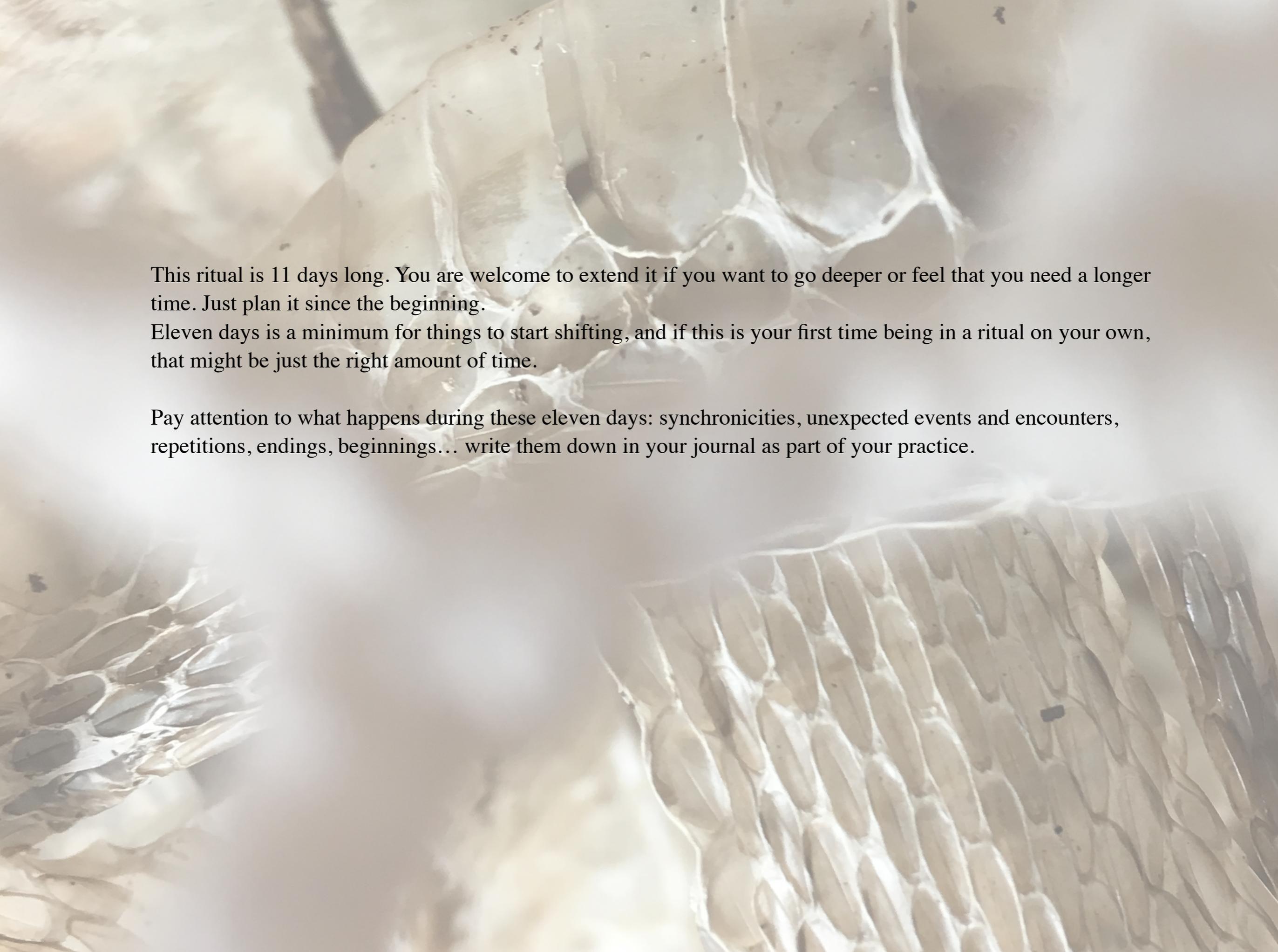
Now that you have created your altar and found your mantra, you are ready to enter into ritual space.

You will come to your altar every day for eleven days and do the following:

- 1/ Get centered by sitting silently, sensing the movement of your breathing throughout your body.
- 2/ Do some vocalization or toning (chant vowels in a low tone).
- 3/ Recite your mantra out loud slowly, at least three times.

Keep a journal nearby to record what happens: your thoughts, emotions, ideas... a recorded practice will give you a lot of information about your process and will be a source of insights overtime.

A consistent practice of ten minutes every day is enough, and some days you might stay longer at your altar or expand your ritual by going outside, doing something creative (movement, singing, visualization, art), taking a bath, cleaning... Start with ten minutes at your altar and see where it leads you. There is no wrong way to be in ritual, as long as your intention is clear and you make space in your mind for it.

A close-up photograph of a snake's head and body. The snake's head is in the upper left, with its forked tongue visible. The body of the snake is coiled, showing the intricate pattern of its scales. The lighting is soft and natural, highlighting the texture of the scales and the smooth surface of the tongue.

This ritual is 11 days long. You are welcome to extend it if you want to go deeper or feel that you need a longer time. Just plan it since the beginning.

Eleven days is a minimum for things to start shifting, and if this is your first time being in a ritual on your own, that might be just the right amount of time.

Pay attention to what happens during these eleven days: synchronicities, unexpected events and encounters, repetitions, endings, beginnings... write them down in your journal as part of your practice.

Closing Ritual

After you have practiced for eleven days consistently, come to your altar to give thanks and close your ritual. This can be done on the twelfth day or a few days later.

Praise the guides that came for you, ancestors, elements of nature, spirits, deities...

Thank Snake for holding and guiding you in this ritual.

Unwind your altar by removing the objects counter-clockwise, starting in the direction of the North.

Gift back to nature any natural element of your altar by burying it in the soil or letting it go in a waterway. The things you want to keep can be cleared under running water, the sun, or the moon.

Give the piece of paper where you wrote your mantra to an element you connect with regarding this Release Ritual: burn it, bury it, let it go in a river/stream, or tear it apart and offer it to the winds.

Clean your altar area and breathe in the clear and open space, full of new possibilities.

Spend some time outside after you close your ritual and appreciate the work you have done. Remember that much more is happening than what you consciously perceive and sense your connection with the living world - what is seen and what is unseen.



Francine Bonjour-Carter

Francine's studies and interest in mythic perspective, archetypes, and somatic awareness, along with her feminine approach, make her teachings very rich.

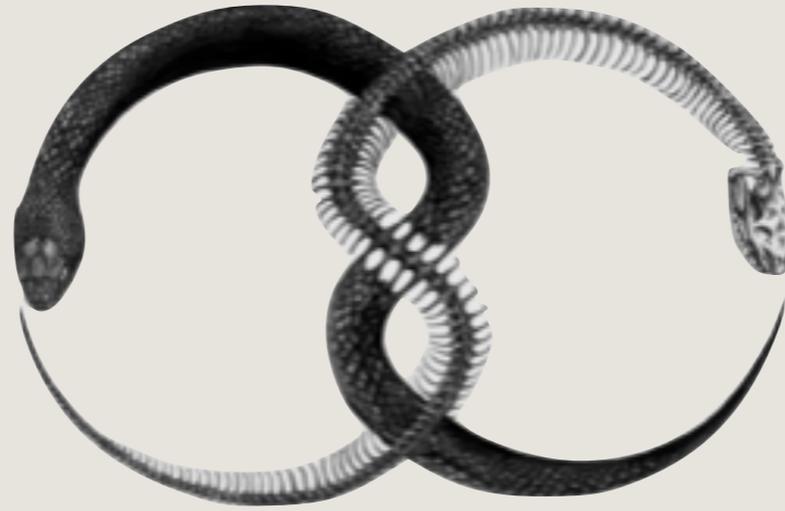
She understands the unique challenges and complexity of being human and is interested in highlighting the deeper currents beneath the surface. Her work focuses on reconnecting with ourselves, our imagination, and with the living world in order to bring meaning and trust to our lives.

Her courses, monthly online gatherings, membership, and writings are all invitations to go deeper.

When she does not connect with snakes or with her ancestors, you will find her sending handwritten letters, traveling to the liminal space, and planting seeds.

Find out more at FrancineBonjour.com





Going Deeper