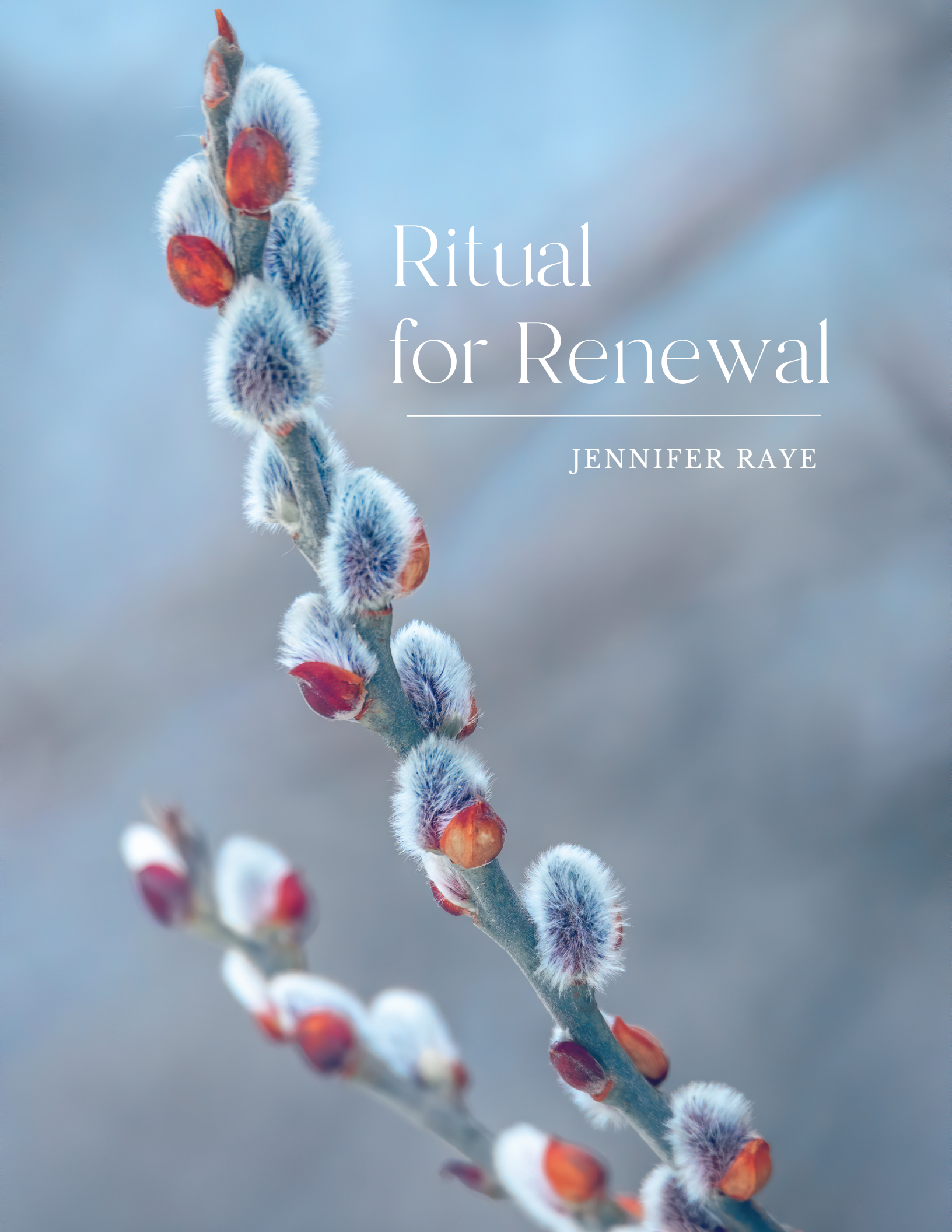




Ritual for Renewal

JENNIFER RAYE

REVEAL. RELEASE. EMBRACE.

"May you see what is hidden in you
as a place of hospitality and shadowed shelter,
may that hidden darkness be your gift to give,
may you hold the shadow to the light" ~ John O'Donohue



As we enter our renewal ritual, it may be helpful to remind ourselves that everything is constantly in flux, and impermanence (*annica*) is an inevitable part of life. Of course, along with the truth of impermanence comes the unavoidable necessity of letting go. A fundamental quality of reality is that it is inherently ungraspable. Sometimes we choose this release, and sometimes it chooses us.

To begin, I invite you to contemplate the areas of your life where some loosening may be required at this time. **Is there something that is revealing itself to you that is ready for release? Is there something new waiting to be embraced?**

I recommend using the audio meditation that accompanies this PDF for further guidance before reflecting below:

Release

Embrace

ELIXIR OF PRESENCE

"The present moment is where life can be found,
and if you don't arrive there,
you miss your appointment with life." ~ Thich Nhat Hanh



Embracing impermanence doesn't mean we don't deeply grieve our losses or feel pain when we lose something we desire. Instead, recognizing and accepting the natural law of change helps us release our rigid agenda for how life should be and aids us in experiencing how things really are. When we know everything is temporary, we are reminded of life's inherent value and preciousness. Rather than leading to complacency or resignation, accepting the fleeting nature of time can soften us, inspire us, and help us gain a deep appreciation for every moment.

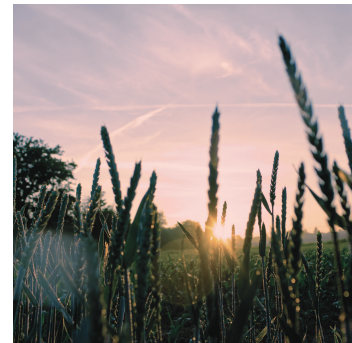
A practice for presence, acceptance, and appreciation:

Intentional moments of acceptance can broaden a feeling of presence and cause an upsurge of kindness toward self and others. The practice below can be done briefly or as part of a more extended meditation.

- Find a comfortable position. Begin by relaxing any areas of tension you discover. Soften your eyes, jaw, and tongue. Aim to breathe naturally, noticing the flow of breath.
- Take a moment and consider the things to release you jotted down on the last page.
- Turn your awareness to your body and mind. Observe any feelings, thoughts, or sensations immediately apparent when you take note of what you're ready to let go of.
- If there is a sense of struggle, tension, sadness, or other complicated feelings, see what it's like to wish that part of you well. Appreciate your human-ness by placing a hand on your body and saying a few words to yourself, such as "this too." We all falter and hold on at times, and grief can be a natural response to letting go. Allow what is here.
- Finally, take a moment of gratitude to acknowledge all that you have. Invite a feeling of thankfulness into your body and mind. Feel its warmth surround you.
- After the inquiry, give yourself a moment to relax and record what you uncovered:

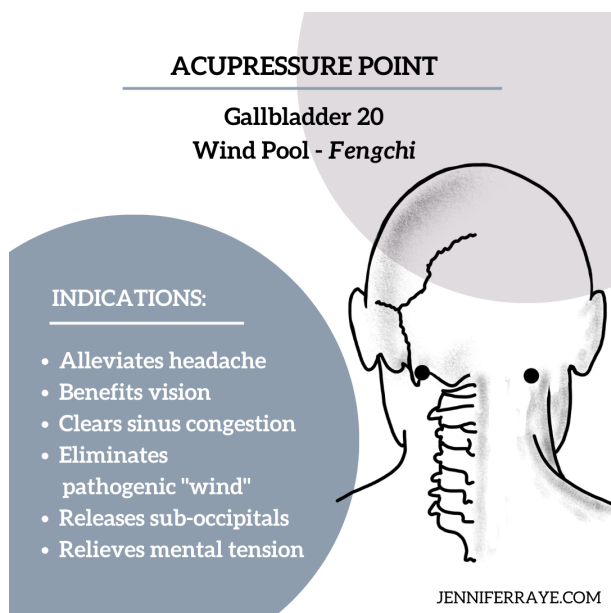
SEEDS OF SPIRIT AND VISION

"Open yourself to the Tao,
then trust your natural responses;
and everything will fall into place." ~ Tao Te Ching



The wood element represents direction and vision in Taoist philosophy and Chinese Medicine. In the great wheel of time, the wood element is the phase in any cycle where there is a release of stuckness or stagnation in favor of creativity and new growth. The wood element supports us in sloughing off the old and outworn and embracing our visions and goals. The spirit of the wood element (魂 - hun) helps us see things from many perspectives and apply these visions in a way that will satisfy our hearts.

To begin working with a new vision, we must first free up stagnation. If you've been feeling frustrated, or stirred up, get grounded and clear tension with the acupoint below:



GALLBLADDER 20 Feng Chi (Wind Pool)

The long winding Gallbladder channel leaves the head and enters the body at this point. Along with the indications in the image, this point also activates the whole Gallbladder channel. Use this point to clear stagnant wood element energy, especially mind tension that is trapped and not integrated into the body.

LOCATION:

At the base of the skull (below the occiput) in the small hollows on either side of the spine (between the sternomastoid and trapezius).

I love using this acupoint during yoga or before meditation! Rest on your back and place the base of your skull on the edge of a yoga block. Roll your head side to side, putting pressure on the tender spots along the occiput. Doing this will massage the tension out of the sub-occipital muscles and put pressure on this point.

Embrace and Renew

Return to the list you created at the beginning of this PDF. Consider these questions and if more has arisen now.

How has this practice helped clarify your vision?

What dreams are you nurturing?

Has this practice helped you move from a state of holding on to one of appreciation?

Where are you headed with purpose?

What are you ready to plant in this next season?

What new way can you take care of your visions and dreams moving forward?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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