

## The Wise Woman / Crone Archetype

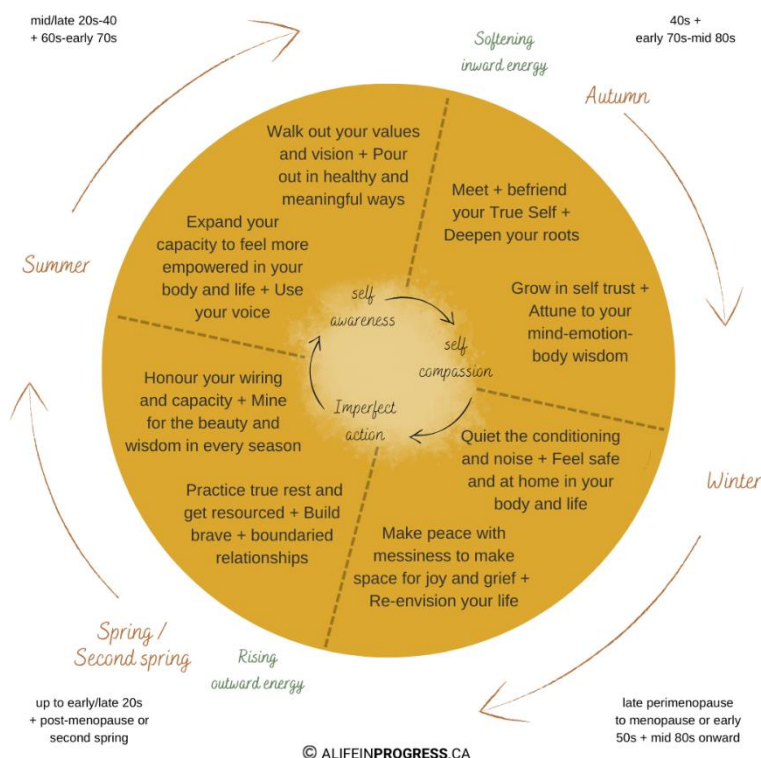
We meet/grow into our Wise Woman through our experiences of winter throughout life and culminating in the Second Winter of our life cycle or elderhood<sup>i</sup>/old age (see graphic below). Aging does not automatically confer wisdom, so we must choose to mine for the wisdom in every season and experience or choose a growth-mindset and take responsibility for our growth and healing work if we are to grow into our Wise Woman.

Every time we bleed if we menstruate, or at the new moon if we practice lunar tracking, or as we navigate the hard winter seasons that we all encounter in life at some point (ex. grief/loss, illness, other challenging circumstances, dark night of the soul, depression) are opportunities to wrestle with and come to know (and embody) the wisdom of winter.

In mythology, the Crone archetype represents the onset of metaphorical death and the accompanying renewal, rebirth, or beginning again. Every ending also ushers in a new beginning. The crone signals the transmutation of the darkness (of winter), and the deep, wild, truth-telling and unraveling of autumn, into wisdom. She represents integration, deep wisdom and intuition, spiritual awakening, authentic self, and embodied joy. “When women resonate or activate crone archetypal images that honor older women, they find a positive sense of self and purpose that ultimately can benefit society and integrate them into the culture as they transition through aging.”<sup>ii</sup>

### A Hope Map for a Brave + Beautiful Life

You're imperfect. Life is messy. Show up anyway.



Spend time envisioning the Wise Woman you are becoming. This is one way that we can ‘begin with the end in mind.’ Explore one or more of the following exercises:

1. Visualize your True Self at 80 years old – or 15, 25, or 35 years down the road – whatever feels accessible to you. Think of her as the Wise Woman you’re becoming. Or write a letter from the perspective of your wise woman to your current self. Reflection questions to help get you started:

- What does she want you to know?
- What does she urge you to turn your attention and focus towards?
- What does she think is most important to expend your energy on?
- What will she encourage you to heal/release/believe about life and yourself?
- What’s her home like? Where does she live? What is the environment like?
- What is her presence like?
- How does she feel in her body and life?
- How might she handle a current situation you’re facing?

2. Consider your beliefs, fears, hopes around aging. A healthy mindset around aging adds up to 7.5 years of life.

3. At the end of your days, how will you know that you have lived well? What regrets do you want to make certain are not part of your story? How will you ensure that you live a life true to yourself?

4. Think about women ahead of you on the journey (in real life, from media, someone you watch in your town, etc.) – is there anyone that you admire or parts of how they show up to life that you’d like to emulate? Journal about this and get clear on what it is about them that draws you or inspires you.

5. Do you have a circle or community that includes women of different generations? Sometimes we need to turn to books or people outside of our family to find the wisdom and encouragement we seek. Or to find models of a new hopeful or joyful possibility as we scan forward and think about who and how we choose to be in each new season of life. What resource or resourcing do you need in order to be equipped for the next leg of your journey?

6. At the next new moon or your next bleed if you menstruate, make space to listen inward and journal what comes up for you. Allow yourself to name and feel whatever emotions rise up. Turn toward your pain, grief, or longing without judgment. Simply listen and take note. Then when spring comes again, revisit what you wrote and decide if you want to take action on anything.

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<sup>i</sup>2004, Carol R. Ember, Melvin Ember, Encyclopedia of Medical Anthropology: A notion of elderhood appears to exist in most non-Western societies and is largely based on combining social and functional definitions of one's place in the life cycle.

<sup>ii</sup> "[The Crone Archetype: Women Reclaim Their Authentic Self by Resonating](#) " by Joanne Sienko Ott (stkate.edu)