



Emily Ridout

Folklorist, Astrologer, Yogi

Three Modern Mood-Lifters from Folklore's Ancient Wisdom

As a **folklorist**, I study **modern culture and ancient wisdom**.

While not all forms of folklore need to be kept alive today (*think—Puritan culture isn't exactly applicable*), some folklore is downright useful (*think—many cultures have knowledge about medicinal plants*).

Sometimes, as we move into the *future*, we forget the *knowledge of the past* that applies to our lives today.

In a time when more people report experiencing depression, indecision, and anxiety than ever before, it's a perfect moment to ask: *what can folklore teach us about our own happiness?*

Three folklore systems I love are **yoga, astrology, and the group awareness of my communities**.

So here it is: **Three modern mood-lifters from folklore's ancient wisdom**.



Method one: Add some yoga to your breath

Try it out:

First, Hydrate. Go get a glass of water and drink it. I'll wait.

Good. Staying hydrated will help the energy flow through your body.

Next take a comfortable seat. Try to sit as straight as you can, with the spine long and the buttocks resting evenly on the floor or a chair.

Breathe in and out, noticing the breath. Begin to bring the breath toward an even inhale and an even exhale, perhaps using a count of four, five, or six for each inhale and exhale.

Now, engage **alternate nostril breathing** (aka *Nadi Shodhana*):

- Bring the right hand to the nose with the thumb and ring finger resting on the nostrils.
- Exhale completely through both nostrils.
- Close the right nostril with the thumb and inhale through the left nostril.
- Close the left nostril with the ring finger (open the right) and exhale through the right nostril.
- Inhale through the right nostril and then close the right nostril and exhale through the left nostril.
- This is one round. If it's comfortable, breathe through 10-20 rounds. When you finish, pause and notice how you feel.



Why it works:

This type of breathing pattern does wonders for your nervous system! It **creates balance** and has the added bonus of **bringing stillness to the mind**. It also **clears the body's energy channels**.

For more information on how to experientially clear these channels, you may want to visit my blog posts on the chakras. You can find the root chakra [here](#) or the overview from when I last taught the workshop [here](#).



Method two: Integrate your moon

No, I don't mean go out and moon someone (although that's been known to do wonders for your mood as well...). I mean integrate the moon sign in your astrology chart.

To figure out what your moon sign is, you'll need to have your natal (or birth) chart. If you don't have one, you'll need to know your birthdate, birth time, and location of your birth.

Got it? Visit the internet and grab your chart—I like astro.com for their free natal chart selection.

Try it out:

Locate the crescent moon shape on your chart. Note what sign it's in (this symbol should be on the outside of the wheel) and what house it's in (the numbered section that looks like a slice of pie).

Write your moon's house and sign here:

House _____

Sign _____

Your moon's **house** will determine the *area* of your life in which you'll take action, and your moon **sign** will determine the *way* in which you'll take action. Select yours in the columns below.



| HOUSE | SIGN |
|--|---|
| 1. Personal vibe, the way you express yourself or experience life | Aries —How can you take direct action in this area? If applicable, can you lead others to join? |
| 2. Survival needs and the possessions that support you (finances, home, etc) | Taurus —How can you be more deliberately yourself in this area? Are you able to make this area feel more prosperous? Could you incite a deliberate plan to create heartfelt prosperity? |
| 3. Education and the places and things that educated you when you were young | Gemini —How can you talk about this area? Can you invite social interaction into or around this area? |
| 4. Your house and your childhood home/ family | Cancer —How can you nurture yourself in this area? Is there something you could do to feel protected and comfortable here? |
| 5. Creativity, entertainment, children, and art | Leo —How can you add some fun to this area? Are there games you can play? |
| 6. Your career, job, and responsibilities | Virgo —How can you order this area? Is there a virtuous way to arrange yourself, your schedule, your things in this area? Can things be simplified? |
| 7. Major one-on-one relationships | Libra —How can you engage with this area mentally? Is there anything out of whack that you can balance? |
| 8. Major life changes | Scorpio —How can you address your deep passions and hidden emotions in this area? Is there a direct way you can act on your feelings to improve your circumstances in this area? |
| 9. The expanding mind—higher education, world travel, philosophies | Sagittarius —How can you seek a broader vision in this area? What does this area reveal to you about the nature of things (the world, life, science, philosophy, etc)? |
| 10. Your ultimate career and public face | Capricorn —how can you build this area up and promote feelings of safety? Can you do this in a way that grows your status and promotes well being for your allies? |
| 11. Your community and who you are in your friend group | Aquarius —how can you subvert this area or take a new and innovative approach? Is there a new mental approach you could take to this area? |
| 12. Spirituality | Pisces —how can you release importance of this area or connect it to your broader vision of emotional and spiritual clarity? What in this area connects with your heart and feeds your soul? |



So, if your moon is in the fifth house in Libra (like mine!) then you'll find mental engagement through entertainment and creative activities. (In fact, the mental engagement it takes to create this worksheet is balancing my mood *as I write this!*)

Write out the combination of your moon style here. Example: for a moon in Leo in the eighth house—how can I add some fun to major life changes? Are there games I can play?

Now, list at least three ways you can answer these questions. I kept the questions broad so that you can take the time to truly engage with your moon and ask yourself what would work for you within these guidelines!

Your answers:

1.

2.

3.

Now try one (or three) out!

Why it works:

In astrology, the moon rules your **emotional state**. Just like the moon moves from phase to phase, you are entitled to feel different emotions within a short time, or even multiple feelings at once.

If you're feeling down, **you are capable of accessing and tweaking your moon energy to bring your mood up!** Experimenting with the sign and house where your moon resides will help you to access your natural capacity for balanced emotions.



Method three: Share your personal folklore

So, **folklore** is the *creative communication* among people who share at least *one thing in common*.

If you've ever told a joke to a coworker, made an internet meme, told a personal story to someone, or even baked cookie (food and crafts are totally folklore!) then you're already on the right track.

One great thing about folklore: While mastery and competence are nice (we all like those gooey, perfectly baked cookies), you can participate without being perfect (someone has to stir the cookie dough and taste test!).

Try it out:

List five creative ways you express yourself (examples: internet memes, recipes you love to cook, personal stories you enjoy sharing, signature dance or yoga moves, particularly fun tweets, outfits you put together, anything!)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

List three of your communities/groups (your family, your friends, millennial, alma mater, Facebook groups, occupation, yoga class, whatever!)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Do any of your creative expressions get shared with any of the groups you're in?
List them here:

Are you an expert or proficient at any of these? Which ones?

Did anyone teach you this skill? Or, do you have a friend you share this skill with
(using the cookie example, who are the cookies for? Who taught you to bake?)?

Who? _____

What specifically do you appreciate about this person and this art form?

Great! You should now have a list of creative expressions that you enjoy. I
challenge you to do one of these activities and then share them with your
community!

Bonus: Say thank you to the people who helped you learn or even just take a
moment to appreciate them in your mind.



Why it works:

Science and sociological studies agree that what makes people happy are **connecting with others** and feeling a sense of **purpose/worth, novelty, and gratitude**.

By doing this exercise, you expressed your creativity in a **novel** way! Also by doing the task well, you demonstrated **proficiency and skill**, which links to a sense of **purpose** (at least for the activity). You also **connected to others** by sharing your creative form.

Plus, if you went for the bonus of **expressing and feeling gratitude**, you hit all four categories!

There you have it! Three modern mood-lifters from folklore's ancient wisdom — GREAT JOB!

If you're looking for more personalized help, there's more you can do!

Did you know that your astrology chart, tarot spreads, and yoga practice can all point to specific and personal ways you can work with moods, life purpose, family, relationships, trauma, big decisions, career, and how to thrive in your mental makeup?

I offer these highly personal sessions and coaching on my website. If you'd like to work with me, you can learn more [here!](#)

