



EP27 Woo²

Journaling as a Practice

with Colette Baron-Reid

Colette:

Welcome to INSIDE THE WOONIVERSE, Woo², that's a little bit of woo x2. In these shorter episodes, you're going to hear more of me, like an audio journal, on wooniversal topics like abundance, resilience, working with the moon, manifestation, meditation, and much, much more.

Connie:

Hey, Colette. How's it going?

Colette:

Hey, I'm doing great. I'm doing great. I'm excited that we're doing Woo².

Connie:

Oh my gosh, okay. So I have a... I think it's going to be a fun topic today... I just got a new journal on the weekend and I was so excited to crack into it. I wanted to ask you, because we haven't really chatted about your journaling practices and how somebody even gets started in journaling.

Colette:

Oh, I have so much to say about this. I didn't know you were going to talk about journaling. Okay. Let's start at the beginning. I actually ended up getting rid of I don't know how many boxes. Boxes and boxes and boxes of journals. I still have a journal from 36 years ago, where I wrote down my favorite affirmations. I still have that journal, and I wrote it very specifically with one of those pens where you know when you stick the ink cartridge in the pen, it was a calligraphy pen.

Connie:

Like the calligraphy, yes.



Colette:

You betcha. I made this beautiful little journal of everything and it was 36 years ago. So I have been journaling, I am talking really journaling, full on, for 36 years. So it is an essential part of my spiritual practice. And when I don't do it and I fall off the wagon, the journal wagon, I do notice that I have more of a hairball in my head. You know what I mean?

Connie:

It's all like, "Wah."

Colette:

Yeah, yeah. Sometimes I tend to get a little overwhelmed, sometimes because I'm a total empath I pick up everything and sometimes I don't know what's mine and what's other people's. So I'm going to say that when I first started journaling, I learned how to journal in a program of recovery from addiction so I had a very specific reason for doing it, which was for an inventory. And so my first journaling experience was not about, "Dear Diary, it's sunny out today." It was more about-

Connie:

That was mine.

Colette:

Right, that was yours? Yeah, "Dear Diary." When I was a kid I had little diaries. But it was more about taking a look at a really, again, rigorously honest look at myself to the best of my ability, because I can say that over the years I've become more aware of my own ways in which I can pretend to myself. And it was really effective because I wrote about very specific things. I always wrote about my resentments, my fears, if I was angry at all, and then I would write a gratitude list. So I would first dump. So I would have a dumping. For me, it was dumping. And then I would kind of sort... it's like going through the trash, like let's go find the treasure in the trash. And then I would find, "Ooh, there's something there." And obviously I would then look at all the things I was grateful for.



I always had to do a gratitude journaling exercise since the beginning because I could be really influenced by any negativity that, if I were to write something down, sometimes I would feel ashamed. And so this way it really kind of counterbalanced at both. I could look at the shadowy aspects of my character, my behavior, the things that I was very unconscious of doing and that I wanted to clean up, but also I could celebrate the smallest things. And so that was very magical for me. But I also started very early on, so I'm going to go back because I had this therapist when I was two years sober, and I'm 36 and a half years sober now. So we're going to go back like a long time, 34 and a half years ago, where I had a psychologist, she was a Jungian therapist, she was a spiritual psychologist I went to who used the tarot.

She used the Haindl version of the tarot... a very specific tarot because I'd never seen that before... as a way for us to kind of hone in on what it was that I needed to look at that session. And it was never about to look at the rotten bananas. It was more about how do I stay in greater connection to my higher power, like what could be either standing in the way but also what was the bridge? What could I be focused on so that I could have more of a connection to my spiritual life? So cards and journaling came together for me a long time ago. So I don't think I even told you this, Connie, but I'm actually doing a course for Hay House on the magic of journaling with Oracle Cards.

Connie:

Ooh... sign me up for this. I love surprises.

Colette:

Yeah, yeah, and the reason is because it kept me on my spiritual... it was part of my spiritual practice but it really kept me honest and it kept me creative. So it really kept me in that magical connection to the epiphanies. It is so meaningful to me how it changed my life to marry those two things. But let's just go back to journaling without the cards for a second. So I found at times, because I've taken so many different ways to journal, including my favorite... and I was mostly influenced by *The Artist's Way* by Julia Cameron... so that plus Oracle Cards plus my recovery program all kind of mused together to form my own specific way of doing this. And so I found that doodling... two things helped me when I got stumped... sometimes I would stare at the page going, "I don't know what to write."



And I kind of got all boggled up in the head, but pulling an Oracle Card always helped me fixate that. But sometimes I was in a knot or I was not in a really clean head space and I was either anxious or I was overwhelmed or I was mad or I don't know, any of those kind of-

Connie:
Emotions.

Colette:

Right, emotional hairballs. I always like to call everything hairballs because it reminded me one time when I saw a cat do that, I'm like, "Oh my God, that's like my head." You know, you have all these like complex things that just mush together and you don't know what to do with it. So I found that walking before journaling or after, just attempting it, doodling also was a way for me to journal. So both, and where I would actually doodle, doodle, doodle, doodle, doodle until I would have a download. And then I would find also like pulling a card after I had cleaned my energy. So when I say clean my energy, going for a walk, sitting down doing the gratitude list first rather than the litany of this is what's happening, meh. Actually, over the years as I've been teaching, I've actually created an opportunity for people to have two different journals.

One called a dumping ground, which is what I did when I was training coaches in my Master Intuitive Coach Institute, which is now defunct, but it was really, really, really great way for us to recognize that that's energy that we want to dump out like we take the garbage out every two weeks like we would, or every week, but you clean out by dumping it down. I call it the head dump, or if you have negative emotions you dump it like it's in the garbage. And then you put the epiphanies in a separate journal. So I have two journals, and I actually can see the patterns of the negativity and how I'd get triggered, et cetera in the one journal. And then in the other one there would go all the gratitude, all the epiphanies, all the reasons why that I have changed and what to do next.

And so you recognize that, wow, this is energy. You feel completely different when you're coming from a place of gratitude and surrender and curiosity than when you're journaling from a place of resentment, anger, et cetera. Also, the other thing is that I learned early in recovery which relates to journaling when it comes to the inventory, is it's not there to judge you. It's there so that you could understand yourself better and recognize, like for me, everything came down to



one specific concept which is self-centered fear. I'm not going to get what I want. I'm not enough. Somebody else got what I wanted. They did this to me, or I will be harmed, some reason why it would come back to me not being safe. You know what I'm saying? It's was about self-centeredness.

Connie:
Survival fear.

Colette:
Correct. Right. So that was also very good because once you could start to see a pattern it's less personal. When you put it down you think it's really personal, but then you recognize the more you do this it becomes less personal and you start to realize that you are actually a spirit in the vehicle of a body experiencing different things in life with other people, because it's always going to be with other people, where together you end up either creating some pain that you might need to learn and grow from, which has been my experience that the most painful things that have happened to me in life have created an opportunity for me to grow. But also that life is less personal and you learn to wear the world loosely around your shoulders once you start to have a specific practice and you keep going.

Another thing that I would like to say about journaling when it comes to energy in the journal, is not to judge. It's just like put it down. Like who cares? You're the only one that's going to read it, or hopefully you'll be the only one that's going to read it. The reason I kept all my journals is because I'm kind of like a journal squirrel.

Connie:
Me too.

Colette:
And I love them. I love to look at the journal section of all bookstores, and I have my favorite journals that I buy 10 of at a time. They're smaller and they fit in my purse and they have the rings. And I do not like lines, okay, that's the other one. I like my journal unlined. Thank you very much. So don't give me one with a little squares either, they make me feel totally cuckoo.



Connie:

The dotted journal or these are like a no?

Colette:

Oh, I can't do that. I bought one and I'm like, "I can't do this. Oh my God, it's giving me an anxiety attack."

Connie:

Okay, interesting. That's really good to know.

Colette:

Isn't that weird?

Connie:

Yeah, and I love it.

Colette:

Yeah, so finding what works for you, but again, if you have trouble journaling pick an Oracle card deck, just look at it as a theme as opposed to giving yourself a reading. That's not about that. It's like what should I be looking at today? In my life's journey, what's an important topic that I might want to address?

Connie:

Well, I'd love to go a little bit towards the beginning of when you were speaking about your practice, how it really started, or the catalyst was your recovery. So when you say inventory, for anybody who's not in a 12 step program or doesn't know, how does a person-

Colette:

What does it mean?

Connie:

Yeah, what does it mean and how do you... for anyone listening who wants to get started and is intrigued by the inventory idea.



Colette:

Sure. So imagine you have a fruit store. Okay? You would not keep your rotten bananas there, would you?

Connie:

No.

Colette:

I mean, I just went the other day to get some bananas, speaking of bananas, and they had taken all these bananas that looked pretty good but they were too ripe and they just gave them to me for free.

Connie:

Oh my gosh.

Colette:

But that's got nothing to do with this, I just thought of it. I don't even know why I segued over there, but whatever. Okay.

Connie:

It's a nice story.

Colette:

Everybody's let's go back... it's a good story, exactly. I got a free banana. Wow. Okay. Abundant universe. So an inventory is when you take a look at yourself and look specifically for your character flaws. Where have I been dishonest? Where have I hurt somebody? Where have I allowed myself to drink poison hoping somebody else would get sick, which is the resentment? Where have I been angry and not allowed it to move through me? Where have I tried to avoid something? So anything... when you look at the seven deadly sins, for example, that'd be a good one, where have I lusted? Where have I-



Connie:

In terms like everything you don't want to look at, basically.

Colette:

Everything you don't want to look at, exactly. Basically that. What needs to go? And oftentimes it starts with blame, it starts with blaming somebody. So I may start that, so and so did blah, blah, blah, because nobody's going to read it. And then I realize, ooh, what's my part in that? So then I'm like, "Oh, well, gosh," because I think it's about me. What if it's not even about me? So an inventory helps you understand what you make things mean also. They call it in recovery a fearless moral inventory, a fearless moral inventory of yourself. And then you ask God to remove your defects of character. No human power can, basically you've tried and it didn't work. Basically you get there and go like, "Okay, I need help. Help."

Right? And then you're saying I've got to surrender my will in my life over the care of God as I understand God, or a higher power as I understand a higher power. And this is something everybody can do. You don't need to be in recovery or a recovering addict to understand what this is. But it is a way when you journal to start a conversation with the divine and then ask yourself am I ready to let this go? And can I be willing to be willing to release this to a power greater than myself? And you start to recognize as well, too, where you try to control yourself and others, where you try to avoid experiences, et cetera. It's just a really good way to get to know yourself and to start loving yourself more and having more compassion for yourself as well. Even though in the beginning, especially if you struggle with shame or feeling less than, you might be tempted to use this as a self-flagellation method, which is like, "I'm so bad," boom, boom, boom. Right?

Connie:

Because that's also not what it's meant to do.

Colette:

No, 100% not. No, it's about being curious about how could I do this better? How could I be a kinder person? How could I create more love in the world? And how could I bring a healthier me to the table with others? Because ultimately at the end of the day, any one finger that points towards somebody else you've got the rest of them pointing right at you.



Connie:
Yes, yes.

Colette:
So it's like, "Okay, what's my part in this?" And sometimes your part in this, and what I've found is, that you might actually be, especially for healer types or empaths, I know a lot of people listening to this audio are going to identify as a person who really wants to help other people et cetera. That's usually the people that follow me. And a common character flaw, the flawsivness of us-

Connie:
The flawsivness... I love that.

Colette:
The flawsivness is the desire to help can turn into people pleasing.

Connie:
The disease to please.

Colette:
The disease to please, and I certainly have had that. And I can tell you honestly, that I can trace every single situation that I have been in that has been painful to that, in me. And I am very aware that I get in blind spots with people, et cetera, and it's a big one for me and I'm still healing with it and from it and working with it and on it and aware of it and try not to do it. And it can be the shadow of the desire to heal others and help others, et cetera, et cetera. But then you're the center of it. It's not about another person. It's all about you. Right? Because you get needed, you get paid attention to, you get control, but it never works out, ever, ever. We all know this. Guess what?

Connie:
Anyone listening to this....



Colette:

Anybody listening, it doesn't work. Okay. You don't get any control whatsoever. You cannot really ever-

Connie:

Influence at best in any relationship. Right? Tony Robbins said that many years ago, you can never control anybody. It is influence at best, at best-

Colette:

At best.

Connie:

... if anyone's even listening.

Colette:

Exactly. And it's interesting too, because I always get, get a kick out of the word influencer. I work with a lot of people who impact other people, impact makers. When I was doing my one-on-one sessions with people they were always really high level business people, which was what I was really good at was strategy, and we would talk about how they would make a better impact in the world. Then, when all of a sudden the word influencer turned into like social media people, so it kind of changed because... Anyway, again, I digress. So journaling has nothing to do with what I just said.

But bringing back the conversation to journaling, we all of us have an impact on each other. Why not be the best we can be? For me, I got a second chance at life. I got into recovery. I should be dead. I got a second chance at life. And I have not done it perfectly, I will say, along the way, but I'm still willing to do the work. I'm still willing to write in the journal about what I think is happening and what I'm making it mean. Those are some of the questions I ask myself, what am I making this mean? What else could it mean? What am I making this mean? A lot of the journal work that we do at Oracle School, which I do once a year, is this, the Oracle cards plus the journaling, what do we make it mean?



Who do we need to become in order to have the life that we see for ourselves? So these are all the kind of questions that a journal prompt can answer when you actually use an Oracle card to help guide your thinking. Again, there's other ways too, like for those of you who are going to go I don't want to do an Oracle card with journaling, but I can say this, that a way for you, if you're a little stumped, go for a walk. I get ideas when I drive a car. I get ideas in the shower. The idea then would be your next action would be go write it down. The other thing I want to say about journaling is I am not a fan of typing, and there has been studies that say that that part of the brain that helps you really get deep with information is when you hand write. When you use your hand and you use cursive writing. Now, I don't know if they still teach that in school. Do they? Your kid is in school.

Connie:

They seriously stopped in many schools. I'm flabbergasted as well because I love writing.

Colette:

And are you going to teach Isaac how to write?

Connie:

I am, and yes, we've been using workbooks since seriously he could hold a pencil, and he loves workbooks. But it is that tactical connection with the neurology in our brain that really solidifies that idea. Even in school, like writing notes versus typing, it's such a different... your mind is like multitasking almost when you're typing versus actually being thoughtful and mindful when you're writing with your hand to paper.

Colette:

Yeah. I mean, listen, some people can't and I get that. If you're not able to, it is what it is, it's still good. But the best way that I have found and studies have shown is to work with a pen with your hand on the paper, if you can, and make it a tactile thing that you haven't learned to... it's not automatic and you can see what you're doing.



Connie:

Absolutely. And just one other point for anybody who's listening who may not have access to Oracle cards, like physical Oracle Cards, Colette has so many decks online for free that you can draw cards from.

Colette:

Yeah. So yes, there's a pick a card section on my website, just go for free. I have 14 decks, I think we rotate them, I think there's three at a time there you can choose from. And just ask yourself a question like what do I need to reflect on today? Or what do I need to know about this thing that I'm reflecting on? So both/and. It really works. Very easy to do. And if you want to go deeper on journaling and learning about how to journal with Oracle cards and meditation and more, you'll want to take the Hay House course that I have. As luck would have it, Connie, we are just launching or I've just launched the course with Hay House called *The Magic of Journaling With Oracle Cards*. It's really great. I love it. It's so easy to follow. It's bite size chunks and I think everybody will really get a lot out of it. And I think you'll have a link to post somewhere.

Connie:

And we're going to post a link in the description. So thank you, Colette.

Colette:

You're so welcome.