

**The 2004 fall theme:
mindful living — self discovery on the creative journey**

This season we focus on the "here and now" and connecting to the natural cycle of life. As well as our "get ready" goal setting plan for the season we'll explore creative cycles, create frames into altar pieces and discuss female mentors on mindfulness. And as with every season we will share one member's creative pursuit and close the season with a girl's night out (or in!) celebration. Enjoy!

Your jewel boxes™:

opening fall — get ready

creative inventory — creative cycles

workshop — altar frames

revisiting exercise — sharing creative pursuits

reflective conversation — mindful mentors

closing fall — celebrate!

start a sister i or mother i circle in your community!

1. Gather like-minded women (use the sister i circle search!).
2. Find places and times to meet. Designate lead sisters for season.
3. Meet—use the sister i format and seasons guide to direct your meeting.

circle format — each meeting looks like this!

opening: read mission statement

silent time word: use word provided to help center quietly

intro sentence: take turns finishing the sentence exercise

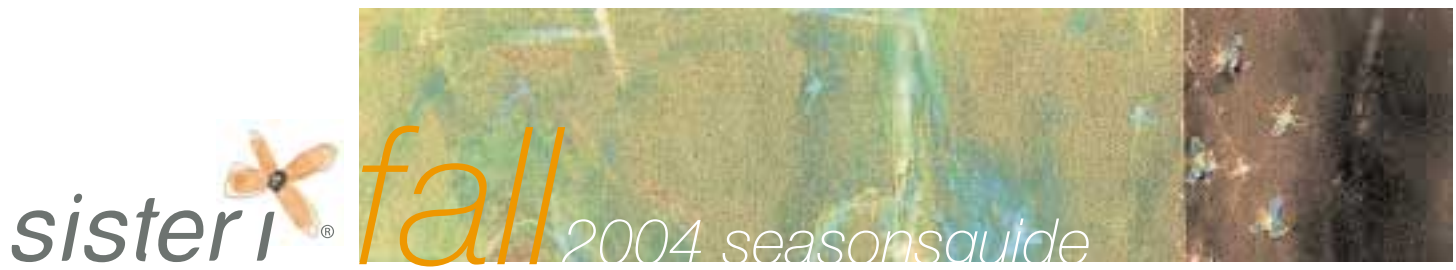
stepping stones/synchronicities: share creative journeys and guiding influences

business: schedules, materials and matters to be discussed

jewel box: the project, activity or discussion for the meeting!

closing: state goals until next meeting — end with brief silent time

*Refer to the circle elements and starter guides for further information on facilitating a sister i/mother i circle in your community — freely available at www.sisteri.com.



sister i circle calendar — your six meeting itinerary for fall

Schedule your meetings two weeks apart, preferably on the same day and time of each week. Schedule places according to the needs of that meeting's jewel box.

lead sister(s):

first meeting **opening fall — get ready**

date:

second meeting **creative inventory — creative cycles**

date:

third meeting **workshop — altar frames**

date:

fourth meeting **revisiting exercise — sharing creative pursuits**

date:

fifth meeting **reflective conversation — mindful mentors**

date:

sixth meeting **closing fall — celebrate!**

date:

*sister i/mother i circle's community gathering day and date:

*Post your community gathering on the sister i website!



fall 2004 seasonsguide

opening — get ready

opening: mission statement

introductions

silent time word: i

intro sentence: I am...

stepping stones/synchronicities: share past creative journeys and guiding influences and state your short-term goals for the next meeting.

business notes: discuss the season schedule and materials needed for the jewel boxes!

jewel box: opening! — creative goals for the season

closing: brief silent time

Welcome to the opening of the fall sister i season. This is the time to introduce ourselves and state our intentions for coming together. During the jewel box we will begin by stating our creative visions for the season. Let this be a time of encouragement — allowing us to share our visions with freedom of mind and spirit. We'll use the questions and statements below to help define our creative goals for the season and refer to them at each meeting during the stepping stones section of the meeting. Take some time on your own before your group gathers and answer the following questions. Share with the group during the jewel box.

My long-term vision for living my creativity is:

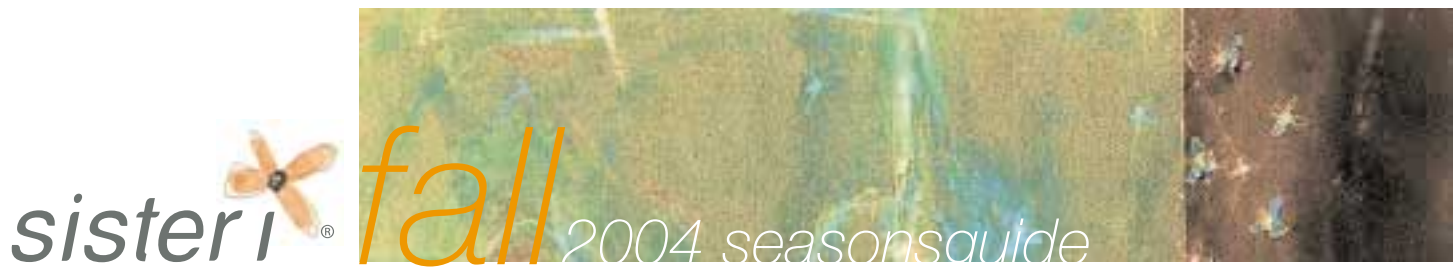
My current creative outlets and goals for the season are:

Here is a list of the areas in my life that are essential to my creative well-being and the goals I hope to achieve throughout the season. Set seasonal goals and action steps under the headings for "mind, body and spirit". Define your goals and choose some action steps to get you started. (Take the creative well-being quiz found on the sister i website to help you define your goals.)

stepping stones for my creative journey through the seasons include:

example: journal writing, light yoga, write a daily/weekly affirmation, draw in sketchbook

Goals for the season	affect on creative well-being (mind, body, spirit)	stepping stones
Example: spend 2 hours painting each week	time alone to express myself on the deepest level	Get baby sitter, clear out space for studio



creative inventory — creative cycles

opening: mission statement

silent time word: now

intro sentence: falls past were...

stepping stones/synchronicities: share past creative journeys and guiding influences and state your short-term goals for the next meeting.

goals for next meeting:

business notes: Who will present for revisiting exercise?

jewel box: creative inventory — creative cycles

closing: brief silent time

The creative inventory meeting is a time for digging deep and finding answers that will help us understand our creative development through a selection of questions and topics related to the theme of the season. The circle selects questions and then engages in discussions from the list.

This season's creative inventory explores the interlacing connection between the four seasons of nature and a woman's creative cycle. Use the discovery questions below to help you explore and reflect and then use them for your discussion.

Think of the four seasons as metaphors for the transitional periods of your life, then discuss your seasonal transitions. For example fall could be a metaphor for adolescence or a time in your life when you focused on a fresh beginning.

Discuss the words "budding, blooming, retreating, dormant" as cyclic phases to the creative cycle.

How do we, as a culture, deny ourselves time to retreat and rejuvenate?

Spring, summer, fall, winter. What is your seasons to blossom?

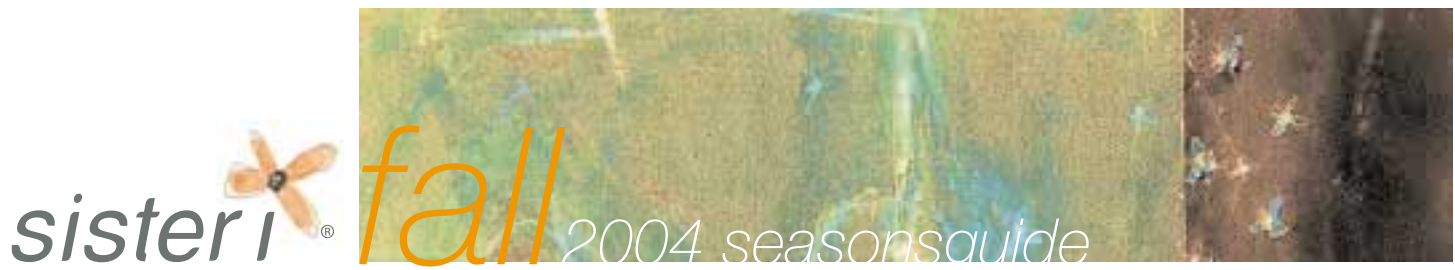
Observe the ebb and flow of your creative energy during the phases of your menstrual cycle and/or the moon.

Did your mother or a female mentor share her recognition of a feminine force in nature? How would you describe it?

What elements of the feminine creative cycle would you like to see passed down to future generations?

How have the hormonal changes within your body been connected to your creative expression?

List your creative inventory questions here:



workshop — altar frames

opening: mission statement

silent time word: icon

intro sentence: Sacred is...

stepping stones/synchronicities: share past creative journeys and guiding influences and state your short-term goals for the next meeting.

goals for next meeting:

business notes:

jewel box: workshop — altar frames

closing: brief silent time

The sister i workshop is designed to initiate problem solving through fun and innovative projects that will inspire your creative journey. Basic instructions encourage members to share ideas and explore a variety of materials with one another.

An altar frame, is similar to an elevated table altar, except that it takes the idea on a vertical plane and is meant to hang on or lean against a flat surface. They can be used for deep reflection and ritual or as simple reminders that the creative journey is in the moment. They can also serve as wonderful pieces of art for all to enjoy. Make them as simple or elaborate as your heart desires.

prep work!

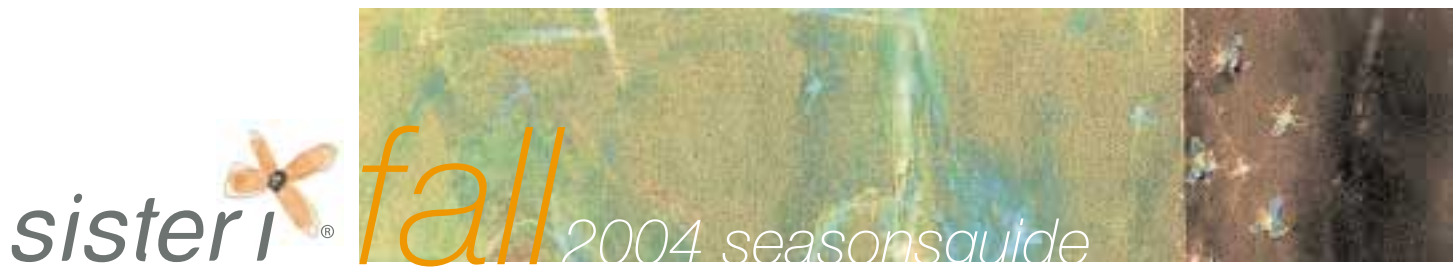
Your prep work includes finding a frame. You will also need a piece of foam board or thick cardboard cut to the window size of the frame.

To cover the board, choose fabric, paper or paint. Gather, too, pictures, quotes and other materials that you would like to incorporate into your altar frame.

circle time and directions

Once you gather with your circle lay out your materials and take some time to share your ideas. You may likely find yourself inspired by the ideas and materials of others — encourage sharing while honoring one another's individual creativity! Use spray glue or white glue to adhere fabric or paper to foam frame. Cut the extra material with an x-acto knife. Secure the covered or painted board into the frame with frame nails or tacks. Add icons and other materials to make your altar frame. Altering the frame is optional.

junk box ideas! new or old frame without glass, adhesive for adhering fabric or paper, fabric or decorative papers, scissors, x-acto knife, miscellaneous materials: velvet! costume jewelry, things from nature, pieces of mirror, wire, thumb tacks (for tacking or hanging), fabrics for little curtains, icons from a variety of cultures pictures or drawings of mythological goddesses, photo of a great grand-mother, paint/ paint-brushes, metallic markers, nail polish, words, hair, super glue, glue gun, camera — send us a photo and we'll post it in the gallery!



revisiting exercise — sharing creative pursuits

opening: mission statement

silent time word: compose

intro sentence: I need encouragement...

stepping stones/synchronicities: share past creative journeys and guiding influences and state your short-term goals for the next meeting.

goals for next meeting:

business notes: make plans for the last meeting — celebrate!

jewel box: revisiting exercise — sharing creative pursuits

closing: brief silent time

The revisiting exercise invites the circle to share their individual creative pursuits through a question and answer discussion forum. Each season a few members volunteer to show and describe examples of their creativity and ask the circle for support and encouragement. This can also be offered as a workshop that engages the whole circle. This is designed to 1. help the circle better understand one another's creative pursuit and 2. receive positive support, encouragement and inspiration from the circle. Whether you are fully engaged in or exploring a new creative pursuit, this is a powerful exercise in opening ourselves up to the genuine support of the group. It teaches us to step back and take the information that others are willing to share and then consciously pocket what is of value and discard what is not. Breaking ourselves from the fears associated with showing our work will bring exciting revelations and insights that will breathe new fire and life into the creative process — be brave!

The presenter first shows her work and explains her creative pursuit to the circle. Examples may come in the form of color swatches of a home decorating project, journal entries, drawings, finished manuscripts, photos, a business plan — anything you would like support on.

Then, the circle members offer supportive and encouraging comments and questions. Remember, this is a time of goodwill, positive regard and inspiration! Please refrain from critiquing no matter how well intentioned or constructive.

explore and support questions

How does it feel to do this work?

Has the season influenced your creative pursuit?

When are you most productive?

Where do you want to go next with this?

What dreams do you envision for your passion?

What would support you most to take the next step?

How can the group support you best?

Describe how your creativity has evolved to this level.

How has working on this filled your creative spirit?

How have you explored your creativity through the process?

Describe the choices you've made.

What is the "meaning" of this piece?

What kind of challenges have you faced?

Where do you see this leading?

What kinds of "truths" are you learning about yourself through the process?

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fall 2004 seasonsguide



reflective conversation — mindful mentors

opening: mission statement

silent time word: heart

intro sentence: I enjoy listening...

stepping stones/synchronicities: share past creative journeys and guiding influences and state your short-term goals for the next meeting.

goals for next meeting:

business notes: discuss materials for next meeting — closing fall

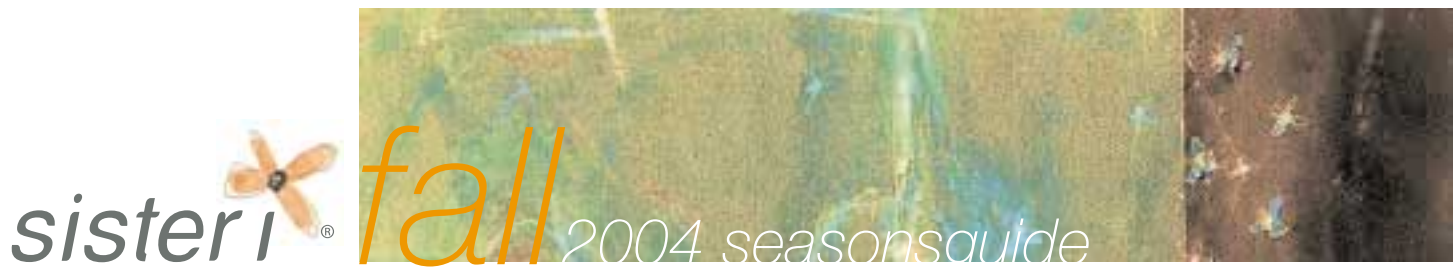
jewel box: reflective conversation — mindful mentors

closing: brief silent time

The reflective conversation engages the group in thoughtful discussions that awaken our senses to the creative world around us. Use the topics and questions suggested by the theme of the season to initiate your discussion.

Share the words and artistic vision of women who have lead or are leading a mindful way of living. These women could be relatives, friends, authors, artists, political figures, celebrities or even imaginary spirits of the heart. Then, discuss the importance of having "mindful" mentors to help us live our creativity and model creative well-being. Bring books, artwork, letters and other examples to your gathering to help guide your discussion.

Use the space below to write any thoughts or ideas you would like to share with the group on this subject:



closing — celebrate!

opening: mission statement

silent time word: sisterhood

intro sentence: I say good-bye to fall...

stepping stones/synchronicities: review seasonal goals from opening season

business notes: discuss details for next season — see below

jewel box: closing fall — celebrate!

closing: no goals for next meeting (a time to pause) — end with brief silent time

The closing season meeting celebrates the creative journey of the circle by sharing accomplishments and bringing closure to the season. An outing is often suggested that follows the theme of the season. This is also the time to make arrangements for next season.

To celebrate the fall season, gather in a place that will bring closure to the season's theme: mindful living. You could take a yoga or meditation class together, invite someone to come to your circle to talk about mindfulness or meet at a restaurant that serves carefully selected ingredients that you can savor bite by bite. Enjoy!

closing season to do list:

Discuss each member's creative accomplishments (include everything from baking/cooking to starting a new business!). Write them in the circle journal.

Choose the next season's circle lead sister.

Get a group photo.

Make sure every member has written in the circle journal.

Thank one another for the circle!

Please do write the sister i website and share your experience of being a member of a sister i circle!

I would really appreciate it. Thanks.

Kei Gratton

founder

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