

Issue 31

September 2022



WITCH

AUTUMN EQUINOX







WITCH
Magazine

Friday 30th September

Dear readers,

I wanted to thank you for your patience whilst this issue was finished and finally published, and for all your well wishes.

Sometimes life happens - and regrettably I had no back up plan while I was unable to work on the issue.

I hope you still enjoy the wonderful Equinox articles , spells and rituals from our writers, even if it's a little late!

Additional art and photos:
Klaire Dawn Ader

Be blessed,

All other images belong to the writer/artist, sourced from UnSplash, or are from the public domain.

Bekki
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WITCH

FEATURED ARTICLES

The Triple Goddess - Rachel Patterson

Sacred Landscape - Helen J.R. Bruce

Mabon for Little Witchlings - Faith Barnes

A Visit to Lily Dale - Carrie Anderson

Wise Words from the Old Grone

How to Mend a Broken Heart - Fairy Beg

Life and Death, Herbs and Spices - Samantha Teves

Every Loss a Seed - Steffie De Vaan

What We're Breeding - Bekki Milner

An Herb, A Cottage, Spell - Samantha Teves

A hand with black nail polish and a ring, holding a lit candle. The background is dark, and the candle is lit, casting a warm glow.

WITCH SAMHAIN

*Submissions due 16th
October*

WITCH is an independently published magazine featuring writers across the globe, from all paths. We feature anything from witchcraft to the occult, pagan and druid practices and anything in between.

Even if you've never written before, we welcome new voices, previously published works and artist features of all kinds.

We'd love to hear from you!

*Send your submissions to:
submissions@witchzine.co.uk*



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MOON
BOOKS

THE TRIPLE GODDESS

RACHEL PATTERSON

If you have done any kind of delving into Paganism you will have come across the term 'The Triple Goddess'. It follows the idea that the goddess has three facets: the maiden, the mother and the crone. The triple goddess represents many things such as birth, life, death (and rebirth) and the phases of the moon, waxing, full and waning. Whilst in the form we recognise it may well be a modern idea, I believe it still gives a wonderful way of working with the goddess and her phases, to help us evolve and understand our own pathway through life. A journey with her can help you to embrace your own personal power.

In some of the writings and explanations the Goddess appears in three ages, that of the young maiden, the mother and then the elderly but wise crone. I want to put to you the suggestion that they weren't always set in family generations but were in some cases, sisters. Also think about the idea of having a triple goddess but all three being maidens, or all three being crones. And of course, there is the idea of having all three phases within one goddess. I always feel the need to pop a fourth aspect in between the mother and the crone for various reasons but mainly because



there seems to be such a big gap between them that needs something else. I call her the matriarch, but I have also seen her referred to as the Queen.

Important to note is that you don't need to use the maiden, mother, crone names. You could create your own. Mother in particular leans towards the idea that every woman must become a mother at some point. Obviously, this is absolute tosh, not everyone wants to be a mother, not everyone can be a mother. This takes a bit of thinking outside the box and moving away from the idea of what the word 'mother' conveys. If it helps to think of her as a creator, nurturer, teacher or something else, do it. Maybe even look at it as being the mother to your own inner child? The idea is to separate the stages of life into bitesize workable chunks. The names are perhaps a little irrelevant. It is the meaning of working with the goddess in different forms and indeed delving into your own spirit and soul that matters.

See your own reflection in each of the stories the goddess brings, which parts relate to you and your own life story.

And whilst we are here, let's throw out the idea of ages too. There isn't any set date on a calendar that says 'today I turn into a crone'. Some like to work with the idea that the maiden phase is before the onset of menstruation, once the menses has begun you move into the mother phase and menopause signals the shift into crone. That idea doesn't work for me, but it may do for you. It must be your call, you will know when the time is right to move into the next phase of your life. It will be different for each and every unique individual person. Just remember that it doesn't stop you working with any of the goddesses in the other phases. Neither does not having a womb!

I believe it is important to note here. Anyone can work





with or identify with any or all of the phases of the goddess. You don't have to be a teenage girl to work with the maiden goddess. You don't need to be a retired lady of leisure to work with the crone. You don't have to be female or identify as female. You can be any age, any race or any gender to work with any goddess in any phase. She does not judge; she does not discriminate. Perhaps each of us has all the phases of the goddess and/or the gods within us already.

The triple goddess represents phases of our own lives but also different aspects of our psyche. Part of our journey is to experience and acknowledge each of these different facets of our personality and even in some cases to unite them.

Just as you would with any new person you meet, it takes time to get to know each other and that includes deity. If you find one that intrigues you, or you realise they are trying to get your attention, start with some research. Learn the stories and myths but if you really want to connect, I find it also helps to learn about their country and culture. I also like to immerse myself in the food of the region too. Journey to their home and this obviously doesn't require jumping on a plane and travelling across the globe! With the internet at our fingertips we can travel in a virtual reality to anywhere on the planet. Set up an altar dedicated to the goddess you want to work with, meditate with them. Place things on the altar that are associated with that goddess such as herbs, spices, flowers, crystals etc. Print pictures of their homeland or purchase artwork with images of that goddess and place them on the altar as a point of focus.

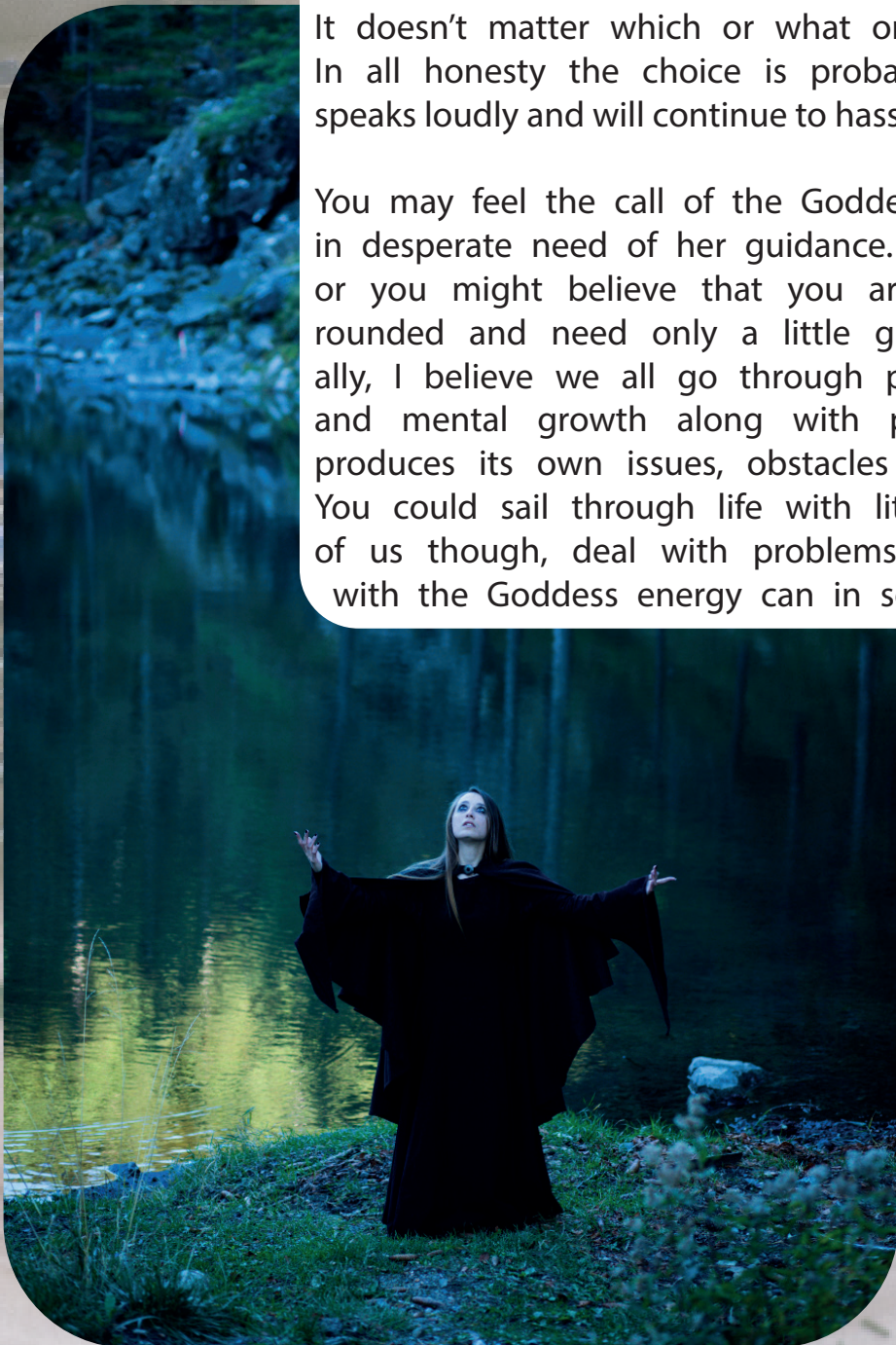
Invite the goddess to walk with you in your daily life so that you can get to know them before you delve deeper.

Each goddess will usually have several symbols or emblems associated with them. You can create one to help you connect. Get creative and crafty or purchase something ready-made. It could be a pendant, a picture or an object to place on your altar.

And whilst we are feeling creative you can work with all sorts of arty outlets to make a connection or express the feelings of the goddess you are work with. Try drawing, writing, poetry, songs, singing, dancing, baking, cooking, sculpting, painting or working with any art form in honour of the goddess.

You can choose to work with one, two, three or all four of them. It doesn't matter which or what order, the choice must be yours. In all honesty the choice is probably hers, because the Goddess speaks loudly and will continue to hassle you until you listen.

You may feel the call of the Goddess, you might feel that you are in desperate need of her guidance. You may be mildly interested, or you might believe that you are spiritually and mentally fully rounded and need only a little guidance or assistance. Personally, I believe we all go through phases in life, those of spiritual and mental growth along with physical changes. Each stage produces its own issues, obstacles and hopefully also revelations. You could sail through life with little to hinder your way. Most of us though, deal with problems on a regular basis. Working with the Goddess energy can in some way help, it might be on



a spiritual level or she could play a huge supporting role. I wholeheartedly believe that we are always learning, no one person can ever know everything. There are always new pathways to take and new adventures or interests to take onboard.

Even if you have been on a spiritual pathway for many years, sometimes it is beneficial to go back to basics, not for a complete reset but just as a refresher. If you are starting your spiritual journey from scratch, oh my, what a wonderful adventure you have in front of you!

There are no benchmarks, no judgements about how far you have come or how much you have learnt, each journey is very personal and individual. There are also no direct routes or short cuts to experience. Each person will take a different journey, and each journey will usually be incredibly wiggly, it will spiral, bend, twist and turn in all kinds of directions. Go with the flow...

Working with the Goddess can provide you with all sorts of healing and self-discovery. I can promise you it will be interesting, exciting and amazing but I warn you it will probably include some messy stuff along the way, the Goddess knows how to kick some serious butt.

Trust is key here, trust your own intuition, it won't let you down. You have the power within, let the Goddess guide you, but do make the most of your journey, it will be enlightening.



PAGAN PORTALS

THE TRIPLE GODDESS



RACHEL PATTERSON

For more information on Moon Books visit
www.johnhuntpublishing.com/moon-books/

For more information on Rachel Patterson visit:
www.rachelpatterson.co.uk

The Triple Goddess is available from Amazon for £6.99 (price correct at time of publishing).



MOON
BOOKS

BOTANICAL MAGIC SERIES

CRAFT A WITCH BOTTLE

SATURDAY, 29 OCTOBER 2022

10:00 AM 4:00 PM

Rudolf Steiner House

35 Park Road London, England, NW1 6XT United Kingdom

A unique workshop combining folk magic, a sprinkle of aromatic botanicals, a dash of inspiration and positive intention to create your very own Witch Bottle.

Witch bottles, constructed in pre-modern England for protection against negative magic and malign influences, were deemed effective by their makers. The workshop introduces the historic witch bottle, its construction and some of its grim contents. The class will then explore its modern incarnation and different versions used in modern spirituality and everyday ritual for positive intention and magical inspiration. Guidance on various materials, plants, resins, and their historical, astrological correspondences will be covered, in addition to suggestions for creating additional bottles for home use.

Using the knowledge learned, each person will create and decorate their own personalised witch bottle for a magical aim. You can bring in any small item that has special meaning for you to include in the Witch bottle, such as an amulet, crystal, stone, feather, scroll etc!

Fee: £70.00

BOOK NOW AT

www.theperfumemistress.com/workshops

Fee includes: all supplies, materials, comprehensive notes and your handmade Witch Bottle, together with some complimentary botanicals to make further Witch Bottles at home.



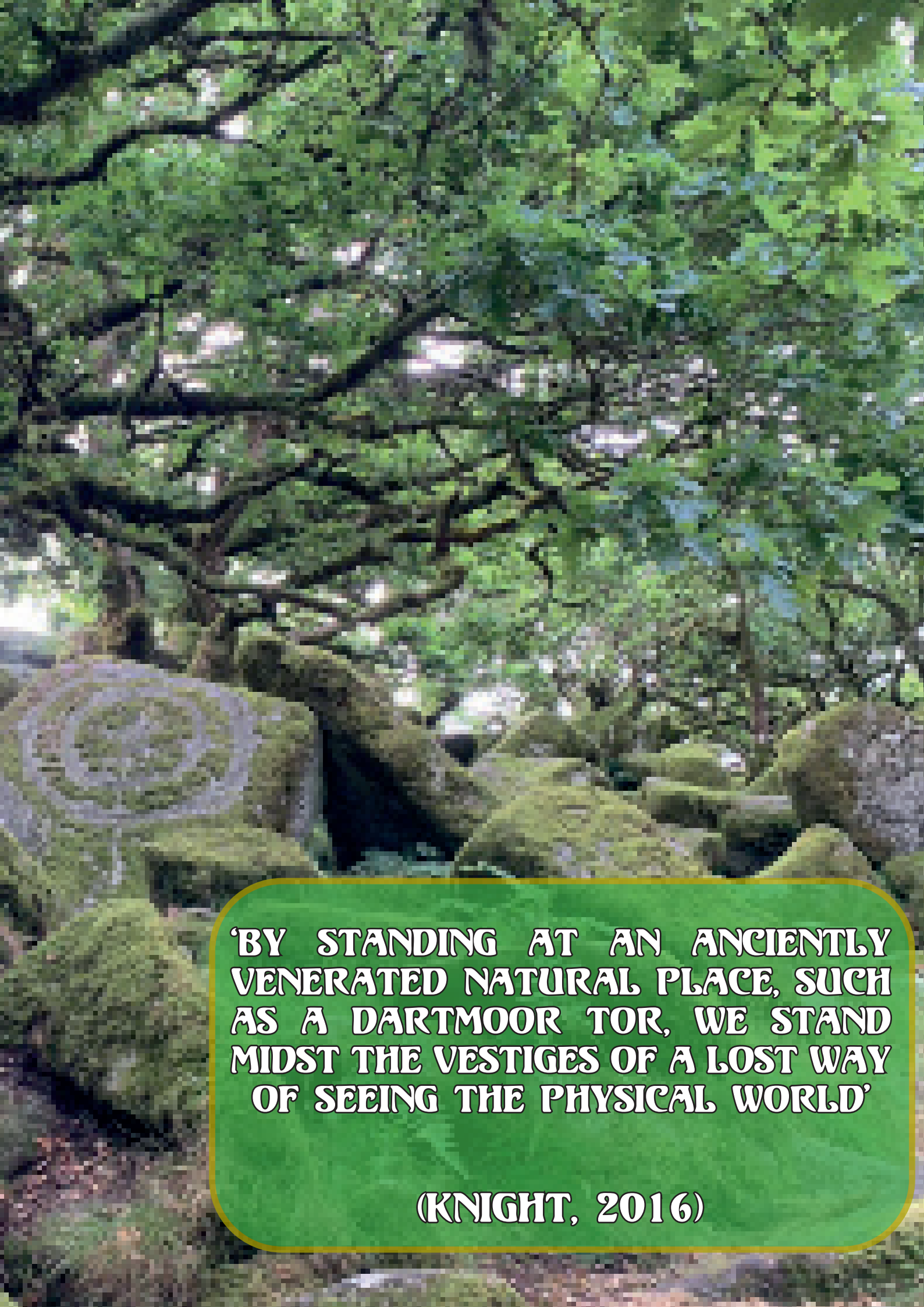


SACRED

LANDSCAPE

HELEN J.R. BRUCE

WISTMAN'S WOOD, DARTMOOR



**'BY STANDING AT AN ANCIENTLY
VENERATED NATURAL PLACE, SUCH
AS A DARTMOOR TOR, WE STAND
MIDST THE VESTIGES OF A LOST WAY
OF SEEING THE PHYSICAL WORLD'**

(KNIGHT, 2016)

The landscape has always offered a doorway. Natural phenomenon such as fairy rings, tree trunk archways and water worn caves have an ancient history of being recognised as such. Also, as humans evolved alongside their local landscapes, they sought to shape the earth and create their own portals. Carvings etched into enduring rock, ceremonial trackways marked by stone rows, and the iconic circles and henges that remain still capture the modern imagination. These gateway places still exist, many largely untouched by time, and gift us the precious opportunity to experience seeing in much the same way as our ancestors did.

This activity can be usefully understood as linked to the philosophical movement of phenomenology, which values the lived experience from a subjective point of view. Applying this framework of understanding to our connection with the land allows us to return to a symbiotic perception of landscape as partially created through our presence within in. Likewise, our experience of landscape as a provider, the home of our ancestors and a dwelling place of the divine, assists in creating our cultural identity and sense of self. 'It is no less than a spiritual experience to explore and intimately learn every curve, nuance and distinction of a landscape, just as you might learn the landscape of a lover's body' (Knight, 2016).

Although the common modern perception of land as 'commodity' may get in our way, Peter Knight believes firmly that we can open 'new eyes' and experience landscape more deeply, which in truth is a return to seeing as deeply as we once did. Recent research into the concept of 'Awe Walks', where subjects were asked to complete a fifteen minute walk focusing outwardly rather than inwardly, incorporates similar ideas. Participants reported increased feelings of awe and positive appreciation of the world around them during their series of walks. Dr. Virginia Sturm, lead investigator of the study, explained that 'One of the key features of awe is that it promotes what we call 'small self,' a healthy sense of proportion between your own self and the bigger picture of the world around you' (Sturm, 2020).



BOWERMANS NOSE



Much like the repeated walks in the study, Knight suggests that our settling into an experience of sacred landscape is an ongoing journey. By employing mindful walking, or 'cognitive archaeology' we may come to understand a landscape through repeated visits in different weathers and seasons. Placing ourselves in the footsteps of our ancestors, in places such as Dartmoor where granite features are almost unchanged since the Bronze Age, 'we are seeing as they did, smelling what they smelt, touching what they touched' (Knight, 2016). When a face shaped rock looms out of the mist, such as the striking Bowerman's Nose, we may share the thrill of emotion our forebears did. How could this not be a liminal site, a location where sacred time meets sacred place and manifests in the mundane world?

As we school ourselves towards a 'small self' perspective and look outwards with intent to the landscape around us, various features will invariably begin to stand out. This is of course subjective, and personal to us, but at this point we may remind ourselves that phenomenology is an introspective discipline which values our consciousness and body as a tool of perception. If the shape of a rock reminds of an animal, it is likely that our ancestors may have made a similar observation. If the beauty of a hidden waterfall moves us to pause and be grateful, then it is very possible that others revered that same place. As 'we experience the landscape by embedding ourselves within it' (Knight, 2016) we align ourselves with the deeper seeing characteristic of ancient inhabitants. Thus our own decoding of landscape features allows light to be shed on how past people experienced and honoured the land.

With this in mind, can it really be true that this is a 'lost way of seeing the physical world? I would like to argue not. Knight himself describes how we may immerse ourselves in the landscape and come to experience it in a strikingly similar way to our ancestors. We may even learn about their spiritual map of the land they inhabited by studying our own emotional and physical reactions to it. The doorways our forebears built are still open. Our feet still fall simultaneously on the physical earth and the spiritual dreamscape. The sacred landscape continues to shape the story of us, as we create the landscape through our embodiment within it.

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MABON

FOR LITTLE WITCHLINGS!

FAITH BARNES
@WITCHINSMALL



ENJOY THE WONDER OF AUTUMN THIS MABON WITH YOUR LITTLE WITCHLINGS!

MABON IS A FANTASTIC TIME OF THE YEAR FOR CHILDREN, WITH ALL THE BRIGHT COLOURFUL LEAVES, AND A BIT COOLER TOO! HERE ARE SOME FUN IDEAS I'VE RESEARCHED AND PUT TOGETHER TO TRY WITH YOUR LITTLE ONES!

MABON IS A TIME TO REST AND RECOVER FROM THE HARD WORK OF THE HARVEST. A TIME OF REFLECTION, TAKING STOCK OF ALL YOU HAVE ACHIEVED AND A TIME OF MAKING NEW HOPES FOR THE FUTURE.

MABON HOPE BUNTING

Set positive intentions around your home by leaf rubbing to create bunting, but with a twist! Also, write your hopes and wishes in ink, and say:

"BRINGERS OF JOY AND LOVE,
SHINE YOUR LIGHT ON THE HOPES ABOVE,
CIRCLE YOUR MAGIC AND MAKE A SOUND,
BY THE POWER OF LEAVES AND TREES,
MAY THESE HOPES BE FREED. "

When you take down the bunting, soak them in a bowl of lemon water to release the wishes written on them. And soon they will come true!

NATURE OFFERINGS

This beautiful time of year is perfect for reconnecting with nature with your family. And fun for the littlens too! Make a picnic and use the leftovers to give thanks to the season and treats for creatures to enjoy. After all, they need to start collecting food for the cold winter now. Nuts, apple peels, bread and seeds make a tasty Mabon mix. Don't forget to touch a tree before you leave to say thank you for the picnic spot too! Feed them your energy and offer them some love.

CHARGING THE FOREST

It's race time! Who can find the most acorns? Gather those Mabon fiery reds, flaming oranges and golden leaves! Can you find 5 green leaves, 5 yellow leaves and 5 red leaves? No race is complete without its very own song! Get ready, set, and go!

"RUN THE FOREST, RUN THROUGH,
CATCHING LEAVES AND ACORNS TOO,
MAGICK SURROUNDS, DANCING WITHIN,
UNDER THIS TREE SPHERE, LET'S BEGIN,
FOR THIS SONG OF JOY IS FOR MABON AND ALL TO SING!"

DO THEY SINK? OR DO THEY FLOAT? IT'S VEGETABLE SINK OR FLOAT!

Representing the harvest theme, celebrate local fresh vegetable pickings with this old-school game. All you need is a bowl of water and chopped-up vegetables! If you want to go the extra mile, you can make tiny holes in the vegetables which float so that they then sink instead! Why not try adding food colouring into the water to add that orangy Mabon feel!

MABON ACORN DANGLING MOBILE

Don't waste the above vegetables, cut them into letters to paint and stamp with! Create a Mabon mobile with acorns hanging from the bottom edge in red and gold ribbon. Draw on the sign three things you enjoy about Mabon or just leaf print with the ones you've found! Make it yours, a family Mabon sign. Full of love and hope for the next year.

You can even make your own family sigil crest! Pick a word which represents your family and get artistic! What colours suit your family's style? (You can use the template opposite to make your shield! Visit www.witchzine.co.uk/downloads to download and print.)

PINENEEDLE DREAM GLITTER BOTTLES!

Glittery pine needles for all to see! Use these fun bottles for altar decoration, and they are perfect for an autumnal picnic game. Or even, shine your phone light through the bottle for a glittery night light! What shadows do you see? Do any dreams or shapes appear with meanings?

You Need:

- Clear Glue
- Lots and lots of glitter! (gold, red, orange)
- Pine needles
- Glitter Glue
- Water
- Glue Gun for the lid

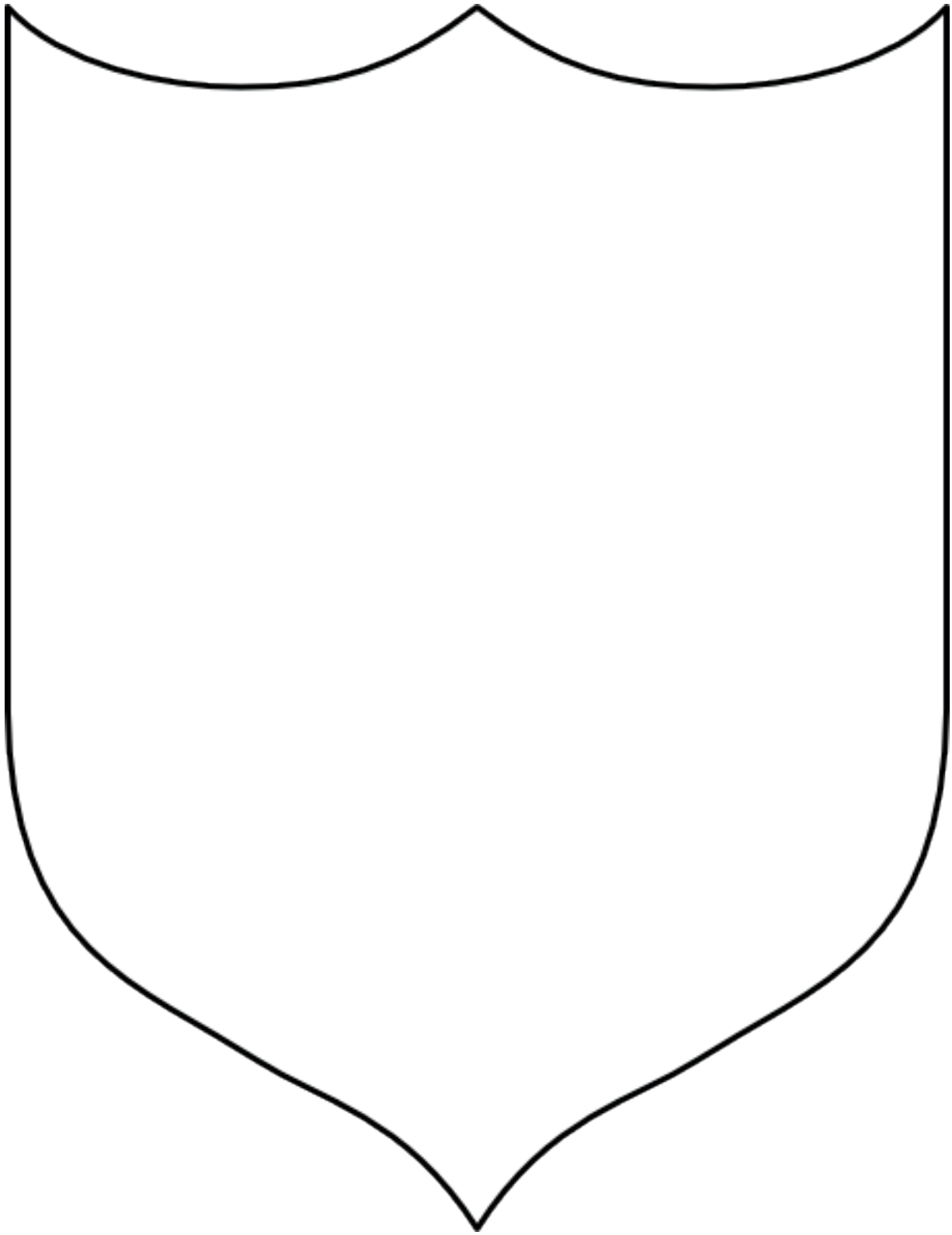
Fill a clear bottle with half glitter glue, a quarter of glue, extra glitter, pine needles and a dash of water! Glue gun the lid on top for safety and to seal in the magick. Then shake, shake, shake! See the sparkles shine!

Send a wish to a loved one, by saying these words as you shake:

"SPARKLE HERE, AND SPARKLE THERE,
WATCH YOUR DREAMS AND TOUCH YOUR HAIR,
PINE SHINES THROUGH, BRIGHTENING ALL YOU DO,
GLITTER GLITTER HERE, AND GLITTER GLITTER THERE,
MAKE A WISH AND SHOW YOU CARE,
SEND TO A LOVED ONE, FOR MAGICK WISHES YOU SHOULD SHARE. "

MABON ISN'T JUST FOR GROWN-UPS, IT'S FOR CHILDREN TO ENJOY TOO! GRAB THOSE AUTUMN LEAVES AND SEE WHAT YOU CAN DO! STAY YOUNG, AND HAVE FUN.

FAITHY XX



Sisters of the Moon Lunar Temple

<https://seekingblissonline.com/courses/1465/about>

Sister, are you feeling the call to be part of a global lunar sisterhood? Would you like to deepen your connection to the moon, the seasons, Goddess and your own internal rhythms? The Lunar Temple is an online monthly membership giving you the opportunity to receive lunar and seasonal guidance and be part of a global community of like minded women.

As part of the membership we gather live once a month via zoom to honour the New Moon. These are beautiful online circles where we gather in the Lunar Temple to set powerful intentions for the month ahead and to connect in sacred sisterhood. Michelle combines her knowledge and passion for all things divine feminine to bring you these beautifully crafted circles.

Our theme for 2022 is 'The Inspired Feminine' - we are going to be exploring badass women throughout history and weaving their magic into our own lives. There will be some really juicy journaling prompts each month as well as creative invitations as we explore pirate queens, warrior women, artists, writers, revolutionaries, poets, truth seekers and much more. Dive deeper into astrology and lunar self care and learn how each of the zodiac signs can take you on a journey of self discovery & empowerment.

Awaken the wild woman within, gather round the collective fire of our ancestors and howl at the moon!



Tarot and Oracle Reading Services

Crooked Cross Crafts

My name is Simon and am based in the West
Country of the UK.

I specialise in Tarot and Oracle card readings.



I can offer the following readings:

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Please visit my Crooked Cross Crafts page on Facebook to see reviews from previous clients

A VISIT TO LILY DALE

CARRIE ANDERSON

With one week left before the start of our vacation, my husband surprised me by scheduling an extra day so we could take a day trip to Lily Dale, NY. It has been a dream of mine to visit Lily Dale, so I was beyond excited. It is the largest Spiritualist Community in the world.

I only had a few days to plan and I spent them reading. First, I read all of the Lily Dale mysteries by Wendi Corsi Straub (absolutely a wonderful way to get a sense of the place while reading my favorite genre). Next, I read Christine Wiker's book, *Lily Dale: The Town that Talks to the Dead* followed by Patricia Price's *Lily Dale: The Major Vortexes*. Then, I gathered my husband and son for a movie night and streamed the documentary, *No One Dies in Lily Dale*. I took copious notes, filled up a journal and had an itinerary.

I do not like crowds. I prefer to just be with a very small group of people, which really means my husband and son. So, I knew that our trip wasn't going to be the typical one where we attended services. Instead, I planned for us to hit all of the main attractions during their non-event times and to experience all of the seven major vortexes.

When we arrived at the entrance gate, I was so excited and hyper. I was a bit bouncy in the passenger seat squealing and pointing out everything. Which, I think is how I managed to completely forget that the entrance is the first vortex. It wasn't until about an hour into our visit that I said, "Hold on a minute! I think I may have made a huge omission with my vortex plan!" We were on a bit of a time constraint because we had to check in at our cabin for our main vacation, so we didn't retrace our steps. At least experiencing the first vortex is a great reason for me to have to go back one day.

Our first stop was at the beach. According to my understanding, there was once a sweat lodge on the other side of the bath house. I did find a circular ring of rocks with a firepit that had feathers, rocks, twigs, and cigarettes grouped inside of it. My son and I both said, simultaneously, that we felt heavier in our heart chakras in this vortex. It felt like being pulled down. I noticed the bees in this area were really loud. So loud that they were all I could hear. Just this buzzing that reverberated in my head and made me feel surrounded, except it was only two bees.

Moving away from the beach we discovered a nature trail. One of the things I loved the most about Lily Dale were their nature based informational signs that they had posted throughout. This trail had many such signs that gave us information about the trees. It was here on the trail that I began to notice how often crows followed us throughout the day. Crows are my favorite bird and I always watch them when I'm at home. Ferns were plenty in this lightly wooded area. Ferns are a personal plant sign that I am safe and protected.

We stopped in at The Bargain Shoppe. I actually got so excited by the book selection that I had to go outside and take a breath. The store had almost every single book that I've looked at online. I knew there was no way that I had brought enough money and I wanted to make sure that I didn't make any rash decisions.



Birthplace of Modern Spiritualism, "Fox Cottage", Lily Dale, N. Y.



FOX COTTAGE POSTCARD
\$5.00ea. while supply
lasts.
The End of the originals!!
BLACK & WHITE also \$5.00

I ended up making my second trip to The Bargain Shoppe right before we left Lily Dale. I bought an amazing book by Jenny Garrison called Yoga With Trees. I also bought a water scrying bowl (I already own one for my wax scrying sessions), copper dowsing rods, and some meditation chimes. As I left the store, with my bag of magical goodies, a black cat was perched on the steps. He moved in my direction and I gave him a giant hug which he reciprocated.

My son really wanted to go to the Lily Dale Museum, so we made our way there. The gentleman working at the museum discovered my son's love of geography and the two of them spent, almost an hour, gathering around an antique globe and engaging in deep conversation.

The museum is small but has so many items to peruse. I absolutely adored the vintage kitschy items that had once been for sale, such as Lily Dale soaps, razors, tea-cups and matches. I fell in love with the museum when I discovered that they had original stock Curt-Teich postcards for sale. Yes, I have a favorite vintage postcard brand. It was beyond exhilarating to be able to purchase a Curt-Teich that had been at Lily Dale for all of those years. They actually had about 20 for sale and were just trying to get rid of them. My husband saw the postcard and just handed me money without even asking.

Looking at my itinerary, I knew it was time for lunch. However, my husband had assumed that we were just going to tough it out until we got to our main vacation spot. I wasn't passing up an opportunity to try out the delightful Sunflower Cafe. It's a cute red building with outdoor seating only. Our food was brought out within a very short time and was quite good. There was a nice picnic vibe to our meal.

We ended up sitting near a gentleman that spends every summer in Lily Dale. He regaled us with tales and then peered at me and said, "I keep seeing small yellow birds. Are you the one that can tell me what they are?". I told him they were goldfinches and then explained about their diet and migratory patterns. "I knew there was a reason I came to the cafe today! Imagine that! I ran into the woman that knew the bird I needed to identify! Thank you!"

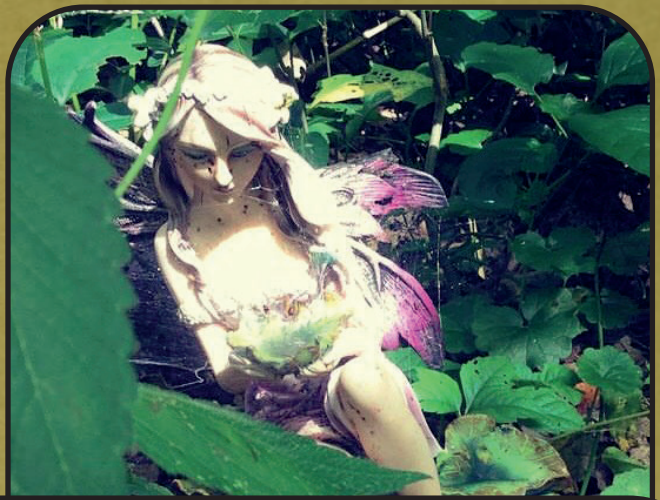
If you are ambulatory then Lily Dale is a very walkable town. We were able to leisurely stroll to all of the main sites using the map that was provided at the main gate.

Inspiration Stump is a very short walk through Leolyn Woods. We were able to sit down in front of the stump (another main vortex) to meditate and experience the old growth forest. While we were sitting there, two women came and decorated the Inspiration Stump with flowers. We moved on a few moments before the area became crowded with those seeking messages.



Walking through Leolyn Woods is knowing that you are surrounded by Nature Spirits. The entire town embraces the Nature Spirits and there's a joy I felt while walking in the woods. I always talk to trees and the trees in Leolyn Woods were clearly used to engaging in conversation.

The Fairy Trail was next on my list. The second we entered the Fairy Trail my husband whispered to my son, "Mom is never going to leave this place." It's true, I did not feel ready to leave. I could feel my dad in this area of Lily Dale. Each gnome seemed to reach out to me with a message from my dad. A tiny plastic mouse in a car by a tree stump brought forth my dad's laugh. I could see my dad decorating our backyard with gnomes, fairies, and animal statuary. He was everywhere in the Fairy Trail and it felt like home. I took so many pictures while on the Fairy Trail and I captured some colorful orbs.



We walked to the Lily Dale Pet Cemetery. There was so much grief and pain. Each grave and memorial was so lovingly created and cared for that it was impossible to just walk through as a tourist. I found myself kneeling by a grave, crying for all of these pets and for all of my lost pets. When I stood up, I felt something on my ankle and looked down. A young cat was twirling its body around my leg. He looked up at me, meowed and headbutted me for a pet. I obliged and then he walked over to a grave, sat down, and stared into the trees.

As our time in Lily Dale was coming to a close, I tried to explain to my son what I was feeling. I was happy, but I was also experiencing waves of sadness. I loved being there and I loved how I felt while I was there, but I knew when we left, that the world of disbelief and ridicule, would come rushing back in. I wanted to stay in a place where I could just be me.

In Lily Dale I never had to explain myself.

In Lily Dale the question wasn't, "Why are you like this?"


Instead, the question was, "How old were you when you realized who you were?" That's a question I can answer with ease. I have always known who I am, but I so rarely experience acceptance at every turn.

In Lily Dale, I had my first glimpse of what life could be like for those of us that acknowledge and practice our "gifts". I wish that Lily Dale was the norm and the everyday world was a closed gated community that I could choose to not enter.

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OCTOBER



WISE WORDS FROM THE OLD CRONE

Mabon, The Autumn Equinox is soon upon us. So...what is Mabon?

It is a sabbat that I never really used to celebrate with a more formal and Pagan ritual until a few years ago and I have taken to wondering why. It is a really lovely sabbat and thanks to the usage of Zoom and other platforms for mutli-techno use, I have found this to be a lovely Harvest Festival and now able celebrate each year in my Cirde of the Crystal Moon with my fellow members.

So ...What is Mabon? ... and why did I not include this particular sabbat in my usual Wheel of the Year rituals in a more formal manner?

The answer to the second question, I now think, is that as a primary school teacher, every school already celebrated Harvest Festival each year at around this time. Maybe this was enough for me. It was always about the bounty of the earth, the bounty of the sea and gratitude for all we had. Many a time I strode in to assembly with my guitar and sang those great songs about saying 'Thank You.' Each year the children brought in goods which we then made up into packages to give out to those who had less than us. Perhaps in my inner psyche, I had already celebrated and saw no need to do it again. Now retired and long since ceased to teach in Primary education I have found the festival of Mabon as if it is a new and shiny toy.

Mabon is the Autumn Equinox, when days and nights become of equal length. It is a time of balance and harmony, a celebration of the second harvest gatherings, one of the four Lesser Sabbats, a welcoming of the Earth's natural shifts. The Wheel turns once more and this is a time of abundance, wealth, generosity and thanksgiving as we honour the year's bounty. It is a great time of year for foraging hedgerows for blackberries, sloes, hips and haws and all for free.

It is traditionally a time to begin to fill up the stores for Winter and of course this year is very poignant as yet again we do not know what lies ahead for any of us. Do you notice a restlessness? Have you sensed the shift in the earth and in ourselves? This was probably how our ancestors felt too more than at any other time of year as winter was always a hard time not knowing what the weather would do and how long the food stores would last. They were very concerned as to whether illness would stay away and whether the fires would keep wild animals out and so on. This disquiet is our ancient DNA resonating in our souls.

We are now on the cusp of the cooler, misty, fruitful days of Autumn, of mellow times. We are also on the doorstep of Winter, the last residue of a hot summer, days are noticeably shortening and the weather has a fresher feel. I love the old Druidic name, Alban Elfed. Somehow I feel very connected to the earth when I say those words out loud to myself. We celebrate the Earth's harvest, but we also hope to make a personal harvest by helping to grow a loving, caring, supportive, community.

One way to calm the soul and make an initial search to find the balance and resonance with the time of year to is to use our meditations to hone our thoughts into actions.

Thinking of the wheel as it turns into another season makes me think of Mandalas. Mandalas are a useful tool in meditation helping us to find that connection with the universe. They are designed to focus the mind and intent as you colour in the different sections. It works almost the same as a spell in that you are clearing the thoughts which pervade your waking life. They can be used to set an intent or an affirmation or just for pleasure and finding time to yourself.

The word Mandala means 'circle'. A Mandala represents wholeness, a continuity of life and it also reminds us all that we are part of the Universe and all of us are connected. Mandalas are often circular in design on purpose to remind us that the wheel turns and life is ever continuing even long after we are gone, as the plants yield their plenty and die down.

Mandalas are easy to find on the internet and in published books of Mandala Patterns or you can make your own. Remember Spirographs?

Happy colouring!



My most favourite way to celebrate Mabon is to use an apple, a magical fruit and a symbol of the season.

I did use this in schools several times giving each class teacher an apple to take back to class and cut open. (carefully!) I would tell the children that they would be the very first people to look inside that apple and notice what it held in its innermost secret. I'd tell them that each of the seeds held everything needed to make a brand new apple tree which could grow and then produce more apples. (That thought still gives me goosebumps!)

So join me now and have your apple ready along with a knife to cut it. (carefully!!)

Pick your apple up and think about where the apple came from. Not where you bought it or collected it from, but where and how it grew. Think about that apple as a tiny bud growing into a flower and then a tiny fruit. Imagine how that apple grew all through the Summer and now into the Autumn; a bit like a time machine; from the Spring buds to Autumn fruit.



Use all your senses now. Feel the smooth skin, look carefully at the colours, smell your apple, and with the knife cut through the apple at its center, horizontally not vertically. Smell its fresh fragrance, stronger now that it's been cut open. Look at the center and see the natural pentagram formed by the core and seeds. Consider that you are the first person maybe the only person to look into the heart of that apple. In many traditions, this pentagram represents the four elements of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water, and the fifth element of Spirit. The apple is a reminder of the healing powers of the Earth and the restorative powers of the Otherworld. Take your time here. Don't rush it. This is a lovely ritual meditation so maintain it for yourself as long as you are able.

When you are ready, slice some of the apple to eat and savour the flavour. Use the power of mindfulness to enjoy what you can see and smell. Feel the apple slice as you place it in your mouth, taste the tartness or sweetness. Breathe in while you are doing that and notice how that intake of breath enhances the flavour.

Take time to eat and then have a drink after. Mead is great after fruit and if you are so inclined, maybe an apple juice or a small cider.

I always save the pips for use in spellwork as they hold so much magic in them.

The Apple tree was and is known as the tree of love, and has a great healing capacity. You must surely have heard of 'an apple a day keeps the doctor away?' With good reason this little phrase is repeated.

Apples are rich in fibre and can help lessen acid reflux and studies have been made to show that the natural chemicals in apples can also help protect the body against blood vessel and heart damage.

So grab your fresh apples while you can. I am making apple crumbles and apple cake as well as apple sauce to use at Christmas or should I say YULE?'

Happy eating.

Blessed Be

The Old Crone

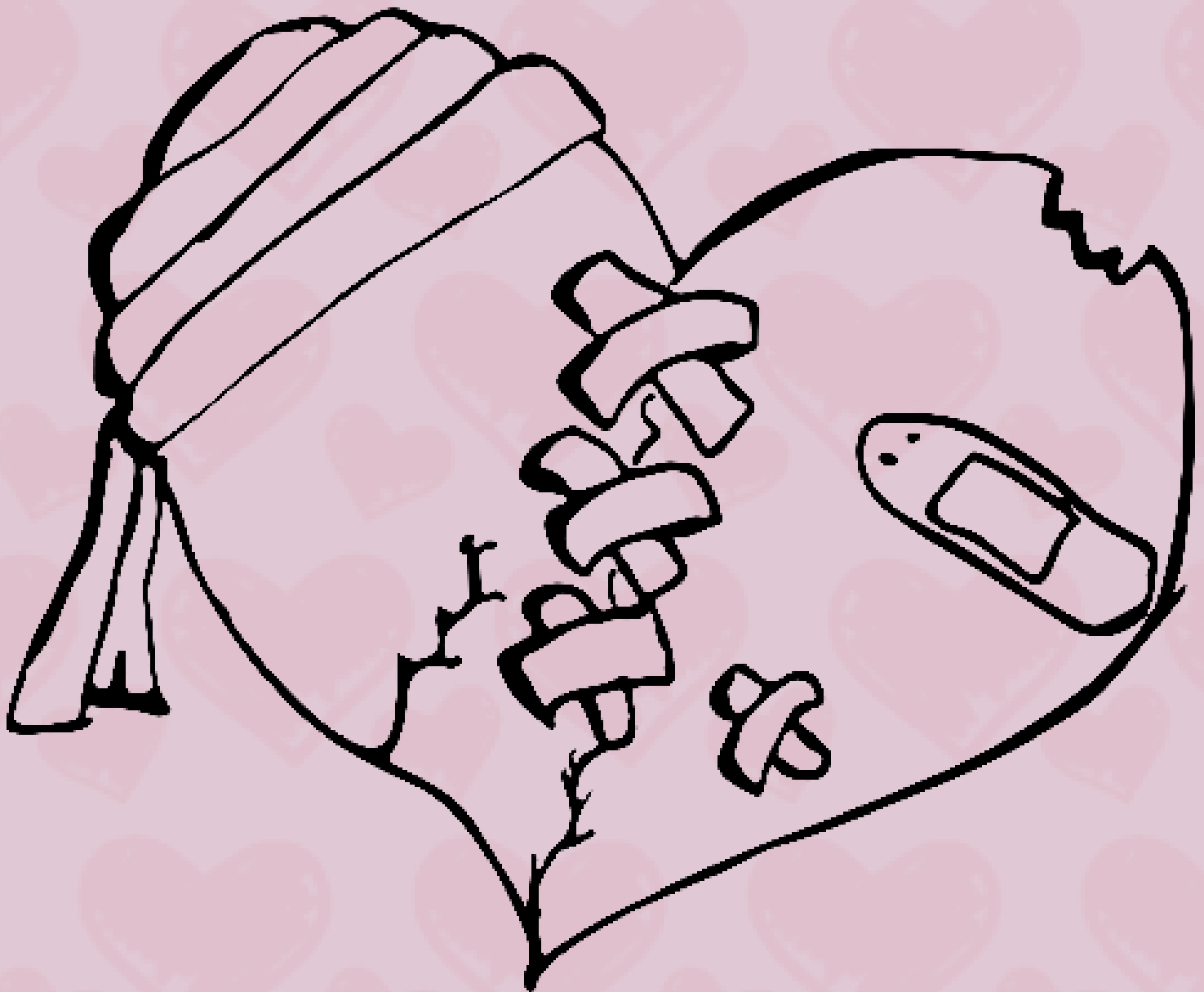
theoldcrone5@gmail.com

p.s. you can print the mandala below by visiting www.witchzine.co.uk/downloads

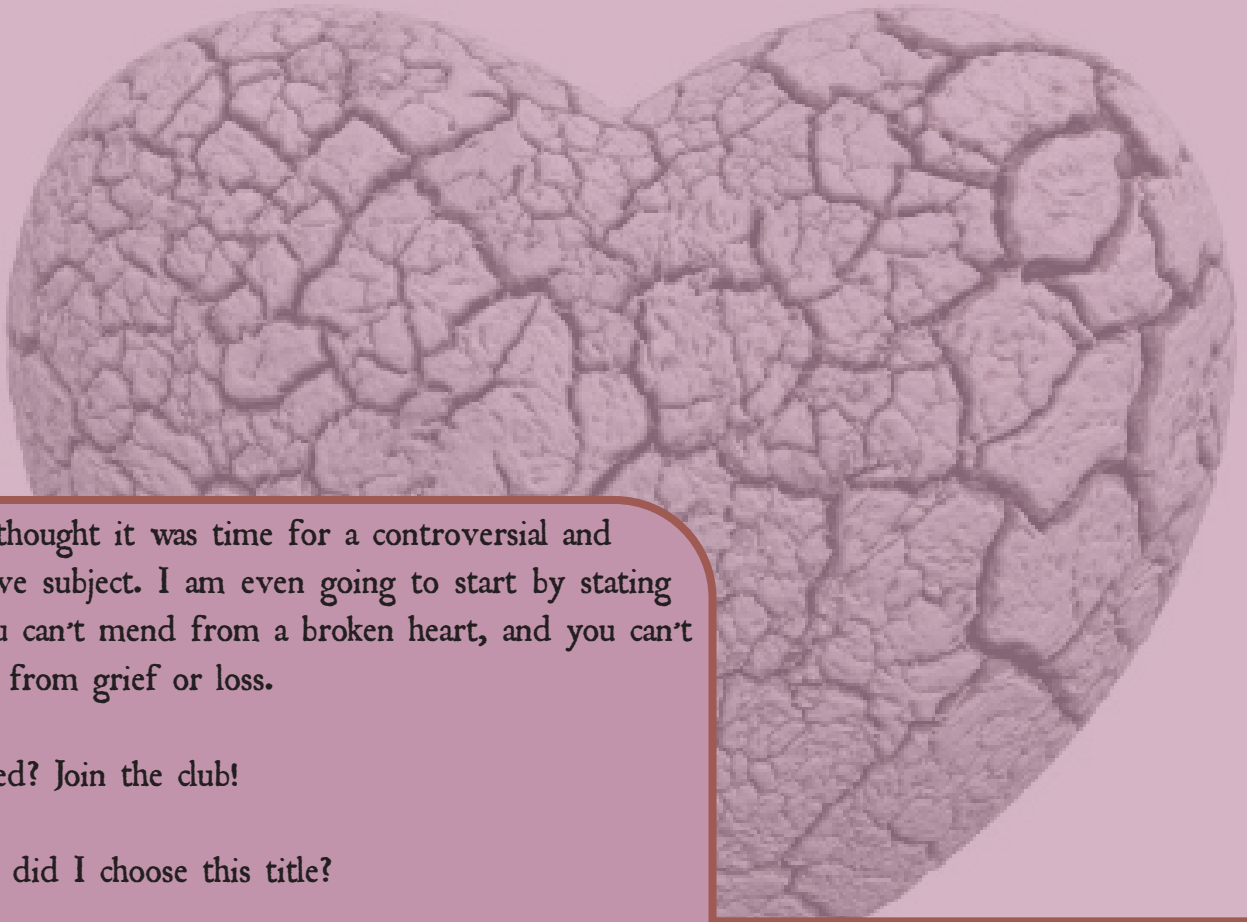


HOW TO MEND A BROKEN HEART

RECOVERING FROM GRIEF AND LOSS



FAIRY BEC



I thought it was time for a controversial and sensitive subject. I am even going to start by stating that you can't mend from a broken heart, and you can't recover from grief or loss.

Confused? Join the club!

So why did I choose this title?

When we have lost or we feel broken, the most common feeling is to want to get back to where we were, but we never will because something has changed and shifted forever. Accepting that this cannot happen is the start to healing but also the most difficult step. The end point for something like this is so unknown and that can be scary. Without a focus, we often do not know where to start and we can feel more lost.

I felt that this title can give an aim that if we focus on it, it will lead us to another way of being that we can then eventually accept as a positive shift. So we will start with the ultimate goal of mending and recovering and see where we go from there. This is in the hope that we become more accepting of the changes in our lives caused by grief and loss.

The reality is that once a heart is broken, it will never be the same again. A bit like those vases which are glued back together with gold. It looks fixed, it looks shiny, and it maintains its function, but it is a very different vase to the one it was intended to be at the beginning.



A broken heart leads to feelings of grief and loss and it can come from many sources: -

- The death of a loved one
- The death of a pet
- The end of a relationship
- Trauma within a relationship
- A once close friend distancing themselves for no apparent reason
- The sudden loss of a job or drastic change within your career
- Emotional trauma that causes changes within your life
- Physical trauma that causes changes within your life
- Struggling with aging and/or increasing responsibilities in life
- A trauma to a loved one that leaves us feeling helpless
- A big change that happens suddenly that we feel we have no control over
- And recently, many of us are feeling the loss of our Queen. Most people alive in our Country and the Commonwealth will not have known another monarch.

Some may even briefly feel it when a holiday ends. As we step out of the glorious weather, we have been having this summer and into the dampening Autumn, there can also be a sense of loss. Especially if you suffer with any seasonal affective disorders.



All the above seem to affect our heart area the most hence feeling like something is broken within it. Accepting this break/fracture/loss is important otherwise we can get stuck in a 'hole' and that can lead to many other issues within our lives.

A lot of humans have been experiencing a big post covid lockdown shift. There was the great 'coming together' in lockdown and now we seem to have the great 'separation'. The amount of people I know who have moved/are moving house, couples splitting up whom you thought would have been together forever and others with major career changes. For the last three months most people I speak to have been feeling unsettled for some reason or another, but they can't always pinpoint why.

I have had to ponder if this has been all to do with a reaction to all the reflection time many of us were gifted during the lockdowns. Additionally, we are now entering what is being titled 'The cost of living crisis' which is making us reflect on the changes that need to be made in our lives in order to cope with this 'crisis'. A crisis is usually viewed as a very difficult situation that brings multiple problems to be overcome. We have all only just stepped out of a pandemic (a crisis in itself) and now we are being told we are in another crisis? We have not had any time to recover!

HEART BASED WORK

The heart resides at the very centre of the 7 main physical bound chakras so if our head is holding the power/the weight at the top, would we feel like we were fighting toppling over in a metaphorical sense?

Heart based work is essentially very simple but can open feelings and thoughts we may struggle to understand. Most people would agree that the broken-hearted feeling that comes with grief and loss leaves us feeling empty in our chests, hollow or even leaves a heavy weighted feeling that can affect the neighbouring chakra the most with things like a tight feeling throat and/or an upset stomach.

Here are some simple heart filling exercises. The first set are for when you are alone, the second are for when you are with others (mainly loved ones).

- 1) Place your hand on your heart and imagine breathing the colour green into your heart until you feel it filling up.
- 2) Wear green - even if it is a pair of pants that only you know you have on - imagine that the item of clothing brings a green aura to yourself for that day.
- 3) Challenge yourself to only speak from the heart for a whole day.
- 4) Challenge yourself to only act from the heart for a whole day.
- 5) Spend time in nature breathing in all the beautiful greenery around you. You can also try leaning on a tree and asking it to take your worries deep underground and recycle them into loving energy.



- 1) Hold the gaze of a loved one for at least 6 seconds.
- 2) Give a hug to someone you care about that goes on for as long as is possible without becoming uncomfortable.
- 3) Tell someone you love something that you love about them every day for a week. See how that changes things for both of you.
- 4) Try the pay it forwards scheme where you do something instinctively nice for someone without expecting anything in return. By saying "Pay it forwards" if they thank you. This can help to perpetuate this feeling of goodwill if they do.

All of the above are about connections. Connections with yourself as well as others. Perhaps you can aim to treat yourself and others with equal kindness?

Green is the colour of Archangel Raphael who is the main healing Archangel. Therefore, any heart work is all about healing. If we are totally honest with ourselves, life is a series of traumas that we experience on many different levels, and it is the way that we deal with that which shapes us for the next one.



THE AGE OF AQUARIUS AND CHANGE

Ultimately, what this article is about is embracing change (mainly that which you are not in control of) and taking charge of it for yourself.

Humans trying to achieve a feeling of balance is somewhat of an absurd concept too. There is nothing symmetrical about our internal organs on the whole so how can we achieve full balance?

Even to walk we must perpetually throw ourselves off balance and regain balance so why do we think we can reach some form of stasis that suggests balance? We can't, we must keep shifting and adjusting.

We keep hearing about the dawning of the age of Aquarius but what does that mean? Aquarius energy is all about change in order to progress forwards into the future. This is a fast-paced energy and many struggle to keep up with it. So are we simply being warned that we need to become more resilient to change and we need to evolve to deal with it better?

Like the Death card in Tarot, grief and loss can simply be defined as change that we are not in control of. The important bit for me is how we respond to that change.

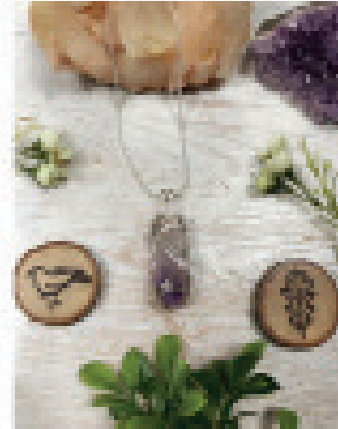
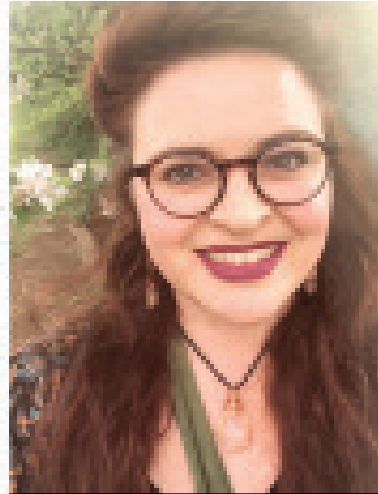
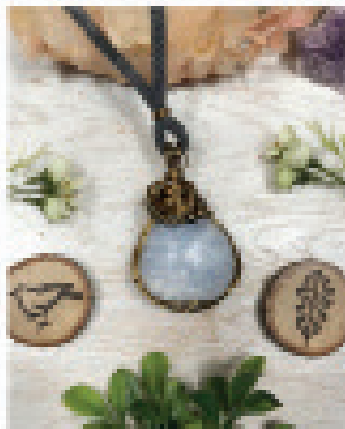


BLACKBIRD OAK

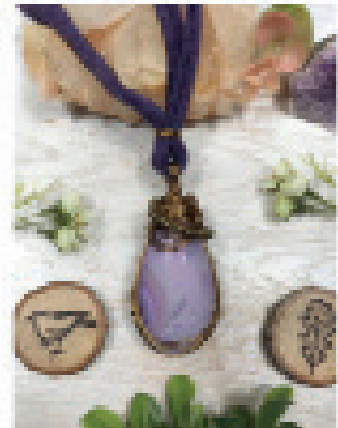
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LIFE AND DEATH, HERBS AND SPICES

SAMANTHA TEVES

Mabon, or Autumn Equinox is a very special part of the year where we are asked to look at the balance of things. The days will become shorter, the weather crisp with Autumn's signature colors, we will be inclined to see the darkness, not just the light of summer past.

This sacred time is a time of thanks, an appreciation of all the Earth has given and the warmth we carry into the winter months. It is a time of love, celebration for the harvest, the initiation of the falls most fruitful moments and bounty, and a time honoring the death of nature as our Earth prepares for its winter slumber. Balance. Cyclical and ever repeating, in nature and in our selves.

On the day of equinox, the wilds of summer give way to the pensive reflection of coming winter and invite a time of transition. The herbs of this season can be found everywhere, in our apple baked goods, on our front porches, in our cherished pumpkin spiced drinks, but the folklore of these herbs is a bit less familiar.



Autumn Spice, the familiar autumnal blend of cinnamon, clove, nutmeg, allspice, ginger. It's everywhere in the autumn months! A cup of warm and cozy, a spiced candle lighting up the dark evenings, even in a milkshake from your local restaurant, its truly everywhere. Now in most pagan traditions the leader of the bunch, cinnamon, is most often associated with the element of Fire and with the planets of Mercury or the Sun. Cinnamon has been said to attract money, peace, spiritual attunement and is used for protection, in love workings and was even used to decorate ancient Roman temples.

As for why we use this herb in our autumnal sips, bites, and scents, that goes way back. Cinnamon (and its pumpkin spice cohorts) was considered "warming" according to the Ayurvedic traditions of South Asia. In the cold months warming spices were used to keep energy levels high, boost the immune system and keep us warm and toasty from the inside out. Spice traders would have carried on this knowledge and eventually the earliest physicians of Europe would have passed along the idea of those warm spices, like cinnamon, being associated with the cold months. Maguelonne Toussaint-Samat wrote that the physician, Arnaldus de Villa Nova (c. 1240-1311), recommended balancing the body by ingesting spices for the cold months in "sauces" of ginger, clove, cinnamon, and more.

Following the years of these medical suggestions, the celebrations and holidays the cold seasons were also laden with recipes boasting these warm spices, as they were considered elegant and even rare/expensive during some periods of time. Tradition held fast and even today we turn to our warming spices as soon as the first leaf changes. Protective, warming, and a delight to the nose and palate!



A flower we all see regaling our eyes as soon as the weather begins to change, the Mum, or chrysanthemum. An Autumn staple for patios and porches everywhere, this hardy end of summer floral has a rich lore and even superstitions surrounding it. In Asia, where it originates, the Mum is a healing plant and a staple of traditional Chinese medicine. It has many rituals and superstitions that live with it in those cultures. The Mum is often considered a fire elemental herb with a connection to Sun energy and a lore of protection around its fringed petals. With no floral scent, and a curious blooming time (after most other florals have fallen) the Chrysanthemum is associated with protection, death, and spirit work. The ancient Greeks would weave these florals into garlands to keep evil spirits at bay.

The modern witch may use them in a similar sense, keeping those wandering ill-wishers at bay with a wreath or potted décor. The mum also holds lore and connection to Christianity in which it was said to have adorned Jesus' body in tomb. A curious little autumn fixture, this bloom was even said to protect from the "wrath of the Gods". Prop a hardy Mum near the door this season to keep a warm household!

As we stand in this space of balance, we hold our autumn herb lore near. Cherishing the wisdom of the ancestors before and honoring the rich history that makes up our traditions. As we stand on the precipice of the dark and introspective months, we lean into our warming and protective herbals. A cup of cinnamon tea, a deep purple Mum near the door, a steaming chai brewed on the stove, all comforts, yes! But also, tiny magical potions and moments meant to enchant our Autumn months with peace, security, and a warmth that cannot be lost to the first frosts.



Sources:

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EVERY LOSS A SEED

AUTUMN RITUAL FOR GRIEF AND REBIRTH

STEFFIE DE VAAN

Autumn is a season of loss. Trees drop their leaves. Berries and nuts provide the last harvest before winter. Flowers embrace their final bloom of the year. Every loss, however, carries a new seed. Whether it's an acorn cherished by a child, a hazelnut forgotten by a squirrel, or a berry lying fallen on the ground—Autumn losses bring the promise of new births. This is a ritual for finding the seed of rebirth in your grief.

SPEAK YOUR GRIEF

Sometimes grief is a private thing. Not secret, but something impossible to share. We've all suffered losses, whether it's a loved one, an incursion on our autonomy, or a devastating material blow. That doesn't mean our shared human language can adequately convey the rawness, the scream-so-loud-I-stop-feeling, terrible ache of loss. Sometimes loss is something to be held and nurtured without friends offering well-intended consolation.

Speak your loss to the earth. Tenderly hold a fallen leaf and tell it how you, too, feel cast aside and adrift. Scream your pain into an acorn until your throat is hoarse. Water the year's last flowers with your tears. Don't hold back—nature also knows loss, and she doesn't judge.

LET IT FALL

Next, let your grief fall. Let the earth have it. Do this in a way that is meaningful to you. Discard that leaf on a forest path where dozens of feet will trod upon it. Place it lovingly near the base of an old oak so it may return to the soil as nourishment. Bury the acorn, or leave it for animals to eat, or take it home to raise into a new tree. Any method is the right one, so long as you do it with purpose.

Take a moment to ground and breathe. Feel your emotions and dig through them until you find the seed of rebirth whether it's catharsis, the emptiness of the world after a rainstorm, or any other emotion that allows you to move on.

The ritual is now complete. The work, however, is not yet done.

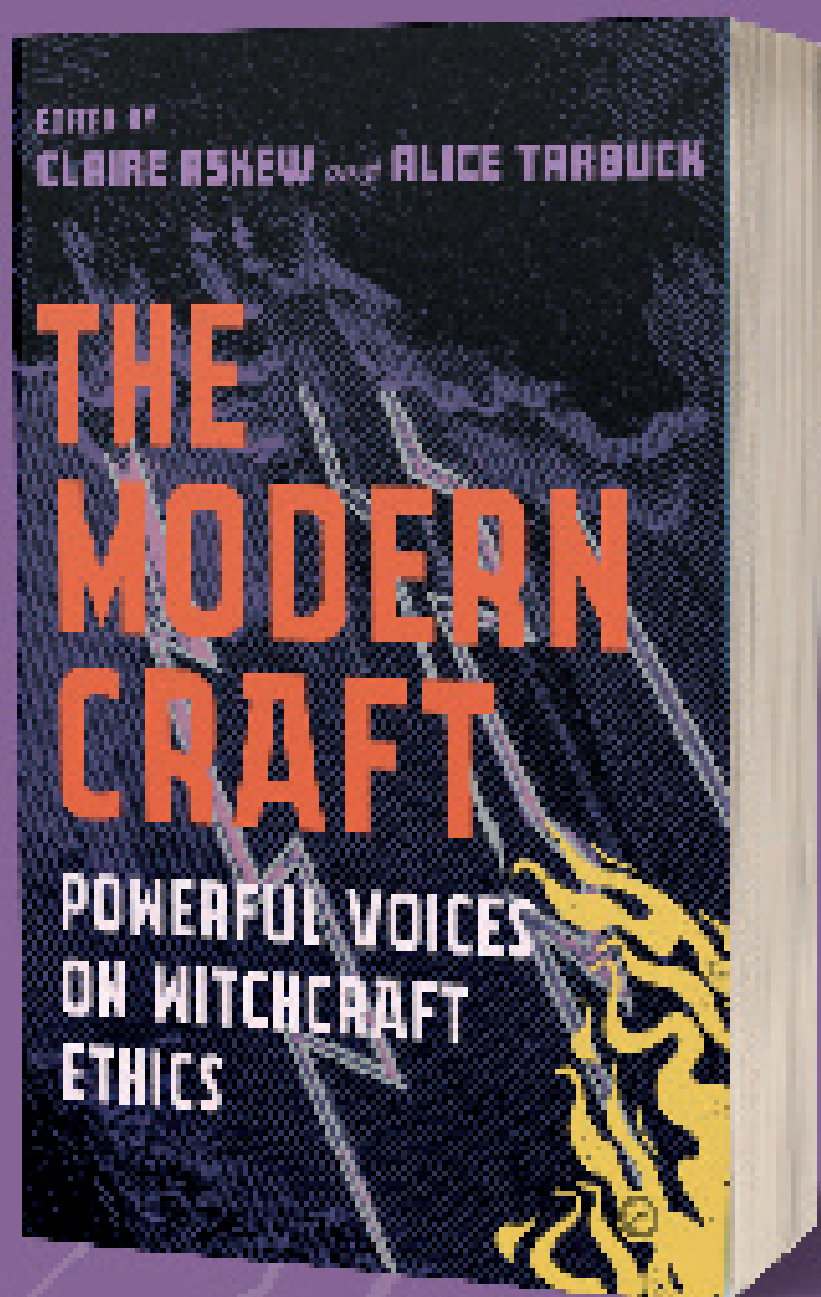
REBIRTH IN ITS TIME

You now possess the seed of rebirth, but you can't rush it. Grief is not a singular, one-and-done event. You'll feel it again. When you do, close your eyes and invoke the feeling you had when you let it fall. That's your seed—keep it safe.

Lost opportunities will make place for new ones. Grief for things that are lost turns into gratitude for things that were. Trauma becomes activism. You have what you need, just give it time to grow.

Visit the author at www.instagram.com/muse_of_midnight

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WHAT WE'RE READING

THE HOLY WILD GRIMOIRE

Danielle Dulsky

Published by New World Library

Available in the UK via Amazon

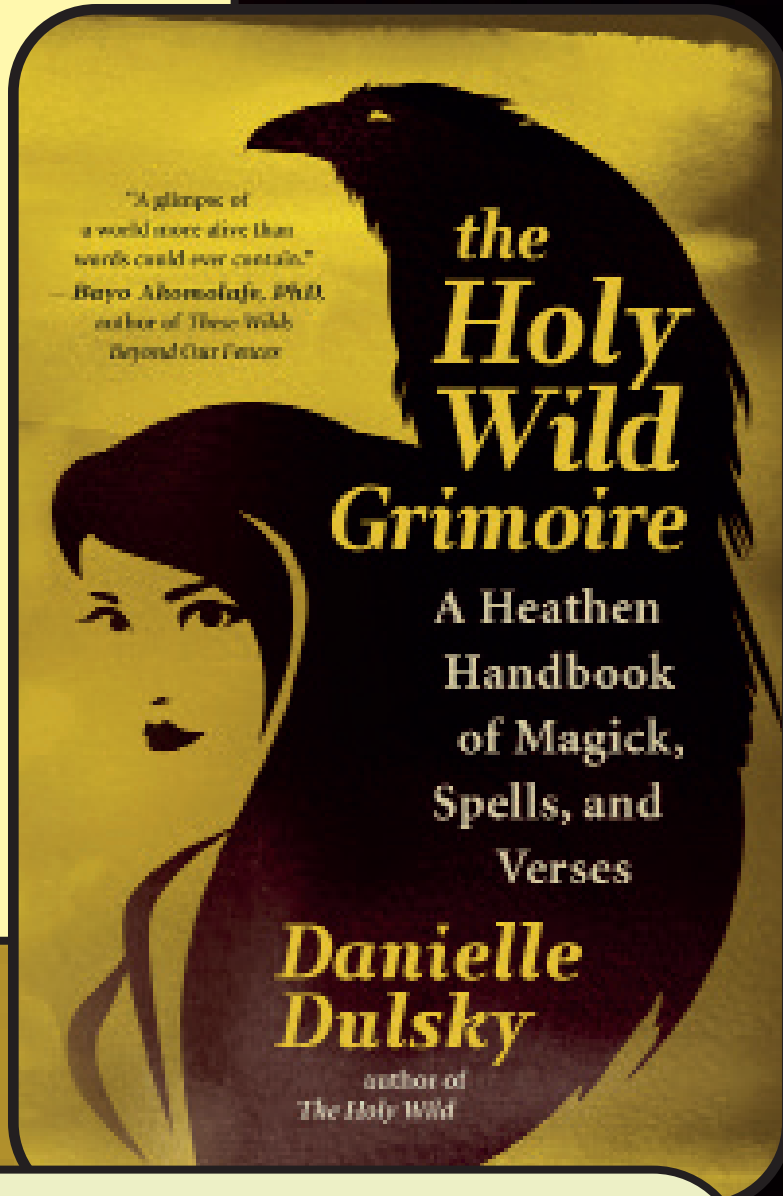
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It's also a perfect opportunity to treat yourself to a nice journal to complete the work - and what witch doesn't enjoy a new notebook?



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Danielle Dulsky is the author of *The Holy Wild*, *Sacred Hags Oracle*, *Seasons of Moon and Flame*, *Woman Most Wild*, and most recently *The Holy Wild Grimoire*.

A heathen visionary, painter, poet, storyteller, and word-witch, she teaches internationally and has facilitated circles, embodiment trainings, communal spell-work, and seasonal rituals since 2007.

She is the founder of The Hag School and believes in the emerging power of wild collectives and sudden circles of curious dreamers, cunning witches, and rebellious artists in healing our ailing world. Visit her online at www.danielledulsky.com.



The Vessel

Adam L.G. Nevill

Published by Ritual Limited

Available from Amazon from 31st October



The Vessel is the latest in spine-chilling folk horrors from author Adam L.G. Nevill.

Something lurks in the trees at Nerthus House, something roused when Jess McMachen takes a job caring for the owner, Flo Gardner. Between Jess' volatile ex husband, and the increasingly weird and disturbing happenings at her new job, The Vessel is an intense and captivating tale from start to finish.

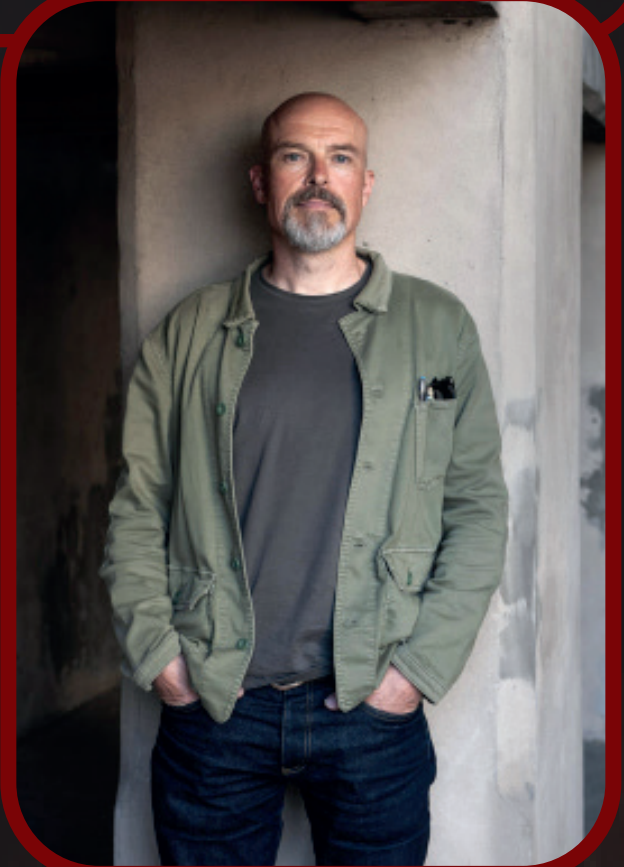
Stained with the scent of old gods, dusty pagan artefacts and oppressively dark and cluttered corridors, The Vessel would be enjoyed by any Witch reader who likes a good fright!

About the author

Adam L.G. Nevill was born in Birmingham, England, in 1969 and grew up in England and New Zealand. He is an author of horror fiction. Of his novels, *The Ritual*, *Last Days*, *No One Gets Out Alive* and *The Reddening* were all winners of The August Derleth Award for Best Horror Novel. He has also published three collections of short stories, with *Some Will Not Sleep* winning the British Fantasy Award for Best Collection, 2017.

Imaginarium adapted *The Ritual* and *No One Gets Out Alive* into feature films and more of his work is currently in development for the screen.

The author lives in Devon, England. Find more online at www.adamlgnevill.com





Pagan Poetry
&
Fiction

Photo by Klaire Dawn Ader

AN HERB, A COTTAGE, A SPELL

SAMANTHA TEVES

Roses by the wet rocks
Marshmallow on the fringe of lochs
Violets near the sullen grave
And Witches' Bells on the steepest cave

A ramshackle cottage, you've seen in nestled in your dreams
With wide windows, domed and latticed
A lavender door, paint peeling and weather-worn
Knotty and gnarled wood for walls
And paled shutters, barely hanging through windy flutters

Fairy Fingers to brew black
Blackthorn tucked above the tack
Ghost Flower to protect
Lady Thistle to detect

Buried deep in the wondersome woods, you've been here twice before
She lives in there, the woman with the silver hair and citrine on her neck
With candles melting on the eaves
Dusty bundles hanging
She knows exactly what you need before you've said a word

Summers Bride for admiration
Lion's Tooth for manifestation
Goat's Leaf to rub betwixt the eyes
Devils' Cherries to see through lies

She beckons with a twisted finger, she wastes no breath
A small table carved with words and runes from another time
Bottles of fog, wary liquids and powders adorn the lopsided shelves
The smell of earth, sweet sweat, and thyme boil in the humid space
She touches your face, she touches your neck, leaving a buzz upon your skin

Elf leaf in neat bundles for peaceful, deep sleep
Crimson peppers to ensure that what you sow is what you'll reap
Starwort to kiss beneath the balsamic moon
Herb of Grace warding against what howls beneath the lune

Whether it is your heart or mind that needs her hand
This cottage built upon ethereal land
She knows just what and how to lend
A greenhouse menagerie with no end

As you leave, you know you'll never be too far to ask, so humble
The woman with the silver hair and the citrine on her neck, never one to stumble
She walks your dreams, scents your halls, her fragrance ever haunting
Farewell for now, you think aloud, the call to this eldritch place forever daunting

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