

PAGAN
MOONBEAMS



GO GREEN



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"Going Green"



Topic Focus

Going Green

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Honoring Gaia Through the WOTY

If you have worked with the Wheel of the Year (WOTY) much, you have realized that half of the spokes coincide with the growing patterns of ancient times as well as many other nature-focused times. Use the solstices and equinoxes to show honor to Gaia and the things that she is made of. This will keep honoring the Earth as a year-long practice and please the gods and goddesses that represent things comprising the Earth. Take the time to learn the gods and goddesses of your pantheon during these times and keep them in your prayers throughout the year.



Name Changes

What do you think about changing the names of things? What if they were named after, or in honor of, a person and it was changed to do the same for another person? Does this mean that the first person is no longer honorable? See what you think of the two examples below:

In a town in Indiana, there was a street named after a Chief that is well-honored in his tribal past. The street was dedicated to him because of his bravery. 60 years later the name of the street was changed to Martin Luther King Blvd. because the town had no street by that name and all towns should have one, they said. What does this mean to the chief who the street was first named for? What is your opinion about this: should they have changed the name? Why or why not?

A school in Salem, MA is called Witchcraft Heights Elementary. There is a new proposal to rename it after the former city counselor who held that position for 20 years. This is the only school not named after a person in the city. Should they be able to change the name of the school? Does changing it mean that everyone reaching the same tenure will get the same "red carpet" treatment, once they retire? Is it fair?

In both cases the law has stepped in and made the final decision. Do you think there should be laws to prevent such things? Why or why not?

Pandora's Recipe Box

By: Pandora

Everyday Is Earthday

Bubba wandered around his home, bored. It was Spring, already, but it wasn't *warm!* Well, it wasn't quite *cold*, but it was certainly not warm, either. He was ready for shorts and sandals!

As his mother swept through the room, with a garlic clove in-hand, he got curious. Following quickly behind the Kitchen Witch, he couldn't help but make noise as he tried to keep up. Hearing the shuffling behind her, his mother turned to discover her son, simply *dying* for entertainment. In her mind, that meant he was due for a new lesson!

"Yes, dear? What have you been up to?" she asked him, ever-so-gently.

"Mom? Why isn't it warm yet? I mean, I get that everything outside is waking up, just like the animals, but it's not warm, yet. I want to wear my shorts and sandals, already!"

"Well....what's stopping you, Bubba? I think you should go ahead and put on those shorts. But stay barefoot, as you *know* it's the best way to be. Well, in this house, at least," she answered an astonished face.

"I'll FREEZE, that's why!" He was exasperated. How could she expect him to wear shorts???

His mother was simply crazy. That's it; she'd lost her marbles! Wait! Did she *have* marbles?

Interrupting his runaway thoughts, she explained her intent to him, "Bubba, wear them *inside the house*, not outside. Besides, if you want to help me, you'll definitely feel warm, from all of the running."

"You told me not to run in the house, though," he said, still confused.

"Different kind of running. Nevermind. Let's drive on! We're celebrating Earth Day, and I need your help, honey," she coaxed.

"Mom, there's an Earth Day? When's Water Day, then? And Air Day?" he asked, since they were getting into the Elements. He'd just started learning about them, so he wanted to know everything Mom could teach him.

"Bubba, Earth Day is about the entire planet we live on, which includes the earth, water, air, and all of the creatures that Gaia has graced us with. Does that make better sense?" Mom was teaching him, already. Wonderful!

He nodded, and she waved for him to continue following him. Once he realized they were going to her "garden room", she sent him on to his room, so he could put on his shorts and then help her plant.

Bubba came back into the room, breathless, and wearing his shorts. Noticeably excited, he asked what they were doing. In answer, the Kitchen Witch—no, she was in the garden room, so that meant she was being a Hedge Witch—held out her opened palm, so he could see what was in it. She let him look, then answered the questioning look that he gave her.

"It's a garlic clove. We're going to plant it, and make new garlic."

"But, doesn't that come from the store, Mom? I know I've seen it there. Even at the Natural Foods store that you like to shop in!" Oh boy, was he confused!

"Well, sure, Bubba. They do sell garlic in stores. But, why do that, when we can grow it, simply by planting the last clove? Besides, you know how good everything from our garden tastes. Plus, garlic helps keep pests out of the garden, if we plant it throughout the garden. That's a little bit everywhere, instead of all in one place, or in rows and stuff.

Pandora's Recipe Box

By: Pandora

Everyday Is Earthday

(continued)

"Besides, buying garlic from most stores means it got there on a big truck. That truck usually has to travel a long way to get to the store. Big trucks, and other big vehicles, usually use lots of gas; and that gas comes out of those big pipes, that make the air smell less fresh. So, are you starting to see how planting our own garlic helps Gaia? This is part of how we're going to celebrate Earth Day," she explained. His mother just hoped it wasn't too much information at one time.

"The air! But, what about the food at that Natural Foods, store? I thought you liked that food, better?" he asked. But he was understanding, much to the Hedge Witch's delight.

She explained how the big stores get their food from growers from far away, but the local Natural Foods Co-op got their foods from growers who lived nearby to them. She also explained that a co-op is where lots of people pay to belong, like a club, but that means they help own the co-op. It helps the co-op buy from local growers, and such. *And*, she said, it meant they knew that the food wasn't grown with lots of chemicals, but most of the big growers *did* use chemicals. And those chemicals aren't good for the earth, water, or the air.

"Ooooooh! So, it's healthier?"

"I'd be the first person to tell you 'Yes', but I want to give you a better answer. While I feel it's healthier, there are doctors and other very smart people who will tell you that it doesn't make a difference. But, even if we ignore the chemicals in the food and ground, like some of the food at the Co-op that doesn't have them, they still have to travel, even just a short distance. And the Co-op's food is closer to the Co-op than the big stores' food is. Closer than the Co-op, is the backyard garden. We don't need to travel to it, and to food doesn't need to be shipped to the garden for us to be able to get it. So, Bubba, it's not just that the food travels to the store and stuff like that. It's that the Earth suffers so much more than just in chemicals released in the air. It's also the chemical pesticides. Remember how garlic in the garden keeps pests away? *That* is also a pesticide. It doesn't have to be a chemical. *And* some natural pesticides make the other stuff taste so much better!" The Hedge Witch was getting excited, and she could see it spreading to Bubba. This was a good sign. A really good sign!

His mother continued to answer his questions, as they planted more than just one clove of garlic. Bubba couldn't wait to see how many wonderful bulbs of garlic would grow! When they started to grow shoots and leaves above the ground, he could help his mother transport them to the garden, to keep pests away. The best part is that you didn't need to start with garlic from somebody's garden, or even the Co-op; apparently, there are lots of kinds of garlic, and you can take a clove from any of them and grow it! How awesome was that!?!

Once again, Bubba saw his witchy mom as amazing, and this was just one lesson, that day. She also tried to teach him about 'companion planting' but he couldn't get past the idea of planting his friends. He was pretty sure Minnie wouldn't appreciate it, let alone make anything better. He was pretty sure she'd be really really angry, and it would totally ruin their friendship.

Hmmm, what if he planted his cousin, Beanie??? She was cool, and loved gardening. Perhaps, that was something to try, on the next visit....

Young Pagans

By: TristA

Redecorating Your Room

Ever get tired of the childish look in your room and your parents just say that it looks fine? This is the time to really look into recycling and reusing. Many of the things that are considered rubbish will make great, cool additions to your room with a few craft supplies that you are sure to have on-hand. There are some ideas below, but I am sure you can come up with more, and that your room will be the coolest upgraded room around!



Egg Carton Trashcan

A long time ago there was a really cool way to decorate or make a trash can with egg cartons; I am sure now would be the time for this craft, again. You can construct a really cool trashcan by using a pizza circle for the bottom and tying together egg cartons, with the cups facing out, with yarn to make a circle that can go around the pizza circle. You can paint the egg cartons to make it match the rest of your décor.

Murals

Murals are the best thing to cover a complete wall and look really nice. The best ones are busy and have a lot to look at. Think about hanging a fish net on the wall with a random look and place scraps from the beach on it, you can even pick up things, at different times of the year, to add more of a closed look to it. Another idea would be to use an old trash bag and hang it where it looks rather nice and place items that look like other things: a piece of cereal that looks like an alien or anything you find. Any kind of mural you come up with I am sure would look really cool, if put up the right way.

Pizza Box Frame

Take a pizza delivery box and cut it in half, so there are two squares. Place any picture that you will want on your wall into the middle of the square. Cut the corners of the pizza box diagonally and fold them down over the paper to make a nice frame. If you want to get a little more fancy, get some paint and paint the frame before affixing it to the picture. You can place a string on the back of the box with brads, too, before adding the picture; this will make it easy to hang on the wall without the nail or fastener showing.

Small Sculptures

Take scraps from the road, house, yard, woods, or wherever you frequent. Stack them together to make small statues to sit around the house. The best sculptures made from trash make the best discussion pieces and add a sense of mystery to your room, as well.

Young Pagans

By: TristA

Throw A Party

Take advantage of Earth Day coming and throw a party at your home with a few friends. Make all the games and fun centered around things doing good for Gaia. Below are some idea's to get you started, feel free to use as many of them as you want and come up with your own fun to add in.



What To Do

Play a game that is has a little twist to a couple of old games. For preparation of the game get some things out of your trash can or recycle bin, nothing rotten or of food origin. To play the game sit everyone in a circle and you will start with the person that has been determined to go first. They will hold one of the items and be given a little bit of time to tell what to do with it to recycle it (ex. A can could be a planter). Once they have come up with something they have to pass to the next person who does the same. No one can repeat something already been used for the round. Once the item reaches someone who can not think of something to do with it in the amount of time allotted they are stuck with the item and must put it in front of them. That person will begin with the next item to be handled the same as the first. The game will be over once all of the items have been used. The winner of the game will be the one with the least amount of things in front of them.

Grocery Bag Craft

Everyone sits in a circle around a big pile of plastic grocery bags. The rules of the game is given out; game will last for X amount of minutes, use as many bags as necessary, you must craft something useable from the bags. Everyone goes and at the end of the time they tell what they have made and what it's uses are. The one with the best item and use wins the game.

Remember that they can be weaved together to make purses, belts, and baskets. This is probably the best advice for the game; you may want to tell your guests or keep it to yourself for a sure win.



Pandora's Recipe Box

By: Pandora

Green Witches ?

Could Jessica possibly be more annoying? Of course, her little sister bothered Samantha. That's what little sisters were for! *Well, that's what Mama would say, anyhow*, she thought to herself. Jessica was obsessed with colors, lately. Granted, Spring had sprung, and all of the new growth had many colors to share. And Jessica had a never-ending stream of questions about why everything has this color or that color, and why wasn't it some other color. Samantha was sure she'd go mad, from all of the questions until one day, she turned around and asked Jessica if she wanted to be green.

"What do you mean, how would I like it if I turned green, Samantha? Mo-o-om! Samantha said she's gonna turn me gree-e-een!" Oh, she could be such a tattle-tail! Even when there was nothing to tattle on.

Samantha stalked after her little sister, into the kitchen, where their mother was working. Whenever they needed to find their mother, the kitchen was the first place to check. As her older daughter entered the room, she looked up, knowing that an explanation was on its way out of her mouth.

"Mama, I asked Jess if she wanted to be 'green', because she *won't stop* asking about the colors of the plants, and why they're not different colors and every other question she can think to ask about the plants," she answered the question Mama didn't have to ask.

Turning to her youngest, Mama explained, "Sweetheart, we're witches you know. We're garden witches--"

"So you mean I'm really going to turn *green*?!?! But, Mama, I won't have any friends if I'm green!" Jessica looked so worried, that is was the only thing keeping her mother from laughing out loud.

"Jess, not the *color* green. 'Green', the way your sister and I are talking about it, is about being good to the planet. That includes all of the plants, animals and other things that you haven't even discovered, yet! 'Green' is a way of life. It's the way of *our life*. So, yes, we *are* green witches, but we're not *green-faced* witches.

"Just the way that we grow things in our home garden makes us green. We don't use *any* chemicals in our garden, which is considered 'green'. After all, chemicals aren't good for us, *or* the plants, so we use other plants to help keeps the same bugs and critters away from our food. That's why some people use the chemicals on their plants. I just prefer not to, and we have all mentioned something tastes better, even if you didn't know there were no chemicals involved. Even the way that I shop is considered 'green', since I bring my own cloth bags.

"Anyway, in our family, being a green witch is a compliment! It means that we care for Gaia, just as she provides for us. Because we do things *for* the environment, instead of *to* it, we are inherently 'green', my pretties!" Mama decided to play on the theme of a well-known green-faced Witch.

Jessica thought about this, and then promptly launched into a new stream of questions. Samantha threw her hands in the air, and seemingly ran from the room. Laughing at her older daughter, Mama turned to the little one.

"So, if we're green witches, why do we wear so many different colors in our clothes??? Why do we even wear clothes? Why do we buy them, instead of just wearing leaves? Wh--"

Her mother interrupted her, mid-sentence, "Being 'green' or *garden* witches has nothing to do with the many colors that we wear. Besides, if Gaia can give us such wonderful colors, *why shouldn't* we display them, as well? And we wear clothes because humans have always worn clothes, in some way. It used to be in animal skins. No," she began answering the look on Jessica's face, "it wasn't cruel. Back then, they hunted animals for food *and* clothing. Humans used every part of an animal.

"Now, there are farmers that raise animals for us to have food. But that's an extremely involved process, and we'll research that one, together. I promise.

"And we don't wear leaves, because the trees and plants need to wear them, as one manner of protection. The leaves also help them absorb moisture from the air, and when it rains. Besides, if we were allergic to the leaves—like I am to fish, remember?—then somebody could be in serious trouble with their health and wellbeing. But, we're not discussing allergies, today, Baby Girl. OK?"

"Mama, you always have so many wonderful things to tell me! So, can I be a green witch, with you, today?" Jessican nearly pleaded.

In answer, she took her daughter's hand, and led her towards the mud room, where they donned hats, gardening gloves, grubby shoes and picked up the bucket of hand tools. They placed these near the garden bed, and retreated to the house to pick up the seedlings Mama had been making sure were ready for transplantation, when the girls had invaded the kitchen.

Jessica seemed to truly enjoy being a 'green' witch, today. Her mother enjoyed having the children join her in the kitchen *and* the garden. Today, this meant she'd get to use her favorite GREEN facial mask, earlier than usual...Specifically, having help meant that her "spa night" could begin earlier than planned. How wonderful it could always be when you had a house full of 'green' witches!

Pandora's Recipe Box

By: Pandora

Stuffed Mushrooms (vegetarian-friendly)

2 Tbsp Olive Oil 8 Portabello (or other larger) Mushroom caps (1 2/3 Lb, total)
1/2 cup drained, canned Fire-roasted or Italian diced tomatoes
4-5 garlic cloves chopped finely
1 bunch scallions (about 6), bulbs and greens separated and sliced
5 oz smoked mozzarella, finely cut
2 Tbsp finely chopped fresh parsley
finely chopped red onion, as desired
1/2 tsp salt

Directions:

1. Heat oven to 400 Degrees. Heat 1 1/2 teaspoons of oil in large frying pan, over medium-high heat. Add garlic, onions and salt, and cook for 5 minutes. Stir in scallion bulbs, and more onion, if desired. Cook until tender, about 12 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat.
2. Place mushroom caps on large baking sheet. Coat mushrooms with remaining oil, if desired. (I forgot to do this, and it came out wonderfully!) Sprinkle with salt. (I forgot this part, too.)
3. Stir tomatoes, scallion greens, cheese and parsley into garlic mixture and season with black pepper, to taste. Fill mushrooms with mixture. Bake until hot, 15-20 minutes.

Pandora's Notes:

- Originally, this recipe called for swiss chard, instead of the red onions. I couldn't find it anywhere! So, I just went with what I had. And, since I had some red onion--which I love, by the way--left over from another dish, I just used a little bit of that!
- As you see, I forgot to oil the mushrooms. I also forgot to drain the tomatoes, so that may be why I was able to get away with it!
- I don't think I really forgot the salt. I don't use it much, at all. I like to taste the natural flavors of things, and the strength of these ingredients didn't need the salt.
- Originally, this recipe also called for only 2 cloves of garlic. According to my guests, who couldn't get enough of these--I had to hide some for my Vegetarian friend, that I'd made them for!--the garlic was not overpowering, at all.

One last note: The original recipe is for Portobellos. We all agreed that any type of large mushroom cap would work.

From this Kitchen Wytch to your's: May all your meals be magickal meals!

Middle Magick

By: Pandora

Tarot: The Wheel of Fortune

First and foremost, my lovelies, I need to apologize for not appearing, last month. I do so very much look forward to chatting with you, but I needed to take care of Pandora. Every so often, it's good to revisit one's inner self and take the time to attend to our own needs. And that explains my choice for this month's topic: the *Wheel of Fortune* of the Major Arcana.

Dig out that trusty tarot deck that you used, the last time we discussed this divination form. Look at the images. Does any one thing stand out, to you? What do the colors 'say'? Is there a specific feeling this particular card gives you? Remember, with divination, in particular, what you feel absolutely effects the message being conveyed through you. With that in mind, we begin.

Just as the wheel of the year spins and the seasons come and go, only to come back in the next year, we must all revisit times and decisions in our lives. The *Wheel of Fortune* reminds us that everything moves in cycles, even change. Even the perspective from which we view a situation is bound to change, over time or given additional information.

Direct This card appearing in a reading is a sure sign that unusual coincidences—or *are they?*—are bound to come into play. This could be a meeting, by sheer chance; it could even be a random lucky moment, like having exact change for the item you just *have* to have! Kismet, some might call it. Whatever these coincidences may be, they will all put a positive spin on the reading. Get it? Spin! Sorry, I couldn't help myself. :)

If this card refers to a person, it usually represents a deeply caring person, an old friend, or even a long lost love. Just remember to pay attention to the entire message that the rest of the cards are sending your way.

Even if the card is more likely to be referring to a situation, instead, it's definitely talking about a happy and positive outcomes. Just remember, a good thing can't go on forever, and this will most definitely run its course, and come to the end of its cycle. After all, everything comes to an end.

Reversed And when the *Wheel* is reversed, knowing that there is an end, even if it's not in sight, is a blessing. Believe me! When this card appears, reversed, it means that Lady Luck has left the building. Literally, everything will be more difficult.

Projects will seem to be devoid of motivation. Even relationships that should be sustainable seem to take so much extended effort. Stay away from gambling of all sorts, including friendly "I'll bet you a dollar that..." style bets. You'll be sure to lose, in the end. And badly. If a choice has been left to chance, it won't be able to get much worse because a choice should have been made. So, make sure that you convey the message the *choices must be made*, and not just simply left to see where it falls.

In the reading, if this card is representative of a person, it is someone who relied on luck for too long and has turned victim of a bad twist of Fate. On the other hand, it could be someone who is literally on a path towards self-destruction; this could be in the form of an addict, with no sense of self-control, who refuses to realize that they'll never succeed on the path they've chosen. Admittedly, that's a hardened view of how bad it could be, but it is the honest reality of what this card could portend.

If this card appears to be referring to a situation, it's most likely referring to all of the roadblocks that appear and interfere with the desired result. We're talking delays, bad weather (bonus points for flights delayed because of foul weather!) and every other little thing that can delay the final ending. Not to worry, though; everything runs its course, and even the seemingly endless bad times do have an end. Just remind the person receiving your reading (which *can* be yourself) that they're often too close to a subject to have the perspective to see the end. Even better? Things will again turn to the positive.

Until next time, my lovelies!

Pagan Resources

There are many Pagan resources for kids, however, they seem to be hard to find. Below is a small list of the ones we found for you to check out. If you know of others or want your own listed here feel free to email us!

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W. Lyon Martin
artist • writer • storyteller • presenter



roots & shoots



**Grey School
of
Wizardry**



Meagan Stories



intelligent info for today's pagan kids...and it's free!

**PAGAN KIDS!
GUIDES**



ANCIENT LIGHT

Challenge for the mind, fun for the hands, joy for the soul

Mystical Evening

By: TristÅ

Take the time, each month, to have a mystical evening with your family, focusing on our monthly theme. Make this the time that Paganism and modern day meet within your own realm. Involve all members of the family, allowing them to help and gain knowledge, both, with this one day. To get you started on ideas, take a look at some listed below.

Plates & Bowls

Make this a dinner to remember by using anything that is cleaned and proper enough to use for the plates and bowls. This shows the children that even their everyday trash can be used a few times before tossing out. I have had this type of dinner and used egg cartons to hold biscuits, plastic around a recently purchased ball as a bowl with a cut paper towel roll to hold it even on the table, and a piece of cardboard that was packaging as a plate. These are just idea's I am sure you can come up with other things on your own.

Left-Over Dishes

Add in a few left-overs that you are able to convert into different dishes. Make a special point to mention that all food prepared should be eaten even if it means to prepare it differently. Waste can happen in food as well as any other area.



After Activity

When your dinner is done take the time to recycle or reuse everything that it had with it. Have your child help you or at least see what you do with everything. If there is food left that you will not be using for left over meals take into consideration the wild animals out there that might take use of it. Your child seeing that everything can be recycled or reused will be great for them.

Gaia Helper Discussion

Take this time to sit with your child or children and teach them the connection between Paganism and the love of the earth. Younger children can even take the title of "Gaia Helper" which could be used anytime after the discussion to enforce things. Older children can help the younger one's with duties and chores that go with being a helper to Gaia which will in turn keep them fresh with ideas.

Magickal Touch

By: Mandi Aumann

Using Composition Books



One great way to use composition books in your homeschool is to use them as a cumulative portfolio for each subject. Each of our students has a math composition book (quadrille ruled, but you can use regular rule), language arts notebook, unit study notebook, and a journal (if they want one). All math work is done in the math notebook - if the student does a worksheet, it gets glued in, but most of the time, the assignment is written out from the non-consumable textbook into the notebook. Sometimes I help them by writing out the problems so they only have to solve them for the homework. The language arts notebook has copy-work, reading log entries, grammar lessons, spelling and vocabulary words, etc. Again, the younger ones have more of my writing than theirs, but this will change over time. The unit study notebook is a lot more creative than the first two notebooks. We use lapbooking techniques and mini-books to show the things we've learned. When we finish a unit, we spend the last couple of days putting the mini-books in the composition book with regular glue. When a notebook gets filled up, the start and end dates go on the front of the notebook, and the notebook gets put in the archive box for future reference.

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I also use composition books for my personal journals. Sometimes I draw, sometimes I glue in printed articles

This section is dedicated to finding ways in our daily lives of incorporating our beliefs. A pagan life is one of symbolism and mysticism. We recognize and celebrate the emotions and memories that daily life holds for us. A bed is not just a bed; it is a mystical place of dreams, peace, and togetherness. Everything in our lives holds new meaning

Reduce, Reuse, & Recycle

I bet you thought I meant reading, writing and arithmetic. This time I'm talking about Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.

These are common words today. Most kids learn them in school when they learn about conservation and ecology. As Pagans, these words should be familiar to us, too. Most of the time, though, applying those words to our busy lives can be a challenge. Around here, we find that a little planning can go a long way in applying all three principles. Bear with me as there is a lot of overlap, but here are some tips for doing these things in your homeschool.

Reduce: First off, only buy what you absolutely need for your school. It can be very inspiring to go to conventions or browse the Internet and see these great textbooks and teaching tools online. We get our tax refund check and start planning for next year, getting excited about what we missed out on using. The grass is always greener. Seriously, though, plan ahead, and commit to using what you have purchased. If what you have is really not working, then find a way to recycle it before you move onto the next purchase. This is common sense, of course. Some examples of great buys that can help you reduce are: mechanical pencils, refillable pens, composition books, non-consumable textbooks, using the computer for school work as much as possible, writing out lessons in notebooks instead of copying or printing them, printing on draft print in black and white (let your students express themselves by coloring in the pictures on their worksheets), and using free Internet resources for clip art and worksheets.

Reuse: As I've already mentioned above, using non-consumable textbooks is a great way to reduce and reuse. Another suggestion for reusing, is to look at it as repurposing. If you have a graded science book, use it for reading materials if you don't plan to use it for science lessons. A Pringles can becomes a telescope with a little creativity. A coffee can becomes a lesson in force and action/reaction when you turn it into a "come back can". Using dry-erase boards for lap lessons can be a handy tool when you don't need to assign something permanent, but need to jot something down. If my kids have trouble solving a math problem, we'll write it out and talk through it with the dry-erase board, then they copy it to their notebook. Old t-shirts can become art smocks. Old jeans become tote bags, pot holders, and a bunch of other things. And all these projects count for school. We also get a lot of our art supplies by repurposing things - styrofoam trays from meat are paint palettes, parmesan cheese bottles are paint brush holders, yeast jars hold brads and staples, and the list continues. Even our paper scraps are saved and used when we need little bits for decorations in notebooks, or torn up and used to make new paper for projects or sending letters.

Magickal Touch

By: Mandi Aumann

Using Composition Books (continued)

I also use composition books for my personal journals. Sometimes I draw, sometimes I glue in printed articles, ticket stubs, photos, etc. Mostly I write. I have found that using composition books really frees my creativity because I only spent \$1-\$2 on it, where a nice looking hardbound journal can cost anywhere from \$4-\$15, depending on the size. By the way, if you watch the prices at Wal-Mart, you can get composition books for less than \$1 each at least twice a year. I really stock up when I see the prices this low.

We have also found the composition books make great Books of Shadows for me and the kids. They are inexpensive, but they hold up well when we add things like drawings, pressed plants, photos, etc. And the covers are sturdy enough that we can use various materials to decorate the covers. At first, I made WordArt on the computer, then glued the printed page to the front of the cover and laminated it with packing tape. Our most recent excursion in decorating our notebooks has employed the use of scrapbook papers from Michaels (over 20 pages for less than \$5 by shopping the sale sheets), ribbons, puffy stickers, clip art, and Mod Podge for the glue. Mod Podge, I'm discovering, is great because it works as the adhesive, as well as a final coat for keeping it all together. The notebooks look great and are personalized by the owner. And we had so much fun shopping for the decorations! It took us about 2 hours to settle on our decorations! You can also find some great resources for free scrapbooking papers online - my favorite is

www.scrapbookscrapbook.com.

This section is dedicated to finding ways in our daily lives of incorporating our beliefs. A pagan life is one of symbolism and mysticism. We recognize and celebrate the emotions and memories that daily life holds for us. A bed is not just a bed; it is a mystical place of dreams, peace, and togetherness. Everything in our lives holds new meaning

Reduce, Reuse, & Recycle (continued)

Recycle: When we cannot find any use whatsoever for keeping an item, we ask ourselves if it can be recycled. Our trash collection is self-service, so we can separate our trash and sort it into the recycling bins at the dump. Most trash service companies offer recycling pick-up as well, but if yours doesn't, consider finding other options locally. Most large businesses today have recycling plans, and you can certainly find someone somewhere who will accept your recycling. As for textbooks and teaching materials, you can resell them online, but another option, especially for older books that may not sell well, is to consider gifting them through groups like Freecycle (www.freecycle.com), BookMooch (www.bookmooch.com), or Paperback Swap (www.paperbackswap.com).

Keeping the planet green, and teaching these skills to the next generation, can be fun. Encourage your kids to think of new ways to use things, but try to help them understand where the line between treasure and trash really is. Some projects are worth photographing, then dismantling to reuse the parts. Some are not. My daughter once tried to keep a sugar cube pyramid so she could give it to her children. It took a lot of convincing, but she finally understood that in a lot of cases, a picture is worth a thousand words.



To The Parent

By: Pandora

Mercury Retrograde: It Can Be a Blessing, in Disguise

Most of us have heard reference of Mercury in Retrograde, but how many of us truly know what it's all about? Well, I hope to be able to give you some clarity, and in more ways than you realize. The scientific answer is that Mercury reaches a point in its orbit that, when compared to Earth's orbit, makes it appear to move backwards across the sky. This happens roughly four times, each year.

But what does this really mean? For most of us, we know our electronic devices will start acting a little crazy or--as I love to describe it--wonky. But what many people may not realize is that it's particularly abusing towards those electronic devices that have anything to do with communication. Is your cell phone being 'stupid'? Mercury Retrograde. Is your computer running a lot slower than it should, but your anti-virus software says it's clean? Mercury Retrograde. Are people leaving messages on your voicemail or on your home's answering machine, but you're not receiving them, either at all or until hours or days after? Again, we can thank Mercury Retrograde.

But that's not all! Mercury, being the Planet of Communication, effects ALL types of communication. This includes all forms of communication. Do people seem to be even more dense than usual? You know why. That just means you need to take more time and effort to make sure you get your point across, clearly. Unfortunately, that doesn't always work. A good friend of mine had to take it to the extent of actually STANDING on the service manager's desk, to get the appropriate attention to her car's issues; the car finally got fixed! Although that's not *quite* the method I'd suggest, on a day-to-day basis, after entirely too much frustration this method was the only viable solution.

We all know there are certain things we should avoid, during this planetary phase, if at all possible. Don't start legal proceedings, including signing contracts, if you can, since you may find yourself having to go through the same details, later. Don't purchase a new phone or computer, is another one I've heard. Don't make snap decisions on purchases, which is a good Rule-of-Thumb, anyway. I've heard so many "don't do this, don't do that", over the years that, I couldn't help but wonder what I *could* do. Truthfully, Mercury Retrogrades can feel paralyzing to many. It's time to look at this planetary phase as something other than a malady.

Mercury Retrograde is a wonderful time to look inward. Really do some self-evaluating, if you can. Even if you simply focus on a single area, this is a great time to do it. Are there any habits that you want to break? Start NOW. Mercury Retro is something that you'll revisit, time and again, so start healthy habits and make every concerted effort to break the unhealthy and non-beneficial ones. As it's a time to look within, and back, it's *very* hard to start something new, so you'll need to put in as much effort and thought as you can. Recruit friends and family, to help cheer you on and hold you accountable. Every little thing you can do will help. Trust me!

So, what can you really do? Well, here are a few ideas:

Take a breath. Nothing is actually as bad as it seems, at first.

Your inner voice, conscience, or whatever you want to call it: LISTEN TO IT!!! Especially now.

Don't be surprised when you run into someone you haven't seen since who-knows-when. It happens fairly often during Mercury Retrograde

Let your sense of humor out. You'll need to be able to laugh at situations Life throws your way, for a while.

That's a good thing!

Breathe. Seriously. You'll need your patience, and remembering to breathe in long, deep breaths is one of the first things to go. Quick, shallow breaths lead to less oxygen in your blood, and traveling through your organs, and more stress chemicals being released. By breathing slowly and deliberately, *right now*, you'll be able to do it well the next time Retrograde comes around, as well as during the so-called normal times of the year.

Be nice. Everybody is going through the same kinds of frustration, right now. So, just like a repetitive line from a Patrick Swayze movie...Be nice!

So, Mercury Retrograde isn't all bad. Take some, or all, of the suggestions and learn to embrace it. Even if only a little bit, it'll prove to be most beneficial.

Until next time: Love & Light!