



Turn of the Wheel

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Wytchehaven Weekend 4: Event Review by Steven Trotter

I recently attended an absolutely wonderful event in Arkansas and I'd like to share my experiences at Wytchehaven Weekend #4 - "Recording the Path" with you. What made this event so wonderful that I have already reserved vacation days for next year's events?

Well, it all began with a beautiful early morning drive into the Ozarks of Salem, AR. The land which is the new, permanent home for the Wytchehaven Weekends fully lives up to its namesake, Pyrrth Annwn, a Welsh term meaning "Door (or Gate) to the Otherworld". While driving up the forested drive to Pyrrth Annwn, the pressures and stresses of the mundane fall from you. At times, the calming energy of this land can be felt pulsating under your feet.

Arriving at noon on Friday, I was welcomed by Niki and Brennan. Niki and Brennan, ordained ministers of the I.S.I.S. Foundation and organizers of the Wytchehaven events, are two of the kindest people I have ever met. I was also welcomed by new friends Miranda, Chasidy, Cindy, and Debbie. From the time I arrived I felt welcome. If you've ever been around me for a period of time, you'll know that I'm very chatty, full of energy, and I never stop. I constantly have a dozen projects I'm working on and always in search for more. I was just the opposite this past weekend. I was quiet and relaxed for the first time in a very long time. I really felt like I could drop everything for a few days and the world wouldn't collapse. :o)

Friday night was the first of a few nights around the revel fire. Each night we descended to Revels to "dance the fire". The evenings included hours of drumming & dancing, a fanciful fairy parade, and musical performances by Sede. Once we had worn ourselves out we headed up the hill to the community fire, a smaller fire pit where you can relax before heading off to bed each night or gather in the mornings to sip coffee, hot cocoa, and tea.

The community fire also served as a classroom for the many workshops offered throughout the weekend. One of my favorite features of Wytchehaven is that the workshops are never scheduled to overlap each other. You can attend every single workshop if you choose to. Which of course I did. The workshops included Crafting a Children's Circle (by W. Lyon Martin), Blessing the Boundaries (by W. Lyon Martin), Wiccan Feng Shui (by Alexandria), Every Day Rituals (by Alexandria), Dancing the Sacred Fyre (by Niki), and Using Origami in Magickal Work (by Jeremy). All of the workshops were very informative. The wonderful thing about having so many workshops is the plethora of ideas I walked away with for my own practices at home, with my child and wife, and in my local community. The workshops are very interactive. Everyone is encouraged to ask questions and share both stories and ideas. Those stories and ideas are then discussed and applied to many people's different paths. We shared and discussed such things as energy flow, grief, rituals, applying your magical life to your mundane life, children in circle, and much more.

Throughout the weekend, we had several rituals. Those included the Welcoming Ritual, a Redneck Pagan Ritual, the Blessing of the Boundaries, and the Closing Ritual. The Redneck Pagan Ritual was hilarious. It was a comical ritual honoring our elders, Cooter & Daisy-Mae. The elements were of course represented by moon pies (earth), cigarettes (air), lighter (fire), and beer (water) and the very appropriate chanting of Give Me Some of That Old Time Religion! I was also lucky enough to take part in the first of an annual tradition, the Blessing of the Boundaries. After a short ritual, a handful of us walked and chanted our way around the boundaries of the main grounds.

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"I didn't find a new festival to attend, I found a family.

I found a true community."



Wytchehaven Weekend #4 Cont...



W. Lyon Martin,
"An Ordinary Girl, A
Magical Child"



Alexandria,
"Wiccan Feng Shui"
& "Life's Little Rituals"

The Blessing of the Boundaries was written and led by the lovely W. Lyon Martin, author of the amazing pagan children's book "An Ordinary Girl, A Magical Child". If you have children that are being raised on a earth spiritualist path, you simply must purchase this book! Lyon's soft watercolor paintings are accompanied by a story which weaves through not only the wheel of the year but also other events in a child's life to which magic can be applied. A prime example is bad dreams.

As a parent, I know how hard it can be to watch your child wake up night after night with bad dreams. Lyon presents you with a wonderfully simply, yet powerfully effective solution to this problem. Having a chance to finally meet Lyon face to face at Wytchehaven, I must say I am honored to call her a friend of mine. Lyon has a very welcoming personality and is very happy to share her years of experience on the path with anyone who asks. She is a true gem among our community.

Another author at Weekend #4 was Alexandria, author of "Wiccan Feng Shui" and "Life's Little Rituals". Her application of Wiccan principles to those of the Asian tradition of Feng Shui is fascinating to say the least. With the aid of a handout and a very thorough explanation of her methods, it was very easy to plot out small changes which could enhance the energy flow in my own home. My favorite workshop of the weekend was Alexandria's "Every Day Rituals". It was one of those workshops in which you find yourself saying "I never thought about it that way". She explains how we too often go into "auto-pilot mode" in our every increasingly busy lives. I learned how to take the time to think about what I'm doing and what it means to me. "Every day rituals" include such small tasks as brushing your teeth and paying your bills. Alexandria explained that she wrote "Life's Little Rituals" more for the mundane world who may not recognize the importance of ritual. This book functions as a "guide for using nonreligious rituals to give thanks for everyday wonders... mark milestones and baby steps... and commemorate the things that truly matter, both big and small."

Above all, my favorite part of Weekend #4 was seeing old friends, putting faces to many of my digital pen pals and meeting many new friends. There's a saying at Wytchehaven that at each festival there are a few people who say they "simply cannot imagine not coming to every weekend from now on". I now proudly add myself to that growing list of people. I didn't find a new festival to attend, I found a family. I found a true community.

Wytchehaven Weekend Related Links:

Wytchehaven / I.S.I.S. Foundation - <http://www.wytchehaven.org>

W. Lyon Martin - <http://magicalchild.handcraftedpagan.com>

Alexandria - <http://www.merflyer.com/>

Book Review by Lunakiss

Mind Magic: Techniques for Transforming Your Life by Marta Hiatt, Ph.D.

If you're at a place in your life where you need to transform your life, author Marta Hiatt will help you get there. A counseling psychologist and Family Therapist, Hiatt shows us in her book "Mind Magic" that having a good positive mental image of ourselves will transform your life. In life we rely on physical exercise to help us transform on our physique to a better one; we should also do the same for our mind with mental exercise.

Hiatt begins laying down the foundation of mental power with Part One : The Evolution of Consciousness: Attributes of Consciousness, The Great Power Within You, and Reprogramming Your Mind. The greatest power in the world is inside your own head, according to Hiatt.

In Attributes of Consciousness, this great power lies within your consciousness - the ability to receive and respond to impressions from outside stimuli. The counseling psychologist takes us inside the scientific levels of consciousness in many areas of life from atomic realm, mineral, plant to human realm. She explains how each one has its attributes to its own world. The main difference between human realm of consciousness and other life is self-awareness, our ability to reflect inwardly. This is how we perceive ourselves and the effect of all areas of our lives.

Hiatt suggests we should achieve the ultimate level of consciousness by going beyond the powers of imagination and continue evolving with the use of creative power within us. As pagans, we already know how use this creative power in our rituals and spells. Seldom do we apply it to everyday use. Hiatt points out that it is necessary to learn how to think properly, and how to channel our emotions into constructive ends. By working on this we begin to build a stronger good image of ourselves.

The other two sections of part one, The Great Power Within and Reprogram Your Mind, offers overview and tips to achieve power and how to apply it mentally. Part Two: Techniques for Transformation includes exercises for us to strengthen our mental power in a more positive light. The use of imagination and self-hypnosis are the machines we use to gain mental power. As we use self-hypnosis and imagination as our machines we begin to build strength in positive mental thinking. Hypnosis helps us accept suggestions and allows us to concentrate better, which the author calls the magic doorway. Imagination directs our thoughts in programming our mind to positively think better instead of negatively, where diseases can originate according to Hiatt. Our thoughts go out into the universe in the form of vibrations and attract to us exactly what we are sending out. She goes on to say, when properly directed, imagination is the key to the doorway to success, love, health, abundance, satisfying relationships, self-confidence, and greater self-expression. All we need to do is become consciously aware of what we are creating, and change the programming if we don't like it.

Many of us rely on spells or certain god(s)/goddess(es) to make our hopes, dreams, and wishes come true but with our personal will power-the will or intent to want change. Some of the techniques in the book "Mind Magic" suggest ways to properly direct our imagination through creative visualization steps; effect of concentration; how to achieve prosperity consciousness through reprogramming the mind to accept hypnotic positive phrases. Hiatt suggests writing negative phrases in certain areas of life and replace them by creating positive phrase cards. These affirmations, if used daily, can help a person overcome fear of love, gain prosperity, achieve self-healing visualizations, etc.

In the section of Self-Healing Through Visualization, the author touches on something we rarely rely on healing with: thought. The previous chapters in "Mind Magic" explain how we summon mental power, images of things and views of ourselves. So in this section we understand thoughts when it comes to visualizing, or as I call it mentally talking, to our bodies energies to help. Meditation is a tool Hiatt mentions that will guide us to self-healing.

Dr. Marta Hiatt wraps up the book with an overview of reaching cosmic consciousness as the ultimate goal and applying the relaxation process in your life's routine. Despite a few shortcomings, the intentional purpose of the word "magic" is to grab the reader's attention and offer techniques to conquer our weaknesses and encourage us to setup our own "gym in life" to work on our minds.

How to Make Herbal Remedies

Part Two - by Crystal Phillips

Last month we focused on infusions, decoctions, syrups, and poultices. This month I want to explain a few more remedy methods.

You can make an herbal oil either with the hot or cold method. A hot infused oil is made by simmering the herb and the oil gently for several hours. All you need is 1 cup dried herb and 2 cups carrier oil, such as cold pressed extra virgin olive oil. You need a double boiler to simmer the herb and oil. Heat gently for about 3 hours. Then strain the herb through a muslin bag or a jelly bag. Store in dry, airtight, dark glass storage bottles. The hot infused oil method is suitable for leafy herbs such as bladder wrack for arthritic pain; chickweed for eczema; cleavers for psoriasis; comfrey for bruises, sprains and osteoarthritis; stinging nettle for skin rashes; and rosemary for aches and pains.

Cold infused oil is made by just soaking the herb in oil in a jar in a sunny location for about a month. All you need is a clear jar with a lid, enough aerial parts and flowers to fill a jar, and enough oil (cold pressed extra virgin olive oil) to cover the herb in the jar. Pack the jar tightly with the herb and cover completely with the oil. Close the lid tightly and place the jar in a sunny windowsill or a greenhouse for about a month. Strain the mixture through a jelly bag. You can make a stronger oil by adding more fresh or dried herb to the infused oil and repeat the process. Then store in dry, dark, airtight bottles. This method is suitable for flowering herbs such as calendula (use fresh or dried) for scrapes, dry eczema, and fungal infections; melilot (use dried herb) for varicose eczema; and St. John's Wort (use only fresh flowering tops) for sunburn, minor scalds or burns, scratches, and inflamed joints. Both of these methods will store for up to a year if kept in a cool, dark place.

Massage oils are very easy to make. Simply add 1 teaspoon essential oil to 3 tablespoons of carrier oil, such as sweet almond oil or grape seed oil. Reduce the amount of essential oil to ½ teaspoon for children, the elderly, or for those with sensitive skin. Store the oil in dry, dark, glass bottles with airtight lid. Make only small amounts at a time because once the essential oil is diluted it breaks down quickly.



Steam inhalations are great for conditions such as asthma, sinusitis, or bronchitis. It clears the respiratory system of excess mucus. You can use essential oil, infusions or dried herb. Use about 10 drops essential oil, 2 cups infusion, or 1-2 tablespoons of the dried herb. Put any of these in a large bowl. Add a boiling kettle of water (about 2 quarts) to this. Then with your head over the bowl, drape a towel over the head and bowl. Then inhale steadily, yet normal, for 10 minutes. Avoid going into a cool atmosphere for about 30 minutes. Eucalyptus, leaves or oil, is great for sinus congestion. Roman chamomile, oil or flowers, is used for the onset of asthma attacks and whooping cough. Fresh yarrow flowers are used for hay fever. Cinnamon oil is used for coughs and respiratory irritations. Mint, leaves or oil, are also used for nasal congestion.

Next month, in the last installment of this series, we will cover an additional four herbal home remedies.

Fall Resurgence by Sasha Daucus

As an herbalist, I admit that I look forward to spring with some alarm—I love it, but it's hard to keep up. Before I know it, the prime time on this or that spring plant has slipped by before I've had a chance to put up a remedy I wanted. That's why I love the Fall Resurgence.

Fall Resurgence is that special time when many of the wild greens start come back up again, fresh and juicy. While the trees, shrubs and taller plants are dying back, or bitten back by the first frost, hardy green, long since too tough, suddenly make another appearance. Gardeners use this time to plant another round of spinach, but don't overlook the chance that the wild greens give you. Now is your time to go out and get another shot at dandelion, cleavers, and chickweed. Even the plantain, which is looking pretty beat up by the end of summer, starts to look fresh and green again.

These herbs, common weeds and aliens, are all too easy to pass over in the search for more thrilling plants. There are few herbs of greater value than dandelion, both roots and leaves, especially for liver health which is central to the overall health of the body. Herbalist Susun Weed says that early in her career she went to several older, experienced herbalists and asked them what was the most important piece of advice they could give her. "They all told me that the liver was the most important thing to take care of," and you don't get better than dandelion for taking care of the liver. Dandelion is easy to come by and can't hurt you. It can be used as a medicine or as a food.

Fall is also a good time to make Green Salves. Green salves can be made out of any number of different plants and roots, and every combination I have tried works well. Several of my friends also make their own green salve, using different recipes and they all swear by them. So, what you do is take a list of ingredients to put in your green salve, cook it up with whatever is on hand and then enjoy. This spring, at an herb class, the folks got inspired to make salves. After the class was over, they put together a whopping good salve with: fresh plantain leaf, fresh comfrey leaf, fresh mullein leaf, dried calendula flowers, dried echinacea root, fresh yarrow leaf.

Fall plants to put in Green salve fresh plantain, cleaver, chickweed, jewel weed leaves. Maybe you will also find some good mullein, yarrow, comfrey leaves, fresh dug echinacea, yellow dock, jewel weed root.

Sasha Daucus is an herbalist, spiritual healer, and teacher working in the Ozarks since 1983. She works at Golden Light Center, a holistic health care clinic, in Doniphan, Missouri. She is a certified Master Herbalist and Reiki teacher.



PURPLE CONEFLOWER
Echinacea purpurea (L.) Moench
ASTER FAMILY

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