Welcome to the Summer Solstice Oracle

We have officially started the summer. Here in Florida it is difficult to distinguish the seasons but there is no denying we know summer weather. It is hot and humid most days with occasional thunderstorms. As I write this the clouds are building and the thunder is clapping. We have been in the 90s for so long I cannot remember winter. As of June 1st we are also in hurricane season that will last until the end of November.

Unfortunately, my health has denied me the chance to go outside much. I have made short runs to check plants and can happily report I picked the first blueberries of the season. There weren’t very many but they were tasty. I love biting down on a warm berry and have the juice squirt in my mouth.

I have also been checking on the butterflies and my heart was full when I saw a Gulf Fritillary laying eggs on the passionflower vine. Now we have a Gulf Fritillary chrysalis that looks like a dead leaf and two Monarch chrysalis hanging from the soffit. It is amazing the number of butterflies that use the passionflower as the host plant. Just like the Monarchs share milkweed with the Queens. I was lucky to catch a glimpse of a Giant Swallowtail the other day. She was going back and forth between the milkweed and a mint plant.
We saw someone make a post on Facebook about hummingbirds so we thought it was time to bring out the feeders. As soon as I walked away from the feeder I saw a jewel colored hummingbird look at the feeder for a few seconds and then take off. I am glad they are back and love watching them fly.

My husband went out back a few weeks ago and opened the pool box where we store supplies and a family of southern black racers came darting out looking for a better place to hide. Apparently they hatched only a few days before because they were about six inches long. The mother has made her home in the pool heater. One of my granddaughters brought me a snake skin from a black racer that is in one piece. There are eye holes and everything. It is about four feet long and now has a place of honor on the bookcase in the girls’ room.

Now a little bit about the solstice. The summer solstice is one of four solar festivals along with the winter solstice and the two equinox. The summer solstice is the longest day of the year. The word ‘solstice’ comes from Latin and means ‘sun stands still.’ We celebrate Midsummer when the sun reaches the most northerly position and occurs in the constellation of Cancer the Crab.

There is a problem with the date though. The solstice generally falls around June 21st but Midsummer Eve is fixed on June 23rd, also known as St. John’s Eve and Midsummer Day as St. John’s Day on June 24th. This may be partly because of the change in calendars.

In ancient China the summer solstice was consider feminine, the yin for the year and the winter solstice male, the yang. This gives balance to the year. The Celts and Druids celebrated the marriage of the sky and earth with bonfires. They also believed there were two different suns depending on the time of the year: one for the waxing and waning parts of the year. There is also a great battle that takes place at this time of year. It is the battle between the Oak King and the Holly King.
In the Norse tradition, this is the midpoint of the year. They called the month of June *Aerra Litha* meaning “before Litha” and July was *Aeftera Litha* meaning “after Litha.” This led to the belief that Litha was the summer solstice.

There are several customs associated with Midsummer. They celebrate the light and the power of the sun. Circle dancing, rolling wheels set on fire and having bonfires are just a few customs associated with the summer solstice. It is good for divination, healing and torchlight processions. This is a festival of fire.

There are several types of divination you can try. Here are just a few ideas: tarot, runes, playing cards and Ogham. I have recently heard of using scrabble tiles for divination. This is also a good time to make contact with faeries.

In the Dianic tradition the summer solstice represents the union with creative, sexual and sensual sides. She is fertile and gives birth to creations. It is a great time to give birth to a project. Show your creative side. You can make or write something. You can sing or dance. Be free with your expressions. We also honor the fire and heat we hold inside. Honor this part of yourself by sitting by a fire pit or bonfire. Light a red candle and honor a mother goddess.

May you be blessed this Solstice Season.
Dawn

*All photos by Dawn Thomas*

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soaps. She is an avid gardener and lives in Florida with husband. Other book reviews can be found on her blog: http://becomingbelladonna.blogspot.com/

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A Question of Sun Goddesses

Dear Mama Donna,

I have always heard that the sun is associated with the male and the moon with the female. Are there any sun goddesses? Who? Where?

Sun lover, in Arizona

Dear Sunny,

In archaic times, people perceived the sun, in its shining prime and glory, the giver of heat and light and life, to be the effulgent force of the female. A passionate aspect of the Great Mother, the versatile Jill-of-All-Trades who issues forth and supports whole life. She is the Heaven Illuminating Goddess, Amaterasu Omikame, in Japan, and the Queen of Heaven and Earth, Arinna, in Mesopotamia. She was Yhi, Sun Woman, to the Arunta of Australia. Sun Sister was known in Anatolia, Siberia and Native America.

Tribal North Europe knew Her, too. The Germans called Her Sunna, as did the Norwegians. In Scandinavia, She was Glory-of-Elves or Sol. The Eddas say that on Doomsday, She will bear a daughter who will be the new sun, the next creation. The luminous world to come. She was Sol, as well, to the Celts who also called her Sul or Sulis. Her celebrations took place on open plains, on hilltops, overlooking
springs. A major ceremonial site was Silbury Hill (Sulisbury Hill) and the springs at Bath, once called Aquae Sulis, were the site of Roman altars sacred to Sul Minerva.

The Great Mother in ancient India was Aditi, the mother of the twelve spirits of the zodiac, the Adityas who would “reveal their light at Doomsday.” The *Mahanirvanatantra* describes the sun as a golden garment of light that graces the Great Goddess. “The sun, the most glorious symbol in the physical world, is the vesture of Her who is ‘clothed with the sun.’”

Shamelessly
   orange like a
   parrot’s beak,
   arousing with a lover’s
   touch the clustered
   lotus buds,
   I praise this
   great wheel the sun —
   rising it is an
   earring for
   the Lady of the East.

   Vidya Kara, Eleventh Century Sanskrit

Tantric Buddhist monks greeted the Sun Goddess, Marici, at dawn, chanting to Her, “the glorious one, and the sun of happiness. . . I salute you O Goddess Marici! Bless me and fulfill my desires. Protect me, O Goddess, from all the eight fears.” Marici, or Mari, was a precursor of the Christian Mary. The New Testament Book of Revelation refers to Her as a “woman clothed in the sun.”

With the advent of the patriarchy, the sun underwent a sex change. Profound, this gender shift was a portrayal of the left brain revolution, the ascendance of ration over passion. Female divinity was overthrown, overthrone, overgrown. Her domain plundered, Her authority usurped, Her worship polluted. The sun, with the strength of its brilliance, its sheer presence and potency, came to stand for the masculine principle, the power of rational thinking. The moon, reflective, more subtle and seemingly erratic, came to be associated with the feminine in
most cultures. Although the traits of the sun are thought to be male, it retains its female designation in the languages of Northern Europe, Arabia and Japan.

Many solar blessings of the Goddess,

xxMama Donna

*Are you cyclically confused? In a ceremonial quandary? Completely clueless? Wonder no more. *Send your questions about seasons, cycles, celebrations, ceremonies and spirit to Mama Donna at: CityShaman@aol.com

Donna Henes is an internationally renowned urban shaman, ritual expert, award-winning author, popular speaker and workshop leader whose joyful celebrations of celestial events have introduced ancient traditional rituals and contemporary ceremonies to millions of people in more than 100 cities since 1972. She has published four books, a CD, an acclaimed Ezine and writes for The Huffington Post and UPI Religion and Spirituality Forum. Mama Donna, as she is affectionately called, maintains a ceremonial center, spirit shop, ritual practice and consultancy in Exotic Brooklyn, NY where she offers intuitive tarot readings and spiritual counseling and works with individuals, groups, institutions, municipalities and corporations to create meaningful ceremonies for every imaginable occasion.

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Before I sleep by Katy Ravensong

My Lady, I give you my hopes and fears,
all my laughter, all my tears.
In this day and in this hour,
I let go and trust your power.

I give to you my losses and gains,
In this moment, I give you my pain.
In my dreams, with the dolphins I'll leap.
I go now to seek healing sleep.

© Katy Ravensong
Book Review Clearing Clutter by Alexandra Chauran
Review by Dawn Thomas

Publisher: Llewellyn Worldwide, Ltd
240 Pages

Self-Help, Health, Mind & Body

This book surprised me. I thought it was a book telling me how to remove clutter from my home. I was so wrong. It goes so much further than that. The author explains how important it is to remove mental clutter as well as physical clutter. She recommends that you simplify, harmonize and reflect as you go through the process.

Sometimes when you are working on a decluttering project it can be overwhelming. She breaks down the process into small bits so it is easier to face the task at hand. She believes that clutter not only exists in our physical space but in our mental states as well. This was a new concept for me and I can see how her clearing clutter tips can help clean my mental and emotional states.

She includes many clearing clutter tips throughout the book. With these tips she shows us how we can look at our lives and see what needs to be cleaned or removed and what should stay. She tells us not to go too far too fast because getting rid of things can be emotional. She includes a ritual for giving things away that could make it easier to get rid of things people no longer need or want in their lives. She also mentions the importance of purifying the space after removing the clutter. This helps with our energetic clutter as well. She shows us how we can create sacred spaces and also including Feng Shui.

There are several exercises to do to help after you have cleaned the mental or emotional clutter. She includes many different types of meditation. She points out the importance of having a schedule and how to keep it clean and uncluttered.
She says, “Worry is worthless” and although I have heard similar statements before it is still very true. She advises us on procrastination and perfectionism and how we should not let them control our lives. The rituals included are so simple but meaningful. It’s just another reminder that we sometimes tend to do elaborate things when something simpler is just as good if not better.

I have spent a lot of time over the last year decluttering different areas of my home. I can honestly say I haven’t done nearly enough. This book taught me that. There are still many areas of my house (and life) that needs to be decluttered. I highly recommend this book to anyone that would like to improve their way of dealing with clutter. This includes the clutter we see and what we don’t.
Book Review: Permanent Spring Showers by Scott Southard

Review by Dawn Thomas

5 Prince Publishing
472 Pages

This book is about relationships and how couples deal with changes in their relationship. There are several scenarios happening in the book showing how the different relationships intertwine with each other. The point of view changes depending on the scenario. Portions of the book are journal entries by Jenn. The only confusing part for me was the change of the point of view. A few times I wasn’t sure who was telling the story.

The book begins with Rebecca and her husband Bob having a loud argument in the front yard. He just told her he had an affair with one of her students. Rebecca is distraught but must leave for a conference. Unfortunately in her haste to load her bags in the car she leaves a box of books she needed to sell at the conference. Once she arrives and realizes her mistake she must call Bob and ask him to send them to her overnight. The books get lost which proves to be just the first of many life changing events for Rebecca. The second is meeting Vince.

Rebecca’s evening with Vince truly turned into a night. They went out to eat, where Vince suggested they start with dessert. I just loved that. How many of us would rather have dessert first instead of being too full to enjoy it? Then they had far too many drinks. The next thing Rebecca realized it was the next morning and there is a stranger in her room. This one foolish act with Vince was all it took to change her life. She just didn’t know how yet.

In another scenario we meet Steve. He had a break up with Anna. They meet together at a café with her new fiancé where things go as well as you would
expect them to go. Next we meet Ralph and his wife Lily. He is jealous of the relationship Lily has with her rowing partner Stacey. They are training for the Olympics. He feels threatened by Stacey and believes she will expose him for who he really is. In the midst of everything is Jenn. She wants to write a book about relationships and seems to analyze everyone. She also is an instigator and pushes their actions around if they don’t fit her story. Next we meet Mary, her twin brother Marty, Gordon, her boyfriend, and her roommate Viv.

Vince has become obsessed with Rebecca. He spends all of his time sketching her but is never satisfied with the results. He wants to find a way to give the sketches life instead of being two dimensional but the way he finds impacts Rebecca in every aspect of her life. Never in her wildest dreams could she imagine how her story would unfold. The next act that follows truly casts Rebecca’s future into the unknown. With another strange twist, Vince hires Bob, Rebecca’s husband, to be a building contractor for one of his art projects. And so the plot thickens....
Book Review: The Choice - Book Two of the Sidhe by Cindy Cipriano
Review by Dawn Thomas

Publisher: Odyssey Books
275 Pages

Sci Fi & Fantasy, Children’s Fiction

At the end of the first book Laurel’s brother Daniel returns from the Sidhe. They saw Finley, Calum’s cousin, but before they could get him out Brownshire, a brownie, says something and Finley disappears in a puff of smoke. Calum is determined to find out where Finley is.

Laurel begs Calum to give her and Daniel the Talents. Laurel’s mother catches them and stops them. Laurel’s parents are angry at the Sidhe and the part they played in Daniel’s abduction years ago. Calum and Hagen miss spending time with Laurel. Her father has made it impossible for the boys to interact with Laurel or Daniel.

Laurel finds a way to meet Calum she tells him she has the Talents and needs his help. Something has been trying to get in the house to steal her new baby sister, Mary. At one point she traps Brownshire but he gets away without telling where he sent Finley. Calum’s grandfather tells him that Laurel is the key for Finley’s return.

Part two of the book focuses on Finley. He is in a strange world with blue sand. There is a golden vortex that opens and drops a body. A little boy runs out drags the body in a cart to a crevice. They hear screaming from the crevice. Finley approaches the boy and asks who he is and where are they. The boy tells Finley he is the Fetch and they are in the Void. He doesn’t know how long he had been
in there. He is there because another Sidhe switched with him and sent him instead as a punishment for something he didn’t do. Each time the vortex opens means a year has passed. Finley tries to find a way out but the boy tries to dissuade him. Calum and Kira, a Gypsy, work together and find a way to locate Finley. With his ring Calum can only bring back one person. Calum has no control over the situation and Finley makes the decision.

This is a young adult book that I completely enjoyed. It was a fast read and I look forward to the next book in the series, The Lost: Book Three of the Sidhe.
I wanted to read this book strictly because of the title. For some reason the title excited me and I must admit that I wasn’t disappointed at all by what followed within its pages. This book was a beautiful follow up to the Celtic Way of Seeing, taking everything a step further and yet in another direction all together.

Kirkey introduces the idea in the first half of the book that the myths, most specifically the Second Battle of Maigh Tuireadh, is a continuous battle within each of us regarding how we see, interact and live within this world. However, it is not just on an individual basis it is also on a community, societal and cultural basis as well. Looking at the Formorian Eye as the forced and controlled interaction of humans trying to shape the world into what we want is the idea of living in contrast to the natural way of things. He compares it to the way in which the industrial world looks at everything as an object and something to be used for gain. In contrast the Tuatha De Danann vision is living in accordance with the world and all its other inhabitants in a “right” manner that brings harmony and a sustainable way of life.

I had never thought in these terms and I can see the correlation and how Kirkey arrived at such a philosophy. My appreciation for this book, however, goes beyond understanding his philosophies and how they intertwine with our world. It is the implication, both spoken and unspoken, that we need to change in order to survive. This is a call to see “the mountain behind the mountain,” as Kirkey puts it, and then to understand that they cannot be separated but are integral parts of each other.

The vision within that shows how we are connected to and part of the interwoven threads of the world gives us the idea that we need to understand that we are of this place regardless of what that place is. In reading this book I began to have
discussions with friends about how Americans are lost. We have no place that we truly claim as our own and the stories of place that give us roots and connection to the earth. The First People of the United States do. Our ancestors in other countries do, but we are still for the most part immigrants and conquerors who have not realized that we have a place. We need a place within our lives. Otherwise our lack of connection continues to justify, in our minds at least, the wonton destruction of the world around us. It is an “other”, an object to be used.

Kirkey discusses the importance of place and story to teach us how we are connected and the importance of accepting that we are. Becoming good neighbors to all of the things that live with us on this planet is just a right way of living. In the stories of the gods and heroes we are taught that the earth is barren when force and imbalance rule and that prosperity flourishes when we live in accordance with the earth. Our seasons are the earth’s seasons and our ego is either the destruction or the nourishment of our world. I would love to read more of what Kirkey has written, and I most likely will look at his poetry at some point. In the meantime the bibliography that is supplied in The Salmon in the Spring will fill another shelf on my book case.

As a last note I loved the sentiment he quotes that states “What use are poets in times of need... poets must be healers – healers who, healed themselves, heal us culturally, heal us, or help heal us, in the visions and myths and rituals by which we live, and to do this effectively they must in some sense be... temporary ones, not eternal ones, of the Dream.” Kirkey conveys that we can substitute druid for poet and that is our charge. I like that, I like that a lot.
Lavendula Vera, L. Officinalis

Gender: Masculine
Planet: Mercury
Element: Air
Powers: Love, Protection, Sleep, Clarity, Longevity, Purification, Happiness, Peace
Parts Used: Leaf and Flowers

Lavender is native to the Mediterranean. Some people believe it was the beginning of aromatherapy as we know it today. Ancients used it for centuries to freshen the air, sedative and healing herb. There are several varieties but the most common are Spikenard, Elf Leaf, NADUS, Nard, and Spike.

Culinary Uses:
Herbs de Provence is a blend of thyme, marjoram, rosemary, oregano, savory and lavender. It is delicious on chicken, fish, pork, potatoes or vegetables. One of my favorite uses is to roast potatoes with it. They are so easy to make and taste like you have been working for hours in the kitchen.

Herb Roasted Potatoes

Ingredients
3 pounds of potatoes
1/4 cup olive oil
1-1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1 teaspoon pepper (1/2 teaspoon if you want to use cayenne or red pepper for a little spice)
2 Tablespoons minced garlic
1 Tablespoon Herbs de Provence
Parmesan cheese (optional)

Directions
Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
Cut up potatoes. You can either cut into wedges or strips. Place in a plastic storage bag and pour in olive oil, garlic, salt, pepper and Herbs de Provence. Shake to well coat the potatoes. Place in a single layer on a baking sheet and roast in the oven for about 45 minutes. Turn the potatoes twice during cooking. Check them periodically to make sure you do not overcook them. Once they are plated you may sprinkle some Parmesan cheese on them for additional flavor.

**Cucumber, Lavender, and Mint Infused Water**
This is very refreshing especially in the heat of the summer. This makes a large pitcher of flavored water. I make mine in an infusion pitcher which makes it easier to pour without the little bits falling into my glass.

**Ingredients**
- 1/2 cucumber
- 1 teaspoon organic lavender flowers
- 2 cups of ice
- Half gallon cold water
- Few sprigs of mint

**Directions**
Peel the cucumber. In a large pitcher add ice, cucumber, water, mint sprigs and lavender. Stir and place in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours. The longer the infusion sits, the stronger the flavor.

**Homeopathic and Cosmetic Uses**
Lavender is a powerful relaxant and a strong yet gentle antiseptic: effective as a remedy for sunburn, bee stings, muscle cramps, burns, and insomnia. Use lavender oil for intestinal gas, migraine, and dizziness. Pillows filled with dried flowers ease insomnia. Being antiseptic, add lavender to healing salves. A tea of the leaf allays nausea and vomiting. Use two teaspoons per cup of water and steep for twenty minutes. The dose is one-fourth cup four times a day. If you don’t want to make your own you can buy premade teabags. Steep lavender
blossoms in white wine for two weeks and strain to make a natural antidepressant beverage. Apply a mixture of lavender and rose petal vinegar to the temples and brow to ease headache. Add lavender oil to footbaths and to rubs for hysteria and palsy. Lavender eases toothaches and sprains. As late as World War II medical teams used lavender infusions to treat and disinfect wounds.

Lavender oil is good for all skin types. It is one of the few oils used neat or undiluted. This classic flower water has a clean floral fragrance. It is gentle antiseptic, calming, and healing qualities bring relief to skin irritations. It is an ideal toner for normal to dry skin. Lavender can be used as an infusion as a soothing facial wash for all skin types. You can make a calming, gentle facial scrub and mask for even the most sensitive skin by grinding dried flowers with ground oatmeal.

**Lavender Velvet Foot Cream**
Yield: about 3/4 cup

**Ingredients**
1/2 cup vegetable shortening
1 teaspoon beeswax
3 Tablespoons of distilled water (can substitute chamomile tea or lavender tea)
1 teaspoon borax
15 drops of lavender essential oil
15 drops rose or geranium essential oil
5 drops spearmint essential oil (optional)

**Directions**
In a small saucepan, heat the shortening and beeswax over very low heat until just melted then remove from heat. In another saucepan, warm the distilled water and dissolve the borax in it then remove from heat. When both mixtures are about the same temperature, place the pan with the wax and shortening mixture into a bowl of ice cubes and add the essential oils. Slowly add the distilled water mixture and use a whisk or spoon to stir. The cream will set up quickly and
will have a fluffy texture. Store it in a container and keep in the refrigerator for up to one year or at room temperature for three to four months.

To use:
Before bed, slather cream thickly onto clean feet and cover with socks. Use the cream on any dry skin and absorbs quickly if you rub in a little at a time.

Magical Uses and Divination:

Throw lavender into bonfires at Midsummer as an offering to the Gods and Goddesses. Lavender in the home brings peace, joy and healing.

Lavender has long been used in love spells and sachets (lavender placed in drawers with clothes) to attract love. A piece of paper on which you have rubbed lavender is excellent for writing love notes.

It is an ingredient of love spells and legends say its scent attracted men. Several centuries ago, prostitutes would wear lavender water or essential oil to advertise their profession and attract customers. Lavender also protects against cruel treatment at the hands of a spouse.

The flowers are also burned or smoldered to induce sleep and rest. It can be scattered around the home to maintain its peacefulness. The plant is so powerful that if one gazes upon the plant when depressed, all sorrow will depart and a joyous feeling will settle upon the person. Since the fragrance of lavender is conducive to long life you should smell it as often as possible.

For a wish, place lavender under your pillow while thinking of your wish. Do this just prior to going to bed for the night. In the morning, if you have dreamt of anything relating to your wish, it will come true. However, if you did not have dreams, or if they were unrelated with your wish, it will not come to pass.
**Folklore and Mythology**

Egyptians, Phoenicians and Arabs used lavender as a perfume for more than 2,500 years. Some legends say Cleopatra used lavender to seduce Julius Caesar and Mark Anthony. The Greeks added it to their bath water. The name may come from the Latin word *lavare* which means ‘to wash.’ In Roman times people considered lavender a prized commodity. It would cost a laborer a month’s wages to purchase lavender flowers in the market.

In Medieval and Renaissance Europe servants strew lavender on castle floors as a disinfectant and deodorant. In Tuscany women used lavender to remove the evil eye from children.

Queen Eleanor of Provence introduced lavender to England in the 1300s. Women and men would wear lavender under hats to prevent sunstroke and headaches. In the Middle Ages people believed lavender was an aphrodisiac. It was also an ingredient in Four Thieves Vinegar to ward off grave robbers and as protection from the plague. It was worn in bunches around the wrist. Glove makers used lavender oil to scent the leather used to make gloves to help ward off the disease.

When burned lavender kept away evil spirits. In Portugal and Spain parishioners placed lavender in church pews on special occasions especially around Midsummer. In North Africa women wore lavender against abuse from their husbands. The Pilgrims and Shakers brought lavender to the Americans.

*All photos by Dawn Thomas*

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“Here is your sacrament
Take. Eat. this is my body
this is real milk, thin, sweet, bluish,
which I give for the life of the world...
Here is your bread of life.
Here is the blood by which you live in me.”
—Robin Morgan (in Life Prayers, p. 148)

“All religion is about the mystery of creation. If the mystery of birth is the origin of
religion, it is women that we must look for the phenomenon that first made her
aware of the unseen power...Women’s awe at her capacity to create life is the
basis of mystery. Earliest religious images show pregnancy, rather than birth and
nurturing, as the numinous or magical state” (Monica Sjoo and Barbara Mor, The
Great Cosmic Mother, p. 71)

Birth as the original sacrament. Breastfeeding as the original communion. Blood
of my blood, flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone, women transmute blood into
breath, into being, into life for others.
Abrahamic theology in its root mythology, sets up the male body as “normal” as well neatly includes the notion that there is a divine hierarchy in which men are above women in value, role, and power. It also twists reality, by asserting that women come from men’s bodies, rather than the other way around. This inversion didn’t begin with Christianity, it has roots in more ancient mythology as well. Connected to the conversion of women’s natural creative, divine-like powers of the womb into the originators of sin and corruption, we readily see the deliberate inversion of the womb of the Goddess into the head of the father in the gulping down of Metis by Zeus and the subsequent birth of Athena from his head. Patriarchal creation myths rely heavily on biologically non-normative masculine creation imagery. I appreciate the brief note from Sjoo in The Great Cosmic Mother that, “In later Hindu mysticism the egg is identified as male generative energy. Whenever you come upon something like this, stop and ponder. If it is absurdly inorganic—male gods ‘brooding on the waters’ or ‘laying eggs’—then you know you are in the presence of an original Goddess cosmology stolen and displaced by later patriarchal scribes” (p. 56).

Modern-day diet culture may actually be as potent an agent of female body control and manipulation as ancient church doctrine. And, where there are wounded, denied, oppressed, and suppressed female bodies, there is an exploited world body as well. Women who retain their “wild natures” see value in “wild nature,” rather than seeing nature as something to be dominated, exploited and controlled. Diet culture encourages this attitude of domination of bodies and restraining of physical, “earthly” impulses and needs—no wonder we see this same basic attitude of domination and control carried out in the macrocosm as well. Womb ecology reflects world ecology, world ecology reflects womb ecology...

According to Melissa Raphael in her book Thealogy and Embodiment, “Spiritual feminism consecrates flesh as something more than passive ‘fertility.’ The word ‘fertility’ cannot evoke the patriarchally uncontrollable generativity and proliferation of flesh. Spiritual feminism celebrates the bounty of flesh in the same moment that it celebrates the earth and the foods the earth produces in generous abundance” (p. 95).

Raphael also observes that, “where a woman’s embodiment is a manifestation of the Goddess that has a very different meaning than if that divinity were imaged as male...The Goddess, the earth, the female body are unified and charged with
sacral powers for the transmutation of matter, for shape-shifting, and for the production of cosmogonic effluvia: blood, milk and water. This spiritual physiology of women is original but it is also subversive of and oppositional to its Western inheritance” (p. 76-77).

Monica Sjoo and Barbara Mor explain that, “Childbirth is a powerful drama and ritual” (p. 47). Ancient herstory is rooted in the generative powers of the female body. “…the facts of women’s experience of life are primordial. It is woman who goes through the sacred transformations in our own body and psyche—the mystery-changes of menstruation, pregnancy, birth, and the production of milk...Women’s mysteries are blood-transformation mysteries: the experience of female bodily transformations of matter. Matter: the mud: the Mother. She transforms herself.” (Sjoo & Mor, p. 50-51)

In this recent poem, composed spontaneously while standing in the woods, I am interested to see how I made the world-body connection somewhat unconsciously in this “theapoetical” experience...

I stand  
on the body of the Goddess  
I sit on her bones  
I breathe  
her breath  
Spirit of Life  
moving through me  
Her voice  
sings in my blood  
stars shine in my veins  
my heartbeat  
a drum  
tuned to the core  
of the planet  
my womb  
pulled by the tide  
my rhythms  
guided
by a distant moon
my cells springing
from hers
my heartsong
strummed
by ancient fingers
my passion
lit by wisdom
from within and without
my hope
kindled
each day
with my breath, blood, and pulse
I pray
I stand
on the body of the Goddess
I sit on her bones
I breathe
the breath of her lungs
I am one of her own...

One of the most profound elements of Goddess spirituality is its affirmation of and respect for women’s bodies and reproductive processes. In this affirmation, we can find a degree of overlap between feminist spirituality and process philosophy. As Carol Christ explains, “Process philosophy shares with feminist theology and thealogy a common interest in restoring the body and the world body, disparaged and denied in classical theism. What process philosophy has frequently failed to recognize is that restoring the body and the world body has enormous consequences for women. A feminist process paradigm will make feminist insight an integral part of process thinking. A feminist process paradigm will also ensure that process philosophers understand the body, the world body, and the divine body in physical terms and not simply as metaphysical concepts” (She Who Changes, p. 199). Christ also asks a profoundly meaningful question, “Is the source of the theological mistakes of classical theism a rejection of embodied life that begins with rejection of the female body? In other words, are the six theological mistakes embedded in a way of thinking that is inherently anti-female?” (200). She suggests that the answer is yes, that these theological
mistakes are intimately tied up, “in denial of the changing body and the changing world, which is rooted in a way of thinking that is inherently anti-female” (She Who Changes, p. 200).

While, like thealogy, process thinking is grounded in experience, the emphasis on philosophical thinking can contribute to a lack of full engagement with the real world. In thealogy many quickly realize that it is a spirituality better *lived* than analyzed: “Don’t just read about the Goddess, LOVE HER, listen to Her, reflect Her as the Earth and Moon reflect the Sun. Don’t just study Nature, put your hands in the dirt, your feet on the forest trail, turn your face to the wind and breathe Nature in and out of your lungs. Feel the connection. No books required.” (Esra Free, Wicca 404: Advanced Goddess Thealogy, 2007)

*Molly is a priestess, writer, teacher, and artist who lives with her husband and children in the Midwest. She is a doctoral student in women’s spirituality at Ocean Seminary College and the author of Womanrunes: A guide to their use and interpretation*. Molly and her husband co-create at Brigid’s Grove: [http://brigidsgrove.etsy.com](http://brigidsgrove.etsy.com) and she blogs about theapoetics, ecopsychology, and the Goddess at [http://goddesspriestess.com](http://goddesspriestess.com).

This post is reprinted from *my column at the SageWoman blogs*. 
Living With Myself by Dawn Thomas

I thought this year would be the year of good health but I couldn’t be more wrong. I have been sick since February and now it is June. I am finally feeling better but it has been a long time getting to this point. I can take a breath without it hurting and the pressure is gone. Sometimes my heart takes off running whether I am moving or not and it is scary. My dad died of heart disease and even though his weight was a contributing factor I go to the cardiologist every year for a checkup. Last month I saw the doctor because I was concerned with my racing heart. He wants me to have a stress test but my lungs aren’t healthy enough right now. This bout has really caused me concern.

I have started walking around my house hoping to build up my stamina and lung capacity. I miss walking the labyrinth in the backyard but with the humidity and pollen high I would have issues being outside. As I walk I have two mantras that I repeat.

As I walk clockwise I say:

“Good health, good lungs, good heart, good hand”

or “Healthy heart, healthy lungs, healthy hand.”

As I walk counter-clockwise I say:

“No more anxiety, no more anger” or “no more anxiety, no more pain.”

I am learning a lot about myself and my limits. I found I needed to reevaluate my life. I found I was spending too much time online and not enough time in real life. I have been spending quality time with my husband and I am learning how not to multi-task. I find pleasure in small things now. Watching the bees gathering pollen in the chaste trees. Seeing a female butterfly selecting the perfect leaves to lay her eggs. Waiting for the berries to ripen. Watching the tree frogs
walk along the window at night trying to catch bugs.

My husband found my reading glasses that had been missing for almost six months. He found them stuck between the seat cushions on the sofa. Another reason I can see things more clearly now. I have a new perspective.

I know my life had changed this year and at first I thought it was for the worst. As I look at what my life has become I am pleased. I only wish it didn’t take a serious illness for me to see. I remember hearing a country music song by Tim McGraw. The lyrics “I hope you get the chance to live like you were dying” had come to mind. As I am beating my health challenges, I can appreciate life and enjoy it. I am grateful for all that I have and all that I am.
Moon Schedule Summer Solstice to Lammas
By Dawn “Belladonna” Thomas

(Times are Eastern Time)

2nd Quarter – June 24th: 7:03 a.m.

Full “Blessing” Moon – July 1st: 10:20 p.m.

4th Quarter – July 8th: 4:24 p.m.

New Moon – July 15th: 9:24 p.m.

2nd Quarter – July 24th: 12:04 a.m.

Full “Blue” Moon – July 31st: 6:43 a.m.

Moon Void of Course Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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**Planting Days**  
June: 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>  
July: 2<sup>nd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>  

**Harvesting Days**  
June: None  
July: 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup>
Mystical Sexuality with a Goddess Wife by Rabbi Allen S. Maller

Some men feel they are blessed because the women they marry are gifts from God. I know I feel this way. Not all marriages are arranged in heaven, but if you are in one of them you should thank God. I do.

At first I thought it was just love that made our relationship so great. But as the years passed (we were married December 25, 1966) I realized more and more that my wife Judy is a gift from God. Since I am a Rabbi, it is not surprising that I think about life in religious terms. I am also a student of Kabbalah (Jewish mysticism) so I often use Kabbalistic concepts to explore and understand the most profound of life's personal experiences.

Although I always thank God for my wife, it is when we make love that I feel closest to her and to God. Rabbi Israel Ba'al Shem Tov, the founder of the Hassidic movement, said (in Zava'at ha-Riva'sh), “Prayer is intercourse with the Shekhneeah” (the feminine presence of God). I would add that intercourse with a God given Shekeenah-wife is a divine service because one is always aware of God's presence and blessing. As Rabbi Akiba taught, “Husband and wife: if they are worthy, Shekeenah abides between them; if not, fire consumes them.” (Talmud: Sotah 17a)

Most Jews know that sexual activities between a husband and wife are a Mitsvah—a Jewish responsibility. Many Jews know that lovemaking on Shabbat is a double Mitsvah. Some Jews know that the Kabbalah (the Jewish mystical tradition) teaches that the Shekeenah (the feminine presence of God) rests on a Jewish man when he makes love to his Jewish wife on Shabbat.

Very few Jews know that Jewish couples who make love with an awareness that the Shekeenah is present through the wife's love and the husbands reverence can repair fractured hopes and intentions in those around them; thus helping to elevate broken spirits both near and far. This is called a Tikun—a spiritual repair.

This Tikun also enhances the spiritual bonds of their own marriage. As Rabbi Shim'on teaches in the Zohar (2:46a) “Then (in the early morning hours) a woman unites with her husband, conversing with him, and entering his palace. As morning approaches, Kenneset Israel (Shekeenah-wife) comes and converses with
the Holy One (Tifferet-Yesod-husband) and he extends to her a scepter of love, not over her alone, but over her and over all those participating with her.”

This refers to all Jewish couples that engage in late night/early morning love making with the holy intention of unifying their spiritual sexual commitment to each other. Each time they enact this Tikun helps repair or elevate another relationship that is a participating part of the couple's, especially the wife's, relationships.

When I make love with my wife, I always do so with the awareness of the Jewish mystical teaching about the Shekeenah— the feminine presence of God resting upon a man who makes love to his wife on Shabbat. Actually the Shekeenah can rest on a man whenever he makes love to his wife with a sense of reverence, tenderness, adoration and love. Shabbat adds holiness and chosenness to their feelings. The key attitude for each husband is the feeling that my wife is God’s gift, the source of my blessings, and a most wonderful manifestation of God’s holy presence in my life.

If, in addition to this attitude, a man also makes love to his wife with the intention of unifying the heavenly realm as he unifies the earthly one, he and his wife enact a great Tikun- a spiritual mending or uplifting which can also affect other people. This Tikun is woven together with similar Tikunim from other married couples into a crown for the Divine One who also unites with His Shekeenah on Shabbat and Yom Tov-Jewish holy days. Just as the prayers proclaimed in each Synagogue are woven into a crown for the Holy One of Israel, so too are the holy unifications (Tikunim) of each married couple woven into a crown.

The active intention of the husband is required to start the Tikun process, although it is the Shekeenah wife who provides the transforming energy. As the Zohar says, “A male desiring to cling to a female emits a seed of anointing (his holy intention) from the top of his brain into his phallus; it pours into the female who thus conceives. Thus, every smooth member of his body joins the female, and the female embraces all.” (2:86a)

A Shekeenah (Goddess) wife embodies and radiates joyful holiness to others, elevating and inspiring them over time.
In the past the esoteric details of how to elevate their lovemaking into a Tikun were transmitted orally and very discretely from mother to daughter. We are the first generation to live in a world that is being transformed by gender equality. The 2,500 year-old prophecy of Jeremiah is being fulfilled before our eyes. “God will create a new thing on the earth- females will surround males.” (Jeremiah 31:22)

Now that female Rabbis are all around us, these details based on the seventh chapter of the Song of Songs, a Biblical book that Rabbi Akiba proclaimed the holiest song in Scripture, can be revealed and understood.

A wife who desires to enable her husband to fulfill the Mitsvah of Tikun coupling should direct him to begin by kissing and creaming her feet (Song of Songs 7:2). Then she should direct him to slowly and reverently work his way up to her crowning flowing hair that entangles a King/God/husband, (7:6) thus allowing him to climb the palm tree (7:9) and perform the unification below which is woven into the unification above. Over the years the spiritual uplift of this Tikun becomes greater and greater. Chapter 4 in my book God, Sex and Kabbalah will provide helpful perspectives.

The fourth of the seven wedding blessings (the central one) uses the verb for making a Tikun to proclaim that God has made mankind in the Divine image, which enables us through coupling together to build families and crowns that become everlasting structures for all future generations. The subsequent blessings proclaim that this coupling also will make for better families, and help bring closer the joy and happiness of the Messianic Age.

Thus Judaism sees marriage not simply as a personal expression of love, but as a way in which our love as a couple will help to make the world a little better place for future generations. Also, couple love is a spiritual enhancement of the Divine presence. A way to feel the presence of the Divine in your personal life and to radiate it to those around you.

As I said most Jews know it is a Mitsvah to make love to your wife on Shabbat. However, very few Jews know that the holy Kabbalist, Rabbi Isaac Luria, developed several Tikunim to enable spiritually aware Jewish couples to repair fractured hopes and intentions in those around them, to elevate broken spirits
both near and far, and to re-energize efforts to make life holy through a couple's own lovemaking at night.

These Tikunim are among those referred to as Tikunay Hatzot-mid night spiritual exercises. Exactly how personal private Tikunim are able to effect other people and situations is inexplicable, yet with patience, hope and trust many impossible situations get resolved.

Every Jewish wife partakes of some aspects of Leah and some aspects of Rachel. Like Leah, every woman is potentially very fruitful, both emotionally and physically. Like Rachel, every woman is potentially spellbinding and enthralling. When her husband regards his wife as a gift from God and loves her totally, faithfully and submissively (egolessly), his lovemaking and partnership being more to give her pleasure than for his own pleasure, he realizes and actualizes her blessings and God's blessings. This is especially important when stress makes her weep openly or inside. All forms of Tikun Hatzot stress this.

Sexual activity prior to midnight increases the aspect of Leah. Sexual activity after midnight and in the pre-dawn or early morning hours increases the aspect of Rachel. Sexual intercourse with Leah, better known in Lurianic Kabbala as the face of Imma, the great mother Goddess, helps to reduce negative actions and situations in family and personal affairs.

Sexual intercourse during the second part of the night is with Rachel who ascends in the morning as Matronita, the ruling presence of Shekinah. Elevating Matronita helps avoid the worst case public scenarios we fear and helps increases the number of small but important contributions to the improvement of Jewish and world society. One who regards his wife as a gift from God will pray in her intimate presence.

These Tikunim should be done every Shabbat for as Rabbi Judah ben Yakar (C.1200) said, “Our Mitsvah of marital coupling is derived from what the Holy One said to Shabbat, -the community of Israel will be your mate-” Thus Israel sanctifies the Shabbat, and a Jewish husband sanctifies his Jewish wife. If they desire, he should also adore his wife at least once or twice during the weekdays.
These Tikunim are not magic, but if done faithfully they always have a positive impact over time. A Hassidic mystic, Rabbi Nathan Hanover, adds, “After you perform Tikun Hatzot, prepare yourself and unify the Holy One with Shekeenah by making your body, each and every limb, a chariot for Shekeenah.”

Thus sexual activity should end with the wife above, feeling she is Shekeenah—the ruling Matronita blessing her husband and rising to heaven, with her husband below her feeling that he serves as a mystical Merkavah-chariot (as did the Holy Temple in Jerusalem) elevating her to the heavens. This helps actualize their thoughts and desires and promotes remedies, rectifications, and blessings for those around them and throughout the world.

Even if you have difficulty believing in the outcome of these concepts, you can only gain personally by practicing the Mitsvah of spiritual intercourse. In time, the effectiveness of Tikunim may become apparent. You have nothing to lose but your secular ego. Rabbi Yitzhak Saphrin, a great Hassidic scholar, taught; “The Divine Spirit does not rest on an unmarried man, because Holy Inspiration is derived from one's wife.”

If you are not yet ready for this level of inspiration then remember the Talmudic (Berachot 57b) statement, “Three (experiences) adumbrate heaven: Shabbat, sunshine, and sexual union.” A sunny Shabbat morning with a wife who is God's blessing, is like winning the trifecta.

Rabbi Maller's web site is: http://www.rabbimaller.com/
Night Musings by Katy Ravensong

the night hums around me ~
another day has come and gone ~
In the silent velvet darkness ~
my soul reaches for the stars.

Somewhere out there
in the vast reaches of space
are the seeds of my beginning,
the race from which I came.

I am a traveler,
though the memories
do not reside
in this human mind.

I have crossed galaxies
and swum with the dolphins
of Atlantis.

I am here to help heal the earth
before Her inhabitants
in their uncaring stupidity
damage Her to the point
of no return.

There are others
who care and who join me
in our mission to
help heal the Earth.

I am here as a light-worker,
as a healer.
I am here to help, to heal
the Earth and Her inhabitants.
The power flows from the Divine.  
I am only a channel.  
A large crystal rainbow ball  
of energy ~ positive healing,  
loving energy ~  
forms between my cupped hands.  
With a prayer, I send it out  
to all those who have need of it.

The night closes around me  
like a black velvet caress.  
I am one with my Lady and Lord.  
I am content.

© Katy Ravensong
Pagan Every Day Libertas, Lady Liberty by Barbara Ardinger, PhD

July 4th

Libertas (Freedom) is another of the Roman civic goddesses, a sister to Concordia and Pax. Although the Romans hardly ever experienced freedom, civic harmony, or peace, they always kept their eyes on the possibilities. Libertas was sometimes merged with Jupiter, sometimes with Feronia, who was originally an Etruscan or Sabine goddess of agriculture or fire. In Rome, Feronia became the goddess of freed slaves.

On Roman coins and other artifacts, Libertas is shown as a matron wearing flowing dress and either a wreath of laurel leaves or a tall pileus, which is a “liberty cap” that looks like a witch hat without the brim. She holds either a liberty pole (vindicta) or a spear, a sometimes a cat sits at her feet.

Libertas became Lady Liberty during the American and French Revolutions and is the subject of numerous nineteenth-century paintings. To celebrate the repeal of the Stamp Act in 1766, Paul Revere created an obelisk with an image of Libertas on it. A short time later, Tom Paine addressed Lady Liberty in his poem The Liberty Tree. Soon the goddess took her place alongside the eagle, the Liberty Bell, and various Masonic symbols in the iconography of the New World.

An enormous bronze statue of Lady Liberty was commissioned in 1855 for the top of the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C., and in 1863 she was hoisted up there, where she stands, hardly visible, to this day. During the War Between the States, both sides claimed Lady Liberty and used her image. Among abolitionists, she was shown freeing slaves, while states’ rights advocates showed her freeing mankind from the tyranny of centralized government.

The civil liberties of pagans are still being violated.

July 5th

Observe good faith and justice Toward all nations. Cultivate Peace and harmony with all… —George Washington

Let every sluice of knowledge be opened and set a-flowing —John Adams
“Liberty Enlightening the World,” which we commonly call the Statue of Liberty, was a gift from France to the United States on the occasion of America’s centennial. Designed by Frederic-Auguste Bartoldi and Alexandre Eiffel, Liberty holds a book in one arm and with her other hand raises a torch, a common symbol of truth and purification through illumination. She wears a crown of solar rays similar to the crown worn by the Colossus of Rhodes, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. One hundred thousand people in France, who had their eyes on liberty, contributed money to the creation of Liberty, and people in the United States financed the construction of the pedestal she stands on.

In May, 1989, Lady Liberty found a new incarnation as the Goddess of Democracy, a Styrofoam and plaster statue built by Chinese students and carried in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square in their demonstrations for academic freedom. She became such a powerful rallying symbol that the Chinese government sent tanks into Tiananmen Square. Liberty was crushed by those tanks. To this day, we don’t know how many protestors were shot, because the old men who rule China refuse to even acknowledge that the demonstrations occurred.

Reader, if you don’t have Lady Liberty in your collection of goddesses, it’s time to get her in your home. My Liberty is an Avon perfume bottle (all those busy Avon ladies personify Liberty in their own way). Since the repairs to the Statue of Liberty in the 1980s, numerous replicas have become available.

Pagan Every Day: Finding the Extraordinary in Our Ordinary Lives (RedWheel/Weiser, 2006), a unique daybook of daily meditations, stories, and activities. Her new book, Secret Lives is a novel of magical realism about elderly women, younger women, good men, and mythological characters including the Green Man and the Norns gone mad in a modern world. Her earlier books are Finding New Goddesses, Quicksilver Moon, Goddess Meditations, and Practicing the Presence of the Goddess. Her day job is freelance editing for people who don’t want to embarrass themselves in print. Barbara lives in southern California. To purchase a signed copy of Finding New Goddesses, just send Barbara an email at bawriting@earthlink.net
Solitary Ritual for the Summer Solstice by Dawn Thomas

Preparation and Altar Needs
Cut flowers to create a circle
A Red candle to represent the Mother
Chalice with beverage of your choice
(Prior to the ritual decide on the type of creative work that you want to do during the ritual. Have the necessary items for the work you choose.)

Casting the Circle
Hail to the Element of the East, Ancient Spirit of Air. Warm me with your warm summer breezes. I ask you to please join me tonight.

Hail to the Element of the South, Ancient Spirit of Fire. The warmth of summer sun is creating an abundance of new life to grow. I ask you to please join me tonight.

Hail to the Element of the West, Ancient Spirit of Water. Wash me clean with your gentle rains and dew filled mornings. I ask you to please join me tonight.

Hail to the Element of the North, Ancient Spirit of Earth. The fragrant flowers are blooming around me with a wonderful essence. I ask you to please join me tonight.

Gaia, Mother Earth, your great love and nurturing sustains my life. I honor you and ask you to join me tonight.

The Work
During this time of year, we are honoring the mother goddesses and the season of growth. We also reflect on what is manifesting in our lives. Spend a few moments thinking about this. What are you manifesting? How are you manifesting this? Are there things that you feel strongly about that would help you fuel this creative fire?
Light the red candle as a symbol of the creative fire inside you. Gaze into the flame and see these thoughts manifesting.

This is a time to be creative – To release creative forces. Make, build or create something in honor of the Mother Goddess. This can be something you make with your hands or something you write. It can also be something using your voice or a movement or dance.

Once you are finished, offer a blessing to the Mother Goddess and drink from your chalice. You may also choose to include blessings for women in your life or in your community.

Closing the Circle
Mother Earth, Gaia, I feel your loving arms around me. I honor you and thank you for joining me tonight. Hail and Farewell.

Element of the North, Spirit of Earth, the scent of your fragrant flowers will remain with me. Thank you for joining me tonight. Hail and Farewell.

Element of the West, Spirit of Water, I feel cleansed from your waters. Thank you for joining me tonight. Hail and Farewell.

Element of the South, Spirit of Fire, from your creative fire I have begun to manifest things in my life. Thank you for joining me tonight. Hail and Farewell.

Element of the East, Spirit of Air, the gentle breezes have warmed me. Thank you for joining me tonight. Hail and Farewell.

The Circle is open but unbroken.

Blessed Be!
For the Summer Solstice issue we are going to talk about orange gemstones and the color orange.

Orange is the color of movement. If you want change or want something to change – orange is your color! It is the color of adventure and social communication.

Orange radiates warmth and happiness, as it combines red physical energy with yellow’s cheerfulness. Orange offers emotional strength and helps us to bounce back from disappointments and despair. The color orange is optimistic and uplifting. Orange brings spontaneity and a positive outlook on life.

The color orange relates to social communication. It is a warm and inviting color, both physically and mentally stimulating. It is also the color assigned to our second chakra, the chakra of creativity and sexuality.

Orange is a power color. It is one of the healing colors. It is said to increase the craving for food. It also stimulates enthusiasm and creativity. Orange means vitality with endurance. People who like orange are usually thoughtful and sincere. Lady luck’s color is orange. I have been told that if a change of any kind is need in life, just burn an orange candle for 7 nights. While you’re at it – add some orange stones!

Here are some orange stones to work with ...

Amber

Million years ago large stands of forests in some parts of the world began to seep globs of sticky resin! This aromatic resin oozed down the sides of trees, as well as filling internal fissures, trapping debris, such as seeds, leaves, feathers and insects. As geologic time progressed the forests were buried and the resin hardened into a soft, warm, golden gem, known as amber. Amber is the fossilized resin of ancient trees which forms through a
natural polymerization of the original organic compounds. Most of the world's amber is in the range of 30-90 million years old.

Amber, coming from the resin of ancient pine trees, holds little insects, feathers, plant material or other small objects that have been trapped. The resin fossilized after many years of passing through a heat and pressure process to become Amber. It appears surprisingly light and warm to the touch, and readily produces static electricity when rubbed. Indeed it was known to the ancient Greeks as *elektron*.

Amber is most usually similar in colors to honey, varying from golden yellow, through rich orange and red to brown, but some can be white, dark brown almost to black, blue or green.

Amber carries the energy of the Sun, and it is a good stone to bring the bearer vitality, success, joy, strength, love, physical healing, luck, abundance and protection. It is also used to calm hyperactivity and stressed nerves.

Amber carries a negative electric charge, and therefore can be used to draw power and energy to the bearer.

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**Aragonite**

Aragonite is a wonderful stone for healing and balancing the emotional body. It can be used to help maintain serenity when circumstances are trying. It is a wonderful stone to use in meditation as it helps open the inner eye for views into past lives. You can use them to help you discover when imbalances occur in your body and crystal workers use them for clearing auric fields.

Aragonite is both soothing as well as energizing. You can actually use aragonite at all chakra centers to open and facilitate healing. It is a good idea to clean aragonite after use.
Carnelian

Carnelian is used in the three lower chakra centers depending on how the actual shade of the stone from red, to orange to yellow. What it does is awakens life force. In the Second Chakra it stimulates sexual and creative energies. Carnelian becomes a powerful ally when you really need to take action. It is a wonderful manifesting stone. It is a great stone for strengthening the body and so good to have around when recovering from an illness. And finally, it is a wonderful stone when courage is needed for any situation!

Calcite

Use Orange Calcite when wanting to bring a little playfulness into your life. It is an excellent confidence stone and useful when innovation is needed. It helps to mobilize your energies and resources. It is especially useful when seeking new strategies. It just gets the energy moving. It is great for healing deep issues arising from sexual abuse. In general, it is good for depression as it stimulates one to feel more energetic. It is like having a ray of sunlight come into your life – a way of “shaking the blues!”

Vanadinite

Vanadinite is another fire stone used in all three of the lower chakras depending on the intensity of color. It is a great stone to use when needing stamina and discipline to get things done. It is an excellent grounding stone and also sparks creativity while it’s at it. This is really a “get the job done” stone especially if the job requires hard work.
When used for Second Chakra work Vanadinite balances sexual energy and reproductive functions by stimulating a free flow of energy.

Have a wonderful, creative time with these orange stones. Use them in your magic as well as in your healing work. Keep them around you when you need energy of all kinds! Anytime you want to see movement in a situation – orange stones are what you need!

Deanne Quarrie. D. Min. is a Priestess of the Goddess. She is the author of five books. She is the founder of the Apple Branch and Beyond the Ninth Wave where she teaches courses in Feminist Dianic Witchcraft, Northern European Witchcraft and Druidic Shamanism. She mentors those who wish to serve others in their communities. She is also an Adjunct Professor at Ocean Seminary College and is the founder of Global Goddess, a worldwide organization open to all women who honor some form of the divine feminine.