

FAQ's

By

Gordon Ireland

FAQ Wicca

What is Wicca?

Wicca is a nature-based religion, founded by Gerald Gardner in the 1950's. Wicca or Wicce means "wise of the craft." Wicca attempts to align itself with nature and it sees all life as part of such. Wicca worships a deity who is divided into female and male aspects, as represented by the High Priestess and Priest.

Wicca has become synonymous with Witches since its inception by Gardner. Gerald Gardner was born in England in 1874, moved to Malaya as a child, entered the British Civil Service, staying in the Far East until he retired. Gardner claims to have been initiated in a coven in the New Forest region in England in 1939 by a friend named Dorothy Clutterbuck.

Wicca is largely Gardner's creation, though it appears that he borrowed some information from others. In 1899, Charles Leland had Aradia, or the Gospel of Witches, a manuscript that was given to Leland by an Italian witch, printed. This book was a history of sorts concerning witchcraft in northern Italy. Another book that seems to have inspired Gardner is by Margaret Murray, A Witch-cult in Western Europe, printed in 1921. This book claimed that witchcraft was a fertility cult that survived for thousands of years and was very much alive today. While her thesis may have been proven false, her ideas have lived on.

All of this led to Gardner's basic beliefs of what witchcraft should be. Using his personal knowledge of the craft and what he had read, he was able to create a tradition that lays claim to being thousands of years old, when in fact Wicca is less than 50 years old. Buckland, who was a protégé of Gardner's brought Wicca to America in the early 1960's. (Clifton, The Modern Witchcraft Movement, Witchcraft Today, pages 21-38)

What is the difference between Wicca and Witchcraft?

The primary difference between Witchcraft and Wicca is that Wicca has been in existence for 50 years, while Witchcraft is probably one of the oldest traditions

known to mankind. Witchcraft is a "craft"; Wicca is a religion, which happens to have witches as members. Witchcraft does not necessarily worship known deities, while Wicca is a Goddess based religion. Last, Witches do not have a rede or any written code or doctrine to follow, while Wicca does.

Why are there so many different types of Wiccans?

Wicca, as any other religion, has many sects. While all groups agreed in principle with Gerald Gardner, not all felt it necessary to follow his doctrine. This led to a division of paths, much like the Christian Church experienced. There are more "sects" that will be covered in this text, but the main Wicca denominations are, Gardnerian, Alexandrian, Seax, Circle, and Dianic Wicca. Though there are many sects of Wicca, they do all have one thing in common; they all follow the basic Wiccan philosophy, "Harm none and do what you will."

Gerald Gardner founded Gardnerian Wicca; the main feature that distinguishes it from other denominations is that they are required to be skyclad, or nude. Another feature about Gardnerian Wicca is that all of the coven High Priestesses can trace their lineage back to the original High Priestess.

Alexandrian Wicca was the creation of Alex Sanders, which is an offshoot of Gardnerian Wicca. The principle difference between the two is that being skyclad for rituals is optional. There are some other differences, but these are primarily slight differences in rituals, i.e. the use of the Athame. Alexandrian Wicca was not named after its founder, but rather Ancient Alexandria.

Raymond Buckland founded Seax Wicca after bringing Gardnerian Wicca to the USA. Founded in the 1970's, Buckland claims that this Saxon form of Wicca is different because of its democratic process and its open rituals (all of which can be obtained through your local bookstore). The main feature that makes this different from the previous two is that, either the Priest or High Priestess can lead the coven. Each coven can decide for itself whether or not to be skyclad during rituals.

Selena Fox founded Circle Wicca in 1974. Selena Fox describes Circle Wicca as: "Wiccan Shamanism, also sometimes known as Circle Wicca and Shamanic Witchcraft, blends together multicultural shamanic practices and Wiccan ways. Central to this path is communion with Nature. Practices include celebrating the cycles of sun and moon; spiritual healing; honoring ancestors; working with animal totems; plant spirits; and other Nature spirits; ritual work at sacred sites; drumming/sacred rhythm making; ritual dancing and chanting; work with dreams; visions; trance/meditations; and personal and collective mythology. "

"The Divine is honored as both Unity and Multiplicity (Goddesses, Gods, Elements, nature Spirits, Ancestors, Guides). Circle casting includes honoring seven directions and associated dimensions: North (Earth, physical realm); East

(Air, mental realm); South (Fire, behavioral realm); West (Water, emotional realm); Above (Cosmos, universe); Below (Planet, biosphere); Center (Spirit, all that is). Although the term, Wiccan Shamanism, was coined by Selena Fox of Circle Sanctuary in the 1970's, this type of Wiccan/Pagan Witchcraft is the orientation of a variety of different groups and individuals in the United States and other countries."

Dianic Wicca is a tradition started by Ann Forefreedom, which primarily worships the goddess, not her consort. This religion, which does have both male and female practitioners, is matriarchal and does not use a male priest.

There are many other traditions in Wicca, some which will be discussed, in later chapters. However, all the modern day Wiccans are based, if somewhat loosely, on Gerald Gardner's original Wicca.

Is there a Wiccan Bible?

No there isn't, but there are a Rede, Laws, Goals, and a Set of Beliefs. These make up the Wiccan ethics and provide the Wiccan with a set of moral guidelines to follow. The other book that is used by Wiccans is called a Book of Shadows. This can be either a coven or a solitary manual: it is used to describe ceremonies and spells. If it is a coven Book of Shadows it will also include coven rules and rites.

What is the Rede?

The Wiccan Rede is the main tenet of Wicca. "An' it harm none, do what thou wilt." Simply put, do whatever you want, but don't hurt anyone in the process. The complete version of the Wiccan Rede is a poem. It is generally attributed to Doreen Valiente as the author in question, although this has not been proven. However when most refer to the Wiccan Rede they are referring to the shorter version. The rede means to counsel, advise or interpret. :

The complete poem is as follows:

THE WICCAN REDE

Bide the Wiccan Rede we must

In perfect love and perfect trust.

Live and let live

Fairly take and fairly give.

Cast the circle thrice about

To keep unwanted spirits out.

To bind the spell every time

Let the spell be spake in rhyme.

Soft of eye and light of touch

Desoil go by the waxing moon

Chanting out the Witches' rune.

Widdershins go by the waning moon

Chanting out the baleful rune.

When the lady's moon is full

Kiss your hand to her, times two.

When the moon rides at Her peak

Then your heart's desire seek.

Heed the North wind's mighty gale

Lock the doors and drop the sail.

When the wind blows from the South

Love will kiss you on the mouth.

When the wind blows from the West

Departed souls will have no rest.

When the wind blows from the East

Expect the new and set the feast.

Nine woods in the cauldron go

Burn them fast burn then slow.

Elder is the Lady's tree,

Burn it not or cursed you'll be.
When the Wheel begins to turn
Let the Beltane fires burn.
When the wheel has turned to Yule
Light the log the Horned One rules.
Heed you flower, bush and tree
By the Lady, blessed be.
When the rippling waters go
Cast a stone and the truth you'll know.
When you have a true need
Hearken not to other's greed.
With a fool no season spend
Lest you be counted as his friend.
Merry meet and merry part,
Bright the cheeks and warm the heart.
When misfortune is enow
Wear the blue star on your brow.
True in love ever be
Lest your Love be false to thee.
Eight words the Wiccan Rede fulfill;
And it harm none, do what you will.

The Wiccan Rede according to Gerina Dunwich is a "...simple and benevolent moral code of Wiccans that is as follows: 'An it harm none, do what thou wilt.' The exact origin of the Wiccan Rede is not known, but some have suggested that it is the Pagan version of the Christians' "love thy neighbor." It has been

interpreted as meaning: Be free to do (magickally or mundanely) what you feel in your heart is right, provided no harm be brought to anyone (including yourself) as a result. Most Wiccans live by the Wiccan Rede and believe that if they violate it, even unintentionally, they will have to contend with a negative karmic return."
(Wicca A to Z)

The Rede along with the Principles of Wiccan Belief and the three-fold law, the Laws of Power and the 13 goals make up the basic philosophy of Wicca.

What is the three-fold law of return?

The three-fold law of return, as written by Scott Cunningham is:

Evermind the rule of three.

Three times what thou givest returns to thee.

This lesson well, thou must learn.

Thee only gets what thou dost return.

What this simple but elegant poem is saying is that whatever you do, good or

bad, shall return to you times three. "What is done will be returned to the doer."
(Cunningham, Living Wicca: A Further Guide for the Solitary Practitioner, page 136)

The Law of Three can also be described as a form of Karma, the Far-East religious philosophy of "cause and effect." Every action is met with a reaction.

What are the other laws of Wicca?

Scott Cunningham wrote the basic laws for those who choose to follow a Wiccan path. Cunningham is quoted as saying "Virtually all religious organizations give their adherents a set of guidelines or rules of conduct. In such laws we often find the true nature of the faith, which can be difficult to determine from the actual behavior of most of its representatives."

Cunningham wrote the Law along with the Law of the Power and the Nature of Our Way as guides for the practicing Wiccan to follow.

The Law

We are of the Old Ways, among those
who walk with the Goddess and God
and receive their love.

Keep the Sabbats and Esbats to the
best of you abilities, for to do otherwise

is to lessen your connection with the Goddess and God.

Harm none. This, the oldest law, is not open to interpretation or change.

Shed not blood in ritual; the Goddess and God need not blood to be duly worshipped.

Those of our ways are kind to all creatures, for hurtful thoughts are quite draining and aren't worth the loss of energy.

Misery is self-created; so, too, is joy, so create joy and disdain misery and unhappiness. And this is within your power. So harm not.

Teach only what you know, to the best of your ability, to those students who you choose, but teach not to those who would use your instructions for destruction or control. Also teach not to boost pride, forever remember: She/he who teaches out of love shall be enfolded in the arms of the Goddess and God.

Ever remember that if you would be of our way, keep the law close to your heart, for it is the nature of the Wicca to keep the Law.

If ever the need arises, any Law may be changed or discarded, and new laws written to replace them, so long as the new laws don't break the oldest law of all: Harm none.

Blessings of the Goddess and God on us all.
(Cunningham, Living Wicca: A Further Guide for the Solitary Practitioner, page 144-45)

What is the Nature of Wicca?

Scott Cunningham wrote the Nature of Our Way as a guide for the solitary practitioner. This piece gives the Wiccan or the Newly introduced Wiccan and idea of the very Nature of Wicca.

The Nature of Our Way

As often as possible, hold rites in forests, by the seashore, on a deserted mountaintop or near a tranquil lake. If this is impossible, a garden or a chamber will suffice, if it is readied with fumes or flowers.

Seek out wisdom in books, rare manuscripts and cryptic poems if you will, but seek it out also in simple stones and fragile herbs and in the cries of birds. Listen to the whisperings of the wind and the roar of water if you would discover magic, for it is here that the old secrets are preserved.

Books contain words; trees contain energies and wisdom book ne'er dreamt of.

Ever remember that the Old Ways are constantly revealing themselves. Therefore be as the river willow that bends and sways with the wind. That which remains changeless shall outlive its spirit, but that which evolves and grows shall shine for centuries.

There can be no monopoly on wisdom. Therefore share what you will of our ways with others who seek them, but hide mystic lore from the eyes of those who would destroy, for to do otherwise increases their destruction.

Mock not the rituals or spells of another, for who can say yours are greater in power or wisdom?

Be wary of one who would dominate you, who would control and manipulate your workings or reverences. True reverence for the Goddess and God occurs within. Look with suspicion on any who would twist worship from you for their own gain and glory, but welcome those priestesses and priests who are suffused with love.

Honor all living things, for we are of the bird, the fish, the bee. Destroy not life save it be to preserve you own.

And this is the nature of our way. (Cunningham, Wicca: A Guide for the Solitary Practitioner, page 112-13)

What is the Law of Power?

The Law of the Power was also written by Scott Cunningham, and was written as a companion piece with the Law to allow the Wiccan ethics for the use of magick. They are as follows:

The Law of the Power

The Power shall not be used to bring harm, to injure or to control others. But if the need rises, the Power shall be used to protect your life or the lives of others.

The Power is used only as need dictates.

The Power can be used for your own gain; as long as by doing so you harm none.

It is unwise to accept money for the use of the Power, for it quickly controls its taker. Be not as those in other religions.

Use not the Power for prideful gain, for such cheapens the mysteries of Wicca and magick.

Ever remember that the Power is the sacred gift of the Goddess and God,

and should never be misused or abused.

And this is the Law of the Power. (Cunningham, Wicca: A Guide for the Solitary Practitioner, page 145)

What are the goals of Wicca?

Scott Cunningham in his attempt to bring Wicca to the uninformed derived that Wicca, as other recognized religions should have a set of goals. These goals allowed the Wiccan to be able to explain themselves better to the general public. The 13 goals of Wicca are:

13 Goals of Wicca

Know yourself.

It is important that we understand ourselves completely. What motivates you? What are your limitations? Cunningham was stressing the importance of self-knowledge, for only by knowing can you grow.

Know your Craft

With so many traditions in Wicca it is important that you understand the right way to worship for you.

Learn.

Wicca, like life doesn't stop once you reach a level or a degree. It is constant, ever going forward.

Apply knowledge with wisdom.

What you know and how you use it. It is important that your knowledge is used properly and with wisdom.

Achieve balance.

Balance of the mind, the emotions, the body and the spirit are important to all.

Keep your words in good order.

Even words have magick, be careful of what you ask for; you just might receive it.

Keep your thoughts in good order.

When performing a task it is necessary that you understand why you are doing so. Check your reasons before you act.

Celebrate life.

Enjoy your life!

Attune with the cycles of the Earth.

Do not forget the Sabbats and the reasons behind them.

Breathe and eat correctly.

This does not mean that you should become a vegetarian, what it does mean is that all things should be done in moderation.

Exercise the body.

A healthy body allows one to enjoy a long life.

Meditate.

A healthy body, a healthy mind. Meditation is not reading a passage in a book it is clearing your mind of clutter and focusing your thoughts on matters that you wish to become more familiar with. It is way of communicating with the Goddess and God.

Honor the Goddess and God.

Honoring the Goddess and God is accomplished by following the goals, the

rede, the Laws and the Principles in your everyday life. (Cunningham, Wicca: A Guide for the Solitary Practitioner, page 151)

What are the Principles of Wiccan Belief?

The now disbanded Council of American Witches wrote the Principles of Belief for the modern Wiccan in 1974. The following is a copy of the Principles of Belief, as printed in RavenWolf's To Ride a Silver Broomstick, pages 6-7.

Principles of Belief

Adopted By The Council Of American Witches April 12, 1974

"The Council of American Witches finds it necessary to define modern Witchcraft in terms of the American experience and needs.

We are not bound by traditions from other times and other cultures, and owe no allegiance to any person or power greater than the Divinity manifest through our own being.

As American Witches, we welcome and respect all life-affirming teachings and traditions, and seek to learn from all and to share our learning within the Council. It is in this spirit of welcome and cooperation that we adopt these principles of Wiccan belief. In seeking to be inclusive, we do not wish to open ourselves to the destruction of our group by those on self-serving power trips, or to philosophies and practices contradictory to these principles. In seeking to exclude those whose ways are contradictory to ours, we do not want to deny participation with us to any who are sincerely interested in our knowledge and beliefs, regardless of race, color, sex, age, national or cultural origins, or sexual preference. We therefore ask only those who seek to identify with us to accept these basic principles:

We practice rites to attune ourselves with the natural rhythm of life forces marked by the phases of the moon and the seasonal quarters and cross-quarters.

We recognize that our intelligence gives us a unique responsibility toward our environment. We seek to live in harmony with Nature, in ecological balance offering fulfillment to life and consciousness within and evolutionary concept.

We acknowledge a depth of power far greater than is apparent to the average person. Because it is far greater than ordinary, it is sometimes called "supernatural," but we see it as lying within that which is naturally potential to all.

We conceive of the Creative Power in the Universe as manifesting through polarity--as masculine and feminine--and that this same creative Power lives in all people, and functions through the interaction of the masculine and

feminine. We value neither above the other, knowing each to be supportive of the other. We value sexuality as pleasure, as the symbol and embodiment of Life, and as one of the sources of energies used in Magickal practice and religious worship.

We recognize both outer worlds and inner, or psychological worlds-- sometimes known as the Spiritual World, the Collective Unconsciousness, the Inner Planes, etc.-- and we see in the interaction of these two dimensions the basis for paranormal phenomena and Magickal exercises. We neglect neither dimension for the other, seeing both as necessary for our fulfillment.

We do not recognize any authoritarian hierarchy, but do honor those who teach, respect those who share their greater knowledge and wisdom, and acknowledge those who have courageously given themselves in leadership.

We see religion, magick, and wisdom-in-living as being united in the way one views the world and lives within it -- a world view and philosophy of life, which we identify as Witchcraft or the Wiccan Way.

Calling oneself "Witch" does not make a witch -- but neither does heredity itself, or the collecting of titles, degrees, and initiations. A Witch seeks to control the forces within him/herself that makes life possible in order to live wisely and well, without harm to others, and in harmony with nature.

We acknowledge that it is the affirmation and fulfillment of life, in a continuation of evolution and development of

consciousness, that gives meaning to the Universe we know, and to our personal role within it.

Our only animosity toward Christianity, or toward any other religion or philosophy-of-life, is to the extent that its institutions have claimed to be "the one true right and only way" and have sought to deny freedom to others and to suppress other ways of religious practices and belief.

As American Witches, we are not threatened by debates on the history of the Craft, the origins of various terms, the legitimacy of various aspects of different traditions. We are concerned with our present, and our future.

We do not accept the concept of "absolute evil," nor do we worship any entity known as "Satan" or the "Devil" as defined by Christian Tradition. We do not seek power through the suffering of others, nor do we accept the concept that personal benefits can be derived by denial to another.

We work within Nature for that which is contributory to our health and well being".

What is the charge of the Goddess?

Doreen Valiente is credited with writing the Charge of the Goddess. It is poem that gives a message from the Goddess to her children.

THE CHARGE OF THE GODDESS

Hear ye the words of the Star Goddess;
She in the dust of whose feet are the hosts of heaven,
and whose body encircles the universe:
I who am the beauty of the green earth,
and the white moon among the stars,
and the mystery of the waters,
call unto they soul: Arise, and come unto me.

For I am the soul of nature, who gives life to the universe.
From Me all things proceed, and unto Me all things must return;

and before My face, beloved of gods and of men,
let thine innermost divine self be enfolded in the rapture of the infinite.
Let My worship be within the heart that rejoices;
for behold, all acts of love and pleasure are My rituals.
And therefore let there be beauty and strength, power and compassion,
honor and humility, mirth and reverence within you.
And thou who thinkest to seek Me,
Know that thy seeking and yearning shall avail thee not,
unless thou knowest the Mystery:
that if that which thou seekest thou findest not within thee,
thou wilt never find it without.
For behold, I have been with thee from the beginning;
And I am that which is attained at the end of desire.
(Starhawk, pages 90-91)

What type of magick do Wiccans use?

Wiccans use an eclectic brand of magick, from folk to ritual. It is rumored that Gerald Gardner had Aleister Crowley write several ceremonies or rituals for him. Although the rumor is unsubstantiated, it does make for an interesting story. (Clifton, The Modern Witchcraft Movement, Witchcraft Today, pages 21-38)

Who do Wiccans worship?

Wiccans worship the One Power, which is composed of everything. Wiccans tend to see the One as being both female and male. In seeing the One this way, Wiccans are simply attempting to attune themselves with nature. This dual aspect of the One, both female and male, yin and yang balance out each other. This dual aspect is often confused with a polytheistic approach, when Wicca is actually a monotheistic religion. All power is derived from One Source, though they may have several entities referred to as "Gods and Goddesses" representing this source.

The Goddess or Lady, is seen as Mother Nature and Mother earth, and sometimes is associated with the Moon. She is often represented as the fertility Goddess, of plants (Venus and Brigid), of animals (Diana and Epona) and of humans (Aprodite and Danu). The Goddesses power is at her peak during the "fertile half" of the year, from spring (May) to fall (October). She is often depicted as the protector of the cycles of life, birth and death, creation and destruction. Maiden, mother and crone often represent the female aspect of the One source. The God, or Lord, is seen as the Sun, and is often placed in the woodlands. Sometimes he is depicted as the "Horned God", often going by the name Cernnous, Herne, or Pan. The God's power is at its peak from fall (October) to spring (May). He is Lord of the Hunt and master of the Wild Magick. Wiccan's usually will worship various deities from the Celtic mythology, they are not worshipped in any particular order and the average Wiccan will call upon whatever deity she/he feels the closest to. Wiccan's also will use a Henotheism approach, calling upon gods from other cultural groups.

How do Wiccan's worship?

Wiccan worship is as varied as the different sects of Wicca. Wiccan worship is conducted on the Sabbats, or during a full moon. The actual ritual is usually personalized towards a particular Sabbat or with a specific goal in mind. The actual ritual also depends on whether it is a coven ritual or a solitary ritual. Wiccan rituals are usually performed within a circle. Nudity, being skyclad, is also optional, depending upon the tradition. Though many Wiccan ceremonies are performed indoors, this is usually for privacy. It is preferred that they be performed in the outdoors, to be closer to nature.

What is a Wiccan ritual?

Ritual according to RavenWolf in To Ride a Silver Broomstick is defined as "A focused mental/physical ceremony to either honor or thank one's chosen pantheon, or to perform a specific Magickal working." Each ritual is highly individualized and must be clearly defined and understood before being performed. Most Wiccans will use a Book of Shadows to organize their rituals. The basic elements to a ritual are varied, but the following is some basic information that should assist any beginner in performing a ritual. Though most bookstores do offer a wide variety of New Age books, many of which would have complete rituals written out for the novice. The first thing one should do before engaging in any ritual, is to have a defined goal or purpose. Second, write out your ceremony. It is helpful to memorize this, to avoid interrupting the flow of the ritual. Third, decide when and where and to whom the ritual is dedicated. When, depends upon the Sabbats and the phases of the moon. Where, of course, depends upon the need for privacy, i.e. skyclad or not. Whom, if you are invoking a particular deity, certain formalities may be needed to be followed. You will also need to gather all the appropriate tools. See chapter two on Magick. Invite whatever elemental, spirit or God/ess that you wish to invoke, open your circle, perform your ritual, close the circle. Record the ritual in your Book of Shadows.

Why does a ritual have to be done inside a circle?

The circle is where Wiccans and many other Neo-pagan traditions perform their rituals. The circle is used to protect those who cast it and to contain the focus of the caster. The actual casting and closing of the circle is just as important as the ritual that is performed inside the circle. Circle casting can be as complex or as simple as desired. This is also covered in great length by RavenWolf and by Buckland.

The circle also represents the cycle of life: life, death, rebirth and life again, never ending. The circle is a perfect symbol to demonstrate wholeness and perfection. It reminds us that everything is connected. The circle is the entranceway to the Otherworld, a place of power and of mystery. The continuous circle seemingly has no beginning or end, thus signifying that as one cycle or season ends, another begins-eternal life.

What is the Wiccan hierarchy?

Wiccans will state they have no hierarchy, that all are equal, because all Wiccans are priests/esses. This is not necessarily true. First, there is the High Priestess who can trace her roots all the way back to Dorothy Clutterbuck (this is primarily a Gardnerian Tradition). The next level would be the High Priest, then the priests/esses, who are broken down into levels of three; Maiden, Mother and Crone. However this only pertains to those who belong to covens. There are the non-witch worshippers who are called cowan's. Though cowan's generally do not engage in the rituals and are not considered true members of the coven. (Buckland, page 54-55)

What are the Sabbats?

The Sabbats are pagan holidays, four of which fall within the time of the equinoxes and the solstices, or the quarters, sometimes known as the Lesser Sabbats. The other four divide the seasons, or the cross-quarters, also known as the Greater Sabbats. The Sabbats fall in line with Wiccan belief of the cycle of life, birth, growth, death, and rebirth. All of the Sabbats are season-based, and are extensions of the original major holidays of planting and harvesting. In staying with the traditions, which conceived the Sabbats, these festivals begin when the ancient day did, at sundown, and end at the sundown of the following day. (RavenWolf, pages 31-38)

Yule (December 21-31) pronounced "You'll" is also known as the Winter Solstice. This is the celebration of rebirth. Yule also means "wheel", for the year has reached its turning point, having reached the shortest day of the year. It is known that the Sun will now grow in strength and the days will become longer. Yule honors the God, as he is reborn. A typical Yule celebration consists of lighting a fire with a Yule log (remnants of which should be kept to light next years log), feast, and decorate the home with seasonal items such as pinecones, holly, and wreaths.

Imboloc (February 2nd)

) pronounced "Im-bolk" also called Candlemass, is the symbol of the earliest days of spring. Imboloc means "in the belly of the Mother," or Oimelc, "milk of ewes". Seeds are to be planted. This is a time when God is considered a youth, becoming a man. Lighting of bonfires to welcome back the sun marks the Sabbat.

Ostara (March 21st) pronounced "Oh-stare-ah" is also known as Eostras Day or the Spring Equinox. This day was sacred to Eostre, a Saxon Goddess whose symbols were the egg and the rabbit. This marks the first day of spring. Day and night are equal at this time. Everything is coming back to life and the days are longer. Celebrations include the dying of eggs (fertility symbol), planting of gardens and setting goals for the future.

Beltane (May 1st) is pronounced "Bell-tane" also known as May Day. Beltane means, "fire of Bel." This is the last of the three fertility festivals. Beltane also represents the union of the Goddess and God. Celebration includes tying ribbons

around the Maypole to symbolize the union of the Goddess and God. Many Wiccans will have their handfasting ceremony performed on Beltane.

Litha (June 21st) pronounced "lee-tha" is also known as Midsummer or the Summer Solstice. This is the longest day of the year. Even though the crops that were planted in the spring continue to grow, it is now known that each day will continually be shorter. This is a celebration of purification, fertility and love.

Lammas (August 1st) pronounced "La-mass" is also known as Lughnasadh. Lughnasadh means "funeral of Lugh," the Irish Sun God, although the funeral is not his, but his mothers. It is the celebration of the first fruits of the harvest. The Goddess and God celebrate the conception of their child.

Mabon (September 21st) pronounced 'may-bon" is also known as The Autumn Equinox. Mabon means "son." Day and night are equal. It is a time of rest, to enjoy the fruits of your labors. It is the celebration of the harvest.

Samhain (October 31st) pronounced "Sow-when", also known as the pagan New Year. Samhain means, "summer's end." Samhain is traditionally the biggest of the Wiccan holidays. It is the day when the veil between the physical and spiritual world is the thinnest. It is a time to honor the dead and to reflect upon the cycle of death and rebirth.

The Sabbats are a reminder that life is a cycle, we are born, we die, and we are reborn again. They help the Wiccan celebrate this cycle and to remind them that it is continuous and unchanging.

What are the Esbats?

An Esbat is a Wiccan working holiday. They occur 13 times a year at each full moon. This is a time of ritual and Magickal workings. It is a time of worship and honoring of the Goddess. It is also where a ceremony called "Drawing Down the Moon" is frequently performed. "Due to the rotation of the earth, there are thirteen full moons, and each carries a traditional name. They are: " (RavenWolf, pages 38-40)

Wolf Moon January

Storm Moon February

Chaste Moon March

Seed Moon April

Hare Moon May

Dyad (pair) Moon June

Mead Moon July

Wyrt (green plant) Moon August

Barley Moon September

Snow Moon November

Oak Moon December

Blue Moon Variable

A Blue Moon occurs when the moon appears twice in the same calendar month. The moon with its 28-day cycle will appear twice within at least one month per year.

What are some good books to read to learn more about Wicca?

There are a lot of good books to read, actually too many to list them all. The ones that are listed were found to be helpful in researching this chapter. For a more complete listing use the bibliography in the back of the book.

Clifton, Chas S. *Witchcraft Today: The Modern Craft Movement* Llewellyn Publications, USA 1993 ISBN# 0-87542-377-9

Cunningham, Scott *Living Wicca: A Further Guide for the Solitary Practitioner* Llewellyn Publications, USA 1998 ISBN# 0-87542-184-9

Cunningham, Scott *Wicca: A Guide for the Solitary Practitioner* Llewellyn Publications, USA 1998 ISBN# 0-87542-118-0

Starhawk *The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess* HaperCollins Publishers Inc., USA 1989 ISBN# 0-06-250815-6

What are some web-sites to visit?

The number of Wiccan web-sites is phenomenal, and it keeps growing .The easiest way to find a web-site on a particular subject is to use your search engine on the computer. Use the words, Wicca, Wiccan, Cunningham, Scott, Witch and Witchcraft. Here are some sites that can help get you started on your search. However because of the constant ebb and flow of the Internet these sites may no longer exist, but as of December, 1998 they were still online.

Celtic Connection <http://www.com/celtic/cc002.htm>

Coven of the Four Corners <http://members.xoom.com/COTFC/index.html>

Wiccan Information Center, The

<http://ww3.sympatico.ca/morgaine/welcome.html>

Wicca & Shamanism <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Olympus/5987>

Wicca & Spellcraft <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Ithaca/7441/index.html>

FAQ On Shamanism

What is a Shaman?

Before one can define or describe what a Shaman or shamanism is, certain terms need be defined such as ecstasy, traditional, and neo-shamans. It is also important to recognize that unlike most of the current neo-pagans groups, religions, and spiritual paths, Shamanism has stayed relatively unchanged through out time. This consistency is what has made shamanism it so popular.

What is Shamanic Ecstasy?

The term shamanic ecstasy was first used by eminent anthropologist Mircea Eliade in his book Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy. The word ecstasy comes from the Greek word, ekstasis meaning to be placed outside, or to be placed. Ecstasy is a state of intense joy beyond rational thought.

Ecstasy as defined by Webster's dictionary is a complete state of joy. This definition as used by Tom Cowan, noted author of several books on shamanism is further elaborated on stating that ecstasy meant to literally "standing outside ones self" and that it was a form of a trance or state of consciousness which allows the shaman to journey. (Pocket Guide to Shamanism, page 110-111)

There are three main points of ecstasy and they are:

Shamanic Ecstasy

Prophetic Ecstasy

Mystical Ecstasy

Shamanic Ecstasy occurs while the Shaman is listening to the sound of a drum or other rhythmic beats. Ecstasy is a state of consciousness (SOC) which is entered for one or more of the following reasons:

To engage in soul retrieval;

To guide the soul of the dead;

To divine answers from the spirits in regards to future events;

To add to his personal knowledge by associating with higher beings.

This then answers part of what is a shaman? A shaman is someone who enters into a state of "ecstasy" to assist in retrieving someone soul, guide the dead to their resting-place, to forecast the future, and to learn more.

Prophetical Ecstasy is a state that is entered to retrieve certain information in regards to future events. This is a form of Divination, or seership. The famous Greek seers of Delphi often used this form. John the Baptist would also enter into this form of ecstasy, often given to fits before predicating Biblical events. One of his most famous prophecies was foretelling the coming of Christ.

Mystical Ecstasy is a state that is entered to become closer with or to the Gods. They usually achieved this state by the use of mantras. Mystics tend to pursue greater levels of spiritual understanding. Yoga masters, Buddhists monks, and Christian mystics were known for the form of ecstasy.

Meditation, contemplation, visualization, and the spiritual concentration that is practiced by yogis and mystics can also reach ecstatic states. These are not associated with the extreme frenzy that is associated with Ecstasy, but are more like mystic trances.

Though with most shamanic culture groups the use of drumming and other repetitive and rhythmic sounds to induce this the ecstatic state to which they make their out-of body journeys. (Drury and Tillett, page 28)

There are three distinct levels of ecstatic responses:

The physiological response: the body exhibits an involuntary response, a physical frenzy.

Emotional response: the emotions tend to run a gauntlet of feelings, fear, awe, passion, joy, etc.

Intuitive response: the mind and body have a blending, which allows for a greater awareness and expanded state of consciousness.

These states may all be achieved at the same time or at different periods of the ecstatic experience. In traditional shamanic ecstatic states the physiological is always present, the emotional may or may not be, and the intuitive is the primary means to the understanding of the ecstatic state. It should be noted that the state of ecstasy could be reached awake, or unawake. This is further defined as that the shaman can control his/her state of consciousness by entering into the ecstatic state at will, by physically, emotionally, and intuitively controlling it.

Ecstasy is not used with the modern or neo-shaman as it is with traditional shamanic groups. Many of the modern day shamans tend to use the less traditional methods and opt for the more "New Age" techniques of journeying. These are yoga, astral projection, and creative visualization to name a few. Though it should be noted that there are neo-shamans that do use the traditional method of "ecstasy."

What is a traditional shaman?

Besides someone who uses the ecstatic state, a traditional shaman is someone who is found in hunting and gathering societies. Or someone whom is currently associated with Aborigine group or is a member of. This includes too many to list, but, does include:

Native Americans

Australian Bushmen

Many of the African native tribes

South Americans

Central Americans

Eskimos

Many of the current tribes still existing in Siberia

Also many of the Oceanic peoples and Asian groups.

A traditional shaman usually will belong to one of the above listed groups and engage in traditional training, which is discussed further into this chapter. Very few traditional shamanic groups will train an "outsider," though some have.

What is a neo-shaman?

The modern neo-shaman is defined as those who practice the principles of Shamanism with out the benefit of community or tribal connection. This would

cover those who participate in shamanic practices, but do not engage in the initiation practices and ways of learning the traditional shaman does. Though there are some neo-shamans that have and do.

So what is a shaman?

A Shaman, in all shamanic cultures, is portrayed primarily as a healer and a spiritual consultant for his/her community. Shamans often have many other roles in their communities: sorcerer, medicine man, priest, and psychiatrist, their primary role is to interact between the community and the spirit world. However, according to Mircea Eliade author of *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, not all shamans are sorcerers, medicine men, priests or psychiatrists. (Pages 3-4)

. The Shaman is found primarily in Siberia, Central Asia, Asia, North, Central, and South America, Oceania, Indo-Europe, Australia, and Africa: actually almost every cultural group in the world has had some form of shamanism, including the Christians.

A shaman is a person who can enter the state of ecstasy at will, whether he/she is a traditional or neo-shaman.

What is Shamanism?

Shamanism is the oldest form of spiritual contact. As such Shamanism predates all known religions and might be the basis of which all religion was built upon, although shamanism itself is not a religion. Shamanism is set of religious-magical behaviors as defined by Eliade or the "magick of ecstasy." Shamanism is a set of beliefs and behaviors. This allows the shaman to shift consciousness at will to obtain information, heal, retrieve souls, or to seek for guidance from the ancestors. Shamanism has remained relatively unchanged over time. (Eliade, pages 2-6)

A primary feature of Shamanism is that it is usually found in hunting and gathering societies. This may be because those agriculture and urbanized societies were less aware of the need to integrate with nature as they were more or less designed around civilization centers and less dependent upon "nature's bounty." (Ember and Ember, pages 424-25)

Modern day shamanism has a more eclectic approach and is more in tune with the problems of the "modern world" while using the methodology of the "primitive world." According to Tom Cowan, author of *Shamanism: As a Spiritual Practice for Daily Life*, the modern American shaman "...draws upon what is best in our society while it reforms those areas harmful to the human spirit and the health of the planet." (Page 12)

Where does the word "Shaman" originate?

The word shaman is the English translation of the word saman, which is Tungus, and mean's "to know." The Tungus are an indigenous people of Altai Mountains in Siberia. The word shaman in Tungus designates the shamanic way of life, experiences and beliefs rather than a religion. There is some debate as to where the word saman may even have come from, Eliade devotes a chapter on that subject. It appears as if the word saman is a derivative of the Tibetan word for Buddhist monk, samana.

The word Shaman has since come to represent all those, outside of the original Siberian culture, who practice shaman like techniques. These include Witchdoctors, medicine men, Dreamwalker, and diviners. Although the shaman goes by many names in many cultures, it is a generally accepted term, to describe some one who fits the known description.

Though there is no universal Native American word for shaman: there never the less were shamans. According to John Swanton author of Shamans and Priests: Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico "...priests worked for the entire tribe...shamans authority depended largely upon personal skill." (Page 522) The Ojibwa Native American Indian tribe did have jugglers of the "hidden truth" called jes' sakid. These jugglers were able to speak to gods and spirits and to heal. (Eliade, page 315) Eskimos also have a name for there shamans, angakok, they are also cable of flight and they journey to the Otherworld (the Sea). (Eliade, page 288)

In some African cultures, the shaman is a diviner, a person who is chosen by the ancestors to be a link between the living and the dead. The Igbo Tribe located in parts West Africa named their shaman's Dibia. (Primitive Worlds, page 117) The Indo-European Cultures, primarily the Celtic, called their shamans the file, or poets. John Matthews author of the Celtic Shaman, states that the Celtic Shamans are called Geilt, meaning madman or wild. (Page 4)

The South American tribe of the Araucanians has female shamans, called machi. (Eliade, pages 324-25) The Asians shamans, primarily those in Korea are called mudang, which usually refers to female shamans, while male shamans are called paksu.

The Oceanian Tribes, which encompasses all of the south pacific islands and the continent of Australia have many names for their shamans: Andaman Islands name theirs oko-jumu, meaning dreamer. The Semang, call their shamans hala. A Malayan shaman is called lupa, someone that obtains a state of madness. Sumatra shaman means "the word" or sibaso. (Eliade, pages 337-374) In Australia they called their Dreamwalker, karadji, or clever men. (Godwin, page 106)

Whatever names or term that is used to describe a shaman it is important to note that a traditional shaman is not a person, but rather a job. Unlike many of the neo-shamans point of view, which treat shamanism as a way of life, a spiritual calling.

What role does "ecstasy" play in shamanism?

Shamanic ecstasy is used to shift the consciousness of the shaman into the higher or lower planes of existence. This shifting of consciousness allows the shaman to complete his/her "mission", whether that is healing, soul escorting, or visiting the ancestors. Ecstasy, or achieving it, also plays an important role in choosing the shaman. Being able to achieve this state at will is what makes a shaman a shaman. In other words, this state of consciousness is what defines a shaman.

Does one need to use drugs to reach ecstatic states?

No, it is not recommend that drugs be used to achieve ecstatic states. The use of drugs is primarily cultural in achieving the ecstatic state. The rhythmic beat of a drum, dancing, and or fasting also allows the shaman to reach this ecstatic state.

However, the historical use of drugs by Siberian shamans is well documented. The Siberian shamans used a mushroom called psilocybin; this mushroom is noted for its psychedelic effects. The Native American Indians have been know to use peyote, while those in Central America marijuana and mescalito or mescaline, and South America use an hallucinogenic drink called natema. (Drury and Tillett, page 27-28) Celtic shamans are said to have sometimes used herbs such as bilberry to reach the ecstatic or desired state.

How do you become a shaman?

According to Mircea Eliade there are two primary ways of becoming a shaman. They are: hereditary, receiving the call, there are also two secondary ways, being appointed or choosing to do so of your own free will. These self-made shamans are considered less powerful than the former two. (Page 13)

Hereditary shaman means: literally to have a shaman in the family. This does not mean that your mother or father is a shaman, but any family member will do, living or dead, close member or many times removed. Hereditary shamans are found throughout most shamanic cultures, not including neo-shamans.

Extreme psychotic like episodes marks receiving the "call", usually appears to epileptic like and is often confused with epilepsy. This is not to be confused with a mental disorder. The "call" is a temporary unbalance that the shaman experiences, and is usually brought under control once he or she accepts the call. Refusing or delaying of the call can often amount in continuing of the mental

unbalance and can result in a mental illness if it is avoided long enough. The call can also be marked by being attacked by an animal, struck by lightning or some other near death experience. It should be noted that "Call" is usually happens simultaneously to those who are also hereditary shamans but is not inclusive to.

Being appointed a shaman involves either the tribal shaman choosing a apprentice or the tribal leaders picking a youth who has demonstrated either some sort of epileptic fit, or a marketable difference in personality from other youths his/her age. This difference usually entails peculiar behavior: a seeker of solitude, absent-mindedness, sings in their sleep and other abnormalities.

A personal quest is making a conscious choice to become a shaman. Eliade states that this "self-made" shaman is considerably less powerful and less likely to be able to communicate at will with the spirits. (Page 13) This is the path that most modern neo-shamans follow.

How does one learn to become a shaman?

There are two traditional kinds of instruction a shaman receives and many forms a neo-shaman can use. The traditional methods as stated by Eliade are:

ecstatic

traditional

Receiving training by the ecstatic method is through visions and dreams. This instruction is given by previous ancestors, spirits and guides and involves an initiation in the Otherworld.

Traditional training is usually done by the current shaman, and if not available the tribal elders. The traditional training includes the names of spirits, history of the clan (tribe); herbalist and other needed to skills to become a successful shaman.

Neo-shamans engage in reading how-to books, attending weekend seminars, and joining shamanic schools. Neo-shamans can have an ecstatic experience and or receive the "call", though this is often not the case. They can however receive traditional training if they find the right teacher and are qualified to do so.

What does a shamanic initiation involve?

The shamanic initiation is two-fold; both in this world and in the next. This phenomenon takes place simultaneously. This initiation is part of the "call" that all traditional shamans receive. This is a very involved process that can, at times, result in death or permanent disabilities if not seen through.

A Siberian shamanic initiation, which includes the following Tribes: Tungus, Manchu, Yakut, Samoyed, Ostyak, and the Buryat, involved some sort of dismemberment and then having the organs replaced, usually with crystals, or other objects. There is also the public initiation which the master shaman and the members of the community would initiate the shaman thus publicly recognizing him or her as "shaman."

The initiatory dreams and visions of a Yakut shaman including dying in a ritual death that last three days. This "death" will include visions; dreams of being disremembered and then put back together. With the Yakut this will include the use of iron to join the parts. A bird transports the shaman to the other world and there it places the shaman on ripen branch of pine pitch, or in another version gives birth to the shaman on a branch of the world tree. (Eliade, pages 35-38)

The initiation among the Samoyed also features birds, trees and dismemberment. The Samoyed candidate also will encounter several divine figures, these being "the Lord of the Waters, the Lord of the Earth, the Lord of the Tree, and many others. The lord of the Tree will give the shaman a branch from which he/she will make their drum. (Eliade, pages 38-43)

The Tungus, Buryat, Manchu and Ostyak include ritual dismemberment and resurrection. This dismemberment involves shamanic ancestors and sometimes-evil spirits will often torture the future shaman for days. (Eliade, pages 43-45) This is found in many other cultures also, including the Eskimos of Alaska, the tribes in Australia, Africa, and Native peoples of North and South America.

Ammasalik Eskimos are attacked by animals and then devoured; new flesh will grow on their bones. For those of the Iglulik tribes, the current or master shaman will extract the soul from the candidate and examine to see if he/she is worthy. (Eliade, pages 58-62)

The Australian shaman believes that a supernatural being called the Nagatya opens the belly and places crystals within the body that give the shaman his magical powers. This usually takes place in a cave rather than a tree. There are several variants of the same scheme among the four major tribes in Australia, but all hold true to a ritual dismemberment. (Eliade, pages 45-50)

This ritual death and resurrection is found among many of the African tribes. The common theme among African tribes is the removal of the head and restoration of the brains to give the future shaman clearer vision to see the evil spirits. (Eliade, pages 55-58)

Among the native people of North and South America death and resurrection is also part of the initial initiation through dreams and visions. Though the use of hallucinatory drugs is more wide spread among the North and South Native

Americans their experiences are too similar to the Siberian shaman to discount there visions as be simply drug induced. (Eliade, pages 53-55)

The Neo-shaman experiences this vision several ways. It is usually self induced, through fasting, meditation, sweat lodges, and the use of drugs. According to John Matthews author of the Celtic Shaman, the shaman will go through a process of "recovering (his/her) senses" by meditating and visiting the "cave of care" where one faces their own personal demons. The initiate seeks out neo-shamanism, and though valid to a certain degree, it lacks certain hereditary powers of a traditional shaman. (Matthews, pages 15-32)

The "true" initiation of shamans all have a common theme: Ritual dismemberment and replacement of organs either by spiritual means or with other matter i.e. crystals. According to Eliade there is a common theme among tribal shamanic initiations:

Time spent alone, away from the tribe, in wilderness

Being symbolically made to look like a corpse

Symbolic burial

Descent into the Otherworld

Self induced or drug induced trance

Period of training

Rites of passage and torture

Public initiation among the follows the true initiation follows the "true" initiation,

though for tribal members it is not any less important. The initiation is performed after a period of initial ecstatic experience or "true" initiation, and formal training with the current shaman. Public initiation is highly ritualistic, often involving physical pain and feats, and is witnessed by the tribe.

According to Eliade, the Tungus and Manchu both have a demonstration of physical feats correlated with mental discipline. The Tungus have the initiate physically climb up a rope, which represents the road to the sky; this ceremony usually lasts up to nine days. The Manchu have their future shamans either walk across a hot bed of coals or diving into holes cut into the ice, thus demonstrating their ability to control body temperature. This is also very similar to the Tibetan monks whom are sent in into the snow with wet sheets wrapped around their bodies and must heat themselves. According to Eliade the Manchu hardly ever use the bed of coals anymore and it is seen as a decline in shamanic powers.

The Yakut, Samoyed and Ostyak initiation is less physical and more of a celebration. The Yakut initiate, after climbing up a mountain or a hill, will be given vows he must repeat surrounded by nine chaste men (on his right) and chaste women (on his left). Among the Samoyed and Ostyak there is singing and dancing and feasting (nine pigs are slaughtered), usually followed by the initiate going into a state of ecstasy.

The Buryat initiation is more detailed and rather involved. First the initiate must be cleansed; this usually is done twice. Next, birch trees are arranged in the following order to be used. One of the birches is set up in the yurt or tents smoke hole. The others are set up away from the tent in the following order:

One is used to place offerings, such as wine. Ribbons representing good and bad spirits are also tied to the tree.

Another has a bell and a horse tied to it.

One is used for the initiate to climb; this is usually a stout birch.

Nine others, grouped in threes are tied with white rope and colored ribbons.

Nine more are used as stakes to which animals are sacrificed

Then they use larger birches to tie the bones (wrapped in straw) of the animals that were sacrificed to.

The actual initiation takes place with the initiate lying in a trance for 3 days, crawling out of the smoke hole and then celebrating his/her emergence as a shaman. The horse is symbolic in Siberian culture as transportation to the Gods, or the Otherworld. The number nine is significant in all of the rituals, the only given reason for this is the fact that there are nine layers of heaven in Siberian religion. One should also note that in each ritual, some sort of ascent, or climb heavenward was used.

This is public initiation by the tribe is also found in many other cultures, including the Eskimos of Alaska, the tribes in Australia, Africa, and Native peoples of North and South America.

Eskimos public initiation is less public, but nonetheless an initiation. The initiate will rub stones together awaiting an important event; this may go on for several seasons. During which he will change teachers at the end of each season, this allows for amore well-rounded education. (Eliade, pages 58-62)

The Australian Bushmen initiation includes drinking of water that has crushed crystals; he is then lead to a grave to begin his symbolic death. There is also assent to the heavens with the use of a magical cord, and it some instances a

rainbow bridge. The use of the entrance of a cave instead of tree is one of the major differences in Australian shamans to others. (Eliade, pages 131-139)

African public initiation varies from tribe to tribe, though it generally follows the typical public initiation as established by other shamanic cultures: ritual death, resurrection and the climbing or ascent. This is followed by a demonstration of powers to the tribe and or current shaman along with whatever other abilities the tribe requires of its shaman.

Shamans of North and South America also have public initiations, though those of North America plains Indians involves certain degrees of physical tests along with a spirit quest or vision quest to prove ones worth to the tribe. Most, but not all, North American Native Indian tribes have some sort of ritual ascent along with the ritual death and resurrection. As with African tribes, North American Indian tribal customs vary.

South American Indian customs also vary to a degree somewhat, although intoxication by tobacco seems to be a common thread along with ritual seclusion. The Araucanians tribe also engages in a ritual ascent of a tree stripped of all its bark that is called a rewe.

The neo-shaman, depending upon which shamanic path he/she is following will also engage in a public "type" ceremony, though this is less public than the ceremony of the traditional shaman. This ceremony can involve a sweat lodge, public drumming circle or a vision quest, of which the neo-shaman will go on a weekend retreat with other neo-shamans.

As we can see there is a common thread throughout shamanic "public" initiations as there are in the "true" initiations:

The number nine is prevalent or a division of.

The ascent.

Ritual death and resurrection

A tree or a cave.

What is the role of a shaman?

Shamanic roles vary, according to Tom Cowan, author of the Pocket Guide to Shamanism, the roles or services of a shaman are: "...healing the spirit, herbal healing, body work, divination, dreamwork, soul-leading...." It should be noted that not every shaman does not perform the same services, nor is every shaman a healer of the spirit or body. (Pages 23-27) The actual roles of a shaman depends upon the shamans natural gifts, some shamans are carpenters,

medicine men, witch doctors, chiefs, warriors, and priests. The role is of less importance than the service a shaman provides.

Healing the spirit is the primary function of a shaman. This includes soul-extraction, soul-retrieval, and soul-restoration. Soul extraction involves the shaman extracting psychic darts that have infected the soul. This is usually an attack from someone who is attempting to harm, maim, or kill the person. The classic dart attack will include the person having pains where no wounds exist. This involves according to Michael Harner, author of *The Way of the Shaman*, a literal "sucking out" of the intrusion. This sucking out of the intrusions is done both psychically and mentally.

Soul-retrieval is the process by which the shaman retrieves pieces of the person's lost soul. This is done by journeying to the spirit world and requesting assistance from the spirits, ancestors, and guides that dwell in the Other World. These beings assist the shaman in discovering what is wrong with the person. Classic symptoms of a person in need of soul retrieval would be those suffering from:

A mental illness

Those abused as children

A feeling something is missing

This would entail the shaman to be able to discern what pieces are missing and to retrieve them. Soul-retrieval also could entail the shaman to go seek the missing pieces from whomever stole them and to do battle and retrieve the missing pieces.

Soul restoration is the literally restoring of one's soul. This occurs when a person is near death and his/her soul seeks to move on. This "death" could be the result of a physical attack or an accident from which the body has recovered physically, but not spiritually.

Herbal healing gives way to the notion that the shaman is a medicine man or witch doctor. Herbal healing is as old as man is. Its very roots go back to when mankind first ventured forth from his/her caves and observed what the animals ate and didn't. Many of the hunting and gathering tribes had the ability to heal with plants indigenous to their area. This is one of the oldest forms of healing and was used in conjunction with spirit healing to hasten the patient to a speedy recovery.

Body work, hands on healing. This technique is still widely used today though now they are Reiki masters, massage therapists, and chiropractors. A hands on healing is energy or spirit of the shaman working with the energy or spirit of the patient working together.

Divination is the means by which the shaman will foretell the future, locate hidden objects, and predicting the weather. This is done by a multiple amount of ways, and depends upon from which culture the shaman is from. Though the most common shamanic method is journeying to the Otherworld and requesting information from those that live there. It is been said that Jenghiz Khan used his shamans that way.

Dreamwork or dream interpretation is also another shamanic device to assist with healing. Shamans will listen to the dreamer's dream, sometime for several days, until they fully understand it. Then they will dream the dream themselves than interpret it.

Soul leading is another important function of a shaman. This is the process of which the shaman will escort the newly dead to their place in the Otherworld. This is done because the shaman who is familiar and a frequent visitor to the Otherworld will be able to find the "soul" its proper place.

Whatever role a shaman plays or services he/she renders it is important to note that not all shamans are healers, diviners, or herbalist. What a shaman is according to Eliade is a "master of the ecstatic." From which he/she receives the power to heal and divine.

Do shaman's shapeshift?

Yes, but not all shamans. Just like not all shamans are healers or religious leaders. Shapeshifting is not a primary ability that shamans possess. There are two types of Shapeshifting: changing your physical form to an animal; which is probably where the werewolf stories begin, this is called lycanthropy. Or changing you form in the astral plane to that of your power animal. Shamans are said to be able to do both. (Matthews, *The Celtic Shaman: A Handbook* pages 56-58)

There is a third form that is less talked about, but more common. During certain rituals or ceremonies the participants have been known to be so enthralled during the drumming and dancing that they have taken on the characteristics of animals; have growled like a bear, bayed at the moon like a wolf and screamed like a eagle. All while acting out the physical aspects of the animal, walking on all fours, etc. This form of Shapeshifting is more common among the Native American population than other aborigine tribes. (Steiger, *Totems: The Transformative Power of Your Personal Animal Totem* page, 64-70)

What is the difference between a "black" and "white shaman"?

The primary difference according to Eliade is that the white shamans have relationships with the gods, the black shamans with spirits. Though most shamanic cultures the shaman has the ability to do both, and often does. As with

other pagan religions and spiritual movements, it is the intent that marks the differences between the two. (Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy pages 184-189)

What is the shamanic "Otherworld"?

The Siberian shamans have 9 levels of heaven. Australian shamans have this world and Dreamtime. African shamans have various shades of reality depending upon the tribe involved. Indo-European have three levels much like their Native American counterparts. These are the three most common levels Upper, Middle, and Lower. These are the levels from which the neo-shaman uses today. These worlds are located on the Tree of Life.

Upper World is located in the branches of the Tree of Life. It is a place where the spirits and gods reside. This is also known as the astral palace or temples. It is where the shaman divines the future, learns from his/her guides, and communicates with the dead.

The Lower World is located in the roots and is a very powerful place. It is where the dead resides and where lost information is retrieved. It is a place where the shaman learns what ails those he/she is treating.

Middle World is located in the trunk. It is the world of here and now. It is where the shaman answers questions for everyday problems.

How does one get to these other worlds?

Tunnels are the primary method of traveling to the Otherworld. These tunnels are located in the physical plane in caves and the base of trees. The tunnel that leads up goes to the Upper World, the one down, Lower World. Authors of the Secrets of Shamanism: Tapping the Spirit Power Within You, Jose and Lena Stevens state that tunnels exist throughout, both on the physical and spiritual planes. The Stevens even go to say that there are also seven "inner" tunnels. These are reached by using the chakras. (Pages 157-173)

The chakras are located at seven points within the body:

The first tunnel is located at the sacrum or the base of the spine.

2. The second tunnel is located at the abdomen, just below the belly button.

3. The third tunnel is located at the solar plexus, just above the belly button.

4. The fourth tunnel is located at the chest, specifically the heart.

5. The fifth tunnel is located at the throat, but it also takes in the ears as well.

6. The sixth tunnel is located at the brow and eyes, also known as the third eye.

The seventh tunnel is located at the crown or the top of the head.

There are many tunnels from which a shaman can reach the Otherworld or spirit realm. Depending upon which culture from the shaman draws his/her powers.

What is journeying?

Journeying is leaving "this world" reality to enter the "Otherworld" while in the state of ecstasy. It is the actual traveling through the various levels of the Worlds: Siberian shamans have 9 levels and usually travel on the back of a goose or a horse. American Indians have 3 levels and travel in accompaniment with their totem guides. African shamans, depending upon the tribe have multiple layers of the Otherworld and travel with their ancestors. Each shamanic culture has its own version of exactly where and with whom they travel; though each shamanic culture does have some sort of journeying involved.

According to Tom Cowan when a shaman journeys he/she is letting their spirit leave their body to journey to the astral plane or spirit realm. There are many ways of obtaining this state of ecstasy, as was discussed with the question "What is Shamanic ecstasy?." This altered state of consciousness has many levels full awake, dreaming, and daydreaming. Though unlike drug induced or dreamed realities, shamanic journeying is intentional. (Pocket Guide to Shamanism pages 111-112)

What does the acronym SSC stand for?

SSC or shamanic state of consciousness is a term first used by Michael Harner, author of the Way of the Shaman. SSC is another term for the ecstatic or altered state of consciousness. According to Harner it involves both a trance state and a learned state of shamanic ways and of the Otherworld. During which the shaman must be aware of what is occurring and in control of the situation, much like lucid dreaming (which will be discussed in later chapters).

What is a guided journey?

A guided journey is a learning journey. It does not necessarily have to begin with the ecstatic state; often it can take place in deep sleep. A guided journey occurs when a spirit guide or animal guide (totem) takes control of the dream and "guides" you to where they want you. A guided journey is not always pleasant. This is where the shaman learns more about him/herself and grows into their powers, it is where they meet and grow to know their guides and spirit teachers.

What is a Guide?

A guide is a spirit helper and may appear to the shaman in many forms. Usually a guide will appear in the form of your own ancestral gods or a figure that is comfortable for the shaman. In some shamanic cultures the guide appears as an ancestor: African and Siberian shamans often have ancestors appear as spirit guides. Many shamanic cultures also have animal guides or totems.

Totems according to Brad Steiger author of Totems: The Transformative Power of Your Personal Animal Totem, a totem is animal, plant, or mineral that has special powers or meaning to the shaman. A totem has the power that is characterized by the object it represents. Example: If the totem is an owl, wisdom; oak tree, strength; crystal, healing and storage of energy. The power of a totem and what it represents also varies in the different shamanic cultures, so what one culture says does not necessarily mean it is the truth or will it apply to another.

Do shamans have rules?

Not in the sense of there being a rulebook. Traditional shamans have a certain set of beliefs and behaviors to guide them as was discussed previously. Neo-shamans appear to be more rules orientated. According to the authors of Secret of Shamanism: Tapping the Spirit Power Within You they're at least nineteen rules or beliefs and behaviors a shaman must follow. Though only ten will be discussed here:

The physical world works of basic principles such as physics and it bound to them.

The spirit world or Otherworld is not bound to such inflexible laws.

That the spirit world is made up of many levels though those levels used by neo-shamans is Upper, Middle and Lower.

The Tree of Life allows the shaman entrance to those worlds.

That all is connected; the physical and the spirit world depend on each other for their respective existence.

That all power is connected to the Web of Life.

Shamans need to know how to enter the spirit world at will

That a shaman needs to know how to manipulate the tunnels to enter the spirit world.

Visualization and a creative imagination will assist in that endeavor.

Sweat lodges, dancing and drumming can assist your entrance to the Otherworld.

What is the purpose of drumming?

The use of a drum is very old; a drum was probably the very first musical instrument made. The drum assist the shaman to reach the state of ecstasy, by beating on the drum the shaman would put him/herself into a trance. Once entered into he/she would journey to the Otherworld than return, describing their travels with song accompanied by the drum. These drums were ornately painted, often with feathers or horsehair hang off the sides. A shamans drum is a very personal instrument.

What is a drumming circle?

According to Tom Cowan a drumming circle is a group of neo-shamans that meet and journey together. This is a shamanic support group and allows the neo-shaman to learn and grow with others. (Pocket Guide to Shamanism page 110)

Where can you go to learn to become a shaman?

There are many shamanic schools. Some of which teach through the mail others by attending retreats. There are no through the mail shaman classes that are recommended. Though you can also find them in New Age magazines, such as:

The Kindred Spirit

Foxhole, Dartington, Totnes

Devon TQ9 6EB, England

Or fax: 01803 8665881

Or

Shaman's Drum

PO Box 97

Ashland, OR 97520

Call: (541) 552-0839

Though when dealing with teachers you can not see or have ready access to, you might as well buy a good book. Finding someone who will give your private

lesson is another thing all together though. The best way would be to find a local drumming circle or supply shop for shamans and ask.

Shamanic workshops or retreats are one of the many ways the neo-shamans learn. There are many of them out there and some are less reputable then others. The better of them are listed here and they are:

Aloha International

PO box 665

Kilauea, HI 96754

Or

Foundation for Shamanic Studies

PO Box 1939

Mill Valley, CA 94942

Or

Tuatha D`e: The People of God

PO Box 12803 3rd Ave.

Edinburgh, EH8 9YY

Scotland

What are some good books to read on shamanism?

That would depend upon what you are looking for. If you are seeking books to learn how to be a shaman there are plenty out there, though the best in this category is by Michael Harner. If you want to learn about shamans and their history the best in that category is by Mircea Eliade.

HOW TO

Cowan, Tom Shamanism: As a Spiritual Practice for Daily Life, The Crossing Press Freedom CA, 1996 ISBN# 0-89594-838-9

Harner, Michael The Way of the Shaman, Harper & Row NY, NY 1990 ISBN# 0-06-250373

Matthews, John The Celtic Shaman: A Handbook Element Books, Boston, MA
1992 ISBN# 1-85230-245-3

Stevens, Jose and Lena Stevens Secrets of Shamanism: Tapping the Spirit
Power Within You Avon Books NY, NY 1988 ISBN# 0-380-75607-2

HISTORY OF SHAMNISM

Campbell, Joseph Primitive Mythology: The Masks of God Penguin Books NY,
NY 1987 ISBN# 0-14-00-4304-7

Eliade, Mircea Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy Princeton University
Press, Princeton University USA 1974 ISBN# 0-691-09827

RELATED BOOKS

Steiger, Brad Totems: The Transformative Power of Your Personal Animal Totem
Harper SanFrancisco, CA 1997 ISBN# 0-06-251425-3

Sun Bear, Wabun Wind, and Shawnodese Dreaming with the Wheel: How to
Interpret and Work with Your Dreams Using the Medicine Wheel Fireside NY, NY
1994 ISBN# 0-671-78416-1

What are the best sites online?

There is only one current online class; this is a beginner's class that claims only
to teach the basics and it is also free. This online course can be found at
earth_spirits-subscribe@onelist.com. There are also several online egroups that
will answer questions and direct the new shaman in the right direction. They
are:earth-shamans-subscribe@onelist.com

shaman-1-subscribe@onelist.com

WarriorShaman-subscribe@onelist.com Though this is a relatively new list and is
currently working on building up its list numbers.

The easiest way to find a web-site on a particular subject is to use your search
engine on the computer. Use the words: Shaman, shamanism, and shamanic
healing. Here are some sites that can help get you started on your search,
however because of the constant ebbs and flow of the web these sites may no
longer exist, but as December, 2003 they were still online.

Bearded Wolf <http://.erols.com/brddwolf/wolf.html>

Metista Teachings & Techniques <http://www.Metista.com/>

SoulQuest <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Agora/2537/index.html>

The Medicine Wheel Way

<http://www.angelfire.com/ok/bobbiesues/pg8medwhl.html>

FAQ ON MAGICK

What is magick?

Before answering what magick is, let's define what it isn't. It isn't Bewitched twitching her nose, it isn't Gandalf or Merlin, or playing dungeon and dragons and it isn't three old hags toiling over a bubbling cauldron under the full moon chanting bad rhymes. Magick is being able to use your natural abilities to bring about change.

According to Aliester Crowley, "Magick is the science and art of causing change in conformity with will." Science is the reductive process that gives us theory; art is the creative process that gives us application thus causing changes to occur. Magick is the process by which we incorporate our science and art to create changes with our will. Or in simpler terms, if you can imagine it happening, it will. (Drury & Tillett, pages 41-42)

One keynote about magick is that magick itself will not work without action. You need to seek out your objective- what are you using magick to obtain. Casting a spell for a job won't work unless you actually go out and look for one; all the spell does is heighten your chances.

There have been cases of what is called spontaneous magick, magick that was called upon. This however is misleading, as often the human subconscious will call upon magick without the use of formal action. While the conscious mind did not call upon the forces to make changes the subconscious does and it is still the person calling upon the forces and not just a gift from the gods.

Where did magick originate?

For early man, religion and magick were inseparable from the world around them, and just about every feature of the land was infused with some sacred significance. Swamps were evil. Every spring, tree, river and mountain was imbued with a spirit, with the unknown hidden behind every rock. With all of this in mind, early man developed magick as a force to combat the evil, and religion

to honor the Gods. The origins of magick were derived from necessity rather than desire, and this still holds true today. Magic is still as primal and as instinctive for man today, as it was then. There are many "histories" of magick, each culture believing its own version to be the one true one. The four major "magickal" cultures are Astro-Babylonian, Egyptian, Greco-Roman, and Christianity-Judaism.

The Asrto-Babylonian relied heavily on astrology. This region was also the home of the reformer of the Astro-Babylonian religion, which before 500 BC was primarily polytheistic. Zarathusta or Zoroaster, was the creator of the dualistic religion, in which Ahrua Mazda, the representative of good and right pitted against Ahriman, the representative of evil. These forces were necessary, according to Zarathusta to keep the universe in balance. Zarathusta was also given the title as the "Father of Magick" because of the Gathas, or verses he had written in the holy book, Zend Avesta.

Egyptian magick and religion were intertwined concepts. The Egyptian Gods were worshipped with magick. The God's and Goddess's very names were words of power. These names or words of power later developed into magickal spells or formulas. The Egyptian priests also served as the magi and kept their knowledge to themselves, passing it on much like the Druids, from master to novice.

Greco-Roman magick was heavily influenced by the Egyptian and Hebrew forms of magick. They relied on the pantheon and teachings from other cultures to form their own magickal workings.

Until the advent of Judaism and Christianity, magick and religion were the same thing. The priests, shamans, medicine men were one and the same. The idea of one God was the death knell to magick and those who practiced it. This occurred because man's use of magick was his attempt at becoming one or equal to the Gods. The very nature of one God forbids this. However, the bible is one of the few sources that even discuss the origination of magick.

The bible, Genesis 6, and the Book of Enoch give us a clear picture of the origins of magick. The Book of Enoch states "... and it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them...And angels, children of heaven saw and lusted after them.... and all the others together took unto themselves wives, and each chose for himself one...and they taught them charms and enchantments, and the cutting of roots, and made them acquainted with plants. This is the first recorded or written reference to the history of magick. (Huson, pages 10-13)

Why do pagans spell magick with a "K"?

Aliester Crowley, a prolific and public magician associated with the ceremonialist group the Order of the Golden Dawn started using the letter "k" to differentiate it

from stage magic. Another story suggests that Crowley, who was known to possess a tremendous ego, used the letter "k" to separate himself from all other magicians of the time.

No matter where it started, the letter "k" is added to the word magick as a matter of course nowadays and is used to refer to occult practices rather than the illusionary stage magic of such people as David Copperfield and his ilk. (Drury & Tillett, pages 41)

What is the difference between black magick and white magick?

Popular opinion has black magick being generally understood as more manipulative and dark, while white magick is generally understood as good.

Magick in itself is neither black nor white, however its practitioners often fall in one category or the other. Black magick is magick used to bend events toward bettering self-interests and to influence others in manipulative, controlling ways, usually without their permission. White magick, on the other hand, is generally used for unselfish purposes and goals and often includes such things as healing and helping others. It is not performed without a request or permission of all those involved and always attempts to work toward the greatest possible good within the will of the all.

Better terms for white and black magick may be "constructive" as being beneficial and "adverse" as intended to work against the natural order. Any magick is likely to produce some sort of side effect, regardless if it is nature (constructive or adverse). Such side effects are no problem for the constructive, since they are beneficial. However, adverse magick can produce dangerous side effects. The beginner as well as the journeyman should always remember that magick can be very dangerous. (Gonzalez-Whippler, pages 56-59)

What is high and low magick?

High magick is ceremonial or ritual magick, used more by the practitioners of The Order of the Golden Dawn, Kabbalists, and followers of Aleister Crowley. High magick also follows a set of guidelines and certain formalities. Ceremonialists call upon demons and other entities to do his/her bidding; this ritual takes time and needs to be done correctly. These guidelines follow a very precise set of parameters and if deviated from usually cause problems for the practitioner.

There are also other references to the differences; one of the more common ones is that High Magick came from those that lived in the cities, castles on the hill. It is said that those who practiced High magick had more time on their hands, therefore their rituals are more expansive.

Low magick is practical everyday, or folk magick, generally used by Wiccans and witches, and other nature-based religions. Low magick has less formality and encompasses more of the "common sense" magick. Low magick often involves the use of herbs, aromas, stones, flowers, animal parts (sympathetic magick) and other natural materials. These animal parts are NOT the result of sacrifice, but rather the practitioner finds that feathers, furs, and discarded bones.

Low magick came from the fields, and the lowlands. The fact is that most of those who lived in the lowlands worked from dusk to dawn, had little if any time or need for elaborate ceremonies; therefore the practice of low magick was straightforward and to the point with little fanfare. (Gonza'lez-Whippler, pages 59-66)

I have heard of tantric magic. What is it?

Tantric or sex magic was first originated by the yogis and later used by the alchemists. Tantra follows the theory that the act of having sex, with or without having a partner, and its culminating orgasmic ecstasy can bring the practitioner closer to or unite him or her with their deity.

Tantric magick involves delaying the orgasm for as long as possible in order for it to build up momentum and strength. This act heightens the practitioner's awareness or consciousness level, at which point the actual Magickal intention is invoked into being. (Drury & Tillett, pages 40)

What is chaos magick?

Chaos magick, according to Pete Carroll "...if you want a one-line definition with which most chaosists would probably not disagree, then I offer the following. Chaosists usually accept the meta-belief system that belief is a tool for achieving effects; it is not an end in itself. (1992)

Chaos magick emphasizes a personal and highly imaginative approach to practicing magick. This approach require that the chaos magician has no peers other than himself, that it is impossible for him/her to learn from anyone, for all they can do is show them their own magnificence; that the only rules they need are the ones they make up; that chance rules the universe, with nothing predetermined; and that the only secret is that there are no secrets. This unique perspective, this lack of logic is what makes chaos magick what it is, illogical and chaotic.

Can anyone do magick?

Possible: Anyone can do magick if they apply themselves to learning the techniques involved. It requires discipline, practice, and application, not to

mention dedication--all depending upon the level of accomplishment that is desired.

How does one do magick?

One learns. Depending upon the magick that you wish to use, you learn from reading, asking questions, studying with others, practicing and more reading.

How long does it take to learn to do magick?

The answer to the question depends on what type of magick is being learned or worked toward. Sympathetic magick--using natural objects to form a link with a desire to bring about its manifestation--can be learned in a matter of hours. Druidic magick, on the other hand, is rumored to take up to 20 years to learn! Wiccans and witchcraft covens often have three or four levels, each taking a year and day to complete before moving up to the next level. The ceremonialist of the Order of the Golden Dawn also has levels, which must be passed through over time. Shamans, on the other hand, claim that one never reaches the point of being able to stop learning and just doing, because if they did they would become as the Gods and evolve to live in the Otherworld.

Every tradition has its own schedule that is imposed upon its members to learn its particular brand of magick. However, if you are able to absorb information and have a very active imagination, it will probably take you less time than you might think.

What are the different types of magick?

Besides the ones that we have already discussed; high and low, black and white, tantric, and chaos magick, there are candle, herb, sympathetic, representational, symbolic, color, crystal, knot, moon, and elemental magick. Now this is not a complete list, there are many more, there is fairy, tree, sigil and even gargoyle magick. Raymond Buckland and Silver RavenWolf give the following summary of the different types of magick; each form is well represented in either of their books.

Candle magick is the use of colored candles to represent the four elements, air, fire, water and earth. When lit these representations are powerful forces indeed. Since the beginning of time mankind has used herbs to heal and perform magick. The use of herbs in magick is only second to sympathetic magick in age. Sympathetic magick is the oldest form of known magick. When early man first started the hunt he would wear animal skins to become part of the animal he was hunting. There are many cave drawings that depict this, but none better than the "Sorcerer" in France.

Those who practice Voodoo or Santeria magick use representational magick, similar to sympathetic magick. Representational magick is the use of a personal item, such as a lock of hair or a fingernail clipping to represent the person for whom the spell is cast. Symbolic or divination magick is the use of symbols to represent various ideas. This includes Tarot, Runes and numerology. Color magick, which is another form of symbolic magick, is the use of color to achieve a desired result. Each color has a certain quality assigned to it, and the combination or the individual use of this assigned color will bring about the desired result.

Crystal or gem stone magick works off the principle that stones give off a vibration and that using this vibration will assist the practitioner in healing or in casting a spell. Knot magick or binding magick utilizes rope, string, yarn or ribbons to perform a binding spell, which allows the practitioner to stop someone from performing an unwanted action. Moon magick emphasizes the different phases of the moon to perform certain types of magick. Elemental magick uses the four basic elements of magick; fire, water, earth and air. Each element has different properties; therefore, they can be used separately or together in achieving a desired result.

It is important that you understand that each of these forms of magick has a basic common denominator, that being the intent and the ability to visualize of the individual. The better the ability to visualize and the clearer the intent, the greater the chances of achieving your desired result.

Is ESP a form of magick?

Yes it is. There are many forms of ESP or extra sensory perception a means of receiving information through other than the normal senses of sight, sound, touch, taste and smell. There is also PK, psychokinesis, and the ability to move objects with psychic abilities.

Examples of ESP would be clairvoyance, astral projection, psychometric, precognition and telepathic receiver. Examples of PK are telepathic sender, psychokinesis, psychic healing, and teleportation. Many Neo-pagans and modern day magicians believe that this is one, if not the first, forms of magick.

What time of day should magick be practiced?

Depends on the magick. What are you seeking to do? Here are some very simple common guidelines.

Day: is for expanding

Night: is for inverting

Sunrise: is a time for new beginnings

Sunset: is to find the truth

Midday: will give you added power

Midnight: for banishing

Waxing moon: for growth

Waning moon: for letting go

Full moon: gives you added power also and it can be a lot stronger than the power you receive at midday.

New moon: use to rest

Magick is best practiced, however, when the user is well rested and at his/her peak mentally. This allows for the full force of the practitioner's energy, no matter the time of day, week or month. (RavenWolf, pages 173-188)

Isn't magick dangerous?

Yes it is. The dangers lie in the intent, which is found within the practitioner. Even if someone has good intention, there are still dangers. These dangers lie within the attitude of the practitioner; arrogance, once one realizes how powerful the will is, it is easy to fall into the trap of thinking one is omnipotent; dependency, using magick to achieve everything; forgetting the pleasures that hard work can bring; showing off is probably the most dangerous. Nothing is worse than a run away ego.

The most effective and simple method of avoiding these traps is to always remember that the key to magick is respect. Respect for the magick and for oneself.

Is Magick comparable to modern science?

Yes, actually magick is the founder of modern science. As stated earlier the original four sciences were magick, kabbalah, astrology, and alchemy. These four "sciences" are responsible for psychology, mathematics, astronomy and chemistry. Magick's primary aspect is visualization. Without using this ability to imagine what could be, man would never have ventured across the seas, or landed on the moon, or even dared to dream to venture among the stars.

I have heard of something called the four qualities of a mage. What are they?

The four qualities of a mage as listed by Migene Gonza'lez-Whippler, in *Spells, Ceremonies & Magic* are:

To know

To dare

To will

To keep silent

In simpler terms, to know is your own personal knowledge, it comes from within.

To dare is to have the courage to use your knowledge. To will is to be able to focus your desire. To keep silent is to be able to demonstrate your ability to keep your ego in check. It is important that the practitioner does not let his/her ego run rampant.

What are the laws of magick?

To begin with, each tradition has its own set of laws, or an idea of how things are supposed to be. Issac Bonewits in his book *Authentic Thaumaturgy* states that they are basic laws of magick that work well within the laws of nature.

Law of Knowledge: To effect a thing you must know the thing.

Law of Self-knowledge: To thine own self be true. In others words know your limitations.

Law of cause and effect: Basic laws of physics, what goes up must come down.

Law of Synchronicity: Coincidence rarely happens.

Law of Association: A relationship between two or more elements to obtain one.

Law of Similarity: If it reminds you of something else, it is probably related.

Law of Contagion: Once objects come into contact with each other they will continue to influence each other, even after separation.

Law of Positive Attraction: Like attracts alike.

Law of Negative Attraction: Opposites also attract.

Law of Names: Knowing the true name of something allows for greater control over it.

Law of Words of Power: Knowing the Word of God is just as powerful as knowing the true name of God.

Law of Personification: Everything should be considered to be "alive" and dealt with as such.

Law Of Invocation: To control the beings from within

Law of Evocation: To control the beings from without.

Law of Identification: Being close to a object for a long enough period of time you will cause one to begin to take on its personality.

Law of Infinite Data: There is always something new to learn.

Law of Infinite senses: No one knows everything.

Law of Personal Universes: We all dwell within our own realities.

Law of Infinite Universe: Anything is possible.

Law of True Falsehoods: Just because it isn't supposed to exist does not mean it doesn't.

Law of Synthesis: Two or more opposing paths will produce a new one.

Law of Polarity: Everything has an opposite, a yin to yang.

Law of Dynamic Balance: Without balance you will fall over. One must keep all aspects of self in balance; spiritual, mental, emotional and physical self.

Law of Perversity: If it can go wrong, it probably will.

Law of Unity: Everything is connected.

Does magick have its own set of ethics?

Yes. Magickal ethics are one of the most important concepts the aspiring practitioner brings to the altar with them. Ethics or the ability to know right from wrong is what separates man from the rest of the animal kingdom, (along with a thumb). Every spiritual/religious group has its own set of moral and ethical behavior. Magick does not recognize the fact that it is being used for good or evil purposes. It is neutral. The Wiccans have a code of ethics called the Rede. Though other traditions do not have a written code, most use the Wiccan rede or the old standby, "treat others as you wish to be treated."

What are the Tools of magick?

The most important thing to remember is that the magick is within you, not the tools. Tools are not needed but rather, they serve as a point of focus for your power or intent. Though some tools are "charged" with energies, some naturally and some by the user. But, remember the more you use a tool, the more powerful it can become. The major tools used in Wiccan magick are the athame, wand, chalice, bolline, besom, cauldron, censer, and a Book of Shadows. This by no means is a complete list of tools; other tools may include gemstones, herbs, and candles. Specific traditions and religions, hermetic and esoteric practices will be discussed in later chapters.

Athame: Usually a black handled, double edged knife (ideally), strictly a ritual tool. It is the symbolic representative of fire.

Wand: The wand can be used for casting circles and is the representative of air and the male aspect.

Chalice: The cup used to symbolically ingest the Goddess and God. It represents water and the female aspect.

Bolline: A white handled knife used to cut herbs and other necessities for rituals.

Besom: Or broom, used for sweeping harmful energies away from the ritual circle.

Cauldron: The cauldron represents birth, death and rebirth.

Censer: An incense holder that represents air.

Book of Shadows: Is another name for a grimoire. It is a text in which the practitioner will keep written spells, thoughts and rituals. It is highly personal and the context will vary from person to person, tradition to tradition.

What are some good books to read to learn more about Magick?

There are a lot of good books to read, actually too many to list them all. The ones that are listed were found to be helpful in researching this chapter. For a more complete listing use the bibliography in the back of the book.

Aveni, Anthony Behind the Crystal Ball, Magic, Science, and the Occult: From Antiquity through the New Age Random House, USA 1996 ISBN# 0-8129-2415-0

Drury, Nevill and Gregory Tillett The Occult: A SourceBook of Esoteric Wisdom, Saraband Inc., China 1997 ISBN# 0-7607-0690-5

What are some websites to visit?

The number of Magick and Occult web-sites is phenomenal, and it keeps growing. The easiest way to find a website on a particular subject is to use your search engine on the computer. Use the words, Magick, Occult, Ceremonial Magick. Here are some sites that can help get you started on your search. However because of the constant ebbs and flow of the web these sites may no longer exist, but as December 2003 they were still online.

Ceremonial Magick with Daniel M. Bemis
<http://www.paganism.com/ag/cmagic/dan.html>

Chaos Magick & Heretical Sites <http://www.thud.org/chaos.htm>

Magick & the Occult <http://www.armory.com/~mortoj/magick/index.html>

Isaac Bonewits Homepage <http://www.neopagan.net>

FAQ ON PAGANISM

What is Paganism?

The word pagan is a derivative of the Latin pagnus or "country dweller." During the initial thrust of Christianity, focus was on converting the population centers; thus, those that lived in the "country" were among the last to be converted. Later the word "Pagan" was used in derogatory terms to describe the uneducated, uncultured, or whose religious practices were other than the Christian faith.

The American Heritage Dictionary defines pagan as meaning as person who is not Christian; One who has no religion. The term "pagan" no longer applies to Judeo, Islamic, Hindu, or Buddhist religions, it is no longer considered to be politically correct to call them pagan.

For 25, 000 years before Christianity, paganism had developed alongside mankind. Paganism is not just a nature based religion or spiritual path, it is a natural one, an extension of man's evolution. Pagan religious or spiritual paths include druids, shamans, witches and all pre-Christian religions.

What is the difference between a neo-pagan and a New Ager?

Neo-paganism is defined as the reconstruction of pre-Christian religions or spiritual paths. The word Neo means new, Neo-pagan literally means new pagan. The main feature that makes neo-paganism different from the worlds primary religions (Christian/Judeo, Islamic) is the absence of any boundaries

between the spiritual and natural world. The French philosopher Lucien Lieuy-Brul (1857-1939) calls this absence Parcipition Mystique or "Mystical Participation." This Mystical participation is a fusion of worlds: waking and dreams, individual will and spontaneous emotions.

Neo-paganism itself is not a religion, but rather feelings and behaviors known as paganism, that constitutes a type of consciousness lost from modern religions. Neo-paganism is a movement that is attempting to claim that consciousness.

New Agers are described as a movement of emerging consciousness devoted towards making the earth a healthier, happier place. New Age does include practitioners of meditation, Reiki, Yoga, and many other disciplines both pre and post Christian. New Agers also engage in the use of tarots, crystal healing and astrology, though some may use crystals for healing and not believe in the power of tarot.

Many New Agers and Neo-pagans are environmentalists or, as they liked to be called, "tree huggers." New Agers often share many of the beliefs of neo-pagans, i.e.: healthy earth, harmony among all, and the common desire to search for answers.

The primary difference between a pagan and someone who engages in New Age practices is that a "New Ager" does not belong to a movement; whereas a Neo-pagan is usually affiliated with a specific group or tradition- Wicca, Druids and other occult/pagan groups. However, most major bookstores combine all Pagan, Neo-pagan, New Age, Occult, and Satanic books listed under the general heading of New Age.

What is the occult?

The occult is taken from the Latin word occultus, which means "hidden." The word occult has a very derogatory meaning; fundamentalist Christian's view anyone associated with the occult as Satanic. Modern day occultists include all pagans, neo-pagan, some New Ager metaphysics, and the hermetic practices.

Is Paganism a religion?

No, it isn't. It is a catchall term that describes a religious and spiritual concept; much like Christianity describes a concept made up of various sects and denominations. There are many forms of Paganism that make up the whole. The Pagan Pledge to Spirituality attempts to capture these concepts and ideals.

What is the Pagan Pledge to Spirituality?

The Pagan Pledge to Spirituality is a pledge that is part of The Pagan Spirit Alliance (PSA) written by Selena Fox in 1980. The PSA is a Pagan friendship

network within Circle Network. The Circle Network is part of Selena Fox's Circle Wicca. PSA is comprised of Pagans attuned to positive (helping/healing) magickal ways. They make the following pledge to themselves not to Circle Wicca or PSA. Though the Pagan Pledge does not claim to be for all pagans, but rather those who hold true Wicca and its offshoot traditions. It is as follows:

PAGAN PLEDGE TO SPIRITUALITY

I am a Pagan and I dedicate myself to channeling Spiritual Energy

I know that I am part of the Whole of Nature. May I grow in understanding of the Unity of all Nature. May I always walk in Balance.

May I always be mindful of the diversity of Nature as well as its Unity and may I always be tolerant of those whose race, appearance, sex, sexual preference, culture, and other ways differ from my own.

May I use the Force (psychic powers) wisely and never use it for aggression nor for malevolent purposes. May I never direct it to curtail the free will of another.

May I always be mindful that I create my own reality and that I have the power within me to create positivity in my life.

May I always take responsibility for all my actions, be they conscious or unconscious.

May I always act in honorable ways: being honest with myself and others, keeping my word whenever I have given it, fulfilling all responsibilities and commitments I have taken on the best of my ability.

May I always remember that whatever is sent out always returns magnified to the sender.

May the Forces of Karma move swiftly to remind me of my spiritual commitments when I have begun to falter from them, and may I use the Karmic feedback to help myself grow and be more attuned to my Inner Pagan Spirit.

May I always remain strongly committed to my Spiritual ideals in the face of adversity and negativity. May the Force of my Inner Spirit ground out all malevolence directed my way and transfer it into positivity. May my Inner Light shine so strongly that malevolent forces can not even approach my sphere of existence.

May I always grow in Inner Wisdom and Understanding. May I see every problem that I face as an opportunity to develop myself spiritually in solving it.

May I always act out of Love to all things on this Planet--to other humans, to plants, to animals, to minerals, to elementals, to spirits, and to other entities.

May I always be mindful that the Goddess and God in all of their forms dwell within me

and that this divinity is reflected through my own Inner Self, my Pagan Spirit.

May I always channel Love and Light from my being. May my Inner Spirit, rather than my ego-self, guide all my thoughts, feelings and actions.

SO MOTE IT BE!

(For more information on Pagan Spirit Alliance and other pagan and neo-pagan groups and organizations, see appendix A)

What are the pagan holidays?

There are eight major holidays that are celebrated by pagans with a Celtic or Wiccan background. They are:

Yule.....December 22

Imblog.....February 2

Ostara.....March 22

Beltane.....May 1

Summer Solstice.....June 22

Lugnasadh.....August 1 or 2

Mabon.....September 22

Samhain.....October 31

These holidays or Sabbats are of Celtic origin and reflect the planting an

harvesting seasons. The two major holidays would have been Beltane and Samhain, others following a seasonal route. The root word of Sabbat is Greek, sabatu meaning to rest. Many of the Sabbats are in close relationship to the major Christian holidays; Yule and Christmas; Ostara and Easter.

According to the author of The Sabbats: A New Approach to Living the Old Ways, Edian McCoy, that most of the pre-Christian and post-Christian cultures

have a certain similarity in the various Sabbats, and though they go by many different names they all serve the same basic purpose. Other traditions, Druid, Wicca, and Astrau (among others) will be covered in later sections, pertaining to each particular tradition or path. The following is a demonstration of how varying cultures have similar religious holidays, but should not be construed into believing that they are celebrated in the same manner or for similar reasons.

Culture Sabbats

Australian.....Y, O, SS, S

Africa (general).....Y, O, SS, M

Aryan.....Y, O, B, SS, L, M

Astrau.....Y, I, O, B, SS, L, M, S

Celtic.....Y, I, O, B, SS, L, M, S

Egyptian.....Y, O, L, M

Greco-Roman.....Y, I, O, SS, L, M

Native American (general)....Y, I, SS, L, M, S

South Pacific.....Y, B, SS, S

Key: Y= Yule, I= Imblog, O= Ostara, B= Beltane, SS= Summer Solstice, L= Lughnasadh, M= Mabon, S= Samhain.

Are there different types of pagans?

Yes. Paganism is as varied as the Christian religions and may include but is in no way limited to Druids, Astrau, Wicca, and Radical Fairies. Shamanism and Witchcraft are not formal religions, though neo-shamanism and neo-witches, i.e. Wicca and associated branches of are considered to be part of the neo-pagan movement. American Indians are included in this text, but since their religious practices were never discontinued they are more pagans than neo-pagan. (This would also be true of other religions in Africa, Australia, and South America, though there are more than the few mentioned above.)

There are also anthropological terms that describe pagans, these terms are largely attributed to Issac Bonewits, but can also be found in several anthropological texts, under the headings: paleo, meso, syncretic, and neo.

Paleo-paganism: is a pagan culture, that has not been disrupted by other civilizations or other cultures. This does not include any known cultures at this time.

Meso-paganism: a group, that is or has been influenced by a conquering culture, but has been able to maintain an independence of religious practices. This includes Native Americans and Australian Aborigine Bushmen

Syncreto-paganism: A culture, which has been conquered but adopts and merges the conquering cultures religious practices along with there own. This includes Voodoo, Santeria, and the Culdee Christianity.

Civilo-paganism: the religions of "civilized" societies, such as -- Classical Greco-Roman religion, Egyptian religion, Aztec & Mayan religions.

Neo-paganism: which this text is primarily concerned with, is an attempt by modern people to reconnect with nature, pre-Christian religions or other nature based spiritual paths. (Harwood-Kaczmarczik, Susan, Br'an Arthur Davis-Howe and etal)

The following chapters and sections will attempt to answer questions on most of the major neo-pagan groups.

What are the different terms for pagans' worship?

Most pagans worship various Gods and Goddesses; some of the are from the same culture base and others are not. The terms for worship are: Monotheism, dualism, polytheism, pantheism, animism and henotheism.

Monotheism is the view that there is only one God, this is primarily a Christian-Judeo and Islamic view towards worship. Though many pagans, while they do worship multiple Gods and Goddesses have the view that all are derived from one source or power.

Dualism is the belief that both good and evil simultaneously exist and that one can not survive without the other. That they balance each other even though they are independent of each other. This is the Zoroaster view.

Polytheism is the belief in more than one God/esses and that all these God/esses are of equal power and authority.

Pantheism is the belief in more than one God/esses, though there is a hierarchy involved. This is demonstrated in the Greco-Roman religions along with the Norse.

Animism is the belief that everything has a soul, plant, mineral and animal: including all the elements, air, water, earth and fire. This is the in all reality probably the first form of worship.

Henotheism is the belief in multiple God/esses, though the worshipper "borrows" from various cultural groups. Example would be, worshipping a Greco-Roman God for one thing and then asking a Celtic God for something else. This is fairly new form of worship used by the neo-pagan.

What type of people are neo-pagans?

All kinds of people are pagans! Doctors, lawyers, police, judges, actors, musicians, housewives, and grandparents, the list is endless. Neo-pagans are people from all walks of life who are searching for an alternate form of religion or spirituality, something to fill a void that they sense on the spiritual/soul level.

Neo-paganism attracts and accepts those who reject or who are rejected by the major religions and established peer groups, either due to their sexual preference or their desire to go beyond contemporary religious thought and dogma. Neo-paganism accepts those who are in need of a spiritual shelter and those who choose to challenge outmoded belief systems.

How do I know if I'm meant to be a pagan?

Paganism is a combination of "meant to be" and "choose to be." A meant to be pagan will discuss how when coming upon a particular faith of tradition will tell you of having a feeling of coming home. Where an "choose to be" pagan, usually will discuss how something was lacking in their life and they made a conscious effort to find it. Paganism as a faith isn't a choice one should make lightly. As with any life altering choice, it should be made with care and thought. That is why it is highly recommended that you read, read, and read some more, before you decide.

You mentioned spirituality and religion as something separate. Are they?

Yes. Spirituality is a feeling rather than an idea. It consists of imagery rather than concepts. Instead of dogma and doctrine, there are myths and nature. Spiritual cultures do not distinguish between myth and fantasies, or spirit and nature, or religion and life. They attempt to incorporate all of these things in their quest to become one with the self.

Religion on the other hand, and this includes Neo-pagan religions, has set rules, dogma, and doctrine which outline the way things are suppose to be. Wicca is a prime example of a Neo-pagan religion. It is one of the few Neo-pagan religions recognized by the United States.

You can be both spiritual and religious; you can also be religious without being spiritual, as you can be spiritual without being religious. Both religion and spirituality rely on faith, or the ability to accept the unseen and the unknown as reality.

Do Neo-pagans believe in heaven?

Neo-pagans do not believe in the Christian (monotheist) concept of heaven. However most pagan religions do believe in some form of an Otherworld, or a place for the spirit to reside after death.

The New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology states the Celts named their version of the "Otherworld" T`ir na N' OG or the side where the Celtic's vision of perfection was brought to fruition. The Norse had Valhalla, a place where warriors or those who died in battle would go. Here they would continue fighting and feasting until the End of time. Some Tribes of Africa hold the belief that there is a hereafter that is a place of judgment and, one would be rewarded according to what one had achieved in this life.

The Encyclopedia of Mythology further claims that American Indian mythology is as varied as that of Africa. One common element in Native American spiritual beliefs is the belief in the existence of three worlds. The Upper world is where the heavenly powers reside, man and spirits inhabit the Middle world and the Lower world is where the dead reside. (Matthews, pages 35-36)

The Wiccan religion has the Summerland where the soul or spirit resides until it is reborn into the next life. (RavenWolf, page 257)

What do pagans believe?

Paganism covers a plethora of religions and spiritual practices. Because of the vast number of traditions that fall under the general term pagan, it is not possible to make a statement that applies to all of them. There are, however, a few general statements that will apply to the majority of Pagan religions or practices.

Many pagans are either, and sometimes both, polytheists (the worship or belief in more than one God) or pantheists (belief in or worship of all Gods).

Pagans recognize the duality, both female and male aspects of the One.

Another common belief held by most pagans is that all life is sacred and that all are equal; plant, animal, and man.

That everyone is responsible for his or her actions, and that karma, or the Law of Three will balance out these actions, though not all pagans believe in karma or the Law of Three.

Most pagans have a belief in reincarnation. Though the degree of this belief is varied as the religions involved.

Why do Neo-pagans believe in reincarnation?

Reincarnation, or the belief that the soul or spirit is reborn is an old philosophy held by many religions, including Christianity. The primary purpose of reincarnation is to learn and grow, to evolve to the next level. It should also be noted that most of the religious groups teach that there is a period of rest in between incarnations—a time for reflection, for the spirit or soul to contemplate what it has learned. (The various neo-pagans beliefs in reincarnation will be discussed in the coming chapters.) (Cranston & Williams, preface)

Can you be both a neo-pagan and a Christian?

Yes, though not without some difficulty. Christians believe in divine omnipresence, the concept that God is everywhere, in everything. Neo-pagans view it pretty much the same way. To Neo-pagans each living thing is sacred.

There are also several Christian-pagan religious groups. These include Santeria, Voodoo and the Cuddee Christianity. These have incorporated both pagan roots and Christian faith into their daily lives without excluding any of the deities involved.

There is also the other point of view, which will always seek to find the differences instead of the commonalities. These differences being the concept of Christianity demands that you need a savior, whereas pagan religions don't. A Christian views life on a linear basis, having a beginning, middle, and an end: Pagans view life as being circular, consisting of death and rebirth. Christians believe the bible gave them dominion over the earth, pagans believe that mankind must work as partners with the earth.

Many people might find it difficult to reconcile these two paths; others see it as a possibility. It is up to each individual to choose their own path, and in doing so respect the rights of others.

Isn't paganism a cult?

No, but there is often some confusion because there are so many cult like groups which fall under the general guise of Neo-pagan. One must keep in mind that while there may be some overlap; there are even more differences.

A cult is classified as a group wherein the will of one or a select few dominates the entire group. Modern day cults, which fall under this definition, are:

Jonestown, Waco, and Heavens Gate. Cults actively seek converts; pagans do not.

A cult may have one or more of the following characteristics, according to Issac Bonewits.

The leader is treated by the followers as someone equal to God.

Making a lot of money from the believers

The teachings deviate from the traditional teachings.

Claims of having found a new doctrine.

Encourages extreme behavior or practices from its followers.

Neo-pagan religious practices are religions which promote individuality and healthy relationship with your god(s) of choice. They don't tell you what or whom to believe in, nor do they insist that one go against ones own principles or beliefs.

Aren't pagans Devil worshippers?

Some Neo-pagans do not believe in the concept of the devil. They claim that the Devil is a Christian creation, actually it is much older than that, but as being such the neo-pagans won't/don't recognize him. There is also the neo-pagan movement to distance themselves from Satan worshippers in an attempt to legitimize themselves to the general public. There are several Satanic sects, some Christian, some pagan, some a combination of both.

In 1486, the publication of the Malleus Malificarn or the "Hammer of Witches" gave the description of the devil. This description was based off the Greek God Pan. Unfortunately for the European pagans two of their main deities, Cernnous and Herne also fit this description of Lucifer. There is some evidence that the resemblance between these pagan gods and Lucifer is far from accidental and that it was a device contrived by the Christian leaders intended to convert and or force pagans to Christianity.

Why do pagans use the pentagram as a symbol?

The pentagram, which represents man, was a symbol of truth with each point symbolizing the virtues of mankind: generosity, courtesy, chastity, chivalry, and piety. The pentagram has a long history associated with magic and religion.

The Christians refer to it as the Seal of Solomon; Star of David and the Judeo Cabalistic paths commonly use it. Though the Star of David has six points. Early Christians even attributed the pentagram to the five wounds of Christ. It wasn't until the Inquisition in 1302 that the pentagram became a symbol of evil. The Templar Knights also used the pentagram, though after they're falling out with the Pope the pentagram was once more regulated as a symbol of evil.

Since it can be drawn with a single line, making it an endless knot, it was used as a symbol of protection against demons, which is ironic considering that, in more modern times, the inverted pentagram has become a symbol for Satanists.

In modern times this distinction in the pentagram pointing up or down has become a symbol of white (up) and black magic (down). It is also a symbol that some modern day pagans wear to show pride in their belief system.

What is the one thing that most pagans would want the world to know about them?

Margot Adler summed it up best in her book *Drawing Down the Moon*:

"We are not evil. We don't harm or seduce people. We are not dangerous. We are ordinary people like you. We have families, jobs, hopes, and dreams. We are not a cult. This religion is not a joke. We are not what you think from looking at TV. We are real. We laugh, we cry. We are serious. We have a sense of humor. You don't have to be afraid of us. We don't want to convert you. And please don't try to convert us. Just give us the same right we give you--to live in peace. We are much more similar to you than you think." (page 453)

What are some good books to read to learn more about Paganism?

There are a lot of good books to read, actually too many to list them all. The ones that are listed were found to be helpful in researching this chapter. For a more complete listing use the bibliography in the back of the book.

Adler, Margot *Drawing Down the Moon; Witches, Druids, Goddess-Worshipper, and other Pagans in America Today* Penguin USA, March 1997 ISBN# 014019536X

Gay, Peter *Enlightenment; The Rise of Modern Paganism* Nort (WW Norton & Co.) July 1995 ISBN# 0393313026

Graves, Robert & etal *New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology* The Hamlyn Publishing Group Limited, USA 1974 ISBN# 0 600 02420 2

What are some web-sites to visit?

The number of Pagan and Neo-pagan web-sites is phenomenal, and it keeps growing. The easiest way to find a web-site on a particular subject is to use your search engine on the computer. Use the words, pagan, paganism, and Neo-pagan. Here are some sites that can help get you started on your search. However because of the constant ebbs and flow of the web these sites may no longer exist, but as December 1998 they were still online.

Lizard Pagan Resource Page <http://www.ecis.com/~alizard/pagan.html>

The General Pagan Facts

<http://www.cob.eku.edu.cis/student/benge2/generalfacts.html>

Pagan Educational Network <http://www.cs.utk.edu/~mclennan/OM/PEN.html>

Pagan Federation, The <http://www.paganfed.demon.co.uk/>

Web Pagan Network <http://www.pagessub.org/default.html>

Other related online egroups.

VISIT Pagan Shopping Online <http://www.paganshopping.com> We have the largest listing of: Wicca products, Cauldrons, Spells, Incense, Figure Candles Essential, Blended, and Occult Oils, Herbs, Athames Candles and Ritual supplies and Wicca products, essential, fragrance, and occult oils, books, libros, Crystal Balls, Novenas and Oraciones, Cauldrons, herbs, spells, love spells, books, spell books, aceites, Candles, Incense and accessories. Ritual tools you need for witchcraft spells and pagan rituals in Wicca, witchcraft, Santeria, and any of the pagan, occult or esoteric religions. Incense, ritual candles, spell kits, books and more. Whether you are a witch, pagan, shaman, or just interested in the magick of herbs and other gifts from the Earth, we offer you the best in Witchcraft and wicca products and pagan resources.

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Pagan Shopping <http://www.paganshopping.com/index.htm>
New Age Retailers <http://newageretailers.com>

Earth Spirits Pagan News & Information <http://earthspirits.org>

Spirit One WebZine <http://www.paganshopping.com/spiritone>

Earth Shamans <http://geocities.com/athens/troy/7922/>

E GROUPS

Michigan Pagans http://groups.yahoo.com/group/michigan_pagans/

ESE Affiliates <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/eseaffiliate/>

Pagan Shopping Contest <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/esecontest/>

New Age Resellers <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/newageresellers/>

Spirit One <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/0-spiritone/>