

Tending the Threshold of Ostara

Ostara reminds us that we are of the earth and readily express the natural cycles of rebirth and growth. Like the crocus that awakens from her slumber and pokes her delicate petals through the cold, hard, ground, shake off the remnants of the sporadic snow clotting the dormant grass. Stretch up your arms toward the sun and give thanks for another turn of the wheel, another opportunity to blossom into what you are becoming. In honor of growth, I toss wildflower seeds in my fairy garden alongside the salt marsh, sending them to the warming earth with gratitude and lofty aspirations. What will you do to encourage continued growth?

The vernal equinox on March 20/21 prompts us that balance is important. Nature yearns for and thrives in homeostasis, giving and taking, sowing and reaping, rest and activity, and light and dark. Spring is the perfect season to consider the many items on my daily to do list. Some require physical activity (e.g., working out at the gym), several need social interaction and communication (e.g., interviewing guests for my podcast), others command mental concentration (e.g., reading a book or writing an article) and a few necessitate quiet and stillness (e.g., meditation). In honor of balance, I commit to scheduling, when possible, as many of these tasks in alignment with my personal daily energetic flow. I also strive to ensure each day has a healthy balance of cerebral, physical, and spiritual activities. Where do you see the need for more balance in your life? What practices can you realign for your wellbeing?

This spring celebration also reminds us that rejuvenation and abundance do not occur in a vacuum. Bird songs raise the vibration, pollinators drink nectar and collect pollen from opening buds, sunlight converts into chemical energy, and water, which comprises 95% of plants, delivers needed hydration. But what about the soil that has laid fallow all winter? The ancient Roman, Greek, and Egyptian civilizations added necessary nutrients by spreading manure, composted organic matter, and urine-soaked straw as fertilizer over their fields. I consider how I can nourish the burgeoning earth yet not incur fines from my homeowners' association (HOA). The answer is a simple one – composting! While I am sure the HOA bylaws prohibit my creating steaming compost piles outside, I am grateful to have received an electric pre-composter for Yule. Every day, in honor of nourishing our earth and the replenishment, my family and I place eggshells, vegetable skins, fruit peels, shells, grounds, beans, nuts and other food waste into the pre-composter. Through the alchemy of heat, movement, and air, the waste is broken down into dehydrated organic matter that, with microbial additive to complete the process, becomes the magical black gold farmers and gardeners yearn for. With a full heart, I replenish the soil of my flower beds, vegetable,

herb, and fairy gardens. How will you take part of the rejuvenation and replenishment process? Perhaps a spring cleaning or garden bed clean up speaks to you.

And finally, like the returning migratory birds who sip and bathe from fresh rain puddles, I brew a spring tea to reawaken my taste buds to earth's treasures. Subtle lavender, symbolic of calm and serenity, combined with bitter lemon, symbolizing healing and abundance, is a refreshing combination to drink hot or cold. At times, I add hibiscus or mint for a delicious variation. As often as I can, in honor of the seasonal threshold, I walk barefoot on the grass, thermos of tea in hand, and find my special grounding place near my aspiring fairy garden. I lie back on the tender shoots of grass sprouting from the rich soil, close my eyes, smell the rich salt marsh, listen to the eastern blue birds and warblers, and thank our earth for reminding me of the vitality of Ostara. How will you nourish mind, spirit, and body this spring?

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