

A Perennial Course in Living Druidry by Emma Restall Orr

LOVE BRIGHT MOON (May - June)

Moon : Love Bright

Love Bright is the name I use for this moon, for the weather is now usually warm enough to make love outside (in comfort), encouraging us to open up and celebrate life with more freedom. What name would be most poignant for you to give this moon?

Festival : Solstice

Alban Hefin is this moon's festival focus, the Summer Solstice, the height of the sun and the longest day of the year. This festival may fall within this moon cycle but even if it doesn't, the moontide is spent preparing for it, for the days grow longer, the sun higher in the sky, as we head towards the hinge of the year.

For some, this is the easiest moon of all: energy is high and the long days allow much to be achieved. Others find it a hard time, with too little darkness for deep nourishment or sleep, and too much energy to avoid chaos. Be increasingly conscious of how this time of year affects you, and what forces and currents in nature are the key influences; craft ideas as to how you can acknowledge and honour those powers when the festival arrives.

The sun is rising and setting at its most northerly points at the Solstice; commit time to seeing just where this is on your horizon.

Season : Summer

Summer is in its flush of growth, with blossom and flowers, the air filled with scent. Whether you live in the wilds of a rural landscape or in the midst of the city, be awake to what is new - every day. Open your life to be receptive to this energy and creativity, taking time to celebrate it. However, as we get closer to the Solstice, the world seems to slow. Those who have been going at full speed suddenly stumble, creating chaos. Within the midst of the profusion of growth, we hit a few days of stillness. Why is this? Can you feel it?

Element : Sun

Through this moon, let the focus be the element of fire as the sun. Outsiders to the Druid tradition still mistake Druidry for a religion based on worship of the sun. Our ancestors in Druidry, particularly over the past few hundred years, by focusing their learning upon the patterns of nature easily presented the sun as a most crucial pivot in nature: our nearest star, its heat and light allows us life. In the modern tradition, the sun is clearly a god to many Druids. What are the qualities of this deity to you? Do you honour and revere this god? Would you say that you worship it, and if not, why not?

The sun is crucial to life. Is there any life on this planet that does not depend on the sun? Taking time to look around, to sit and watch, seek out the song or energy of the sun in everything around you. Can you see and feel it in leaves, petals, the first strawberries, in the grain of a wooden bowl? Is there anywhere you can't perceive it? Feel its pull, through time and through space. How can it guide and hold you?

Perception : Seeing

The medium of perception to work on through this moon is the ability to see. Through the waxing half of this moon, spend time finding awareness of what is around you. It may sound like a simple task, but it is truly rewarding. Pausing from the rush of life, as we pull ourselves from the complacency of familiarity we see as if for the first time: the landscape of our home, the people close to us, the clutter we live with, the skies, the buildings, the trees.

Then, just as we can limit our hearing by only using our ears to hear the noise, if we only see with our eyes we miss a great deal of life's magical depths. As the moon wanes, relax: find a sense of not just the outer skin of the world, but also what it is made of. Cells, atoms, molecules, electrons, quarks and more, make up everything around us. Does an increasing awareness of this change the way you see the world or your attitude towards it? How?

Many in Druidry speak of seeing 'spirit'. What does this mean? What are they perceiving and what is the value of this depth of vision?

Self : Identity

With the sun so high, this moon allows us to feel the strength of our vitality. How is your own vitality? What fuels it and what drains it? What do you do with that energy? How does your sense of identity and purpose direct that fuel of energy, forming your behaviour? How does your self-expression, the way you behave, make you feel about yourself?

At this time of long days and bright sunshine, we can't easily hide. Let yourself be seen. What are the strengths and weaknesses exposed in you and around you at this time? How does that make you feel?

Pride is a complicated emotion in the human soul. How is pride connected with identity, with light and vitality? What does pride diminish?

Environment : Petals

Some place hawthorn as the tree of this cycle, but in my valley the hawthorn is now starting to recede. The most remarkable plants at this time are the cow parsley and elder, both in exquisite profusion of white flowers.

Which tree's song is most poignant in your environment? What of the flowers, the dog rose and campion? How is the energy different now that all the trees are in full leaf? Are there fledglings from nests? What of the local wildlife?

If you live in an area where there is not much wild growth, plan for this moontide extended or regular trips into the countryside, allowing your soul to be nourished by the non-human world.

Creativity : Inspiration

Having found a muse during the last moon, this tide gives you the opportunity and encouragement to nurture that muse further, to work on the relationship, deepening the connection. It is not about reaching out to that soul in order to touch, but about opening your own soul to see, to receive, to be inspired. It is about making gifts and offerings that inspire the muse to be with us.

In Druidry, we speak of the cycle of inspiration: inspired, we create and offer our creativity to that which has inspired us, which inspires that soul to give more, which inspires us further. Sometimes this cycle happens within one relationship, and sometimes the inspiration flows through an environment.

So, in this moon, we look at that most potent Druid word: Awen. The

extraordinary kick of lightning that is the experience of one spirit consciously connecting with another, Awen is the explosion of life's essence into our awareness. It is the power of inspiration drawn directly from the gods, from the primary currents of nature. As you nurture the connection with your muse, commit to discovering more about the power of Awen and how you can find it.

Humanity : Society

Society is the focus of this moon in terms of how we relate to the world around us. The bright sun and high energy all too often encourage pride and arrogance, weakness exposed by the light clumsily hidden behind big words and colourful declarations.

Where we are lacking enough confidence to be honourably assertive, aggression is used; confrontations and conflicts rise up in the summer heat.

Pause, stepping out of the rush of energy, and see how society around you is working, individuals and groups pushing and pulling. How are you adding to this tug of war? How are you not helping? How could your living be a positive force instead?

Ethics : Peace

Peace is the word of this moon, not because it is easy now, but because with energy so high it is necessary. We can learn the greatest lessons of peace at this time, not only in terms of others but also about peace within ourselves; for we can't effectively call for peace in the world if within our own soul we are in perpetual conflict.

Each time you see the turmoil of fighting (war on television, scuffles in the street, children squabbling, couples bickering), check your own state of peace.

What is peace, after all? What allows you personally to feel at peace? How can you share that feeling most honestly, respectfully and effectively?

Review :

In the last few days of the moontide, when the moon is dark, consider what you have achieved through the cycle. What have you learned, changed, understood, and given in exchange?