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The Tradition of Giving

Druidic Traditions: Unveiling the Winter Solstice Festival's Magic

By Henry Dalton

The Winter Solstice Festival, also known as Yule, marks the shortest day and the longest night of the year, occurring around December 21st in the Northern Hemisphere. For Druids, this celestial event holds great significance both in ancient times and the present day. This article explores the rich history of the Winter Solstice Festival and how Druids celebrate it, past and present.

Ancient Celebrations: In ancient times, Druids were the spiritual leaders and revered keepers of Celtic traditions. The Winter Solstice Festival represented the rebirth of the sun, as after this day, the days began to grow longer. This annual astronomical event was celebrated with elaborate rituals and customs.

Druids believed that during

the solstice, the veil between the physical and spiritual worlds was thin, making it an opportune time for divination and communing with the spirits. They would gather around sacred bonfires, wearing traditional robes and crowns of evergreens and holly. These fires represented the returning sun and provided warmth and light during the longest night of the year.

The ancient Druids would also exchange gifts, a practice that is a precursor to modern-day gift-giving during the holiday season. Mistletoe, which was considered a sacred plant, played a central role in their rituals and symbolized the promise of new life and fertility.

Modern Celebrations: While modern Druidry is a revival

of ancient traditions and spirituality, it has adapted to the contemporary world. Druids today celebrate the Winter Solstice Festival in ways that honor their ancestors while embracing the present.

Bonfires and candle lighting remain an integral part of the celebrations, symbolizing the return of the sun and the triumph of light over darkness. Druids often gather in sacred groves or natural settings to mark the occasion. They engage in meditation, chanting, and other rituals to connect with the spiritual energy of the solstice.

The exchange of gifts during the Winter Solstice Festival continues to be a cherished tradition among modern Druids. These gifts may carry symbolic meaning and reflect the values

of nature, community, and the interconnectedness of all life.

Mistletoe is still a significant element in modern Druid celebrations, used in ceremonies and rituals to signify hope, love, and unity. Druids today often decorate their homes with evergreens and other natural materials to bring the energy of the forest indoors.

The Winter Solstice Festival is a time of great importance for Druids, both in ancient and modern times. While the specifics of the celebrations have evolved, the core themes of rebirth, light, and the connection between humanity and nature remain constant. The reverence for the natural world and the desire to honor the ancient traditions make this festival a deeply spiritual and meaningful occasion for Druids worldwide.



FROM THE PUBLISHER

As the wheel of the year turns, we find ourselves once again at the heart of winter, celebrating the sacred festival of Yule. It is a time of reflection, of connecting with the depths of our souls, and of sharing our inner light with the world. Here at the Metaphysical Times, we welcome both old friends and new readers to join us in this season of wonder and transformation.

Yule is a time of unity, a reminder that the threads of kindness and connectedness weave through the tapestry of our lives. In the midst of the darkest days, we light a candle to honor the returning sun, symbolizing hope and the promise of brighter days ahead. It is in this spirit of hope and renewal that we extend our gratitude to each and every one of you. Your support and readership are the flames that keep our metaphysical fire burning, and for that, we are deeply thankful.

The power of community and interconnectedness is never more evident than during this season. Just as the oak and holly kings battle for

supremacy, we too face challenges and conflicts in our lives. But it is in coming together, in embracing our differences and celebrating our shared humanity, that we find the strength to overcome any darkness that may loom.

As the publisher of the Metaphysical Times, I've witnessed the incredible transformation and growth of this community. Your passion for metaphysical knowledge, your thirst for understanding the mysteries of the universe, and your willingness to delve deep into the realms of the unknown inspire us daily. Together, we have created a haven where seekers of truth and wisdom can find solace and illumination.

During this season, we bestow upon you blessings of love, wisdom, and abundance. May the Yule log burn brightly in your hearts, illuminating the path to self-discovery and enlightenment. May the ancient magic of this season touch your spirit and guide you towards the realization of your deepest desires.

In a world that sometimes seems fraught with

division and discord, let us remember the true essence of Yule – the coming together of people, the sharing of warmth and love, and the recognition of our common humanity. As we light our candles and gather around the hearth, let us also light the way for others, spreading the message of kindness, compassion, and unity.

Our journey through the metaphysical realms is a winding and mysterious one. It's not always easy, and the path may be shrouded in shadows at times. But together, we can navigate these uncharted waters, bringing to light the hidden truths that lie beneath the surface.

So, to all our cherished readers, old and new, I say thank you. Thank you for being a part of this extraordinary community, for your support, your curiosity, and your dedication to the metaphysical journey. As we embrace the turning of the year and the return of the sun, may you be blessed with joy, love, and a deeper understanding of the universe.

Embrace the light within you, and let it shine



brightly, for in doing so, you become a beacon of hope and inspiration for others. Together, we can make this world a better, more connected place, one Yule blessing at a time.

With heartfelt gratitude and the warmest of wishes,

Christy



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The Dark and Light of Yule: Balancing Energies

By Christy Mann

As the days grow shorter and the nights longer, the world prepares for the enchanting festival of Yule, a time when we celebrate the transition from darkness to light. Yule, often associated with the winter solstice, holds a profound metaphysical significance that goes beyond its surface-level traditions. In this article, we will explore how Yule represents the delicate balance between light and dark energies and the metaphysical implications of this transformative shift.



The Winter Solstice: A Cosmic Phenomenon

Yule is intrinsically tied to the winter solstice, which occurs when the Earth's axial tilt reaches its maximum extent away from the Sun. This moment marks the longest night and the shortest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere. Symbolically, it represents the darkest point in the year, both in terms of sunlight and, metaphorically, in our personal and spiritual lives.

The Dark Aspect of Yule

During the darkest hours of Yule, the veil between the physical and metaphysical worlds is believed to be at its thinnest. This is a time when we can access deep

inner wisdom, introspection, and explore the shadow aspects of our consciousness. The darkness of Yule is not to be feared but embraced, for it is in this profound stillness that we can confront our fears, heal old wounds, and seek spiritual growth.

The Light Aspect of Yule

As Yule progresses, we witness the gradual return of light. This is a moment of hope and renewal, symbolizing the birth of the Sun. The return of light signifies the promise of new beginnings and the triumph of knowledge over ignorance. It is a time when we can set intentions, make resolutions, and align ourselves with the energies of growth and transformation.

Balancing the Energies

The beauty of Yule lies in its ability to help us balance the dualistic energies of dark and light. It encourages us to acknowledge and integrate the shadow within ourselves, allowing for personal growth and healing. At the same time, Yule invites us to welcome the returning light and harness its energy for positive change.

During Yule, consider engaging in rituals that represent this balance. Meditate in the darkness to explore your inner world, confront your fears, and release what no longer serves you. Then, as the light returns, perform rituals or light a candle to symbolize your aspirations and the things you wish to manifest in the coming year.

Metaphysical Implications

Yule reminds us of the eternal cycle of life, death, and rebirth. It is a time when we can tap into the cyclical nature of the universe and find harmony within ourselves. As we move from darkness to light, we are encouraged to embrace the full spectrum of existence, understanding that both light and dark are essential to our spiritual evolution.

In conclusion, Yule is a season of profound metaphysical significance, representing the intricate dance between darkness and light. By recognizing and balancing these energies, we can find inner peace, personal growth, and a deeper connection with the cosmos. As we celebrate the transition from the longest night to the returning light, let us remember that Yule is a time of magic, renewal, and the promise of a brighter future.



Yule and the Rich History of the Yule Log Tradition

By Hank Davis

As winter’s icy grip tightens and daylight dwindles, various cultures across the world come together to commemorate the winter solstice, a momentous celestial event when the sun reaches its lowest point in the sky. Among these age-old traditions is Yule, a festivity steeped in history and symbolism. At the heart of the Yule celebration lies the Yule log, a unique tradition where a cedar tree root, renowned for its ability to burn hotter and longer, is ignited to guide people through the darkest night of the year. In this article, we delve into the origins and customs surrounding the Yule log, exploring how this humble cedar root became a symbol of warmth, light, and endurance.

The Origins of Yule and the Cedar Tree Root

Yule, often associated with Christmas, finds its origins in the ancient customs of Germanic and Norse traditions. The term “Yule” traces its etymology to the Old Norse word “jól,” signifying a pagan winter festival celebrated over twelve days—roughly aligning with the modern Christmas season. This festival was more than a simple celebration; it marked the winter solstice and the rejuvenation of the sun as the days gradually grew longer. Yule was a festivity filled with diverse customs and rituals that continue to influence the way

we observe the holiday season today. At its core was the Yule log tradition, with a twist unique to certain regions—the use of a cedar tree root, celebrated for its extraordinary burning qualities.

The Yule Log Tradition: Cedar’s Warm Embrace

The Yule log tradition, rooted in Scandinavia, symbolized the return of light and warmth during the bleakest days of the year. Unlike the more conventional Yule logs made from large, carefully selected logs, the Yule log in these regions was typically crafted from the root of a cedar tree. Cedar was favored for its exceptional burning properties, which included burning hotter and longer, ensuring that the light it provided would carry people through the longest night. Preparation for the Yule log ceremony involved selecting a cedar tree root with great care. This root, once chosen, was adorned with various symbols and inscriptions, invoking blessings and good fortune for the coming year. The significance of the cedar tree root was two-fold: it represented the enduring warmth and light required during the darkest night and also had protective and fertility connotations.

The Cedar Yule Log’s Dual Symbolism

Symbol of Illumination: The cedar Yule log, with its capacity to burn hotter and longer, served as a symbol of illumination during the dark and frigid nights of winter. Lighting the Yule log was a momentous event, signifying the victory of light over darkness and the return of longer days. **Protective and Fertility Associations:** Cedar was known for its protective qualities, and burning a cedar Yule log was believed to guard homes against malevolent spirits and misfortune in the coming year. Additionally, it held fertility symbolism, with its ashes often used as a potent fertilizer to ensure a prosperous harvest in the spring.

The Modern Celebration of the Cedar Yule Log

Today, the cedar Yule log tradition continues to persist in various forms, honoring its pagan and historical roots. Some communities still gather to light a cedar Yule log, reciting blessings, and exchanging well-wishes for the year ahead. While the burning of the cedar Yule log is less common in modern times, its symbolic significance endures, invoking the spirit of hope, light, and endurance during the harshest of seasons.

Influence on Contemporary Celebrations

The Yule log, especially the cedar Yule log, has left a lasting imprint on contemporary holiday customs. It has contributed to the symbolism and traditions of Christmas celebrations, where the notion of light prevailing over darkness remains a central theme. The act of lighting the Yule log has evolved into the lighting of Christmas candles, often representing the light of Christ, the “Light of the World.” Additionally, the Yule log tradition has contributed to the tradition of Christmas caroling, with carolers singing songs around the Yule log, spreading cheer and celebrating the season. The history of the Yule log, particularly when kindled from the cedar tree root, underscores the enduring power of cultural traditions and symbolism. It is a reminder that, even in the heart of the coldest and darkest of nights, there is a beacon of warmth and the promise of brighter days ahead. The cedar Yule log is a testament to the resilience of ancient customs and their ability to continue illuminating the way through the longest night of the year.



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Gingerbread’s Sweet Affiliation with Yule: A Festive Tradition

By Henry Dalton

As the winter season draws near, and the world envelopes itself in a cloak of frost, one tradition that brings warmth and cheer to many is gingerbread. Gingerbread and its close association with Yule, the ancient Germanic festival that predates modern Christmas, is a delightful aspect of this time of year. In this article, we will delve into the delightful history of gingerbread and its meaningful connection to the Yule celebration.

Gingerbread’s Heritage

Gingerbread, with its roots in ancient civilizations, is an age-old delight enjoyed by many. The use of ginger as a spice dates back over 5,000 years in ancient China, while gingerbread-like confections were relished in ancient Egypt and Greece. However, it was the medieval Europeans who refined gingerbread into the delectable treat we recognize today. The Crusaders, returning from their journeys in the Middle East, brought with them an array of spices, including ginger, cinnamon, and cloves, which found their way into gingerbread recipes.

Gingerbread’s Role in Yule Celebrations

The beloved tradition of gingerbread houses, which has been cherished for centuries, traces its origins to Germany in the 16th century. The fairy tale “Hansel and Gretel” by the Brothers Grimm, featuring an edible gingerbread house, likely played a role in popularizing this practice. These intricate and colorful

gingerbread constructions add a charming and delicious touch to the seasonal celebrations.

The Modern Gingerbread Tradition

Gingerbread retains its cherished status during the holiday season, irrespective of one’s cultural or religious background. Families come together to bake and decorate gingerbread cookies, creating delectable works of art that are both beautiful and scrumptious. Gingerbread men, women, and various other festive shapes are crafted, making these cookies a favorite treat to share with friends and family.

Gingerbread houses continue to be a prominent feature of holiday decor, gracing homes, parties, and gatherings. Many people delight in crafting gingerbread houses from scratch or employing pre-made kits, adding their unique creative flair with vibrant icing, candies, and other edible embellishments.

In conclusion, gingerbread and Yule share a deep and interconnected history, with gingerbread representing a delicious symbol of warmth and merriment during the winter season. Whether you prefer gingerbread cookies, gingerbread houses, or other gingerbread delights, you are carrying on a tradition deeply rooted in both ancient Yule festivities and present-day holiday celebrations. So, as the winter chill settles in, remember to savor the sweetness of gingerbread while celebrating the season with your loved ones.



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Coping with Mental Illness During the Winter Holidays

By Henry Dalton

The winter holidays are often depicted as a time of joy, togetherness, and celebration. However, for individuals dealing with mental illnesses like schizoaffective disorder (bipolar type), PTSD (unspecified), and social phobia, this time of year can be particularly challenging. The pressure to conform to societal expectations, the prevalence of gatherings and festivities, and the heightened emotions that often accompany the holidays can exacerbate the symptoms of these conditions. In this article, we will explore how these mental health issues can affect individuals during the winter holidays and provide some strategies for coping with these challenges.



Schizoaffective Disorder (Bipolar Type)

Schizoaffective disorder, which combines symptoms of schizophrenia with mood disorders, can become more difficult to manage during the holiday season. Individuals with this condition may experience mood swings, hallucinations, and delusions that can be triggered or intensified by holiday stress. They may find it challenging to engage in social gatherings, where they may feel overwhelmed or paranoid.

Coping strategies for schizoaffective disorder during the winter holidays include:

Maintain a consistent routine

Stick to your medication and therapy schedule, as consistency can help stabilize mood and manage symptoms.

Set boundaries

Communicate your limits to loved ones, and don't feel pressured to attend every event or gather.

Plan low-key activities

Choose less overwhelming holiday activities to participate in, such as one-on-one gatherings with close friends or family.

Practice stress-reduction techniques

Engage in relaxation exercises, mindfulness, or deep breathing to manage anxiety and mood fluctuations.

PTSD (Unspecified)

For individuals with PTSD, the winter holidays can serve as a potent trigger for traumatic memories and anxiety. The pressure to be festive and attend social events can be overwhelming, and the excessive stimulation during the holiday season can make it challenging to manage PTSD symptoms.

Coping strategies for individuals with PTSD during the winter holidays include:

Communicate with loved ones

Let trusted friends and family members know about



your condition and your triggers. This can help them understand your needs and offer support.

Plan self-care

Prioritize self-care activities like taking breaks, getting enough sleep, and engaging in relaxation techniques to manage anxiety.

Consider smaller gatherings

Opt for smaller, more intimate holiday gatherings where you can feel more comfortable and in control.

Create a safety plan

Develop a safety plan to manage triggers and handle difficult situations during the holidays.

Social phobia,
or social anxiety disorder

Social phobia, or social anxiety disorder, is characterized by intense fear and anxiety in social situations. The increased emphasis on social gatherings during the winter holidays can make this time of year particularly challenging for those with social phobia.

Coping strategies for individuals with social phobia during the winter holidays include:

Gradual exposure

Work with a therapist to gradually expose yourself to social situations, starting with smaller gatherings and working your way up.

Utilize relaxation techniques

Practice relaxation exercises and deep breathing to manage anxiety before and during social events.

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT)

CBT can be effective in addressing social phobia, helping individuals identify and challenge negative thought patterns.

Reach out for support

Connect with a trusted friend or family member who can accompany you to social events and provide emotional support.

Dealing with mental illnesses like schizoaffective disorder, PTSD, and social phobia during the winter holidays can be challenging, but it's important to remember that you are not alone. Seeking

professional help and support from loved ones can make a significant difference.

By employing coping strategies, setting boundaries, and prioritizing self-care, individuals with these conditions can navigate the holiday season with more ease and less stress, ultimately finding ways to make the season more manageable and, hopefully, more enjoyable. As someone who suffers from all three, the holiday season is a very rough time of year for me, more so since I experienced a traumatic event on Christmas eve. Seeking help from those closest to me is hard, but it helps having those closest to me there for support.

Need to talk to someone?

Go to

www.findahelpline.com

for a search tool with help lines around the world.

Merry Meet The Twisted Witch

By Metaphysical Times LLC

In the hidden realms where magic weaves its intricate tapestry, there resides a figure who embodies the duality of light and dark, order and chaos, known to all as “The Twisted Witch.” She is not a mere character but a manifestation of the intricate facets of her creator—Christy Mann, a writer who walks between the worlds of the metaphysical, the mystical, and the mundane.

“The Twisted Witch” is a pseudonym that serves as a vessel for the myriad roles Christy Mann fulfills. Within this pseudonym, she is the witch, the author, the guide, and the guardian of ancient wisdom. Her journey is a path that delves into the depths of her own soul, exploring the shadows within and the luminous truths that lie beyond.

The Twisted Witch is not confined to the stereotype of a witch brewing potions in a hidden cottage. She transcends boundaries and weaves spells of universal significance, working with both the light and dark energies that are fundamental to existence. Shadow work, spells, rituals—these are but a few tools in her vast arsenal, each a reflection of the multifaceted nature of her being.

Her presence extends beyond the pages of a book, and she has embarked on a mission to share her knowledge and wisdom with others who seek their own spiritual journeys. Through her blog, “The Twisted Witch,” she generously imparts information, exercises, spells, meditations, and more, serving as a beacon to guide individuals along their unique paths of discovery and self-transformation.

But Christy Mann, known as The Twisted Witch, is not only a writer and a guide. As the publisher of the Metaphysical Times Newspaper and Full Moon Magazine, she is a curator of knowledge and a gatekeeper to the secrets of the mystical and the metaphysical.

With a mind that projects scenarios dozens of steps ahead, The Twisted Witch navigates the intricate labyrinth of existence, always seeing the bigger picture—the “big picture curse” as she calls it. Her metaphysical abilities are not just a part of her work; they are an integral aspect of who she is.

As you delve deeper into the world of The Twisted Witch, you’ll discover a guide, a mentor, and a source of inspiration. She



is a guardian of ancient knowledge, a weaver of metaphysical tapestries, and a master of the shadows and the light. Her journey is an exploration of the human experience in all its complexity and diversity.

The Metaphysical Times is honored to present an in-depth exploration of “The Twisted Witch” and the extraordinary

world she inhabits. We invite you, dear readers, to embark on this journey with us, as we delve into the heart of the metaphysical, guided by the wisdom and insights of Christy Mann, who weaves her magic under the pseudonym of The Twisted Witch.

The Twisted Witch’s story is one that defies simple categorization. It is a tale

of transformation, of embracing the shadows within, and of revealing the luminous truths that reside in the depths of the soul. Her journey as a writer, a witch, and a guide is a testament to the complexity of the human experience and the boundless potential for self-discovery.

Within the persona of The Twisted

Witch, Christy Mann explores the delicate balance between the light and the dark, the known and the unknown. Her work as a witch is not limited to conventional expectations but delves into the universal energies that underpin all of existence. She dances on the fine edge of duality, casting spells that challenge the very nature of reality and embracing the shadows as a means of enlightenment.

The Twisted Witch’s identity as a witch goes far beyond the stereotypical images often associated with the craft. She is a practitioner of spells and rituals that challenge the very essence of what it means to be a witch. She walks the path of shadow work, peering into the depths of her own soul and confronting the fears and desires that reside there.

In her rituals, she explores the boundaries of existence, bridging the gap between the material and the metaphysical. Her work is a testament to the transformative power of the craft, as she weaves together the threads of her own experiences to create spells and rituals that resonate with seekers on their own journeys.

As The Twisted Witch, Christy Mann embodies the duality of existence. Her metaphysical abilities, often referred to as the “big picture curse,” set her apart as a figure who sees beyond the confines of time and space. She projects scenarios dozens of steps ahead, navigating the



intricate web of cause and effect that weaves the fabric of reality.

In the metaphysical community, The Twisted Witch is seen as a seer of the future, a guardian of ancient knowledge, and a weaver of destinies. Her ability to navigate the boundaries between light and dark, to embrace the shadows

as a means of enlightenment, and to bridge the gap between the known and the unknown makes her a unique and formidable presence in this world.

The Twisted Witch is more than a character or a pseudonym; she is an embodiment of the complexity of existence itself. Her journey is one of

self-discovery, of embracing the duality within, and of sharing her knowledge and wisdom with others who seek their own paths of enlightenment. She challenges us to explore the boundaries of reality, to question our assumptions, and to embrace the shadows as a means of illumination.



The Unlikely Peace:

How Birger, the Norse Wolf Berserker, United the Elk Tribe

By Hank Davis

In the frigid heart of the Norse wilderness, where the Yule freeze gripped the land in an iron-clad embrace, two rival tribes were locked in a bitter war. The Norse Wolf tribe, known for their fearless warriors and fierce Berzerkers, were locked in a relentless struggle with the Elk Tribe, renowned for their survival skills in the harsh northern winters. It was a rivalry as old as the mountains that surrounded them, fueled by territorial disputes and ancient feuds. But as the unforgiving winter approached, fate had a different plan in store, one that would bring an unexpected end to the hostilities and usher in a new era of understanding.

At the heart of this story stood Birger, a young Norseman and a formidable Berzerker who was known far and wide for his berserker rage in battle. His relentless ferocity and unmatched skill with a battle-axe were legendary, and he was feared by many. However, during one particularly brutal Yule freeze, Birger's fate took an unexpected turn.

As the bitter cold descended upon the land, Birger found himself isolated from his tribe, caught in a blizzard that threatened to claim his life. He was wounded and on the brink

of death when he stumbled upon the Elk Tribe's territory. The Elk Tribe, despite their ongoing feud with the Norse Wolves, had a tradition of offering shelter to those in need during the Yule season, a tradition that had been passed down through generations.

Weakened and near death, Birger was taken in by the Elk Tribe. It was an act of compassion and a testament to the strength of their Yule tradition. The Elk Tribe's leader, Haldor, saw the dying Norseman as a human being first and foremost, setting aside the ancient grudges between their tribes. Haldor's daughter, Ingrid, played a crucial role in nursing Birger back to health. She was a skilled healer and her kindness began to thaw Birger's heart.

During his recovery, Birger witnessed the Elk Tribe's way of life. They were experts in survival, using their knowledge of the land to find food and shelter even in the harshest of winters. Birger was deeply impressed by their resourcefulness and their ability to adapt to their environment. He soon realized that the Elk Tribe's way of life was not so different from that of his own Norse Wolf tribe, albeit with a focus

on harmony with nature.

As the Yule season drew to a close, the Elk Tribe and Birger formed a bond that transcended their tribal differences. Birger, once a fearsome warrior, now saw the potential for peace and coexistence between their two tribes. He approached Haldor with a proposal – that they put aside their differences and unite their tribes for mutual benefit.

Haldor, moved by Birger's transformation and the compassion he had shown in sheltering him during the Yule freeze, agreed to the proposal. The two tribes, Elk and Norse Wolf, met for a peace summit on the first day of spring. Amidst the thawing snow and emerging greenery, a treaty was signed, officially ending the long-standing feud. It was an unprecedented moment in their history, marking a new beginning for both tribes.

With their newfound alliance, the Elk Tribe and the Norse Wolf tribe prospered. Birger, now a revered member of the Elk Tribe, used his skills to help train their warriors,

while also instilling in them the fierce determination of the Norse Wolf tribe. The Elk Tribe shared their knowledge of the wilderness, teaching the Norse Wolves how to better adapt to their harsh surroundings.

In the years that followed, both tribes learned to coexist and thrive, and they became an example of unity for the surrounding communities. The Yule tradition that had once brought Birger and the Elk Tribe together now stood as a symbol of the enduring peace between the two tribes. The rivalry of the past had given way to friendship and cooperation, all because of a chance encounter during a harsh Yule freeze.

Birger's journey from a fearsome Norse Wolf Berzerker to a peacemaker was a testament to the power of compassion, understanding, and the unifying force of shared traditions. It served as a reminder that even in the harshest of circumstances, humanity's capacity for change and forgiveness could bring about a brighter future, where ancient rivalries could be laid to rest, and lasting peace could be forged.



Embracing the Yule Light Within: A Winter Solstice Meditation

By The Twisted Witch

As the winter solstice approaches, we find ourselves amidst the darkest days of the year. Nature’s energy has withdrawn, and the world seems cloaked in shadow. But within this darkness lies the promise of light. Yule, the festival of the Winter Solstice, reminds us that even in the deepest night, there is a spark of hope, a glimmer of rebirth.

This meditation invites you to embrace the Yule light within, to find solace, wisdom, and renewal during this sacred time.

Begin by finding a quiet, comfortable space. Dim the lights or light a few candles to create a serene ambiance.

1. Center Yourself: Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Inhale deeply, filling your lungs with fresh, cool air. Exhale slowly, releasing tension and worry. Feel the weight of the world lifting from your shoulders.
2. Embrace the Darkness: Picture yourself standing in the heart of a deep, serene forest, the ground blanketed in snow. The night is still and silent. Embrace the darkness around you, knowing that it holds the potential for transformation.
3. Kindling the Yule Fire: Imagine a single, solitary candle in front of you. This candle represents the Yule light. With intention, light it, allowing the flame to flicker and dance. As you do, say aloud or in your mind: “I kindle the Yule fire within me, the light that banishes darkness.”
4. Reflect on the Past Year: With the Yule light before you, take a moment to reflect on the past year. What challenges did you face, and how did you overcome them? What lessons have you learned? Recognize the growth and wisdom gained from your experiences.
5. Set Your Intentions: Now, envision the year ahead. What do you hope to achieve, learn, or manifest? Set your intentions for the coming year. Imagine these intentions as tiny, glowing seeds within your heart.

6. The Sacred Rebirth: As you meditate on your intentions, let the Yule light before you grow brighter and warmer. It symbolizes the returning of the sun and the promise of rebirth. Feel the warmth of the Yule light infusing your entire being, renewing your spirit.

7. Gratitude: Take a moment to express gratitude for the blessings in your life. Acknowledge the support of friends, family, and the Universe. Feel the warmth and love that surrounds you.

8. Connect with the Earth: Imagine your roots extending deep into the earth, grounding you in its stability and strength. As you connect with the earth, feel a sense of oneness with nature, recognizing your place in the grand tapestry of life.

9. Closing: Slowly, become aware of your surroundings. Gently extinguish the Yule candle, knowing that its light continues to burn within you. Carry this inner light with you as you go about your day, and let it guide you through the winter months.

10. Revisit: Whenever you need a moment of solace or inspiration during the Yule season or throughout the year, revisit this meditation. The Yule light is always there to guide you.

This Yule meditation allows you to tap into the ancient magic of the Winter Solstice and find inner peace and guidance within the darkest of times. Embrace the Yule light within you and let it lead you towards a season of renewal and hope.



Blessed Yule from the Team at Metaphysical Times

Hunter's Moon in October

article from www.almanac.com

December's full Cold Moon rises on the night of Tuesday, December 26, 2023...Boxing Day and the First Day of Kwanzaa! However, this also means that it will be high and full in the sky on Christmas, for the appearance of a full Moon on Christmas Day. Learn more about the Cold Moon and what makes it unique.

Why Is It Called the Cold Moon?

The Moon names we use in The Old Farmer's Almanac come from Native American, Colonial American, or other traditional sources passed down through generations. Various Native American peoples traditionally used the monthly Moons and nature's corresponding signs as a calendar to track the seasons.

Today, December's full Moon is most commonly known as the Cold Moon—a Mohawk name that conveys the frigid conditions of this time of year, when cold weather truly begins to grip us.

Alternative December Moon Names

Other names that allude to the cold and snow include Drift Clearing Moon (Cree), Frost Exploding Trees Moon (Cree), Moon of the Popping Trees (Oglala), Hoar Frost Moon (Cree), Snow Moon (Haida, Cherokee), and Winter Maker Moon (Western Abenaki).

This full Moon has also been called the Long Night Moon (Mohican), as it rises during the "longest" nights of the year, near the December winter solstice. This name is doubly fitting because December's full Moon shines above the horizon for a longer period of time than most full Moons.

Other names include Moon When the Deer Shed Their Antlers (Dakota) and Little Spirit Moon (Anishinaabe).

In Europe, ancient pagans called the December full Moon the "Moon Before Yule," in honor of the Yuletide festival celebrating the return of the sun heralded by winter solstice.

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DECEMBER 2023

make kindness the norm.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT																																																																																																		
26	27	28	29	30	1 Create a Kindness Tree and decorate it with notes of kind acts to do.	2 Create handmade holiday gifts for friends, family and co-workers.																																																																																																		
3 Send an unexpected, handwritten postcard or letter to a loved one.	4 Talk to the person sitting by themself at a party.	5 Attend a local event in your community.	6 Join Soldiers' Angels and send a holiday care package to a deployed service member.	7 Contribute toys to your local Toys for Tots campaign.	8 Send holiday cards with inspiring notes to children using the Cardz for Kidz service.	9 Donate to a global charity of your choice.																																																																																																		
10 Invite some friends or family members to a fun night out at an Escape Room.	11 Try a new hobby such as beading or jewelry making.	12 Be accountable for everything you do or say today.	13 Start a staff meeting or your first 10 minutes of class with an inspiring video.	14 Purchase a Christmas tree for a family that can't afford one.	15 Hand out candy canes along with a smile or a note wishing the recipient a joyful holiday season.	16 Get festive and decorate your home for the holidays.																																																																																																		
17 Leave unused coupons next to the corresponding products at the grocery store.	18 Help a neighbor shovel snow or complete a household chore.	19 Take time out today to crank up and enjoy your favorite holiday music.	20 Host an ugly sweater day party at work.	21 Get some friends together and gather treats for delivery workers with a note of appreciation for all their hard work.	22 Get a few \$5 gift cards to hand out to unsuspecting passersby.	23 Open your home for the holidays. Invite neighbors and friends over for drinks or dessert.																																																																																																		
24 Gift a loved one an experience rather than a material gift.	25 Take a long, solitary walk in the park or in the woods.	26 Practice mindfulness today. Take deep breaths.	27 Practice independent, critical thinking.	28 Donate towels or blankets to an animal shelter.	29 Respect yourself. Make others aware of your boundaries.	30 Write a list of goals you would like to accomplish in your life.																																																																																																		
31 Reflect on all the kind acts you've done this year and celebrate.	1	2	3	<div><div>NOVEMBER</div><table><tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>Th</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr><tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr><tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr><tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr></table></div> <div><div>JANUARY</div><table><tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>Th</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td>31</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr><tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr><tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr><tr><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr></table></div>			S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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The Tradition of Giving: Embracing the Spirit of Yule

By Hank Davis

As the winter solstice approaches, people around the world prepare to celebrate the season of Yule. Yule, a pagan festival rooted in ancient traditions, has been adopted and adapted by various cultures, often incorporated into the modern celebration of Christmas. Central to the spirit of Yule is the tradition of giving. In this article, we will explore the origins and significance of giving during the season of Yule.

Ancient Origins of Yule

Yule has its origins in the ancient Germanic and Norse pagan traditions, dating back to at least the first millennia CE. The word “Yule” itself is believed to have been derived from the Old Norse word “jól” or “jūl,” referring to the midwinter festival. These early celebrations marked the winter solstice, the longest night of the year, and the gradual return of the sun.

Gift-Giving in Pagan Yule

One of the most enduring traditions associated with Yule is the act of gift-giving. Ancient pagans exchanged gifts to symbolize their gratitude for the past year’s blessings and to wish each other good fortune for the year ahead. Gifts were often handmade and imbued with personal significance, emphasizing the importance of thoughtfulness and love behind each gesture.

Sacred Yule Tree

The Yule tree, an evergreen tree decorated with ornaments and lights, is another central aspect of the Yule celebration. This tradition likely evolved into the modern Christmas tree. Ancient pagans believed that the evergreen tree symbolized life’s continuity during the long, dark winter months. It was also customary to hang gifts, often small food items or trinkets, on the branches of the Yule tree.

The Influence of Yule on Modern Christmas

With the spread of Christianity in Europe, Yule traditions were gradually incorporated into the Christmas celebration. Gift-giving, the Yule tree, and the Yule log all found their way into the Christian holiday, often with new religious symbolism. Today, many people interchange the terms Yule and Christmas, acknowledging the shared traditions between the two.

The Spirit of Giving

In both Yule and Christmas, the act of giving is a core expression of love, gratitude, and community. The tradition of giving during Yule has evolved from simple tokens of goodwill to more elaborate and often materialistic exchanges of gifts. However, the essence of the tradition remains intact: the act of giving as an expression of love and the strengthening of social bonds.

A Time for Reflection

Yule is not just about the physical exchange of gifts but also a time for reflection and introspection. It is an opportunity to express appreciation for the people in our lives, our shared experiences, and the support and warmth we receive from our communities. It reminds us to be mindful of the past year’s challenges and achievements and to set intentions for the year ahead.

Inclusivity and Generosity

One of the beautiful aspects of the Yule tradition is its inclusivity. It emphasizes the importance of giving to those in need, sharing with the less fortunate, and extending acts of kindness to strangers. This generosity is reflected in many modern holiday customs, such as charity drives and volunteering.

The tradition of giving during the season of Yule is a cherished and time-honored practice that continues to bring warmth and light to the dark winter months. Rooted in ancient pagan customs, Yule’s influence can be felt in the modern Christmas celebration, where the spirit of giving remains central. As we gather with loved ones during this special time, let us remember the significance of thoughtful, meaningful gifts and the power of generosity and community that Yule represents.



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