

What are the Seven Gifts of Druidry?

(an extract from the website of The Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids)

Today our biggest problem is that we have separated ourselves from Nature - so much that there is a risk we may not survive as a species. We need philosophies, spiritualities, ideas, that can help us get back in touch with Nature again - our spirituality must become ecological. It now seems that the Old Ways, reinterpreted for our times, can offer us the kind of spirituality that we need to heal the separation that has occurred between ourselves and our environment. Druidry is one such Way, and although at first sight it might appear to be just an old curiosity, a quaint memory from the distant past, if we take the time to look at it more closely, we will discover a treasure-chest just waiting to be opened. And in this chest we can find at least seven gifts that Druidry brings to our modern world:

The first gift is a Philosophy: which emphasizes the sacredness of all life, and our part in the great web of creation. It cares passionately about the preservation and protection of the environment, and offers a worldview, which is ecological, geocentric, pragmatic, idealistic, spiritual and romantic. It does not separate Spirit and Matter - it offers a sensuous spirituality that celebrates physical life.

The second gift puts us back in touch with Nature: with a set of practices that help us feel at one again with Nature, our ancestors, our own bodies, and our sense of Spirit, by working with plants, trees, animals, stones, and ancestral stories. Eight seasonal celebrations help us attune to the natural cycle, and help us to structure our lives through the year, and to develop a sense of community with all living beings.

The third gift brings Healing: with practices that promote healing and rejuvenation, using spiritual and physical methods in a holistic way to promote health and longevity.

The fourth gift affirms our life as a Journey: with rites of passage: for the blessing and naming of children, for marriage, for death, and for other times of initiation, when it is helpful to ritually and symbolically mark our passage from one state to another.

The fifth gift opens us to other Realities: with techniques for exploring other states of consciousness, other realities, the Otherworld. Some of these are also used by other spiritual traditions, and include meditation, visualization, shamanic journeying, and the use of ceremony, music, chanting and sweathouses, but they are all grounded in specifically Celtic and Druidic imagery and tradition.

The sixth gift develops our Potential: Druidry as it is practiced today offers a path of self-development that encourages our creative potential, our psychic and intuitive abilities, and fosters our intellectual and spiritual growth.

The seventh gift of Druidry is the gift of Magic: it teaches the art of how we can open to the magic of being alive, the art of how we can bring ideas into manifestation, and the art of journeying in quest of wisdom, healing and inspiration.

