

My dear children, how do we measure our growth? When we were but little children we stood by a wall to mark how far we grew in a month or year. As we grow older we change our view from how tall to how slim around the waist or how fat our wallet is. But when it comes to our spiritual path we can get frustrated when our perceived progress is too slow. Our society demands productivity and progress. And when we turn our attention to others we can become depressed or full of ego. In the end it is not a race, there is no finish line, but a journey with many stages that are sweet and slow or excitingly fast.

We love to compare all that we do. It gives us a sense of accomplishment when we succeed and goals when we feel stuck. When we look at a tree cut in half we see the story of its life. Each ring is another year in the trees journey. Some of these rings are long and wide showing us this was a rich year with good nutritious water, food, and sun. This tree learned a lot and stretched out to live more fully. Then we see short, small circles where there was less water and food and the sun tested the strength of the tree. We can even see where a sickness and broken limb was mended and loved to health. In these dry years the tree pulled within to conserve strength for when it could expand again. We as humans are no different. Each year we expand, grow, stretch and uplift to another ring of consciousness.

Our rings are the lessons we learn, challenges we face, and passions we embrace. Some times our year is full of passion, events, and people. We stretch to new places when we move past old beliefs and limitations. We feel as we look back over our year totally different than when we began. Other years we do little focusing on one project, one task, even just trying to live each day. Although these lean years feel as we do not expand, our expansion is internal allowing us to leap more fully into the outer world. There is a balance between our internal growth and outer growth.

This is also reflected in our mundane activities verses our more spiritual activities. Some days are spent reflecting quietly by a stream expanding our mind and heart allowing the spiritual side to breathe and refresh. Some days are spent racing back and forth to work, paying bills, and visiting parents. Although we sometimes crave one over the other, both days can be as one. Allow



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yourself to be what you need (spiritual or physical) as we sometimes need to be very focused in one world.

Time to check your growth rings. Look back over these last two months. Were you stretching out into the world or pulling internally to grow? Are your days balanced with spiritual awareness and daily issues or are you spending too much time on one side of the balance? What would you like to grow toward next? And the most important part of growing, just like when we were little, give yourself a gold star! You have grown more just now then you thought possible. Just being alive today making the choice to live in your heart is a huge leap in growth. All my love my dear children. Namaste' Mother Mary

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Go Outside - It's Spring!

Eric Mowery

Spring is here, earlier than expected but certainly welcomed. Living here in the Pacific Northwest I find that getting outside each day, even when it is raining, boosts my energy level, lifts my spirits, and strengthens my connection to Goddess /God. This month with spring coming, I am choosing to be fully conscious of the return of spring and our shift toward the light half of the year. Perhaps you will join me in this. If you already have a daily spiritual practice, how about doing part of it outside as well?

Each day, rain or shine, step outside. Perhaps walk through a city park at lunch time. Some mornings I just open the back door and look out at the yard. Take a few deep breaths to clear your mind of chatter and slow down. Clap your hands once. Take a deep breath and as you exhale, extend your awareness down through your feet, into the ground. Visualize your awareness going down among the tree roots and deeper. Feel the strength and support within the earth and within the tree roots. Inhale that energy as Strength.

Take a deep breath and exhale and extend your awareness to the bushes, trees and flowers around you, hearing within your mind the sound of the leaves forming and gently opening, reaching toward the sunlight. Visualize the buds in the fruit trees filling with potential and bursting forth in blossoms of light pinks and vibrant whites. Inhale that energy as Vibrant Potential.

Take a deep breath and exhale and listen for the birds. Many bird families are already busy with new chicks. Listen and feel the birds,

flying through the air, feeding their young, filled with optimism and hope for the new year as spring comes. Inhale as energy Optimism.

Inhale and surround yourself with all these energies. Exhale and surround your friends and families with these energies. Inhale and exhale, surrounding the planet with these energies. Clap your hands three times. Now go about your day knowing and remembering the connection you have with the web of life and use it in blessing yourself and those you come in contact with today.

Eric Mowery at mindfulgardening.net loves to help people create sacred spaces in their own yards. 206-683-8242

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