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**Sacred Journeys Newsletter - OCTOBER 2019!**

*Our intention is to share with you each month upcoming community events, resources and inspirations, to lift your Spirit and feed your Soul! We believe that Love is the fabric of reality. We share this to awaken, expand, and strengthen this Divine Consciousness in you, in all of humanity, and our planet.*

*Love- Jonathan & Shari*

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**Greetings from Shari-**

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**SPECIAL EVENTS**

- 10-10-19: Portal day
- 10-13-19: Full Moon
- 10-31-19: Happy Halloween!



Sharing another great voice about Autumn with all of you.

Enjoy!  
Love-Shari

**Naming the Days Feature  
by Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat**

Excerpt from SpiritualityandPractice.com

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### PRAYER NETWORK

You are able to submit prayers to our prayer circle of 100+ people, as well as have the opportunity to pray for others. To join, simply email: drjonathancohen@gmail.com.

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### INSPIRATIONS

"Sometimes

Letting things go

Is an act of far

Greater power

Than defending or

Hanging on."

*Eckhart Tolle*

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### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TV :  
*Pose*

2. HELP THE  
PLANET-  
BUY TREES!

<https://www.ishaoutreach.org/en/cauvery-calling/campaigns/cauvery-calling-action-now-12435?>

The autumn equinox marks the arrival of the season of fall, traditionally seen as a period of changes leading to the dark of winter.

In *Holidays and Holy Nights*, Christopher Hill points out that for Christians who observe the liturgical year, autumn is actually the beginning of the cycle. In an excerpt, he suggests that "the dynamics of the fall of the year have the sweep of a great symphony or an epic poem."

That may explain why so many poets have reflected on this season. *The Heart of Autumn* contains 38 examples selected by Robert Atwan from such poets as Robert Bly, May Sarton, Carl Sandburg, Robert Penn Warren, Archibald MacLeish, and others.

The excerpt from this book is "Leaves" by William Virgil Davis, a poem that conveys the mysterious qualities of fall.

What spiritual lessons and practices are suggested by the coming of autumn? Here are three areas for your meditations.

### 1. BALANCING DARKNESS WITH LIGHT

On the autumn equinox, day and night are of equal length. This signals the need to balance light and darkness within us. Far too often, we fear the dark and adore only the light. Joyce Rupp, a Catholic writer and poet who is one of our Living Spiritual Teachers, challenges us in *Little Pieces of Light* to befriend our inner darkness: "I gratefully acknowledge how darkness has become less of an enemy for me and more of a place of silent nurturance, where the slow, steady gestation needed for my soul's growth can occur. Not only is light a welcomed part of my life, but I am also developing a

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greater understanding of how much I need to befriend my inner darkness."

Buddhist Gary Thorp in *Caught in Fading Light* tells a wonderful teaching story about accepting all situations where we are left in the dark without answers:

"Once, when the Zen master Tokusan was still a student, he visited his teacher, Ryutan, just before sundown. They sat on the floor of Ryutan's hut, casually drinking tea and discussing Zen until deep into the night. At last, Ryutan said, 'Maybe it's about time you went home.' Tokusan bowed to his teacher and walked to the door. 'It's completely dark outside,' he said. Ryutan lit the lantern and said, 'Why not take this?' Just as Tokusan was about to take the lamp from his teacher's hands, Ryutan blew out the flame. Tokusan suddenly knew everything there was to know."

Thorp comments: "Sometimes there is no remedy for our situation than to begin from a point of absolute darkness. Turning off a television set and extinguishing a lantern have certain similarities; they are both abrupt and transition making, and can leave us in a different world. In darkness, we are always on our own."

## 2. LETTING GO

As we watch leaves fluttering to the ground in the fall, we are reminded that nature's cycles are mirrored in our lives. Autumn is a time for letting go and releasing things that have been a burden. All the religious traditions pay tribute to such acts of relinquishment. Fall is the right time to practice getting out of the way and letting Spirit take charge of our lives.

In *Kinds of Power* James Hillman, the elder statesman of contemporary depth psychology,

challenges us to learn from others about this:  
"For what the actor tries to achieve on stage is to 'get out of the way' so that the character he or she is portraying can come fully out. So, too, the writer and the painter; they have to get out of the way of the flow of the work onto the paper and the canvas."

Buddhist teacher Sharon Salzberg, another of our [Living Spiritual Teachers](#), writes in [Lovingkindness](#) about one of the offshoots of letting go: "Generosity has such power because it is characterized by the inner quality of letting go or relinquishing. Being able to let go, to give up, to renounce, to give generously – these capacities spring from the same source within us. When we practice generosity, we open to all of these liberating qualities simultaneously.

They carry us to a profound knowing of freedom, and they also are the loving expression of that same state of freedom." Fall, then, is the perfect season to give generously of your time and talents to others.

### **3. ACKNOWLEDGING IMPERMANENCE**

Autumn reminds us of the impermanence of everything. We have experienced the budding of life in spring and the flowerings and profusions of summer. Now the leaves fall and bare branches remind us of the fleeting nature of all things. Jewish rabbi and writer [Harold Kushner](#) in [The Lord Is My Shepherd](#) suggests that when we contemplate fall's changes, we grow more appreciative of all the beauties that surround us:

"The poet Wallace Stevens once wrote, 'Death is the mother of beauty.' What those words say to me is that we cherish the beauty of a sunrise, of a New England autumn, of a relationship, of a child's hug, precisely because those things will

not be around forever and neither will we be around to enjoy them."

Fall also brings home to our consciousness death and the challenge to live every day to the fullest. Susan Jeffers in *Embracing Uncertainty* gives us a spiritual practice to facilitate this twofold movement:

"I was once told that certain spiritual masters in Tibet used to set their teacups upside down before they went to bed each night as a reminder that all life was impermanent. And then, when they awoke each morning, they turned their teacups right side up again with the happy thought, 'I'm still here!' This simple gesture was a wonderful reminder to celebrate every moment of the day."

Finally, Cynthia Kneen, in *Awake Mind, Open Heart* shares an open heart practice to carry with you into the fall.

"When you are brave and have an open heart, you have affection for this world – this sunlight, this other human being, this experience. You experience it nakedly, and when it touches your heart, you realize this world is very fleeting. So it is perfect to say 'Hello means good-bye.' And also, 'My hope, hello again.' "

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<https://www.facebook.com/SacredArtbyShari/>

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[https://www.etsy.com/shop/SacredArtbyShari?  
ref=hdr\\_shop\\_menu](https://www.etsy.com/shop/SacredArtbyShari?ref=hdr_shop_menu)

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## Reflections from Jonathan -

In my studies about anxiety I know that we do not erase fearful thoughts. They are endemic to our human condition. We do have an opportunity though to replace them.

One of the strongest ways for me to replace fearful thinking is through conscious breath in darkness. One of the strongest forms for this practice is eyes closed meditation. Many times when I begin my meditation process the thoughts get stronger. As I stay with the process there are unexpected and very welcomed spaces when peace emerges. When those spaces occur my gratitude is deep.

As I reflect upon my spiritual evolution, I am clear that the most impactful experiences include time in darkness and silence. My experience with sweat lodges, vision quests, sun-moon dance are ones which took me to the core. Each involved conscious breath work in silence and darkness. In each experience there was a time of intense fear in the thinking domain which was followed by a release and ensuing peace.

I currently do at least 1.5 hours of yoga and meditation a day. It all involves closed eye breath work. When I previously heard others say they take their issues "to the mat" I did not always know what that meant. I now do. That breathing time in silence is a Godsend.

No, we do not erase thoughts- we replace them. In this autumnal place of letting go my wish for all of you is peace. Try some time

with silent eye-closed meditation.  
May peace prevail on Earth.

Love-  
Jonathan

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