

THE DRUID NETWORK

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<https://druidnetwork.org>

75 Richmond Terrace

Darwen

BB3 0HE

MEDIA CONTACT +44 7923 964092

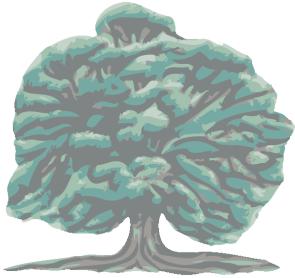
office@druidnetwork.org

The Garden Meditation

By Snowhawk

This Garden Meditation is a tool that I use regularly, along with my grove and those I teach and mentor in prison. I also present this at workshops and it has been received very well. The concept here is to explore one's own inner landscape. It is time set aside to explore our imagination. Instead of looking for patterns using runes or tarot, or looking for omens in the outer-world, we can at any time look inward, finding patterns and symbols, messages and even omens in our own subconscious mind, within our own imagination. In this meditation we create a garden. It can be any garden and we can change it at will. It is understood this garden is a reflection of our own being. It is 100% ours. Images in this garden represent aspects of ourselves. This meditation comes from the Hawaiian Huna tradition but variations of it are found all around the globe. I learned a very similar concept from Bobcat which she refers to as "the inner grove".

The garden can be used for a tool for healing as well, setting patterns in our subconscious mind that will manifest in our physical being. An example is this: we may be ill with a chest cold; in our garden a stream runs through the garden; when we do the meditation, the stream is blocked with weeds, silt, branches, and other materials. During the meditation we clean out the blockages. We re-envision the garden stream as free flowing, clear and



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beautiful. Our mind sees this as the natural order of things and begins to manifest this in our body. We get healthy.

To me, this inner garden doesn't just represent my physical body. I meet guides there. I do shamanic work.

Within your garden you may have helpers too, gnomes, elves, fairies, a human gardener – again, it doesn't matter. You can tell them what you want to change and they will do the work. You are all powerful here as it is yours, totally and completely. The important thing is to make it feel real. Use your senses while you are there. Start with touching three things, tasting three things, smelling three things, but try eventually to use all your senses. If you don't like the garden change it to something completely different. But at first just see what your mind throws out at you. Try not to be overly willful. Let your mind show you things.

I highly recommend journaling about your garden. It is interesting and can be very insightful to see how the garden changes and evolves over time.

You can use this meditation for the following:

- Relaxation;
- Interpretation – as a way to check in with your inner landscape (subconscious mind, your body, your soul) ; and



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- Resolution – everything in your garden is a reflection of what is going on in your life. Your garden can help you understand this better; you may see relationships that aren't apparent in your daily work. Here is a place where you can correct issues and plant seed of change.

The meditation is done as follows:

1. As with all time we use for our spiritual practices, it is important to begin by making prayers to the spirits of place, giving thanks for the space you have and asking that your meditation be undisturbed. Begin the process of bringing yourself fully into the moment and into the place where you are. Find yourself comfortable and relaxed, rooting into the Earth. Become aware of your breath. Don't force it. Let it flow in and out without effort. Be aware of the process and feel the movement of the air into your body and back out into the world. Use your breath to feel your roots growing deeply into the Earth, seeking strength and nourishment.

Think about who you are in this place at this moment. Feel the edges of your nemeton, your intimate space. Become fully present. Close your eyes. Let your breath flow naturally, leading you into meditation.

(If you are having a difficult time relaxing, proceed anyway as the process of doing the Garden meditation will naturally relax you. Close your eyes and take a deep breath. Blow the air out and let it naturally come back into your body. Then just breath naturally, unforced.)



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2. Let an image of a garden come into your mind. Don't worry if it isn't clear and well developed. Don't judge what comes into your mind. If you feel that it is easier to travel to your garden somehow (riding magical creatures, flying, using a boat, whatever), feel free to use that imagery but let the image arise naturally. In your mind find yourself inside of that garden. The garden can be anything, a farm, flower garden, forest, jungle, a Victorian paradise, whatever. It doesn't matter. Fill it with anything you want, a sacred well, stone walls, statues, water fountains, and water gardens, endless flowers, wind chimes, well maintained lawns, a Zen garden of stone and sand, anything. It can just be totally natural as well (mine is a jungle). Don't judge what comes into your imagination. It is just your mind's creation. It is a place to start and nothing is fixed. The garden represents your subconscious and your physical body. It is a place where you can make change.

3. Once in your garden bring your senses into play. Touch three things, smell three things, and hear three things (bird song, water falls, rivers and streams, the wind through the trees, the texture of a stone, explore it with your senses). If there is a stream, well, or fruit, smell and taste the water or fruit. Explore the texture of things. What sounds are on the wind? Bring as much of your consciousness into play as you can.

4. Move and explore your garden. What grows there? What is the soil like? What is the climate? What is the time of year? Let your curiosity lead you around. What are you wearing? How do you feel in this place?



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5. If there is change you wish to make in your garden, do the work now. If the work is more than can be done in a moment, express the intention of the change you seek. If you have helpers in the garden, let them know the work that needs to be done. Begin the process of that change.

6. Within your garden, find a focal point such as a tree or fountain, or stone. This is an inner landmark that will help you make get back to your garden quickly when you need to meditate and don't have a lot of time. Become familiar with it. Work with it until it becomes "real".

7. When you are ready to leave, bless your garden, bless your helpers. Bring your emotional presence into play. Feel the gratitude within your own soul and express the thanks outwardly. This is your place of beauty and possibility.

8. When you are ready to end the meditation, do so consciously, not from distraction. Find yourself present again on the physical plane. Become aware again of the spirits of place. Give thanks that you have had a place of solitude to do this work. Give thanks that you were not disturbed. Find your roots again, feeling the Earth beneath you given you constant support. When you are ready, move on with your day.

Snowhawk

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