





# AUTUMN EQUINOX

AUTUMN QUARTER POINT

*20th-23rd September*

SUN ENTERS LIBRA ♎

*Day and night equal length*

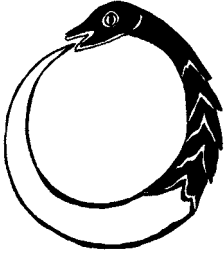
*Mabon \* Alban Elued*

*Harvest Festival*

*Festival of Thanksgiving*

*Festival of Restored Balance  
and Integration*

# AUTUMN EQUINOX



*Day and night are in perfect balance again all over the world.  
The Sun enters the sign of Libra, bringing balance and  
harmony and, by necessity, change and transformation.  
It is time to take action and move into a new energy phase to  
balance the outer world with the inner world. It is a time to  
release the past and move forwards, a chance to be clear about  
what it is you want to do now and prepare for winter.*

AUTUMN EQUINOX IS THE DOORWAY TO WINTER. Summer is over and a new phase will begin. Here we can share with each other what we have gained and completed during the summer and make our plans for the coming winter. From now on the days will get noticeably shorter and colder. The Sun's power is waning fast. This is the time of ripening fruits, nuts, mushrooms and berries. It is a busy time if you want to lay in stores for the winter. After all is gathered in, and the outside jobs are completed, we can celebrate the harvest. This is the family gathering of autumn's end, Thanksgiving, the big harvest party; a feast and a celebration of the year's abundance. Here we celebrate the Earth and all her gifts, friendships, family, our produce, our creations and achievements, as well as our own personal harvest.

It is a time for balancing and reconciling opposites and to see them as part of the whole. Everything co-exists together and we need both sides in order to be balanced and whole: the seen and the unseen, the known and the unknown, creation and destruction, death and rebirth, materialism and spirituality. Here at the Autumn Equinox, celebrate your whole selves, your masculine and feminine aspects, your conscious and unconscious, the active and the receptive, your light and dark sides, your fortunes and your misfortunes, your young self and your old self – and all aspects of the cycle of life. Celebrate it all, the good and the bad. Honour the changing season that brings a chance to start again. Dragon Day was celebrated at the Spring and Autumn Equinoxes. The dragon goes underground now for the winter. Here the dragon is invoked to carry the Fire energy into the inner realms, to activate the Fire within. The dragon is an ancient energy symbol representing Earth energy, dynamism, Fire, will and courage. This we take with us now as we turn to face the dark inner realms. This is not a place to fear as we have been taught, but a place to get in touch with your power, strength, inner focus, spiritual path and a reconnection to your inner wisdom. We are part of this whole, not separate from it.

## THE UNDERLYING ENERGY OF THE AUTUMN EQUINOX

**THE EQUINOXES PREPARE US FOR CHANGE IN THE EARTH'S ENERGY.** This is the transition into the winter season that we must all respond to. Things are moving fast now. Preparations and intentions for the coming winter months must be made now. The days are shortening and the increasing cold is here to remind us that change is coming. The leaves are changing colour and falling from the trees; the fruit is ripening and needs to be gathered in. Outside jobs need to be completed. The sap in the trees and plants is moving down now.

This is the beginning of root energy and brings rest, sleep, and renewal. It is a chance for all of life to go within and re-enter the dark womb of the spiritual world. Equinox celebrates the balance between the outer journey and the inner journey, and the strong foundation this brings into our lives. It is a time for long-term planning and incubation. The seed ideas we plant now will re-emerge in the spring, changed, transformed and strengthened by their time in the unconscious. Use the Autumn Equinox to begin to turn inwards. Listen to the understanding and intuition that come from your inner knowing. Learn to trust this part of yourself and value the transformation inherent in this season.

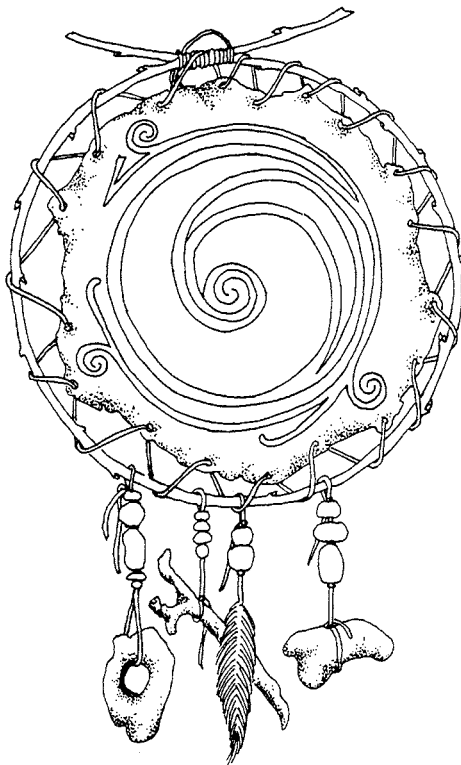
Give thanks for your harvest. A state of gratitude opens your heart and increases the flow of Love and abundance in your life. Give thanks for the inner rewards you are beginning to harvest and look for ways to use them in the future. Ask for guidance; be open to a change in focus, or a change in direction in your life. State your intent to connect to your inner wisdom and to follow your spiritual path.

At this moment, when we appreciate all that the Earth has provided for us, ask yourself what you can give back, to help the healing of the Earth, to undo the damage of our industrial/scientific age. The gift you have is your inspired vision and enlightenment; your love, compassion and higher ideals that



will affect all those you speak to, and will bring changes in the world. Welcome your awakening intuitive creative faculties that will help heal our imbalanced rational world. Share the wisdom and power this brings you. Manifest the goodness of your spirit in all you do.

The double spiral is the symbol of Autumn Equinox. It represents the in-breath and the out-breath; the point of balance between the worlds; the inner and outer journey. This endless cycle of change brings renewal and new opportunities to explore and understand our selves and the life we are creating. Your harvest is the starting point of this understanding. At the Autumn Equinox, look back with thanks and blessings to the gifts and help given, to the expansion that began in the spring. Welcome the turning, the change of energy flowing towards the dark and the power within. Connect to your inner pathways, your spiritual path. Rest, re-charge, and find the source of your inner world. Slip out of time. Dream a new dream.



*Love for Life*

*I am so small and yet I'm always cared for,  
My share of abundance awaits.  
And your life is yours just for the cost of living it,  
And even that is up to you.*

*Counting blessings  
Thanking the land  
Connecting to the source of Life*

*Opening hearts  
In simple gratitude  
Returning love for life*

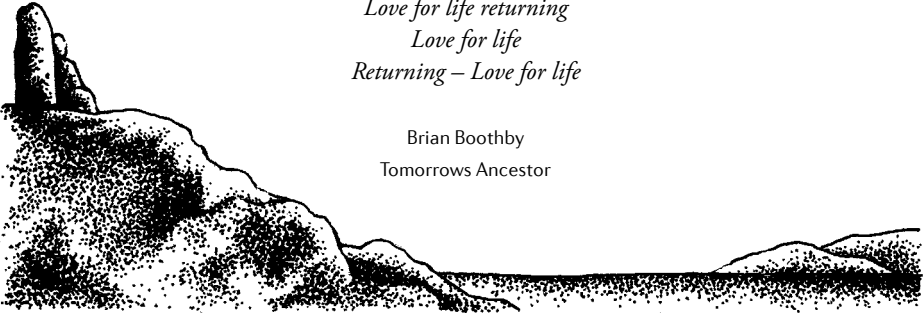
*So sit on the hill, and watch the Sunrise,  
Forget your hardships, break your bread.  
We give so much – we give so little  
The balance settles with gratitude.*

*Counting blessings  
Thanking the land  
Connecting to the source of Life*

*Opening hearts  
In simple gratitude  
Returning love for life*

*Returning love for life returning  
Love for life returning  
Love for life  
Returning – Love for life*

Brian Boothby  
Tomorrows Ancestor





PREPARATIONS FOR  
AUTUMN EQUINOX

*Space-clearing \* Talking Stick \* Binding  
Herb Sachets \* Incense  
Hermes/Mercury \* Root Meditation  
Trees and Shrubs: Apple \* Heather  
Herbs: Fennel \* Marigold \* Hops  
Hawthorn Berries*

**Begin making plans to have a harvest party** of summer's end. Plan to gather with friends and family to celebrate the harvest and for thanksgiving. This is a great occasion for a bring-and-share feast!

**Celebrate the abundance of the Earth:** apples, damsons, sloes, rose hips, haws, elderberries, blackberries, the flowers, the fungi, and all the ripening seeds on the plants. There is so much to appreciate now before the rain and the cold begin the period of disintegration and decay. The energy of the Earth is turning inwards now; the sap in the trees and plants is returning into the roots. Young trees and plants will become stronger through the winter months as their roots grow deeper. Sit with your back against a favourite tree, tune into its descending energy. Here in this moment, feel the same energy within yourself. Turn and seek strength in the roots of your deepest being. Rest and sleep is the completion of the cycle of growth that began in the spring.

**Plant native tree seeds such as acorns** from the oak, hazelnuts from the hazel, rowan berries from the rowan, alder cones from the alder, haws from the hawthorn. Label the pots and leave them outside without a saucer under them. Some will germinate in the spring, when they can be potted up into a larger pot. Some will take two years to germinate. Later you will need to find permanent homes for them. Plant them in the ground when the leaves have fallen and root energy begins.

**Finish off any garden projects you may have started.** Move trees, bushes and perennials to their new positions. Split herb plants and share them with your friends or replant in new positions. Clear the garden, cut back, weed and compost. Collect seeds for growing in the spring. Give thanks for the abundance you have enjoyed in your garden. Give thanks to the flowers, herbs and the medicines you have harvested. Give thanks to the nature spirits, retreating now.

**Plant native bulbs in the ground where they will stay hidden until the spring.** Plant mixed bulbs in large pots and stand them outside your door. This way you will see and appreciate their re-emergence as the light returns after the Winter Solstice.

**There is much to do at this time,** gathering fruit, making fruit wines, jams and preserves, collecting and drying mushrooms and seeds. This is a busy time in the kitchen that once again becomes the heart of the home. Prepare food for the feast using the abundance of the season. As you make the food, give thanks from your heart for all that you have.

**Let the abundance of the Earth speak for itself.** Collect autumn leaves and make a celebratory basket of coloured leaves. In other baskets collect nuts and seeds, seed-heads, fungi, fruits and berries. They can be displayed and honoured in any creative way you wish. Hang up coloured cloths of browns, yellows, oranges and reds.

### **Space Clearing**

This is the time to clean out and clear your space ready for the coming new season. Throw out or give away unwanted things that are no longer relevant, or hold emotional associations that may be holding you back. Move forward into the new season with greater clarity, uncluttered by psychic dross. Creating light and harmony in your living space will greatly affect how you feel and what you achieve in your space. As you are about to move indoors now, the importance of a clean uncluttered space for yourself cannot be over-emphasised. Give everything a wash, getting rid of all the dust. Burn sage to cleanse the space. Create a special area or shrine to focus your spiritual journey. Light candles there. Put appropriate Bach flower remedies into water and, using a



plant-spray, spray the room to enliven and enhance its energy and your energy within it. As you work, state clearly your intent for clarity and harmony. It is a wonderfully uplifting thing to do and afterwards your room feels very different.

**Dedicate an area of your room to your spiritual growth:** a window ledge, a table, or a shelf. On it, place a coloured cloth, a vase of fresh flowers, crystals, and anything of significance that will help you keep connected to your spiritual path and the insights you are gaining. Light a candle here whenever you make this connection.

**Wash all your crystals and put them under the harvest Full Moon to recharge.** Thank them for all their help, for their energy, power and healing. Crystals are very powerful living things, acting directly on the energy field of the body. They respond to vibrations of respect, care and love, like all living things. They can help us to become balanced, to communicate with all of nature and to experience all life as sacred.

**Make time for meditation and connection to your inner self.** Meditate with the spiral, the double spiral, and the inner and outer breath. Seek to balance the busy outer world with the peace within. Nurture a sense of gratitude for all you have. This will open your heart to love and inner peace. Meditation will facilitate positivity, peacefulness and serenity. When it becomes a part of your daily life, it creates a balance between our active and receptive selves. Practise mindfulness meditation. This means keeping focused on the present as you go about your daily chores. As you become aware of your thoughts and what comes up from the unconscious, gently bring yourself back to the present moment and the job you are doing.

### **Herb Sachets and Herb Storage**

Sort out your dried herbs, throwing away last year's unused leaves and flowers. (Roots may be kept for two years if they still smell good.) Make sure that this year's herbs are properly dried, labelled and stored in a dry place in dark jam jars or brown paper bags. Sunlight and damp will destroy their properties. Using circles of muslin and coloured threads, tie herbs into herb teabags or herb bath sachets (See page 152.) Make a note of the herbs in them and label them. Give some to friends as gifts.

### **Incense Making**

Experiment with different incense mixtures of dried herbs, berries and flowers. Keep a note of what you put into the different mixtures and what you might use them for. Give the mixtures your own special names, label and store them in a dry place. Burn the dried mixture in a special dish using glowing charcoal blocks.

## Making a Talking Stick

Make a talking stick that can be passed around the group to facilitate discussion, share deep thoughts and feelings. The person who holds the stick is the only one who can speak and must not be interrupted. When she or he has finished speaking, it is passed on to the next person who wishes to speak. It is a power stick and can greatly focus and aid communication. It can take many forms. It may be a piece of wood you find, or one you cut, with thanks and intent. A good size is 40-60cm long and 2-3cm in diameter. But there are no fixed rules. You may prefer to leave the bark on or strip off the bark, sand it smooth and polish with beeswax polish or oil. Oiling it will keep the wood strong and stop it from drying out and cracking. You can also bind coloured threads on to it.

1. Tie a length of thread on your stick, with one long thread that runs the length of the stick and stays inside the binding.

2. Wrap the wrapping thread round the stick, carefully laying each wrap snugly against the last

and keeping the inner thread inside the binding. Change colours by tying on a new colour to the wrapping thread, carefully binding the knots inside, and continue to keep the inner thread running inside the binding.

3. Tie off by tying the wrapping thread to the thread that ran inside. Tie on bells, shells, stones with holes in, feathers, beads and other special things.



**Seek to balance the male and female within yourself.** Take a look at your life and perhaps notice areas where you are still responding to your conditioning and what society is expecting of you. Find ways to change so that you feel more balanced within your self.

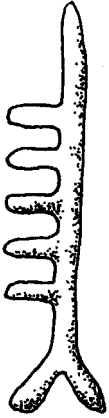
**At the Spring and Autumn Equinoxes, fast for a day** to help cleanse the body of harmful toxins. Drink mineral water and herb teas (fennel is good) to aid the process.

### **Hermes (Greek)/Mercury (Roman)**

Worshipped extensively in the pre-Christian era as a four-fold god, his sign, the Arabic numeral four later became incorporated into the Christian cross. Hermes-Mercury was a god of the four elements, the four quarters of the Earth, the four winds, the four seasons, the four great Fire festivals, the four quarters of the year (Solstices and Equinoxes), the four fixed zodiac signs and animal totems of the year, and later the four archangels. Hermes-Mercury represents the blending of opposite forces, outer and inner, active and passive. His logical aspect, represented by the phallus or rod, was balanced by his intuitive aspect represented by the twin serpents, thus creating the caduceus, used in astrology and alchemy, as a symbol of healing. The serpents, dragons or snakes of Hermes-Mercury were sometimes shown in a circle biting their own tail, representing the unending cycle of death and rebirth. The hermetic power of androgyny and blended opposites is an ancient mystery whose potent symbolism has survived for us to re-examine.

Mercury is dedicated to communication, especially between the worlds. There were many temples dedicated to Hermes or Mercury, always to be found on high places. Many of these later became dedicated to the Archangel Michael, the angel of death and transformation. The two St Michael's Mounts, one in Cornwall and the other across the English Channel in France, were both Mercury's mounts in pre-Christian times. (The French one still bears the name St Michel – Mont Mercure.)

## TREES AND SHRUBS OF AUTUMN EQUINOX

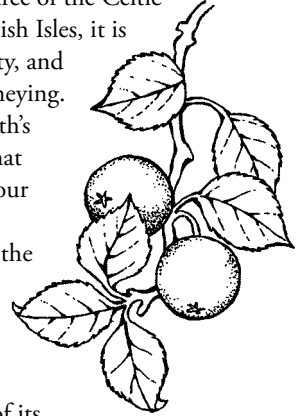
**APPLE**

The cultivated apple tree (*Malus pumila domestica*), and the crab apple (*Malus pumila*), both have similar properties and a long history of myths and legends, cures and uses. In every country it is regarded as sacred, magical, a symbol of fruitfulness and abundance, a means to immortality, a cure for all ills, and a gift of Love. It is the tenth tree of the Celtic Tree Ogham: QUERT. Q. From Greece to the British Isles, it is connected to the fabled Western Isles of immortality, and has strong links to the Underworld and inner journeying.

Here at Autumn Equinox, it is a symbol of the Earth's abundance. It teaches us to give all, in total trust that all will be replenished. It inspires us to be open to our loving heart and to the abundance in our lives. By affirming and feeling thankful for what we have in the

present, we open up the channels for our own abundance.

Apple is a powerful cleanser. The Bach flower remedy can be taken internally by those who have a poor self-image, and used externally, a few drops in the washing water to cleanse your outer body, room, utensils, or wherever you feel the need of its cleansing energy. It is used for psychic cleansing as well as physical.

**Verjuice**

Verjuice, the ancient magical drink of the Druids, is made by laying ripe crab apples in a heap until they begin to sweat. Remove the stalks and the rotten fruit, beat the remainder to a mash in a large bowl. Press this through a coarse cloth or muslin. Bottle the juice and leave for one month.



### HEATHER – *Calluna vulgaris*

Heather is not a tree but is never the less included in the Celtic Tree Ogham. It is eighteenth in the Ogham: Ur. U. It is seen as a gateway between the inner world of spirit and the outer world of manifestation. How you go about your life is very much a reflection of your inner world, and demonstrates a loyalty to one's true self. If you are at peace with yourself, you will do what is right without ulterior thought of reward or advantage. This is the message of heather. Spending time with heather will lift the spirits and bring a calming soothing energy. Heather inspires us to go about our lives with this same lightness of spirit, which we can then pass on to others. Seek out any areas of your life that are causing you stress and find inspiring ways to increase your inner peace. Collect the flowers for herb teas. Frequently used in cleansing mixtures, it is a diuretic and antiseptic.

## HERBS OF AUTUMN EQUINOX

### FENNEL – *Foeniculum vulgare*

Harvest the seeds in the autumn. Make an infusion in the usual way and use for all gastric disturbances, for stimulating digestion, reducing bloating and helping to expel wind. Fennel is a hot dry herb and will get rid of dampness and cold. It can be safely drunk by nursing mothers to increase milk production, passing through the mother's milk to the baby to reduce wind and colic. Fennel is nourishing and sustaining, whenever you feel you need nurturing. It has a soothing calming effect on the emotions.



**N.B.** It is a uterine stimulant, so use sparingly if pregnant.

### HOPS – *Humulus lupulus*

Harvest the hop flowers in early September as they cascade over the hedgerows. Hang them up to dry as part of your Equinox decorations. It is a strong sedative, calming the liver and the stomach, relieving headaches and sleeplessness due to stress. Mix dried hop



flowers and lavender flowers and fill a small cotton pillow with this mixture. Sleep with the herb pillow inside the pillowcase to ease insomnia.

**N.B. Do not use hops if you are feeling depressed, as they will make the depression worse.**

### MARIGOLD – *Calendula officinalis*

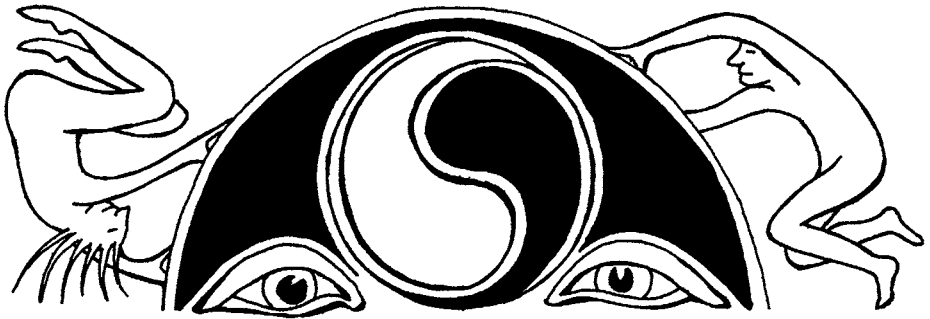
A herb of the Sun to take with you into the winter. The petals can be gathered in September and dried for winter use as herb tea. It is a powerful blood cleanser that works on the lymphatic system and builds up the immune system. Drink the infusion whenever the immune system is lowered, and for viral and fungal infections such as candida. The same infusion can be used to bathe wounds, and is safe to use with children and babies. Calendula will bring comfort to the spirit. It has a soothing effect after shock, trauma or anger. The fresh leaves and petals can be added to salads.



### HAWTHORN BERRIES – *Crataegus monogyna*

Collect and dry the haws from September to October. This is the primary remedy for all problems of the heart. It should be drunk regularly in later life to relieve and prevent angina, hardening of the arteries, and palpitations of the heart, water retention and poor circulation. It will regulate high or low blood pressure, depending on the need, and gently bring the heart back to normal function, improving the general condition of the heart. It is also a useful herb for relieving stress, insomnia and any nervous condition. Pour cold water onto a handful of berries and let them stand overnight, strain and drink the next morning. The berries can be burnt as an incense to help release blocked energy and open the heart to giving and receiving love. By releasing stress, it enhances a person's ability to let go and trust.





## AUTUMN EQUINOX CELEBRATIONS

These are some suggestions for celebrating the Autumn Equinox.

**Plan to get out and about and experience the Equinox** on the day whatever the weather. The exact time and day can be found in any astrological diary. (See Recommended Reading page 234.) Bring back treasures from your walk to put on your Autumn Equinox shrine.

**Gather with friends and family for a bring-and-share feast.** Ask everyone to bring food and drink that reflects the season. By putting tables together and covering them with sheets, it may be possible to seat everyone for a real communal feast with much toasting and dedications, thanking the Earth and each other. Decorate the tables with vases of flowers, fruit, nuts and autumn leaves. Light candles with a dedication and thanks for the harvest of the year. Before you eat, bless the food. Say a simple grace together. You will need to decide whether to feast first, or have the ritual celebration first, how to balance and harmonise the two, and how to use the space available creatively.

**Thanksgiving and balance are the twin themes of the Autumn Equinox.** Seek to take the harvest you have gained in the outer world and integrate it with the turning within, to help bring clarity to the way ahead as the season changes from autumn to winter.

**Have some baskets of yarns,** seeds, shells, string, sticks, fir cones, feathers, dried grasses, dried flowers, ribbons, threads, needles, scissors. Ask everyone to bring

something and then sit together, weave, thread, bind, create something that reflects the abundance of the moment. It may be a necklace to wear, a headdress, an autumn posy to hang up, a special wand or totem. As you make it, think positively about what you are harvesting and how you can use this for your greater good and the greater good of the Earth.

**Set aside a special place for a shrine.** Ask everyone to bring something to represent balance. This quiet place can also be used for meditation and contemplation.

**Bring the group together to celebrate and focus the Five Elements.** Set up each direction and its element, reflecting the abundance of the harvest in whatever way is appropriate to the space available.

### **Water in the West**

Give thanks for the cleansing power of Water, washing away the dust of summer, bringing renewal and a new inner focus. Give thanks for the watery season about to begin as the rains replenish the Earth and sustain life. Give thanks for abundance of love and compassion, and deep connections. Give thanks for the gift of emotional expression. Through tears and laughter we are made full, helping us to find inner strength and helping us to move forwards.

### **Earth in the North**

Give thanks for the harvest of the Earth and all her gifts of food, medicines, and all the resources we take. Give thanks for all the spirits of nature that now withdraw for rest and renewal. Give thanks for the wisdom we have gained through our experiences. These we now take within for understanding and assimilation. The physical harvest is a result of all our hard work and creativity. Celebrate what has been achieved and manifested.

### **Air in the East**

Give thanks for communication, for new ideas and realisations. Give thanks for all the opportunities to share our thoughts and words with each other. Give thanks for the freedom of communication and the different methods of communication available. Give thanks for communications from beyond our world, for telepathy, for our inner voice. Resolve to balance these inner communication systems with the more acceptable outer forms.



### **Fire in the South**

Give thanks for all the beneficial changes that have manifested. Celebrate your spontaneity and the strength of your will and courage. Celebrate your vitality and your health. If you are not well, give thanks and celebrate those days when you feel better. Celebrate and give thanks for your achievements and successes. Give thanks for your creativity. The active power of Fire now brings expansion and inner illumination and insights. Balance outer creative power with the spiritual journey within.

### **Spirit at the Centre**

Give thanks for Spirit; within and without and ever present. We open our hearts to the abundance that this vital connection brings us. We give thanks for the power of Universal Love and connect to our source and the guidance from within. We reach out and touch the sacred, the still point of power at the centre of our being and through it we are at one.

*The words I have written here are intended as clues and pathways to understanding. When invoking the elements, it is important to speak from the heart and with power, so that you help to make the connection strong for yourself and all those present. Use the elemental charts on pages 30-34 to help you.*

**Here at Autumn Equinox**, the Earth's energy is balanced between the outer and the inner worlds. Now, at this point of balance, look back on what you have achieved and plant the seeds of where you wish to go. Share this with each other. Remember your seed vision of this moment by decorating and writing on a piece of card, birch bark or wood.

**Focus on your feeling of balance and stillness** and let sounds or notes out from deep within. Begin with a simple harmony of hums, and then let out any words that come to you. Whisper them, sing them, call them out! Help each other by echoing each other's words, notes, humming, droning, creating a rhythm of sound and movement. Weave together an expression of sound harmonising the power of the moment. Feel the power of expression as the unconscious and the conscious become balanced. Let yourself go, release your inhibitions, and celebrate your freedom to be yourself.

**Go around the circle, each in turn**, saying, "I love and approve of myself exactly the way I am." Go round several times until the energy shifts and begins to have power. Resolve to say this to yourself every day. It will bring great strength and healing.

**Lie on the floor and, to a simple drumbeat,** feel your breath become steady. Focus on the still point within. When you feel you are calm and connected to your inner being, ask for an image to help or guide you. Affirm that your spiritual path, respect for the Earth and each other, and love, will guide your actions. Make a drawing of your vision and any words that come to you and share it with each other afterwards.

**Reflect on the gains and losses of the year.** Give thanks for the outer expansion and what has been possible. Look at what is no longer needed, and what it is time to let go of with thanks and blessings, as you release the past.

**Share with each other the seeds of your harvest** that you take with you into the next cycle. Count your blessings. Celebrate your abundance.

### **Root Meditation**

Plant your feet firmly on the ground, feet apart, and let your mind relax and come to rest in your lower abdomen, or hara. Let any tensions flow down through your body, and let your weight sink into the soles of your feet. Now begin to feel your roots reaching down into the Earth and spreading out like a tree's roots. Visualise the deep dark world within yourself and feel the contact with the Earth's energy as it flows through you, bringing calmness, nourishment and a strong firm foundation.

**Using drums and percussion, dance your harvest dance.** Fill your heart with all that you have gained. Let out any sounds or words from within to express this. Echo each other's words to give them strength and power. Visualise the rays of the Sun being taken within, warming you from the inside. Celebrate yourself, balanced and whole.

**Create a walking-meditation dance,** with a few simple steps you can lose yourself in repeating. Centre your energy in the abdomen area or hara, as this will help you to stay grounded. Feel your feet firmly on the Earth and your energy returning to your roots way down deep under the Earth. Perhaps a simple chant will emerge.

**Honour the dragon with a snake dance** led by a dragon mask or dragon effigy. The dance begins with expansive expressive energy, with much noise, drumming, percussion, singing and celebration. Weave in and out and all around, and then into a wide circle. Gradually spiral the circle inwards until the energy begins to move within, quietly and slowly until the dragon is laid to sleep for the winter. All lie down and contemplate stillness, rest and renewal.

**This is the time for reconciling opposites** and bringing our whole selves into balance. Each light a candle for restored balance, and to help focus an area in your life that you feel needs balancing. Seek to balance light and dark, young and old, male and female, conscious and unconscious, emotion and detachment, active and passive, material and spiritual. Share with each other your new insights and understanding. Make some new intentions to focus on and incubate this winter.

**Pass the talking stick or talking bowl around the circle.** Let each say what each person feels grateful for and what has been learnt from the active phase.

**Plant some native bulbs or tree seeds in pots to place outside.** Plant your own inner seeds with them. Focus on your hopes, ideas, and intentions for the spring and your allegiance to the Earth. Plant some of the fruit, nuts, seeds and berries you have gathered for the Autumn Equinox, label them, leave them outside without saucers underneath, and see what comes up in the spring.

**We all need to know we are loved and respected for who we are.** Share what you value about each other. Celebrate and give thanks for your friendships. This too is part of your harvest. Pass the talking stick or talking bowl around several times.

**Continue the process of letting go of things, ideas,** conditioning, and values that are no longer serving you. Write them down on paper and burn them in the candle flame or fire as part of a ritual of letting go.

**Blessing and giving thanks for the food you eat,** creates a shift in awareness. Share with each other any blessings you know that can be said or sung before eating. Teach them to each other.

**In the centre, place a Basket of Abundance** into which everyone has put things they wish to give away, things they no longer need. Each lights a candle with thanks for their own harvest and abundance, and then takes something from the basket.

**Come together for a closing ceremony.** Thank the elements, the spirits of place, the spirit of Autumn Equinox, your spirit guides and helpers and each other. Sing one of the blessings songs you have learnt.

**Bless the food and drink** and have a great feast and celebratory party.

