

How to Create a Festival of Lights Spiral Ritual For Both Northern and Southern Hemispheres June 2022

Here is a blueprint for creating a spiral, and a ritual for our festival time together. Gathering enough greens, getting candles and holders, making stars, etc. might be more than you can handle, though doing this together with family and friends can be a very fun and meaningful project. If you do not have a group or want to simplify things, you can create a spiral more easily from beautiful cloths, or other materials you already have. You could also simply create a spiral pattern drawn on paper, or embroidered on cloth where you just trace your finger in and out to experience the gestures. It's up to you!

Materials needed for larger spiral creations:

- Enough greens to make a spiral that you can walk into and out of without touching the candles placed along the way.
- Alternatively, enough cloths, silks, any material that you can make a spiral from in your own way.
- A stump of a log or small table for the center of the spiral.
- A large candle for the middle, placed on the stump or table.
- Matches/lighter at the center.
- Enough candles and holders for every person participating. The traditional way is to use apples, cored, with small white candles placed in the center of the apples. I have used small wooden rounds with holes in them as well. Any votive holders that protect the flame from the greens will also do.
- Golden or silver stars cut out and placed all along the spiral. These are spaced evenly though out the spiral and mark where the candles will be placed, so that there is a full spiral of light at the end. Be sure and put the stars in safe positions, so that the candle flame will not catch greenery on fire. (See photograph.)

The Ritual Gestures

Southern hemisphere spiral

- ❖ Light the large center candle before the ritual begins.
- ❖ Begin from the outside with an unlit candle. Hold it in your hand as you enter the spiral path.
- ❖ Walk slowly in the darkness inward, as this reflects the Earth's contracting in breath at the Winter Solstice, and one's own journey through the close and holy darkness of our souls and our body experience of the winter season.
- ❖ Spiral inward to the large candle alight at the center. Take your time, and pause in the center for a moment before lighting your candle from the bright light of Gaia's consciousness within. *What seeds of potential are you holding, in the close and holy darkness time of the year? Connect with those in the*

- northern hemisphere who are mirroring your path, and with all those who walk with you on your journey.
- ❖ Turn and walk slowly back out along the spiral path.
 - ❖ Choose one of the star markers on the spiral, and place your candle/Self-Light there.
 - ❖ If you have enough people, this will fill the spiral with light when all have participated. If you have lesser numbers, people can simply walk the spiral more than one time.
 - ❖ Spend time linking with those from the northern hemisphere who are honoring the Summer Solstice, with a spiral that is bursting with blossom and radiant outward Light and manifestation.

Northern hemisphere spiral

Because this spiral represents the Sun at its height of glory, the candles will already be burning, and placed on the stars around the spiral before the ritual begins. Your walk starts at the center of the spiral, rather than from the outside. Freya suggested that creators of this spiral create a straight path into the center that participants walk first. This is very like the Sidhe spiral glyph, with its straight line down the middle, which could link our festival with the Sidhe in a meaningful way. Alternatively, each person can simply cross the spiral at any point, and head toward the center when it is his/her turn, to begin the walk from the center outward.

- ❖ Create a centerpiece that has one large candle, surrounded by a circle of many flowers and herbs and plants. This center candle is already burning as the ritual begins, **as are all the little candles along the spiral path.**
- ❖ Spend some time in the center before you begin, experiencing yourself at the heart of the Sun, at its height of glory, and celebrating Gaia's gifts of beauty and abundance. *What in your life has blossomed and found outer form and manifestation?* Connect with those in the southern hemisphere who are mirroring your path, and with all those who walk with you on your journey.
- ❖ When you are ready, choose a flower or herb from the circle, and walk slowly and intentionally out of the spiral.
- ❖ Stop at one of the burning candles along the spiral. Pick it up, experiencing the candle as the Sunlight that created the blossom you are holding in your hand.
- ❖ When you are ready, blow the candle out as a mirroring of Gaia's breath at its full and most expansive exhalation; also honoring that after the Summer Solstice, the Light will, in reality, begin to lessen.
- ❖ Place your blossom where the candle was, and take the extinguished candle with you as you walk out of the spiral.
- ❖ When everyone has completed their walk, you will have created a beautiful flower bedecked spiral of blossoms, Gaia's dreams made manifest. (If you are doing this alone, you will simply repeat the ritual as many times as it takes to replace all the candles with blossoms.)

- ❖ Spend time linking your experience with those who are honoring the Winter Solstice, and the gradual building of a spiral of inner Light in the southern hemisphere.

This will be a new and emergent experiment in creating a Gaian Festival of Wholeness and Light together.

Thank you for participating in any way you feel called to do so!

Freya, Lucinda, Ara and Linda