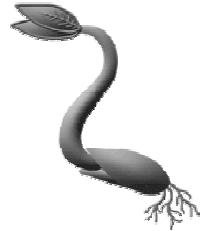


THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF ALL THINGS

The following is an excerpt from *SPRING! 12 Ways to Inaugurate the Season* by Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat. You can read the full article at http://www.spiritualityhealth.com/newsh/items/blank/item_4057.html



"Just as there are seasons in the world around us, so there are in our interior life," Teresa of Avila wisely observed. "We cannot expect it to be otherwise."

Spring is a season of renewal and rebirth. It's a time when buds become leaves and flowers, when healing rain washes city streets and falls like grace on parched country fields, when the hard ground beneath us softens to allow shoots of new life to emerge.

As outside, so inside. Spring is a time for cleaning out and making way for fresh possibilities and new commitments. It's a time to revive our senses and expand our horizons. It's a time to begin again.

With all that in mind, we have designed some spiritual exercises for your celebrations of the start of spring this week. Hopefully, they will help hasten an interior rejuvenation to match all the marvels going on around us."

1. START YOUR DAYS WITH REJUVENATING IMAGERY

In the morning before breakfast, do this imagery exercise for rejuvenation, overall health, healing, and energy. Called "Tree of Life," it was given to us by Fran Greenfield.

Close your eyes and breathe out slowly three times. See yourself walking along a path where ahead of you is a strong, tall tree. Go to this tree and embrace it, knowing this is the tree of life. Now stand beside the tree, leaning up against it. As you stand here, feel yourself becoming as one with the tree. Feel your toes curling down into the earth, drawing in its nutrients and strength. Feel your torso becoming as the trunk, and your arms reaching up through the branches. As you and the tree merge together completely, see and feel its sap rising and circulating throughout, imbuing you with strength, peace, and the power to heal. Know and feel how the tree's chlorophyll is giving you energy. Feel how it is to be the roots, the trunk, the branches, and the leaves of the tree. As the golden sun warms you and the fresh breeze stirs you, imagine yourself in full bloom. Feel and know how it is to be ageless — strong and full of life. See how you are connected above and below, to heaven and earth, to all that is, was, and that ever will be. . . . Breathe out one time, and slowly return now, feeling rejuvenated, awake, aware, and entirely yourself. Thank the tree for this experience. Then slowly open your eyes.

12. END YOUR DAYS WITH PRAYER

The Earth is always a good teacher — and especially in spring. End your days this season with this prayer from the Native American tradition.

Earth teach me stillness as the grasses are stilled with light. Earth teach me suffering as old stones suffer with memory. Earth teach me humility as blossoms are humble with beginning. Earth teach me caring as the mother who secures her young. Earth teach me courage as the tree which stands all alone. Earth teach me limitation as the ant which crawls on the ground. Earth teach me freedom as the eagle which soars in the sky. Earth teach me resignation as the leaves which die in the fall. Earth teach me regeneration as the seed which rises in the spring. Earth teach me to forget myself as melted snow forgets its life. Earth teach me to remember kindness as dry fields weep with rain. — Ute prayer

"Apprehend God in all things, for God is in all things." —Meister Eckhart