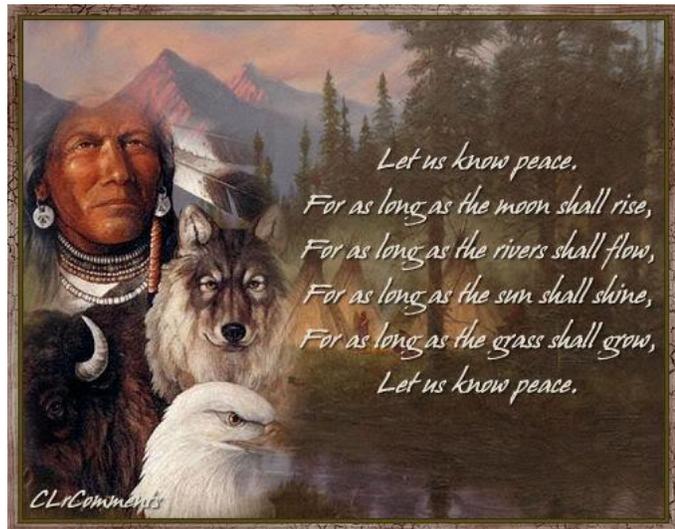


A New Year's Eve Ceremony of Release and Renewal

"For last year's words belong to last year's language and next year's words await another voice. And to make an end is to make a beginning."

~ TS Eliot



*Let us know peace,
For as long as the moon shall rise,
For as long as the rivers shall flow,
For as long as the sun shall shine,
For as long as the grass shall grow,
Let us know peace.*

On New Year's Eve, I invite you to set aside half an hour for this ceremony of closure and renewal. You can do it alone or with a partner, or friends and family. If possible, light a candle.

Put into writing a list of the important events of the year. Write the challenges you faced, the important realizations, the moments you regret. Read the list (to yourself or out loud). Then offer it to God, the Tao, the Universe . . . whatever works best for you . . . you can use the following words or your own: "I offer these thoughts and actions into the hands of grace. May all that is of benefit come to fruition. May all mistakes be dissolved. In the year to come, may my life be of benefit, may I know my own freedom. May I be loving. May I be loved." . . . Do this as a ceremony, and when you've made your offering, burn it if possible, or tear it into tiny pieces and bury it.

In this way, you offer up the karmas and events of the current year. Dissolving the year about to end, you are free to move forward into the year to come.

Next, make a list of your intentions for the upcoming year. Rather than making resolutions (which our tendency is to break) put into writing a list of what you would most like to bring forth in your life in the year to come. Then write your intentions

in the present tense, as though they are already happening: Here's an example: in this new year, I am living deeply in my true Self, living in continual recognition that the play of my life is the play of divine awareness and love. I am serving joyfully and in love, caring for my body, and growing more and more intimately connected to the sisters and brothers who are my companions on this journey of the awakening heart.

Whatever intentions you create, let them be filled with your wish for growth, for wisdom, for love. May your intimate relationships expand your heart. May your life be of benefit to everyone around you. May you let go of struggle, yet be willing to make the effort required to move forward on your journey. May insight fill you. May love be your polestar . . . and . . . may you be blessed in every moment of the holiday season, this beautiful year, and the year to come.

Peace . . . 