

WICCAN BELIEFS

Their beliefs include:

Wiccan Deities:

- 1) Beliefs differ: Most Wiccans believe that a creative force exists in the universe, which is sometimes called "The One" or "The All". Little can be known of this force.
- 2) Most regard the Goddess and the God as representing the female and male aspects of the All. These deities are not "out there somewhere," they are immanent in the world.
- 3) Many regard various pagan Gods and Goddesses (Pan, Athena, Diana, Brigit, Zeus, Odin, etc.) as representing various aspects of the God and Goddess. The term "Wicca" normally implies that the person's religion is based upon Celtic spiritual concepts, deities, and seasonal days of celebration. Some Wiccans include beliefs, practices and symbols from ancient Pagan religions (e.g. Egyptian, Greek, various mystery religions, Roman, Sumerian) or upon Aboriginal religions (Native American Spirituality, Shamanism).
- 4) Some Wiccans are actually agnostics, who take no position on the existence of a supreme being or beings. They look upon the Goddess and the God as archetypes, based on myth.
- 5) It cannot be stressed enough that Wiccans have no supernatural being in their pantheon of deities who resembles the Christian-Muslim Satan.

Respect for Nature:

- 1) Wicca is a natural religion, grounded in the earth. All living things (including stars, planets, humans, animals, plants, rocks) are regarded as having a spirit. Many Wiccan rituals deal with bringing harmony and healing to nature. Wiccans tend to share a great concern for the environment.
- 2) Gender equality: Wiccans celebrate the sexual polarity of nature. For example, the fertilizing rain is one manifestation of the male principle; the nurturing earth symbolizes the female. Females are respected as equal (and sometimes at a slightly higher rank) to males. A priestess is often the most senior person among coven -- a local group of Wiccans. They aim for a female-male balance in most of their covens (local groups), although men are typically in the minority.
- 3) Human sexuality: Sexuality is valued, and regarded as a gift of the Goddess and God, to be engaged in with joy and responsibility, and without manipulation. Wiccans generally accept the findings of human sexuality researchers that there are three normal, natural, and unchosen sexual orientations: heterosexuality, homosexuality and bisexuality. Some Wiccans celebrate "the Great Rite" which involves ritual sexual intercourse. However, it is consensually performed by a committed couple in private.
- 4) Afterlife: Wiccans have a wide range of beliefs. Some believe in ancient legends of a Summerland where souls go after death. Here, they meet with others who have gone before, review and integrate their previous lives on earth, and are eventually reincarnated into the body of a newborn. Some believe that after many such cycles -- perhaps some as female and others as male; some lives with a high standard of living and others in poverty; some in positions of power and others suffering oppression -- that the individual accumulates sufficient experience to go on to another level of existence about which we know nothing.
- 5) Some see an individual's personality, memory, abilities, talents, etc. as functions of the human brain, which degrades and disintegrates at death. They do not anticipate any form of continuity after death.
- 6) Other Wiccans anticipate continuity after death in some very narrow senses: That the molecules that go to make up our bodies may in turn be incorporated in other living entities;
- 7) That our influences on children, friends, and society in general will continue to have influences on the next generations.
- 8) Three-fold Law (a.k.a. the Law of Return) The law states that: "All good that a person does to another returns three fold in this life; harm is also returned three fold."

This belief strongly motivates each Wiccan to avoid attempting to dominate, manipulate, control, or harm another person.

The Wiccan Rede:

This is the main rule of behavior: "An it harm none, do what thou wilt."

"An" and "wilt" are old English words for "if" and "want to." This means that a person should feel free to do whatever they want to, as long as it does not harm themselves or anyone else. This and the three-fold law obviously prevent a Witch/Wiccan from doing harm to themselves or to others, or taking harmful drugs, etc. Thus, many activities that have been traditionally attributed to Wiccans, from the laying of curses to conducting love spells, are strictly forbidden to them.