

# Summer Magick

## A Summer Walk Into Healing, Celebration, and Renewal

**By Preston Vargas**

Summertime. It is the magick of outdoor rituals pulsing through the cool night air, the solidarity we show at Pagan Pride gatherings, and the laughter we share at potluck picnics. For each of us the season of sun conjures up rich images. However, nothing is as quintessential to summer as those long strolls on beautiful days. Still, as commonplace as a summer walk may seem, it can be a wonderful opportunity for healing, celebration, and renewal. A summer stroll can be a sacred experience that can move any of us into a mutually beneficial relationship with the world around us.

### EARTH-WALKING

“Earth-Walking” is experiencing a sacred dimension to what would otherwise be a simple walk. It is the practice outlined in Starhawk’s book, *The Earth Path*. Earth-Walking is a process of opening energetic and spiritual channels which allow one to enter into a relationship with a particular location and the entities that inhabit it. I find it similar to the processes of shape-shifting and aspecting. For me, Earth-Walking is perceiving my consciousness as the living consciousness of the planet.

While it would be wonderful

if I could say it is one of my daily practices, truthfully I do not Earth-Walk as often as I would like. However, I try to do it as often as I can. One recent time was a beautiful summer day on the northern California coast. That particular day I felt overwhelmingly compelled to go for a walk. In some respects I believe I was called to Earth-Walk. Following the call, I headed west toward the setting sun.

After about ten minutes of quiet walking, I reached Ocean Beach on the west end of San Francisco. It was a warm day and the tide was low. I kicked

off my flip-flops and walked lazily in the surf. As the sandy waves scrubbed between each of my toes I felt myself sinking into the rhythms of that “between” place where the sea meets the shore.

### HEALING

As I Earth-Walked, I meandered through the breaking waves and sea foam.

Occasionally I would bend and throw.

Bend and throw is a practice I have of trying to save stranded jellyfish. I cannot help it when I come across them lying there so helpless and pitiful. Once

out of the sea, their beauty is a little deflated, like an old “happy birthday” balloon that’s wrinkled and has barely enough helium to keep it from dragging on the floor.

I bend down and scoop them up quickly and heave them back into the sea. I do not believe many of them recover but I try nonetheless. Not surprisingly, I get stung when I engage in this rescue mission. My partner laughs at me every time he catches me doing the bend and throw. He often comments that the jellyfish are not very appreciative as evidence of their stinging me. However, I disagree. The jellyfish are most grateful. Especially since they know that I know that I am going to get stung. They are grateful that knowing this, someone tries to



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help them anyway. The jellyfish, if they could, might in gratitude stop stinging me. Yet they have not. I accept the nature of a jellyfish and don't blame a single one. I think it would be silly of me to feel otherwise.

However, on this day the jellyfish were few and my hands ended up just a tad tingly. I continued Earth-Walking north on the beach, scouting out for intact exoskeletons of deceased sand dollars. I've gotten into the habit of decorating my altar with those little star-discs treasures. However, I could not find any.

As I was walking, I noticed a sea worn plastic bag. Actually, I had first thought it was a jellyfish in distress. The bag seemed to be glaring at me. I would have felt guilty leaving it there. Ocean Beach was sharing a beautiful day with me. How dare I walk past this trash in my pursuit of treasures from the sea? Somehow, this plastic bag that had made its way here felt as if it were my responsibility.

With the plastic bag in tow I kept heading north. There I was Earth-Walking and ugh... more trash. Candy wrappers, cigarette butts, bits of plastic, Styrofoam, and all sorts of trash. As I went along, I just kept picking it up. I could not stop. Each time I noticed a piece of refuse I would rush over to it and scoop it up. It was the same excitement that I get when I find a sand dollar intact. I went on with my hunt with a smile and skip in my step. If I had not been so consumed with what I was doing I might have noticed tourists looking upon me with a bit of wonder about a crazy San Franciscan.

If I was attracting onlookers I did not care. I was completely enveloped in the deep healing process that was

going on. My Earth-Walking had helped me merge with the essence of Ocean Beach. Each wave that rolled into shore felt as if it were caressing Me. The sand drifting in sheets across the dunes were tickles upon my skin. I was Ocean Beach cleaning Ocean Beach. I was healing myself. As the process continued I felt increasingly whole, healthy, and content.

## CELEBRATION

When my bag was full I made my way east towards the street where I found a trash receptacle. I emptied my bag and headed back west, back to the surf to continue the healing process. As I was

Through my extended senses, the sunset felt sublime.

I had never known that humans were not the only beings who stopped and gathered together to share a beautiful sunset. Here was a flock of gulls who had gathered with a purpose. They had gathered to individually and communally celebrate the setting sun and in extension the sacred unfoldings of our cosmos. In fact, as I scanned the shoreline, almost all of the shore birds had gathered in groups staring in quiet celebration of the setting sun.

I sat down in the sand to share in this celebration. All at once, I was full of anticipation, longing, and fulfillment.

In my shifted state of being I was consciously engaged in this phenomenon in a manner that spanned through my extended senses, emotions, and intellect. I had undoubtedly seen beautiful sunsets in the past. Yet this particular sunset created a new feeling within me.

The gulls preened and gazed quickly back at the sun, making sure they would not miss a crucial moment. As I sat in my track pants and sweatshirt I felt underdressed. The gulls were carefully sifting sand from their feathers. They were smoothing over any ruffles in their form. There was a sense of pride to their preening. The birds would not have it said that they were unkempt at the setting of the sun. They wanted to present their best selves. It was as if they were welcoming back a long absent lover. I thought to myself, "here I am in sweats and the birds are dressed in their Sunday best." As I contemplated the idea of the birds dressed in their "Sunday best," I suddenly remembered cosmologist

Brian Swimme saying something to the effect that every species is a saint.

It then became immediately apparent to me. I had wandered into a community of winged saints. Ocean Beach in its gratitude for healing had initiated me into a celebration that the sainted shore birds have been



*"Rotunda of the Sea," sculptures by Guadalupe artist Alejandro Colunga, on the boardwalk in Puerto Vallarta.*

stepping through the soft sand about midway down the beach I was stopped in my tracks. To my left was a flock of gulls. They were a gray color with bright brick red beaks. They were doing the strangest thing. They were all quietly staring off in one direction. West. I decided to attend to what the gulls had noticed. As I slowly turned my head west I was met with an amazing sunset.

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participating in for thousands, maybe millions, of years.

The shore birds were gathered in anticipation, longing, and erotic joy. I was swept up in their bliss as they officiated and partook in the cosmic consumption of the sun and the sea. The sun burned with longing for the cool embrace of the sea. The sea in turn, chilled and lonely, craved the warmth of the plunging sun. They would find in each other pleasure and deep communion.

I sat in celebration with the gulls and experienced the erotic fulfillment that sunset brings, and the hopeful joy that tomorrow the unfoldings of the universe will greet me in unimaginable ways. We celebrated as the sun slipped behind the thin veil of mist and finally entered into the sea.

As I walked home in the afterglow, and the gulls flew off to their perches, I was overcome with gratitude. I was grateful not for any trinket that I could

carry back home but for a greater treasure. I had experienced something profound, something that before reintegrating into the rhythms of nature I might never have known. I had been gifted with a priceless treasure. It is a treasure that lingers on the altar of my soul.

## RENEWAL

It is still difficult for me to remain grounded in nature as I continue with all of my everyday experiences. The dominating paradigm of mainstream society is struggling to retain a mechanistic and nihilistic worldview. Not very long ago, the system had no need to struggle. Yet now the system is in its death throes. Our environmental, economic, population, health, political, spiritual, and social crises are evidence that the foundations of the system have cracked and the tower is poised to fall. Springing up through the cracks are the suggestions of new modes of being.

These suggestions of new modes of being are strengthened by grounding in the rhythms of nature.

Each of these experiences strengthens the field of a new mode of being. That is one of the residual effects of practices such as Earth-Walking. Each succeeding experience can occur with less hindrance and deeper intensity. Each time I Earth-Walk, the process becomes more fluid and the phenomenon intensifies. This is able to occur because a field of experience is being created. A path between the veils is becoming wider and the veil itself becomes slightly thinner. As these new modes of being are presented to us, the opportunities to exist in mutually beneficial relationships to the whole are multiplied. Witnessing how "small" practices can subtly influence the course of our future fills me with awe and hope. I am in awe of the amazing power of our world and I am hopeful that we are even now transitioning into a mode of being that is mutually beneficial to all.

*Witch and Gatekeeper Preston lives out his soulgifts to restore co-creative relationships by dancing the interwoven stories of the Cosmos.*



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