

## Helpful Open Ritual Hints:

Merry Meet,

There have been numerous questions asked about Public Rituals and how one should act and what one should bring, etc. Here are a few guidelines that will help:

**Time & Place** - Try to be on time or a little early to a Ritual. It's a simple courtesy. Instructions are usually given before a Ritual starts and it gives you some time to socialize. If something comes up and you are late, enter quietly and approach the northeast side of the Circle. Most of the time there will be a person available to 'cut' you in.

This varies depending on the Ritual involved and the person(s) doing the Ritual. Never just walk into or through a Circle.

**Food/Drink** - There is usually a potluck or social time after most Rituals (sometimes it is part of the Celebration).

It is customary to bring something to share (fingerfood, etc.). If you don't remember or can't afford to, it's OK, don't sweat it. It is also customary to bring your own utensils, glasses and plates. This helps to cut down on trash and is more environmentally sound.

**Sharing** - This is the part of Ritual where the food/drink is passed around the Circle to symbolize the shared meal and our connectedness with the Earth. Unfortunately, everyone is not always in perfect health. Some will have colds, etc. and all the icky symptoms too (e.g. colds sores, etc.). If you are not healthy, please do not help spread the contagion. When the Chalice/Cup is passed to you, instead of drinking from it, bow your head in respect and pass it on.

**Robes, etc.** - There have been many questions about this subject. If you wish to wear a robe or special outfit, then do so. If you are unsure about the dress (or lack of) then ask one of the organizers. Just try not to change in the middle of an invocation. Always dress for the weather.

**Children in Circle** - Many people have asked if it is OK to bring children along. This is often a point of contention in many communities. There are the debates of Celebration vs. Magick, concentration vs. disquiet, sanctity vs. revelry, etc. Let's face it: screaming children and yelling parents are not conducive to worthwhile Ritual.

### Here is a simple rule of thumb:

**\*\* If a child is mature enough to participate in Ritual without disturbing the flow then let them \*\*.**

For those parents who do not believe their child or children have reached that maturity, there are the following possible options:

- 1) don't bring the child, hire a baby-sitter.
- 2) have on-site care available at Public Rituals.
- 3) stay home and do your own Ritual.

The second option is the best overall. Community is important to young and old alike.

The next generation is vital if Paganism (in all its forms) is to survive and flourish. Investment of more time and effort is needed in teaching those who will succeed us. ESP strives to have child

care at rituals. Those who are willing should step forward and volunteer for our pool of baby/child-sitters for Public Rituals.

To wind up, just a few concepts about Ritual: Rituals are sacred celebrations. A time to remember, reflect, honor Deity, and perform Magick. Ritual should be approached with a certain devoutness & reverence. There should be a connectedness between those participating and the Universe around them. **Circle is for worship**, not a place for malice or rumor. Dislikes, fights and disagreements, even enmity should be set aside before entering sacred space. It should be approached with an open heart and mind- "In Perfect Love and Perfect Trust".

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