

A dark, atmospheric photograph of a forest. The trees are tall and thin, with light-colored bark, possibly birch. The ground is covered in moss and fallen branches. The lighting is low, creating a sense of mystery and darkness. The overall mood is somber and quiet.

# Samhain

EMBRACE THE DARKNESS & REST

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PHOTO P 2 OCH BACK: DANIEL STRANDROTH

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ILLUSTRATIONS: ANNA LINDER

# Guided by the rhythm of nature

I firmly believe that we need to find a rhythm to life that allows for more than efficiency, consumption and productivity. A rhythm where expansion, transformation, reflection and rest stop being buzz words and becomes part of our life.

I think that nature and the seasonal changes serve as the best guide. With more knowledge about and staying closer to Mother Earth and the

rhythm of nature, I am convinced that we can create sustainable lifestyles for ourselves and the planet.

The changing seasons and shifts in nature affect us all but in different ways. And just like the seasons, our needs change. With this guide, I hope you can begin to find your seasonal rhythm.



*Anna Linder*



# The wheel of the year

Winter, spring, summer and fall – seasons we all know but not always think of as a guide that can create rhythm, energy and a balance to life.

If we add four crosspoints between the solstices and equinoxes, we get the Wheel of the Year – eight opportunities to pay attention to the changes of the seasons, the rhythm and shifts in nature and a beginning to feel them within.

## NORTHERN HEMISPHERE

<b>SAMHAIN</b>	October 31–November 1
<b>WINTER SOLSTICE   YULE</b>	December 21/22
<b>IMBOLC</b>	February 2
<b>SPRING EQUINOX   OSTARA</b>	March 19/22
<b>BELTANE</b>	May 1
<b>SUMMER SOLSTICE   LITHA</b>	June 20/22
<b>LAMMAS</b>	August 1
<b>AUTUMNAL EQUINOX   MABON</b>	September 22/23

## SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE

<b>SAMHAIN</b>	April 30– May 1
<b>WINTER SOLSTICE   YULE</b>	June 20/21
<b>IMBOLC</b>	August 1
<b>SPRING EQUINOX   OSTARA</b>	September 21/22
<b>BELTANE</b>	November 1
<b>SUMMER SOLSTICE   LITHA</b>	December 20/23
<b>LAMMAS</b>	February 1/2
<b>AUTUMN EQUINOX   MABON</b>	March 20/21

**NORTHERN HEMISPHER**  
**SOUTHERN HEMISPHER**

October 31  
April 30

SAMHAIN

**SAMHAIN SEASON**

# Embrace the darkness & rest

The days are getting shorter, the darkness becomes deeper. Looking to nature, we notice that the trees have let their leaves fall and now provide the earth with a protective shield. Frost bites the vegetation, and the first snowfall is not far away.

Nature rests, the sap returns to its roots to gather strength, and just like nature, we humans likewise need a period for rest, review, reflect and closure. And magick.

**SAMHAIN OCT 31 - NOV 1 | APRIL 30 - MAY 1**

This time of the year the veil between our world and the world of the dead is at its thinnest. It's a time to honour and celebrate our ancestors.

Samhain is also the beginning of the new year for witches and pagans. We end the harvest seasons, say goodbye to the sun and embrace the darkness.

**HONOUR & CELEBRATE YOUR ANCESTORS**

Add an extra seat when you set the table on October 31st and let one of your ancestors join you at the table.

Visit or invite one of your older living relatives and let them speak about their lives, memories and tell the story about your family.

**EMBRACE THE DARKNESS**

Spend time in nature at night. Or let the darkness surround you at home. And sit *with* the darkness.

What happens within you? With your thoughts? Do you want to run away, go deeper? What do you feel? How does your body react?

A photograph of a bare tree in a field with a large circular light effect on the right side. The text is overlaid on the image.

Honour,  
celebrate  
& embrace  
darkness



# Rest

We are in between autumnal equinox and winter solstice, the darkest time of the year. Nature is resting, the animals prepare for hibernation - what do you do?

Do you push through at the same pace and do whatever it takes to stay on top of "everything"? How long is your to-do list, and how many "I'm just going to" do you need to complete before you're done? When will you get time to rest?

Sleeping through this time of the year is probably not an option (although the thought may be tempting), but how can you provide yourself with some rest?

Rest can be slowing down, creating space in your calendar, allowing yourself to do things at a slower pace, and being present in the moment with family or friends.

## PERSONALLY

*This time of the year I make sure not to add anything to my to-do list. I finish things I started during the year and delete the things that I never seem to get to.*

*I pay attention to self care, my yoga practise becomes more yin-focused and power walks turns into wander walks.*



**WHAT WOULD YOU NEED RIGHT NOW PHYSICALLY, MENTALLY, AND SPIRITUALLY?**

**IS REST AND RECOVERY SOMETHING THAT FEELS UNREACHABLE RIGHT NOW? WHY?**



# Explore

What expression has nature, where you live, this time of the year?

You don't need to have access to deep forests, unbroken views or even a garden to explore the rhythm of nature. Just step outside and notice how the air feels against your skin, in your nostrils and how it affects you.

Add a tree, some shrubs or a small park that you see more or less on a daily basis and pay attention to the shifts and changes.

Add all the senses, the scent of the earth, the colours of the foliage and how the ground feels under your feet.

What signals do you get? How does the energy feel? And does it affect you?

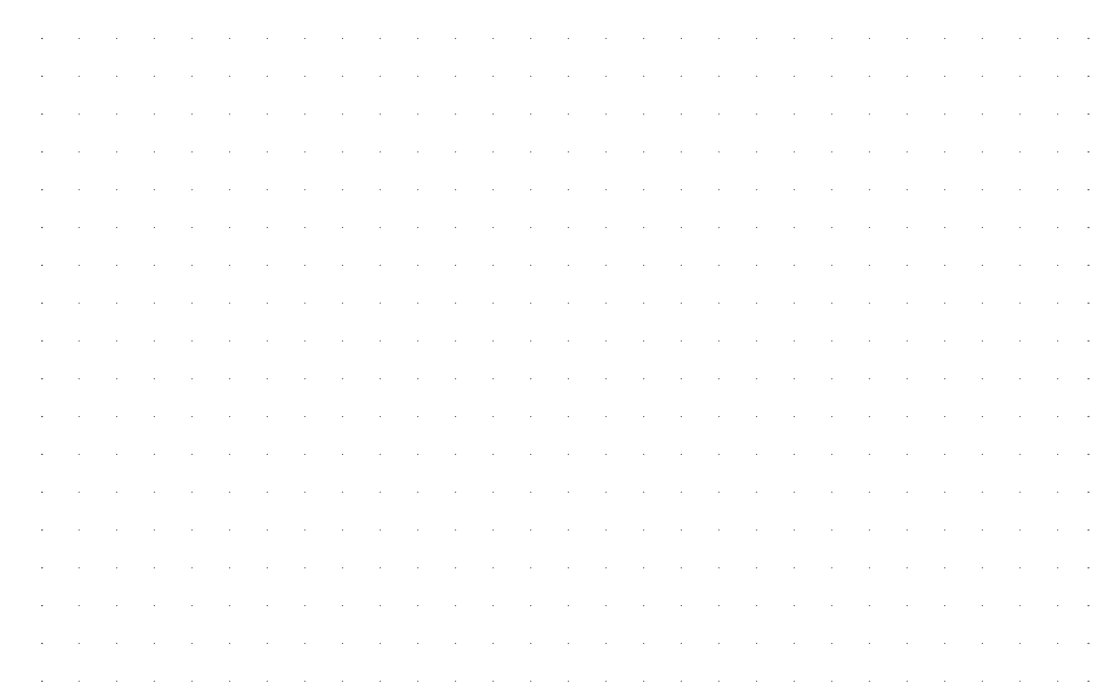
## PERSONALLY

*I thrive in the darkness, with the grey overcast days and the high air on a clear morning. The calm of nature gives me a sense of inner peace, and I can relax in a way that I find difficult during any other season.*

*This is when I make time to reconnect with myself and my body and create a clear path for my mind.*

**THE CHANGING SEASONS AND SHIFTS IN NATURE AFFECT US ALL BUT IN DIFFERENT WAYS.**

**HOW DO YOU EXPERIENCE THIS TIME OF THE YEAR WHEN THE DAYS GET SHORTER AND  
THE DARKNESS SURROUNDS US? HOW DO YOU ACT AND REACT?**



**DEFY THE WEATHER.**

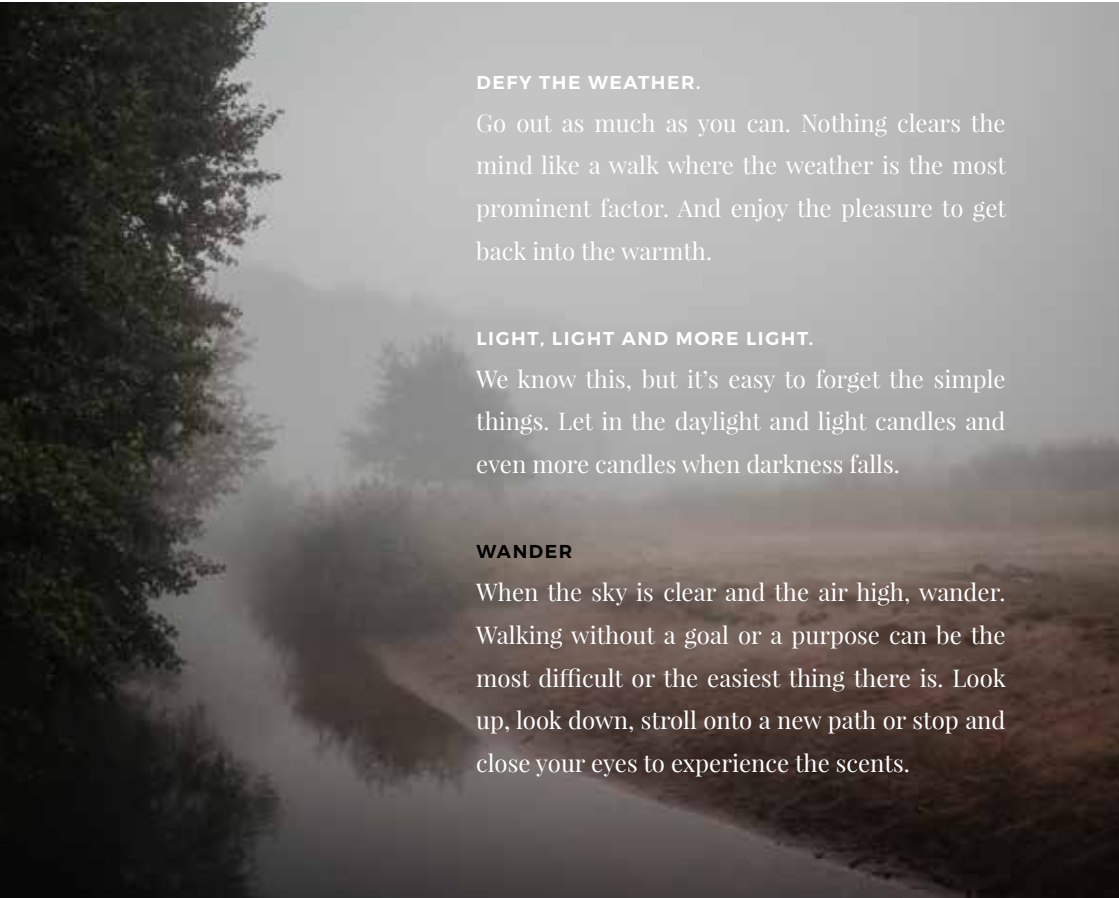
Go out as much as you can. Nothing clears the mind like a walk where the weather is the most prominent factor. And enjoy the pleasure to get back into the warmth.

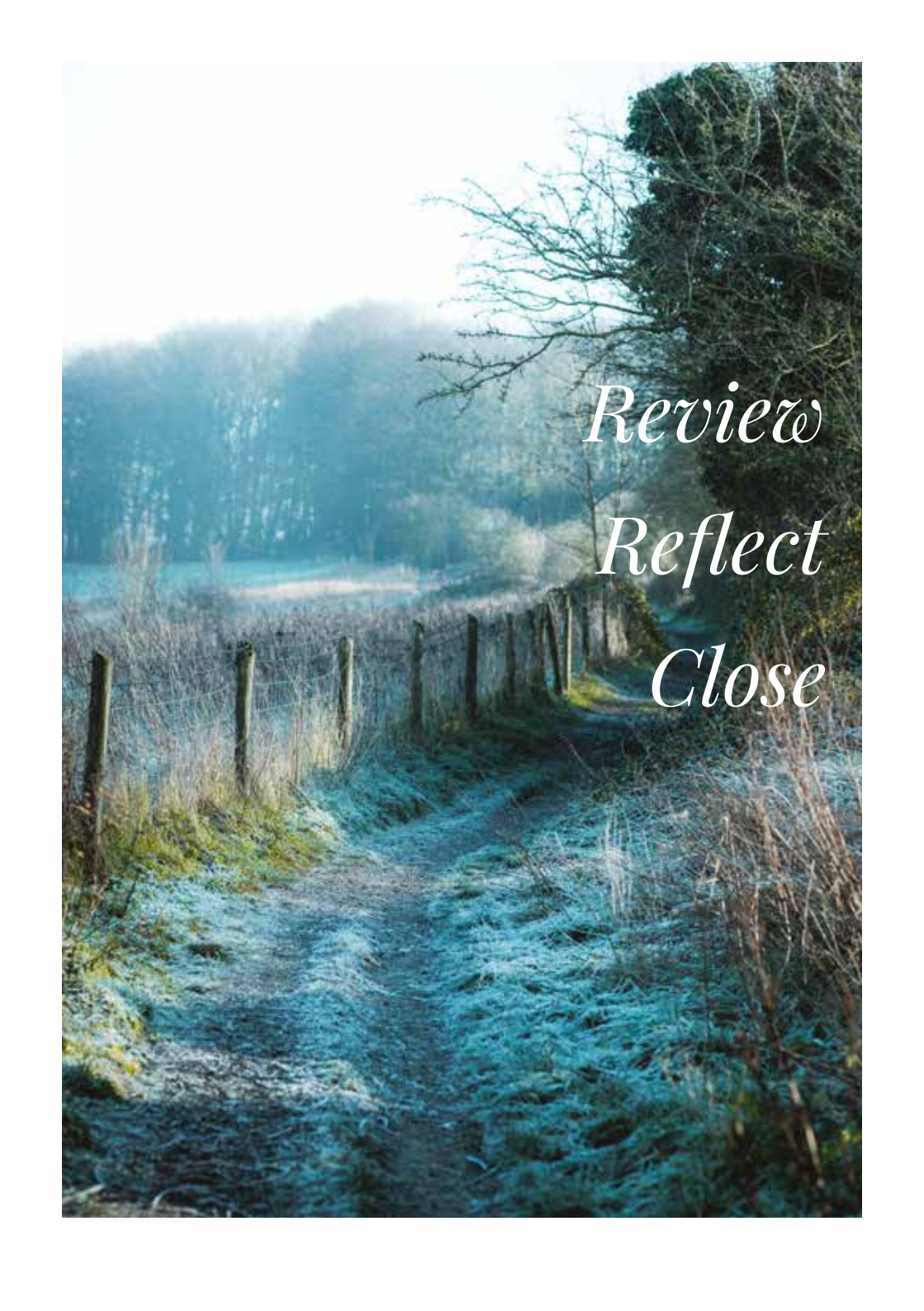
**LIGHT, LIGHT AND MORE LIGHT.**

We know this, but it's easy to forget the simple things. Let in the daylight and light candles and even more candles when darkness falls.

**WANDER**

When the sky is clear and the air high, wander. Walking without a goal or a purpose can be the most difficult or the easiest thing there is. Look up, look down, stroll onto a new path or stop and close your eyes to experience the scents.



A misty, rural landscape with a dirt path leading through a field. A wooden fence runs along the left side of the path. The background is filled with trees and a soft, hazy light. The text "Review", "Reflect", and "Close" is overlaid on the right side of the image in a white, cursive font.

*Review*  
*Reflect*  
*Close*

### **REVIEW, REFLECT & CLOSURE**

Samhain is a period of death and rebirth, closure and review, reflection and rest. A time to look back at the year that has passed from different perspectives and leave behind what no longer serves us.

There is no one right way to do this and if you have your own process, stay with it.

If not, the following pages invite you to explore, ponder and discern. Putting words to what is going on in your head is one way to explore – expressing yourself with colours and shapes is another. Some questions might need to be processed in your mind for a while.

Create your way.

Do it at your pace.

And only if you want to.

**WHAT ARE YOUR STRONGEST MEMORIES OF THIS YEAR?**

**HOW DID THAT AFFECT YOU?**

**WHO HAS BEEN IMPORTANT TO YOU DURING THE YEAR?**

**WHAT DID THEY MAKE YOU FEEL / DO AND HOW DID THAT SUPPORT YOU?**

*Review*



**HOW HAVE YOU CHANGED DURING THE YEAR?**

**WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE LEARNED ABOUT YOURSELF?**

*Review*

**I HAVE EXPLORED**

**I HAVE EMBRACED**

*Reflect*

**I HAVE LEFT BEHIND**

**I HAVE LEARNT TO SAY NO TO**

*Reflect*

**WHAT THOUGHTS, PATTERNS, RELATIONSHIPS, BELIEFS AND PROJECTS IS IT TIME TO  
ABANDON OR VIEW AS COMPLETE?**

*Close*

**WHAT DO YOU WANT TO STOP SAYING ABOUT AND TO YOURSELF?**

*Close*



Magick



### **CLOSURE**

To mark an ending it can feel good to physically get rid of what you no longer want to carry with you.

On a piece of paper, write, draw or create something that represents what you want to let go of or leave behind.

Burning (in a safe way) or burying the words, the drawing or the creation are two ways to mark symbolic endings - but there are more ways.

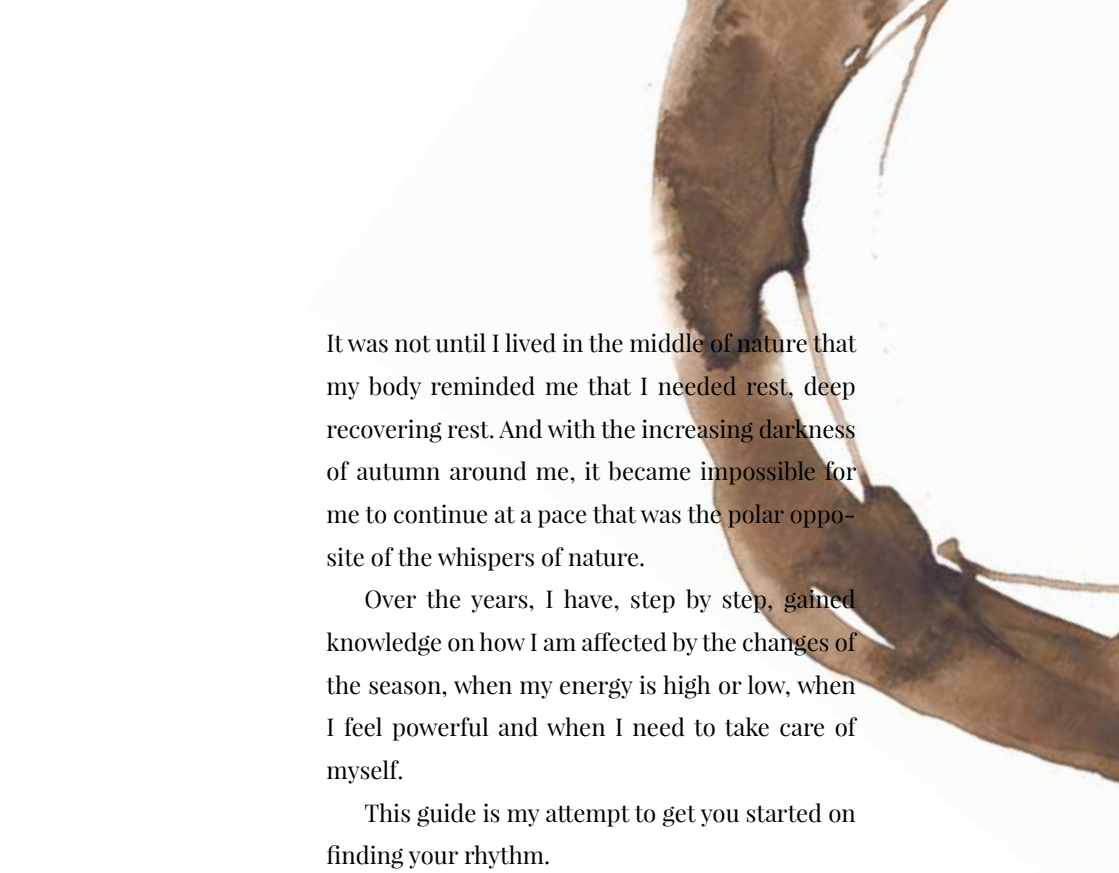
Listen to your intuition and instinct, and you will know what you need to do.

### **BEGINNING**

Let tarot or oracle cards guide you on the upcoming Wheel of the Year. Draw eight cards - one for each season and sabbat in the Wheel of the Year.

### **THE SPIRAL**

Gather material from nature and create a spiral. Imagine yourself at the centre, moving outwards, towards the light, and returning back into the darkness at the centre of the spiral. Do you feel drawn or more at home at a specific stage of the spiralling?



It was not until I lived in the middle of nature that my body reminded me that I needed rest, deep recovering rest. And with the increasing darkness of autumn around me, it became impossible for me to continue at a pace that was the polar opposite of the whispers of nature.

Over the years, I have, step by step, gained knowledge on how I am affected by the changes of the season, when my energy is high or low, when I feel powerful and when I need to take care of myself.

This guide is my attempt to get you started on finding your rhythm.



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