

Research Space

Journal article

Flow, liminality, and eudaimonia: Pagan ritual practice as a gateway to a life with meaning

Sonnex, C., Roe, C. and Roxburgh, E.

This is the accepted version of:

Sonnex C, Roe CA, Roxburgh EC. Flow, Liminality, and Eudaimonia: Pagan Ritual Practice as a Gateway to a Life With Meaning. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*. 2022;62(2):233-256. doi:10.1177/0022167820927577

Journal of Humanistic Psychology

FLOW, LIMINALITY, AND EUDAIMONIA: PAGAN RITUAL PRACTICE AS A GATEWAY TO A LIFE WITH MEANING

Journal:	<i>Journal of Humanistic Psychology</i>
Manuscript ID	JHP-2019-Oct-6710.R2
Manuscript Type:	Special Issue: Anomalous Lifeworlds: Mysticism, Magic and Expanded Consciousness
Keyword:	meaning in life, paranormal, personal growth, psychology of religion, religion, self-acceptance, spirituality, transpersonal psychology, well-being

SCHOLARONE™
Manuscripts

Abstract

Paganism is a term applied to a number of nature religions based on traditional indigenous practices. Paganism is practiced through rituals designed to facilitate a flow state that allows practitioners to use magic to achieve their aims. Since the introduction of Wicca to mainstream society in the 1950s, many other Pagan traditions have developed. Similarly, the number of people identifying as Pagan has also increased; in 2011 the number of people identifying as Pagan in the UK census reached 80,153. Despite this growth, Paganism is a topic that is under researched in Psychology.

This paper uses Ryff's theory of Psychological well-being as a frame work through which to explore the ways in which Paganism may be particularly conducive to eudemonic well-being as a result of the flow experiences inherent in its practice. This theory posits six key dimensions of eudaimonia; personal growth, self-acceptance, positive relation with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, and purpose in life. The ways in which each of these dimensions is elicited through Paganism is elucidated.

Introduction

Paganism is used as an umbrella term for a number of different nature-based religions/spiritualities that are inspired by the native pre-Christian traditions of (mainly) Europe (Clifton & Harvey, 2004, Jones, 1998, York 1995). Paganism is a burgeoning belief system; the UK census shows that the number of people who labelled their religion as 'Pagan' almost doubled from 42,262 in 2001 to 80,153 in 2011 (Office for National Statistics, 2001, 2012). Pagan understandings of divinity vary, but tend to be animistic, pantheistic, and polytheistic "in recognising a plurality of divine beings which may or may not be reducible to an underlying One, or Two, or Three, etc." (Jones, 1996, p. 34). This plurality of divinity is most commonly seen as a complementarity of Goddess and God. Animism and pantheism are exemplified by the range of other entities that feature as part of Pagan practices, such as the spirits of the elements (Earth, Air, Fire, Water). In this paper we will describe how Paganism involves forms of magical practice that are intended to enable the adherent to interact with the mystical world that these entities inhabit. This is enacted through ritual workings¹ either individually (known as solitary practice) or as part of a group (sometimes referred to as a coven). Pagan rituals can serve a number of purposes, they are "performed to celebrate the seasons, honour the deities, attune with nature, attain self-realisation, induct participants into the mysteries, and for magical and healing purposes" (Hume, 1998). The design and performance of Pagan ritual is a creative enterprise where practitioners express their aims through symbolism (Butler, 2004; Hume, 1998; Roundtree, 2006).

The structure of Pagan practice is similar to Van Gennep's tripartite model of ritual (Butler, 2004; Magliocco, 1996), consisting of the stages shown in Figure 1:

Fig 1 about here

The separation from daily life is most clearly embodied in the casting of a magic circle — the sacred space that Pagans create in which to conduct their rituals. Unlike many other religions, Paganism has no dedicated places of worship that adherents attend; instead they create their sacred spaces each time they wish to practice in a process called "casting the circle". This entails demarcating the

¹ Pagan practice involves rituals that utilise magic; those done to mark the seasons are referred to as rituals, those done to bring about a specific aim, tend to be referred to as "spells". However, the distinction between a spell and a ritual can sometimes be blurred since they tend to follow the same pattern, so that the term "working" is often used to refer to them collectively. To reflect this, the terms "ritual", "working", "magic", and "spells" will be employed interchangeably in this paper.

1
2
3 boundary of the circle (using physical markers such as salt, rocks, or candles) and through the use of
4 magical tools such as a magic wand or athame (ritual knife) to establish the boundaries by
5 manipulating subtle energies and then consecrating the space by invoking entities such as the
6 elemental spirits and deities of choice, inviting them into the circle to bless it by their presence and
7 lend their energy to the workings within it (Magliocco, 1996). It is here that the first elements of
8 liminality in Paganism become evident. The term "liminal" comes from the Latin "limen" meaning
9 threshold (Reber, 1985, p. 404). A liminal space therefore is one that exists at the interface of two
10 others; this threshold can be literal (for example, a border between countries) or figurative (for
11 example, the hypnagogic state of consciousness, between wakefulness and sleep). Circles are most
12 often created in the practitioner's house so as to establish a boundary between the everyday,
13 profane world that surrounds them and a space within which they can interact with the sacred. The
14 practitioner works with otherworldly entities and magic in a space that has been sanctified and
15 separated from the mundane world yet is located very visibly within it. The notion that the circle
16 separates one from the real world is common within Pagan introductory texts, and the magic circle is
17 often described as existing "between the worlds" (Adler, 1986, p. 109; Green, 1991, p. 59; Orion,
18 1995, p. 32; Starhawk, 1989, p. 72). The concept of liminality is clearly an important aspect of the
19 separation element of ritual.

20
21
22
23
24 The testing phase in Neo-Pagan workings refers to the ritual that occurs within the sacred circle. It is
25 referred to as a "testing" because, as Magliocco (1996, p. 102) explains, this process "requires each
26 participant's undivided attention and tests the strength of the circle". As each Pagan ritual differs
27 according to its purpose, it is difficult here to outline exactly what ritual entails, though in general
28 terms it involves "raising" (i.e., creating) energy, imbuing it with a purpose and directing that energy
29 towards a suitable target (Adler, 1986; Cunningham, 2003; Magliocco, 2004; Sonnex, 2017). Rituals
30 to celebrate the Sabbats (holy days of astronomical or agricultural importance such as solstices,
31 equinoxes, harvests) often reflect the period of the year in which they are being celebrated; for
32 instance, Beltane (April 30th in the Northern Hemisphere and October 31st in the Southern
33 Hemisphere) marks the start of summer, when nature is coming into full bloom, and so rituals to
34 mark this day often involve dramatic representations of fertility and fecundity such as maypole
35 dances and weaving (Magliocco, 2004), and energy raised during these rites will be directed towards
36 growth and abundance. Bespoke spells may be less elaborate but still use metaphor; for example,
37 simple candle magic often involves inscribing an appropriately coloured candle (such as pink for
38 love) with a symbol representing the desired aim (such as a love heart) and burning it whilst
39 visualising the desired outcome. The energy raised and programmed through this visualisation is
40 considered to be 'sent' when the candle is extinguished.

41
42
43
44
45 Some scholars consider Pagan ritual to be a form of folk art, likened particularly to theatre by virtue
46 of the performative nature of ritual, the use of props (i.e. paraphernalia such as wands, candles,
47 incense, and costume in the form of ritual dress), and staging in the form of the creation of the
48 magic circle (cf., Hume, 1998; Magliocco, 1996). Butler (2004, p. 110) explains that "the 'audience'
49 for neo-pagan performance included the earthly participants of the ritual itself, and also, perhaps,
50 the unseen entities believed to be present during the performance". Like traditional theatre, the use
51 of costume, sets and props is designed to create a liminal atmosphere, to distinguish events from
52 everyday reality, to spark the imagination of participants, and to fully immerse them in the world
53 created 'on the stage'.

54
55
56
57 However, unlike theatre, Pagan ritual performance is deeply infused with symbolism and meaning
58 (Butler, 2004; Hume, 1998; Magliocco, 1996; Rountree, 2006). Pagans use real objects as symbolic
59 representations of the intentions of the spell for multiple reasons. Firstly, they act as mnemonic
60

1
2
3 devices, providing a tangible connection to the intentions, such as a toy eyeball being used to
4 represent a real eye in healing spells focused on this organ (Sonnex, 2017, p. 176). Secondly, some
5 objects are believed to have magical correspondences or energetic kinships that help to boost the
6 energy created by the practitioner, thus aiding in the spell work. Symbols also contribute to the
7 liminal atmosphere of a working, especially when they engage the senses such as music, chanting, or
8 incense. A number of authors have argued that such symbolic representations serve both esoteric
9 and practical purposes in spell work (Adler, 1986; Luhrmann, 1989; Magliocco, 2004). Pagan author
10 Starhawk (1989) explains that the symbolic aspects of ritual are intended to facilitate
11 communication with the unconscious, "arousing the emotions as well as the intellect" (p. 124).
12 Similarly, noted Pagan practitioners Janet and Stewart Farrar (1992) explain the use of ritual and
13 representations as a means of engaging with multiple levels of reality that each understand different
14 "languages" ranging from words and logic in the lower levels to symbols, images and emotions in the
15 higher levels. By using symbols in this way, spellcasting becomes a more immersive, liminal
16 experience that engrosses every aspect of the mind.
17
18
19

20
21 The final stage of the tripartite model of ritual involves the reintegration into society, and occurs
22 when the ritual comes to an end. At this point practitioners will "ground" the energy that they have
23 raised during ritual and then close (i.e., dismantle) the sacred circle. Grounding of energy tends to
24 occur in two ways. One is through visualisation, usually imagining roots growing from one's feet into
25 the earth, allowing the excess energy to flow through the roots and out of the body (much like
26 earthing electricity). The other is through the consumption of blessed food and drink (usually
27 referred to as 'cakes and wine') which is believed to help in returning to an ordinary state of
28 consciousness by bringing awareness back to the body, and to the mundane world. The process for
29 dismantling the circle is the reverse of the process for casting it, the entities that were invoked are
30 thanked for their presence and bade farewell, the energetic boundaries are dissolved through
31 visualisation, and the physical circle is packed away. These acts indicate the end of the ritual and a
32 return to the mundane world (Butler, 2004; Magliocco, 1996).
33
34
35

36 Liminality is believed to be necessary for workings because the manipulation of energy that
37 comprises magic is not possible in an ordinary state of consciousness, and creating a feeling of
38 liminality facilitates the shift in consciousness required. Adler (1986), Orion (1995), and Starhawk
39 (1986) all conceive of this altered state of consciousness (ASC) as a change in perception, from
40 profane to sacred, from narrow and limited to holistic and expansive. Researchers exploring the
41 phenomenology of ritual practices (e.g., Ezzy, 2014; Shadrack, Sonnex, & Roe, 2019; Sonnex, 2017)
42 equate this ASC with Csikszentmihalyi's Flow experience, which is described as "the holistic
43 experience that people feel when they act with total involvement" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, p. 36)
44 and is considered a liminal experience (Turner, 1983). The phenomenology of ritual that Pagan
45 practitioners report shares many characteristics with the phenomenology of flow. Sonnex (2017, pp.
46 169-170) reports that this was a defining feature of ritual phenomenology discussed by
47 interviewees, with one participant stating "[people] use ritual because it makes it easier to [...] focus
48 on the intent". Practitioners also discussed the merging of action and awareness that characterises
49 the flow state; as another participant explained "the [spells] that do work seem effortless" (p. 169).
50 Luhrmann (1989, p. 134) provides an account of Pagan ritual phenomenology that very clearly
51 demonstrates the parallels between the two states;
52
53
54
55

56 One officer [...] said she is 'not there' when the ritual is good: she becomes a 'channel' for
57 the forces. For William [...] the difference between powerful and powerless ritual was
58 whether he was 'doing' or 'being done'. When he was 'doing', the ritual hadn't taken over. It
59 was 'empty'. When the rite was good, it felt as if something was acting through him and that
60

1
2
3 he himself was absent. In such rituals his normal sense of space and time alters, and he
4 knows that the only things of consequence lie within the confines of the rite. A witchcraft
5 priest told me that 'when it [the ritual] works, then my personality – me, Paul – steps aside,
6 and someone else takes over.
7

8
9 Lurhmann's participants describe experiences that are indicative of flow; awareness and action
10 merge as people feel "taken over" by the ritual, focus is limited to the events in the circle, there is a
11 distortion in their temporal and spatial awareness, and they experience a loss of reflective self-
12 consciousness. Bloch (2000) explains that discussions of flow in academic literature tend to take one
13 of two approaches: seeing flow as boundary transcending; or seeing flow as quality of life. The
14 liminal nature of Pagan ritual suggests that practitioners' flow experiences would fit into
15 understandings of it as boundary transcending. In this paper we will argue that the liminal,
16 transcendent, flow experiences within Pagan ritual also fit into understandings of flow as quality of
17 life, promoting feelings of well-being.
18
19

20 21 22 **Eudaimonia**

23
24 Ezy (2014, p. 16) proposes that these liminal, ritual flow experiences allow one to discover a life
25 with 'soul'; that is, "a life that is experienced as worthwhile, and performed with dignity and
26 respect". This definition shares many similarities to Eudaimonia, a term that comes from Aristotle's
27 *Nicomachean Ethics* and refers to living in accordance with one's *daimon* – one's full potential or
28 true self (Ryff & Singer, 2008; Waterman, 1993). The eudemonic approach therefore views well-
29 being as being akin to self-actualisation and fulfilling one's potential, in contrast to the hedonic
30 approach, which considers well-being to be the presence of positive affect and the absence of
31 negative affect (Ryan, Huta, & Deci, 2008). Thus, whereas hedonic well-being is concerned with the
32 outcomes of actions, eudemonic well-being is concerned with the processes; that is, the question
33 becomes 'are we living well?' rather than 'are we feeling good?' (Ryan & Deci, 2001). It is clear that
34 this approach to well-being has much in common with Humanistic theories of optimal functioning.
35
36

37
38 There are three key theories of Eudaimonia: Waterman's (1990, 1993) theory of Personal
39 Expressiveness, Ryan, Huta, and Deci's (2008b) Self Determination theory, and Ryff's (1989) theory
40 of Psychological well-being (PWB). This paper will focus on eudaimonia as PWB because it has a
41 strong theoretical grounding, and accommodates a diverse range of existing theories from areas
42 such as life-span development, humanistic psychology, existential psychology, clinical psychology
43 and utilitarian philosophy (Ryff & Singer, 2008). The result is a comprehensive theory that posits
44 Eudaimonia as being comprised of six core dimensions:
45

- 46
- 47 • Personal growth
- 48 • Self-acceptance
- 49 • Positive relation with others
- 50 • Autonomy
- 51 • Environmental mastery
- 52 • Purpose in life
- 53
- 54

55
56 The link between religiosity/spirituality and eudaimonia has been suggested previously (e.g.,
57 Dierendonck & Mohan, 2006; Pargament, Wong, & Exline, 2016). However, this research has not
58 considered Pagan practices. In the remainder of this paper we will consider the ways in which Pagan
59 practice might engender eudaimonia by reflecting on the six dimensions proposed by Ryff (1989).
60

Personal Growth

The first PWB dimension to consider is Personal growth, since this is the dimension that most closely resembles eudaimonia as described by Aristotle (cf. Ryff & Singer, 2008), and is inspired by humanistic theories such as Maslow's self-actualisation and Rogers' fully functioning person, and life-span theories such as Jung's concept of individuation (Deci & Ryan, 2008a). Ryff and Singer (2008) describe it as "dynamic, involving a continual process of developing one's potential... and becoming, rather than achieving a fixed state wherein all problems are solved" (p. 21).

A popular definition of magic in Paganism is provided by (in)famous occultist Aleister Crowley as "the Science and Art of causing change to occur in conformity with Will" (Harvey, 1997; Reid, 1996; Seymour, 2005). Ruickbie (2011) explains that for Crowley 'Will' does not simply refer to that which we desire; rather, it is the 'True Will', which is more akin to the concept of 'true self'. Thus, magic becomes "the science of 'understanding oneself and one's conditions' and the art of 'applying this understanding in action'" (Ruickbie, 2011, p. 195). This draws attention to the importance of the personal growth dimension in the practice of Paganism. In a survey of British Pagans, Ruickbie (2011) found that "personal development" was the second most popular reason for conducting magical rituals. When asked what effect practicing magic had, 60% stated that magic had had a profound effect on their lives, often this effect was one of personal transformation; "they had discovered themselves, improved themselves, solved their personal problems or expanded their awareness... a large number specifically stated that magic had increased their self-confidence" (Ruickbie, 2011, p. 206).

To take part in Pagan practices is to actively choose a path of personal growth and self-empowerment. Noted Wiccan Priest and author, Stewart Farrar (1995) states that the basic aim of magic (regardless of the tradition/system it is practiced in) is "the spiritual development of the individual ... and the expanding of his consciousness" (p. 118) to the extent that other effects of magic (i.e. successful spells for purpose) are merely by-products of this true purpose (p. 119). Farrar (1995) uses the Golden Dawn interpretation of the Sephiroth of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life as a framework for the stages of spiritual development attained in Pagan practice. The highest stage is "Ipsissimus", which Farrar explains "means literally 'one's very self' or 'most truly oneself' [and] expresses the goal of all Western magical Systems" (p. 120). This could be interpreted as referring to the self-actualised (Maslow) or fully functioning (Rogers) or Individuated (Jung) person. That so many theories from psychotherapy have influenced the construction of the personal growth dimension may explain the parallels between it and the concept of spiritual development in Paganism. Modern Paganism is strongly influenced by Jungian theory, and many Pagans understand the Goddesses, Gods, and other spiritual entities they work with as archetypal figures (Adler 1986; Crowley, 1989; Starhawk, 1989), and spiritual growth occurs as a result of engaging with these figures in ritual. As Waldron and Waldron (2004, p. 37) explain, "through mythology and the embracing of the unconscious, as manifested through deeply resonant archetypal symbols, one can find wholeness and a sense of reconnection in a fundamentally alienated and disconnected world".

Magic and ritual practices are also seen as a metaphor for change (Rabinovitch, 2000; Reid, 1996; Rountree, 2006; Waldron & Waldron, 2004). Every Pagan ritual contains aspects of self-reflection and self-transformation, although this aim is more explicit in some rituals than in others (Berger, 1999). Rountree (2006) provides examples of two such spells conducted by covens, designed by and intended for specific members; the first was by a 20 year old woman who wanted to cast off her feelings of inferiority and assert herself as an adult in her family, the second was by an older woman who wanted to "accept cronehood and ageing" (Rountree, 2006, p. 195). In both of these examples,

1
2
3 the women used magical ritual practices to help them come to terms with the aging process, to
4 accept their new roles, and to progress to the next stage of their life.
5

6 *Self-Acceptance*

7
8 The above examples share the theme that rituals to aid personal growth often include elements that
9 are focused on self-acceptance. Ryff (1989) defines self-acceptance as having a positive view of
10 oneself, accepting both positive and negative aspects. Pagan practices can be particularly beneficial
11 for women in helping them to cast off the marginalising view of women imposed by a patriarchal
12 society and instead to see themselves as valuable, worthy, and powerful. McPhillips (2003, pp. 76-
13 77) discusses the importance of body-focused ritual practices for her all female Pagan group, stating
14 that they provided
15

16
17 a major incentive to appreciate our bodies and what they could do, in very different ways to
18 what we had been taught by the wider culture ... in participating in and creating these
19 rituals, I experienced a deep sense of spiritual freedom and empowerment.
20

21
22 The matrifocal nature of Paganism provides women with a powerful, multifaceted role model
23 (Morgan, 1995) and an inkling of their own divinity. This sense of divinity can be further reinforced
24 through ritual practices such as “drawing down the Moon” where a female practitioner will invoke
25 the Goddess into herself and may either recite the Charge of the Goddess (a ritual poem that is a
26 promise of love and guidance from the Goddess) or other insights or revelations she may receive
27 from the Goddess (Harvey, 1997; Orion, 1995). Through this ritual the female practitioner embodies
28 the Goddess herself.
29

30
31 Pagan practice can be especially healing for those who identify as LGBTQ+, particularly those who
32 have come from other, less tolerant religions. Being part of a religion that condemns LGBTQ+
33 individuals can have a serious negative impact on self-esteem (Beagan & Hattie, 2015). Paganism, on
34 the other hand, is not simply accepting of the LGBTQ+ community; the sacralisation of the body and
35 of sex espoused in Paganism, and the embodiment inherent in Pagan rituals can provide LGBTQ+
36 folks with a spirituality that celebrates their sexuality and allows them to see it as a source of joy,
37 power, and worship rather than as something sinful to be denounced (Beagan & Hattie, 2015).
38

39
40 Accepting both positive and negative aspects of the self is a key element of the transformative
41 nature of Pagan ritual for all practitioners, and one that contributes to personal growth. Ezzy (2014)
42 demonstrates this clearly when discussing two of the rites performed at ‘Faunalia’, the pseudonym
43 he gave to a Pagan festival: The Underworld rite examines death, deterioration, pain and
44 vulnerability, whilst the Baphomet rite focuses on sexuality, sexual contravention and alterity. Both
45 explore concepts that are often considered taboo in western culture but could be argued to be
46 necessary to achieve a sense of wholeness and integrity. Through rituals such as these, and through
47 the sanctity of the body and sex espoused in Paganism, participants are able to acknowledge,
48 explore, and assimilate aspects of themselves that they may have previously rejected or repressed,
49 leading to wholeness and greater self-acceptance. Coco and Woodward (2007) observed that
50 practitioners who failed to engage with the more serious aspects of Paganism such as moral
51 responsibility and acknowledging the darker aspects of nature and human nature, were branded as
52 a “Fluffy Bunny” or inauthentic Pagan, suggesting that this is a fundamental aspect of Pagan
53 practice.
54
55

56 *Positive relations with others*

57
58
59
60

1
2
3 The next of Ryff's (1989) six dimensions to be considered is positive relations with others. Those who
4 have positive relations with others have affectionate, empathic, intimate and trusting relationships
5 and also understand the reciprocity involved in such relationships (Ryff & Singer, 2008). In line with
6 this, tolerance and equity are key values within Paganism (Berger, 1999; Magliocco, 2004). The
7 coven provides a space within which these values are expressed, and relationships are formed.
8 Pagan author Starhawk (1979) describes the role of the coven as "a Witches' support group,
9 consciousness raising group, psychic study centre, clergy-training program, college of Mysteries,
10 surrogate clan, and religious congregation all rolled into one" (p. 35). Berger (1999) described her
11 experiences with the Circle of Light coven in terms that reflect this function. Meetings began with a
12 'check-in session' where members discussed their week, shared their feelings and spoke of spiritual
13 experiences. The aim was to enhance members' inter-personal skills (vital for any group process),
14 and foster intimacy between group members especially as, over time, people began to share more
15 personal information. Sessions were aided by a 'facilitator' whose role was to "ensure that the group
16 process does not result in a few people dominating the conversation and therefore the decision
17 making process" (Berger, 1999, p. 57). Rituals ended with food, drink, and chat; eating after a
18 magical working is believed to help 'ground' an individual, bringing them back from a magical state
19 of consciousness to a mundane one, but also helped to foster intimacy between group members.
20 Finally, as members departed, farewells usually involved hugging and kissing — another way to
21 break down barriers and build relationships. The efficacy of these practices was clear, coven
22 members referred to the coven as 'family', this sentiment was mirrored in their interactions; when
23 one coven member was taken ill and had to be hospitalised, the coven rallied around providing both
24 magical support (in the form of healing spells), and practical support such as providing
25 transportation to and from hospital, food shopping and help with domestic chores (Berger, 1999).
26 Like many Wiccan covens, the Circle of Light coven abides by the concept of 'Perfect love and perfect
27 Trust' "and aims to provide ... a place of safety and care" as well as a place of learning and practice
28 (Berger, 1999, p. 52).

35 It would be disingenuous to claim that there is no discord in the Pagan community. As with any
36 community, interpersonal disputes do occur, and they are often the reason why covens are
37 dissolved, or individual members choose to move on. Covens can be fluid and short lived, with
38 members creating breakaway groups or dissolving the coven after a few months or years. This does
39 not, however, weaken the importance of the relationships formed there. Many of these
40 relationships endure even after members have left or the coven has disbanded, and even those that
41 do not survive are still considered to be important to those involved (Berger, 1999).

44 A large number of Pagans are described as solitary in the sense that they practice alone (Berger,
45 1999), but this does not mean that a sense of community, and the positive relationships that come
46 with it, are absent for them. There are some organisations that Pagans can join to aid in networking
47 such as the Pagan Federation and the UK Pagan Council, many online spaces exist that that allow
48 Pagans to come together and share stories and discuss their religion. Coco (2012) uses the term
49 "Networked individualism" to describe the combination of real life and online gatherings that has
50 resulted in "ties to community [shifting] from linking people in particular geographic locale to linking
51 people in any place thus enabling... opportunities to participate in 'communities of practice' that
52 facilitate an overall sense of Pagan identity and belonging" (p. 1). York (1995) defines the Pagan
53 community as a Segmented, Polycentric, Integrated Network (SPIN), which is explained by Gerlach
54 (2001, pp. 289-290) in the following way:

58 Segmentary: composed of many diverse groups, which grow and die, divide and fuse,
59 proliferate and contract.
60

1
2
3 Polycentric: Having multiple, often temporary, and sometimes competing leaders or centres
4 of influence.
5

6 Integrated, Networked: forming a loose, reticulate, integrated network with multiple
7 linkages through overlapping membership, joint activities, common reading matter, and
8 shared ideals and opponents.
9

10 The terms “Networked individualism” and SPIN both capture the diffuse yet connected nature of the
11 Pagan community, that enables Pagans to retain autonomy (a key trait amongst Pagan practitioners,
12 that will be discussed later in this paper) whilst still reaping all the benefits of being part of a
13 community.
14

15
16 One important instantiation of this network is via festivals. Advertisements for Pagan festivals often
17 emphasise their community building nature (Pike, 2001). Ezzy (2014) explains that festivals often
18 evoke a feeling of ‘Communitas’, which he defines as “a deeper sense of community in which
19 relationships are more intimate and open” (p. 55). This feeling is more intense than the camaraderie
20 that might be experienced in mundane life, and are felt even more acutely in ritual states of
21 consciousness. Ezzy (2014) limits feelings of communitas to festivals, but it could be argued that
22 these feelings are evoked in almost all Pagan rituals — Psychologist and Pagan author Viviane
23 Crowley (1989) claims that “entering a circle is one of the most intimate things one can do with
24 another” (p. 68). Even solitary rituals can elicit a sense of belongingness as, for some Pagans, one
25 aim of ritual is to re-assert a sense of connectedness to all things, as one practitioner in Sonnex’s
26 (2017, p. 184) study states:
27
28
29

30 [magic helps us to] remain connected ... to deity, to everything, however we perceive it, and
31 remaining connected to the earth and the wind and the sky and the sea and it all sounds
32 very ephemeral but those things are all in us too.
33

34 The concept of interconnectedness is a central part of the Pagan world view (Pike, 2001; Sonnex,
35 2017), espousing that all beings are connected in an intricate web, and through this web of
36 connections magic is able to effect change (Magliocco, 2004; Sonnex, 2017). Tapping into this web of
37 interconnectedness during ritual provides practitioners with a renewed feeling of connection (Adler,
38 1986). So, whilst Pagan communities may look different to more traditional faith communities, it is
39 clear to see that not only do these communities exist, but that the positive relationships within
40 them are strengthened through ritual practices.
41
42

43 *Autonomy*

44
45 One of the reasons Pagan religious communities look different from more traditional religious
46 communities is the balance between connection and autonomy that defines them. Autonomy is one
47 of the dimensions of personal well-being identified by Ryff (1989). When defining autonomy, Ryff
48 and Singer (2018) draw on a number of different theories and concepts, including Maslow’s
49 characterisation of self-actualisers as resistant to enculturation, described by Rogers’ description of
50 the fully functioning person as having an internal locus of evaluation, and Jung’s description of
51 freedom from tradition as part of Individuation.
52
53

54 Autonomy is another central element of Paganism. Sonnex (2017) found that being able to dictate
55 how one practices one’s faith, rather than having to adhere to circumscribed practices is a defining
56 aspect of Paganism for many; having spiritual intermediaries such as clergy was felt to dilute
57 personal experience of the divine. She demonstrates this using a quote from one of her participants,
58 Athena:
59
60

1
2
3 I think the personal spiritual authority ... is huge ... not all faith traditions have personal
4 spiritual authority ... So your experience with the divine is then mediated through that
5 second or third party and I really, I'm all about the experiential ... so I was looking for an
6 unmediated experience ... the fact that I have my own personal spiritual authority and I can
7 have the unmediated experience with the divine are ...the two most crucial things for me. (p.
8 130)
9

10
11 Sonnex (2017) called this autonomy 'spiritual agency' and likened it to Bandura's (2001) theory of
12 human agency, which identified three modes of human agency: personal, proxy, and collective, with
13 the first two being the most relevant. Personal agency is the capacity for individual choice and
14 action. Proxy agency, on the other hand, occurs when we relinquish our agency to others who are
15 more knowledgeable, experienced, or influential, to act on our behalf. Clergy or gurus can be
16 understood to act as proxy agent in the religio-spiritual sphere given their training, experience, and
17 positions of authority in religious organisations. Bandura (2001) explains that proxy agents are often
18 utilised because effectively exercising personal agency requires one to become adroit in the field in
19 which one might otherwise seek a proxy agent. Exercising personal agency necessitates assuming
20 responsibility and accountability, which deters many people. For Pagans, this proxy agency is
21 rejected in favour of personal spiritual agency. With spiritual agency comes responsibility for one's
22 own spiritual education that in other religions would have been assumed by a priest or clergy figure;
23 in contrast, for many Pagans initial forays into Paganism were self-directed. This autonomy also
24 extends to the moral and ethical milieu; Pagans have a self-directed morality which states that they
25 alone are responsible for their actions and their effects. Sonnex (2017, p. 151) demonstrates this
26 point with a quote from another participant, Donkey:
27
28
29

30
31 I think [the most important thing about being Pagan [is] probably responsibility for one's
32 own life without turning to some ... all powerful, deity to sort of say, "ok so what do I do
33 now?" and sort of, and/or "I'm sorry Sir, is that ok now?" ... twenty Hail Marys and off we go.
34 ... so I think it's, that's extremely important, taking responsibility, I mean your own
35 conscience doesn't lie to you.
36
37

38 Practitioners must face the consequences of their actions and, as a result of this personal
39 accountability, Pagan ethical responsibility might reasonably be argued to be more autonomous
40 than religions that offer absolution.
41

42 Both Bloch (1998) and Ezzy (2003) believe that the emphasis on autonomy within Paganism is
43 indicative of it being a modern religion and a product of the modern western zeitgeist of
44 individualism, reflexivity, and focus on the self. This mirrors Ryff and Singer's (2008) assertion that
45 autonomy is "undoubtedly the most western of all the ... dimensions" (p. 23). Bloch (1998)
46 investigated specifically the autonomy within alternative spiritualities, which he defined as "world
47 religions, pop psychology, New Age 'parapsychology', Neo-Pagan spell casting and the occult" (p.
48 287). According to Bloch, these spiritualities were considered alternative precisely because of their
49 rejection of dogma and their emphasis on "individual self-autonomy" (p. 287). Bloch's interviewees
50 explained that although books can provide information, it is direct experience that provided the
51 basis for their belief and practices, so that they often rejected spiritual or religious authority. This
52 prioritising of autonomy is something that has been identified by other researchers of the Pagan
53 community. Orion (1995) in her study of American Neo-Pagans found her participants shunned
54 figures of religious or spiritual authority (p. 42) and concluded that the desire for autonomy was
55 "one of the greatest inducements to study magic" (p. 162). Adler (1986) likewise found that one of
56 the six main reasons why people feel compelled to practice Paganism was "freedom", which she
57 describes as the ability to act as one chooses without having to comply with other people's notions
58
59
60

1
2
3 of what is right or wrong. In the opening paragraph to her book *Drawing down the moon: Witches,*
4 *Druids, Goddess-Worshippers and other Pagans in America Today*, Adler describes Pagans as
5 “Eclectic, individualist and often fiercely autonomous” (p. 3), establishing immediately how
6 definitive the characteristic is. When describing the common characteristics of the participants in her
7 work, Luhrmann (1989) stated that Pagans are often rebellious and concerned with issues of control.
8 Rebellion is often understood to be a rejection of the authority of others and Pagans cherish the
9 control of their personal practices that Paganism affords them.
10
11

12 Orion (1995) proposes that the combination of autonomy and an appreciation of traditional or folk
13 magic practices makes the image of the historical witch very appealing to modern Pagans. Many
14 understand that accusations of witchcraft were a reaction to perceived assertions of independence -
15 autonomy was viewed as a challenge to the power structures of the time. Orion concludes, “This is
16 the power contained within the witch archetype that contemporary witches are attempting to
17 release and harness. It is, in essence, self-sufficiency” (p. 114).
18
19

20 *Environmental Mastery*

21
22 Whilst autonomy is about “self- determination, independence, and regulation of behaviour from
23 within” (Deci & Ryan, 2008a, p. 1), environmental mastery, the next dimension to be considered, is
24 concerned with control of the outside world. Ryff and Singer (2008) describe those high in
25 environmental mastery as demonstrating “a sense of mastery and competence in managing the
26 environment; controls complex array of external activities; makes effective use of surrounding
27 opportunities: able to choose or create contexts suitable to personal needs and values” (p. 25).
28 Environmental mastery is strongly linked to autonomy, which in Paganism is expressed through
29 shaping one’s spiritual environment as one sees fit, rather than following prescribed practices. This is
30 especially evident when it comes to the design of ritual practices. Sonnex (2017) found that
31 practitioners emphasised the importance of working in a way that feels right for them. This freedom
32 allows Pagan practitioners to create a personally meaningful and effective set of practices that evoke
33 a sense of liminality that is conducive to flow.
34
35
36

37 Rituals that serve some external purpose (i.e. spells) are an obvious way in which Pagan practices
38 foster a sense of environmental mastery. Spells for purpose are intended to effect change, most
39 commonly in the form of healing spells (Ruickbie, 2004; Willin, 2007) but also as spells for personal,
40 social or situational advantage (Ruickbie, 2004), such as spells to find a job or a new house. How
41 Pagans understand the mechanisms behind spells, whether as the result of a psychological change in
42 the practitioner’s consciousness, or as the result of actual changes in the environment manifested as
43 a result of manipulation of energies, varies between practitioners (Adler, 1986; Harvey, 1997;
44 Ruickbie, 2004). However it is that spells are believed to work, they are considered to be effective
45 and to allow the practitioner a level of control over their own lives or the lives of those for whom
46 they perform the working.
47
48
49

50 *Purpose in Life*

51
52 The final dimension to be discussed is purpose in life. Ryff and Singer (2008) define purpose in life as
53 comprising beliefs that give one the feeling that there is purpose and meaning to life and having
54 goals and a sense of directedness. This mirrors Steger’s (2013) description of meaning in life as being
55 made up of cognitive and motivational aspects. The cognitive aspects are “comprised of people’s
56 comprehension of the world around them” (Steger, 2013, p. 1) whereas the motivational aspects are
57 related to one’s “investment in a self-concordant purpose” (Steger, 2013, p. 1). It is the former
58 aspect of purpose that Pagan practice contributes to most clearly and that will be discussed here.
59
60

1
2
3 Steger argues that “the goals people develop are most beneficial when they arise naturally from the
4 unique ways they comprehend life; when the cognitive component of meaning provides the
5 springboard for the motivational component” (p. 2), suggesting that the broader, cognitive aspect of
6 meaning in life can also influence the narrower, motivational aspect.
7

8
9 There is a wealth of evidence demonstrating a link between religiosity/spirituality and positive
10 mental health outcomes (e.g., Joshanloo, 2011; Koenig, 2009). More recently, research suggests this
11 link can be explained in terms of the capacity of religiosity/spirituality to imbue life with meaning.
12 Ivtzan, Chan, Gardner, and Prashar (2011) found spirituality, either individually or in conjunction
13 with religiosity, positively correlated with participants’ sense of meaning in life. Steger and Fraiser
14 (2005) found that over 90% of the relationship between religiosity/spirituality and well-being could
15 be accounted for by treating meaning in life as a mediator, and Khumalo, Wissing, and Schutte
16 (2014) found similar results with a South African sample. Although this research did not include
17 Pagan participants, it is likely that Paganism confers the same benefits on practitioners.
18
19

20
21 A key part of the Pagan cosmology is “the Wheel of the year”; a metaphor for the cycle of death and
22 rebirth seen in the changing of the seasons (Berger, 1999; Magliocco, 2004; Starhawk, 1989). The
23 wheel of the year is made of up of eight ‘Sabbats’, or holy days, four of which fall on the solstices
24 and equinoxes and four of which fall on fixed days in between (see figure 2.) The celebration of
25 these sabbats can imbue practitioners with the feeling that there is purpose and meaning to life.
26 There are a number of metaphors applied to the wheel of the year, such as the story of Demeter and
27 Persephone, or the story of the Oak king and Holly king. The most common myth depicts the Earth
28 as a Goddess and plant life as the God whose role is that of son and consort. He is born at Yule, is
29 joined with the Goddess at Beltane, reaches his peak at the summer solstice, and dies at Samhain to
30 be reborn again. (Magliocco, 2004, p. 106).
31
32

33 Fig 2 about here

34
35 These metaphors apply not only to the changing of the seasons but also to human experiences, as
36 Starhawk (1989, p. 44) explains, “waxing and waning, birth and death, take place in the human
37 psyche and life cycle. Each is to be welcomed in its proper time and season, because life is a process
38 of constant change”. This parallel of cycles in nature with cycles in human life is seen with the
39 mythology of the Goddess in particular. In many traditions the Goddess is seen as a trinity of
40 maiden, mother, and crone. She is seen as an avatar of the moon and so these three aspects reflect
41 the moon phases of waxing, full, and waning, they also reflect the three stages of womanhood;
42 youth (pre-menarche), adulthood, and Older adulthood (Post-menopause), with some women taking
43 part in rites of passage, at menarche and/or menopause, to mark their transition from one phase to
44 the next (Hardman, 1995; Manning, 2012; McPhillips, 2003). By celebrating the changing of the
45 seasons as represented by the turning of the wheel of the year, and moon cycles as the three
46 aspects of the Goddess, practitioners are reinforcing the cyclical nature of time, imbuing the world
47 and their experiences in it, with a sense of order and meaning (Berger, 1999; Harvey, 1997;
48 Magliocco, 2004).
49
50
51

52
53 As with other religious/spiritual beliefs, Paganism can foster a sense of purpose in life that makes
54 distressing life events meaningful and therefore tolerable. Hood, Spilka, Hunsberger, and Gorusch
55 (1996) explain that finding meaning “probably constitutes the core of successful coping and
56 adjustment” (p. 380), religion provides this meaning particularly in distressing situations, and helps
57 not only in dealing with the negative emotions that arise, but also with problem solving. Reid (1996)
58 describes how Pagan magical practices can be particularly beneficial to those who have survived
59 trauma and abuse, comparing the techniques of magical training to those prevalent in self-help
60

1
2
3 literature. She explains that because magical practice involves developing a depth of knowledge
4 about one's self (as discussed in the self-acceptance section of this paper), experiences and feelings
5 are naturally acknowledged, re-examined and re-evaluated, especially those considered "dark". It is
6 understood in Paganism that power is gained through successfully overcoming the challenge of
7 facing our inner demons (Luhrmann, 1989; Reid 1996); doing so tests our resilience and strength of
8 will.
9

10 **Conclusion**

11
12
13 In this paper we have considered Pagan practices from the perspective of Flow, Liminality, and
14 Eudaimonia in order to explore the ways in which being a Pagan might confer wellbeing benefits. We
15 have argued that the Liminal, flow experiences inherent in Pagan practice provide a pathway to
16 eudaimonia by fostering all six of Ryff's (1989) dimensions of psychological wellbeing.
17

18
19 Personal development was shown to be a key reason for conducting rituals, especially those
20 designed to help the practitioner come to terms with major life changes. Engaging with archetypal
21 figures in ritual allows practitioners to explore aspects of themselves that may otherwise have been
22 neglected, and thus contributes to the process of personal growth. Through the veneration of the
23 feminine divine, the sacralisation of the body and of sex, and the embracing of the darker aspects of
24 human nature, Pagan practices provide a counterpoint to negative and limiting norms, values,
25 attitudes, and beliefs. This promotes a sense of self-acceptance in practitioners, especially those
26 from marginalised groups. Pagan communities strike a balance between independence and
27 fellowship, with covens providing a congregational type of experience that comprises part of a
28 wider, more diffuse network that encourages positive relations with others. The liminal, flow
29 experiences of Pagan ritual foster a sense of *communitas* amongst those participating. These rituals
30 also allow participants to reaffirm their place in a web of interconnectedness, such that even solitary
31 practitioners benefit from an increased sense of relatedness as a result.
32
33

34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
Autonomy is a key element of Paganism. It is instantiated in the lack of clergy and the self-directed
nature of morality, and is often a motivating factor in the decision to adopt these practices. This
emphasis on self determination means that Pagans can exercise mastery of their spiritual
environment, dictating what their rituals look like and how they should be performed. Many Pagans
further achieving feelings of environmental mastery to working magic to effect change in their lives.

The tenets of magic provide practitioners with a way to reframe traumatic experiences as
empowering tests of will, thereby assigning meaning to such experiences and making them easier to
cope with. The Pagan cosmology is centred around natural cycles, with rituals designed to mark key
points in the seasonal calendar and in their own lives that affirm belief in an ordered universe and
imbues practitioners' lives with meaning.

Given the close parallels we have identified, we would argue that modern Pagan beliefs and
practices provide a valuable insight into processes that engender flow and facilitate personal and
interpersonal growth. In our view, further detailed research with this relatively neglected religious
comprise an underrepresented community is likely to prove most fruitful.

54 **References**

55
56
57
58
59
60
Adler, M. (1986). *Drawing down the moon: Witches, druids, goddess-worshippers and other pagans in America today (revised and expanded ed.)*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Beagan, B. L., & Hattie, B. (2015). Religion, spirituality, and LGBTQ identity integration. *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling*, 9(2), 92-117.

- 1
2
3 Berger, H. A. (1999). *A community of witches: Contemporary neo-paganism and witchcraft in the United States*.
4 Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press.
5
6 Butler, J. (2004). Neo-pagan ritual practice as visual culture and creative expression of identity'. In M. Nic
7 Craith, & U. Kockel (Eds) *Communicating cultures: European studies in culture and policy*. (pp. 108-128).
8 Munster: Lit Verlag.
9
10 Clifton, C.S., & Harvey, G. (Eds) (2004). *The Paganism reader*. New York: Routledge.
11
12 Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1975). *Beyond boredom and anxiety*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
13
14 Cunningham, S. (2003). *Wicca: A guide for the solitary practitioner*. St Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications.
15
16 Dierendonck, D. V., & Mohan, K. (2006). Some thoughts on spirituality and eudaimonic well-being. *Mental*
17 *Health, Religion and Culture*, 9(3), 227-238.
18
19 Ezzy, D. (2014). *Sex, death and witchcraft: A contemporary pagan festival*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
20
21 Farrar, S. (1995). *What witches do*. London: Robert Hale Ltd
22
23 Gerlach, L. P. (2001). The structure of social movements: Environmental activism and its opponents. In J.
24 Arquilla & D. Rondfeldt (Eds) *Networks and netwars: The future of terror, crime, and militancy*, 289-310. Santa
25 Monica, RAND
26
27 Hume, L. (1998). Creating sacred space: Outer expressions of inner worlds in modern Wicca. *Journal of*
28 *Contemporary Religion*, 13(3), 309-319.
29
30 Ivtzan, I., Chan, C. P., Gardner, H. E., & Prashar, K. (2013). Linking religion and spirituality with psychological
31 well-being: Examining self-actualisation, meaning in life, and personal growth initiative. *Journal of Religion and*
32 *Health*, 52(3), 915-929.
33
34 Jones, P. (1996). Pagan Theologies. In G. Harvey & C. Hardman (Eds) *Paganism Today: Wiccans, Druids, the*
35 *Goddess, and Ancient Earth Traditions for the Twenty-First Century*. London and San Francisco: Thorsons, 32-
36 46.
37
38 Jones, P. (1998). The European native tradition. In J. Pearson, R.H. Roberts, & G. Samuel (Eds) *Nature religion*
39 *today: Paganism in the modern world*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 77-88.
40
41 Khumalo, I. P., Wissing, M. P., & Schutte, L. (2014). Presence of meaning and search for meaning as mediators
42 between spirituality and psychological well-being in a South African sample. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*,
43 24(1), 61-72.
44
45 Luhrmann, T. (1989). *Persuasions of the witch's craft: Ritual magic in modern culture*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard
46 University Press
47
48 Magliocco, S. (1996). Ritual is my chosen art form: The creation of ritual as folk art among contemporary
49 pagans. In J.R. Lewis (Ed) *Magical religion and modern witchcraft*. Albany, NY: State University of New York
50 Press 93-120.
51
52 Magliocco, S. (2004). *Witching culture: Folklore and Paganism in America*. Philadelphia, PA: University of
53 Pennsylvania Press.
54
55 Office for National statistics (2001). *Census 2001*. Retrieved March 16th 2011 from
56 <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/census2001.asp>
57
58 Office for National statistics (2012). *2011 Census*. Retrieved February 21st 2012 from
59 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011census>
60
61 Orion, L. (1995). *Never again the burning times: Paganism revived*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland press.

- 1
2
3 Pargament, K. I., Wong, S., & Exline, J. J. (2016). Wholeness and holiness: The spiritual dimension of
4 eudaimonics. In J. Vittersø (Ed.) *Handbook of eudaimonic well-being* (pp. 379-394). Springer, Cham.
5
6 Pike, S. M. (2001). *Earthly bodies, magical selves: Contemporary pagans and the search for community*. Univ. of
7 California Press.
8
9 Reber, A. (1985). *The penguin dictionary of psychology*. Harmondsworth: Penguin
10
11 Reid, S. (1996). As I do will, so mote it be: *Magic as metaphor in Neo-Pagan witchcraft. Magical Religion and*
12 *Modern Witchcraft*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press 141-67.
13
14 Rountree, K. (2006). Performing the divine: Neo-pagan pilgrimages and embodiment at sacred sites. *Body and*
15 *Society*, 12(4), 95-115.
16
17 Ruickbie, L. (2011). *Witchcraft out of the shadows: A complete history*. London: Robert Hale Limited.
18
19 Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2001). On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and
20 eudaimonic well-being. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52(1), 141-166.
21
22 Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M., (2008a). Hedonia, eudaimonia, and well being, an introduction. *Journal of Happiness*
23 *Studies*, 9 (1), 1-11
24
25 Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2008b). Self-determination theory: A macrotheory of human motivation,
26 development, and health. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie Canadienne*, 49(3), 182.
27
28 Ryan, R. M., Huta, V., & Deci, E. L. (2008). Living well: A self-determination theory perspective on eudaimonia.
29 *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 9(1), 139-170.
30
31 Ryff, C. D. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being.
32 *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57(6), 1069.
33
34 Ryff, C. D., & Singer, B. H. (2008). Know thyself and become what you are: A eudaimonic approach to
35 psychological well-being. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 9(1), 13-39.
36
37 Seymour, E. (2005). Pagan approaches to healing. *Multicultural Aspects of Counseling Series*, 22, 233.
38
39 Shadrack, J., Sonnex, C., & Roe, C. A. (2019). Ritual Occultation and the Space between worlds: Exploring the
40 discursive nature of the 'flow' state in Black metal and Pagan performative practice. In C. McLaughlin (Ed)
41 *Trans-states: The art of crossing over*. Somerset: Fulgur Press.
42
43 Sonnex, C. (2017). Extending the non-contact healing paradigm to explore distant mental interaction effects of
44 pagan healing spells. Unpublished doctoral thesis, the University of Northampton
45
46 Springer, K. W., Hauser, R. M., & Freese, J. (2006). Bad news indeed for Ryff's six-factor model of well-being.
47 *Social Science Research*, 35(4), 1120-1131.
48
49 Starhawk. (1989). *The spiral dance: A rebirth of the ancient religion of the great goddess* (2nd ed.). San
50 Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco.
51
52 Steger, M. F. (2013). Experiencing meaning in life: Optimal functioning at the nexus of well-being,
53 psychopathology, and spirituality. In P.T.P. Wong (Ed) *The human quest for meaning* (pp. 211-230). New York,
54 NY: Routledge.
55
56 Steger, M. F., & Frazier, P. (2005). Meaning in life: One link in the chain from religiousness to well-being.
57 *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52(4), 574-582.
58
59 Vallerand, R. J., Pelletier, L. G., & Koestner, R. (2008). Reflections on self-determination theory. *Canadian*
60 *Psychology/Psychologie Canadienne*, 49(3), 257 -262.

1
2
3 Waterman, A. S. (1990). Personal expressiveness: Philosophical and psychological foundations. *The Journal of*
4 *Mind and Behavior*, 11 (1), 47-73.

5
6 Waterman, A. S. (1993). Two conceptions of happiness: Contrasts of personal expressiveness (eudaimonia) and
7 hedonic enjoyment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 64(4), 678.

8
9 Willin, M. (2007). Paranormal phenomena in British witchcraft and wiccan culture with special reference to
10 spellcraft. *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, 71(2), 65- 79.

11
12 York, M. (1995). *The emerging network: A sociology of the New age and Neo Pagan movements*. London:
13 Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc.

14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

For Peer Review

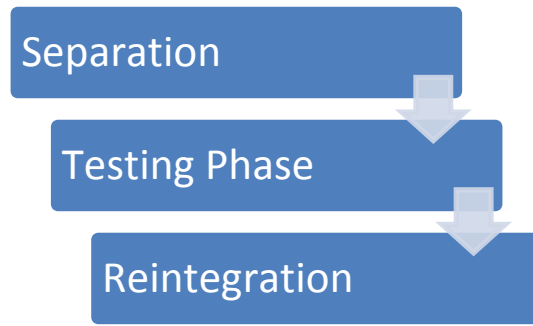


Figure 1. The tripartite model of ritual

For Peer Review

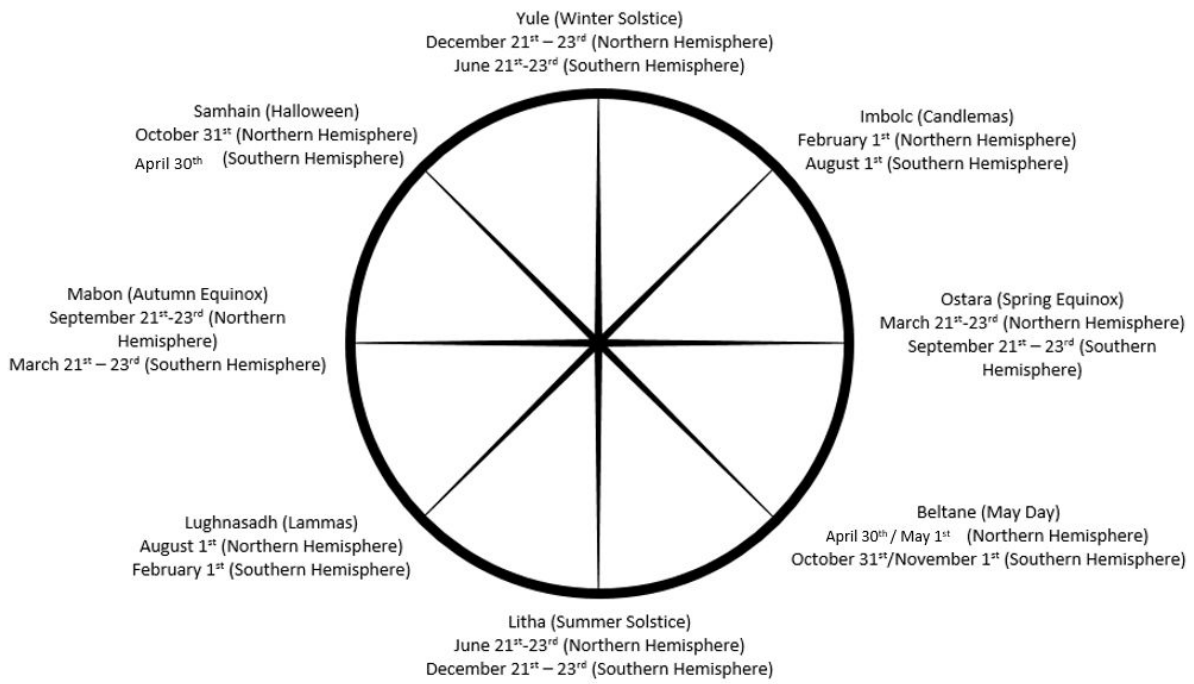


Figure 2. The wheel of the year

Peer Review