

## Mabon: Restoring the Balance

### Sep 10, 2023

#### Mabon's Wisdom: Restoring Balance in the Wake of Adversity

- Welcome to Mabon!
  - Festival of harvest and thanksgiving
  - turning of seasons, sacred time of transition
  - reflect on the cyclical nature of life
  - give thanks for our blessings
- Embracing the Equinox:
  - embrace the balance between day and night
  - Mabon arrives with the equinox, a time when light and darkness share an equal moment
    - The equilibrium of day and night reflects the delicate dance between light and darkness, growth and decay, joy and sorrow
    - reminder that life is a constant interplay of opposites
      - embracing this duality is essential for our spiritual and emotional well-being
    - vibrant colors of autumn begin to paint the world, air carries a gentle chill, insects sing
      - remind us that even in times of transition, there is beauty
    - the equinox reminds us that balance is a natural state of existence
- Acknowledging the Shadows
  - As night and day shift, as the moon waxes and wanes
    - our lives experience moments of struggle and pain
    - our lives ebb and flow between moments of despair—let's say challenge—and hope
    - Mabon encourages us to embrace this balance and find strength in the midst of it
  - Darkness is not to be feared
    - within the darkness seeds germinate and dreams take root
    - darkness is an integral part of life's tapestry, cycles of nature
    - darkness does not erase light; it merely tempers it, giving it greater depth and meaning
    - acknowledging shadows does not mean succumbing to despair
      - but recognizing existence of challenges that call for our attention and action

- In seeking balance, we honor our capacity for resilience and our commitment to creating positive change
- Just as Mabon marks the transition from light to dark, we too navigate the duality of life's experiences
- Adversity has the power to unveil our inner strengths and ignite our compassion for others who may also be struggling
- By acknowledging both darkness and light, we can find the equilibrium that keeps us steady on our journey
- A battery connected only on the positive side does not work!

## **How do we deal with bad news day to day?**

### Story: The Farmer's Parable (China/Taoist)

- Note: Taoism emphasizes naturalness, peace, effortless action, detachment, receptiveness
- Once upon a time, a farmer had a valuable horse run away
  - “Bad News!” said his neighbor.
  - “Good news, bad news, who knows?” replied the farmer
- Later, the horse returned to the farm with many wild horses accompanying it
- Some time after that, the farmer’s son fell and broke his leg while trying to train one of the wild horses
- Soon after, the army came through town conscripting all able-bodied young men, and the farmer’s son was passed over
- And so on
- Do not get too upset—or attached—to what happens
- dark and confounding things can turn out to be opportunities
  - when looked on in hindsight
- Pollyannaish, i.e excessively optimistic
  - how many have had things not turn out as desired only to find something better was in store?
    - Job Loss
    - Cancer: its gifts is stripping all the petty concerns from your life, focus on health, family and love

- Viktor Frankl said when we've lost much, or even nearly everything, sometimes all we can choose is our attitude in the face of trials
    - we don't know the end of the story we're living
      - don't know the twists and turns to come
    - we never know what gifts will follow "bad news"
      - need to take both good and bad as simply what happens
      - And choose which part of our character those reveal
- The Gift of Awareness: bad news is around us all the time
  - confront reality head-on
    - acknowledge the struggles and injustices that surround us
  - awareness is crucial step in addressing issues that plague us
  - commitment to knowledge and understanding can turn challenges into opportunities for growth and transformation
- Balancing Empathy and Boundaries:
  - we value compassion and empathy
    - but exposure to bad news can take a toll
  - Finding balance means engaging with empathy while also setting boundaries to protect our mental and emotional health
  - choose to engage in meaningful ways without becoming consumed by despair
    - recognize your ability to help is amplified when you are emotionally able
  - Avoid doom scrolling
  - limit exposure to the bad
    - the worst social media sites
  - seek out the good <https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/>
  - Breathe!
  - Shake it out - physical movement
  - Talk it out
    - But no politics after 8pm
  - Learn what works for you!
- Finding Sanctuary in Nature:
  - trees stand tall through storms and flowers bloom amidst adversity, so we draw strength from the natural world

- When overwhelmed, our connection to nature becomes a sanctuary of solace and rejuvenation
- Spend time in the embrace of the forest, by the side of a flowing river, or under the vastness of the night sky
- Let Earth's rhythms remind you that even in darkest times, renewal and growth persist
- Renewal and Letting Go:
  - learn to let go of what no longer serves us, making space for new growth and opportunities
    - reflect on what we've accomplished
    - release what no longer serves us
  - bad news can cling to our thoughts
    - need to let go of fear, anger, helplessness
    - By shedding these, we create space for hope, renewal, and the possibility of positive change
- Kindling the Flame Within:
  - Within each of us burns the sacred flame of resilience and hope
  - This flame is a testament to our ancestors' strength
    - and our own capacity to endure and thrive
  - When the news is bleak, tend to this flame!
    - keep it alive through compassion, connection, activism
  - Candle's light can dispel the shadows
    - our actions contribute to a brighter path for all
- Cultivating Hope:
  - not mere wishful thinking
    - conscious choice to see the potential for change and progress even in the darkest of times
    - hope reminds us that better days are possible
  - By nurturing hope within ourselves and sharing it with others, we become beacons of positivity and resilience
- Taking Positive Action:
  - Be an agent of change
  - counteract bad news' effects by taking positive action
    - participate in community initiatives
    - support organizations that align with our values
    - show kindness to those around us
  - each step contributes to a ripple effect/ positive transformation

- The Harvest and Gratitude
  - Mabon harvest
    - give thanks for the bounty that sustains us
    - find solace in blessings that surround us, despite troubling news
  - acts of gratitude uplift our spirits
    - remind us that even in times of difficulty, there is much to be cherished
  - by focusing on the positive, we can restore our internal balance
  - remember to recognize and appreciate blessings in our lives
    - it's easy to overlook the gifts that surround us
      - pause, to take stock, and to express gratitude for the abundance we've received
    - express thanks for
      - the relationships that sustain us
      - the opportunities that enrich us
      - the lessons that shape us
- Community and Unity:
  - celebrate shared human experience
  - As farmers come together to harvest, we gather as community
    - support one another
    - celebrate our diversity
    - nurture the bonds that unite us
  - reach out to those struggling, offer assistance and a listening ear
  - celebrate the tapestry of cultures, experiences, and beliefs that enrich community
  - Our unity lies in our willingness to share, to empathize, and to learn from one another's stories
- Conclusion:
  - In a world where bad news threatens to unbalance us, remember the equilibrium from embracing darkness and light
    - let us be inspired by the values of compassion, understanding, and action
    - Acknowledge the reality of the world while nurturing our capacity for hope
      - Let us not turn a blind eye to the challenges of the world
        - Instead, embrace the darkness as a canvas for the light to shine more brilliantly

- continue to seek unity in diversity
  - to confront adversity with courage
  - to be a beacon of hope in a world that sometimes feels dark
- Together we have the power to reshape the narrative
  - one act of kindness and one moment of hope at a time
  - Let us become the change we wish to see
- Find balance in the midst of adversity
- express gratitude for the blessings in our lives
  - find strength in the balance between light and darkness
  - nurture the bonds of community that sustain us
  - Let us be inspired to sow the seeds of positive change
- May we walk forward with a heart open to both the shadows and the light, finding our place in the ongoing dance of balance and renewal