

Principles of Wiccan Belief

As Adopted By The Council Of American Witches Witch meet, April 11-14, 1974, Minneapolis, Minnesota

The Council of American Witches finds it necessary to define modern Witchcraft in terms of the American experience and needs.

We are not bound by traditions from other times and other cultures and owe no allegiance to any person or power greater than the Divinity manifest through our own being.

As American Witches, we welcome and respect all Life Affirming teachings and traditions, and seek to learn from all and to share our learning within our Council.

It is in this spirit of welcome and cooperation that we adopt these few principles of Wiccan belief. In seeking to be inclusive, we do not wish to open ourselves to the destruction of our group by those on self-serving power trips, or to philosophies and practices contradictory to those principles. In seeking to exclude those whose ways are contradictory to ours, we do not wish to deny participation to any who are sincerely interested in our knowledge and beliefs, regardless of race, color, sex, age, national or cultural heritage, or sexual preference.

We therefore ask only that those who seek to identify with us accept those few basic principles:

1. We practice rites to attune ourselves with the natural rhythm of life forces marked by the phases of the Moon and the seasonal Quarters and Cross-Quarters.
2. We recognize that our intelligence gives us a unique responsibility toward our environment, We seek to live in harmony with Nature, in ecological balance, offering fulfillment to life and consciousness within an evolutionary concept.
3. We acknowledge a depth of power far greater than is apparent to the average person. Because it is far greater than ordinary, it is sometimes called "supernatural," but we see it as lying within that which is naturally potential to us all.
4. We conceive of the Creative Power in the Universe as manifesting through polarity - as masculine and feminine - and that this same Creative Power lives in all people and functions through the interaction of the masculine and feminine. We value neither above the other, knowing each to be supportive of the other. We value sexuality as pleasure, as the symbol and embodiment of Life, and as one of the sources of energies used in magical practice and religious worship.

5. We recognize both outer and inner or psychological worlds - sometimes known as the Spiritual World, The Collective Unconscious, The Inner Planes, etc. - and we see in their interaction of these two dimensions the basis for paranormal phenomena and magickal exercises. We neglect neither dimension for the other, seeing both as necessary for our fulfillment.
6. We do not recognize any authoritarian hierarchy, but do honor those who teach, respect those who share their greater knowledge and wisdom, and acknowledge those who have courageously given of themselves in leadership.
7. We see religion, magick and wisdom-in-living as being united in the way one views the world and lives within it - a world-view and philosophy-of-life which we identify as Witchcraft, the Wiccan Way.
8. Calling oneself "Witch" does not make a Witch, but neither does heredity itself, or the collecting of titles, degrees and initiations. A Witch seeks to control the forces within him/ herself that make life possible in order to live wisely and well, without harm to others and in harmony with Nature.
9. We acknowledge that it is the affirmation and fulfillment of life in a continuance of evolution and development of consciousness that gives meaning to the Universe we know and to our personal role within it.
10. Our only animosity toward Christianity or toward any other religion or philosophy-of-life is to the extent that its institutions have claimed to be "the one true, right and only way" and have sought to deny freedom to others, and to suppress other ways of religious practices and belief.
11. As American Witches, we are not threatened by debates on the history of the Craft, the origins of various terms, the legitimacy of various aspects of various traditions. We are concerned only with our present and our future.
12. We do not accept the concept of "absolute evil" nor do we worship any entity known as "Satan" or "the Devil", as defined by the Christian tradition. We do not seek power through the suffering of others, nor do we accept the concept that personal benefits can only be derived through denial to another.
13. We acknowledge that we seek within Nature for that which is contributory to our health and well-being.