



Exploring the God & Goddess

A Series of Classes
by Kathy Cybele

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Preface

The following classes are from my *Exploring The God And The Goddess* series. I taught this series originally in 2005 and have updated some of its contents for this printing. I hope this course helps you to deepen your personal connection with deity.

Table of Contents

[Preface](#)

[Exploring the Goddess and the God](#)

[The Goddess](#)

[The God](#)

[Working with Specific Deities](#)

[Putting It All Together](#)

[END NOTES](#)

[RECOMMENDED READING](#)

Exploring the Goddess and the God

THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH DIVINITY

In our modern world it is hard to find time to nourish our souls'. Our focus is on the mundane concerns of survival, creating income to keep a roof over our head and food on the table. Then many of us try to fill the void this type of lifestyle creates by acquiring material items, consuming alcohol and drugs, sexual promiscuity and other mundane pursuits. Unfortunately in the dark of night, when our world is quiet and we only have our true selves for company, we find that there is a place deep inside that is hollow and hungry. A new car, a new lover, or a few hours of drug induced oblivion will not fill that hole. Why? Because that hole is not hungry for anything that exists in the mundane world, only the gifts of the spiritual world will satisfy this hunger.

Many people do not realize that we are not human beings having a spiritual experience, but spiritual beings having a human experience. Here in the material realm we cannot neglect either side of our existence. Our physical body must have its needs met, but we must also see to our spirit's needs.

SPIRITUALITY VERSUS RELIGION

There is a difference between spirituality and religion. Religion is a structured belief in whom divinity is and how to worship. Spirituality involves your inner beliefs and how you live your life. So you see, you can be a religious person and do everything your particular religion requires, but that doesn't mean that you are a spiritual person.

Spirituality is what nurtures your soul, it is what can fill that hole deep inside and give you strength when the mundane world around you becomes too much of a challenge. Spirituality acts like a rudder to help guide you through your life.

THE CREATION OF THE GOD AND THE GODDESS

Most people feel that there is something larger than them "out there". They believe that something bigger than themselves created all that surrounds them; perhaps this something even controls (or has some impact) on their day-to-day life. The attempt to understand this larger something, for brevity sake let's call this larger something "The One", has lead to the creation of many different faiths and deities.

Way back in time, sometime after our ancestors rose from the primordial ooze, mankind reached a level of awareness that went beyond himself and he began to investigate the world around him. He looked around and saw nature, he saw females of all the species giving birth. This observation lead to a belief that mankind's creator

must be a female, a goddess.

Archeology supports the above with some of the earliest primitive artwork that consisted of Earth mothers drawn on cave walls and created in stone. One of the most famous of these is the Earth Mother of Willendorf, which dates back to 30,000-25,000 B.C.E.

When was the first god image? It took a long while for our ancestors to realize the role of the male in reproduction. Most likely this concept wasn't discovered until our ancestors changed from nomadic tribes of hunter-gatherers, to farmers of both plants and animals. Then through the interaction with their captive herds mankind began to understand the male's role in breeding. In the Minoan culture evidence of a male deity appears between 2100-1700 B.C.E.

The roles and positions of male and female divinity changed as society changed, for divinity is merely a reflection of humankind. A well known Hermetic maxim "As above, so below" addresses this reflection. As above, so below means that what exists beyond this realm of existence (above), is a reflection of what exists here with us (below).

WHICH CAME FIRST – THE DEVOTEE OR THE DEITY?

At this point you're probably asking yourself some version of the above question. Remember when we were talking about "The One"? This is where The One comes in.

The One is too huge for us with our current experiential limitations to understand. Remember when ancestors looked around themselves and created a form that they could understand and relate to? They said, "Our creator must be a female, a pregnant female who gives birth. She would nurture and take care of us just as our own mother's do here on Earth." The One looked down upon us and said, "Ok, I can be that for you." And a piece of energy that was/is The One metamorphized itself into the pattern determined by our ancestor's.

Our ancestors embraced their creation, gave it a mythos, characteristics, created a way to worship their deity, and their creation became what they wished. Their deity's personality deepened and grew and became sentient. Yes sentient, aware of self, and able to make its own decisions/actions. This is what most Witches don't realize. Deity is not a stagnant grouping of energy that lies around awaiting our bidding – it is self aware and self actuated.

Once you understand the above you can begin to develop your own relationship with a god and a goddess. You can learn what they like and what they dislike, their histories, and how to connect with them through veneration.

THE MAIDEN, MOTHER, CRONE, OAK KING, AND HOLLY KING

Today many Witches work with the general energy of the Maiden, Mother, Crone, Oak King and Holly King. This is a valid way to worship deity but stepping beyond these generic personifications of The One can enrich your life in amazing ways. The difference in your spirituality is akin to the difference between cooking and becoming a master chef. Both will feed an empty stomach, but a master chef can elevate the necessity of eating into a celebration.

Let's stay with the concept of eating. On tonight's menu is a full moon ritual.

The Mother	The Goddess Diana
Flowers	Jasmine
Wine	Deep red wine
Cakes	Bread made of barley
General invocation speaking to general aspects of the mothering energy. "Great Mother of the moon. We call on you this night of the full moon. Come forward and bring your loving energy to those gathered here in your name."	Specific invocation speaking of Diana's special skills, attributes, and mythos. "I call to she who is Queen of the Witches, Huntress and Protector of Women. She who was worshiped at her temple, surrounded by her sacred woods at Lake Nemi. Mother of Ariadia, lover of Dianus. Diana, your priestess calls to you on this night of the full moon. Come forward and enter me and speak to those who have gathered here in your name."

You can see that the menu of the left will fulfill the monthly ritual obligation from *The Charge of the Goddess*, but the one of the right goes beyond fulfilling the obligation and could lead to a more rich experience through the interaction with the Goddess Diana.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT IN PREPARATION FOR CONNECTING TO SPECIFIC DEITIES

To benefit fully from this course you will need to do some soul searching and work. You can use the following questions to begin choosing a specific deity with which to connect.

1. What is your genealogy? Which lands do your genetic ancestors come from?
2. Are you attracted to a particular culture? If so which one?
3. What myths most interest you: Greek, Roman, Etruscan, Egyptian, Norse, Celtic or some other culture?

The Goddess

The Goddess is the ultimate expression of female energy. The Goddess is powerful, but her power comes from knowing herself and being true to her nature. The Goddess is: wise, strong, sensual, confidently sexual, independent yet not distant, loving yet not helpless, nurturing yet not consuming.

THE FALL OF THE GODDESS

In ancient times it was understood that only women could create life, so naturally the first deity that was acknowledged was the Goddess. These ancient cultures were matriarchies, women governed and lead and the divine feminine was revered above all else. During these times both the Goddess and women were strong and had power. Then the slow shift of power from a matriarchal to a patriarchal system began.

“The demise of the Goddess can be traced back to the invasions of warlike nomadic peoples from the Asiatic and European north who overran the centers of the Goddess culture in Southeastern Europe, the Near East and India causing large-scale destruction and dislocation. They brought with them their sky gods who ruled from the heavens like despots. The Goddess, women, and their values were suppressed. Patriarchy, the domination of culture by men, was the new order of society. Even in India where the worship of the Goddess never died out among the common people and was reabsorbed into evolving Hinduism in the first millennium, the culture continues to be patriarchal and the status of women inferior to that of men.

“The death blow to Goddess culture was delivered by monotheism in which one male, all-powerful and absolute, ruled both the heavens and the earth. Monotheistic faiths were implacable foes of the Goddess. As we know, the Bible records the continuous battle waged by the ancient Hebrews against the worship of the Goddess.”¹

“The social system that ultimately evolved in the lands conquered by the Indo-Europeans was based on a system of dominance that mirrored the interpersonal relationships of their pantheon. We are only now becoming aware that patriarchy has become so embedded in our belief system that we accept its premises as natural and inevitable.

“Lerner looks to the analysis of class structure, men being dominant, women the underclass, for her understanding of the root causes of patriarchy.

“Women . . . became a resource, acquired by men much as the land was acquired by men. Women were exchanged or bought in marriage for the benefit of their

families; later, they were conquered or bought in slavery where their sexual services were part of their labor and where their children were the property of their masters. . . . Since their sexuality, an aspect of their body, was controlled by others, women were not only actually disadvantaged but psychologically restrained in a very special way.’ ”^{1, 2}

Historically, the easiest way to control a people is to take away their rights and to make their basic beliefs invalid, evil or illegal. So power was taken away from both women and the Goddess. The Goddess was absorbed into the patriarchal religion and given a secondary role. She was even denied her innate ability to give birth, that became the ability of the male deity “God”.

“In 1484, the Papal Bull of Innocent VIII unleashed the power of the Inquisition against the old religion. The persecution was most strongly directed against women: of an estimated 9 million Witches executed, 80 percent were women, including children and young girls, who were believed to inherit the ‘evil’ from their mothers. The asceticism of early Christianity, which turned its back on the world of the flesh, had degenerated, in some quarters of the Church, into hatred of those who brought the flesh into being. Misogyny, the hatred of women, had become a strong element in medieval Christianity. Women, who menstruate and give birth, were identified with sexuality and therefore with evil. ‘All witchcraft stems from carnal lust, which is in women insatiable,’ stated the *Malleus Maleficarum*. ”³

WOMEN AND THE GODDESS

For centuries women have suffered under a patriarchal system where all of the primary deities are male.

“Since the decline of the Goddess religions, women have lacked religious models and spiritual systems that speak to female needs and experience. Male images of divinity characterize both western and eastern Religions. Regardless of how abstract the underlying concept of God may be, the symbols, avatars, preachers, prophets, gurus, and Buddhas are overwhelmingly male. Women are not encouraged to explore their own strengths and realizations; they are taught to submit to male authority, to identify masculine perceptions as their spiritual ideals, to deny their bodies and sexuality, to fit their insights into a male mold.

“The importance of the Goddess symbol for women cannot be over-stressed. The image of the Goddess inspires women to see ourselves as divine, our bodies as sacred, the changing phases of our lives as holy, our aggression as healthy, our anger as purifying, and our power to nurture and create, but also to limit and destroy when necessary, as the very force that sustains all life. Through the Goddess we can discover our strength, enlighten our minds, own our bodies, and

celebrate our emotions. We can move beyond narrow, constricting roles and become whole.”⁴

The Goddess’s attributes are everything that women strive for, but many of these attributes are ones that women have been forced to subjugate over the centuries. Anger, lust, sensuality, sexuality, and strength are traits that are “unfeminine” and thus must be hidden and denied.

MEN AND THE GODDESS

Men have also suffered under the current patriarchal system. Men have been forced into unnatural beliefs and molds. They’ve been taught that they are superior to women in every way. This fallacy extends into all facets of life including the belief that men have superiority over women both intellectually and spiritually.

Men have been taught that they must be strong and since women are weak that they must deny their so called feminine sides. By denying these traits and oppressing their partners, men are failing to reach their full potential.

“The Goddess is also important for men. The oppression of men in Father God-ruled patriarchy is perhaps less obvious but no less tragic than that of women. Men are encouraged to identify with a model no human being can successfully emulate: to be mini-rulers of narrow universes. They are internally split, into a ‘spiritual’ self that is supposed to conquer their baser animal and emotional natures. They are at war with themselves: in the West, to “conquer” sin; in the East, to ‘conquer’ desire or ego. Few escape from these wars undamaged. Men lose touch with their feelings and their bodies, becoming the ‘successful male zombies’ described by Herb Goldberg in *The Hazards of Being Male*: ‘Oppressed by the cultural pressures that have denied him his feelings, by the mythology of the woman and the distorted and self-destructive way he sees and relates to her, by the urgency for him to “act like a man,” which blocks his ability to respond to his inner promptings both emotionally and physiologically, and by a generalized self-hate that causes him to feel comfortable only when he is functioning well in harness, not when he lives for joy and personal growth.”^{4, 3}

For men, the Goddess represents all that they’ve been searching for in a mate. As the Maiden she is a playful and independent friend who entices the little boy within to come out and play. As the Mother she is the nurturing and loving parent who accepts them as they are but lovingly encourages them to strive to be even more. The Mother is also the sensual, lusty and sexually confident lover who matches his sexual desire and is never afraid to tell him what she wants. As Crone she is the wise grandmother who holds them close to her breast, softly whispers in their ear that which they must hear, then gently pushes them back into the world with a renewed sense of purpose.

The greatest secret is that the Goddess is not an external source of power with which men must connect, but that she is a vital part of their soul. Men must put aside the societal concepts of the feminine and search inside to find and connect with female deity. Only through acknowledging and accepting their inner goddess can men reach their full potential.

RESURGENCE OF GODDESS WORSHIP

There is a growing desire in the hearts of people to rediscover the Goddess. During the time of Pope John Paul there was a movement within the Catholic church to elevate the status of Mary to the level of Jesus, thus making her a goddess.

If we step back and look at the history of our world we might be surprised to see how quickly the pendulum is swinging back toward the balanced worship of the God and Goddess.

“The Goddess was continuously worshipped for thousands of years, 3500 - 500 B.C.E. . . . It is useful to put the ascendancy of the male god, of patriarchy, over the Goddess into perspective. The concept of monotheism is a relatively recent one, first expressed by the ancient Hebrews less than 4000 years ago. The exclusive authority of one universal male god in Western culture goes back less than 1700 years to the conversion of the Roman Emperor Constantine in 320 C.E. and his imposition of Christianity as the state religion. Since that time Christianity has actively attempted to convert the rest of the world to one ‘true’ faith.”¹

The desire of humankind to reconnect with the divine feminine is a wonderful sign that the future of our planet is bright, for through the worship of the Goddess we reconnect with the loving and nurturing sides of our natures. This nurturing feeling extends beyond our immediate families and expands to include everything and everyone we touch. Thus we leave behind us a wake of hopefulness, not hopelessness.

WHO IS THE GODDESS?

This question is really beyond the scope of this class. First because of the all encompassing nature of the Goddess and secondly because of the intimate nature of the Goddess. How you interact and how you envision the Goddess is different than anyone else, thus the intimacy of this relationship.



One of the good ways to understand the energy of the Goddess is to understand how this energy has changed throughout the millenniums.

The first image of the Goddess dates back 25,000 years with Venus of Laussel (shown at the left). The Goddess of Laussel is a sculpture that once stood at the entrance of an Ice Age rock shelter in the Dordogne region of Central France. She holds in her right hand a crescent moon shaped bison horn carved with 13 notches, probably representing the 13 moons of a year. This is the earliest image of a goddess associated with the Moon. Her hand rests on her pregnant belly, perhaps implying fertility or the creative power of the goddess.

The earliest goddess images are female figures with exaggerated breasts and genitalia. These images with their exaggerated female organs speak to what our ancestors thought the Goddess's primary purpose was, the birth and feeding of children. This was not seen as a weakness, but as a divine miracle.

As mankind moved away from their nomadic lifestyle to that of farmers/herders their vision of the Goddess became more specific. The Goddess's physical image and spheres of influence evolved to match that of her followers. Her mythology began to develop along with her personality, likes and dislikes. Soon her image's began to include fish, snakes, birds, grains, musical instruments, and fire.

The God

The God, is the masculine balance of the Goddess. He is the Goddess' son, playmate, lover and companion. But he is so much more than that, because he is a complete entity onto himself. He is not the stereotypical male — harsh and distant. He is all that the male of our species should strive to be. He is the Oak King, Holly King and Dark Lord. He is rebirth, responsibility, and sacrifice. He is gentle, strong, and protective. He is playful, powerful, and understanding.

HOW “THE GOD” BECAME GOD

As we saw in our goddess class the first images of the God appeared during the late Minoan period 3000 BCE – 1450 BCE.

The artwork before 1450 BCE did not include implements of war and strife such as swords, thunderbolts or spears. It is believed that Minoan Crete is the last settlement where men and women lived in harmony.

The matriarchal lifestyle of the Minoans began to shift as waves of nomadic tribes from the North began invading. These invaders are known as “Indo-Europeans” and came from Asia and Northeastern Europe. The invaders brought with them a patriarchal lifestyle that included kings, male priests and warriors. The deities that they had created were angry males who were associated with war. These invaders included the Aryans in India, the Hittites in the Fertile Crescent, the Kurgans in Eastern Europe, the Shemsu Hor in Egypt and the Hebrews in Canaan.

These new war gods were not interested in living in harmony but in conquering and controlling others. These gods demanded complete obedience and were willing to punish those who displeased them. This attitude caused their followers to fear them and a distance began to grow between humans and “God.”

As these war gods conquered new lands they began to rewrite each culture's myths.

“In order to justify their actions, the conquering males had to rewrite the ancient teaching stories, the myths, to reflect a God in their image who would justify their actions: a God who was all-powerful with no competition from a Goddess; one who was devious and revengeful; a deity who could, and did, rape and kill and punish for the slightest infraction of impossible laws. This deity was given the power of creation, in reality something only held by females and the Goddess. The Pagan God devolved into a pale spiritual copy of what He had been and was totally foreign to His true nature.

“This new patriarchal image of the God gave men a false image of maleness. Those males who were born after the destructive rewrites of the myths and

reforming of the God's nature tried desperately to model themselves according to this false deity image, thinking this was the ideal male image."⁵

The shift from a matriarchal society to a patriarchal society changed how land, wealth, and social position were inherited. Instead of these things passing from mother to daughter they began to be passed from father to son. This caused a big problem because the only way to guarantee the paternity of a child was to control the mother. No longer could men be nurturing, loving, and equal partners with their mates.

WHY SHOULD WE VENERATE THE GOD?

Remember the Hermetic maxim "As Above, So Below"? This means that we are a reflection of deity and deity is a reflection of us. If we are a religion of nature then our greatest teachings lie within nature. All around us we see the balance of nature; animals and even plants have male and female members. To venerate one gender of deity and not the other causes an imbalance, a denial of the very essence of being human.

For centuries men and women have been raised on lies. Women have been taught that to be female is to be the lesser of the sexes; that women are powerless and must seek forgiveness for their sins from a masculine deity. After centuries of denying the Goddess it is only natural for women to turn their backs on the God and seek the Goddess.

Men have been trained that to be male they must deny their "feminine" traits; that they are superior to women and that in order to be perceived as strong they must be brutal, violent and hostile. They have been taught to reject their Mothers and all that they represent. So when men find the craft they tend to connect with the Goddess and love her as they were unable to love their own mothers.

Because of this, the worship of the God has taken a secondary place to the worship of the Goddess. Women perceive the God's presence but they don't embrace him; they stand apart from him. They see him through the eyes of individuals that have been subjugated, hurt and injured by his gender. Men perceive him, but the God's version of maleness is a foreign concept and thus all that the God represents is not easily accepted into the male psyche.

Both genders watch him suspiciously. Women wonder if he could possibly be nurturing, loving and yet strong. Men wonder if they could possibly be freed from their current unnatural state and return to the natural loving individuals they were as young children.

We must strive to connect with the true essence of the God, because only through the acceptance of both the God and the Goddess can we create harmony between or

spiritual and mundane halves.

CONNECTING WITH THE GOD

After spending the majority of our lives living with the lie of what manhood should be, connecting with the God can be very difficult. Women have to forgive the men in their lives for living the lie, and release any anger they might hold against all mankind. Men have to forgive themselves for the same reason.

Women have to learn all that manhood should be: loving, nurturing, supportive, trustworthy, and dependable.

Men have to see that they can possess all of these traits and still be perceived as strong. They need to see that they are stronger individuals when they allow themselves to experience all these emotions.

We must strive for balance in all aspects of our lives, and this includes balancing our masculine sides with our feminine sides. It's time for both sexes to reconnect with the energy of the God and make it their own.

It's up to you to seek the God. Look for him in the eyes of the men around you. Look for him in the forests and meadows. Seek him in the old myths, your dreams and your meditations.

He has been waiting patiently for you to return to his loving embrace, but first you have to open the door to your soul and invite him in.

Working with Specific Deities

Many Wiccans and Witches happily worship the three fold Goddess and her consort the Horned God. This type of worship can enrich your life and help you to grow spiritually. You may ask “If that is true then why bother developing a relationship with a particular deity?” We touched on this briefly in the first class by using the example of two “menus” for a full moon ritual. This example showed how working with a specific goddess can influence your choices and enhance your experience.

This type of relationship is not to be entered into lightly. You cannot treat your relationship with deity like a light bulb, *ON* when you need it and *OFF* when you don’t. Like any good relationship it needs continuous maintenance. You will find that making offerings and communing with deity when you aren’t in need of their assistance will create a dynamic such that when you do need their help they will be there without hesitation.

YOU SAY ARTEMIS, I SAY DIANA

You have probably heard, “Aphrodite is the Greek version of Venus” or “Bacchus is the Roman Dionysus”? This is not true. As you research you will find small differences between two deities that are “just the same” but from different cultures. For instance Artemis is a chaste goddess, where as Diana has consorts. Seems like a small difference, but trust me it isn’t.

Once you decide which deity to venerate the real work begins. You must begin researching how that deity was venerated in the past. Research as far back as you can to receive the purest form of veneration, then comes the most difficult part, trusting your gut. You need to be open to receiving information that may not make sense in regards to the information you have gathered.

As an example, when I was beginning to work with Diana I felt that she wanted me to make her a candle. The image that came to my mind was of a green candle with twigs and leaves. This confused me until I linked these items to how she was venerated at Lake Nemi in Italy. There she had a sacred grove and was seen as a goddess who ruled the forest.

This type of thing may happen to you if so, just trust yourself and use this new information to fine tune your interaction with your deity.

WHY RESEARCH IS IMPORTANT

As we spoke about in the first class, deities began as energy that we shaped and nurtured until the energy itself became sentient. This sentient entity is accustomed to

certain types of veneration and offerings, thus by discovering and duplicating the ancient ways of venerating a certain deity you can more easily connect.

This is especially important if you find yourself attracted to a lesser known deity. It is true that the Gods need us as much as we need them and if the deity you are interested in has not been venerated in a long time then your attention may be needed to help revive your deity. The deity will recognize the energy you are putting out and will be more likely to respond.

DAILY MEDITATIONS

The minimum you will need to begin connecting with your chosen deity is a specific incense, oil, a journal, and if possible an offering. Your journal will help you remember anything you receive during the meditations and act as a log of your progress. Other items you may wish to incorporate could include an image of your deity and/or their associated animal, plants or fruit attributed to your deity and so on.

With these items you will begin doing daily meditations as follows. Find a quiet time when you will not be disturbed for at least fifteen minutes. Place before you a table that will act as your altar. Upon your altar place your candle, incense and offerings.

Take some time to calm your mind and release all of the mundane minutia. The easiest way to do this is by taking three slow deep cleansing breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth. Keep breathing deeply and begin relaxing your body. Start with your feet and slowly begin relaxing each part of your body all the way up to your neck and head. Don't forget your arms, hands, and fingers. Pay special attention to your shoulders and neck, as these areas tend to hold the majority of our stress.

Once you are relaxed open your eyes and pick up your candle. If you have discovered some special symbols for your deity you may now etch them into your candle. Then pour some oil into your hands and begin rubbing it into your candle, this process is known as dressing your candle. You only need to dress your candle the first time you use it. While you are dressing your candle keep your mind focused on what you have learned about your deity. Think about all the information you have gathered, their image, their temples, how their followers venerated him/her and so on. Once you feel that this process is complete place your candle back on your altar and light your incense. Next light your candle and begin quietly chanting your deity's name, or if you found a chant that has been used in the distant past use that one instead. Allow yourself to drop into a trance and open yourself up to what your deity may send you. If you are going to be able to keep an eye on the candle you may leave it burning, if not, extinguish it until your next meditation.

You may not get a response right away; sometimes making a connection with a specific deity takes time and dedication and sometimes it never happens.

You must perform this daily meditation for thirty days without fail. This gives you enough time to become comfortable with the mediation and relax. Dedicating thirty days to this meditation also shows how serious you are about establishing this relationship. If you can do this more than once a day, do it, what I'm giving you here are minimums not maximums.

You may start these meditations with a store bought candle, but I recommend that in time you create your candles from scratch. When you create your own candle you can include oils, herbs, and other items that are specific to your goddess. Whether you make your own candles, or purchase them from the store, you must keep the wax remnants. These remnants still contain the power that you placed within them when you dressed your candle. To dispose of the remaining wax you may burn it in a balefire or bury it in the earth so that the energy may be absorbed and the wax becomes neutralized.

Putting It All Together

We have come to the end of this series, but just the beginning of your quest. Hopefully you have a better understanding of who the deities are and have begun working on your relationship with them.

There are just a few thoughts to cover in tonight's class; compatible deities, and what to do when you realize you have been attempting to work with the wrong deity.

COMPATIBLE DEITIES AND PANTHEONS

As we've seen there are many different gods and goddesses and each of them has a different mythos. Some of these mythos are compatible and some are not. You wouldn't want to mix Dionysus with Hera or Demeter with Hades. This is a consideration if you are going to be working with a partner in a magickal space where you will both be invoking the energy of your individual deities.

This is less of a concern in your individual veneration as it is rare that your two, or more, deities will reference each other, let alone interact.

If you create an altar for your deities make a separate altar for each one, most deities don't like to share. I have heard many stories of people putting a statue of a deity on an altar that belonged to a different deity and immediately getting a very strong negative feeling. I've even heard of the offending statue falling off of the altar. So unless you know that the mythos of the deities is that of a mated pair – separate altars are preferred.

CHANGING DEITIES

Sometimes after at least one full moon cycle of veneration you may feel no response. This may be a sign that you have been trying to connect with the wrong deity. Releasing and changing this connection needs to be done with the same reverence with which you have been pursuing this connection.

You can design your own ritual of release or use the following. Follow the same steps you've taken daily in your attempt to connect with deity, including lighting their candle, state something like the following:

“_____ I have been attempting to connect with you and either I am unable to hear your voice or another is awaiting my call. I value how this time has touched my soul and I will hold in my heart all that I have learned about you. Blessed Be.”

Then let the candle burn down. If you have created or purchased anything as an offering for this deity bury it in the Earth and release it.

Wait at least one full moon cycle before you begin attempting to connect with another deity. Spend this time resting and learning from the experiences of the previous 30 days.

SOMETIMES DEITIES ARE TRANSITIONAL

There may be times when a deity may enter your life for a limited period of time. This usually happens when a major life lesson is occurring or about to occur. For instance Athena may step in to give you the strength of a warrior. Hecate may arrive to help you release a loved one or Pan may appear to help you revive your lust for life and so on. How do you know when this is happening? You may start noticing related “coincidences”. Suddenly you may notice a particular bird – a lot! You may find yourself stumbling onto books, websites, or television shows about a particular deity. As the saying goes there are no coincidences, when this happens start doing some research and try connecting to the new deity. If you are already working with a specific deity don’t quit your veneration, just add the new deity.

How will you know when this deity has completed their task and is moving on? When your connection with them wanes. When this happens release them with a ritual like the one written for changing deities. You can modify the verbiage as follows:

“_____ I thank you for assisting me during this time in my life. I value how this time has touched my soul and I will hold in my heart all that I have learned about you. Blessed Be.”

Then let the candle burn down. If you have created or purchased anything as an offering for this deity bury it in the earth and release it.

THAT’S ALL FOLKS

Well at least that is all for me as your teacher. The challenge of this class is that it is experiential and thus cannot be completely taught in this format. The real teaching begins as you put into practice what you have learned here.

It has been a privilege being your instructor

Kathy Cybele

END NOTES

1 The Once and Future Goddess by Elinor Gadon

2 Ibid, 201-2

3 The Spiral Dance by Starhawk

4 The Hazards of Being Male by Herb Goldberg, (New York: Signet, 1977), p.4

5 Lord of Light and Shadow, The Many Faces of the God, by D. J. Conway

RECOMMENDED READING

Earth God Rising — The Return of the Male Mysteries

by Alan Richardson, Copyright 1990, Llewellyn Publications

The Flowering Rod, Men, Sex and Spirituality

by Kenny Klein, Copyright 1993, Delphi Press Inc

Lord of Light and Shadow, The Many Faces of the God

by D. J. Conway, Copyright 1997, Llewellyn Publications

The Once and Future Goddess

by Elinor Gadon, Copyright 1989, Harper One

Spirit of the Witch

by Raven Grimassi, Copyright 2003 Llewellyn Publications

The Witches God

by Janet and Stewart Farrar, Copyright 1989, Phoenix Publishing Inc.

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Kathy Cybele was raised in an Irish household where her mother filled her days with fairytales, Brownies (both the chocolate and the small mischievous kind) and magick. Thus, when Kathy found the path of Witchcraft in 1988, she knew she had come home.

In 1992 Kathy joined a Celtic/Gardnerian coven, received her degrees, and was elevated to the rank of elder and High Priestess. Kathy founded and lead The Circle of the Sacred Meadow from 1998 – 2010.

Kathy still enjoys teaching in local venues and has taught over 200 classes.