

## Living the Inner Seasons of our Lives by Raven Murphy



Who can resist the beauty of this transitional season as we find ourselves unpacking our favourite sweater and taking long drowsy walks in the woods not to mention breathing in the inviting aroma of burning leaves. Everywhere there are signs of autumn. Geese honk their farewells as they begin their journey to warmer lands. Squirrels scurry about filling their winter cupboards with nuts and acorns. Animal coats thicken in preparation for winter. It is harvest time. A sense of completion and accomplishment enfolds the land. Mother Earth invites us to gather the fruits of her womb.

One of my fondest childhood memories are the times when my mother and I would retrieve the vegetables out of our summer garden and begin a process of canning and preserving. How I enjoyed the feeling of celebration for all the hard work of planting and tending to our garden throughout many unbearably hot days. After enjoying the sweet corn, green and yellow beans, carrots and so many other delicious treats throughout the summer we would approach our garden one last time to dig out that last of what could be yielded and made to use.

Coming from a family of eleven siblings, my mother was taught early on that wasted food was not acceptable. She had a way of coming up with recipes for just about anything. "If it grows, we eat it" she announced one day when picking green tomatoes from our garden. Mom had an amazing ability to create tasty treats out of anything. Her green tomatoes were transformed into a delicious green tomato jam that, although was delicious had to be eaten with one's eyes closed because it really did look like snot on toast! (A great trick I used to love to play on my friends.) Mom's famous pickled beet recipe is famous in our family with its perfect pinch of cinnamon and just a hint of clove. These precious red rubies were only opened for the first time on Christmas day. The festive colour and sweet taste brought a spirit of abundance and gratitude to our table as happy satisfaction settled in our hearts.

Although the natural cycles of nature that bring the harvest season is obvious, there is more to it than meets the eye. Mother Earth provides valuable teachings through metaphors that, with a bit of self awareness, can reveal her invitation for each of us to explore, expand and experience the awe and wonder of this sacred season.

Autumn is a wondrous metaphor for the transformation that takes place in the human heart. Take for instance the falling leaves. What caused the leaf to let go? Was it the rain, aggressive winds or a gentle breeze? Autumn is the season of letting go. When in your life have you had to let go of something? Were you successful by way of rain (tears) or perhaps a storm (anger) or a gentle breeze (allowing time)? What needs to fall from your tree of life? Just as the naked beauty of the branches can be seen, and the birds' abandoned nests become visible; we learn that when we allow certain things to fall away in our lives, there are other things we can see more clearly.

In the midst of this colourful harvest season, we are also called from our labours to celebrate the festival of gratitude. I like to walk my precious K-9 in the early mornings when the grass is wet from the dew of the night sky and the sun is preparing a grand entrance. I marvel at the sun's perfect timing as it caresses and transforms each blade of grass from wet to dry. My heart expands as I am gifted with yet another nature metaphor. I begin to ask myself. Who brings sunshine into my life? Who has helped to dry my tears and feel joy again? As I walk along the dying leaves and the wet grass, I am guided to live the inner season of my life by recognizing the importance of energizing my spirit. I turn my face to the changing brilliant colors of autumn as I open my eyes to see my own beauty. In this moment my heart swells with gratitude as I embrace the courage to slow down and rest in the arms of Mother Earth, in her silence and comfort.

May this autumn season lead you into deeper peace.



As a dynamic speaker, educator, storyteller and author, Raven wholeheartedly shares her experiences and the wisdom of her Ancestors through a wide variety of presentations, workshops, retreat days and guest appearances.

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