

## Episode 96: Setting Spiritual Goals || What makes a good goal?

Welcome back to Round the Cauldron where we talk theology, philosophy, and everyday life as a modern witch. Today is the very first episode of 2021; it might be a little short, not sure yet, but we're going to be talking about setting good goals for your spiritual practice. So if you're ready to hop into the show, grab some coffee, pull up a seat, and join me 'round the cauldron.

Before we talk about those tips, I just want to say hello. Hello to 2021. We are mostly moved into our new home. You might actually hear some construction noises in the background. They are still doing construction in this area so you might hear like the beeping -- I don't know, maybe you can't.

Anyway, you might hear some background noise of that. What you won't hear are neighbors running up and down their floor or their dogs barking and yapping all day long. So we're in our new home. I've already cleansed the space. I have already introduced myself to the Land spirits. So here is to crossing our fingers that 2021 is a better year for everyone involved.

I also want to say congratulations to the winners of the giveaway. I picked the winners of the giveaway on January 8th and those emails have already been sent out. So check your email if you entered to see if you won one of the awesome prizes that I gave away, plus one of the extras.

So why do I want to talk about setting goals for spirituality? Well, the first obvious reason is because it's a new year. During this time of year we are constantly bombarded with imagery and slogans and "new year, new me" or "let's reach our weight loss goals together! We can do it!" or "Kick those bad habits! The new year is the best time to do that. Let's set resolutions!"

I've talked about why I don't like resolutions in the past and instead I prefer to set goals for myself. So I wanted to share my tips for how I breakdown my goals and then go about either achieving them, changing them, or giving up on them altogether.

One of the reasons that I don't like resolutions is because there is such a large stigma -- maybe stigma is not the right word. There is such a large expectation, I guess you could say, about setting resolutions and making them public because then it's out in the world. And what happens if you fail? Or what happens if you decide that that resolution is just no longer going to work for you? Do you give up? Because then everybody is going to see that you gave up because it's already public. So I feel like setting goals for yourself is different than setting a resolution. Resolutions generally are very broad, very vague, and don't necessarily come with a plan to back up the resolution.

I could say as a resolution, yeah, I'm going to get in better shape. But what does that mean? Does that mean getting fit and healthy? Does that mean diet? Does that mean becoming a different shape like an apple or a square? That's, you know, that's besides the point, but resolutions for the new year I just find are very riddled with guilt, and

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there's a lot of shame around resolutions if you fail, or if you just decide to give up on it. So I tend to go with goals over resolutions.

Are spiritual goals different than your personal goals in your everyday life? Not necessarily. They may be different if you make them different, and I always recommend setting goals for your spirituality just so that you have a way to measure your growth if that's something that you're into. If you don't care, or if you're just like, yeah, I'm just going to do it and if I learn something new, cool. If I don't, then that's fine too. Then that's totally okay. I'm here for the people who need to have that measurable growth, who need to have a way to hold themselves accountable, and who need the guidance, I guess you could say, on setting goals and making them achievable. I'm also here for the people who set their goals only to realize six weeks from now that that goal just doesn't work for you anymore. And I'm here to say it's okay to abandon a goal that no longer fits your needs, okay? If it doesn't work, get rid of it.

So let's go over a couple of things real quick regarding what a spiritual goal is. Now, in this sense I'm using the word spiritual in a very broad sense. For me, this is going to cover any sort of new age practice, any sort of occult practice or witchcraft practice, or Pagan practice -- basically all of that encompassed together under the umbrella of spirituality, alright? So if it applies to you, great. If it doesn't, that's okay too.

So for me, setting spiritual goals is important because it helps me track my progress. It helps me hold myself accountable and it also gives me something to do. It's a way for me to track the things that I'm interested in, but also make sure that I am doing the things I said I was going to do. So spiritual goals could be that you want to maybe meditate more, or you want to read more books, or maybe you want to learn a new divination practice, or you want to finally figure out who that is that's trying to contact you from the other side, from the Otherworld. Those are all spiritual goals, and your spiritual goals don't need to be profound. It can be as simple as you want to meditate once a week for 10 minutes. Or you know, maybe you want to learn how to use your pendulum.

Those aren't very profound goals, but that's okay because one of the reasons that we set goals is for those goals to be personal to us and important to us. And that leads me into the next section. How do you figure out what a good goal is for you? Please keep this in mind that I'm only speaking from my own experience and my own opinion when it comes to setting goals. You might have a different opinion. You might have learned different processes. That's okay! So yeah, now that we have that out of the way...

I have a couple of things written down in my notes that I think are important to consider when setting goals for yourself or making goals for the new year, or even just like the month of January or the next six months. The first thing that I think is really important when it comes to setting goals for yourself is that your goals need to be realistic for you. What's realistic for you is going to be different than what's realistic for me and for, you know, your parents or your best friend or the neighbor down the street. Everyone's reality is slightly different. Everyone's truth is different, so your goals need to align with

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your truth and your reality. For me it would not be unreasonable for me to say, okay, I want to learn Ogham and this year, okay? Or I want to learn Irish this year because those are two of my goals. However, if I were to have a goal of yeah, 2020 is gonna be my year! I'm going to make \$1,000,000. That's not really realistic for me whatsoever because of the type of work that I do. That's not realistic. However, if you are in a line of work where that's possible for you, then a goal of making \$1,000,000 would be realistic for you.

Maybe you don't live near a body of water, or let's just go with the ocean, for example. Maybe you don't live near the ocean and going to the ocean for you is a journey. Like maybe you have to take the weekend and do it like that. You couldn't realistically have a goal of going to the beach every single day because it's physically not possible for you. It's not realistic. However, you would be able to set a goal of going to the beach once a month. That would be more likely to be possible because it allows for better time management, better fitting to your reality. So all of that to say that one of the first things that I think is important when setting goals for yourself is to make sure they are realistic for you.

You also want to make sure that the goals you set for yourself are interesting for you. I'm not going to set a goal to learn runes, for example, because it's not interesting to me. I have no interest in learning how to read runes or throw runes or use them for divinatory purposes. It doesn't fit my practice and I'm just not interested, so setting a goal to learn how to read runes just isn't practical for me because it wouldn't happen because if I'm not interested in it, I'm not going to do it. So when you set goals for yourself in your spirituality, if it doesn't interest you, don't do it. This is something that I find a lot of people are pressured into -- not necessarily pressured actively, but pressure just by being in a community that people feel like they need to learn absolutely everything that has to do with witchcraft or paganism or spirituality because they see other people doing it too.

But if you're not interested, there's really no point. I'll use astrology for an example. I see, oh my gosh, witches and pagans everywhere using astrology and talking about astrology and sun sign this, and moon sign this, and rising this, and this is in my 12th house. That's great, and it's interesting to read about but for me, I have zero interest in learning astrology because it just isn't something that I want to learn. It's I mean I, I don't need to look up other people's charts. I have no interest in that. If I'm interested in my own astrological chart, I'm going to go to someone who knows what they're talking about, but for me just to learn astrology just because? I really have no interest. So make sure your goals are interesting to you. And don't feel pressure from external sources to set a goal for something that you're not interested in just because that's what everyone else is doing.

And you also want to make sure that whatever goals you're setting for your spiritual practice are important to you. If it's not important to you and you set a goal for it, you might fall into the trap of giving yourself way too much time to accomplish the goal and eventually just forgetting about it, because it's not something that you feel strongly

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about. For example, for me, learning Ogham and learning Irish, those are things that are very important to me because they are part of my practice and part of honoring the living, breathing culture that is Irish paganism. I am not an Irish person. I was born here in the United States. I do have Irish ancestry, but that's not really important when it comes to Irish paganism or being mindful of the living culture that is thriving in Ireland right now. So those are important to me.

If I were to set a goal, going back to astrology again, of learning about astrology, it's not important to me. I probably either just wouldn't do it or I would forget and just like, okay, you know, whatever. I just -- I failed at that goal. It's fine, no big deal. So set important goals. And before we talk about my process and this, it's called S.M.A.R.T. goals that I learned in the quote-unquote "corporate world" when I was working for some hospitals, I want to talk about giving up on your goals. Because we are always told that you never give up, right? And you just keep pushing forward if it's something that you want to do or you said you're going to do. Just keep going. Never give up, right? I call bullshit, okay?

It's okay to give up on a goal that no longer suits you. And I know I've had some conversations with people in some Discord servers, I think even in my own Discord server, about how they were learning something and then something else happened and they shifted focus and they abandoned one goal and picked up another. That's okay. If these goals are only for you, only for your purposes, then I say it's fine. If it no longer suits you, if it's no longer something that you want to do, or something that you're interested in, it's okay to stop doing it. It's okay. There's nothing wrong with quitting or giving up on something that no longer serves you, alright? That's something that I don't think enough people in this world talk about.

Now that we have gone through all of that information, what a goal is and all of my random examples, want to talk about a method that I learned when I was working for some hospitals on setting goals. Now in that context it was setting career goals, but the S.M.A.R.T. method can be applied for setting literally any goal, alright? And in this case, "smart" is an acronym. So when we set S.M.A.R.T. goals, we want to make sure they are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-based.

And these are all things that I think I've already talked about a little bit, but I'm going to go through the smart method with one of my examples of one of my goals, okay? So we'll start with specific. Have a specific goal. For me, I will use the goal of learning to read Ogham for Divination, alright? If you don't know what Ogham is, it's an ancient Irish alphabet that was commonly used as grave markers, and it is now used as a divinatory practice. They are commonly carved on wooden staves and thrown I believe in a manner that is similar to tossing runes, but again, this is something that I am going to be learning how to do. So my specific goal is to learn how to read Ogham for divination. Now, this is something that is measurable. I can track my progress and what I have learned and what I still have left to learn. I can do this by setting a smaller goal. Okay, so what I do is I take my larger goal and I break it down into smaller chunks to make it more manageable, make it more realistic for me because if I just look at the big

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picture of "I want to do this big thing in 2021," okay, that's great but what are the smaller steps that I need to take to get to that bigger picture?

So breaking that down and making it measurable in this case for reading Ogham would be picking one feda, so one letter of the Ogham alphabet each week to learn, and this is something that's achievable. There are only 20 feda, and if I want to learn through 2021, that's 52 weeks. So if I take one feda a week, that's only 20 weeks. This gives me wiggle room too, so that during measuring my achievement level, I guess, for learning the Ogham, if I take one a week and then the next week, I'm going to pick a new one, I would quiz myself first. Okay, what do I know? What do I don't? What? What do I don't - - what don't I know? Am I comfortable with this feda or do I need to spend another week with it? And then that gives me that wiggle room to really make sure that I am learning it in a way that is going to be retained and not just passively -- you know, a passing...What am I trying to say? Like make it in my long-term memory, not my short-term memory, if that makes any sense. Learning Ogham is also something that's relevant to me and this goes back to what I said about making sure that your goals are interesting and important and realistic.

Learning Ogham is relevant to me because it's important to me. I find it super interesting and keeping it time bound to a whole year makes it realistic. I hope that breakdown of how I set my goals and plan for them makes sense. It was a little strange for me to write it all out like that because normally it's something that I just think about and just then do, but I'm trying to be more mindful this year and writing things down and then planning for them that way also helps me look back on the progress that I have made and not get stuck in that rut of oh my gosh, I haven't done anything this year. You know, we all get like that. Tracking my progress like this and setting my goals and creating plans is a good way for me to keep track of everything that I am doing.

I hope this episode was helpful to anybody that needed a little boost in setting their spiritual goals for the coming year or the coming six months or whatever. Make sure that you're following me on all of my social media. I would love to hear if you have any goals that you're trying to reach or something that you want to achieve this year 2021 and I will talk to you soon.

Bye for now.

I'd like to give a big shout out to my patrons over on Patreon. Thank you so much for all of your support. If you'd like to join me over on Patreon, you can do so at [patreon.com/roundthecauldron](https://patreon.com/roundthecauldron) and get patron-exclusive perks and content and also help support what I do here on YouTube and my podcast. Don't forget, I also have a shop where you can book a tarot reading with me, pick up a guided meditation, or one of my crocheted goodies like an altar cloth or a goddess doll.

Thank you all so much and I will talk to you soon.