



# 5 Simple Rituals for Autumn

## 1. The Nature Walk

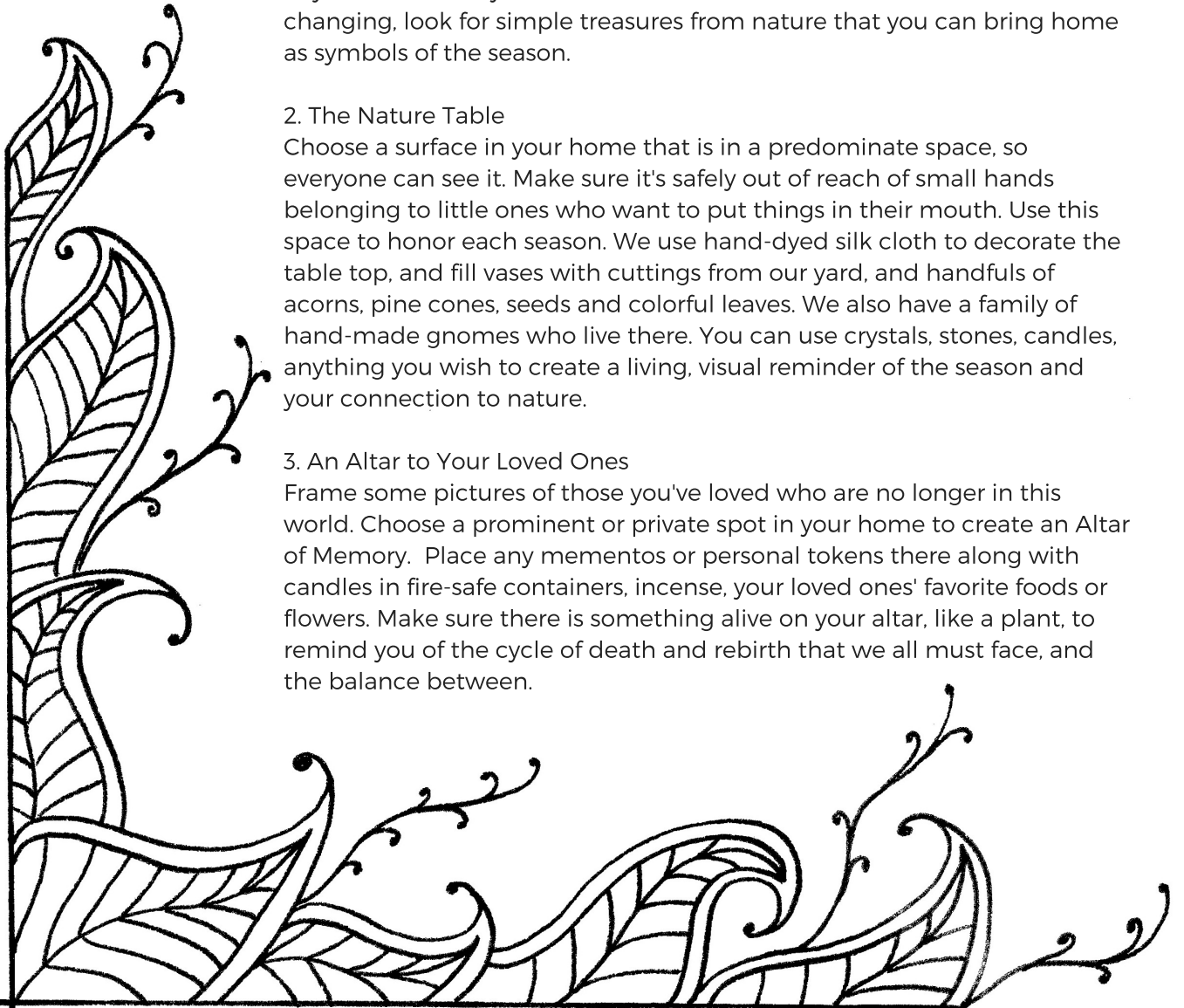
Step outside, in a park or wild space where there are trees. Use your yard if you have one. Keep this quiet if you can, and if you have little ones with you, encourage them to be quiet too, or sing a calming song together as you walk. Feel the changing air, smell the richness of the fallen leaves, and any other aromas you discover. Hear how the sounds of nature are changing, look for simple treasures from nature that you can bring home as symbols of the season.

## 2. The Nature Table

Choose a surface in your home that is in a predominate space, so everyone can see it. Make sure it's safely out of reach of small hands belonging to little ones who want to put things in their mouth. Use this space to honor each season. We use hand-dyed silk cloth to decorate the table top, and fill vases with cuttings from our yard, and handfuls of acorns, pine cones, seeds and colorful leaves. We also have a family of hand-made gnomes who live there. You can use crystals, stones, candles, anything you wish to create a living, visual reminder of the season and your connection to nature.

## 3. An Altar to Your Loved Ones

Frame some pictures of those you've loved who are no longer in this world. Choose a prominent or private spot in your home to create an Altar of Memory. Place any mementos or personal tokens there along with candles in fire-safe containers, incense, your loved ones' favorite foods or flowers. Make sure there is something alive on your altar, like a plant, to remind you of the cycle of death and rebirth that we all must face, and the balance between.





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## 4. Illuminate Your Shadows

Find a quiet spot, ideally outdoors if you have a space that is private. Make sure you have a fire-proof container (something metal) or fire-safe spot (a fireplace or fire pit), some small pieces of paper, a writing instrument, and some matches. Quietly reflect on your personal shadows, the darker places within you that you find most troubling and difficult to embrace. Write down one word that describes each shadow, a word that is meaningful to you. Once you have filled as many pieces of paper as you can, begin lighting each on fire, letting each one burn out in your fire-proof container. You are not burning these shadows away. Rather, you are illuminating each one, casting warmth over them, and bringing them into the light to hold them closer to you in a loving way.

## 5. The Harvest Feast

This ritual can be as elaborate as a large meal that you prepare for or with friends, to as simple as a dinner for one. What's important is that you incorporate the flavors, aromas, and colors that you most associate with the season. Savor this sensory experience, create an atmosphere of warmth and beauty, even if it feels silly to do so 'just for you'. Autumn is a time to creatively imagine ways to capture warmth and stave off the cold of the impending Winter, and to celebrate the light that is ever-present. Without the light, there are no shadows. Repeat this ritual whenever you wish to give light or gain some light for yourself.

