

## CREATING AN ALTAR

Have you ever walked into a church, temple, healing space, yoga studio or other sacred space and felt the subtle shift in energy? Perhaps you feel more peaceful or centered. You notice the stillness. Your heart expands. Things start to become clearer. What if you could experience that every day in your own home? How would your life be different if you began each day with clarity and peace? One of the simplest ways to cultivate a relationship with the sacred is to create an altar in your home. This week, we'll begin the ritual of creating a sacred altar. Here's how to do it:

1. **Find a place that you can dedicate to sacred work.** Your altar can be the corner of a room, a shelf, a small table, or even the top of a dresser. What's important is that you claim it as a sacred space and begin to treat it that way. If you'd like to set a specific intention for your altar (such as personal healing) or design it around a theme (such as the four directions/elements, the chakras, etc.), begin to think about that now.

2. **Intentionally and mindfully, clean your altar space.** Remove all clutter and wipe your altar with a damp cloth. When the space is physically clean, consider burning sage or incense or diffusing an essential oil. My favorite essential oils for clearing are sage, rosemary, lavender, orange, frankincense, hyssop, spikenard and palo santo. When you're done, your altar should feel clean and clear.

3. **Begin gathering sacred items for your altar.** Find items that are personally meaningful to you, make you feel peaceful or bring you joy. Some suggestions:

- a prayer rug, scarf, or fabric that looks and feels pleasing
- pictures of any spiritual masters you feel a connection to (Christ, Buddha, angels, goddesses, etc.)
- sacred earth items - rocks, seashells, pinecones, seeds
- crystals or gem stones
- flowers or plants
- candles
- prayer beads
- poems, sacred books or inspiring words
- mirror
- chimes or bells
- a sand tray to draw in
- anything that feels sacred to you!

Consider designating one area of your altar to honor the earth and the changing seasons. Here, you can keep seasonal items from nature (i.e., fresh flowers in the summer, leaves in the fall, seeds in the winter, etc.)

4. **Arrange your altar in a way that feels pleasing and has personal meaning.** Be intentional and mindful as you place each item.

Take your time with this ritual. Your altar is a reflection of your divine nature. It should make you feel peaceful and joyful. It's a place you can come back to anytime you want to reconnect with your sacred self.

The more times you return to your altar, the stronger the energetic connection will become. Sacred places around the world were made sacred by the devotional practices of the people who visited them. Acknowledge your altar every day in some way. It's a great place to do your one-minute meditation. Other ways to honor your altar include bowing to it, saying a prayer or simply touching your sacred items.

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