

How can you more fully flourish in your life? What do you need to let go?

By Robert Mulhall Jun 7, 2024 2 min to read



Participants stretch and breathe before a class at Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health in Stockbridge in 2020. Staff at Kripalu use this time before summer to ask themselves what they can shed in their lives in order to fully bloom.

STEPHANIE ZOLLSHAN — THE BERKSHIRE EAGLE

In the Irish and Celtic Wheel, we have just had the celebration of the sacred fire festival of Bealtaine (Beltane), often celebrated on May 1. It was a time when all the fires of Ireland were extinguished and relit from one central fire on the Hill of Uisneach.

This was a time to honor the element of fire, the arriving season of summer, the medicine of the snake, the bear and the sun. Still today, at the beginning of May back in Ireland many will gather at Uisneach and light the fires. Often two fires were lit during the festival for cattle to be driven between to help cleanse them of disease and ensure the future health of the herd and the families they fed.

In these times it can feel like we are living between two fires all the time. Things feel intense on so many levels, some days it just feels challenging to be alive and engaged in our world.

I often reflect on what is needed in these times, from me as a father, as a leader, as a citizen of this world, from Kripalu, and from our community. I know from my experience that for me to live into what is being asked of me, I must keep walking between the fires and releasing all that does not align. It is a dance between courage, fear and faith, allowing myself to be completely human in my fear and at the same time open to a vast well of courage and faith to take the next step, to show up, or as Maya Angelou guides us to "have enough courage to trust love one more time and always one more time."

Since 2008 — in my own life — I feel like I have been walking between these two fires constantly. With such a path I often can get caught in this one aspect of living, the walking between the fires.

"Sometimes letting things go is an act of far greater power than defending or hanging on," said [Ekhart Tolle](#), spiritual teacher.

The festival of Bealtaine invites us into two paths of practice: The practice of letting go as we walk between the fires and the practice of lighting the central fire or igniting within us that which is our full expression. Just as the sun shines fully in the season of summer, can we too allow ourselves to shine fully? Not just as an act of individual fullness but from a knowing that we are part of an undivided web and that as we shine fully, we may give light and hope to others as they walk through the fires and light their own central flames. As we light our own fire, may we do so with brilliant care to ensure that we are stepping forward into this season full of love, released of hate, full of curiosity, released of judgment.

In order to fully emerge, the butterfly must let go of being the caterpillar, the flower must let go of being the bulb. What are we being asked to shed about who we think we are in order to fully blossom?

At Kripalu, as we do our work and serve the community, we regularly reflect on this question of "what do we need to let go of in this time to be able to more fully flourish?"

I look forward to next month when we can continue this thread of inquiry and see what needs watering in our life.

Robert Mulhall is the CEO and president of Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health in Stockbridge.

f t e b



Robert Mulhall



PREV

NEXT