

Nick Thomsen Oral History

Renee: 0:01

This is Renee Cyr conducting an interview with Nicholas Thompson on Sunday June 23, 2019 at 4:00PM at the Lawrence Public Library

Nick: 0:00

I'm walking into this blind by the way, without the questions.

Renee:

Totally fine.

Nick:

But I'm totally fine with whatever you have to ask me.

Renee: 0:08

All right. And everything is voluntary. So if you don't like any question, just let me know.

Nick:

Of course.

Renee:

Alright, let's start. What is the name of your coven? And where is it located?

Nick: 0:23

The coven I am more or less unofficially involved in would be the White Rose Coven. And it's not exactly what I would call official, per se. It's more like something that was formed by one of my friends, friends. And it's a way for anyone of the Pagan community to just come together and discuss things and just try to celebrate events together. Not too long ago, we had the spring equinox, Mabon I believe it is.

Renee:

Mabon is fall.

Nick:

No

Renee:

Ostara?

Nick:

Yes, Ostara. As you can see, I get a little bit confused with that sometimes.

Renee:
It's alright.

Nick:
Anyhow, we had an event like that at Clinton lake where we just got together, made a few offerings, and lit some candles, focused on our intents of what we wanted for the next year. And like I said, it's not exactly something I would say I'm officially a part of, but it's the closest thing we have to a coven here in Lawrence, Kansas that I'm aware of.

Renee 1:27
Yes.

Nick1:30
So I'm surprised you actually reached out to us, or heard of us. But Jaidynn has been very good at finding people. So kudos to her.

Renee 1:38
You are listed on Witchvox, but there's not a lot of information. So I also don't know a lot about what it looks like as a coven. I've spoken to some of the Topeka covens, which seem a little more set. But Lawrence is still very hard to pin down with our Pagan community. And how long have you been practicing Paganism?

Nick: 2:10
Since about my sophomore year in college.

Renee:
Okay.

Nick:
So since I was about like, maybe 19 or 20. I was raised Methodist and Lutheran. My step mom was Catholic. So I kind of have that sort of smorgasbord of religious beliefs growing up in the household. Stepdad was atheist as well. And so there was plenty of, plenty of discussions about that sometimes. But finally, when I left, I just said... Sorry, am I getting ahead of myself

Renee: 2:45
Nope. All you.

Nick: 2:48
But when I left, I just never felt that close to the church. I mean, whenever I would go to the church, I would feel like there is some sort of presence and that there definitely was something there. But I don't know, it was just the politics and the interpretations that drove me away. I felt like, people were so focused on trying to make this...I don't know. They were more interested in a government than religion, if that makes any sort of sense.

Renee:

Yeah.

Nick:

And that's kind of what drove me away from it, and decided to invest my time in other areas where, I don't know, I felt like I could just be solo. Practice on my own, rather than just having to feel confined to what others believe in a book, you know.

Renee: 3:38

And how did you learn about Paganism? Was there a book or person that inspired you?

Nick:

Well, I mean, you see TV shows about it. And, you know, the thing is, like, with all those 90s and early 2000s videos, you see witches as either you know, these, I don't like sort of teenyboppers like Sabrina the Teenage Witch, which are kind of like trivialized, and it's made fun. And it's meant to induce some sort of like positive response. So I mean, that was positive in its own response. But you see, like these things like Hocus Pocus or these..what else was there. Sorry, my mind is kind of fried right now. I'm used to working night shifts. I haven't had my coffee yet. But long story short, witches are either trivialized or they are just kind of lumped in. And it's just all big baddies, you know. So when I got to college, though, I met some friends who were practicers, practitioners. They were mostly of the Celtic pantheon variety. And so when I first started, I decided to get into the Greek side, because part of me felt... Well, as you can see, I'm not exactly from that descent or anything. But part of me thought it was kind of ironic that people still consider them Pagan, even though they were like the fore-founders of government and democracy. So I thought, hmmm I would invest time in there because they were the creators of that form of government. And after a while, I just kind of decided to invest more in like, what my bloodline is, what my ancestors worshiped. So I tend to focus on the Norse and Celtic pantheons myself. Though, I have been interested in researching like the Egyptians and a few of the Eastern philosophies, just to see what their beliefs are.

Renee: 5:43

How do you define your own religious path?

Nick: 5:54

I would definitely say Pagan. When we get into the whole labeling thing, if we're going to get technical here, Pagan is just anything that is a non Abrahamic religion. And even though I would say that, I do believe that the Christian God does exist. And I do believe that all the other gods in all the other religions do exist. It's just not a path that I am loyal to myself, if that makes any sense.

Renee:

Yes

Nick:

I would say, if I had absolutely described myself in terms of a religion, definitely Pagan with some Unitarian Universalist views. Because I think it's important to realize that, no matter what your faith is, we all kind of are part of this larger ocean, even though it delves off into all of these smaller rivers and streams.

Renee: 6:53

Nice. How long have you been a member of Coven of the White Rose?

Nick: 7:01

Since I moved here back in September. My roommates, they were friends with Jaidyn and they were part of the organization for quite some time. And when I came here, I thought of it as a way to like meet people, make more friends. So. But I'll be honest, when I say that it's not like I said, something that I would say I'm fully involved in as much as I would be. Because getting together has been pretty hard with everyone's schedules, and just trying to recruit new people trying to keep everyone involved.

Renee:

And how involved would you say, are you with your religion in general? Do you practice on your own?

Nick: 7:41

I practice on my own, yeah. Always set a time on Sundays, and Mondays, ironically enough, just to sit down and just commune with my gods. Just ask myself, if I'm on the right path, ask myself what I need to reevaluate in my life. It's definitely, I guess, my way of going to church, I guess you could call it.

Renee: 8:12

How would you describe your personal general beliefs? What would you say are the defining characteristics?

Nick: 8:20

Well, right off the bat, as I would say, I wouldn't say...The one thing that drove me away from Christianity itself was the idea that there's one true God, there is one true religion. And it just drove me insane when all these people within Christianity had all these labels, all these offsets, all these ideas. And it's like, at this point, we might as well be worshipping several different gods. The way people are just, you know, so so, so so intent on getting their own identities, their own governments, their own groups themselves, you know. It just kind of drove me insane. So for me, right off the bat, I would have to say that my idea is, there's not exactly a true religion, there's just an idea of what you believe in. So past that, I would definitely have to say that, I believe in the idea that my ancestors are watching over me. And I feel that what's important to people themselves is to call upon whatever strength they can from their bloodlines, if they can. I

think that's definitely something that I hold to be true, for myself. And I think it's important to ask that, because without them, I wouldn't be here where I am today, you know. But in the same breath, you have to have confidence in yourself. You can't also be beholden to what others believe. So know where you came from, know your roots, then branch out. I think that's kind of my idea in a nutshell.

Renee: 10:02

And which gods or goddesses do you particularly worship?

Nick: 10:09

Odin, then there's Thor, from the Norse pantheon. Then from the Celtic ones Dagda. I've always been drawn to the idea of knowledge and money for its own sake. Even though at times, I probably just kind of just get it all twisted around in my head. Almost kind of like a glass that's just overflowing with water, you know, just going all over the place. It's like, "ahh there's too much, I can't keep it all together." But it's definitely those three, but the two, that I worship the most of are Sol and Mani, The Sun goddess and the moon God from the Norse Pantheon. I just like the idea how within their offset, within their theos and everything, that the sun and the moon plays such a vital, important part in it. Because their idea is that even after Ragnarök, the sun is going to keep rising and keep setting. So even after Sol is devoured by one of the wolves that come across, and just pretty much raise havoc on everything, there's always going to be somebody who takes up the mantle and just keeps going, you know. It's almost like the idea of infinity, you know.

Renee: 11:24

Do you believe in and seek assistance from other supernatural beings: dragons, fearies, angels, others. So you did mention ancestor spirits, anything else?

Nick: 11:37

There have been a few times actually where, not willingly per se, but there have been some weird incidents, to put it mildly, where presences have been made known to me. Most times in my dreams. I would have to say that in terms of like any practices, or magic or witchcraft, or anything like that, I do focus a lot on divination. If there is information, that I would like to glean. Most times I focus on tarot cards, but I've been interested in doing other things like palm reading, and tea leaves, and crystals and all this other things. But kind of what makes it difficult is just the commercialization of our faith and beliefs. And, you know, you can go on to things like, you know, Wikipedia, or Google or anything like that, and just get all these articles that are out there. And you can read as many books as you like. But what makes it hard sometimes is that everyone says, well, looking for any one true source is almost like looking for a needle in a haystack. You get so many people that say, "this is what worked for me". And, you know, "this is the one true path." And when that happens, I just kind of steer clear of that because... like I said, I think it's important to go our own ways. Seek help if you want it, and if something rings true for you then explore, you know. But I don't know, with as strong as my faith is, it's kind of hard to be all, how do I put this, It's hard to branch out when there's a small bit of skepticism as well. Or at

least when it comes to other people, I guess I should say. I know I probably sound a little hypocritical in that regard but...

Renee: 13:40

What are your beliefs about the afterlife?

Nick: 13:45

My belief is that. once you die, If you've submitted to some sort of creed, then your thoughts become your reality. At that point, your spirit is no longer bound to your body, your spirit is no longer bound to this place, unless you wish it to be. At that point, you'd go to Valhalla, you go to heaven, you go to the unknown, wherever it is that your heart desires, and whatever it is that you've more or less created for yourself in that image, you know?

Renee: 14:19

And do you believe in reincarnation? Or is it like a permanent?

Nick: 14:22

I do believe in reincarnation to some extent. Like I said, it's one of those ideas, where do you believe in it? And if so, that kind of makes it so. I'm not sure if I can fully believe it 100% for myself, though, because.... I don't know, the idea of just taking a really long sleep just sounds interesting sometimes, you know.

Renee: 14:59

How do you see the relationship of your beliefs with Witchcraft or magick?

Nick: 15:05

You mean, like what I personally believe in?

Renee: 15:07

Yeah. Do you practice magic? Is that part of your religious practices?

Nick: 15:14

I do some rituals, and I do commune as best as I can, with the gods. Though, if they start talking back, I might go and call the psychiatrists just to be doubly sure. I'd like to believe that they show themselves in ways that are not quite so direct. But yes, I'm very open to the idea of magic and witchcraft. And I think that it's important to learn about these tools that were used in the past.

Renee: 15:47

And have you been involved in other covens, churches, or religious organizations, prior to this?

Nick: 15:56

Prior to like, when I set up on my own, you say?

Renee: 15:59

Yeah,

Nick 16:00

Well, like I said, I was part of the Methodist Church on my dad's side, Lutheran on my mother's. Stepmom was Catholic, stepdad was an atheist. I mean...

Renee: 16:11

Were you attending all of those churches?

Nick16:14

Mostly the Methodist and Lutheran ones, There was like maybe one or two events that I went to with my step mom, but no for the most part, my dad's a Protestant, so we never really went to that church. So... but she attended with him, most of the time. She's from Oklahoma, so she hasn't really found a church that she really enjoys up here. But after high school, when I went to college, there are a few times where I went to the Episcopal churches, because my friends, one of my friends who got me involved in it, his his mom was actually a minister at that church. So you know, hanging out with him, you know, there'd be the occasional you know, let's go to church on Sunday, you know, more or less just to make my mom happy, you know, just to meet other people, you know, cuz I'm kind of a social being in that regard. So will I go to church, if I'm feeling up to it, you know, and if I'm feeling sociable enough.

Renee: 17:16

Why do you think people are attracted to this religious body? Either your coven particularly or Paganism in general?

Nick:17:26

I think in terms of Paganism, in general, it's the idea that.... it's one of two things. One, we've reached this point in life, where we are recognizing that the old way of doing things just is not cutting it out for everyone. Like with the idea of the church, like Roman Catholicism and everything that's been here since... If history, if my history lessons serve me right, that was like the progenitor and everything for all the other like religions, and everything offshoots and everything. So people will say, you know, it's a very patriarchal society, one that is very 10 step process, for lack of a better term. But people are realizing, you know, the old ways just aren't doing it. And these evolving times, you know, we can't always just, you know, we can't always live a lifestyle that was perfect, you know, thousands of years ago. And so, you know, some churches are realizing this and starting to make make progress in that regard. But for some people, it's just not enough. For some people, the history is just too bloody. So for them, they want to distance themselves from it. I think, another aspect that is worth noting, as I said, before, was the commercialization of it. We've reached a point where, again, the kind of interplay with one another. But there's this idea of being the counter, the idea of being the anti, you know, the idea of being that person on the fringes of society. And we're commercializing it.

There are people who want to make profit off of the, and it's definitely making its way within like, the youth, it's making its way within college, it's making its way in those areas for people just want to branch out and explore themselves.

Renee: 19:32

Do you think there's a sense that it's generally more genuine? Or is it more of like, I want to spite my parents and do something different?

Nick: 19:41

Oh, definitely both. I have seen definitely both sides of that spectrum. Not to diss anyone, because, you know, if, if spite causes you to go out and explore yourself, well hey, that can be a motivating factor as well. I mean, the guy who did Redbox, you know, just hated the late fees, that movie rental companies did. You know and he said, "Well, fuck this." Pardon my French.

Renee: 20:18

Um.. sorry were you done?

Nick: 20:20

Yes, yes, yes.

Renee: 20:22

Okay. What do you feel is the advantage of being a member of a coven versus just being a solitary practitioner?

Nick: 20:30

Definitely the sense of community. You know, as much as I say, have confidence in yourself, there's going to be those times where you realize that you won't know everything, that you won't be strong enough to take on everything by yourself. And that's all right. You know, just like, you know, all branches are part of one tree, you know, the roots go deep. Form that with people.

Renee: 20:58

What makes Coven of the White, Rose unique?

Nick: 21:09

Hmm what makes it unique. I would say in this regard, the fact that the person who put it all together, she herself doesn't have any set beliefs herself. She is of the mindset of, kind of like this agnostic, almost belief is what I want to say, you know. She wants to bring this community together, she wants to have these faiths and beliefs for one another, you know, and she participates in these rituals, as well. And it's so nice to have that. I think it's nice to have that sort of how do I put this, secular reasoning, who... the secular mindset that kind of helps bring you back to reality, sometimes, you know, for lack of a better term. Because sometimes you gotta have the mundane in your life. Can't always just being moving through the ether.

Renee: 22:07

How often do you meet as a group?

Nick: 22:12

Very infrequently. Like I said, everyone's living their own lives. We've got a few people who actually live in KC, because they feel like they haven't really found the right community up there for them. They've met Jaidyn from what I understand, they hit it off. And then they decided they want to come here and explore a few things with us. So. But as for meeting as a whole group, it's one of those hit or miss things. We'll meet up for coffee and just try to discuss beliefs and get to know people, and just more or less, let them know, "Hey, we're here for you." I guess you could say it's more like a set of independent countries, if you want to call it that. If that makes any sense.

Renee:

Yes. And how many members are involved?

Nick: 22:56

What was our count last time? I'm gonna say about 10 people, at least.

Renee: 23:13

And do you meet for social gatherings, as well as doing rituals and...?

Nick: 23:19

Yeah, or coffee most times, but we haven't really like met up at each other's house and had a barbeque or anything. Though I can totally imagine, like getting this barbecue together, where we all just like, dress up in gear and everything just to make the neighbors talk. I could totally be down for that.

Renee: 23:39

Have you done any community service or outreach as a group?

Nick: 23:44

Jaidyn looks at things like that, for people to pursue on their own. I think there was one. What was the last one she did? Because I want to say that there was something like a volunteer for a prison, or something where, not not not like a minister or anything like that. But for somebody to have, like, anyone who's within the system, just to talk to for like, I guess spiritual guidance, for lack of a better word. I think that was the last thing she brought to the group's attention. But again, not a group thing, more like an individual thing. Like, "Hey, here's some things you can do if you want to, like get out of the house for a change." Or anything you want to do to like just better yourself, you know?

Renee: 24:35

Do you have educational programs? Do you guys teach classes to beginners on like, the

fundamentals of Paganism?

Nick: 24:46

We haven't had anything like that just yet. Most people kind of come into this with their own ideas, their own beliefs, their own practices. It's more like a like a, like a buy sell trade, I guess you could say, you know. We just help each other out and exchange information. You know, very loosely based.

Renee: 25:10

How has membership affected your life outside of the group? Has your behavior been affected by the group's ideals?

Nick: 25:20

I wouldn't say so. I'm ... not in a negative way. But I tend to be like one of those independent people, as I probably mentioned several times before. But I think, I think even before that, I've been aware of that, you know, there's these stories going around of...I remember those stories back in the 90s and early 2000s, of Witchcraft and Paganism, you know, being like, gateways to more violent, more seedier lifestyles. And, you know, being part of the community has, I guess...It's helped me fight back against that, that, that that stigma. In the sense that we're just like any other people, you know. It's definitely something that I enjoy, for the most part, I guess.

Renee: 26:27

Good. Are there any rituals or ceremonies that you would like to describe? Any favorite practices you have?

Nick: 26:43

I'm not exactly. I'm sorry. Could you say that again?

Renee: 26:46

Sure. So like any rituals or ceremonies, either you conduct individually, or as a group that you want to talk about?

Nick: 27:01

Let's see here. Um, like I said, on Sundays, that's normally the times I reserved for myself just to meditate and commune and just reevaluate myself, realign myself, I guess you could call it. Earlier today, I mean, I was just sitting down and just focusing on... Well, in a few months we're actually going to be moving. So it's just realigning myself and just asking myself, are these the roommates that, not the current ones that I'm with right now, I'm actually going to be moving into a different apartment. But are these the roommates that I feel most comfortable with. Are these the circumstances that I feel comfortable with myself. And the last ritual that I remember doing, Ostara I feel like that did spark something within me, because it's the idea of birth and renewal and, I felt like I was kind of just drifting away a little bit before then. And there's just something magical, about just being in the woods, being in nature, and just looking up at the sky. And just,

even if it's a pain, trying to get a fire started in the rain. Just having that sense of willpower, that sense of intent. I don't know, just throwing it out there to the universe, and just...I don't know, it's definitely a confidence booster.

Nick 28:44

One of the scarier rituals that I've ever done was actually a cleansing ritual. When I was living back in Lola, with those group of friends that I mentioned before, there was a man and his wife who lived out in Neosho Rapids. And there was one instance where we did this ritual, and it was basically the same thing as Ostara, you know. What is it that we're looking for? What do we need? What do we want? When do we want it? But I'm not sure exactly what happened in that one, because right after, during that ritual, I actually felt this presence. And I actually caught a glimpse of this dark shadow being. And, you know, after I thought about it some more, I realized that I kind of see these things, just like, I've seen these things since I was a kid. And, you know, it's something that you just can't put a name to until you're older and can comprehend it better. But... you know, I mentioned it to him right off the bat. And, you know, he joked about it. And, I mean, he he didn't know it was there, but he was like, "you know, if you saw it and everything, then, you know, hey, just keep us in touch if anything happens." And there's just, after that, just something I felt like was that my back the entire time, whenever I would leave my house, I felt like something would just be peering in through windows.

Renee: 30:26

Did it feel like sinister, or benign, or peaceful?

Nick: 30:34

I would say I've had bad experiences before with shadow people, because there was one instance where I was sleeping in my room and I just felt this dark presence just looming over me, and just suffocating me. I tried to speak, and I tried to fight back. And I don't know, it just felt like it was feeding off of that terror. And then just something just snapped in me. I just had enough and I was angry, that something could be so, I guess sadistic, just to feed off of something like that. I just got so angry. And I remember saying "you're not welcome here." And, you know, I leapt up out of my bed, and I felt that forced just get thrown across the room. And I remember it hitting my door, and then just kind of just slithered away. And after that I just blacked out and woke up in the morning, I thought was a dream. Until my dad said, "so what was that loud bang coming from your room last night?" And I'm like, okay. Of course, I never talked about it with my dad, because he's one of those people who says "the only ghost I believe in is the Holy Ghost." And I'm just sitting there like. If we believe in a man who just floats in the clouds, why can't we be more open minded about other things, you know.

Nick: 31:57

But to finish that story, the people I was living in the house with at the time, you know, they had cast wards and runes and everything over it, just to be doubly safe, because they also believed in that idea. And I brought it up to them. And one of them actually brought out this huge ass Bible. And he said, "select something from here." And I said, "I don't know, the stories all that

well, I don't know the scriptures." He was like, "okay, just leave it up to chance." And I just said, "alright."

I shall not fear the shadows of evil hearts. It was something to that effect. And I just remember thinking, "Fuck, all right." So they put that in my room, highlighted that scripture. And there were just wards and runes just being placed all over. And I can remember that same night, that being just looking in, and I can't tell if it was curious or anything. And maybe it was just me trying to be a little more definitive of what my boundaries were, but I don't know. I think I think there's definitely some etiquette to spirits as well, like one, don't peer into people's bedroom windows. So I don't know. I, I want to open myself up more to that side of things, to spirits. But like I said, I think it's definitely one of those things that I take with a very heavy side of caution.

Renee: 33:47

Do you create new spells and rituals, kind of continuously? Or do you have traditional scripts you always use?

Nick: 33:57

I use the traditionals as reference, just to create something for myself. I think, like I said, you know, you have this history, and you can delve off of it and everything. And I think it's important for individuals to create their own.

Renee: 34:17

How do people relate to each other within the coven? Does everyone pretty much get along?

Nick: 34:22

Yeah, we've pretty much, everyone gets along with one another. I mean, we're all friendly. There's like no fighting or anything to that extent. No.

Renee: 34:35

And how does the group interact with other members of the general public?

Nick: 34:41

I mean, me and my roommates, we tend to keep to ourselves for the most part. But um, you know, I would say, out of the three of us, I'm the most sociable one. I just go out, I try to be involved with like people that I meet around, but Lawrence is kind of a, kind of a funny place like that. Sometimes, you either click with people, or people are just too busy and going on their way, you know.

Renee: 35:03

Do you feel you have to hide your religious beliefs from people?

Nick: 35:08

Yes, and no. Well growing up, being the only gay kid within the small town that I grew up in, it

kind of has taught me the importance of having just a grain of caution. And, you know, a few weeks ago, here I am walking down Mass street wearing these huge socks that say gay on the side of it. And, you know, it was like, the most free and everything I'd ever been. But at the same time, I also walked around with a sense of just weariness, you know. I guess maybe there's just some things about myself that it can't change, but I think having a little sense of caution never hurt anyone. But if people ask I'm not shy about it, it just like I am with myself. There is strength to be had in who you are.

Renee: 36:10

How is the coven governed? Are there leaders, are there roles people play?

Nick: 36:18

Jaidyn is kind of our impromptu... gatherer, I guess you could say.

Renee: 36:25

She founded the group?

Nick: 36:28

Mmha. But, you know, someone will say "hey, you know, Ostara is coming up, or Mabon is going to be here. Do we want to do anything for the equinoxes?" And after that, it just kind of takes care of itself. Like I said, it's more like a community thing than anything?

Renee: 36:51

Does food figure into your religious life? Do you guys do you like potlucks or feasting?

Nick: 36:57

Oh, for get togethers. I mean, you know, we asked "Hey, is anyone like vegan/vegetarian? Are there any meats that you need for like a ritual or anything?" But for my personally, I'm an omnivore. I just eat whatever is set in front of me.

Renee 37:17

Does the group own any real estate or buildings? Do you have a set place you practice or meet?

Nick: 37:23

No, no. I wish we did, though. [long pause] We'll meet at coffee houses just to meet up, but past that no. Nothing that says belonging or property of the White Rose

Renee: 37:48

Do you raise money for the group?

Nick: 37:51

No, no, no, it's all pretty much just self based, you know. What you bring to the group is what

you bring.

Renee: 38:01

And how are new members recruited?

Nick: 38:05

If anyone expresses interest, if anyone just seems like somebody who we would want to bring to these gatherings, you know, we just send out an invitation and we let other people know. Be like, "Hey, do we want to meet up for coffee and just meet this individual? See if they want to be a part of this group?"

Renee: 38:22

And is there like a process of joining or is it just like you meet them? And then you're like, "Hey, I'm gonna show up for the next event."

Nick: 38:29

It's very informal. Yeah, it's "Hey, you seem cool. Let's be friends."

Renee: 38:37

Do you guys have any behavior codes or prohibitions?

Nick: 38:41

Well, obviously, if you're a jerk, you know, we're gonna call you out on it. But as for like, a formal thing of, you know, just treat each other with a chain of command or anything like that, no, we don't have anything that specific or that technical.

Renee: 38:58

Okay. Are there rules regarding matters of dress or style?

Nick: 39:06

No, no, come as you are.

Renee: 39:11

What are the people like? Are there any unforgettable characters who are involved?

Nick: 39:23

There was one person, their name was Riley. But since then they've gone through a name change, and I think that they are now practicing... correct my pronunciation if it's wrong Kabbalism? Kabbalism that's how it is? So it's almost like this, if I remember right, mystic...Jewish mysticism.

Renee:

Yes.

Nick: 39:47

Yes, yes. So that's been the most memorable. And I've been meaning to talk with them for some time, just to... I don't know. Just sort of, this idea that something. Again, again, Abrahamic religion, but at the same time, it brings in this sense of mysticism this occult. I'm kind of interested in learning about that. It's almost like this accepted sort of witchiness within itself, you know.

Renee: 40:19

Yeah. Have you ever thought about leaving the group? And if so, why?

Nick: 40:25

I can't say I've ever thought about leaving the group? Because, like I said, it's just very informal. So I wouldn't say that I would leave the group. I would just say that, you know, I'm a part of the group, but I come and go as I please, you know.

Renee: 40:41

Is there anything about it you would change?

Nick: 40:45

I mean, I do wish that there were a few more events. But that's largely based upon, you know, everyone's got busy schedules. And sad to say, you know, Sunday is not the day of holiness for everyone. But, you know, it happens. I've come to accept that, you know, if things change, they change. Chaos. That's just the way of things and I've learned to roll with the punches like that.

Renee: 41:19

How do you see the future of the group? Is it currently growing, modernizing?

Nick:41:26

Stable, I think would be one word to describe it. We haven't had anyone like burst out and say, "Oh, you people are just posers or you people are imposters," or anything like that. Membership growth has been slow and small. But the people who do join, they stay because they form friendships with one another.

Renee: 41:53

And what has been the best and worst thing so far about being involved?

Nick: 41:59

Best thing I would say is just meeting other people. I'm kind of a social butterfly. And like I said, even though people will say "you don't talk that much." I go, "yeah, but it's nice to have this group of people, knowing that I've got them at my back." Worst thing, ugh having it rain on us whenever we're trying to do a ritual.

Renee: 42:25

Yep. Anything else you want to share?

Nick: 42:32

I'm not...I'm trying to rack my brain right now, but nothing really comes to mind right now.

Renee: 42:40

That's okay. And are there other people and or groups you know about that I should interview?

Nick: 42:49

None that I'm aware of. I wish I could help you out though.

Renee:

No worries. All right. Well, thank you so much.

Nick:

Thank you Renee.