



The Twelve Traits

In compiling this set of values, modern followers of the Germanic Way have had to study the old sagas, the heroic epics, and the manuscripts collectively called the *Eddas*. Nothing like an explicit list of values and virtues exists, but they can be inferred from a careful reading of these early sources. Since this is a work of synthesis by modern men and women, several different complementary statements of correct Germanic behavior have emerged over the last few decades.

Here, then, is a partial list of these qualities:

Industriousness - Be productively engaged in life. Avoid laziness. Strive to accomplish good things.

Justice - Let equity and fairness be your hallmark. Treat others in accordance with what they deserve, and give each person a chance to show his or her best.

Courage - Fear is natural, but it can be overcome. Train yourself to do the things you fear, both physically and morally.

Generosity - An open hand and an open heart bring happiness to you and to others. The miserly are never happy.

Hospitality - In ancient times, travelers were greeted with food, drink, and a warm place by the fire. See that your guests never want.

Moderation - Enjoy all good things, but do not overindulge. No one admires a glutton or a person who cannot control his or her appetites.

Community - Cooperate with kin and friends, do your fair share, and remember your responsibilities to others.



Individuality - Although we belong to a community, we are also individuals with distinct personalities and clearly-defined rights. Respect the individuality of others, and insist on the same in return.

Truth - Be honest and straightforward in all your dealings. Avoid deceit and deception.

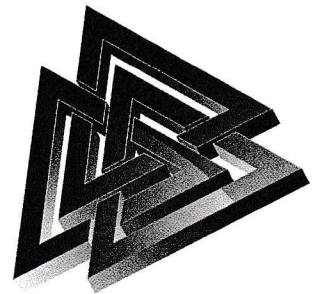
Steadfastness - Learn to persist, to endure in the face of adversity without discouragement. Do not be blown about by every changing wind.

Loyalty - Be steadfast in your commitment to others and to yourself. Have a true heart.

Wisdom - Learn from your experiences. Grow in the understanding of the world, and of the human heart. Comprehend as much of the universe as you can in the years available to you.

There is nothing complicated about these twelve traits, yet they provide material for a lifetime of growth. To the extent you develop them in yourself, you will stand high above the crowd!

Adapted from **We Are Our Deeds: The Elder Heathenry, Its Ethic and Theow**, by Eric Wodening (Available from Theod, PO Box 8062, Watertown, NY 13601)



OTHROERIR KINDRED

159 Clinmar Place, Apt. 1
Centralia, IL 62801

Email:

Deoful_Odian@yahoo.com
Phone (618) 267-5535

Facebook Group Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/OthroerirAsatru>
KindredMtdWestRegional/

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