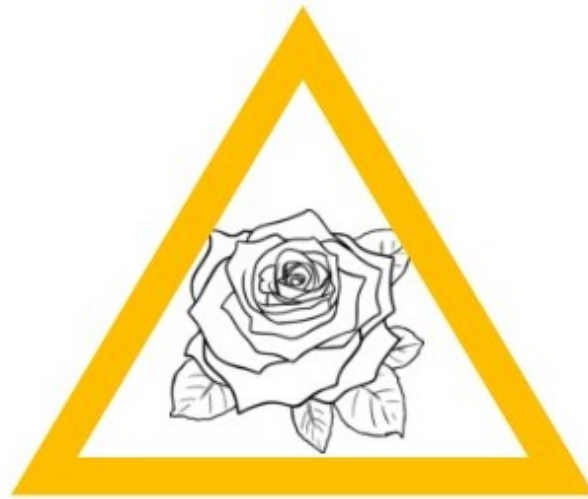


# The Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose

Volume 1: The Candidate and Seeker Grades



FELLOWSHIP OF THE  
HERMETIC ROSE

edited by John Michael Greer

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FELLOWSHIP OF THE  
HERMETIC ROSE

0° Candidate Grade

## Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose: A Prospectus

Quite a few years have passed now since I studied occultism with the late John Gilbert. My original reason for seeking him out was that he was among the last surviving members of the Ancient Order of Druids in America (AODA), which I wanted to learn about. When I first made contact with him, I had no idea that AODA was part of a cluster of occult organizations, once independent of each other, which had ended up sharing members and techniques during the second half of the twentieth century.

One of those organizations was the Magickal Order of the Golden Dawn (MOGD). This had a convoluted history, as most occult orders do. It was John's reworking of the material he received from one of his teachers, Dr. Juliet Ashley, who ran an organization called the Holy Order of the Golden Dawn. Dr. Ashley, in turn, based her order on a charter, rituals, and instructional material that she received in 1939 from Arthur Edward Waite, whose Holy Order of the Golden Dawn was one of the fragments left over from the collapse of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.

The MOGD had its own very distinctive system of training, by no means identical to the better-known Golden Dawn systems, and I found it very much worth studying. What sets it apart most noticeably from the Golden Dawn mainstream is that it doesn't teach ceremonial magic. That may seem surprising, given the fixation on magic in the occult community these days, but there are reasons for it. First, magic is only one aspect of occultism, and it's not necessarily the most important aspect; plenty of people who are interested in occultism aren't interested in magic, nor does every occultist have the necessary talents to become a capable mage; and too much focus on magic is not necessarily a good thing.

There are other options. In the occult traditions of the West, there are schools and orders that focus on magic, and others that don't. These others focus on meditation, divination, and the study of occult philosophy; their goal is wisdom and the development of intuitive and mystical awareness, rather than magical power. Their students achieve success in life not by forcing the world to conform to their wills, but by sensing the flow of events and being in the right place at the right time. It's not a path for everyone, but it works, and works well.

That was what many occult orders and societies taught in the golden age of American occultism, which began around 1890 and ended just after the Second World War. The MOGD was a late survival of that tradition, and it was the one that introduced me to that approach to occultism. After John's death in early 2021, I set out to place his teachings into the hands of new students. This book is one of the results.

The material in this book differs in some minor details from the material I received in the MOGD, just as that differed from Juliet Ashley's Holy Order of the Golden Dawn, that from Waite's Holy Order of the GD, that from the Hermetic Order of the GD, and that from whatever source inspired Westcott and Mathers to get the whole ball rolling in the first place. To mark the distinction and avoid confusion, I've given this new venture a different name, the Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose—FHR for short.

John's system included his own idiosyncratic take on the Tree of Life, his own distinctive symbolism for the grades of initiation, his own grade rituals, and a great deal of other material on a galaxy of occult topics. All of this is included in the pages that follow. I've included every piece of technical occult instruction he gave me in the FHR, changing only those details (such as

the signs and passwords of the degrees) which I pledged to keep secret. I have also added some original material of my own where it seemed helpful.

The FHR has eight grades of initiation, as follows:

0° Candidate

1° Seeker

2° Sojourner

3° Server

4° Student

5° Teacher

6° Initiate

7° Adept

The 0° is a preliminary degree for those who are exploring the work of the Fellowship without making a commitment to that work. The 7° is an inner degree which is to be attained by the individual through his or her own efforts, and remains a wholly private matter when and if it is attained. (Anyone who proclaims himself or herself an Adept of the FHR thus proves by that act that he or she isn't one, and also the he or she doesn't know the first thing about the Fellowship's teachings and traditions.) The grades between these two endpoints correspond very roughly to the historic Golden Dawn grades, as follows: Seeker to Neophyte, Sojourner to Zelator, Server to Theoricus, Student to Practicus, Teacher to Philosophus, and Initiate to Portal.

All the work of these grades, and the grade initiations themselves, are designed to be performed by the individual member through his or her own efforts. A member who reaches the grade of Teacher is qualified to found a temple, if four other members join in, but this is optional at best and irrelevant at worst. Individual work is the heart of the system. The primary goal of that work is the attainment of wisdom through the practice of ritual, meditation, and divination, and the study of traditional occult teachings. The secondary goals of the work are the development of a good general grounding in occultism that can then be applied to many other practices, on the one hand, and on the other, reaching a professional level of skill in at least one form of divination. (John was a brilliant tarot reader, but he encouraged students to master whatever mode of divination they preferred, as well as getting a general grasp of a few standard methods.)

There is no hierarchy in the FHR beyond the degrees of initiation. Any person who successfully completes the work as far as the Teacher grade can open a temple and serve as its head. Any person who successfully completes the work as far as the Initiate grade is in possession of the full tradition and may do with it as his or her personal spiritual vision directs. This includes the right to go off and set up a separate working using whatever variations on the material he or she chooses to use, just the way I've done here. (Occult traditions routinely pup separate workings this way—it seems reasonable to acknowledge that, and not try to fulminate uselessly against it.)

The foundations of training in the system will be familiar to regular readers of my books and blog. (Where do you think I got this approach?) The core practices are a daily discursive meditation, a daily divination, and a daily protective ritual—John Gilbert strongly recommended the Sphere of Protection but he also allowed members to practice the Lesser Banishing Ritual of

the Pentagram and Middle Pillar exercise instead if they found those more suitable. The FHR will continue that tradition, and add the Judson exercise, an etheric banishing, as a third option. All these are described in the Candidate Grade papers that follow this one, so is discursive meditation, and so is the approach to daily divination practice I recommend.

If you haven't settled on one of the protective rituals, try all three and see which works for you. If you already follow a system of training that includes these three elements as daily practices, why, you're good, and you can do the rest of the FHR work as a supplement to that system. Those readers who are familiar with my book *The Way of the Golden Section* and its sequels may be interested to know that everything taught by the FHR is compatible with the Golden Section Fellowship work, and this book may be used as a resource for GSF members.

In addition to the daily practices, weekly practice of a home temple ritual, a set of elemental scryings, invocations of your Guardian Angel or Guardian Genius, and a whole of a lot of divination will be part of the training ahead. All told, you can expect to put 30 minutes or so every day into the basic daily practices, and one to three hours a week into other work, plus time spent reading and studying.

Prospective members will doubtless want to know what membership costs and what they will need to provide in terms of material requirements. Membership is free. In terms of equipment, you will need a small table or folding tray to serve as a temporary altar for some practices, and an altar cloth to put over it would be nice. You will need a chair that you can set up facing the altar. You will need four candles—one each colored red, yellow, blue, and green—and appropriate holders for them. You will need one standard Rider-Waite tarot deck—yes, it has to be that specific deck; if you prefer to use a different tarot deck for divination, that's fine, but you need the Rider-Waite for ritual purposes.

You will also need a pair of small pillars, 6" to 18" tall, which you can put on the sides of your altar; one is black, one white. If you have woodworking skills, making them from wood is the best option, but you can use anything else that works—if you can't afford much, get two cardboard cylinders from the centers of paper towel rolls, cover one with white paper and the other with black paper, and tape or glue one end of each to a small square of heavy cardboard so they stand up. (Drop something small and heavy into the bottom of each to help with this.)

You will also need symbolic representations of the four elements. To begin with, these are very simple—an incense burner and your choice of incense for fire, a folding fan for air, a cup or bowl of water for water, and a small bowl of salt for earth. Over the course of your training you will replace these with a wand, a book, a cup, and a pentacle; instructions for making or buying these will be included. (Yes, a book for air, not a dagger. That's one of the distinctive features of this system. There are complicated reasons for it; one of them is the very old rule against bringing anything of a metallic nature into a temple of the mysteries, which some of my readers will have encountered in a different context.)

So that's what you have to look forward to, dear reader, if you decide to climb aboard this very odd train and ride it into the distance. If, having read the above, you've decided you want to give it a try, and are willing to start experimenting with the basic practices of the Fellowship, why, by the power in me invested as an Initiate of the Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose, I proclaim you received and welcomed in due form as a member of the Candidate grade.



## Beginning the Work

As mentioned in the prospectus, the basic practices of the FHR are a protective ritual, discursive meditation, and some form of divination. These are to be done every day. The half an hour or so it will take you to perform these practices are the single most important investment you can make in your own spiritual development and occult training. They form the threefold foundation for attainment on the occult path.

The protective ritual, as already noted, may be the Sphere of Protection, the Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram and Middle Pillar exercise, or the Judson exercise. If you haven't yet made one of these part of your daily routine, it's fine to experiment with all three in order to decide which one suits you best, before you proceed to the initiation of the grade of Seeker. Whichever one you decide to use should be committed to memory, so you can begin to concentrate on performing it smoothly and cleanly, and making it effective.

Discursive meditation follows the method set out in one of the papers that follow. You may draw themes for meditation from any book on occultism that interests you. Sources of themes for meditation that are very well suited to the work of the FHR are Eliphas Lévi's *Doctrine and Ritual of High Magic*, Dion Fortune's books of essays such as *Applied Magic* and *Sane Occultism*, and the writings of Manly P. Hall—his monthly letters, which you can find online for free download at the address below, are especially rich in themes.

<https://manlyphall.info/a-monthly-letter/index.htm>

You needn't limit yourself to these, however. You get to choose the themes of your meditations, now and in the future.

Divination may use any method you choose. In order to complete the training program of the FHR you will have to master at least three methods of divination, of which no more than two can be divination decks (and those have to be different types of deck—for example, you can't just do two different tarot decks). There are hundreds of divination decks currently in use, ranging from classic decks such as tarot and the ordinary playing card deck through less common decks such as the Lenormand deck and the Kipper deck to newly minted and rather exotic decks such as my Sacred Geometry Oracle. You may use any of them you like.

Outside the realm of divination decks, however, the range of divination methods available is nearly as great, and you may use any of them—in fact, you may do three methods that don't use decks. (You just can't use more than two decks, if you use decks at all.) Numerology, which is covered in a set of papers in the final volume of this book, is certainly an option. So are astrology, geomancy, palmistry, metoscopy (face reading), runes, Ogham, the Coelbren, domino divination, dice divination, tea leaf reading, dowsing, radionics, dream interpretation, and the list goes on. If you already know one or more forms of divination, you can include those, but consider learning at least one form of divination that is completely new to you as part of your FHR work.

These three practices are the first steps to take as you prepare for your initiation. While you work on them, you will also need to learn how to open and close a temple of the FHR. The ceremony for doing that is given in a later paper.

## Basic Rituals

In order to work your way through the grades of the FHR, it's necessary to practice a daily ritual working. Three options are listed in the prospectus: the Sphere of Protection, which was the standard ritual taught for this purpose in the Magickal Order of the Golden Dawn; the Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram and Middle Pillar exercise, the standard Golden Dawn workings of this kind, which were always an option in that order for those who preferred it; and the Judson exercise, a forgotten etheric banishing and cleansing ritual I rescued from obscurity and have tested at length. Full instructions for each of these are given in this paper.

### Option 1: The Sphere of Protection

The Sphere of Protection (SoP) is the foundational ritual practice of an entire family of initiatory orders. It was originally devised sometime in the 1950s by Dr. Juliet Ashley, a longtime occultist who studied Jungian psychology in the 1930s and went on to become the leading figure in a series of esoteric groups—the Ancient Order of Druids in America, the Universal Gnostic Church, the Holy Order of the Golden Dawn, the Order of Spiritual Alchemy, and the Modern Essene Order. All these organizations taught and practiced the SoP as part of their basic training.

Later, in the 1970s, Ashley's student John Gilbert developed the SoP further as part of his preparation for ordination at Universal Seminary, the distance-learning school operated by the Universal Gnostic Church for its clergy. His version became standard in the orders just named. John was my teacher and initiator in these traditions, and it was from him I learned the ritual. It's a very solid protective ritual, a little subtler in its effects than the Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram but equally effective in practice, and deserves more attention than it's received.

### Learning the Sphere of Protection

One of the distinctive features of the SoP is that you don't start doing it all at once. You begin with the opening and closing sections, and then add in the elemental invocations in the middle, one at a time. The process of learning the SoP thus functions as a basic initiation into the work of the seven elements. Seven elements? Yes—in the SoP you work with Air, Water, Fire, Earth, Spirit Above, Spirit Below, and Spirit Within. We'll get to those one at a time as we proceed.

The opening and closing sections have evolved substantially over the years. The version included in my books *The Druid Magic Handbook* and *The Dolmen Arch* is the one I learned from John Gilbert; it's effective, but the opening section shows, a little too clearly for my taste, its descent from the Christian Sign of the Cross (which was used as the opening section in Juliet Ashley's time); the closing section also has proven to be very difficult for some students to learn. The version presented here have been tested over several years, and works well. If you want to try the older version instead, why, you know where to find it.

### About Divine Names

One of the peculiarities of the Sphere of Protection is that it doesn't specify which divine names, if any, are to be vibrated in doing the ritual. (We'll get to vibration later on; you don't do it in the opening or closing.) That's a reflection of a core theme in the work of all the orders that use the SoP, which is that the name or names by which you know the divine are your own business. When I was ordained a priest and then a bishop of the Universal Gnostic Church, John Gilbert

asked me in the name of what deity I was prepared to take the ordination, and the name I gave was the one he used. That was not merely standard but required.

For the SoP, you're going to need to fill certain slots. For the Opening, you need three deities—the standard approach for polytheists is to call on a father god or sky god, a mother goddess or earth goddess, and a deity with whom you have a specific connection. Not a polytheist? Not a problem; Christians using this rite call on the three persons of the Trinity, while animists and others who prefer to work with impersonal forms of divinity can apply those as needed (an example is included below). For the Closing, you don't need any divine names at all. For the elemental invocations—we'll get to that as we reach those.

## **The Opening**

1. Stand in the center of the space where you will be working, facing whichever direction is sacred in the tradition in which you're working. (For example, in the Universal Gnostic Church and the MOGD, this was east, while in AODA it's south, where the sun stands at midday.) Take a few moments and a few breaths to focus your attention and let your body and energy become stable. Then sweep your arms up to your sides until your hands meet above your head. Draw your joined hands down to your forehead, and touch with them the point between your eyebrows, at the location of your third eye center; as you do this, imagine a beam of pure white light descending from infinite space to a point in the center of your head, forming a small sphere of light there. Say the name of the sky god or father god.
2. Now draw your joined hands down the front of your body, shifting your hands as needed, to touch a point on your belly just below your navel, at the location of the womb center. As you do this, imagine the same beam of pure white light descending through your body to the heart of the Earth. Say the name of the earth goddess or mother goddess.
3. Now raise your elbows and draw your hands back up, separating them in a sweeping, blossoming motion. End with your arms down at your sides. As you do this, imagine the light rising up again from the heart of the Earth, filling your body. Say the name of the third deity you've chosen.
4. Now cross your arms, right over left, the fingertips of each hand resting against the opposite shoulder. As you do this, imagine the light shining out through your body and filling the space around you, cleansing and blessing all things. Say something appropriate to finish. That concludes the Opening.

Here are some sample words that can be used with the Opening:

(1) "Hu the Mighty, great Druid god;" (2) "Ced the Earth-mother, source of all life;" (3) "Hesus of the Oaks, chief of tree-spirits;" (4) "May all the holy powers bless and protect me now and always."

(1) "Osiris!" (2) "Isis!" (3) "Horus!" (4) "Powers of the Ennead, mighty in magic!"

(1) "In the name of the Father," (2) "and of the Son," (3) "and of the Holy Spirit," (4) "Amen."

(1) "By the sky above me," (2) "by the earth beneath me," (3) "by the life force within me," (4) "may I be blessed and renewed now and always."

Or come up with your own. Back in the day, it was rare to find any two initiates who did the SoP with the same words.

## The Closing

The earlier version of the closing, the actual establishment of the Sphere of Protection, involved some fairly complicated visualizations. Those work, but a lot of people have had trouble with them. The following visualization will be found less challenging. Fair warning, though: it needs regular practice to become really effective.

At the conclusion of the Opening—or, later on, at the conclusion of the elemental invocations—turn your attention to your solar plexus, the area just below where the two sides of your ribcage part company. Imagine the equivalent point in the middle of your body, where the beam of pure white light passes through you. Imagine the beam of light forming a small sphere of light there. Feel this as the meeting place of the current of light descending from the sky and the current rising back up from the heart of the Earth.

Now imagine the sphere of light expanding, fed by the two currents flowing into it. It grows until it surrounds your entire body, and as much further as you need to make it to encompass the area you wish to place within its protection. Concentrate, as it expands, on the sense that the space inside it is lighter, cleaner, and brighter than the space outside it. (The more effort you put into this sense, the more effective the ritual will become.)

Pause, once you have expanded the sphere to the size you need it, and feel the space around you as cleansed, lightened, and illuminated. Then cross your arms as you did at the end of the Opening, and say something appropriate, e.g., “May the holy powers bless and protect me now and always,” or a suitable prayer—for example, the Lord’s Prayer if you are a Christian. That concludes the closing, and the Sphere of Protection.

If you’re interested in learning this, try doing it at least once a day for the next week, and then add the first of the elemental invocations—the Calling of Air.

## The Calling of Air

The seven elemental phases are learned one at a time. For the next week or so, in other words, you'll be doing the Opening, the Calling of Air, and then the Closing. Then you'll learn the Calling of Water, and practice the Opening, the Calling of Air, the Calling of Water, and the closing. Rinse and repeat until you've gotten all seven down and the Sphere of Protection is complete. Why? First, because it's much easier to take it a step at a time; second, because it turns the process of learning the SoP into a process of initiation.

Okay, one more thing, If you're using divine names in this practice, you'll need one that's associated with the element of air. If you're using Judeo-Christian symbolism, the standard divine name to use is יהוה , YHVH, which Christians usually pronounce "Jehovah" and Jews don't generally pronounce at all. (The most common practice among mages nowadays is to repeat the letter names, "Yod, Heh, Vau, Heh," though there are other ways of vocalizing it.) In the Druid Revival traditions I work with, this element is associated with Hu the Mighty, the great Druid god. If you work in a theistic tradition, choose a relevant name from your tradition; if you don't, don't worry about it -- you can also invoke the element of air in an abstract way—for example, by simply saying “I invoke the powers of Air.” The Calling of Air is done as described below:

\* \* \* \* \*



First, perform the Opening phase of the Sphere of Protection.

Then face east. Using the first two fingers of your right hand, trace the emblem of Air (the figure shown on the left) in front of you—first the circle, starting from the top and going clockwise from there, and then the vertical line, from the point where it joins the circle up to the top. Imagine that symbol drawn in a line of yellow flame or of blazing yellow light. This is the invoking form of the symbol of air.

Point to the center of the symbol and say an appropriate invocation. Here's the one I use when I'm practicing this ritual in a Druid context: "By the yellow gate of the rushing winds and the hawk of May in the heights of morning, and in the great name HU, I invoke the Air, its gods, its spirits, and its powers. May the powers of Air bless and protect me this day and always, and further my work. May my mind be inspired by the ways of nature." (You can use this one as written; you can also come up with one of your own. The SoP is flexible that way.)

As you finish the invocation, imagine as intensely as possible a wind blowing out of the east toward you, crisp and fresh. See a morning scene in which the sunrise and the sky dominates all. Make it look like spring in the place where you live. Engage all your senses, so that you smell and feel and hear as well as see the imagery. Breathe the energies of air into yourself. Take a little while at this, and then say, "I thank the powers of air for their gifts."

Then trace the same symbol in the same place, but this time draw the circle counterclockwise. This is the banishing form of the symbol of air. It doesn't banish air—it banishes other things with the help of air. Point at the center of the circle and say words such as the following: "And with the help of the powers of air, I banish from within me and around me and from all my doings all harmful influences and hostile magic, and every imbalance of the nature of air. I banish these far from me." Spend a little while imagining every imbalance and unwanted influence being swept away by the winds and being lost in the vastness of air.

Finally, perform the closing of the SoP. Do this sequence daily for the next week or so.

Note 1: the name HU (or any other divine name you use) is vibrated. Vibrated? That's a way of pronouncing words used by ceremonial magicians. To learn how to do it, try chanting a simple vowel sound like "aaaah," changing the way you hold your mouth and throat until you feel a buzzing or tingling feeling somewhere in your body. With practice, you can focus the vibration wherever you want, inside your body or outside of it, and it becomes a potent magical method. For now, do your best, and see how steady you can get the buzzing or tingling sensation.

Note 2: yes, I know this isn't the standard emblem of the element of air. It's the one we use in the assortment of spiritual and magical traditions that share the SoP. If you've taken up the practice of daily meditation, why this emblem is used for air is a good theme for that practice.

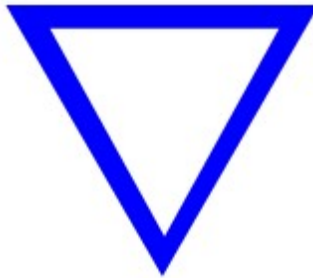
## **The Calling of Water**

Once you've done a week with Air, you can add the next element. For the next week, you'll be practicing the Opening, the Calling of Air, the Calling of Water, and the Closing; in later weeks, you'll add the remaining five elemental Callings.

If you're using divine names in this practice, you'll need one that's associated with the element of water. If you're using Judeo-Christian symbolism, the standard divine name to use is  $\aleph$ , AL, which is pronounced "Ell." In the Druid Revival traditions I work with, this element is associated with Hesus the chief of tree-spirits. If you work in a different theistic tradition, choose a relevant name from your tradition; if you don't, don't worry about it—you can also invoke the element of water in an impersonal way. The Calling of Water is done as described below:

\* \* \* \* \*

First, perform the Opening phase of the Sphere of Protection, and then perform the complete Calling of Air, including both the invoking and the banishing aspects.



Then face west. Using the first two fingers of your right hand, trace the triangle (shown on the left) in the air, starting from the bottom point and going clockwise. Imagine that symbol drawn in a line of blue flame or of blazing blue light. This is the invoking form of the symbol of water.

Point to the center of the symbol and say an appropriate invocation. Here's the one I use when I'm practicing this ritual in a Druid context: "By the blue gate of the mighty waters and the salmon of wisdom in the sacred pool, and in the great name HESUS, I invoke the Water, its gods, its spirits, and its powers. May the powers of Water bless and protect me this day and always, and further my work. May my heart be instructed by the ways of nature."

(The divine name, if you use one, should of course be vibrated; see the explanation in the post on the Calling of Air if you need a reminder of how this is done.)

As you finish the invocation, imagine as intensely as possible an ocean or a mighty lake reaching out west of you into the distance. See an evening scene in which the sunset shines above the waters. Make it look like autumn in the place where you live. Engage all your senses, so that you smell and feel and hear as well as see the imagery. Draw the energies of water into yourself. Take a little while at this, and then say, "I thank the powers of Water for their gifts."

Then trace the same symbol in the same place, but this time draw the triangle counterclockwise from the bottom. This is the banishing form of the symbol of water. Point at the center of the triangle and say words such as the following: "And with the help of the powers of Water, I banish from within me and around me and from all my doings all harmful influences and hostile magic, and every imbalance of the nature of Water. I banish these far from me." Spend a little while imagining every imbalance and unwanted influence being washed away by the waves and dissolved forever in the vastness of the water.

Finally, face the same way you faced in the Opening, and perform the Closing of the SoP.

Do this sequence daily for the next week or so. Notice the change in the energetic balance between this phase and the one you completed over the last week.

## The Calling of Fire

After another week of practice, add the next of the elemental callings. There's a bit of a twist here. You learn the Calling of Water second, but it's not done second once you learn the Calling

of Fire. For the next week, you'll be practicing the Opening, the Calling of Air, the Calling of Fire, the Calling of Water, and the Closing, in that order. You'll keep that order, too, when we go on to the remaining four elemental Callings. Why? You need water and air to balance fire, but fire goes in the south, so you do it after air in the east and before water in the west.

If you're using divine names in this practice, you'll need one that's associated with the element of fire. If you're using Judeo-Christian symbolism, the standard divine name to use is אלהים, ALHIM, which is pronounced "Elohim." In the Druid Revival traditions I work with, this element is associated with Sul, the healing goddess of hot springs and the sun. If you work in a different tradition, choose a relevant name from your tradition, or invoke the element of fire in an impersonal form. The Calling of Fire is done as described below:

\* \* \* \* \*

First, perform the Opening phase of the Sphere of Protection, and then perform the complete Calling of Air, including both the invoking and the banishing aspects.



Then face south. Using the first two fingers of your right hand, trace the triangle (shown on the left) in the air, starting from the top point and going clockwise. Imagine that symbol drawn in a line of red flame or of blazing red light. This is the invoking form of the symbol of fire.

Point to the center of the symbol and say an appropriate invocation. Here's the one I use when I'm practicing this ritual in a Druid context: "By the red gate of the bright flames and the white stag of the summer greenwood, and in the great name SUL, I invoke the Fire, its gods, its spirits, and its powers. May the powers of Fire bless and protect me this day and always, and further my work. May my will be in harmony with the ways of nature." (The divine name, if you use one, should of course be vibrated.)

As you finish the invocation, imagine as intensely as possible the sun blazing high in the southern heavens. See a noonday scene in which heat shimmers in the air. Make it look like summer in the place where you live. Engage all your senses, so that you smell and feel and hear as well as see the imagery. Draw the energies of fire into yourself. Take a little while at this, and then say, "I thank the powers of Fire for their gifts."

Then trace the same symbol in the same place, but this time draw the triangle counterclockwise from the top. This is the banishing form of the symbol of fire. Point at the center of the triangle and say words such as the following: "And with the help of the powers of Fire, I banish from within me and around me and from all my doings all harmful influences and hostile magic, and every imbalance of the nature of Fire. I banish these far from me." Spend a little while imagining every imbalance and unwanted influence being shriveled up and burnt away by the blazing heat of the sun.

Turn to the west, and do the complete Calling of Water. Finally, face the same way you faced in the Opening, and perform the Closing of the SoP.

Do this sequence daily for the next week or so. Notice the change in the energetic balance between this phase and the previous ones.

## The Calling of Earth

This comes after the three Callings you've learned already, and before the closing.

If you're using divine names in this practice, you'll need one that's associated with the element of earth. If you're using Judeo-Christian symbolism, the standard divine name to use is אֲדֹנָי, ADONAI, which is pronounced "Adonai." In the Druid Revival traditions I work with, this element is associated with Elen, the goddess of dawn and dusk and of the old straight tracks. If you work in a different tradition, choose a relevant name from your tradition, or invoke the element of earth in an impersonal form. The Calling of Earth is done as described below:

\* \* \* \* \*

First, perform the Opening phase of the Sphere of Protection, and then perform the complete Callings of Air, Fire, and Water, including both the invoking and the banishing aspects.



Then face north. Using the first two fingers of your right hand, trace the symbol on the left in the air in front of you, starting from the point where the circle and line join and going clockwise around the circle, then down the line to the bottom. Imagine that symbol drawn, just as shown here, in a line of green flame or of blazing green light. This is the invoking form of the symbol of earth.

Point to the center of the symbol and say an appropriate invocation. Here's the one I use when I'm practicing this ritual in a Druid context: "By the green gate of the tall stones and the great bear of the starry heavens, and in the great name ELEN, I invoke the Earth, its gods, its spirits, and its powers. May the powers of Earth bless and protect me this day and always, and further my work. May my body thrive according to the ways of nature." (The divine name, if you use one, should of course be vibrated.)

As you finish the invocation, imagine as intensely as possible a night scene lit only by the midnight stars. See the great dim shapes of mountains in the distance. Make it look like winter in the place where you live. Engage all your senses, so that you smell and feel and hear as well as see the imagery. Draw the energies of earth into yourself. Take a little while at this, and then say, "I thank the powers of Earth for their gifts."

Then trace the same symbol in the same place, but this time draw the circle counterclockwise. This is the banishing form of the symbol of earth. Point at the center of the symbol and say words such as the following: "And with the help of the powers of Earth, I banish from within me and around me and from all my doings all harmful influences and hostile magic, and every imbalance of the nature of Earth. I banish these far from me." Spend a little while imagining every imbalance and unwanted influence being buried, crushed, and absorbed by the immense quiet weight of earth.

Finally, face the same way you faced in the Opening, and perform the Closing of the SoP.

Do this sequence daily for the next week or so. Notice the change in the energetic balance between this phase and the previous ones.

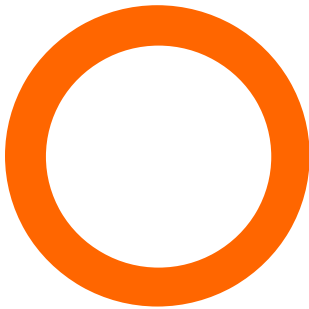
## The Calling of Spirit Below



Add this stage after another week. This and the next two callings differ from the ones you've done before in that you invoke and don't banish. Spirit integrates and harmonizes; you've invoked the four elements and then banished, to chase off what you need to chase off, and now you invoke the three forms of spirit to bring everything else into balance.

If you're using divine names in this practice, you'll need one that's associated with the element of earth. If you're using Judeo-Christian symbolism, the standard divine name to use is אָגְלָא, AGLA; this is a *notariqon* (basically, an acronym) for the prayer *Ateh Gebor Le'olam, Adonai*, "Thou art mighty forever, Lord;" pronounce it "ah-geh-la." In the Druid Revival traditions I work with, this element is associated with Cêd, the earth goddess of Druid Revival lore. If you work in a different tradition, choose a relevant name from your tradition, or invoke Spirit Below in an impersonal way. The Calling of Spirit Below is done as described below:

\* \* \* \* \*



First, perform the Opening phase of the Sphere of Protection, and then perform the complete Callings of Air, Fire, Water, and Earth including both the invoking and the banishing aspects.

Now same face the way you did at the opening. Using the first two fingers of your right hand, trace an orange circle horizontally, as though you were drawing it on the flat surface of a table or altar in front of you. Imagine that symbol drawn in a line of orange flame or of blazing orange light. Then imagine it descending a short distance below your feet and moving directly under you. This is the symbol of Spirit Below. Point to the center of the symbol and say an appropriate invocation.

Here's the one I use when I'm practicing this ritual in a Druid context: "By the orange gate of spirit below and the power of the telluric current, and in the great name CÊD, I invoke Spirit Below, its gods, its spirits, and its powers. May the powers of Spirit Below bless and protect me this day and always, and further my work. May I be empowered by the telluric current." (The divine name, if you use one, should of course be vibrated.)

As you finish the invocation, imagine as intensely as possible the deep places of the Earth and the immense powers that dwell there. Engage all your senses, so that you smell and feel and hear as well as see the imagery. Draw the energies of Spirit Below into yourself. Take a little while at this, and then say, "I thank the powers of Spirit Below for their gifts."

Finally, perform the Closing of the SoP.

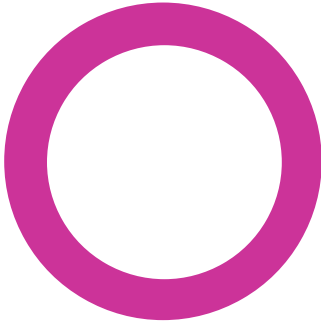
Do this sequence daily for the next week or so. Notice the change in the energetic balance between this phase and the previous ones.

### **The Calling of Spirit Above**

Add this after another week. It comes after the five Callings you've learned already, and before the Closing. If you're using divine names in this practice, you'll need one that's associated with the element of spirit. If you're using Judeo-Christian symbolism, the standard divine name to use is אֱהִיָּה, AHIH, which is pronounced "Eheieh;" this is traditionally the name of God that was

revealed to Moses, and means "I Am." In the Druid Revival traditions I work with, this element is associated with Celi, the Hidden One of Druid Revival lore. If you work in a different tradition, choose a relevant name from your tradition, or invoke the element of spirit above in an impersonal form. The Calling of Spirit Above is done as described below:

\* \* \* \* \*



First, perform the Opening phase of the Sphere of Protection, and then perform the complete Callings of Air, Fire, Water, and Earth including both the invoking and the banishing aspects, followed by the Calling of Spirit Below, which is only invoking.

Keep facing the same way you did at the opening. Using the first two fingers of your right hand, trace a purple circle horizontally above you, as though you were drawing it on a low ceiling over you. Imagine that symbol drawn in a line of purple flame or of blazing purple light. Then imagine it ascending a short distance above your head and moving directly over you. This is the symbol of spirit above. Point up to the center of the symbol and say an appropriate invocation.

Here's the one I use when I'm practicing this ritual in a Druid context: "By the purple gate of spirit above and the power of the solar current, and in the great name CELI, I invoke Spirit Above, its gods, its spirits, and its powers. May the powers of Spirit Above bless and protect me this day and always, and further my work. May I be empowered by the solar current." (The divine name, if you use one, should of course be vibrated.)

As you finish the invocation, imagine as intensely as possible the realms of outer space far above you and the immense powers that dwell there. Engage all your senses, so that you smell and feel and hear as well as see the imagery. (What does space smell like? According to astronauts, it smells a little like a scorched barbecue grill—hot metal with an odd hint of meat.) Draw the energies of Spirit Above into yourself. Take a little while at this, and then say, "I thank the powers of Spirit Above for their gifts."

Finally, perform the Closing of the SoP.

Do this sequence daily for the next week or so. Notice the change in the energetic balance between this phase and the previous ones.

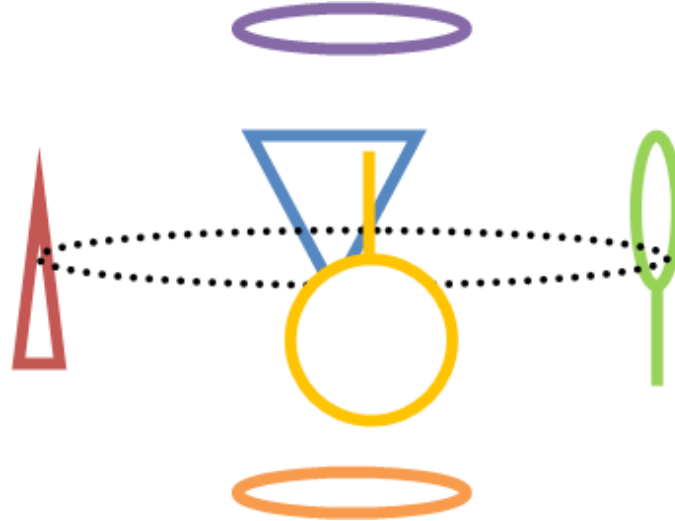
### **The Calling of Spirit Within**

Add this after another week. This comes after the six Callings you've learned already, and before the Closing. With it, the Sphere is complete.

Where the earlier Callings use a divine name, this one causes a sacred word or syllable. Druids practicing this ritual use the word Awen, the Grand Word of the Druid Revival traditions; Christians typically use the name of Jesus, "the namewhich is above every other name;" in the Hindu and Buddhist traditions, Om would be the appropriate syllable to use. If you aren't using divine names in this working, of course, you don't have to worry about a sacred name. The Calling of Spirit Within is done as described below:

\* \* \* \* \*

First, perform the Opening phase of the Sphere of Protection, and then perform the complete Callings of Air, Fire, Water, and Earth including both the invoking and the banishing aspects, followed by the Callings of Spirit Below and Spirit Above, which are invoking only.



Keep facing the same way you did at the opening. Visualize all six of the symbols you've traced around yourself, as shown above, each in its proper color and place, and see yourself in the midst of them.

Then say an appropriate invocation. Here's the one I use when I'm practicing this ritual in a Druid context: "By the six powers here invoked and here present, and in the Grand Word AWEN(pronounced AH-OO-EN), I invoke Spirit Within. May the powers of Spirit Within bless and protect me this day and always, and further my work. May they establish about me a Sphere of Protection."

The moment you say the words "Sphere of Protection," go immediately to the Closing of the SoP, formulating the sphere around you. This completes the Sphere of Protection in its full form.

A couple of notes may be useful here. You don't call upon gods, spirits, and powers in this seventh invocation, because Spirit Within is the small bright flame of the spirit in you—no other beings need apply. You've called on the powers of the rest of the universe, now you add your own spiritual power to the mix. You also don't trace a symbol because you are the symbol.

Practice the complete ritual daily for the rest of your life. Yes, I mean that! Combine it with ten to twenty minutes a day of discursive meditation, and a daily divination using the oracle of your choice, and you've got a set of esoteric practices that will take you very, very far along the Path.

## Option 2: Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram and Middle Pillar exercise

These are the standard ritual workings of the Golden Dawn tradition. You can use the classic versions of both practices, which you can find in any book of Golden Dawn magic. If you don't happen to be comfortable using Hebrew divine names, which the classic versions use, the following methods can be used with any pantheon you prefer.

### A Polytheist Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram

Over the years that I've studied and taught occultism, I've heard from a lot of people who are interested in practicing ceremonial magic but don't find the Jewish or Christian religious context of most ceremonial magic appealing. My book *The Celtic Golden Dawn* was written in part to set out a system of ceremonial magic for people like me who find the Druid Revival traditions to their taste, but of course there are a lot of people out there who go in different directions. So I got to work, drafted a ritual, and field-tested it to work out the bugs.

To use this ritual you'll need five divine names. One of them is the name of the god or goddess with whom you have a personal relationship. The other are four names taken from the pantheon you worship, each of which has four letters.\* (Think ZEUS, ISIS, etc.) It's best to have two gods and two goddesses; other than that, and the requirement that each name have four and only four letters, it's up to you.\*\*

\*If you use a sacred alphabet, such as the runes or Ogham, it's four runes or four Ogham fews, whether or not that amounts to four English letters.

\*\*In the ritual below, the names of the deities will be given as PATRON, GODDESS 1, GOD 1, GODDESS 2, and GOD 2.

Got it? Here's the ritual.

1. Stand facing east. Raise your hands from your sides in an arc until your palms join above your head, fingers pointing up. Draw your joined hands down to your forehead, visualizing light descending from infinite space to a point above your head, and say, "In the name of..."

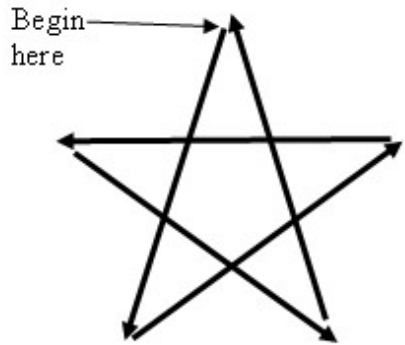
Draw your joined hands down to your heart, visualize a ray of light descending from above your head to the center of the earth, and vibrate the name (PATRON). (Vibration? That's the mode of chanting that produces a buzzing or tingling sensation in your body. It's discussed above, on page 11.)

Now separate your hands, and touch your right shoulder with the fingertips of your left hand and your left shoulder with the fingertips of your right hand, the hands crossing at the wrist. Say: "...my patron god(dess)..."

Now raise the elbows straight up and bring your hands up, out, and down in a circular motion, bringing them back together palm to palm in front of your lower abdomen or groin (depending on your body's proportions). Visualize your fingertips tracing a circle of light. As you do this say: "...I place myself within the circle of Her (or His) presence..."

Now bring the joined hands up to your heart again, fingertips pointing upwards. Visualize the shaft of light descending from infinite space to the center of the earth, the circle of light you drew with your hands, and your heart shining like a sun. Say: "...and protection."

This rite is called the Circle of Presence, and replaces the Qabalistic Cross in the standard Golden Dawn version of the Pentagram ritual.



Banishing Pentagram

2. Go to the eastern quarter of the space, and trace a pentagram with the first two fingers of your right hand, beginning with the top point, and tracing counterclockwise to banish, as shown in the diagram on the left. (This is for the banishing ritual; you'd trace clockwise to summon.) Visualize the pentagram drawn in a line of light. Point to the center of the pentagram and vibrate the name (GODDESS 1).

Trace a circle around to the south, draw the pentagram in the same way, point to the center, and vibrate the name (GOD 1).

Repeat to the west, trace the pentagram, and vibrate the name (GODDESS 2).

Repeat to the north, trace the pentagram, and vibrate the name (GOD 2).

Trace the line back around to the east and return to the center.

3. Say: “Before me the powers of Air; behind me the powers of Water; to my right hand the powers of Fire; to my left hand, the powers of Earth. For about me stand the pentagrams, and upon me shines the blessing of (PATRON).” Visualize the elements in the four directions when you say these words.

4. Repeat the Circle of Presence. This completes the Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram.

#### Notes:

1. Yes, you can have the gods in east and west and the goddesses in north and south if you wish. It works best to have the gods facing each other and the goddesses facing each other, for the sake of energetic balance.
2. Yes, you can reference some kind of elemental symbols in the four quarters in part 3 if your tradition has them, e.g., the four treasures of the Tuatha de Danaan, or the four sacred animals we use in Druidry. If not, just use the elements as given.
3. Yes, I know, the Hermetic GD version of the pentagram ritual traces the pentagram differently. We've done it this way in the Druidical GD for some years now with excellent results; give it a try and see how you like it.
4. Why four and only four letters? I have no idea, but it reliably works better that way.

#### A Polytheist Middle Pillar Exercise

The Middle Pillar exercise is the basic internal energy practice of Golden Dawn magic. It's meant to waken and energize five energy centers in the subtle body, and then circulate energy through the subtle body as a whole. It's best done every day, right after the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram and right before your daily meditation.

You're going to need to personalize this rite to work with whatever pantheon of deities you prefer. You're going to need the names of five deities; you're also going to need five colors and five symbols. The default option here, adapted from Israel Regardie's *The Art of True Healing*, is to use deities corresponding to the five elements—spirit, air, fire, water, and earth, in that order. In that case the colors are white, yellow, red, blue, and brown, in that order, and the symbols are the sun, a cloud, a flame, a drop of water, and a stone.

That's the default option, again. You don't have to use the default option. If your tradition has other symbols for the five elements, you can use them; if it associates the elements with other colors, you can use those. You can also choose a different and subtler logic for the deities you assign to the energy centers. The first deity can be the supreme deity of your pantheon; the second can be a deity of wisdom and initiation; the third can be a hero deity, a sun deity, or a deity of the hearth; the fourth can be a fertility deity, or a woodland deity, or a deity who's closely associated with the life force; and the fifth can be a maiden goddess. (Those readers who know their way around *The Celtic Golden Dawn* now know the logic behind that book's version of the exercise.)

(By the way, in case you were wondering, the names of the deities don't have to have four letters each. That was just for the pentagram ritual. It's also fine if you invoke a deity in the Middle Pillar exercise that you also invoked in the Circle of Presence; it works well, for example, to invoke your patron deity at your heart center.)

However you do it, work out a suitable table as follows:

Crown center:	DEITY 1	COLOR 1	SYMBOL 1
Throat center:	DEITY 2	COLOR 2	SYMBOL 2
Heart center:	DEITY 3	COLOR 3	SYMBOL 3
Genital center:	DEITY 4	COLOR 4	SYMBOL 4
Foot Center:	DEITY 5	COLOR 5	SYMBOL 5

In the Druidical GD, these are as follows:

Crown center:	Hu	White	Sun
Throat center:	Ced	Violet	Crescent moon
Heart center:	Hesus	Golden	Cluster of oak leaves
Genital center:	Coel/Sul*	Silver	Red dragon
Foot Center:	Olwen	Green	White trefoil

\*There's a lot of polarity symbolism in Druidical magic, so which deity you invoke at the genital center is determined by which set of genitalia you have, Coel if you've got male genitals, Sul if you've got the female set.

Or let's say you wanted to do an Anglo-Saxon version, one option might be this:

Crown center:	Tiw	White	Sun
Throat center:	Woden	Blue	Raven

Heart center:	Frige	Red	Spindle
Genital center:	Ing	Green	Sheaf of Barley
Foot Center:	Eostre	Brown	Flowers

Other arrangements could be chosen easily enough; these are just samples. Make your decision and give it a try. Once you've got your table constructed, the exercise is done as follows:

\* \* \* \* \*

First, perform the complete Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram.

Second, imagine a ray of light descending from infinite space to form a sphere of light just above your head, around eight inches in diameter. This sphere is COLOR 1 and contains SYMBOL 1. When you have formulated it clearly in your imagination, vibrate NAME 1 three times.

Third, bring the ray of light to your throat, and form another sphere. This one is COLOR 2 and contains SYMBOL 2. When you have formulated it, vibrate NAME 2 three times.

Fourth, bring the ray of light to your heart, and form a third sphere, which is COLOR 3 and contains SYMBOL 3. NAME 3 is vibrated here three times.

Fifth, bring the ray of light to your genital center, and form a fourth sphere. This one is COLOR 4 and contains SYMBOL 4. NAME 4 is vibrated here three times.

Sixth, bring the ray of light to your feet, and form a fifth center. This one is COLOR 5 and contains SYMBOL 5. The name vibrated here, three times, is NAME 5.

Seventh, return the attention to the center at the top of the head. Bring a current of white light a few inches wide down the left side of the head and neck, the left shoulder and arm, and the left hip and leg, down to the center at the feet, and then back up the right leg and hip, the right arm and shoulder, and the right side of the neck and head, back to the center atop the head. Repeat this a total of three times; if possible, synchronize with the breath, so that the energy flows down with the outbreath and up with the inbreath, but it is more important to visualize the whole course than to make it happen within a single breath.

Eighth, in the same way, bring a current of white light from the center above the head, down the midline of the front of the body to the center at the feet, and then back up the midline of the back of the body to the center above the head. Repeat a total of three times.

Ninth, turn the attention to the center at the feet. Breathing in, draw a current of energy up the Middle Pillar of the body from there to the center above the head; breathing out, allow the energy to spray like a fountain out and over the whole body, cleansing the entire aura, pooling at the feet and being drawn back up the Middle Pillar with the next inbreath. Do this a total of three times.

Tenth, perform the Circle of Presence. This completes the exercise.

### Option 3: The Judson Exercise

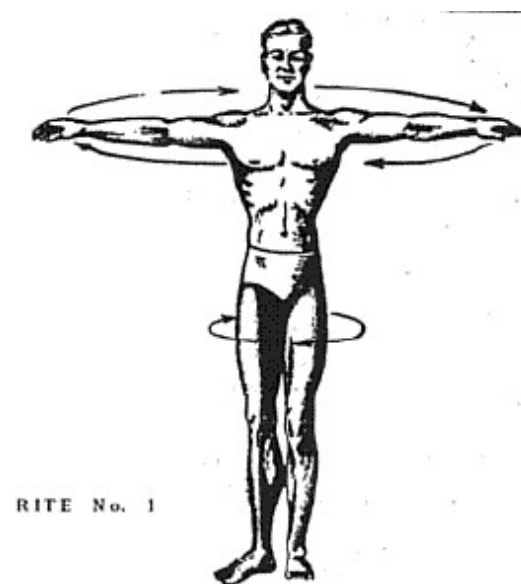
Abby A. Judson was once a tolerably well-known figure in the Spiritualist circuit. In 1888, she learned a certain simple exercise from one Dr. H.W. Abbott, whom I haven't yet been able to trace. Abbott claimed he'd been taught them by the spirit of a king of Atlantis named Osseweago; given the role of the town of Oswego in upstate New York as a hotbed of early American occultism, I suspect that the good doctor was having fun at Ms. Judson's expense.

The exercise, as Judson notes in her book *The Bridge Between Two Worlds*, is primarily meant to bring the practitioner into contact with benevolent spiritual currents and chase off negative energies. She recommends it to mediums because it keeps noxious entities at bay. I've done some experimenting with the exercise and modified it slightly; you can find Judson's original version via these two links:

[http://iapsop.com/ssoc/1891\\_\\_judson\\_\\_development\\_of\\_mediumship\\_by\\_terrestrial\\_magnetism.pdf](http://iapsop.com/ssoc/1891__judson__development_of_mediumship_by_terrestrial_magnetism.pdf)

[http://iapsop.com/ssoc/1894\\_\\_judson\\_\\_the\\_bridge\\_between\\_two\\_worlds.pdf](http://iapsop.com/ssoc/1894__judson__the_bridge_between_two_worlds.pdf)

Here's my current version:



1. Stand facing north. Turn counterclockwise three and a half times, arms extended out to the sides, palms down, concentrating on the idea that unwanted energies are being thrown off as you turn. End facing south.

2. Bring your heels together, shift your weight onto the balls of your feet, extend your arms to the south, spread your fingers slightly, bow your head and close your eyes. Imagine that you are being permeated with the magnetic energies of the earth.

3. Turn clockwise to face the north. Then raise your arms up and out above your head and look up. Turn very slowly clockwise once around, while imagining life and blessing descending to you from the sun. You can say a prayer or spoken invocation as you do this.

4. Extend your arms to your sides, palms down, and turn clockwise four and a half times, concentrating on the idea that you are wrapping yourself and your aura in the positive energies you have invoked. End facing south.

5. Sweep your "positive hand"—this is usually the hand you write with—palm down a few inches above the palm and forearm of your negative hand, which is held palm up. Do this three times, sweeping the hand from elbow to fingertips. Then reverse, and sweep off the positive arm and hand with the negative hand.

These stages are, respectively: (1) throwing off inharmonious magnetism; (2) blending with the magnetism of the earth; (3) calling down beneficent influences from above; (4) gathering them up and charging the aura; (5) sealing the aura.

Note 1: Judson, like many writers of her time, uses the word "magnetism" to refer to what



Mesmer called "animal magnetism," Reichenbach called "od," etc., etc.,etc. It's not the force that comes from physical magnets.

Note 2: To make sense of "clockwise" and "counterclockwise," imagine yourself looking down at a giant clock face on the ground just beneath your feet. The way the hands move on that clock face is "clockwise" in terms of this exercise.

Note 3: Yes, it's occurred to me more than once that this exercise played a role in the origins of the Five Rites, aka Five Tibetan Rites, the enigmatic not-actually-Tibetan exercises that have become popular in the occult scene over the last thirty years or so.

My experiments with this exercise suggest that it functions as a banishing ritual, but it works primarily on the etheric level, where most banishing rituals work primarily on the astral. Judson suggests doing it first thing in the morning and then again at night; I've tried this with good results, and it does not seem to conflict in any way with any other form of magical practice.

# The Art of Discursive Meditation

## Part One

Let's start with a couple of details that tend to be forgotten. First of all, there's nothing particularly exotic or, ahem, Asian about meditation -- though of course most Asian spiritual traditions teach it as a matter of course. So did most Christian churches until not much more than a century ago. For a change, this isn't something that got dumped at the time of the Scientific Revolution, when so much of the Western world's spiritual heritage hit the dumpster in a hurry; meditation got dropped in the late 19th and very early 20th century, when most denominations discarded their remaining methods of personal spiritual practice and embraced notions of spirituality that focused on collective salvation, either by sheer faith and nothing else (the fundamentalist approach) or by charitable works (the social gospel approach).

So we're dealing with something that used to be practiced by people all over the western world. (The word "meditation," remember, didn't have to be imported from some exotic language; it was borrowed into English from Latin, the normal language of educated people in the West until 1850 or so.) That's the first thing to keep in mind. The second is that what we're talking about is different in a crucial way from the kinds of meditation that were imported from Asia in the late 19th and 20th centuries. Nearly all of those latter methods focus on silencing the thinking mind, and classic Western meditation doesn't do this. Instead, it focuses and directs the thinking mind. That's implicit in the word itself. When we say a crime was *premeditated*, for example, that doesn't mean that the perp chanted a mantra or emptied his mind before doing it; it means that the perp thought it through, planned it, and deliberately decided to do it.

Western meditation—to give it its proper name, discursive meditation—is focused, deliberate, reflective thought. A subject for thinking—a theme, in the standard jargon—serves the same role in discursive meditation as a mantra or what have you in other kinds of meditation. You focus your attention on it just as intently as on any other kind of meditation, but that means you think about it, keep your mind and your thoughts on it, explore it, and understand it. Later on, we'll talk about how that works. For now, let's start with the first step, which is posture.

No, you don't have to tie your legs into an overhand knot to practice meditation, and in fact for the kind of meditation we're doing, you don't want to do that. The posture to use is the one shown in Egyptian statues of seated gods and goddesses. Sit on a relatively hard chair; if it has a back, slide forward, so your back doesn't touch it at all, and your spine is free. Your feet rest flat on the floor, your knees and hips are at right angles, your hands rest palm down on your thighs, your head is straight. Look forward and down, as though at something on the floor a few yards ahead of you. Breathe slowly and easily. (If you're already practicing the Sphere of Protection or another banishing ritual, do this in the space you've just cleared with that ritual. Set the chair in the space before you begin, and get used to doing the ritual around it. More on this later.)

Got it? Now don't move for five minutes. Don't fidget, shift, wiggle, scratch an itch or anything else. Leave your body completely still for five minutes by the clock. Do this once a day. That's your assignment for the next week.

Unless you've already done this, or practiced certain other exercises that have the same effect, this is going to be much harder than you think. Our bodies are actually full of tensions and discomforts we never notice, and part of the constant shifting and wiggling and fidgeting that

most people do most of the time is a matter of trying not to notice just how uncomfortable we are. Confront the discomfort head on. Stay still for those five minutes, no matter what. You'll still probably be having some trouble at the end of the week, but at that point we can go on and add something that will make it even worse. ;-)

That's one of the secrets of meditation. It is literally the most boring, grueling, frustrating thing you will ever do—and once you get the hang of how to do it and why it's important, you'll do it every day, because the payoffs are worth so much more than the boredom et al. Five minutes a day sitting in the posture described above. Got it? Go for it.

## **Part Two**

The last week of boredom and frustration, though it doubtless didn't feel much like this, was your introduction the most important practical side of the occult path, the process of training the mind to think clearly, deeply, and reflectively. The preliminary training in posture we discussed in Part One is essential to what follows, so if you didn't spend a week doing that, pop back to the previous section and give it a try.

This week we're also going to work on the physical plane, but from a different angle. A little bit of theory will be helpful to clarify this next step, so let's talk about relaxation.

Most people these days realize that it's possible to be too tense. Since the opposite of one bad idea is generally another bad idea, it's worth remembering that it's also possible to be too relaxed. Until very recently, most people in Western societies were much too tense. It was extremely rare to encounter anyone in the Western world who was too relaxed, whose body was so lacking in tension that it was limp and floppy, and so teachers of spiritual exercises put a lot of focus into relaxation. That had its effect, and now you find people on either end of the spectrum. What you find too rarely is people who have the balanced midpoint between too much tension and too much relaxation, which we can call poise.

Last week's exercise, and the practice of sitting in a fixed and slightly unnatural posture more generally, is meant to keep you from being too relaxed. Keeping the spine straight, the head held up, the legs parallel, and the body still requires tension. Now we move to the other side of the balance and make sure you aren't too tense. This is done by relaxing your muscles while retaining the posture you've established. You don't move at all; you don't shift or wiggle or stretch; you just let go of the tensions you don't need to keep the posture.

Here's how it's done. Start at the crown of the head. Consciously relax any muscular tensions you find there, and if there's any tension that won't let go, imagine that it is relaxing. (The imagination will become reality with a little practice.) Spend a little while on that part of your body, and then move further down your head to the sides of the skull. Consciously relax any tensions you find there, if you can, and if you can't, imagine the tensions dissolving. Go all the way down your whole body this way, taking it a bit at a time, and doing the same twofold relaxation on each part of your body. This should take you at least five minutes, and quite possibly more than that. All the while, maintain the seated posture without moving. Don't pay attention to your breath -- that's a later phase -- or to anything outside yourself; simply focus on your body, and on the process by which you're releasing unnecessary tensions.

You may find that when you finish this, you ache from head to foot, or that some part of your

body hurts a little -- or a lot. That's what happens when you have a lot of unnecessary tension you stopped noticing a long time ago. With repeated practice, the tension will go away. You may also find that when you finish this, some of your muscles feel as though they've had a workout. They have -- you've been holding your body in an unfamiliar position for a while, and that takes muscular effort. Your body will get used to that in due time. So that's the second stage of the process. Five minutes a day or more, sitting motionless in a chair, relaxing your unnecessary tensions. Got it? Go for it.

### **Part Three**

So far we've dealt with posture and relaxation. Now it's time to integrate a third factor, which is breathing. How you breathe has powerful effects on your state of consciousness, and there are intricate systems of breathwork that take advantage of this for various reasons.

If you don't have a teacher to supervise you and watch for signs of trouble, though, those systems can be risky. Breathwork stimulates the vagus nerve, which has a range of effects on the sympathetic nervous system and the endocrine glands; if you do it clumsily, you can mess up your health. (I learned that the hard way, and it took about five years for me to get things back to normal. You don't want to go there.)

Fortunately there are methods of breathwork that are both safe and effective, and one of them is very commonly used in discursive meditation practice. It's called the Fourfold Breath. It's quite simple. You breathe in through your nose, slowly and deeply, to the count of four. You hold the breath in to the count of four. You breathe out through your nose, slowly and fully, to the count of four. You hold the breath out to the count of four. Repeat to the same steady rhythm.

How do you know how slow or fast to make the rhythm? Simple—make it reasonably slow without gasping or running out of air. Keep it steady, gentle, and flowing. No two people will have exactly the same rhythm, nor will you have the same rhythm every time you practice. Don't use a metronome or any other mechanical aid; just let yourself find a pace that works for you.

One detail worth noting is that you don't hold your breath by closing your throat; you hold it by keeping the muscles of your chest and abdomen in their positions, either expanded or relaxed. If you're used to closing your throat to hold your breath, this can take some practice. How do you tell if you're closing your throat? Draw in a deep breath, hold it for a little while, and then breathe out. If you hear or feel a little "pop" inside your throat, you've closed it. To keep from doing that, keep trying to breathe in a trickle of air while you hold your breath in, and keep trying to breathe out a trickle of air when you're holding your breath out. You'll get the hang of it quickly.

For the next week, five minutes of the Fourfold Breath will be your practice. Take the position, hold yourself still, and let the tension drain away from the crown of your head to the soles of your feet, just as you did last week; take a minute or two to do this. Then begin the Fourfold Breath. Keep doing it for five minutes.

What you're doing this week is the sequence you'll use to begin the process of meditation for real next week. Keep at it, and see where it takes you!

## Part Four

So far we've dealt with posture, relaxation, and breathing: the preliminaries to discursive meditation. Now it's time to go all the way and meditate.

To make sense of what follows, it's important to remember that the word "meditation" literally means "thinking." As we discussed in the first post on this topic, when you say that a crime was premeditated, you don't mean that the perp did it in a blissed-out state with a mind empty of thought. You mean he thought deliberately, seriously, and intentionally about the crime before he did it. So that's what you're going to do -- no, not commit a crime, but think deliberately, seriously, and intentionally about something. (I suppose in some circles that counts as thoughtcrime, but we'll let that pass for now.)

To do that, you need something to think about. The subject for a discursive meditation is known as the theme. You can use anything as a theme that you want to understand. It's standard practice to choose themes from whatever spiritual path you follow, and some paths have specific bodies of lore that are typically used for discursive meditation.

If you're a Christian, for example, go open a copy of the Bible—yes, right now. Turn to the beginning of the Gospel according to John. That's traditionally where you start Christian discursive meditation: begin with the first verse and work your way through one verse at a time. (If you can't find something to ponder in the first verse of John, you may want to shine a flashlight in one ear and see if the beam comes out the other.) If you belong to a different faith that has a holy scripture, a sacred book, or a traditional volume of sacred lore, why, go ye and do likewise; I learned an enormous amount by meditating my way through the Mabinogion and the knowledge lectures of the Golden Dawn, and I'd guess that my Hellenic and Heathen readers could get at least as much out of Hesiod's Theogony and the Elder Edda respectively.

Other options? Well, the classic alternative to written texts is sacred or magical imagery. Do you have a Tarot deck, and do you want to get much deeper into it than you've gotten so far? Deal out the Fool. That's going to be your first theme, and you're going to work on it for at least seven daily meditations. You know those weird and complicated diagrams that fill books on alchemy, and make next to no sense if you just look at them? Congratulations; you now know how to unlock them. They were designed and made to be explored and unpacked using discursive meditations. Brother Masons, you know the trestle boards of the three degrees? Guess what...

The key to choosing a theme for meditation is to take it in little bites. The bigger the theme, the less you'll get out of it. If you're doing the Christian meditation referenced above, don't take the entire first chapter of John as a theme. Take the first line of the first verse: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Better still, take the first clause: "In the beginning was the Word." What does that mean? What beginning? What is a word? Why is Christ described as a Word? And so on.

If you're meditating on Tarot trump 0, The Fool, here again, don't do the whole thing at once. Start with the concept. What is a fool? Why is that concept suited to the beginning of the Major Arcana? Then, in another session, go on to some detail of the card, and focus on that for the entire section. Proceed from there.

Whatever your theme is, when you're ready to begin meditation, sit down in the position we've discussed and settle into it, neither tense nor relaxed but poised. Let go of excess tension, beginning from the top of your head and letting it drain down from there; spend about a minute

at that. Then do five minutes of the Fourfold Breath, letting your mind focus solely on your breathing. Then you're ready to begin.

Call the theme to mind. If it's verbal, repeat it silently to yourself several times. If it's an image, see it as clearly as possible in your mind's eye. In either case, hold it in your mind for a little while, and then begin thinking about it.

Your thoughts will wander off the theme. Bring them back. They'll wander off again. Bring them back again. You'll have as much trouble keeping your mind on the theme as the practitioner of mind-emptying Asian styles of meditation has keeping thoughts at bay, and you'll develop the same skills of catching your mind wandering and bringing it back. In the intervals between these vagaries, on the other hand, you'll be learning something about the theme, and you'll also be working on the capacity for focused reflective thought, an essential human skill and one very poorly developed by most of us.

Think about the theme for ten minutes. Then do a couple of final cycles of the Fourfold Breath, and finish. The next day, pick up another part of the theme -- "and the Word was with God" if you're doing the Christian meditation suggested above, some detail of the card if you're doing the Tarot meditation. Repeat the process. The next day, do it again, and again, and again. Next week we'll discuss some of the common problems and add in a few helpful tricks, but that's enough for now. Give it a try and see where it takes you.

## **Part Five**

The method of discursive meditation covered already is the framework for everything you do with this kind of meditation: settle your physical body, let go of unhelpful tensions, use rhythmic breathing to settle your subtle body, and then think, slowly, patiently, with as much mental focus as you can manage, about the theme of your choice. That's the method. Know that much, and practice it daily, and you'll find your way step by step through the complexities of the process and achieve the states of increased clarity, perception, and wisdom that meditation brings. Yes, it really is that simple.

Are there difficulties? Of course. I've already mentioned that meditation is the most boring activity you will ever experience, and I mean that quite literally. At some points it's maddeningly dull. That's true of every kind of meditation, by the way, and it's essential to its effectiveness. Boredom is always a sign that you're not paying enough attention. Meditation works by teaching you to notice what you don't usually notice, to pay attention to the things you usually slide right by. Thus there are two rules for dealing with boredom in meditation. The first is to keep going; the second is to slow down and pay more attention. That's not easy, but it'll get you through the boredom and help you notice what you've been missing.

You'll almost certainly go through the stage at which your body itches, aches, and throws every other possible annoying and distracting physical sensation at you. All those are sensations that you've been having all along anyway, without noticing them. Now that you're quieting the constant babble of sensory and mental chatter, you're going to notice them. Remain motionless and keep on with the meditation; you can scratch or whatever once your meditation session is over. This is a passing phase and your body will quiet back down after a while.

Many people also go through a stage when, as soon as they start meditation, they get really

sleepy. That's another body issue; sometimes it's a way for your body to tell you that you aren't getting enough sleep, sometimes your body simply isn't used to being quiet except when you're going to sleep, and so it treats the meditation session as the lead-in to a nap. Fairly often this is just another passing phase. If it's not, you can add a bit of physical discomfort into the mix. I had some trouble with this early on in my practice, and solved it by meditating stark naked on a metal folding chair -- oh, and did I mention that it was winter? ;-) It was too cold for me to feel drowsy, and that broke my body out of the habit of treating meditation as naptime.

Some other points may be worth mentioning. Most people find that it helps to practice meditation at the same time every day, so that it becomes a habit. Most people find that it's a good idea to wait at least an hour after eating a meal or having sex before practicing meditation—in both cases, your body has most of its energies directed somewhere other than the thinking centers in the head, and needs time to redirect those. Traditional lore has it that it's a bad idea to meditate while drunk or under the influence of drugs, though a mild dose of caffeine seems to be exempt from that—Zen monks in Japan drink plenty of tea before meditating, and so do I, with good results in both cases.

Finally, there's a habit you may want to try introducing into your practice once you've gotten some experience with discursive meditation. When you're meditating and realize that your mind has gone rabbiting off away after something other than the theme of your meditation, don't just pop it right back onto the theme. Instead, notice what it's thinking about, and then work your way back through the chain of associations that got it to where it was. If you suddenly notice that you're thinking about your grandmother, let's say, stop there and go back.

Why were you thinking about your grandmother? Because you were remembering a Thanksgiving dinner at her house when you were a child. Why did that memory come to mind? Because you were thinking about nuts, and she always had bowls of mixed nuts out on Thanksgiving day. Why were you thinking about nuts? Because you thought about squirrels, and the association came to mind. Why were you thinking about squirrels? Because one ran across the roof of your house, and the skittering noise broke into your train of thought and distracted you from your theme.

Do this repeatedly and you'll find that it trains your mind to run back to the theme just as readily as it ran away from it. You'll also become more aware of your habitual thought patterns, which is a serious plus, as this will teach you over time to work with them consciously, rather than having them control you unconsciously. Give it a try and see where it takes you.

## Introduction to Divination

One of the commenters on my blog asked me a while back for advice on learning how to read tarot cards. It's a question I field fairly often, and it has a fairly straightforward answer.

There are tens of thousands of books out there on the tarot, and at least as many on other systems of what is technically known as sortilege—the kind of divination that involves pulling one or more symbols out of a preexisting set (say, a tarot deck, or a set of runes, or a set of Coelbren letters, or what have you). Sortilege isn't the only kind of divination out there, but it's far and away the most popular, and it's also easier to learn than most of the others. There are also many different ways to learn to read tarot, or any other method of sortilege.

The following is the way I do it. I've learned something like twenty different sortilege systems over the years, starting with Tarot and going on into some fairly odd corners of occult tradition. I don't recommend books for beginners, though those can be useful later on.

Here's what you do:

1. Pick a Tarot deck (or what have you) that appeals to you. You'll get better results with a deck if you like the art and find the symbolism interesting to look at.

2. Go through it slowly, card by card, looking at every image. Then read the LWB ("little white booklet") that comes with it.

3. Every day thereafter, take one of the cards -- do them in order so you get every card – and just look at it for some minutes. Notice how the imagery makes you feel, what it reminds you of, what thoughts it awakens in you. Then read the section of the LWB on that card, and think about how the meanings listed there (both upright and reversed) relate to the imagery. Then look at the card for another minute or so before putting it away. This is Part One of your daily divination practice.

4. Part Two is to cast a simple reading every day. The one I recommend is three cards laid side by side. The first represents you; the second represents the situation; the third represents the outcome. Shuffle the cards, ask them "What do I need to understand about today's events?" and then shuffle them again, cut, and deal out three cards. Again, look at the cards, and see what reactions they awaken in you; then look up their meanings and think about those; then try to tell a very simple story in which the cards provide the plot and your life provides the characters and the setting.

Write down your interpretation. Of course it's going to be wrong at first; don't worry about that. Just write it down, then shuffle the cards, put them away, and go do something else.

5. The next day, go back to your reading, compare it to the events of the day, and see if you can figure out what the cards were trying to tell you. This is Part Three of your daily divination practice. You probably won't figure it out at first, but give it time, and remember that the LWB is not a set of stone tablets handed down from On High. If you review your readings every day once the facts are in, you'll begin to figure out what the cards mean to you, which is after all what matters, and then you'll begin to interpret them better the first time.

That's it. It's probably going to take you several months to get to the point that you understand what the cards are trying to say to you, but it's going to take you that long no matter what you do,



so you might as well buckle down and do it.

Two additional comments that I've found it necessary to make over and over again to students:

First, as noted above, the LWB is not a set of stone tablets handed down from On High. It's just one person's attempt to summarize what the cards tend to say to that one person. The single most common cause of failure in learning to divine, in my repeated experience, can be summed up in the words "But that's not what the LWB says!" The LWB is a springboard; if you cling to the springboard while trying to dive off it, you're going to end up going nowhere.

The important thing is to try to figure out what the cards mean to you, and that need not have much at all in common with what they mean to someone else. When you cast a reading, let your intuition take over; when you try to figure out what the reading meant the next day, approach each card with the thought that it must refer to something you experienced, and pay attention to any connection that comes to mind, no matter how far-fetched. It may not turn out to be far-fetched at all.

Second, nothing in any reading is as dire as you think it is. Again, *nothing in any reading is as dire as you think it is*. And one more time, NOTHING IN ANY READING IS AS DIRE AS YOU THINK IT IS. Seriously. Every beginning Tarot reader I've ever met, myself included, started out reading each card in its most over-the-top sense, and learned through experience (and more than occasional embarrassment) to tone things down to the point that they make sense.

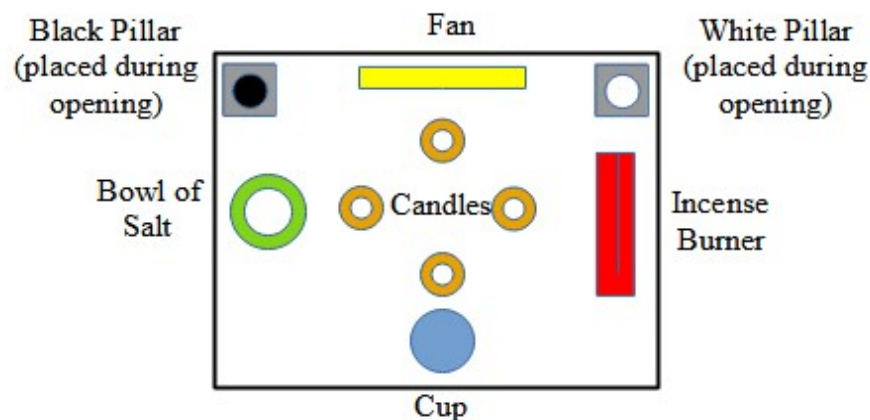
OMG, here's the card named Death! (It means that something's going to change in a way that doesn't permit going back to the previous state.) OMG, here's the Ten of Swords! (It means that something is over and done with.) OMG, here's -- well, you get the picture. Over-the-top tarot reading is a reliable source of drama for those who enjoy being emotionally overwrought, but I can't think of any other use for it, and it reliably yields inaccurate readings. If you want accurate readings rather than drama, the sooner you outgrow this habit, the better.

So there you have it. The daily practice of divination is one of the three foundations of occult training as I understand it and teach it -- the other two being the daily practice of a basic banishing ritual, and the daily practice of discursive meditation. Five minutes of ritual, fifteen minutes of meditation, and ten minutes casting and interpreting a reading -- that's just half an hour a day, and it will open portal after portal for you.

## Temple Opening and Closing

This basic ceremony is used to begin and end the self-initiation, equinox, and solstice rituals of the FHR, and can be used for other purposes as needed. Like all ceremonial workings, it should be practiced regularly until it can be done from memory. (I strongly recommend practicing this ritual once a week, in fact.) You will need to be able to perform this ceremony smoothly and effectively before you can perform the Seeker initiation, the first of the FHR initiation ceremonies, so getting started on it now will be helpful.

The physical requirements of the temple are simple. You will need a room or other space where you can be assured of reasonable privacy while you work. (It can be used for other purposes when you aren't practicing ritual there.) You will need an altar with an altar cloth; as mentioned in an earlier paper, this can be any small table or folding tray. You will need your symbols of the four elements—a folding fan, incense, a cup, and a stone—and you will need the black and white pillars to set on the altar. You will also need a chair. (When you perform the Seeker initiation, you will also need the four candles, but until then, leave them out.)



Set the altar in the center of the space with the chair in the west, facing it. The four elemental symbols are on the altar, the fan to the east, the incense to the south, the cup to the west, and the stone to the north. The pillars are in some convenient place close to the altar. When they go on the altar, the white pillar will go on the southeast corner and the black pillar on the northeast corner, but they are not placed on the altar until the lodge is opened and they are taken off again when the lodge is closed.

### Opening Ceremony

Before you begin, sit in the chair facing the altar, and take a few moments to clear and center your mind. Then rise and go to the altar, standing on the west side, facing east. Say:

“I prepare to open this temple of the Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose on the Candidate Grade.” (You will replace the word “Candidate” with the title of another grade when you have achieved it.) “I invoke the presence and protection of my guardian angel/genius.”

The phrase “guardian angel” is used by believers in monotheist faiths, while “guardian genius” is a term for the same concept in classical Paganism. You may use either phrase as you wish.

Imagine the guardian angel/genius as a tall, winged, luminous figure in the east, facing you. Be aware of its protective influence.

Once you have done this, place the black and white pillars on the altar, the black pillar on the northeast corner and the white pillar on the southeast corner. (This is when you will light the candles, once you are ready to enter the grade of Seeker.) Then say one of the following, depending on which of the three protective workings you are using.

If you use the Sphere of Protection, say: “Let this temple be set apart by a Sphere of Protection.”

If you use the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram, say: “Let this temple be set apart by the sign of the Pentagram.”

If you use the Judson exercise, say: “Let this temple be set apart by the Magnetic Forces.”

Perform the Sphere of Protection, the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram, or the Judson etheric cleansing to banish all unwanted energies from the space. Then say:

“I now clear and cleanse this temple according to the ancient ways.”

Take the folding fan to the east, raise it up in front of you, and open it. Imagine the wind blowing toward you from the east, and imagine it swirling around the fan. Now walk clockwise around the temple with the fan, and say the following words as you do so:

“I purify this temple and all within it with the element of Air, and I invoke the spirits and powers of Air. May they bless this temple and further its work.”

When you have returned to the east, put the fan back on the altar, and go around to the south. Pick up the incense and face south. Imagine heat streaming toward you from the south, and imagine it gathering around the incense. Now walk clockwise around the temple with the incense, and say the following words as you do so:

“I purify this temple and all within it with the element of Fire, and I invoke the spirits and powers of Fire. May they bless this temple and further its work.”

When you have returned to the south, put the incense back on the altar, and go around to the west. Pick up the cup and face west. Imagine cold spray drifting toward you from the west, as though you stood near a waterfall, and imagine the spray gathering around the cup. Now walk clockwise around the temple with the cup, and say the following words as you do so:

“I purify this temple and all within it with the element of Water, and I invoke the spirits and powers of Water. May they bless this temple and further its work.”

When you have returned to the west, put the cup back on the altar, and go around to the north. Pick up the stone and face north. Imagine the rich dark scent of freshly turned soil coming toward you from the north, and imagine it gathering around the stone. Now walk clockwise around the temple with the stone, and say the following words as you do so:

“I purify this temple and all within it with the element of Earth, and I invoke the spirits and powers of Earth. May they bless this temple and further its work.”

When you have returned to the north, put the stone back on the altar, and circle around past the east and south to the west of the altar. Face east and say:

“I invoke the Divine Presence. May (use the name of a deity, or simply say “God” or “the gods

and goddesses”) be with me and grant his/her/their presence and protection while this temple is open.”

You may say a prayer at this point, either aloud or silently, or simply attend to the divine presence. When you are ready to go on, say:

“I now declare this temple of the Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose open on the Candidate (or other) Grade. The Sun has arisen, and the shadows flee away.”

At this point, proceed with the working you have planned, or simply sit in the chair and meditate. When you are finished, proceed to the closing ceremony.

## Closing Ceremony

Before you start the closing, sit in the chair facing the altar, and take a few moments to clear and center your mind. Then rise and go to the altar, standing on the west side, facing east. Say:

“I prepare to close this temple and return to my duties in the outer world. I now clear and cleanse the temple according to the ancient ways.”

Now clear and cleanse the temple with the symbols of the four elements, using exactly the same actions and words you used in the opening. When you have finished, return to the west of the altar, facing east, and say:

“I thank (name of deity, or simply “God” or “the gods and goddesses”) for his/her/their presence and protection while this temple was open.”

You may say a prayer at this point, either aloud or silently, or simply attend to the divine presence. When you are ready to go on, say one of the following, depending on which working you did to prepare the space.

If you used the Sphere of Protection, say: “I now release the Sphere of Protection I placed about this temple, and send its influence to benefit those who need protection at this time.”

If you used the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram, say: “I now release the banishing I placed about this temple, and send its influence to benefit those who need protection at this time.”

If you used the Judson exercise, say: “I now release the Magnetic Forces I placed about this temple, and send their influence to benefit those who need protection at this time.”

Imagine the protective energies dissolving and going elsewhere to protect others. Then remove the white and black pillars from the altar and set them somewhere else. (When you are using altar candles, this is when you will extinguish them.) When this is done, say:

“I now declare this temple of the Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose closed on the Candidate (or other) Grade.” This concludes the ceremony.

# How to Create an Astral Form

by John Gilbert

## OVERVIEW OF CREATING ASTRAL FORMS

According to the Tree of Life model there are ten steps involved in creating anything. We'll go through these ten steps paragraph by paragraph:

1. **AWARENESS.** First, become aware that you can create an astral form as this is an innate ability given to each of us as part of our being. Anybody can create an astral form. Everybody does it whether they know it or not. Whenever you become aware you can create anything, you start to build the astral form of your creation. You can create anything you want to create.

2. **INTENTION.** Secondly, we must intend to do something or we can never accomplish anything. Set your intention now to create the astral forms for your Seeker initiation. Intention is everything.

3. **BELIEF.** Thirdly, you must come to believe you can create astral forms for your initiation. You are not alone in this. Your guardian angel or guardian genius will help you. The egregor or group consciousness of the Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose will help you, and so will the egregors of the older orders and traditions from which the Fellowship descends. Believe you can and you can.

4. **LOVE.** Fourthly, to create anything you must energize that creation with your love for it. The Divine energized us with Divine Love when we were created. In commemoration of our own creation we energize the things we create with our love. Love what you create.

5. **POWER.** Fifthly, having energized our creation, we now emotionalize it with our personal power. Our personal power is the complete range of all the emotions we feel. This includes emotions like love - hatred, peace - anger, joy - fear, happiness - sadness, acceptance - rejection, forgiveness - resentment, and all our other emotions. These emotions give us our personal power. Empower what you create.

6. **HARMONY.** Sixth, we balance all these energies and bring them into harmony with each other, we focus our awareness, intention, belief, love and power on the object to be created and we balance these energies. Bring harmony to that which you create.

7. **DESIRE.** Seventh, having balanced all the spiritual, intellectual and emotional energies, we now proceed to bring our creation into manifestation by adding our personal desire, passion and intensity for this creation. The more we want it, the more easily it manifests. Desire what you want to create with all your being.

8. **MIND -** Eighth, we add our present awareness of our creation, any and all past experiences we've had with creating things, and our future thoughts and ideas about what our creation will become. We bring our creation into our mind and add our own thoughts and ideas to our desire. We decide to complete this creation.

9. **THE MATRIX -** Ninth, by using our power of visualization we create the astral form of our intention. This creation is accomplished in the astral world and it is the matrix into which the influences of the higher planes descend. The astral form is created by an act of visualization.

10. MANIFESTATION - Tenth, the astral form is created in the astral world according to our awareness, intention and belief. It is filled with our love, power and harmony. And it is created upon the matrix of our desire and mind. We are the father-mother of our creation.

## IMAGINATION

We create astral forms by visualizing them. If you are already quite good at visualizing astral forms, you may skip ahead to the next sub-section.

Most Candidates are not able to visualize astral forms because their visualization skills are not well enough developed. This is not a criticism. It is merely an observation of a weakness that can soon be corrected. It is corrected by the proper use of your imagination.

Imagination is one of the three primary functions of the human mind. It is the function most related to the future. According to the teachings of the Tree of Life, our mind operates in the past (memory), present (cognition) and future (imagination). The Tree of Life further teaches that you cannot become what you cannot imagine yourself becoming, you cannot do what you cannot imagine yourself doing. Conversely, you can become what you imagine you will become, and you can do what you imagine you can do.

Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't, you're absolutely correct. You can do what you think you can do. You can't do what you think you can't do. Imagination is the key that unlocks this universal law. Everybody with a brain can imagine something happening. Use that power to help you learn how to visualize the things you want to visualize.

Imagine that you can create an astral form for your guardian angel or guardian genius—you will do this in the rituals ahead. Imagine yourself creating that astral form and you will create that form. You may not yet be able to visualize it, but have no doubt that you did imagine it into being; imagination and visualization are not the same thing. To imagine is to think something into existence. To visualize is to see what you have created. You can create something on the astral plane before you have learned how to see it.

Imagine the guardian angel or guardian genius as a conventional winged angelic form, taller than a human being, radiant with light. Practice imagining yourself building and holding this astral form and you will build and hold it in the astral world. You need to be aware that creating such an object in the astral world will draw attention. Some of that attention will be unwanted. So, before you start imagining anything being created in the astral world, we suggest you place yourself in a Sphere of Protection.

Practice adding and subtracting details to your imagined astral form. You will, actually add and delete features from your astral form. This activity will attract more and more attention as your skills improve. Just keep yourself within a Sphere of Protection and you have nothing to fear from this increasing interest in your astral creation.

The more you practice the more skilled you will become. That's another universal law governing all physical, mental, emotional, psychological and spiritual endeavors of all kinds. The more you practice the more skilled you become.

## VISUALIZATION

Once you feel you have become accomplished at imagining yourself create and hold an astral form, the next step is to imagine you can see your creation. Keep in mind that what you imagine, you can accomplish.

This is a ten-step process just like the process explained at the beginning of this lesson. What you do is go back over those same steps but instead of setting your intention to create an astral form, set your intention to see the astral form you've created. You will.

Most people are quite disappointed by what they begin to see. Don't fall into that trap. First of all, your astral sight isn't very well developed yet so what you think you see isn't at all what you're actually looking at. Secondly, your creative skills are not very well developed yet so what you actually create isn't exactly what you think you created.

The more you practice both skills the more skilled you become. Our best suggestion is to continue imagining yourself creating and holding the astral form while you practice seeing your creation. You can do both at the same time.

Each of us develops these skills on our own timetable according to our previous experiences in this and former lifetimes. We can speed that process up by practice and practice alone. Please be aware that regardless of the quality of your creation, it is and will be an adequate form for your purposes. Once you can see the astral form you are creating you are visualizing that astral form. That's what visualization is - seeing what you imagine you see.

Visualization is nothing more than seeing what you imagine. You see with your third eye, your psychic senses or with your intuitive mind. You may see things in full color or you may see them in black and white or shades of gray. Practice and you will improve your ability to see things in full living color.

The myth regarding your ability to create forms in the astral world is the story of Pinocchio. It is the awareness, intention and belief of the creator that is most important in the creation. It is the love, power and harmony you place in your intention that empowers your creation and it is your desire, mind and the matrix you create that finally manifests your creation. The astral forms you create are your own personal Pinocchios.

The message is clear. If you want to visualize anything you need to practice. The more you practice the better your skills will become. In the meantime, the things you imagine yourself creating will be created and they will be able to serve the purpose for which you created them.

# Protection Against Psychic Attack

by Brother A. A.

As you progress along your spiritual path, you'll undoubtedly pique the interest of others, both incarnate and discarnate. Those incarnated in the flesh may be tempted to attack you psychically in order to elevate themselves. The net result of their attack is to hinder their spiritual growth. At the same time, you may experience some negativity in your life because of their negative energy. You can protect yourself against these attacks.

Those not incarnated in the flesh are usually, but not always, more benign. They usually just want to get your attention to deliver a message for them to somebody residing in the flesh. Occasionally, they want to talk with you, to warn you of some coming event, to persuade you to change your ways, or just to chat with somebody who'll listen. It's good to remember, when working with discarnate entities, that they're not all holy people. In fact, they're just exactly the same person they were when they died except they no longer have a physical vehicle.

The discarnate may communicate with you in any number of ways including:

1. Visual: by showing you themselves or other things
2. Auditory: by speaking to you or making other sounds
3. Tactile: by touching you or causing sensations on or within your skin
4. Olfactory: by causing odors to affect your sense of smell
5. Gustatory: by causing tastes to affect your tongue
6. Psychic: by attempting to cause you some sort of harm

The incarnate may also attempt to harm you psychically by using any one or more of those same techniques in their psychic attack. They may send you pictures, messages, sensory perceptions, odors or tastes. More likely they will attempt to harm you in a physical or emotional manner, to cause you physical injury, to induce a heart attack, to choke you, to induce fear and terror, or great sadness and depression.

By whatever method your assailant may attack you or benign entities may intrude into your mind, you have at your disposal a most helpful form of protection called the Sphere of Protection. When used to protect yourself against psychic attack, use the following adjustments or additions to the Sphere of Protection. The adjustments may be substituted for the intentions of the Sphere of Protection, but our intention here is to add them to the basic structure of the Sphere, to produce a Sphere of Psychic Protection. That way you have two layers of protection against attack. These are the suggested adjustments or additions:

## **Air**

The Element of Air is associated with sound, any kind of sound including psychic or discarnate voices. When banishing Air also banish all unwanted voices and sounds.

## **Fire**

The Element of Fire is associated with sight, any form of visual aid including their physical body



when incarnate here on Earth. When banishing Fire also banish all unwanted visions of every kind.

### **Water**

The Element of Water is associated with touching and emotions including all sensations to the skin. When banishing Water also banish all sense of touch. Unwanted emotions are included in the regular Sphere of Protection.

### **Earth**

The Element of Earth is associated with both taste and smell including all unsolicited smells and tastes. When banishing Earth also banish all unsolicited tastes and smells.

### **Spirit**

There may be times when you want these intrusions, or at least some of them. These times include an emergency and anytime you voluntarily want to speak with discarnate beings. When invoking Spirit you can indicate such times or establish a signal so discarnate beings know this is the time you will offer them an audience.

Several years ago when I did a lot of trance mediumship and channeling I used the symbol for Spirit Above any time during the day when I was willing to open myself to discarnate beings. I still use that symbol and I always state my specific purpose when using it. I've had to stop opening myself to all the entities that want to talk. There's just not enough time in the day to listen to every one of them. But, I do allow urgent messages for people I know at the end of my sessions.

These simple techniques really do work. The secret is to learn the Sphere of Protection very well first. Then expand it to include psychic protection. The alternative is to do the Sphere of Protection and follow that with a Sphere of Psychic Protection. This second method is suggested to those people who have a problem receiving too much information from the other side. After a few days or weeks, when the individual has solved his or her psychic problem, the two rituals may be combined into one.

If, after using the Sphere of Protection for several days you still experience unwanted communications, we suggest you try meditation to raise your vibration level. Perform the Sphere of Protection, spend ten to fifteen minutes doing meditation, and then perform the Sphere of Psychic Protection. After several days or a few weeks this can all be compressed down into one expanded version of the Sphere of Protection.

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(Note: Brother A.A. was one of John Gilbert's pen names. This essay was written specifically for those who use the Sphere of Protection, but students of the FHR will find that its methods can be adapted in various ways to work with other protective rituals.)

# The Tree of Life

by John Gilbert

The following seven part essay on the Tree of Life by John Gilbert derives its teaching from the traditions of the Universal Gnostic Church. It should be studied carefully and reviewed more than once as you proceed through the grades of the Fellowship. However, you are not required or even expected to agree with the ideas it presents. The point of this essay, and others to follow, is to encourage you to explore the philosophy of occultism and the foundations of your own experience of the world.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Part One - Awareness

The Book of Genesis begins with: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Three things are mentioned in this first sentence: God, heavens and earth. In this essay, we'll call this first God mentioned in the Western theology as Creator God or simply as The Creator for the sake of clarity.

This creation story is told in every commonly known religion. The principal character in this story is called by many names (Ahura Mazda, Brahman, Ptah, and YHVH for example). The other two characters are called male and female, heaven and earth, light and darkness, energy and form, and several other pairs of opposites.

This is the nature of the Tree of Life. One creates two who are opposite in nature and those two combine to form one balanced whole. This is where we'll start our discussions since this is where Gnostics started to become separated from the other Western religions and spiritual paths.

Gnosticism is not so much a religion as it is a spiritual path. It is this spiritual path which is disclosed by the Tree of Life. This is the topic of our discussion.

If Creator God created the heavens and earth we know Creator God must have existed prior to this creation. On this assumption alone man has tried to define Creator God for thousands of years. We're no closer to arriving at a perfect definition now than we were back then.

Our second assumption is that Creator God created something Creator God knew and understood. We all create things we know and understand. We don't create things we don't know and we don't understand. So what Creator God created was familiar to Creator God.

If Creator God knows all about each of us, because Creator God did create us, then Creator God knows more than all of us put together. In fact, Creator God knows everything we know and Creator God knows more than we know. Thus, because Creator God knows everything, Creator God has to be omniscient.

If Creator God was all there was in the beginning, then there was only one thing Creator God could have used to create and that one thing was Creator God. Therefore everything that is created is within Creator God, and Creator God is within everything. Creator God is both omnipresent and immanent.

If Creator God created us and all that is within Creator God, then all the power that is must exist within Creator God. Creator God is and must be omnipotent. Additionally, since Creator God created the heavens, and there is no end to the heavens, and those heavens are within Creator God, then Creator God must be infinite.

If Creator God was in the beginning and Creator God is infinite then it follows that Creator God is also eternal and ever-living. So, we know Creator God is eternal, infinite, omnipresent, immanent, omnipotent, omniscient and the Creator of all that exists. Everything is Creator God. Creator God is everything.

If we assume Creator God created something He, She or It knew and understood, then it follows that the Law of Correspondence may be true. That Law says: "That which is above is as that which is below; and that which is below is as that which is above." In short, this law is: "As above, so below."

This gives us the opportunity to understand more about Creator God because the Law of Correspondence says we create in the same manner. How do we create?

We create because we get the idea we can create, we think we can create, so we set about creating. We might intuit this idea, reason it out for ourselves, or receive it from some Higher Source. This logic leads to several possible ways in which Creator God came to create all that exists.

One possibility is Creator God received the inspiration to create Heaven and Earth from a Higher Source. In this case, we drop our consideration of this particular "Creator God" and go back to the Original Source above and beyond which there is no other Higher Source. In other words, we disregard this possibility since we've already decided there is no Higher Source above the Creator God we're considering.

If Creator God reasoned it out or intuited the idea to create a physical universe, the first step in this process was to become aware such a creation was possible. As above, so below.

To understand this process let's examine the life of a child. The first thing a child does is cry. Why? The child has become aware of something and reacted to that something. This is the story of a child's life: to become aware of something and react to it. This is the story of life for most humans most of the time. As we go through life, we become aware of many things and possibilities. Once we become aware, we start to think and have feelings about the things in our awareness.

As below, so above. Before Creator God could create anything, Creator God first needed to become aware of the possibility of creating anything. Awareness is the first step of this or any other creation.

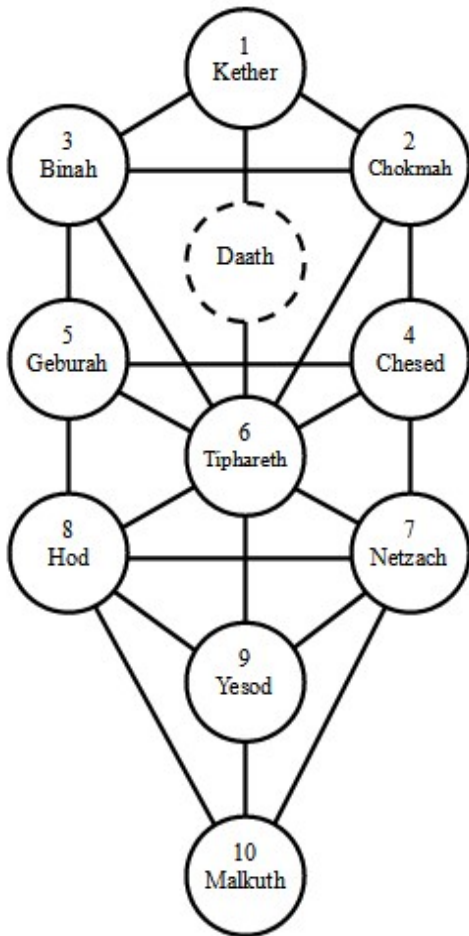
On the Tree of Life, the topmost sphere is called Kether (pronounced ket' - er) or The Crown. In the Tree of Life we're creating now, we'll call this sphere Awareness. For our purposes, Kether, the Crown and Awareness are all the same thing. What we know about one, we know about the other.

The Qabalah teaches that Awareness is partially manifest and partially unmanifest. It is partially of the world of creation and partially of the world above and beyond the creation. Awareness is like that. It's both partially in our consciousness and partially in our conscious mind. We're aware, but we're only aware of what we see, hear, smell, touch, taste or feel (intuit).

The Creator created everything that ever was, is now or ever will be. The first step in this creation process was the act of becoming aware it was possible to create. Awareness precedes everything else. It's the first step in thinking everything we think, feeling everything we feel, speaking everything we speak and doing everything we do.

According to the teaching of the Qabala, nine more steps are needed to actually manifest anything in the material plane. But none of those steps will occur until and unless there is first Awareness of the possibility of creating something in our lives.

Awareness is the first step, the first of ten steps to manifestation. Awareness is the first sphere on the Tree of Life, the first of ten spheres of manifestation. Awareness is the first act of creation, it is the first creation from which all else flows.



According to the Big Bang Theory, in the beginning there was nothing. At a point in this nothingness all the matter and energy that ever was, exists now and ever will be was created. All this energy and all this matter were compressed into a single point, a single point in the Mind of the Creator.

The sheer power of all this energy being compressed into a single point caused it to explode in a Big Bang. Matter and energy have been moving away from the explosion of this single point ever since. Matter and energy will continue to speed away from this explosive beginning until the energy of that explosion has been expended. Then, according to the Big Bang Theory, everything will reverse course and be pulled back to its source in the Mind of the Creator.

Nobody knows for sure when the Big Bang occurred nor when it will collapse back on itself. Scientists are looking back in time toward the center of the Universe with very powerful telescopes. They say the Big Bang occurred about twelve billion years ago and that our Sun is about five billion years old.

These same scientists say the Universe is still expanding and it's not slowing down. Not yet. The best minds working on the Big Bang Theory guess the Universe will continue to expand for at least another ten to fifteen

billion years.

To think it all began because Creator God became aware creation was possible. As above, so below. To think that all we are, have been and ever will be is so because you and I became aware we could create our own lives. This Awareness was the first step in our own act of creation.

The Creator has been called many things. In the tradition of the Universal Gnostic Church, the Creator is usually referred to as Creator God. In Indian traditions the Creator is called Brahman. In Greek myth Gaia emerged from the Chaos and created the Earth and everything in it. Thus the Creator can be considered to be Chaos though some call Gaia the Mother of All.

Tellus Mater was the Roman Goddess equivalent to Gaia and she, too, was born of the Chaos. In our discussions we'll consider Chaos to be the Creator in both Roman and Greek mythology. The Creator of the Mesopotamians was the God El, the father of all man and creator of all things. The Creator in Egyptian mythology was Atum the self-created, the Great He-She. Memphite priests taught that Atum was the child of Ptah but this was apparently not a widespread belief.

In Irish Druidism the Creator is a goddess called Danu. She is the Great Mother of all that is and ever was. The name of the Creator in Norse mythology is lost to us. Many consider The Creator to be Tiwaz but the stories seem to indicate Tiwaz was born of the Creator.

The North American Indians were not one faith or religion but many. The Creator has as many names as there are tribal families. The Pueblo Indians consider the Creator to be Awonawilona. Awonawilona is The One Who Contains Everything.

The Algonquin Nation called the Creator Kitchi Manitou and the name Manitou has been used by several tribes in describing the Creator. Certain of the Pacific Coast Nations called this same God by the name Olelbis. To the Pawnee Nation this God is Tirawa-Atius and to the Cherokee it's Kanati and Selu (father and mother) who created all that is.

You need to decide for yourself what name you'll use for The Creator who, according to the Western theology, created the Heavens and Earth. Which is to say, The Creator created all that is, was and ever will be.

\* \* \* \* \*

(Note: John Gilbert had a significant number of Native American students, some of whom became priests and bishops in the Universal Gnostic Church. This is why he so often included discussions of Native beliefs in his teachings.)

## Part Two - Intention and Belief

"In the Beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" according to the Book of Genesis. Several creation stories start out in the same vein. The words are different, but the concept is the same. Some say God first created the light and the dark. Others say the first creation was male and female, masculine and feminine energies.

The Heavens are boundless, endless. They go on forever. Earth is bounded, finite. It's a definite thing and well-defined. The more we study the early creation stories, the more we become convinced the first creation was to create matter and energy.

According to Einstein's Theory of Relativity, matter and energy are two different expressions of the same thing. Matter and energy can each be converted into the other. More than that, everything in the whole known Universe is either matter or energy, and the sum total of all the matter and all the energy is the Universe.

This sounds like: "In the beginning was God, and God thought about matter and energy and God was matter and energy." All the matter and energy that ever was or ever will be is here now, and all that matter and energy is the Creator. The Creator is probably more than all the matter and energy, but all that matter and energy are the Creator.

There's nothing in this story to tell us which came first, matter or energy. Consequently every religion has a theory based on the major culture of that religion. Christianity teaches man came first. So do all the major Western religions. Most Pagans believe the All-Mother, or Great Mother came first.

Gnostics are not in agreement about this either. Some are in the "Man-came-first" camp while others stand firm knowing "Woman-came-first." Science says they came together, one cannot exist without the other.

The Big Bang started out as a point of combined mass and energy and the energy of that primal explosion is still propelling that matter through space. Matter and energy work together. You can't have one without the other. They both live and act together within the Creator and they are The Creator.

Energy is boundless force and it expands forever. This is the "Heaven" of the first creation. This is the masculine principle called "Force."

Matter is form. It restricts and confines energy. This is the "Earth" of the first creation. This is the feminine principle called "Form."

The Creator is both form and force, matter and energy, masculine and feminine. All the matter and energy, force and form, are The Creator but the Creator is more than just that.

Most of the ancient writings about the creation allude to the male and female archetypes rather than explicitly naming them. For example, Genesis refers to this phase of creation as "God created the heavens and the earth." The Jerusalem Talmud explains this as a process of the one Creator God dividing Himself into two things of opposite polarity. Usually this is explained as being the Void which is of negative polarity and the Substance. Some Christian theologians consider the angelic world to be the Heavens and manifestation to be the Earth.

Eastern philosophers look at creation in very much the same way. Brahman, the one Creator God, became the Male and the Female principle without diminishing Brahman. In this philosophy the One became Three in One. That's pretty close to the Western concept of the Trinity. The Two, male and female, cannot exist without the One, but the One is self-existent with or without the Two.

The other interesting thing about the Two is that one cannot exist without the other. The Male Archetype cannot exist without both the Creator Archetype and the Female Archetype. The Female Archetype cannot exist without both the Creator Archetype and the Male Archetype. The Creator Archetype can exist with or without the Male and Female Archetypes.

In many religions, the Great Mother gave birth to her husband and together they gave birth to all that exists. In others, the male came first as in the story of Adam and Eve. In the Qabalah, the Creator (which may be called the Great Mother or the Great Father) came first. The Creator separated Itself into two parts while retaining the whole of Itself. These two parts are the Mother of All Things and the Father of All Things. They are the Light and the Darkness, the Positive and the Negative, the Male and the Female Principles, the Male and Female Archetypes.

There really is no discussion about which came first, the man or the woman. The answer, according to the Qabalah, is they came together. One Archetype cannot exist without the other. They are opposites, and when they come together they are The Creator. But the mystery is that even if they don't come together, the Creator exists in Its fullness and is not diminished in any way.

The Great Mystery has a very simple explanation. If the Male and Female Archetypes exist in the Mind of the Creator, then it makes sense that the Creator is not diminished. If the Mind of the Creator is that which gets divided, then it makes sense that neither the Male or Female Archetype can exist without the other. These Archetypes are opposites and to think of the attributes of one is to define the attributes of the other.

The Creator is the One Mind and creation is in the Mind of the Creator.

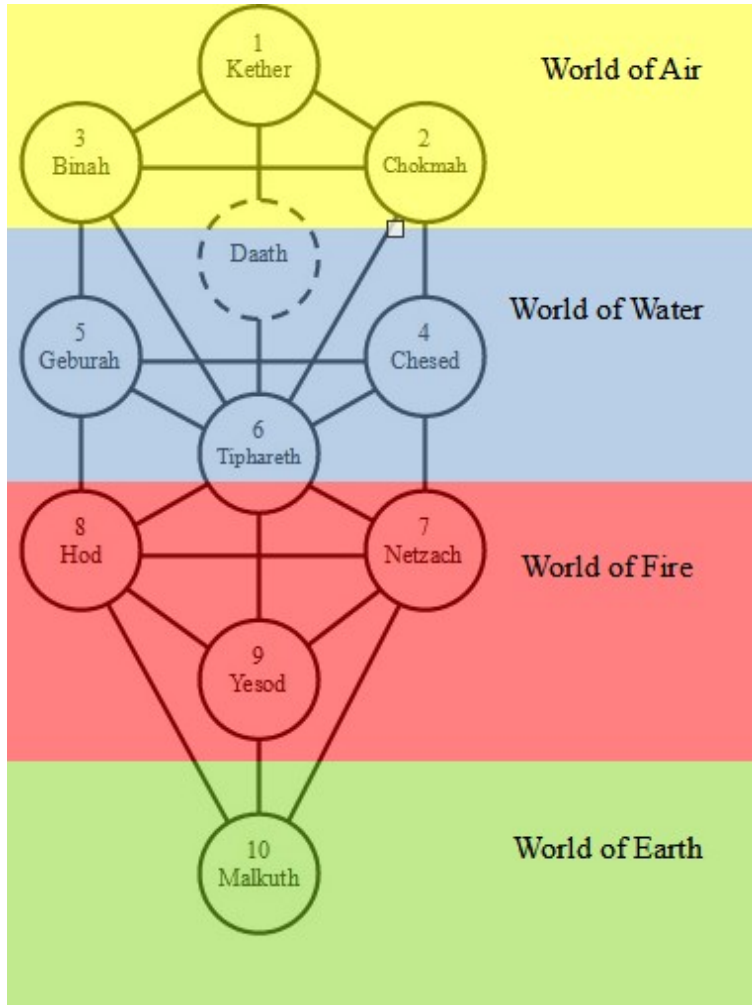
That's the great secret of all the Western and Eastern Mysteries. Everything is Mind. Everything is the Creator. Nothing exists outside the Mind of the Creator. Everything exists within the Mind of the Creator. We are all brothers and sisters in the creation of all that exists. We're all in this same Mind together. We're all interconnected not only to our friends but to our enemies. We're connected to all the plants, animals and minerals in this world. Everything is the Creator.

The Creator is unconditional love, all knowing, all powerful, present everywhere and in all things. This is the archetype that is the Creator. It's the root of the Air Element.

The Father archetype is outgoing energy that moves away from the source. It expands in all directions as it moves. This energy is a force that moves things. Because it moves, we call it positive. The Father archetype is all about intention, the desire to do something, the ability to conceive it, the resolve to do it and the energy to finish what is started. It's the root of the Fire Element.

The Mother Archetype is ingoing and does not move. It is inert but collects energy inside itself. It's a form that contains things, and because of this we call it negative. The Mother Archetype is all about receptivity, the capacity to feel it, the inertia to contain it, the ability to remember it and the ability to love it forever. Mother is the root of the Water Element.

On the Tree of Life, the Creator occupies the topmost sphere. All energy moving down through the Tree of Life originates in this topmost sphere. The Father Archetype occupies sphere number two on the right-hand side of the Tree of Life as you're looking at the Tree. The Mother Archetype occupies sphere number three on the left-hand side of the Tree of Life as you're looking at the Tree. These two spheres are located below the first sphere. All three are interconnected so as to form a triangle with The Creator Archetype at the top. The sphere for Father is called Intention (Chokmah) and the one for Mother is called Belief (Binah).



This triangle is called the Triangle of Air. It's also called the World of Air because everything in this world is thoughts and ideas. Nothing else exists in this world except thoughts and ideas. It's the Archetypal World or the World of Archetypes. It's also called the Spiritual Triangle among several dozen other names.

Some authors consider the Archetypal World to be the Trinity of God the Creator, Father God and Mother God. In Christian Gnosticism this trinity is often called Father-Mother-Creator God or Creator-Father-Mother God. It's also called Creator-Mother-Father God. The three spheres in this triad can therefore be labeled Creator God, Father God and Mother God in that order. The Creator Archetype, Father Archetype and Mother Archetype is another way of saying the same thing as is Creator-Male-Female Archetypes. Awareness, Intention and Belief are the definitions of these three concepts.

Several authors assign different Judeo-Christian God names to these spheres. The most common assignment of Divine Names is Eheieh to Kether (Creator), Yah to Chokmah (Father) and YHVH Elohim to Binah (Mother). Eheieh is often translated as "I am That I am" or as "I am What I am." Yah is Father God, YHVH is the Tetragrammaton normally rendered as Jehovah or Yahweh, and Elohim is Father and Mother God. Some claim Elohim is a singular male God and plural female Goddesses.

Your assignment, should you decide to experiment with the World of Archetypes, is to assign one God or Goddess from the pantheon of your choice to each of the spheres in this trinity. It's important to preserve the sequence of Creator-Male-Female Archetype for these first three spheres. But the name of the Deity assigned to each is entirely up to you.



## Part Three - The Abyss

The Archetypal World, the World of Air is separated from the rest of the Tree of Life by an Abyss "of endless breadth, depth and width." It's so deep you can't see the bottom of the pit, you can't see anything as you look down except endless space. It's so wide it appears to go in either direction forever. The other side is so far away you can't see it. You're not even sure there is another side. Standing on the edge of this abyss, it feels like you're standing on the edge of the world looking out into nothingness. At least, that's what most of the mystics who've been there have to say.

Yet, when we look at the Tree of Life, we see paths connecting each of the three top-most spheres to each other. We also see five paths from these three crossing the Abyss; one from the Creator and two from both the Father and Mother Archetypes.

These five paths are called the Impassible Paths because crossing the Abyss is impossible until and unless you've completed all the requirements to do so. We'll discuss those requirements in the pages that follow. But in short, they can all be summed up in the admonition to love your Creator and your neighbor as yourself.

The Abyss not only separates the World of Air from the rest of the Tree of Life, it reflects the first three Sefhira into the next level of the Tree. As a result of this reflection, the second triangle is upside down relative to the first. It is a reflection like a pool of water might reflect that which is above it. If the second triangle on the Tree is a reflection of the first, then the second triangle isn't real at all. It's just a reflection. Reflections aren't real.

Some of the modern theories about the birth of the universe would agree with this point of view. The modern concept accepted by many physicists is the universe is a hologram within the mind of some vast intelligence. It doesn't take much of a leap of faith to believe that Intelligence is the Creator as expressed through the Father and Mother Archetypes.

Science continues to prove the Gnostic viewpoint in all things.

The *Sepher Yetzirah*, which is the first written document we know as the Qabala, teaches that Spirit breathed (Air) and from this breath came the "The Great Waters." Air came first and Water second. The *Sepher Yetzirah* continues explaining that Water carried Fire in Her belly. Desire (Fire) comes from the belly and is a combination of Air and Water but desire (Fire) is born of Water. Desire is born from our emotions.

Here's a little exercise to help you understand the Abyss a little better: Stand in front of a mirror. Point both your index fingers like guns. Point these "guns" at the mirror and slowly move them forward until they touch the mirror. In this example, your shoulders are the Father and Mother Archetypes above the Abyss. The reflection of your shoulders are Daughter and Son on the other side of the Abyss. The mirror represents the Abyss. Both your arms and the reflection of your arms are the connecting path between these spheres. They connect at the mirror but each remains in its own world and does not encroach into the world of the other.

This is actually a fairly good analogy. The spheres above the Abyss are in a different world than those below. The spheres below are a reflection of the spheres above. The spheres above are connected to the spheres below through the Abyss. But since that which is above and that which is below the Abyss do not cross the Abyss, this connection is between two different kinds of

things. The two kinds of things do not mix, they connect. They touch each other at the Abyss.

The only thing that crosses the Abyss is our consciousness. Our bodies never cross the Abyss nor does our personality. Our thoughts, ideas, memories, and attitudes cross the Abyss but our emotions and our desires do not. When we cross over the Abyss from above all we bring with us is our thoughts, ideas, and attitudes. We leave our memories behind in the World of Air, the World of Archetypes.

## Part Four - Love, Power and Harmony

Spanning the Abyss is a path running down the right-hand side of the Tree of Life from Father God to Daughter God directly below. Also spanning the Abyss is a path running down the left-hand side of the Tree of Life from Mother God to Son God or God the Son directly below.

Father God is the Father Archetype and the Male Archetype. Mother God is the Mother Archetype and the Female Archetype. Daughter God is the Daughter Archetype and the Maiden Archetype. Son God is the Son Archetype and the Knight or Young Man Archetype.

These archetypes each have many variations and definitions. An interesting exercise is to start a page in your journal for each of the five major archetypes we've already discussed. Then add other possible names and attributes for each over the course of several weeks or months.

For example, the Creator Archetype also includes such other archetypes as architect, artist, author, builder, designer, discoverer, founder, inventor, and producer. Any type of creative endeavor is a candidate for classification under the master symbol of the Creator.

As we examine the Son and Daughter Archetypes we find two very interesting facts:

First, the only energy coming down the Tree of Life into Daughter comes from Father and the energy coming down into Son comes from Mother. The energy from above changes polarity as it crosses the Abyss. The Male gives birth to the Female and the Female gives birth to the Male.

Secondly, the only energy from the other "parent" comes through the first. Mother God sends energy across to Father God and that's the only female energy that goes down to Daughter God. Father God sends energy across to mother God and that's the only male energy that goes down to Son God. It's difficult to understand how the polarity can change in such an arrangement.

Daughter God is the fourth sephirah on the Tree of Life and its Hebrew name is Chesed (Hess' - ed) which means Mercy. Mercy is also called Charity, Love and Unconditional Love. Mercy is the archetype of the loving daughter. But, remember Mercy is a reflection of the Father-Mother-Creator Archetype. So the Father-Mother-Creator Archetype contains the Loving Daughter.

Son God is the fifth sephirah on the Tree of Life and it's Hebrew name is Geburah (Geh - boo' - rah) which means Severity. Severity is also called Strength, Power, Trepidation, Chaos and Conflict. Pachad is another Hebrew name assigned to Son God. Pachad means Fear or Trepidation. All of these names are assigned to this sphere and the Son of God, the Son of the Goddess or the Widow's Son. (That's a long story in itself because the Black Widow is Binah, the Mother Archetype. She's also the Black Madonna.) Power is the archetype of the God of War and the warrior and this warring son is contained within and is a reflection of the Father-Mother-Creator Archetype.

There's one more Child of Deity, but this child is a very special child. It receives energy from all of the first five Sephiroth. The Creator, Father, Mother, Daughter and Son all send energy down into the sixth sephirah. It is literally the child of all the Sephiroth above it. This Child of Deity is on the Middle Pillar directly below The Creator but on a level further down the Tree than both Daughter and Son. It completes the second triangle on the Tree of Life, the triangle reflected from above, the triangle reflected across the Abyss.

The name of this Sephirah is Tiphereth (Tiff' - er - et) which means Beauty. Other names

assigned to Beauty include Harmony, Balance, Son of God and Christ Consciousness or Krishna Center. It is the archetype for the Peacemaker, the Hanged God and the Sacrificed or Crucified King. It's also a direct reflection of the Father-Mother-Creator Archetype.

The sphere attributed to the Daughter Archetype is called Mercy, Charity, Love and Unconditional Love. In the Order we usually refer to this sphere as Love, and by this we mean Unconditional Love.

The sphere attributed to the Son Archetype is called Severity, Strength, Fear, Trepidation, Anger, Sadness and Power among other things. In the Order we usually refer to this sphere as Power and by this we mean to include the power of Anger, Fear and Sadness.

The sphere attributed to Beauty or Harmony is also called Balance, the Crucified or Sacrificed God, the Crucified or Sacrificed Archetype, Service, the Grandchildren, the Grandchildren Archetype and the Soul. In the Fellowship we usually refer to this sphere as Harmony though we see the Creator as our Spirit and this center of Harmony as our Soul.

These three spheres form a downward-facing triangle which is a reflection of the upward-facing triangle of the World of Air. Each of the three spheres in this triangle are connected to each other. The Creator is directly connected only to our Soul (Harmony). Father is connected to both Daughter and Harmony. Mother is connected to both Son and Harmony. Everybody above is connected to the Grandchildren below.

This downward-facing triangle is a reflection of the upward-facing World of Air. It is the Child of Air. These three spheres in the lower triangle are reflections of the Archetypes. They are the reflection of thoughts and ideas.

Reflect on your own thoughts for a moment. You'll start to feel something. This something can be reduced to love, happiness, peace, and joy or it can be fear, anger, sadness and indifference. The reflection of our own thoughts and ideas are the emotions of our life.

As Above so Below. As Below so Above. The reflection of the thoughts and ideas in the World of Air Above the Abyss are the emotions of the World Below, the World of Water, the World of Emotions.

The World of Air is separated from the World of Water by the Great Abyss. There is a great chasm between our thoughts and ideas and our emotions. There is a great chasm between thoughts and ideas and emotions in the Divine Mind.

In the World of Air the male and female, Father and Mother Archetypes are the opposite of each other. You can't have one without the other. The Creator participates in both the male and female and is more than the sum of both.

In the World of Water this concept of opposites is carried one step further. Daughter is Mercy, Love, Charity and Unconditional Love. Daughter is also the opposite of all these things. She's Indifference, Apathy, Intolerance, and Unkindness.

Son is Anger, Fear, Sadness, Severity, Strength and Power. He's also their opposites. He's Joyful, Peaceful, Happy and Soft and his Strength and Power are used with Joy, Peace and Happiness.

It's in that place called Harmony where all these positive and negative emotions come together, where they become balanced. Any expression of excessive positive or negative emotions is due

to an imbalance in this area of our lives.

Here's the important secret taught by most mystery religions: Emotions are a product of our thoughts. We learn fear, anger, sadness, love and all our other emotions. Our thoughts and attitudes control our emotions.

In our experience, the most difficult thing to accept about the Tree of Life is that our emotions are born in our thoughts and ideas, our attitudes and belief systems. This concept blocked many of us from spiritual progress for several years. The skeptic in us couldn't accept anything about our minds having control of our emotions. Period. As far as we were concerned, our emotions were out of control, and thinking about them didn't make them any better.

But if you stop to think about it, it's all very logical.

We think. Because we think, we start to have feelings about our thoughts. Our feelings affect our thinking and it goes round in a circle. Our emotions feed our thoughts and our thoughts feed our emotions. We can work ourselves up into a dither in no time at all. We can also calm ourselves down and change our thinking.

If Unconditional Love is a decision, why do I instantly dislike certain people? It's all based on my memory of past experiences. Our memories store things based on the amount of emotion attached to those memories. The more emotional the memory, the easier it is to remember and we remember it more vividly. Since our memories are stored in our subconscious mind, we're not always aware we're reacting to something based on those memories.

The fact is that we judge people based on our memories of that person, people who look, act or behave like that person, people who speak like that person, or people who subconsciously remind us of that person. It doesn't matter who the person is, what matters is how we view that person based on our memory or past encounters with other people. We instantly dislike certain people because they remind us of one or more negative attributes of other people in our memory. We instantly like some people for the very same reasons.

Unconditional Love is a decision. We choose to love somebody or not. We choose to love something or not. We choose to love and we choose not to love. We choose to be indifferent toward certain people or things. We choose apathy over love. We choose the level of our commitment.

Anger is a decision. It may be conscious, subconscious or even unconscious, but it is a decision. Conscious anger is often called "righteous anger." We're entitled to feel angry and so we do. Subconscious anger is a habit we've formed over time. We've been angry in this situation before and here we are again. Eventually our anger can become so automatic it's done on an unconscious level. Our thoughts birth our anger.

Fear is a conscious, subconscious or unconscious decision. We become anxious and our anxiety turns to fear. We worry about what could happen and our worry becomes anxiety, and our anxiety becomes our fears. If we expect the worst, we begin to worry that the worst will happen. If we expect the best, we begin to worry that the best will happen. Our thoughts birth our fears.

Sadness is a decision. It's a conscious, subconscious or unconscious decision based on past memories collected by our senses of sight, hearing, touching, tasting or smelling and the emotions we decided to connect to that memory.

We are the parent of our emotions. Our thoughts, ideas, attitudes and beliefs give birth to our emotions. And we imbue our memories of people, places, things and events with these emotions. We are the product of our entire lifetime of thinking, birthing and growing our emotions. Study my emotions and you can understand my thinking, the thinking that gave birth to those emotions.

This is a very hard lesson to fully comprehend and understand. We talk to people who have hormonal imbalances that cause them great depression. Telling them they thought themselves into this depression is not a cure for their problem. Drugs are not a cure for their problem. The only cure is serious spiritual work and very few people are willing to invest the amount of time and energy to do spiritual work. It's a commitment and commitments take energy, time and work.

Your assignment, should you choose to participate, is to ponder your emotions this week and see if you can trace them back to your own thoughts, ideas and attitudes in your distant past.

## Part Five - Paroketh

The Abyss separates the World of Air from the World of Water. It is the third veil on the Tree of Life. It is the third veil we must rend as we return to our Source from the World of Manifestation which is our physical universe. As we come down the Tree of Life we now reach the Second Veil. The Second Veil is called Paroketh which means “veil.” This is also known as the Portal. It's the Portal through which we must travel to reach our Soul. It's also the Portal through which the first order member of the Golden Dawn must pass in order to become an Adept.

Paroketh is called the Veil of Illusion because what we see below this veil is an illusion. Reality is on the other side. Our soul resides in the true reality. Our ego and persona reside in the illusion of reality. Paroketh is also called the Curtain of Fire which refers to the fact that the World of Fire is located beneath the World of Water on the Tree of Life. As we descend into matter we must cross this Curtain of Fire.

Additionally, Paroketh is called the Curtain of Water because as we ascend the Tree of Life from the World of Fire we're confronted by a Curtain of Water which we must part (like Moses and the Red Sea) to ascend further.

As we incarnate into this physical world, we move down the Tree of Life from our beginning in Awareness at the top of the Tree. We build our intentions and focus ourselves down to one primary purpose for incarnation in the World of Air—the first three spheres. In the teachings of the Order the body we inhabit here in the World of Air, the World of Archetypes is our Spirit. Our Spirit is our Higher Self, our own Holy Guardian Angel. It's our Spirit that decides to incarnate and it's our Spirit that decides upon our purpose for incarnation. It's our Spirit which our Unmanifest Self builds in the World of Archetypes as the first step in our physical incarnation.

Since we cannot move across the Abyss in our Spirit, the Order teaches that our Spirit creates our second body, our Soul. Our Soul lives in the World of Water, the Creative World where we create the essence of what we will become in physical reality. Our Soul is in constant communication with our Spirit. Our Spirit knows everything our Soul knows and experiences, just as our Unmanifest Self above the Tree of Life knows everything our Spirit knows and experiences. And, since our Unmanifest Self is a "Spark of Light in the Consciousness of the Unmanifest Creator," the One Source of All-That-Is knows everything our Unmanifest Self knows.

Our Soul decides how we'll express Unconditional Love and all our other emotions in our lives so we can reach the goal of achieving our purpose in the physical reality. It's in the World of Water where the blueprint for our emotional reactions to life are created. It's here we plan the relationships of our life. It's in this world where we attune our emotions to our life's purpose. We build an Emotional Body and that Emotional Body is our Soul. In various paradigms our Soul is also called our Christ Body, Christ Consciousness, Conscience, Krishna Center, Krishna Consciousness and our True Self.

The next step in our descent down the Tree of Life is to cross the Veil of Illusion, the Curtain of Fire. Just as our Spirit builds a body to exist in the World of Water, so our Soul builds a body to exist in the World of Fire. This body is called our Astral Body or our Ego Body and it is our Ego and our Astral essence. Our Ego is the complex building block upon which our physical body, persona and personality are built. Our Ego resides in the World of Fire and it's in constant

communication with our Soul.

It's important to realize not all Souls create an Ego and descend into the World of Fire. Not all Egos create a body and a persona and descend into the World of Matter, the World of Earth. Likewise, not all Spirits create a Soul and descend into the World of Water and not all Unmanifest Selves descend into the World of Air. Those who remain in the World of Fire we call Ghosts. Those in the World of Water we refer to as Astral Beings, Spirit Guides or Animal Guides and we consider many to be Masters. Those who remain in the World of Air are Ascended Masters, Adepts and Great Souls.

The fact that you and I inhabit a physical vehicle means we decided to manifest for some purpose and we entered the World of Archetypes, World of Emotion, World of Desire and the World of Matter in that order. Our job is now to discover our original purpose and then accomplish those goals. That process is called "climbing or ascending the Tree of Life." It's also called evolution, alchemy, pathworking, and magic. This is just the opposite of our descent into matter which is called involution.



## Part Six - Desire, Mind and The Matrix

Once we descend through the Veil of Illusion, also known as Paroketh, we enter the World of Fire, the Astral World. In this world we build the foundation for our physical body. In this world the Universe builds the foundation for the suns and planets of the universe. This is the astral world which is the foundation for the physical.

According to our Gnostic traditions, this is the World of Ego. It's the world of our ego. The first sphere in this world and the seventh sphere on the Tree of Life is called Desire. Its Hebrew name is Netzach (pronounced net' - zak) which is usually translated as Victory. A better translation is probably "Firmness," meaning the firmness of our intentions and dreams. Hence, the name of "Desire." Other names like Passion, Drive, Devotion, Intention and Ambition are also appropriate names as is Intuition. Our Desire center is the root of our intuition.

Desire is the manifestation of Fire in the Astral World. Desire is based in our original intentions before we started the final stage leading to our incarnation (incarceration) here on Earth. It's the closest thing we have in the Astral World to our Soul which resides in the World of Water. It's our spiritual center in the Astral World.

In our opinion, the Element of Fire is the most difficult of the four Elements to interpret in the Tarot. Astrologically we understand the drive, passion, desire and energy of Fire fairly well. But in the Tarot we attribute it to things like a person's career, their intuition or their spirit. Our Passion is more than just our career, it's all of our consuming interests and all of the energy we have in our life.

Our Fire is a place we can go in meditation to learn about our life's purpose, our mission in this lifetime. When we made the decision to incarnate, we determined what we really wanted to accomplish in this lifetime. That's our purpose, our reason for incarnating. We can find that reason in the World of Fire.

We've descended the Tree of Life from the World of Air, through the World of Water, through the Second Veil and now find ourselves in the World of Fire. We've passed from the World of Reality into the World of Illusion. We've received our "Baptism by Fire" as we crossed through the Curtain of Fire. This is our third baptism by the way. We received a Baptism by Air into the World of Air when we became manifest in our Spirit. We received a Baptism by Water into the World of Water when we descended into our Soul. Now we receive a Baptism by Fire as we descend into our Ego.

Our Ego is clothed in the World of Fire by the Elements of Fire, Air and Water. Fire is sphere seven. Water is the ninth sphere to be discussed next. Air is assigned to sphere eight, which in Hebrew is called Hod, and that's our next subject. Before we get there though, it's interesting to note that our Spirit, Soul and Ego are each composed of denser and denser Air, Fire and Water as we descend from the Unmanifest down the Tree of Life to physical manifestation.

Sphere eight is the Air Element expressed in the World of Fire. It's our thoughts, ideas and attitudes filtered through our emotions. These are not the Archetypes we find in the World of Air (sphere one) nor the intentionally balanced emotions we find in the World of Water (sphere six). These are the raw, vibrant, energy-filled thoughts we have in our everyday mind. That's why we call sphere eight Intellect or Mind and it refers to our day-to-day intelligence.

Our Mind operates on three distinct levels:

1. Memory (Past)
2. Cognition (Present)
3. Imagination (Future)

Our complete memory contains both subconscious and unconscious minds. Our subconscious mind is where we store memories we can normally access. Our unconscious mind stores all other memories. Our Cognitive Mind is our rational mind also known as our thinking mind. This is our logical and deductive mind with which we think and deduce. Our Imagination is our Imaginative Mind and this is where we plan our future and imagine the possibilities for our life.

Our Intellect is connected to our Emotional World at both Harmony and Power. This gives us the ability to draw upon our Inner Strength and our Inner Harmony (also called our Soul). Our Intellect is also connected to our Desire Center and this gives us some direction in focusing our thoughts. What we desire colors what we think. If you haven't figured it out already, both our Desire and our Intellect are masculine qualities.

The first two worlds, the side spheres, which lie on the right and left pillars of the Tree, were balanced in that one was feminine and one was masculine. Now, in this second reflection of the Divine, we see an imbalance right-to-left. This imbalance will become important as we complete our study of the Tree of Life. For now, it's fun to think about these things.

The Tree of Life is a three-phase descent from the Unmanifest through the Three Worlds of Air, Fire and Water resulting in Manifestation in the World of Earth. The first world is the World of Air. It's composed of the three Elements Air in sphere one, Fire in sphere two and Water in sphere three. These are the Creator, Masculine and Female Archetypes. The Creator is the center of balance between the Masculine and Feminine.

The second world is the World of Water. It's composed of the same three elements. Sphere four is Water. Sphere five is Fire and sphere six is Air. Remember, the Abyss separates the Second World from the First World and that the Second World is a reflection of the First. Notice also that the masculine has moved from the right-side of the Tree of Life to the left as you move down from the World of Air to the World of Water as you face the Tree. The feminine moves from the left side of the Tree to the right as you move down the Tree from the First World to the Second.

The third world is the World of Fire. It's also composed of the same three elements of Fire in sphere seven, Air in sphere eight and Water in sphere nine. All of this leads to the fact that sphere seven is the Element of Fire in the World of Fire. Our intentions and beliefs in the World of Air have been energized with emotional power in the World of Water. The result is our intentions have become emotionally charged when we reach sphere seven. Emotionally charged intentions are our passion, our drive and our desires.

Harmony, Desire and Intellect all send energy to the third sphere in the third triangle, in the Third World of the Tree of Life. This third sphere is the ninth sphere on the Tree of Life. Its Hebrew name is Yesod and this means "Foundation." This is the foundation of the physical universe.

Physical matter is built upon a Matrix of Energy. Physical matter is itself spinning energy. Modern physics has proven what Einstein postulated half a century ago, that energy = mass times the speed of light squared ( $E = mc^2$ ). Matter is energy. Our ancient brothers and sisters who

understood the Qabala centuries and millennia ago knew this. Modern science has only proven this fact in the last twenty-five years.

The Matrix of Energy upon which the physical universe is built is the Element Water. This element flows into all the forms that exist on Earth. So there you have it. In the World of Fire we have the same three elements of Air, Water and Fire that we've seen in the World of Water and the World of Air. The masculine and the feminine have switched polarities as we move down the Tree of Life from world to world. In the last world, the World of Fire, the feminine has moved from the Left Pillar to the Middle Pillar. Balance is maintained by the third sphere representing the third element in each world. Thus in the World of Fire, Water is the balancing point.

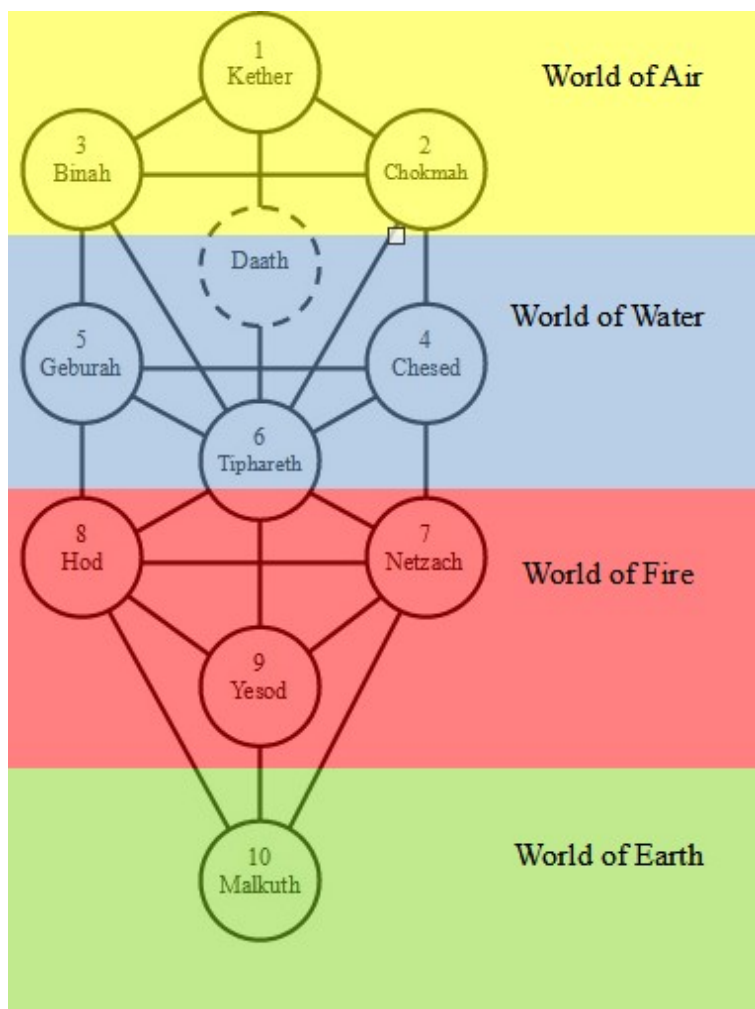
As our consciousness crosses the Abyss we experience a change in polarity and the right side of our body changes from feminine to masculine as we cross the Abyss. When our consciousness passes through the Veil of Illusion we experience another change in polarity. This time, however, our polarity is scrambled. Feminine Water changes to Masculine Fire, but Masculine Fire changes to Neutral Air and Neutral Air becomes Feminine Water. Thus it is in the World of Illusion, the Astral World.

## Part Seven – Manifestation: The Four Worlds & Three Pillars

The final sphere on the Tree of life is called Malkuth (Mahl' - koot) in Hebrew. This is translated as "Kingdom" or "Manifestation." The three spheres in the World of Fire, the spheres of Desire, Intellect and Foundation, all send energy to Manifestation.

Manifestation receives energy from the higher spheres only through the three spheres in the World of Fire. Thus it is completely isolated from the higher worlds.

Manifestation is the Earth Element and it stands alone as the only sphere in the World of Earth. It receives energy directly from the Elements of Air (Intellect), Fire (Desire) and Water (Foundation). Harmony, which represents the Element of Spirit in the physical world, sends energy to Manifestation through the other three Elements.



The World of Air which is also the World of Archetypes is composed of Awareness (1 = Air), Intention (2 = Fire) and Focus (3 = Water). The World of Air is the home for our Spirit. Just as the World of Air is the first creation of the Unmanifest Creator, so is our Spirit our first body and it resides in the World of Air. Our Spirit resides in the World of Archetypes, thoughts and ideas. Our Spirit is our original Archetype and the ultimate source of all our thoughts and ideas.

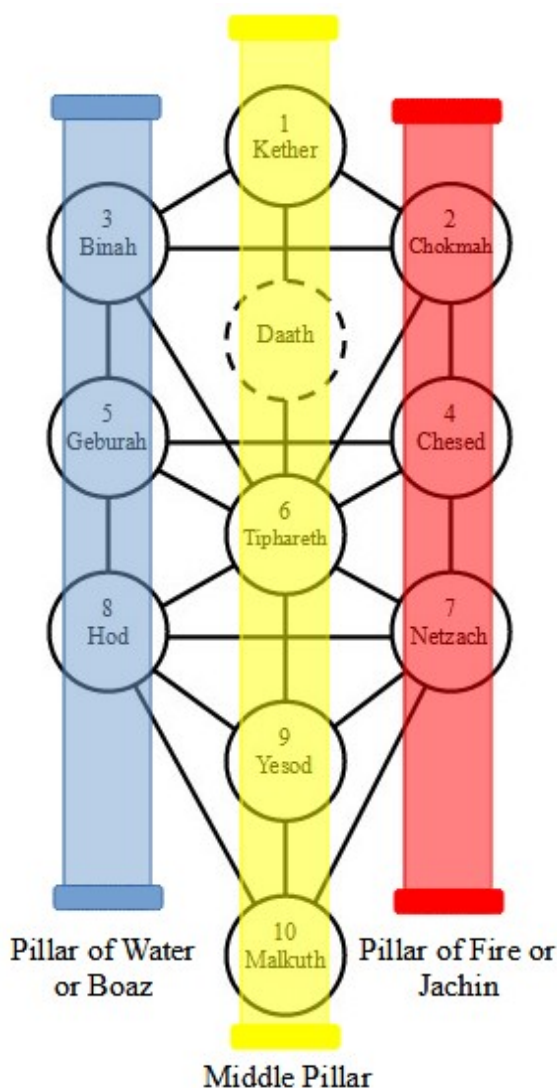
The World of Water, which is the Reflection of the First World, is composed of Love (4 = Water), Power (5 = Fire) and Harmony (6 = Air). Notice two things. One, the Elements of Fire and Water have switched places as we move from the World of Air to the World of Water. Two, the Element of Air remains in the middle. The World of Water is the home for our Soul. Just as the World of Water is a reflection of the World of Air across the Abyss, so is our

Soul a reflection of our Spirit reflected across the Abyss. Our Spirit resides above the Abyss and does not cross over it to our Soul. Our Soul resides below the Abyss and does not cross over the Abyss.

The World of Fire, the second reflection of the First World over the Abyss and through the Veil of Fire, is composed of Desire (7 = Fire), Intellect (8 = Air) and Foundation (9 = Water). The

World of Fire is the home of our Ego which is the reflection of our Soul. Just as our Soul doesn't cross the Abyss, our Ego doesn't cross the Veil of Water. Remember, the Veil of Ignorance seen from above is the Veil of Fire and seen from below is the Veil of Water. The Veil of Ignorance separates the Worlds of Water and Fire just as the Abyss separates the Worlds of Water and Air.

The World of Earth, the third and final reflection of the First World, is composed of only the tenth sphere Manifestation (10 = Earth) and is the sole representative of that Element. Our body resides in the World of Earth and within it is our three Elemental Bodies: Astral (Foundation = Water), Mental (Intellect = Air) and Intuitive (Desire = Fire). It also contains our Etheric, the energy field created by our physical body. Our body is home to our Ego, Soul and Spirit. It's also home to our higher subtle bodies, which various traditions name in various ways. Let it suffice that we have one subtle body for each sphere from six on up to number one.



Notice that as we move down into the World of Fire, the Element of Fire switches from the left side to the right side of the Tree. This switching back and forth is the result of a change in polarity as we cross the Abyss and again as we cross the Veil of Paroketh. Thus the Right Pillar (as we're looking at the Tree) has Fire (Intention = 2) at the top, Water (Love = 4) in the middle and Fire (Desire = 7) at the bottom.

The Right Pillar has several names. Among them are the Pillar of Fire, Pillar of Wisdom, Pillar of Knowledge, Pillar of Intention, Pillar of Desire, Pillar of Light, Jachin (which some call Joachim), the White Pillar, and the Left-hand of God. The Left Hand of God alludes to the fact that we turn around and step backwards into the Tree of Life. The Right Pillar is the left side of our body.

Taken to another level, our left brain is associated with Intention; our left shoulder, arm and hand is associated with Love = Compassion; and our left hip and thigh with Desire. The left side of our body is the Right Pillar.

The Left Pillar has Water (Belief) at the top, Fire (Power) in the middle and Air (Mind or Intellect) at the bottom. Notice that Air is at the bottom of the Tree instead of Water as would be expected. This is one indication we have that the second reflection of the Archetypal World is more corrupt than the first reflection.

The Left Pillar has several names. Among them are Pillar of Water, Pillar of Cloud, Pillar of Understanding, Pillar of Faith, Pillar of Power, Pillar of Darkness, Pillar of Fear and Anger, Pillar of Anxiety, Boaz, the Black Pillar and the Right Hand of God. The Pillar of Cloud is the pillar the Jews followed during the day on their forty-year journey through the desert on their way to

the promised land. During the evening they followed the Pillar of Fire.

Taken to another level, our right brain, right shoulder and arm and right hip and thigh are the Left Pillar of our body and they're associated with Belief, Power and Mind in that order. In the Jewish Kabbalah the Left Pillar is the Right Hand of God, the Hand of Power.

Between these two pillars is the Middle Pillar which includes the spheres of Awareness, Harmony, Foundation and Manifestation. Some Qabalists hold the middle pillar also includes the sphere that is not a sphere, the Sephirah that is not a Sephirah, the hole in the middle of the Abyss. This sphere that is not a sphere is called by many names. Among them is the Hebrew word Da'ath which means Knowledge or Learning. Other names for this Sphere are Emptiness, The Void, Enlightenment and Consciousness

The Middle Pillar has many names but it is most commonly referred to as the Middle Pillar. Other names include the Pillar of Harmony, the Pillar of Balance, the Pillar of Awareness, the Pillar of Consciousness, and the Pillar of Equilibrium. The Middle Pillar by any name becomes more important as you advance in rank in the Order.

# Notes on Numerology

## Part One: The Birth Number

In a previous journal entry here I introduced some of the basic concepts of modern numerology, with an eye toward a divination for the new year. That got an extremely lively response – lively enough that I agreed to post a series of entries here discussing numerology in more detail. This is the first of those entries. Since it's an expansion of the material I learned from my late teacher John Gilbert, it also counts as the first installment of the teachings of the eccentric Golden Dawn offshoot he inherited and I received from him. (There will be plenty of those as we proceed.)

A couple of details probably need to be mentioned before we proceed. First, there are many systems of numerology. The one I practice and teach was the most widely used version in early twentieth century American occultism. I originally encountered it in various books I read in my teen years, learned it again as part of my studies with John, and more recently found it discussed in a great many out-of-print books on the subject in online archives. It's the one that reliably works for me, but your mileage may vary.

Second, there are many different theories about why it works. I don't propose to get into those. If you follow the rules you'll get meaningful results: that's the promise of the system. I've found that promise amply fulfilled, but again, your mileage may vary.

With those points out of the way, let's go on. In using numerology for personal guidance, three numbers matter: the birth number, the name number, and the time number. Each one of those has its own meaning and importance. I discussed the time number in the entry mentioned above, though there's more to say about it and we'll get back to it in due time. For now, we'll start with the first of the three numbers: the birth number.

You find your birth number by writing your birth date in numerical form, adding up all the digits, and continuing to add the digits until you get a number between 1 and 9. For example, if you were born on September 3rd, 1987, you would write that out 9 3 1987, and then add  $9 + 3 + 1 + 9 + 8 + 7 = 37$ ;  $3 + 7 = 10$ ;  $1 + 0 = 1$ . The birth number for a person born on that day would be 1.

There are two exceptions to the rule of adding up the digits. If you were born one day later, 4 September 1978, the digits would add up to 38, which equals 11. If you get 11, leave it – that's a significant number, not simply an intermediate stage on the way to 2. Similarly, on those rare occasions (say, 6 June 2008) when your sum adds up to 22, leave that as well – that's also a significant number. 11 is a rare birth number and 22 is a very rare birth number, but both do happen, and when they do, it's worth noting.

Take the necessary minute or so to add up your birthdate. When you're done, we'll go on.

\* \* \* \* \*

Got your number? Excellent. Now let's talk about what it means.

Your birth number is sometimes called your life path number or soul path number. It represents the fixed framework of your personality and your life, and it sums up the things about you that won't change no matter what. It defines the lesson you have come into this incarnation to learn. That's not all of numerology by any means – the name number, which we'll examine next,

represents things you can change, and the time number (or, rather, the numbers generated by it) represent the things that change all by themselves. In any life, however, there are things fixed in place. You can learn to live with them, work with them, and build a happy life around them, or you can slam your head repeatedly into them until you pass out, but either way they won't move. There are nine birth numbers, and then the special birth numbers 11 and 22. We'll discuss them one at a time.

**If your birth number is 1**, the challenge this incarnation places before you is to be yourself, to go your own way and achieve something original with your life. You are equipped for this task with a strong will and a robust ego. You dislike complexities and have no talent for dealing with them, but given a definite goal and a straightforward way to get there, you are in your element. Winning is everything to you. Your understanding of the world is always shaped by your own interests—your instinct is always, quite literally, to look out for number one—and you generally insist on having your own way. Your emotions tend to be blunt instruments, and you have little if any tolerance for subtlety; you are honest and frank at best, clumsy and rude at worst. Strong, self-assertive, and ambitious, you need to cultivate a sense of fair play and honesty, and remember that the needs and rights of others also have to be taken into account, or your selfishness will turn potential allies into enemies and lead you into fights you can't win. You tend to suffer from back trouble and respiratory illnesses, and your fortunate colors are red and yellow. The Sun rules this number.

**If your birth number is 2**, the challenge you face in this incarnation is to interact well with other people. You are prepared for this task by being naturally tactful, considerate, and kind; you can be very persuasive and are skilled at supporting others. You prefer quiet and peaceful surroundings. You rely on your emotions more than your intellect, and this can result in mood swings and in veering back and forth between extremes of feeling. Left to your own devices, it can be very hard for you to make up your mind or choose a definite course of action, but you are skilled at helping others achieve their goals and can develop a talent for diplomacy and negotiation. You give good advice to other people but have a much harder time taking care of your own needs. Patience and the ability to see both sides of an issue are your strengths. To thrive, you need to learn how to make decisions, even if you have to flip coins to do so, and learn how to give the same care to yourself that you give to others. You tend to suffer from headaches; your fortunate colors are white and gold. The Moon rules this number.

**If your birth number is 3**, the challenge you face in this incarnation is to express your creative abilities. You have been equipped for this task with talent in some field, and you also have a quick and versatile mind. You are easily entertained and easily distracted, and you have little tolerance for other people's demands. You are best suited to work by yourself; it will be difficult for you to learn to keep your surroundings neat and clean, but if you do this you will find that it makes you happier and more productive. The difficult part of the work before you is learning to take life seriously, put your abundant energy to good use, and finish the things you start. It is very easy for you to think only of the present and let the future take care of itself, but if you let yourself follow this inclination you will land in one scrape after another and accomplish little with your life. Learn to make the most of the opportunities that come your way, and put your talents and your adaptability to good use, and you will accomplish marvels. You tend to suffer from illnesses caused by bad habits, excess, and personal neglect; your fortunate colors are light green and rose red. Mercury rules this number.

**If your birth number is 4**, the challenge you face in this incarnation is to learn self-discipline



and build solid foundations. You are prepared for this task with a serious, sober mind; you are naturally risk-averse and prefer stability and security to change for its own sake. You will face some amount of hardship and labor in this life, but you can overcome them and achieve great satisfaction by patient effort. You can work hard, but only when you want to—otherwise you respond to demands with a stubbornness that others sometimes mistake for laziness. You like to take your time making sense of new ideas and new situations, and need to understand what you have to do before you do it. It is easy for you to become fearful of change, but if you let yourself fall into this trap you will miss opportunities for happiness and prosperity and condemn yourself to poverty and misery. Take things a step at a time, follow the rule of honesty and fair dealing, choose high goals you can work toward steadily over the long term, and then apply your talent for disciplined effort, and you can achieve a successful life and leave a meaningful legacy for the future. You tend to suffer from poor circulation and from illnesses caused by stress; your fortunate colors are dark green and dark blue. Venus rules this number.

**If your birth number is 5**, the challenge you face in this incarnation is learning the lessons of freedom, for you will spend this life in restless seeking and you will always choose your own path. You are equipped for this challenge with abundant energy and overflowing interest in the unfamiliar; you are impatient with routine and prefer change and excitement. You tend toward the eccentric and the extreme, and you tend to have sudden intense enthusiasms which do not always last long. You are quick to accept new ideas and are genuinely interested in people, you do unexpected things and are constantly heading for new places, and when you get into trouble – which happens fairly often! – you are good at finding a way out. Your great weakness is that you often have your eyes fixed so intently on the distant horizon that you fail to notice what’s right in front of your face. You tend to suffer from health problems caused by your own unhealthy habits; your fortunate colors are light blue, light green, and pink. Mars rules this number.

**If your birth number is 6**, the challenge you face in this incarnation is learning how to accept responsibility for others. You are prepared for this task with an open, generous spirit; you tend to be optimistic, tolerant, honest, and sincere, and people are naturally attracted to you. Treat them fairly and you will thrive. Good fortune tends to be come your way more often than not, so that you have plenty that you can share with others. You dislike conflict and discord and like to live in comfortable, pleasant surroundings. Your great weaknesses are complacency, self-satisfaction, and self-indulgence; if you are not careful you risk falling into hypocrisy and abusing the trust that others place in you, and this will land you in troubles from which you cannot easily extract yourself. If you avoid these mistakes and cultivate a sense of justice and balance, you will earn the trust of others and may rise to a very high position in life. You tend to suffer from heart trouble, nervous conditions, and problems with eyesight and hearing; your fortunate colors are orange and brown. Jupiter rules this number.

**If your birth number is 7**, the challenge before you in this incarnation is that of achieving wisdom through reflection and insight. You are prepared for this task with a keen and penetrating mind; you are contemplative, imaginative, and intuitive. You prefer solitude to crowds and the life of thought to the life of action. You are likely to have considerable talent in some field of scholarship or creative activity, but you will have to learn to put that talent to work and to overcome a reluctance to move from contemplation to action. Depression is your great obstacle; it is easy for you to become moody and dispirited, and to blame the world for its failure to recognize your talent when you’ve never given the world a fair chance to notice you! Patience, careful planning, and the courage to show yourself and your work to the public are essential if

you are to shine. You tend to suffer from psychosomatic illnesses caused by mental and emotional issues; your fortunate colors are purple and gray. Saturn rules this number.

**If your birth number is 8**, the challenge this incarnation sets before you is that of worldly accomplishment. You are equipped for this task with drive, ambition, and a talent for some field of practical endeavor; you have a forceful nature and have no fear of hard work, and you like to see others working as hard as you do. You like to set things in order and get them moving, and you are good at details. Opposition simply spurs you on to greater effort, and you are rarely so happy as when you are facing a challenge. You are naturally good at business and can thrive under high pressure. Your great faults are a tendency toward selfishness, on the one hand, and a habit of judging everything and everybody in terms of superficial factors such as wealth and status, on the other. Learn how to help others be successful on their own terms, rather than simply drafting them into service in your own quest for wealth and power, and you will accomplish great good in the world. You tend to suffer from digestive trouble; your fortunate colors are canary yellow and light brown. Uranus rules this number.

**If your birth number is 9**, the challenge that is set before you in this incarnation is that of service, for you must serve humanity in some way. Public attention is your life blood and you have some ability, talent, or gift that may enable you to get it. You can influence people – in fact, it will be difficult for you not to influence them! You are destined to some form of achievement and so it is essential that you recognize the difference between the things you can do well and the things you can't, choose a course to follow, and pursue it. You face two serious obstacles, one at the beginning and the other later on. The first is failing to rise to the challenge your talent sets you, and refusing to try to become what you dream; the second is the overconfidence that comes from success, which can lead you to attempt things you know you can't achieve. Avoid both of these and you will make your mark on the world. You tend to suffer from circulatory troubles and from problems with the reproductive system; your fortunate colors are red and dark brown. Neptune rules this number.

**If your birth number is 11**, you have the basic characteristics of 2, but in addition you have a gift for vitality, energy, and decisive action, and your intuition can enable you to do the right thing at the right time. You must cultivate these factors, however, or your life will simply unfold as though your birth number was 2. Develop your talents, and your patience, tact, and kindness then becomes a basis for achievement, and all the time you spent weighing both sides of each question enables you to choose your course of action with great skill. You have the capacity for great power and knowledge, but this can be a serious danger if you abuse it. This is the traditional number of the occultist and the mage, and you will likely be drawn to the study of one or more of the occult sciences. You tend to suffer from nerve problems; your fortunate colors are white and violet. The Moon rules this number.

**If your birth number is 22**, you have all the basic characteristics of 4, but with a rich inner life that often bears at least a trace, and often much more than a trace, of mysticism; this is the traditional number of the mystic. That inner life is your gift and your burden, and deserves its place at the center of your world. You will probably pass unnoticed by most people, and if you let yourself become obsessed with attracting public notice you will be frustrated and miserable. Be patient, and if you feel you must express your personal vision and your inner life in some form that other people can see, do it in a form which will outlast you and have an impact on the future—some of the great classics of mysticism and spirituality have come into being in this way. You tend to suffer from respiratory troubles, and from illnesses caused by neglecting your health;

your fortunate colors are cream and coral. Venus rules this number.

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So there you have it. Take the time to think about your birth number and see how well it fits the recurring patterns and enduring factors in your life. If you have the chance to work out the birth number of other people you know well, do the same thing. Always remember that your birth number is only one of the numbers that numerology uses to understand your life, and it's the only one that's fixed. In the next installment of this series, we'll talk about the one you can change.

## Part Two: The Name Number

Last week we discussed the first of the three numbers that play a primary role in numerological divination: the birth number, which represents the things in yourself and your life that you can't change. This week's lesson in numerology focuses on the other half of the equation: the name number, which represents the things in yourself and your life that you can change. As the label suggests, the name number is the sum of the numerical values of the letters of your name, reduced in the usual way to a number between 1 and 9, with 11 and 22 (and possibly other doubled numbers) as special cases.

The conversion of letters to numbers is handled as shown in the table on the left. This is the Pythagorean set of letter values, and it's one of two systems in common use in modern English language numerology—the other is the Chaldean, which takes its letter values from Hebrew. If you find different values in other books or online sources, no, you're not confused; they're probably using the other system. This is the one that I learned and that has always worked best for me, but of course your mileage may vary.

There's a trap here, however, for those of my readers for whom English is a second language. The table shown above only works if your language has the same letters as English. If it doesn't, you need to find a different table. No, I can't point you to one, but in theory all you need to do is write out your alphabet in its normal order and assign the letters to the numbers 1-9, repeating as needed. That's the principle on which the Pythagorean system works. If English isn't your native language, give your own language a try and see what you get.

With that settled, let's go on to name numbers. Which name do you use as a basis for calculating your name number? Whichever one you usually go by. Yes, this means that if you don't like your current name number, you can change your name number by changing what people call you. Let's say that your name is John Jacob Jingleheimer Smith, and everyone knows you as John Smith. That's  $1 + 6 + 8 + 5 + 1 + 4 + 9 + 2 + 8 = 44$ ;  $4 + 4 = 8$ . If you don't like having a name number of 8, you don't have to keep it: start going by Jacob Smith,  $1 + 1 + 3 + 6 + 2 + 1 + 4 + 9 + 2 + 8 = 37 = 10 = 1$ , and you've got 1 for a name number; go by J.J. Smith and you've also got a 1; go by Jay Smith and you've got a 6; or go by J. Jingleheimer Smith if you prefer that, and you've got a 5. And that's without even doing a legal name change!

Yes, I know that rationally speaking this shouldn't have the kind of effect that numerology claims it does. Let me whisper one of life's great secrets in your ear: the world isn't rational. That's why occultism flourishes in every age and among every people: it deals, as rationality can't, with all the places where human reason trips and falls flat on its nose in dealing with a universe too vast and complex for our minds to process.

Take the few minutes you need to calculate your name number, taking the name you normally use as the basis for the calculation. When you've finished, we'll go on.

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Got your number? Excellent. Now we'll discuss what it means.

As your birth number represents the lesson you came into this life to learn, your name number represents the methods and strategies you're using to achieve it. You can use any name number to meet the challenges of any birth number, though some work together more easily than others!

(To know how a name number will influence a birth number, add them together and consider what the sum means—we'll discuss this in more detail later on, when I post about adding numbers and interpreting the results.)

The name number is also known as the number of development. There are nine birth numbers, and also the special numbers 11 and 22. We'll take them one at a time.

**If your name number is 1**, your best strategy is always to get moving, make things happen, and deal with problems as they come up. Don't try to plan out everything in advance—that's not your strong suit. Instead, hit the ground running, choose the best opportunity you see, and stick to that. Avoid speculative ventures or long range projects, take each day and each project as it comes, and move straight ahead to your goals. You have the energy, courage, and ambition you need to succeed; you are likely to make money, but you also tend to spend it just as easily.

**If your name number is 2**, you are good at planning and you have the potential for excellent judgment, but you lack the initiative to take the lead and make things happen. You have a changeable disposition that can leave you subject to mood swings and vagaries of action, and if you let this get the better of you, you will land in trouble. Instead, focus on expressing your naturally friendly and agreeable qualities, avoid arguments, and remember that patience and careful judgment are your strengths. Choose friends and associates who can take your advice and guidance and do something with it, and beware of sentimentality, which will lead you into unhappy relationships, failure, and spitefulness.

**If your name number is 3**, you have the capacity to become a jack of all trades and a master of some. You tend to be impatient with things that you think are small or trivial; rein in that habit and pay attention to the subtle details, and you will achieve much. You have a gift of self-confidence that will help you, but be careful not to let it go overboard and lure you into promises you can't keep! Learn to take advice from others, and focus on situations where your versatility and quick thinking can shine, and you will flourish.

**If your name number is 4**, you have a talent for hard work and reliability that can take you very far indeed. Your steadiness and dependability make you a valuable friend, partner, and employee. Choose your path with care but once you've chosen, move steadily toward your goal and you can achieve almost anything you can imagine. You will attract friends, though you will need to be careful to avoid people who simply want to exploit you for their own benefit. Remember to learn new things as you go, and don't let yourself fall into the common 4 habit of underestimating your own capacities—you can accomplish much more than you think.

**If your name number is 5**, you have an independent mind and shine best when working by yourself. You find it easy to learn from experience but hard to take advice or apply the lessons of others. You will be most successful in life if you can make it an adventure, for change is essential to you and risk adds spice to your experiences. You will have to work to overcome your restless nature when steady work is required, but if you do this you will excel. You are naturally lucky, but don't count on luck carrying you through every obstacle, because your luck is as unsteady as the rest of your life. A little ordinary caution and some practical preparations for trouble will help stave off the risks involved.

**If your name number is 6**, you have a gift for making people like and trust you. Follow through on the promises you make to them, respond to their trust and loyalty by being loyal to them in return, and you will attract them to whatever you do—as customers if you are in business, as

students if you teach, as supporters if you go into politics, or what have you. Integrity is your great strength, while your great weakness is the temptation to take the love and loyalty of others for granted. Avoid drastic changes and radical action, remember that each day builds momentum that will pay off in the long term, and you can rise very high in the world.

**If your name number is 7**, you have the capacity for original thought and deep reflection. You will do best in a situation that makes use of your mind and your creative talents. Learn to plan your activities in advance and move step by step toward your goals, and always take the time to think through every important decision before you make it, and you can accomplish great things. Your great weaknesses are depression, on the one hand, and a tendency to chase impractical daydreams on the other; focus your efforts on things you can reasonably hope to accomplish, and remember that you will need help from others if you wish to achieve financial success, since you have no natural talent in that direction.

**If your name number is 8**, you have the capacity to achieve great things in business or in any practical field, and if you want to make money you can do so—though you will have to work at it. This is a number of hard work and big plans, and it requires you to set realistic goals for yourself and pursue them over the long term. You will need to learn how to tell the difference between real opportunities and illusory ones, for not every door you encounter leads to success; if you learn from the experiences of others you can avoid many problems. Jealousy and self-indulgence are your great weaknesses; think big and enlarge your heart to make room for others, and you will do well.

**If your name number is 9**, you have the capacity for great accomplishment in at least one field of activity, but you will need to set your sights high if you are to fulfill that capacity. Drudgery and boredom are very difficult for you to tolerate. Your great weaknesses are pride and arrogance, which can lead you into self-defeating behavior. Strive to live up to high ideals and to be fair to others, and you will avoid that pitfall. This name number can lead to great success or great failure; you will need to work harder to achieve the former and avoid the latter than most people, though you can succeed if you give others the same respect you give yourself.

**If your name number is 11**, you have the keen judgment of a 2 combined with the capacity for decisive action. This will tend to surface spasmodically—that is, you may go for years living life as a 2, suddenly accomplish something that relies on decisive action, and then settle back to the relative calm and balance of a 2. Choose your goals carefully, think through all the details of your plan, and be sure of your timing, and you can accomplish your goals. Pay attention to intuition and inspiration as sources of guidance, and consider learning and practicing one or more of the occult sciences—they will benefit you.

**If your name number is 22**, you have the capacity to venture into unexplored fields of thought and action. As a name number, this is the mark of the eccentric and the genius, but it can also be the number of the misfit and the misunderstood failure. The patient discipline and capacity for work that characterizes the number 4 is essential, and must be cultivated in order to put your unusual talents to good use. Focus on practical results rather than airy abstractions, or you risk overvaluing your ideas and becoming one of the legions of unsuccessful cranks.

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So there you have it. Take the time to think about your name number and see how well it fits the way you habitually tend to deal, or not deal, with the events and challenges of your life. If you

have the chance to work out the name number of other people you know well, do the same thing. Always remember that your name number is only one of the numbers that numerology uses to understand your life; it needs to be assessed alongside the birth number, and certain other, minor numbers to give a complete picture—and then the time number needs to be factored in to see how the number influences are working at any given point in your life. In the next installment, we'll discuss how to use the time number to make sense of every day and every year.

## Part Three: The Time Number

In the two previous posts in this sequence we've talked about the two basic numbers used in classic numerology, the birth number and the name number. Several people have posted wondering what the sum of those two numbers might mean. That sum does have a meaning, but it's not an obvious one: it's your own personal time number.

Every year, of course, has a number, and every day of every year has a number, which consists of the year number plus the month number plus the day number. (Oddly enough, nobody back in the day seems to have tracked months as independent factors with their own numbers and influence—just years and days.) You can take the year number 2022, for example, and add the digits together to get 6; 2022 is therefore a 6 year, and has certain general characteristics as a result. Similarly, the digits in 28 January 2022 can be added together— $2 + 8 + 1 + 2 + 0 + 2 + 2$ —to give you a day number of 8, and that day has certain general characteristics as a result.

It's a matter of common knowledge, however, that you don't necessarily have the same kind of day, or the same kind of year, as everyone else. That's where your time number comes into play. As usual in numerology, the way this works is very simple; you add your time number to the day or year number, and that tells you what that day or year will bring to you. If your time number is 6, for example, 2022 won't be a 6 year for you—it'll be a 3 year ( $6 + 6 = 12$ ,  $1 + 2 = 3$ ). In the same way, if your time number is 3, 28 January 2022 may be an 8 year for the world in general but it's an 11 year for you.

If you haven't done so already, work out your birth and name numbers, and add them together before we go on.

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Got it? Here's what the numbers mean.

1. Ruled by the Sun, this is a number of new beginnings and opportunity. This is a time of practical action and constructive change, focused on a single achievable goal. It's a good time to take direct action and to start new things in motion, so long as they aren't complex or roundabout. It's a bad time to negotiate deals and contracts, for example, but fortunate for signing them if you've already worked out the details. Move ahead forcefully during this year, make prompt decisions, and deal with difficulties as they come up rather than trying to sort things out in advance.
2. Ruled by the Moon, this is a number of ups and downs, ebb and flow, and variability. This is a time of variable outcomes and of indecision, and is unfortunate for action. Spend your time weighing possibilities and researching options rather than trying to make things happen, and let other people carry the ball to the extent that you can. It's a fortunate time for planning and research. It is very often a time of contrasts, so that what starts badly is likely to end well, and what looks promising to begin with may well fail to live up to your hopes. The more attention you pay to balance, nuance, and maintaining your calm, the better the results will be.
3. Ruled by Mercury, this is a number of complications, minor changes, and many things to do. It's not the time to try to focus your attention on one thing, for if you do this you'll find obstacles boiling up all around you while unexpected opportunities slip past you ungrasped. Instead, be attentive to your surroundings and circumstances, and pursue different goals and options as the



situation suggests. The opportunities and challenges you face will all be easier to deal with if you can bring other people into the picture, for cooperation rather than conflict is highlighted at this time. Stay nimble, keep moving, have fun, and it will be a successful time for you.

4. Ruled by Venus, this is a number of stability and steadiness, but also of being stuck in one place, of staying quiet and avoiding trouble. It is favorable for anything involving hard work and patience and is beneficial for doing personal projects and pursuing routine activities, but trying to push events to a conclusion will have bad results. If you take your time and focus on things that don't depend on chance or on anyone else's contribution, on the other hand, this can be a time of steady gains. Choose a project already under way and take care of the dull, necessary things that have to be done to make it a success; later on, you'll be glad you did.

5. Ruled by Mars, this is a number of unexpected changes in which the risks and rewards are both considerable. It is marked by instability and sudden shifts for good or ill. New prospects may beckon, though not all of them will be as good as they look—make sure to do your research and be sure you understand the downsides before you commit to anything. Since chance is more likely than not to break your way, this can be a lucky time, but only if you're prepared to handle the challenges as well as the opportunities. Don't take unnecessary chances or to do anything on a whim, but this can be a good time to take decisive action, once you know what the dangers are.

6. Ruled by Jupiter, this is a number of harmony and peace. It's a favorable time for ease and comfort, for settling disputes amicably, for following precedents and using established approaches. Social events are especially fortunate during this time. If you kick back, take it easy, and encourage other people to do the same, you'll look back on a period of success and happiness. It's a bad time for conflict, which will prove ruinous for those who start it, and unfavorable for direct action, sudden changes, or new beginnings. Take no chances you can possibly avoid; slow and easy is the motto to follow at this time.

7. Ruled by Saturn, this is a number of contemplation and mystery. Things get weird during a 7 time period as factors you don't yet know about take charge. It is favorable for study and preparation, for creativity of all kinds, for meditation and the cultivation of your inner life, and for all things religious and spiritual in nature. Seek advice from others, and work out the details of plans already decided on. Avoid depressing thoughts, as it will be easy to be dragged down by them. This can be a lucky day for you if you pay attention to your intuition, because you will be closer to the hidden side of life than at other times.

8. Ruled by Uranus, this is a number of success earned by practical effort. Sustained work at this time brings substantial rewards, and big projects are as easy as small ones. Complexity is not a problem at this time; you can focus on the big picture rather than the little details, and it will all work out. This is not the best time, however, for starting brand new activities in motion. Instead, work on finishing up projects already begun. Many people find this time especially attuned to finance—it is a favorable time for seeking a new job, making an investment, or advertising the goods or services you offer—but anything that involves constructive effort on your part will thrive during this time.

9. Ruled by Neptune, this is a number of completion and karma, adding together the influences of the previous eight numbers. The cycle that began with 1 ends at this time, for good or ill, and the time will be shaped by the consequences of whatever has taken place earlier in the cycle. Your actions in previous days or years will determine how your efforts turn out. This time can therefore be wonderful, terrible, or anything in between. If you don't like the outcome, this is a

very good time to try to learn from your mistakes and prepare to try again.

11. Since it sums to 2, this number is ruled by the Moon, and under most circumstances it has the same influence as 2. If you have planned and prepared carefully, however, this is a time where you can take decisive action to achieve your goals. You can still fail by slapdash decisions, however, Choose your time well and follow your plan, and you can achieve improbable things.

22. Since it sums to 4, this number is ruled by Venus, and under most circumstances it has the same influence as 4. During this time, however, your inner life will be more vivid and powerful than usual, and if you choose to cultivate it you can find important inner guidance and insight. Be sure to temper your inspiration with the practicality of 4, however, because it is easy to go off the deep end during this time, overvalue your inner perceptions, and go through the day or year baffled by the fact that nobody thinks that your insights are as important as you do.

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So there you have it. Take some time to work out previous years and days, and see how well their numbers match your experiences.

One other thing you may find useful is the art of horary numerology, which as far as I know was just invented a few weeks ago by one of the commenters on this journal. As horary astrology is a way of getting answers to questions by calculating an astrological chart for the moment that the question was asked, horary numerology is a way of getting answers to questions by doing a numerological analysis on the time of the question. If you have a question, look at the nearest clock, and add together the numbers of the hour and minute. Add those to the numbers of the day, month, and year, and then add your time number to the sum of those.

For example, let's say that today you were wondering whether to sign up for a certain online class and you glanced at the clock, which said 5:49.  $5 + 4 + 9 = 18$ ,  $1 + 8 = 9$ ; to that you add today's day number, 8, and your own time number—let's say this is 7.  $9 + 8 + 7 = 24$ ,  $2 + 4 = 6$ ; 6 is a favorable number so long as conflict is avoided, and it's especially favorable for dealing with people, so the answer to your question is "yes, this is a good opportunity." Give this a try and see how well it works for you.

## Part Four: Relationship Numbers

In previous posts in this series we've talked about the two basic numbers of numerology—the birth number, representing the aspects of yourself and your life that aren't subject to change, and the name number, representing the aspects of yourself and your life that you can do something about—and combined them into the time number, which tells you how each day and year will work out for you. Very few of us go through life untouched by the influence of other people, however. In the case of important relationships, certain numbers created by addition can be used to sort out how these will work.

Relationship numbers are a relatively new dimension of numerology; they are mentioned on very few of the old books, and the meanings given below may well need a certain amount of revision as more experience with the system is gained. I have found in my own experience, however, that they are worth calculating for any serious interaction among two people—relationships in the romantic sense, of course, but also business partnerships, friendships, and any other close connection. You can also use them for your relationship to a company, a school, or an organization, provided that you can get the necessary information to work out the number—which is not always easy.

Two numbers need to be calculated to make sense of any relationship. The first is the outer number. This is based on the birth numbers of the two people involved. Add the two birth numbers together and reduce to a single-digit number in the usual way (with the usual exceptions of 11 and 22). That gives you the outer number. This number represents the concrete, outward, practical side of the relationship. If it's for a marriage, for example, how will the marriage work out in purely practical terms? Will the people involved be able to handle each other's habits? Will they be comfortable together? Will they be able to work together, build a stock of shared wealth, and prosper?

Here's what the numbers mean.

**If your outer number is 1**, the relationship will be a practical success. This is the number of those relationships where the two people work together instinctively, as though sharing each other's thoughts. They will need to learn how to listen to advice from others, however, as such a relationship can become a feedback loop that amplifies bad ideas and keeps mistakes from being noticed until too late.

**If your outer number is 2**, the relationship will be full of ups and downs, successes and failures, wins and losses. The two people involved are very different, and they can succeed if they learn to balance their strengths and weaknesses, but this will not be easy and will require a great deal of patience and thoughtfulness on both sides. Lacking that, things can very easily descend into stalemate.

**If your outer number is 3**, the relationship will be successful but unstable. In a marriage or other romantic relationship, one or both partners may not be faithful; in a business partnership, one or both partners may have something going on the side in a more economic sense! If you know what you're getting into and are willing to stay flexible and adjust to the other person's vagaries, this can work, but don't count on happily ever after.

**If your outer number is 4**, the relationship will be stable but not necessarily successful. This is

a good number for a marriage when both parties are interested in home and family, and it can be an extremely good number for a partnership when hard work and steady gains are desired, but if you are looking for a whirlwind of romance or quick profits in business, this is the wrong choice for you.

**If your outer number is 5**, the relationship is going to be a mess. This is a number of sudden change, disruption, and adventure, not of any kind of lasting situation. A brief passionate affair followed by “So long, it’s been real” or a short-term business deal are certainly options, but if you try to hang on and make things last, the two of you will likely end up fighting like cats and dogs, if one or the other person doesn’t simply blow right out of town.

**If your outer number is 6**, the relationship will be a success, even though it may not have the results you want. This number brings happiness and generosity; a relationship of any kind with this number will tend to be comfortable and happy in its practical dimensions, though if it’s a business relationship the business may not make much of a profit. “Relax, enjoy, and have fun” is a good motto for this kind of relationship.

**If your outer number is 7**, the relationship will only be successful if you can both handle solitude and silence. A romantic relationship with this number will be difficult, though it can work if both people are comfortable spending much of their time apart and treating closeness as an occasional event. A business partnership with this number will have the partners working on their own most of the time, and interacting only as needed. If you need social interaction in your relationships, this is a very difficult number.

**If your outer number is 8**, the relationship will be a great practical success, but you will have to work at it. This is the number of businesses that start out with very little and grow from there a step at a time, and its effects on romantic relationships is similar: it’s common for couples with this relationship birth number to start out relatively poor and end up comfortable or even rich. Learning to work together productively is essential in either case.

**If your outer number is 9**, the relationship is high-intensity stuff, and it may be a success or a disaster depending on how the people involved handle the pressure. Setting positive goals and remaining faithful to ideals is essential, and can result in great achievement. The people in the relationship will face important challenges, and how they deal with those will have immense influence on how things turn out in the short run as well as the long run.

**If your outer number is 11**, the relationship has the characteristics of a 2, but with a much stronger chance of success. Different as the two people are, if they can learn to work well together and balance their very different capacities against each other’s, they can accomplish astonishing things.

**If your outer number is 22**, the relationship has the characteristics of a 4, but with a much greater intensity for those involved. These are typically fated relationships, the sort of thing that happens to the people in question whether they want it or not. The results may be heavenly, hellish, or (more likely) a mix of each, but a relationship with this birth number probably can’t be avoided, and the consequences for good or ill are likely to be life-changing.

\* \* \* \* \*

That’s the outer number. The other number is the inner number, and it’s found by adding together the name numbers of the two people involved, and reducing it to a single digit in the usual way

(with the usual exceptions of 11 and 22). Where the outer number tells you about the practical dimensions of the relationship, the inner number tells you about its emotional dimensions, and especially about what provides the relationship with its emotional foundation and direction.

**If your inner number is 1**, the relationship is founded on shared goals. The people involved know what they want and need each other's help to get it, and will thrive so long as both are willing to share the effort needed to achieve their mutual goal.

**If your inner number is 2**, the relationship is founded on shared needs. Each of the partners has a quality the other lacks, and often more than one such quality—this is the classic case of “opposites attract.” The relationship will thrive so long as each person is able to get their needs met by the other.

**If your inner number is 3**, the relationship is founded on shared interests. The people in this relationship keep it going by staying light, playful, and entertaining, and by making sure that both partners have the chance to pursue their interests.

**If your inner number is 4**, the relationship is founded on shared security. We all need at least a little stability and familiarity in life, and a 4 relationship is a good way to get it. It will thrive so long as both people are willing to accept the placid, unexciting life that this kind of relationship reliably generates.

**If your inner number is 5**, the relationship is founded on shared adventure. The craving for excitement and novelty is the glue that holds this relationship together, and a little danger simply adds spice. As a result, such relationships rarely last long, but they can be great fun—or great misery!—while they last.

**If your inner number is 6**, the relationship is founded on shared comforts. This is the kind of relationship in which the people involved are simply too comfortable with each other to want to change. Generosity is essential for making this kind of relationship work.

**If your inner number is 7**, the relationship is founded on shared ideas. This can be a very cold and cerebral relationship, or it can be one of passionate commitment to an ideal, but one way or another it depends on the life of the mind and will thrive as long as the people in question remain equally committed to their ideas.

**If your inner number is 8**, the relationship is founded on shared effort. This is the kind of relationship that must be worked at, not one that comes easily. So long as both partners are willing to put in the necessary effort, it can be very successful, but there will likely be difficult times at first.

**If your inner number is 9**, the relationship is founded on shared service. In this kind of relationship the people involved need each other's emotional support and nurturing, and the relationship thrives so long as they take care of each other.

**If your inner number is 11**, the relationship has the characteristics of a 2 but with a dynamic element. By meeting otherwise unmet needs, the relationship enables the people involved to accomplish things otherwise out of reach; this is the classic number of a creative partnership in the arts or business.

**If your inner number is 22**, the relationship has the characteristics of a 4 but with an unusual emotional and spiritual depth. The emotional security and stability provided by such a

relationship allows one or both partners to pursue a deep spiritual or creative life, very little of which may be visible to anyone else.

\* \* \* \* \*

A caution is probably worth adding at this point. Numbers are simple; relationships are complex. No pair of numbers can sum up more than a small part of what a relationship means to the people who are involved in it, and of course there's the far from small detail that the relationship can mean one thing to one of the participants and something quite different to the other.

More generally, this is the great limitation of numerology. It's a simple, clear, straightforward method of divination that is easy to use and easy to interpret. Since the universe is rarely simple, clear, straightforward, or easy to interpret, there can be a distinct mismatch between the number and the reality! Numerological divination is most helpful as a quick, readily available source of guidance and intuitive insight. It is worth learning and practicing, especially by beginners to the divinatory arts, but is best supplemented with other divination methods that can provide more nuance and detail.

In the final part of this sequence we'll discuss some of the minor numbers that numerologists have used to add to the flexibility of the system.

## Part Five: Minor Numbers

The birth number, name number, and time number are the foundations of practical Pythagorean numerology, and you will find them repeated under various labels and forms in nearly all books on numerology. If you know how to create and interpret them, you can do everything necessary to give competent numerological readings.

Some books on numerology, however, include other numbers that can be used by numerologists in their readings. I don't use any of these, but some numerologists find one or another of them useful. Experiment with them and see whether they work for you.

All the minor numbers below are based on the name you normally use—in other words, the name from which your name number derives. They can be changed by changing your name, or simply by changing the spelling of your name.

**The vowel number.** This is found by adding up the values of the vowels in a name. For example, in the name John Jacob Jingleheimer Smith—assuming for the moment that Mr. Smith likes to use his whole name—the vowels are o, a, o, i, e, e, i, e, and i;  $6 + 1 + 6 + 9 + 5 + 5 + 9 + 5 + 9 = 55$ ,  $5 + 5 = 10$ ,  $1 + 0 = 1$ , so the vowel number of this name is 1. The vowel number shows you how you appear to yourself, irrespective of what other people think. Thus Mr. Smith sees himself as a simple, straightforward man with equally simple and straightforward goals, even though others might disagree with this assessment!

**The consonant number.** This is found by adding up the value of the consonants in a name. For example, in the name John Jacob Jingleheimer Smith, the consonants are j, h, n, j, c, b, j, n, g, l, h, m, r, s, m, t, and h;  $1 + 8 + 5 + 1 + 3 + 2 + 1 + 5 + 7 + 3 + 8 + 4 + 9 + 1 + 4 + 2 + 8 = 72$ ,  $7 + 2 = 9$ , so the consonant number is 9. The consonant number shows you how you appear to other people, irrespective of how you think of yourself. Thus other people think of Mr. Smith as colorful and flamboyant, even a bit of an actor—a fact which baffles him. (As it happens, he's right and they're wrong—his name number is 1, the same as his vowel number. Other people, perhaps taken aback by his complicated and overblown name, see him as far more flamboyant than he actually is.)

**The initial number.** This is found by adding up the value of your initials, in the way that you would normally write them. For example, if John Jacob Jingleheimer Smith usually writes his initials JJJS, his initial number is  $1 + 1 + 1 + 1 = 4$ . The initial number shows you your modus operandi—that is, how you habitually approach the world, for good or ill. Thus Mr. Smith tends to habitually approach problems in a patient, methodical way, and fairly often feels overwhelmed by the burdens facing him.

**The keynote number.** This is found by taking the first vowel of the name, together with every letter that comes before it in the name, and adding them up. For example, in John Jacob Jingleheimer Smith's name, the first vowel is o and the only letter that comes before it is j. O equals 6 and J equals 1, and so Mr. Smith's keynote number is 7. The keynote number shows you your most common interests, and thus tells you what hobbies or avocations you will find most satisfying. Thus Mr. Smith, when he can take time away from other pursuits, will enjoy some solitary activity that puts his mind to work.

**The mentality number.** This is found by adding up the number of letters in the name you use

for your name number—not the numerical value of the letters, but simply how many of them there are. For example, there are 26 letters in the name John Jacob Jingleheimer Smith, and  $2 + 6 = 8$ , so 8 is his mentality number. The mentality number shows you your habitual thoughts, the lines upon which your mind naturally works. Thus Mr. Smith, in any situation, will find that he habitually thinks of ways in which he can turn it to practical advantage.

**The frequency number.** This is also based on the name number, but not everyone has one of these. A frequency number exists if, when you set out the digits of the letters, one number appears at least half again as often as any other number. For example, if the name you normally use is Osborne F. Fox, this works out in numbers as 6, 1, 2, 6, 9, 5, 5, 6, 6, 6, 6. Since 6 appears six times in the name and no other number appears more than 4 times—in fact, of course, no other number appears more than twice—6 is your frequency number. The frequency number represents an additional influence that comes into play from unexpected sources, for good or ill. Thus Mr. Fox will very often find himself in comfortable circumstances by what seems like sheer chance, and will repeatedly end up in positions where he receives generosity and kindness—as well as those where he will be expected to provide these.

\* \* \* \* \*

So there you have it. Numerology is a simple form of divination, well suited to provide a quick overview of individual personality and of fortunate and unfortunate days and years—the main purposes for which people have consulted oracles since the beginning of history, and doubtless long beforehand as well.

There are quite a few books available on Pythagorean numerology, if you want to expand your knowledge of the system, and there are also helpful chapters in old volumes on divination and the psychic arts and sciences. Many of the books add further levels of complexity, which after all is necessary if you want to turn this relatively simple system into enough material for a book! I have found the following resources particularly useful; some are in print, others are readily available from online archives of out-of-copyright books.

Coffman, C.J., *Manual of the Enumeration* (Los Angeles: The Enumeration, 1927). Quirky but interesting.

Gibson, Walter B., and Litzka R. Gibson, *The Complete Illustrated Book of the Psychic Sciences* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966). A classic old-fashioned guide to divination, with a chapter on numerology that remains the best introduction I know of.

Goodwin, Matthew Oliver, *Numerology: The Complete Guide* (2 vols.; Franklin Lakes, NJ: New Page, 1981). The Encyclopedia Britannica of numerology books. The tables in back are worth the price of both volumes.

Javane, Faith, and Dusty Bunker, *Numerology and the Divine Triangle* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer, 1979). A classic volume, highly recommended by many readers.

Taylor, Ariel Yvon, *Numerology Made Plain* (Chicago: Laird & Lee, 1926). A good basic introduction.

Wilson, Ernest C., *You and the Universe: A Book of Numbers* (San Diego: Harmonial, 1922). Another good introduction, though a little more occult-themed than others.





FELLOWSHIP OF THE  
HERMETIC ROSE

1° Seeker Grade

# 1° Initiation

## **Preliminaries and Preparations**

This ritual is the first step in your initiation into the Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose. It marks your formal entrance into the Fellowship and your acceptance of certain commitments and responsibilities as a member. Be sure to read the text of the ritual carefully before deciding whether or not to perform it. If you decide to proceed, certain preliminaries are necessary, and certain preparations need to be made.

The preliminaries are straightforward. Before you perform the ceremony, you should have begun daily practice of the three basic training disciplines discussed in the prospectus: a daily protective ritual (the Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram, the Sphere of Protection, or the Judson exercise); a daily session of discursive meditation; and a daily divination. You should also have studied all seven parts of the introductory essay on the Tree of Life by John Gilbert, and the papers on building astral forms and protecting yourself against discarnate beings. Finally, you should have learned and practiced the temple opening and closing ritual, as you will be performing it as part of the ceremony of initiation.

The preparations are equally straightforward. You will need the chair, altar, pillars, candles, Rider-Waite tarot deck, and the basic emblems of the elements (incense burner and incense, folding fan, cup of water, and bowl of salt) mentioned in the prospectus. You will also need a room or other space large enough that you can set up the altar in the middle and walk around it in a circle, and an hour to an hour and a half of uninterrupted time.

It was standard practice in Juliet Ashley's Holy Order of the Golden Dawn to perform initiation rituals only on a solstice or equinox. Under John Gilbert's leadership that was changed, and members were encouraged to perform the initiation rituals on the day immediately following the new moon. You may do either of these, or choose a day that numerologically adds to 1, when combined with your personal time number. (See the papers on numerology in volume 3 if you don't know how to do this.) Choose the day for your initiation using any of these methods.

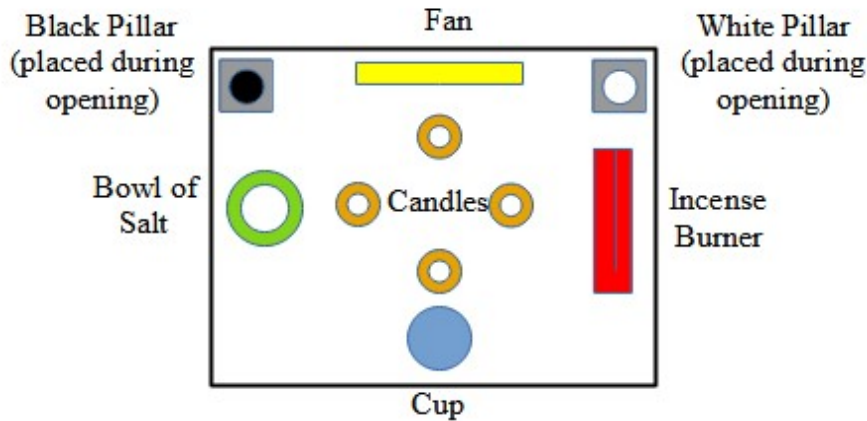
You may wear a robe or other ceremonial clothing or not, as you prefer. White robes were standard wear in Juliet Ashley's time, according to what I learned from John, but his rule was that each initiate got to make his or her own choice of ritual garments, or wear ordinary clothing, or nothing at all. Choose which of these options is right for you.

Finally, you will need to decide how you will call on the Divine. You may use any divine name you choose, or simply say "Source of all that is" or some other abstract term. Settle on what you are going to say before the ceremony.

## **Before you Begin**

Set up the altar in the center of the space with the chair on the western edge of the space, facing the altar. Put the emblems of the four elements on the four sides of the altar—the fan to the east, the incense burner to the south, the cup to the west, and the bowl of salt to the north. Put the four candles around the center, the yellow candle a little to the east, the red candle a little to the south, the blue candle a little to the west, and the green candle a little to the north. Leave the center

empty. Do not put the pillars on the altar yet; instead, put them in a convenient place until the opening ceremony begins. Near the pillars, place Trump 0, The Fool; you will be putting this on the altar a little later.



Put water in the cup, light the incense, and then perform the complete Opening Ceremony, placing the pillars on the altar and lighting the candles where the ritual instructs you to do so. In the appropriate places, instead of “...on the Candidate Grade,” say “...on the Grade of Seeker.”

When you have completed the opening ritual, take a few minutes to build the astral forms you will need for the initiation. There are five of these. In each of the four quarters there stands an initiate; the one in the east wears a yellow robe, the one in the south a red robe, the one in the west a blue robe, and the one in the north a green robe. You may fill in all the other details as you wish. Further to the east, beyond the initiate in the yellow robe, stands your guardian angel or guardian genius, who watches over the ceremony. Imagine your guardian as a tall winged angelic figure in a white robe. Remember that imagination is not the same as visualization. If you can visualize these forms, that’s good. If not, simply imagine that they are there.

Once you have done this, leave the space. Close the door behind you if there is a door. Sit or stand, wait for a little while, and then go to the door and knock three times. (If there is no door, knock on a wall or some other surface.) Imagine a voice responding, saying, “Who are you, that dares to approach this temple?”

You reply aloud: “I am a child of Earth, but my heritage is that of the starry heavens.”

The voice replies: “Child of Earth, you may enter.” Go into the temple space.

### First Point

Go to the west of the altar, facing east. Say aloud: “I, (say your full name), a child of Earth, present myself for initiation into the grade of Seeker. I have taken up the required practices and studied the required texts assigned to the Candidate Grade, and I know of no reason why I should not advance to the Seeker Grade. I therefore purify myself with the four elements to prepare for my initiation.”

Circle around clockwise to the east of the altar, pick up the fan, and wave it to send a stream of air against your face. Say: “I purify myself with the element of Air, and I invoke the spirits and powers of Air. May they bless me and further my work.”

Put down the fan, go to the south of the altar, pick up the incense burner, and use one hand to waft incense smoke over your face and head. Say: "I purify myself with the element of Fire, and I invoke the spirits and powers of Fire. May they bless me and further my work."

Put down the incense burner, go to the west of the altar, dip your fingers into the water, and flick droplets of water onto your head and face. Say: "I purify myself with the element of Water, and I invoke the spirits and powers of Water. May they bless me and further my work."

Go to the north of the altar, take a pinch of the salt between thumb and forefinger, open your mouth, and place it on your tongue. Say: "I purify myself with the element of Earth, and I invoke the spirits and powers of Earth. May they bless me and further my work."

Go around clockwise to the west, facing east across the altar. If you are able to do so, kneel on both your knees. Place the fingers of your right hand on the altar. Raise your left hand, palm forward, fingers together. Say: "Having placed myself in due form, I now take on myself the obligation of the Grade of Seeker.

"I, (say your full name), in the presence of the Divine and of my guardian angel (or guardian genius) and in this temple of Seekers do solemnly promise that I will take up the studies and practices of the Grade of Seeker so long as I may do so with a clean conscience, and will persevere in them while I remain a Seeker and a member of this Fellowship.

"I further promise that I will act as befits a friend and companion to every member of this Fellowship who acts in a similar manner toward me.

"I further promise that I will never use any magical knowledge or ability I may now have or may gain hereafter for selfish or destructive purposes, and should I do so, may my powers depart from me until by proper restitution I have earned their return.

"To all this I solemnly and sincerely promise in the name of (speak the name of the Divine you have chosen)."

Imagine that you hear the sound of a bell somewhere in the east, ringing a single chime. Then imagine a voice speaking out of the east, saying: "Arise, child of Earth, and be received into the Grade of Seeker. Long have you dwelt in darkness. Quit the darkness and seek the light."

You rise to your feet and behold the altar, with the four candles, the four elemental emblems, and two pillars. Say: "Having passed from darkness to light, I present myself to receive instruction in the step, sign, grip and word of the Grade of Seeker."

Read the following passages aloud, and make each of the motions as it is described.

"The step of this grade is made by taking a half-step forward with your right foot.

"The sign of this grade is made by raising your left hand to the level of your left shoulder, one to two feet out to the side from your shoulder, with the elbow bent and the palm facing upward. The tips of the thumb and index finger of the left hand are touching, as though you held the stem of a flower between them, and the other fingers are gently spread. This is the position of the left hand of the Fool in Trump 0 of the tarot deck used by the Fellowship.

"The grip of this grade is made by making the step and sign, with your right foot next to the right foot of the person you are greeting. Then place your right hand palm down on their left shoulder. This grip should only be given to another member of the Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose.

“The word of this grade is ‘Wayfarer.’ It is divided in half when used for working purposes. The member giving the grip shall speak the first half, ‘Way,’ and the one receiving the grip shall respond with the second half, ‘Farer.’”

Now imagine the voice in the east saying: “Go around the temple to the four quarters, beginning with the north, communicate what you have just learned to the officers of the temple, and learn how you may quit the darkness and seek the light.”

## **Second Point**

You go to the north and face north. Imagine an initiate standing there, dressed in a green robe. Make the step and sign, then place your hand on his imagined shoulder in the grip, and communicate the word. Release the step, sign and grip, and then read aloud the passage below, imagining that the figure in green is speaking to you.

"Welcome. I congratulate you on attaining the Grade of Seeker. I am the Master of Earth; my station is in the North, the place of darkness, because of all the elements Earth is the most resistant to the penetration of light. Thus the direction of North is assigned to the element of Earth. My station is also assigned to Malkuth, the tenth sephirah of the Tree of Life, the sphere of manifestation and our material world. The symbol of my office is the pentacle. As you prepare for your initiation into the first grade before you, the grade of Sojourner, you will be asked to make and consecrate a pentacle to be used in your rituals and placed upon your altar as an emblem of the element of Earth.

"My primary duty is to care for the needs of the Temple building and all the things within it. This is a reminder that all of us need to first take care of our own Temple and all of the things within it. Then we may apply ourselves to our other duties. The secondary duty of my office is to purify the Temple with the Element of Earth. For this purpose I am entrusted with the bowl of salt, of which you have already tasted and which was used to purify you and invoke the powers of Earth on your behalf. I bless you again in the name of Earth. May the Divine guide you on your journey."

You go around the temple clockwise to the west and face west. Imagine an initiate standing there, dressed in a blue robe. Make the step and sign, then place your hand on his imagined shoulder in the grip, and communicate the word. Release the step, sign and grip, and then read aloud the passage below, imagining that the figure in blue is speaking to you.

"Welcome. I congratulate you on attaining the Grade of Seeker. I am the Master of Water; my station is in the West, the place of twilight and the setting sun, because water seeks its own level as the sun at twilight seeks the darkness. Thus the direction of West is assigned to the element of Water. My station is also assigned to Yesod, the ninth sephirah of the Tree of Life, the sphere of the emotions and our astral world. The symbol of my office is the cup. As you prepare for your initiation into the second grade before you, the grade of Server, you will be asked to create a cup to be used in your rituals and placed upon your altar as an emblem of the element of Water.

"My primary duty is to care for the needs of the members of this Temple. This is a reminder that all of us need to first take care of those people who are dependent on us. Then we may apply ourselves to our other duties. The secondary duty of my office is to purify the Temple with the Element of Water. For this purpose I am entrusted with the cup of water which you have already

experienced and which was used to purify you and invoke the powers of Water on your behalf. I bless you again in the name of Water. May the Divine guide you on your journey."

You go around the temple clockwise to the east and face east. Imagine an initiate standing there, dressed in a yellow robe. Make the step and sign, then place your hand on his imagined shoulder in the grip, and communicate the word. Release the step, sign and grip, and then read aloud the passage below, imagining that the figure in yellow is speaking to you.

"Welcome. I congratulate you on attaining the Grade of Seeker. I am the Master of Air; my station is in the East, the place of the dawning light, because of all the Elements, Air is the first to see the light. The direction of East is therefore assigned to the Element of Air. My station is also assigned to Hod, the eighth sephirah of the Tree of Life, the sphere of the mind and our mental world. The symbol of my office is the book. As you prepare for your initiation into the third grade before you, the grade of Student, you will be asked to create a book to be used in your rituals and placed upon your altar as an emblem of the element of Air.

"My primary duty is to see to the instructional and educational work of this Temple. This is a reminder that all of us need to see to our own instruction and education. Then we may apply ourselves to our other duties. The secondary duty of my office is to purify the Temple with the Element of Air. For this purpose I am entrusted with the fan of air which you have already experienced and which was used to purify you and invoke the powers of Air on your behalf. I bless you again in the name of Air. May the Divine guide you on your journey."

You go around the temple clockwise to the south and face south. Imagine an initiate standing there, dressed in a red robe. Make the step and sign, then place your hand on his imagined shoulder in the grip, and communicate the word. Release the step, sign and grip, and then read aloud the passage below, imagining that the figure in red is speaking to you.

"Welcome. I congratulate you on attaining the Grade of Seeker. I am the Master of Fire; my station is in the South, the place of the noonday sun, because in the element of Fire, the light is most clearly shown. The direction of South is therefore assigned to the Element of Fire. My station is also assigned to Netzach, the seventh sephirah of the Tree of Life, the sphere of energy and the will that shapes all our worlds. The symbol of my office is the wand. As you prepare for your initiation into the third grade before you, the grade of Teacher, you will be asked to create a wand to be used in your rituals and placed upon your altar as an emblem of the element of Fire.

"My primary duty is to maintain discipline and good order in this Temple. This is a reminder that all of us need to maintain discipline and good order in our own lives. Then we may apply ourselves to our other duties. The secondary duty of my office is to purify the Temple with the Element of Fire. For this purpose I am entrusted with the incense burner which you have already experienced and which was used to purify you and invoke the powers of Fire on your behalf. I bless you again in the name of Fire. May the Divine guide you on your journey."

Go around clockwise to the west of the altar and face east. Say: "Having presented myself to the four quarters and the four officers of the temple and received their instructions and blessings, I ask for further instruction in the secrets of this Grade."

### **Third Point**

At this point, take Trump 0, the Fool, from the place where you left it and set it in the middle of

the altar, so that it forms the center of the equal-armed elemental cross made by the four candles and the four elemental emblems. Regard it for a few moments, and then imagine that you hear a voice from the east, saying the following.

“To the left of the altar you behold three steps rising upwards. They refer to the three pillars of the Tree of Life, to the three basic practices of ritual, meditation, and divination you have been assigned, and to the three divinatory methods you must learn and practice in your studies. Advance up those steps, in token of your willingness to perform the work of the grade ahead.”

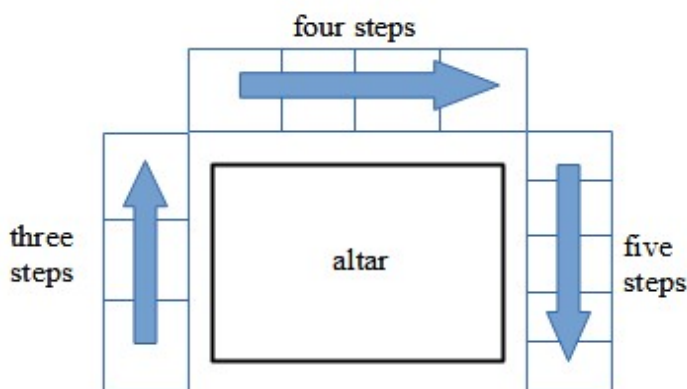
Take three steps toward the east on the left side of the altar, imagining that you are climbing three steps of a stair. (This will take you to the northeast corner of the temple; see the diagram.) The voice then goes on as follows:

“To your right you now behold four more steps rising upwards. They refer to the four worlds of the Cabala, to the four principal officers of a temple of the Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose, and to the four magical virtues—to know, to dare, to will, and to be silent. Advance up those steps, in token of your willingness to study the teachings of the grade ahead.”

Turn to the right and take four steps toward the south, imagining that you are climbing four steps of a stair. (This will take you to the southeast corner of the temple.) The voice then goes on as follows:

“To your right again, you now behold five more steps rising upwards. They refer to the five elements, earth, water, air, fire, and spirit; to the five points of the pentagram, and to the five

initiations of our Fellowship you may receive before you approach the Veil of the Sanctuary. Advance up those steps, in token of your willingness to face the challenges of the grade ahead.”



Turn to the right and take five steps toward the west, imagining that you are climbing five steps of a stair. (This will take you to the southwest corner of the temple.) Turn to face the altar, and then go to the chair in the west of the temple and be seated. Read the following lecture carefully.

### The Seeker Lecture

You have been welcomed into the Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose by a form of initiation that has much to teach. As you sit here in this Temple of the Grade of Seeker, you behold the altar with its two pillars and four burning tapers. The two columns on the altar represent the right and left-hand pillars of the Tree of Life. The black column standing on the upper left-hand corner of the altar represents the Pillar of Power, the left-hand pillar on the Tree of Life. This pillar is also called the Pillar of Severity, Pillar of Water the Pillar of Cloud. The white column standing on the upper right-hand corner of the altar represents the Pillar of Compassion. It is also called the Pillar of Mercy or the Pillar of Fire.

The four burning tapers on the altar are representatives of the four mundane elements. The

colors of the taper identifying the elements, for yellow symbolizes Air, blue Water, red Fire and green Earth. These tapers burn on the altar during all ceremonies in the Seeker Grade to remind us that we are still children of earth, in need of light and guidance, as we seek to attain our birthright as heirs of the starry heavens. These tapers and the elements they represent are the lights which which lighted your way to the place where you now are. They also light the emblem of this grade, Trump 0, the Fool.

This trump is the most significant of the emblems assigned to this grade. It shows a Seeker high up in the mountains. The Seeker carries all his possessions in a sack tied to a staff. The Seeker stands on a precipice with one foot raised as if to step off into the abyss below. A small dog jumps beside the Seeker. The Seeker is a Child of the Divine.

The Seeker represents you before you decided to incarnate in this world of ignorance, before you descended into manifestation in the realm of the four elements. It represents all of us as we prepare to enter this world of suffering and pain to learn what we will learn. The Seeker represents all of us as we prepare to jump off the cliff in the rarified World of Air at the top of the Tree of Life, through the Veil of Truth into the World of Water, through the Veil of Illusion into the World of Fire, and through the Veil of Ignorance into the World of Earth. The Seeker jumps and plunges down through the worlds to become a child of Earth.

The Seeker is born in this physical universe and spends a lifetime traveling back up the Tree of Life from the World of Earth through the Veil of Ignorance to the World of Fire, from the World of Fire up through the Veil of Illusion to the World of Water, and from the World of Water through the Veil of Truth and back into the World of Air. There the Seeker will remain until and unless destiny calls him to descend through the Tree of Life again to this world of ignorance.

To the ignorant, it appears foolish to work one's way up the Tree of Life, to sacrifice time and energy to do internal work, to build better relationships and seek a closer communion with the Divine. To the ignorant it appears foolish to value love more than money, the Divine more than things and true friendship more than accomplishments. To the ignorant it appears foolish to travel a path of acceptance, forgiveness and love rather than join in the greed, envy, and avarice of the world. It appears foolish to value truth over salesmanship, happiness over income at any price, and peace of mind over winning at all costs.

In the tarot, the Seeker is called the Fool. The Seeker and the Fool are the same person seen from different perspectives. Here in the Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose we value truth, happiness, peace of mind, acceptance, forgiveness, love and communion with the Divine above all the glitter, fame and fortune of the World of Ignorance. While the world may see us as foolish we see ourselves as seekers of the things we value. While the world may call us Fools, we call ourselves Seekers and we seek the truth of the creation, the truth of the Divine and the truth about ourselves. As you study the tarot, remember that the Seeker is the Fool.

This completes the Seeker Lecture.

### **Closing the Ceremony**

After you have finished reading the Seeker Lecture, spend at least a few minutes meditating on the ceremony you have performed and the symbols and teachings embodied in it. Then rise, thank your guardian angel or guardian genius, thank all the other spiritual beings that have



assisted in the ritual, and dissolve the astral forms you created for the guardian angel or genius and the four initiates. (You do this simply by imagining the forms disappearing.) Once you have done so, perform the complete closing ceremony to close the temple in the Grade of Seeker. This completes your initiation into the Seeker Grade.

It is highly recommended that you devote time in the days and weeks ahead to meditating on the ceremony you have just passed through. Every detail of that ceremony has something to teach you. The more attention you give to the ceremony, the more meaningful it will be for you and the more you will gain from it.

## 1° Overview

Welcome Seeker! Once you have completed the preparatory studies of the Candidate grade and performed the initiation ritual, you are a member of the Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose and an initiate of the 1° grade of Seeker. The work before you is considerable but it builds on what you have already learned.

The requirements you must fulfill to complete the work of the Seeker grade and proceed to the next stage, the 2° grade of Sojourner, are as follows:

1. Continued daily practice of a protective ritual (Sphere of Protection, Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram, or Judson exercise), discursive meditation, and some form of divination;
2. Continued weekly practice of the ritual for opening and closing the temple;
3. Study of several papers assigned to the Seeker grade;
4. Study of at least one additional book on some aspect of occultism;
5. Practice of a series of scryings of the element of Earth;
6. Creation and consecration of a pentacle of Earth.

Once you complete these requirements, you will be able to perform the self-initiation ritual for the 2° grade of Sojourner. This uses the same equipment as the 1° initiation, though you will only need one of the candles, and you will also need your pentacle of Earth. At least one month should elapse between your Seeker and Sojourner initiations; you may take as much additional time as you find useful.

A few comments on some of the requirements for the grade may be helpful at this point. The book you read to fulfill requirement #4 may be literally any book on any occult topic, so long as you have not previously read it. It can be a good book, an indifferent book, or a really dreadful book, as there is something to learn from each of these. To become a capable occultist you will need to know your way around the literature of occultism, so you might as well get started; the number of books you will need to read for each grade, at a minimum, is the number of the grade itself: 1 for the 1°, 2 for the 2°, and so on.

If you're short on money, remember that most public libraries have some books on occultism—in the Dewey decimal system used in most US libraries, they're near the beginning of the nonfiction section at or just after Dewey number 133. You can also search [archive.org](http://archive.org) using keywords such as “occult” and “divination,” or visit the IAPSOP collection of classic out-of-copyright occult books at [iapsop.com/ssoc/](http://iapsop.com/ssoc/) and download texts to your heart's content. If you can't find something in any of those sources to read, check to see if you still have a pulse.

Scrying is the receptive use of the imagination, as creating astral forms is the active use. In scrying, you imagine yourself entering another realm of being and experiencing things there. You don't have to be good at visualizing to practice scrying, though it's an advantage if you are. The FHR, like John Gilbert's *Magickal Order of the Golden Dawn* before it, uses its own distinctive set of elemental symbols as symbols for scrying. All this will be explained in detail in a later paper.

The pentacle, as mentioned already, is the working tool of the element of Earth. You will need to make or buy one before you finish the work of this grade. There are various kinds of pentacles in

use in modern occult practice. The one you will make or purchase as a Seeker should be a disk of some sturdy substance 4 to 8 inches (10 to 20 cm.) across; wood is the easiest material for most people to find, but if you want to make your pentacle out of pottery or some other substance this is fine. It should not be any form of metal, however.

Your pentacle is decorated with a symbol that you consider holy. For example, if you are a Christian, it would be entirely appropriate for you to place a cross or a crucifix on your pentacle. If you are a Druid, the symbol of the Three Rays of Light might be appropriate; if you are a Hindu, the holy word Om, and so on. If you do not belong to a religion, the pentagram or five pointed star is a traditional decoration. However you decorate your pentagram, the symbol may be painted, carved, cut out of paper and glued, or attached in any other way that appeals to you. It may be very simple—the pentagram I made and consecrated under John Gilbert's tutelage, and am using for field testing the FHR rituals, is a plain disk of wood six inches across, with a pentagram made of construction paper glued to one side—the points are triangles of white, red, yellow, blue, and green paper to represent the elements. Plain as it is, this works well.

More detailed instructions for making and consecrating the pentacle of Earth are given in the following paper.

## The Earth Pentacle

Your pentacle of Earth may be constructed from nearly any substance including wood, ceramic, stone, reinforced fabric, reinforced cardboard, leather, hide, glass or plastics that can be colored or painted. (It should not, however, be made of metal) It is normally circular in form and anywhere from four to eight inches in diameter. Those are the suggestions of the Order. How you make your own personal pentacle is strictly a matter of personal taste. After all, it is your pentacle.

The front of the pentacle should have on it a symbol that is holy to you. The most traditional symbol is a pentagram, which is a holy symbol in the Hermetic tradition and in some other traditions as well. In the classic form, the uppermost point should be white, the upper left point yellow, the upper right point blue, the lower left point green, the lower right point red, and the center black. These colors are used for the elements in the FHR.

However, since this is your pentacle, you may use any symbol on the pentacle you consider holy. If you are Christian, you may certainly use a cross or a crucifix. If you are Jewish, a Star of David would be entirely appropriate. If you are Buddhist, the Wheel of the Law, and so on. Choose a symbol that is sacred to you, and put it on the pentagram using any means you wish, from painting or carving to cutting something out in paper, gluing it onto a wooden disk, and covering the pentacle with a layer of varnish.

You may also buy a pentacle of Earth if you find one that is suitable to your needs. Not everyone has the craft skills needed to make a satisfactory pentagram. (That said, a very, very simple pentagram will work as well as a fancy one. When I was studying with John I made a plain wooden disk with symbols cut out of colored paper and glued to the surface, and this was entirely satisfactory.)

You will need to make (or buy) and consecrate your pentacle of Earth before you complete the work of the Grade of Seeker and proceed to the next grade, the Grade of Sojourner.

### Consecrating the Pentacle

Once you've made or bought your pentacle of earth the next step is to consecrate it. Your pentacle is a magical shield, and it will protect you from harm on all the planes of existence once you have consecrated it. To prepare for this ceremony you will need the chair, altar, pillars, candles, and the basic emblems of the elements (incense burner and incense, folding fan, cup of water, and bowl of salt) you have already provided for yourself. You will also need a room or other space large enough that you can set up the altar in the middle and walk around it in a circle, and half an hour to an hour of uninterrupted time. You may wear a robe or other ceremonial clothing or not, as you prefer.

You will also need a name for the divine appropriate for this ritual. If you are a monotheist, the name of the deity you worship is always appropriate. If you are a polytheist, choose the name of a god or goddess associated with the earth. If you have no particular religious belief, a term such as "Source of all that is" may be used. You will be calling on this name during the ritual. Choose the divine name you want to invoke before the ritual.

You may perform this ritual on any day that is convenient for you. Before you begin, set up the altar in the center of the space with the chair on the western edge of the space, facing east across the altar. Put the emblems of the four elements on the four sides of the altar—the fan to the east, the incense burner to the south, the cup to the west, and the bowl of salt to the north. Put the four candles around the center, the yellow candle to the east of center, the red candle to the south, the blue candle to the west, and the green candle to the north. Place your pentacle in the center. Do not put the pillars on the altar yet; instead, put them in a convenient place until the opening ceremony begins.

Put water in the cup, light the incense, and then perform the complete Opening Ceremony, placing the pillars on the altar and lighting the candles where the ritual instructs you to do so. In the appropriate places, instead of “...on the Candidate Grade, say “...on the Grade of Seeker.”

Sit in the chair and meditate briefly on the element of earth and the work you are about to do. Then go to the west of the altar, facing east. Say aloud: “I proclaim a ceremony of consecration for my pentacle of earth. Let the pentacle therefore be purified by the four elements.” Pick up the pentacle and take it with you.

Circle around clockwise to the east of the altar, pick up the fan, and wave it to send a stream of air against the pentacle. Say: “I purify this pentacle with the element of Air, and I invoke the spirits and powers of Air to bless this pentacle and further its work.”

Put down the fan, go to the south of the altar, pick up the incense burner, and hold the pentacle over it, turning the pentacle so that it receives incense smoke on both sides. Say: “I purify this pentacle with the element of Fire, and I invoke the spirits and powers of Fire to bless this pentacle and further its work.”

Put down the incense burner, go to the west of the altar, dip your fingers into the water, and flick droplets of water onto the pentacle. Say: “I purify this pentacle with the element of Water, and I invoke the spirits and powers of Water to bless this pentacle and further its work.”

Go to the north of the altar, take a pinch of the salt between thumb and forefinger, and sprinkle it on the pentacle. Say: “I purify this pentacle with the element of Earth, and I invoke the spirits and powers of Earth to bless this pentacle and further its work.”

Circle back around the altar clockwise to the west of the altar, still holding the pentacle, and stand there, facing east. Raise the pentacle high in both hands. In your own words, call on the Divine to bless the pentacle, so that it will protect you from harm on all the planes of existence. You may make this prayer as long or as short as you choose.

Then circle around the altar clockwise, still holding the pentacle, until you are on the south side of the altar facing north. Using the pentacle, trace the symbol of Earth in the air above the center of the altar: start where the line joins the circle, trace the circle clockwise until the pentacle returns to its starting point, and then trace the line down. Imagine the pentacle drawing a line of green light in the air, forming the symbol of Earth.

Point with the pentagram at the symbol and earth and say: “Spirits and powers of earth, behold this pentacle of Earth, purified by the elements and blessed by the Divine. I ask you to fill this pentacle with the strength and stability of Earth, so that it will protect me from harm on all the planes of existence.” Imagine currents of energy flowing from the north into the pentacle, giving it protective power. Maintain this imagination as clearly as you can for several minutes.

Then lower the pentacle and circle around to the west, facing east. Set the pentacle on the center of the altar, surrounded by the four candles. Now call on the Divine again in your own words, offering your thanks and gratitude for the help you have received in consecrating your pentacle. You may make this prayer as long or as short as you choose.

Finally, sit on the chair in the west and meditate for at least a few minutes on the ritual you have performed and the pentacle as a symbol. When you are finished, rise and perform the complete closing ceremony in the grade of Seeker. This completes your ritual of consecration.

### **Using Your Pentacle of Earth**

Your pentacle of Earth will protect you from harm on any of the planes of existence. Most of the time it will simply block any harm that might otherwise come your way. If you feel you need more protection than usual, take the pentacle in both hands and turn clockwise in a circle, imagining that you are wrapping yourself in a veil of green light. You can also use it as a means of making contact with the energies of the element of Earth, and also with the elementals, nature spirits, and angels of Earth, in ways that will be explained in later papers.

If you have a permanent altar or another place you keep spiritual or magical gear, your pentacle of Earth can be kept there. It need not be wrapped in silk or otherwise protected against other magical energies, since its consecration is primarily on higher planes, which are not affected by banishing rituals or other sources of magical interference.

# The Elementals

by Brother A. A.

## The Nature of Elementals and the Etheric Creation

In my opinion there's a great deal of confusion about what an elemental really is. Someone way back in history described and named the elementals as sylphs, undines, salamanders and gnomes. My personal experience is these are all nature spirits. Elementals are more basic and less differentiated beings than nature spirits.

According to most world religions, the creation is divided into two realms: 1) Material and 2) Etheric. The Material Realm is called earth and the Etheric Realm is called heaven. The Material Realm, or manifested world, is composed of minerals, plants, animals and humans. Minerals are the basic building blocks of everything else that exists. The ancients believed minerals were composed of intelligence and had the ability to think thoughts and ideas. So even though minerals look like earth they are from the first world, the Element of Air.

Plants not only think, they also feel emotions and are thus associated with the second world, the Element of Water. Animals, think and have emotions but they also have passions and desires. Animals are associated with the third world, the Element of Fire. Humans have thoughts, emotions, and passions, and they're ignorant about who and what they really are. Animals, plants and minerals know who they are. We don't. We humans are the "salt of the earth." We are associated with the fourth world, the Element of Earth.

The Etheric Realm consists of elementals, nature spirits, angels and archangels. Elementals are energy beings who look like little balls of colored light. When they're working you can see their hands and arms. When they're not working, you can't see arms or hands. It appears they draw their hands and arms back into themselves when they don't need them. They are intelligent and will carry on a conversation. I've never seen any of them exhibit any emotions - not even happiness or disgust. I suspect they don't have emotions, but I may be wrong. If this is the case, however, Elementals belong to the first world, the World of Air, just like minerals in the Manifested Kingdom.

All nature spirits think thoughts and ideas and feel emotions. They don't display any evidence of having desires, passions and drives to accomplish anything. They know their place and purpose in creation and they merely perform their duty to accomplish their purpose. They do have a sense of humor and exhibit emotions by such things as laughter, crying and expressions of pain.

According to mythology, sylphs are air elves and undines are water elves. The "common" elf is an earth elf and there are also fire elves. Salamanders are the leprechauns and sprites of the Fire world. Both sprites and leprechauns are fun-loving nature spirits who love to play games and trick humankind. So are salamanders. Salamanders and leprechauns are the fire and earth sprites respectively. The other sprites are air and water sprites. Nature spirits are associated with the second world, the Element of Water, just like plants in the Manifested Kingdom.

Angels seem to have a purpose about them. In addition to expressing thoughts and emotions, angels also express desires, passion and purpose. Some angels serve as guardian angels to help humankind on their chosen spiritual path. Others serve as teachers, healers, and spiritual caregivers. This indicates angels are associated with the third world, the Element of Fire, just like

animals in the Manifested Kingdom.

Archangels appear to be the ruling body for the angelic realm and are thus associated with humans in the Manifested Kingdom. Just as humankind has dominion over the "earth" and all that is in it, so archangels appear to have dominion over "heaven" and all that is in it. Thus it is said in many scriptures of many religions: "In the beginning, God created heaven and earth."

## **Air Elementals**

The Air Element is the element of thoughts, ideas, and attitudes. These things take form in the first world, the World of Air, as thought forms. They have the appearance of the image associated with the thought itself. Thoughts about money look like transparent money though the form ebbs and flows. It is not solid and fixed in form. Thoughts about anything look like the mental object formulated, be that Gods, monsters, flowers or love.

Our thoughts become thought forms in our energy field. The thoughts we hang onto remain within this field. Those thoughts that we let go of float out into the vast World of Air. We can grab onto other people's thoughts which drift out into the World of Air. Sometimes we can read the thoughts they're hanging onto. Sometimes, other people—both discarnate and incarnate—send us thoughts and we can hang onto them or let them go. Sometimes these thoughts are sent out to a large number of people all over the world.

Air Elementals manage these thought forms. They move thought forms from one place to another, attach and detach them from energy fields. They keep thoughts forms out of certain areas and keep them in other areas. These activities cause some mystics to say Air Elementals are "thought form herders" or "thought form guards." But there's no negative connotation with herding and guarding.

These Air Elementals look like little balls of colored light when they're traveling or waiting. The rest of the time they take the form of a ball with hands to hold onto a thought form. Sometimes thought forms are very large and several Air Elementals will manage it. Sometimes you'll see one Air Elemental moving a very large thought form. Not all thought forms are being managed by Air Elementals at any given point in time. In fact, most of them are attached to the energy field surrounding a sentient being or just floating around in space.

Air Elementals are neither good nor bad, happy nor sad. They're neutral in all things. They're also very helpful. If you have any thoughts you don't want to keep, Air Elementals will help you remove them from your energy field. They'll help bring thoughts to you or take them away from you. They don't care, they just do what needs to be done. Like most things in the creation, they just do what they're created to do.

Some people think all Air Elementals are some shade of yellow. In my experience this isn't the case. Thought forms and Air Elementals come in every shade of every conceivable color. Others feel Air Elementals are drawn to the color yellow. In my experience this isn't the case either. They don't seem to show any preference for any particular color over any other colors.

The Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose assigns the color yellow and the East direction to the Element of Air for all ritual work suggested by the Fellowship. This is the same color and direction assignment made by the original Order of the Golden Dawn. Assigning Air to East does not mean the Element of Air is in the East and only the East. Indeed, the Element of Air



permeates all of creation. It also does not mean all thought and ideas are colored yellow for they come in every conceivable shade of every color.

The assignment of color and direction to the Elements is for the benefit of the magician and not the Elements or the elementals. Elementals see these things and know they are magical operations. It's also true nature spirits, angels and archangels also see the work of the magician. They also know and understand the magical operations. The most common assignment of color and direction is the one used by the Fellowship.

However, there is no universal law that East must be Air, and the color of Air must be yellow.

The truth of the matter is the intention of the magician is the most important ingredient in any ritual no matter what the purpose. While the Fellowship suggests using East and yellow for Air, there is no requirement for the individual magician to follow this suggestion. The same can be said for the other directions and colors. If you already have made a different assignment of color, direction or both, you're encouraged to continue using that system. If you haven't adopted any particular associations, we suggest you adopt some and use them regardless of the associations the Fellowship makes.

### **Water Elementals**

Water Elementals are dedicated to handling emotions in the second world, the World of Water. They move, remove, bring in and move out emotions just like Air Elementals handle thought forms. Air Elementals manage thought forms but Water Elementals manage "emotional forms." These look like thought forms except their colors are deeper and they "glow." Thought forms do not "shine" or "glow." Emotional forms do shine or glow or both.

Water Elementals look a lot like Air Elementals though they move through space with an undulating movement similar to "swimming." Air Elementals move through space more quickly as though they were "flying." Air Elementals don't have wings and Water Elementals don't have fins. Water Elementals manage emotions in a manner similar to the way in which Air Elementals manage thought forms.

The Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose assigns the West direction and the color blue to the Element of Water. This is the same color and direction assignment made by the original Order of the Golden Dawn and we maintain it to this day. Assigning Water to the West does not mean the Element of Water is in the West and only the West. Indeed the Element of Water permeates all of creation. This does not mean all emotions are colored blue for they come in every conceivable shade of every color.

As with the Element of Air, each magician is encouraged to either follow our suggestions or use the color and direction assignment of his or her choice for Water.

### **Fire Elementals**

Fire Elementals are dedicated to handling energy forms, which are emotionalized thought forms, just like Air Elementals handle thought forms and Water Elementals manage emotional forms. Energy forms look a lot like emotional forms except they pulse and vibrate with energy. Thought forms managed by Air Elementals are the basic building blocks of both emotional and

energy forms just like minerals are the basic building blocks of plants and animals. The emotional forms managed by Water Elementals are thought forms which have evolved into emotional forms. Emotional forms glow or shine with color. Energy forms, managed by Fire Elementals, not only glow or shine, they also pulse and vibrate with energy.

Fire Elementals look like Water or Air Elementals except they jump through space rather than fly or swim. To watch them move through space is like watching an unconfined flame of fire jumping here and there. The energy forms they manage are desires, passions, intuitive insights and intentions. It's interesting to watch this progression from thought forms evolving into emotions and becoming energy forms as we move through the first Three Worlds of Creation: Air, Water and Fire.

The Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose assigns the South direction and the color red to the Element of Fire. This is the same color and direction assignment made by the original Order of the Golden Dawn. Assigning Fire to South does not mean the Element of Fire is in the South and only the South. Indeed the Element of Fire permeates all of creation. This does not mean all desires are colored red for they come in every conceivable shade of every color.

As with the Elements of Air and Water, each magician is encouraged to either follow our suggestions or use the color and direction assignment of his or her choice for Fire.

## **Earth Elementals**

Earth Elementals look like little colored balls who extend arms and hands to handle astral forms upon which the physical universe is being built. They don't change these astral forms, they build manifested matter on them. These astral forms are energy forms or "emotionalized" thought forms which have been selected to be the foundation for building a part of the physical universe. These astral forms are in the fourth world and are the Element of Earth.

Everything starts as a thought form being handled by Air Elementals. A few thought forms are transformed into emotional forms. The new emotional forms are managed by Water Elementals. A few of these emotional forms become energy forms. These energy forms are managed by Fire Elementals. A few energy forms evolve into astral forms and these become the building blocks of the Manifested World. These astral forms are managed by Earth Elementals.

Astral forms look exactly like manifested forms except they're composed entirely of energy and have no material form. Manifested forms are the minerals, plants, animals and humans who reside on this planet in this time and space. The Earth Elementals manage the astral forms. It's theoretically the responsibility of humankind to manage manifested forms.

Unlike Air Elementals that "fly" through space, or Water Elementals that "swim" through space, or Fire Elementals who "jump" through space, Earth Elementals "walk" through space. What's interesting is they don't appear to be walking on anything, they just appear to be walking through space. But when an astral form becomes large enough, Earth Elementals can be seen "walking" on it.

The Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose assigns the North direction and the color green to the Element of Earth. This is the same color and direction assignment made by the original Order of the Golden Dawn and we maintain it to this day. This does not mean the Element of Earth is in the North and only the North. Indeed the Element of Earth permeates all of creation. This does

not mean all astral forms are colored green for they come in every conceivable shade of every color.

As with the Elements of Air, Water and Fire, each magician is encouraged to either follow our suggestions or use the color and direction assignment of his or her choice for the Element of Earth.

### **Spirit Elementals**

The World of Spirit lies beyond the Tree of Life and our knowledge of it is extremely limited compared to what we know about the Four Worlds of Creation (which, it can be argued, is minimal at best). We can only guess as to what Spiritual Elementals look like and what they do. We suspect they provide the fundamental building blocks for thought forms and the energy to evolve these thought forms into emotional forms, emotional forms into energy forms, energy forms into astral forms, and astral forms into the manifested forms of this physical world.

The Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose assigns three directions to the Element of Spirit: 1) Above, 2) Below and 3) Within. The Fellowship assigns the Above direction and the color violet to the Element of Spirit Above; the Below direction and the color orange to the Element of Spirit Below; and the Within direction and the color white to the Element of Spirit Within. These assignments are arbitrary and do not mean the Element of Spirit is only Above, Below and Within. Indeed the Element of Spirit encompasses all the other Elements and permeates all of creation. This does not mean all spiritual forms are colored orange, violet and white. Indeed all colors may be assigned to all Elements.

As with all the Elements of Air, Water, Fire and Earth, each magician is encouraged to either follow our suggestions or use the color and direction assignment of his or her choice for the Element of Spirit.

## Working With The Element of Earth

The Element of Earth represents physical reality as we know it. Everything we can sense with taste, smell, touch, hearing or sight is a part of this physical reality. Our senses are designed to function in this physical reality.

We call it a physical reality but mystics of all ages and common sense tells us it's really not "real" at all. It's all an illusion but we're living in this illusion and our senses tell us this illusion is real. For us, at this stage of our spiritual evolution, it is real. Knowing that the physical reality is an illusion, but continuing to live in that illusion as though it's real, is called the human condition of the spiritually awakening person.

The spiritually awakening individual does several very predictable things:

1. They seek the truth behind the illusion - they become a student
2. They begin to do inner work
3. They become interested in divination
4. They join a mystery school of some kind
5. They begin to meditate
6. They begin to believe they can become healers
7. They start to receive messages from the spiritual world
8. They become aware of their own Guardian Angel
9. They start to receive inspiration from their own Higher Self
10. They start to do things they never dreamed of doing
11. They seek out a group of like-minded individuals
12. They start to develop an intimate relationship with the Divine

These are the "Twelve Apostles," the twelve signs of a spiritually awakening individual, the zodiac of individual consciousness, the sign of a Seeker. As you read through this list you begin to realize how very different you are from the mass of humanity. This knowledge can take you down many paths to sorrow, or it can take you down the single path of service. You get to make the decision to use this knowledge to help yourself and others or to use it to help yourself only.

The path of only helping yourself leads to sorrow. The path of helping yourself and others leads to ultimate victory for everybody. You choose your path.

The Element of Earth represents our existence in this world, our ability to survive in this world. In ancient times this ability was called the act of barter because you did something to benefit the person who provided you with the tools for survival, tools like weapons, health, food, shelter and clothing. You contributed to the welfare of the community and the community provided the tools for your survival.

Things have not changed except that today we use money as a symbol of our part of the barter. therefore all things having to do with money are a part of our survival and our ability to survive

in this world.

All things having to do with money includes our financial affairs, our possessions, our health, food, clothing and shelter. These things are representatives of the Element of Earth.

Seekers are to take care of their financial affairs, possessions, health, food, clothing and shelter to the best of their ability. Make that your priority while living in this illusion we call the physical reality. Make that your priority because it is only while you are living in this illusion we call the physical reality that you can bring the Spiritual Element down into the Earth Element. That's your job as a Seeker. It's your duty as a Child of the Divine to bring the spiritual down into this reality, not just for your own benefit but for the benefit of the creation.

The Spiritual Element you bring down is called unconditional love. You bring down the unconditional love of the Divine by invoking spiritual energies from above yourself in your daily ritual work. You radiate it out into the world by the other aspects of the same ritual.

You didn't know that, did you? Now you do and that knowledge brings with it a duty to consciously bring the spiritual into the creation. That duty rests upon you because you're one of the spiritually awakening humans on this planet, you're now a Seeker. You can either accept that duty or not because you have free will to do what you want to do. No guilt attaches if you decide to follow another path, if you decide not to accept this duty, if you decide to delay your own spiritual progress, if you decide not to remain a Seeker.

But that's only part of working with the Element of Earth. Another part is to learn to accept ourselves and the creation as we and it are. We are what we are. The creation is what the creation is. We have the free will to change who and what we are. The Divine has the power to change the creation. We can choose to accept these things or not. If we reject them we delay our spiritual progress and follow another path. If we accept them, we also accept the responsibility to change ourselves into the person we want to become.

Acceptance is the key. When we accept ourselves as we really are we become less angry, less fearful and less sad people. When we accept all of creation as it really is we become happy and joyful people filled with peace. It's a matter of applying our free will to the Earth that is us. Until we accept ourselves as we are we cannot love ourselves. Until we accept the creation as it is we cannot love the creation. Ultimately our spiritual success depends upon our ability to love ourselves and the whole of the creation.

One of the best approaches to this concept of acceptance is taught by the Order of Spiritual Alchemy. Their work is well worth the time and effort it takes to complete. Its preliminary teachings will be given in a further grade of this Fellowship; its complete teachings can be found online at [www.octagonsociety.org](http://www.octagonsociety.org).

Another approach, which was developed by Dr. Juliet Ashley is fondly called the Ashley Technique by those who knew her. It's a simple and effective technique to use anytime we become aware of something about ourselves. It consists of two steps.

1. Identify the problem you're facing.
2. Either do something about it or learn to live with it.

This is a little subtler than it looks at first glance. First we acknowledge that's how we are and accept that's the way it is. After all, it's that way for a reason - whatever that reason may be.

Secondly, we make a conscious decision either to change that something or learn to accept it as it is. That something may be a behavior, belief, intention, or a physical or emotional manifestation of our personality. Whatever it is we first accept it as it is and then we decide to either keep on accepting it or change it.

If we decide to change it, we set it as an intention in our meditations and we consciously set about accomplishing the desirable change. If we decide to keep on accepting it, we set that as our intention in our meditations and we consciously set about accepting ourselves more and more. It's a simple method, the Ashley technique, and it works – it works miracles in our lives.

### **Using the Imagination**

One important skill you will be developing as you proceed through the degrees of the Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose is the ability to use the imagination as a medium for interacting with the inner planes. This is an essential occult skill. Some people find it easier than others, but anyone can learn to do it. The following practice will begin the process of developing that skill.

To prepare for the practice, place a chair in the North or stand to the south of a chair in your room. Make a list, mental or written, of questions you want to ask about the Elemental World of Earth. (We'll talk more about those a little further on.) Perform your protective ritual (Sphere of Protection, Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram, or Judson exercise). Face the North and trace the green symbol for Earth in front of you in the air. Start where the straight line joins the circle and draw the circle clockwise, then draw the straight line downward. Imagine it, as you draw it, as though you were tracing it in clear green light.

Expand that green earth symbol in your imagination to be as large as a circular door. Stand there and ask for permission to enter the World of Earth for instruction about the Element of Earth and the Elemental World of Earth. Wait for permission. It may take a minute, just relax, breathe deeply and listen. Soon you'll hear or feel the message to enter.

Stepping through the green doorway is like stepping through an invisible barrier into another world. That's exactly what it is. Accept the invitation and step through the green doorway, turn around and sit down in your chair. Your physical body will be sitting down in this physical world, but your astral body—your body of imagination and vision—will remain standing and alert in the Elemental World of Earth.

Attend to your physical body by breathing deeply, relaxing and setting your intention to travel in the Elemental World of Earth in your astral body. Place your attention in your astral body in the Elemental World of Earth and ask your questions one at a time.

In the beginning we suggest asking only one or two questions. The problem is not in receiving the answers, but in our ability to remember our questions and the answers as we move through this portal. It's not at all unusual for those entering the Elemental Worlds for the first time to forget their questions and not ask anything. In time asking questions gets easier and easier.

Sometimes the answer you receive is: "I don't know," and that's a valid answer. If you have the presence of mind, you might then ask: "Can you find anybody that does know the answer to my question?"



Once you have answers to your questions, thank the beings who have been working with you and ask for permission to depart. That permission is always given but sometimes a short message is communicated first. Keep in mind that you've entered a world where your desire is their command to perform acting under their own laws and regulations. Your request for permission to leave will always be granted and the request is always appreciated. So is a simple "Thank you."

As you return your attention to this physical reality you realize the green doorway is in front of you and your astral body is on the other side of that doorway. Just will your astral body to come through the doorway and return to your body. It will. Now by an act of will, diminish the size of the green Earth symbol to a dot and bring it into your aura so it becomes a part of you. It is no longer a doorway to the Elemental World of Earth. It is a part of you as is the knowledge you learned while visiting there.

You will be expected to perform this meditation at least three times before taking your Sojourner initiation. The knowledge you learn will serve you well. Here are some typical questions for which you can receive answers (but these are only a few suggestions and are not intended to limit your questioning in any way):

1. What can Earth Elementals teach me about myself?
2. What can Earth Nature Spirits (Gnomes) teach me about myself?
3. Is there a Gnome willing to be one of my Spirit Guides?
4. If so, what is that Gnome's name?
5. What will you teach me (name of Gnome)?
6. What's the name of the Earth Angel in charge of my body?
7. What will you teach me (name of Angel)?

Elementals and Nature Spirits do not have egos. Elementals have spirits. Nature Spirits have spirits and souls. Both are very genuine and unencumbered by egos and ego wars. But they do appreciate common courtesy and they appreciate our gratitude and prayers.

Angels do not have puffed-up egos like humans, but they do appreciate our gratitude. They not only appreciate our prayers for them, they appreciate our acknowledgement of their existence and value. So does the Archangel Uriel who is the Grand Commander of the Elemental World of Earth.

### **Working With Earth Elementals**

You may want to review the article about Elementals to refresh your memory about the nature of Earth Elementals. It helps to have a good idea about what to expect before getting started. Perform the exercise given above, and once you are in the Elemental World of Earth, enter into meditation.

Formulate your intention to communicate with local Earth Elementals as they go about their duties. Being Elementals they seem to always be doing their duty and they never seem to tire of doing it. But when you enter their world they do pay attention and they will honor your requests

and they will take the time to communicate with (educate) you.

Relax and keep probing for contact as you continue meditating. You'll start to receive some impressions from the Earth Elemental World. Keep a record of your impressions and you'll start to see some patterns evolving. That's when you know you're working with the Earth Elementals. As with all things, practice improves your skills. Daily practice is more effective than weekly or monthly practice.

Once you start receiving general impressions you can open communication and start asking questions. It's a process. Work with the process and you'll learn far more than you ever imagined about yourself, the creation, the Divine and how everything in the creation works together for the benefit of all.

Earth Elementals, and all Elementals, have a mind and they can think as clearly as any human. They speak from truth and knowledge and without emotional garbage, desires or physical limitations. They do not deceive but they do have a sense of humor - more intellectual than rowdy, often dry or droll, but humorous nonetheless. Earth Elementals, like all Elementals, have a Spirit and that Spirit is an individualized and manifest expression of the Divine

Earth Elementals know about the Element of Earth and not much more. Unlike humans they are not really curious about anything other than what they need to know to perform their duty of taking care of astral matter to form the physical reality.

Enterprising magicians use Earth Elementals to help them create and hold astral forms. All you have to do is ask. But first you need to open communications with the Earth Elementals.

### **Working with Earth Nature Spirits**

Earth Nature Spirits are called Gnomes. Do not confuse Gnomes with Dwarves, Halflings, or other creatures from the fantasy worlds. Do not confuse them with Elves or other kinds of Nature Spirits.

Gnomes are the caretakers of Mother Earth, the protectors and builders of all the mineral kingdom. They attend to the things of the Earth like mountains, volcanoes, rocks and crystals, earthquakes and the healing of mankind's damage to Mother Earth.

Gnomes can be playful and they have a whole range of emotions and emotional responses. You can hurt their feelings, make them angry, incite them to fear, and make them sad. These approaches are not recommended. Treat them like the friends they are and you'll have more than just a friend, you'll have a faithful helper.

Gnomes, like all Nature Spirits, have a Spirit and a Soul. They are not encumbered by an ego or a plethora of personas. For this reason, Gnomes are very real and not pretentious or deceptive. They have no ulterior motives. They are what they are and nothing else.

You can build a friendship with a Gnome in your part of the world. The best way to do this is to first open communications with the Earth Elementals working nearby. There are several taking care of your body, so finding one is easy. After you've established yourself with them, ask for an introduction to a Gnome. They'll be honored to introduce you to a friendly Gnome and they're very good at matching personalities so you'll like each other right off the bat.



Open communications with the Gnomes you meet and you'll develop life-long friendships that will always serve you well. They'll keep you healthy, happy and your life will be filled with abundance. You may not be as rich as you desire, but your life will be abundant in many ways.

### **Working with Earth Angels**

There are two basic types of Earth Angels - builders and destroyers. Earth Angels are responsible for the changes to the ever-changing Earth Element. Things change. All things change. Change requires that some things grow while others diminish. Change requires robust health and disease, abundance and poverty. For it is change that keeps the creation alive and helps us learn. Earth Angels can bring healing or illness according to our need at the time. They can bring abundance or poverty according to our need at the time. Earth Angels can also protect us from any of these things.

Angels have spirits, souls and egos just like all animals including humans have spirits, souls and egos. Having an ego means Angels have desires, wants and needs just like we do but in a different manner. Angels do not have free will or self-determination. Angels are created for a specific purpose and they serve that purpose without question. But within that purpose Angels do have desires, wants and needs. Humans have free will, they self-determine what they will do, when and how they will do it regardless of the rules and regulations. Angels are law-abiding and they follow all the rules and regulations.

What Angels don't have that humans do is one or more personas. We humans face this manifested physical world in fear and to protect our fragile egos we create personas. We all have personas as a child, adult, parent, student, teacher, worker, leader, follower, lover, partner and a variety of other roles. Each of those personas is not only a form of protection for our Ego, it's also a false representative of our Ego. Each persona presents a false face to the public. Angels don't have a false face. They are what they are.

You can open communications with Angels when you're ready to do so. As a group they're not very chatty but they will answer questions to the best of their ability. The best way to connect with an Earth Angel is by asking your Gnomish friend to introduce you to one. He or she will be honored to do so. Another way is to create an Earth Angel astral form and invite an Angel to occupy the form.

Just remember that Angels don't have a great deal of knowledge about things other than their own duty in the creation. They also don't have a lot of time to waste on meaningless chatter. But they are usually kind and willing to answer a sincere question asked in a respectful manner.

### **Working with the Earth Archangel Uriel**

There's a great deal of confusion about the name of the Earth Archangel but it's generally agreed the name is Uriel, Auriel, Oroiael or Ariel. The Fellowship addresses the Earth Archangel by the name Uriel in our rituals and ceremonies. Some members use another name. Whichever name is used the energy we know as the Earth Archangel seems to respond to our requests.

Uriel is the Archangelic commander of the Earth Angels and one of the seven major commanders in the Angelic realm. Uriel does not answer most human requests in person. Uriel usually

responds to human requests by assigning an Earth Angel to handle it. The kinds of requests Uriel is likely to answer are requests for protection, good health, improved finances and improvement of the environment, food crops, nut and fruit trees.

Some Angelologists consider Uriel to be the Green Ray of the Divine Light. The Green Ray is the healing ray and it's usually associated with the planet Venus. The Green Ray is also the abundance ray thought to bring monetary gain to those who tune into this ray. Some ritualists also consider Uriel to be the Archangel of the North.

The Fellowship makes the following assignments to the seven Archangels in our tradition:

1. Uriel - Earth
2. Michael - Fire
3. Gabriel - Water
4. Raphael - Air
5. Metatron - Spirit Above
6. Sandalphon - Spirit Below
7. your Guardian Angel - Spirit Within

### **Suggestions for Further Study**

Seekers are encouraged to research the Earth Element, Earth Elementals, Earth Nature Spirits, Earth Angels and the Earth Archangel on their own and decide how they will approach and handle these subjects. Seekers are encouraged to create their own Pentacle of Earth according to their own concept of what this pentacle should be, how it should appear and how it should be constructed. Seekers are also encouraged to create their own consecration ceremony. Using our suggestions as suitable guidelines is acceptable but not required.

What we're saying is there is no one perfect way of doing anything we suggest concerning the Earth Element. What we're suggesting is that you do your own research. Go inside yourself in meditation and contemplate how you will handle these things. Communicate with the Earth Elementals, Nature Spirits and Angels willing to communicate with you. Call upon the Earth Archangel by the name you decide to use. Read books, search the Internet, discuss these issues with your friends and other members of the Order. Start your own study group and work with a group of like-minded people. Find the way that works for you.

# Your Guardian Angel

Your Guardian Angel was created when you were created at the beginning of time. You and your Guardian Angel travel parallel paths - you in the material world and your Guardian Angel in the “heavenly” world, you in the World of Illusion and your Guardian Angel in the World of Truth. You travel together because your Guardian Angel has been given a charge to protect and nurture you and you’ve been given the charge to help both of you advance spiritually. It’s an interesting connection because you both depend upon each other.

Question: What would you do if you knew exactly what your Guardian Angel wanted to do to help you advance spiritually?

That question deserves an honest answer before you proceed. What would you do?

If your answer is that you would do nothing, you’re going to have a rather hard time with the rituals and ceremonies of the Fellowship of the Hermetic Rose. All of our workings are designed to help you and your Guardian Angel work together for your mutual benefit and the benefit of all of humanity. It’s a Universal Law that whatever we do to help ourselves also helps others. The corollary is that whatever we do to harm ourselves also harms others. Spiritual apathy harms both us and others.

If your answer is that you would do something but not necessarily what your Guardian Angel suggested, you’re going in the right direction. The truth is our Guardian Angels always want what is best for us. Their desire is not that we do something specific but that we do something constructive for our spiritual path.

If your answer is that you would do exactly what your Guardian Angel wanted you to do, it’s time to take control of your own spiritual path. Our Guardian Angels never order us to do anything, they never tell us what to do. They are there to protect and nurture us and to help us on our spiritual path. They have no specific desires for us to do anything in particular. They have a desire for us to decide for ourselves the best course of action to take.

It’s very important to understand that Guardian Angels, and all Angels, do not have free will. They are created for the purpose of serving. They serve by protecting and nurturing you, and by doing the things you want them to do so long as those things are within the scope of their understanding and the purview of their duty. For example, no Angel will ever do anything to harm any part of the creation. It’s not in their nature to harm anything or anyone.

Where you’ve heard otherwise, you’ve been misinformed. But don’t take our word for it. Learn our techniques for opening communication with your own Guardian Angel and find out for yourself. That technique is as follows:

1. Learn to build an astral form for your Guardian Angel
2. Meditate with and on your Guardian Angel
3. Learn to use and trust your own intuitive abilities

Your Guardian Angel doesn’t need the astral form you’re building. Angels can build their own astral forms anytime they need them. Not only that, they can build their own physical form on that astral matrix anytime they need to do so. Building an astral form for your Guardian Angel is

practice for you—practice with your Guardian Angel adding a helping hand.

Meditating with your Guardian Angel is the way you open and utilize the lines of communication. You may use any meditation technique of your choice. Set your intention to talk with your Guardian Angel. Ask your Guardian Angel to speak with you during your meditation. You may not hear your Guardian Angel in the beginning. That's phase one. During phase two you do hear your Guardian Angel but you don't believe it. You think it's all in your imagination. Sometimes it really is your imagination and other times it is not. Phase two is a confusing time because you need to learn how to differentiate between the voice of your imagination and the voice of your Guardian Angel.

Phase three of communicating with your Guardian Angel during meditation occurs when you finally are able to prove to yourself that what you're hearing is your Guardian Angel and not your imagination. Congratulations, the lines of Angel communication are now open.

Learning to use and trust your own intuitive abilities is an alternative path to meditating on and with your Guardian Angel. The difference is that in this path you meditate to improve your psychic skills, your intuitive mind. Get yourself comfortable, relax, set your intention to develop a specific psychic skill, open your third eye or empower your intuitive mind. Use the meditation technique of your choice and practice on a regular basis. Short daily meditations is more effective than longer intermittent meditations.

One final suggestion: the more you communicate with your Guardian Angel, the more easily lines of communication will open.

# Developing Your Own Unique Spiritual Path

by John Gilbert

If each of us is a unique part of the creation, then it is very logical to assume each of us has our own unique spiritual agenda. That spiritual agenda is more than to learn how to accept, forgive and love everything and everybody more and more. That spiritual agenda includes resolving all of our spiritual, mental, emotional, psychological and physical issues of every kind.

If each of us is a unique part of the creation, and if the Divine is the all-accepting, all-forgiving and all-loving Source of all things, then it stands to reason we each have a unique set of tools to resolve all of our personal issues. Those tools are our innate intelligence, life experience, intuitive insights and direct communion with the Divine.

Our innate intelligence is all the knowledge we've gained on our journey through life since our birth. It also includes some deeper knowledge we brought into this lifetime from our spiritual home where we resided before our birth. That knowledge may be close to the surface in some people, but for most of us it is buried deep in our subconscious mind. Nobody can tell us what that knowledge is or where it's hidden or why. But when the situation calls for it, we can access that hidden knowledge. We just know what to do in spite of the fact we never learned to do that.

Our life experience is unique. Even people in the same situation learn and experience that situation differently. We see life through our own eyes and we filter what we see with our own mind, emotions and desires. We experience life with every level of our being. We experience life with our physical vehicle (Earth), astral body (Fire), emotions (Water), mind (Air) and our spiritual being (Spirit). We each experience life differently because we are each different people.

Our intuitive insights are also individualized. They speak to the person we are about the people and things in our life. When we tune into another person we pick up only what they are willing to share with us and what we pick up is filtered and limited by our own mind, feelings and desires. Our intuitive insights about ourselves are also filtered and limited by our own mind, feelings and desires. (mind = Air, feelings = Water and desires = Fire.)

Our direct communication with the Divine is likewise filtered and limited by our own mind, feelings and desires. When we learn to expand our mind, balance our feelings and subdue our passions, our direct communication with the Divine becomes Divine communion. To expand our mind means to become more aware, pay attention to life, awaken to our true spiritual identity, improve our memory, imagine a better future, logically solve problems, pay attention to our conscience and intuitive insights and allow our consciousness to expand. To balance our feelings means to become calm and peaceful during our Divine communion. To subdue our passions is to do the same thing.

This is a process. It doesn't happen overnight. The process is to study and learn everything we want to study and learn. The process is to be ourselves and learn what appeals to us. It appeals to us because that's who we are. Take control of your own life. Discard the things that no longer serve you. Follow your own unique spiritual path. If you find something helpful, add it to your spiritual practices. If and when it is no longer useful to you, discard that part of your spiritual practices. Do the things that help you become the spiritual person you came here to become.

The world is filled with every kind of knowledge you can possibly imagine. You can not learn it

all and you cannot use it all. Find what you want to learn and then learn it. Use what serves you and your spiritual path and discard the rest. Everything is not for everybody. Life offers us many more things than we could ever possibly use or need. We have to make choices and the choices we make predict our future.

Knowledge can be used to free you from the bondage of this world or to control you. Whenever anybody tells you that you must do it their way, you are their employee and you are entitled to be paid for your services. If anybody requires you to pay them so you can do it their way, you are paying them to control you. This is not a wise choice. First of all, their path is not your spiritual path. If any part of their path appeals to you, find another teacher who can help you learn that part, a teacher who wants you to learn how to find and follow your own unique spiritual path. Then learn what you want to learn and make it a part of your own unique spiritual path.