



QUAREIA—THE ADEPT

Module IX—Teaching, Mentoring, and
Group Construction

Lesson 8: Group Construction

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WELCOME

Welcome to this lesson of the Quareia curriculum.

The Quareia takes a magical apprentice from the beginning of magic to the level of adeptship and beyond. The course has no superfluous text; there is no dressing, no padding—everything is in its place and everything within the course has a good reason to be there.

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So remember—in order for this course to work, it is wise to work with the lessons in sequence. If you don't, it won't work.

Yours,

Josephine McCarthy



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In Lesson 6 of Adept Module V, you looked at some group mechanics, in particular the patterns and combinations and how to work with them. In this lesson we will look at load-sharing, choosing work, and how that work can, and likely will, affect each of the magicians.

You need to think carefully about all these things before you undertake to organise group work, as it will have a direct effect on you and everyone within the group.

The group

As I pointed out in Adept Module V, groups of adepts come together and work in a time of need, be it need out in the world, or for a specific magical purpose. Over the years, the best way I have found to do this is to put the call out to those capable of doing the work, and seeing who responds and eventually turns up. Let the natural inner filtration system work, as opposed to cherry-picking exactly who comes into the group.

Those who turn up to the work, or rounds of work, will be those most suited and most able to do the job at that particular time. And that is a very important point that a lot of magicians miss: timing is everything.

We tend to think in modern terms, that someone 'qualified' will do a job whenever it is needed. Magic does not work that way. It works in patterns and tides. Sometimes a particular adept can be perfect for the job; other times not so much. It all depends on what is happening to the adept's life and health at that particular point in time, and what magical burdens they are already carrying.

If they are about to get sick or pregnant, or are being lined up to take on a magical burden, then they will be blocked from joining the group by inner contacts and fate patterns. Usually when you are blocked the reason for it becomes apparent soon enough. It is about moving away from the idea of being a hero willing to work towards being a worker ready, willing, and able to do the job coming forward. So putting out the call and accepting the responses as they come in usually allows filters to be naturally in place.

The organiser

The role of organiser and catalyst for the work is a lot tougher than it seems on the surface. Not only do you have to bring in the adepts and find a suitable venue for the work, but you also, at a magical level, become the foundation and fulcrum for the load-bearing. If the work becomes too much pressure for the adepts then the backwash will lap at your feet: it starts and ends with you.

In practical terms it means you can end up carrying heavier loads than the others, and that load-sharing can last for months, if not years after the initial workings. Even if you do not do the actual work itself, as its organiser you will become the parent of the group: you carry the ultimate energetic responsibility. Because of that, you also have to act as decision-maker and referee, particularly if you have adepts in the group who are new and not used to long-term and heavy energetic loads.

For example, I did a few rounds of work with one particular group in service, and as I was getting a bit long in the tooth for heavy inner work by that time I acted as the organiser, decision maker, etc. When it came to the actual work, I went out of the room while they did what they had to do. The first time I did that, I thought I would be okay. I knew my body would not carry a heavy load: my contribution to the group was to pull it all together, trigger the work, then let them get on with it. But energetically it still drew heavily on me, as there were some new and fairly inexperienced adepts within the group. It knocked me

out for months afterwards, and even today when that work retriggers, as long-term projects do, it floors me again. That was a harsh lesson indeed.

So think carefully about the dynamics of the group. If you are organiser and leader then you will carry the load just like the others do, and if there is a young or inexperienced adept in the group then when power comes through that is too much for them to handle, you will be next in line to carry it.

Usually when a group comes together some interesting dynamics play out in its roles. This is not organised; it just tends to happen. There will always be an anchor in the group: someone who falls asleep at each ritual/visionary session. Usually they are sitting in a key direction. What is happening is that the adept goes into a deep sleep whenever power flows, and they become the gatekeeper and watchman or watchwoman at a deep level. Sometimes the role switches around the group; other times it is always the same person.

I worked with one group with one man who would always end up sitting by the door, and when we went in vision he would always pass out in a deep sleep. He was experienced at visionary work, so that was not the issue. After a while of this happening, my curiosity got the better of me, and I looked in vision at what was happening in one of the sessions. He appeared in the group in vision as this vast man guarding the door: he was terrifying. When I opened my eyes, he was fast asleep. When we came out of vision and he came out of sleep, he had no recollection whatsoever of anything: he had just blanked out. And that is how it often works: the very deep self kicks in and begins to work on whatever is necessary, and the consciousness of the person just shuts down.

After a while I learned that this is what was happening, which helped me to keep an eye on him. Guardians of the threshold need extra care, as they are doing a dangerous and heavy job which takes a lot of energy. So I made sure to feed him and that he got what he needed in the breaks. Such a loss of inner energy makes you very hungry, and the food grounds you after the work.

The flavour of the work a person does is often, but not always, defined by the direction in which they are sitting. Everyone works a section of the pattern, and the power flowing through the directions filters and defines how it is worked with, what aspect of the work they see, and so forth. So at the end of each working the group should discuss what happened, what they saw, etc., as everyone gets a slice of the picture, rarely the whole thing.

If you go back and look at the patterns that can be worked with in group work, you will see key points around the space where people sitting there can act as bridges, anchors, thresholds, keepers, and so forth. See where people gravitate to if you are sitting in a circle with the four directions defined with altars or candles. They will be drawn to certain seats, which will end up being the perfect direction for them and for the work.

Choosing the work

Normally this sort of group comes together in response to a need, magical or worldly. What work is done and how it is approached is really important, as any work done will pass through the adepts before it launches out into the world. And purely by nature of how magic works, whatever they do will also affect their own lives.

So if there is bad and potentially dangerous political, social, or epidemic situation, and the adepts choose to work to bring through balance and to hold/plant/trigger the Scales in a key position within the unfolding pattern, then those scales are also going to work through the lives of the adepts. While ever the constructed and released work with the scales is active—which can be months and most often years—the scales will also reach into any aspect of the life of each adept in search of balance.

It is not uncommon among adepts in such situations to see divorces, health crises, job changes, changing living situations and diets... whatever is moving towards imbalance or is imbalanced in the lives of the adepts, the scales will trigger to start the move back towards a fulcrum as much as is possible.

The bigger and more important the job, the more power will come through, and the more imbalance within or around the adepts will be addressed. This is part and parcel of adept magical work, and is to be expected and accepted, not fought.

If the adept recognises what is happening, and moves towards the transformation first by accepting the change and then adapting to it, then whatever is needed to facilitate that change in the best possible way will make itself known. If, however, the adept chooses to block or fight the transformative power of the scales, then they will be bound up and locked out of power. This can bring a developing bad situation to a

quick head in a painful and often disruptive way. They either have their lives torn apart or they become locked down and unable to connect with anything.

This is not talked about enough in magical communities, and is badly misunderstood by many adepts who feel that magical service should always bring them nice happy things. Life and magic does not work that way, and such an attitude will pull an adept away from magic, destroy them, or both. When you work at a high level of magic and for high stakes, you cannot expect a nice pat on the back, a piece of cake, and a handful of cash. You are more likely to come out with injuries, loss of vital force, and massive changes in your life.

So why do it?

Serious adept group service is often a response to massive destructive change happening out in the world, in the inner worlds, or both. Such powerful situations have a lot of destructive energy and forces flowing through them. It is like standing in the path of a tornado or hurricane and expecting to emerge with a nice hairdo and perfect makeup—the stuff of fantasy movies, not reality. The working adept is like a paramedic or firefighter in such situations: it is a hard, demanding job that is dangerous, but also vastly rewarding.

Not all group work is so intense and dangerous, but showing you worst case scenarios should help you be aware and plan for potential problems, and encourage you to use your common sense so that you are not caught unawares.

Sometimes what you think is simple work that you have been directed to do, turns out instead to be long-term hard labour. For example, if there is a political situation brewing and there is a lot of corruption in a political party, then a group of adepts planting the Scales in their headquarters may seem like a fairly simple job. But it can have long-term backwash energetically, particularly if the future fate of the nation is at a crossroads. In such circumstances, you do the work, let the backwash flow around you, and pay close attention to any imbalance in your life. How can you think that you can impose balance on a situation if you are not also willing to impose it on yourself? If you approach it that way then you will have minimum backlash.

And that takes you back to your choice of work. Are you expecting from others what you are not willing to address in yourself? And it takes you to the point of understanding limitations. The adepts are limited not by their ability to move power around, but by the state of their own lives,

actions, choices, and willingness to accept necessary change, however painful that may be.

Thinking about all the parameters of such work really narrows down what work the group can realistically do and is *willing* to do. This helps the group as a whole, or its leader, decide what action to take, and what not to do.

Along the same lines it is also prudent, particularly if the intended work departs from the fulcrum in either direction—destruction or creation—that *before any decisions are made* the whole picture is looked at both by analysis and divination. Look at the worst case scenarios of what could go wrong, and look especially for potentially hidden consequences that could mar the work's outcome or hurt the adepts.

This is important, as there are often hidden factors involved in complex situations, unforeseen consequences, and ways the work could unfold into unintended patterns. The further you move from the fulcrum, the more this becomes an issue. Think back to your early training when you looked at the unexpected ways that magic can unfold, bringing results in direct opposition to what was intended. The more power is involved, the higher the stakes become.

A good series of steps that forms the basis of choosing are: What is the surface problem? What is the deeper underlying problem? What is lacking in the picture? And what is the minimum power/dynamic that can trigger a process of rebalance? Then you look at the root power: is it truly creation or destruction that is needed, and if so, how could those raw powers affect the adepts involved? Only when the group, or its appointed organiser, has looked in depth at the issue at hand should the group make a decision.

Choosing a space

Very few magicians give any thought to the actual space where they will work. Because of this, unforeseen powers can become entangled in the work, beings can be drawn into it unexpectedly and destructively, or places ripe for destruction can be triggered into action. On the other hand, careful choosing can result in having stores of energy to draw on and local land beings coming in to help with the work. Or you can choose a neutral place where you have a clear lens to work through.

However, I will say from experience that sometimes you have no choice. No matter how hard you try, you end up in a place you know little if anything about, and it ends up being the perfect place. Again, this is back to not overfiltering and allowing inner contacts and fate patterns to come together—particularly with powerful work—and slot you into the perfect place for the job at hand.

But there are some common sense things to think about. If you do not have a permanent place to work from and need to hire a place just for the job, then try to make sure that there are no burial grounds beneath it and that the building was never a mental health institution, or worse—much worse—a New Age psychological dumping ground like a ‘love and light’ retreat centre. Such places tend to be full of discarded, unbalanced, and putrid energies that act like magnifying glasses to any imbalance within you, and it is also like wading knee-deep in a sewer. They may look like pleasant, clean, beautiful places, but too often the work that goes on there—usually commercial feelgood self-analysis for the bored and disaffected, and lots of badly coordinated drum-banging—encourages energy patterns to form that are restrictive and unhealthy.

So give some thought to where you will work, where it is, and expect that there may be a secondary ‘job’ to do there that could involve releasing the dead, cleaning up, or tuning.

Family connections can run deep

When a group of adepts come together to work on a project, one of the inner dynamics that happens is that your patterns become harmonised to an extent, and sometimes enmeshed. You become energetic family to each other.

Not only do you have the energetic pull from the work every time it triggers, but you can also experience pulls from each other through load-sharing, and the deeper level connections that form where you become brothers and sisters. This is the root of why religious, mystical, and magical communities call each other brother and sister, because at a magical and energetic level, you are.

This can mean that a group of people who would not necessarily get on as friends, who are all very different, become bonded not only by their meetings and work, but by the threads of power that form into patterns as a result of their work.

In practical terms this means that you look out for each other, and that your paths will be connected even if you all subsequently scatter after the work. When you go on to do your work in isolation, often one or more of the group will turn up in vision to work with you, and they will dream of you in times of need. This is not working at a conscious level, but deep in the underbelly of magic, through dreams, energy connections, and so forth.

Module Summary

There has been little practical work or study projects in this module, as it is not a deep subject that needs you to dive below the surface often. It is just information that you need to know and think about.

It also served to give you a rest energetically from the demands of magic for a short while to prepare for the last module, which will be heavy lifting in an energetic sense. Hopefully it has let you catch your breath, think, and get ready for the last step on the ladder to becoming a true, fully-formed adept. You may find that while you have been reading this module things in your life have been quietly shifting and preparing for the last climb up a sheer cliff-face to the peak of the mountain.

Make sure everything is in order in your life so that you can take that next step—and don't plan to dive deeply into the last module if you also have a few hectic weeks at work or family trips ahead. It is not the sort of module you can take on holiday with you, or dip in and out of while you are in the middle of a load of tight deadlines at work. You will feel it. Step forward and go with the flow. Listen to your inner senses, pay attention to what is happening around you, and watch as things are moved out of the way for you to take the final step.

Finally, I have attached to this lesson a large extract from my 2009 book *Magical Knowledge One*, which may give you some ideas on how to broach certain basic topics that are pertinent to beginners when you are teaching.

Extract from Magical Knowledge One: Foundations

Introduction

Magical training these days is available in a wide variety of forms be they local classes, internet study groups or expensive weekend intensives. The cost also varies from small donations to literally thousands of pounds/dollars and the old wisdom 'a fool and his money is easily parted' really becomes obvious. So how should someone, who seeks magic from the bottom of their hearts, navigate their way through this minefield of commercialism, new age bunkum and con artist gurus? Well, basically use your common sense and don't let the powerful yearning within you cause your bullshit meter to turn off.

These days you can learn alone or in a group, or a combination of both but there is one really really important point that needs to be absorbed and understood; magic is not about paths, rules and dogma. Magic is the understanding of how the world works from an inner point of view; it is a true hybrid between spirituality and science. Magic is about the Divine Power that hangs the universe together- magic or spirituality speaks to that power and science quantifies that power. Once that is understood, then it truly becomes apparent to the seeker when a supposed school of magical thought is actually a school of magical dogma that seeks to mould individuals to its agenda. A true magical school will teach techniques and methods that are related to the culture from which the community springs. A true magical school will not tell its students that it is the only way, or that walking away from that path will bring dire consequences, or that it is the holder of various secret magical revelations. All such claims should set off the bullshit alarm and the hand of reason should swing from the sky and slap you joyously around the back of your head.

Many different schools will give you many different things and my advice is to start at the beginning with a well-known and respected group or school to learn the very basics, or at least some good basic books. That gives you a structure to work from and will give you an idea of what is happening in the universe. Just be aware that many schools these days offer 'training to the highest levels of magic' and that with them you can become an adept in 3 years. If you see such claims, walk away quickly because they are full of shit. In my opinion (which is not humble), schools

are useful only for the basic foundation of magic. After that, an individualist's path with inner guidance and outer helpful people will be far more useful for magical training. The other dynamic with that approach is that when you call out to the inner worlds for a teacher, one will cross your path when it is time to really get your ass in gear and learn the serious stuff - you are never really alone with magic.

This book is divided into two parts. The first half of the book is about the general magical pitfalls, mess ups, explanations about how things work and why, how the inner worlds work and what they are, and a brief outline of the beings you can expect to meet in the inner worlds. Throughout the book you will find advice regarding 'rules', boundaries and how things work. Because this book is aimed at people in the early stages of serious magical study, those rules are there to provide a ring fence around the practitioner for their own safety. There will come a time when you decide that a rule no longer applies and that is valid providing that you have accomplished the task within the rule structure so that you fully understand the power dynamics; that ensures that you stay alive and do not damage yourself or those around you.

The second half of the book is about how to teach yourself how to acquire certain magical techniques, explanations of how to make things work and advice about the various areas of magical study. Basic but potentially powerful techniques are combined with some exercises to give the reader a path of work to begin with. Working with these techniques will very likely put you on a path to finding a decent magical teacher who will guide you through the next magical phase of your life.

Magic has been my life from being very young, and I can say that it has enriched my life to a level that is almost indescribable; I cannot imagine life without magic. The path was and still is tough, mainly walked alone with the odd eccentric teacher thrown in my path when I needed them, and it has challenged my courage, strength and values to levels that almost broke me at times. I think it has made me a better person and it most certainly made me feel whole: it is like coming home. Magic is my life.

1- The World of Magic and Magical Training

Things to Consider

The first exposure of a person to magic these days is usually through a book or a film and then a desire for something which we all know instinctively, deep in side us, is powerful, natural and true. Gone are the days when the lords of the manor secretly held all the mysteries of ritual magic and the villagers held the magical secrets of the land powers. In the last hundred years magic has gone public, it has appeared in college courses, night classes, how to books, films, t shirts, the list is as endless as a compulsive shopper's wish list. And there in lies the secret: magic is power, true magic, real magic. It is powerful, intense and dangerous. It is beautiful, inspiring and it brings us closer to ourselves.

Although the average person in the street is exposed only to the cotton candy variety of magic, their instincts, deep instincts, tell them to fear it or desire it. Such fear is of course partly grounded in the fears fed to us as children, and the propaganda fed to us by the church. Yes magic is dangerous in its full potential, yes it can do the soul damage if misused, and yes there are unethical people out there who use it. But the same could be said of a car. And if a child gets into a car, the worst thing that could happen is they take the handbrake off and roll. A car needs keys, and it needs skills to drive it. Once those skills are honed to a fine art, they can be used for great good or great bad. They can also be used simply to do a necessary job.

The majority of people who are first drawn to magic fall in to either the witchcraft collection of paths (Wicca, Trad Craft, etc), or the ritualist collection (Golden Dawn, OTO etc). On line courses and book series proliferate and eventually people find their way to a local group or a more solid course of study. From that point they usually join a coven or a lodge.

The commercialisation of magic has brought about a massive change in how magic is approached, and why. It has been watered down to make it more palatable, it has been discussed in psychological terms to make it more believable and it has been presented to make it the panacea for all ills. The dogmas have been reinforced, the snake oil pocketed and the profits made. Magic is so much more than that. Magic is the power that flows from un-being into being. Magic is the space between objects, planets and cells. Magic is the logic of the universe.

Many of the systems of magic that have developed over the millennia were originally designed in relation to the land on which the magician lived and what culture he or she was immersed in. The cultural relationship with Divinity was the vessel that held the magical system, and religion/-magic were one and the same thing. The separation between Deity and magic is a relatively recent thing and has been a slow but sustained split in the various schools of magic.

This movement away from the central culture and religious expression of the people slowly developed magic as a hidden power that was potentially evil, and something that only 'bad' people do. This attitude developed steadily in the monotheistic religions, so we go from Moses, Aaron and Miriam, the mythical three magicians who mediated magical power in a battle for their people, through to Jesus who used magic, along with other religious revolutionaries of that time (Simon Magus is one good example), to the purging of all magical/ mystical texts and people during the expulsion of the heretics in both Judaism and early Christianity. It was at this point that magic and religion in the western world parted ways.

Because of this expulsion of heresies, magic became furtive and mobile. It was passed quietly on from generation to generation by people who moved around from one land to another. So for example, Jewish people traveling around Europe took their own brand of magic with them and began practicing and teaching it upon the new land where they lived. This had a great affect upon the people whom they interacted with and magical wisdoms were passed back and forth and sometimes melded together. One very good example of this is Italy in the 15th century when Seraphidic Jews were cast out of Spain and ended up in Italy via Libya. The interaction between Libyan Berbers, Spanish Catholics and the Jewish Kabbalists is very apparent in the magic of that time which gave birth to the Keys of Solomon.

The magic of those Kabbalists from the 15th cent still has a great deal of influence on the magic of today: the Keys of Solomon and related texts are considered the cornerstone of certain types of magic. Egyptian writings relating to magic/religion that were unearthed in the 1800's by esoteric archaeologists and romantics also play a heavy part in modern magic. Today, people follow those paths of magic because they are known and they work. But how valid is that?

Magic is an expression of power and an expression of how that power relates to you, your environment and your ancestors. Magic is the interface of the land and Divinity; it is the power of the elements around you, the power of the sun and moon, the air that you breathe

and the language of the unseen beings, both benign and malicious that are living alongside you. With all that in mind, how valid is it to then try and interface with this power by using a foreign language, foreign deities, and directional powers that have no relevance to the actual land upon which you live? The systems will work, and sometimes very powerfully, but to what effect on the land and upon ourselves? I am not saying that to use these systems is wrong; I use them in various ways myself. But I think it is important to also be very mindful of where you are and what you are, and to build upon that foundation.

So if you were beginning to practice magic in steps, beginning with opening and closing the directions, instead of copying something from another land, stop and look at what is around you. Where is the water in relation to you, where are the plains or grasslands, where is the sun, where are the burials, where are the mountains. Look at what ancient things are around you, what ancestral contacts are there. Do you have cemeteries, cairns, ancient remains, burials, castles etc. Look at maps to see what natural springs are around you, are there any caves etc. If you are in a city that is modern and vast, like an American city, look into its history to see what is there. It is often not easy to find the ancient stories of a land but if you dig with intent to work with it, powers will begin to awaken to help you.

When I lived in Tennessee, I had a hell of a job trying to find local information but after digging relentlessly, I did come across some very interesting details that really slotted together very well and gave me a template to work from upon that land. Another very important point to consider is manners. If you work to find what is actually on the land, and who was there before you, how they did things, what were their legends etc., you will find that quite powerful forces begin to swirl around you in response. You will be led to places to experience things and the natural powers of magic within the land will open up top you. It is important that if these land powers awaken to you, that you are acutely aware of the manner of your communication towards them and that you are always respectful (so that they do not eat you).

Magical Systems, Old and New

One of the major problems that has repeated over and over within magical circles is the quick disintegration of a true magical system to either a commercial new age venture, or the older story which is an infighting, agenda driven lodge. The first happens when the power input is imbalanced and the second usually happens either for the same reason or because the person who was holding it together died. Both pictures

(and these are just two examples of what can go wrong, there are many more) display an inherent imbalance in the foundation of the system. Why the inherent imbalance? Because the foundations are built on shaky ground.

A great many magical systems work from the ground up, Kabbalah for example, trains the neophyte to slowly climb the Tree of Life through study, ritual and meditation. This works from the stance of the human body, which is a finite physical container for the soul, reaching up towards Divinity. This creates a drag upon the body and is also like swimming up a stream against the tide. When you work from the ground up, you are working within the burden of manifestation, and you have to carry that manifestation as a spirit form as you attempt to journey back to the threshold of Divinity (the edge of the Abyss or Daarth).

The spirit naturally travels down the Tree on its journey into and through life. If you repeat this journey in a conscious way, you are more able to interact magically with the process, the beings involved and the powers as you pass from un-being into being. Dion Fortune was a great advocate of this method and from my own personal magical experience, I would say it is a far more powerful method and for me unlocked a great many of the magical secrets hidden within its structure.

And yet, going from Malkuth upwards is the 'Official' way to work the Tree. I am not saying that it does not work to study going up the tree, but I am saying that it does fly against the natural flow of the tree (which is not actually a tree or anything even remotely to do with trees). The other problem I see in Kabbalah training is that it encourages intense mental study which creates a trap whereby the mind is constantly swirling around concepts that only the spirit can truly open.

The second aspect of a shaky foundation is the magical container, i.e. the philosophies, myths and rituals that the system sits upon. Most western magic comes from the line of systems that were developed out of mystical Christianity and Judaism, with some Greek, Roman and Egyptian threads thrown in for good measure. If you look into the deeper historic and magical aspects of all of these threads, the first thing that becomes apparent is the lack of proper polarity i.e. exclusion of women in their full power and the heavy reliance upon sovereignty power, which is essentially a power grab. So you have magical systems developing through a male line that is connected to religious and mythical patterns of power grabbing. Both patriarchy and matriarchy are imbalanced expressions of power and can both express power imbalances through their actions, something that we have witnessed repeatedly throughout history.

The other problem with the basing of magic upon these mythical and religious foundations is that by the time the classical era came along, i.e. Greek/Roman era, these ancient patterns were already corrupt and degenerate. By the time the medieval era came along, it was truly stinking. Magic deals directly with power and with beings. When you look into Judaic and Egyptian history, you have to go back a pretty long way to find the time when there was a less dogmatic and manipulative relationship to power and beings. It is a pattern that repeats over and over in the Mediterranean and near east cultures from about 500BC onwards (much earlier in some cases). These cultures and the degenerated myths are what our current magical systems are based upon. They are then imposed over a land that has no real connection to them.

So how does a neophyte or new initiate navigate such a vessel and do they actually need to? A system by which a person can learn about power structure is vitally important, just as religion is an important teacher for a person to learn about devotion. If they are approached with the pre warning about the pros and cons, the cracked vessel, then much learning can be brought out of working within such a container. The important step is to realize when it has given all that it can give and it is time for the initiate to step away and move on. There are also a great many lessons that can be learned from working with an unbalanced system, and learning first hand why it is imbalanced. Most people have a complex bag of learning needs when they first approach magic and the imbalanced paths can place those learning needs right in the face of the initiate if they choose to look. It's all about evolution.

That is not to say that we should stick with imbalanced paths because we can learn from them, any more than we should take heavy drugs to learn why not to take them. Some people need that 'in your face learning'; others have different burdens of learning that they need to shoulder. The adepts have a chance, if they take it, to strike out and wipe the slate clean by working on structural methods of learning magic that do not rely on these imbalanced paths. It is very hard work but does provide a healthier ladder for the initiate to climb, and it is a form of magical service to the next generation. For the neophyte or new initiate, the onus is to look beyond glamour and comfort zones, to find a system that is clean and as balanced as possible. Most of the magical systems of old present a wonderful glamour that attracts seekers like a golden grail. It is up to the seeker to look beyond, and to question what it is they are actually looking for. If it is pure glamour, then such magical systems will suffice. If it is true magical learning a beginner seeks, then the search will become much harder and will have less outer gratification.

But with the quickly changing world in which we live, and with its more flexible way of being, there are many magical adepts from a variety of systems who are throwing the old order to the winds and trying to experiment, research and build more relevant and efficient working practices. The previous generations who attempted such vessel building often reverted to drawing upon history, myths, philosophies and more recently psychology in an attempt to forge a new path. I feel the problem with such an approach is that by reaching through texts/histories, we are already back to the issue of shaky foundations. This is reaching up the tree from the ground, trying to swim against the tide. The answer, I feel, is to reach into the inner worlds, into the land and to access the deeper inner soul of ourselves, which is to go from the inner worlds, from the soul 'out of time' to get a deeper inner perspective of how the power flows into our world. That way, the adept can see at what point in the process the power begins to distort (so from a Kabbalistic point of view for example, at what section of the tree does the power begin to fragment) and begin to work on a vessel that plugs that distortion, or dispenses with it entirely. By working on the construction of a magical system before the powers manifest physically, the outer expression of that power finds its own natural form that is more in harmony with who we are and where we live.

Duality and ethics in magic

The major issue that people hit when they begin serious magical study is the issue of light/dark, good/bad, right/left hand path (a dyslexic's nightmare). Such separation of the two streams of power is inherently unhealthy and immediately creates an antagonism of power (although that antagonism can be seen as a power source by some magical paths). Either path studied to any depth will create an imbalance within which the natural flow of power will try to re harmonize itself. When this rebalancing manifests itself without the conscious actions or intentions of the magician, it can have a destabilizing effect upon the magician and will play out in a number of different ways either through the life path of the practitioner or through their bodies as mental or physical imbalances. If a practitioner consciously engages the opposing flow of power through action and intent, it can have a more productive and educational effect without quite as much devastation.

Another way of avoiding such imbalances is to completely sidestep the polarization and approach the light and dark equally, or to walk a path that works with beings unconditionally. The same method is also employed in the interaction of beings in the inner worlds and outer worlds. Instead of viewing a being as inherently 'good' or 'bad', the

practitioner works with each being without judgment and understands that every being has its role in the picture of existence. Just because a being or a being's expression of power is bad for humanity or a human, does not make it bad, it is all relative. In practice this means working in all worlds with all beings in an appropriate way and simply understanding how they affect us and how we affect them. Through that understanding you may choose to not work with certain beings because of how they affect us. That is not the same as the practice of subduing, pinning or binding a being just for being itself because it is considered 'dark'.

If a being of great power is causing chaos, the first question to ask would be why? If it is simply doing its own thing in the greater pattern, then it should not be interfered with just because we do not like it. If it is out of place because some human ritual action drew it in, then it should be quietly put back where it belongs (parasites for example). If it has been bound ritually into service by a human action and is causing chaos then it must be unbound and put back where it came from. If it has been released from a natural process of binding by ritual magic, then it needs to be put back into its binding. It's like returning things to factory settings.

Some beings, particularly strong ancient powers, are bound naturally by the evolution of species and the planet. To release them for conditional reasons is highly dangerous as they do not operate on our 'frequency' and can cause untold damage. This can manifest as a practitioner summoning and releasing ancient powers from the depths of the Abyss. It is all very 'glam' but creates a hell of a mess. And this is one of the approaches that have created such imbalance in the world of humans; we cannot stop fiddling to suit ourselves. Practitioners follow a path of light and dark, and then from there, summon or, banish or bind beings that fit with their agenda. This is reflected in the Tibetan Buddhist practice of teaching respect for all beings, but then binding powerful beings into conditional service. Not healthy at all. It is much healthier, but harder, to meet and work with such beings on an equal footing, unconditionally, powerfully, and with respect.

In practical modern terms, the magical practitioner would learn about all the various orders of beings, meet them on their own turf (i.e. the Abyss) and learn the dangers of certain types of beings. From there, a wider understanding of how power and consciousness can develop, leading to healthier and more respectful practices.

Approach to training: selfish versus non selfish

Magic is simply the manipulation of power to illicit a change. The change can be conscious, conditional, unconditional or unconscious. Magic moves power from A to B, it awakens powers and forces, or it sends them into hibernation. It evokes emotional responses, affects the human body, changes the flow of fate, brings things into being and sends them into un-being. It can build structures in other worlds and it can be used to interface with beings from other realms.

So immediately you can see how easily misused magic can be if someone with no ethics, loads of patience and natural talent decides to walk down that path: such a path does have its downsides however.

There are two ways to approach magic; the intelligent way and the stupid way. To approach it the stupid way, the neophyte uses magic to obtain that which his personality is too weak to achieve alone without effort. As the neophyte progresses, the temptation and then justification to use magic to achieve whatever is needed becomes greater and more normalized. So if the magician is slighted, hurt or otherwise upset, then they will revert to aggressive magic to attack and punish. They will use magic to protect their physical territory from physical things i.e. put magic on something so it will not be stolen. Magic is used to draw in a lover, money, fame, and to settle disputes: the list is as endless as man's stupidity.

If this path is taken, there is no fatherly god sitting on a cloud wagging a parental finger. Life is not quite so easy. Magic is used for inner issues, not outer ones. What happens with such an approach to magical work is that the personality gradually gets weaker and the spirit gets flabbier. We learn, strengthen and mature from the physical knocks, hardships and disappointments that life puts in our path. Using magic to short cut those lessons leaves a person emotionally, spiritually and magically illiterate. The personality that approaches magic to handle issues and problems is the same as the personality of a long term drug user: their emotional age becomes stuck at the age they started 'using'. They do not develop an 'inner skin' which is something that life knocks can give us, therefore they become vulnerable to inner parasites that feed off emotive, magical and sexual exchanges, and they then use that energy to cross dress in an effort to convince the practitioner that it is a magical contact/deity.

The combination of a retarded emotive age and inner parasites results in a very unhealthy and unhappy individual who 'bottoms out' in their magical power. It levels off at a dead end and they get stuck there. It is nature's way of saving humanity from its own idiots. If they are naturally

talented at magic, it can result in mental illness.

A more intelligent way is to approach magic like learning a craft that has an ancient heritage, and a lot of responsibility attached to it. If it is approached with a sense of respect and a sense of service, of wanting to be useful, then although such a path is not as materially rewarding in some senses, it is a very powerful path indeed. A respect for the Divinity within all things, a respect for the beings of all the different realms without judgment or prejudice, and a respect and willingness to protect/serve the world of nature around us are all foundations of approach which put the neophyte on a path of magical priesthood. It then links him those who have walked the same path of service for millennia. It is not a fluffy bunny path by any means- the practitioner often serves deep and high in the Abyss, facing great danger. Such a path brings with it difficulties and challenges but it also brings with it great learning, power and maturity. The magician must be able to cross all realms, commune with all types of beings and be able to fight their corner in deep magical combat when needed. All of this needs to be done without any emotion.

So why do we do magic?

Humanity has an ability that many other beings, both physical and not physical do not have: we can move power and consciousness from A to B. We can initiate action, pressing the red button so to speak, which many other beings cannot do. Every being has its inner action and when all the beings and actions are put together you have an orchestra. Our part is to start the ball rolling and move power around. Magic forms a threshold and filter for power, it shapes it, patterns it, gives it form and brings it out into our world. It alters the flow of inner power and by ritual we can effect change in that power, give it boundaries and use it to a specific end.

With that in mind, the magician can use that ability to serve himself, or to serve the land, culture, community or Divinity. It will work regardless of the intention but the long-term outcomes both for the individual and the land upon which they reside will be different. Often the magician will change intent over the years as the personality matures. Sometimes, of course, that doesn't happen and the magician stays on their original path of intent, be it good, bad or indifferent. If the magician develops along a path of unconditional magic, then their magical actions join the 'orchestra of power' and the intention is simply one of serving where it is needed and doing the work that is presented to them. Often (but not always) the result or conclusion of the work is unseen by the magician, and they just play their part.

Personal development

There is a stream of people who are drawn to magic because religion has failed them in some way or other and yet they are deeply aware that there is more to the world than Kentucky Fried Chicken. Often people have mystical, magical or power/sight experiences that show them, at a deep personal level, that there are streams of power that are not obviously apparent and they begin to explore those streams.

In general, the Western culture in which we live is underpinned by a sense of powerlessness: the government runs our lives, the churches/mosques etc. control our access to Divinity, and social constraints discourage use and expression of power. When a person chooses not to play a part in that circus they look elsewhere for a path to power. Some people begin that path in search of their own power, some begin in search of knowledge and some approach that path from a sense of deep instinct.

The beginning of the path in magic is very much about personal development, be it spiritual, intellectual or self-determination. This is the first rung of the ladder and has many dead ends woven into it at a deep magical level regardless of the type of magic it is. These dead ends are designed to trap someone and teach them a lesson that is needful for their development. Some stay in those traps indefinitely (the inner weeding process) and some eventually get the message at a deep level and haul themselves up on to the next rung of the ladder. The 'dead ends' on the first rung of magic are often related to our relationship to power, glamour and ego. We all go through it in one form or another and most climb out of it with a very red face, ready to move on, lesson well learned. There is nothing wrong in making mistakes and doing silly things, it is all part of the learning process. The first rung teaches us about ourselves, our weaknesses and strengths, our true desires and fears, and the real extent of our ability to be honest with ourselves. Remember the words over the door to the temple: Man, know thyself. The threshold of the temple must be crossed with the intention to be willing to look in the mirror with an open mind and see what is really there.

If we approach the 'outer mysteries', which is the first rung of the ladder, with that openness then we begin the focused evolution of the soul, which subsequently takes up the rest of our lives. Because the outer court of magic, or the outer/lesser mysteries contain methods of divination, methods of basic ritual, using magical tools, and the study of magical history, there are many who approach the first ladder and get stuck in these outer court skills. They can pull a few 'tricks', impress people with their titles, dress in cool clothes and have strange symbols around their necks: it is a power dead end for the ego. Some get stuck

there for a time and climb out, and some stay there indefinitely.

When the initiate climbs out of that dead end, they look back and see the power traps, the allurements of the ego and they then have to face their weaknesses. That is a major step forward. Higher octaves of the same experience revisit the neophyte in a variety of ways until all the layers are peeled away. There is nothing wrong with ego, indeed it is something that is needful in our society and for ourselves: it is a natural and healthy part of our psychological make up. It only becomes a problem when it becomes the 'truth' to us and we are unaware of it. The first layers of training expose the weakness and then the strengths of our egos. It takes fragmented egos and solidifies them, making a person confident with awareness from within, as opposed to trying to obtain confidence and power through outside actions.

When that rung of the ladder is finished with, the new initiate climbs onto the next rung which is a higher octave of the first. The magical work becomes more about the group, or the community, or the lodge. The same traps are present, just in a more subtle dressing. The magical work becomes more focused through ritual and vision, through the use of the elements/tools, and the introduction to beings. This brings with it, particularly for the naturally inclined magician, the ability to begin to move power around, contact inner beings and affect the world around them in small ways. They learn how to manipulate power and the very shiny dead end appears. Some magicians, at this phase, become very enamoured of their own power ability and sense of importance. It is the all singing all dancing messiah trap. Their ability to impress people is strong and they begin to be held in awe by people who are not of their level of knowledge. Some climb out of this dead end, again red faced and a little wiser. Some do not and become new age pop star/goth/guru/Merlin flavoured magicians who effectively feed off the surrounding neophyte's energy.

The initiates who do not get stuck in this trap, or who climb out of it, learn how to use their ability and technique for the good of their community, land, lodge or group. At this phase, initiates are also sometimes given the responsibility to teach early neophytes which in itself is a major learning tool for the initiate. It is only when we have to teach something to another person that we really begin to see the mechanics of power, technique and method. If the initiate is not part of a magical order or group, i.e. a lone practitioner, the same power dynamics occur as it is part and parcel of the way inner power flows. Things are put in your path and you either learn from them or you don't. If you learn, more powerful things are put in your path and you step forward to the

next training session. This rung is the usual one where initiates decide to leave the group or stream and go it alone. It is a harder path, but can for some be a much more powerful one.

The next and more powerful rung is the one of service to the long term planetary powers and to Divinity. This is the level where magic and spirituality truly comes together and the adept becomes a true priest of Divinity/universal power (not deity). The service is rarely conducted within a lodge or group, but becomes either a very lonely path or a path whereby others of similar level are brought together from different streams to do a 'job', which can often span a whole lifetime. It fully dispenses with the dead end of egos because the simple nature of the work often demands a silence in the outside world. This is not an oath form of secrecy; rather it is a knowing that there is nothing to be gained and all to be lost by advertising ones actions. This is where the old saying 'cast ye not pearls before swine' comes into play. If you tread this path carefully, then others of similar service are put in your path to work with. If you become stuck in the dead end, it forms into a stronger messiah trap and the whole 'illuminati of the modern age' bullcrap rears its head.

Each rung has its own steps within it that expose our weaknesses and strengths, and the rungs flow in a natural power manifestation rather than being imposed by human structures. The groups and lodges often have their own self designed lessons, but in truth, life itself places the more powerful traps at your feet to see how you handle them. Power has a way of working and it will flow regardless of how we try to shape it, funnel it or use it. By taking a lone path, the initiate essentially hands over the lessons to be learned to a higher teacher and it can take a very strong sense of focus and self examination to be able to walk the lone path. Hence it is harder but infinitely more productive.

2 -The Pitfalls and Traps of Magic

Oath taking

Once the neophyte is crossing the road to become an initiate, one of the first major issues to raise its head regardless of whether the person is a member of magical group/lodge, or a sole practitioner is the issue of oath taking. At some point, once a person has begun to show any ability to work in the inner worlds, the need for oaths will raise its head. There are many reasons why oaths are asked of a magician, and to be honest with you, most of the reasons are a load of bull. There are a small number of reasons to take oaths and a very limited list of whom that oath should be bound to. There tend to be three basic types of oaths, the oath to a group, the oath to a deity or power, and the oath to a landmass. Within those categories there are many variants and sub categories with enough red tape to keep you going for months.

The first basic type of oath I mentioned is the oath to a group/lodge/fellowship. This type tends to cover secrecy, honor and obedience towards the group, the work, the leader or all three. I am personally very uncomfortable with such oaths as they are easily misused, often connected or attached to curses, and are not really necessary. If there is work being done in the group that is of a nature that is best not discussed, one would hope that magicians working at that level would have enough intelligence to know to hold their tongues without being sworn on pain of death. If such an oath is needed, it reflects upon the weakness of the group and therefore states that they should not be doing such work anyhow. If the oath is sworn to the leader, then it is very possible that there is the potential for a power grab situation going on where the leader is manipulating the members. Oaths are often asked for when there is something to hide- remember that.

Another reason for oaths that is unhealthy is an age-old adherence to drama and intrigue. It puts the members in a 'special status', a secret society, a brotherhood. That's all well and good if you are 18 yrs. old but if you are a mature magician it is not really appropriate. When we come to the issue of magical knowledge that should be withheld, kept secret and preserved, the path of oath taking, I feel, is still not justified. Those who are unprepared at an inner level cannot understand magical knowledge; it reveals itself to a seeker only when the seeker is ready to receive it fully. Some naturally talented people can unravel magical text and usually promptly blow themselves up. But the taking of oaths under

these circumstances can be very unhealthy both for the practitioner and the magic itself.

The other very important issue regarding oath taking is that it disengages the individual's important learning curve regarding knowing when to keep silent and when not. The institutionalization of magical learning over the centuries has created a framework whereby the individual is not allowed to develop their own self-discipline, their own inner strength nor are they given space to develop individually at their own pace. When someone who is immature begins a path of practice that will potentially take them to strength, knowledge and power, they will show off and brag about it to their peers who are not involved in such a path. Life will teach such a person a lesson of maturity, which will be painful and embarrassing if they are perceptive. If they are not perceptive, but are self absorbed, they will continue to expose themselves to ridicule as they parade their path like a new coat. That will trap them magically at that stage and they will not travel much beyond the basics.

As the initiate matures, they usually become very aware that it is pointless to try and discuss magic outside of the community of magicians. Their silence becomes self-imposed. As the initiate progresses onto being an adept, they begin to see how magic is just another name for what is basically the power of the universe. That power is addressed in terms of religion, magic, physics and biology etc. When the adept talks about magic to a priest, or a theoretical physicist for example, it is very possible to have in depth magical conversations where you realize you are both talking about the same power, but you are both just using a different vocabulary. Hence the need for secrecy falls away. It's all about discernment, which is one of the major necessities in magic.

And this is why, for me personally, I have no qualms about writing certain texts and making them available: the lack of secrecy ensures that the information goes where it needs to. It is then possible for a physicist to pick up the work, read it, and recognize what it is that is being written about. Moving the vocabulary to one side, it is all about how power expresses through substance, and how you can actively be a part in that. The rules and regulations that abound in magical groups/lodges are outdated and follow a mentality of control and hierarchy. We need to move a little beyond that and mature a bit spiritually.

The other pitfall with oaths is the inner impact or binding that can affect the spirit and life path. Some magical oaths are constructed to be more than just a promise - they can become ritual binds that will trigger curses if that oath is broken. Sometimes, many times in fact, neophytes or new initiates are bound by ritual oaths to obedience and secrecy. Then

they discover that the group or lodge is corrupt and is involved in magical practice that goes against the ethics of the individual. The ritual oath means the person who is oath bound cannot warn others, challenge the behavior or seek support, however confidential. It puts the individual in an ethically difficult situation in that they can potentially become silent witnesses to all manner of magical abuses. The side effect of such a curse bound oath is that they also become complicit in the unbalanced act and take on some of the energetic interplay that is tied to the ritual actions. Leaving the group is not enough to sever from the oath, so it pays to be very choosy about what oaths one takes and to whom.

Deities rarely ask for heavy oaths, but it does happen, usually to the lone practitioners. This is because when you are not involved in a group, you are not in the middle of a power network which has hierarchies, so you are free to commune with whatever beings you choose to work with. A lone practitioner will at some point be asked by a deity or a power to commit to a service or union for a limited length of time. You can simply agree or disagree to such a request, or one can swear an oath. Be very mindful that if you swear an oath, you cannot back out without repercussions.

The tying in of energy

This is something that most people do not realize when they attach themselves to a magical path, group or deity, and that is by partaking of that path, you are in effect tying yourself energetically to that path. That can happen naturally or can be imposed upon you. It happens naturally when you begin to work with a specific God or Goddess, your energies become interwoven with the magical interface that allows that power to interact with humanity. The more energetically sensitive you are, the deeper the impact upon your spirit will be. The same happens naturally when you work on a piece of land for a very long time, particularly if you also live on that land – you become entwined with its energy structure. This was the mechanism that was used in times past to accommodate sleepers within the land. It strengthens the interconnection with the land, and the power of the land flows through the practitioner as they mature in magical knowledge and skills.

The tying in of energy is also done intentionally when people join some magical lodges or groups. Their energies become connected, usually by way of initiation or oath, to the egregore and the magical structure that upholds the group. This can become extremely unhealthy as the balance of the whole structure is only as balanced as the person or persons upholding the group. Any action initiated by the leader is

energetically tied to all its members so that the action is in effect fuelled by the members. If this is done with consent, then all well and good, and people sometimes learn some hard lessons. If this is done without consent, as is often the case, then irreparable damage can potentially be inflicted upon the energetic systems of the people. Most often this action without consent is done without bad intent, and sometimes without understanding, but never the less the results can take many years to untangle.

Because of these types of pit falls and problems, it is wise to not get into oaths until you are absolutely sure what it is that you are getting involved in. It pays to look from an inner point of view as well as an outer point of view, and if a person is not able to do that, then that in itself is an indication that oaths should not be taken. As for the tying in of energies, it is prudent to develop one's energy sensitivity as a priority when working/learning magical skills. With a heightened level of sensitivity, it is harder for a 'tying in' of energy to be imposed upon you, and the more ground foundation work one does the more solid the practitioner becomes. With that solidity comes boundaries, which are of paramount importance in magic. Without boundaries, one is quickly drained of energies in a variety of ways, and can be potentially exposed to powers that can seriously unbalance a sensitive mind. Anyone who walks a magical path must understand from the very beginning that you are ultimately responsible for yourself and you are not going to be protected from the results of your own bad decisions.

If you are walking a solitary path, the rules are the same. Inner contacts can initiate all the same problems that outer groups can, and one should proceed with caution and common sense at all times. The solitary path is something that does have less in the way of pitfalls, but is much harder to walk. The development however of a solitary magician is often fused with far more power than a group path if the solitary magician has good inner and outer boundaries, and lashings of self-discipline.

Blockage of knowledge

This is a favorite form of power manipulation in groups and lodges. The leader or 'inner court' members effectively block the neophytes and initiates from accessing certain lines of power 'for their own good'. I find this arrogant and elitist. There is nothing wrong in unravelling training in steps and ensuring that each person develops a strong foundation and good working practice. That is different. When someone who is being grounded in the foundations of magic, and they have natural talent, or have done this at some 'other time', the foundation training will awaken

certain things within their consciousness which will allow them to access deeper inner realms and contacts. This is the hallmark of a true initiate: they find the inner keys for themselves. Many lodges hold very tight control over inner contacts and inner temples, locking out all but a few adepts, the chosen ones, which in effect mummifies the line of magic. This disengages the natural development of progress within the initiate ranks and keeps them disempowered. The result is a group of initiates who cannot access new realms and new contacts for themselves, and who often cannot step beyond the 'allowed' contacts. Such controlling behavior is degenerate and unforgivable.

The other form of blocking power that can happen in groups is where all the members are deliberately blocked from accessing the inner worlds in any way other than what is given to them. This can be done by giving the initiates certain meditations or visions to do that effectively block them from inner worlds and contacts. It is often done furtively, and in a way that would not arouse suspicion. I have personally witnessed an eastern 'Lama' giving out a group meditation that was designed to stop the practitioner accessing power from the land. People trusted his robes and gentle smile and did not stop to think for a moment what it was they were doing. I was appalled by the arrogance of the man, that he did not even try to hide what he was doing, but instead sugar coated it with new age sweetness.

Thankfully such behavior is not widespread and most blocking happens when the teacher feels 'justified'. I don't feel that there is such a justification; such 'nannying' of an initiate stops them from learning important lessons. Many initiates who are not strong enough to handle deeper inner contacts often cannot get them anyhow. If they are able to make the contacts but are not grounded enough to work with them, they will either shut down naturally, or they will fragment physically or mentally. Such power blocking is there to stop that from happening. But I do feel that, in the long-term pattern of spiritual development, it is an important phase to go through if it is necessary. By protecting a person from their actions, their natural inner evolution is suppressed and they do not really learn why not to do something. If they have been warned, then that is enough, they have to make the choice, not the lodge. Usually I have found that when the work begins to really pick up pace and the power levels rise, people who would be unsuitable for the work suddenly cannot get to the meetings. The inner contacts that are being worked with usually filter out unsuitable candidates, and they tend to be better judges than I so I trust that filtering.

The blocking of power for a solitary practitioner is not really an issue,

as there is no one there to block him. If the lone practitioner is not capable of handling a contact, they will not get that contact. If one is being blocked from getting into somewhere or making contact with an inner being, it is usually because the inner 'do not disturb' sign is up for a reason. To this day, I sometimes find that I cannot access something, or sometimes I am booted out of the inner worlds. Usually within 24 hours I find out why – I would have an infection, or have energy building up for something else to be done, or there was something unhealthy going on and I was being filtered out of it. The more we work without outer imposed structure, the more we are guided in a healthier way by the inner world contacts and the natural tides of magic.

Past lives and Genetic Threads

Something that rears its head very quickly in magical training is the issue of past lives, ancient souls and blood lines. In our modern world of disconnected communities and disempowered people, it has a wonderful allure to hearken back to another life/personality/time when things were different. For a weaker personality, this can provide a refuge from the real world, where a person can be 'something' of importance.

It is important right from the outset to be able to distinguish reality from fantasy and the lines can get blurred very easily. Yes magic will exhume past living experiences, yes it will wake up other times when you have lived and yes it will also kick start genetic knowledge held in your blood (along with feuds, quests and unfinished business). But such awakening has to be approached very carefully and with a level head. 'Past' is not 'better', it is just a memory that can be useful or not.

The mechanism of remembering 'past living' experiences in magic is to enable you to access magical knowledge that you acquired in other lives so that you can integrate that learning in a present day setting and use it consciously - that way you not constantly re learning about the wheel. So before I go on to talk about how such memories can be used in magic, lets look at what can go wrong, and often does.

When people begin to reach back through time, or the magic awakens old dormant memories and skills, how that person reacts to the awakening will decide whether or not that person moves any further along the path of true magic. It is one of the swirls that catch people on the climb up the ladder of magical training and like so many other swirls, they can be spectacular in their presentation. The amount of people who get trapped at this phase and think they are Akhenaton, John Dee, Crowley, Dion Fortune etc is just mind-boggling. They spend the rest of their lives trying

to recreate a past that never existed, or to live in a past culture that has no real relevance in today's world. Who cares if you were John Dee in another life? You are not now, so get over it.

Past memories can do many things when they emerge, and the first thing to be wary of is getting into the glamour and drama of another life. It does not matter who you were, all that matters is the skill set that you have access to, awareness of any outstanding patterns that need to be addressed (and I mean magically, not psychologically) and any ongoing jobs. The ongoing jobs are not usually something that emerges early on in a magical training. The deep timeless consciousness of the soul only usually brings that to the fore when it is finally time to get back to work, and that can often be many years into the magical life of someone.

Access to the magical skill set is often the first thing to emerge from other lives. The skills initially emerge unconsciously and will have been triggered by the practitioner's involvement in a situation that demands such a skill. So you are put in a situation that is new to you in this life, but you will feel like you are slipping into a comfy old favorite pair of slippers. You will be on home turf and will be able to access things you didn't know that you knew. When that happens, is it best to expand that opening by going into silence through meditation, so that it can emerge naturally. Sometimes, the door can be opened by a specific event, but what comes after that needs to be approached with care and intelligence. Powers and skills need to emerge in their own time without being forced and if the ground is prepared by stillness and meditation, and an 'openness' to allow nature to do her job, then the skills will emerge as needed.

An example. When I was a youngster, a man called Dr Gupta, a doctor in Bradford who was running a small research project, hypnotized me. I regressed quickly which was not expected or intended, and the major thing to come out of it for me was the emergence of the void. I was talked into a space 'between lives' where I was still, silent and in a place of profound power. I did not have the vocabulary to properly verbalise what I was experiencing, but the experience itself stayed with me and changed me forever. It opened the doors within me, and skills started to spill out. They came out slowly though, emerging over a twenty-year period that allowed me to properly integrate them and build upon them. I never consciously at any point tried to actively engage the skill memory, which to be honest with you is something that never occurred to me anyway during those years. I tended to bumble my way through things, blissfully unaware most of the time of what the hell was going on around and even within me.

If you do try to actively engage the memories, they filter through your present day mental vocabulary and you can quickly get trapped in the 'story' as opposed to engaging the skills you actually need. Anything that you try to force under such circumstances will shut down upon you as power just does not flow like that. Magical development in general has a basic rule - focus on what is directly in your path and the rest of it falls into place as you go.

Outstanding patterns are things that begin to emerge as the magical development of the individual progresses. By outstanding patterns I mean events that play out, often mirroring mythical patterns that are much bigger than ourselves. So I am not talking particularly about personal behavior patterns, but rather patterns of power that play out through families, lodges, races and cultures. When we recognize what is happening we can choose to get back on the hamster wheel of the pattern or we can opt to look for more imaginative solutions to our small part in the play –what can we do to change the cycle for the better?

Often recognizing a pattern and consciously deciding not to partake of it is enough to break the cycle. The most common patterns are ones of war/conflict/magical infighting and rival temple powers. To dive back in to 'do your bit', or 'defend the ancestors' adds to the pattern, which feeds power to all the beings that have a vested interest in keeping the pattern going. One of the maturing factors of magical development is the conscious decision to find better more balanced ways to resolve your part in the pattern. By focusing on your own actions, you allow the deeper powers to run through the pattern as a whole. Often the best action is not actually a part of the pattern, but a small regular act of service to uphold or help the beings that are working within the fate pattern. This in turn is mirrored in the magical development of the adept who finally gets to a stage of realizing that most of the time, magic is not the appropriate action to take. The longer and deeper you do magic, the less you do – it becomes very clear that most of the time is it just interfering with a bigger pattern. This is why certain lines of adepts choose unconditional magic in service: you turn up, lend a helping hand and then leave without ever knowing what the hell you just did. That way, it is very hard to interfere or impose your own opinioned action upon a situation.

Candy shop magic

This is a term I use for the practice of buying into any and all magical paths, books, courses, workshops, outfits and silly jewelry/haircuts/t shirts. The person hops from one book to another, from one path to another, constantly looking for the next power fix and glamour image.

One week it's Chumley, the next it's Fortune, Enochian magic, Egyptian magic and so on. I am not saying that someone should stick only with one path because that is equally unhealthy. But there needs to be a sensible solid consistency in the initial learning so that something can take root and begin to grow. We have to learn the rules before we can break them. This is obvious to anyone who has studied any classical discipline to a professional level. Once you know one system of work well from the inside out, then you can throw that structure away if needs be and access virtually anything that is even remotely on the same frequency. So lodge secrecy regarding contacts becomes obsolete: once you have worked in depth with inner contacts, you can access just about anyone or anything. You don't need to have the contacts handed to you: just go get them for yourself.

If you are a lone practitioner, it is even better though it is harder. The lone practitioner needs to find an initial training mechanism that will teach inner and outer pattern making, provide boundaries and self discipline. It takes a lot more work because it all has to come from within you, but it is far more rewarding if you achieve it and certainly more powerful. You also do not end up with the sometimes-ridiculous rules, poor quality work and low level dross that often accompanies beginner training.

Once that basic foundation is there and inner contacts have been made and worked with, then it becomes interesting to go and look at these various systems. The truths and flaws quickly become apparent in a way that would not have been so obvious in the early stages of the initiate. That way, you can read interesting ideas, be challenged, informed and view all of them with a critical eye. There is too much written about magic by people who have no real inner experience. They rely on other books, history, philosophy and myths to come to their conclusions, rather than direct experience. A beginner would not realize that is what is happening, but an initiate who has experience of deeper inner work will immediately spot the flaws in the text and move swiftly on.

The other problem with candy shop magic is that the various paths that are dived in and out of often don't mix well, and from a power point of view can be antagonistic. So mixing deities that are not connected, with a form of magic that is not connected to them can result in anything from total failure to a power kickback that unbalances the practitioner. Ever wondered why so many chaos magicians suffer from depression? Yes, power does have the potential to work in such a way, but only when done with a deep and full knowledge of the ingredients that are being put together. A trained classical musician, for example, can write a crazy piece of orchestrated music using unusual instruments and

make it work... why?, because they know how the rules of sound works. Someone who is just messing about with instruments and can sort of play one enough to busk is not quite the same. The outcome will most probably be noise. The same goes for power and magic. Learn the deep rules first, then push the boundaries.

Glamour, Control and Ego

The three 'Magic' words. These are the biggest of all of the pitfalls. Magical paths and individual teachers can present themselves in a very glamorous way. They draw power around themselves, people look up to them and they begin to behave like rock stars. They then start to try and control their adoring 'fans' with rules and demands which in turn feeds their ego. Groups similarly shroud themselves in secrecy, club rules and ranks. They appear as mysterious and have goals that you are told you may be able to aspire to, but will possibly never reach... guaranteed to draw an audience.

A wide-eyed young aspirant sees what they perceive as power and begin to emulate so that the next generation of egomaniacs is ready and waiting. It's the same pattern as cult behavior and people fall for it all the time. They get away with really bad behavior because people will turn a blind eye and more often than not, they will try to excuse or even to copy such behavior.

This weeds out the idiots from powerful magic and keeps them in magical primary school. If you are starting out on a magical path either with a group or alone and you find yourself adoring some teacher/leader/adept... remember one thing – their shit stinks just the same as yours does. And if they are playing on the glamour, they are probably not quite as powerful as they would have you think. Power does not need glamour. Power is hard work, like chopping wood. It burdens people with responsibility, it challenges them and their actions on a daily basis, and then it puts you to work.

So when you approach a magical path, do not disengage your common sense: use the same early warning alarm systems you do in everyday life. Do not believe everything you see and are told - personal experience is everything in magic, and never ever hand over your power or will to someone else.

3 - Power and Magic

Magic is about working with power - it is the calling of power, the manipulation of power and the moving of power from A to B. The forms that we work with in vision and ritual, the names, beings and objects are just vessels for the power; they are also just matrices that allow interface between conscious power and humanity. It is very important to understand this when walking a magical path: it is all power and nothing more.

When we first tread a magical path we are often swept up in a tide of rituals, beings, magical objects, visionary inner worlds and inner contacts. Our conscious mind is kept busy with the 'inner' reality show and that allows our minds to interface with Universal Power. But the clutter of human magic, the accoutrements, is just a dressing that presents itself until our consciousness becomes malleable enough to work without such dressing. Eventually the work becomes a wordless formless movement of power that has no defined goal other than pure inner instinct: we become a conscious part of the Universal Power. But a practitioner of magic has to go through the stages to get to such instinctive work; through the structure the magician finds the nature of power. Why? Because that is how our consciousness works.

Boundaries

The first skill that is paramount when working with power is boundaries. If you have no boundaries for the magic, it will overtake you and destroy you. Another word for the boundaries is frequencies. When you work in a particular magical stream, you connect to a certain 'frequency' of magic so that when you are correctly tuned to that frequency you only pick up what is a part of that path. This is very important because such defined tuning blocks out many unhealthy inner beings, realms etc that could be parasitical or damaging. It allows the magician to learn and grow in a relatively safe environment. The longer that path has been walked, the more tuned and focused it is, the safer it becomes. Such boundaries can be self-imposed for a new magician learning alone providing it is approached with careful thought.

The boundaries themselves present as self-imposed restrictions on what action is taken, what element of power is worked with and what inner visions are done. Add to that, the regular daily exercise of grounding and stabilizing meditations and the potential magician is on the right path. The restricted path should be a longer term endeavour, not a two week burst of enthusiasm that quickly vanishes.

So for example, a person wishes to train themselves in magic. After learning the very basics of the directions and observing what is around them, they would choose one direction with one element and begin to work with it. From a visionary point of view there would be one place, usually a place of learning like the Inner library, where they would go in vision on a weekly basis. There would be one simple ritual that is done regularly until its power begins to flow, and a daily meditation to train and discipline the mind.

The simple vision or ritual often gets cast to one side in search of something more powerful and interesting, and such action is a dead end that pulls the prospective magician off the tracks. Some of the simplest rituals are the most powerful once the magician has learned the deeper frequency of the ritual and can interact with it. For me, the most powerful ritual of all is the lighting of the candle. It opens all worlds, all times and gives me access to focused power that is unfiltered. Boundaries contain the power so that it begins to build, allowing the new practitioner to slowly adjust physically to being in the presence of power.

The inner vision of the Library has a bit more freedom to a budding magician because all of the books in the library are in fact the consciousness of many magicians and priests/esses throughout time. It is possible to interact with these wise minds and learn a great deal. Working within the visionary confines of the Library allows the spirit to interact with inner contacts in a variety of ways while still maintaining boundaries.

So the combination of a daily simple stillness meditation, a twice weekly ritual working with a specific element in a specific direction, and twice weekly visits to the Inner Library is a good foundation training that will seriously build inner muscle over a year. Working to such restriction over a year will build the inner battery for power and will give the practitioner a solid basic foundation to work from. During that first year, it would be wise to not read tons of magical books, but to work with a small selection that is within the same field. It is important that the ritual and visionary experiences of the practitioner in the early stages of training are not influenced by the writing of others; it is vitally important that the reading is done after the experiences, not before.

The other very important and often overlooked boundary that is needed to work with power is a physical discipline. That can take the form of anything from a physical training like martial arts, dance, athletics etc to disciplines like dietary restrictions, yoga etc. It is also good to do a regular physical service whether that entails tending a patch of land, looking after a few graves of local ancestors or gardening for an elderly neighbor. Doing something that sometimes you do not want

to do, but have to, is very good for self-imposed boundaries. Service is very important in magic as it teaches us not to be selfish; a quality that is not good to mix with power. The physical discipline builds up strength and enables the body to process large amounts of power, and the service builds stamina. With strength and stamina the power can flow unfettered through a human and be mediated to whatever situation needs it.

Working with Power

If someone just wants to dress up in the outfits, wave around wands and utter silly incantations, then power will never be an issue for them. If however a prospective magician truly wants to know how to engage power, work through the worlds and interact with the many beings of the inner realms, then they really need to learn how to interact intelligently with power.

Once a magician has learned how to connect with power, they need to know what to do with it and how to do it: a common mistake that people make when dealing with power is that they identify themselves with it and take it on as a mantle. This quickly leads to messiah or magus syndrome where they put themselves on a pedestal and quickly self-destruct: they become parodies of what they aspire to. Some also try to power grab, i.e. hold on to the power themselves and not let others engage freely with it. That also brings about degeneration and the inner worlds eventually disengage from such individuals.

Those are the most common mistakes. The subtler ones to watch for are where the power begins to fragment parts of the mind and/or body that are not able to hold such power. This can happen through wilful stupidity or blissful ignorance. If someone is ill and does not realize, and they work with a high level of power, the power will find the weak point in the body and smash it wide open. It will do the same to any emotional or mental weakness or frailty: hence the need to be physically and mentally solid before working with higher levels of power.

Loss of Ego

This is a very important step in the path to working with magical power, and that is the ability to loosen the grasp on the ego. This is talked about frequently, often in very philosophical terms, in a variety of spiritual and magical traditions. Such traditions often take it too far so that people are expected to lose the very essence that defines them in magic.

To lose the ego in a healthy way means to have conscious awareness of

what a small player you truly are in a very big show, and when you get a taste of power, to understand that to connect with such power is actually normal – it does not mean you are ‘chosen’ or ‘special’. By understanding this, the next step, which is to drop the need to control, is far easier to swallow. Surrendering control of a situation is a major step in working with large amounts of power, because without such surrender, the power cannot truly flow. We limit ourselves by our need to contain power and make it do what we want it to. Our imaginations and ability to look at the longer range prospect of an action is so limited that we cannot possibly mediate the full flow of power and contain it. We end up in a losing battle with nature and the forces that flow all around us. And when those forces do things we do not like and we cannot control, we label them as evil. Such behavior is a pattern within humanity that rears its head from the smallest issue to the biggest project.

But by relinquishing control, we then have to approach power either unconditionally, or in harmony with everything else. When we step beyond the toddler phase of ‘it’s all about us’, we then begin to see how these vast powers which can be horrifically destructive, are also regenerative and are just doing their jobs. The same goes for smaller powers that flow through magic: when they flow in balance, regardless of their outcome, we must learn to live with and around that power, rather than contain or manipulate it.

A good example of this is the tale of Lilith. This power, which is a hive consciousness, is the force of storms in the desert, which often brings with it death to the weak. This power, identified in some desert cultures as female, and in others as male, also began to be connected in near eastern myths with parasitical powers that induced sexual dreams in god fearing Jewish men (it was her, they cry, I didn’t do anything... yeah right). Some of that connection is a graft used to keep that power from being communed and worked with. Such rewriting of powers has potential to be a book in itself – it was frequently done, and still is, to keep people away from raw power. Back to Lilith. So that power of storms and death became feared, reviled, and ‘amulets a many’ were created to keep her/them/it at bay. But no-one ever stops to ask what true function that power has in our world?

The power of the storms is about keeping the land healthy. So instead of battling the storms with magic, how about learning to live with such storms in a healthy way? How about learning about its power and working with it in service? By doing so, the magician learns to tune to the power and can feel it coming: he will feel its intention, it’s path, it’s force and will be able to act accordingly. Such a magical connection

with the land and power was adeptly displayed by the Adaman Island's Aboriginal Indians, who live on a string of islands in the Indian Ocean. When the tsunami hit, they were already safely tucked away at the top of the hills. They moved hours before the giant wave hit. They were in tune with the land and talked to the sea. They knew the earthquake was coming and they knew the sea was coming, so they got out of the way.

So back to the near East. Instead of working with the power of the storms, and the call of death at the door of a new born, which is about genetic health and ensuring there is no overpopulation, the people worked against that power. Lilith was presented as a female demon, she was reviled, hated, and vast amounts of people prayed against her. Magical amulets kept that power at bay and other powers were prayed to, in an effort to stop the storms: a magical battle of wills began that continues in our psyche to this day. How much simpler it would have been to acknowledge the power of the storms and live/work around them, and to take responsibility for population control and genetic health so that land powers did not need to do that for us. The Adaman islanders have proved that it works. They live as our ancient ancestors did; in harmony, in balance, with very little disease. They are truly living in the Garden.

It's all about keeping the balance. When you begin to work magically with deeper powers such issues will come to the fore and we have to be very careful indeed to ensure that we are working with the power in a balanced way, not in a selfish or egotistical way that will strengthen and encourage imbalance. It's about changing how we think about power. If we take the time to watch, listen and learn, the powers of nature have incredible lessons to teach us about how power works and what our parts are in such power displays. Most of the jobs of a magician are about restoring balance - very simple, very unglamorous and not very useful if you want to get laid or have a new car.

Power Drunkenness

One of the major dangers of doing high magic without foundations, without scruples and without common sense, is the 'all singing all dancing' spectacular 'blowing a fuse'. If someone has natural ability and they play with powerful magical rituals or visions, then they will get a possible hit. If they have no boundaries or foundation, or they approach it with a lust for power, then they will get blown apart.

When people get a first taste of real magic, it can be like a drug if there is no internal discipline within the practitioner. Such a taste then

becomes an addiction and magic is done just because they can do it, to prove something to themselves, to impress others or to draw things to them. When they succeed, the ego becomes inflated and the common sense goes out of the window. Just as amphetamine can give people a false sense of importance and greatness, so can magical power. It will hike you up on a great high and you will plateau before you crash unceremoniously to the ground. The crash can come in the way of degeneracy, idiocy, or mental instability. It can be fast and spectacular or it can be slow and insidious, but it will come one way or the other. History is littered with tales of magicians degenerating slowly into rotting heaps, literally blowing themselves up, or becoming parodies of themselves.

But what causes the power drunkenness in the first place? Weakness in the personality. Everyone has a weakness of some sort or another, which is not really the problem. What does cause the problem is when there is a weakness in the body, mind or personality and the person does not address it in any way. It is ignored, denied, dodged and compensated for, which points to someone who is not ready to know himself. And that takes us back to the words the initiates read as they enter the sanctum: Man, Know Thyself.

If you have a weakness, and you are aware of it, then you take that weakness into account when you begin to work on something magically. If you know that weakness will interfere with a magical job, then you withdraw and wait until you have strengthened. Just being aware of a weakness goes a long way towards dealing with it. We all have them without exception; the trick is to know what they are and what you have to do to strengthen that weakness. This takes us back to the self-discipline issue which is one of the earliest lessons in the magical path and one of the most important qualities in a magician. If you know your weakness, and you focus on addressing that weakness while also walking a magical path, then power drunkenness will not be a major issue.

In the end, how we approach power dictates how we will approach magic and in turn how that magic will affect us, and everything around us. This is why the initial path of magical training or self learning should be slow and precise: get those feet firmly planted in the earth and remember how much it hurts if you stick a wet metal fork into a plug socket.

The Power Dynamics of Ritual and Vision

A major question for beginning and experienced magicians alike is, when do you use inner powers, when do you use outer patterns and

when do you simply cause an affect by observation or participation? There are no easy answers to such questions and I feel that there is no real hard fast 'rule' to make such decisions clearer. I feel it all depends on the person, situation and intent. The more you immerse yourself in a magical life, the more fluid and 'chameleon like' such a path becomes. Humanity is the one that makes hard fast rules and Humanity is the one that hits such barriers like a truck traveling at high speed. In real terms, the universe is an ever changing, diverse and confounding power that is infinitely harmonious.

A major key to working with inner powers is having the ability to adapt and change, to be able to question the rules and to follow instincts. It is important to understand that most outer ritual will not really work well without the inner plug stuck in the socket: without inner fuel they become psychologised rituals and 'feel good' imaginary actions. Such inner fuel comes from either a person's natural mediating abilities or their trained skills in visionary magic.

There are cases however where pre constructed rituals that have been used before with inner power, will work properly when performed without any inner connection. When a ritual is 'contacted', it becomes a single beacon of power. After that, if the ritual is repeated exactly, it is connected back to the original ritual: they become one and the same action. The ritual passes through time and every time the ritual is performed, it is manifesting the original ritual with all its contacted power. This is why ancient rituals, when conducted exactly to the prescribed pattern, will work. What is happening is not a re enactment, or a repeat of, it is a reconnecting to the original ritual so that it's power continues down through time. This was understood and demonstrated very well in ancient Egypt; they knew that a certain ritual had to be exact, with the original tools, words, timing etc. That is because they knew that performing the ritual in this way brought the original ritual, with all its contacted beings and power, through time and up to their present day.

Maintaining ritual this way ensured that the power and structure stayed in place and that the ritual would work even if there were a generation of priests who had no contact ability. If they did everything in the ritual as they should, the contact would work because the ritual would be passing through time and connecting to the original. This was also very important because the preparation involved in opening a power contact, and the energy needed to maintain that contact, would have been massive. The rituals were not minor issues; they maintained the rivers, the weather, the birth of new generations and the health of the crops. If any of these failed, then the population would die. So the rituals had

to draw in deities and associated beings that had the power to work in harmony with such flows of nature. To manifest that level of contact, with multiple deities over a year cycle was an incredible amount of work. There is no way that such rituals could be done from scratch year in and year out as the pressure would wipe out the priesthood.

The way to get around such a problem is to ensure that the contacted ritual could travel through time; so it would need to be re triggered year after year. To take the ritual through time with its contacts, it had to be repeated exactly, with the same tools, same words, same everything. Then it became joined with the original; the power and contact would flow through time and through the repeated action. The patterns of those rituals are still imprinted in the inner worlds and can be awoken with the right skills and tools. In today's world, the same technique can be used; once a contacted ritual is created, it can be revisited if re created exactly.

Using Inner Power

The foundation training in vision/astral work opens the consciousness up to the deeper powers that run through magic, enabling the power to flow through the inner landscape of the practitioner. The deeper into the inner realms a magician goes, the less intricate the rituals need to be. The human consciousness becomes more fluid through visionary work, allowing the mind to stretch out and interconnect with all the patterns of power that flow around the outer world. Once the mind becomes comfortable and able to handle the stretches of worlds and power, it slowly becomes entwined in the inner patterns of power; this is the 'plugging in' phase of visionary magic. It can take anything from a couple of years to many years to achieve this, depending on how flexible and stable the practitioner is. The mind needs to be disciplined and yet unfettered at the same time. Once that stage is reached, wherever the mind goes, power truly follows.

So let's break this down a little. The steps towards accessing inner power are simple and very hard work. First the mind must be disciplined, and then the imagination must be loosened. From there, once the basic ability is in place, the practitioner needs to learn about how they individually perceive the over all structure of the inner worlds. Many books have been written over the years about how many astral planes there are, what color they are etc, but in reality, the living breathing universe is not quite that accommodating. Things are not so neat and tidy, hence the need to be flexible, and to not be indoctrinated before you get your feet off the ground. The best writings to read about the inner worlds and attendant angelic beings, are The Revelations of John of Patmos, the Book of Ezekiel

and other visionary ancient texts. What you are reading in those visions is a true glimpse as to the reality of the strangeness of inner power. They are not allegories, or hints; they are direct descriptions that are literal: the mysteries are hidden within text indeed!

The first stage of visionary/astral work, once the basic skills are in place, is the connection with humanity's stored knowledge and an interface with Divinity. Humanity's stored knowledge is what the Theosophists called the Arkashic records and what others call the Great Library. It is the consciousness of all learning that has been done by humanity and it is the wisdom and knowledge of those who have gone before us. It is also a filter for new understanding flowing out of the void – it passes through the library before flowing into the minds of those ready to receive it. Where does that new knowledge come from? I haven't a bloody clue to be honest with you.

In the Great Library, what we perceive as books, scrolls etc are in fact fragments of magicians, priests/priestesses, scholars, inventors, healers etc. The part of them that held the knowledge in life was jettisoned at their death and that part of them passed into the Great Library. If you wish to learn something of depth, that is where you go. It is also a place where one can access many different temples throughout time, various inner adepts and a variety of streams of magic and religion. All those threads come together in this powerful place of learning and wisdom.

This is why it is a good thing for a new practitioner to spend at least the first year of their training simply going into the library and making contact with the teachers and their various skills. Often an inner adept will put a book 'into' you, which means they have connected you to the knowledge and teacher that is that book. Its lessons will slowly unfold over the years and that is one of the major keys to the library: you don't go pick up a book, read it and go, oh! The books flow into you and unravel in their own time. It can take anything from a few weeks to many years. I am still unraveling things I was plugged into back in the early 90's.

The progression from the Great Library is usually a natural one. The practitioner is guided from the library to other places, usually inner patterns of outer temples and from there they are slowly introduced to the various realms and beings. This is the greatest form of education as it is solely the responsibility of the magician to direct their own learning, and it is coming from inner sources, not outer classes or programs. The practitioner occasionally gets outer confirmation of their inner training when they come across a book in the outer world that talks about what they have experienced on the inner. It is always far better to get it yourself through inner discovery and then have outer confirmation, than to learn

from a book or outer teacher and have to take their word for it. Go find out for yourself!

The period of active visionary work can take quite a few years and there is no real way of speeding that process up. It will take however long it needs to take. From that solid visionary aspect, it will slowly become apparent that you can slip into inner realms quickly and without vision, just by thinking about them. This is where the inner and outer minds are coming together and the consciousness is becoming fluid. During this phase, the practitioner flows between solid inner visions, interacting with beings in vision, and simply thinking about them and being there. Again this phase will take as long as it needs to take and will run parallel to similar developments in the ritual work which we will discuss in a minute.

The ability to be able to interact with an inner contact just by virtue of thinking about them is a very important phase as it demonstrates the ability of the magician to be able to truly hold themselves in more than one world at once. Having the body in one world and the mind in another is one thing, but having the mind in two places, interacting in both places at the same time is the stage whereby the inner powers are preparing to truly flow from outer to inner in a constant conversation of power. So in practical terms, a practitioner would be walking around a sacred site (or the supermarket) and could be holding a conversation with someone while also interacting with the power site, talking with the inner contacts there and also be interacting with the inner pattern of the sacred site. Balancing the mind going in so many directions at once is a key skill which takes many years of practice, and it quickly becomes very clear why anyone with mental instability should not do magic: they would fragment very quickly under such strain.

It is also at this phase where the inner vision and outer ritual come together. As the magician is walking around the temple conducting a ritual, so they are also walking in the inner worlds weaving the power and interacting with the inner beings that are connected with the ritual. The two actions work simultaneously and allow power to flow back and forth, manifest to un-manifest in a dance of power.

Outer Power/ritual

In magical practice, outer power mainly expresses itself through the use of ritual action. When a new practitioner begins to explore magic, the first thing they usually encounter is ritual. At first the ritual seems to be a dramatic action that bonds the group, focuses intention and attention,

and specifies, through action, a magical intent. This layer of ritual was quickly taken up by psychologists and is used to unravel certain issues through action and intent.

The next layer of ritual that surfaces in magic is the layer by which the practitioner repeatedly assigns a certain direction, altar, object or statue a specific power and identity. This is the first step on the bridge to connecting with true outer power through ritual. The mental intent married to a ritual action kick starts the wheels of power into action and the power it produces heavily depends up either the mental focus of the practitioner or the embedded pattern of ritual in the object or direction.

An embedded pattern of ritual is an inner pattern that has built up over time, and engaging this pattern through magical action and intent will trigger the pattern regardless of the ability of the practitioner. It is a bit like a neuro-engram; a pattern/action repeated many times in exactly the same way will create specific memory pathways in the brain. Once that engram pattern is in place, the need for conscious action goes and the action becomes an automatic response. So it is with magical patterns repeated over generations in the same place and in the same way. The magical reaction of the ritual power moves from conscious to automatic. This was probably one of the reasons why, in many ancient temples that worked with high levels of magical power, only the highest initiates were allowed to access the inner court/sanctum. This restriction stopped the idiots from waltzing in and pressing the red button.

It is interesting to note that in some ruins of ancient temples, these patterns are still operating. It is as if the temple was abandoned so quickly that the priests never had time to shut them down. Those who have the knowledge or keys to the ritual will still be able to operate the temple's magical power. Many other temples though are tightly shut and the ritual patterns have either been dismantled or are ritually sealed.

The next step on from working an engrammed ritual is a ritual of conscious engagement. This type of ritual relies heavily upon the visionary or inner response skills of the practitioner. A ritual of conscious engagement is where the practitioner works through the object or direction, through ritual action and speech, to connect with inner powers drawn in to assist with the ritual intent. So as a practitioner approaches a direction/altar, they call from an inner point of view as well as an outer point of view for the power or consciousness that they wish to work with. This is the first stage of vision and ritual coming together as a working method. So the outer ritual prepares the space and tunes the frequency needed, it puts the practitioner and /or objects in a certain pattern, and then uses vision to bridge inner power/contacts into the pattern so that

the ritual is conducted on both inner and outer planes through direct intent and action. This is a very effective way to work that shares the burden of power out between the soul, mind and body. The patterned outer structure of the ritual takes up some of the impact and spreads the power out into a more manageable job.

High ritual

What I term as high ritual is not impressive scripts, velour robes and gold fabric headdresses (god forbid), but a form of ritual that is one of the highest frequency methods of working without blowing yourself up. In high ritual, there are many things going on at once and the practitioner has to carry burdens on many levels as they work. The outer ritual carries on as normal, but at the same time the practitioner is also doing the same outer ritual action in an inner temple in vision, while also mediating/interacting with power/contact/pattern in their own realm.

Any use of speech must be conducted while also talking to the inner contact/deity/power with the mind. At the same time the practitioner will be expected to conduct ritual action both in vision and in body. It can take many years to achieve this skill but the equal distribution between outer action and inner action is one of the least impacting ways of doing powerful work. It is working to the scales of balance but if large amounts of power are worked with, then both the mind and the body will take the impact.

Visionary action

This type of action is a step on from high ritual and is where the lines between vision and ritual completely merge and the spearhead of the action is intent. Visionary action needs a very pliable mind, a focused body and a deep familiarity with power. One of the hallmarks of powerful magic is that the more powerful the magic, the less formed the action/vision/ritual. So when your mind and body becomes truly comfortable with power, it has no need of elaborate rituals and visions to navigate through magic, instead it develops a sense of 'touch' for want of a better word, where everything moves in a natural way with a little stewarding. It is a bit like homeopathy or cranial osteopathy; a little conscious movement goes a long way.

So for example, calling in a power or deity is done in the ritual space by first standing very still and tuning into the rhythm of the space. The magician then reaches with the mind through the space for the rhythm of the power she wishes to draw in, and by using movement, reaches

out both inwardly and outwardly to connect and flow with that power. It becomes a tai chi type motion where the body and mind flow like a river to commune and connect with power and consciousness. The intent governs everything, so it becomes an awareness of power with intent and nothing more. A physical motion interrupts the stillness of the tuned space, gathers the power and moves it by way of focused body movement. This is probably where the use of mudras came in when Bharat Natyam was still a form of ritual action and not a new age entertainment.

When the mind becomes tuned to this level of action, it can affect change or connection just through the action of observation. Just as in quantum physics, observation alters the outcome of an experiment, so just 'being' with intent in a ritual space will affect change. The difference between the random affect in experiments of passive observation, and the directed intent, is that observing magic with focused intent gives a specific result that is repeatable. It is a controlled use of power to affect change rather than a random result from a passive action. The only prerequisite is the level of focus and magical experience in the person doing the observing. Without that level of experience, the observation simply elicits a random change by nature of the human presence: the change cannot be directed or focused for a specific action or outcome.

This dynamic can be seen when a magician who has experience of inner and outer ritual visits a sacred site, temple, church or dramatic re-enactment. The mere presence and observation by the magician alters the power pattern and brings about change. If the magician has no specified intent other than to acknowledge the power of the place, then the change will be unconditional, whatever is needed for the site, but it will not be random. If the magician observes with intent, then the intent will trigger specific powers into action. Hence the more experienced the magician is, the less they seem to do (and without velour robes and silly headdresses).

Inner worlds and actions: cause and effect

Usually when people embark upon a mission to learn and practice magic, they give little or no thought to what will be the long term consequences of their actions. We have all been there in one form or another and most develop beyond that, but some do not. Some people do magic to get what they want and to control their universe, some people do magic to affect the world according to their agenda, some do magic because that is how they breathe, and some people have no clue why they do it, just that they are driven down a particular path and they go with the flow. All of these, plus many more reasons for doing magic have positive and negative effects on the individual and the worlds around them. I say

worlds because magic not only affects the outer world, its ripples pass through all the worlds in one way or another.

Any act of magic will have an effect through the worlds to a greater or lesser degree, because magic is the tuning fork of the universe: it is the vibration that affects change far beyond our understanding of the original action and allows us to perceive and interact with power. Our very limited understanding of the universe prevents us from seeing the vast multi layered highways of consciousness, power and substance (particles), how they interact and how their interactions trigger more highways, patterns and expressions. Just as we are all moving faster and away from ground zero of the big bang, so magic expands and accelerates from its initial action.

That is why when you do a simple magical act the first time, it is weak. But over the years, as your consciousness strengthens and your ability to perceive subtler ‘vibrations’ from the tuning fork of the universe strengthens, so the re-visited act gets more and more complex. What is actually happening in such instance is that as the initial magical act expands and gets ‘faster’ as it moves away from the point of origin, so it grows, and as the magician re-visits that ‘highway’ of the magical act, they interface with an increasingly faster, more diffuse, more complex line of magic than they had originally initiated.

My personal deepest experience of that is with the lighting and tuning of the candle flame. The intent to light a candle to prepare the space for a ritual act developed from that simple stance, to an act of bringing into physical manifestation an elemental expression that lights through all worlds and all times: it becomes the Light of Divinity within everything. And that is the biggest clue to all magical acts: in its true expansion, all magic is an expression of the power of Divinity. By Divinity I do not mean deity, but the unexplainable ultimate conscious power of the Universe. So when you start to meddle with such power, it bodes well to use a bit of foresight and common sense.

So let’s bring it a bit closer to home and look at it in more practical terms. The inner and outer worlds are not separate realms; they are intricately interwoven like a bolt of fine linen. Anything you do energetically in one realm affects many others. It’s that simple. The action/reaction seesaw between the worlds is a strange and interesting one, and the way it all balances is very curious. Small focused actions create massive energetic responses. Large diffuse actions create little response. The more condensed the power, the heavier the result has to be to balance the seesaw. A beautiful pattern example of that is the Tree of Life. The first 3 spheres balance out the rest of the 7 spheres, that is because the

first 3 spheres have a stronger 'Divine' power than the other seven which are basically continued expressions of the first three. The tree is a good expression of the acceleration of magical/Divine power as it expands, changes frequency and becomes more diffuse and complex. The tenth sphere is the fully externalized expression of power, i.e. our world, and beyond the tenth sphere are the actions of time (past, present, future).

So 'inner power' is denser energetically but has no physical expression of itself in our understanding of the laws of physicality, whereas 'outer' power is more diffuse, has less density energetically but has a stronger physical expression that we can perceive. Thus a small amount of inner power is balanced by a much bigger expression of outer power. The other thing that becomes obvious from a magical point of view is that there is not just inner and outer, there are many other layers of power expression in between that all interact with each other. In magical terms pure Divine power is on one end of the seesaw and all expressions that come from that power are on the other. On the Tree of Life, it translates to three expressions of Divinity that have issued from the pure inner power on one end of the seesaw and life/death/all of creation is on the other. Did you get that??

That translates in magical practical terms thus: a conscious interaction with a small amount of inner power creates a much bigger expression or reaction in the outer world. The closer to the source of the inner power you get, the more profound and powerful that interaction becomes, with long term consequences for the physical world. But it also depends upon the frequency that the magician is 'vibrating' at (remember the tuning fork of the universe?). So if you go back to the lighting of the candle it would go something like this.

The magician lights a candle with intent to tune a sacred space. The magician is in the early days of magical work, so he has not consciously interacted much with that 'tuning fork/magic, therefore his 'vibration' is currently tuned to physicality more than anything. Therefore he does not perceive the real power behind the magical action – he cannot perceive the density of inner power in its pure form.

As the magician continues to interact with the magic away from the physicality, i.e. in vision (no physical act), so his vibration begins to change as he moves his consciousness into nonphysical realms. This allows him to perceive nonphysical power and with that perception comes more understanding which leads to more interaction in the inner worlds.

The more he practices lighting the candle, the more he begins to

perceive the power as it moves away from the initial point of action, and the diffuse complexity of that power expression is seen and interacted with. This in turn builds momentum in the vibrational change of the magician, so it becomes a conscious interaction between the ever expanding magical inner power and the magician. Through that interaction, the consciousness of the magician begins to flow with that highway of power expression, and there comes a point whereby the magician can revisit or observe the initial expression of inner power triggered by the very first lighting of the candle with intent. The magician is now vibrating at a frequency where he can fully perceive its power to the best of human ability. Hence the act becomes more and more profound, greater power is perceived, and the direct long term energetic consequence of the action is now observable. This is why magicians who work deeply in the inner realms do less and less magic as they mature, but when they do initiate a magical action, its long term affects can be considerable.

Justice, Balance and Karma

The minute one begins to walk a magical path and starts to interact and influence the 'tuning fork of the universe' that person takes on the responsibility of justice/karma. Why? Because a magical action has consequence and you bare responsibility for that.

These are words that do not often pop into the heads of people first walking a magical path, as the focus of intent is more often directed towards the acquisition of power, skill and peers. I have had interesting conversations with elderly occultists regarding the subject of justice/karma and I think the misunderstandings that often arise in conversations come from the lack of understanding of those two words: karma and justice.

In our Christianized culture, we perceive justice as being 'punishment', the need for the perpetrator to be remorseful and the victim to forgive. This is all a perversion of true justice and is an imbalance of the power expressed upon the Tree of Life as the sphere of Chesed/mercy. Mercy is an emotional expression of power without a counter balance of practical learning through bitter experience and removal of power (Geburah). The Christian religion expresses the power of Tiphareth only through Chesed, so the pure solar power of Tiphareth has to naturally re-balance itself in humanity through raw expression of Geburah; the result is the vicious side of this religion. If it is not consciously engaged by humanity, then the scales of the Universe will engage it instead. The result of that unfocused raw power flowing through humanity is the genocides, inquisitions, self-inflicted cruelty, oppression etc. This unbalanced religious

expression has permeated every facet of our western culture and it leads to spiritual immaturity, long term destruction and degeneration. The deeper esoteric wisdoms of justice, although depicted in some form in every court house, the blindfold goddess of justice with the scales and the sword, is dismissed out of hand.

Justice is about power in and power out. The scales, like the Tree of Life, have to be kept balanced so that the practitioner can handle power safely without getting blown up. The deeper into magic or spirituality you go, the stronger the need for justice in your life is. If you live completely within the physical realm, then the sword of justice is slow and diffuse. The more you reach through the inner worlds through magic or spirituality, the more focused, pronounced and densely powerful the sword of justice becomes. When you take on specific magical responsibilities as an adept, then the scales become very finely balanced indeed and knowingly taking a false step will result in swift results. The lesson of the unfolding energy will be sharp and to the point. And it will not come in the form of punishment, but in the form of bitter understanding through experience.

Justice is not about morals, it is about responsibility: if you do something that you know damages, hurts or deprives someone, then your 'power-scales' are at a deficit. As a magician, when you interact with the inner worlds, you automatically engage the rule of magical justice, known as the rule of Ma'at in ancient Egypt. Universal consciousness will place things in your path to teach you why your actions were unbalanced, so that you learn from bitter experience. That is a lesson that is hard to forget. Then, once the learning is in place, the energetic scales must be rebalanced. This is achieved by putting you in a situation whereby you observe an energetic 'debit', and you are given an opportunity to put your own action or energy into that debit to turn it into a credit.

The deeper you go into inner magic, the more profound the effects of justice are. If you reach through the inner worlds in an unbalanced pursuit of power and you are not ready from an inner point of view to handle such power, you will blow yourself up. Cause and effect... put hand in fire, hand get burned. This will manifest either as literally going mad from the power, or being shut down magically. If you are totally incapable of handling large amounts of power, or powerful contacts, then the inner safety switch is thrown and you are left in the dark. This is done by the deeper part of you and is for your own good: you literally blow a fuse and end up in the dark.

If you have the natural or trained potential to handle vast amounts of power/contact and you go after that power in an unbalanced way, then

you will be treated to a very hard lesson. The two possibilities are going mad or dying. Because you potentially have the ability to hold power, the inner fuse does not flip and the power flows into an unbalanced vessel and tips it over. Its all about personal responsibility, cause and effect; it's not about punishment.

This has been one of the biggest misunderstandings regarding the role of karma. Some people perceive the laws of karma to be based around an idea that your life is pre-ordained, nothing can be changed and any shit in life you get is because you were bad in another life. That is not true and is a total misunderstanding of the law of karma. The law of karma is the same as the law of Ma'at or justice: everything is to be kept in balance or chaos occurs. The law of karma is the law of responsibility and understanding the natural consequences of actions.

So in magical practice, if you curse or attack someone, you are put into a dance of rebalancing the scales with them. If you magically interfere with nature for conditional human ends, then the results of that action will be set in motion and there is nothing that you can do to stop it. One you realize that your simple thoughtless action is spreading out and causing untold damage, you cannot say sorry and stop it. You will have to observe the long unfolding of that action. And because your energy went into the initial action, your energy will be drawn upon throughout the unfolding of the action until it has run its course. This connection of energy to an action is that part that most people do not understand. This connection of energy will manifest in many ways, and the more profound the magical action, the more energy it will draw from you until it has fully run its course. With so much of your energy going in a justice direction, it will leave you energetically in deficit. This will manifest as inner weakness that will make you vulnerable to an endless list of imbalances, both energetic and magical.

If you try to compensate for such imbalance by using magic to draw more energy to you, or to enlist the help of beings, or to counteract the imbalance, then the imbalance will get longer and more pronounced as you draw more and more beings and power to your unbalanced orbit. The best advice is either; hunker down, accept the results of the energetic deficit and learn a hard lesson, or you can consciously engage the unfolding alone and offer yourself unconditionally in service to help re balance the scales. Working unconditionally, without specific intent or agenda, allows the energy to flow where it needs to and puts you in situations that will truly give you an opportunity to rebalance things. Often we can make things much worse by actions that we think will bring about rebalance but actually do not. This is because our understanding

is often short sighted, and working blind with justice will side step such lack of understanding. This is why the statue of Justice is blindfolded: humanity cannot often perceive the whole picture and we need to work blind, unconditionally, trusting the flow of universal power to guide our hand. We surrender to the tide of universal power and yet keep our awareness focused so that we can learn from the events that manifest. That way, you will rebalance your scales and learn some good lessons.

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