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# QUAREIA—THE INITIATE

## Module III—Power Dynamics of Creation, Part II

### Lesson 3: Perfect Balance

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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.*

*For more information and all course modules please visit*

[www.quareia.com](http://www.quareia.com)

*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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#### Lesson 3: Perfect Balance

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The power of balance is the third dynamic of the three core powers of creation. This power, *Perfect Balance*, sits between the power of Restriction and the Light Bearer with its inclination towards creative physical manifestation.

It keeps the two opposing powers in balance. As the Divine impetus for creation pulses in to the inner worlds from Divine source, it is guided through Perfect Balance: the tension between Restriction and the Light Bearer forces it to flow down the middle of the tension. As it passes through Perfect Balance, it receives equal measures of power from the two opposing powers.

This forms a pattern of balance, of creation and restriction (destruction) equally embedded in the creative impulse so that it can manifest into time. The creative fire is enough for it to manifest in physical form, and the Restriction ensures that the fire does not burn too brightly and has a time limit on its manifestation.

The orbit of Perfect Balance is where we find root deities and primal deities, all of which have a measure of creation and destruction, of light and dark. When as magicians we work with subdivided deities but wish to find the true, balanced, and complete source of that sub-deity, this is where we track back to find the source of that power.

It is the last of the deeper creative powers before we start to encounter the lower powers of creation, the ones which are directly active in the formation of the creation into a person, place, being, or thing. All the powers of creation that you learned about in the apprentice section have their roots in this power.

Before the creative power can manifest into something physical, it must pass through a variety of filters that essentially split its power into dynamics. Those dynamics are things like the Grindstone, the Unraveller, the Threshold, the Wheel of Fate, and so forth.

As magicians, understanding this dynamic and the three core powers of creation lets us work with fragments of these powers as they manifest in life. They are inherent in all magic, from the smallest act to the most powerful, and working with them in gnosis enables the magic to reach as balanced and harmonic a state as possible.

Nothing can manifest in Perfect Balance, but neither can anything manifest physically if it does not have the resonance or influence of this power: it is a paradox.

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## *The Thresholds*

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There is a lot of talk in magic about thresholds, yet few people really understand what this means. Thresholds when crossed in magic take the magician from one quality of power/energy to another.

These thresholds are usually guarded, and will repel those who should not cross. Each threshold in magic and inner vision allows a crossing from one level of power and energy to another, and the guardian of the threshold ensures that those who cross it are compatible with the power they are attempting to step into.

This dynamic of *compatibility* became degenerate in the minds of many cultures and devolved down into whether you are *worthy* to cross. This in turn led to guilt tripping, power grabbing, and ego bolstering: people believed that if they were 'good' or worthy, they would cross a threshold unharmed.

What is deemed 'good' depends entirely on the culture's standard of 'goodness' which did and still does vary widely. This in turn led to the

development of various kinds of magic in an attempt to dodge around the guardians. We have already looked at some examples of this in some later Ancient Egyptian texts which contain spells to dodge the threshold guardians in death. Humans always seem to have this lowest common denominator of manipulation. Declarations of: “I am righteous,” “I am pure,” “I am worthy,” “I deserve it,” and so forth.

All this is a complete misunderstanding of the real dynamics of the thresholds and displays a stunning lack of inner connection and understanding of power. The threshold guardians are not there to *kick out the unworthy*; they are there to *reject the unbalanced*.

Each threshold is a stage of power where energy shifts from one state to another. If your inner and outer body can deal with the shift of power and is compatible with the power levels over the threshold, the guardian will let you pass unharmed.

When we learn the basics of magic as you learned them in the apprentice section, we learn not only about the nuts and bolts of magic and its techniques, but we also take small steps towards understanding the different worlds around us, what drives them, and how we flow and back and forth energetically with everything around us. This learning process changes the magician at a very deep level, causing shifts in energy/consciousness which in turn changes how we are, what we do, and how we see the world. These changes are the result of shifts in consciousness.

It is not how we are and how we behave as a result of those shifts that interests the guardians, it is the energetic shifts themselves. They are not judges, they are *weighers of the scales*, which is to say they perceive how our balance of light and dark, spirit and substance is at that time. This in turn tells them whether we can withstand the shift in power/energy when we cross a threshold. They are there to keep us and the worlds beyond the threshold safe.

There is no bolt of lightning that will come out of the sky if you cross a threshold that you are incompatible with, and there will be no heavenly punishment. One of two things will happen: either you will be suddenly kicked out of vision and be bruised, or if you manage to push through the guardians or bypass them, the impact of the incompatible energy will likely trigger a cascade response in the mind or body, which will result in the unravelling of your mind or body over a span of time.

I did not realise this for quite a while and when I used to teach groups; I would sometimes take a few people in vision and place them in deep centres of power so that they could experience them for themselves.

I thought I was doing a good thing: I could get there with no problem, and I could take them there with me, with no problem; but by the action of me carrying them to an inner state *to which they should have walked themselves*, I bypassed their own personal interaction with the guardian. I carried them over the threshold, thus disengaging the natural action of the guardian.

Some people dealt with this just fine, some blanked out and became disorientated, and others seemed okay but then went on to have total mental or physical breakdowns. I did not realise the harm I was doing to people... and there is no sorry in the inner worlds.

It is for this reason that I do not teach face-to-face practical magic any more. I will show the way and give the information, but ultimately the student has to make the steps themselves and have their own experiences—which is how this course works. This time I have learned to guide a student a step at a time!

Essentially, when you reach a threshold a guardian perceives your weighing of light and dark, spirit and matter, and how your deeper spirit/soul flows back and forth between these two states. If the flow is compatible with the power beyond the threshold, you will be able to cross unharmed.

If the flow is almost compatible, you will still be given access, but you may have some kickback or struggle with its energy for a while. This is caused by a catalyst process that happens in the inner worlds: if you are almost compatible with a power, being in its presence or orbit will trigger the incompatibility to move towards balance.<sup>1</sup>

The closer in the inner worlds you tread, the more powerful this dynamic becomes. If you cross over the directional threshold into a magical direction, you are crossing a wide threshold into a place that has a multitude of different energies: it is very likely you will be compatible with the energies there: it is a safe sandbox to learn in.

If you forge deeper and attempt to stand in the orbit of the Light Bearer, Restriction, or Perfect Balance, then you have to be directly compatible with those powers. If you are not, the tension between those

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<sup>1</sup>An energetic healing crisis.

powers will at best kick you out and leave you bruised and exhausted. At worst it would tear you apart so that your world starts to fall apart around you. Anything between those two extremes could certainly cause problems in your life and health for quite some time.

Why does this happen? Resonance. When you come into the energy orbit of these larger powers, they deeply affect everything around them, including you. The power of Restriction will resonate powerfully with your own restriction, the Light Bearer will resonate with your creative fire, and the power of Perfect Balance will resonate with your scales. All these inherent life powers within you will be amplified, and if they are out of balance with each other within you, it will cause an energy conflict within you as they each seek to find their own balance.

So for example if you have a simple cold or virus, your immune reaction will be overtriggered to the point that your immune system will have gone into overdrive. It can be dangerous to attempt such work in such circumstances: your cold could turn into a major battle for survival, or a latent immune imbalance may be heavily triggered—everything becomes more powerful than it needs to be, and everything fights itself.

In the same way, if the magician has a mild mental imbalance, that will be amplified. If the magician has a slow-growing cancer, it will suddenly become virulent.

The human body and spirit works through its imbalances in a way that it can cope with, and if we support the body and spirit in that process it will strive to find its own balance. However if the body and spirit is exposed to power that is beyond its capacity to accommodate, it will go into meltdown in an effort to process it.

Think of this as a house's electrical system with its fusebox. If too much power flows through the cables to the washing machine, the appropriate fuse will trip to stop the flow.<sup>2</sup> If there is no proper fuse in place, too much power could flow into the appliance and cause a fire. The washing machine does not set on fire because it is unworthy, but because too much power has flowed into its circuits, some of which may be faulty and therefore weak points.

A major part of the magician's training is making sure that their circuits are strong and healthy, that their fuses are in place, and that no

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<sup>2</sup>The threshold.

circuitry is weak, damaged, or faulty. This part of training is far more important than learning the words of a ritual, or learning fancy sigils, or gaining keys to an inner realm: a solid, grounded magician will find these things out for themselves regardless. What is important is that they understand what they find and are strong and balanced enough to cope with the power of what they work with.

All of this comes down to knowing the powers of creation, destruction, and balance, and knowing how to navigate or orbit these powers. The 'knowing' is not about skill but about development. If the inner and outer muscles are developed and the right balance of restriction and creation is held, then everything is in place for the magician to work powerfully and safely.

So let us look at how this boils down into practicalities for the magician.

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### *Finding magical balance*

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A lot of what you learned in your apprentice training was about stepping you towards understanding the various forms of balance in stages. You learned the basis of balance for your actions, of your instincts, your tools, your practice, and your inner senses, while being protected by boundaries as you worked. Your magical ritual and vision work took you to some simple, wide thresholds where you could practice the outer actions and inner impulses of moving from one energy state to another.

By starting to learn balance from the simplest outer magical actions, you mirror a deeper pattern: balance begins from the densest part of us and evolves outwards. We do not reach out of ourselves to achieve balance; it starts within the body's substance and actions, and then moves out to the mind, the deep consciousness, and then our deeper selves that are connected to everything around us.

Many magicians work endlessly in deep and powerful rituals and visions to reach 'up' to find balance and harmony from outside of themselves. They will do rituals to gain strength, balance, wisdom and so forth, and all is destined to fail. The powers of balance, restriction, and creation are all fostered in the magician from within themselves in



the most practical terms. And I am not talking about abstractions, but real, solid, physical practicalities.

You cannot understand how balance works if you do not know how to balance. Inner and magical balance works the same way physical balance does: everything is mirrored in everything else.

When you look at balance in terms of scales, energies, and so forth, you are working in abstractions; and in truth you cannot guess the weight of something by looking at it. Learning how to balance is an important skill: the body's very substance learns the process before the mind and consciousness learns it, because the powers of restriction, creation, and balance all reside within the substance of the body: *these powers express in the bones, muscles, organs, nerves, and skin of the body.* This was understood in many cultures and is also the foundation of things like Yoga and Tao Yin.

Balance and the distribution of substance versus mind is critical to working with deeper power dynamics. It starts with the physical understanding of the distribution of weight, of balance, then expands into learning the balance and coordination of movement. From there it moves to understanding the upkeep of balance in the body through nutritional and medicinal care.

Once the body is moving towards an understanding of balance, the person's attention is spread out to their living conditions, how they maintain their own environment, and how they interact with everything around them.

This passively starts to trigger changes in perception, which in turn begins to catalyse change in the mind. To start with the mind is folly: always start from the substance and work out from there.

Physical training like Yoga, Tai Chi, martial arts, ballet, gymnastics, and so forth all bring these elements together in order to create a vessel that can process creative fire. The ancients knew this, and many successful mystical and spiritual schools had an element of these disciplines in their training.

Just as a ballet dancer uses visualisation to physically balance, so the magician uses physical balance dynamics in order to use their minds in a balanced way. We will look at this in a small way in the practical work. Working with physical/mental balance teaches you about magical

balance in ritual; working with balance in ritual teaches you the balance of energies in the inner worlds.

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### *Balance in working magical practice*

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The overall principle of balance flows through magical practice by way of the magician's techniques. If balance is not incorporated into the practice and actions, the unbalanced force and element of the magic is likely to spin out of control in its actions. This is a major dynamic that some magicians fail to understand to their detriment—and also to the detriment of those affected by their magic.

Too often magic is influenced by emotion, be that compassion, wanting, hate, anger, or fear. Magic fuelled by emotion tends to have only an end point (the result wanted) and emotion (and often beings) to drive it. Such magic is a loose cannon that can trigger all sorts of imbalance in the magic's energy. Unforeseen results and consequences are often the end of this tale. Emotion, just like belief, has no place in magic.

**Balanced magic has a creative point, a peak of completion, an unravelling, and a death/end.**

It is like engineering. You would not build a car out of anger or with wishful thinking; you build it using the principles of engineering. At every stage of the unfolding of magic there should be a counterpoint, an anchor, a destination, and a place in time—all of which have elements that balance each other.

The use of a central flame creates a fulcrum that everything else balances round. The use of the various combinations of directions in ritual brings in forces that are in tension with one another: east/west, north/south, east/south/west/north/centre, light/dark, and so forth.

In vision, the central stillness within the person triggers the fulcrum within them, and either the use of a tool<sup>3</sup> or a visionary construct<sup>4</sup> creates a foundation: a tension of opposites, and the magical action creates a future.

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<sup>3</sup>For example a foot on the stone.

<sup>4</sup>For example the Inner Library, landscapes, or temples.

Past and future balance each other, fast and slow, angel and human: all these and many other combinations create a pattern that relies on balance.

This in turn enables the three deep creative powers to find expression in the magic, which fuels it, strengthens it, and makes sure that it stays on track in a way that is conducive to all the patterns of fate, creation, and destruction that run inherently through all things: it makes the magic compatible throughout the worlds.

Later as an adept the magician roots themselves with their feet deep in the Underworld, with their heads in the stars, and their centre as the fulcrum. Without tools or temples, the magician becomes the scales, with their consciousness as the central pillar and their arms and minds as the creative action/compost dynamic. What keeps it all balanced is the left hand creative dynamic and the right hand completion/weighing/composting dynamic: the birth, culmination, and death of the magic are all entwined in the magical action.

To work like this without an exteriorisation<sup>5</sup> the magician themselves must be balanced—and I mean literally able to balance. As I said earlier, the physical ability of the magician's body to maintain balance allows the deep inner powers to flow around and through the magician: the magician stands within the vortex of magic as he or she works.

As the power hits the physical body, if the body has a good ability to balance, the substance of the body itself will distribute the power flows evenly through the body's energy channels and release them accordingly.

The energy that does not need to flow through the magician flows around them in orbit before it releases—and again, the strength of that power can knock the inner integrity of the magician unless they can counterbalance it: the knowledge that the body has regarding balance is triggered and the inner and outer body shifts accordingly to counterbalance the force of the magic.

And this brings me to another point that is important to understand and work with: the knowledge of the inner body, the energetic body, is directly influenced by the knowledge and health of the outer body, and vice versa.

The magician's inner and outer bodies are inextricably linked. Even though we try to think of them as separate units, they are not. By teaching

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<sup>5</sup>No tools, no work space, no words, no actions.

the outer body the principles of balance, the inner body learns them too. When the inner energetic body is aligned, so too is the outer body. First you teach the substance, and what the substance learns, everything else learns.

Not only does this adherence to balance affect the inner dynamics of power and energy in magic, but it can also protect the magician from certain levels of impact. When a force is projected towards the magician, if they have no inherent balance and their body does not know the principles of balance, the force will knock them off-centre both energetically and physically.

It is far easier to magically attack and seriously damage a magician who has poor balance than a magician with good balance. And it is more likely that an adept with poor balance will get a nasty impact if they work with strong inner powers.

This can be seen when groups of magical adepts come together for a round of work. As the adept stands silently in a flow of power, the body of an adept with poor or damaged balance can be seen to be constantly swaying and may actually tip over during the mediation of a force.

As apprentices, the basic principles of counterpoints were built into your training actions so that you learned the principle of balance in a passive way without realising it. There were counterpoints in the substance around you (tools, directions), and as you moved round the directions and moved the tools around, you were subconsciously learning the principles of magical balance.

As an initiate the principles of balance are to be learned in your body and joined with the balance of action/tools/space; and as an adept the principle of balance will be learned by joining your energetic body with everything around you.

The practical work for this lesson is quite intensive but allows you to pull together the three principles you have just been learning about in this module, which in turn will prepare you for what will come next.

*Task: Revisit the vision of balance*

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Go back to the vision in Lesson 1 of this module. Redo the vision, but this time when you are out in the stars, when you have finished observing the actions, instead of drifting in the stars you are going to forge a path.

While you are out in the stars, look down at your feet. Your left foot is filled with the light of the Light Bearer, and your right foot is filled with the darkness of Restriction. Before you is a path of light that is the trail of the Light Bearer. Beyond the path, if you look carefully, you will see the planet Earth, your home.

Feel yourself balanced with the Divine spark within you, the light of your left side, and the dark of your right. Take a step forward with your left foot onto the bright path of the Light Bearer.

As you step out on to the path, a bright white cube appears under your foot. Stand on that bright cube with your right foot suspended off the path. Now place your right foot down on the path and lift your left foot off the bright cube: a dark cube of black appears under your right foot.

Step forward one foot at a time. Alternating bright white and dark black cubes appear under your feet as you step forward towards the Earth. As you walk and the cubes appear, the Earth gets closer and closer: you are forging a path of light and dark towards physical manifestation.

As you walk you can feel the difference in power between the cubes, and as you speed up to walk at a normal pace you become aware that your right heel is placed down on the dark cube before your toes lift off of the bright cube: through your action of forward movement, the two opposites of light and dark become linked in your body. Your human body and your forward momentum link these two powers in a moving balancing act as you forge forward towards physical existence.

As you walk you become aware of the continent that you live on, the country, the city, town, neighbourhood, house, and finally room where your body is sitting in vision. The closer you come to your home/building, the more you realise that you are vast in size and may not fit into the building, let alone the body sitting in vision.

Cast your mind to your right foot as you walk; the darkness of the cube, the density of substance. The more you focus on the density of substance, the more your etheric body shrinks and restricts itself until it can be accommodated in its physical form. The more restricted your etheric body becomes, the more it intensifies the brightness of the light within you and beneath your left foot: the two powers become intensely polarised.

Stand before your body and look at it. As you stand there you realise that you stepped through the south wall of the work room, passing through the south altar.

Turn and look beyond the south altar: a long path of black and white squares, made up of the light and dark cubes, forms a path into the south, into the future, and out into the stars. Look at it and realise that this is your path as a magician and as a human. It will take you into the future and ultimately to the stars: your path is defined by your balance between the creative light and the harvest of Restriction. Your eternal consciousness is the bright Divine spark within.

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### *Task: Associated Research*

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Look up the history of chequerboard floors in temples and ritual structures. You will have to plough your way through lots of conspiracy and other silly websites, but if you do an image search you may be more successful at least in seeing the depictions through time.

If a site makes a claim without a direct historic reference, discount it and in general ignore the text, as it will tend to devolve down into 'good and evil' rather than 'light and dark' energy.

Just look at the images, where they are, when they were, and in what context they belong. One useful site has an e-version of an old book called *Pompeii: Its Life and Art*. Look at Chapter Ten: the Temple of Apollo, figure 28. It will show you the cubic white and black floor in the temple of Apollo.<sup>6</sup>

[www.gutenberg.org/files/42715/42715-h/42715-h.htm](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/42715/42715-h/42715-h.htm)

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<sup>6</sup>The light bearer and god of the south.

### *Task: Threshold practice*

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Set up your working room with all your tools in the directions, open the gates, and welcome the contacts to the thresholds. Still yourself by the central altar with the south altar beyond you.

Recover the sense and vision of the light and dark, your left side and right side, and of the path of light and dark flowing from you. Be aware of the your body filled with light on the left side and darkness on and right side, and be aware of the angelic presences at your shoulders.

Go to the east altar and stand in silence. Close your eyes and in vision, walk through the altar and over the east threshold. Do it slowly and be aware of any change in how you feel as you cross the thresholds: you are learning to 'feel' into each threshold so that you can be aware of its power and how it affects you as you cross. It will be a subtle shift, like a whisper, as it is a wide threshold and is one of the lowest level thresholds you can cross in vision.

Once over the threshold turn back and look into the room. Look at the floor, look at the pathway your footsteps have made, and then look at your feet. Look at whether the threshold is bright or dark.

When you are ready, step back into your body, open your eyes and repeat in the south, west, and north.

When you have finished stand before the central altar, close your eyes, and in vision step into the central flame. Stand in the flame and wait until your own inner spark, the creative fire within, resonates exactly with the power of the central flame.

When you feel that harmony, in vision look beyond the flame to the south altar. Look at the floor that leads to the south altar, and look at the path into the south beyond. Now turn round and look at the floor leading to the north altar, and look at the path that flows from the north altar and into the north beyond.

Open your eyes and go to the east altar. Look at the sword and close your eyes. Now pass into the sword and pay attention to how it feels to cross the threshold into the sword.

Come back out again and repeat with the cord in the south, the vessel in the west, and the stone in the north. Pay close attention to how the threshold of each tool feels as you cross into it and back out again.

Open your eyes, and sit and meditate for a short while. Think about how each threshold felt and presented itself. Before you close the room down, write up your notes in your journal, and later type them out on computer. Write up how they felt, any resistance or forward momentum that you felt, any shift in balance, any sense of confusion or focus, and any surge in energy.

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### *Task: Physical balance exercise*

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When you move your body in balance, the powers follow you and flow with you in harmony. Trying to write specific physical exercises without a physical demonstration is difficult, so I will try to keep things as simple as possible. For those of you who already do some physical discipline that uses balance, adjust what follows as is necessary for you to work with what you know.

When you raise a leg off the ground, the shift in weight needs a counterbalance to compensate. Usually we fling out our arms out and move our torso to try and rebalance. In certain physical disciplines, like yoga, ballet, and gymnastics, we learn to isolate different parts of the body and shift weight accordingly, so that balance in the body can be pushed to the extreme.

For magicians, who are of different ages, weights, and physical levels of fitness, such heavy training is not always possible; but the techniques important for magic are possible for anyone to work with, and those techniques use the mind.

I discovered this by accident when training as a dancer<sup>7</sup> and as I advanced in magic, I realised it had application in magic: using the mind to balance the body. It is something you can experiment with or incorporate into your own physical discipline, and is something you should try to keep up with, as it will really help the body adjust to magic.

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<sup>7</sup>And rediscovered a well-known wheel of which I had been unaware.



Everyone has a dominant side to their body in terms of balance, so when you figure out which is your stronger side, work the weaker side more. Always start with the weaker side, and always do more on that side.

Stand up and put your feet together. Now turn them out, both at the same time, to a comfortable position with the heels together. Don't turn out one and then the other, as this pushes the rotation of the hip on the dominant side more, which will unbalance you.

Your centre/fulcrum runs from the crown of your head, down through the centre of your torso, down between your legs, and lands at the point where your heels meet when your feet are turned out. We use turned out feet because this frees up the hips to join in the balance exercise. When the feet are together pointing forward, the centre of balance is different, which is why most classical dance forms work with feet turned out. You do not need to work with the extreme turnout that dancers do, but you do need to find your own natural turnout, which is found by turning both feet out at the same time.

Now be aware of where your head is and what it is doing. Normally when an untrained person turns out their feet, they sway back a bit, stick their chin out, and also stick their ribcage out in order to balance. This disengages a lot of the body's structure that can be utilised in balance.

Your aim is to keep your weight ever so slightly forward rather than back, and not to move the head or the ribcage at all: you isolate the feet so that only they move. It's harder than it sounds! Just trying to turn out the feet without moving anything else will teach you about how your body handles weight distribution and balance. Practice this simple movement until you can do it without moving anything else. Learning a simple isolation will really help you when processing magic.

If your hands involuntarily turn out at the same time as your feet, then it is a sign that as an adult you need to do a lot more physical work that uses isolation.<sup>8</sup> Hands and feet connection is normal in young children, but should not be present in adults: if you are doing that, your brain needs rewiring by learning isolation.

Once you can turn out without moving anything else, then it is time to test the balance of the body's fulcrum. Do this first by holding on

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<sup>8</sup>Like martial arts, tai chi, or yoga.

to something, then once you have a good idea of the movement, do it without support.

Start by raising one leg in front of you, but instead of letting the toe lead the action, have the heel lead the action. Your foot will be slightly turned out already: lift the foot slowly, with your focus on the heel leading the movement and your toes pulled back. Keep both legs straight.

Your body will want to move in order to compensate. Don't allow your legs to bend at all, as it will throw the focus back to the body. Take note of what happens to your body: what wants to move and where does it want to move to? What is wanting to counterpoint the movement? Is it your arms? Is it your head? Is it your torso?

Now try this: do the action again, but before you start imagine that a hand comes down from the ceiling and grabs your hair by the crown and holds you up. Really focus on it so that your body responds: your neck will lengthen and you will feel a lift out of your hips. Now lift your leg while feeling the grip on your crown.

If your arms want to go out, just imagine your arms out the sides: use your inner vision to imagine your arms, head, and so forth out instead of physically moving them out: counterpoint with your mind and not your body.

Do the same raising the leg to the side, toe up facing the ceiling and heel pointing to the ground.<sup>9</sup> First see what wants to fly out,<sup>10</sup> and instead of using your body parts to balance, use your mind. Then do the same to the back without tipping the body forward.

Now do the other leg. Once you have gotten good at this, up the game a bit by doing it on one leg on tiptoe. Use something to hold on to. Raise the leg in the position, then rise onto tiptoe. Everything in your body now has to balance on the bridge of one foot, so then you really start to learn about body balance.

Once you are up on tiptoe, let go of what you are holding on to, and try to balance. Use your arms and use your head<sup>11</sup> this time, and instead of imagining the arms, you are going to imagine an orange ball.

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<sup>9</sup>That position uses hip rotation.

<sup>10</sup>Arms, usually!

<sup>11</sup>The heaviest part of you, very useful for balance and counterpoint.

Imagine an orange ball hanging in the air on the opposite side of the body to the raised leg when you try to balance. Keep your mind on that visual. If you raise the leg to the front, see it behind you; if the leg is raised to the side, see it on the opposing side; if the leg is raised to the back, see it before you. See how long you can hold the balance for.

Experiment with where you place this ball: if the leg is low, see the ball high so that you could draw a line from your foot through the body to the ball in an acute or opposite angle. As you try to balance on one foot on tiptoe, use your arms and the orange ball to focus your balance. The better you get at it, the less you will need to use your arms, and the more you will be able to rely on the orange ball: move it around you in order to learn how to counterbalance.

And if you feel silly standing in your living room on one leg imagining an orange ball moving around you, remember this: as a magician when you step into the flow of power, your body will seek to counterpoint the balance. If it knows how to balance, it will utilise that knowledge and act accordingly. If it doesn't you are more likely to get energetic knocks, bumps, and scrapes.

This is a tiny fraction of a huge body of knowledge that involves the crossover between the body and magic, and learning to balance, counterpoint, compensate, hold weight, shift weight, and move power around. If you have not still taken up a physical discipline, now would be the time to do it. You need to do a discipline that uses subtle shifts of energy and balance, one that teaches you how to move power around you and how to isolate and focus certain aspects of the body. Weightlifting is pointless for this type of work, as is running: it is not about muscle or endurance, it is far more subtle and complex than that.

Yoga, Tai Chi, soft martial arts, ballet, or gymnastics<sup>12</sup> would be good ones: anything that makes you learn how to balance, transfer weight around, and use your mind as well as your body.

Start with the above simple balancing exercise and do it a few times a week until you get good at it, then do it once a week at least. I do it to this day: while I am waiting for the kettle to boil or something to cook, or when I have a few spare minutes, I practice a balance routine.

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<sup>12</sup>For the younger ones among you.

*Task: Researching Ardhanarishvara*

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Look for an image of Ardhanarishvara (the composite). The best image, if you can find it, is one from the British Museum. It shows Shiva and Durga as Ardhanarishvara. Note on this image in particular which hand holds the sword (left) and on which side runs the river of Shiva (right).

Ardhanarishvara is a complete root deity of balance. This will give you a good idea of how important complete balance is/was in ancient religions. You can also search out other deities that are composites of male and female and read about them.

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*Task: Researching Hexagram use in India*

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Look up the use of the Hexagram in India, as it is a symbol of Perfect Balance. Look at where and why it appears.

QUAREIA

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