

For Those Who Walk The Path of
Magick, Psychic Development or Spiritual Growth

the Essentials of Magick

A Complete Guide to
Common Elements of
All Magical Systems

BY NATHANIEL

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Common Elements of
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Disclaimer

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The information in this book is solely intended for interested readers and educational purposes and should in no way be understood as diagnostic or therapeutic instructions in the medical or psychological sense.

Magick is neither simple nor safe – it's an art that requires patience, inner strength and emotional stability.

As author, I do not even pretend to write a universal book about magick – I even believe it is impossible to do so. In this work, I have explained the commons of most magical and spiritual traditions. The basics: the existence of spirits, the need for magical cleansing, grounding, the basics of magical self-defense and similar elements, are common for all systems. The theory of magick, energies and such is general, and I understand that some people will not agree with my words. Still, I hope that those who are beginners, will find the techniques and knowledge from this book useful and that this knowledge will keep them safe on the first steps of their journey until they find more effective techniques by themselves.

In this book, you'll find quite few references to Reiki, mainly in footnotes. This is so because I practice and teach Reiki, and this school of spiritual thought is close to my heart.

Preface

For the past ten years I explored different schools of magick¹ and spiritual work. I've seen schools of Chaos Magick, Wicca, New Age and mysterious arts of the Far East; schools of modern Huna² and ancient African magick; paths of healing Reiki³ and destructive arts of black magick. By gaining knowledge and experience over time, I've realized that these different schools of magical thought have many elements in common. Elements that are essential for successful and safe practice. And yet, at the same time I was never able to find a proper book that would introduce me to the very basics of all magical practices – these basics that are common for Chaos Magick, Wicca, Reiki, Huna and hundreds of other systems.

What I could find was a large set of books entitled “introduction to magick”, yet what these books represented was all but the essentials. All of these books were circling around the Western arts of ceremonial magick, mixed with Wiccan witchcraft, and rarely any of these books managed to go deeper into the subject of correlations between different schools from different areas of the world. Thus, I had to learn everything by myself. Which I eventually did, after battling countless numbers of personal demons of my mind, and quite physical (energetically) malicious spirits that thought of me as of pray that can be fed upon.

Thus, I've learned a lot in the past nine years, and because of

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- 1 The term “Magick”, with the letter “k” at the end, has been introduced on the beginning of XX century by Aleister Crowley. It was meant to distinct practical, occult magick from growing movement of stage magic - based on illusion and tricks.
 - 2 Modern Huna isn't as traditional as some people would like to believe. It is based on reconstruction of Polynesian beliefs and practices, yet it has been created in XX century by Max Freedom Long. Still, it is based on some traditional beliefs and practices, and one has to admit, it's very effective practice when used properly.
 - 3 Reiki is a form of energy medicine, and even if it's considered being more of a spiritual healing, it is based on the principles of Magick, as I shall explain soon.

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this, I decided to write down what I know in this book, and to share my knowledge with those who make their first steps on the path of magick – magick of different schools. Because it doesn't matter if you practice Huna, Reiki, Wicca or classic European ceremonial magick. The basics, the essentials, are still the same.

Some people believe that magick experiences are subjective, and personal, that they have no objective elements and that everything can be explained only from a subjective perspective. In the result, in the eyes of many people there is no such thing as the set-in-stone collection of basics for magical arts. But the truth is that whether you curse someone with Christian magick, Wicca ritual or ceremonial technique, the effect will be the same; and whether you make a Norse god, or forest spirit, or Buddhist demon angry, you will get a punch into your “third eye”.

Some people do not wish to admit it, but there are some common basics for every magical system in the world, basics which you need to learn if you do not wish to get possessed and your life destroyed. This book is not sweet, nor colored with rainbow – I show you things as they are. And you should definitely learn about them if you wish to remain safe in the world of magick or esoteric arts of different sorts. Because in esoteric arts, whether you call number #1 “one”, “jeden”, “uno” or “un”, it's still number 1, and 1+1 equals 2, no matter how do you pronounce it.

So, this book is not sugar-coated, not at all.

In every tradition, there are some similar effects – because the world of magick and the way in which magick works is always the same – the terms and practices might be different, though. This book has been written in such way that after reading it, you can figure out practices related to your own schools of thoughts, and understand which paths that you walk miss some important, almost mandatory practices.

This work is not a guidebook to any specific esoteric path. Rather, it is a guidebook that explains the basic commons of every tradition, from Wicca to Buddhism. I'm going to explain the archetypes of energies and entities – from ghosts to gods. Then, you're going to learn about the tools of the trade – incenses,

candles and more. All of this will be supported by examples and stories from my own practice, and practice of people I have met – as friends and teachers.

Although I understand that this book won't suit everyone, I hope that most readers will benefit from it; thus that they'll be able to understand what they're missing in their practice, and why some practices that they've learned are important for their safety and success.

Who Is This Book For?

The word “magick” in this book's title might be misleading, so I wish to explain who is this book for. Not only practitioners of European magick will benefit from this work – actually, anyone who is interested in modern magick, occult or spiritual work, like the one promoted by New Age movement, should read this book. It is because everyone who is dealing with things like energy healing; law of attraction; manifestation; rituals; summoning; spirit communication; channeling; divination and even spiritual development, deals with energies and entities, as well. And because of this, one must know the basics that are common for every magical or spiritual schools.

Thus, this book is for:

- **Practitioners of ceremonial magick** – whether it's Enochian system, modern Chaos Magick, “Golden Dawn” based systems and so on.
- **Pagan practitioners** – those who follow practical pagan and neo-pagan paths. By practical we understand those paths, that include magical practice and rituals, and the practitioner chose a solitude path.⁴
- **Witches and shamans** – those who walk the path of witchcraft as solitude practice and as part of Wiccan

⁴ Those who are members of larger groups of practitioners understand that there is always someone skilled in magical work, a form of a “priest”, and it is he who teach about practical aspects of his craft; if you're a student of such teacher, this book will serve as a reference work, only.

religion (or other system of witchcraft, for example those based on “*Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches*”); and shamans⁵, guided by spirits who would like to learn a bit more about essentials of magical practice.⁶

- **Psychics** – those who have awakened their extra-sensory perception and are using their skills on a daily basis, for example, to offer psychic readings, psychometry or psychic healing.
- **New Age followers**⁷ - those who use the Law of Attraction, or participate in New Age workshops, or practice different schools of self-growth and spiritual development.
- **Card readers and fortune tellers** – those who practice divination with Tarot, runes or angel cards, or use any other method of divination and fortune telling.
- **Healers** – those who are Reiki healers, or Pranic healers, or those who use other forms of energy for the purpose of

5 Although the name “Shaman” originates from waste regions of Siberia, today this name is used to describe those people, who have been chosen by spirits, and have passed initiation by these spirits, and finally, who are guided by the spirits; and it's all based on more animistic approach to magick and spirituality. Shamanic practices include rituals, and "ecstatic" trance states, in which shaman performs healing, or travels to higher or lower worlds (planes of existence). It is worth mentioning, especially for those who walk the path of New Age that one cannot become a true shaman if he won't be chosen or initiated by spirits. No workshop nor any diploma will make you a shaman, and a true shaman does not require workshops or diplomas since he is guided by spirits.

6 It is essential to know that a true shaman is guided by spirits, and these spirits will teach him or her everything that the shaman has to know. Also, it is worth knowing that if you suspect you've been chosen by spirits to become a shaman (whatever this “position” is called in your culture), you should become a fan of reading, and definitely seek someone to explain you what's going on (for example, other shamans).

7 By the word “followers” we understand those who practice schools associated with New Age ideology and movement. It does not suggest any religious connotations.

healing.

If you feel you belong to one of these categories or similar, then this book is definitely meant for you.

Seek Your Own Answers, Yet Know the Essentials

The most important thing, which I want to teach you, is to seek your own answers. If you have become interested in the art of magick or spiritual development, then it means that you seek a way to change your life, one way or another. This is why people get to practice things – they want to become richer, or they want to find true love, or they want to help others. Or they want to seek power to control others, too because there are different intentions that people have – some are positive, and some are negative. I hope that this book will help you realize that negative intentions are dangerous, and it's far better seeking “power” through positive growth, rather than through manipulation and black magick.

But, ethics aside for now, if you truly wish to change your life through magick, then you must read and learn a lot. Through reading and learning – from books, people and your own experiences – you gain knowledge and you grow. Thus, you learn how to achieve your goals more effectively, and yet how to remain safe at the same time. This book is a guidebook – it guides you on your path. But it doesn't provide you with definite answers, which you require. But we'll deal with this later. When you're done with this book, think about what you have learned, and look for more books that can give you the answers. Because I do not provide you with recipes for success.

I provide you with knowledge about energies and intentions; entities that exists and will come in contact with you as soon as you begin your magical work; collection of safety rules, which you should keep in mind in order to remain safe. These are the essentials – to understand how the “world beyond” works and what you can find there is the key for successful and safe practice of magick. And this is what you truly need, when you're still a beginner – the understanding of basics. Without this, you won't be

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successful on your magical path, simple as that.

The Book of Theory

Everything starts with theory. You can never begin your practice if you won't learn the theoretical aspects of it – it is the order of things. The essential theory of magick can be limited to two primary things. First, definition of terms, which helps understand what we understand as magick. Second, the understanding of intentions (your Will) – the primary force that governs all magical activity. Let us waste no time, and start with the definition.

The Definition of Magick

Before we explain the essential elements of different schools of magick and spiritual work, we must define the term “magick” itself, first. The best way to do so is base ourselves upon an encyclopedic definition. We can read in a great work of John Michael Greer, “The New Encyclopedia of the Occult”:⁸

(...) Originally, the word – in Greek, *mageia*; in Latin,

8 **Magic**, Greer, p. 287

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magia – meant the knowledge or art of the *magoi* or *magi*, a hereditary caste of Persian holy man.

Later on, we can read the definition of Eliphas Levi:⁹

(...) Levi defined magic as the art of manipulating the Astral¹⁰ Light, the mysterious substance-energy that in his view lay behind all magical activities.

And finally, few words later:

(...) Aleister Crowley (...) proclaimed that magic – or as he spelled it, “magick” – is “the science and art of causing change in conformity with will”.

From the essential point of view, magick is all these three things. First, it's an art, and knowledge. Then, it's knowledge of using and manipulating energies – that exists all around us. And finally, it's an art of manipulating these energies in order to cause change according to our will. Whether you use Reiki, Huna, Wicca or ceremonial magick, you still do the same thing – use the knowledge to manipulate energies in order to achieve a change in the physical world.

Let me give you some examples so you can understand magick better.

- **In ceremonial magick, you have a goal.** In order to achieve this goal, you perform a ritual. A ritual is a form of activity, that based on knowledge, focuses your will upon your goal. Thus, this leads to manipulation of energies in

9 It is believed that the modern idea of energy in Western Magick is evolution of the concept of astral light, created by Eliphas Levi.

10 **Astral Realm** - is a common term that is associated with the spiritual realm of dreams, thoughtforms, emotions and ideas. As such, energy that is present in this realm, which mix itself with our physical realm is called astral energy.

order to achieve the goal – the change of reality.

- **In Huna, you have a goal.** Therefore, you collect energies from your environment in order to fuel your subconscious mind, which then uses its power of shaping the reality to change the world, and achieve the goal – the change of reality.
- **In Reiki, you have a goal of healing something** – by healing you understand the process of returning something back – a person or idea – into a state of perfect harmony. Thus, you open yourself, and you allow the energy of Reiki to flow from the source into the person or idea and heal it. With time, this subtle energy of Reiki brings harmony back, and the goal is achieved – the change of reality.

Similar process can be noticed in many schools – modern Law of Attraction practices, Wiccan rituals, Pranic healing, Buddhist meditations, or shamanic (animistic) practices. The life of the practitioner and the goals might be different, yet the principles are the same. Still, the change of reality is just one of many goals of practical magick. There are at least two primary schools of thought when it comes to magical practices.

- Some people try to influence the world around them via magical means, by performing rituals, casting spells and working with energies and entities. These are exoteric practices – acting on the outside. This is what people often calls the actual magick.

- Some people use meditation¹¹, mantras¹² and rituals in order to change their own mind as they believe that the mind is what creates the reality. These are esoteric practices – acting on the inside. This is what most people understand as spiritual development.

Finally, there is a third school of thought, in which a person doesn't try to change the reality, but seeks final enlightenment through spiritual practices. This “third path” requires some basic knowledge, as well, so you should keep reading this book even if you seek enlightenment, not a change in the world.

What is this change that we talk about, and what are the other goals?

11 **Meditation** - is a form of spiritual practice, in which a person's goal is to clear his or hers mind of any thoughts, seeing through the nature of the mind and thus, the nature of the Universe. There are many schools of meditation. For those who begin their magical practice, it's worth mentioning that meditation is often mistaken with trance practices and contemplation. Trance is a form of altered state of consciousness, when you visit parts of your mind that you cannot access on a daily basis, or when you visit places beyond the material realm. In case of meditation, you seek peace, serenity, awareness and understanding. Contemplation, on the other hand, is a form of meditation (but meditation is not a form of contemplation) - in this form, you dedicate your meditation practice towards thinking about a specific issue - thus, you contemplate something.

12 **Mantras** - by this name we recognize phrases that originate from Hindu religious tradition, to put it simple. In reality, mantras are far more ancient phrases that later on evolved into complex practices and were implemented into Buddhism tradition. Mantras operate on different levels - for example, on the energy level and on the mind level; thus they influence the person who practice them. The practice is based on constant repetition of mantras, and since they carry specific energy charge and meanings, through repetition this charge and meanings are “activated”, changing the person in proper - according to the effect of the mantra - way. There are different mantras. Some are meant to develop psychic abilities, others are used for healing, others are used to support spiritual development and search for enlightenment.

Why do People Practice Magick, and the Types of Magical Effects

There are many reasons, and thus many different effects of practical magick. One who practices magick might wish to change things, or to bless things, or to thank for things, or finally, to see things. And it's just the basic division.

To Make Changes in Reality

What is this “change of reality”? To use simple words, one might wish to improve his financial condition. Or, one might wish to heal his illness, or illness of someone else. One might wish to improve the way his company works. Or one might wish to find true love. In order to do so, people perform rituals or use talismans. Sometimes, they use healing upon themselves, or learn magical techniques that can help them focus their will upon the ability to change their life.

This is the most popular goal of magick for many people. In this case, the energy and intention that is created during magical work is directed so it can influence, one way or another, the reality of a person.

To Bless; to Thank

Some rituals and activities are not meant to make a change of reality, of course. Sometimes, rituals and magical activities are meant to bless and to give thanks. Sometimes, the energy is meant to help someone in achieving his goals. For example, my friends might wish to move to a new flat, and as I collect a large amount of energy during my meditation, I can send this energy to them with the intention of helping them make their wish come true – such blessing is a form of white magick as long as I send the energy to support their goals, and I do not try to force them to approve my vision of the world.

And sometimes, magical work is used as a form of thanksgiving, when the energy is sent to someone in a form of blessing because

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you're thankful for the person's help. Or sometimes, the energy is sent to spirits or Mother Nature, as a thanksgiving for the harvest, as a simple example.

To Protect

Quite often, magical work is used in order to protect the person or a place. This is when rituals and magical work are used to create shields around someone, or to cleanse a person or a place. This form of magical activity includes the use of amulets, special objects that are meant to protect a person. This form of magick includes offensive magick techniques, as well, when it is essential to take actions against someone who is attacking us magically. For example, when an entity attacks us, we take offensive actions for example by surrounding the entity with bright, spiritual light meant to force the entity to hold its attack.¹³ When a room or a person is cleansed of negative energies, and then shielded with energy shields or magical symbols, this is also a form of magical work, meant to protect the person or a room.

To Understand and See

And there is another reason and result of magick – it falls into the category of divination. There are many ways and techniques of divination, some of which are very popular these days, like runes or Tarot¹⁴ cards, to name the few. These ways are meant to help the person see the causes and results of different actions, and help the

13 This is just an example, please do not use this technique just yet.

14 As I teach Reiki, I've learned and proven to myself and others that Tarot cards are connected, not to higher planes of existence, but to lower energies and entities. I mention this because you must be aware of the fact that using Tarot cards isn't as safe as some people think. In reality, Tarot cards are very difficult and dangerous tools, and one must be very skilled in order to use them properly. I know many Tarot cards readers, who admit that it's a difficult art of divination. If you wish to use Tarot cards, you must learn an exceptional amount of magical self-defense techniques and a lot of safety rules. On the other hand, if you are a Tarot reader already, and you wish to follow some more spiritual path, like Reiki, you should keep in mind that, at some point of your journey, you will have to give up the cards for good.

person understand the best ways of dealing with specific problems.¹⁵ Yet quite often, different systems of divination are used to support spiritual growth – through proper work, they can be used to point the person who performs the reading for himself to this person's own problems and things, which must be healed and worked out in order to push the person's spiritual development further.

These are the reasons why people practice magick – they want understanding and tips for solving their problems, or they wish to change the reality to improve their life; or they wish to thank for something or help others; and finally, they want to protect themselves and their families. From a more practical perspective, a psychic might use magick to perform psychic readings, but at the same time he might use magick to shield himself and the room in which he rests from negative energies and magical attacks. Or a Reiki practitioner might use magical work to shield the room, so later on he can channel healing energy to another person. A Joe Doe might spend few months working out his financial beliefs in order to change his financial situation for better. And a pagan circle might perform a ritual to gather strong, healing energies that they wish to use in order to support the healing process of Earth. All of these are forms of magical work.

So, now that we are far more knowledgeable, what is magick, one more time?

The Simplest Definition of Magick

The simplest definition of magick would be “**the process of causing change in conformity with will**”. While most schools use additional tools and techniques like meditation, prayer, rituals and ceremonials, a lot of magical activity is based simple upon your desire – “through”, “will” or “intention”. The nature of the mind is fascinating, but it can be defined by using three words, and three words only: **thoughts create things**. Your mind shapes the

¹⁵ I would like to point out that any form of divination connects the divinator with a person for which the divination is performed. This means that the divinator is always at risk of collecting negative energies from his clients.

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Universe; your minds create the world around you. And finally, your mind creates your life.

It is interesting to see if you have an opportunity to talk with people who have practiced magick for 20, 30 or even 60 years that as time passes, each decade it's easier and easier to perform magical work. It is a result of expanding popularity of magical practices under different names – Buddhism, Taoism, Wicca, New Age... Hundreds of years ago, one had to study many years in order to achieve his magical goals. Today, things can be accomplish within months, and sometimes within weeks.

While many schools of magical or spiritual thought teach many additional techniques of focus (meditation, prayer), these are merely tools that help you clear your mind of unwanted thoughts, and focus yourself upon your goal. That's why magical arts work for everyone, no matter what is your faith, magical path or set of beliefs. That is how everyone on this planet shapes his or hers own life – magick works all the time.¹⁶

Whether you wish to change the reality, or to heal yourself; to bless something or to thank for something; to protect yourself against unpleasant spiritual forces, or to learn about the future, in all these magical activities, you deal with intention, goals and energies. As you do, you come in touch with unwanted energies and entities, and finally, with intentions and goals of other people. Thus, you need to know how things work, what might go wrong, and how to protect yourself against unwanted energies or contact with entities. These elements are common to all magical and spiritual schools. All the basics will be described in this book.

In any way, based on the definitions above, you should not understand magick simple as a term to describe ceremonial, European practices, as many books these days do. Magick is the term that defines the art of manipulating energies in order to achieve a change in the world in conformity with our will. That's the basic definition. Now, the change in the world in conformity

¹⁶ Well, basically – you shouldn't fall into a trap of paranoia and see magick everywhere. Just because you have cut your finger while making breakfast, doesn't mean that someone cast a curse upon you. You might just be clumsy.

with our will – it sounds like a powerful and dark thing, isn't it? But in reality, this activity can be achieved in conformity with our will and in conformity with the highest good of all living beings at the same time. Many people do this these days, especially those in modern New Age circles, interested in Huna or The Law of Attraction.

Thus, here we come to change our perspective upon magick – it's not the magick itself that carries dark “feelings” with itself. It's the way we use magick, and the result which we want to achieve. If your practices and goals aren't hurting anyone, then your magick is considered to be white magick.

The Definition of Black Magick

We've defined what magick truly is, and we've said that because magick works in a specific way, everyone is using magick all the time, and it works all the time. Unfortunately, this means that people can do bad stuff with magick, as well. And in most cases, they're not aware of the fact that they're practicing black magick in its darkest form. What is so called “black magick”? Black magick is the **“process of causing change in conformity with our will, against the will of others; or against a specific person's will.”** Black magick, for example, happens when:

- A ritual is performed in order to harm someone physically, emotionally or spiritually.
- A magical act is performed with “over everyone's dead bodies” approach – when you wish to achieve your goal no matter the consequences.

These things are obvious, and I will not discuss them further. But some things aren't as obvious as one might think. Black magick is the most popular form of magick in the entire world – and in most cases it is done not by those skilled in magick, but by normal people. Black magick occurs, when:

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- You're a psychic healer, and you want to heal someone – but this person does not wish to be healed. Forcing healing upon the other person is considered to be a magical attack, and there are no excuses for “healers” actions.
- Any form of “healing”, when performed in conformity with your own will, and not with the highest good of the other person in mind, is often a form of black magick, especially if your own intentions towards this person are not clean and positive. This happens often in case of those healers, who wish to heal someone, but the only way to heal this person, which they know, is based upon their own false or misleading beliefs.
- And form of persuasion – when you want someone to do something in conformity with your own intention or “plan”, is a form of black magick. People make their own decisions, and they should never be forced to do anything. This form of black magick happens in case of many forms of advertising or marketing campaigns.

Caring thoughts aren't as “white” as people would like to believe, and this deserves few more paragraphs. And this is the most awful and most popular, at the same time, form of black magick. Parents “caring” about their kids, for example. They “care” for their daughter not to be raped by her boyfriend. Yet magical acts follow intentions. When parents focus on raping of theirs daughter normally, it hurts her energy field and her very being. If they focus on raping of theirs daughter strong enough then it works like a curse – theirs daughter will be raped, eventually – and if not, then something else, still terrible, will happen to her.

- Another example is quite popular, as well. Imagine your parents who constantly worry about your budget. They keep thinking *“oh my God, oh my God, what will happen to poor Timmy, he's so inexperienced, so poor, what will*

he do for money, he won't be able to survive, oh my God!" - it's a terrible for of black magick, because it attacks you.¹⁷

- Another example – you want to create a business. You have a great business plan, money for investment and great business contacts. Yet people around you think constantly “this won't work” or “he doesn't have the skills to make it work” or “I'm sure it won't work because I tried it myself and it didn't work.” This is black magick, as well.
- Another example – you've met the man of your dreams, and you've fallen in love completely. Both of you are sure that you're meant for each other. Yet, just wait for your parents to start thinking “this guy is terrible. I hope it won't work out for them”, and if your parent's will is strong enough while yours and your boyfriend's will are weak, then your parent's thoughts will be black magick in its finest...
- Quite often, people cast love spells or charms – either by themselves, or with the help of skilled occult practitioner. Forcing someone into a love relationship is black magick, as well. Such spell or charm will never cause positive effects – yes, sometimes it will work. If a woman wants a man to fall in love with her, and she uses a spell, it might work. She will have the man. As a form of bonus, she will have a man who beats her, drinks alcohol, torture her mentally. If she's really lucky, after 10 years of a toxic relationship that will destroy her life, she will finally get the divorce, but the consequences of her actions will hunt her for the next 30 years. If she isn't lucky, a car will kill

17 Worrying about someone is a form of black magick, as well – but I call it the weakest form of black magick. When you worry about someone, you send this person negative energies, yes, but they're not that strong. So you shouldn't be afraid or angry at yourself when you worry about someone because sometimes we can't help it. Even so, try to realize that worrying about someone is pointless, and you should hope for all the best for the person in question.

by Nathaniel

her on the street. Do you really want to cast love spells? Any form of love spell or love charm, a form of black magick, creates a toxic relationship – sometimes, the person who cast the spell will be a victim, and sometimes, a person upon which the spell has been cast, will become a victim. Now you know what love spells are, please, do not cast them – destroying someone's life isn't ethical.

- And finally, when you pray with the intention of converting someone to your religion, this is a form of dangerous black magick. It's about asking your God or your Egregore to look at this particular person and force it to convert. It's using magical means (with the help of entities) to make a change in person's like against this person will. This is a pure magical attack – very ugly I have to say, and very aggressive, especially when someone tells you “I will pray for your soul” right into your face. Unfortunately, it happens all the time, mainly in monotheistic religions like Christianity, especially in the Catholic school of thought. If you know someone who is praying in such manner, ask this person to stop. No one has the right to choose your faith or path.

People use black magick all the time,¹⁸ because they do not learn anything about true spiritual development. Sometimes, this black magick is strong, and sometimes, it's weak. It all depends on the strength of a person – if your inner strength is great, then the negative thoughts and wishes won't harm you. That is why a part of magical and spiritual development is the process of improving your self-confidence, self-assessment and self-esteem, and of course, your personal feeling of safety. If you're not easy to manipulate, then you are far safer in the magical world than people who can be easily manipulated.

¹⁸ Of course, positive thoughts are far more powerful than negative thoughts; with clearing your intentions, strengthening your will and practicing white magick in its finest, none of the negative intentions and magical practices of others will harm you.

While for some the path of black magick might appear easier, the truth is that, in the end, the difficult “white” path brings wonderful fruits, and the “black” path leads to suffering – there's no exception – especially when there's always the cause-and-effect magical law working in the background – but we'll discuss it later. Choose your path wisely.

The Basics You Need - Thinking

There is a lot to know and to learn for anyone who wish to follow a path of spiritual development, or pagan paths, Wiccan way or European magical traditions. With New Age movement all around us and books being published with little responsibility in mind, there is a great need for a book such as this one. A book that covers the basics, easily understandable for everyone, no matter what your tradition is. And the very basics of basics lie not in energy arts, but in your head. If you wish to deal with magick, there is a specific way that you must think.

Think and Stay Responsible

Magick isn't mainly about doing, but about thinking. There are many thinks you need to think over if you really want to deal with magick. One of the basic rules requires for the practice of magick is the rule of thinking. It says: think, think, think or just think before you do. To understand this better, we need few examples of magical practices and the things you need to think over.

- **You're about to perform a psychic healing** – there are many think you need to consider: does the person requires psychic healing, or maybe a psychotherapist will be enough? Do you have enough knowledge, and are your skills advanced enough to help the person? What kind of result do you want to achieve? Does the person truly agrees for healing?¹⁹ Can there be some unforeseen results

19 As I practice Reiki, I notice this problem from time to time – people don't wish to be healed. I mean while most people are open for healing, yes, there is

or consequences of your action? Do you have enough energy to perform healing? Or do you have enough skills to channel the healing energy, if you act as a channel? If so, do you truly understand the source of the healing energy?²⁰ Have you shielded yourself and the room? Is your patient truly safe on the spiritual level? Have you grounded yourself? Do you know how to cut the connection with your patient after the healing session? Do you have clear intentions? Are you sure you do not want to harm the person you're about to heal?

- **You're about to perform a magical ritual that is meant to attract you money** – here, as well, we have many questions: do you really need to perform a ritual? Maybe you should look for a better job, just like that? Or maybe, instead of magical ritual, you should work out your laziness? If you really want to perform a ritual: do you really know what you're doing? Are you truly shielded against unwanted spiritual influence? What kind of ritual do you wish to perform? Do you consider that it's an

a group of those who are closed for healing. Closed, meaning they do not wish to be healed – why so? There are many reasons. Sometimes, they don't want to be healed because they don't believe in spiritual healing, truly. And sometimes, people don't want to be healed because they like being ill – everyone cares about them, and everyone pays attention to them – for some people, it's more important than healing and responsibility for their own life. Make sure that your patient truly wants to be healed.

- 20 Once again, in case of Reiki, the source of the energy isn't truly understood. While pure Reiki (traditional Japanese Reiki, or classic Western Reiki from the Usui-Takata lineage) is clear on this matter, there are many modern schools of Reiki that do not work with real Reiki energy, even if they use the term “Reiki” in the name of the school. Some schools, created by inexperienced healers or people with problematic ego, often plug their students to egregores, and this is quite near to black magick. There are many schools of Reiki, or even other schools of spiritual healing that use egregores, so be sure to truly understand what you're getting into – another aspect of thinking. On the other hand, there are many schools of spiritual healing that truly attune the person to the “Source” or positive entities, like Bodhisattvas in Buddhism.

exchange based ritual? This might happen if you ask a spirit or a deity to help you with your money – if so, ask yourself, what kind of price you will have to pay for getting some more money? What kind of consequences your ritual might cause?

- **You're about to perform a magical ritual that is meant to attract love of a specific person** – do you consider that if you would be meant for each other, you wouldn't have to perform a ritual? Are you aware that forcing someone to love is black magick and your negative intentions will come back to you, sooner or later?
- **You're about to learn a new magical technique** – do you really need to learn it? What kind of energies does it utilize? Can you include this technique into your daily practice? Later on, you will learn that mixing traditions and energies isn't such a good idea. Can you learn the technique without becoming a worshiper of specific deities or spirits?
- **You're about to begin practice of specific tradition** – do you really want to walk this particular path? Will this new path require you to break the connection with previous practices? Or, will it require you to end your relationship with some people?

As you can see, there are many questions asked above, in such few examples – imagine how many questions you have to ask yourself in real life. Magick is like real life – you need to be responsible for your own actions, and this requires you to ask yourself each and every time many questions, that may save your life and mental stability. Because you have to be responsible. In magick, you're responsible for:

- **Yourself** – your life, your mental stability, your dreams, your health, your work and everything that is related to your life.

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- **People you love** – especially people you love, you should keep them in mind when practicing magick. Think if your actions influence them, or harm them. Imagine that quite often, you might become a subject of a magical attack, and if the attack can't get to you, it might strike the person you love.²¹
- **People you might influence** – for example those who seek your psychic services or healing services, or those who might become subjects of your magical ritual – make sure you won't harm them.
- **The reputation of your school of thought** – you're responsible for the school of thought through you practice – in other words, you are responsible for your tradition. If you're an Asatru follower, and your actions are aggressive and full of hate, this will influence your entire movement.

You cannot simply practice something and care not about these things mentioned above. Stay responsible, because your actions bring results – do good stuff, and good stuff will happen to you. Do bad stuff, and bad stuff will happen to you and to people you care about.

Mental Stability in the Practice of Magick

In the old days, people who wanted to learn the art of the occult (the secret knowledge) had to spend many years learning and training themselves in the art of mental discipline. Even near the end of XIX century, the occult orders kept this approach. Later on, in the XX century, the New Age movement was born, and the secret knowledge became secret no more. Some people say that these teachings should be available to everyone, and they should

²¹ This doesn't happen often, especially if the other person isn't working with magick – in such case, people have a tendency to have a far greater spiritual protection than those who intentionally work with magick.

be free. I cannot agree – these teachings can do more harm than good. It's because there is an important factor to all spiritual and magical practices – it's the mental stability. These days, many “spiritual” workers gathered around the New Age movement have no stability at all – thus they suffer from possessions, they fall into the trap of channelings and their own fears and beliefs. Because of this, New Age movement do more harm to humanity than good.

Mental stability is important. How to define such stability? Basically, you're unstable when:

- **You are controlled by fears** – fear of losing your lover; fear of loosing your job or money; fear of being attacked; fear of being manipulated by others; fear of conspiracy theories²² and so on.
- **You are easily manipulated** – when you don't have your own will; when you easily take orders and do things others want instead of doing things you want.
- **You have low self-assessment and self-esteem** – when you believe you're unworthy, or you're afraid what others might say or think of you; when you're afraid of taking actions or speaking your mind.
- **You blame others for your troubles** – when you hate someone; or you become aggressive towards someone; or you try to manipulate others for your own gain;
- **You are controlled by your own false beliefs** – if you think you have no power, and you're unworthy of practicing magick or achieving success; when you think that only bad people achieve success; when you think in all these bad things that your parents and teachers taught you, then you have a problem.

22 A person who believes in conspiracy theories easily becomes paranoid. Such person should NEVER practice magick, at least not until the fear of “conspiracies all around me” is dealt with. Blind belief in conspiracy theories is a sign that the person in question doesn't feel safe in the world and suffers from constant emotional pain of fear.

by Nathaniel

All these are signs that you aren't mentally stable, and before you begin advanced magical practice, you should work some things out. But we'll deal with such practices later. For now, let's continue with the stability issues. A good way to define if you're ready to practice magick or not, is to honestly analyze your intentions towards magick – or, why do you want to learn magick?

- **Your magical practices should not be dictated by your fears** – for example if you're afraid you might lose your lover or job it's not a good intention as it's a sign that you are controlled by your own fears. And if you are controlled by fears, then you need to deal with these fears, first before you begin magical practices. Love spells are often being cast out of fear that the person might end up lonely for the rest of person's life – such spell is dictated by fear.
- **Your magical practice should not be dictated by hate or aggression** – quite often I encounter people who wish to cast a curse upon someone because they don't like this person. Sometimes, people want to use magick to have their revenge. Sometimes, people wish to use magick in order to control someone, to manipulate the person to do things the person doesn't want to do. Sometimes, people want to use magick in order to force a person to go to bed with them. This, too, is caused by fears, or, on the other hand, by uncontrolled lust. Sometimes, these are simple uncontrolled energies of hate or aggression. But your magick practice should not be controlled by these energies.
- **Magick should not be dictated by lust** – neither should be your practice. Lust for forced love is a sign that a person is unable to open itself for true, romantic love. Lust for money is a sign that a person doesn't believe in its own capability of making a decent income. Lust for material goods is a sign that a person can be easily manipulated by advertisement into buying things that the person doesn't need. If you believe you're controlled by lust, it means

you're not ready to begin magical practice.

- **Your practice should not be dictated by your low self-assessment** – sometimes, people want to practice magick because they believe it will make them special – so mystical, so magical and occult – and “cool”. Sometimes, they practice magick simply to become accepted within the community of other magical workers. Sometimes, they become psychic healers, not because they want to help others, but because helping others makes them feel good, worthy, needed and generally “cool”.²³ Often, young people start learning and practicing magick – in their case, it's a way to find their own place on Earth, a symbol of their youthful rebellion. Again, in all these cases we can see problems with self-assessment, which should be empowered before the person begins serious magical practice.

All of these are called “negative intentions”²⁴ - and all of them are signs that you are not ready to begin serious magical practice, but instead you should start with basic practices that are meant to enforce mind discipline. Mind discipline is not an ability to control your negative thoughts – it's the ability not to be controlled by negative thoughts. Here is where we can see another problem of New Age – many New Age schools try to get rid of negative emotions entirely. But this is impossible because by running away from negative emotions, you do not heal them – they will catch you, eventually. One must learn to live with negative emotions and allow them to flow – when they flow, and you observe them, they do not build up in your body; thus they do not create anchor points

23 I observe this among Reiki practitioners, who practice and teach Reiki so they can feel good about themselves. And Reiki practice is never about you, it's about the person you're helping – either by sending this person's Reiki, or teaching this person how to use Reiki.

24 In the end, you might think that magick is all about making your life and the entire world a better place – with all these positive intentions in mind. And you'd be right.

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for unpleasant entities to attach, and you're no longer a slave of these negative emotions. Dealing with negative emotions and intentions is not about destroying them – but about healing them in such way, that when something unpleasant happens to you, you won't feel negative emotions, and you won't be influenced by these unpleasant events any more.

Why is mental stability so important? There's a quite simple reason for this – when a person isn't mentally stable, he or she becomes an easy target for unpleasant entities who can use the person to feed upon. Such person will become dangerous for himself or herself, but also, the person will become dangerous for people around him or her. Negative intentions create “holes” in your energy body, through which entities can attach themselves, feed upon you, and with time, control you, so you can do more bad stuff; thus generate more energy the entities can feed upon. And of course, with negative intentions acting as reasons for your magical practices, you cause harm to others – and it's simple unethical.

Magick was never about power – it was about understanding the Universe, coming in contact with God, and making the life of the entire community better. Whether you practice pagan magick, or Taoist techniques, or spiritual teachings of Huna, the good of the entire community should be kept in mind. And these days, the whole World is one, big community.

Do You Really Need Magick?

To some people, magick is the ultimate answer to all problems of the world. But in reality, a lot of problems can be solved without the use of magick. For example by talking – communication is the key to many problems. As you already know, the first rule of magic says “think, think, think”. Thus, whenever you encounter a problem in your life, think how can you solve it without the use of magick. Perhaps you can ask someone for help, maybe you can negotiate, or maybe you can consult a spiritual worker or psychotherapist. This might sound trivial to you, but trust me when I say that it's important to mention this – many problems can be solved without magick. And you should remember about this

because too often people fall into the trap of using magick everywhere they can. You don't have to use magick all the time, so don't try to do this. It has a lot to do with grounding and this topic will be discussed later.

In order to be good at magick work, you must devote your entire life to this – but is it really something you want? You can't practice magick as a hobby, after work hours – magick has to be your work. And that's why peoples skilled in magick exists – it's their job to serve others through magick. You can always consult some shaman or witch or psychic, instead of becoming one yourself.

How to Improve Your Mental Stability?

In the old days, problems that I've described earlier like fears or unethical goals were healed by priests, community leaders or the heads of family. Today, a lot of people that practice magick want to heal these problems, by becoming spiritual workers themselves. But know this – “priests” and people capable of helping you are still out there. Besides such magical workers out there, there are psychologists and psychotherapists available, as well. And they can really help you. If you have a choice – visit a psychotherapist or learn magick, choose the first option.

Still, there are some basic practices for every school of spiritual thought. Improving your mental discipline and going through the basics of mental stability is a complex process that takes years. You must heal your fears, false beliefs, lust and improve your self-assessment. There are many ways to do so. The school of Huna teaches about affirmations²⁵ - phrases that, when written in proper way, are meant to reprogram your beliefs. Most eastern schools teach different forms of meditation, and a lot of modern New Age schools explain the importance of forgiveness – forgiving others and forgiving yourself is what I consider being the most important element of improving your mental discipline.

If you walk the path of Wicca or Norse Magick, or Reiki, or

25 Nathaniel., *Affirmations 101, What Do You Need To Know About Using Them For Inner Growth*. On: A State of Mind. On-line access: <http://astateofmind.eu/2011/03/18/affirmations-101/>

by Nathaniel

Huna, or any specific pagan or European tradition, you should know this – as a beginner it is all right to ask those who are more experienced than you. Read as many books about your tradition as possible. Go to on-line discussion boards run by groups in your tradition and ask for basic practices and books. Find someone in your tradition who could provide you with a list of basic books and practices. And most important, understand that even if these basics might look pointless, the truth is they are very, very important and there is a reason to practice them.²⁶

If you do not follow a specific tradition, but you explore the world of New Age ideologies, then it's difficult to find a book covering the basics of mental discipline. You may wish to use affirmations and forgiveness techniques as mentioned earlier. You might want to learn the technique of healing Core Images¹, as well, which is useful to healing your intentions. You can learn Zazen meditation that originates from the Zen school of Buddhism, as well – Zazen is a wonderful form of meditation that teaches mental discipline. A simple version of Zazen for beginners has been explained in my other book, *Psychic Development Simplified*.²⁷

Generally, look for practices that:

- Help you clear your mind of chaotic thoughts;
- Help you deal with unpleasant memories from your past;
- Help you redefine your beliefs, from negative to positive;

26 On the beginning of your journey, it's difficult to learn the basics – there are so many chaotic books out there. I hope this book will help you out, truly. Yet, I advise to think – wouldn't it be better to follow one specific tradition, instead of trying to create a safe mixture of different practices, just like New Age does? The more advanced you are, the easier it becomes to choose your own path. For example, I teach Reiki, this is the primary energy I work with – in addition, I work with my own energy, Chi. I also implement Taoist and Buddhist spiritual teachings into my life, and I follow the psychological code of Huna. Finally, I've been taught the basics of magick by a European shaman – all of this helped me remain safe on my own path. But if you're just a beginner, try not to mix so many things at the same time.

27 Nathaniel, *Psychic Development Simplified*. A State of Mind 2011.

- Help you heal your negative intentions by understanding why do you have negative intentions towards yourself and others;

There are plenty of such techniques, some of which reflecting the ideology of New Age, others reflecting the pagan or magical ideologies. You can use these techniques to improve your mental discipline. Then, you will be ready to begin more advanced magical practices.

Learn and Read a Lot

Magick is difficult – you cannot fall into a trap of a “enlightenment over single weekend workshops”, because the path of magick and spiritual development is a long one.²⁸ While you can participate in workshops and courses of a different sort, as they are very useful, you have to understand that while you can benefit from participation, the workshops themselves won't turn you into an enlightened Buddha or a powerful magus. Workshops, courses and lectures are great if they are being managed in a professional way. While lectures can be host almost anywhere, the workshops, which are based on practice, have to keep the safety issues in mind.

Once, I participated in a workshop, in which the teacher came straight from a bus with her luggage right by her side, and she immediately started the class. Quite soon, she started doing something within people's auras – without cleansing herself first, transferring all the negative energies she had upon her own aura to others. All of this occurred in a room that wasn't cleansed and wasn't shielded against unwanted spiritual influence. I was quite terrified as I was able to perceive, clairvoyantly, two unpleasant entities – one crawling between the participants and the other one standing in the corner, with a scary grin. These entities were looking for prey, and this particular workshop provided them with

²⁸ At the moment of writing this book, I work with magick and spiritual development for 9 years – and I cannot call myself “master”, still.

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some. More than that, the teacher didn't cut herself from the participants, creating the links and attachments, through which she draw their life force back to her – I call it “psychic vampirism” - it will be discussed later. And finally, let's say it – the teacher, she was hot, and it was clearly visible that the male participants weren't in control of their sexual desires during this class.

Thus, there are some things that are essential for your safety on the path of learning:

- **The person that runs the workshop should know what he or she is doing** – the teacher should cleanse himself or herself, especially if he or she wants to work within people's auras and their energy system. You cannot get into someone's energy body – the aura and inner energetics – if you won't cleanse yourself, first. That's the basic safety issue of spiritual work with others.
- **The place should be cleansed and shielded against unwanted spiritual influence** – there are beings that are psychic vampires, astral parasites that feed upon life force of people. Especially those who cannot protect themselves, or are inexperienced enough to notice these parasites. The place, in which the workshop takes place, should be shielded against such entities. The place is filled with unpleasant energies, as well – and it should be cleansed of these energies. Otherwise, these energies fill influence the participants in a negative way.
- **You must be careful when you open yourself** – in the example above, the participants were willing to open themselves for the teacher's magical doing – but they weren't aware what she was doing. I don't know it either as I wasn't risking an attachment from the nasty grin entity in the corner. But it's not the point. The point is that if you do not know that the other person is doing, then do not open yourself unless you trust the person completely. Once someone is within your aura, he or she can do wonderful

things, but also, he or she can do terrible things – trust and knowledge are essential here.

- **The teacher should cut his attachments and links, and he should teach it to the class** – every single time you do something within a person's aura, or you work with entities or even objects, you create links with these objects. Links, through which energy and intentions can flow from source to source. These links should be cut, and the teacher should know it. More than that, if the participants work one with another, the teacher should instruct how to cut the links. If he doesn't do this, then it's a serious safety issue flaw.
- **The group's energetics** – in the example above, the group's energetics problem was related to the teacher's hotness, and the inability of the male participants to control their sexual desires. Such uncontrolled energies can destabilize the entire workshop, and these energies might make the workshop ineffective and even dangerous. The energy keeps flowing from person to person, especially if people open themselves for everything. And it can do serious damages to the person's psyche and spirit. The teacher should know how to control these energies.

All of these elements I discuss in this book, so don't worry – you will learn about them sooner or later. Don't be afraid to ask the teacher if he remembers about the above essential steps. If he doesn't, don't worry about your money or time – just walk away. Because it's much better to lose money and time, but remain safe, than to lose money and time, and get yourself a nasty astral attachment that will require some serious magical work to get rid of. So while you can truly participate in workshops and classes as you can benefit greatly from these, remember that there are safety issues to keep in mind.

In addition, you should read a lot of books. This is essential knowledge regarding studies of magick, as well. Different books

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say different things about the same subject. Some books are written in a New Age style. Other books are meant to inspire and share experiences, not to teach. Other books are based on a scientific basis. To help you understand it better, let me give you some examples. In case of Reiki, there are many types of books. Some are quite New Age – they talk about peace, love, wonderful energies, angels, channelings and basically, they are based upon New Age understanding of the author. While they can provide you with some additional knowledge, they are pointless, generally. But there are other books – manuals that are pure and simple, they teach the essentials, acting like guidebooks or even text books for students of the Reiki path. These books are worth reading, but they will not provide you with too many personal opinions. Then, there are books about personal experiences of Reiki practitioners. These books are meant to inspire and share experiences. You can learn about the author's perspective from such books, but you shouldn't think about them as the source of ultimate truth – as modern New Age followers do. Finally, there are more professional books, like *The Big Book of Reiki Symbols* by Walter Lubeck and Mark Hosak, which are based on literature, scientific books and detailed research – these books are meant to expand your knowledge about Reiki in a far more complex way than the previous books. If you truly want to learn about Reiki, you should read all these types of books – then practice by yourself. In the end, the experiences of others will help you with your own practice. The guidebooks will tell you how to practice, and the scientific books will help you take your practice seriously. But in the end, the amount of knowledge is just a foundation for your practice.

Let me give you another example, this time about shamanism. There are many types of books about shamanism. Some are quite New Age – they talk about becoming a shaman over a weekend, or they talk that shamans are healers of the New Age and everyone can become a shaman. This isn't true, of course. Then, there are more personal books, written by true shamans (or medicine men, or healers), books which are written as a form of biography. And they are good because quite often they contain a lot of useful

teachings. Then, there are more scientific books that discuss shamanism from anthropological and scientific perspective, and they are worth reading if you truly want to know what shamanism really is. If you have been appointed by spirits to be a shaman, then you should read personal books and scientific books. But in the end, your practice and the guidance of spirits is the most important element of your work.

What I want you to know is that there are many books about magick arts available – some are great, and some are worth of your time, and some are full of fluff, and you shouldn't even look at them. But, in the end if you truly want to learn magick, then you have to read almost everything that is related to your path, and draw conclusions on your own. You have to gain your own experience and figure out which books are useful, and which aren't. Theory is important, and the more theory you collect in your head, the safer and more effective your magical work is.

The Process of Initiation

An “initiation” is a concept that exists in every tradition of the world. One can be initiated into childhood, adulthood, elderly, into being a man or woman, or into magical or spiritual practice. The processes that occur in initiation are often psychological, and they are always present when someone walks the path of magick or spirituality. That is why it's essential to learn about such processes and learn what you might expect in initiation.

There are three forms of initiation – one form is a complex psychological process. The second one is a ritual interconnected with the culture and society. In this book, we're more interested in this first form of initiation – the definition would be: a psychological process related to spiritual changes that occur because of magical or spiritual practice. In other words, something spiritual or magical influence you, and acts like a trigger, which triggers the psychological change. This process of change from one state to another, stronger and more spiritual state, is what we call an initiation.

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While rituals and cultural activities are one-time event and they can last few minutes or few hours, the magical initiation should be understood as a process that may last for many weeks, months or even years. For example, in shamanic traditions, the initiation process may last up to 20 years before the person is truly ready to become a shaman. In Usui Shiki Ryoho Reiki practice, while the attunement requires an hour to be complete, the initiation process continues for 5 to 10 years. Once again, during this time, the process of psychological change occurs. In most initiations, in the coming months or years, the old habits, patterns, beliefs, traumas and desires will be change if needed, so the person is ready to play a new role. In shamanism, the person chosen by spirits must change his or hers beliefs, learn new things, heal the old wounds, and rebuild the character, so he or she is ready to walk between the physical and spiritual realm. In magick or spirituality, whatever the path or tradition is, the initiation prepares the person to be: a magician, a healer, a spiritual leader, a healing energy channeler and so on. No magical path is free of this process.

But, while every tradition has a concept of such psychological initiation, not everyone will experience this process. Some people are simple meant to live a simple life, some people will experience only a small form of initiation. Generally, the bigger the life role is the more difficult the initiation becomes. Initiation on the path of magick is a process of magical “coming of age”. One must prove he is worth the path.

Initiation often begins with a personal crisis, when the personal values of a person becomes worthless in the face of changing reality, or when a person – due to any reasons – is forced to look beyond the comfort zone and look for new ways to live. An end to a relationship, a tragedy in family, death or deadly illness, or even a mystical experience, which leads to change, all of this may become a start for initiation. It doesn't have to, of course, so do not expect that every personal crisis is a beginning of initiation into a powerful spiritual worker. Sometimes, it's just yet another life experience. Still, quite often a crisis, an illness or tragedy is a reason why a person begins the search - for new ways to live, for

new practices and so on. Sometimes, what the person finds is just a new hobby. And sometimes, the person finds magick or spiritual path to walk. And this is often a reason why people fall into interest of magick and spirituality.

Sometimes, initiation begins in case of people who never heard of magick. And sometimes, initiation begins to a skilled spiritual worker who spent years on learning and practicing. In such case, initiation often marks a point when the person begins to walk a path to something greater – destiny, or spiritual ability, or new level of understanding.

During the initiation process, you may experience your personal crisis; the night of the soul or senses; illness; or you may simply live your life. It's an individual process, always. One day you're up and one day you're down, and the wheel of fortune keeps on turning. And quite often, the initiation requires you to move aside, go into a wild or at least limit your contact with the world, even if it's an evening alone with your cellphone turned off. Because often, initiation requires you to face yourself, like looking into a mirror and facing your light and darkness at the same time.

What may trigger the initiation? There are many possibilities – most of which are related to a specific path and beliefs.

- **Spirits** – this occurs mainly in case of shamans, when spirits choose the person to become a shaman. Then, the process of initiation begins, it is triggered on a spiritual level by spirits. Spirits, as spiritual beings, will be discussed later on.
- **Karma and past life events** – some people believe in reincarnation, and because of this, they also believe that the process of initiation might be triggered by past life karma. You've done something – good or bad, and this is why a psychological change in you begins.
- **Destiny** – if one believes in destiny, one may believe that some people are destined to become healers, mediums and so on. And if they are destined to become someone else,

then at some point the process of change – and preparation – must begin.

- **Personal decision** – some people decide to achieve a specific goal. Such thing occurs in case of Reiki practice, for example. They choose to become attuned, and because of this, the initiation is triggered. This often occurs in other magical or spiritual schools.
- **Magical practice** – and finally, magical or spiritual practice may trigger the process of initiation. That is, of course if someone is meant to become initiated into something.

One may ask, when does the process of initiation ends? The simplest answer is this: when it ends, you will know it. Until this time, live your life and let things be.

An Initiation That Gives The Skills

There is one more form of initiation – an initiation into practice. It's a ritual, but not based on cultural aspects of the society, yet based on a magical work that gives you a specific ability. While some psychological changes, understood as initiation, may be required for a person to begin a new form of practice, this specific type of initiation is a one-time event. It's often present in Buddhist practices, or in European magical tradition, when a master or teacher performs some magical doing on a person, changing this person's energies, or mind patterns or aura, so the person in question can learn a new ability and use it right away. Sometimes, the ability can be used right away, and sometimes, an initiation into practice triggers more psychological changes as described earlier.

An initiation into practice might be performed by:

- **A teacher or master** – which can perform a simple or a complex ritual upon you. This is often present in European or pagan traditions, and in Buddhist teachings.
- **Spirits and entities** – once again, the spirits or deities

perform some magical doing so you can use a new skill.

- **Past-life triggers** – this is a common concept in Buddhism. It is believed that a person might be initiated into a practice in this life automatically if the person has been initiated into practice in the past life.
- **Self-initiation** – one may be self-initiated into practice after many years of studies and learning.

The look, the feel and the process of such initiation ritual depends on the path and tradition of your choosing. This type of initiation rituals are performed, because, without them, one would be unable to practice a technique or skill. At some point, a person was initiated into a practice – either by spirits or a teacher or by himself after years of learning and practicing – and the person decided to pass the initiation to others. This is how it works in quite many magical and spiritual paths.

In some magical systems, the initiation rites include making changes in the energy system of a person. For example, in Reiki practice, the energy system is attuned to specific vibrations so that the person in question can work with Reiki energy. Other paths may include placing specific symbols called “seals” within the person's body – these seals have various purposes. Some of them are meant to give the person a new magical ability, but other seals are meant to block the person from the spiritual realms. Unfortunately, that second thing often occurs in modern religions, in which the practitioner is blocked to anything but a single deity or ideology. Often, this leads to a problem that organized religions are blocking the path towards enlightenment or magical growth. Of course, if the seals can be placed within the body, they can also be removed. If someone is skilled in such magical work, he or she is able to deal with seals, just like he or she is capable of dealing with curses, charms or other energetic manipulations. I will discuss energy manipulation in one of the further chapters. Anyway, the seals which often block: magical sensitivity, perception, clairvoyance or even the Will to explore other magical systems are

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a serious stuff, which is a reason that:

- No one should be forced to take the initiation rites with seals without conscious agreement.
- And everyone should carefully think if he or she really wishes to take such initiation rites if they mean becoming someone of a limited “freedom”.

As you can see, the processes of initiation are quite complex. What you should understand as an essential piece of knowledge is this: initiation is a process of change. It may be fast, one-time event, or it may last for many years to come. It is present in every tradition, and you should not be surprised if your magical or spiritual practice will cause changes in your personality and life in general, starting with work and hobby, ending on relationship and life beliefs. And in most cases, the process of change is difficult and emotionally painful, but if you wish to benefit from spirituality and magick, then you must be ready that change may occur.

The Initiation and the Journey

There is something else that should be mentioned in this book – the initiation journey. In the context of magick, it is quite a common reason to begin magical practice: a quest for finding yourself. My first interest in magick turned into such initiatory journey when I left my friends, home, family and nearly everything else and traveled to a big city far away from home. There, I started my quest for finding myself. A quest that took me four years. Four years to understand the lessons, to learn new things, find the inner power, become a man and return to the old ground as a completely new person. During my personal journey, I turned from a boy into a man – there was a lot of pain, a lot of situations that needed me to face my inner fears, and to find the power and manhood that was hidden within me. I conquered my inner demons, and I have found out my own truths – and then, I was ready to move on. Or should I say, to return home.

All of this begun with my interest of magick. It's not like magick guided me or forced me to this journey. It's more like there is a deep interconnection between magick or spirituality and basic mechanisms of life. In the old days, during the nomad tribes era, boys and girls were living their homes and heading into the wild to seek their inner power, so later on, they could become man and woman. This process of the inner journey into the wild, the initiation into an adult life and personal nature, is a natural element of our life. Everyone should take such a journey to find himself or herself. This way, one can find his dreams and goals and personal destiny, and one can learn himself or herself, find the inner power and inner, natural abilities, which will define a person's place in the world. It is so natural, yet so unknown to the people of the West. But know this – the wild changed, and now your journey might lead you to a big city where, still, you can learn your own independence. Things might look different than 5 or 6 thousand years ago, but the basic principles remain the same. The practice of magick or spirituality – an integral element of human life – might start your own journey, and you must be ready that no matter what your tradition or path is, you will have to walk it, and you will have to face yourself. Because, without the journey as a quest of finding yourself, you will not be successful in the world of spirituality.

Your “Psychic” Intuition

No matter if you walk the path of European Magick, traditional Asatru, oriental Buddhism or modern Reiki, there are some things all people have in common – one of these things is your psychic intuition. While the word “psychic” might seem to be a bit too “new age”, the truth is that every person has something we call “intuition”. This intuition of yours is a very important tool in magick and spiritual development because it's your guide, your inner voice that keeps you save and helps you achieve your goals – sometimes, even without true magick. Some people say that intuition is your sixth sense. Others believe it's your higher self, a

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part of a universal “God-mind” that speaks to you. Others believe it's your spirit guide, and some people believe that intuition is a word of spirits that give you advises. The truth is – we do not know what intuition is for sure. But we know it exists, it happens, and it works.

What is intuition? It's your ability to “sense and know things” based on your “heart”, not “logic”. You just know something is better, or something is wrong. You know that you forgot about something, or you know that some practice isn't the right practice for you. You go for a spiritual workshop, and you know that this particular teacher is right for you, or no. And there is no logical way to help you understand why is it that you know these things. And you should trust these inner feelings.

You feel them all the time – the point is to listen to them, and act according to your intuitive feelings. If you feel that something is right for you – do it. If you feel something isn't right for you, do not do it. It's that simple. Of course, sometimes you feel that something is wrong about a person or a workshop for a reason – because you have fears or traumas from the past experiences. How to distinguish your intuition from your fears? Simple, by your logical thinking. If you feel something, try to find logical reasons why you feel this way, or why you “know” something is or isn't right. If there are logical reasons – your memories, beliefs or fears, then it's not the intuition, it's your logical mind. But if there are no logical reasons behind your feelings and “knowing”, then it's intuition. And intuition is meant to be trusted.

There are few universal ways that might help you develop your intuition – an ability that is quite useful because it helps you decide: whether this spirit or teacher is trustworthy; whether this book is worth reading; whether this practice is safe; whether you are ready to begin a new path and such. For example, you may start a notebook, and whatever you do, perform the following exercise: ask your intuition what should you do, and await intuitive answers, which may come as: a vision, a memory-like sight, an inner sound or music, or just an inner voice. Or you may feel something in your heart, or you may simply know things. Then

write down your feelings in the notebook and make a decision. Write down the decision – note if it's based on the feelings, or it's based on your logical thinking. After some time – hours, days, weeks – the results of your decision will be clear to you. The results might be positive, neutral or negative. Now go back to your notebook and read over your notes regarding this particular decision. Analyze your feelings and your decision, because based on this, over time you will learn which feelings are generated by your intuition, a which feelings are generated by your fears and logical mind. Generally, positive results driven by intuitive feelings are a lesson that you've heard your intuition. Next time, you will be more experienced, and you will know what to seek in your feelings – over time, you'll be able to distinct between intuition and your logical mind. This will help you in the future.

Generally, the practice of meditation that is focused on clearing the mind and creating a state of peace, such practice is a gateway to intuition. If the mind is silent and at peace, it is governed by no fears or troubles. This way, your intuitive feelings and information have a clear way to your conscious mind. In a meditative state of mind, it's much easier to communicate with your intuition. Basically, each and every magical and spiritual tradition has some form of meditation. Because meditation is a state of mind, not a specific Hindu-related pose. Thus, you should learn what are the techniques of clearing your mind and putting it at peace, and the practice of such techniques will help you develop your intuition.

Whenever you try something new, or you think about buying a new book, or trying some new workshop, ask yourself if it's right for you, and await intuitive answers. They will guide you, and they will make sure that whatever you do, is right and good for you. And with these words, we can finally move to another chapter of this book and discuss the fascinating nature of our reality and multiple layers of existence.

by Nathaniel

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