

SEVEN STEPS IN PRACTICAL OCCULTISM

LESSON ONE

The practical instruction given in the first seven lessons of our curriculum has just one aim. It is intended to show you just what to do in order to attain health, happiness and security. It is designed to meet the needs of those who are interested in the practical application of occultism to their personal problems. It avoids technicalities and speculation, to the end that those who read it and put it into practice may begin to live the fundamentals it explains. It clarifies basic occult principles for those who have studied other systems of metaphysics.

The welfare of humanity as a whole depends on the well-being of the personal units in the social order. The world is good to live in, if one knows how to live. Knowledge of forces, laws and methods which will make you a better and more serviceable unit in the social order is set forth in these pages. Put this instruction into practice and you will be doing a service to all mankind. When you are happy, your daily living will add to the sum-total of human effectiveness and fulfillment.

True health is contagious. When you express it, your mere presence will heal. A free, cheerful spirit showers blessings on all who enter its presence. Be full of joy and you will make your neighbor happy also. No man lives unto himself. Apply this knowledge. Use the methods given in these lessons to make yourself secure and inevitably you will add to the riches of the world.

Because these things are true, this course is concerned primarily with just you. By concentrating on expressing the wonderful powers of human personality, you will be doing the best that can be done to help all your friends, relatives and associates .

You will be given plain, specific instruction. Carry it out precisely, giving full attention to every detail.

These pages contain a clear statement of procedures which have been tried and tested over a long period of time. Study each lesson carefully, so that you know exactly what it means. Then put it into practice. Give at least a week to the work outlined in each lesson. Make haste slowly.

The first step is very simple, yet it is of utmost importance. Many persons never take it. Their failure to do so accounts for their failure in everything else. Possibly you have already attended to this indispensable preliminary. If you have done so, you will understand how important it is, and you will realize that, in beginning this study, you cannot do better than to start with a reaffirmation of your decision.

First of all then, before you turn this page, take pencil and paper and write your answer to the question below:

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

By thus formally making up your mind, you have taken the first step in the right direction. What you have just written is probably rough, and far too long a statement. Try now to put what you want first (your most urgent desire) into a single sentence that shall embody your purpose as you now conceive it. Begin thus: "I will apply all my powers to achieve the following aim." Then set down exactly what you seek to accomplish. Remember, your sentence should give expression to a single purpose.

If your ultimate objective is a long-range project, which includes several intermediate stages, begin by directing your practice to the logical first step while keeping in mind the final goal. As soon as the first step has been accomplished successfully, begin applying your practice to the next. Do not permit yourself to linger by the wayside. The importance of this first step cannot possibly be over-emphasized. Until you have taken it read nothing beyond this page. Until one purpose, prefaced by the specific declaration of intention given above, is actually written out, you are simply wasting time and energy if you read any more of this lesson. So stop, and do it now!

Why do this? Because, provided only that your desire is in accordance with the laws of life and justice, you can be whatever you want to be, do whatever you want to do, have whatever you want to have.

Note that echoing verb. It indicates imperiousness of craving or need. Not puny, timid wishing. A real want has in it the quality of royalty. . . imperiousness which is "befitting an emperor or sovereign; commanding, ascendant." Furthermore, the old Latin root of the kingly adjectives imperative and imperious is a verb meaning "to set in order, to regulate."

This is the magic of a real want. It heads you in the right direction. It regulates the exercise of all your powers. It brings your life into harmony with the universal order. It prepares you for success, because the literal meaning of success is "getting things and events to follow one another in the correct sequence."

You can be, do and have whatever you really want, because the mental and emotional state which is expressed by this verb enables you to put your desire into specific imagery. Wishes are vague. Hopes are hazy. Genuine wants are sharply defined. A clear mental image tends to materialize itself as an actual condition or event.

Memorize that statement. Definite images have a driving power. Like seeds, they have life of their own. You have now begun to use this magic power. You have taken the first step to bring it under your direction so that you can build with it.

YOU KNOW WHAT YOU WANT !

You have chosen your goal. From now on, you will make steady progress toward it. Every stage of the journey is clearly mapped out for you by others who have been over the road. In this instruction there is no guesswork. It is neither theoretical nor experimental. These methods have been tried and proven by thousands who bear witness to their practical value and uplifting power.

You are now associated with a company of men and women who are on the highroad to attainment. Their power is linked with yours through the sharing of common interests and the practice of like methods. You now enjoy the privilege of being engaged with them in a concerted effort for the betterment of the human race through the improvement of its personal units.

No matter how far off the fulfillment of your aim may seem to be, today you have turned your face in the right direction. Most persons never make this beginning. They have no dominant purpose, no planned procedure, no particular destination. Thus they never "get anywhere," when they might achieve creditable success if only they would decide on somewhere to go.

This you have done. Now you must set to work. Mere aspiration will not take you to your chosen goal. There must also be activity. Concerning this we can give you nothing better than the words of a great French writer, Eliphas Levi (Alphonse Louis Constant), who said:

"Every intention which does not assert itself by deeds is vain intention, and the speech which expresses it is idle speech. It is action which proves life and establishes will. Hence it is said in the sacred and symbolical books that men will be judged, not according to their thoughts and their ideas, but according to their works. We must act in order to be. . .

"In order to do a thing, we must believe in the possibility of our doing, and this faith must forthwith be translated into acts. When a child says: 'I cannot,' his mother answers: 'Try.' Faith does not even try; it begins with the certitude of completing, and it proceeds calmly, as if omnipotence were at its disposal and eternity before it. Dare to formulate your desires, then set to work at once, and do not cease acting after the same manner and for the same end; what you want shall come to pass, and by you and for you it has indeed already begun."

"As if omnipotence were at its disposal." In this phrase Eliphas Levi tells us a great secret. For omnipotence, or All Power, is really and truly at our service. Eliphas Levi's knowledge of the All Power was derived from the same sources to which the B.O.T.A. are deeply indebted for the greater part of the instruction given in our curriculum. In his day men of science scoffed at him, but the grandchildren of his incredulous contemporaries have accepted his doctrine though few of them have even heard his name, or even know what he put into writing so long ago as 1859. Yet our electrical and atomic age is a concrete realization of the French adept's lucid conception of the ALL POWER. Study carefully what he wrote about it:

"There exists a force in nature which is far more powerful than steam, by means of which a single man who can master it, and knows how to direct it, might throw the world into confusion and transform its face. It is diffused throughout infinity; it is the substance of heaven and earth. When it produces radiance it is called light. It is substance and motion at one and the same time; it is a fluid and a perpetual vibration. The will of intelligent beings acts directly upon this light, and by means thereof, upon all nature, which is made subject to the modifications of intelligence.

“By the direction of this agent we can change the very order of the seasons, produce in the night the phenomena of day, correspond instantaneously from one end of the earth to the other, heal or hurt at a distance, and endow human speech with a universal reverberation and success. To know how to master this agent so as to profit by and direct its currents is to accomplish the Magnum Opus (Great Work), to be master of the world, and the depository even of the power of God.

“Being the instrument of life, this force naturally collects at living centers; it cleaves to the kernel of plants as to the heart of man (and by heart we understand the great sympathetic), but it identifies itself with the individual life of the existence it animates. We are, in fact, saturated with this light, and continually project it to make room for more. The settlement and polarization of this light about a center produces a living being; it attracts all the matter necessary to perfect and preserve it.

“This force has four properties--to dissolve, to consolidate, to quicken, and to moderate. These four properties, directed by the will of man, can modify all phases of Nature.”

Eliphas Levi's ideas are now advanced by those who have worked out the theory of matter and its constitution at present adopted by our leading physicists. His prophecies, derided when he made them, have been fulfilled. The devices of our electrical age realize his predictions to the letter.

Electricity, which is called light when it produces radiance, is now held to be substance and motion at one and the same time. It is diffused throughout the universe, over spaces measured in terms of millions of light-years. From it the structure of everything in the physical world is built up. By means of it we may so regulate the temperature of a room as to produce Arctic cold in midsummer, or torrid heat in midwinter; and in buildings of the future, electrically conditioned air will release us from bondage to the seasons. More than this, since the discovery of atomic fission, it is, even now, theoretically possible to modify climatic conditions so that the frozen wastes of Siberia and northern Canada may be transformed into granaries, and the fetid jungles of Brazil and India may be made fit for habitation.

All over the world, Edison's lamps have turned night into day, and this one application of electricity has changed habits, customs and morals within two generations. By telephone and telegraph we have instantaneous communication from one end of the world to the other. Television is now making us practically omnipresent in terms of sight, as well as by means of hearing. And when one voice may be sent out by radio so that the inhabitants of the whole world may listen to the words of a single man, we may say truly that the Great Magical Agent has “endowed human speech with a universal reverberation and success.”

There are wonders yet greater than these. For years, Dr. George Crile has been offering evidence that the human body is an electrical machine. Recently, an apparatus has been invented which demonstrates that our bodies are centers of this force, sending off fine radiations imperceptible to ordinary senses. Thus science approaches the domain of knowledge which has been explored by practical occultists for thousands of years. Human

thought and will may act directly on this force. This fact is the basis for a method which will enable any person who applies himself steadily to carrying it out, to attain mastery over himself, and, through this self-mastery, command over the conditions of his environment.

Each of us lives in a world of his own creation, built according to his imagined mental pattern. Change the pattern, and you change your world. You are always acting directly on this force which centers itself in you. You do not have to learn how to do this any more than you have to learn how to digest your dinner, or teach your heart how to beat. Try to get this fact firmly fixed. Every day of your life, up to this moment, you have exercised control over this force and have directed it by mental means. The world you find yourself inhabiting now is the world you have built for yourself. If it does not suit you, you have power to change it.

Remember, you already have full power to do so. What you will learn from these lessons is not how to get power. You don't need to get what you already possess. Nor will you learn from us how to become a master of hidden forces. You don't need to become what you are, right now. The hidden force always responds to your mental direction. Whatever pattern you impress upon it, that pattern it follows automatically.

What you need to know is neither how to get power to direct the magical agent, nor how to become its master. You need to know how best to use the power you actually possess, and how to apply your natural mastery over it so as to produce the manifestations you desire. Hence one main purpose of these instructions is to show you how to make the right kind of mental patterns.

We who are engaged in this work call ourselves "Builders of the Adytum." In ancient temples, the adytum was the house of the god, the inner shrine where dwelt the deity in whose honor the temple was erected. Our use of the word "adytum" has to do with the fact that the organism of man is capable of being transformed even more wonderfully than the conditions of his environment. Just as the builder of a house gathers materials from various places and assembles them according to a plan, so do the Builders of the Adytum take the raw material of human experience and shape it in a particular way. The end sought is to enable men and women to manifest actually what they always are potentially--to aid them to demonstrate the fact that they are really masters of themselves and their surroundings. To attain this end is to know that one is a "depository of the power of God."

To build the adytum, we must learn to control our bodies, to direct the nerve currents coursing through them, to equilibrate the emotions, and to master the modifications of the mind.

In joining with us in this enterprise you are not simply taking up an intellectual pastime. Neither are you seeking to gratify idle curiosity. You have a definite end in view. It is now clearly formulated, so that even before finishing your study of this first lesson, you have actually done something positive to take you toward your chosen goal. All the power you require in order to complete this work is yours now -- this very minute. You have

nothing to acquire but knowledge, and even that is already present in the subconscious treasure-house which you will find described in Lesson 2.

The most important practical instruction in the present lesson comes here at the end, to give it greater emphasis. Keep your decision to yourself. Do not show what you have written to anybody. Do not discuss it. Every night, just before going to bed, read the statement. Do the same thing every morning, before you begin dressing.

When you know the words by heart, destroy the paper and recite the statement every night and morning until you have achieved your first objective. Then write out a similar statement of the second logical step toward your ultimate aim. When you have realized this, go on to the third step. Keep your statements of purpose restricted to one at a time.

Always observe this little ritual. It is simple, but it is a bit of genuine magic. Be sure always to make the introductory statement given on page 2. This may seem to be a little thing, but as you make further progress you will understand why it should be done exactly as described.

Read this lesson several times during the week, so that you are sure to grasp its full import. Pay special attention to the long quotation from Eliphaz Levi. It will repay careful study.

Remember that others are working with you. We are all just as eager to see you reach your chosen goal as are you. You have linked yourself with a great and continually extending chain of intelligent centers of the All Power. We are working with you, and our knowledge and experience will be subtly communicated to you through the contact you have now established.

You KNOW what you want; you WILL to accomplish it; you DARE to aspire to it and work for it. Be sure that you remain SILENT about it until you have attained your goal.

Special Notice!! Over a period of years, it has occurred again and again that our students are troubled by inability to make a clear-cut decision as to what they really want. This has brought many questions, and what follows is the gist of our replies to these inquiries.

Often the difficulty is caused by making the aim too remote. Some students think they must aim at the highest ideal they can conjure up. What you're to aim at is being something and doing something, with the specific purpose of effecting a change in your circumstances.

It is quite possible that you may have a glimpse of a relatively distant goal, but the purpose of this technique is to enable you to progress to the next definite objective which appears to lead toward that goal, if you do glimpse it. Don't waste a moment's time trying to think up some high and lofty objective, far ahead in life. Life is not lived by years. It is an affair of days, hours -- minutes, even. Today's activity determines the fulfillment of tomorrow's ideal.

Many write us that their aim is "service," or "spiritual enlightenment," or "to know the Truth." None of these are to be classed as aims. They are no more than nebulous aspirations, and often they are symptoms of a desire to "get away from it all."

If the aim is "service," what kind of service? Every field of service requires preparatory training. A dishwasher serves as truly as does a teacher. But the teacher requires very specific kinds of preparation in order to become qualified and acceptable as an educator.

We are all servants of Life, and we serve Life best when we know what we want to "be" and "do." Some people write us that their problems can be solved only if they have "money." One of our members visualized "money" most successfully -- but when he found himself handling thousands of dollars in bills, it turned out that he was only the agent for an associate. The money belonged to somebody else and did our member no good whatever. He achieved a real security later on when he learned to follow the procedures as outlined in our curriculum.

If you want friendship, then you must learn how to be a friend, and act as a friend. If you want love, you must qualify yourself for this wonderful experience. How lovable are you? The more lovable you become, the more inevitably will you be able to attract Love from your environment. This, too, requires specific action.

"Spiritual enlightenment" is a final goal for all. But unless we learn how to bring our mental-emotional life under more conscious self-direction, we are not qualifying ourselves for this supreme experience. We must learn how to live and act in the here and now. To do it correctly, we must decide on something for which and toward which we can begin to act -- not by-and-by, but forthwith, as Eliphaz Levi tells us on page 3. Only as we become ever more aware of this instant can we begin to see how our mental-emotional life of yesterday has fashioned today.

The first seven lessons of B.O.T.A. will give you a technique to help you make mental patterns today which will give greater fulfillment to your tomorrow. The Tarot lessons which you will start in the eighth week will train you to dissolve the old frozen mental-emotional patterns and release this energy so that you may live in the present instant ever more fully.

No matter how much you may have read, how many courses you may have studied, how many classes or lectures you may have attended, you will find one thing different in the basic techniques of B.O.T.A. You will be taught how to perfect your image making faculties -- how to transmute your personality, and finally you will learn what it means to know that your personality is an instrument through which the Lord of Life expresses ever greater degrees of enlightened Self-direction, Spiritual perception, and Self-fulfillment.