

The Book of Initia, Chapter Seven

Initia General Theory II

Famous Witches and Magicians



Arthur Edward Waite 1857-1943

Waite was born in Brooklyn, but moved to England with his family as a one-year-old. He studied with every school of magick, famous and infamous, and made great contributions to Freemasonry (and by default modern witchcraft) even though they do not give him the credit and recognition he deserves. His lasting legacy for Witches and Magicians is the Rider-Waite Tarot, widely considered to be the standard for tarot.

He commissioned and directed the artist, Pamela Colman Smith, in the design of each card. The Smith-Waite Centennial Edition Tarot celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2009 with a special edition tarot that is an exact reproduction of the original. The main innovation was the illustration of all cards, not just the Major arcana but the Minor cards too, and in such a way as to be pictorially suggestive of their divinatory meanings. (Prior decks were more like playing cards.) He deliberately obscured some of the occult and esoteric aspects, but left them “hiding in plain sight” for those who seek.

He was the first to draw parallels between the legend of the Grail and tarot and also made popular the spread known as the Celtic Cross.

The Successful Witch’s Tool Kit

What are the nine absolute essentials in a successful Witch’s tool kit?

Make a guess list based on your training BEFORE you turn the page. (HINT: The phrase “tool kit” is a metaphor. None of them are actual physical objects.)

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If you asked some “experts” this question, they might start listing such things as a wand, herb(s), a cup, a scrying device, a cutting instrument such as a knife, sword or boline and on and on. Of course you, as SIA students, approach this question from a different perspective. Here is my list in order of importance according to my personal scale of priorities. I’d be willing to bet that you guessed some of these correctly.

1. IMAGINATION

2. CREATIVITY

3. A HEALTHY, PLUMP CORPUS CALLOSUM

4. CURIOSITY

5. DISCIPLINE

6. COURAGE

7. FLEXIBILITY

8. CONFIDENCE

9. SACRIFICE

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As you know, I think the number “9” is an especially magickal number. So it didn’t surprise me in the least that my list was nine items long.

IMAGINATION - There were a couple of “dump” questions on the application to SIA and this was one of them. If an applicant cannot self-report a good imagination, we would not be able to grant admission to the school because, as we have discussed in past lessons, it is simply not possible to perform magick without it. That is because ...

... magick is abstract.

The results may be concrete, but the magick that caused the result is not.

We don’t have a part of the brain set aside for fantasy and illusion and another set aside for magick. It is the SAME faculty. If you cannot “visualize”, being a Witch or Magician is not in the cards for you. Fortunately, very few people fall into this category.

I performed once-a-month guided meditations in Houston for several years as part of my practice as a “professional metaphysician”. We took reservations up to thirty five people (because I don’t like to try and manage energy groups larger than that, too many individuals create too many cross-currents) at a time. Of the hundreds of people I encountered during that phase of my life, I encountered only two such people. I worked with each of them one-on-one, but could never help them access this ability that I continue to believe is universally innate to humans.

CREATIVITY - These first two items on the list are so critical that it is almost impossible to rank them. Either could legitimately occupy the number one position.

Real magick requires hands-on creativity. Buying a prepackaged spell and following directions will get you somewhere between nowhere and not very far with probability favoring the former. **Yes. You must call a full-blown spell into reality causing matter to rearrange its form according to your will using nothing more than the divine spark of creativity you share with the gods.** When your belief in your ability to do this is small or uncultured, this may be almost painful, but it gets easier as practice and success feed self-confidence.

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A HEALTHY, PLUMP CORPUS CALLOSUM - The corpus callosum is a wide, flat bundle of axons beneath the cortex that conducts inter-hemispheric communication in the brain (communication between right and left sides of the brain). We have visited the subject of left and right side brain activity before. Here is a brief review.

The left brain is turned outward toward the external world (objective). The right is turned inward toward the self (subjective). The left is in charge of the concrete, logic, mathematics, everyday problems and so forth. The right is in charge of feelings, intuition, imagination and so forth. That would include all things psychic.

(Side Note: The objective mind can reason both inductively and deductively while the subjective mind is only capable of deductive reasoning.)

Mediums operate in right-brain mode because their job is to use psychic sensitivity for purposes of information gathering or, sometimes, communication. Those who study mediumship, along with other paranormal phenomena, must utilize *both* sides of the brain.

(Paranormal) ...phenomenology differs from many other forms of data analysis in that, to be done well, the investigator must alternate back and forth between what has traditionally been thought of as left and right brain functioning. - Giorgi 1985.

(Side Note: Many private (non-church) and state U.S. universities used to offer courses in parapsychology in the 60's, 70's and 80's, but these courses have either been removed or relabeled misleading, vague or innocuous terms like "alternative psychology" or "consciousness studies".

The courses, and even degrees, are still widely offered and respected in England. *I took two semesters of parapsychology as part of my undergraduate work in psychology and, although, I didn't then and don't now think parapsychology belongs with the study of psychology, I wouldn't take anything for the education I got from what I might affectionately call Weird 101 and 102. It was this that led me to the theosophic schools which in turn led to traditional Witchcraft, aspects of which became keeper pieces in my quest of the truth.)*

Rounding back to the subject at hand, a successful Witch must rely on both sides of the brain. Women have a definite advantage because the corpus callosum is generally much bigger and better developed in the female brain, but it is not a foregone conclusion.

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"Famous Witches and Magicians" series, A.E. Waite. The point is that you must use both sides of your brain to perform magick and, like the phenomenology investigator, Witches must switch back and forth as necessary.

CURIOSITY - Never underestimate the value and virtue of curiosity. It is the bedrock of your desire to learn and do. It is the evidence that you are engaged intellectually, awake and fully present for your life; that you are eager to wring every bit of promise and potential out of the circumstances that come your way and those you have to run down. Curiosity isn't a purely human characteristic, but, even in the animal world, it is mother to enterprise, ambition, purpose and desire.

Curiosity surely played a key role in the events that led you to Seasons in Avalon, for example. Curiosity is what fires your interest in learning more about yourself and about magick. Wanting to know how much you can do, how much power you can manage, how much insight you can gain from psychic development -- all things stoked by curiosity.

DISCIPLINE - If you're doing this right, you know it's not *all* fun and games. Some of it is tedious. Some of it is tiring. And all of it places demands on your time which is a near-universal issue of modern life. Discipline is required to make time for new lessons and materials, to practice, to organize how your magickal time should be applied and put to best use. Those who were looking for an easy path to power over others succumbed to the God of Attrition many lessons back.

Also related to discipline are maturity and good judgment, two things I mention a lot. Chronological age is a "bust out" question in the application, but there's much more to maturity than your birthday. Even if you are seasoned in experience and balanced in outlook, that's still no guarantee of good judgment. However, positioning it as a goal is better than nothing. For one thing, you need good judgment to know when you may need more study or preparation before you attempt a particular task.

There are questions you should ask at the beginning of planning a magickal working. Here are two of them.

1.) Is this a goal worthy of my training, limited time and energetic resources?

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ETHICS Alert! 2.) *Can I foresee a ramification by which this act, this thought or this working might adversely affect an innocent?* I taught my own children that all “commandments” and laws could be reduced to this simple question.

COURAGE - This means the courage necessary to take a step into the magickal unknown, which you have done several times if you have completed the first nineteen lessons, but also the courage necessary to look at yourself truly, to evaluate your personal assets and flaws and examine your belief system with a comb of fine teeth. In some ways, this is the most difficult task in magick because it is contrary to human nature.

Humans like to concentrate on our assets and ignore the possibility of flaws. We (present company excluded of course) like to take on the mantel of a packaged set of opinions before reaching adulthood and full development of brain, then spend the rest of our lives saying such inane things as, “That’s the way I was raised.” The last thing most people want to do is think about whether or not there are holes in the logic or authenticity of their world view; religion, ethics, politics or philosophy. They fear having to think. Worse, they fear the conclusions such an exercise might render.

Most people’s lives are arranged around a system of lies and illusions. Witchcraft does not accommodate self-delusion. If you fail to account or compensate for a personal liability or fault, it will form a natural barrier to your result. If you fail to recognize when a position is an operating perspective (opinion) and not a perfect truth, it will block your magick. And so on.

Many of your fellow students have written to say that one of the most important things they have received from undertaking this training is understanding of self with the smoke, mirrors and guide wires stripped away. Giving credit where due, while it is true that such a cathartic journey is precious and invaluable, it also takes courage.

FLEXIBILITY - It’s one thing to recognize that your world view looks like Swiss cheese. The willingness to change when a better idea presents itself is something different. These are two steps of the same process. First you must have the courage to look honestly. Then you must have the flexibility to change what needs to be changed.

When I said that some people fear the conclusions that might reach if they examine

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their belief system, what I mean is that some, perhaps most, people have lifestyle forms constructed around belief systems. What if their social and recreational lives have been built around membership in a church? What if a particular religious or political view is of paramount importance to their families? What if changing their minds about a fundamental view would precipitate being rejected by their circle of friends? Typically, the older people become, the more unlikely is flexibility unless it has been practiced with few interruptions throughout life.

CONFIDENCE - This means confidence in yourself as a person and as a Witch/Magician, but also confidence in the magick itself. This might also be called "belief".

If you don't believe that your magick is going to work, there's no point in going through with it. *It's not just that it won't work. It's that it can't work!* **Being confident that your magick will work is the key ingredient.**

SACRIFICE - As a point of interest, many of the items on this list are shared by various spiritual disciplines, religions or pursuits. But, only these last two, are shared by all that I know of. *There has never been a system of belief that didn't require some kind of sacrifice. It's like a Universal invoice for knowledge or experience gained.* At this point in your training, your sacrifice is your tuition, your time and your energy. I'm going to suggest that the next time you cast a spell that involves the favor of a particular deity you make mention of this. Write into your spell an appropriate place to say, *"In sacrifice I have given my time, my money, my energy and my earnest devotion to learning the ways of magick."*

PROBING DEEPER ON THE SUBJECT OF ELEMENTS IN MAGICK

Side Note: *You may wonder why I always refer to Earth, Air, Fire and Water as the four ancient elements. I was in a discussion with a professor many years ago and said something about the elements. He looked perplexed for a beat or two until he realized I was talking about Earth, Air, Fire and Water. He then said, "Oh! You mean the four ANCIENT elements!" In deference to the fact that most people would think of the modern periodic table when the term elements is used, I have added the word ancient for purposes of precision and clarification, distinguishing between science and magick..*

ASTROLOGY IN PERSONALITY: *The Elements*



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Astrology holds that your personality is influenced by the position of heavenly bodies at the moment of your birth. This is how your Sun Sign is determined. These days anyone can readily tell you their Sun Sign, but few seem to understand that Sun signs and Moon signs are yin and yang. Your Sun sign governs how you appear to others; your outward attributes. Your Moon sign determines your state of emotion, psychic reactions and pure instinct. A Witch's Moon Sign is even more important to the practice of magick than the Sun sign; first, because Witchcraft, itself, is ruled by the Moon and, second, because Witchcraft relies on intuition and instinct which fall under the purview of the Moon's influence. *(If you refer to page 4, paragraph 2, you will see the obvious correlation between Sun/Moon signs and Right/Left brain function.)*

If you do not know your Moon sign, let your curiosity take you here:

http://www.findyourfate.com/astrology/ephemeris/your_birth_year.html

This is an excellent geocentric ephemeris meaning that Earth is the center of the Universe for purposes of this calculation as opposed to heliocentric method which uses the Sun as its basis.

To find your moon sign:

1. type (or cut and paste) the URL above into your browser bar replacing "your birth year" with the numeric year of your birth, ex. 1979
2. Scroll down until you find your birth month on the table.
3. Locate your day of birth in the far left hand column.
4. Line up your day of birth with the fourth column from left under the heading "MOON".
5. Your moon sign is abbreviated as follows: CP = Capricorn. AQ = Aquarius, PI = Pisces, AR = Aries, TA = Taurus, GE = Gemini, CN = Cancer, LE = Leo, VI = Virgo, LI = Libra, SC = Scorpio, SG = Sagittarius **Note that the moon will recreate perfect re-alignment with the circumstances of your birth once each month.**



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Side Note: "Once in every lunation cycle the Moon will be at the same phase that it was when we were born. This is the moment of our monthly lunar return and is a powerful time for us. This is particularly important for women, as they can be fertile at this time, even if it does not occur at the appropriate time in their menstrual cycle. Research has shown that if a women has sex during the few days around her lunar return she can spontaneously ovulate, which may go some way towards explaining how women fall pregnant at times when they least expect it, such as when they are menstruating. It is therefore extremely useful to find out what the Moon was doing at the time of our birth." - Susie Hazell 2003

For a brief description of Moon sign characteristics, I recommend this reference...

<http://www.mooncalendar.co.uk/the-astrology-of-the-moon.html>

Now determine which of the four ancient elements rules your Moon sign. To be both smart and creative about the use of your strengths and weaknesses you must know what they are.

Earth	Capricorn, Taurus, Virgo
Air	Libra, Aquarius, Gemini
Fire	Aries, Leo, Sagittarius
Water	Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces

When you are planning a spell, factor your Moon sign's element into the equation. For successful magick you must invite all the elements to be represented and do your best to achieve a balance. (Unless there's a good reason otherwise.) In seeking balance you must be aware of the elemental qualities your presence brings to the spell or ritual and also have a working knowledge of the



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qualities of the other elements and how they interact. There are a lot of moving parts in this determination which is the exact reason why it hasn't been introduced until now.

Let's look at the elements from the perspective of common knowledge *and* through magickal eyes.

EARTH - Earth, as planet, is the ground on which we walk; our home. As represented by flora and fauna, earth is dependent on air to breathe, water to drink and fire for warmth and electrical animation. It can put out fire. It can contain, block or channel water. It can cause tsunamis and earthquakes with its movements. In arid regions it can be whipped into a storm that blinds and threatens ability to breathe. Our bodies are formed out of earth expressed as bones.

AIR - Air forms the sanctuary of our atmosphere, the small blue line being the only thing separating us from an instant death in space. Fire and water draw their life from Air and are absolutely dependent upon it. When enraged it can be devastatingly destructive in the form of tornadoes, cyclones and hurricanes. It can extinguish fire or make it spread. It can excite the ocean waves and sink ships. It can wear mountains away to dust with relentless persistence and bury ancient cities. Without the breath of life, our brains cease to function within minutes.

Side Note: Here is what I call the "Survival Rule of Three". You will die in three minutes without air, in three days without water, in three weeks without food. Why do I include trivia such as this with your lessons? Because Witches need to be smart and know about diverse things. You never know what might come in handy.

WATER - The surface of our world is 70.8% water. That's why it looks like a blue marble from space. More than half the weight of our bodies is water, approximate 62% depending on age, gender, condition, etc. As said in the Survival Rule of Three, we can live only three days without it and that would be life at its most unpleasant. Water shapeshifts to nourish earth's flora and fauna. The saltwater gives birth to clouds that hold fresh water, the



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wind blows the cloud over land where it rains upon crops, parks, gardens, forests. It fills lakes, cools cities and makes us feel cleaner and shinier than before. Most important, it was our birthplace when we began as single cell organisms. Yes. It's true that people have been born with gills or web feet.

FIRE - Now come we to fire. Fire is warmth. It cooks our food and burns away disease. It is magickal and hypnotic, appealing to the most primeval part of our psyche. When out of control its flames can consume earth in the form of flora and fauna. It is just as two-sided in the form of electricity. As lightning, it can stun us with its beauty while devastating a random target. It is also the platform that makes the dizzying magics of modern technology possible. I've noticed that fire is often ignored in the telling of what makes us possible and what a shame because the truth is that fire is an essential component of life on Earth and life in bodies. The earth gives us bones. The air gives us breath. The water gives us flesh and blood, but the fire is what causes the electrical impulses that animate us into self-directed beings with motor control of our bodies, thoughts, memories, awareness of feelings, and so on. Without Fire, we would be bodies in a coma unable to survive without intensive care. But, last and most important of all is the warmth of the Sun's fire. All the earth and air and water in the Universe could not sustain life without the Sun.



The point of this elemental review is not just to point out the qualities of each of the four ancient elements, but to prompt reflection on how complicated is the interaction between them. Balance means paradise. Imbalance means disaster.

As I mentioned in your first year studies and in the *Seasons Primer*, I have a relationship, albeit tenuous, with the Buddhist concept of environmental harmony known as Feng Shui. The reason why Feng Shui is germane to the consideration of elements in Witchcraft is because it is a body of work that assigns importance to the elements and seeks to balance and harmonize their properties in the structures we use for living,

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working and playing. The first part of the process is balance. The second is harmonization. It is this latter part that acknowledges the complexity of how the elements interact with one another. Working it out in magickal terms is like rock/paper/scissors to the extreme.

ASSIGNMENT: Your assignment for this lesson is to plan a spell taking all known elemental influences into account.

1. Determine whether the essential nature of the goal of your spell is Earth, Air, Fire or Water. The following is not a list of every situation, but it should lend enough insight to help you make a determination.

EARTH	AIR	FIRE	WATER
goals of a material nature, protection, security, bindings	recognition, negotiation, politics, self-improvement, justice, plans and planning	love, friendship, courage, passion, health, independence, banishing, repelling, reversing	magick, psychic development, feminine, maternal, domestic issues, social events, creativity

2. Pair the nature of the spell goal with your Moon sign - the predominant influence in magick. Then ask yourself how these two factors interact and whether or not you need to compensate for an overabundance or shortfall.

Naturally there are too many possibilities to create a comprehensive guide, but here is an example. You are not getting along with a particular family member and would like to cast for domestic harmony. What you seek is in the Kingdom of Water. You know your Moon sign, but need to know hers/his as well.

	Element
GOAL = Domestic Harmony	WATER
your Moon sign = Sagittarius	FIRE
her Moon sign = Taurus	EARTH

Moon signs reflect the same attributes of Sun signs falling into one of three categories: cardinal, mutable and fixed.

For a brief overview About.com is as good a source as any.

<http://astrology.about.com/od/foundations/p/CardinalSigns.htm>

The ailing relationship needs an influx of water. Magickally speaking, how will we account

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for these factors?

Well, let's start with you. You are Fire in this scenario. Fire can be put out by both water and earth together or separately. Too much water or earth could produce a result that makes you feel smothered or powerless. The right amount of water could catch the beauty of fire in its reflection and make you feel even more vibrant and alive.

The other party is Earth. Because of a misplaced fear of loss of control, Earth might try to block water from flowing freely so that it stagnates or dries up. Too much water could harm Earth who can be diminished (eroded and washed away). On the other hand Earth's blooms and thrives like paradise when nourished with the right amount of water.

3. Always look for the easy way. You can do things the hard way, but there's no point in wasting precious resources needlessly. If the other party lives in your household, look around and make sure there are enough representations of water to promote domestic harmony. Generally speaking, water proxys are things in colors of blue or black, actual water, water features or reflective surfaces. *(Refer to the charts on the following page for reference.)* Make sure that you have enough water represented in the environment so that you're not battling uphill.

4. The actual spell is, as always, yours to create because nothing else will work.

a.) I would suggest that you try to balance the elements represented at your Circle taking into account the fact that the element of your Moon sign tips the scale in favor of that element. *If the essence of the goal of your spell is Fire and you are a Fire Moon Sign, then you should increase your symbols or actual Earth, Air, and Water and forego fire altogether; no candles, no incense, no spells that involve burning, no electronic devices -- even those that are battery operated. It's very easy for fire to get overly enthusiastic and burn right through the good as well as the bad including your money, your love, your health and so on.*

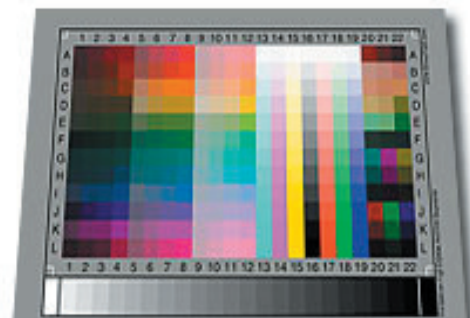
b.) I would also suggest that you use the element *needed* as the delivery mechanism. *In the example of water, you might visualize a river flowing through the center of your home so that the Goddess Harmony can float past on her barge leaving her blessing as she passes. I have also often used the image of _____ raining down on me.*

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Other ideas for delivery: If your spell element is Fire, the delivery method might be lightning or something electrical. Air might be wind, plane, glider, helicopter, dust devil, magic carpet, etc. Earth might be a tree springing out of the ground by your window or, again, in the middle of your living room. (In the case of money, that could be an actual money tree.) You can also make friends with the mining dwarves and ask them to deliver your material manifestation by tunneling. The list is as long or short as your imagination can conjure.

ELEMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE CHART This is my pocketbook version of Feng Shui, modified for Western culture and the practice of magick.

HEALTH	Fire	yellow, orange
WEALTH	Earth	green, gold
LOVE	Fire	red
FAMILY, SOCIAL	Water	blue, black
INTELLECT	Air	white, gray, navy blue
BUSINESS	Air, Earth	white, green
SPIRITUAL	ALL	black, purple, white



Ways in which elements might be represented in buildings:

Elements can be represented by color, material or actual function of an object.

EARTH	green, gold	yard, gardens, houseplants, pottery, ceramics, brick, books, wood (including floors and furniture), rugs, carpeting, tapestries, animals and likenesses or animals, landscapes
AIR	white, gray, blue	flags, banners, kites, mobiles, high ceilings, large windows, stairwells, open areas, wind instruments, windchimes, art depicting lots of sky (NOTE: Make sure your A/C filters are changed often to keep air flowing. If your filters are full, the effect to your environment is the same as restricting your breathing by holding a handkerchief over your nose and mouth.)
FIRE	red, yellow, orange	candles, fireplaces, stoves, ovens, anything electrical including battery operation, nightscapes of cities
WATER	blue, black	pools, fountains, mirrors, reflective surfaces (anything shiny), sinks, tubs, showers, hydrants, metal furniture, metal sculpture, oceanscapes

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5. Last, don't forget to record every detail of the planning and enactment of your spell including your personal research and the thought process. The choices you make beforehand are every bit as important, if not more so, than the actual performance of your casting.

Side Note: Using astrology to identify which elements are strong in a personality can help you enormously with interpersonal relationships. *I have a friend who is a Phi Beta Kappa and semi-celebrity in the field of psychology in Houston. After being in practice for thirty-five years and seeing literally thousands of individuals (or families), she tells me that applying astrological models to personality renders more accurate results than any other diagnostic tool at her disposal. Of course knowing someone's Sun and Moon signs doesn't make you an astrologer, but it does arm you with some knowledge that you can use to the benefit of your relationship with them.*

How do you know whether to look to the Sun sign or Moon sign characteristics for insight?

The general rule of them is this. The Moon = magick. The Sun = mundane.

However, few things in the Universe are that simple. You must use your good judgment. In all things magickal and when the issue is emotional, intuitive or creative, your Moon sign characteristics predominate.

The Book of Initia, Chapter Eight will be the ultimate checkpoint -- a self-test. This will enable you to see how well you have integrated the material thus far and will also reveal areas that need review or practice before we forge ahead into new territory.