

The Book of Initia, Chapter Six

Initia General Theory 1

Precautions and Prerequisites

The past two lessons have taken big leaps forward. The next two lessons, including this one, contain odds and ends of theory and practical aspects. This gives you a chance to catch your breath or catch up if needs be.

Fear of Flying

Some of you have expressed personal reservations about astral travel. Let me make it clear that **flying is an option**. It is not required by me nor is it necessary to a respectable practice. For some of us, it's a "perq" of the Witch Arts, but, thankfully, we are not all the same. Should you desire to try it in the future, the framework will be there for you.

The fact that I required you to have a guide with you (read astral bodyguard) for initial flights is evidence that risks do accompany this activity. The first type of risk pertains to what may be encountered when out of your physical body. The other is the danger inherent in learning to enjoy the separation from your physical body too much. There is undeniably a seductive and addictive aspect to the unfettered feel of movement without the restrictions of speed or gravity. This is why you are strongly cautioned to set specific parameters for yourself beforehand; to know what you are going to do and return immediately thereafter. Self-discipline is essential because of the delight and the fact that time is perceived differently when out of the physical body and seems slower. You may be gone much longer than you think.

No one thinks less of you who have decided to approach astral travel slowly and with caution, if at all. In fact, it is an indicator of the maturity and self-awareness we hope all our students possess. **If you have not already done so, I would recommend you read the Initia, Chapter 4 Q& A, Chapter 5 discussion posts and General 2nd Year Questions.**

Practice and Priorities

Practice is one of those interesting words. It means three things and all of them apply to Witch Arts. It can mean

- (a.) the pursuit of a professional activity,
- (b.) customary/habitual performance,
- (c.) or repeated exercises for the purpose of gaining proficiency.

At this point in your training I must presume that less committed students have submitted to the Law of Attrition and that those of you who have made it this far are serious about your studies. In light of that, we must begin to establish some of the habits of mastery. This means ritualizing daily practice in the sense of the third meaning above – repeated exercises for the purpose of gaining proficiency. Here are some of the things I would like you do.

1.) Carve out fifteen to thirty minutes a day to devote to the practice of a magickal skill or skills. It may be one thing or a combination and, for those of us with ADD, it can change from day to day. Such activities as reading or planning do not count. This is time reserved for meditation, divination, casting, contemplation, communication with non-carnates in this or other dimensions, or the deliberate manipulation of matter or energy. This needs to be fifteen concentrated minutes during which your attention is perfectly focused and not wandering to grocery lists or other distractions of the mundane world (which are always vying for supremacy).

CHECKPOINT: At this point you should be able to raise an impenetrable Ward or Circle -- ethereally -- within minutes and without props. If you don't feel proficient at this, go back and pick up this stitch. Start practicing one or both of these exercises at least once a day. (You shouldn't have any trouble taking down your Ward or Circle instantaneously.) If you do feel that you are on track with these two challenges, your new goal is to be able to do these two things within seconds. And, when you have reached that goal, work on instantaneous.

Sometimes music rooms have a sign that reads, "Practice makes perfect when you practice perfectly."

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NOTE: *The good news is that some Witch arts, once mastered, become permanent knowledge gained; akin to riding a bicycle. Once you have the instant Ward and Circle, you will not have to continue practicing these particular tasks. This ability will always be with you even with long periods between use.*



Q&A Quiz A student once wrote and asked why you would take down an ethereal Circle once raised. What is the answer to that question?

2.) Your feedback indicates that many of you have made quantum leaps in sensitizing your awareness since beginning this training. That makes sense because increased self-awareness should be a natural result of following the course work and integrating the material without requiring particular effort toward that goal. Now it's time to turn the knob up to the next notch. If you're not paying deliberate and close attention, you're going to miss an awful lot of stuff going on around you all the time. The phrase "consciousness raising" was popular during the eighties. I think consciousness expansion is more precise. It means seeing things in new ways or for the first time because of a shift in focus: things that may be common, a part of your everyday environment.

Have you ever learned a new word and then been amazed by how many times you hear or read that word in the next few days? Do you wonder what your brain was doing when encountering that word before? I do.



Here's another example. Twenty years ago my spouse was taking flying lessons. He began to comment about the direction flags were flying as we would drive here or there as they indicate which way the wind is blowing. The result was that my consciousness was expanded to include noticing flags and marking the direction of the wind. These are mundane examples of consciousness expansion, but they illustrate the idea. The fact is that flags were flying, giving up information about wind and weather, all around me whether I was paying attention or not.

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I'm going to suggest that you program yourself to become more aware of the magic in your surroundings – not just clear and present messages to you from the Powers, but also **the magic of everyday things**.

One day I was sitting at my sunroom table engaged in conversation. The wall on the garden side forms a bay and is mostly windows. Out of what is probably thousands of times I have looked at that view, I registered for the first time that the two trees closest to the windows grow leaves in the shape of stars (Sweet Gum) and hearts (Redbud). That realization gave me a head to toe thrill. What could be better “Feng Shui” than love and magic growing just outside the sunroom/kitchen. Then I asked myself, “Is there more?” When I looked through the filter of magical eyes, this is what I saw.

Right next to those trees are five sets of wind chimes, every one unique, given to me one Mothers' Day by my four children and my spouse. So add household harmony, fairy music and an offering to the element of air to the love and magic growing on the trees outside my sunroom windows. Next to the wind chimes are hanging ferns that thrive outside year round except for one month out of the year. These serve as evidence that my wish to live in a semitropical climate is fulfilled. They also remind me that I have inherited a Witch's green thumb tracing back to great grandmothers and beyond I'm sure. So add honoring ancestors, an offering to the element of earth, and success to love, magic, household harmony, fairy music and the element of air. Now add the bird house I bought at an arts festival because of its magic and the fire element expressed as animal life. The element of water and the magic of its reflective surface is represented by a lagoon pool.



my bird house¹

¹ A plug for the artist just in case you are interested. I kept his card. <https://arborcastlebirdhouses.com>

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This is the magical balance I have created for myself without consciously realizing I was doing it, but it's not coincidental either. These choices are the result of "plugging in" magickally.

As I have told you before, you are a receiver for guidance from the Powers That Be. The question is not whether or not you have the equipment, but whether you have it turned on and how high. In the first year I asked you to begin consciously looking for messages in any form (from strangers, all forms of media including scratches in sidewalks or any other source you can name) -- reminders from the Powers that your reality is, at least partially, perhaps mostly, up to you; the rest being lessons that are the result of contracts made prior to incarnating the body you now occupy. Your practice cannot fully mitigate that, but it can give you the tools and philosophy to move through and past.

As a side note regarding the lessons mentioned above, sometimes it's not about our lessons in particular. We can get caught in the crossfire or fallout of others' lessons because we have chosen to love them. Naturally, it's impossible to watch someone you love suffer or be unhappy without feeling some of that yourself. That's part of the price tag, but it cuts both ways. Most of us have had someone agonize over our trials at some point or other, too.

What we want to do now is turn up your receiver so that you're getting more and missing less. I'm going to suggest that you program yourself using this method. Set your intention to give yourself an instruction every morning – the first thing when you wake up, before you get out of bed – to see the messages and be aware of the magic all around you. Do this for twenty-two days in a row. (Longer if you think you need more.) Set a prop by your bedside so that it is likely to be the first thing you see when you open your eyes, something that is out of place so that you will instantly remember to tell yourself, "Today I will look and listen for the magic and the messages and I will be thankful to the Powers when I see."



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All of us need this reinforcement because we are afloat in a sea of mundane thinking and understanding. It is an illusion, but it is such a powerful illusion that it will take control in an instant. The moment we let go of our divine spark and turn loose of the rudder we are once again floating along carried by the current of mass consciousness, often in the opposite direction of where we want to go. What is worth having is worth working for. The power of contrary mass consciousness is so great that, no matter how often or how long you witness magick at work, you will always be amazed and delighted by it. You will never be bored, calloused or jaded by your results or those of others.

Look around your life and appreciate the magic that is there by “happy accident” *and* design. Adding intention to your “happy accidents” creates an equation for manifestation that is unbeatable.

CHECKPOINT: If you have not mastered the technique of instantly creating a Circle without props, this is a good time to go back and pick up that stitch.

3.) Last, we’re going to begin working with energy manipulation. This will be an ongoing study, one that should occupy some of your magickal attention for the rest of your life.

Let’s look at four different kinds of energy that can be manipulated and managed.

- a. Within your own body.
- b. Between yourself and other living beings including plants.
- c. Between yourself and inanimate objects.
- d. Between yourself and ideas or essences.

In this lesson we will talk about the first two.

- a. **The movement of energy within your body.** It’s easiest to express this in terms of the Asian idea of “chi” – the life force.

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I went to graduate school with a transplanted Korean who was also a taekwondo master and owner of a large studio in central Houston. One of the psychology classes we shared had only six graduate students. There was an afternoon when the skies had opened with one of our customary, gully-washing Spring rains. He and I were the only people who made it to class. While we waited to see if our professor showed up, we talked about various aspects of Asian mysticism and came to the subject of chi. He gave me a demonstration of how chi can actually be moved around the body with enough concentration (and a lifetime of disciplined training). I actually saw movement, ripples under the skin as if there was something else alive in his body. At one point he said he was going to concentrate the chi. He stretched out his forearm and told me to touch it. It was hot, several degrees warmer than normal, perhaps 103 degrees.

What I got out of that experience is more eye witness evidence that there is so much more to us than “conventional wisdom” implies. **There is a physical force within us that cannot be explained by cells and electrons.** I can’t say that I have learned to move energy around my body in the same way, but I can use a trance technique with light as a symbol for energy. The next time you become aware that an area of your body needs particular attention for healing or stimulation, put yourself in a meditative state and experiment with moving light around outside and inside your body, fast and slow. You can focus the light in particular area(s) and work with various intensities and colors until it feels right for you. The color you use will be some variation on white/yellow/violet. With practice, you can educate yourself to hear your body and it will tell you what it needs.

Many of us report having an actual physical reaction to magick sometimes, a sensation like vibrating or tingling in different parts of the body and to different degrees. It doesn’t always happen, but, when it does, you can be certain you have tapped the Source.

b. The movement of energy between yourself and other living beings, including plants.

PLANTS: It’s true that plants respond to us. Incredible as it may seem, research shows that your plants will register an electrical response to your thoughts about watering them from many miles away. Talking to your plants isn’t nuts and neither

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is touching them.



I once bought two colorful crotons and placed them in large planters on either side of the chair I sat in to read and watch TV. The room had lots of northern light and I thought they would do well. A year later I realized that the one on my right had grown a good foot taller than the one on my left. I began eliminating possible causes. All conditions: light, sound, food, water were identical. As I sat down to mull over the mystery I realized that I absent-mindedly held a leaf of the plant on my right and was stroking it between my fingers. Apparently I had made a habit of this without conscious intention and a connection with the plant. It responded to my touch by growing twice as big as its twin. This is why I told you to begin gently stroking the tiny leaves of your magical seedlings as they rear their heads.

ANIMALS: Of course any good pet owner can give you stories about the wordless communication that passes between people and their dogs or cats or in the case of actor, Ben Kingsley, his chicken, but it gets stranger when the animals are not pets. Sometimes they are not domesticated either. I have many of these encounters and few are initiated by me. I wrote about some of them in the second edition of the *Primer*.

Just yesterday I was treated to a new one. My dog and I go out everyday unless it's raining and sometimes even then. Since I live in a forest, there are what seems like millions of squirrels about. Here that would be gray squirrels. My dog and I are accustomed to having them constantly skittering across the path and up trees close by. But yesterday we met a squirrel who wanted to play. He sat in the middle of the path ahead, but, as we approached, he didn't run away as is expected. He waited until we were about fifteen feet away and then, instead of scrambling up a tree, ran another twenty feet ahead and waited for us to catch up. This went on for half a mile or so. I had gradually increased my pace to see what he would do. I even tried stopping and starting to be sure it was a game, rules determined by squirrel. By the time he decided to leave the path I was jogging too fast for someone my age and laughing out loud. A good chase was had by all. I don't know what that was about right now, but I betcha I'll find out soon enough.



Texas gray squirrel

Last, and most important for now, is energy passing between yourself and other people. First let's talk about what exists between you and other people. If you are standing in line at the bank with other people, you probably think there is nothing between you and them. That is how we are taught to regard our reality, but, like much of what we're taught, it's not true.

Assuming a fish had a sense of self and could speak, if you asked one what is between him and his school mate, he would say there is nothing there. That's because the fish has never known anything except his liquid environment, doesn't comprehend another way of being and because he moves through the water effortlessly – as if there's nothing there.



Just as sea life shares the waters, humans share the atmosphere. The fact that we can move through the air effortlessly as a fish does through water does not mean nothing is there. The air is composed of chemical gases that might have been poisonous except that we evolved able to draw life instead of death from them. The composition is four elements: nitrogen (78%), oxygen (21%), argon (1%) and a trace of carbon dioxide. Just as two separate fishes will feel a ripple that travels through the water, humans will be unconsciously aware of currents in the air, even if those currents aren't recognized by science. Psychic supports *and* attacks can be transmitted on the currents of what connects all of us on the purely physical level with no need of employing the more occult astral magicks. **We are not as autonomous as we have been led to believe. And the rule in magick, as in most things mundane, is apply the simplest method with the least effort required.** Why reach for the sledgehammer if the fly swatter will do?

TAKING IT TO THE STREETS:

Exercise #1 You can absolutely affect the people around you with your thoughts and feelings. Likewise, you are susceptible to unconscious matching of others' emotions, even strangers with whom no conversation transpires. To prove this to you, I would like you to try this exercise. The next time you find yourself in a situation where people are becoming impatient and agitated by being forced to wait an unreasonable time (in a

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customer service line or doctor's office for instance) take the emotional temperature of the situation, look around at the place and the people, then close your eyes and recreate the scene in your mental snapshot. Now picture in your mind a pinkish white light with yellow flecks descending like a gentle rain, washing away the murky gray haze, until the room is filled with a shimmering light that pulses a vibration of patience, peace and contentment. If you achieve adequate concentration, this should take less than five minutes to accomplish. When you open your eyes, you will see that the faces around you are less strained and the general mood has changed for the better noticeably.

People who go out into the world without any sort of psychic shield are susceptible to the whims of stronger minds, or intentional focus, for better or worse, meaning that this same technique could be used to create irritation and anger. Though I don't understand why anyone would have to gain, I have no doubt that it could be done just as easily as purging discontent (as in the paragraph above). In past lessons we have talked about psychic self-defense aimed at you in particular, but we have not discussed the need for protections from random attacks and discord. When the attack is not aimed at you personally the magick is much weaker and you should have no trouble with deflection at this point in your training. Just flick it away with your thumb and third finger.

Exercise #2 You should be spending some time in psychic development. This is a catch-all phrase that can be applied to a lot of different kinds of activities. These two exercises are intended to show you how you can take your practice out into the world, multitasking your magickal and mundane activities, strengthening your mastery, without special time or solitude. Psychic development isn't all work. The following games may seem whimsical, but there's nothing silly about the skill set that you are building.

a.) When you are waiting for one of multiple elevators, send a small burst of concentration out to **"guess" which door will open first.** (It doesn't count if one of the doors is open when you get there.) You must commit by going and standing in front of your choice. Begin keeping track of how many times out of how many tries you are correct. Mathematically,



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you should be right 50% of the time when there are two elevators, 33% of the time when there are three elevators, 25% of the time when there are four. Don't be discouraged if you're not always right. Keep at it. If the number of times you name the door that will open is greater than these percentages, then you are exercising your innate precognitive abilities.

TIP #1: Do not do this when you are with someone else who is distracting you by requiring *any* attention no matter how little or how passive.

TIP #2: You can increase your average by expressing no emotional reaction when you are wrong and expressing enthusiasm (even when completely inwardly) when you are right.

There are lots of variations on this game. Which line will be fastest at the bank drive through? Which line will be fastest at the grocery checkout? And so on and so on.

b.) See if you can get another person, facing away from you, to look around. Pick a stranger in a crowded place. If the other person doesn't respond, it may not be your lack of ability, but their lack of sensitivity. I can't give you a mathematical probability to go by because, according to the current understanding of non-paranormal scientists, you should *never* be able to get another person to look around just by staring at them. Consequently, a single success beats the odds. (The reverse: have you ever been preoccupied and felt a "nudge" that someone was looking at you?) **If you can send a message that says, "I'm looking at you." You can send other messages telepathically as well.** We will cover this more thoroughly later in ethics.



Q&A Quiz Answer: If you are able to hold a Circle open for more than an hour, you are either (1.) a rare and extraordinary talent (2.) far too advanced for this course or (3.) not doing it right. As you progress you will find your mind can compartmentalize magickal tasks, holding a protective Circle so that it requires less energy, but it will always require *some* of your energy so long as you are restricted to a corporeal state (in a human body). Since Witches don't keep world records, I couldn't tell you what is the

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anyone has been able to do it.

After you have worked in Circle, you may very well feel satisfied and even refreshed on a spiritual level, but, if you've done it right, you wouldn't have the magickal energy to do another right away.

"Conventional wisdom" is another term for stupidity. - source unknown