

The Book of Initia, Chapter Two

Introduction to Esoterica

Where the Strange Roads Go Down

Now that you have done the work of assessing both goals and your progress, and reviewing first year, it is time to delve into new material. First, let us reorient ourselves to the task and clarify our purpose. As you know by now, the Seasons in Avalon approach to Magick studies is unique because it is a blend of schools, traditions and individual experience.

ASSIGNMENT #1: Second Draft

Go back to the assignment for last month, Chapter One of Second Year, the Book of Initia. Look at what you wrote in your +/- workbook as a first draft. See if, in the month's time since you did the exercise, anything has changed. Pay attention to subtle distinctions in your own desires. If you have wanted something badly for a long time, sometimes you may not notice that the glitter has faded from that desire. Or you may notice, but not believe that you have, basically, lost intense interest. There are several reasons why this can occur. First, you would not be the same person today as yesterday even if you were among the willfully ignorant, but the fact that you have voluntarily submitted yourself to the active path of seeker means that you are undergoing much bigger changes, in shorter periods of time. It is only natural that your needs and desires will shift with changes in your knowledge and perception.

Second, as you have become more skilled at manipulating the marvelous faculty of your imagination, you have learned to create facsimiles of experience wholly within your beautiful mind. In fact, I believe that some forms of Magick even change us at the molecular level, if not permanently, then at least during a state of semi-trance in Circle.

I use the word facsimile for a reason -- because an experience that takes place wholly within your mind is like the copy you would get at the grocery store copy machine -- readable, but not quite as good as the original. When you create or recreate an experience wholly within your mind, you can, with practice, come very close to engaging the senses as if you were engaged in the physicality of the event. (Review Alternate Reality Experience presented in Chapter Eight of First Year if you need a reminder.) Close is good and sometimes it's enough to satisfy your need.

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Many years ago I was in a “Master Mind” group with three other women. We met weekly with the purpose of supporting each other in our various dreams and goals and keeping each other on track. One among us had her heart set on a champagne colored, Mercedes, two-seater convertible. I supported her pursuit by assisting her on a series of guided meditations. Having questioned her about the “pay out” she anticipated from achieving this goal I had some clues about imagery. So I developed elaborate scenarios. In one, she was like Grace Kelly, driving her car with top down around the bends of Monaco’s cliff side roads coming into Monte Carlo from the French Riviera. She wore a bright-colored silk scarf around her head and neck, but left the long ends dancing in the wind above the sunlit Mediterranean Sea. I asked her to feel the air on her face, to hear the scarf whip in the breeze, to feel the fine leather under her grip on the steering wheel, to know how the car would be admired when she would soon stop in front of the Fairmont Hotel. In another, she was driving her car as Grand Marshall of a birthday parade in her honor. And so on.

After we had done these for a month or so, she reported that she no longer wanted the car ...really. It seems that she had absorbed the essence of that experience, gotten what she needed from it and moved on to something more challenging.

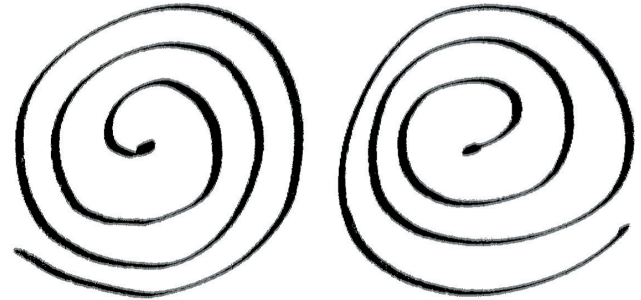
I think that, if you asked her subconscious mind directly, it would report that she once owned that car. Some desires are like that. If you are able to deduce which ones they are, you can cross them off your list thereby freeing up energy for the dreams that won't go away.

Let me add one technique to this process. Last chapter I gave you a plus/minus model for attracting and repelling. As an alternative you can use spirals. For your attractions



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spiral, begin in the center and draw clockwise (deosil). For your repelling spiral, begin in the center and draw counter-clockwise (widdershins). Then, in the future whenever you think about something on the list, accompany that thought with the act of mentally stirring deosil or widdershins as appropriately corresponds to the item, at least three times.



PULL
deosil

PUSH
widdershins

Rules for rearranging reality to suit you.

1. Check in with yourself often to see if what you think you want is what you really want. There are a lot of parts to yourself. Some of them are quieter than others, but that doesn't necessarily mean that they are less opinionated or needy.
2. When you realize that you have manifested something on your list, take more than a minute to appreciate the manifestation and yourself.
3. Don't let culture dictate, or even influence, the true gem of what you want out of life.

When I was growing up, I had a few friends who lived on palatial estates. My favorite was called Broad Valley. It was tucked away behind a gate house at the end of a long, winding drive such that you would never even know it was there unless it was your destination. It had an Olympic size swimming pool with a cabana the size of a small hotel. It had a grand staircase, twelve feet wide with a slow and elegant rise to the mezzanine and second story. There were four dining rooms of various sizes and styles the choice of which depended on occasion. Naturally, at that age, my favorite was the large game room designed for the four children to entertain friends with big leather couches, media, pool table an actual soda fountain bar and teak floors with zebra rugs from one of her father's safaris. The house sat on a hill that sloped down toward stables complete with enough sheep to keep the pastures groomed to perfection. I could go on for some time in my description of the place, but I think you get the idea.

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I can't remember how many full time staff were needed to keep it running, but I think it was two cooks, three maids, a gardener and a maintenance man who could work on cars as well. The night before I got married, the family and entire staff left the house to my bridesmaids and me. It was wonderful and I used to think that was exactly what I wanted.

Last year my mother told me that Broad Valley had recently sold to a Saudi prince. I guess the news dredged up some old feelings because I dreamed about it shortly thereafter. In my dream, I was moving into Broad Valley. The moving vans were there and boxes were being brought in. I was standing in the kitchen when the full force of what I had done hit me. How could I have sold my house with the beautiful red door and the sego palms on either side of the winding walk and the two-story windows with the fabulous view of the rainforest! How could I possibly have done that? I was devastated with grief. I sank down on the kitchen floor of the "dream" house feeling like I wanted to die, but hoping this horrible thing could be undone. That's when I woke up literally and figuratively. The dream was a gift to make me realize that I hadn't failed to manifest the grand plan, but, rather, had ended up where I really want to be. This enabled me to pull final closure around Broad Valley and savor even more my favorite phrase, "Life is good."

This is what I take as the moral of this story. There are a lot of different approaches to the manipulation of matter. It might be called treasure mapping or vision board or a host of others. One thing they all share is an insistence that you be excruciatingly clear about the details of what you want. Yet I have observed that I often manifest something better than what I requested.

About a year after we had moved into our home, I found an old dream house wish list I had made. I was astounded to see that my home fits the painstakingly detailed criteria line by line with only a couple of exceptions, but better because of additional features I didn't know to ask for. This has led me to believe that there is a Magickal failsafe that will look out for your best interest once you set the wheels in motion. You might cover all

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bases by following the details rule, but including a catch-all such as “or better”, or even “the house (job, car, degree, etc.) that will make me happiest”.

4. ACTION. The Sympathetic Magick part of manifesting. By now the phrase “like attracts like” is thoroughly integrated into your consciousness. **Look for ways you can physically move yourself closer to your goals**, ways in which you can encourage a shift in your vibration.

Get creative. There are thousands of ways for you to encourage your magnetizing list. If your goal is to pass the CPA exam and go to work for one of the big accounting firms, find out where the people at Ernst and Young go to lunch. You can have lunch there, too while you observe what they wear, what they eat and how they act around each other.

The Path of the Seeker

The occultist and the mystic are both seekers, but with a basic difference that you will not find in Merriam Webster. The mystic renounces the world in the sense that s/he objects to finding the spiritual essence, or soul, encased in a material body that is, in turn, surrounded by a material world from which there is no permanent escape except death. The occultist wholeheartedly embraces this condition and seeks to use knowledge to manipulate material and non-material for betterment, comfort, pleasure or even for the joy of the challenge. We, as Witches who practice Witchcraft, are a subgroup of occultists who believe that we are here to work with the material world – not to reject it.



MYSTIC. The Ascetic Path turns away from the material world.

“The great majority of our fellow-men are willing to take the world as they find it, and so long as it does not treat them too hardly, they are content. Others, however, question what lies behind the world as they see it, and until they learn the answer to that question, suffer from the divine discontent which has forever

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urged men to 'seek beyond the skyline, where the strange roads go down'".
– Dion Fortune

This quote couldn't be more apropos because we are nearing the time when we will be departing the mundane altogether for a sojourn to where "the strange roads go down".

FOUNDATIONS

I trust that you have been practicing the use of your sixth sense whether by deliberate psychic development, meditation, listening intently for messages from intuition or beyond and divination, whichever method you have chosen – because much of the journey forward will rely heavily on your familiarity with the paranormal¹.

To become adept:

- You must be confident that you do, indeed, possess a sixth sense.
- You must be able to think in abstract² ways and flexible enough in your thinking to be able to translate spiritual wisdom and paranormal phenomena into occult terms regardless of source, whether it is East or West, Wiccan or Christianity and so on.

Any of the following may become a noun when preceded by "the".

1. **Paranormal.** Function adjective. 1920. Means not scientifically explainable

Supernatural. Function: adjective. Etymology: Middle English, from Medieval Latin *supernaturalis*, from Latin *super-* + *natura* nature. Date: 15th century. 1: of or relating to an order of existence beyond the visible observable universe ; especially : of or relating to God or a god, demigod, spirit, or devil 2 a: departing from what is usual or normal especially so as to appear to transcend the laws of nature b: attributed to an invisible agent (as a ghost or spirit)

Supernormal - Function: adjective. Date: 1868 1: exceeding the normal or average 2: being beyond normal human powers

2. **Abstract.** expressing a quality apart from an object <the word poem is concrete, poetry is abstract>

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- You must be conversant with aspects of the elements, their properties and associations.
- You must be able to impact the circumstances of your world, material and essential.
- You must be able to cross dimensional barriers to acquire the additional power that is only available by and through that process.
- You must commit each new day to a student's humility and a quest for learning something new because none of us can expect to meet our potential without continuing to grow in knowledge and wisdom for as long as we are here.

INTELLECT

Much of the advanced work of Witchcraft is conceived and supervised by the mind. When I say mind, I do not mean brain because the mind is brain plus more the paranormal factors of will, reason and intuition. You already know that you rely heavily on your brain for Magick. The left side of your brain identifies the need to expend energy on Magick, then plans spells and rituals. The right side of your brain is responsible for imagination and creative response in casting, for extrasensory perception and communication. But, the left side of the brain is not left out of the Circle. It must be summoned to work with symbols and correspondents. In short, all of your gray matter is necessary to Magick. **Still, we find on analysis, that there are mental factors at work and yet unexplained by science. These factors taken with the brain is what I mean by "mind".**

PERSONAL PROTECTION

During your first year of study I repeatedly issued admonitions against attempting certain kinds of workings before you are ready. At this juncture, we will proceed, but I rely upon the caution of maturity for you to know the difference between being unready for a challenge and expressing the natural anxiety any of us feels about trying something new.

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To reach the status of Adept, you must press further into the world beyond the borders of the mundane. During the coming months, among other things, we are going to study....

Psychic Self-Defense in depth as relates to both humans and non-humans.

Evocation of guides.

Astral projection.

A treatise on other dimensions.

Astral travel to other dimensions.

ASSIGNMENT #2, MANDATORY: Preparation

Now the true work of the Initiate begins.



Alice considers descending the rabbit hole.

The next lesson will be on Psychic Self-Defense. The placement of this particular study is not random, but deliberate because it is part of your preparation for embarking on active Magicks that require training. To the end of certainty that you are ready, here is a program of exercises you **must** complete before proceeding.

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DAILY: Every day for the next fifty six days you are to find five minutes (at least) that you can spend alone. If possible, it would be best to do this task after dark in a dark room.

1. Begin your daily exercise by lighting a white candle. A pillar candle or taper is better for this purpose. It does not have to be new for each use and you can extinguish any way you please.
2. **Days 1-21.** For the first 21 days, the next step will be to create a Witch's Circle, (*Orbis Veneficus*) without the necessity of material form. We will call this an Ethereal Circle to distinguish it from an actual physical Circle. This is going to be, perhaps, the most important tool in your satchel of Magick so be meticulous and don't cut corners.

You will use the same Power Word process presented as a "Tip" in Novicia, Chapter Ten on creating my Heptagon Ward. Pick a word that doesn't come up often in everyday conversation. I use the Latin "orbis" for this purpose.

After lighting your white candle, close your eyes and draw a deosil (clockwise) Circle around yourself. The Circle is composed of blue/violet/white light. It grows from the ground up where you draw it and quickly springs into a tubular wall of glowing, pulsating light that surrounds you, extending through the roof above you and into the infinity of space. Once you have your wall in place, allow the intensity of the light and your feeling of security to build for a moment or two while you stir the air deosil with your power hand, then say, "ORBIS!" (or your power word if different) loudly and clap your hands at the same time. If you follow this step exactly, on the 22nd day you will have formed a permanent impression such that you should be able to instantly erect your protective Circle, anywhere, anytime, by simply saying,



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“ORBIS” and making a clockwise Circle with your hand.

To reinforce the process, as you go about your mundane activities each day, when you think of the exercise, whisper the word “Orbis”, hear your loud clap of thunder and see your Circle instantly spring up around you. Do this two or three times during the day. Dissolve the Circle by saying, “Discedo!”(pronounced disk-ay’-do), see it collapse, instantly falling to the ground and then disappear.

Safe and protected inside your Circle, allow yourself to become perfectly calm and relaxed. Stare into the candle flame for a minute or two until you are focused. Then allow your eyes to close.

With your eyes closed you see your physical self sitting in the physical room, wearing the actual clothes you have on, but you are also able to see the opaque glow of your erected Circle. Pretend that you can see a silver/violet spiral forming in your mid section. You are forming a visual representation of the portal through which your ethereal self may leave the body for short periods of time. You will not leave your body. You will simply begin to prepare yourself for adventures yet to come.

3. **Days 22-55.** Light your white candle. Erect your Circle instantly by simply saying your Power Word and stirring once. If you have not achieved the desired effect, continue the process above until you have.

Safe and protected inside your Circle, allow yourself to become perfectly calm and relaxed. Stare into the candle flame for a minute or two until you are focused. Then allow your eyes to close.

With your eyes closed you see your physical self sitting in the physical room, wearing the actual clothes you have on, but you are also able to see the opaque glow of your erected Circle. Pretend that you can see a silver/violet spiral forming in your mid section. You are forming a visual representation of the portal through which your ethereal self may leave the body for short periods of time. You will not leave your body. You will simply begin to prepare yourself for adventures yet to come.

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New Moons / Full Moons:

Every new moon and every full moon for the next fifty five days, you are to **add** these steps to the Daily exercise. You will need a mortar and pestle or something similar to grind the herbs.

Prepare and burn an incense consisting of the following:

EQUAL AMOUNTS OF...

Dittany of Crete

Calamus

Cinnamon (grocery store is fine)

Juniper Berries

Sandalwood

Patchouli

Tobacco (smoke shop okay, you could even take apart a cigarette)

Bergamot Leaf or 3 drops Bergamot oil in mixture

If possible, find something made of smoky quartz to have on your body during this exercise.

This is a Flying incense that will stretch your psychic skills and help prepare you for the feeling of being free of your body.

1. Light the incense.
2. Light your candle.
3. Erect your Ethereal Circle.



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Get comfortable and, when you feel the time is right, picture yourself hovering above your house or apartment. You feel completely safe and secure. Your spirit has not left your body. You are simply exercising your imagination. You know that your body is protected by your Orbis Veneficus and that your mind is free to explore the world without worry.

See yourself look over the rooftops of your neighborhood if you are an urban dweller or over the countryside if you live in a rural area. Decide where you want to go and see that you can move quickly, effortlessly. You are able to fly past whatever draws your attention at whatever speed you wish. If it is a full moon night, you may enjoy flying over the nearby countryside. If it is a new moon night, you may enjoy the techno beauty of a city nightscape. Hover in the air above the city and savor your ability to appreciate the creation of mortals from this perspective. You can fly past skyscraper windows where people are working late.

Perhaps someone will look up from his desk because he thought he saw movement out of the corner of his eye. You can fly over pastures where horses stand sleeping, past retro-drive-in movies, past brightly lit sports stadiums.

If there is a cloud cover, climb above the clouds to where you can see an endless horizon of

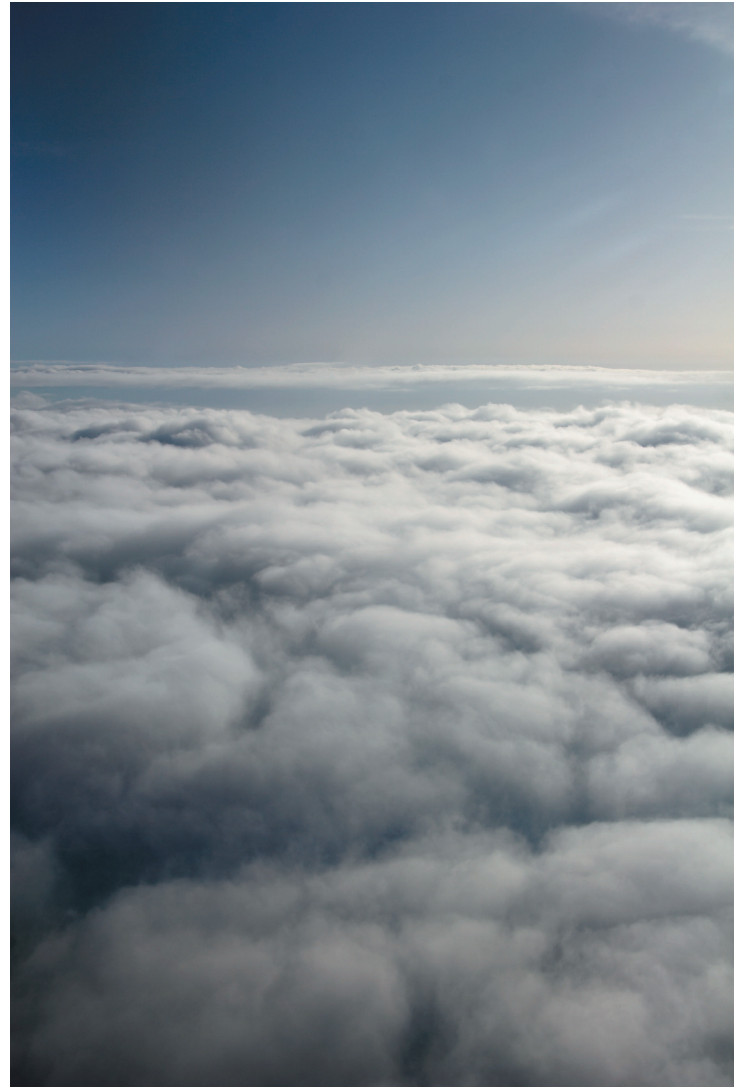


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moonlit mist. There is a wonder and beauty of flying alone that only Witches, among humans, can enjoy. The weather is irrelevant. If it is a warm night, wear long skirts to your Circle so that you can feel the wind rush past the fabric and tousle your hair. If it is cold or rainy or worse, you can choose to be completely impervious to discomfort. You can watch a cold rain fall on your bare skin and laugh. The degree to which your physical senses engage is entirely up to you.

You are very familiar with the sights, sounds and smells of your world. However, you have not previously explored the world in the four dimensional way of being able to move up and down as well as forward, back, side to side. Nor have you ever been able to move your body as quickly as your mind. You can use this exploratory exercise to go as far as you wish and do whatever you wish knowing that you are still in your body, awake and alert anytime you open your eyes. You can even fly over the Atlantic, past the Colosseum in Rome, past the pyramids at Giza, past Hadrian's wall. Watch out for airplanes. They can't hurt you, but they can startle you and cause you to become disoriented.

CAUTION: *This is an exercise of imagination. You are to stay in your body and let only your mind wander. If you should feel a strong pull from your mid section, if you should feel suddenly very sleepy or if you have the sensation of a "buzz" or eeling "high", stop immediately!*



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On the next new or full moon, try the exercise again without the incense. You must develop enough control to keep your ethereal body in your physical body while your imagination wanders before you are ready to release the ethereal body.

SUPPLIES:

I have selected a group of incenses or oil mixtures to be used in conjunction with particular exercises over the next few months and have put together a list of their ingredients so that you have time to collect these or supplement your present collection. We are going to try to make sure these are stocked at 7th House for your convenience.

HERBS

Bergamont

Calamus

Cinnamon (grocery store is okay)

Dittany of Crete

Dragons Blood

Galangal Root

Irish Moss

Juniper Berries

Mugwort

Myrrh Gum

White Pine Bark

Sandalwood

Tobacco (Any source. You can even take a cigarette apart.)

OILS

Benzoin

Bergamot

Hyssop

Jasmine

Lemon

Myrrh

Musk

Patchouli