

# The Book of Novicia, Chapter Two

## ***PRACTICAL MAGICK vs RITUAL MAGICK***

Note: Remember, you must keep and complete a 13 Moon Journal, divided by chapters that correspond to the lessons, in order, reflecting your reactive thoughts and conclusions. The first chapter of your journal would contain the process you went through to determine what you want from life and, indirectly, from Magick, along with notes on the Treasure Map assignment and spell work if any.

In my Witches' Dictionary I defined Ritual Magick as....

- 1.) A system promoted by the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. (Ancient Mystery Schools, Qaballah and its offshoots employ Ritual Magick as a means of altering consciousness and advancing toward mastery of various mystical goals.)
- 2.) In common usage, Ritual Magick is any highly stylized and well thought-out ritual which incorporates the use of paraphernalia and symbolism.

So what is Practical Magick?

*Practical Magick is fueled by both knowledge and intent. The child who repeats the saying about rubber and glue is casting a spell, but it lacks full power because it is not fueled by intent. Practical Magick includes acts of Magickal heritage, sometimes called superstition, such as throwing salt over a shoulder<sup>1</sup> or knocking on wood<sup>2</sup> along with chants which is the repetition of sayings from Magickal heritage.* - from Seasons of the Witch Primer

**PRINCIPLE: Magick is most powerful when fueled by intent.**

1. Throwing salt over the shoulder is related to the use of salt in spells of protection or banishing.
2. Knocking on wood is related to the Druid devotion to trees and the sacred properties of wood.

## The Book of Novicia, Chapter Two

Here are some simple ways to distinguish these two approaches.

RITUAL MAGICK is.....

formal  
intellectual  
"high" Magick  
detailed  
stylized

PRACTICAL MAGICK is.....

informal  
intuitive  
"low" Magick  
simple  
natural

When approaching spell work, the first decision you will make is whether or not you're going to cast a spell using Ritual Magick or Practical Magick. (There is a third type of Magick used in spells that I call "Simple or Primitive Magick". We will cover that approach in Chapter Three.) Before you decide which type of Magick is most appropriate, let us discuss this Chapter's Magickal Key and self-initiation.

**KEY: Your ability to cast is finite.**

This is a fact of Magickal practice that is seldom talked about -- if ever -- and one that most advanced practitioners had to learn the hard way. Consider this one of my gifts to you.

You have a Magickal reservoir like a lake, but more like a human-made lake with a dam. The amount of water is finite and calculable. You can let some of the water out of the dam with confidence -- knowing that it will refill, but the lake will be replenished according to the schedule of the rains and the flow of the river that feeds it. You cannot hurry the process.

This reservoir is your Magickal currency which you can trade for favors from the Powers That Be. Keep in mind though that, if you are a Witch, part of your physical energy is tied to this reservoir. Some Witches choose to spend their Magickal currency in small amounts on small favors, sometimes on a daily basis; a good parking space here, a little bit of money there. Other Witches may cast spells worthy of the gods two or three times a year that leave them Magickally and physically depleted (and dreading the next casting) because the reservoir was so completely emptied that the earth beneath was parched or even scorched. (If you are this fool-hardy, make sure the goal is worth it.)

## The Book of Novicia, Chapter Two

### **SOLITARY SELF-INITIATION (for beginners)**

If you are an absolute beginner and you are working as a Solitary, you should initiate yourself before beginning a serious practice of Witchcraft. If you are not a beginner, but never experienced initiation, you may want to do it now. This is a journey that begins with a rededication of yourself, a second birth in a sense. In traditional Witchcraft the *skyclad* (naked) lack of dress helps symbolize rebirth into the Magickal world. You should be alone, indoors with lights off (day or night), but with at least one window open so that energies can flow freely.

You do not need any tool or any prior knowledge except to know which direction is north and a little kitchen salt. Look at the following attributes of compass points and ask yourself which one of these speaks to you. There will be one that speaks to you louder than the others.

<b>North</b>	<b>Winter</b>	<b>New Moon</b>	<b>Midnight</b>	<b>Earth</b>	<b>Green or Black</b>
<b>East</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>First Quarter</b>	<b>Sunrise</b>	<b>Air</b>	<b>Yellow or White</b>
<b>South</b>	<b>Summer</b>	<b>Full Moon</b>	<b>Midday</b>	<b>Fire</b>	<b>Red</b>
<b>West</b>	<b>Autumn</b>	<b>Last Quarter</b>	<b>Sunset</b>	<b>Water</b>	<b>Blue or Gray</b>

When you are ready, get your naked body wet in the shower or with sink water. Then rub kitchen salt on your face, chest, arms, abdomen, and legs. You will feel a sensation of being clean, charged and “ready”!

The direction that speaks to you Magickally is where you should begin. Say this out loud three times, **“Let not this working be reversed and bring upon me any curse.”** Stand straight with arms straight out facing the direction you have chosen. Visualize a column of light coming down from space and entering your body through the top of your head. As the light moves down through your body it spreads out around you and forms a circle about nine feet in diameter. At the same time green and blue energies are being absorbed by your body from the earth, moving upward from your feet and out of the top of your head, mixing with the white light to form a circle around you.

Slowly begin moving doesil (clockwise for Northern Hemisphere). As you turn the lights begin to move and swirl about you. As you move through the four compass points you interact with each and

## The Book of Novicia, Chapter Two

allow them to claim you as Magickal kin. Keep your breathing deep and steady. When you come back to the compass point where you began count "1" revolution. Do this nine times. Then say this, **"I AM S/HE. I swear to the Powers That Be that I will never bring shame on the Magickal Arts. I will never compromise my gifts, my knowledge or my sisters/brothers in Magick."**

Here is the question we will come to again and again. **What do you want?**

Whatever it is, it's the reason why you're here studying Witchcraft. It's not because you love the change of seasons - although you do. It's not because you need to believe your yearnings have an honorable heritage that predates the Middle Eastern patriarchal religions - although they do. It's not because you feel out of place with mainstream thinking on spirituality - although you do. It's because you know this life is supposed to be an exercise in standing on your tiptoes, stretching, reaching for that something that's on the top shelf -- perhaps you can't quite see it, but know it is there. Furthermore, I'm absolutely convinced that you wouldn't want it if you couldn't get it.

Okay, so you're sixty-years-old and you want to be a rock star. Make an investment in your next lifetime by taking up the guitar now. Musical ability is one of the things that accumulates over lifetimes. Maybe you won't have platinum CD's this time around, but you might get some pleasure out of forming a play-for-fun band with others of a like mind.

Even taking into consideration certain limitations of age or body type or child-rearing responsibilities, etc., etc., there are some things you want that you CAN have in THIS lifetime.

### *How do you decide when and how to cast?*

First, decide what you want. Take as long as you need. Refer to the process you went through during the first two weeks of the first lesson. If you did the work, you probably know what you *really* want. A wise man once said that the tragedy of death is not the death of the body, but the death of unrealized dreams. This is why you wanted to be in a body. Don't waste another day of the opportunity.

Go to your *Seasons of the Witch* calendar to determine what Power Days are coming up that closest fit your situation. Once you've determined what you're casting for and when you're going to do it,

## The Book of Novicia, Chapter Two

you're well on the way. The next decision will be the approach. Is it something that will be well-suited for Practical Magick or will Ritual Magick be a better fit? Here are three questions that will render the answer.

*1.) Is it in your Sphere of Influence? If not, how big a jump would it be?*

*2.) How much do you want it?*

*3.) How much of your Magickal currency (energy) are you will to expend?<sup>1</sup>*

If the answers to these questions are:

1.) It's a fairly big jump from here to there.

2.) I want it badly to desperately.

3.) I'm willing to expend a lot of energy.

**AND** you are a mature personality<sup>2</sup>, then you have a lot of Ritual Magick planning and preparation to do. Typically you need a longer planning period for Ritual Magick to allow energy to mass and build sufficient pressure that will be released during the casting.

Everything else (mostly) will be Practical Magick. Sometimes the line between the two can be a moving target. It can blur and change depending upon your unique Magickal personality, but so far as definitions go, this should suffice.

<sup>1</sup>. Spell intensity can fall anywhere along a continuum from a quick wish murmured under your breath to a full scale dramatic production that takes weeks or months to mount and weeks or months to recover from. Ideally you want to choose to come close to the amount of energy necessary - not much more, not much less. - *Seasons of the Witch Primer*.

<sup>2</sup>. MATURITY REQUIRED. This is why we will not accept anyone under eighteen and prefer twenty-two; because younger people answer every question of desire in this way without the experience to discriminate.

## The Book of Novicia, Chapter Two

Like many things in life a successful practice of Witchcraft is dependent upon making good choices. Whether your choice in this case is Ritual Magick or Practical Magick,

***start with thinking and talking about the goal in a wholly positive way***

and do not allow yourself a moment of disbelief. It's the simplest of simple things that can make ALL the difference in results.

There are people who study the Craft and different aspect of Pagan religions such that they could have earned a doctorate if one was offered. They have memorized tomes of information and can regurgitate what they read or were told at will. They have lots and lots and lots of information, but nothing in terms of results to show for it. By results I mean possession of the things that make us happy, joyful, confident, exuberant, secure and unafraid. For many who have the handicap of a depressed or dysfunctional upbringing, this is a bigger challenge. But it's not impossible and should be within reach of an experienced practitioner of the Craft.

### ***Assignment:***

Your assignment for this lesson is to write a spell using a Practical Magick approach and a Ritual Magick approach. The subject matter should be something personal -- a Magickal goal for which you intend to cast in the near future.

Following are ***comparative examples of a spell.***

### **ex. of a PRACTICAL MAGICK spell**

Note: There are hundreds, maybe thousands, of ways to construct this spell. This is not a template. It's an example.

- 1.) use an unscented candle (refer to the chart on page 135 in *Seasons of the Witch Primer* to choose a color that corresponds with the focus of your spell)
- 2.) heavy paper or parchment paper with what you want written on it – take care, penmanship counts in the sense that you get back what you put in
- 3.) compose a quatrain; a four-line rhyme to set the Magick in motion – no matter how simple, no matter how silly it seems. No one knows why there is such Magick in speaking simple rhyme. It is true nonetheless. If you need to refer to examples, you can find examples in the first lesson and on pages 77-78 of the *Primer*.
- 4.) Light the candle. Concentrate for a few moments on what you want. Light the paper with your candle and drop it in your cauldron or fireproof container. As it burns, say your rhyme at least three times or in three multiples of three (that's 9 times) ... OUT LOUD! The paper transforms into smoke which transforms into vapor which is carried on the four winds to seek out and bring you the thing, the opportunity or the essence you want. Spend a minute visualizing the request going out into the world, crossing dimensions if necessary, gaining the attention of the Powers That Be who judge you worthy and, with the wave of a hand, change the course of future events to align themselves with the outcome that pleases you.
- 5.) You can allow the candle to burn out if you have it in a location 100% safe from fire if unattended or extinguish at midnight - whichever feels right to you.

This spell is exquisite in its simplicity. A person with absolutely NO training of any kind could cast this spell and have a marvelous bit of success. A spell like this could be conceived in a few minutes and it doesn't require a deep Magickal chest. Supplies are minimal. All that was needed is a candle, pen and paper, and a match.

Now let's see what would happen if this same spell were constructed for Ritual Magick. The first three steps are for beginners, but experienced students may find something of interest as well.

## **RITUAL MAGICK first 3 of 7 steps are basics for Beginners**

Do not be afraid. The very first spell I ever cast was one of the most complicated High Magick spells I have ever written. I spent months researching, carefully-- even meticulously --crafting. I involved three friends. I persuaded them to dress in costume, represent each of the Ancient Elements and read my ritual poetry. I even had a good friend, one of the original aromatherapy masters, create essential oil blends to use as offerings to the four quarters. It was elaborate. It was mystical. It was Magickal. And none who were present will never forget it.

Here are the bare basics of formal Magick. This is a foundation on which much more elaborate castings can be built later. There are many more things you *could* include. These are what you *must* include.

### ***1. Establish the cornerstones for a Ritual Circle.***

There are two basic methods, but you are probably familiar with only one of them.

A. The first method uses **the four compass points**: north, east, south and west as a foundation. These are sometimes called Quarters, Pillars or Guardians. They have many correspondences, but the ones you must know are the corresponding elements. Refer to page 3 of this lesson. (There are two directional correspondents listed for each element in the back of the *Primer*. This is because there is some disagreement about which is correct and I find the argument legitimate. Later we will revisit this topic and you will have an opportunity to decide for yourself. For now, use the more common convention page 3 of this lesson.) Most people represent these four stations with candles of corresponding color, also page 3. Set the candles far enough apart so that there is room for you to sit in the middle.

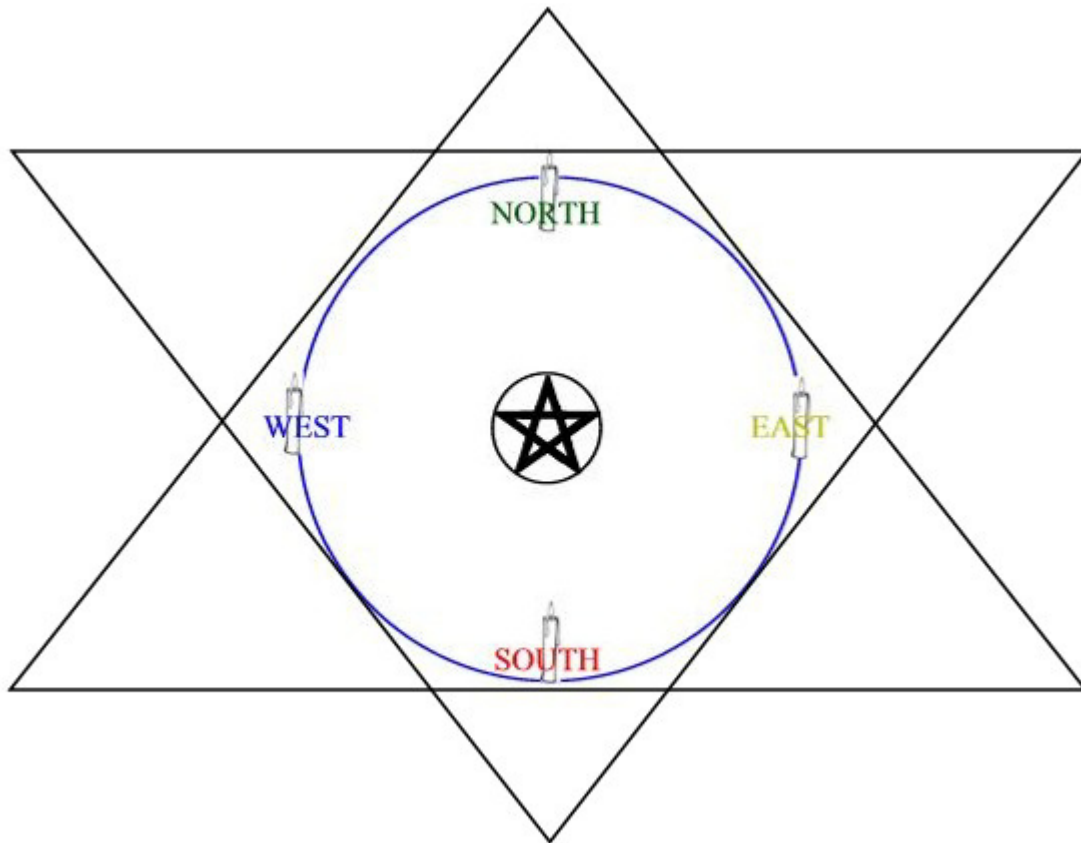
B. The second method uses **five points to form a pentagram**. The points represent the four Ancient Elements plus “spirit” or the god in you. Let the top, or apex, of the star be set in the north and designated \_\_\_\_\_ (you).

Refer to the diagrams following. Set the candles far enough apart so that there is room for you to move around without catching your skirt on fire<sup>1</sup> with space in the middle for you to sit (if you choose) with the symbols you have chosen to represent your quest.

<sup>1</sup>This is only funny if it hasn’t happened to you.



## The Book of Novicia, Chapter Two

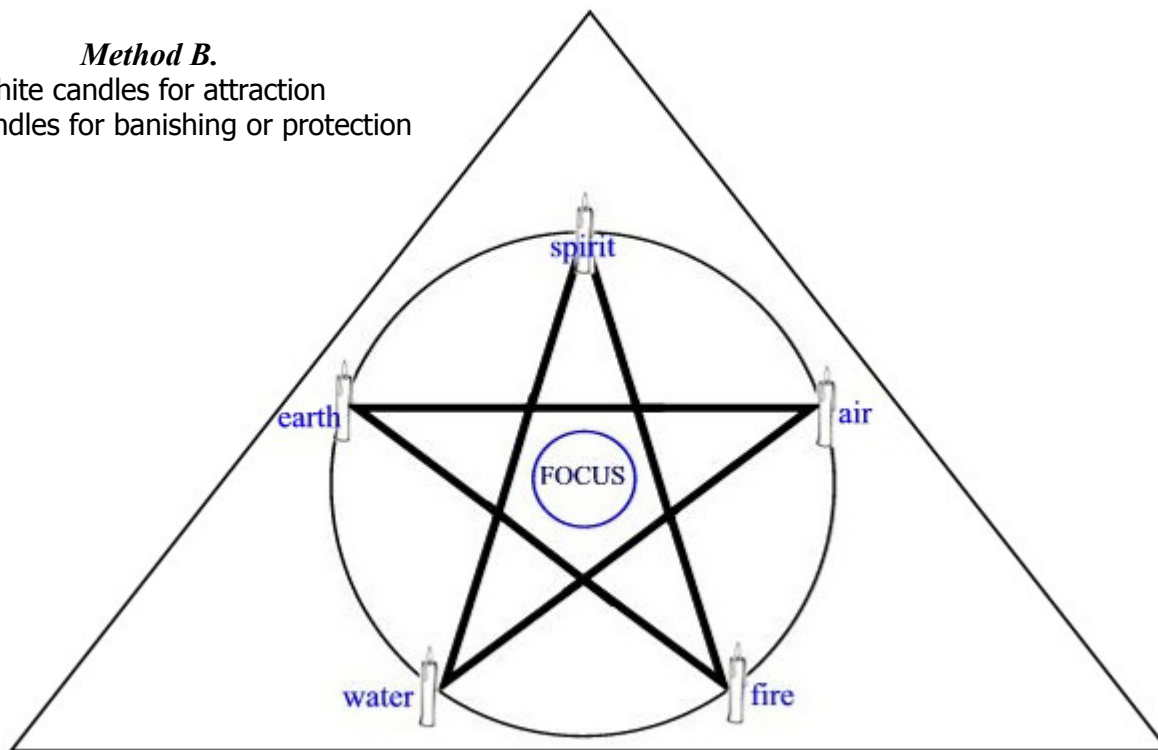


*Method A.*

## The Book of Novicia, Chapter Two

### ***Method B.***

white candles for attraction  
black candles for banishing or protection



*Which one will you use?*

**KEY: Magick is one part knowledge and two parts instinct or intuition. It is not and can never be an exact formula or equation.** This is one of the reasons why you were asked to complete an application questionnaire and one of the reasons why not all applicants were accepted to this school.

If you are planning a ritual and one of these seems more appealing, go with that.

*Note: As a general rule, I use Method A. when casting for tangible things and Method B. when casting for non-physical things. I always use Method B for repelling/reversing spells and for spells of protection.*

***2. When your cornerstones are in place, set the focus of your spell.***

The focus of your spell is a symbol or collection of symbols that will represent the goal of the spell. As a general rule I use a receptacle to contain my symbols. (If I'm using Method A, I place a pentagram underneath the receptacle (top of star pointing north) which will serve as a cauldron. It doesn't have to be a work of art. It could be hand drawn.) For example, when I am casting for anything related to prosperity --from actual money to business success to real estate -- I use a large bowl made of green glass set on top of a stone pentagram. A pillar candle goes in the middle of the bowl. Depending on the spell that one candle might be the only thing present or it might be surrounded with a riot of goodies such as gold coins, a parchment rolled and tied with velvet ribbon, tarot cards, a photograph or toy, etc. etc.

**KEY: The Magician must come to the Source prepared, but in the spirit of "play".**

***3. Drawing the Circle.***

When all is ready, make sure you have ***inside the Circle*** a lighter or matches to light candles and salt to seal the Circle. Go within. Form a Circle with a sprinkling of salt. Begin in the north and go clockwise until you at north again. See a circular wall of blue flame rising from the salt toward the heavens. Say, "All within is safe and sound,," three times. Once you clearly see this image in your mind's eye, you are protected and may proceed.

***4. Evocation of Elements***

Begin lighting candles in the north and go clockwise. As you light each flame pay some polite tribute to the element represented. *Ex. If using Method A, you might say something like, "Hail Kingdom of the North! And welcome to my Circle."* Acknowledge each of the Ancient Elements, close your eyes long enough to imagine the force of nature that each represents. Volcanoes pushing out of the sea to form mountains, the sound of wind rushing through trees or past wind chimes, the hypnotic effect of fire --the hiss and crackle, and, last, the sound of water as rain, babbling brook, waterfall or ocean waves. Experiencing these things in your mind, as vividly as possible, calls them forth.

## The Book of Novicia, Chapter Two

### ***5. Set the Focus***

Set the focus of your spell in the middle of your Circle. Use an unscented candle (refer to the chart on page 135 in *Seasons of the Witch Primer* to choose a color that corresponds with the focus of your spell). Keep in mind this candle doesn't have to be large. It can be as small as a tea light. Light the candle. Lay beside it your piece of paper with what you want written on it.

### ***6. Cast the Spell***

The spell is cast by speaking your desire in rhyme. Say your quatrain out loud to set the Magick in motion – no matter how simple, no matter how silly it seems. No one knows why there is such Magick in speaking simple rhyme. It is true nonetheless. If you need to refer to examples, you can find examples in the first lesson and on pages 77-78 of the *Primer*. As you speak your quatrain, use your dominant hand to stir the air above the cauldron in a clockwise motion. Once for every repetition of your quatrain, nine times total.

***CHECKPOINT: You are safe in the Circle. Allow your Magickal sensitivity to surface so that you can feel the change in your environment when you begin stirring the air.***

Close your eyes. Hold your hands out, palms up. Concentrate for a few moments on what you want while breathing deeply three times. Light the paper with your candle and drop it in your cauldron or fireproof container. As it burns watch the paper transform into smoke which transforms into vapor and "see" it carried on the four winds to seek out and bring you the thing, the opportunity or the essence you want. Spend a minute visualizing the request going out into the world, crossing dimensions if necessary, gaining the attention of the Powers That Be who judge you worthy and, with the wave of a hand, change the course of future events to align themselves with the outcome that pleases you. The steps are complete.

### ***7. Opening The Circle***

When you are ready to reopen the Circle, you will reverse the process. You can open the Circle and leave the candles burning if you wish. Beginning in the west move counter-clockwise (widdershins), dismiss each Guardian Element with respect and gratitude. Something like, "Great Kingdom of the West, I thank you for your service. Merry Met, and Merry Part and Merry Meet Again."

When this is done, close your eyes and lower the circular curtain of blue flame until it ceases to be.

## The Book of Novicia, Chapter Two

When you are ready to snuff the candles, do so in the order of west, south, east, north. If you have a fireproof way to let the focus candle burn out, it would be ideal.

### IN CONCLUSION:

As you can see a Ritual Magick spell is Practical Magick on steroids and this Ritual Magick spell was a very simple example of what High Magick can be. Before your training is complete we will attempt some spells that are much more intricate and elaborate.

***Magickal Notation:*** Don't forget your journaling. The keeping of a Witch's Diary is a big part of the process. No detail is too unimportant to record.

Your Chapter One notes will be about the process of deciding why you're studying Witchcraft and approaching life changes through the Treasure Map spell.

Your Chapter Two notes will be about the process of writing a Practical Magick spell of your choosing and a corresponding Ritual Magick spell.

### *Support and reinforce your spell casting by....*

1. speaking and thinking positively about what you want
2. stay alert for signs, messages and opportunities
3. be prepared to take physical steps using mundane methods when they are called for

In Chapter Three we will explore Simple, Primitive or Sympathetic Magick. Also, the Chapter Three podcast will include an interview with Gena Ferguson, also known as Raven's Wing, author of *Cult of Raven: The Poetic Rites*.