

SCRYING PROCEDURES
by G.W. Fisler

The first step in scrying is to pick out the medium that you wish to scry with. There are many choices. They range from the simplest (a clear glass filled with water) to the expensive (a large, clear crystal sphere). There are many variations in between.

You may have read other articles on scrying either on the net or in a book.

Let me state that all of these writings are wrong, or at least partially wrong. Every article that I have read states the author's preferences. In other words they champion what worked for the author. You may, and probably, are different. I can not over-emphasize that you should do what feels right for you. We are all individuals who have a different psychological makeup.

The following is a short list of what I have read:

You must use an absolutely clear crystal
You should use a crystal with inclusions (defects)
lead crystal will not work
lead crystal is the only reliable medium
The crystal sphere should be 2" in diameter
the crystal sphere should be at least 3" to 4" in diameter
stare at the crystal without blinking
do not focus on the crystal, but look "past" the crystal. Blinking is all right
This list of contradictions could go on and on, but I think you get the idea. You need to get what feels right to you. I personally prefer the scrying mirror for several reasons, the first being cost. If you do not want to make your own please e-mail me to discuss a custom made scrying mirror. This does not mean that I would not or could not use another medium. It is just that the black faced scrying mirror is what I feel most comfortable with. The following is a list of mediums that have been used. There are more possible variation than I have listed here:
Crystal sphere
Crystal skull (carved)
Mirror (could be a black mirror or a silver mirror)
Glass of water
Bowl of water colored with ink
Candle flame
Coals of a fire
fire smoke
Pool of water
Fog or mist over water

Various disciplines mandate a consecration ritual before using the scrying medium. On a purely psychological standpoint this makes sense. The subconscious mind must be convinced what you want it to accomplish. This may be accomplished through ritual or meditation. Polishing the crystal or mirror while thinking about what you want to accomplish will be enough.

Anything that will induce a state of altered awareness should be done. For beginners dim lighting is a must. Incense may be burned and/or meditation music may be played. Do what feels right for you. A side note is that in past centuries incense played a more important role in inducing altered states than in the present time. The reason for this is that the incense was inhaled. This decreased the amount of oxygen in the blood stream. The brain will enter an altered state during periods of oxygen deprivation. I do not recommend this procedure

due to possible health risks. It is only mentioned as an historical note.

The actual procedure for scrying is simple and straightforward:

Get the room ready - dim lighting, incense, music, etc. that you want

Place the scrying medium on a table at a convenient level

A dim light (candle or?) should be behind the viewer. To start out this should be the only light in the room.

Perform the progressive muscle relaxation exercise

Look at the mirror (or crystal) in a relaxed manner, focusing about 5" past the surface of the mirror (this may or may not work for you so try other methods)

You will blink but do not be too concerned about it

Keep your mind blank except if you have a specific question to ask

Do not scry for over 20 minutes at first

The images may appear in different manners. They may just appear or they may be preceded by a "cloud of mist" forming first. The mist could dissipate or morph into the images. The images could be symbols of the subconscious or may be actual pictures of events, past, present or future. As an example of each person being different, the first visual impression that I receive looks like flying insects rotating on the reflective surface of the mirror.

This is the basics. Your success at scrying may take days, weeks or months to accomplish. You may be successful the first time that you try. Practice will make perfect, so keep on trying if you do not succeed at first. If you feel that you are at a dead end, try something different. It may help. Keep practicing. Remember that nothing worthwhile in life is easy. Happy visions!

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How to make a Scrying Mirror

by G.W. Fisler

Scrying does not have to be an expensive undertaking. The price of a lead crystal sphere is outside the price range that most of us are willing to pay. This is especially true for someone new to scrying who is not yet sure of success.

Nostrodamas is credited with seeing the future in a bowl of water that was colored with ink. This and other low tech methods are ideal for someone who wants to try his hand at scrying without a heavy investment.

The method that I prefer is a scrying mirror. One of these can be constructed for less than five dollars. The first step is to buy a picture frame. An oval frame is ideal but any other shape is acceptable. Try to find a frame that has some aesthetic appeal for you. Frames may be found in many of the dollar stores that seem to be popping up everywhere. The frame must have a glass insert and not a plastic one. Now on to the construction.

First, disassemble the frame. Clean one side of the glass with your Scrying Mirror Cleaning Solution (i.e. Windex). Paint this side with a thick black paint

t. Oil based enamel seems to work best. I prefer the gloss black but matte black will work well also. Apply several coats of paint until light will not pass through the glass.

At this stage you may paint designs or symbols around the edge of the frame if you are artistically inclined. If not there is a variety of frames with designs already on them. The choice is yours.

Next, assemble the frame with the painted side of the glass to the inside. The thicker the plate of glass, the deeper the mirror will appear.

A method is needed to hold the frame at a shallow angle to the vertical. Some frames have a leg on the back that will do nicely. Trimming the bottom of the leg will adjust the angle. An alternate method is to use one of the display stands that are used for collector plates. Varying the size of the stand will increase or decrease the angle of the frame. These are available at craft stores or those stores where America shops.

An alternate method of constructing a scrying mirror is to use a clear crystal plate. Paint the back side as described for the picture frame. With this method I recommend covering the painted portion with felt or some other heavy material. This will help protect the paint from being scratched or scuffed off.

You are now ready to begin scrying. Good luck and clear visions!

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PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION TECHNIQUE

by G.W. Fisler

This technique should be practiced in a dimly lighted room, if possible. A BSOLUTE quiet and privacy are also necessary. This exercise should be practiced daily for at least ten minutes. Work up to 30 minutes as it becomes comfortable to do so. Meditation music may be played to cover up any background sounds.

These exercises may be performed while laying down or sitting in a comfortable chair. One of the well padded reclining loungers would be ideal. A chair that enveloped you will make you feel safer. It is hard to relax when you are tr

ying to stay upright in a normal chair. I prefer to work from the feet up when lying prone, but switch to working from the head down when I am using a chair. Actually, you may use either method. The choice is up to you.

Those of you that are familiar with Yoga know the effect that breath has on the body. The breath that we will use here is called 2/4 breathing. It goes like this:

inhale to a count of four

hold breath to a count of two

exhale to a count of four

hold breath out to a count of two

All counting is done mentally at first. After a while the timing will become automatic. Do this for 2 to 3 minutes before starting the progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) exercise. Try to continue with this breathing as much as possible during the PMR, but do not be too concerned if you do not get it right at first.

You do not have to get it perfect to get results.

Close your eyes and clear your mind. Try not to let any stray thoughts enter your mind. I sometimes visualize a small sphere in the center of my mind. I let this sphere expand and push all of the extraneous thoughts out of my mind.

Concentrating on your breathing will keep the mind free from thought from that point on. Try to tense the muscle on an in breath and relax on an out breath.

Curl the right foot and tense all the muscles in the foot. Relax and repeat once. Do the left foot.

Tense the right calf muscles. Relax and repeat once. Same on the left side.

Tense the right thigh muscles. Relax and repeat once. Do the left side.

Tense the muscles in the buttocks and anus. Relax and repeat once.

Tense the muscles in the back. Relax and repeat once.

Curl right hand into a fist. Relax and repeat once. Same on the left side.

Tense all the muscles in the right forearm. Relax and repeat once. Same on the left side.

Tense all the muscles in the right upper arm. Relax and repeat once. Same on the left side.

Tense all the muscles in the chest. Relax and repeat once.

Tense the shoulder muscles. Relax and repeat once.

Tense the neck muscles. Relax and repeat once.

Tense the head muscles. Relax and repeat once.

Tense all the muscles in the body. Relax and repeat once.

Your eyes should have been closed during this exercise. You should have lost or reduced all sensations in the body. This is an important step in any metaphysical pursuit. Practice until you get it as perfect as possible.

Tower of Light Exercise

by Gary Fisler

This exercise will open and balance the chakras. There are many variations of the Tower of Light, but the one that we will use here is the one used by various followers of the Golden Dawn and its offshoots. You may also hear it refe

tered to as the Middle Pillar Ritual. There are more chakras than those listed here, but these are the ones that we need to stimulate in order to astrally project.

The start of this exercise is rhythmic breathing. This is a cornerstone of western spirituality as well as the more well known eastern versions. First find your pulse. Then familiarize yourself with the rhythm of the heart. The idea is to use your pulse as the timekeeper for your breathing. For example:

1. Breathe in to the count of 4 beats
2. Hold breath for 2 beats
3. Breathe out to the count of 4 beats
4. Hold breath out for 2 beats
5. Repeat

The ratio does not have to be 2:4. It may be 3:6 or 4:8 also. Experiment and find out which one feels right for you.

It is now time to do the actual Tower of Light exercise. The steps should be memorized and are as follows:

Stand erect with the feet close together but not touching.

Start rhythmic breathing. Continue till it starts to feel natural.

On an in-breath visualize a small sphere (about 2") of bright light situated 2-3 inches above the head. This is the Crown Chakra. On each in-breath visualize this sphere getting brighter. Do this for 4 to 5 breathes.

On an out breath visualize a shaft of this same light shooting down from the crown chakra to your forehead in the area of the third eye. On an in-breath visualize a small sphere of bright light half outside the head and half inside in the area where your third eye is supposed to be. This is the brow chakra. Visualize the sphere getting brighter on each in-breath for 4 to 5 cycles.

On an out-breath visualize a shaft of bright light shooting from the brow chakra to the area of the throat. This is the throat chakra. On an in-breath visualize a small sphere of bright light just outside the throat but not touching the body. Visualize the sphere getting brighter on each in-breath for 4 to 5 cycles.

On an out-breath visualize a shaft of bright light shooting from the throat chakra to the area of the heart. This is the heart chakra. On an in-breath visualize a small sphere of bright light half inside and half outside the chest. Visualize the sphere getting brighter on each in-breath for 4 to 5 cycles.

On an out-breath visualize a shaft of bright light shooting from the heart chakra to the area of the groin. This is the base chakra. On an in-breath visualize a small sphere of bright light half inside and half outside the area of the groin. Visualize the sphere getting brighter on each in-breath for 4 to 5 cycles.

On an out-breath visualize a shaft of bright light shooting from the base chakra to the area of the feet. This is the earth chakra. On an in-breath visualize a small sphere of bright light half inside and half outside the ground. The sphere is touching the insoles of the feet. Visualize the sphere getting brighter on each in-breath for 4 to 5 cycles.

Visualize the connection of all the chakras to each other through the shaft of light. Do this for 4 to 5 in-breathes.

On an in-breath visualize a bright shaft of white light flowing from the earth chakra up through the body. You should visualize this shaft of bright light activating all the chakras as it passes up through the body.

When this shaft of bright light reaches the crown chakra, it will split in half with half going down each side of the body (but not touching the body) and connecting with the earth chakra. The upward shaft of light is performed on an in-breath and the downward return to the earth chakra is performed on an out-breath.

Do this for 4 to 5 cycles. Gradually let the shaft of bright light get dimmer until it fades.

By this time you will be feeling all sorts of strange sensations. If you are not, then your personal energy is low. Time to access your lifestyle and see what you can do to redirect energy, but that is a topic for another article. After performing this for a while you may get a strange sensation in the brow chakra. It may feel like a tingling sensation, or possibly like the skin is shrinking. This is normal and signifies that the brow chakra is becoming more aware. This is what you want. Learn to love the sensation, even though sometimes it is so intense that it is distracting. Remember, practice this exercise every day for the rest of your life! It will be well worth it.

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Side-Effects of Hypnosis Tapes

by G.W. Fisler

Hypnosis tapes are a very effective way to reach the subconscious mind. This is one of my favorite methods to induce astral projection and to perform progressive muscle relaxation. It frees the mind from having to think and concentrate while you are trying to enter an altered state of consciousness. Concentrating on the voice on the tape helps to keep the mind from wandering.

I noticed some strange side effects after using these hypnosis tapes. They are nothing serious, but may cause some concern to those who are new to using them.

My greatest concern was the dreams that I had after using an hypnosis tape.

At first, I thought that these could be prophetic dreams. I kept having different dreams about a sailboat that I was on. In each of these dreams the boat was either sinking or already sunk. As an avid sailor, this disturbed me.

I finally realized that these were not prophetic dreams, but rather the surfacing of deep, inner fears. Hypnosis connects with the subconscious mind, which communicates with symbols. Dream images are the easiest way for the subconscious to communicate. Unfortunately, it is not possible to predict what will come out of these sessions.

The second effect was the intensity of the lucid dreams I have while using these tapes regularly. They are easy to remember, which is unusual for dreams.

Some will probably say that these are all an out of body experience. Some are and some are not. I have noticed that some of these dreams involve unresolved issues with persons that I have long since lost contact with. Although it is possible that the astral counterparts of these people are involved in these "dreams", until I have more proof of this I will label them as lucid dreams.

A good side effect of these tapes is that OBE's that occur during sleep are easier to remember.

The last effect that we will talk about is the loss of sleep. I have found some nights that my mind is so busy recording my mental escapades during the night, that I wake up in the morning rather drained. This effect may be lessened by breaking up the daily sleep time. A good nap in the early evening will overcome the drained feeling in the morning. Play the hypnosis tape after the nap. The tape will be more effective at this time since the body will not be fully awake and therefore more prone to stay relaxed.

Another way to solve this drained feeling is to play the hypnosis tape in the morning when you first wake up. If you decide to try this method, do not use an alarm clock that shocks you awake. One that plays some gentle music would be more effective.

Hypnosis tapes are a safe and effective way to effect change in our lives. I wish you luck on the Path that you have chosen.

The Inner Sanctum Exercise

by G.W. Fisler

This exercise is to train the mind to concentrate and to be led by your own thoughts. It is a guided meditation that is controlled by the subconscious mind.

Routine repetition will gather images from the subconscious mind to be added to the content of the exercise.

I found that during this meditation that a good portion of the content was added by something other than what I was thinking at the moment. There will be times when something "pops" into your mind. This happened to me when I was contemplating about a personal motto. An appropriate motto popped into my mind without any conscious thought on my part.

The progressive muscle relaxation exercise should be performed first. This will promote an altered state that is conducive to contact with the subconscious.

The following is an outline of the meditation that I use. Yours will not and should not be identical. Pick a place that mirrors your own desires. This place should be one that you identify with and feel comfortable in. I feel very comfortable in a nature setting or on a boat. Others will be petrified to be in these areas. An example of this occurred to me several years ago. A person th

at worked for me could not understand that I would live in the country. He asked why I was not afraid that some wild animal would attack me. He was from Chicago. Personally, I feel a whole lot safer in the woods than I would on the streets of Chicago! A meditation that took me to a large city would not be productive. The same for this other person who meditates about being in the country.

The first part of the exercise programs the subconscious to embrace astral projection. This meditation will seem to be more real every time that you perform it. In actuality it is getting more real, at least on the astral planes. Enough talk. The following is a basic outline of the meditation. The basic parts should be memorized. The other parts will fill in as you go along.

Sit or lie down in a comfortable position. This exercise may be performed any time of day. A perfect way to relax if you can find a private spot during breaks

•
perform progressive muscle relaxation exercise

Close your eyes and picture a door in front of you. This door may be any shape.

Try to make it symbolic. Any emblems that have meaning for you may be placed on the door. Those of Jewish descent may use the Star of David, Wiccan may use a Pentacle while others may wish to use the Ankh.

Picture the door opening.

Picture your astral body lifting out of your physical body and flying through the door.

There is a path leading from the door into the distance. This path is flanked on both sides by old oak trees. Glide down the path. Look around you. What do you see? Do you encounter any other beings on this path?

At the end of the path are two extremely large oak trees, one on each side of the path. (Columns or any other symbolic item may be substituted)

Passing through these two trees brings you into a large circular clearing. (this area could be a large room, a cave or anything else that you can relate to) This is your inner sanctum.

Greet the Inner Sanctum.

Look around the clearing. You notice a stream crossing the clearing. It has pooled in the center of the clearing. This pool has a mist floating on top of it.

A light is centered high in the center of the clearing. You notice this is the moon. (obviously if your sanctum is a cave or room the light will be something else of your choosing)

You may wish to incorporate the symbols of the four directions. I will leave this up to your particular training to fill in the gaps here.

There is a small pedestal in front of the pool. There is a plaque on the pedestal. Can you make out the inscription? This is your personal motto. It should reflect you and the results you expect from your life. Do not worry if you are unable to read it the first few trips. This is something that your subconscious will fill in for you if you give it time.

Spend a few minutes staring into the mist that covers the pool. Push all other thoughts out of your mind. Concentrate on what the mist is trying to tell you.

(if some of you are thinking that this is a form of scrying then you are correct)

Meditate on any other things that you wish.

Bid farewell to your inner sanctum and turn to leave.

Glide back along the path, retracing the steps that brought you here.

Mentally pass through the door and watch it close behind you.

Assimilate your astral body into your physical body.

Ground yourself by drinking or eating something.

Write down any impressions that you had.

Take your time doing this exercise. It is not a race! The longer you take, the more you will get out of it. Do it at least once a day with the progressive muscle relaxation (PMR). If you can find ten or more extra minutes during the day, do it a second time with or without the PMR.

Astral Strangeness

by G.W. Fisler

While expanding your awareness of the worlds outside of conscious "reality", you will notice some strange things that may make you think that you are "losing it".

During the day, if you daydream, you will probably enter an altered state of consciousness. This may lead to visions of things that are not there in physical reality. These visions may be seen out of the corner of your eye or may be what is considered a normal daydream. It will usually be a bit stranger than a normal daydream, though. This is just astral trash or thought forms that are loose in the astral planes. They can not harm you in any way.

The thing that always startled me the most was hearing someone shout my name. This was not physical hearing, but rather a feeling of hearing my name enter my mind and displacing any other thoughts that were there. Sometimes it would be my first name and sometimes my last name. It is hard to describe to someone who has not experienced it, but you will know what I am talking about the first time it happens to you! I almost jumped out of my skin the first time. Jumped out of that altered state that I was in too.

This next occurrence is one that is usually encountered when entering the hypnagogic state. This state is the time when the body is asleep but the mind is still awake. It occurs just as we are falling to sleep. One method to induce astral projection is to try to prolong this hypnagogic state.

I have sat here at the computer for about 10 minutes trying to figure out how to explain this astral occurrence. This is so strange that I did not believe that it happens until it happened to me. The best way that I can describe it is a slide show. A progression of images of different people will flash in front of you at a rapid rate. It is not a scary incident but one that could frustrate you. I always get irritated that none of the images stay long enough for me to remember any details. The images are usually a frontal image of a person similar to what one would expect in a portrait.

The images will be of both males and females and from all different time periods. Some say that this is a picture of past lives. I am skeptical. There are other possibilities. The universe is a large and wondrous thing. We still do not know how communication is accomplished between different animal species so how will we know what happens on the universe level?

These images could be family lineage, images picked up from the "Akashic Records", or someone else's thought patterns. Who knows? They are still interesting.

You will probably encounter strange occurrences other than what I have talk

ed about. Do not let them stop you from continuing on your spiritual quest. At tribute them to a wonderful universe and continue on.

PSYCHOMANTIUM

by G.W. Fisler

The psychomantium is an ancient form of mirror gazing that has been popularized by Dr. Raymond Moody, M.D. It has its roots in the oracles of ancient Greece. This type of mirror gazing is used to contact spirits of departed loved ones.

The initial setup is a little more complex and costly than that of a scrying mirror. A large mirror (4' high by 3-1/2' wide) is attached to a wall with the bottom edge about 3' from the floor. A comfortable, high backed chair is placed about 3' from the mirror. The top of the backrest of the chair should be below the bottom of the mirror. The feet of the chair should be trimmed to allow the chair to slant farther back than is normal.

The person sitting in the chair should not be able to see his/her reflection in the mirror. The area around the chair and mirror is surrounded by a black velvet curtain. This black void should be all that is reflected in the mirror.

A lamp with a 15 watt bulb is placed behind the chair. This is the only illumination in the room.

This procedure is usually performed after dark to alleviate the problem of light entering the room through the windows. Thick, dark curtains or a room without windows would allow you to use the psychomantium even during the day.

Proper mental preparation is essential for this procedure to work. Dr. Moody starts his participants at 10:00 AM. They are requested to bring personal items from the deceased person that is to be contacted. Throughout the day they discuss the deceased. At dusk the participant enters the psychomantium. He/she is told to stay as long as they like. They were also told to blank their mind except for thoughts of the deceased and to gaze into the mirror.

I recommend Dr Moody's book "REUNIONS: Visionary Encounters with Departed Loved Ones" for a complete explanation of his findings. I will try to hit the high points:

These visions did not disturb the participants but instead seemed to add closure to an unresolved part of their life

In certain instances the vision was not of the person that was expected but instead a person who had unfinished personal issues with the participant

The visions communicated in an intellectual manner with the participants

The participants claimed that it was a real person that contacted them and not just a vision of that person

My experiments in this area are still ongoing. As soon as I have enough data I will try to make some sense of it and will publish the findings here. I am trying to determine if a large size gazing mirror (see "How to make a Scrying Mirror") will have any different effect than using a regular mirror.

I hope that I have given enough information for you to try this experiment for yourself. E-mail me with your experiences. I would love to hear from you.

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People have been Scrying for many years, from the time of the ancients to the modern day. When clear-vision is sought a variety of mediums have been used for their reflective purposes. By using or attuning to an external source or object, one can enhance the stillness and peace needed to start the visions rolling. However to pursue such a practice while in a state of turmoil would induce a very chaotic and random effect, with little real continuity. This train of vision would then need much deciphering and ordering to make sense of any information gained.

All of creation that can be beheld by the eye and all that cannot is born of the element of consciousness. Each individual from a single grain of sand to the gods themselves are but facets of the one whole divine consciousness with an eternal inner-connection, separated only by their own definition of the self.

If then we are to seek vision over a part of our life, or if asked to help another, we have only to find this connection within our selves. The essential truth is that all things are within us, all potential and possibilities are ours to be tapped. If we are to search for the highest truth possible, then one should reach for the highest point of consciousness available. Pure Love. This is not the sentimental state of the Earth Mind but the Bliss State of the open spirit. True potential lies in the giving and receiving of Pure Love energy. We now arrive at the first stage of successful scrying, the setting of sacred space.

For myself, when I seek to set a sacred space, I use the four elements or characteristics of the Medicine Wheel. I feel that this is the most perfect way possible, as within the wheel is much understanding and wisdom, as without lies much yet to be discovered. The other great advantage is the connection to the spirit through the natural world and order of Gods creation. So my work has led me to use the natural elements in my practice.

I won't go into great detail about the Medicine Wheel as that would be a task within itself, but in order to be able to set a Sacred Space one must observe these key elements-

Definition

Intention

Purpose

By Definition one defines the boundaries. This is simply who you are in your active space. A sacred circle should be held in pure and clean thoughts recognising the sacredness of all creation. By holding oneself in the energy of pure love, we are protected from the outside harmful and mischievous energies. Let the Pure Love rays flow from your heart. In our Intention we determine within ourselves why we are on such an undertaking and then to what Purpose or end result this is all for.

By keeping our selves in our Sacred Space in this way we are protected from all harmful rays. The great majority of which are ones own negativity returning again. Love is both the key and the way.

The actual practice of Scrying is most simple. By following the guidelines laid down above you will find your self a little more than halfway there. The next step is to make the bridge of consciousness or to hold ones attunement to the task in hand.

As I mentioned earlier, I use the Four elements though such implements as a mirror or crystal could be used.

For the first step in the actual practice, take your self into a meditation and find within yourself the pure spirit. At this time it pays to be clear about your intention or the direction of your practice, so that the energy's have continuity in their flow. From this place then attune to the medium you are using - be it Fire, Water or any other such entity. Allow the energy of your chosen proxy to fill your essence; this combined with the focus of your intention may fill you with the vision you require.

Remember the connection that you require is with the energy of your subject rather than the physical manifestation. The common mistake is to look for the visions in the fire or water itself rather than within.

When absorbing an energy within your own being, such as that of fire or water, it is important that it is consecrated first. Either by blessing the water or dedicating the fire to its purpose.

Hopefully these guidelines will be enough to start many on their way, as with most practices the only limitation lies within yourself.

We have used sand as a medium, with great success. The client holds a focus on their issue and makes a mark upon the sand; the reading is then given from this impression.

There has been success for people who use the smoke from incense, while myths and tales tell us of the whispers on the wind. Allow your imagination to take you to new and fertile lands.

If you would like more information, or to share experiences then please contact me at -
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A Short Course in Scrying

by Benjamin Rowe
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Author's note:

This document was originally presented as a series of posts on the "enochian-1" and "Praxis" email lists. The contents are substantially unchanged from those posts.

Introduction

Several folks have sent messages asking me to post some instructions on learning to skry. Since doing the job right will take a while, I'm going to do it in sections, as I have the time. Here's a rough outline of what needs to be covered, IMO:

1. Preliminaries

- Relaxation
- Concentration

2. Creating a "Refuge" or "Sacred Space"

- General considerations
- Establishing the space
- Establishing your "astral" body in the space
- The "surprise me" technique
- The "magick mirror"
- Pathworking

3. Testing your visions

4. Applying these skills to Enochian magick.

For some parts of this I can adapt things I've already written for other contexts; for other parts, I'll be starting from scratch, and may need a few iterations before I have something I feel comfortable posting. So the posts in the series are likely to be erratic. No one should hesitate to ask questions if anything is n't clear; I know my prose gets cumbersome at times.

Credit Where Credit Is Due department: Following a programmer's maxim -- "Steal only from the best." -- much of what I'll say in this and following parts is shamelessly stolen from my memories of a course taught by the Fellowship of the Inner Light, a group based in Virginia Beach, VA in the mid-to-late 70's. The founder of the group has since died, and I haven't the faintest idea if they are still in business. But if you find the opportunity to take their "Inner Light Consciousness" course, or even to acquire the manuals for the course, it is well worth the trouble. While not labeled as such, it is an introduction to all the things a beginning magician needs to know but which nobody ever tells them.

1. Preliminary Considerations

To start with, the reader should understand that scrying is as much a learned skill as is reading or ice skating. Persistent practice is necessary to teach the nervous system how to do it, even where the person has some innate talent. And as with other learned skills, there is a "learning curve". At first there will be a long period when you don't seem to be making any significant progress. Then things will suddenly fall together and your practice will improve markedly in a s

hort period before leveling off again at something close to your highest level of skill.

It is best to expect a learning period of at least several months; don't expect quick results. It is likely that you will have occasional sessions where things work much better than usual. Don't be too encouraged by these, as it is likely you will fall back to a lower level in the next session. When an improvement lasts for a week or more, you are justified in judging it a genuine advance.

Before getting to skrying techniques as such, I want to discuss the various kinds of distractions that can cause trouble for beginners, and suggest some solutions. Distractions can be generally classified in three types:

Physical distractions. E.g., itches, muscle aches and twitches, etc.

External distractions. House and street noises, other residents of your home, etc.

Mental distractions. The internal "chatter" that we are all prone to.

Four of the traditional practices of yoga are intended to reduce and eliminate such distractions. Asana and (to a small extent) pranayama deal with physical distractions; pratyahara with external distractions, and dharana with mental distractions. These high-discipline practices are more than most people will need for our current purposes; perfection isn't necessary, just something "good enough". But those who find they do need more than the simple techniques described here may wish to look into them.

Traditional asana practice seeks to eliminate physical distractions by training the body to remain in a single posture for long periods of time. The muscles are trained to maintain a state of tension such that the body remains locked into the chosen posture. The lack of movement reduces the intensity of the body's sensory signals to the brain. That is to say, repetitive, unchanging signals are completely processed at the pre-conscious level and are never brought to the attention of the conscious mind. Unfortunately, the traditional practice usually produces extreme pain for a long period before the muscles are trained to a given posture.

The same effect can be produced without the painful intermediate stage by achieving a state of profound physical relaxation. The nervous system doesn't care why it is getting repetitive signals from the body, but only that it is so. Lack of movement engendered by relaxation is just as good at producing such signals as is lack of movement produced by muscle locking.

The practitioner should begin by choosing a comfortable posture that can be maintained without muscular tension. A sitting posture is recommended over a supine position, since relaxing while lying down easily leads to sleep. I preferred to sit cross-legged on a bed, with my back supported by a pillow against the wall. A high-backed easy-chair is as good. All that matters is that you can be perfectly relaxed in the position without falling over.

A certain type of breathing can help promote relaxation. Take a deep gulp of air through your mouth, breathing from the belly; don't strain to take in the maximum. Hold it as long as comfortable, and then release it, allowing the weight of your ribs and the natural tension of your diaphragm to push the air out of your lungs without forcing it. Relax for a moment at the end of the breath. Repeat for one minute, or until you start to feel dizzy. You will find that as you release the breath, all your muscles have a tendency to loosen. (This type of breathing is, perhaps not coincidentally, identical to the way one takes a joint of marijuana.)

Once you are comfortable and have done the breathing, begin to work at relaxing each muscle in your body individually. Start with the scalp and face, and work y

our way down the body, working outwards from the spine at each level. Complete relaxation of any muscle will be accompanied by a pleasant "melting" sensation; try to make your whole body feel as if it has melted into a puddle of warm pudding.

By the time you have reached your feet, you will probably find that your face and scalp muscles have tensed up again, just from your concentration on the task. Start again at the top and work your way down, repeating as often as needed to get to a state of complete relaxation. When the physical relaxation is complete, try to extend it to the inside of your head as well, letting your awareness float in a warm internal glow.

While this exercise is simple and easily mastered, it is very important. Most of the other forms of distraction practitioners encounter are accompanied by tension reactions in some part of the body. An extreme example is the "startle" reaction, in which some small noise triggers a state of high alert in your body; your heart suddenly jumps and increases its rate of beating, and every muscle in the body suddenly tenses. The parts of the mind responsible for these reactions and distractions are often not directly accessible to consciousness; but since body and mind influence each other, you can begin to subvert and eliminate the reactions by eliminating their physical manifestations.

The other aspect of controlling distractions is to understand the nature of the human mind. Each of us is not a single being, but a multitude. Our minds are composed of many "sub-minds", each with its own special functions. Some of these (the visual sub-minds, for instance) are so intimately connected with our consciousness that we never notice their functioning unless something goes seriously wrong. Others act with greater independence.

But while they are not accessible in the same way that, e.g., the language forming parts of the mind are, there is communication back and forth between them, and between them and the conscious mind. The conscious self, the part of the mind which calls itself "I", is supposed to function as a mediator, arbiter, synthesizer and director between these other aspects of our being. Its function is to take the results of their work, compare and evaluate them, make use of them to act in the world, and direct their future work on the basis of the results obtained. When there are conflicts between different sub-minds, the conscious self is supposed to "keep the peace" by balancing their respective needs and viewpoints.

Unfortunately, human evolution is not yet at the point where the consciousness automatically functions in the best way possible. The capability for it to do so is there, but it requires training and experience to develop its proper relationship to the other sub-minds. Lacking that training, we too often end up acting as censors and tyrants rather than mediators, suppressing troublesome messages from these parts rather than dealing with them. And as often as they are suppressed, they leak up through some other channel, producing distractions and what Crowley called "breaks" in one's practice.

The key to permanently relieving both physical and mental distractions is to deal with them in the right way, immediately as you become aware that they are occurring. You have to re-condition yourself into the desired response while the distracting sensations or thoughts are still present in your mind, and the physical tensions are still in your body. The sub-minds aren't particularly time-conscious; they understand what is happening "now" much better than events in the past or future.

Once you have achieved a state of physical relaxation, try just sitting in the relaxed state, with your mind not focused on any particular thing and with no intention of doing anything else for a while. It is a sure bet that after a few minutes, some part of your mind will take the opportunity to bring its own concerns

to the surface, and you will start talking to yourself mentally about whatever it is concerned with.

As soon as you realize you are following some line of thought, stop and assess your body's state. Do the relaxation exercises until you are back in a completely relaxed condition. Then imagine that you are extending that relaxation to the part of your mind that brought up the thoughts you were thinking; imagine that part enveloped and permeated by a warm, melting glow, while simultaneously you talk to it, telling it: "Relax, be still, there is nothing you need to do right now." Successful relaxation of a sub-mind through this procedure will produce a sensation of a sudden, mildly pleasurable energy-release in some part of your brain, sometimes accompanied by a sensation of "clearness".

It is likely that by the time you get one sub-mind quieted -- or even while you are still working on it -- another part will pop up with a different thought-train. Keep working on the first instance and ignore the new one. Don't be concerned if you don't get to everything that comes along during this practice; the things you miss are certain to show up again at a later time. Do one thing at a time and don't jump around. If you forget what you are doing somewhere in the middle of things, just start over with the relaxation exercises, and unfocusing your attention.

This same technique can be applied to external disturbances. The only difference is that when telling the disturbed sub-mind to relax, you tell it that the noise or other distraction is unimportant and not worth attention.

The Fellowship of the Inner Light teaches a slight variation on this method, which some people may prefer. They use a particular biblical (?) phrase when speaking to the sub-minds; it is almost a mantra in their version of this practice. The phrase is: "Be still, and know that I Am god." The intent of this usage is to consciously and deliberately assert the conscious self's rightful place as director and decision-maker, while at the same time acknowledging the existence of the sub-minds as quasi-separate entities.

And rather than just sitting with one's attention unfocused, they prefer that the practitioner use a mantra: "Eheieh", meaning "I am", the highest name of God in the Hebrew cabala. The mantra should be spoken internally, in a relaxed and casual manner; i.e., whenever the practitioner happens to think of it, rather than in steady repetition. I personally find that the use of a mantra tends to produce tensions rather than alleviate them, but this may not be the case for others.

Continued use of this simple practice will, over time, result in a profound reduction in the amount of verbal "noise" your mind produces, and make it substantially easier to concentrate on the visual images of the "magickal space" techniques to be described in the next section. You don't have to be proficient at this before going on to create a magickal space; the two efforts can be done in parallel, with each reinforcing the other.

2. Creating a magickal space

The foundation of all magickal work is the imagination. The part of the mind that creates images serves as a meeting ground between the conscious mind, the unconscious parts of our being, and the magickal universe at large. Visual symbols are the primary means by which meaning is communicated in the magickal worlds. The more flexible you make your imagination, the more effective your magickal work can be.

The best exercise I know of for developing the imagination is called "creating a refuge" or "creating a magickal space". The Vietnam veteran from whom I first learned it said that the U.S. Army Special Forces taught it to him as a means of maintaining a sense of privacy, personal integrity, and personal space under conditions -- as in Viet Cong POW camps -- where these things would be deliberately denied to him by his enemies. When I encountered the Fellowship of the Inner Light a few years later, I found that they were teaching essentially the same technique for purposes of self-mastery and spiritual development.

Once you become practiced in the method it requires no special physical place; it is completely "portable" and can be done anywhere you can sit and relax for a moment. I have used it effectively in many "un-magickal" environments; e.g., a crowded government office, a busy commercial hotel, and in the middle of the Las Vegas COMDEX show.

The basic idea is very simple. You make up an imaginary world that you would enjoy being in, and then you imagine yourself walking around in this world. Not much different, in principle, than what people do in any ordinary daydream. But here the idea is to work for consistency, so that it appears the same every time you enter it, and to continually add details to it. With practice and familiarity, this imaginary world will begin to take on a sense of being a "real" place; not real in the same way as the physical world, but having a permanence about it nonetheless.

For purposes of illustration, I am going to describe one of my own magickal spaces, one which I no longer use. It is important to understand that at every step, the images you use should be those that feel right to you; this is to be your own private space and its contents should always come out of yourself and be meaningful to you. Your space may resemble mine in some aspects; if so, that is all right. More likely it will not, and that too is perfectly appropriate.

The steps described here should be done sequentially, but you do not have to be perfect at any step before going on to the next. Right from the beginning, you can work on several steps in a single session. However, in any given session most of your attention should be given to the earliest steps in whatever group you are working on. As each step becomes more familiar it will take less practice to reach a satisfactory level and you can naturally give more attention to the next .

A. Establish the boundaries

Until your magickal space is well-established, you should begin every session by affirming its invulnerability. Imagine that your space is invisible to any being but yourself, and is impenetrable by any force or person without your express, conscious permission. Think up an image of your space's boundaries that reflects these ideas. I imagine my magickal spaces as "pocket universes" that, seen from the outside, are so tiny as to be lost in the immensity of our own universe; seen from inside, they are as big as I want or need them to be. Other people I know of imagine theirs as surrounded by an adamantine shell, or by a science-fiction force field that "bends" all forces so that they bypass it.

Once you have the boundary of your space established, imagine yourself inside it . As you enter into it, feel all the pressures and demands of your daily life being locked out behind you, unable to follow you in. Imagine that they became completely disconnected from you at the moment you entered your space. They are not trying to force their way in; they can not even sense your space or yourself inside it and are drifting away without anything to attach themselves to. Feel yourself to be totally safe, totally free of any connection to the mundane world.

This matter of feeling safe is very important. As in the relaxation exercises, the feelings you generate are the way you tell the unconscious parts of yourself, the "sub-minds", what to believe and how to act. As far as they are concerned, what you feel is what is real; tell them something often enough, and they will begin to cooperate in making it so, to an extent you could not manage with your conscious resources. If you feel safe and free from pressure in your magickal space, then in a short time you will actually be safe and free there.

B. Create the landscape.

Once you have established a secure space, take some time to think about the general layout of your world. Decide on the major features of the landscape, what sorts of buildings or other structures you want. Make a mental "map" of the areas in your world that you will want to visit most often. Once you decide on these major features, they should not change.

A few ground rules for inventing your world:

-- You should keep the contents of your world absolutely private. Do not speak of them to anyone, and do not write them down anywhere. This first world is going to be your secret refuge and workplace, and much of its protection comes from no one knowing what it is like. Once you have the technique down, you can build other magickal spaces for public purposes.

-- Make your world much bigger than you could maintain by conscious use of your imagination. Create as many detailed areas as you want, but surround these with regions whose landscape is only known in a general way, and whose specific content is unknown. These allow room for expansion, and for the "surprise me" exercises later on in this paper.

-- Make the world a place where you feel comfortable and safe, so that it reinforces the impressions established in the previous step, and make it a place where you can have fun.

-- You can populate your world if you wish, but DO NOT, under any circumstances, use images of living people in your world. For some time, all of the contents of your world will be a reflection of yourself in one way or another. There is a possibility that images of people will be "taken over" by some unconscious part of your mind as a vehicle of expression. If you use images of real people, the behavior of the image may carry over into your relationships with the real person, with ill effect.

Begin to build your world by picking one location within your "map" of it, and imagine yourself standing at that spot. Fix the relationships between various landmarks in your mind, and see them surrounding you at the proper angles and distances. Fill in the details to the degree that you would actually be able to see if you were standing at a similar spot in the real world.

For example, one of my magickal spaces has a landscape of hills and ravines covered by a thick forest like pre-colonial America. The central area contains a rather utilitarian castle on a low bluff overlooking a large river meadow. A small tame river meanders along one edge of the meadow. Various outbuildings and special-purpose areas are dispersed in clearings in the nearby forest.

I began to build this world by imagining myself standing in the meadow, looking north. I can see the green grasses, small colorful wildflowers, and an occasional cowpie nearby. Animal paths wander about, and a more direct human-made path goes from the bluff to the river. The bluff appears to be made of a flaky granite, and the castle is right on the brink of it; a couple of winters' worth of erosion to the bluff might undermine the nearest wall. I can only see all of one cast

le wall from this position, and part of another; I can just barely see the top of a tower above the wall. All of the walls are made of dressed gray stone without mortar. Below the castle a tunnel or gate is cut into the bluff at the meadow level.

Turning to the east, I see that the bluff gradually reduces in height towards the south, coming down to the meadow somewhat south of my current position. I can see the end of a dirt road where it curves off the bluff and into the meadow. More forest rising behind the road implies that the ground beyond is higher. I know from my "map" that there is an area of grassland a mile or two in that direction.

Looking south I see that the river continues in that direction, and passes through a cut in the hills several miles away. Sunlight glares off the entire length of the river in that direction, and a haze prevents me from seeing anything beyond the gap.

Looking west, I see that the river is fairly shallow at this point; small ripples cover its surface as if it were flowing over a gravel bar. The forest beyond it is edged with undergrowth, mostly honeysuckle bushes, which has been tramped down in places as if by animals coming for water. Paths leading into the forest quickly disappear into the shadows of the trees.

You do not need to fill in all the details of the scene consciously; in fact, it is better to encourage your imagination fill in many of the details by itself. Give it the general outline and let it show you what you should see in such a location. E.g., instead of trying to imagine each blade of grass and wildflower in the meadow, I would let my unconscious do so. If I liked what it did, I would send it a feeling of approval; if I didn't like it, I would tell it to try again, and turn away for a moment to let it change things.

Once you have the view from a particular location fixed fairly well, move to other nearby locations -- twenty to thirty yards away, for outdoor locations -- and imagine what things would look like from this new position. What does the changed perspective reveal that was hidden before? What was unseen from the previous location that can be seen now? (Note that perspective in magickal space is never quite the same as it is in the physical world, though the difference is hard to quantify; you will not be able to make things appear in precisely the way you see natural objects.)

Keep moving to new locations and build up an image of the scene as it would be seen at each one, until you have a good sense of the place as an actual "space". In the example space, I spent some time going to various positions in the meadow, noting that less of the castle was visible close to the bluff, more of it from farther away; noting the colored gravel in the riverbed, and how it made a ford across the river, etc. Then I went up to the castle and looked outward from positions on every side of it, seeing the wider landscape, filling in the positions of various known places in the forest, deciding how far the grasslands extended behind the castle, and so on. Do this for your own space.

When you have established the perspective from several locations, try moving smoothly between them, with the parallax of the surroundings changing continuously, as it does when you move about in the physical world.

At first you will find that your vision of your world has a tendency to "withdraw" from the scene; your imagination will try to view it as if seen through a window, or on a movie screen, or like a tableau in a museum. Whenever you notice this has happened, firmly place your viewpoint back inside the scene, and fix it there by turning and looking at what is in every direction around you.

Also at first, your world will tend to be still and tableau-like, a frozen image. Once you have the appearance of things fairly well established, try bringing some action into the scenes. Let grass and tree limbs be blown by breezes, and hear the sounds the wind makes. Watch water move and hear the sounds it makes. Add some living creatures to the landscape and let them move around in ways appropriate to their natures.

It is also important that you stay relaxed throughout the exercise; doing this work should be like a relaxing daydream, not requiring fixed concentration and alertness. Do the relaxation exercise before starting each session, and do it again if you find yourself getting tense at any time during the session. Let your mind do as much of the work as it can without conscious decisions on your part, and encourage it to do more.

You should spend at least several weeks on this exercise, and as much more as you want. Take your time, relax, and give as much work as you need to filling in the details in all the important locations in your world. Indoor locations should be given as much time as the general landscape. The more thoroughly you do the work in these early stages, the more effective your scrying will be later.

C. Establish a body in the magickal space

The final step in the basic process of creating a magickal space is to create a body for yourself within that space. Up to this point in the exercises, you have been pretty much a naked viewpoint, seeing the world but not interacting with it to any great extent. Now you need to build up an image of your body within the space, and learn to use it. To do this, you need to develop a conscious awareness of the sensory surface of your body and of its kinesthetics, and duplicate these in an "astral" body. Judging from accounts by students at the Fellowship of the Inner Light, this part of the work gives people the most difficulty, and people will have widely varying degrees of success in it.

Before entering your magickal space, stand up and relax, preferably without any clothes or jewelry. Close your eyes and put your attention onto your skin. Even without anything touching you, you should be able to feel a sense of activity or sensitivity in your skin, a "readiness to feel". Note the way your body's shape is outlined by the skin sensations.

Next, plan out some series of movements that will move every part of your body in turn, through most of its range of movement. Tai Chi or Yoga exercises are good for this if you know them. Still keeping your eyes closed, go through the movements and note how each part of your body feels in different positions, and note what your kinesthetic sense tells you about the positioning of your limbs as you move.

Finally, do the same sequence again with your eyes open. This time pay attention to the way what you see of your body changes as you go through the movements. Pay particular attention to your hands and arms. Try to consciously associate the image of your body with the sensations you get as you move.

Each of these three steps focuses on one of the major aspects of your body image: your sense of the body's boundaries, its internal sensations, and its appearance to your eyes as you interact with your surroundings. Under normal conditions, these sensations are half-unconscious, and are always secondary to whatever activity you are engaged in. You need to be aware of them consciously in order to build yourself a second body inside your magickal space. If you wish, you can do these exercises separately from your practice in your space, until you are ready to make your magickal body.

Once you are ready, sit down and go through the relaxation exercises, and enter

your magickal space. Once there try to feel as if you have a body in the magickal space that feels exactly like your physical body, but is completely separate from the physical. Go through the three steps in your imagination, and try to duplicate all the sensations you had while doing them physically. By doing this you will, over time, gradually build up a perception of your "astral body" as a distinct entity, within and a part of your magickal space.

After finishing this exercise in each session in your magickal space, spend some time just moving around your world, touching and manipulating things as if they were physical objects. Things you touch should give sensations appropriate to their nature; bricks and stone should feel hard and rough; metals should feel cool, with textures appropriate to their shape; wood should feel warm and grainy, etc.

If you have rituals that you do on a daily basis (and haven't already started doing them in your magickal space) create a dedicated place in your magickal space for ritual work and begin doing them there as part of this practice. The regular, repetitive movements of ritual work will serve to reinforce your body image, and doing the rituals will begin to turn your space from a mere refuge into something useful for your magickal work. In particular, I would recommend practicing the Golden Dawn's pentagram and hexagram rituals; these will be important later, as a means of testing the visions you obtain when you start scrying.

PROBLEMS

The most common problem people encounter in this part of the work is maintaining a consistent shape for their body. They find that even after long practice their head and arms will remain reasonably well-defined, but the rest of their imaginary body has a tendency to blur into amorphousness. This is a reflection of the relative density of nerves in the physical body. Eighty percent of our sensory and kinesthetic nerves are in the head and hands; half of the remainder are in the upper chest, shoulders and arms. Our perception of the rest of the body is substantially more vague, and depends as much on sight as on direct sensory connections. When one tries to build an astral body, the mind tends to give each part of it a size proportional to the relative nerve densities.

This is really not so bad. You don't need legs in the magickal space, since you are moving yourself around by your volition rather than by pushing yourself with muscles. You do need arms and hands to do the gestures of magickal rituals, and lips and jaws to speak the words. If you find that after some practice you can't maintain a full body image, don't worry about it; just get by with what you do have, and imagine the rest of your body concealed by a robe or other loose garment.

The second problem people have is that their physical body twitches or moves when they try to move their magickal body. They unconsciously tense up the physical body, trying to "lock" it so that it won't follow along with the magickal body. This is a matter of lifelong habit, of associating the sensations of movement with the volitional act of moving your muscles. One has to disassociate the sensations from the volition, and another simple exercise will help.

In your magickal space, imagine you are standing with your arms held out in front of you, palms facing downwards. Now imagine that you are turning them so that the palms face upwards, but that you are turning them entirely with your eyes. That is, you see them turning over, and feel the sensations of the changed position, but you don't involve the part of your mind that moves the muscles. You should see your arms move without willing them to move. (In fact, you are directing your will through your visual centers instead of your muscles, but it should not seem like you are willing it, at first.)

The first few times you do this, your physical arms are almost certain to tense up into rigidity. When you notice this happening, stop and do the relaxation exercises until your body is loose again, and then go back to trying to move your magickal hands again.

Once you succeed in turning your astral hands over without tensing your physical hands, you should try moving the fingers individually. Curl each one over onto the palm, and straighten it out again. Again, do the relaxation exercise whenever your physical body tenses up. When you succeed in moving the individual fingers without tensing up, try various coordinated movements: clenching your fists, grasping objects, karate chops, Vulcan greeting-gestures, and so on.

The hands are the hardest part of the magickal body to separate from the physical, because a major portion of our nervous systems go into controlling their movement. Once you have managed to dissociate movement of your magickal and physical hands, the rest of your body will be very easy, and can be done with similar exercises, if necessary.

3. Putting your magickal space to work

By the time you have worked the exercises in the previous sections for a few months, you will have established a solid foundation for all your future magickal work. Practically every magickal and meditation technique you will ever encounter is a variation or extension of the skills you have learned in building your magickal space.

Every person will have a different level of "peak performance" with these techniques. Only a rare few are able to enter wholly into the magickal space, and become entirely unconscious of their physical body; for these people, the end result of this work is indistinguishable from the classical descriptions of astral projection. Most people will find that a certain portion of their awareness remains "outside", and that the intensity of the sensations they have never attains the brightness and clarity of normal perception. I fall at the low end of this latter category myself; in my visions, colors are more implied than they are perceived directly, and most of the time I need to focus intently to perceive fine details.

Being able to put all of your awareness into the magickal space is not necessarily an advantage. What matters more is that you make the best use of the level of skill you do have. It is the meaning you can extract from your experiences, the insights you gain into yourself and the world, and the uses to which you can put them, that count the most. Bright and glorious visions are nothing, if they have no useful content or if your awareness and understanding are not (gradually but permanently) expanded thereby.

Having established the basics, in the following sections we are going to look at various exercises, all of which are forms of "scrying". Before going into the details, we need to consider -- in a general way -- the nature of the things a person experiences while scrying.

Dreams, it is often said, are the realm of symbols; the same is true of scrying.

But while the symbols of dreams are usually expressions of processes happening below the conscious level of awareness, the symbols seen in scrying are often (in an ideal world, always) the expression of processes and events occurring above the level at which consciousness resides. They are the lowest and most readily apprehended aspect of processes that the consciousness can not yet completely

encompass. In a sense, the symbols you see are no more than anchor points; a convenient means by which your awareness is given a connection to something coming from outside its current scope.

The form of the symbol does not necessarily bear any direct relation to the nature of that to which you are being connected. Some symbols -- such as the Greek gods or the cabalist's Tree of Life -- have forms that directly reflect some aspect of the inner reality. Others have connections that are largely a matter of convention; they relate to particular aspects of the inner reality only because we habitually use them in such a way. The cabalistic color attributes are in this category. And others yet are seized upon to serve the needs of the moment, and have no particular meaning outside the context of the vision in which they occur.

But in all these cases, when a symbol is seen in a vision it has a direct connection to some magickal power, archetype, thought-form or entity. In order to get the greatest benefit out of your scrying, you must continually attempt to sense beyond the symbol, to extend your awareness along the path it provides and apprehend that which it embodies.

Accomplishing this is a delicate task. The relaxation exercises described previously again become important, this time the portion of them dealing with quieting the mind. This is important in two ways: first, because the mind's internal chatter will tend to overshadow and conceal that which is being communicated through the symbol, and second, because active parts of the mind will attempt to twist the meaning of the symbol to fit with their own preconceptions.

This is especially the case where the practitioner has personal desires that relate to the information being conveyed, or where the person's self-image feels threatened. If your conception of yourself is dependent on a particular world-view and the information does not accord with that view, it will be almost impossible for you to see it clearly.

To reduce the possibility of this happening, you should also work consciously to develop a mental state of unattachment towards the content of your visions, a deliberate disregard for any personal significance they contain, and a deliberate refusal to evaluate the contents for truth or falsity. Critical evaluation of the results of a scrying session is definitely necessary, but the time for that evaluation is after the session is completed. While the work is proceeding, you should seek to be in a perfect state of suspended judgment; neither believing nor disbelieving anything that you see or sense, simply seeking to receive the symbols and their attached meanings precisely as they present themselves.

When using scrying techniques in magickal work, you are always trying to penetrate unknown "territory". Any work that can result in a spiritual advance will be, by definition, at least partly outside the scope of your current perspective and understanding. Like anything truly new, it takes the mind a while to adjust and be able to see it clearly. Further, the meanings behind any symbol can have many different levels; it may take a long time for these to "soak in" to your awareness, and the final significance may be very different from the first, superficial appearances. In my own work, it has sometimes taken up to a year and a half, with repeated exposures, before I fully comprehended what I was being shown. Thus, no evaluation you make should ever be so definite that you cannot change it; all meanings should be tentative until they have been repeatedly reinforced by additional experiences.

I cannot give any assurance as to the manner in which the meanings attached to a symbol will appear to a particular person. I do not have enough information from other people to characterize any particular way as "typical". In my own case, they come in two or three ways, depending on the amount of power I have managed

to invoke and how high above my normal level of consciousness I have managed to raise my awareness.

Usually, they appear as groups of thoughts or associations that appear simultaneously in my mind with the words spoken by some entity, providing a detailed context for the words; it is as if the thoughts out of which the entity produced the words were being transmitted along with the words. If I am looking at a visual symbol rather than hearing words, then they appear as sudden detailed "realizations" of what the symbol is intended to represent, which appear instantly in my awareness.

Less frequently, the hidden meaning of symbols appears as an entire storyline, a long series of events that appear in the mind as if some part of myself had been taken away, taken on a long tour through magickal spaces, and was then returned to the exact moment in time from which it had left. The complete tour is instantly "remembered" as it happened, even though for my conscious awareness, no time at all has passed.

In the rarest case, the meaning appears to my awareness as a tightly-bound packet of mystical energy, which sits in my mind and gradually "unravels" itself into words, images, and meanings over a period ranging from minutes to weeks. These "packets" seem to be some magickal equivalent of books. Their content usually does not seem to be directed at the particular person receiving them, but rather at some general audience; and the content is often radically different from the perspectives and ideas the seer would normally be interested in.

You should not take these as being the only ways in which the meanings behind symbols can present themselves to you; you may find that some other means is more typical for you. But if you do happen to receive information in any of these ways, you can feel confident that you have had some success in this matter.

The Magickal Mystery Tour

The first scrying technique is very simple, and can be very entertaining. The results you get with this method can range from silly to sublime, from inconsequential to important, depending on the conditions of the moment. This method lets you acquire a feel for the ways in which your unconscious mind symbolizes things, and gives it some practice in doing so in a non-critical situation.

Enter your magickal space and re-affirm your safety there, using the method previously described. Then go to some familiar outdoor location in your space, and look around to establish your bearings and the relative positions of the other familiar regions.

Having done this, imagine that these familiar territories are surrounded by vast areas about which you know nothing as yet, in which anything at all might be happening at any given moment. Decide that you are going to take a walk and look around some part of those areas. Then look around you again, pick a direction, and start walking. As you move out of your familiar areas, don't try to imagine that you will find any particular features in the landscape, and don't try to look for any particular thing. Let your imagination fill in the features of the areas you pass through without interference.

Move around in the wilderness until you find some interesting item. It might be an interesting natural feature, an object, a building, a person or animal. Examine the object or explore the building, remembering that everything unusual has some sort of meaning in a magickal space. If nothing clear comes to you, move along in the direction you were going. Sometimes it happens that several locations

in sequence tell a story that isn't clear until you have been to all of them; other times, the first locations you come to simply aren't very important.

Talk to a person or animal as if they existed independently of yourself; treat them with the respect and politeness you would give to any stranger you encounter in an isolated place; try to maintain a friendly and unthreatening attitude no matter what the being does, and remember that since all this is taking place in your private world, you are perfectly safe. Don't try to script their actions, just let them speak and act spontaneously. Asking a person you meet to tell you about himself and what he is doing will nearly always get a positive response.

If the person does not acknowledge your presence, or does not respond to your queries, then watch what they are doing for a time, until you don't see any point in continuing to do so. Then move on to another location. If they do respond, when you have run out of questions then ask them if there is anything else interesting to see in the neighborhood, and follow any directions they might give you.

Usually such explorations will tell you something about yourself, your life-situation, or your current magickal environment. It will all be in symbolic form, of course; the obvious meaning of the events won't always be their deepest significance. But once you understand the symbolism, the results usually turn out to be something useful or interesting, though not always important.

This method is particularly good for those times when you know something important is going on in the magickal side of your life, but you can't tell what it is.

It is also very good for any situation where you aren't certain what questions you should be asking. To use the method in such a way, hold the idea that you need information or answers in your mind while you are picking the direction for your tour, and try to sense the direction in which the answers lie; there will always be such a direction. Then go in that direction and continue finding interesting things until you feel like you have received all of the answer; this will usually manifest as a sense of relief or a reduction in some vaguely-sensed pressure. Then consider the things you have seen in relation to your current situation; the meanings they contain will usually provide essential clues you need.

The Magick Mirror

The next method is very close to a "classical" scrying method, save that the apparitions are astral rather than physical. The method is capable of endless variations, of which only a few will be described.

Pick a convenient location within your magickal space. If you intend to scry in conjunction with invocations of magickal forces, a temple or magickal workroom would be the best place; otherwise, any place where you feel most comfortable and secure.

In that place, imagine a frame, as for a large mirror. This should be at least your own height, and of a width such that all of it can be in your field of vision at the same time. Now imagine that this frame contains a sheet of glass. But rather than being a silvered mirror the glass appears to contain a deep, transparent blackness; as if behind the glass were a void of indefinite extent.

You can get an idea of the correct appearance -- and construct a physical magick mirror at the same time -- by taking a piece of half-silvered or quarter-silvered glass (from a scientific supply house) and laying it on a piece of good-quality black velvet. Look into this under very low illumination and it will seem to have an indefinite depth; that is, it will seem to have depth, but you will be unable to tell exactly how deep it is.

You should at the same time imagine, and feel a total confidence, that the answer to anything you look for will appear to you in this mirror. Don't get bogged down in how the mirror does this, simply generate an emotional confidence that it works.

The basic use of this mirror is fairly simple. You hold the thought of what you want to know about in your mind, and then you imagine that the mirror is "tuning in" to that thought, using the thought to make a connection to some place where the answer can be found. Once you feel that the mirror is tuned, release the thought and wait in mental silence for images to arise out of the darkness of the mirror. And as with the "mystery tour" technique, the images will be accompanied by meanings that you will be able to "hear" or sense in your mind.

There are several variations on the basic method for different purposes. Once you get accustomed to the basic method, you can make use of those described or invent your own. As you come to be familiar with the method, your own intuition will become a better guide to its use than any "official" technique; do not be afraid to experiment.

For psychometry, hold an object in your (physical) hand, and imagine that there is a link between it and the mirror. Then look to the mirror to reflect the "impressions" contained in the object. If it is an object that is connected by use to some person, you must specify that it is impressions of the person that you want, not impressions of the object itself; otherwise you may get some odd results. For example, I once tried to psychometrize a flint knife-blade, and got a geological history of the stratum from which the flint had come. Its connections to its rocky origins were stronger than its connections to the persons who had made and used it, and these came across most intensely.

You can also "psychometrize" a person -- give them a "life reading" or answer specific questions -- by holding their hands and looking to your magickal mirror to reflect impressions you get from their spirit. This is more difficult, takes more practice, and works best when you have no personal relationship with the person in question. It should never be done with people with whom you have an emotional entanglement of any sort.

To get basic ideas and meanings related to visual symbols, imagine the symbol drawn on the face of the mirror in glowing lines. Then imagine that you are pushing the symbol into the mirror, so that it recedes in the distance and eventually vanishes from sight. Sending the symbol into the mirror "tunes it in"; wait in mental silence for images to arise, and these will bear in some way on the symbol.

Magickal invocations can be used to enhance the power of the mirror. As an example, you might want to explore the nature of the element of Fire. You could begin by performing the Lesser Pentagram ritual to banish extraneous influences, directing that the banishing include the mirror. Then you could use the Greater Pentagram ritual to invoke the element of Fire. When you have a strong sense of the element's force being present, direct that force into the mirror, simultaneously imagining that the force is not only tuning the mirror to the element, but is also charging it up and clearing the channels so that the mirror works with its best effect. Or alternately, you could request that the archangel or angel of the element appear to you in the mirror and answer your questions.

With any of these methods, the images you get will at first be vague and static. But with practice the images will sharpen, expand and become active, presenting whole landscapes and long storylines that dramatically present the answers you are seeking. The mirror will seem to become a window opening on the part of the astral plane that relates to your search.

Once you achieve this, the mirror can be used as a "gate", an opening through which you can travel directly to the plane being viewed, to experience events there first-hand. From the standpoint of initiatory magick, this is the preferred mode of operation, since it immerses your consciousness in the power you are exploring. Immersion increases the potential for real and lasting changes in awareness and enhances your power to achieve insights and realizations from the power.

To convert the mirror to a gate, imagine that the image in the mirror becomes three-dimensional, as if you were actually looking through a window at a real place instead of just seeing a picture of it. Then imagine that the glass of the mirror dissolves and vanishes while the image in the mirror remains in place. Or if it is easier for your mind, imagine that the glass is in fact a hinged window in a frame, and open the window.

You will usually find that unless your being is totally in tune with the force you have invoked, you will have some difficulty passing through the frame and into the world on the other side. The Golden Dawn's "Sign of the Enterer" will help to overcome the resistance. Stand just short of arm's length from the gate; raise your arms directly above your head, and then bring them down and forward with the fingers straight, while at the same time taking a step forward. Alternately, pull your hands back so that they are close to your body at shoulder level, and then extend your arms sharply forward while taking the step. Imagine that these gestures are punching a hole in whatever is resisting your entry, and that the momentum of your forward movement is carrying you through the gate and into the world beyond. If you still feel resistance once you are through the gate, repeat the gestures again.

Once you are through the gate, look around and make note of everything you see. Start with the major features of the landscape, then focus in on the details. If you have invoked the power correctly, you should see objects and events that reflect parts of the power's nature.

It is good practice to test the world you enter, and any beings you encounter, to ensure that they are in fact related to the power you invoked, and are of a good nature. The means of testing will be discussed in detail in the next installment of this series.

If you find that you have difficulty turning the mirror into a gate, or that the mirror won't give you images of complete landscapes and storylines, a variation on the magickal practice of "pathworking" will help. The practice as described below is halfway between scrying a simple symbol and doing a freeform exploration of an invoked force, and will thus assist in the transition between them.

Pathworking

The term "pathworking" is used for several different practices, ranging from simple meditations through programmed visualizations to visions and astral travel. What they all have in common is the use of symbols traditionally associated with the "paths" of the Tree of Life, e.g., the Tarot trumps. These symbols have been in use for long enough that stable regions reflecting their power have been established in the inner planes. By using the symbols in these practices the person connects to those regions and can learn something of the realities behind the symbols.

Preliminary Steps

1. Pick a visual symbol for the path you want to explore. Tarot cards are good starting points. The cartoon-like images of the Rider or Wang decks are preferable to detailed images like Crowley's deck; the bright, flat colors of these cards

encourage your imagination to fill in the blanks. We'll use the Rider deck's "Fool" card as an example.

2. Review what you know about the correspondences of the card. Read what your available sources have to say about the card. Then go on to some unconnected activity for a while and let your unconscious absorb the information; let it make its own connections and conclusions without any effort by your conscious self.

Using the example card, what comes immediately to my mind: The Fool is generally attributed to the element of Air and the path of Aleph. In the Golden Dawn version of the Tree, the path of Aleph connects Kether with Chokmah. In Achad's version of the Tree, it connects Malkuth with Yesod. The Fool is a primal form of Air, more cosmic and less "earthly" than the Tarot suit of Swords. In the cabala, it represents both the "mind" or "intellect" aspect of being, and the Yetziratic, "formative", or "Son" aspect of the IHVH sequence. In the Enochian elemental sequence it represents the creative Ideal manifested by the divine, which is the basis for further development and full manifestation through the other elements. In the structure of the planet Earth, it is the atmosphere which lies between the spirit-aspect of the planet's magnetosphere and the water-aspect of the oceans. And so on.

3. Study the card and note the details, and also note any connections that come to mind. Consider the figure in the card; what does his/her posture, gestures, expression, etc. say about his attitude and emotional state? Where does his attention seem focused? Try to get some idea of the type of personality being expressed.

Ex: The cliff on which the Fools stands seems to be colored using three of the Malkuth colors: black, olive, and russet. The Fool's boots are citrine, completing the foursome. The mountains in the background are in a Yesodic violet, with snowy tops reflecting the light of the Sun, which is colored in Kether's white. The sky, dominant in the picture, is an Airy yellow, slightly darker than the citrine of his boots.

The Fool's outer garment is green with ivy patterns, reminding me of the Green Man of Celtic mythology and Malkuth again. The lining is red, reminiscent of both Fire and the sexual energy of Mars. There are wheels embroidered on the garment, which brings to mind another card, The Wheel of Fortune, attributed to Jupiter, who is Lord of the Air. There are also Fleur-de-Lys on the garment, which are either Lilies (Malkuth, according to Crowley) or Irises (Yesodic by color and shape).

His inner garment is white, again suggesting Kether. A feather is mounted at the front of his hat, and its shape suggests the Uraeus serpent of Egyptian costume, or the feather of Maat. He carries a rose in his left hand and a staff with a bag at the end (rather phallic) in his right.

The Fool's head is bent back, his eyes focused on something in the distance that only he can see. His posture is somewhat pretentiously "sensitive", the sort that you would see the French Sun-King use in one of his dances. Overall he reminds me of a Galliard poet of the 13th century, a noble's over-educated younger son, wandering and pretending to be a minstrel while eschewing mundane tasks. He is about to walk over a cliff. The dog at his heels seems either playful or trying to call his attention to his immediate danger.

You don't have to go into such detail as in the example; if you are just starting out in magick, you probably won't have the resources to do it. The important thing is to note the details, and try and interpret the figure's expression and posture, and the acts in which he seems to be engaged.

These first three steps are preparatory, and should be done before beginning the main part of the practices. Once you have done them, let the information float in your unconscious for a few hours or a day while you do other things. The idea is to gently focus the unconscious on the subject matter, and to let it absorb the information and ideas without your conscious interference. This makes it more willing to participate in the practices, and enhances its ability to make connections with the magickal region behind the card.

Main Practice

4. Sit down and do the relaxation exercises, as described in the earlier section .

5. Place the card in front of you so that you can look at it without straining your eyes or changing your relaxed position. Look at the card without deliberately focusing on any one point; let your eyes move from point to point within the picture in their normal scanning motion.

6. Now enter your magickal space and get your awareness firmly established there . Go to the place where your magick mirror is located and stand where you can view it head-on. Imagine the image from the Tarot card in the mirror, so that it completely fills the frame. Then look at the landscape in the picture; think of what it would look like if it were real and not just a cartoon image. Try to see the image as a three-dimensional world behind the glass of the mirror. Think about the parts of the landscape that are hidden beyond the window frame and fill them in. Keep the colors more or less the same, but fill in the details; build up a picture as if that world were a real place that you can see. Feel free to incorporate details of real places you have seen in your life. (But DON'T use real people as models for the figures.)

Ex: The mountains in the Fool card remind me of the Swiss Alps, violet-tinted rock with permanent snow-cover at their summits. I fill in the picture with the appropriate details of ravines, rockslides, etc. The cliff on which the fool stands looks to me as if it is some sort of moss-covered granite, and the sharpness of the drop suggests that it was carved out by a glacier. The same glacier would have carved a deep, rounded valley below, and I imagine it being there, with fields of grass and copses of pine and fir trees, perhaps with the rooftops of a village small in the distance.

The Fool is walking towards the window, so there must be a trail down into the valley hidden behind the outcrop. I imagine a trail following a curve upwards around the end of the valley to end at the outcrop. I imagine this outcrop is on the side of a mountain the summit of which is somewhere to the right of the visible area.

7. Next, imagine that you have jumped through the window frame and are standing in the world you have been looking at, but at some moment in time just before the living figures of the card appeared on the scene. Don't try to move through the mirror, just make an instant transition to the place you just imagined. If you have to, build the landscape up again from scratch, but with you inside it.

Turn around and look at the surroundings from your new viewpoint; get a 360-degree view, and fill in the parts of the landscape that were behind your original view through the window. (The window, incidentally, should not be visible.) Imagine what your other senses would tell you if you were in a similar physical location, and add those in to your impressions of this place.

Ex: Looking back towards the window's position I note that the mountains get lower in that direction, and gradually fall off into rolling farmlands in the far distance. A large lake (like Lake Lucern or Geneva) can be seen just at the edge

of visibility. I can see the mountain on whose side I stand, and can see directly the path I had previously imagined behind the outcrop. This path comes up to my current position, then curves around the mountain and up to a pass in the middle distance. Looking down into the valley below, I see that there are light clouds between me and the village, giving the impression that I am in a world above the normal world. I can feel and hear the wind blowing around me, and there are faint scents of pine, grass, and flinty rock in the air, as well as an ozone freshness. Faint sounds of human activity come from the village.

8. Spend some time getting the scene and your viewpoint firmly in your imagination. Don't worry if details change or shift, and don't expend any effort trying to change them back. Just get the major outlines and positions firm and let the small detail change as it will. Think of how places look in your regular daydreams; often there is very little detail, and what detail there is is more often understood to be there rather than actually seen. As you continue the practice over weeks or months, your unconscious will gradually learn to fill them in and keep them steady without conscious effort.

9. The next step is in some ways the most difficult, and in some ways the easiest. We have all had daydreams in which we invented face-saving dialogs for some embarrassing past occurrence in our life, and others in which we imagined the events and interactions we would like to see happen in some future meeting, or in some situation we would like to be in but cannot attain in the mundane world. What you do in this step is basically the same. The only difference is that you shouldn't have any particular desire to control what the other characters say, but instead want to see what they say of themselves.

What you want to do is imagine a scenario by which the Tarot card's person arrives at the location where you are standing, and begins to converse with you. Using our example, you could think that you hear someone singing in the distance behind you. You turn and look down the trail, and see the fool climbing it, followed by his dog. He sings a cheery tune as he walks. As he comes close enough to hear you, you call out and wave to him; he looks up and waves back. He comes closer and steps onto the escarpment where you stand. He smiles and walks to the edge of the cliff, looking outwards. He stretches his arms and takes a deep breath of the fresh mountain air, and for a moment he is posed in exactly the way he is shown on the Tarot card. Then he turns to you and asks, "Where away, traveller?"

The idea behind this is to give your unconscious mind a credible reason for believing you to be in a situation where you can talk to the card's character. The part of your unconscious that touches the imagination doesn't believe in hypothetical situations; to it, things are either real or they aren't, but anything that is reasonably consistent will be accepted as real. This part of your unconscious mind plays the character's part while your conscious mind plays yourself. This same part reaches out into other parts of your minds and into the magickal realms and pulls in information to use in building its characterization.

9. Now that the character is present, you can ask him questions about himself, the various symbols of his clothing and appurtenances, and about the environment in which you find yourselves. Always act as if the character were a real person, independent of yourself. Treat him with the respect of equals; never act superior to him, and never, ever threaten. If he doesn't want to answer a particular question, don't press. Answer any questions he poses honestly, to the best of your ability. But at the same time don't allow yourself to be threatened or cowed; demand that your interactions be on a basis of equality and nothing else.

Another thing to remember is that in this phase of the exercise there are no wrong results, only results you don't understand. If something seems out of place with the nature of the card, don't reject it. Simply admit that you don't understand

and and file it away for later consideration. Generally you should follow along with whatever happens; there is no way you can be hurt, so there is no reason not to do so.

10. When you start to tire, or the character indicates he has had enough, it is time to end the exercise. Say goodbye to the character, turn and walk away until he is out of sight. Then "jump" back through your magick mirror and turn around; see the point you just jumped from through the mirror, even if this is not the same point that was there at the start. Then imagine closing the mirror so that it only shows its usual deep blackness.

After leaving your magickal space again, spend a few moments focusing your attention on various objects in your physical environment. Get up and walk around, stretch yourself, get a drink or go to the bathroom, or some other mundane task. Then sit down again and write down what happened during the exercise, in as much detail as you can. Note what was said, any ideas that happened to pop into your mind, any changes in the scenery or movements into other scenes.

It sometimes happens that unexpected things occur during this exercise. For instance, the character might come up behind you and say hello while you are still working on the landscape. Usually it's best to go along with these happenings rather than insist on following the various stages in order.

Once the character appears, then the rule is to allow whatever wants to happen, as in the "mystery tour" exercise. You should not worry much about keeping the environs steady. The character might change the landscape to make a point, or introduce creatures or objects. Other things might appear and disappear spontaneously. You sometimes find yourself and the character transported to an entirely different scene. All these things are acceptable, and should be taken in a spirit of non-judgmental interest. Remember that the logic of visions is the logic of dreams, where such events are not at all unusual.

After you have worked with this method for a week or two using various Tarot images, try again to invoke a force using a ceremony and getting a response through your mirror. The practice of creating landscapes in the mirror should have overcome any difficulty in that regard. If you still have trouble, try combining the invocation with an appropriate Tarot image.

4. Testing your visions

It is usually a good idea to apply tests to the images you get in scrying, and to the various beings you might encounter. The ultimate test is, of course, a critical appraisal of the quality, consistency, and value of the results you get from your work; but that test can only be applied after the work is done. Other methods allow you to get some sense of whether there is something wrong at an early point in the session. You can then take appropriate efforts to correct the problem, or if necessary end the session and save your energy for another time.

The most reliable testing method makes use of the symbols in the Golden Dawn's Greater Pentagram and Greater Hexagram rituals. But the effectiveness of the method requires that you have some experience in performing those rituals, and in getting a good response from them. If you are not already experienced in their use, you should practice using them in your magickal space for a while before implementing this testing procedure.

A limitation of this method is that it only works where the powers being scryed

are among the traditional, conventional powers used in magick. That is, the powers are elemental, planetary, or zodiacal in nature. Where the nature of a power is unknown, or it is of an inherently mixed nature, other methods must be applied.

After attaining a steady image of some magickal region in your mirror, you draw the invoking pentagram or hexagram appropriate to the power you invoked, using white lines in the air in front of you. Vibrate the god-names of the power a couple of times, then cast the symbol into the mirror. If the mirror is correctly "tuned" to the power, the pentagram or hexagram will be absorbed and will either have no effect, or will cause the image to become sharper and brighter. If the image becomes darker, becomes distorted, or breaks up entirely, then you know that something is wrong; you should banish and start over.

Similarly, if you have used the mirror as a gate and entered into some region, you should cast the appropriate symbol against any object that appears prominent in the area, and always against any being who appears to serve as your guide. In either of these cases, the being or object should show no effect, or should grow brighter, larger, or more solid as a result of the contact. A false or deceptive being will shrink, or its appearance will become distorted, or it will disappear.

No magickal being worth speaking to will ever object to being tested in this way. There is no reason that it should, since by doing the test you are, effectively, blessing and feeding it; few beings will pass up a free lunch. If a being attempts to convince you to not do the tests, that in itself is a sign that something is wrong.

Note that you should always use the invoking pentagram or hexagram for tests, never the banishing versions. Using a banishing figure is the same as commanding the forces you invoked to disperse again, nullifying your efforts.

Two secondary types of testing seem to depend in some way on the magician having an intent that they will work correctly; there is no obvious reason why they should work, but they usually do, just the same. The first of these is the use of the G.D. grade signs; the second is the use of the Hebrew letters of the planets.

The idea behind the use of the Grade Signs in scrying is the same as their use in Masonic rituals and greetings. By displaying a sign to a spirit you encounter, you claim a right to the "secrets" of that grade and its corresponding element. The spirit should answer back by repeating the sign, thus showing that it is also qualified to deal with the secrets of that grade. (Illustrations of the Grade Signs can be found in most published versions of Crowley's Liber O, and in Regardie's The Golden Dawn.)

If a spirit can perform the appropriate sign for the invoked element, this indicates that your vision is on-track. If the spirit cannot perform it, performs it improperly, or its form becomes distorted, this is an indication that something is wrong. However, it is not necessarily proof that you are dealing with a deceiving spirit, particularly if the same spirit has already passed the pentagram/hexagram test. Rather, it is more likely that there is insufficient magickal power present for your communication to be clear. The best course is to vibrate the divine names for the power you are invoking several times, and then repeat the signs again. Only if the spirit is still unable to perform the signs correctly should you end the session.

The exchanging of signs also contains an implicit agreement between you and the spirit being tested. That is, by doing this you are agreeing to deal with the spirit on a basis of equality and brotherhood, neither dominating that spirit nor

being subject to it. You are also acknowledging that both of you are "members of the same fraternity", operating within the general community of workers seeking to align themselves with "god" (or with divinity in whatever form you conceive of it). You should never try to exchange signs with a being you know is not with in that community, or with which you must maintain a position of dominance -- e. g., a demon or a true "elemental". Conversely, you should never try to dominate a spirit with whom you have exchanged signs; assume instead that it will assist you willingly and without coercion, and treat it with the same respect that you would wish it to give you.

It sometimes happens that in answering your sign, the spirit will add other signs after repeating the one you used. This is an indication that the spirit is of a mixed elemental nature, or is intrinsically of a higher "grade" than that at which you are working. As an example of the first case, if you were invoking an angel from one of the Lesser Angles of the Enochian Tablet of Earth, you would perform the sign of Set. The angel would be expected to respond with the same sign, but if it were an angel of the Lesser Angle of Fire, it might add the sign of Fire (the goddess Thaum-aesch-Neith) as well. As an example of the latter case, a Senior from the Earth Tablet might add the LVX signs after the sign of Set.

The LVX signs are a special case. Their use indicates that the spirit is aligned with the divinity, is of a "good" character; but does not test for any particular elemental or planetary nature. They should be used in conjunction with the appropriate hexagrams for testing spirits related to the planets or zodiac, or in any case where the benevolence of the spirit is in doubt. All of the Enochian angels will be able to perform these signs, as will any Hebrew-system archangel.

There are no Grade Signs specifically associated with the planets in the Golden Dawn system; one must make do with the LVX signs, and these are usually sufficient. However, those who wish to assemble a set of elegant and effective planetary gestures for testing spirits should consult Planetary Magick by Melitta Denning and Osborn Phillips.

The final form of testing is, in my opinion, the least reliable. I do not use it myself, preferring to trust my own judgment. But I note it for those who might wish to experiment with it.

The Golden Dawn adepts acknowledged that in this sort of work there is always a danger that the visions one sees will not be a true reflection of the forces invoked, but may rather be constructions or projections of the seer's own mind and emotions. They classified these projections according to an association with the planets:

Type

Planet

Hebrew letter

Tarot Trump

Memory

Saturn (as Time)

Tav

The World

Construction

Jupiter

Kaph

Wheel of Fortune

Anger

Mars

Peh

Tower

Vanity or ego

Sun

Resh

The Sun

Pleasure

Venus

Daleth

The Empress

Imagination

Mercury

Beth

The Magician

Wandering
thoughts

Luna

The Priestess

The theory is that if you suspect that one of these factors may be influencing your vision, you can project an image of the corresponding Hebrew letter or Tarot Trump into the scene. It will cause the scene to darken, diminish, or disappear if the scene is in fact the sort of projection you suspect it to be.

My personal feeling is that introducing extraneous powers into a vision in this way will cause more problems than they will solve. As well, it seems to me that invocation of a force related to a type of projection would tend to enhance the projection rather than eliminating it. However, this may not be the case for you ; try it if you wish and see if it works.

5. Scrying with the Enochian Magick

There are several considerations for Enochian magick work that do not apply to scrying using other systems.

The first of these is the unquestionable power of the Calls and the divine and angelic names. As Crowley once said, other systems require effort; Enochian magick requires caution. While the power built up in any one session is almost never of an unmanageable level, some effects of the magick tend to accumulate across sessions; it is easy for an overeager beginner to get in deeper than he expects. Added to this, the powers invoked through the Calls seem to enter into the magician's field of awareness along some spiritual dimension that is outside those we consider "normal"; it seems to operate through some sort of meta-space with qualities different from those that compose the magickal worlds to which we are accustomed.

The consequence of these factors is that any work with the magick places a certain amount of stress on the magician's mind and body, and over-use can lead to various stress-related forms of illness. Anyone working regularly with the magick should keep an eye out for signs of this stress in himself. The typical symptoms are similar to those that come from abusing methedrine or "speed": nervous exhaustion, severely lowered immune response, inability to concentrate, hypersensitivity, hyper-reactivity, reduced judgment, flights of ideas, and paranoia.

One time in my own career, the stress of overusing this magick combined with an equally stressful mundane occupation to give me the worst of both the physical and mental consequences. On the physical side, I contracted mononucleosis, effectively stopping all my magickal work for six months or so. On the mental side, the changed viewpoint and loss of judgment caused me to make seditious remarks to a class of Federal employees I was training, resulting in the loss of my livelihood.

So caution is well-justified. But with a few easy, obvious precautions, these problems can be avoided.

Avoid using the magick at times when other parts of your life are unusually stressful. Try to arrange your affairs so as to reduce the social and economic pressures to the minimum level compatible with your needs.

Get regular exercise; a healthy body handles stress better.

Don't use recreational drugs while working with the magick. Aside from being illegal (jail is a poor place for magickal work), all of them add to the stress on

your body. Most stimulants and sedatives also reduce your magickal sensitivity and ability to focus in your magickal space. Hallucinogens make you too sensitive, and reduce your level of control.

Learn to pace yourself. When first starting out, allow a day or two between Enochian invocations to absorb the results and "cool off". Later, when you get to the point where you need to accumulate power over several day's worth of invocations, allow at least as many days off after the series as you spent in doing the work. Take longer vacations from the work every few months to keep yourself grounded.

The importance of pacing yourself cannot be overemphasized. When you begin getting significant results from your Enochian work, it is very tempting to keep going; the anticipation of even more amazing results drives you on. But the extra-dimensional or meta-dimensional character of these forces allows them to influence all levels of your being simultaneously, including many levels of which you are not consciously aware. The cumulative effects of this influence can cascade into a dangerous level of stress before you become aware of it. Regular intervals of rest and relaxation, and of immersion in the everyday world, are the only sure way to avoid the problems.

Another difficulty, which bears more directly on scrying, is that the Calls allow you to invoke a force without having any knowledge of its nature. In normal methods of invocation, one begins with a symbol or set of symbols, and seeks by their use to bring about the manifestation of the corresponding powers. The symbols you use define the power to be invoked. In contrast, the Calls produce a manifestation of power regardless of whether you comprehend their symbolic content.

Adding to the confusion is the fact that, from a perspective accustomed to the traditional magickal powers (i.e., the elements, planets, and zodiac) the nature of the invoked powers seems to change depending on the depth of one's penetration into their realms. Or from another angle, the Calls and Names open up different realms, depending on the level of existence at which you are operating. On the most superficial level, they appear to be more or less "elemental" in nature, with an overlay related to the functions of the angels' specific offices; but at "deeper" or "higher" levels, this elemental aspect fades, to be replaced by a succession of increasingly complex and inclusive expressions that may bear little or no relation to the most superficial appearance.

Unless the magician supplies an explicit set of symbols to which the invoked powers can be anchored, the powers will tend to remain in an indeterminate state; a sort of "fuzzy cloud" of energy which contains all the power's potential expressions, but which manifests none of them explicitly. A visual symbol used as an anchor causes this indeterminacy to "collapse" into that aspect of the power which is most nearly similar to the symbol's innate associations. The congruency between the symbol and the invoked power does not have to be very great. It is sufficient that some small aspect of the symbol's associations be similar to the power's; the major associations of the symbol can be entirely inappropriate, and the collapse will still occur.

So the symbol the scryer uses will determine, in part, the initial manifestation of an invoked Enochian power; the scryer's expectations or preconceptions of the power's nature will also be partially determining. This accounts for the documented fact that different magicians have produced widely varying -- sometimes even contradictory -- results using the system. However, it is my observation that with repeated invocations and scryings, the true nature of the invoked power will break through these initial, superficial expressions. The longer you work with a particular Enochian power, the more closely your results will accord with that nature, and the deeper you will penetrate into the realms to which the power connects.

Since penetration past the sometimes-deceiving surface manifestations takes time, orderly, methodical work habits are necessary to get the most value of your Enochian work. The fact that invocations have a cumulative effect can be used to advantage if you plan out your course ahead of time, and stick to it. The following suggestions will all enhance the effectiveness of your Enochian scryings: For every angel or other power that you invoke, do several scrying sessions. Allow time for a connection to be built up between you and the angel, and for your mind to become accustomed to its power. Work for an extended period solely with powers from a single Tablet. Or if you are working with the Aethyrs or the 91 Parts of the Earth, pick a set of contiguous Aethyrs or Parts and do them sequentially. If you are invoking single squares of some angelic or divine name, plan to do all the squares of that name in sequence. Plan out a series of invocations to investigate all the angels of a given rank within one of the Tablets, in some logical sequence. Complete the series before working with any other rank or Tablet. Alternately, plan out a series to investigate all the powers within a given Lesser Angle, in order of rank.

A Magickal Space for Enochian Scrying

Since the Enochian powers are so sensitive to the visual symbols in a magickal space, the general-purpose magickal space developed in the preceding sections of this paper is likely to be inappropriate for Enochian work. The profusion of objects with which you have populated the landscape would all tend to anchor the forces in unexpected or undesired forms. A space with a more neutral visual appearance needs to be used.

A woman I once met made a habit of surveying people about the appearance of their magickal spaces. Amusingly, nearly all the Enochian magicians she knew (most of whom did not know the others) had chosen to build essentially identical spaces for their work. This space might thus be considered an archetypal Enochian workplace. It consists of a broad, gray plain, surrounded at the horizon by low hills; both plain and hills are illuminated in a flat, sourceless light of relatively low intensity. Overhead, there is a night-sky filled with stars. The plain is large enough that the magician always has a previously-unused area available in which to perform a new series of invocations.

The remaining few magicians in her survey had chosen to go even further in the direction of minimalism than this Michael Moorcock landscape. Their workspaces consisted solely of a clear space within a gray mist, with a featureless gray floor underneath, created ab initio for every invocation.

My feeling is that the plain has a slight advantage as a workspace. It allows for the establishment of long-term or permanent structures, useful for advanced works in which the invocations must be done in section, or for building a temple appropriate to a range of Enochian works.

Scrying Techniques for Enochian Magick

Both the "magick mirror" technique and its extension as a "gate" work as well with Enochian powers as they will with other, more conventional magickal powers. I would recommend that you create a new mirror in your Enochian workplace for every series of invocations that you do, and destroy it after completing the series. Since the Enochian powers tend to accumulate over time, this prevents residual forces from previous works from interfering with a new work.

However, as mentioned above, it is often necessary to provide a firm visual anchor for Enochian powers; you may find that the mirror technique is insufficiently exact, and only gives you confused or contradictory results. If that is the case, one of the following methods will be more effective.

The Golden Dawn devised a technique for using visualizations of truncated pyramids as the starting point for visions of individual squares from the Tablets. This practical method has been proven by use to be very effective, precisely because it provides a well-defined symbolic "anchor" for the Enochian powers. I recommend this technique for beginners, both for this reason and because it tends to focus the powers into their most "earthly", most readily-comprehensible form.

The basic technique is to build a truncated pyramid in your magickal space. The flat top has an area one-ninth the area of its base. The relative sizes of the top and bottom means the sides are tilted inwards at an angle of forty-five degrees. The letter of the square is visualized on the flat top. The sides of the pyramid are colored and labeled with symbols and images according to a complex system of attributes.

(The G.D. system of attributes is described in detail in book 4 of Regardie's *The Golden Dawn*; my own alternate system (which I believe to be a substantial improvement over the G.D. system) is described in the papers titled "Godzilla Meets E.T.", which can be found at: <http://www.hermetic.com/browe/index.html>. The pyramid method works very well with either system.)

The pyramid is visualized as being large enough to stand on the top. Having vibrated the appropriate Calls for the name in which the square lies, the magician then stands on top of the pyramid in his astral body, and vibrates the hierarchy of names. As he vibrates each name, the magician imagines the power of that name gathering around the pyramid.

When the last name is vibrated, the magician imagines that each side of the pyramid is gathering in the attracted energy, each taking the type appropriate to its attributes and symbols. This energy is seen moving upwards, being focused as it goes by the narrowing of the sides. The flows of energy from the sides reach the top simultaneously, run into each other, and form a beam of light shining up and outwards into the astral worlds, forming a path to a region of magickal space governed by the square. The magician then follows this beam in his astral body until a landscape or other scene forms around him. This scene should symbolize various aspects of the square invoked. From that point, the techniques described earlier can be used to explore the region.

I prefer a variation of this method, in which the magician stands inside the pyramid. When the energies traveling up the sides reach the top, they come together on the letter and then shine downwards into the pyramid, illuminating the interior. The angel governing the square is invoked to visible appearance within the pyramid and is tested there. After testing, the angel conducts the magician to various scenes that illustrate the square's nature.

Since a session using this technique only explores the power of one letter of an angel's name, you only get a partial view of the angel's nature. To fully understand an angel, all the letters of its name should be explored in sequence.

When you wish to invoke all of an angel's powers at once rather than a single letter, it is more convenient to make your anchoring image something like a magickal circle, or a talisman sufficiently large that you can stand on it. A example design for such a circle would have the divine names superior to the given angel written around the rim of the circle. The name of the angel being invoked would be written within the circle, oriented so that it appears upright when you are facing in the direction in which you want the angel to appear. If the angel is associated with a particular magickal formula (e.g., Kerubic angels and the INRI formula) symbols appropriate to that formula might also be drawn within the circle.

Note that the intent of this figure is much closer in function to a talisman than to the traditional idea of a magickal circle. It is not intended to block off its interior from the exterior areas; you should feel free to move in and out of it at will. Nor is it intended to "contain" the invoked force. Rather, the idea is that the charged figure will serve to attract the attention of the appropriate being -- like putting a big illuminated sign saying "Land Here!" next to a runway -- and will also serve to condition the surrounding magickal space so that it reflects the nature of the invoked powers.

Vibrate the appropriate Calls several times; then enter the magickal space and create the circle. Vibrate the divine and angelic names, and as you feel the invoked power arrive, direct it into the lines and letters in the circle so that they glow and re-radiate the power to the surrounding environment. Keep vibrating the names until the intensity of invoked power seems to level off, then vibrate only the name of the being you wish to contact, asking it to appear before you. Vibrate the angel's name until it does appear; then apply the tests, and ask the angel what you will.

Calling the angel to the circle is my personal preference; I would rather have the guide take me to the place I want to go than go there first and find a guide afterwards. The reverse may be more comfortable for you. If that is the case, you can vary the above method by concentrating the invoked force in the circle instead of allowing it to radiate. Then imagine that the force is creating a "gate" to the power's magickal space; imagine the center of the circle opening up as the magick mirror did in the earlier exercises, so that you can step directly through it into that space. Or you can imagine that the powers form a beam of light shooting up from the circle, which you can ride to the powers' space.

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Odds and Ends about Scrying

Random Tips, Experiments, and Techniques...

Have you felt the need to peer into the future lately? Want a more direct method than the Tarot Cards or Runes or watching for signs? Try some of these scrying techniques on for size.

DEFINITION:

Scrying: A method of perceiving events and answers by way of the unconscious.

INTRODUCTION:

Scrying is often considered the most difficult method of divination for several reasons. Unlike the Ruins or the Tarot, scrying demands that you have a working knowledge of your subconscious's symbolism and the ability to interpret those symbols reliably. Though most methods of divination lead you to look outside of yourself, scrying requires that you look within yourself to find the answers you are seeking.

There are almost as many methods of scrying as there are scryers. Some of the most famous scryers throughout history (Nostradamus, Levi) used complex methods to awaken their psychic abilities. However, the complexities are not required to get reliable results -- the only requirements are dedication, patience, and some psychic ability.

If you have not had any indication of psychic abilities, do not despair. You simply might not have discovered them as yet. Scrying can awaken them if they are present. However, if you are convinced that you have no psychic abilities whatsoever, scrying is probably not the method you should use for divination.

Above all, scrying requires patience. At the beginning, visions will come sporadically and they will be very vague. Only practice and time well spent will enhance your abilities and enable you to rely on your talents.

METHODS OF SCRYING:

Here is a short summary of some of the most common techniques that can be used for scrying.

Crystal gazing -- This is the method that first comes to mind when the word "scrying" is mentioned. The crystal does not have to be large. The only requirement is that the stone that is being used must be very clear and as flawless as possible. It helps if you use a crystal associated with the Moon.

Water gazing -- This method requires a large black or silver bowl. The bowl is filled with pure water (rain water or water from a natural source if at all possible). The bowl is then used in the same way as a crystal. If you are lucky enough to live near a pond, lake or ocean, you can dispense with the bowl and just use the whole body of water as a huge scrying tool.

Fire gazing -- This method often provides startling results. The energy of the fire really lends something to the visions it produces. Anything from a candle flame to a bonfire can be used. All the usual precautions should be taken, of course.

Mirror gazing -- A regular hand or wall mirror can be used. It helps if the mirror is round or oval in keeping with the lunar motif.

BASIC PREPARATION:

It is always best to scry at night, because this method of divination is closely related to the Moon and all other Lunar correspondences. If you are indoors, you should extinguish all of the lights except for one candle. The candle should be out of your line of sight when you are looking at your scrying tool. Above and behind you is a good placement. Some people prefer that the candle flame flickers, others like the flame to remain still. Experiment and see what you like.

The room should be as quiet as you can make it. If you live in an apartment or with someone else, some quiet instrumental music can be used to drown out any unwanted sounds. Don't use music with lyrics, because at the least, the lyrics mi

ght influence your visions. At the most, they might prevent you from concentrating enough to see anything.

Make sure that you will not be disturbed, and figure out a comfortable way to sit either holding your scrying tool or with it resting before you on the floor or a table.

If you are scrying on a particular subject, you might get better results if you schedule your scrying time for when the Moon is aspected favorably to the corresponding planet. Visions are always stronger around the time of the full Moon.

TIPS AND TECHNIQUES:

A short meditation session before you begin to scry often helps to get you into the mood and release some of your tension. You must be feeling as relaxed and receptive as possible. Make sure that you are sitting as comfortably as possible. It is quite frustrating to be on the verge of perceiving something when a leg or arm falling asleep breaks your concentration.

When you look into your scrying tool, try to look past the surface and into the center of it. Try to keep your eyes fixed on one spot, but don't prevent yourself from blinking. Since you are in a dark room, the need to blink might lessen as your body relaxes, but don't try to force yourself not to. That will only cause discomfort and distraction.

Limit your sessions to a set period of time. Don't be discouraged if you cannot remain focused during the entire session or if you feel the need to stop before the session is over. If you are not used to meditating, try to start out with a 15 minute session. You will be surprised to experience how long 15 minutes will seem as you try to keep your mind from wandering. Ultimately, scrying sessions should last up to an hour in length. Don't set a timer or try to keep track of time. This will create a distraction and you don't want to be in the middle of a particularly vivid image when the timer goes off!

Keep in mind that though the words "vision" and "scry" almost always call to mind information that is perceived with the eyes, that this is not necessarily the case. While scrying, information can come to you via all five of the senses and also as intuitive flashes. When reviewing the information that you have perceived, take all your senses into account.

Start a scrying journal if you intend to scry on a regular basis. Date each entry, and make sure that it is close by during each scrying session. Note down all your perceptions after your session, sleep on them, and then work on interpreting them the next day. Though it is true that some visions come through so clearly that they need little interpretation, most of the time you need to meditate on your visions for a while to absorb their true meanings.

If you are familiar with another method of divination (Ruins, Tarot, Pendulum, etc.) you can use their help with interpreting the information you get from scrying. Simple one card/one ruin spreads are the best to give you an overview of your vision's meaning. Or if you are familiar with a dream interpretation spread, you can use that to help you figure it out.

Often at the beginning of a scrying session, you will start to see clouds of colors in your scrying tool. Some scryers never get past this stage. If you find this to be the case, you can interpret the colors using traditional color symbolism.

CONCLUSION:

There are many, many methods of scrying in addition to the ones that I listed at the start of this page. Experiment and find the one that is most comfortable for you to use. Ultimately, you know yourself best and you will know the method that works best for you when you find it. Have faith in your abilities and keep trying.

If you have questions, comments, or just want to share your scrying experiences with me, please email me.

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The Essential Skills of Magick

By Benjamin Rowe, Copyright 1999

The Three Essential Skills

All effective magick stands on three legs: imagination , emotion , and feeling; everything else - all the words and gestures, the implements and costumes, the elaborate circles and furniture - serve only to reinforce and focus these three capacities. If any of these three is lacking, then the work is likely to fail; once you are skilled in using all three, you can dispense with practically all the other things people sometimes insist are essential to the practice.

Of the three, emotion is the power that drives the whole show; emotion from the guts, and from the heart. I will go even further; it is not just emotion, but passion that is the power behind magick. Passion in the sense of an intense desire to be connected to that which you are seeking to invoke; a desire that places no restrictions or limits on the connection, but which is so one-pointed that nothing save that which is sought is included within its focus. And passion in the sense of a boundless enthusiasm for the acts by which you seek to create that connection. Admittedly, this is the ideal case; but the closer you can get to it, even for a few moments, the more likely your work is to be successful.

This passion-for-connection is what creates the magickal link between the magician and that which he is invoking; or, if the link already exists, expands it and strengthens it. The emotion literally creates a channel or umbilicus between them, through which energy and knowledge can flow in either direction. The stronger the emotion, the stronger the link becomes; the less energy is lost in side-thoughts and distractions, the stronger the link becomes. Thus a one-pointed focus is most desirable.

But conversely, restrictions the magician places on the connection become constrictions in the link, reducing the potential flow of power through it. If a magician insists that a spiritual force or being manifest itself in a specific way, then it is less likely to appear, or the manifestation will be weaker. But if his desire for connection is unconditional, then a response is much more likely, and will be more powerful when it comes. Similarly, if a magician doing a ritual to obtain money desires that money to appear in the form of a cashier's check, he is less likely to obtain it than if he was willing to accept it in any form.

In its highest form, this unconditional passion becomes almost indistinguishable from what is called "Divine Love", which is the closest that one can come (with in the worlds of manifestation) to the transcendental state of the Mother aspect of divinity. Passion-for-connection transforms into a state of pure relationship, pure Love, in which all distinctions are erased; both the nature of the magician and the nature of that being invoked disappear, totally lost in the link between them.

Imagination provides the medium (rather, an opening to the medium) through which magick produces its results. The personal imagination seems to blend seamlessly into the astral light, the larger magickal universe; the point at which one becomes the other is impossible to define clearly. An object that begins as a purely internal construct - created and sustained by the imagination of a magician,

propelled by the power of emotion - can move out into the astral light and take on a life independent of its creator. It can gather or become a container for magickal power, and act back on its creator (or on others) in ways that are impossible for him to produce through his imagination alone. Conversely, beings and powers operating on levels the magician cannot yet perceive can make themselves known to him through his receptive imagination, opening his awareness into new realms of experience.

The symbols used in magick are forms that, when created in the imagination, tend to gather specific types of power from the astral light, which are further limited by the intent of the magician. The shape of the container, in effect, determines what can be put into it; the simpler, rigidly geometric forms (such as the pentagram and hexagram) draw relatively pure, fundamental forces; complex symbols - e.g., god-forms - draw correspondingly complex assemblages of forces.

When the magician projects the image of a symbol onto his surroundings, an extended magickal space is created in which the astral light becomes conditioned into conformity with the symbol. The area becomes more attractive to the types of power invoked, more comfortable for magickal beings having the nature represented by the symbol. The world of the powers and the world of the magician then interact, making interaction possible.

(A detailed series of practices for developing the imagination and creating a general-purpose magickal space can be found in my article *A Short Course in Scrying*. This present paper is aimed towards showing by example how it is used in formal rituals.)

Feeling is the third leg of the tripod, and the final key to success in magick. In order to bring into being the conditions you desire, you must create in yourself the sensations and feelings that the things you have created through your imagination are real, and that the goal of the operation has already been accomplished. In the magickal universe, when you act with all your being as if something is already real, it becomes real. This feeling of reality is the trigger that causes a symbol to move from the imagination into the astral light.

This key to magick is simply stated, but in practice it seems to give the greatest difficulty for most people. The usual culprits are intellectual doubts - "I know I am only imagining this" - and fears of various sorts, e.g., "what if it makes me go crazy?" Both of these have to be ruthlessly eliminated from the magician's consciousness for the duration of the operation. After the work is completely over, you can be as doubtful and fear-ridden as you want; a certain amount of doubt, of critical examination, is healthy and appropriate at that time. But during the work, you must be completely focused on feeling (not thinking) that what you create is real.

Some might be concerned that this "believing makes it real" idea is actually a form of self-hypnosis, a way of fooling oneself by reducing the critical faculties. A genuine success in performing the ritual will dispose of this concern. At some point in the work a threshold is crossed; the strength of the invocation produces an even stronger response from somewhere outside yourself. Events in your magickal space take on a life of their own, at least partially independent of your will. And - most significant - they begin to manifest an intensity, richness and texture that it is utterly impossible for you to produce through your imagination alone, no matter how adept you might be in its use. Once this has been experienced even a skeptical mind must grant that the events are "real" in some sense, even if not in the same way as mundane happenings.

So for magick to be successful, emotion must push a link outwards into the magickal universe, imagination must aim it towards the desired goal, and feeling must affirm the reality of that which is sought. Full success will not come on the f

irst try; for some people, not even on the fiftieth. It takes time to condition the mind to the proper performance of these practices. But once a single success is attained, additional successes follow at more frequent intervals.

The Golden Dawn's Pentagram Ritual

The Pentagram Ritual is an excellent practice-piece for developing proficiency in these three essential skills. Its physical and verbal elements are simple and easily memorized, enabling the student to give most of his attention to the visualizations and the feelings attending them. But for all its simplicity, it is capable of producing profound effects on the consciousness of the magician. Performing it is also of long-term benefit; it purifies and strengthens the magician's magickal body, and increases his general sensitivity to events in the magickal universe.

Oddly, the most frequently referenced descriptions of the Pentagram Ritual make almost no mention of its imagery and feeling components. Perhaps in the Golden Dawn and Crowley's A:.A:., these were expected to be the subject of verbal instruction, or were simply assumed to be too obvious to mention. Regardless, it was the absence of such descriptions that prompted a student to request the elaborated version of the ritual that follows.

The Pentagram is a symbol whose power is partly innate, and partly a matter of the magician's intent. Its natural tendency (in the astral light) is to attract a dynamic, active mix of the elemental forces; in contrast, the equal-armed cross attracts the same forces but tends to keep them fixed and distinct from each other. But when the Pentagram is used to invoke a specific element, the element is determined largely by the magician's habitual methods of usage and his intent of the moment. There are several methods of encoding the desired element in the way the Pentagram is drawn; all of these are more or less arbitrary, and depend on consistent use and practice to be effective.

Figure 1.

In modern magickal systems, it is customary to associate the elements with the points of the Pentagram as shown in Figure 1. This set of associations derives from the Golden Dawn, and was intended to reflect the positions of the Elemental Tablets within the "Revised" Great Table of the Enochian magickal system. Had they chosen to use the original version of the Great Table (as would seem more appropriate, from more recent research) a substantially different set of associations would result: Earth would be at the upper right point, Water at the lower right, and Fire at the lower left.

Since the Golden Dawn associations have come into general usage, it seems convenient to stay with them. The method of drawing invoking and banishing Pentagrams is also arbitrary, and in this case, the Golden Dawn used a method that is cumbersome, difficult to remember, and contains an undesirable dualism. To replace it, I recommend the method used by the Aurum Solis, which is simple and self-consistent. To draw an invoking Pentagram, draw clockwise from the point associated with the desired element; to draw a banishing Pentagram, draw counterclockwise from the same point.

In the Golden Dawn version of the ritual, the magician is instructed to draw a pentagram of Earth in every quarter. The theory behind this was that the element of Earth serves as container or receptacle for the other three elements. This idea seems to derive from an old interpretation in which Fire, Water, and Air were the true elements, and Earth merely something on which they acted. I feel it mo

re appropriate to use the pentagram of Spirit. Spirit contains all the other elements within itself on an equal basis, and facilitates the transformations between them that make possible activity and life in the manifest world; it is more truly "generic".

The Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram

The Opening.

Stand in the center of the circle, feet together, facing east. Using your thumb, touch the center of your forehead, and vibrate "Ateh."

As you say "Ateh," imagine a beam of light coming down from the heavens, and forming a sphere or dome of brilliant white light, about nine inches across, above your head.

Note: Wherever a glowing sphere, column, or line is mentioned it should appear like a neon light, transparent or translucent with every point of its interior emanating light. Your body should be perfectly "transparent" to all these images; that is, the lines and column should pass through your body without being hindered by it in any way.

Still using your thumb, gesture slowly down the centerline of your body until your thumb is pointing at the ground between your feet.

As your gesture moves downwards, imagine a column of white light about 3 inches thick, descending from the sphere through the center of your body at the same rate of speed (as if you were "drawing" the column with your gesture). Feel the column as being filled with a vibrating energy that sets up a sympathetic vibration in your body wherever it passes.

Vibrate "Malkuth."

Imagine the column of light descending into the ground below your feet. Once there, it anchors itself in place and forms another ball of light; this ball starts out a dark red, but quickly becomes brighter and whiter as more energy feeds into it.

Touch your right arm at the level of your heart and vibrate "ve-Geburah."

Imagine a small sphere of light forming where you touch.

Move your hand horizontally to the same point on your left arm and vibrate "ve-Gedulah."

As you move your hand, imagine another line of white light being traced horizontally through the center of your body, intersecting the vertical column about where your heart is. When the line reaches your left arm, imagine another small ball of light forming there. Then imagine a flow of energy back and forth between them. Feel that energy as it passes through your body, and begins to produce a tingling sensation in your heart.

Make a clockwise circle about 6" across around your heart. Vibrate "le-Olahm."

As soon as you complete this circle, imagine a big pink rose blooming inside it,

with its stem at the intersection of the horizontal and vertical lines of the cross. Feel the movements of its petals in your heart as it unfolds. When it is completely unfolded, imagine a rose-pink radiance being emitted from it in all directions. This radiance expands until it completely encloses the cross and your body.

Vibrate "Amen."

Bring your arms down to your sides, relax as much as you can while still standing straight, and take a few moments to appreciate and feel everything that you have visualized so far. You should generate in yourself a sense of satisfaction with what you have done so far, and joy in the result.

Let the above visualizations fade. Don't try to "erase" them, just stop giving attention to their maintenance. If they continue to exist without any effort on your part, that's fine. If they disappear, that's fine, too.

Main Ceremony.

Advance to the east point of the circle. Draw a large pentagram with your wand, or with the pointed fingers of your hand.

The lines of all the pentagrams, and the circle connecting them, should be seen in a blue-white color. They should have a perceptible, three-dimensional thickness, at least equal to that of a clothesline or thin rope.

Make a stabbing gesture at the center of the pentagram with wand or hand, and vibrate "Yahweh."

As you vibrate the name, imagine the inside of the pentagram becoming an open window into the Realms of Air. Beyond the window, you should imagine some landscape that seems Airy to you. One image works especially well for me: the view from a Tuscan hill town, the sky an almost painfully brilliant blue, creating a dome so vast and seemingly deep that it dwarfs all the human and natural features of the landscape into insignificance. The "Big Sky" of the American Plains is a similar image. Whatever, you should feel that the landscape is filled to overflowing with the force of Air, vast in extent, all-penetrating, and etherial. Imagine that this realm extends to infinity in the direction you are facing.

Once you have the landscape firmly visualized, imagine a cool wind blowing into your circle through the pentagram. Feel the wind filling up the circle and blowing through your body and soul, leaving no part of you untouched. It blows out and replaces the impure Airy elements of your own nature with pure Airy power. Keep feeling this wind until you feel cleaned out and filled with Airy power.

Note: If you are banishing, you should next feel the power sweeping out of yourself and the circle, back through the pentagram. After which you should imagine the "window" closing again. Same for all the following quarters.

Take a few moments to stop and appreciate whatever degree of Airyness you have managed to bring into the circle. Feel a sense of satisfaction with it, and vow to make it even better the next time. Then stop consciously supporting the images and feelings. At first they will fade, but with continued practice you will find that a residual feeling of the element will remain in the circle throughout the rest of the ceremony.

Move clockwise around the circle until you come to the south. Starting at the center of the eastern pentagram, draw a blue-white line as you go. Face the south

and draw a large pentagram. Make the stabbing gesture at the center of the pentagram, and vibrate "Adonai."

Imagine the pentagram opening into the Realms of Fire. The landscape you choose should present a feeling of intense, radiant heat, like that you feel on your face from the Sun, only sourceless and omnidirectional. An appropriate image might be Death Valley at noon, with shimmering waves of heat filling space in all directions. Or the surface of the Sun -- ultimate, incandescent heat. The landscape should feel full to bursting with the power of the element, and feel like it extends to infinity in the direction you are facing.

When the landscape has been firmly established, feel the heat rushing into your circle through the pentagram. Feel it filling the circle and yourself, burning out any impurities and totally consuming them, then replacing them with pure Fiery force. Continue until you feel completely purified by the Fire and filled with its force.

Take a few moments to stop and appreciate whatever degree of Fieryness you have managed to bring into the circle. Feel a sense of satisfaction with it, and vow to make it even better the next time. Then stop consciously supporting the images and feelings.

Move clockwise to the west, drawing a segment of the circle as you go. Face the west, and draw a large pentagram. Make the stabbing gesture at the center of the pentagram, and vibrate "Eheieh."

Imagine the pentagram becoming a window into the Realms of Water. Imagine a watery landscape. I use either an infinite region filled with water of a deep, almost violet blue color; or an underwater view of a reef with plenty of fish and plant life, and waves crossing the surface overhead.

With the landscape visualized, imagine Water gushing into the circle and yourself, dissolving any impurities and diluting them into nothingness, replacing them with its own pure power. Keep feeling this until you feel clean and totally filled with Water.

Pause to appreciate the Watery element you have managed to bring into the circle. Feel satisfaction with it, and know that you can do even more the next time. Then stop consciously supporting the images.

Move clockwise to the north, drawing the circle as you go. Face the north, draw a large pentagram. Make the stabbing gesture at the center of the pentagram and vibrate "AGLA."

Imagine the pentagram becoming a window into the Realms of Earth, beyond which you can see some landscape that seems supremely "Earthy" to you. I use either a soft, warm darkness of infinite extent; a cave with ancient paintings on the walls; or cultivated land with all sorts of food-crops growing. The emphasis should be on the fertility and potential for life hidden in the darkness of the Earth, rather than the view of Earth as cold, sterile stone.

Imagine the Earthy power moving through the pentagram, filling up the circle and penetrating your body, making any impurities so inert and heavy that they fall downwards out of your body, to be replaced by a pure earth force. Keep feeling this until you feel clean and totally filled with Earth.

As in the preceding quarters, pause to appreciate the Earthy element you have managed to bring into the circle. Feel satisfaction with it, and know that you can

do even more the next time. Then stop consciously supporting the images. Complete the circle by returning clockwise to the east, drawing the line as you go. Return to the center of the circle and face east.

Standing in the center of the circle, try to see all four landscapes at once, and feel the power of all four elements focused on you through the pentagrams.

Say: "Before me stands Raphael; behind me stands Gabriel; on my right hand is Michael; on my left hand is Auriel." The names of the archangels should be vibrated.

The angels should be imagined appearing as their names are vibrated. Each should be seen as an immense figure on the horizon beyond the landscape in their quarter. You should have a definite sense of them as sapient, self-aware beings of great power, come to aid you in your work. The landscapes represent the natural, non-sapient force of the elements; the archangels represent the divine powers that rule and direct those elements.

The archangels should have some form that signifies - in your mind - their rulership over their elements. I see them as figures in robes the color of their elements. Raphael has blond hair that moves in an invisible breeze; he holds a fan or dagger in his right hand pointed towards you. His face has an aquiline cast. Gabriel has dark hair with a bluish cast, dark skin, and holds a silver cup towards you. His robes seem to move in an invisible current. Michael has hair and eyes like flames, a slightly fox-like cast to his face, and his robes seem to be made of woven threads of fire. He holds a flaming sword pointed towards you. Auriel wears black or green robes. His face is rounded, and of a nut-brown color. He holds a disk-like pantacle with one face pointed towards you.

Imagine each of the archangels sending a benediction to you through his weapon. Stand with your arms stretched out to the sides, and feet apart. Say: "About me flame the pentagrams..."

See the four pentagrams and the lines connecting them suddenly flaring to an intense brightness around you. As they do so, imagine a fifth, equally bright pentagram forming about your body, its points congruent with your head, hands, and feet. Remember that the pentagram signifies rulership of the Spirit over the four elements, and that by identifying it you are claiming that rulership for yourself. Try to feel yourself as Spirit, connected to the four elements, but also above them.

Say: "...and in the column shines the six-rayed star!"

Your mood as you say these words should be one of triumph and exultation, a sense of complete success in the endeavor of invoking the elements.

Imagine a large golden hexagram, the same width as your circle, forming in the air above you. Rays of power shine radially outwards from each of its points. The lowest point of the hexagram is congruent with the highest point of the pentagram previously visualized.

The hexagram signifies the planetary or "heavenly" realms that are above the worlds of the elements. Elemental Spirit is a summation or concentration of these heavenly forces. By claiming the power of the elemental Spirit, you are also declaring your freedom from the rule of the mundane world, and claiming the right to

enter into and work in those higher realms.

The Response.

At this point, the invocation is effectively complete. You have finished setting up the conditions for a response from the astral light; now you must give that response a chance to occur. This is an utterly vital part of any invocation you will ever do; you may get some response while performing the ritual, but the most important, the most vital, revealing, and consciousness-expanding part of the response nearly always takes place in the quiet time after the active work has ended.

You should now cease all active visualizations, and assume a relaxed, comfortable position, standing or sitting. Silently open yourself to the forces you have invoked, listen for them with your mind, your body, and your aura. Don't do anything, and don't think about doing anything for a time; just absorb your magickal environment as passively as a "couch potato" watching TV.

When it seems, after a while, as if everything that is going to occur has occurred, do the ceremonial closing to complete the session.

The Closing

Repeat the "Cabalistic Cross" from steps 1 through 6.

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WATER SCRYING

You will need a large, deep bowl made from glass, brass or silver. It must have a smooth and even rim.

You must set your base on some sort of tripod for best results. A tripod made of laural boughs is the best.

You will need to do your own testing to find out which bowl works best for you and how much water you should use. Do not use water from a tap. Get clean, fresh water from a stream.

The ancient Greeks believed that nature spirits dwelled in fresh water. The water may be stored in a vessel and used again.

However it is a good idea to replace your water once a month. Never collect the water of a day time. Water should only be collected at night preferably on a full moon.

To make your wand use a branch from a bay tree, hazel tree or the laural. The end of the wand should be covered in dry tree sap or resin.

Dip the end of the wand into the water until it becomes wet. Wet the rims of the bowl.

The best time to scry is at night when it is quite. By gently drawing the rim of the wand around the bowl it will cause it to resonate.

The action of the resonating basin will cause circular ripples to form in the basin. The water seems to breathe with the sounds.

It is the harmonics that seem to whisper forth predictions of the future. These are interpreted with the help of a guardian angel.

You may also receive visual impressions which Nostradamus likened to that of a "burning mirror".

People have been Scrying for many years, from the time of the ancients to the modern day. When clear-vision is sought a variety of mediums have been used for their reflective purposes. By using or attuning to an external source or object, one can enhance the stillness and peace needed to start the visions rolling. However to pursue such a practice while in a state of turmoil would induce a very chaotic and random effect, with little real continuity. This train of vision would then need much deciphering and ordering to make sense of any information gained.

All of creation that can be beheld by the eye and all that cannot is born of the element of consciousness. Each individual from a single grain of sand to the gods themselves are but facets of the one whole divine consciousness with an eternal inner-connection, separated only by their own definition of the self.

If then we are to seek vision over a part of our life, or if asked to help another, we have only to find this connection within our selves. The essential truth is that all things are within us, all potential and possibilities are ours to be tapped. If we are to search for the highest truth possible, then one should reach for the highest point of consciousness available. Pure Love. This is not the sentimental state of the Earth Mind but the Bliss State of the open spirit. True potential lies in the giving and receiving of Pure Love energy. We now arrive at the first stage of successful scrying, the setting of sacred space.

For myself, when I seek to set a sacred space, I use the four elements or characteristics of the Medicine Wheel. I feel that this is the most perfect way possible, as within the wheel is much understanding and wisdom, as without lies much yet to be discovered. The other great advantage is the connection to the spirit through the natural world and order of God's creation. So my work has led me to use the natural elements in my practice.

I won't go into great detail about the Medicine Wheel as that would be a task within itself, but in order to be able to set a Sacred Space one must observe these key elements-

Definition

Intention

Purpose

By Definition one defines the boundaries. This is simply who you are in your active space. A sacred circle should be held in pure and clean thoughts recognising the sacredness of all creation. By holding oneself in the energy of pure love, we are protected from the outside harmful and mischievous energies. Let the Pure Love rays flow from your heart. In our Intention we determine within ourselves

s why we are on such an undertaking and then to what Purpose or end result this is all for.

By keeping our selves in our Sacred Space in this way we are protected from all harmful rays. The great majority of which are ones own negativity returning again. Love is both the key and the way.

The actual practice of Scrying is most simple. By following the guidelines laid down above you will find your self a little more than halfway there. The next step is to make the bridge of consciousness or to hold ones attunement to the task in hand.

As I mentioned earlier, I use the Four elements though such implements as a mirror or crystal could be used.

For the first step in the actual practice, take your self into a meditation and find within yourself the pure spirit. At this time it pays to be clear about your intention or the direction of your practice, so that the energy's have continuity in their flow. From this place then attune to the medium you are using - be it Fire, Water or any other such entity. Allow the energy of your chosen proxy to fill your essence; this combined with the focus of your intention may fill you with the vision you require.

Remember the connection that you require is with the energy of your subject rather than the physical manifestation. The common mistake is to look for the visions in the fire or water itself rather than within.

When absorbing an energy within your own being, such as that of fire or water, it is important that it is consecrated first. Either by blessing the water or dedicating the fire to its purpose.

Hopefully these guidelines will be enough to start many on their way, as with most practices the only limitation lies within yourself.

We have used sand as a medium, with great success. The client holds a focus on their issue and makes a mark upon the sand; the reading is then given from this impression.

There has been success for people who use the smoke from incense, while myths and tales tell us of the whispers on the wind. Allow your imagination to take you to new and fertile lands.

If you would like more information, or to share experiences then please contact me at -
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