

THE  
**UN-SPELL**  
BOOK

ENERGY ESSENTIALS

~~~~~ *for* ~~~~~

MASTERING MAGICK

MYA OM

# About the Author

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# Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Prologue: For the Novice](#)

[ONE: The Foundation](#)

[TWO: Adding Energy](#)

[THREE: Working with the Elements](#)

[FOUR: The Tools of Magick](#)

[FIVE: Thought Constructs](#)

[SIX: Putting It All Together](#)

[Afterword](#)

[Appendix: Spell Template](#)

[Suggested Reading and Bibliography](#)

# Introduction

IT DOES NOT TAKE A great deal of skill or any type of special power to be a successful witch. I firmly believe that if you can master the basic concepts discussed in this book, you can cast any spell successfully. There are so many people who believe that spells or magick do not work for them. They point to backfired spells, to workings that did not work, or to their own disbelief that they can successfully cast a spell. I cannot do anything about disbelief—the simple truth is that if you do not believe it will work, then it likely will not. If, however, you are one of those people for whom spells do not work as planned or do not work at all, this book is for you. In writing this book, I have only one goal: to teach you how to be a successful witch.

There is a misconception that if your spell did not work, you must have done something wrong. That is not the case—you can do everything technically right and still have a negative result. There is an art to spell-working that many witches do not understand until many years after their induction into the Craft. In the normal course of things, the novice witch could turn to a teacher or Craft mentor for aid. In my case, I had my great-grandmother, and later I found other wise and wonderful people who were willing to advise me. But not everyone is as lucky as I was. There are those of us who are unable for a variety of reasons to connect with an elder or a mentor who can explain the basics.

While I love many of the books on witchcraft that are out there, most of them assume that the witch is walking into the working with at least an intuitive understanding of how magick works. Most of the time, the reader is given nothing more than a crash course in visualization and often not even that. Spells read like recipes in a cookbook, and although on the surface it appears as if following the spell is as simple as following a recipe, most of these books fail to tell you why we do things in a particular way—or how to do it without the aid of the book.

The concept of energy is one of the biggest components that most books exclude, but they also leave out the methodology that is associated with spell crafting. The authors may assume that you already know what you want, but

how you define what you want could be very different from how I define what you want. Take as a simple example the words “abundance” and “prosperity.” In most spell books, those two words are associated with monetary gain or financial security. But if you look up the definitions of abundance or prosperity in the dictionary, you find out that the word can be interpreted in more than one way. The dictionary defines abundance as an extremely plentiful or over-sufficient quantity or supply, and defines prosperity as a successful flourishing or thriving condition. Neither of those two words really mean money or financial security. So you could cast a fully successful spell for abundance and get an abundance of dust bunnies. Or you could cast an equally successful spell for prosperity and get prosperity of something totally unrelated to money.

Consider the old story of Aladdin—not the Disney version, but the one retold in *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights*, a medieval Arabic folk tale. There are many versions of the story, but in the one I remember from my childhood, the genie is a trickster. In fulfilling the wishes Aladdin makes, he is only obligated to fulfill the letter of the wish, not what Aladdin actually thought he was wishing for. The story teaches that when working with supernatural forces you have to be very careful to know and communicate exactly what you want. If you want money, then ask for money. But just saying “I want money” is not enough, because a penny is still money.

The first goal of this book is to teach you how to identify what you want, and the second goal is to teach you how to use various magickal techniques to get what you want. It is not always simple; it will take work, effort, and thought on your part. But if you put in the work, you will notice immediate results. In the end, I hope you will realize that the only limitations on your abilities are the ones you place there. This is not rocket science; you do not need to have an understanding of particle physics or quantum mechanics to cast a successful spell. You also do not have to be an initiate or an acolyte of a particular tradition to do these workings. Once you understand the basics, you can build on what you have learned, incorporate new techniques, and cast more complex spells. In my experience, though, the hardest spells to cast are the ones that require no tools at all—just an application of the will. That is the goal every witch should strive for.

# Prologue: For the Novice

IF YOU ARE READING THIS chapter, you may be a true beginner at magick workings, or you may be a more advanced practitioner seeking to fill a gap in your learning or curious to see what techniques are discussed. In either case, welcome. In this chapter, we are going to focus on three basic skills necessary to understand the rest of this book. If you are a new practitioner, these skills are important to have regardless of whether or not you decide to use the rest of the techniques discussed in the book. The three skills are:

1. The basics of visualization
2. How to connect to energy by opening your chakras (energy centers) and directing energy through each point,
3. How to protect yourself during the various types of workings and in various situations.

As in the rest of this book, we will focus on practical skills, real-life techniques, and exercises designed to help you learn and master the skills so you can apply them. None of the skills discussed here or in the rest of the book are abstract. All of them can be used effectively in both ritual and spellwork to increase the effectiveness of your working and to help you achieve your desired results. At the end of the chapter, I have provided a short list of trusted suppliers where you can get most of what you need for any spellworking discussed in this chapter.

In the mid-1990s, I picked up a book on spellwork. Like you, I was a true novice, and I was seeking assistance in mastering my burgeoning skills. What I got instead was a one-page introduction to visualization and more than 300 pages of spells. Many hours of reading later (and \$15 poorer), I was no closer to understanding the practical aspects of my craft than when I first picked up the book. My hope is to provide you with a primer you can use to

build on your skills as you practice your craft. The key word here is practice. I can give you the basic theory and you can understand it on an intellectual level, but until you actually work through the exercises and attempt to really master these skills, you will not truly grasp the mechanics of the technique.

The first question is: what is visualization? The simple answer is that visualization is the image or series of images that you are able to create or make up by closing your eyes and thinking of a person, place, or thing.

How does it work? On a practical level, it works by closing your eyes and taking a few moments to think about the object you want to visualize.

## EXERCISE P.1

### Basic visualization

You will need:

2-5 minutes

An object to focus on, such as an apple

Set the item in front of you and spend a minute looking at it. Memorize its form, shape, size, and color.

Now close your eyes and imagine that the object is in front of you. Try to recreate it mentally. Begin by trying to see the basic shape of the object; this can be as simple as a black outline of what the object looks like. Then fill in details such as size, color, and position.

If you are a novice to basic visualization, you may have to repeat this exercise a few times. Before you move on, make sure that within a minute or two you can create a working mental image of the object you are trying to visualize. It can be fuzzy and all the details do not have to be exact, but make sure that you can at least get the basic shape and color of the object.

The above exercise was a very basic introduction into the skill of visualization. As you have learned from trying the exercise, visualization is when you attempt to recreate something mentally that you have a visual reference point for. In this first exercise, you learned how to recreate something that you have just seen, but what if you don't have access to the object you are attempting to create? In such a case, you have to recreate the object from memory.

## EXERCISE P.2

### Visualization from memory

You will need:

10-15 minutes a day for a week

A focusing object (you can use the same one from Exercise p. 1)

Spend a minute or two studying the object and committing it to memory. As in Exercise p.1, try to learn all the aspects of the object. Once you have done all you can to memorize the shape, dimensions, color, and form of the object, put it away someplace where you cannot see it. After waiting for 5 minutes, close your eyes and attempt to recreate the object from memory as you did in Exercise p.1. Next time, wait 10 minutes, and work up to 15 minutes as you practice this technique again and again.

Most spells and rituals require skill beyond simple visualization. Spellwork in particular demands that you master an additional skill called creative visualization. Creative visualization utilizes the basics of visualization with an additional step. It requires that you put the object you are visualizing into the context of your working. You have to be able not only to see the object in your mind, but also to mentally work with the object so that it changes to match your goal.

## EXERCISE P.3

### Introduction to creative visualization

You will need:

15-25 minutes

A focusing object (you can use the same object from Exercises p.1 and p.2)

Begin by following the steps in Exercise p.2. When you mentally create the image, instead of creating a replica of the exact same focusing object, change something about it. Start by changing the color. Then try changing the size of the object so that it is smaller and then larger than the object in real life.

Next, try visualizing only a portion of the object—for example, the right side of the object only. Finally, try to visualize mentally erasing the object. Do this by visualizing the object getting dimmer and dimmer until it disappears from your mind's eye and you can no longer see it.

Practice these variations separately and all together until you can easily transform an object in your mind's eye.

Now that you know the basics of creative visualization, it is time to put them into practice. Creative visualization occurs at two possible points in any working. Look at the example below and see if you can identify where creative visualization is used:

### Sample spell

Goal:

To obtain a new job

Items needed:

Printed copy of current resume

Fairy dust

Steps:

Charge the resume with the intent that anyone who reads the words on the resume will be impressed.

Charge the fairy dust with the intent that when a person gets the dust on them they will remember you in a positive manner.

Sprinkle some of the dust on the resume before you send it out. As you do this, focus on the person(s) who will receive the resume and see the spell working on them.

When you go for an interview, sprinkle some of the dust on your hands and refocus the intent of the working.

This spell is a modified version of a spell from my own book of shadows. I have used different variations of the techniques shown above with excellent results. Take a few moments to consider where the creative visualization technique would come into play, and then look below to see if you were correct.

### Sample spell

Goal:

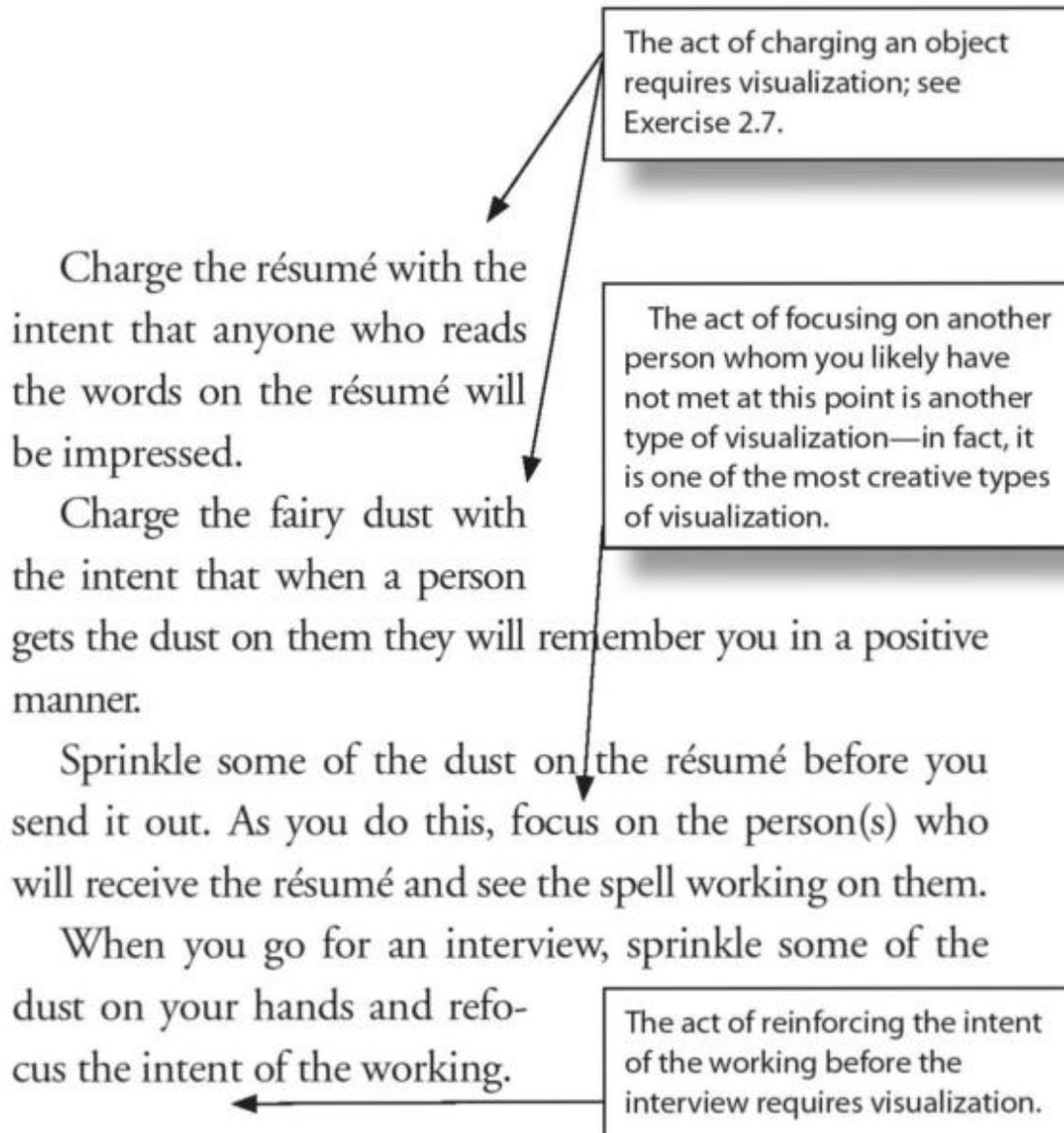
To obtain a new job

Items needed:

Printed copy of current resume

Fairy dust

Steps



Now that you understand the basics of creative visualization and the practical use of mastering this skill in spellwork, it is time to test your

visualization ability while at the same time mastering the next skills we will discuss in this chapter: learning how to connect with energy, how to open up your chakras, and how to bring up energy. Mastering these skills will help you in Chapter 2 when we begin our more in-depth discussion of energy work.

First, it is important to identify exactly where your energy centers are on your body. The energy centers, or chakras as they are called in Eastern religious traditions, are points on the body that are located in roughly the same position for each individual. There are seven major energy centers in your torso and two smaller energy centers located in the palms of your hands. There are other smaller energy centers located on your body, but the ones that we will use most often in this book are the two energy centers in the palms of your hands to direct energy for spellwork.

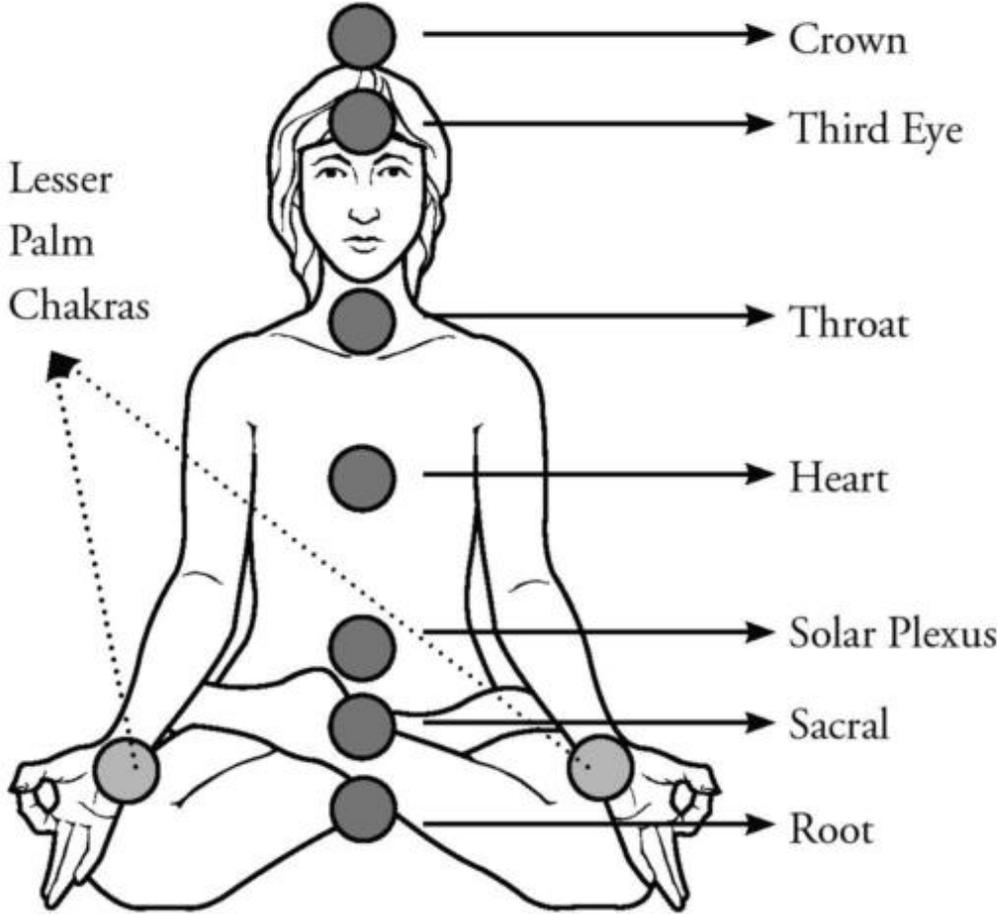


Diagram A

For the purposes of this book, all you need to know is that every person has these energy centers along his/ her body and that these chakras are responsible for controlling our own bodily energy flows. It is important to know where the chakras are in your own body and to learn how to connect with them and direct energy through each of these centers. The next three exercises will help you with this. In Exercise p.4, you will use a pendulum to locate each of your chakras. In Exercise p.5, you will learn how to connect with each chakra, and finally, in Exercise p.6, you will learn how to balance and cleanse your chakras.

The chakras correspond to a great deal more than what we are going to use them for in this text. If you would like more information, please see the bibliography at the end of this book for related reading on this subject.

## EXERCISE P.4

### Finding your own chakras

You will need:

10 minutes

A pendulum

A copy of diagram A

Take a few moments and familiarize yourself with the chakra locations on the diagram. You can do this exercise alone or with a partner. Begin by holding the pendulum in your dominant hand (if you are right-handed, this will be your right hand; if you are left-handed, it will be your left hand).

Start with the smaller chakras in the palms of your hands. Hold the pendulum by its chain and suspend it above the palm of your hand so that the pendulum does not touch your palm but hovers over it. Make sure that the chain is fully extended and allow the pendulum to move as it wants to. Try not to move your wrist as you do this.

After a few moments, you might feel a tingling sensation every time the pendulum passes over the center of your palm. You might also notice that the pendulum will come to a complete stop and begin to vibrate at the very center of your palm where your energy center should be. When I do this, I normally get a corresponding ping of sensation from the chakra, which lets me know I am at the right place. Do not be alarmed if you feel a tingling

sensation or a feeling of warmth or cold as the pendulum swings over and connects with the energy center.

Repeat this with each of your chakras, starting at your crown and working down to your root.

Note: If you are a very high energy emitter or if you have worked with directing energy prior to attempting this exercise, the pendulum might spin in a wide circle around your chakra. All this means is that you are emitting a great deal of energy at this time and your chakra is very open. I have also noticed that with people who see spirits or energy or who do mediumship work, the pendulum will often have this result at either the crown or third-eye chakra or both.

## EXERCISE P.5

### Connecting with your chakras

You will need:

10 minutes

Close your eyes. Clear your thoughts and control your breathing by taking deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth. Focus on your body and release any tension that you are holding, especially in your back and shoulders.

Focus your attention on the very top of your head and feel the chakra at your crown open. Test the energy there; it might feel warm and tingly. Follow the connection, the trickle of energy, downward to the middle of your forehead and feel the chakra there open. Test the energy there; it might feel a bit cooler and you might feel a bit of pulsation. Follow the connection downward to the base of your throat, where your voice box is, and feel the chakra there open. Test the energy there; it might feel subtle and vibrational. Follow the energy trickle down again to just above your heart and feel that chakra open. Test the energy there; it might feel very warm and steady. Follow the connection downward until you get to the point between your belly and your chest and feel that chakra open. Test the energy there; it might feel heavy, dense, and warm. Now follow the energy trickle a bit further down to the center of your stomach; feel that energy center open. Test the energy there; it might feel very warm and fast flowing. Follow the

connection down to the last energy center just above your groin and feel that chakra open. The energy might feel very hot and earthy.

You have now established a connection between all seven major chakras in your body. From the final chakra, feel little tendrils of energy extend downward until the tendrils connect with the earth below you. Draw up energy from the earth until each chakra, moving upward from your root all the way to your crown, is completely filled with energy. Feel the energy expanding outward, and as it expands, feel your physical body dissolving, leaving nothing but energy behind. You are that energy, and this is your true form. It is the physical body that is the illusion.

Take a few moments and focus on what it feels like to be composed solely of energy. Then, when you are ready, draw the energy back in, and visualize it flowing down from your crown, to your third eye, to your throat, to your heart, solar plexus, and sacral chakra, moving down to your root chakra and back into the earth. Make sure you return any excess energy back to the earth.

When you are done sending all the energy back into the earth, focus once again on each chakra, moving up from your root to your crown. As you focus on each chakra, visualize it returning to its normal state. When you reach the chakra at your crown, you should feel very calm and relaxed.

There may be times when you have a hard time connecting with one or more of your chakras. They might feel closed or too open. This is likely the result of having an imbalance in your chakra points. An imbalance can be the result of a physical ailment or a magickal working, or it can result when you work more with one energy center and ignore another. If you had a difficult time connecting with one or more of the chakras in the above exercise, then you need to work through Exercise p.5. There are many ways of correcting chakra imbalances, but in my experience the visualization exercise below is the simplest and most effective method.

## EXERCISE P.6

### Correcting chakra imbalances

You will need:

10 minutes

A place where you will not be disturbed

### Part A: Opening the chakras

Sit on a chair with your back straight and your feet planted on the ground. Close your eyes and breathe deeply, in through your nose and out through your mouth. Focus for a few moments on releasing any tension you are holding in your body. When you are ready, focus on your feet and visualize tendrils of energy extending down from the bottom of your feet and sinking into the ground below you. Extend the tendrils down into the earth until you connect with the energy of the earth just below the surface.

Visualize that energy flowing back up the tendrils you sent out into the ground. Feel the earth energy flowing up to the bottom of your feet. Feel it move up, past your ankles, up your calves, knees, and thighs until the energy begins to settle at your root chakra.

Feel the energy flow throughout your root chakra, mixing with your own energy there. It swirls gently, opening up the chakra and filling it with clean, warm earth energy that you have drawn up. If you feel any negative energy there, visualize it flowing down the energy stream until it is absorbed by the earth.

When you are ready, allow the earth energy to move up to your sacral chakra from your root chakra. Feel the energy flow between the first two chakras. The energy you are drawing up swirls gently in the second chakra and fills it with clean, warm earth energy. Take a moment and focus on the sacral chakra, feeling it opening as it fills with energy. Again, if you feel any negative energy, visualize it flowing down the energy stream until it is absorbed by the earth.

When you are ready, once again allow the energy to flow up past your hips and your belly and up your spine until the energy begins to flow into the chakra point at your solar plexus. Feel the energy flow between the three chakras. The energy you are drawing up swirls gently in the chakra and fills it with clean, warm earth energy. Take a moment and focus on the third chakra, feeling it opening as it fills with energy. If you feel any negative energy, visualize it flowing down the energy stream until it is absorbed by the earth.

When you are ready, allow the energy to flow up again, through your chest and lungs, until it begins to flow into your heart chakra. Feel the

energy flow between the four chakras. The energy you are drawing up swirls gently in the fourth chakra and fills it with clean, warm earth energy. Take a moment and focus on your heart chakra, feeling it opening as it fills with energy. Again, if you feel any negative energy, visualize it flowing down the energy stream until it is absorbed by the earth.

When you are ready again, allow the energy to flow up. The energy continues upward until it begins to settle at your throat chakra. Feel the energy flow and ebb between the five chakras. The energy you are drawing up swirls gently in the chakra and fills it with clean, warm earth energy. Take a moment and focus on your throat chakra, feeling it opening as it fills with energy. If you feel any negative energy, visualize it flowing down the energy stream until it is absorbed by the earth.

When you are ready, allow the energy to move up past your neck and chin, up your face and past your eyes until the energy begins to settle into the chakra point at your third eye. Feel the energy flow between the six chakras. The energy you are drawing up swirls gently in the chakra and fills it with clean, warm earth energy. Take a moment and focus on your third-eye chakra, feeling it opening as it fills with energy. Again, if you feel any negative energy, visualize it flowing down the energy stream until it is absorbed by the earth.

When you are ready, allow the energy to move up one final time. The energy flows past your third eye and up to the very top of your skull, until the energy begins to settle in your crown chakra. Feel the energy flow between the seven chakras. The energy you are drawing up swirls gently in the chakra and fills it with clean, warm earth energy. Take a moment and focus on your crown chakra, feeling it opening as it fills with energy. If you feel any negative energy, visualize it flowing down the energy stream until it is absorbed by the earth.

## Part B: Tuning the chakras

Now that you have opened all seven chakras, you need to balance them. This is done by tuning the vibration of the chakras until they are all vibrating at the same frequency. This can be done in two ways. You can apply stones or crystals to each of the energy centers and allow the stones to tune the chakras. This is effective, and there are many books that discuss this

particular technique. However, I prefer the second method, which uses sound, and that is what we will discuss here.

Take a moment to focus on how all seven chakras feel as the earth energy you have drawn up flows between each center. The energy moves up from the earth and along your body, connecting each chakra to the next. Taking a deep breath, open your mouth and sound the universal intonation of “om.” Hold the last part of the intonation for as long as possible until you feel it resonate within the chakras. Repeat the intonation and each time allow the resonance to build as the intonation goes on. Continue until you feel all the energy centers vibrate in tune with your intonation.

Note: Allow yourself to breathe as you repeat the intonation. Do not use a prerecorded intonation; it just does not work as well.

### Part C • Releasing the energy

Once the energy is vibrating in tune, allow yourself to release any excess energy that you have drawn up back into the earth. Feel the energy flowing back down your body from your crown, to your third eye, to your throat, heart, solar plexus. Feel it descend past your sacral chakra and your root. It flows down your legs and to your feet until it reaches the earth and returns to the source. Once you have returned all the energy to the earth, slowly pull back the energy tendrils you have extended until they reconnect with your body.

Before we move on to the final section of this chapter on protection, there is one final technique you will need to master involving the use of creative visualization. This is what is commonly called grounding and centering. These two skills can be practiced alone or together.

### EXERCISE P.7

#### Grounding and centering

You will need:

5-10 minutes (this will take less time as you become more experienced)

Sit in a quiet, comfortable place where you will not be disturbed. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths.

Focus your attention on the different parts of your body and feel each part relax. Start with your toes and work upward to the top of your head. Pay particular attention to those parts of your body that feel tense. You might notice particular aches or pains, so just focus on those areas a little longer or feel free to adjust your position. The idea here is to be very comfortable.

Now visualize roots extending from the base of your spine down into the ground. See them sinking in until they are solidly planted in the earth. This is the grounding part.

Once you are grounded, feel your roots draw up energy from the earth. Pull the energy up your spine and feel it flow through your body. Now gather the energy you are pulling up into a ball that sits in the center of your body, the area below your heart. This is the centering part.

Now that you are grounded and centered, you can begin to use the energy you brought up. This can be done in several ways. The important thing to remember is to release any energy you did not use in the spellwork. To do that, simply send the energy back down your spine into your roots and back to the earth.

In the last section of this chapter, we are going to talk about protection, in the sense of knowing how to deal with negativity. As a practitioner, there are many situations in which you will need to know how to protect yourself either from the negative intentions of others or from negative energy or even from mundane threats. There are four types of protection techniques you can use.

### Shields

Shields are the most commonly discussed method of protection, and they are addressed in almost every spellwork book out there. Essentially, a shield is a barrier that you maintain constantly to keep out unwanted energy. There are a number of ways to create or set shields. The most common is to visualize a brick wall or tower surrounding you and keeping any negativity out. This is a perfectly adequate method for setting shields, but it is not my preferred method. Ideally you should create your own shields based on whatever symbols have meaning to you. For example, if you connect strongly with fire, you might visualize your shields as a wall of fire surrounding you and burning up any negativity.

### Charged objects

These are objects that you charge with the intent of keeping negative energy out. This can be done to jewelry or charms for personal protection, or it can be used to keep negative energy out of a particular area, such as your home or even your office at work. You can charge any object you like for this purpose. For example, I charged a tapestry I picked up at a local metaphysical store and it currently hangs over my fireplace mantle. Its purpose is not only to keep negativity from entering my home, but also to provide a warm, welcoming feeling for my guests.

Another way to keep negativity out of your home is to charge two lodestones and place them with some salt in the windows and the doorways of your house, one lodestone at each side of the window or door. (A lodestone is a naturally occurring magnet, brownish black with a metallic luster.) If you have noticed a great deal of negativity in your home, this technique might be best for you. Before you set the salt and the charged lodestones, you should cleanse the negativity that is already in your home. The best way to do this is to burn some sage and walk it through the house, focusing on the corners of each room. Let the smoke from the sage waft upward in each room. Then stand in the center of the room and set its intent. For a bedroom, you might visualize it being a comforting, peaceful place to sleep. For the living room, visualize happy company relaxing on the couch, and so on. Make sure you cleanse each room and hallway of your home. You can do the same at work if you have a private office and there are no smoke detectors. Otherwise you can cleanse the space with representations of each element. As you do so, visualize each element cleansing the space of any negativity. Once the space is cleansed, set the lodestones. As you set them with the salt, visualize them sucking up any negativity that makes its way into your space. Replace the salt every few weeks and recharge the lodestones once a month.

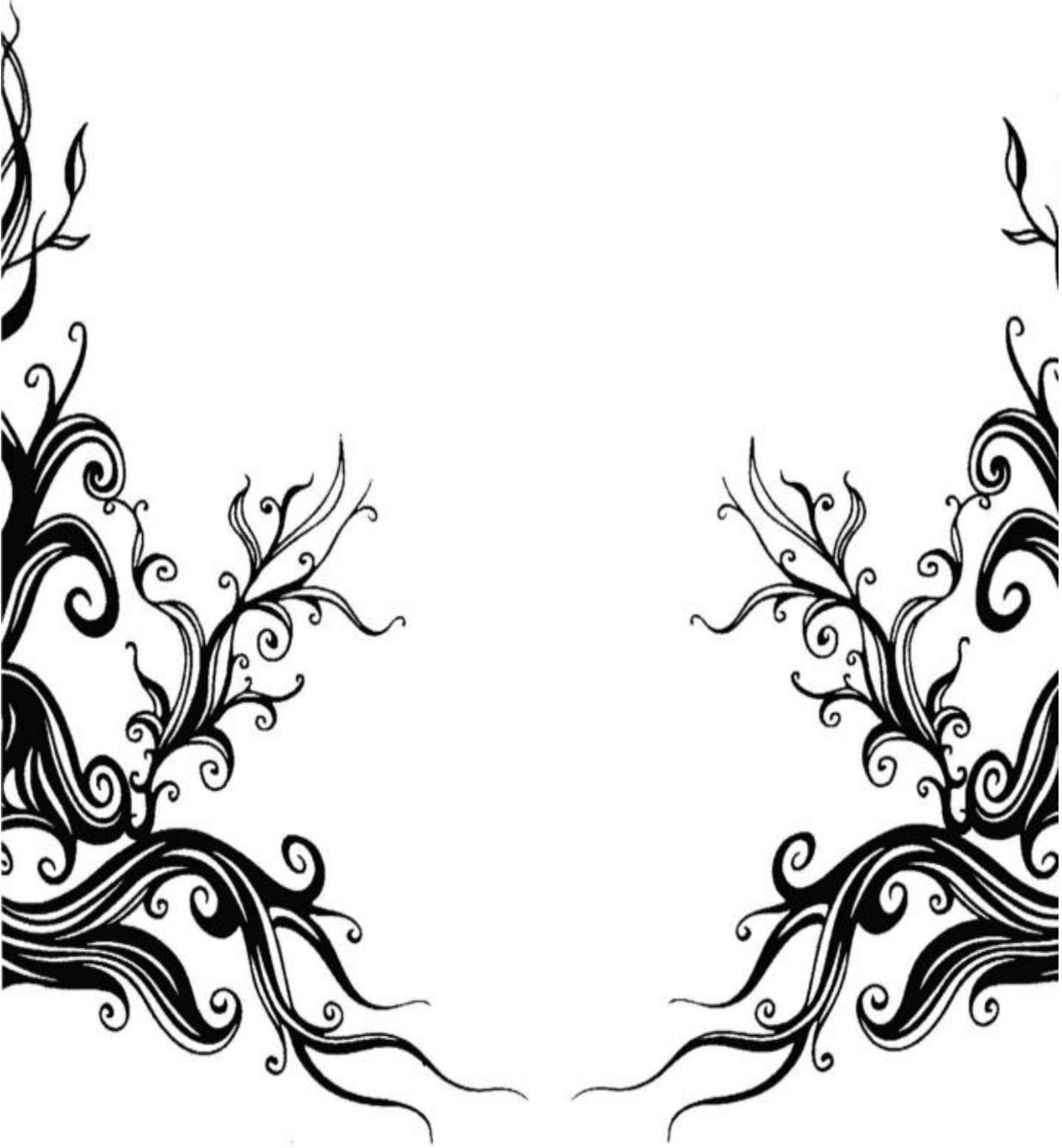
### Deflecting

Deflecting is used to keep out the energy of a particular person or place that you come into contact with. It is similar to a shield, except that it is only used when you are in the vicinity of the person or place whose energy you are trying to keep out. I use this method when I am working in a public circle where I do not know the participants or when I am around a person or place that has particularly negative energy. There are some people whose energy just bothers me. This can be because they complain constantly or because they put out negativity that I do not need entering my life. This

method is similar to the blocking technique mentioned later in this book (Exercise 2.5). Simply visualize a barrier between this person and yourself where his/her energy cannot affect your own.

### Circle

The final method to consider is the possibility of working within the confines of a circle. A circle is a ring of focused energy designed to keep out energies that are not welcome and to keep in energy that is being raised within the confines of the circle until you release it. Most Wiccans use a circle as a cornerstone of any ritual or spellwork. In my experience, the non-Wiccan practitioner either dispenses with the circle altogether or has a very different view of what a circle is used for. There are two methods that I personally use. One is the basic circle, where I am inside the energy ring and I perform my working from there. With the second method, I am outside the energy ring and the circle is used to contain the energy of the working until I release it. There is also a third method, which I do not personally use but which I have been part of, that combines the first two methods, so you have a circle that you are inside and another circle that you are outside of. I see this as overkill, but you should develop the method that works best for you. In Chapter 1, you will learn a valuable shortcut for setting a circle, which makes it easier to decide which method you would like to work with.



*one*

# The Foundation

I think I knew the moment I stepped out of the airplane that it was going to be one of those days, but I was hopeful. I walked clutching my backpack with one hand and my passport with the other to the line of people waiting at passport control. The closer I came to the gate where the woman sat in all her uniformed finery, the larger the pit of dread in my stomach grew. Firmly I told myself there was no reason for it, I am an American, traveling on an American passport—there would be no trouble. Still, even as those words echoed in my head, I began preparing a different speech. If you have ever been sent to the principal's office or been called to the conference room by your boss at work, then you know this speech very well.

Finally, it was my turn and I clutched the remnants of my tattered nerves and walked calmly toward the armed woman. I handed her my passport with a smile and a cheery “Good morning!” She did not even bother to look up at me. I thought, my charm will not work on this one, and I waited for her reaction. It came like clockwork: she opened the passport, and I could tell you the exact second she read what to her was the damning warning sign. Her eyes got big, and she looked up and finally made eye contact with me. “You’ll have to wait over there,” she said, pointing to a seating area where a motley assortment of men and women waited with various degrees of impatience. I said nothing, and I resisted the urge to roll my eyes.

Instead, I walked over to the seating area and took a seat cross-legged on the floor. From my backpack, I took out my MP3 player and put on a nice meditative chant. I closed my eyes, centered myself, and let the rhythm of the chant consume me. Internally I repeated, “You will give me no more trouble and let me pass,” until each word became a breath and I felt the resonance of the energy expanding, going out with each exhalation. At the final exhalation of the word pass,” I opened my eyes and saw a different uniformed woman walking toward the seating area. In her hand, I could see a familiar little blue book, and I could not resist a smile—okay, it was more of a smirk—as I packed up the MP3 player and got to my feet. She handed me back the passport and said, “Welcome to Israel.” With a wide smile, I

said, “Thank you.” Some days—well, let us be honest, most days—it is good to be a witch.

You can cast a spell anywhere, anytime, with nothing more than the power of your will. Later I found out from friends that the average wait at the Tel Aviv Airport for detainees is almost two hours. I waited a total of ten minutes. I do not pretend to be able to do anything that another witch cannot do. Any person who is able to focus his or her will is able to accomplish pretty much the same things I can do. Many people are able to do this unconsciously—these are the people we call lucky. They are the ones who are able to naturally get what they want, and since they have always gotten what they want, they do not imagine failure.

It is easy to find yourself on the wrong side of the wishing well, in a situation where you feel as if nothing you do is going to produce results. This can happen because you have been discouraged in the past, as a result of workings that have not worked as planned or when you have made effort after effort with no results. The thing you have to remember is that magick is an act of will. You are imposing your will on the world, through the magickal working, to produce a particular result. So when a spell fails, it is important not to become discouraged. We turn to magick in an effort to transform failure into success. For some of us—in particular, new practitioners who have seen too much failure in life—we need the psychodrama of ritual. We use ritual as a tool to train the mind so that we are able to accomplish through spellwork the same things that “lucky” people are able to accomplish naturally.

The reason for this is twofold. First, our minds are not used to success and so we need to project the will onto a tangible object, or self-doubt will creep in and the working will fail to manifest or will manifest in an unexpected way. Second, most books on spellwork say that we need magickal tools in order to be successful. This is partially true and partially not. If you believe with 100 percent of your being that you can only do a magickal working through the use of physical objects, then you will need the physical objects to be successful. However, if you believe that you can cast a spell anywhere at any time with anything (or nothing), and you believe that with 100 percent of your being, then you do not need the tools of ritual.

You read books and they instruct you on the ideas of sympathetic magick, the uses of candle magick, scrying, and so on, and none of them can tell you the point when a doll becomes more than a doll, when a candle becomes

more than a candle, or when a mirror becomes a vessel through which you can see the future. That is because these objects never do become more than they are—it is your belief that they are more that transforms them from the mundane into tools of magick. Having mastered that idea, it's easy to take the next step and realize that in the end you do not actually need the tools. But how do you cast a spell without tools? Into what do you channel your energy and will? What becomes the focal point? The answer is simple: yourself.

In order to understand why you can cast a spell without tools, you must first understand what magick is:

Magick is focused energy transformed by the will to accomplish a particular result.

The definition is straightforward. The concept is harder to grasp. First, you need to understand precisely where the focus comes from. Then you need to understand the role that energy plays in the success or failure of the working. Finally, you must understand exactly how your will works in transforming the energy—not just during the spell, but afterward, when you are waiting for manifestation.

In this chapter, we will look at two of the three elements needed for a successful spell or ritual: the focus and the will. In Chapter 2, we will discuss energy. Many people intuitively understand the concepts of focus and will, and a lot of books discuss these two concepts, but they don't usually tell you how to add the focus to the will. The two concepts are treated separately and as if they did not affect each other, or as if the two terms can be used interchangeably. In this chapter, we will look at each skill separately and then at the end of the chapter we will discuss how the two concepts work together. After our energy discussion in Chapter 2, we will discuss how focus, energy, and will all work together. I decided to structure the book this way because many books don't give attention to the energy part of magickal workings. Although my previous book focused exclusively on energy working, I understand that not everyone will have read it and I believe that the concept is important enough to address twice. For those of you who have my *Energy Essentials* book, you can use any of the techniques in that book here. You will notice, though, that the energy-raising techniques discussed in this book are not the same ones from *Energy Essentials*.

## EXERCISE I.I

## Will

You will need:

20-30 minutes

Paper and pen

Take a few minutes to think about a need you have. Then write on the paper exactly what the need is. Write out the need in as much detail as you can possibly think of—try to focus on exactly what you want. For example, if what you need is \$1,000 to pay an unexpected bill, then write down how the bill came about, why you need the money, and where you would like the money to come from.

After you work through exactly what you need, think about how to sum up the need in a single sentence. In the earlier example, you might say:

\$1,000 to pay my outstanding hospital bill

Will is when you are able to set aside any other possibilities for your need and narrow it down to represent exclusively what you need and the outcome you want.

## EXERCISE 1.2

### Focus

You will need:

15-20 minutes

Pen and paper

Now that you know what the will is, you need to learn how to focus it. By focus, I mean how to set aside all the other meanings or possibilities for the particular goal you have set. We will use the same example from Exercise 1.1. This exercise may sound easy, but it's a powerful and effective part of spellwork.

First, take the sentence you wrote in Exercise 1.1 and narrow it down to one word. In our example, the word might be “money.” Your need might not be the same as the one in the example, and it might take you some time to figure out how to narrow the need down to a single word. Take your time and think the need through before moving on.

Once you have the single word, write down what comes to mind when you think of that particular word. Using the example word “money,” you might write:

Money—not having enough of it. What I need to pay for things I want. What I get for working. The stuff the student loan people keep taking away from me. Bills...

Brainstorming like this is the point of the exercise—if you were to cast a spell for simply “money,” what words would dominate in your mind? Would they represent the need you would like met? Or would it more likely be the general words you think of in your daily life when the word “money” comes up? And that is only one word—how many spells do you cast that only have one word?

Now start with the word you used in Exercise 1.1. Write out a definition for your word that is in keeping with your stated goal. For example:

Money = a fulfillment of my desire to pay this \$1,000 bill.

Take a few moments and memorize your definition. Repeat it over and over if necessary. Set an intention that every time you hear the word “money” (or whatever your word is) in a conversation, you will think of this definition.

This is harder than it might seem at first because you are dealing not only with your own preconceived meanings but also with the meanings that others attach to the word you are focusing on. My recommendation if you are new to the practice of magick or if you are having a hard time staying on point is to pick words that are unlikely to come up in daily conversation. A good way of doing this is to practice creating what I call trigger words. We will discuss this in Exercise 1.3.

The goal here is to train your mind and your thoughts so that when a particular word is focused on, it garners a particular response. In the above exercise, the idea was to focus the word “money” on getting \$1,000 to pay a particular bill. You should keep track of exactly what your goal is and reinforce this goal through your thoughts, words, and actions. You can do this with any word. For example, many people who practice candle magick tend to think of money/prosperity in terms of the color green. They tend to think of romantic love in terms of the color pink and passionate sexual love in terms of the color red. The same idea is true here. Choose a word. Define the word as your goal. Then use the instances where you hear the word to

reinforce your definition. Doing this is a simple way to combine your will with your focus and to reinforce your goals.

At first glance, focus and will appear to be similar in that they both deal with the goal of the spell or ritual; however, they come in at different places in the working. Will is about identifying specifically what you want. Focus is about ensuring that you identify what you want with what you are saying you want. It does not benefit you to cast a general spell for money if it isn't enough money to pay your bills. It is important to identify these aspects of the spell prior to beginning the working, as both will and focus are vital to the success of the spell.

The will primarily works within the act of spellcasting. It is the statement or series of statements that you will make during the spell/ritual. It represents the objective of the spell. Usually, it will be a declaratory statement: "X will happen."

The focus works not only within the spellcasting itself, but also afterward. It represents what the statement means and is a way of remaining on point during and after the spell or ritual until your goal has manifested itself—stating that "X will happen," then focusing on what you define X as or what X means to you.

The will and focus together make up the full intent (goal) of your working.

Will + Focus = Intent

In the next exercise, we will use the concepts of focus and will to create trigger words. A trigger word is a word that, when said, will immediately conjure up a particular sensation, emotion, or particular type of energy. Trigger words act as a magickal shortcut. They help you get into a particular ritual frame of mind even if you are just sitting in your cubical at work. They are an excellent way of learning how to exercise both your will and your focus. You are using your will and your focus to create a word that will evoke a particular result.

This next exercise does double duty in that it shows you how to combine the will and the focus, while at the same time helping you create a shortcut in the ritual process. This second goal will become more important later on as we begin to work without tools. The shortcut is to the psychodrama of ritual, which many of us find necessary to get into the spellcasting mood.

Look at it as a training tool for your subconscious. For so long, you have taught your subconscious that magick works within the confines of a particular structure. Now that you are breaking the structure, you need to provide it with the skills necessary to think outside the ritual box.

All of us have natural trigger words that, when said, immediately take us to a particular place. They might make us think of a particular person, place, or thing. For example, whenever I think of the word “rain,” I am immediately taken back to a day when the group of people who would later become my coven were having a ritual and BBQ and it started raining. It rained so hard that within minutes all of us were totally soaked. It was the kind of rain I absolutely love—warm, fat drops that fell swiftly from the sky. It almost felt like taking a shower. Instead of running for cover, three of us stood in the rain, our heads turned up toward the sky, basking in the glory of nature. We stood there for about half an hour until the rain stopped, just taking in the feeling of the rain falling, watching the sky above us, listening to the sounds of distant thunder, and seeing flashes of lightning. It was one of the times I felt closest to the Goddess.

To this day, I can still feel the rain soaking my hair, dripping down my nose. I can feel the wet T-shirt and jeans cling to my body, and I can even see the expressions on the faces of my friends as we basked in the warm rain.

### EXERCISE 1.3

Trigger words

You will need:

5-20 minutes a day for a week

Pen and paper

There are two ways in which this exercise can be performed. You can mentally walk through the physical steps of a ritual, or if visualization is difficult for you at first, you can walk through the steps in real life, using the action to build your trigger word. I’ll describe the method using visualization; if you choose to do the exercise physically, just adapt as necessary.

To begin, choose a word that makes you think of being in a ritual circle or doing spellwork. Use the techniques discussed in Exercises 1.1 and 1.2 to help you do this. For this to be most effective, pick a word that already has a magickal or mystical meaning for you.

Once you have chosen your word, take a few moments to ground and center yourself. Now, keeping the word in the forefront of your mind (chant the word out loud if you need to), mentally walk through the steps of a spell or ritual. Focus on each step that you normally take when performing the ritual. If you are having a hard time with this, see the example below. The example might be a bit different from your own practice, if you do not use a ritual circle or aren't Wiccan. Feel free to use it as a guided meditation, but it would be best if you created your own using the steps you follow when casting a spell or when you are involved in a ritual.

Take out your ritual tools from the drawer in your altar table. Set the tools up on the altar. Take a moment and look down at your altar. Note the location of your tools where you set the athame, the chalice, and the candles. Light the sage and inhale its sweet scent as you walk the perimeters of your circle to smudge and cleanse the area. Then stand in the east, and call in the first guardian. Move to the south, west, and north until all guardians are called in. Seal the circle. Breathe in the feeling of standing between the worlds. Call in the Lord and Lady feel them standing behind you, their hands on your shoulders. Bask in the feeling of it.

Focus on your feelings and on the trigger word you have chosen. How do you feel when standing in the middle of the ritual circle, or when you are in the middle of casting a spell? Connect those feelings to that word, so that when you use the word you are mentally transported to that place and time, standing in the circle, waiting to begin your working. When you are sure you have the feelings connected to the word, mentally go through the steps of release: thank the Lord and Lady, dismiss the guardians, and release the circle. Put away your tools. Do whatever it is you do when you are done casting a spell, even if all you do is put away your tools and throw out the remnants of your spell.

When you are done, take a few moments and focus on your trigger word. Think about the feeling of being in ritual. Think about the steps that you walked through. Then write down the definition of the word based on what you just did. Do these parts of the exercise every day for three days while further refining your definition each day.

On day 4, you should have a definition that sums up the feeling of being in ritual space and of casting a spell. Read over the definitions from the past three days and combine them into a single definition that sums up what the trigger word will mean. Memorize the definition of the trigger word. Today, instead of mentally walking through the steps of the ritual as you did on days 1-3, focus on the word you chose and meditate on the feeling of being in the ritual. It is very important to pay attention to the emotions and sensations rather than to the actions.

Refine your definition again to incorporate any differences between what you wrote earlier and how you feel at each step of the ritual. At the end you should have a word that represents what you feel throughout the steps of ritual/spellwork.

On days 5, 6, and 7, spend five minutes or so meditating on your word. As you do this, focus on the word definition you created at the end of day 4 and try to evoke the same feelings that you had in ritual. At first you will notice an echo of the feeling in the back of your mind, as if the feeling is not quite there. That is fine. Try as you go on to draw it forward and engage it with the meditation.

By the end of the meditation on day 7, you will notice that when you start meditating on the word the emotions and feelings of being in ritual will emerge faster and will become much more intense.

For the trigger word to be most effective, use it every time you begin a working to put yourself into the mental state of being in ritual. Periodically reinforce the trigger word by repeating the meditation or by going through the steps of a ritual.

I know that at first this exercise does not appear to be much of a time-saving technique. You spend a whole week working on creating the trigger, and you have to find time to fit it into your busy schedule. But if you put in the time at the beginning, once you have the trigger word, you will be able to save a great deal of time. The trigger word created in this exercise is one of the more complex trigger words. For simpler concepts, you can create a trigger in one or two sessions. As you become more experienced in creating trigger words, they become easier and quicker to create. The best thing about them is that they can be used again and again. Once you have created one to fit a particular need, you can use it if that need ever comes up again.

The purpose of this exercise is to bring the same feeling of standing in circle to the forefront of your mind with nothing more than an invocation of a word. Essentially it is a shortcut designed to put your subconscious in a magickal frame of mind, and to train your mind to make a connection between the word and a magickal working. After using this technique for a while, the same feeling of being in sacred space will be with you just as soon as you think the word. You are telling your mind—in much the same way as performing the physical steps of a ritual—that you are about to step from the mundane world into the magickal world.

Scents also work well for this type of shortcut—for example, the smell of sage almost immediately puts me in a magickal frame of mind. Unfortunately, you cannot always start randomly burning sage—the people in the dorm tend to get mad when you set off the smoke detectors, and I am sure your boss at work will feel the same way.

There are many ways to use trigger words other than as a shortcut to evoke the feeling of being in ritual space when you are away from your altar or do not have time to set it up. This technique is particularly useful for confidence, self-esteem, courage, and protection spells. In Chapter 5, we will discuss in greater detail how to use the trigger words in spellcasting, until ultimately you can use a trigger word itself as a complete spell. You will not always need to create a trigger word. They are best used for spells or rituals that you do more than once, so you don't need to repeat efforts for something you can do once and then recapture.

The final exercise in this chapter deals with focal words. Focal words are similar to trigger words, except that they are generally only used once. A focal word acts as the linchpin of a spell. It is the verbal representation of your focus and will to your subconscious. Essentially you are telling your subconscious, the universe, and the divine, “This is what I want, and this is what you need to work on for me.” Sometimes, when casting a spell or planning a ritual, it is hard to think of exactly the right words to use to convey your goal. Without the correct words, the intent of your spell/ritual may be muddled.

For example, let's say you need \$100 to pay for something. Writing a spell asking for money might not be specific enough. Money = any denomination of funds. It does not mean getting the right amount that you need. Writing a spell asking for prosperity might not work either. Prosperity = a wealth of

something. It does not mean that you will have monetary prosperity. The same is true of using the words “abundance” or “wealth.”

The following exercise will teach you to be specific when you are wording your spells. You will be able to focus your will more easily on your actual goal and not just on your stated goal. Remember that magick takes the path of least resistance, so you need to make sure you are not leaving any loopholes or outs in your spells. The idea is not to find the perfect word, but to use the right words to convey the message that you want.

## EXERCISE 1.4

Focal words

You will need:

5-10 minutes

Pen and paper

Part A: The questions

Begin by asking yourself the following questions (example answers follow):

What is my goal?

I need to banish X from my work life.

Is this something that can have a magickal fix?

Yes, I could cast a banishing spell.

Is this something I could deal with mundanely?

Well, I tried to tell X to go away, but he/she would not take the hint. I have no mundane control over his/her presence in my life, so it is not something I can deal with mundanely without doing something drastic that will have negative effects on my life, such as quitting my job.

What am I looking for the spell to accomplish?

I want X out of my life. It does not matter to me how that happens, so long as X is not hurt and is still alive. I do not care if the reason X goes away is because something good happened, like getting a job at the North Pole. In fact, I know that X wants to be promoted, so it would be great if X is promoted out of state.

In this example, you could ask for X to get promoted, but that might not lead to the result you want because X could end up being promoted in the same office, which doesn't help your situation. You could ask for X to go away, but that might mean that X will "go away" in a permanent way, such as by dying (extreme, I know, but it is something to think about). Asking for X to "get out of my life" might have a similar result.

Who says that you have to cast the spell on X? Perhaps the solution is not for X to go away, but for your own circumstances to change. Perhaps you are the one who needs to be promoted? But if this happened, it does not mean that you will no longer have to deal with X. Continuing with the questions, you might ask:

What is it about X that bothers me?

I do not like that X is in a position of power over me. He/she is a demanding person and I do not feel like anything I do pleases him/her. So perhaps X does not need to go away—in which case a banishing is not necessary. Maybe what needs to happen is for X to no longer be in a position of authority over my life.

So if you cast the spell, what would you ask for? Use Exercises 1.1 and 1.2 to help you figure this out. For example, you might say: I want to be promoted at work to a new, better position where X will no longer be in a position of control over my life.

Part B: How focus and will play into the spell

Identify the focal words or phrases in the sentence you came up with. In our example above, these might be:

- new, better position at work
- X no longer has control over my life

Do you think these focal words/phrases are a good representation of the stated goal from the example in part A? What would you do differently?

Do the proposed focal words fit with our definition of "the will"? In my opinion, the first focal phrase does: "new, better position at work" is a specific statement of a clear goal. The second focal phrase could use more work; the statement "X no longer has control over my life" is not very specific. It implies that X controls all aspects of my life, so I may reword it

to reflect exactly what it is that X is in control of. Here are a couple more questions to consider:

What could I do to make sure that my will is added to the spell?

I would use specific terms as much as possible to convey exactly what I want to see manifest.

How would I maintain focus during and after the spell?

I would make sure I knew exactly what I meant when I used the specific focal words in the spell. I would keep those definitions in mind when I use the words later on or if I discuss my situation with others.

It is vitally important to remember that you are only in control of the spell up to the point where you release it. After that point, it is released to the universe and you need to allow it to accomplish its goal. You have to trust that once it is out of your hands, it will do what you intended it to do. Part of maintaining focus is to firmly believe that the spells you cast will work. It means not making statements that are contrary to your stated intent. For example, if you cast a spell for a promotion, it is contrary to your focus to state that you will not get the promotion when you are talking to your friend on the phone later that night.

In this chapter, we learned what the will and the focus of a spell are. We learned that these two elements work hand in hand to accomplish the stated intent of your spell. In the next chapter, we will discuss how to add the third element of successful spellwork—energy—to the will and the focus to create a complete and highly successful spell.



**two**

# Adding Energy

THERE IS A BIT OF confusion in magickal circles about exactly what energy is and whether or not it is necessary to have a separate energy-raising portion within spell/ritual work. One view is that the act of performing the working is sufficient to provide the needed energy to power the spell/ritual. I agree with that in theory—the act of performing the spell does add some energy to the working. Depending on who you are and your level of engagement in the casting process, this may or may not be sufficient for a good working. It is not enough for a great working. The deliberate act of raising and channeling energy does two things. First, it reinforces the will and the focus by ensuring engagement in the act of spellcasting. This is because raising energy is an active rather than a passive skill. Second, it provides an additional push to the working that assists in achieving your goals.

I look at it like this: if you put a rock at the top of a hill, it may or may not eventually roll down the hill, depending on where you put it and on other natural forces. If, however, you give the rock a push, you will ensure that it will actually roll down the hill. Once you provide the initial shove, it will continue under its own power. The same is true of spells—if you give them that extra shove of energy, they will move more quickly to accomplish your goals.

Energy is a catalyst for change. It comes from different places and can be divided into three broad categories:

- **Personal energy:** This is energy that comes from the self or from other living things, such as emotions, sex, energy sent to you by another participant in the spell/ritual, and so on.
- **Divine energy:** This is energy that comes from a connection with a spiritual entity—that is, invoking the gods/goddesses to assist with rituals/spells, praying to God, invoking spirits, calling on saints, and so on.
- **Universal energy:** This is energy that is drawn from the world around you, from the earth, from drawing down the moon, from the ambient energy that surrounds us everywhere.

Even though the energy comes from different original sources, through the ritual act the witch or practitioner transforms the energy into something that can be used to manifest the stated intent of the spell. The ways of transforming the energy are limited only by the imagination and the belief of the practitioner in his/her abilities.

There are three goals of this chapter. First, to teach you how to connect with each of the three broad categories of energy. Second, to instruct you in how the energy can be transformed within a spell/ritual. Finally, to bring the energy together with the will and the focus so that you understand, at least in theory, how a complete spell would function.

## EXERCISE 2.1

### Personal energy

You will need:

5-10 minutes

Pen and paper

Find a quiet place where you will not be disturbed. Get comfortable. Take a few deep calming breaths to release any extra tension from your body.

#### Part A: Bringing the emotion up

Pick an emotion (the more powerful the emotion, the stronger the results).

Example: Hope

Take a few moments and think about what that emotion feels like:

Hope feels like an opening sensation in my chest. Like watching the sun come up in the morning or peeking out from behind a cloud on a gray rainy day. It lifts my spirit and makes me feel bigger than I am. In connecting with hope energy, I feel more open to possibilities. I feel as if things will proceed smoothly.

#### Part B: Using the emotion

If I were casting a spell to get good news or perhaps a spell to get over a loss, I might work with hope energy. I might gather that energy of hope that I

am currently experiencing and direct it at another person (see Exercise 2.8). I might use the energy to charge an object (see Exercise 2.7).

Think about the emotion energy you chose to connect with. What type of working could you use it in?

### Part C: Working with other emotions

Write down some other emotions that you normally experience and then write how you might use them in a spell/ ritual. For example:

Happiness: combating depression, finding contentment at work, in a spell to end discord

There are many emotional energies that you can connect with. These emotions can be both positive and negative. You should not limit yourself to working only with positive emotions or negative emotions. Both serve a vital purpose. As humans we experience a wide emotional range. Experiment by working with these various types of emotional energies in your own spells and rituals. Emotional energy is an easily accessible method of energy raising. It requires that you do what comes naturally—feel.

## EXERCISE 2.2

### Divine energy

You will need:

5-10 minutes

This exercise is performed at your altar (if you keep one) or wherever you feel the greatest connection to the divine. I recognize that different people will connect with the divine in many different ways. I also recognize that not all magick practitioners are Wiccan. So when you choose to connect with the divine, you should do so in a way that feels the most comfortable to you. If that means going to church and lighting a candle or meditating quietly while looking at Christ on the cross, then by all means do that. If it means invoking the Lord and Lady in a circle, then do that. If you are like me and feel the divine most in nature, then go sit under a favorite tree.

Once you are where you need to be, sit quietly for a while to clear your mind. Breathe in deeply and release any tension you are holding on to. Close

your eyes and expand your senses outward to connect with the divine around you.

The way this connection occurs will be personal to you. For me, I feel a gentle hand brushing the side of my face. I see a smiling woman with bright hair that changes color as I look at her. In her eyes she carries the wisdom of the world. As I look at her, I see the world breathe in time to her breath. I know she is the Goddess.

Once you have established your personal connection with the divine, think of something you need. Clearly define that need. For example:

I need a job.

Ask for assistance with what you need. Again, the way you do this will be personal to you. For me, as I sit cross-legged under my favorite tree, I have a conversation with the Goddess. I tell her about my need, why I need it, and where I think the need can be filled from. Then I simply say, “Please help me.”

I know that by asking for help I have created both will and intent, because I have articulated a clearly defined need. By connecting with the divine—in my case the Goddess—I have the divine energy I need to achieve my goal.

The divine exists both within and without. Every time I use magick, either in ritual or by casting a spell, I am connecting with the divine in some way. The divine has blessed me with the knowledge and the ability to help myself. I look at it like this: each person carries part of the divine spark. This spark allows us to transform our lives into what we want them to be. It is a portion of the creative power of the universe, and it is a gift that should be used. That energy is there for you. By connecting with it, you honor yourself and your god(s). Because of this, I never believe that the god(s) are not listening or that they are unwilling to help me.

Connecting with the divine is another quick and simple way of adding transformative energy to your spellwork. For some people, it works better than most other energy-raising techniques because they are more comfortable working with such a relationship than with attempting something outside their comfort zone. In our society, prayer is seen as an acceptable way of getting help. To some, prayer is as necessary as breathing. I never say no when someone offers to pray for me because I know that I can use the energy of that prayer to fulfill some need in my life.

Even though I believe in the divine and I connect with it regularly, I also believe that even an atheist can be an effective practitioner of magick. Magick is a skill. It can be honed and developed. Any person who is capable of focus and will and who can raise some kind of energy can practice witchcraft. The most devout believer in the world will accomplish nothing if he/she is unable to communicate a clear need. Simply saying, "Oh, Lord, I need help!" is not enough, because the Lord (or the energy that is the Lord) will not know what to help you with. If you choose to practice the above exercise, please keep that in mind. Don't forget all the elements of successful spellwork just because you are working with the divine.

### EXERCISE 2.3

#### Universal energy

You will need:

5-10 minutes in a place where you will not be disturbed

Sit or lie down someplace comfortable. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. As you breathe in and out, exhale any tension or stress that you are feeling and focus on being relaxed.

Open your third eye and expand your awareness outward until you reach the place where your own personal energy field ends. Where this is will vary with each person, but generally it is an inch or so beyond the skin. As you do this, you may feel a tingling sensation that is strongest over the major energy points in your body.

Visualize little energy tendrils unwinding from your own personal energy field and extending outward away from your body. Feel the tendrils brushing against the latent energy hovering in the air. Pull that energy toward you through the tendrils until you feel the energy connect with your physical body. Visualize the energy being absorbed through your skin and into your body.

Take the energy you pulled and direct it down into your dominant hand (right if you are right-handed, left if you are left-handed). Allow the energy you gathered to pool in the palm of your hand until it forms a little ball. Make sure you pull all the energy you have gathered into the ball. Now release the energy by visualizing the energy ball evaporating back into the air.

## EXERCISE 2.4

### Chanting as energy

You will need:

5 minutes

A recording of a favorite chant or song

Put the chant on repeat. Sit in a place where you feel comfortable and press Play. Start the volume on low. Focus on the sound of the chant. Start out by just listening. After the first time through, join in if you can, even if you just chant silently. Each time through, raise the volume of your chant to raise the intensity.

Note: If you are looking for a chant to use in this exercise, I recommend a chant by a group called Moonstruck; it is on their album *Witch of the Wildwoods*. The name of the track is “Cauldron Chant.” In my opinion, it is a complete spell—all you need to do is add focus to the energy raised by the chant and you will be all set. There are other chants that work well, but in my opinion, none are as perfectly constructed as this one.

The four previous exercises are simple methods to raise energy. These methods can be used as part of your spellcasting, and can be applied quickly and easily. They require very little preparation and take very little time. Once you master these techniques, you can raise energy in a matter of minutes. As you will learn later, they can be applied to workings that are accomplished completely without the use of tools.

Sometimes it is not enough to just gather energy for the working. You need to direct the energy toward a specific purpose. This can be accomplished in many ways. In traditional candle magick, energy is directed and released through the act of burning the candle. In kitchen magick, energy is directed and released through the act of making and consuming food. In the next four exercises, we will discuss the ways in which energy can be transformed and directed toward a specific result.

## EXERCISE 2.5

### Transforming energy: Blocking

Blocking is an easy technique to deflect a particular type of energy away and keep it from affecting you. I use this in places where there are a lot of people feeling similar emotions, such as crowded exam rooms or airplanes.

You will need:

5 minutes

Sit upright so that your back is straight. Cross your legs at the ankles. Cross your arms just under your chest. Close your eyes. Take a few deep breaths and center your energy so that it flows from your crown to your toes in a smooth, uninterrupted rhythm in time with your heartbeat. Once you are sure the rhythm is smooth, expand your awareness to the edge of your aura where your shields are set.

Take a moment to reinforce any weak points. From there, deliberately expand your awareness beyond your shields until you can feel the energy and emotions bombarding the shields. (If you have never done this before, you may want to be careful because you might feel suddenly nauseous.) Take a few moments to identify the energy coming at you—anger, nervousness, fear, and so on. Once you are sure exactly what type of energy you are dealing with, draw your focus inward back to your shields.

Next, decide what the opposite emotion/energy is to the one that is being sent at you, such as peacefulness for nervousness. Focus on drawing that energy/emotion upward through your energy centers. You can do this by visualizing it as a color or just by remembering a time when you felt peaceful. Once you have the feeling down, infuse the energy of it into your shields. This will neutralize the energy being sent at you.

This is an easy example of a working you can accomplish without the use of tools. I like it because it allows me to block unwanted energy and is a good way to keep stress out of my life. This technique can be adapted to a variety of situations. For example, it can be used to block general negativity or to keep someone else's fear or anxiety from affecting you.

## EXERCISE 2.6

Transforming energy: Sending

You will need:

5-10 minutes

## A candle

This is an excellent technique to send energy to a person who needs help or healing. (Remember to always ask before using magick on a person.)

Begin by grounding and centering. Focus on the person you are trying to help. Then light the candle to release the energy.

As a modification, you can also do this by charging a focal object and then giving it as a gift to the person you are trying to send energy to. As he or she uses the object, they will have access to the energy.

## EXERCISE 2.7

### Transforming energy: Charging

You will need:

5-10 minutes

An object you want to charge

Salt water

Cleanse the object in the salt water to dispel any energy that is already there. If you are charging a candle, do not submerge it in the salt water. Dip your fingers in the water and run them over the candle, making sure to avoid the wick.

Hold the object in your receiving hand (if you are right-handed, that will be your left hand, and vice versa), then ground and center. Use any of the energy-raising techniques discussed in Exercises 2.1, 2.2, or 2.3. You can also use your own energy-raising techniques or any of the techniques discussed in Energy Essentials.

Start by visualizing this energy as pure white neutral energy. This is energy you have drawn up but have not given focus to. Next, visualize your intent and shape the energy in your hand to reflect that intent. For example, if you are charging an object to draw money, you might focus on the energy in your hand turning green. As you do this, visualize whatever you need the money for happening. For example, if you need it to pay a bill, see yourself writing the check and putting it in the mail.

The purpose of charging the object is to focus your spell and to provide energy that will cause your desire to manifest. If you are using the object as a spell or as part of a ritual, you will need to add one additional step to the

above exercise that allows the energy gathered into the object to be released in some way. For example, if you charge a candle, you might visualize the energy being released as you burn the candle. As another example, I have a lovely tapestry that I bought when I was 18 at one of my very first international outings. It has gone with me around the globe. Right now it is doing double duty as a throw over the back of my sofa, but I have used it as curtains, as a blanket, and on one very memorable occasion as a dress. Aside from its multi-functionalism, the reason the tapestry goes with me on my little jaunts is that I continually charge and recharge it with protective energy. You may laugh and think, wow, I didn't know people in their twenties carried security blankets, but the reality is that my home has never been burglarized, even though at one point I lived in the Cass Corridor, one of the worst parts of Detroit. Approximately once a month, I recharge the energy in the tapestry. I use a preferred meditation to raise energy and then I visualize weaving the energy into the lines of the tapestry itself. As I weave the energy in, I focus on my goal of protection and safety. I see the energy taking on the shape and form of the tapestry. I see the energy lying there latent until there is a need for it, and then I visualize it acting to preempt any threat to my property. The more I repeat the steps of this protection spell, the more powerful the effects and the more charged the tapestry becomes.

Now that we have covered the basics of raising energy and transforming energy, it is time to learn how to put the steps together. In the next exercise, we will go over a new method of energy raising and then discuss how to transform that energy toward a particular goal or intent. Most energy (with the exception of emotional energy) is neutral, meaning that it lacks intent as well as direction. In casting a spell, you need to provide the energy with definition. Part of that is accomplished through will and focus, and we will discuss how that plays into the complete spell in Exercise 2.9. But before that, in Exercise 2.8, we will learn how to direct the energy toward the intent of the spell. As with the will and the focus, having a clear idea of what you want to accomplish and translating that idea into the energy is essential to successful workings.

## EXERCISE 2.8

Transforming energy: Directing

You will need:

5 minutes

Begin by picking a goal for the energy you want to raise. For example:

Meeting new people

Take a minute and consider how you could direct the energy raised to represent your goal:

I could use visualization to see the energy taking on the characteristics I associate with meeting new people. I might charge an object to create a charm that will draw new people to me when I wear it.

The goal of this part of the exercise is to figure out the best way for you to channel your intent into the energy. Take some time and consider what you would do to reach your goal. What needs to happen for your goal to be met?

To meet new people, I might need to step out of my shell and put myself out there.

How can you represent what needs to happen in your energy?

The energy could take on the characteristics of stepping out of my shell. This can happen by having the energy turn to a color I associate with meeting new people and being outgoing.

When you have this visualization clearly in your mind, raise the energy according to any of the first four exercises in this chapter. Once you have raised the energy, direct it and shape it according to the intention you have clarified.

The final exercise in this chapter is the first complete spell. As you read it, note the structure of the spell and identify each of the three basic elements of spellworking that we have discussed so far. Think about how you would expect the results of the spell to manifest. Think also about how you might modify the spell, either for a different need or in a way that works better for you.

## EXERCISE 2.9

Bringing it all together: Energy, will, and focus

You will need:

5 minutes

A fresh fig

## Part A: Performing the spell

Hold the fig loosely in your receiving hand so that it sits in the center of your palm. Ground yourself and pull up a ball of energy about the size of a baseball and bring it to your center. Let the energy sit at your center for a few moments until it takes on the characteristics of your own personal energy. Then direct the ball upward from your center and down your dominant arm until the ball sits comfortably in the center of your palm.

Once the energy ball is in the center of your dominant hand, direct it to take on the characteristics of money. Feel it in your hand, taking on the feel of a large stack of \$100 bills or a check for a large sum of cash. See the energy turn green—whatever reminds you most of money.

Focus specifically on your need:

I need \$100 to buy some new clothes.

Next, bring your two hands together until the energy ball hovers over the fig. Then allow the energy ball to float downward from your dominant hand until it covers the fig completely. Feel the fig begin to absorb the energy directed at it. (For me, this means that the fig feels very warm in the center of my palm.) Finish the spell by eating the fig. As you swallow it, feel the energy sliding down your throat with the fig and know that as it is digested, the energy will be released into the world to bring you the money you need.

## Part B: Analyzing your spellwork

Take some time to consider the following questions:

What was the goal of the spell?

Was the goal reflected in the working?

Can you identify the will, the focus, and the energyraising technique?

As you will have noticed, the spell in the last exercise was pretty simple. It involved two things, a fig and energy. This is a very powerful spell, which I have used more than once with excellent results. A focused successful spell does not have to be complicated or time consuming. It does not require expensive ingredients or unusual metaphysical supplies. In the rest of this book, we will focus on how you can cast complete successful spells anywhere with little planning and few, if any, tools.

Magick should be easy and uncomplicated. As long as you master the basics of spellcasting, your spells should work regardless of the amount of preparation or tools you use. Before moving on to Chapter 3, make sure that you understand and can apply the skills learned in these two initial chapters. As you read through this book, you will notice that every exercise builds on the skills you learned here. Every spell contains will, focus, and energy, so being able to identify and distinguish these elements is vital to grasping the more advanced skills we will discuss in the rest of this book. Before we move on to the next chapter, let us take a look at another sample spell.

### Sample spell

Goal:

Banishing negativity

Items needed:

2 lodestones

A small container filled with  
salt

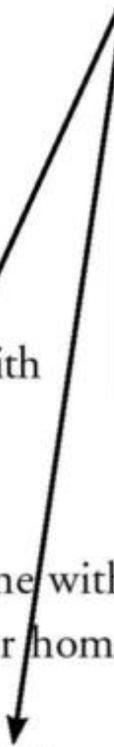
#### *Steps*

Charge the first lodestone with the intent that it attract any negativity in your home or office to it. Place the lodestone in the salt.

Charge the salt to absorb the negativity from the first lodestone and neutralize it.

The act of charging an object is an energy-raising technique; see Exercise 2.7.

A trick to remember is that any time you see the word "intent" or "goal," you should immediately think of the will and focus elements.



Place the second lodestone in the salt. Charge the second lodestone with the intent that it absorb the neutralized energy. As it does so, visualize the lodestone sending the neutralized energy out to attract positive energy.

Take a few moments to look over the spell. Try to identify where the will, focus, and energy elements of the spell come in. As you identify where each element occurs—it can appear in more than one place—try to think of what technique(s) you could apply when casting this spell to either improve it or modify it for a different goal.

### Sample spell

Goal:

Banishing negativity

Items needed:

2 lodestones

A small container filled with salt

Steps

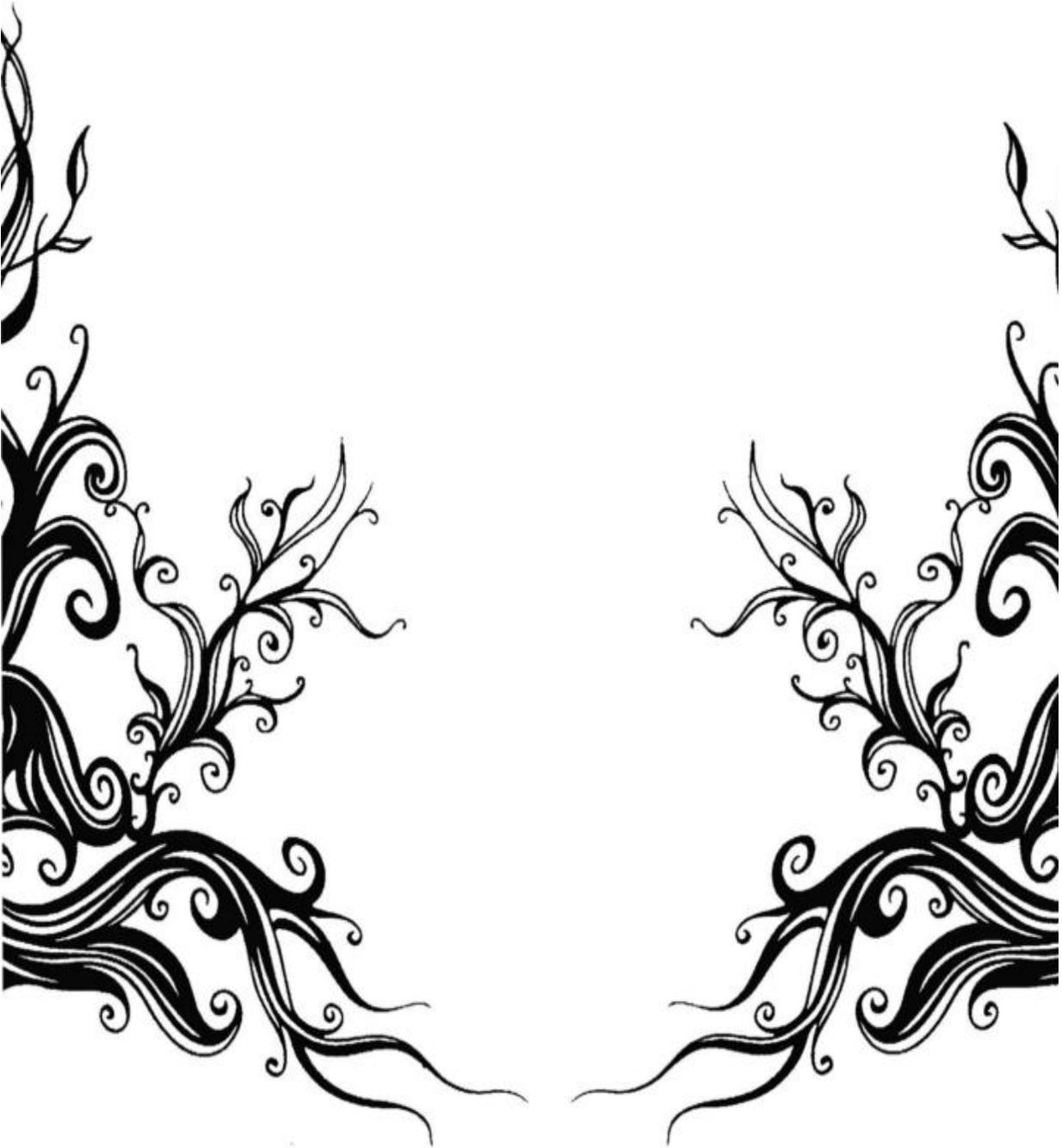
Charge the first lodestone with the intent that it attract any negativity in your home or office to it. Place the lodestone in the salt.

Charge the salt to absorb the negativity from the first lodestone and neutralize it.

Place the second lodestone in the salt. Charge the second lodestone with the intent that it absorb the neutralized energy. As it does so, visualize the lodestone sending the neutralized energy out to attract positive energy.

Most experienced spellcasters apply energy, will, and focus intuitively. These practitioners are able to identify from experience what is needed for a spell to work. For newer practitioners, the process of trial and error can become disheartening and leads many to assume that either they are unable to cast spells or that spells do not work for them. As we discussed earlier, a spell works best when you are able to identify what you want, and how you want to direct the energy toward getting it.

For the rest of the book, we will focus on many of the more advanced skills that witches master over time. You will learn how to use the three basic elements of successful spellcasting to improve your ability to practice your craft.



three

# Working with the Elements

I COME FROM A WORLD that values family—including the extended family. As a child, it was not unusual for me to be surrounded by a plethora of aunts, uncles, and cousins. All of these people descended like locusts on my great grandmother's house, bringing with them a joyous chaos that I could only stand for a short period of time. When I had my fill, I often escaped alone into the solitude of the hills at the edge of the village. It was there that I first began working with elemental energies. It was not until many years later that I realized exactly what I had tapped into as I spent those quiet afternoons hiding from my familial obligations.

The Jordan Valley, where I spent a majority of my childhood, is a unique place. It is a dry land with negligible rain fall, but the land there is some of the most fertile in the world. It was a study in contradictions that I took for granted. There were mud huts and tents side by side with palatial mansions, and these were often owned by members of the same family. Donkeys, camels, and horses vied for space with cars, trucks, and the occasional pedestrian. Children were encouraged to run wild and often appeared unkempt and refugee-like to outsiders. My mother had trouble with this. She valued rules and structure. There were very few times when my brother and I were ever allowed to play freely with the neighbor children in Amman. But my mother did not travel into the Valley, and there we were free of her restrictions and I could get as dirty and lost as I wanted to. I ran in slippers and blue jeans as nimble as a goat in the hills; it never occurred to me that falling was a possibility.

My favorite place, back then, was a little outcropping of rock that overlooked a steep incline. On the days I managed to sneak away, I climbed up and sat at the very tip of the ledge. I liked it because I felt like I was floating over nothingness. I could sit for hours and just disappear into my surroundings. I became the air that played with gentle fingers through my hair. I was the rock tumbling down the side of the incline. It was my skin that the lizards sunned themselves on. I felt welcomed when I arrived, and the air and earth kissed me goodbye when I went home. I knew that I could travel with the air and sink to the earth and that I was perfectly protected. The place knew me and I knew it. Fifteen years after leaving Jordan for the

United States, I went back, and I almost cried because the feeling of the place was exactly the same.

As I developed my own magickal practices and studied the teachings of various masters, I came to the realization that the energy I connected with as a child could only be the energy of the elementals inhabiting that little desert valley. When I understood that, I was finally able to understand why I felt as if I were a cherished princess when I visited. There was always a breeze to cool me and always some bit of nature to entertain me. The energy of the place felt perfectly in tune with me. I have heard others describe similar sensations, and the stories are always the same—it is as if the very location wants to provide for your needs.

In 2003, I was working on translating an old Arabic story into English for a graduate-level Arabic class I was taking. It was an Iraqi version of *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights* written in old Arabic. There are quite a few versions of *Arabian Nights*, and this one was hardly distinguishable from any of them. The only reason I remember it is because there was a phrase in Arabic that captured my attention. It is impossible to translate it literally, but the phrase reminded me of a story in the Quran about King Solomon. Sure enough, when I looked up the story in the Quran the turn of phrase was copied from there. I am sure that many of you are familiar with the story of King Solomon, either from popular culture or from Biblical teachings. The story in the Quran is strikingly similar, except that the Quran gives a detailed list of beings over which King Solomon was granted power. Among those beings are the Jinn. According to Islamic mythology, the Jinn helped the king with all manner of magical things and were slaves to his will. Common oral tradition in Jordan suggests that these Jinn are beings of energy who were able to grant those able to control them power over the elements. The Quran specifically mentions control over wind and the ability to understand the language of birds and animals.

A year later, I came across a portion of an Arabic text from Morocco that discussed the modern ability to connect with and control the Jinn. The first thing the text suggested was to establish a relationship with the Jinn. You did this by identifying the living place of the Jinn in question and making offerings of some kind. Then either through trickery or by performing some task that put the jinn in your debt, you gained control over the will of the Jinn. My initial reaction to this was, I have no idea where to find a jinn and I have a fundamental opposition to slavery. In any case, the text itself was

written in code, and the person who translated the portion of the code he shared with me was not 100 percent sure of its accuracy. I decided not to pursue this information or to further my knowledge of the jinn at that time.

Some time after that, I had a discussion with my Craft mentor about working with elemental energy. The elementals were not something I had consciously worked with at that point. She described to me exactly what those elemental energies were and how to connect with them. The one thing she was not able to communicate to me was how to consistently get them to assist in magickal workings. Basically, the problem came down to the fact that the energy was sentient, and it was hard to tell when its agenda lined up with your own intent. I did further study on my own and I discovered two things. First, most books did not treat these energies as sentient. Second, most of the books suggested working with these energies in a very limited way. Essentially, the books suggested inviting the energy to help in whatever way it chose by throwing the invitation out there during the working. What was missing for me was any kind of follow-through.

To me, the act of spellcasting is one of control. When I cast a spell, I want to know what the result is going to be, the time frame in which the result is going to manifest, and the degree of energy it is going to take on my part to attain my goal. The method of connecting with the elementals suggested by the books I read took the control away from me (the spellcaster) and placed it in the hands of an energy which may or may not be willing to expend any effort into helping me. Still, I could see the potential of working with the elementals.

I began to consider what I knew about the elementals. I realized I knew a few things:

- They are beings of some sort who are made up of energy.
- This energy is related in some way to the four basic elements of magick: earth, air, fire, and water.
- Occasionally these beings will assist in ritual or spellwork in some way.
- Most people tend to either lump elementals in with the elements or consider them a representation of the element they are associated with.

When I wrote down what I knew in my book of shadows, I realized that these elemental energies were remarkably similar to the descriptions of the jinn I had read about in both *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights* and the Quran. I went into my files and dug out my notes on the Moroccan text, and

I decided to modify the suggestions written there and see how they worked when applied to elemental energies. The end result is this chapter.

Working with elemental energy is an excellent shortcut to effective spellwork. There are many variations on elemental energies that you can connect with. When working with these energies, it is important to keep a few things in mind:

- These are sentient energies that have their own agendas, goals, and desires.
- You cannot force or command them to work with you.
- The most effective workings require the addition of your own energy to the energy of the elemental that you are connecting with.

That said, once you have established a working relationship—or better yet, a friendship—with an elemental, you will find a discernable improvement in your own workings. Sometimes the elementals will even do things to help you out without your having to ask. In this chapter, you will learn what the different types of elementals are, what they can do, and what to expect when working with them. You will learn how to establish a relationship between yourself and the elemental energies or spirits. You will also learn how to combine your energy with the energy of the elemental in an effective working.

As a child, the relationship I established was instinctive. I did not think that by sitting in the sun and enjoying a connection with the world around me, I was doing anything special. It never occurred to me that I was building a friendship with the air and earth elementals that lived in that particular little valley. But that is exactly what I was doing. As an adult, the actions of a child often seem silly and embarrassing. It is easy to forget that children act on instincts that we suppress in adulthood. One of the hardest things in a magickal practice is learning to set aside those thoughts in the back of your mind, the ones that say “this is silly” or “I look stupid doing this,” and just let go. If you are unable to do this, it will be much harder to establish a relationship with the elementals.

### EXERCISE 3.1

It is okay to look silly and confuse the neighbors

You will need:

15 minutes in a favorite outdoor place (this can be your backyard, a public park, or anyplace where you connect with nature)

When you arrive at the location, take a moment and absorb your surroundings. Consider what it is about this place that you like so much. Is it the stream that gently splashes water on your feet? Is it the old oak tree that you like to sit under? Is it the grass that tickles your bare feet as you walk? Is it the night-blooming flowers that you like to watch open as the sun goes down? Or is it the scent of jasmine that fills your senses as you breathe in? It can be one thing or a number of things that make the place you have chosen a favorite place.

When you have identified one or more things that you like about the place, approach each of those things in turn and tell them so, out loud. Then say thank you.

Old oak tree, I like you because you are strong and beautiful. Thank you for always being here. I appreciate your constant presence in my life.

Yes, I realize that I am asking you to walk up to a tree and tell it that you like it, and yes, I am 100 percent serious. No, I do not care that the neighbors are going to think you are batty. When you are done with each individual part of your favorite place, then thank the place too.

Backyard, you are one of my favorite places because you always welcome me with peace. Thank you.

This is an important exercise. It may seem like a silly little thing to say thank you, but I found that when working with elementals, “thank you” is an essential part of forming a relationship. The act of expressing appreciation shows that you care about them as much as you expect them to care about you. After all, if your goal is to ask them for help in the future, you need them to know who you are now.

It is accepted that there are four main elemental energies: earth, air, fire, and water. Each of those broad categories represents a variety of elementals, which all share some similarities. Then there are some energies that are made up of an amalgam of two or more of the elements.

Working with elementals of any type requires the same skill set: you must have some type of relationship with the elemental so that you can communicate your goals. You then must understand what the elemental you

have chosen is willing or able to help you with. Finally, you have to be willing to put up at least part of the energy needed for the working. If any of these three steps is missing, the working will likely be unsuccessful.

The first thing we will focus on is establishing a relationship between yourself and the elementals. Like any friendship, the relationship will not happen overnight. But with time and effort it will deepen into something enduring and spectacular.

## EXERCISE 3.2

### Establishing the elemental relationship

You will need:

10 minutes a day for as long as it takes

Begin by identifying the energy you want to connect with. Then identify a location where you feel the most connected to that particular type of energy. For example, when I want to connect with the air elementals I usually go up to the roof of my apartment complex. Transatlantic flights are wonderful for this too. The place should reflect your own sense of connection. Pick a place that has meaning for you, and where you can relax and open up your third eye for the duration.

Get into a comfortable position and open your third eye. I do this by focusing on the space in the middle of my forehead and visualizing the energy center there opening and taking on the characteristics of an eye. But you can use whatever visualization technique you are most comfortable with.

Set your intent to communicate with your chosen elemental. You do this through the application of the will and focus techniques discussed in Chapter 1. With your third eye open, observe the energy of the place you have chosen. What do you see?

Use one of the energy-raising techniques you know to draw up some energy. You can use one of the techniques discussed in Chapter 2 or your own. Hold the energy in your center (the space between your belly and chest).

Visualize the energy taking on what you feel are the characteristics of the elemental you want to connect with. Again, this should be personal to you.

Then allow the energy to expand outward from your body, and as you send it out, visualize the energy calling to the elemental of your choice.

Now wait. Normally I sense the presence of an elemental energy within a few minutes. The first few times you do this, the energy might be really subtle, and it might feel as if you are imagining it. You are not. (If you feel absolutely nothing, try again the next day. This is something that takes work and time. The degree of initial success will vary, depending on your comfort level and experience.)

Have a conversation with the elemental energy. If you are not sure where to begin, just tell them your name. Usually I communicate through images rather than words; in my experience, this works better. As your relationship with the elemental deepens, they will reciprocate and you will have a two-way conversation.

When you are done conversing, thank them for coming. Do not forget to release any extra energy you called up back into the earth.

My recommendation is to spend at least a month working with one type of elemental energy before moving on to a different energy. The reason I suggest this is because it takes time to understand the full nuances of the energy you are connecting with. To test if you are ready to move on to working with another elemental energy, try traveling with the elemental. Traveling with an elemental is similar to astral projection in that you are no longer confined to your own body. In this case, though, you become the elemental for the duration of the ride.

In the summer of 2009, I had the opportunity to travel to Israel. As a lark, some friends and I decided that it would be fun to visit King Solomon's Mines. This is a national park in the middle of the Negev desert, where the biblical King Solomon's gold mines are thought to have been located. Before you get too excited, the mines found in the area are actually copper mines, and they are most likely Egyptian in origin, as evidenced by the beautiful temple to Harbor with its inexplicable manmade lake and the hieroglyphs that pepper the walls of the caves. However, the myth persists and the Israeli government is only too happy to capitalize on the fascination and religious significance.

In any case, the majority of the trip to the mines involved random hiking and mountain climbing. About halfway through the afternoon, when my friends declared it was time for a break, I sat on a rock outcropping with a

chilled bottle of water in one hand and my iPod in the other. It had been years since I had been in the desert of my homeland, and I decided to open up my third eye and see if I could commune with the earth elementals I remembered from childhood. The results were spectacular. I still remember what it felt like to be a single grain of sand. It was a completely spontaneous and unscripted journey.

In the next four exercises, I have scripted out four elemental journeys. They are based on actual experiences I have had when working with the elementals. If you are an advanced practitioner, please feel free to go off script. The scripts are provided as a guide for beginners who have limited experience with visualization and trance work. The exercise set is designed to be used in tandem with Exercise 3.2, so remember to begin there. You do not have to do the exercises in order. If you are a beginner, it is best to start by connecting with the elemental energy you identify with most. You can also use the exercises without doing Exercise 3.2, using them instead as guided meditations to help you better understand the energy you are connecting with.

### EXERCISE 3.3

#### Air

You will need:

10-15 minutes

Close your eyes and take a moment to center yourself (do not ground in the earth or attempt to draw up any earth energy—you cannot fly with roots). Once you are centered, make sure your internal energy is flowing smoothly and that there are no blockages. If you need to, go through each of your chakra points so that your energy flows easily from one point to the next.

Slowly expand your awareness outward until you are hovering at the very edge of your skin, just at the point where your body ends but before you reach the edge of your aura and shields.

Allow yourself to focus on the sensation of the air brushing against your skin, of the breath entering and exiting your body. Just beyond the confines of yourself, know the vastness of the sky around you and how the air always surrounds you, even as the earth cradles you. The air is everywhere no matter where you are. It is the same air that ruffles your hair, the same

breeze that cools your body and steals your breath, the same air that can be gentle or punishing.

Suddenly you dissolve, becoming nothing more than energy, and a strong breeze comes to carry you along its currents. You flow with it easily, unafraid and weightless. As you are carried by the wind, the world around you is immaterial. You turn at a whim, insubstantial and free. You open your inner eye at the sound of light laughter all around you; it is as if a million bells tinkle in the breeze. Directly ahead of you, an elemental winks and waves before taking off on the breeze. You follow, and together the two of you navigate the air currents, flowing upward until you brush the vastness of space and downward until you hover just above a grain of sand. This is where the elemental waves a jaunty farewell and continues to ride the current, and you realize that the grain of sand is yourself. As a strong wind whips suddenly by, it returns the other million pieces of yourself it had taken with it, and you are back. You whisper a quiet “thank you,” and then open your eyes.

#### EXERCISE 3.4

##### Fire

You will need:

10-15 minutes

Close your eyes and take a moment to center yourself (do not ground in the earth or attempt to draw up any earth energy). Once you are centered, make sure your internal energy is flowing smoothly and that there are no blockages. If you need to, go through each of your chakra points so that your energy flows easily from one point to the next.

Slowly expand your awareness outward until you are hovering at the very edge of your skin, just at the point where your body ends but before you reach the edge of your aura and shields.

Focus your awareness on the energy that you carry within your body. This energy is you, not your skin or your flesh. As you realize this, your physical body dissolves and all that you are is energy.

Between one moment and the next, you suddenly feel very hot. It is not an uncomfortable or painful feeling—it is a reflection of the energy that is you.

All that you are is made up of flame; it is a bright burning that is reflected in the sun and in the molten core of the earth. You burn, but you are not consumed by the flame. It is you. As you look around, you realize that you are not the only flame. There are hundreds of bright points of light around you, each of them a unique flame. They whip around you, streaming little tendrils of fire in their wake, playing and urging you to follow them. You feel the wisps of flame caress you, touching with invisible hands, and you flow with them. You are the forest fire raging and consuming, the devourer of dead things and the ultimate transformer. The flames whip around you again, faster and faster, and you dance with them, burning brighter and brighter until everything around you becomes pure white light and you are consumed. The light fades into a gentle darkness, and you drift for a moment as awareness of the physical world returns. Before you open your eyes, the flames pass around you once more, gently warming you, showing you a gentler side of fire. With a last caress, they are gone, and you are back.

### EXERCISE 3.5

Water

You will need:

10-15 minutes

Close your eyes and take a moment to center yourself (do not ground in the earth or attempt to draw up any earth energy). Once you are centered, make sure your internal energy is flowing smoothly and that there are no blockages. If you need to, go through each of your chakra points so that your energy flows easily from one point to the next.

Slowly expand your awareness outward until you are hovering at the very edge of your skin, just at the point where your body ends but before you reach the edge of your aura and shields.

A fat warm raindrop falls, followed by another and another, until you are dissolving under a deluge of water. Your physical body is erased with each drop that falls until all that you are is energy. You float buoyant above the lake of water that is rapidly forming around you, the waves pushing you along. Through the sheet of water a hand emerges, extended in welcome. The energy that is you reaches out to it, and as you touch, you are transformed into the falling rain. The hand tugs you down, and the water that

is you blends with the water in the lake. You realize that each drop of water is a tiny elemental and they are inviting you to follow them. They sink into the earth, some finding deep underground reservoirs, some evaporating to form clouds. Others are absorbed through the roots of plants, providing life, giving nourishment.

You follow some of the water up the roots of an old oak tree, flowing up the trunk, becoming smaller and smaller as you flow to branches and then to the leaves. You are a drink of water providing renewal to the thirsty. As you realize this, you see that the oak tree is you. As awareness of your physical body returns, the hand of water waves farewell, and you wipe away a tear as you open your eyes.

### EXERCISE 3.6

#### Earth

You will need:

10-15 minutes

Close your eyes and take a moment to center yourself. Once you are centered, make sure your internal energy is flowing smoothly and that there are no blockages. If you need to, go through each of your chakra points so that your energy flows easily from one point to the next.

Slowly expand your awareness outward until you are hovering at the very edge of your skin, just at the point where your body ends but before you reach the edge of your aura and shields.

You feel solid and dense. Nothing can move you. You are as heavy as a boulder of rock. The wind whips around you, the rain falls on you, fire burns over you and in you, but nothing can move you. Plants tickle you as their roots shoot down, seeking your core. Animals leave imprints as they walk on you. You are a miniature earth floating in the cosmos of space. Other earths float around you, each as solid and substantial as you are. There are millions of them, moving in seeming chaos, but as the moments pass, you realize there is uniformity to their motion. You begin to see that for all your solidness you are no bigger than a grain of sand. You could fit on the head of a pin.

The winds whip you from one side of the universe to the next, but you are still solid, still substantial and unchanged. The mantle of age hangs heavy on

you, billions of years of wisdom. You are large as a planet and tiny as a grain of sand. You are earth. As you realize this, your awareness of yourself begins to return. You feel lighter and mobile. Before you open your eyes, your hand reaches down to touch the earth below you, and in its solidness you feel the security of self.

Mastering your understanding of the elements will help you understand and choose which tools to work with and which energies to connect with. Ultimately the goal is to be able to tap into the elemental energies without needing a physical representation of those elements. After all, the elements are all around us, constantly—even on those days when we've been sitting in the office cubicle for so long that we forget that there is an outside world.

An important part of Wiccan practice is learning how to connect with and work with all four elements. This importance carries over into spellwork because you often articulate a need that cannot be filled by a single elemental, regardless of how strong your connection is with it. As you have probably noticed, the above exercises focused on learning each individual element. Once you have learned what each element feels like and how to connect with the particular elemental(s) of your choice, you can move on to working with more than a single elemental energy. The next exercise will walk you through establishing a connection with all four elements.

For the past six years, at the cusp of winter, I have held workings at the shore of Lake Michigan. The wind blows fiercely there in December, and I light a fire on the sand right at the edge of the surf. The purpose of the working is to welcome the winter and to ask as politely as possible that the coming snow be transformative rather than destructive. This is always the most powerful elemental working that I cast each year. As I perform the working, I can feel the presence of each of the four elemental energies. At the beginning, they feel separate and distinct. By the end, I cannot tell where one begins and another ends. I use my energy and understanding of each element to blend them with very powerful results. I work with all four elements because it is not just a weather working.

### EXERCISE 3.7

A dance of transformation

You will need:

10 minutes

Close your eyes and release any and all tension you are holding in your body. Breathe in and out. Allow your physical body to dissolve or fade away until all you are is energy. Feel the energy that is you begin to transform so that you take on the characteristics of earth. You are heavy, dense, and immovable, and you start to sink down into the belly of the earth. Take a few moments and focus on what that feels like. Plants draw nourishment from you. Animals burrow into you for safety. You are the earth. Without you, there would be no life.

Allow yourself to be transformed again. You are getting hot and hotter still until you become liquid, molten, and fiery. You sink down until you connect with the fire core at the center of the earth. You are now a shower of sparks, a flame of scorching heat. You are fire. Focus on what that feels like. You destroy to bring renewal. You flow within the molten core and follow as it begins to surge upward, breaking through the crust of the earth, spitting you out of the mouth of a volcano. The fire that is you flows upward into the air and is transformed again.

You are no longer fire; you are something cooler, weightless, and light. You are the summer breeze or the bitter winter wind. You blow across the face of the earth; you carry the birds and insects. Without you, there would be no flight. You are the breath that flows into human lungs. You are air. Focus on what that feels like.

When you are ready, allow yourself to be transformed again. You become heavier, but still transparent. You are cooler, but not cold. You have a light denseness, and the energy that is you gathers together, becoming a cloud of water. You are a cloud pushed along by the breeze. Take a few moments and focus on what that feels like. Your water feeds all life—plant, animal, and human. You are the river, the lake, and the sea. Allow yourself to fall as rain from the sky. Each drop of you dances in the air, and as you hit the ground, you are transformed again back into energy and then back into your physical self.

You are not limited to working with either one or four elements. As I mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, there are particular energies that are distinctly elemental but which carry the vibration of more than a single element. The best example I can think of is a weather working. When I work with the weather, I connect to at least the air and water elementals. Often the

weather energy I am working with feels as if it is a hybrid of both elemental types, and I am unable to distinguish clearly that this is air and that is water. The energies are so interwoven that they form a single unique energy type that has the characteristics of both air and water.

In the beginning of this chapter, we discussed three important steps to working with elemental energies. The first set of exercises walked you through establishing a relationship with the elements. Now it is time to learn how to perform workings with the elemental energies that you connected with. There are two things to remember when working with elementals. First, the elemental energies have their own sentience. Second, you need to add your own energy and intent to the working to accomplish your goal.

The exercises that follow build on the techniques mastered in the first pages of this chapter, and also on what was discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. The main goal of the book is to assist you in creating successful spells that require a minimum of planning and time. To get to that point, you need to practice. It is not enough to read about something and understand it intellectually. You have to actually apply the techniques discussed in this book consistently to all parts of your magickal practice.

The focus of this portion of the book is working with elemental energies. There is one major difference between this type of working and all of the other workings discussed in the rest of the book. This difference ties in to our earlier discussion of will and focus. When working with elemental energy, it is not enough to identify your own will and focus. You have to consider as well the sentient energy you are calling on to assist you and whether that energy is willing or able to assist you with the set intent of the working. This is a vital consideration and requires a true understanding and a relationship between yourself and the elemental.

Learning to identify the abilities of the elementals you are working with is something that you will discern as you build the relationship with the different elementals. As a beginner, you should go to the source for information as to what the elemental will and will not do. There are many books that claim to speak for the sentient energy, but in my experience the information they provide is misleading and incomplete. These books assume that the elementals share the same associations we have about the elements. The stereotypical example is working with fire elementals on a love spell.

I am not saying that a fire elemental will not help you with a love spell. I am just saying that you should not assume that it will help you. These are not energies you can force, and it is improper to assume that they will do everything you ask. In Exercise 3.2, we discussed how to communicate with the elementals. In this next exercise, we will apply what we learned in Chapter 1 and in Exercise 3.2 to a proposed elemental working.

## EXERCISE 3.8

### Asking the question

You will need:

10-15 minutes

Begin by identifying a need. Then go through the steps discussed in Chapter 1 to ensure that you know exactly what your goal is.

Take a few minutes and focus on creating a series of clear mental images of what you would like to accomplish. For example, if you want to cast a spell to attract a new love, you might first create a mental image of meeting someone new. Then you might create another image of you and the new person going on a date, and so on.

After you create the mental images of what you want to happen, you need to consider what role the element will play in helping you, and create a mental image of how that help might happen. For example, if you are working with an air elemental, you might visualize the elemental whispering in the person's ear, sharing good things about you or perhaps encouraging him or her to call. You might visualize the air elemental blowing the person into your life.

Walk through the steps of Exercise 3.2 to call the elemental of your choice. As part of your communication, bring up the mental images you created and focus on sending those images to the elemental. As you do this, hold a final image in your mind of the elemental helping you to attain your goal, and ask the elemental: Is this something you can or will help me with? The answer will come in the way in which the elemental communicates with you. If you are not sure what the answer is, you can use a pendulum or tarot cards to verify.

Once the elemental has answered your question, you can decide how to go forward. If the answer is no, you have two options. You can go forward without the help of the elemental, or you can reconsider either how you formatted the working or the role you saw the elemental playing. If the answer is yes, you can proceed to Exercise 3.9.

## EXERCISE 3.9

### Adding energy

You will need:

10 minutes

Begin by following the steps of Exercise 3.2 and Exercise 3.8 (if you have not already done so). Then use one of the energy-raising techniques discussed in Chapter 2, or if you are a more advanced practitioner, you can use your own.

Hold the energy you raised in your center. Visualize the elemental sitting or standing opposite you. Hold your hands out, palms up. Draw on the energy in your center, allowing it to flow so that at least a portion of the energy is sitting in the palm of each hand. Visualize the elemental extending its hands so that they hover, palms down, over your hands. You might feel an initial jump of energy as you do this—it is usually similar to the sensation of putting two magnets together. Depending on your own connection with the elements, it might feel like either an attracting or a repelling sensation. If you are perfectly in tune with all the elements, you might only feel an attraction.

Personally, I identify strongly with both water and earth. When I work with those energies or those elementals, my energy is highly complementary to theirs and the feeling is the clicking of two similarly charged magnets. However, if I work with fire or air, two energies that I do not personally connect with, I feel an initial repelling sensation that is similar to holding two oppositely charged magnets next to each other.

You can work with any type of energy—just be aware that one or more might be less naturally attractive to your own energy. If you are working with complementary elemental energy (you feel an attraction), the energy of the elemental will blend with your own energy with hardly any effort on your part. As the energy you have drawn up comes into contact with the

elemental energy hovering above it, your energy will begin to move toward the elemental. Here you must be very careful not to let the energy be consumed fully by the elemental. You want to allow most of the energy to be absorbed by the elemental while holding on to the tail end of the energy. Then with the cooperation of the elemental you want to redirect the energy into the spell. If you are an advanced practitioner, you can do this in any way you normally direct energy for spellwork. If you are a beginner, my recommendation is to use the tail end of the energy you are holding to charge the objects to be used in the spell. Or you can tune the energy to your intent and then release it into the world to manifest your goals.

If you are working with clashing elemental energy (you feel a repelling sensation), begin by tuning the energy you are holding so that it takes on at least some of the characteristics of the elemental energy you have chosen to work with. You can do this by focusing on the energy you have drawn up, visualizing it changing to mirror the energy of the elemental. Once you have done this, you can proceed with the same steps discussed above.

There are many methods of combining energy. The only limit is your own skill and imagination. If you are a beginner, I recommend experimenting with many different techniques until you find the ones that suit you best (see Exercises 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 for some ideas). You might also see my first book, *Energy Essentials for Witches and Spellcasters*, for suggestions on using chant and dance to move and combine energy.

Now that you know how to connect and combine your own energy with that of the elementals, you should be able to use that energy consistently in spell and ritual work. The degree of effort necessary to form a connection with the elemental energy will decrease the more you work with the energy and the stronger your relationship with the elementals becomes.

Before moving on to the next set of skills that we will develop, it is important to understand how to work with elemental energy in an actual spell. There are many ways you can connect with the elementals, and as you work with them more and more, the elementals may choose to reveal other methods of connecting with them than the ones discussed in this book.

Helping my garden grow

Plant your garden as you normally would. Then pick a sunny day and sit out in the sun for a few moments.

See Exercise 3.2 for the connection mediation or feel free to write your own.

Meditate and work on establishing a connection with the earth elementals.

Once you have connected with the elemental energy, communicate with it by holding in your mind a series of pictures of your garden. Start with the seeds, then visualize them germinating and growing. In the end, hold the image of a beautiful and abundant garden. Ask the elemental energy if it will work with you toward this goal.

Make sure that you are obtaining assent from the elemental energy you are working with before you continue with the working.

If the elemental declines to help you, you can still proceed with the working, just do it without the elemental energy.

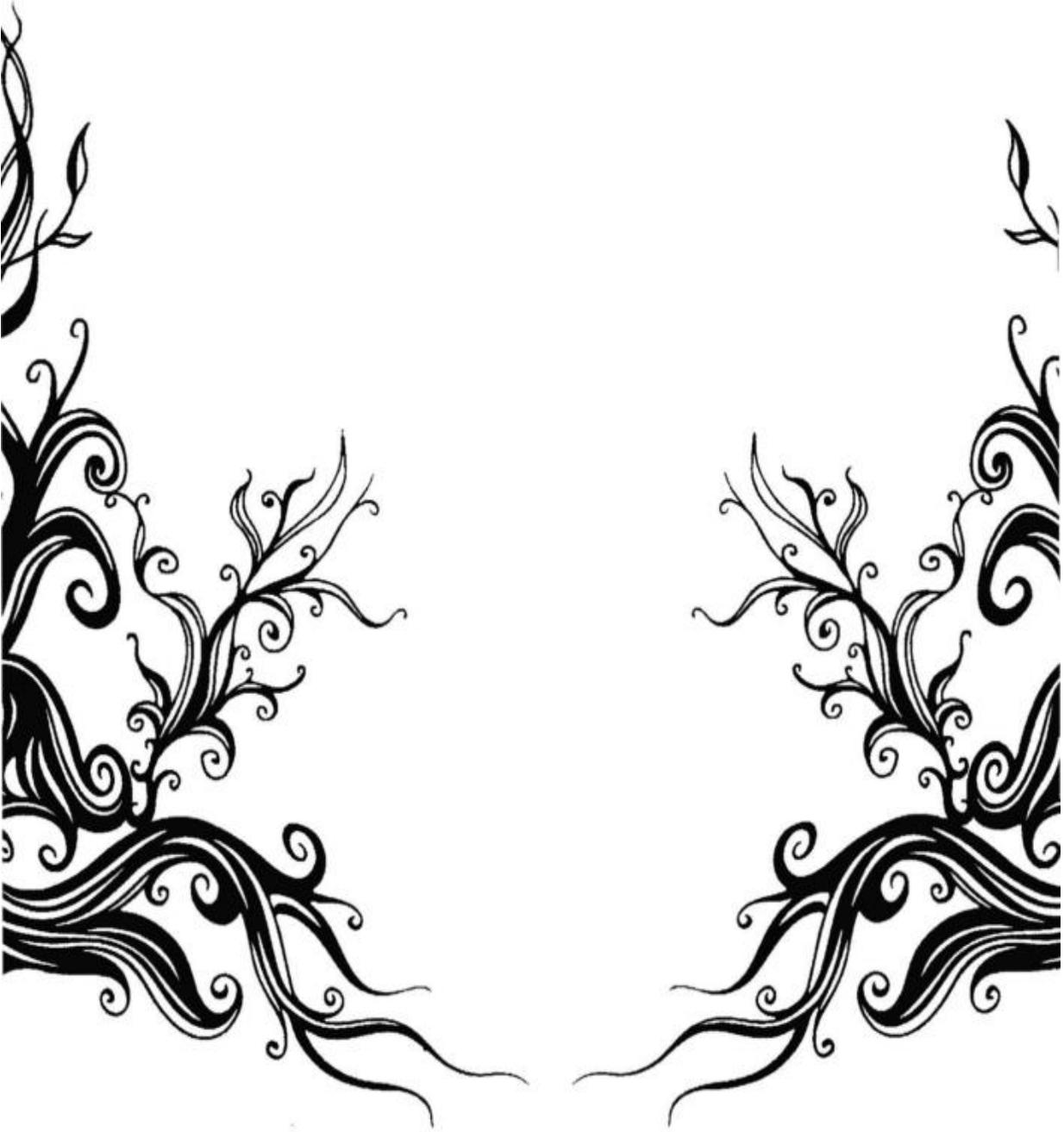
With its assent, raise some energy from the earth and

blend it with the energy of the elemental, and then direct that energy so that it falls like little drops of rain over the seeds planted in the garden.

Then tend the garden as usual.

In the next chapter, we will discuss some of the tools of magick and how to use the various shortcuts and methods developed in these first three chapters to accomplish spectacular workings that require very little preparation. These workings can be performed virtually anywhere, from a crowded bus to the solitude of your own ritual room at home.

One thing to keep in mind going forward is that the greater the effort you expend initially, the less effort you will have to expend later on to achieve the same result. This is particularly true if you are a relative novice to spell crafting. Something that used to take me an hour years ago now only takes a few minutes. Do not be discouraged if the exercises seem beyond the scope of your current abilities or if you are not able to establish a connection immediately. The longer you work at this, the easier it will all become.



*four*

# The Tools of Magick

I COULD HAVE STARTED THIS chapter with any number of valuable magickal skills. There are a great many things that can be used as a starting point for a discussion of spellcasting. I chose to begin where I began—with the modern folk magick of tea, tincture, and potion making. These were some of the first skills I learned as a child.

My great-grandmother, the woman I idolized, taught me most of what I know about basic spell craft. She was a healer, astrologer, matchmaker, and witch. Jeda knew things far beyond what was expected of her as an uneducated woman living in the heart of the Middle East. So much of what she taught me was taught to her as a child living at the turn of the twentieth century. As best we could guess, she was born sometime in the 1890s. She had vivid recollections of a nomadic childhood spent traveling the breadth of what was called the Ottoman Empire. The women in her family made their money by telling fortunes, reading the stars, and assorted folk healing. The men made their money by raising horses, racing, and fighting. It was the life of a true Gypsy, only ending after World War I when the political powers of the time decreed such a nomadic lifestyle was prohibited.

For most of my life, Jeda lived in a mud hut just outside of the government settlement my father's family lived in after the Six-Day War of 1967. It was only when she fell ill that she moved in with her youngest son, my great-uncle, a year before she died. From her hut, Jeda practiced all sorts of traditions that my father—and to some degree her daughter, my grandmother—considered to be nothing more than superstition. As the eldest granddaughter of her eldest daughter, I was privileged to be exposed to even some of her secrets. I think that she doted on me partially because my mother was American and I had no other family to teach me, and none of my aunts were at the time old enough to have produced any offspring. It is customary that the mother's side of the family undertake the domestic education of any female children. All of my cousins had this, but with my mother's family living thousands of miles away, I only had my father's family.

There were a few things that were considered necessary to any girl's education. First and foremost was how to make a decent cup of tea in the Middle Eastern style. Second, at least in Jedas opinion, was how to make a good healing potion or tincture. Though she always laughed when she said this, I took my obligations seriously. Before I was even ten years old, I could brew a better tea than any of my cousins and two of my three aunts. It always made me proud to hear them say that I was sha-tra (skilled) in these domestic tasks.

One thing that went hand in hand with the ability to make a good cup of tea was how to read the tea leaves, and that was another skill I was determined to master, particularly since my aunts loved to make up fortunes from what they saw in my tea leaves. I cannot think of a better place to begin our discussion of practical spell craft than with tea making, followed by a crash course in tea leaf reading.

#### EXERCISE 4.1

How to make a proper cup of tea (shay)

You will need:

A metalpot (copper ifyou have it)

Loose black tea, 1 tsp. for each 8 oz. cup

Sugar to taste

At least 15 minutes

Fill the pot with ice-cold water and set it on the stove top at a low heat. Add the sugar. Do not cover with the lid. Allow the water to heat to the point where steam is just beginning to come off the top of the pot. Add the loose tea.

Allow the water to come to a rolling boil and then remove the tea pot from the heat. Allow the tea to sit for at least three minutes before pouring. If you plan to use the tea leaves for a reading, do not use a strainer; just pour the tea directly into your cup.

You can substitute a blended tea for the black tea if you do not like the taste or if you are performing a working that calls for the addition of particular herbs.

Using tea in spellwork is especially effective if you are using it for healing or attraction types of magick. One modification that Jeda used was to add fresh mint or sage when the tea leaves were added to provide an extra healing boost for most ailments. To cure the common cold, she added honey and a wedge of lemon, which I augment with a bit of blackberry brandy. To cure stomach ailments, she brewed the tea with yansoon (anise) and sugar. To ease discomforts of menstruation, she brewed a tea made of the stems of dandelions; this is a bitter tea and I do not care for the taste of it, but it works.

When using tea for magickal purposes, it is best to sip it slowly, and as you do so, focus on the intent of the working.

## EXERCISE 4.2

### Reading tea leaves

You will need:

A tea made as described in Exercise 4.1

At least 10 minutes

Sip the tea slowly and focus on the question you would like answered. It should take you at least ten minutes to drink the tea.

When the tea is all but gone—there should be tea leaves and a few drops of tea left in the bottom of the cup—tip the cup over in a single motion. Allow the cup to sit upside down on a hard surface such as a plate for a few minutes.

As the cup sits there, take a few moments and focus on opening your third eye. When your third eye is open, focus once again on the question you want answered. Hold the question in the forefront of your mind as you turn the cup over.

Look at the tea remnants with your third eye. What do you see?

I have read books on tea leaf reading, and many of them give preset meanings for the images you see, but in my experience it is best to focus on what the images mean to you. This is one of those situations where you will have to learn to trust your instincts—and they will seldom be wrong.

If you plan to practice tea leaf reading, you will want to invest in a journal and begin documenting your readings. I do this by noting:

- The date
- The purpose of the reading
- What I saw
- What I think it meant

I leave a blank space at the end of the page where I can go back and document the results after the answer to my question manifests.

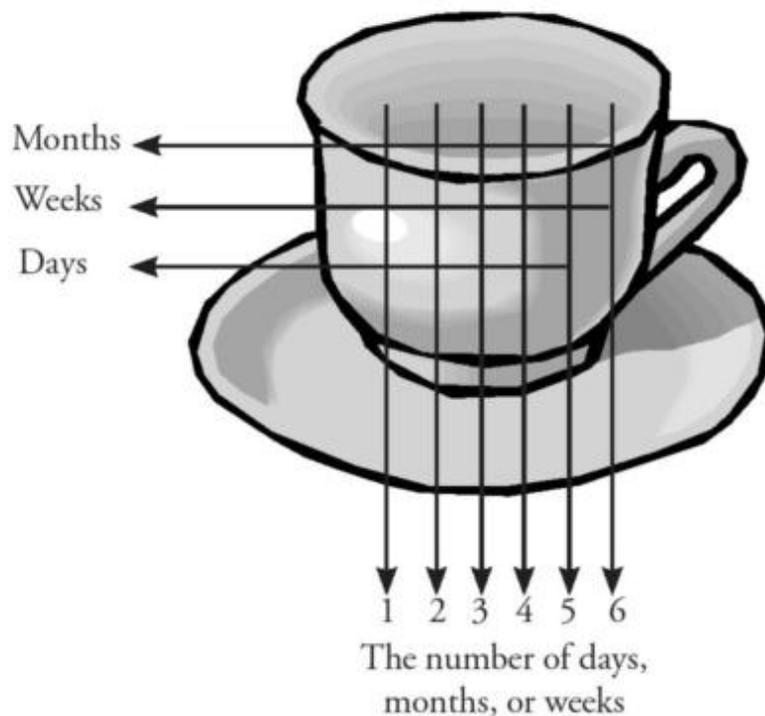
Often when I brew a tea for a magickal working I will also do a reading of the tea leaves at the end to determine the time frame in which the spell will manifest. This is very easy to do and takes just a bit of extra effort.

### EXERCISE 4.3

Time frame

You will need:

A tea made as described in Exercise 4.1



For this exercise, I mentally section the tea cup into three levels and six sections:

Note where most of the leaf deposits end up to get a fairly accurate idea of how long it will take the spell cast to manifest. I usually do not go any further out than six.

This is an especially valuable technique for beginners, because having a time frame in mind gives you something to hold on to before you begin to worry that it didn't work or you didn't do it right.

I have a close friend who specializes in creating wonderful teas, tinctures, and brews. She wildcrafts most of her herbs and grows the rest in her home garden. I admire her deeply, and someday when I am done running at a million miles an hour I plan to follow her example. For now, though, I am more than happy to get most of my supplies from her. In some magickal circles, you are looked down on for buying commercial herbs, teas, and so on. I tend as a matter of personal choice and easy availability to buy most of what I need from my friend, who lives about three hours away from me. She has a website I can order from, but when I need something immediately, I go with the next best thing—I head to my local metaphysical store. The grocery store may be better when you are searching for fresh (not dried) herbs that can serve double duty in the kitchen, such as spearmint or basil.

A word about making your own teas: pick herbs that have a pleasant taste and that work well together. If you are new at this, you may want to obtain an herbal (a book that describes the properties of herbs and other plants) to make sure that your tea is safe to drink. An excellent herbal was written by Scott Cunningham, titled *Cunningham's Encyclopedia of Magical Herbs* (Llewellyn Publications, St. Paul, MN, 2000). There are other herbals out there, but none are as easy to use.

This type of working is perfect for me because I normally have at least one cup of tea a day, so it is easy to brew a different type of tea for my daily dose. If you do not like tea, you can substitute coffee for some types of workings and just cast the spell as you get your morning caffeine fix. (During my last exam season, I found that coffee works great for a bit of extra focus!)

#### EXERCISE 4.4

Charged tea as spellcasting

You will need:

A tea made as described in Exercise 4.1

Since this book is all about saving time, as your tea brews, ground yourself and use one of the energy-raising techniques discussed in Chapter 2. If you like, you can use Exercise 3.9 and enlist the help of an elemental energy.

Direct the energy down your dominant hand (right if you are right-handed, left if you are left-handed).

Focus on visualizing the energy flowing from your hand into the teapot. As you do this, focus on your stated desire. When the tea is as charged as you would like it, release any excess energy and ground yourself.

Drink the tea as usual. As you drink, visualize the tea flowing down your throat to your stomach. As the tea is digested, see it releasing the charged energy into the world to bring you what you need.

Do not charge tea that you will be serving to anyone else. You should not use a spell on someone else without getting their consent; it is a violation of trust and just plain bad karma.

For tinctures and potions, the charging method is pretty much the same, and the magickal working is completed when you ingest them. You do not drink oils, but as you apply the oil, visualize it accomplishing the same thing as the tea. As it is absorbed, visualize it releasing the charged energy into the world to bring you what you desire.

If you are making a tea, tincture, potion, or oil for someone else, you may want to instruct that person to follow the visualization step of the exercise for maximum effect. This will help the person add his/her own will and energy to the spell.

## EXERCISE 4.5

### Making infused oil

You will need:

A base oil like olive, jojoba, almond, or sunflower seed oil

The herbs you plan to infuse

A clear glass container

A sunlit window

Place the herbal ingredients in the bottom of the glass container. Pour the oil over the top, seal the container, and place on the windowsill in the sun for at least a week. A month is better, especially if you live in a place that does not get a lot of sun.

If you plan to use the oil in spellwork, spend a few minutes every day visualizing the sun charging the oil with energy to accomplish the intent of the working.

Once the oil has become infused, strain it through cheesecloth to remove the herbs and any sediment.

Note: You can mix the oil with other oils you have made. If you decide to do this, make sure that you have used the same base oil so the oil blend doesn't separate. Consider not only the properties of your herbs, but also those of your base when deciding what to use to make your infused oil.

When I use the oil either as part of a working or as the working itself, I add some additional energy just to make sure that I am maximizing the effectiveness of the working.

## EXERCISE 4.6

### Making a tincture

You will need:

An alcohol base, such as brandy, vodka, scotch, or whiskey (not rubbing alcohol or any other alcohol intended for external use)

Herbs of your choice

A glass container with a tight seal

A dark storage space

Place the herbs in the container, add the alcohol, seal tightly, and allow the tincture to set for at least three weeks in a cool, dark storage space. Shake the tincture every few days to maximize its potency.

Once the tincture has set, strain the herbs out through cheesecloth and move the tincture into a different container if you wish.

As with the oil, consider the intent of the tincture when choosing the base alcohol you use as well as the herbs.

I particularly love to get assistance from earth elementals when making tinctures. The tinctures are much more potent when I do this than if I charge the tincture myself either during the creation process or when it has set.

One teaspoon of dried herb is about as strong as one tablespoon of fresh. I prefer to use fresh herbs when possible, but it takes a great deal more of a fresh herb to equal the same amount of a dried herb. You may want to take that into consideration when deciding whether to use fresh or dried herbs, especially if you are using a small container.

If you choose to dry your own herbs, you may want to invest in a good herbal that explains the methodology for drying the various types of herbs, roots, and flowers that you want to use in your spells. A quick rule of thumb is to keep the drying herbs in a cool, dry place, stored in a brown paper bag. If the herbs you are drying smell stale or musty, they are developing mold due to moisture and should be disposed of.

There are a great many uses for oils, tinctures, and teas in spellwork. For example, you can use an oil to anoint a candle or other object as part of charging the object for use in a spell. Tinctures and teas can be consumed as part of a spell or for healing purposes. If you use edible oil (such as olive oil) and herbs, you can consume the oils you make as well. Oils, especially those with a jojoba base, are excellent for healing purposes and can be used on the body to open the chakras. Using these tools when they are charged with intent can be a powerful aid to magick. To really understand how they work, you need to try them in various types of spells. Use the following example as a starting place.

### General healing

Make an oil using a jojoba base, infused with equal parts comfrey, calendula, and lavender. Charge the oil with a healing intent. To charge the oil, hold it in your dominant hand and use any of the energy-raising techniques we discussed in Chapter 2, or your own if you prefer. Visualize the energy you are raising taking on healing characteristics—for example, I equate healing with giving comfort, with a decrease in pain, and so on.

The great thing about this oil is that the herbs used in it have proven healing properties, and even without charging the oil it works well on skin rashes, minor cuts, and burns. Apply topically only.

It is important to do your research before you combine your ingredients. If you are a beginner when it comes to herbs and how they work on the body,

you should begin your research with an herbal primer. From there you can experiment with various herbs to find out what works best together. Keep a journal and document the mixtures you make, the ratios of herbs you use, and what you created the herbal mixture for.

There are a great many other skills in a witch's bag of tricks along with the ability to make a good healing oil or tincture. One of the first things most people learn as a witch is the power of lighting a candle. Ninety-five percent of the magickal books I own at least mention it. Since this is not a book on candle magick, I am not going to go into this in great detail. The basic premise behind candle magick is simple: charge the candle with your intent, light the candle, and let the intention go.

Most metaphysical stores carry small candles that burn down in less than an hour. They are an inexpensive and easy way to practice candle magick on limited time. You can usually get these candles for less than a dollar.

## EXERCISE 4.7

### Simple candle magick

You will need:

A candle and a candleholder

Matches

To charge a candle, hold it in your dominant hand. Depending on your need, use any of the energy-raising techniques discussed in Chapter 2. You can also use Exercise 3.9 to raise the energy with the help of an elemental.

Once you have raised the energy, focus on your intent. Visualize the energy being absorbed by the candle.

The next part is very important: As you light the candle, visualize the same energy being released out into the world as the candle burns.

If possible, let the candle burn until it naturally burns out. If you cannot let the candle go until it burns out, just snuff the wick.

Candles are inexpensive and readily available to even the most isolated solitary. Like teas, candles represent a starting place for the novice witch to begin a magickal practice. There are many methods of spellwork that you can employ using candles, and these have been thoroughly covered in many other texts. If you are interested in knowing more than just the basic

technique, I recommend picking up *Advanced Candle Magick* by Raymond Buckland (Llewellyn Publications, St. Paul, MN, 2002).

A big part of candle magick is color association. Each color of candle represents a particular emotion or energy. The colors are a good mental shortcut for beginners, especially if you use your own color associations rather than the basic ones listed in most candle magick texts. More advanced practitioners should be able to connect to the emotional energy without a physical representation.

## EXERCISE 4.8

### Creating your own color associations

You will need:

20-30 minutes

Pen and paper

Take a few moments and clear your thoughts by breathing deeply. Next, bring up an emotion as you did in Exercise 2.1.

As you connect with that emotional energy, try to see the energy as a color. This will be easier for those who are experienced with visualization or who have a gift for seeing auras and other energies. If you are not a particularly visual person, then just think of what color comes to mind when you connect with that particular energy. Write these associations down in your journal or book of shadows.

For example, when I think of feeling frustrated, the first color that comes to my mind's eye is dark green tinted with a bit of blue. That is because when I call up that particular emotion, I trigger a memory of a time when I felt very frustrated, and that color has an association for me with that time. When I trigger that memory, I connect with the emotion and am able to access it on a deeper level. When you create a connection between a color and an emotion that is personal to you, it is possible to connect with the energy at a much deeper level than if you follow someone else's color triggers.

The same is true when using color as a representation for tangible things such as money. Most books will instruct you to use green because in the United States money is green. They might add the fact that growing plants

are green and when farmers sell their crops they get money. You could just as easily tell people to think of the color yellow, because that is the color of gold and gold is currently worth much more than the dollar. The best is when you use a color association that has a personal meaning to you.

One thing I advise against is the habit some people have of overusing candles in spellwork. This is partially why candles only get an honorable mention in this section and are used sparingly in Chapter 6. When you are considering a spell—whether it’s one you find in a book or write yourself—consider the value of every ingredient to the spell’s intent. If the only reason you are using six candles is because each one is supposed to represent an emotion or desire, I recommend using one candle charged with all of those emotions/desires.

Along with candle magick and potion making there is one more type of tangible magick that should be part of every witch’s knowledge base: sympathetic magick. This type of magick is the premise behind the use of items such as voodoo dolls. Working with sympathetic magick can be very powerful. The purpose behind sympathetic magick is to use one object to represent another similar object in the mundane world, so what you do to one object you are doing to the other. In many cases, you are urged to add some aspect of the original object to the object you are using in the spell. This strengthens the connection between the sympathetic object and the actual object.

## EXERCISE 4.9

### Basic sympathetic magick

You will need:

Cardboard

Tape

A pen

Scissors

For this exercise, I will use the term poppet, but it is important to remember that you are not limited to creating an effigy of a person for this type of magickal working.

If you are doing this to affect a particular individual, you need something from that individual to tie the poppet to him/her. If you are doing this to attract a particular type of person to your life—for example, a new love—you need something to represent that. If you are doing this to change something about your circumstances, you need something to represent that. If you plan to cast a spell to draw a particular energy or situation to you, then you will want to create a representation of that as well. The representation can be something simple like a cutout of a person or a heart, or you can become more detailed. You can also just write your intentions on a square of cardboard if you aren't feeling particularly artistic.

To begin, cut out the poppet in a shape that approximates your need, such as a human shape if you are working to attract or repel a person (or a type of person). Name the poppet with your stated goal, such as New Lover. Write this name on the poppet.

Use the remaining cardboard to cut out a representation of your goal, such as a heart shape for love, or you can just write on the poppet exactly what you would like to attract or repel. Writing is a good method for beginners who are not very good at visualization. Attach the representation to the poppet.

Use any of the energy-raising techniques in Chapter 2, or your own, to charge the poppet with your intent. In this example, you might visualize how you would meet your new lover, or you may visualize being asked on a date.

To complete the spell, if you are trying to banish something from your life, destroy the poppet. If you are trying to attract something to your life, keep the poppet until the spell manifests and then destroy the poppet.

There are many variations you can employ when using sympathetic magick. You do not have to limit yourself to the preconceived notion that using this method of spellwork is dark or negative. The skill itself is neither good nor bad—like any other form of magick, the intent lies in the heart of the witch. Poppets and replicas are not the only way to use sympathetic magick. It is possible to use any object that belonged to or was once a part of an individual in a sympathetic magick working.

My great-grandmother believed that hair and nail clippings should be collected and burned to avoid what she called aieen el-shur. Literally translated, it means the eye of malevolence—in more common nomenclature, the evil eye. The idea behind the evil eye is that someone,

generally acting out of hatred or jealousy, uses something of yours to bring bad luck or some kind of evil into your life. A lesser version of that is called aieen el-hassod, or the eye of jealousy, where a person—someone you know or even a stranger—sees you and feels such overwhelming jealousy that it becomes a kind of curse. This curse works to destroy the object of the jealousy. Say, for example, that you are very beautiful and the person is jealous of your beauty. The curse would work to destroy or diminish your beauty in some way. In the Middle East, it is believed that children are the easiest targets of aieen el-hassod and should be protected. There are two common ways of accomplishing this protection: first, by reading protective verses from the Quran, and second, by using a hamsa, a talisman that resembles an upside-down hand with an eye made out of lapis or turquoise in the center. I have seen boxes placed under cribs that combine the two by containing the protective verses inside the box and drawing or carving the hand on the box.

There is another type of protective magick that my great-grandmother used to ward off both types of the evil eye. This was a last-resort action that she used when the person appeared to be already afflicted. To hear her explain it, the working was part protection and part curse-breaking. It is one of the neatest forms of sympathetic magick I have been exposed to.

## EXERCISE 4.10

### Protection

You will need:

Hair or nail clippings/representation from both persons

Cardboard

Scissors

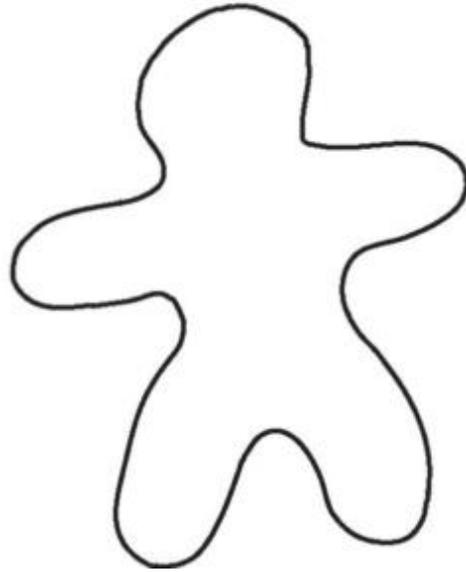
Tape

A black marker

Matches or a lighter

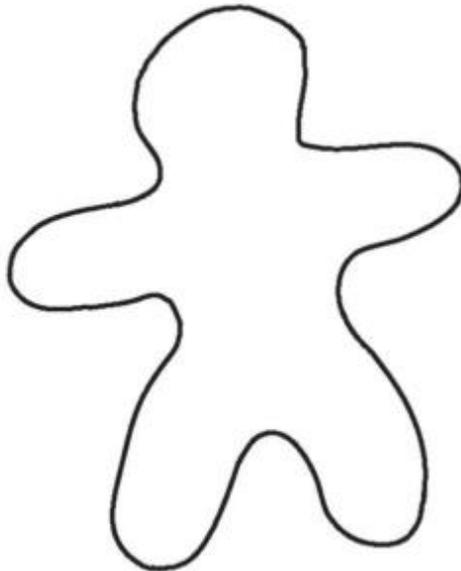
A cauldron or other fireproof container

Fold the cardboard in half and use the scissors to cut out the rough outline of a human figure. When you are done, there should be two identical cardboard shapes. (We will call them Poppet 1 and Poppet 2.)



Poppet 1

On Poppet 1, write the name of the person you are trying to protect.



Poppet 2

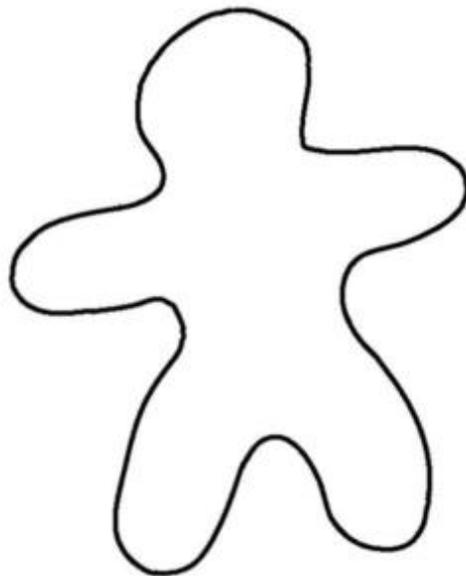
On Poppet 2, write the name of the person you believe set the evil eye, or more generally write “jealousy” or “evil intention” if you don’t know their name.

Tape the hair/nail clippings (or other representation) of the person you are trying to protect to Poppet 1. This strengthens the connection and makes the

representation more personal and powerful.

Use the scissors to poke holes in Poppet 2. You can put the holes in symbolic places on the poppet's body if you wish—for example, if the problem is gossip, you might poke the holes where the mouth would be. Stuff the hair/nail clippings (or other representation) of the person you are trying to protect against into these holes.

Normally at this point in the magickal working, my great-grandmother would recite verses from the Quran about protection and banishing evil. What I do is a little different. Hold Poppet 2 in your dominant hand and Poppet 1 in your receiving hand. Close your eyes and visualize drawing energy away from the person who set the evil eye. Visualize the energy moving through Poppet 2 and becoming neutralized, and then transform the energy into protective energy. As you do this, feed the protective energy into Poppet 1. Visualize sucking Poppet 2 dry, so that it is an empty dry husk that contains no more negative energy or intention. Burn Poppet 2 in the cauldron to seal this portion of the working. On the back of Poppet 1, write a protection blessing and bury the poppet on your property. The blessing written on the poppet below is a translation of the traditional blessing that Jeda placed on the back of her poppets.



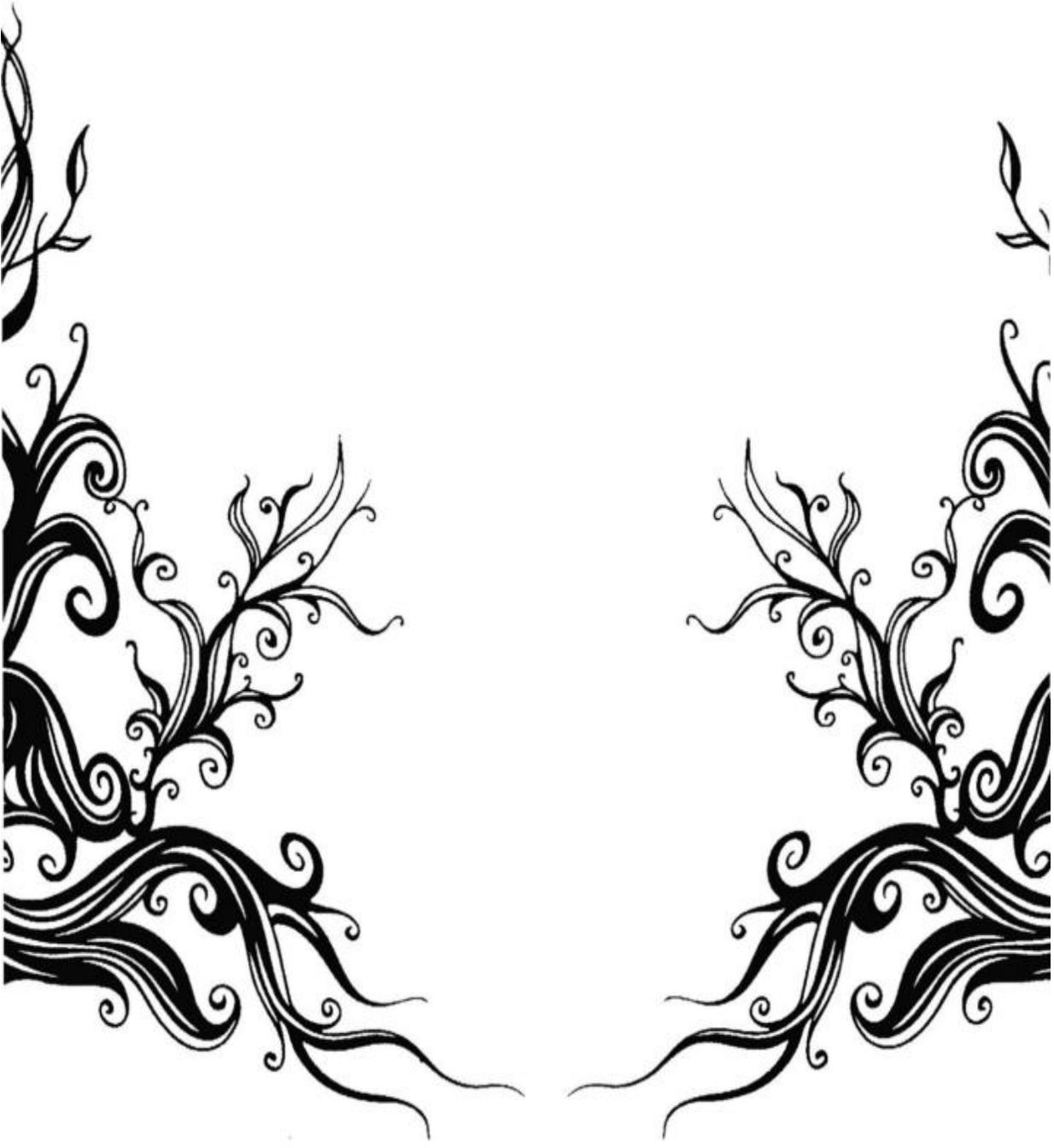
Poppet 1 Front



### Poppet 1 Back

There are many other skills that you can master as a witch that involve the use of tools. This chapter was designed to give you a basic idea of what you can do. In Chapter 6, we will come back to what we learned in this chapter and see how to combine these skills with those covered in the earlier chapters, as well as the skills we will discuss in Chapter 5. Learning how to combine all of these skills will help you to become a better, more effective spellcaster.

The above set of exercises involved the use of minimal tools to aid in focusing or energy gathering and direction. Many of the techniques can be easily adapted to a wide range of needs in your own magickal workings. All of the exercises, unless otherwise indicated, should take you at most 10 to 15 minutes to complete.



*five*

# Thought Constructs

THOUGHT CONSTRUCTS ARE CREATIONS OF pure energy made through an application of the will and focus. These constructs can be given as much or as little direction and purpose as is required by the working. In this chapter, we will learn how to create a construct, what constructs can be used for, and how to destroy or reabsorb constructs once they have served their purpose.

The simplest way to describe a thought construct is to show you. Close your eyes and draw up a tiny bit of energy—just enough to form a small ball of energy that floats in the palm of your dominant hand. Visualize that energy floating up from the palm of your hand until it is hovering above your third eye. From there, choose where the energy will go next. You can try sending it to the corner of the room or perhaps upward until it touches the ceiling. When you are done playing with the energy, draw it back and return it to the earth. What you created was a tightly controlled thought construct—a bit of energy that you directed with your will to accomplish what you want. Most constructs do not require your constant attention. Once a construct is created, you convey your will to it and set it loose.

Many people confuse a construct with a thought form, and in essence I suppose they are the same thing. But in application they are very different. When most people create a thought form, they tend to do it hurriedly and without thinking through what they are building and why. For example, a common use of thought forms is to charge a protective spirit with protecting the witch, his/her family, and perhaps the family house. What the witch fails to consider is how this amorphous spirit, whose only goal is to “protect,” is supposed to protect everyone and the house from everything. If you remember back to the first two chapters of this text, you will recall that such unfocused commands are a bad idea, because while your protective spirit is saving you from a paper cut, thieves just walked out the front door with your new television. It is for this reason that I do not use the term “thought form.” A thought construct is a much more focused entity, charged with a specific task for a specific duration of time.

## EXERCISE 5.I

## Creating an autonomous thought construct

You will need:

10 minutes

Begin by following the steps laid out in Chapter 1 for determining exactly what your intent is. Follow with any of the energy-raising techniques described in Chapter 2.

Form the energy that you have raised into a ball of energy sitting in the palm of your dominant hand.

From there, visualize the ball of energy changing to take on the shape and characteristics of your intent. If you are a beginner, you can do this by utilizing Exercise 2.1 or 4.8. When the energy has taken on the characteristics of your intent, give the energy a labeling name. The name should be the representation of what the energy is supposed to do or bring, such as “protect” for protective energy. Use Exercise 1.3 (trigger words) if you have a hard time with this part.

Before you release the energy, communicate with it, using the mental image technique discussed in Exercise 3.2. Give it a time frame and communicate exactly what you would like it to do. You provide a time frame for two reasons. First, you do not want a construct floating around with no purpose after your goal has manifested. Second, you want to set a time limit for when you want the goal to manifest.

When you release the thought construct, visualize a little thread extending from you to the thought construct. Make sure you focus on seeing the connection as elastic but unbreakable. If the goal of creating the construct manifests before the time frame you set runs out, you can tug on the thread and bring the thought construct back to dismantle.

For example, if your intent is to have someone think positive thoughts about you, the energy might turn into a butterfly that flies away, seeking the person you want to think about you. Perhaps the butterfly will whisper good things about you in that person’s ear. If the reason you want the person to think positive things about you is so that you get a job you interviewed for, you might set a two-week time frame for the working. Two weeks should be enough time for your prospective employer to review any other candidates and make a decision.

In the previous exercise, you learned how to create a simple autonomous thought construct. This type of construct is the one you are most likely to use in spellwork. It is easy to create, has a single stated goal, and has a finite duration. There are very few situations where you will need to create a more complex thought construct. Still, it is a valuable skill to understand. A complex thought construct is one that has an indefinite duration and/or has been set to accomplish more than a single task.

## EXERCISE 5.2

### Complex thought construct

You will need:

25 minutes

Spend a few minutes thinking about what the thought construct should look like, what characteristics it would have. If you have artistic ability you might want to do a rough sketch. For example, if I were creating a construct with the purpose of protecting my home, I might visualize a large German shepherd dog with unusually large teeth and claws to guard my home from any intruders.

Think through every part of the construct, right down to the tiny details. For example, my German shepherd might have a black spot right above his nose. He might have one floppy ear and one that stands upright. He might have one hind leg with a splotch of black while all the other legs are brown. Have a clear image of what you plan to create.

The initial process of creating the thought construct is identical to the first steps in Exercise 5.1. Once you have the energy drawn up, the ball of energy in your palm takes on the characteristics of your intent.

In the above example, I might visualize the energy taking on the characteristics I associate with protection. My German shepherd would need to be strong to fight off attackers, but he would also need to be gentle with my friends and family. So he would need the ability to discern intent and act accordingly. This means that he would need to be intelligent as well. The characteristics you come up with should be tailored to your individual construct.

Once the energy takes on the characteristics you desire, visualize the energy forming into the shape you designed for the construct. If you are new to this, I recommend picking a starting point for visualization that is not too complicated, such as an ear, rather than visualizing an entire face or torso, or something that has a great deal more detail and complexity. Work from there rather than trying to create the entire construct all at once.

When the construct is whole, communicate its purpose to it as discussed in Exercise 3.2 by holding a mental image of what you would like it to do and sending that image to the construct. Before releasing the construct, you may want to set a geographical boundary or attach the same type of connection discussed in Exercise 5.1. For example, I might send my German shepherd construct the image of it guarding the front door of my home and property line and keeping away intruders. Then release the construct to do its job.

The more effort you put into creating the construct, the more complex it will be. Since you will likely keep this construct around for a while, it is important to periodically reinforce the structure. To do this, visualize the construct and see it dissolving back into its energy state. Take a few moments to draw up some more energy and allow the construct's energy to absorb it. From there, reform the construct back into the form you created for it.

One common mistake that beginner practitioners make is to create thought constructs, either purposefully or accidentally, and set them loose with limited direction and no purpose. In the most extreme situations, these thought constructs can run amuck and start disrupting the life of the witch. The effects can be benign or destructive, depending on the amount of energy infused into the construct and whether there was an initial purpose for the creation of the construct.

Early in my own practice, I experimented with creating thought constructs with a friend of mine. We thought it was fun to see a tangible representation of what we could create out of just energy. Everything went great for the first few months, until the constructs took on a life of their own. At first, only small things happened—the phone would turn off seemingly on its own when I wanted some peace and quiet. My car started, but refused to go faster than 25 miles per hour, and when I took it to the mechanic, there was nothing wrong with it—until I got behind the wheel again and the car had the same problem. Other little annoyances like missing mail started

happening with alarming regularity, not just to me but to my friend, who also happened to be my roommate. Finally, at my wits' end, I took out my tarot cards and pendulum in an attempt to communicate with whatever it was that appeared to be plaguing our lives. Imagine my surprise when I discovered that the “beings” responsible for the string of mishaps were the thought constructs we made. Apparently, they thought they were helping.

Another surprising discovery was when I went looking for a way to dismantle the thought constructs I had so painstakingly created, only to discover that no one I knew had any idea of how to do that, nor could they point me to a book that did. Frustrated, I finally came up with a solution. These constructs were made by me, and as such I could probably dismantle them in the same way I put them together.

### EXERCISE 5.3

#### Deconstructing a thought construct

You will need:

10 minutes for each construct you plan to deconstruct

If you created the construct based on Exercise 5.1, close your eyes and focus on the thread connecting you to the construct and draw the construct home.

If you did not create the construct based on Exercise 5.1 or 5.2, and it is running amuck, then begin by going to a place where you can feel the energy of the construct in some way. The place where you first created it will work. Then adapt Exercise 3.2 for calling an elemental and use it to call your construct. Focus on changing the intent from connecting with an elemental to connecting with the thought construct.

Once you have called the construct to you, visualize energy tendrils extending from yourself to the construct. Then visualize the tendrils turning into straws through which you can suck out the energy you fed to the construct. As you suck the energy out, visualize it being absorbed by your own energy, and when you are done, release any excess energy back into the earth.

Now that you have learned the basics of constructing and deconstructing thought constructs, you can spend some time experimenting with them and

using them for different purposes. Just remember to document the constructs you created. I do so by noting:

- The date of creation
- The purpose of the construct
- The duration or time frame
- The name of the creation (if I gave it one; see Exercise 5.4)
- The result

There are some thought constructs that are so complex that they are almost sentient. These constructs take time, effort, and a great deal of energy to create, and I do not recommend trying to make one if you are a novice. Though other energy techniques require a label to help you focus your intention, only this type of construct gets an actual name.

## EXERCISE 5.4

### A named construct

You will need:

10 minutes daily for about a month

The basic steps are the same as those discussed in Exercise 5.2, with two important differences.

You will want to spend at least a week gathering energy for your construct. If you are not skilled in holding energy, then you can use the energy to charge a holding object such as a clear quartz crystal point.

When you have gathered a sufficient amount of energy, you will need to spend a few days creating the personality of your thought construct. These types of thought constructs are as close to sentience as you can make out of energy. I like to think of them as a sort of energy android with many of the same characteristics of human sentience. The only limit on the complexity of this creation is your own imagination. Visualize the energy taking on the characteristics you decided to give the construct. I would limit this to one characteristic per day until you are finished.

For example, my favorite named construct is a tiny dragon I named Bubba. When I created Bubba, I charged him with the following: fierceness, loyalty, doggedness, watchfulness, and protection. I meditated on what each

of those terms meant to me and how I saw them working together and separately in the construct I was creating.

Once the construct has all the characteristics you can think of, it is time to begin forming it. For this type of construct, I start by forming it from the inside out, meaning organs outward to skin. You will want to spend a few days forming objects like the heart and brain. This is something that takes time, and you may want to consult an anatomy book if your imagination fails you. Remember, though, you are not bound by the limitations of a being that exists in the physical world. Your construct is limited only by your ability to imagine it.

At the same time that you are working on creating the form your construct will occupy, begin considering what the name of your construct will be. You can use Exercise 1.3 (trigger words) to create an effective and powerful name. The name should represent the purpose of the thought construct.

On the day when you shape the last bit of the construct's form, you will give it its name. Names are very powerful things, as they impart separateness from the creator. A name gives the will to act. I chose Bubba's name because it was whimsical and I wanted him to have the playful personality I associated with the name. At the same time, I wanted to take advantage of the Bubba stereotype of a big, burly guy who was really strong.

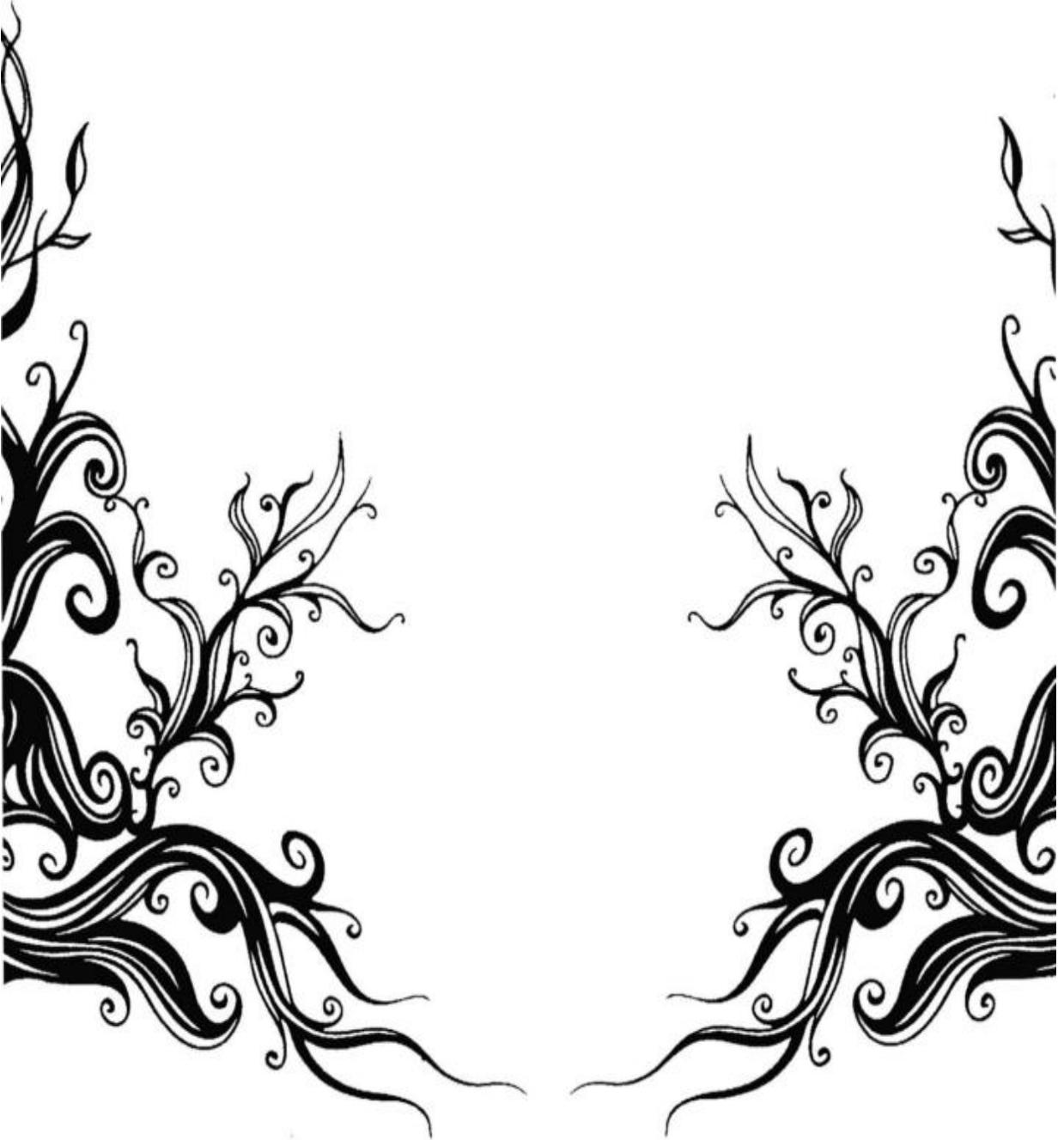
My construct Bubba acts as both familiar and protector. Bubba gives advice and holds space for me in workings. He can also be a bit of a pain since he is nocturnal and liked to chase my former roommate's cat around the apartment. One of my goals in creating Bubba was to act as a barrier between me and the spirit world. So part of Bubba's job is to take messages on my behalf. All of these are things I considered carefully when I started the process of creating Bubba. It took me a little over two months to create the final Bubba form and give him a name. I consider him to be one of the most complex thought constructs that I have ever created.

We have covered the most important aspects of creating thought constructs. I just have one final comment to make on the process of creating thought constructs before we move on. Most teachers begin with having students create inanimate thought constructs. I do not believe in doing that. In my opinion, if you can create an energy ball in the palm of your hand, then you are sufficiently skilled to create an autonomous thought construct. If, however, you have a hard time forming energy into shapes, you may want

to begin by practicing that first before moving on to something more complex. I do not see this as an issue for most readers of this book at this point, if you have worked through the entire book in order. But if, like me, you like to skip around and have found this chapter a bit too complex, then go back to Chapter 2. Pick any of the energy-raising techniques discussed there and practice forming the energy into different shapes.

One of the most famous stories of an energy construct is that of Philip. A group of individuals came together to experiment with mediumship and contacting ghosts in the 1970s and the result was Philip. He was not a real ghost; rather, Philip was an amalgam of history and fiction that was based on the subconscious intentions of the group members. This story remains famous because of the documented occurrences of remote phenomena that occurred at the homes of the group members. These phenomena included the classic results expected from contacting a ghost, such as tapping, flickering lights, and objects moving and levitating seemingly under their own power. The method used to create Philip has been duplicated more than once with similar results.

Thought constructs are limited only to the extent that you place limitations on them. In the end, as the creator of the construct you are the one in control. It is very easy to view a construct, especially a named one, as sentient and powerful in its own right, and that is very much true. But always remember that you are the creator and as such you have the ability to destroy or deconstruct the thought construct at will. The thought construct has no such ability to do the same to you unless you give it that ability. Remember what Voltaire said: "If God has made us in his image, we have returned him the favor." (Si Dieu nous a faits a son image, nous le lui avons bien rendu.) By this I mean, do not create a god unless you intend to do so.



*six*

# Putting It All Together

CONGRATULATIONS! You HAVE MADE IT to the final and most complex chapter in the book. This is the most skill-intensive chapter, as it requires you to utilize many of the individual skills discussed elsewhere in the book. Learning how to combine and adapt your skill set is vital if you plan to advance as a magickal practitioner. Once you master the skills discussed in this chapter, you should be well on your way to being able to practice your craft in any locale and with very little preparation.

Spellcasting is a skill, and like any skill it takes time and effort to master it. However, unlike other skills, spellcasting often involves creating something from nothing through the application of your will. Most novice practitioners have a hard time wrapping their minds around the fact that they are the ones with ability and not the objects they are using. I cannot stress this enough: a candle is only a candle. It is only the application of your will and your energy that transforms it into something else.

When Jeda made charms or practiced other aspects of her craft, she used to tell me that the source of her ability came from the fact that humans were created from the breath of Allah. By this she meant that since humans were created from clay and the will of Allah in the image of Allah, we have a portion of the same creative ability that Allah has. I grew up believing that I had the power to create, through my will, the life I wanted to have. This belief did not mesh well with other parts of Islamic ideology, in particular the ones that require submission to the will of others, namely the men in my life. My rejection of Islamic thought meant embracing the fact that I wanted power over my own life.

Over the years, I had conversations with other practitioners, and although we all came from different backgrounds, the end desire was the same: we all shared a quest for power and self-determination. For some, this manifests as a desire to embrace the opposite ideology of the one they were raised with. I myself came to Wicca because it represented exactly that—in Islamic thought, you are fine until you start believing in more than one God.

When you reject a particular ideology, it is easy to reject all aspects of that ideology and everything that it represents, including the moral compass that

you were raised with. As a witch, you need to create your own set of morals. You need to decide where you will draw the line at something you will not do. For some, this means following the Rede (“An it harm none, do as ye will”) or the tenets of another faith that maintains a belief in harming none. For others, the answer is not so simple, and they choose not to be bound by a set of rules or definitions of morality imposed by an outside source. They remember that the Rede is a relatively new creation based on old concepts. Whatever category you fall into, check your own moral compass before beginning any working.

I am not attempting to tell you what to think or how to practice your craft. All I am saying is that concepts of good and evil exist, as do concepts of right and wrong. The skills taught in this book can be taken in any direction you choose. I am writing about ethics at this point because most of the skills discussed in the rest of this chapter can easily be used to detrimentally impact the lives of others. The choice is yours, just as the power is yours, and it is up to you how you choose to go forward.

In Chapter 5, we spent some time discussing the various types of thought constructs and how to make them. What we did not really talk about is how to use thought constructs. I indicated that the only limit to your creative ability is your own imagination. The same is true of the limits of what you can do with a thought construct or with energy that you have drawn up. We are going to begin our discussion of combining skills with how to combine thought constructs with sympathetic magick. This is a wickedly effective skill to master, and it is one of my favorites. To master this, you need to learn two things first: how to create an anchoring object (Exercise 6.1) and how to tie a construct to the anchoring object (Exercise 6.2). From there, you will learn in Exercise 6.3 how these two skills can be applied to sympathetic magick.

## EXERCISE 6.1

### Creating an anchoring object

You will need:

10 minutes

A clear quartz crystal that fits comfortably in the palm of your hand

Just about anything can be turned into a focusing object. Crystals work especially well because they already vibrate at their own unique frequency when they come into contact with energy. Feeling the vibration of other objects requires a bit more listening.

Hold the crystal in your dominant hand. Take a moment and open up the lesser chakra point in the palm of your hand. As the crystal comes into contact with the open chakra point, feel the unique vibration of the crystal.

Use any of the energy-raising techniques discussed in Chapter 2 and bring up some energy so that it pools in the palm of your receiving hand. Focus on the vibration of the crystal you are holding in the palm of your dominant hand, and visualize tuning the energy in your receiving hand so that it takes on the vibration of the crystal.

Bring the crystal and the energy together by bringing your receiving hand over your dominant hand. Allow the crystal to absorb the energy. As the energy is being absorbed, visualize the energy turning the crystal into an anchor. I do this by feeling the focusing object becoming very heavy and dense. When the crystal is as full of energy as you can get it, release your hold on any excess energy. Take a moment to ground.

A variation of this technique makes a wonderful attraction spell. Instead of visualizing the energy turning the crystal into an anchor, visualize it becoming a magnet for the type of energy you want to attract into your life—money, love, and so on.

## EXERCISE 6.2

Tying a construct to an anchoring object

You will need:

- 10 minutes plus the time it takes to create the thought construct

- A crystal or other object to act as anchor

- Begin by creating the anchor according to the steps in Exercise 6.1.

Follow the steps for creating the construct according to Exercise 5.1 or 5.2, up to the final step before releasing the object, where you create the tie between yourself and the object. Instead of tying the object to yourself, visualize the object being anchored in the crystal. Reinforce the connection between the anchoring object and the thought construct by communicating to

the construct the fact that it can use the energy contained in the anchor if it needs assistance in accomplishing the task set to it.

It may occur to you that you can tie pretty much any energy to this type of anchor, including energy beings like ghosts and elementals. Only do this as a last resort, and after a great deal of consideration. Unlike working with a construct that you created for a purpose and which you have full control over, you do not have full control over a sentient energy. If you do not have its cooperation, it will be hard to tie it to an anchor. In any case, doing this without proper consideration of the consequences could easily cross the line into baneful magick.

### EXERCISE 6.3

More advanced sympathetic magick

You will need:

15 minutes

Materials as described in Exercise 4.9

Begin by assembling what you need as described in Exercise 4.9. Then follow the steps laid out in Chapter 1 for determining exactly what you would like to accomplish with the working.

Create the representative object as instructed in Exercise 4.9, including charging the object with intent and using the tangible representation. Then use Exercise 6.1 to turn the object into an anchor.

Create the thought construct according to Exercise 5.1 or 5.2 and tie the construct to the anchor.

If you are trying to affect a person, as you are creating the thought construct, hold a mental image of the person and infuse the characteristics you associate with that person into the thought construct. You do not have to think of every single characteristic of the person, just focus on the ones you are trying to influence. For example, if you are attempting to change something about the person, you should visualize the person with the trait you dislike changed or with the new trait added.

If you are creating the construct to attract a situation into your life, visualize the situation as already being realized. For example, if your goal is to obtain a new job, you might visualize the offer letter being given to you.

If you are creating the construct to get rid of something in your life, visualize what your life would be like without that thing. For example, if your goal is to get rid of a troublesome roommate, you might visualize how clean or quiet or nice your home feels with him/her gone.

When the construct is tied to the anchor, follow the final instructions of Exercise 4.9 on what to do with the representative object/anchor.

This is a very powerful and advanced technique. Please use it with discretion.

There are a number of variations you can employ with this particular technique—for example, I once used this technique on my resumes when I sent them out. The constructs I created were charged with influencing prospective employers to think positive things about me. I have also used a variation of this technique to tie an object I gave as a gift in an effort to influence that person to help me with a project. The construct I created was charged with the goal of changing the person's mind about the project. In another variation on this technique, I anchored a thought construct to a statue of Bast, an Egyptian cat goddess, which I purchased the last time I was in Egypt. The construct embodies many of the elements and the physical form I associate with Bast, and it draws on her energy to provide protection for my home. Specifically, the construct housed in its representation is there to ensure that no intruders or people with malicious intent enter my home.

What you can do with this skill is limited only by your imagination. This includes not only creative but moral limitations. If you believe with your whole heart that what you are doing is evil and that you should be punished for it, you are creating the intent for punishment. I freely admit that I place limits on my own practice, but these limits are voluntary—they are not a limitation of ability. I gauge my understanding of that through use of the term will not rather than cannot. The difference between the two terms is choice: by choosing that I will not engage in a particular type of action, I remain the person in control of the situation and the outcome. In stating that I cannot, I am giving my control of the situation and the outcome away to an external force. Remember the lessons of Chapter 1 when considering what the nature of your response to any given situation will be. As witches, we instinctively turn to a magickal solution when sometimes no magickal solution needs to be taken. Stop and think before acting, otherwise you might cause more harm than good.

When a focused thought is transferred to a charged instrument and then captured on paper, it can prove to be a powerful and effective method of spellcasting. It is also very simple—all you need is paper and pen.

#### EXERCISE 6.4

Sending energy for manifestation

You will need:

Pen and paper

Sit someplace where you will be comfortable writing and will not be bothered for a few minutes. Charge the pen by using the technique discussed in Exercise 2.7.

Once the pen is as charged as you would like it to be, begin writing. Focus on writing down your need on the paper, and as you do so, visualize the energy flowing from the pen into the words. As each word is written on the paper, visualize the energy being released into the world to bring what you want. You can dispose of the paper however you want, but I prefer burning or burying it. When you are done, release the excess energy back into the ground.

In a variation of this exercise, instead of visualizing the energy being released as it is written, visualize the energy being imbued into the words. This variation is perfect for protection spells. You can place the paper in your home—you might frame it or put it on your altar—or you can carry it with you for a bit of extra personal protection. Replace or reinforce the charged words regularly to keep the spell potent.

#### EXERCISE 6.5

Influencing (perfect for dealing with bureaucrats)

You will need:

2 minutes

Draw up some energy into the palm of your right hand. Allow the energy to pool in the center of your palm. As the energy sits there, focus on it taking on the characteristics you want the person you are dealing with to have: sympathy for your problem, a desire to help you, a solution for your

situation, and so on. Most of all, you want to focus on having that person see things your way.

When you meet the person, make sure to touch them in some way with your dominant hand. If you are right-handed, just shake the person's hand; if you are left-handed, lean in as you shake their hand and place your left hand on their shoulder—at worst, you may appear overly friendly. As you connect, allow the energy to transfer from yourself to the other person. Visualize the energy traveling from the point of connection and moving up so that it influences both heart and head.

This technique works best if you use it before dealing with people who you know will be difficult, but it can also be done on the fly. Three years ago, on the day after Thanksgiving, my brother needed a ride back to college in Ann Arbor. I was still living in Grand Rapids at the time and it was a three-hour drive one way to Ann Arbor, so that day I was looking at a six-hour car ride. I was driving along, going a bit too fast, in an effort to cut at least a few minutes off my drive. I forgot that the area just outside of Brighton was infamous for cops pulling people over—had I remembered, I would have slowed down or at least worked out some kind of glamour spell. Instead, I got pulled over.

I sat in the driver's seat waiting for the police officer. As he walked up to the car, I thought, what can I do to not get a ticket?

The officer asked for the usual documents—license, proof of insurance, and car registration. As I handed him each object, I pulled a little energy into it, reinforcing the following thoughts: “You do not want to give that poor girl a ticket, it's the day after Thanksgiving, she seems like a nice kid, she is so far from home, you should let her go with a warning.” My hands were shaking from all the energy I was pulling up, because I did not have time to ground. I did not argue with the officer, and he took my papers and walked back to his car. I sat there with my brother, who was telling me that I should have at least tried to talk my way out of the ticket.

A few minutes later, the officer came back and asked, “Have you had any other tickets?” I said, “No!” He looked at me and said, “All right, I am going to let you go, but in the future you need pay attention to the posted speed limit.” As he walked back to his car, I finally let out a deep breath that was equal parts relief and letting go of the energy I had been holding in. For the rest of the drive to Ann Arbor, my brother complained that girls never get

tickets and how that was so unfair, because just a few months earlier he had gotten a \$200 speeding ticket for driving along the same stretch of highway. All I said was “It must have been my lucky day.”

This is really a simple technique; I use it when having to deal with people who could give me a hard time, such as the people at the DMV, the financial aid office, the court house, and any other time I have to deal with bureaucratic hassles.

There are many other ways you can use thought constructs in magickal workings. The above exercises are designed to give you a foundation to draw from when you expand your own magickal practice. Remember that what you do can have consequences you might not always plan for. Even the best, most organized witches cannot foresee every possible outcome of their spells. That is why many practitioners often complain of unexpected consequences, spells that did not go as planned, or ones that backfired completely. The steps outlined in this book will help you avoid the most common pitfalls that result in a bad outcome.

# Afterword

IT IS MY HOPE THAT in reading this book you have gained the knowledge and ability to take your spells to the next level. Writing as a teaching method is limited because it is hard to gauge the ability and needs of your student. I firmly believe that the ability to use magick is an inherent part of being human. The only limits on your abilities are the ones you place on yourself.

Imagination is the only obstacle to creation. Think outside the box—because it is only when you realize that the box does not exist that you will reach your full potential.

Wishing you all the best,

Mya

# Appendix: Spell Template

## Part A: Preparation

Identify the goal of the spell:

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The will:

The focus:

The focal word on which the working hinges:

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What tools, if any, do you need?

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## Part B: The Magickal Working

Identify the skills you will use:

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The energy-raising technique:

Any objects to be charged:

How will you tie the skills to the goal of the working?

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Part C: Documenting Your Results

Was the working successful?

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When did manifestation occur?

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Did the manifestation happen as expected?

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Would you use this working again?

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1 A pendulum can be purchased at any new age or metaphysical store; you can also buy one online from any number of purveyors of Pagan supplies. They can cost anywhere from a few dollars to \$100 or more, depending on the crystal used and the quality of the chain. You can also make your own by attaching a crystal point to a length of silver chain. See the bibliography for some books on using pendulums.

Body, Mind & Spirit / Magick Studies

## True Magickal Power and How to Use It

Why would a Witch who practices magick write something called *The Un-Spell Book*? To help other magickal people understand that the *spellcaster* is the true source of magickal power. The exercises and techniques in this guide will help you master the essentials behind all successful magick: your own focus, will, and energy.

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Need a Spellbook  
Again!**

A lifelong Witch, **Mya Om** was initiated into the Craft in 1998, after studying both Dianic and American Eclectic Wiccan traditions. She is a columnist for PaganEdge.com, a contributor to the Patheos.com series on the future of Paganism, and the author of *Energy Essentials for Witches and Spellcasters*.



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