Basic Spell Writing

Your first steps in writing or creating a spell come with your very first thoughts or desires about bringing about change. This can be a thought as simple as a wish or inner comment about something you would like to see, do or have.

Magick is the act of manipulating energy to bring about positive change in one’s life. Our Correllian teachings tell us that our thoughts and emotions have a direct effect upon the energy around us. Once a thought or desire comes into our mind it will either take seed and grow in intention toward a magickal outcome, or it will simply depart, maybe to return again as a memory, or be forgotten. It is our desire that determines the path the thought or intention will take. It is the depth of our need or the strength of our emotional tie to the thought that empowers it toward fruition.   A thought that grows in intention toward a magickal end will have roots in our mind and heart. These are the seats of our thoughts and desires, respectively. At this point we must make a decision as to whether or not our desire is one we truly would like to bring about in perfect love and perfect trust. Whether our desire will be ethically correct is a choice each of us must make. Whether or not we wish to accept the responsibility of our actions is a decision that must be considered with seriousness. Intention and magickal ethics go hand in hand and are the solid foundation that all magickal spells are built upon. When used as a first step, they are the balance that is needed to insure a well-grounded and stable spell.   Since you are reading this, you are interested in learning to write your own magickal spells and bringing about positive change in your own life. That being the case, be prepared to accept the responsibility involved in proceeding with spell-working. We do this by considering the foremost concepts in Wiccan literature, the first of which is known as ‘The Wiccan Rede’ or simply ‘The Rede’ and the second known as ‘The Law of Three’ or ‘The Law of Threefold Return’. The basic and foremost teaching of the Rede is simply ‘…As you harm none, do what you will…’ We must always consider these words when we first begin to entertain the idea of spell-working. It should always be our intention to cause harm to none. Period. Many ask how we can live without harming anything or anyone. We are discussing intention here. When considering the working of magick and manipulation of the energy around us, we must consider our intention first. The Rede teaches us to harm none. As such, we must consider if our intention is directed toward harming anyone. Is our spell directed negatively toward anyone or anything? As spirit creatures and children of the Goddess and God, we are each granted free will. We must insure that our workings will not directly affect the free will of another. One technique we might use in this respect is to never direct a spell toward another person without that person’s consent. No matter how positive our intentions are, we should always, when possible, get permission from the person before working a spell on their behalf.   The Law of Three works in almost the same manner as Karma. What we send out is what we will surely see return to us a multiple of times. To continue to send out the same energy is to receive the same in return until we have learned what we must from it. If we send out harmful or negative intent, we must be prepared to deal with it when it returns to us as many times as it takes for us to learn from the experiences. To follow the Rede is to insure that what returns to us is positive and enlightening. When we abide by magickal ethics we are creating a balance between our magickal efforts and nature.  When we are prepared to accept the responsibility for our magickal intentions, and when we have determined that our intent is in compliance with the main concepts of magickal ethics, then we are ready to proceed with the creation of our spell.

Banishing and Manifesting

As part of our discussion on intention, we will discuss the two major types of spell-workings to consider when writing spells. These are banishing, sending energies away or getting rid of, and manifesting, bringing energies in or creating. It is important to determine what we are trying to accomplish with our spell and considering these two categories will help us to begin.

Spells to manifest are simply spells that we use when we wish to bring something into our lives or create a positive thing or change. Spell types used for these purposes are wishing spells, attraction spells, spells that are written for the purpose of bringing something or some positive energies into our lives. We are letting the Universe know that we are open to these energies and ready to bring the desired outcome into our lives. These types of spells are usually worked when the moon is waxing or growing larger in appearance and approaching fullness or when the moon is full, also when the tide is coming in, or approaching or at high tide. The energies we are working with are those of a drawing nature and intended to bring or create.   Spells of a banishing nature are simply that. They are intended to banish or get rid of situations, bad habits, negativity and the unwanted from our lives. Examples of banishing spell intentions might be losing weight, banishing negativity, or shedding a bad habit. By banishing we are sending away undesired energies. We are letting the Universe know that we are no longer in need of these energies. Spells of the banishing type are usually worked when the moon is waning or growing smaller in appearance, or when the tide is receding or going out or at ebb. The energies we are working with are those of an expelling nature and intended to rid or send away. Banishing spells can be different from other spells as they tend to be action spells. By action, I mean they are spells that call for acting out or speaking the intention and usually focus on the spoken charm, timing, writing the intention on paper, burning, candles, etc. A banishing spell can even be written in such a way that you would “act out” the actual banishment. As an example, let’s say your intention is to leave behind or banish an old habit. You could write a spell that would require you to actually “step away” from your old habit. You might write words such as “I now leave this old habit behind!” and as you speak this charm, you actually walk forward one step, literally out of the old and into the new. Many banishing spells don’t include actual ingredients. In spells such as these, extra energy will be added by matching correspondences related to timing, candles and colors, elements and directions.

This is my favorite part of spell-writing: the tools! I love to write. I love using my computer to write. But when it comes to writing my spells, I take a few steps back in time and use an old-fashioned feather-plumed quill pen and an inkwell. For me, this acts as a key that enables me to shift my consciousness to my magickal state. You might like to use a sheet of parchment paper to write your finished spell on. It gives it a very beautiful look. Do using special tools to write with have any effect on the actual spell? In my opinion, yes, however, you might pour the same amount of energy into a spell using a pencil and steno pad. It is entirely up to you. My purpose for using special writing tools is my belief that the actual act of writing a spell begins when the idea of intention first blooms in thought. Then I determine to proceed with writing the spell and that is when I begin pouring conscious energy into it. The writing process is part of the spell-working and you are actually sending energy into the spell as you create it and write it down. This is why a Book of Shadows can be a very powerful tool. A witch pours her personal energy into each spell and entry in her/his Book of Shadows. It becomes part of her/him. I keep copies of many spells on floppy disk and even in my computer. But the spells I write originally are kept in my actual Book of Shadows and that is solely for my use.

If using a quill pen is not your cup of tea, you might consider using a calligraphy pen or a fountain pen. There are also marking pens in all colors, ballpoint pens or gel pens. Gel pens can be fun to use for spell-writing as you can use them on colored papers including black. If you are not a fan of pens, you might like to use a pencil. Pencils make it easy to erase and make corrections. Yes, mistakes do happen and pencils help. However, using a pen will make you think before you write and thus make you aware of the need for concentration and focus.

Paper is another thing to consider. Many prefer to use loose-leaf notebooks as this makes it easier to organize individual spells. This is perfect for those who have a gift for organizing. On the downside, constant organizing can lead to deterioration of the paper. Loose-leaf notebooks usually end up leaving the paper in a ragged state if the sheets are used often. Scrapbooks are nice to use for spell-writing as you can paste or tape samples of herbs or pictures related to the spell on the pages that the spell is written on.   On a practical side, you might just want to use a spiral notebook to write it all down on and then make a special organized entry of it in your Book of Shadows. This is okay, too. Just remember that your initial writings, in the spiral notebook, contain your energy and you will want to keep this as well. A spiral notebook used as a map-working book for laying out spells, can be an interesting journal to keep. I use a regular bound journal when I do any extensive spell writing. I jot down my first impressions about the spell I want to write and any ideas and begin laying it out. Then I sit down and write the spell. I also keep a little leather bound memo pad in my vest when I am at work. If I get an idea or a desire or need arises, I jot it down. I then work on it when I get home.

Another method for keeping an organized record of spell-working is using index cards and index card files. You can also use dividers to keep your notes in alphabetical order, much like a recipe card file. Each spell is written on an index card using both front and back. The ingredients can be listed on the front of the card and the instructions can be written on the back. You can even select a box that you can decorate with sigils and other magickal symbols. This method of spell record keeping can come in handy when spell-working space is limited. You need only have the index card on hand, for reference, while working the spell, as opposed to having a book. This method is truly handy. I would suggest using the large size index cards as this gives you plenty of space to write.   There are a lot of writing tools available. It all depends upon your preferences. However, I would like to suggest that you keep a spell journal. A spell journal will be a record of your spells and how they worked. You can look over your successful spells as well as your near misses. And there will be near misses. By keeping a spell journal, you will be able to look over your work and determine what works and what doesn’t. In your spell journal you will want to include everything about your spell-writing: how you first came to the idea; when you first intuited the intention; how you are feeling that day. What day of the week it is. What time. Where you were when the intention first came to you; how you were feeling when you began writing. You can simply begin writing these things down, or you can make an actual list of these questions and literally fill in the blanks. These are merely suggestions. After time, most of your spell-writing will be based upon intuition and experience and will begin to come more and more easily. With practice, there will come a time when you will begin to intuitively know which ingredients to include and what type of spell and method of magick to use.   In these modern times we are thankful for equipment that we have available for our use. There are many of us who, for one reason or another, are unable to write with a pen or pencil, comfortably. Or we may simply not like to write, physically. For many, the computer is a blessed gift. Let me state here that there is absolutely nothing wrong with writing your spells on a computer and saving them to disk. It is a matter of personal choice. You can send as much energy into a spell by writing it into your Word program as you can by writing it on paper. It all comes down to your intention. The computer offers a wonderful array of programs for printing out pages, which can be bound into a book, if so desired. Though for this witch, nothing compares with the actual feel of sending my energy of intention into my written words while writing with pen and ink.

Whether you choose a pen and inkwell, a pencil, or a computer keyboard, you should strive to make your spell-writing as magickal an experience as the spell-working itself.

We have learned from our First Degree studies that everything in existence is composed of energy. All that exists vibrates at different frequency levels. As we consider the seven levels or planes of existence, we see that the highest vibrations exist at the highest level, or Deity, and the lowest exist at the lowest level, that being matter. We now see that a Spirit being will have a very high frequency of vibration and a stone will vibrate at a very low or subtle frequency. A good way of relating to this concept is to consider radio waves. They travel in an up-and-down roller-coaster type of movement. Higher frequency vibrations make the waves closer together and very steep. Lower frequency vibrations make the waves further apart and more like gentle slopes.   So what has all this to do with magick? Well, our First Degree lessons teach us that magick is the manipulation of the energy around us to bring about change in our lives. Each ingredient that we include in our spell-working will have an effect upon that energy, sort of like ripples in a pond. Each stone, herb, color, incense, or oil that we include in our spells, will bring its particular properties or energy to that spell. How much of an effect is determined by the number of ingredients we use and their properties. We also know that thought and emotion have an effect upon energy. Thought and emotion, like spirit, vibrate at a higher frequency than physical things such as stones and herbs. Proper timing can also boost the intensity of a spell’s energy. The greater effect we have upon this energy, the more power we will be introducing into our spells. That is why it is important to understand the concepts of energy and timing. We must also remember that any spell, regardless of how long it is or how many ingredients are involved, is nothing more than words written on paper if we do not do the visualization and personal energy work involved. The power of the spell is relative to the amount of energy we put into it. We must empower the spell and all the ingredients to our intention. As we have learned from our First Degree studies and exercises, we must practice and exercise our psychic muscle to become powerful witches. Yes, the ingredients we use do bring their properties to our spells, but the more personal energy we pour into the spell, the more power it attains and the more energy it has when we send it out to the Universe, the more successful it is apt to be. It is of vital importance to every witch to practice and become skilled at visualization and raising power. Diligent practice of your First Degree exercises is the beginning. As this course deals with the writing of spells, as opposed to the working of spells, we will leave discussion of raising power to future courses.

Timing is a matter of determining the proper time of day or night, season, hour, moon phase, or even tidal motion for performing a spell for a particular intention. There are mountains of information on magickal correspondences for timing to be found on the Internet as well as in books. In our final Lesson of this course, we will deal with the basic lists of timing correspondences as well as correspondences for all ingredients, which you can add to your personal Book of Shadows as a start. With time you will collect more and your lists will continue to grow.

To address the issue of how to incorporate timing into our spells we need first to consider the intention. As with each ingredient, we want to look for the correspondences or properties of each spell, and determine which period of time, or phase of the moon, or tidal movement we would like to use for our purpose. If the spell is of a banishing nature, or one of getting rid of something such as a bad habit, then we would consult our lists of correspondences for the best time and ingredients to include in our spell working to achieve that goal. As you can see, when we begin to work at gathering together our thoughts and ingredients for spell working, we are actually involved in a research type of project. As with all things magickal, the most important factor is first determining our intention or goal. What is it that we want to bring about with our spell? By answering this question first, then we can begin to lay out our map of accomplishment. Spell-writing can actually be thought of as making a map. Your intention is your starting point. Your ingredients and timing are steps on the map and your goal is at the end. By thinking about spell-writing in this manner, we can lay out a blueprint or recipe for successful spell-writing and a successful spell-working.

Another important point to consider in relation to timing is the length or duration of the spell. Will the duration of the spell be the length of time it takes to cast the spell? Or will the effects of the spell continue on for a week, a month or longer? We must determine how long the actual spell will last. Length or duration refers to how long the spell itself will continue working after you have finished casting it. Spells written to last more than the usual time it takes to cast as spell will need to be determined using basic number correspondences. This means finding the number of hours, or days, etc. that the spell will continue. For instance, if the intention of a spell is protection, one might write a spell that would include lighting a white candle for 7 minutes, reciting a spoken charm 7 times and doing this each day for 7 days. On the seventh day the spell is completed and ended.

It is important to remember that what you choose to include in your spell and how long it will last is totally up to you. If you want to write a spell that incorporates wishing on a full moon, then so be it. Your major ingredients would be determining when the next full moon will be and the words you will speak or think. If you want to write a candle spell for love, then you need only determine the color of candle you will need, and what you want to say. How and what you include is up to you. If you wish to only use your personal energy as the sole input of energy for your spell that is your choice. Including more ingredients is a matter of bringing in energy or power from our environment.   Spell ingredients such as stones and oils, and anything you might choose to include, can be powerful not only as ingredients, but these items themselves can be further empowered or charged by you, to bring additional energy into the spell. How much effort you put into your spell determines how powerful it will be. This has nothing to do with which ingredients or how many ingredients are used. I have written very successful spells and worked them and simply thought a desire from deep within my soul. No ingredients were used, no special ingredients, just deep intention. On the other hand, one of my most powerful spells included an extensive list of ingredients and was worked over a period of 30 days. So how do you know what kind of spell you need? By using your intuition and your own basic wants.

**Charms/Incantations**

The American Heritage dictionary defines incantation as ‘ritual recitation of verbal charms or spells to produce a magic effect.’ It is a Latin derivative, which means ‘to enchant.’ When we include a spoken charm in a spell we are, in a sense, adding a means of enchantment, a way to send our magick out by speaking a chanted charm. Any words we may speak from the heart will send our energy out with the spell. It only adds to the harmonious energy of the spell if we can arrange those words into a pleasant-sounding rhyme. We often find that rhymes are easily committed to memory and can be very useful in creating spoken charms, which can also be used as positive affirmations. Affirmations themselves can be a form of spell-working that can have a powerful effect. Powerful words or phrases used in spoken charms can send their energy into a spell and work as excellent correspondences; they are a form of spoken ingredients in spells. It is not my intention to teach a course on writing poetry or prose. This is simply a short lesson on composing a spoken charm that can help to empower any spell.   The important part, as mentioned, is the intention. Think about your intention. Begin to feel what you are thinking about. If you are focused on bringing prosperity into your life, then begin to feel the desire for it. Begin to visualize your intention as already in effect. Form a picture in your mind of your intention as having already manifested. How strong is your intention or desire for the outcome? Where do you sense it? Is it just a thought? Do you feel it in your heart? By locating the seat of your desire, you can begin to sense your creative urges kick in and this is what we want to tap into. Writing is a means of expressing what is in your heart and mind. It is a means of putting into words what you are feeling on a cellular level, so to speak. It is the tool we use to capture ideas and feelings that come from within. It is a means of interpreting what we experience with our senses. Our emotions find release in the writing of words. When we experience a desire to create a spell addressing a specific intention, we should listen to our heart and let it speak to us. Write down any thought that comes to your head. Be creative.  A rhyming dictionary can be very helpful in finding words that will rhyme to produce a rhythmic or musically flowing effect. A Thesaurus can be an excellent source for words that relate to or describe one another. Selecting words that express your feelings can be a powerful part of spell-writing. Words that flow in a melodic or rhythmic nature can add an extra boost of energy to a working. I have always been taught that melodious and rhythmic spoken charms or incantations are like music to Spirit. I feel that incantations that rhyme have a flowing vibration and can be very powerful to use in spells.

Once you are ready to begin to create the spoken part of your spell, you will be very familiar with your intention. By this time, it has been growing in strength and power with each thought you have given it. With your intention in mind, think about how you are going to bring it into form. Think about the method or magickal technique that you will be using and include this in your charm. If you are using a simple candle spell, you might focus the intention upon the candle and make reference to it. For example, you might say something like this for a money spell:

“Candle flame strong and bright,     Draw money to me on this night.”

Use simple words that say what you want. The phrases can be repeated as a chant and will form their own rhythm in the repetition. The charm itself can be as long or short as you choose. I would suggest you keep the charms short to begin with. This makes it easier to remember and you will be less likely to make mistakes that can break the rhythm if you are chanting the charm. Your charms can express the nature of your spell whether it is a solemn working or one of lightness and joy. It is important to sense the spell and let your creativity flow from it. Take into consideration the time of day and use it as you write. You may want to include the ingredients you are using in the wording of the charm. For instance you might want to include the herbs, stones, or oils by name and include their magickal properties and how they will affect your intention. Your wording may stress your need and may be in the form of a request for the power of the magickal ingredients’ properties to boost the energy of your spell.  Another method of boosting the power of your charm is to determine the number of times to repeat the charm. Numbers have a magickal property of their own. By matching your intention with the magickal properties of numbers, you can add extra power to the chant as well as to the entire spell. As part of your magickal education I suggest taking the Numerology course offered by Witchschool.com to help include numbers in your spell writing. Whatever method of writing you choose to create your spoken charm, remember that you will do well to memorize the charm and know it before performing your spell. This is important because you will be able to speak the charm from your heart and will be able to speak it without reading it. As you speak a charm in this way, from your heart, it is rising from within you on a cellular level and coming out with your breath, much like the technique used in magickal breathing. When using charms in this manner, it is much more beneficial if we have committed the charm to memory and can speak it from within and not by reading what was written on paper. Once you have written your spell and committed it to paper, you will find that most of it is committed to your memory as well.

Lay Out and Composition

For the purposes of this lesson we will carry out the writing of a Prosperity Pouch Spell. In composing or laying out a spell, I like to think of it as writing a recipe for change. Spells are a lot like recipes. They contain a list of ingredients and steps for preparation and execution. For a magickal spell, our first thought is our intention. With this in mind you might like to think of a title for your spell. However, at this time, your intention is most important. The title can simply be your intention. If your spell intention addressed prosperity, you might simply call it ‘My Prosperity Pouch Spell’ or even include your name ‘Lynda’s Prosperity Pouch Spell’. Consider continuing without choosing a name. Often a name will come to you while you are writing the spell.   Next, you will want to date your spell by simply entering the date you wrote it or began writing it. As you are the one who created it, you alone know when it came into being, whether it is the day you first thought of it, or the day you actually sat down and began writing it. The choice is yours. Then, state your purpose in a brief phrase. For instance, ‘A spell for a prosperous change written by Lynda’ or simply ‘A prosperity pouch spell written by Lynda’. You just want to write something to comment on the intention of the spell. If you are writing a spell for someone else, then you might want to say something like ‘A prosperity pouch spell written for a friend’. What ever the case may be, statement of purpose will make it easier for you to identify a spell when you are looking for a spell to use.

In spell-writing it is important to determine the timing related to your spell. Here you will enter the time of day, day of the week, planetary hours, moon phase, tidal movement, or what ever other timing information you choose to use, if any. Also included here will be exact dates the spell will cover. For instance, if the spell will last seven days, then you will enter the beginning date and the ending date, including month, day, and year. Again, it is up to you how many of these correspondences you will use, or if you choose to use any at all. A point to consider when writing a spell is setting the location. Where you perform the spell may take some planning. If you choose to perform your spell outdoors, such as at a park or at the seashore, you will need to take into consideration the other ingredients. You won’t want to try to light candles at a park if there is a fire danger warning in effect. You would not want to attempt to keep a candle lit on a windy beach. For this you might like to use a jar candle or even an oil lamp. If you write a spell that is to be cast outdoors you will need to make sure that all and any ingredients that you may place out in nature are ecologically safe. For instance, if your spell involves leaving an offering to Deity or nature, you would want to leave something like flowers, herbs, or natural objects. You would not want to leave plastic or imitation flowers. When spell casting outdoors, be prepared to pack out all waste and trash. If others before you were not as thoughtful, bless Mother Earth by picking up after them. Another point to consider is privacy. If you are sure that there will be no unexpected visitors, you can pretty much perform your spell as you choose. Ideally, this is what we all would like in an outdoor setting. However, if your location is a public beach or park, you will want to be discreet and try to find a private place. Always be sure to carry out anything you carried in; never leave trash or anything harmful to nature. This is why I like to stress the use of only natural ingredients for spell workings. Always leave the area better than you found it.

Another important step in the process is to enter the supplies you will use in the spell. You will want to list the ingredients and the amounts or numbers needed. If you are including one of each item, then you will want to list it that way. It is important to remember that numbers play a very important role in spell-writing and working. Numbers have magickal meanings and these meanings are often interpreted differently depending upon who is doing the interpretation. Use your intuition. Listen to your inner self and start there. You can use the common magickal meanings attributed to numbers, also. The choice is yours. If your intuitive powers are strong, then listen to them. There will be a list of number correspondences in a later lesson. You will also want to list anything you will need to perform the casting of this spell. You should list all ingredients as well as all tools needed. An example of items to list here would be herbs, oils, incense, stones, candles, magickal or ritual tools (chalice, cauldron, athame, etc.), pouches, pen, paper, matches, cords, mixing bowls, water - anything you will use for or in the spell. One of the most creative parts of spell-writing may very well be your incantation or spoken charm, or any spoken words. These are usually spoken at specific intervals of the spell-working. You will need to compose the charm or incantation and determine when it will be spoken. Most are usually spoken or chanted when the ingredients are being blended together or put together. For instance, if you are putting together a magickal pouch spell using an herb, an oil, a stone, a pouch and a candle as your ingredients/ supplies, you might want to begin combining the herb, stone and oil by mixing them together in a bowl. While you are mixing you will be chanting the incantation. It might be something like:     “Herbs and stone and oil combine,     Let prosperity be mine!”  You will need to determine the number of times to repeat the chant by determining the magickal number to match the intention. There may be more chants or incantations included in a spell, in fact there may be many, however for the purposes of this basic course, we will simply include one. We covered writing your own charms and incantations in Lesson 4.

A major step that makes your spell working flow smoothly is called ‘procedure’. These are the step-by-step instructions on how to carry out the spell. You will begin at the first steps. The instructions might read like this:  “At your altar or sacred space, place your pentacle disk in the center with the mixing bowl in the center of the pentacle disk. Light the green candle. Place the herbs and stone in the bowl, add the oil by drop. Mix them together. Repeat the following incantation three times:  ‘Herbs and stone and oil combine, Let prosperity be mine!’  Now take up the pouch in your receptive hand (left hand for right handed people) and with your power hand (right hand for right handed people) pick up the magickal mixture of herb, oil and stone, and place it into the pouch. Empower the pouch and its contents by sending your energy from within you, and into the pouch through your power hand.” Determining the steps in the spell requires a lot of thought and consideration. How you accomplish this is a matter of thinking the process through as if you were actually working the spell in your mind. It is sort of like trying to find your path in unfamiliar territory. You will probably make a few false starts until you come up with your procedure. When you get to the point of describing your procedure, you will already know what type of spell you are writing. In the case of our example ‘Prosperity Pouch Spell’ we knew we wanted to make a pouch that could be carried or worn. With that said, we then knew it would require ingredients and those ingredients would have to be empowered and combined so we chose to use the mixing bowl to mix the ingredients and the charm spoken as we mixed and empowered, followed by placing the ingredients into the pouch. Next comes the closing. At this point, for this particular spell, we have pretty much finished our spell. All that is left now is to close it and this is simply done by extinguishing the candle and speaking a closing. Your closing can be anything you wish to state. You may simply want to say ‘So mote it be!’ or ‘Blessed Be’. In keeping with magickal ethics, the Rede, the Law of Three, and Karma, I always like to end by including the following or similar words: ‘With harm to none and for the highest good of all concerned, So mote it be!’ In perfect love and perfect trust, we thus seal the spell and send it on its way into the Universe and into the hands of the Goddess and God. As an option, you may wish to include an entry titled ‘Further Instructions’. In the case of the sample spell, it would give instructions on how to use and maintain the pouch. It can be very confusing if after working a spell you are unsure about how to deal with what it left over. This section will tie up any loose ends by explaining any details not mentioned in the actual spell. This is the perfect place to mention what to do with any libations (drink, liquid, etc.), herbs, incense or other items that may be left over from the spell casting. Whether they should be cast to the wind or buried or whatever needs to be done, this is the place to explain it. So, we have gone through the steps of writing and laying out the spell. Let’s see what it will look like when it is all written out. We will use Lynda’s Prosperity Pouch Spell as an example.

Lynda’s Prosperity Pouch Spell

A prosperity pouch spell written by Lynda

Timing: At Noon during the time of the Full Moon.

Date of Creation: Jan. 1, 2004

Supplies Needed:

A pinch of goldenseal herb

A drop of cinnamon oil

1 small Aventurine stone

A small pouch to be worn or carried on person.

1 green candle

Your pentacle disk

A small mixing bowl or shell

Location: At home: at your altar or other sacred space.

Charm/Incantation:

‘Herbs and stone and oil, combine Let prosperity be mine!’

Procedure: Prepare your altar or sacred space. “At your altar or sacred space, place your pentacle disk in the center with the mixing bowl in the center of the pentacle disk. Light the green candle. Place the herbs and stone in the bowl, add the oil by drop. Mix them together repeating the following incantation three times: ‘Herbs and stone and oil combine, Let prosperity be mine!’  Now take up the pouch in your receptive hand (left hand for right handed people) and with your power hand (right hand for right handed people) pick up the magickal mixture of herb, oil and stone, and place it into the pouch and seal or close the pouch.” Empower the pouch and its contents by sending your energy from within, and into the pouch through your power hand.

Closing: Now extinguish the candle and finish by saying: ‘With harm to none and for the highest good of all concerned, So mote it be!’ It is done.

Further Instructions: The pouch should be worn or carried as needed to attract prosperity. The contents of the pouch may be refreshed or replaced as needed or desired.

As we see here, our spell is complete and as such can be worked at the proper time, as needed.

Journal Keeping

Now that the spell is written and has been cast, you will want to get your spell-writing journal out and start keeping records or notes about your workings. In it you will want to record your experiences with writing and casting the spell. What you choose to put into your spell-writing journal is up to you. Keep in mind that having a record of your experiences with spells you have written for yourself, or written for others, will help you to understand your strengths as well as points you may need to work on. You will also be able to look back at the timing and ingredients and determine which you most enjoyed and which were most beneficial. You will be able to discern patterns in your workings and in the cycles of time. You will begin to know yourself better by reviewing your spell-writing journal. You will be able to see your energy cycles and how they react to the timing of your spell. You should even be able to discern your creative cycles.   As you create spells by impulse or intuition, you will begin to find that others around you will come to you seeking your help. Your journal will then be invaluable for keeping information related to spells you created specifically for others. They should be written in the same manner, the only difference being how they are performed. If the person chooses to perform the spell alone, then a well-written spell will have all the specifics related to the complete casting of the spell. There will be no questions in the person’s mind as to how to proceed or how to perform the steps involved. Everything will be written out, in detail. Of course, in this case, you will have to wait to see the results of the actual spell casting, and then make an entry in your journal. If the spell is to be worked by you, then you will keep the records much the same way as you would for a spell written for yourself. If the spell is worked in the presence of the person for whom it was written, then you will mention their presence. The person’s presence will have an effect upon the spell due to their energy. This should also be noted in your journal.

Entries into the journal should include:

• Name of Spell:

• Intention:

• Date Performed:

• If for another, their name:

• Performed by:

• Results:

• Comments:

The ‘Results’ section is where you will record how the spell turned out. If it was a prosperity spell that did not have an ending date, such as our sample spell, then you may want to make entries as time passes. You would make note of changes that occur in your situation. This type of spell will be one that you will come back to your journal for many times, making entries to note any changes.   Any special circumstance or unusual occurrences should be noted in the comments section. These would include anything out of the ordinary that may have happened. Any signs or omens you may experience by seeing, hearing, feeling, or sensing as well as any temperature changes while you worked the spell, or any scents or odors that you may have noticed can all be signs from Spirit. These should all be noted in the ‘Comments’ section. Signs can come from any source. They could come from the sounds of animals outside or they could come as a whispered thought from within. Whatever the occurrence, whatever the source, you might want to make note of it in your ‘Comments’ section. It can be helpful to determine if there are any patterns related to signs or omens in your spell workings.

Though Lesson 2 discussed the various types of journals available, it would be beneficial to discuss them here a bit more. When selecting your journal, you may want to consider the benefits of different styles.

Computers have made it very easy to keep all our written information on floppy disk. This has its benefits, in that we can easily print out our journal entries and also keep a copy on disk. Printing out our journal pages to keep in a binder or file enables us to have a hard copy where we can include pictures, herb samples, oil samples, stone, feathers and whatever else may have been included in a spell that will help us to relate in an exciting visual and sensual manner. Keeping a journal on floppy disk makes it very easy to send spells we have written to others who may be in need, in a speedy manner. Floppy disk journals can enable us to take our journal with us and not have the bulk of a book or notebook-style journal to contend with. As witches, we can expect similar results to words that we record on a floppy disk as we expect with any other form of writing. Floppy disks make it easy to make changes and insert additional comments as results and changes of note occur.

Keeping a journal in a hand-written manner is one of the most exciting and empowering experiences that I have had the pleasure of enjoying. A bound book with blank or lined pages can be very empowering to use. It can work like a key to shift your consciousness in preparation for your spell-writing. There are a variety of bound books available and some very unusual handmade blank books can be obtained at Renaissance Fairs and Metaphysical bookstores. Remember, when using a bound book, you will want to leave space for future entries.

Loose-leaf notebooks can be useful in that they can easily accommodate additional pages and inserts, which can be helpful when making additional entries. The style of book you select for your journal is a choice that only you can make. It is entirely a matter of personal choice and convenience.

Your journal is your private place to record your experiences and results in spell-writing. As such you may want to be sure it is kept in a secure location. An old wooden box, the kind used for storing silverware, makes a wonderful chest for storing your journal or Book of Shadows. The boxes themselves can be decorated with symbols and personal sigils of protection. A journal box can help to keep your journal out of sight and safe. Always be careful when traveling with your journal. Keeping a back-up copy on floppy disk is always a good idea.

In concluding this lesson, remember that your journal is a tool that can be used to aid you in your growth and development as a powerful witch. Use it wisely and intuitively, respecting free will and harming none.

Magickal Properties and Correspondences

In this lesson we will cover the basics of correspondences. Correspondences are magickal properties related to spell ingredients and timing, etc. It would be a tremendous undertaking to try to list all the correspondences or properties of all spell ingredients in one place. So for the purpose of this basic course, I will list enough to give you a list that you can work with as you begin to write your spells. As you become more familiar with writing spells, you will begin to collect more and more information on correspondences and will find your basic lists growing.   There are an unlimited number of ingredients you can include in your spells, far too many to list here. We will include some basic herbs, oils, stones, and other correspondences. By using these lists you will be able to write your own basic spells. Each will be listed by intention.

Note: When working with stones, clear quartz crystals may be used in place of any stone and can be included in any working to add its power to the energy of the spell and its ingredients.

Courage

Herbs: Agrimony, cloves, mullein, mustard seed, sweet pea, tea (black or green tea), yarrow.

Stones: Agate, amethyst, aquamarine, bloodstone, carnelian, red tourmaline, tiger's-eye.

Oils: Cedar oil, clove oil, ginger oil.

Creativity

Herbs: Beech, cinnamon, clove, vervain.

Stones: Amethyst, aquamarine, fluorite labradorite, sapphire.

Oils: Cinnamon oil, honeysuckle oil, jasmine oil, lemon oil, mint oil, orange oil.

Good Luck

Herbs: Allspice, bayberry, cabbage, caraway, heather, moss, parsley, peony, poppy, star anise, strawberry, vanilla bean, violet.

Stones: Amber, amethyst, aventurine, apache tears, jade, lepidolite, tiger’s eye, turquoise.

Oils: Orange oil, pine oil.

Happiness

Herbs: Azalea, catnip, cherry, geranium, hawthorn, lavender, saffron, St. John’s wort, violet, witch grass.

Stones: Amethyst, chrysoprase, yellow zircon.

Oils: Apple blossom oil, basil oil, lavender oil, sesame oil, tuberose oil.

Healing

Herbs: Allspice, angelica, apple, bay, blackberry, cedar, garlic, sandalwood, rosemary.

Stones: Agate, bloodstone, coral, hematite, holey stones, jasper, pink tourmaline, rose quartz.

Oils: Camphor oil, coriander oil, cypress oil, eucalyptus oil, myrrh oil.

Love

Herbs: Avocado, cardamom, carnation, coriander, frangipani, ginger, jasmine, rose, tomato.

Stones: Calcite, beryl, moonstone, pink tourmaline, rose quartz, sapphire, topaz.

Oils: Cardamom oil, coriander oil, ginger oil, jasmine oil, rose oil.

Magickal Powers

Herbs: Alder, galangal, marigold, mugwort.

Stones: Bloodstone, garnet, quartz crystal, malachite, opal.

Oils: Allspice oil, dragon’s blood oil, ginger oil, vanilla oil.

Money

Herbs: Almond, buckeye, comfrey, dill, garlic, honeysuckle, oak moss, tonka bean,  vertivert.

Stones: Aventurine, coal, calcite, goldstone, jade, mother of pearl, salt, opal.

Oils: Allspice oil, basil oil, bergamot oil, cinnamon oil, cinquefoil oil, patchouli oil,  pine oil.

Protection

Herbs: Bay leaf, bergamot, cloves, cinquefoil, dragon’s blood (resin), geranium, juniper,  rosemary, St. John’s wort, Spanish moss.

Stones: Emerald, hematite, moonstone, holey stones.

Oils: Cypress oil, juniper oil, patchouli oil.

Prosperity

Herbs: Alfalfa, almond, elderberry, mistletoe, musk, parsley, peony, poppy, tulip, vertivert.

Stones: Aventurine, bloodstone, chrysoprase, mother of pearl, olivine, ruby, sapphire, tiger’s eye.

Oils: Almond oil, cinnamon oil, peppermint oil, patchouli oil.

Success

Herbs: Clover, honeysuckle, peony, rowan, strawberry.

Stones: Amazonite, chrysoprase, malachite.

Oils: Ginger oil, oakmoss oil, sunflower oil, verbena oil, vertivert oil.

Wisdom

Herbs: Bodhi, lemongrass, sage, sunflower.

Stones: Coral, chrysocolla, jade, sodalite, sugalite.

Oils: Almond oil, lavender oil, peppermint oil.

Color Correspondence Table

White: All purposes, peace, purity, protection.

Black: Banishing, banishing negativity, absorbing negativity.

Red: Energy, strength, passion, courage, protection, self-defense.

Pink: Romantic love, friendship, peace, compassion.

Orange: Energy, courage, success, willpower, imagination.

Yellow: Intellectual pursuits, confidence, travel, communication.

Green: Healing, money, wealth, fertility, jobs, growth, luck, abundance.

Blue: Healing, patience, happiness, wisdom, psychic abilities, tranquility, changes.

Purple: Power, spirituality, meditation, magickal powers, deep healing.

Brown: Stability, pets, grounding, strength.

Tidal Correspondence Table

High Tide: The water is at its highest level. This is the optimum time to perform all types of magickal spells.

Ebb Tide: The optimum time to perform banishing spells to send off the unwanted with  the receding tide.

Low Tide: The water is at its lowest level; the optimum time for introspection and going  within.

Flow Tide: The tide is ‘coming in’ or rising. The optimum time for performing manifestation spells, spells to bring in or draw.

Lunar Correspondence Table

Waxing Moon: Optimum time for manifestation spells, spells to draw your desires or goals.

Moon: Optimum time for all magickal spells and workings, the time of greatest  power.

Waning Moon: Optimum time for introspection and magickal spells of banishing  negative or harmful energy.

New Moon: Optimum time for new beginnings.

Days of The Week Correspondence Table

Monday: Psychic abilities, peace, healing, fertility.

Tuesday: Passion, courage, protection, strength.

Wednesday: Wisdom, divination, studies, travel.

Thursday: Money, prosperity, luck, wealth, success.

Friday: Love, romance, friendship, beauty.

Saturday: Family and home, transitions, new beginnings, banishing.

Sunday: Healing, power, success, protection, vitality, vigor.

Time of Day Correspondence Table

Morning: New ventures, new beginnings, success, jobs, healing, purification.

Noon: Power, strength, energy, courage, protection, prosperity, money, luck. Add extra  energy and power to spells.

Evening: Banishing, getting rid of unwanted or negative energy.

Night: Love, divination, magickal power, psychic abilities.

Element Correspondence Table

Earth (North): Grounding, money, jobs, possessions, prosperity, manifestation, growth.

Air (East): New beginnings, communication, study, learning, wisdom.

Fire (South): Courage, creativity, passion, protection, strength, banishing, energy, will  power, change.

Water (West): Purification, love, psychic powers, dreams, divination, peace.

In this lesson I have attempted to give you the basic information on magickal properties and correspondences. At this point, by using the tables and the information in the previous lessons, you should be able to sit down and write a spell of your own. Do not limit yourself to these short tables. There is a wealth of information to learn in regards to magickal properties and correspondences. The lists of herbs, stones, oils, and other spell ingredients are as limitless as the imagination. It is a wise witch who listens to his/her own intuitive voice when laying out a spell. If you sense the need to use a certain ingredient in place of one traditionally used, then do so. It is by listening to our higher selves that we truly begin to learn and grow as witches.

Summary and Closure

In this course we have covered the very basics of writing a spell. By following these guidelines and applying our Wiccan principles to our workings, we are sure to create spells that will enhance our lives and light our paths to becoming balanced and powerful witches. I wish you success in your magickal endeavors.

Blessed Be,

Moonraven (Rev. Teri Ott)

1st Degree Priestess Correllian Tradition

1st Degree Mentor

1st Degree Senior Mentor

aka Marina Seabourne Writer and Sea Witch.

Before You Cast a Spell

Understanding the Power of Magic

Carl McColman

NEW PAGE BOOKS

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**Author’s note**

This book does not contain any spells, or any specific instructions on how to cast spells, raise and direct energy, or perform any other kind of magical procedure.

Instead, this book teaches important universal spiritual principles that are necessary to master the magical arts. Although it is written especially for the beginner in magic, it contains information that can be of use to experienced magical practitioners as well, even if only as a review.

As the title implies, the information contained in here needs to be thoroughly understood before you begin your magical studies. For those who have already begun working magic without learning this material—well, better late than never!

Seekers who are tempted to bypass the information contained herein are advised to consider this: The more you think you don’t need to read through the universal principles presented in this book, the more likely it is that you really do.

*Magic!*

What a fascinating, mysterious topic.

This book is written for anyone with an interest in magic and its related fields: occultism, spellcraft, Wicca, Witchcraft, or Paganism. It’s written specifically for the person who is new to these subjects (although even veteran magicians might find some useful ideas presented here).

What inspires people to study the art and science of magic? Of course, everyone is unique, but perhaps your situation is similar to one of these:

* You are someone who wants to cast a spell—a spell to find a lover, get a better paying job, or lose those extra few pounds you gained over the holidays last year. The way you see it, magic is all about getting results, and the more practical, the better.
* Perhaps you are fascinated by magical figures in literature, from Merlin the Magician to Gandalf the Grey to Albus Dumbledore. In your mind, magic is all about wisdom, knowledge, and enlightenment. For you, magic sounds like a tool you can use to become a better or wiser person.
* Maybe you’ve done some research and have learned about great magicians in the past, figures such as John Dee (Queen Elizabeth’s astrologer) or Dion Fortune (one of the greatest magical teachers from the 20th century). You have a sense that magic is all about mysticism and powerful inner spiritual transformation. You feel that magic is a bridge to Divine Union.
* Or perhaps you’re intrigued by modern Witchcraft (or Wicca) as a system of magic. As you see it, magic involves working with  the forces of nature to become attuned with the spirit of the Goddess and the God who are worshiped by Wiccans, Witches, and other Pagans.

So you see, magic (and spellcraft) covers a wide terrain. There are many different reasons why people explore the magical arts. And guess what? Each of these approaches to magic is perfectly valid. In this book, we’ll take a look at the principles that underlie the world of magic, focusing on universal principles that apply to all the different varieties of magic. Many books on magic will only address one or two of these different types of magic. If you buy a book that does not really approach magic from the perspective that interests you, you might feel like it is a waste of your time and money. Hopefully this book will address all the major reasons why people feel drawn to magic, so in the pages to come you can find information that speaks directly to the circumstances in your life and your goals for exploring this ancient path.

But as the title implies, I’m writing especially for people who are interested in spells. This is not a long book, so please be patient and read it all the way through before you get started with spellcraft (the art of casting spells) or other kinds of magical work.

*Learning How to ‘Fish"*

There’s an old proverb: "Give a man a fish, and you’ve fed him for a day. But teach him how to fish, and you’ve helped him to feed himself for a lifetime." Alas, many of the books on magic that are currently available seem to fall into the "give a fish" variety. They contain spells— lots of them. They might also include some general pointers on how to write your own spells. But many of these books do not really teach the spiritual principles of magic. Even if you manage to pull off a successful spell by following the instructions, you’re left without the deep understanding necessary to take your magical work farther.

By contrast, this book aims for more of the "teach how to fish" approach. By explaining the universal laws and principles that form the foundation of magical practice, this book can help you find the confidence and skill necessary not only to write and cast your own spells, but to apply magic to every area of your life from now on. Magic is the spiritual doorway to transformation. You may have become interested in magic because you want to learn how to cast spells, how to become wise, or how to get closer to the Goddess. But whatever your motivation for picking up magical studies, I suspect that eventually you’ll want to master all the varieties of magic. The principles in this book can help you do that.

Before we begin let me offer just a few words of warning: It’s been my experience that the best teachers of magic, like the best football coaches or college professors, are tough and demanding on those who learn from them. I’m taking the same approach in this book. This is not a cutesy, fluffy-bunny, feel-good approach to magic. These days, more and more books seems to be published that claim to provide all sorts of spells and instructions for working magic, but, upon closer examination, such books seem to have very little substance to them. Such books are the magical equivalent of cotton candy. They’re wispy, pretty, sweet, and fun. But just as cotton candy is not very nourishing, so, too, do all the sweet books on casting spells lack the ability to truly nurture our magical power.

Don’t get me wrong. I’m not trying to be a grouch or put down all the spell books (in fact, some of them are written by good friends of mine). I just want to make sure that you understand that this book is different. I’m not giving you a bunch of spells to try, nor am I going to waste your time with all sorts of glib platitudes. When I make a reference to a certain kind of spell (such as a protection spell or a psychic mirror spell), I don’t provide any instructions on how to do it. Sorry! Instead, it is my intention for this book to provide a no-nonsense look at the basics of what it takes to do real magic—for real results. If I start giving you instructions on spells, it could distract you from the main purpose of this book. So just as a winning football coach isn’t afraid to make demands on his players to know that’s what it takes to turn them into champions, I’m going to propose a similar challenge in this book. Let’s get started.

*Spiritual Power*

First of all, let’s get crystal clear about something, straight up. Magic and spellcraft involve power—spiritual power. If you are interested in magic, you’re interested in power. If you want to cast a spell, you are saying to the universe that you are willing to plug into the cosmic power outlet and let the energy flow through you.

Now keep this in mind: Just like any other form of power, magical power is dangerous. Touch an exposed electrical wire, and you’ll get shocked. Get struck by lightning, and you’ll be lucky to survive. Walk in front of a car speeding down the highway at 60 mph, and you are asking for serious trouble.

Power is not to be messed with. There was a reason your mother wouldn’t let you touch a hot stove when you were a toddler. The power of the heat would burn you.

Have you ever wondered why mainstream religions (like most forms of Christianity) are so opposed to magic? Well, there are a variety of historical, social, and psychological reasons. But one reason is very simple: Many churches operate under the assumption that their members are sinful, or in other words, spiritually flawed. And for this reason, they are not to be trusted with real spiritual power. Such power can only be wielded by the priests or ministers.

Fortunately, in today’s world we have freedom of religion, which means we have choices about what we believe or how we pursue spirituality. Therefore, we can explore spiritual power without worrying about if our minister, priest, or whoever will approve. We understand, contrary to what some religions have taught, that magic is not evil or sinful. But we do need to be careful. Magic may not be a bad thing, but that doesn’t mean it’s harmless. Like any form of power, it can be misused. And like any form of power, it can cause an accident if not properly controlled. Magic is power, and real power is dangerous. It’s important for you to respect magic.

Look at this way: If magic wasn’t very powerful, who’d want to waste their time with it? It would be like trying to drive a car that can only go 3 miles per hour. At that rate you may as well walk—at least then you’d get exercise! But because it is powerful, it needs to be treated with the same respect that is shown to any other conduit of power.

One of the things that bothers me about fluffy little magic books is that they gloss over the power of magic. They present magic as a fun little thing, on a par with playing with toys. On one hand, there’s nothing wrong with having a playful or fun attitude when exploring magic. After all, magic can help us to do many things, including having more fun in our lives! But if we limit magic to the level of fun and games, then we’ve trivialized it, and that can cause us to miss out on its true power. So if you want real power to flow in your life, take magic seriously.

*So You Want to Cast a Spell*

I know, some of you are already getting a little antsy. You don’t want a long and involved discussion of all the philosophy behind magic. You just want to get instructions on how to cast that love spell or money spell, don’t you? You’re itching to get started. *Forget about all this theory*, you might be thinking to yourself, *I just need to cast a love spell, and I need to do it right now!* or, *Understanding the principles of magic won’t pay the rent, which is due next week. I need results today, not sometime next year!* Okay. It’s time for me to be that tough football coach. You wouldn’t expect to be the star quarterback your very first game, would you? (If so, then you need to learn a lot about football!). Without the proper training, you would probably make a lousy quarterback, and it’s likely that you would get hurt very badly the first time you got tackled. It takes practice to be a star athlete. In fact, it takes practice to do anything well—and magic is no exception.

Okay, okay, I know that some people will want to cast a spell or do a magical ritual to address an immediate need, whether real or imagined, in their lives. If you have such a pressing need, I sympathize. We’ve all been there. But there’s another old saying: "Lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on my part." As the author of this book, it is my goal to lead you one step at a time into a practical, useful, how-to-get-results understanding of magic. And like it or not, that takes time.

If you don’t like this approach, put this book down and go buy one of the fluffy little spellbooks. Trust me, your bookstore will have plenty in stock. You can always come back to this book in a week or a month, after all the spells you’ve tried in the other book fail to get results.

Remember, to cast an effective spell requires more than the right color candle and the right kind of herbs, and the correct words recited during just the right phase of the moon. You can get all the little details of a spell done perfectly, and still have zero in the way of results.

Or, you can read this book, learn the principles, and then get results in your life—with or without all the "stuff" you use in a spell. (Most seasoned magicians refer to candles, incense, and so forth as props—like the props used in a theater. And just like a prop in a theater isn’t a real object used in the real world, so the props of magic are not where the real power lies.)

Don’t get me wrong. Most magically minded people love to work with candles, incense, oils, and herbs, and enjoy timing their rituals with the movement of the heavenly bodies. Such magical work is, well, fun! Later, I’ll discuss why it can be really effective. But for now, just remember this: You can work powerful magic without ever casting a spell. And you can cast spells until you’re blue in the face, and not have the slightest amount of real magic at work in your life.

*Your First Two Principles*

So back to being your coach. If you want to work magic or cast a spell, here are two principles you must master first. Chapters 2 and 3 of this book will clear away your misconceptions and give you plenty more principles to master; for now, let’s just stick with these two:

1. Magic requires you to know yourself.

2. In order to be effective, magic requires careful planning and execution.

The rest of this chapter will concentrate on these two principles. Master these, and you are well on your way. As part of your careful planning and execution, you’ll need to master the further principles discussed in the rest of this book.

*Careful planning and execution* doesn’t necessarily mean it takes six months just to do a spell. Indeed, once you get up to speed, you really can pull off an effective magical working in just a few hours (or, during an emergency, in just a few minutes). But when you’re a beginner, it takes longer. That’s a universal law. It takes longer to do *everything* when you’re a beginner, from cooking a meal, to painting a picture, to operating a computer. Magic is no different.

Sure, you could buy a book of spells and follow the directions. But if you haven’t done the proper mental and spiritual preparation, odds are, your magic won’t work. You’ll end up demoralized and angry that you’ve wasted $20 on a book that didn’t help you out. And even if your spell *did* achieve results, you may not be able to repeat your success, because after all, you didn’t really understand what you were doing!

I don’t mean to be harsh, but I do want you to understand that magic is like a gourmet meal or a fine bottle of wine. It’s something that requires time to reach its peak.

Okay, okay, okay. What about that rent check or the cute new guy who just moved into town that everyone else is flirting with? Such "emergency" situations call for the principle that magic *requires you to know yourself*. To be perfectly honest, most people don’t want to get to know themselves very well, because it means getting to know all your flaws, all your contradictions and bad habits, all the ways in which you’d rather avoid hard work, or put yourself ahead of other people. No, I’m not picking on you personally—to be human is to have our fair share of vices and weaknesses. I have plenty of my own (just ask my wife). Here’s the kicker: When we get ourselves into an "emergency" situation, often it is because one of our weaknesses is acting up.

The rent is due next week, and you don’t know where the money’s coming from. But were you thinking of that two months ago when you bought that new HDTV? Or hadn’t the thought crossed your mind that showing up to work late one too many times would mean losing your job? And perhaps if you had paid your brother that $100 you owed him last year when you promised, he would actually be there to help you out now, when you really need him?

You’ve just met the most adorable person in the world, and you *must* have him (or her). Oh really now? Your life was moving along just fine before this person walked into your life, so why are things so desperate *now*? If you’re really so needy and desperate, would this person even enjoy being around you? When it comes to love and romance, what do you have to offer? And who says only this one person can be your soul mate?

Okay, I’ll get off my soapbox now. All I ask is that you keep in mind how magic is not some easy way to avoid the hard responsibilities of life. If your reason for being so interested in magic boils down to looking for some sort of spiritual shortcut to happiness, you’re doomed to failure —unless and until you undergo an attitude adjustment.

If you’re not desperate, but simply want to learn the magical arts as an overall part of your work to make your life the best it can be, then read on. If you find learning about magic even half as enjoyable as I did when I first explored it, I think you’ll love the powerful principles I’ll be discussing in the pages to come.

*Understanding Magic and Spellcraft*

It’s time for a few basic definitions…

Magic is, according to magical author W.E. Butler, "the art of effecting changes in consciousness at will." But it’s more than just that—after all, that definition could just as easily be describing meditation. So we’ll also consider the definition of one of the most well-known of modern magicians, Aleister Crowley, who defined magic as "the art and science of causing changes to occur in conformity with will." Put these definitions together, and we see that magic involves using the will to create change, with change in consciousness being an important part of the equation.

To be a human being is to be an agent for causing change in the world. Every day, each and every human being causes countless changes to occur: We eat things, we create garbage, the artistically inclined among us create paintings or poems or other works of beauty, and so on. But we normally don’t think of scrawling a new poem on a sheet of paper as a "magical" act. That’s because the key to magic lies in the change of consciousness. Spiritual disciplines such as meditation or shamanic trance work involve shifting the consciousness from ordinary awareness into an altered state where amazing things can happen: Communication can occur with angels, departed loved ones, and other spirits; wisdom or other forms of knowledge can be imparted (including insights into the future), and energy can be set into motion that will result in—you guessed it—some sort of real change occurring in the ordinary world where most of us function in "normal" human consciousness.

There! That’s the realm of magic. A magician becomes skilled at changing his or her consciousness at will, and while in that altered state can access knowledge and energy that can be used to shape circumstances in the material universe in positive and constructive ways.

Okay, then, so what is a spell? In their book *Spells and How They Work*, Wiccan authors Janet and Stewart Ferrar define it this way: a spell is "merely a deliberate process for achieving a desired aim" that "uses levels and laws which mechanical materialism disowned." Put another way: Magic is the energy of change that involves altered states of consciousness; a spell is a process of initiating change that involves the energy of magic. Such a process can be intricate and complex, requiring the careful attention to many details, or it can be starkly simple, requiring little more than the magical shift of consciousness and the ability to direct the energy accessed during that shift. In other words, a spell can involve all sorts of props (candles, incense, oils, rituals, chants, herbs, crystals, and pins) or it can be something done *entirely in the mind*.

The energy of magic is universal. It is not something that is available only to the privileged few. Anyone of ordinary adult intelligence and mental ability can learn how to meditate, how to access altered states of consciousness, how to identify and feel magical energy, and how to direct that energy to the purpose of causing creative change. You don’t have to become a high level initiate of the *N*th degree of the Most Holy Secret Inner Temple of the Grand Lodge of the Hermetic Auspicious Order of the Silver Dusk in order to do magic. That said, it must also be said that magic is far more easily learned from a skilled teacher than from a book (in fact, I would tend to argue that you can’t fully master magic from a book at all. You need a teacher to learn magic, just like you need a teacher to learn how to drive or to fly). Furthermore, it’s much more fun to study magic with others of a like mind than all by yourself. So for this reason, becoming an initiate of the Order of the Silver Dusk (or whatever ethical, magical, or Wiccan group might be operating in your neighborhood) may well be the most efficient way for you to master the skills of magic. Just remember: You don’t have to join a group to do magic; it’s just often that it’s the easiest or most practical way to do it.

Given all the pros and cons of solitary work versus group work, I would recommend you find a group to train you in magic or, at the very least, find a qualified teacher who can train you individually. It’s no coincidence that most of the fluffy-bunny magic books also are the ones that most vigorously promote *solitary* Wicca and magic. Now, there’s nothing wrong with being a solitary. But if you’re serious about doing magic all by yourself, with nothing but books and your intuition to guide you, remember this: Your best-case scenario means that it will likely take you much longer (and through much unnecessary trial and error) to master it all alone than if you just made the effort to find an ethical group in the first place. And your worst-case scenario involves either spinning your wheels or deluding yourself (thinking you’re working magic when all you’re doing is playing with your imagination). Unfortunately, a book isn’t much help at cutting through self-delusion!

*Hard Work Is Good For You*

Whether your path to magic involves working with a group or studying it all by yourself, here’s another important word of warning: Magic isn’t easy. Sorry to disillusion you, but it’s the Goddess’s honest truth.

If you are interested in magic because you think it can be a shortcut to happiness (or at least a quick way out of whatever mess you currently are in), well…sorry. We may as well get it over with right up front: Magic is not a quick fix. It doesn’t make life easier or give you some sort of direct line to winning the lottery. What magic *will* do is help you to focus the natural psychic powers in your mind (Yes, you have psychic powers—we all do; meditation and becoming familiar with your inner source of energy are your keys to psychic development.) so that you can apply your efforts to achieving your goals more efficiently and gracefully. Magic is about working smarter, not harder. But it’s not about avoiding work altogether. Remember that.

To a child, everything is magic. To a teenager, magic looks like an exciting shortcut to power. To an adult, magic is a spiritual tool that is effective for achieving one’s dreams. But like any other tool, it must be used, and that means it must be put to work. To succeed at magic, you have to work hard.

No matter your chronological age, perhaps you have more of a teenager’s idea about magic. After all, many of the movies and TV shows that come out of Hollywood encourage us to see magic in such a simplified way. Wriggle your nose, and the housework gets done. Cast a spell, and the cute boy falls hopelessly in love with you. Well, maybe such ideas make for an entertaining story, but they’re not what real magic is about. So if you’re just interested in magic because you want to cut a few corners on life’s journey, I’m afraid this book will disappoint you. For that matter, I’m afraid magic will disappoint you, until you shift your expectations to a more realistic level.

On the other hand, if you’re willing to work hard at mastering the principles of magic and letting it transform your life from the inside, you’ll find that it really does have an amazing impact on your life, externally as well as internally. One of the things I believe is that *the person who is adept at magic lives a successful life*. It’s an important principle. If you stick around in the world of magic and get to know other people who pursue magic, you’ll soon discover that there are folks in the Wiccan/Pagan/magical world who talk a big talk about what accomplished magicians they are—but their lives are a mess. They can’t hold down a job, they have unaddressed problems with addictions, they don’t manage their money well, they treat other people poorly or abusively. Well, if their magic is as powerful as they claim it is, why can’t they clean up their own act? Don’t get me wrong: I’m not saying a person has to be perfect in order to be taken seriously as a magician. None of us are perfect, whether we are students of magic or not. But in my experience, one way you can tell if a student of magic is truly serious and dedicated to the art is if she or he is at least working on improving life in real, concrete ways. And that means that over time, his or her life gets better in easy-to-see ways. The path of magic is not the path of being a victim or a martyr. It is the path of personal responsibility and conscientious living.

*An Inside Job*

To get the best results from magic, remember that it is first and foremost an inside job. What I mean is simple: Magic is about power—using spiritual power to create real change in life. But the most important and powerful changes that you can accomplish with magic are changes that occur *inside* of you. This means changes in your perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, feelings, self-esteem, and confidence. If you really want magic to blow you away, then you’ll want to learn how to use it to transform your inner universe.

Does this mean that magic doesn’t make any difference in the "real world"? Not hardly! It’s just that the path magic takes to transform the outer circumstances of your life will start with a transformation of your inner self. You want a relationship with an incredibly beautiful, sexy, and interesting person? What magic offers you is the chance to make changes on the inside so that you become more beautiful, sexy, and interesting yourself! After all, won’t a sexy/interesting person want to have a relationship with somebody who is more or less their equal? You want more money to flow in your life? The best magic will be that which helps you not only to believe in your own worth (that you deserve more money), but also to find the inner skills and resources necessary to make the choices in your life (like training for and finding a better-paying job) to enable that money to flow.

Yes, I said, "find a better-paying job." You don’t really think casting a money spell means you get to sit back and just wait for the check to arrive, now, do you? If you do, then please go back and carefully reread the section on "Understanding Magic and Spellcraft."

Magic requires you to know yourself, and that is directly related to its role as an agent of inner transformation. You need to know your inner world enough to know where your blocks are: Perhaps you don’t believe you are a sexy person, or that you are someone capable of earning a six- or seven-figure income; maybe you are convinced that everything you touch turns to cow poop, or whatever. Magic can transform any and all of your inner blocks and limitations. But you have to know about them, too. And sometimes your inner blocks are very subtle. Maybe you have an inner belief like this: I shouldn’t have to work for my money. I’m entitled to be taken care of!

Well, if you really want to believe that, be my guest, but while you’re sitting around waiting for your entitlement, the rest of us who understand that it’s actually fun to do interesting and challenging work are busy making a real difference in the world—and getting paid for it! So whatever your inner blocks/limitations/attitude problems may be, when you transform them, you create the space for the energy of magic to work its miracles: not only within you, but in your outer life as well. But the inner work has to come first. This is one of the main reasons why the spells in all the “Let’s-Cast-a-Spell” books rarely, if ever, work. From what I’ve seen of such books, it seems that they tell you nothing about the important inner work that needs to be done—or perhaps, at best, they just mention it in passing. If you learn how to work magic on the inside, then you can more powerfully and effectively use the various spell “recipes” found in all the spellbooks if you choose to. Of course, once you master the inner principles of magic, you’ll discover you can transform your life with or without casting spells!

*Success, Failure, and Other Results*

I often speak with people who are interested in studying magic, and they ask me to recommend the books with the “real” magic in them. Presumably, they have tried one or two of the more popular spellbooks out there, and have not had much luck. So they figure that the problem must be that they’ve bought inferior books and if they can find the books containing real information, and then follow the directions, they’ll be set!

*Sigh*. I usually point out one or two of the books I like (see Appendix A for a few ideas on the kinds of books I like to recommend) and mention that success in magic is not so much about finding the right book, but rather a question of finding the right inner connection to power.

One of the things that even the most accomplished magician understands is that not all spells work, and all spells don’t work all the time. Moral of the story: You could read all the arcane writings of John Dee or Hermes Trismegistus or Aleister Crowley themselves, and you still wouldn’t have the power of magic locked up. This is for two reasons:

1. If you don’t do the inner work, following the best directions in the world is pointless.

2. Sometimes, even under the best of circumstances, casting a spell simply doesn’t work.

True magicians know what a blessing this is.

Consider this: Say you wanted a particular job. You worked all sorts of mojo to get the job, but it was offered to someone else: someone clearly less qualified than you! But before you even have a chance to stop feeling angry about it, another job offer comes to you, from out of the blue: an even better opportunity involving more money and a more fun and creative job description. Now, wouldn’t you suddenly be *very* thankful that your spell for the first, less desirable job didn’t work? I know I would! In fact, an accomplished magician in this situation would quickly and humbly get on his or her knees and make a point of thanking the Goddess that the spell *didn’t* work.

So you see, part of the task of doing magic is learning to develop faith. Yes, this includes faith in the spiritual sense, as in faith in the Goddess (we’ll take a closer look at this in Chapter 5). But it also means faith in a general sense of trust in the universe in which we live. This is to say, having a trust that, sometimes, when things don’t go our way, it simply means something better is waiting for us. Such trust is not always easy to come by, particularly when the disappointment we are facing seems insurmountable.

My wife’s daughter Rhiannon was born with serious handicaps that led her doctors to recommend turning off life-support when she was only 3 days old. So believe me, I know about seemingly insurmountable disappointments. Incidentally, my wife refused to follow the doctor’s advice: She has never lost faith in magic—or in miracles— even when facing something as traumatic as serious birth defects. We recently threw Rhiannon a surprise party to celebrate her eighteenth birthday! So much for the doctors who were willing to let her die as a baby.

Trust is not just a feeling, it’s a choice. It’s a choice that says, "I choose to believe everything is going to turn out alright, and even well. Even though right now things might not look so hot." If my wife could say that when she was holding a baby who didn’t appear to have a chance to live for a week, you and I can say that when we have to deal with life’s more average-sized setbacks.

You want to cast a spell? Then ask yourself: *Have I reached the point in my life where I trust in the universe so much that, even if the spell doesn’t "work," I will still take responsibility for my own happiness, well-being, and empowerment?* Because to be a successful magician requires that level of trust.

*Be Careful What You Ask For...*

You need to have trust when you cast a spell, for two reasons: One is to be able to deal with the spell that doesn’t "work," but the other reason is to trust the spell itself. Because, yes, spells *do* work! But that raises an entirely different set of issues.

There’s an old saying that is used in talking about prayer: Be careful what you ask for, as you’ll probably get it! What goes for prayer also goes for magic (we’ll look at the similarities between magic and prayer later on). This warning is important, for two reasons:

1. Sometimes what we ask for has unforeseen consequences.

2. Sometimes, once we receive it, we realize it isn’t really what we wanted after all.

Two movies illustrate this point. In *Big*, a little boy makes a wish to become grown up. His wish is granted, and he is surprisingly successful, finding a job at a toy company and even winning the heart of a lovely woman who works there. But in the end, he realized this wasn’t where he wanted to be, and fortunately is able to reverse his wish. Another movie, *Bedazzled*, tells the story of a hapless man who makes a deal with the devil because he is so in love with a woman he’s never even met. (Yes, I know, Pagans and Wiccans don’t believe in the devil. But just follow the story: Its message still applies!) The devil gives the poor guy a series of wishes. Every time he makes a wish he gets exactly what he asks for, only the sneaky devil has thrown in a few unforeseen details that, well, take all the fun out of the situation. The man’s first wish, not surprisingly, is to be fabulously wealthy and married to the girl he idolizes. The wish is granted except he is a drug lord with an unfaithful wife!  Again and again, he tries to make the wish more and more specific, but there’s always some twist that seems to ruin it. In the end, the devil gives up on the guy when it becomes apparent that all he really wants is what’s best— not only for himself, but for the woman too (and for more on *that*—wanting what’s best for everyone involved—see Chapter 4).

Maybe it’s a good thing when our spells appear to "fail." What if our magic worked, but we ended up even more unhappy than we were before? (There are all sorts of stories of people who win the lottery only to find that their lives become increasingly miserable). Here’s where knowing yourself kicks in again: You need to be absolutely clear about what you desire, why you desire it, and your commitment to make the best of things—even if the spell works. Because you just might find that extra money or that new boyfriend makes life more complicated than it was before.

*What Do You Really Want?*

Okay, so you don’t really want your life to be more complicated... You just want to get that sweetheart, or that new car, or whatever. Not so fast! Remember, magic requires you to know yourself. Another part of this principle is that to cast an effective spell, you need a crystal clear understanding of what it is you really, really, way-deep-down-inside want. In my experience, most of the people who are looking to cast a spell but who are new to magic generally are looking for one of the following:

1.  A spell to make somebody fall in love with them.

2.  A spell to get more money, or a better job.

3.  A spell for revenge on somebody who they think has done them wrong.

4.  A spell to protect them from somebody who they think is psychically attacking them.

If you recognize your own desired spell in this list, then this section is written especially for you. And no matter what kind of spell(s) you wish to cast, it’s always wise to begin by asking yourself, what do you really want?

*Love spells*

You are not alone. Everyone who has ever walked the planet has seen somebody somewhere with whom they have fallen into hopeless unrequited love. But casting a spell on your love interest is probably the single most boneheaded thing you could do. Very few authors will be this blunt, but I’m going to lay it on the line: *The typical love spell is actually a form of psychic attack.* Which means, it is a direct violation of magical ethics. Yes, indeed, if you cast a love spell on someone, you have basically proven how much you don’t love that person! Why? Because you are trying to manipulate the person’s free will. If you truly love someone (or think you do), the last thing you’d want is for that person to be magically coerced into showing affection to you (or anyone else). True love is about freedom, not manipulation.

Think about it: What if your love spell works? What if suddenly this person is fawning all over you? You’d be miserable! Why? Because you’d never know if the person genuinely was interested in you, or if it was just the spell working. You’d always harbor this secret self-doubt that, as soon as the spell wore off, your lover would be gone. It would be the most unhappy situation you could possibly place yourself in, and it would be all your fault. And then there’s the karmic repercussions. If you send out a spell that is aimed to manipulate another person, you have broken the two most sacred laws governing magic (those will be covered in greater detail in Chapter 4). So don’t go there. Now, back to the question of what you *really* want...

Perhaps you really want to have someone in your life to love. Perhaps you really want to feel more confident in your ability to give and receive love. Perhaps way down deep inside, you really want to love yourself better. Each of these possibilities are fair game for safe, responsible magic. Doing a spell to help you meet new people, or to help you increase your confidence, or to nurture more self-love, all avoid the trap of manipulating another person. And unlike the manipulative love spell, they are all much more likely to result in the one thing you want the most: *happiness*.

*Money spells*

Everybody wants more money. Donald Trump and Bill Gates are just as hungry for more money as you and I. It’s part of the human condition to want more, more, more. You are just like everyone else in that regard. But this has a special implication for magic. Because everyone wants more money, doing a spell for it is, spiritually speaking, vague and unfocused. What do you want the money *for*? Are you just trying to avoid work? Like the bumper sticker: "Dear Lord, let me prove to you that winning the lottery won’t spoil me!" Well, lots of people are saying that prayer, so you’ve got lots of competition. But what about wanting more money because you want to buy a nice present for your mother? Now that’s something different. You can do a spell specifically about the present you want to buy, seeking spiritual help in manifesting the actual item. You may not need money after all. Perhaps you could barter with somebody for the thing you want, or enter into a contest where you’ll win it. If your spell is specific about the object(s) you desire, you have a better chance of creating a safe and effective magical working.

Often, money spells are really job/career spells. After all, the best way to have money flow into your life is through a job you really love. In this circumstance, what you really want may be a sense of self-knowledge as to what kind of work would truly make you happy, and cooperation from the universe in manifesting an opportunity to get that desirable new job.

*Revenge spells*

Now we’re getting into deep, thick, muddy water. Human beings are clumsy creatures, and sooner or later every one of us does something that really hurts or annoys somebody else. Aren’t you glad that when you’ve hurt another person, whether accidentally or on purpose, that they didn’t just fire off a revenge spell on you? (If you think a harmful spell *has* been cast on you, see "protection spells" on page 35). The world we live in would be a terribly unfriendly place if everyone who ever got mad or hurt caused psychic trouble for the person who did them wrong, whether in real or imagined ways. So now, let’s take a closer look at your situation. Are you sure the person intended to hurt you? Are you absolutely positive this isn’t just a major misunderstanding? Are you really willing to take on the negative energies that will follow you like a black cloud if you fire off a psychic attack on someone else, even when it is just to "get back" at them? Or maybe you need to get down to what you really want? If you’re hurting, chances are, the main thing you want is to feel better. Guess what? You’ll feel a lot better if you concentrate on your own happiness rather than on the other person’s misery. As the proverbial saying goes, "Living well is the best revenge." Why not forget about causing harm (which, again, is a violation of the most important of all magical laws), and instead pour your energy into a direction where it will do some good: into feeling better for yourself? Once a feel-better spell kicked in, you’d find the idea of revenge to be, well, boring.

*Protection spells*

Actually, of the most commonly desired spells out there, protection spells are the best. After all, everyone wants to feel safe, and so a little magic to erect a "force field" around you isn’t a bad idea, huh? Well, I just want to mention one thing: If you think you’re under a curse, or at the receiving end of a psychic attack, there are two things to keep in mind:

1. Harmful magic is the weakest kind of magic there is, so it is easy to protect yourself from it.

2. Even if you have solid evidence that somebody is trying to hurt you on a magical level, don’t give in to the temptation to cast a revenge spell or a "counter-curse." If you do that, you’re no better than the person who’s out to get you.

So what do you really want when you’re looking at protection spells? Safety, most likely. And fortunately, magical safety requires little more than a normal ability to meditate and a sense of connection to the Goddess. After all, if you have a sense of being close to the Goddess, can anything truly harm you? (Okay, maybe you could still get run over by a bus. But even physical death cannot separate us from the love of the Goddess.)

Perhaps the spell(s) you are interested in performing have nothing to do with love, money, revenge, or protection. But even so, it’s still important to go through the process of asking yourself in a no-nonsense, get-real sort of a way, what is it that you really want? Could you get what you really want without even going to the bother of casting a spell? That would make life easier, wouldn’t it?

*Your Pre-flight Checklist*

Here’s where the second of my bottom-line principles kicks in: In order to be effective, magic requires careful planning and execution.

Pilots have a checklist they use before flying to ensure that their plane is safe and ready for take-off. If you think of magic as "flying" into the realm of spiritual energy and power, then it only makes sense to use a checklist like this one, before you cast a spell:

\_\_ 1. *What exactly do you intend your spell to accomplish?* We’ve already covered the importance of this. Try to understand all the reasons you want to do magic, including the hidden-reasons. Would it be a boost to your ego to pull off a spell? Are you really trying to cut corners in life? Do you think magic is interesting because it’s something that your parents or teachers disapprove of? I’m not saying that it’s wrong to have these "hidden" motives for doing magic. Just be aware of them. And if they are the *only* reasons you’re doing magic, think carefully. The spiritual energies you’ll be tapping into when you do magic are real. Be sure you know what you’re doing before you turn on the power source.

\_\_ 2. *Are you absolutely positive the spell will not in any way cause harm?* In other words, is your spell ethical? If your answer is "no," don’t do the spell. For more on ethics, see Chapter 4.

\_\_ 3. *Have you tried every possible ordinary way to achieve your goal?* The Goddess isn’t going to work a miracle just for your entertainment. If you can reach your goal through normal human effort, that’s what she’ll expect you to do. Save your magic for those times when normal efforts haven’t paid off.

\_\_ 4. *Are you fully prepared to continue making every normal human effort to reach your goal?* Remember, a spell is not meant to do your work for you. Cast the spell, and then keep working toward your goal, just as hard as if you hadn’t done the spell at all. When the spell kicks in, it will manifest by making your mundane efforts flow more easily.

\_\_ 5. *Have you mastered the skills of meditation and visualization enough to be able to work magic effectively?*

\_\_ 6. *Is your connection to Spiritual power (The Goddess and the God) strong enough to make you trust in the spell’s success?* See Chapter 5 for more information on meditation and spirituality and the role they play in magic.

\_\_ 7. *If this spell doesn’t turn out the way you expect, are you willing to take responsibility for its results?* Basic human principle: will you clean up your own mess? If the answer is no, you’re not ready to work magic.

\_\_ 8. *Regardless of how the spell turns out, are you willing to take 100 percent responsibility for your own inner peace and happiness?* In other words, if you’re expecting the spell to make the difference between whether or not you are happy, you may be setting yourself up for disappointment. See Chapter 7 for more on this topic.

\_\_ 9. *If you are using props such as candles, oils, incense, and so forth, are you confident that the materials you are using are meaningful to you in ways that support the successful completion of the spell?* In other words: Don’t just use supplies because you read about them in a book. Take the time to understand what the color means, why you’re lighting a candle, and what all the big words in the chant mean, before you start the ritual. The more you understand what you’re doing, the more meaningful it is, and the more successful your magic will be.

\_\_ 10. *Is your spell designed to create the highest good for all parties involved?* This is just a double-check on the question of ethics. Again, see Chapter 4.

Taking the time to answer these 10 questions before you get started in your magic will help to ensure that you are working your magic in the right way and for the right reasons. Don’t be discouraged if, after reviewing this checklist, you come to the conclusion that you’re not quite ready to work magic. It shows how strong a person you are, if you’re able to admit when you’re not ready to do something. Read on, my friend. The material I cover in the pages to come is designed to give anyone with an interest in magic the basic knowledge and perspectives necessary to work magic in safe and responsible ways.

*The Greatest Magic of All*

I want to close this chapter with a brief appeal to what may be the most important point that anyone studying magic and spellcraft needs to know:

*The most powerful form of magic is love.*

Remember how I defined magic: a form of spiritual energy that empowers us to make changes in our lives. Well, so is love. Indeed, love is the ultimate form of spiritual energy. It is the energy that flows from and through the Goddess and the God in their eternal embrace, and it is out of the energy of love that the physical universe was created (and is still being created). Love is the rocket fuel that propels all things. What is truly magical is that love is something you have an endless supply of; you can generate more and more love simply through your choices, actions, and attitudes.

Out of love comes many other powerful forms of energy, including hope, wisdom, strength, compassion, trust, generosity, hospitality, cooperation, and kindness. These are not just old-fashioned virtues. These are precisely the kinds of emotions and energies that make life worth living.

If you feel there isn’t enough love or trust or whatever positive energy in your life, then what are you doing about it? Are you creating love et cetera in your heart to share with others? If not, then I challenge you to think long and hard about that. Lighting a green candle for more money is an easy thing to do. Making a loving commitment to yourself to do the hard work necessary to earn that money is every bit as magical—and in the long run, will make you a happier and more powerful person.

And what is the goal of magic, if not to help us become happier and more powerful?

This is not to say that you should forget about ritual, magic, and Witchcraft and just try to be a "nicer" person. That’s not my point at all. But when you do the kind of magic you’re interested in—whether casting a spell for money or engaging in a ritual to draw closer to the Goddess—start by focusing on how you can generate more love in your own heart, by making the choice (in your thoughts, words, and actions) to be a more loving person. Do that, and you will be plugged into the primary source of all universal magic.

And then, there will be no stopping you!