

Most would not link the words 'ordinary' or 'commonplace' with magick. Perhaps that is why magick has become a critically endangered field of study. It is precisely its esoteric mystique, which protected its students and practitioners for over a millennia, that now has forced it to the brink of oblivion.

Once distinguished from the better known illusory performing art, most people blink out. With either indifference or fear they quickly move on, perhaps repressing a nervous giggle. That is sad.

Magick, the spiritual technique, is humanity's oldest discipline. Designed over multiple millennia its fundamental goals remain constant: furthering personal awakening by aligning the self with the environment in a dynamic ongoing interaction whose purpose is to foster dialogue (communication). Said interaction unites sacred with profane, the divine with the practical and, the individual with the communal. The fruits of such interactions often defy belief. Hence, the vernacular use of "magical" to define moments when such interactions express themselves.

Do such moments happen by accident? Of course they do. Magick is a natural phenomenon. How often have things just 'clicked' for you? Those are moments of magick. However, accidentally is not the only way that 'magical moments' happen. Therein lays the debate and the wonder.

"Magical moments" do happen with greater frequency in the practitioner's life than in the layperson's. That is due to the former's extensive training and discipline. Likewise, moments of tranquility and compassion happen with greater frequency in the lives of Zen Buddhist monks than they do in the lives of members in an urban street gang. It all has to do with choice, training and discipline. There is nothing 'magical', a.k.a. incomprehensible, about it.

Why magick's longstanding abilities to enhance awareness, focus attention, improve mental and physical health or serve a unifying social function still remain unrecognized, bewilders me. My bewilderment though is not relevant. What is relevant is to show how an instance of magick is both attainable through training and repeatable. While it may seem exotic to the onlooker, it is teachable and entirely natural. Being repeatable is magick's donation to the much later scientific method.

All spells are individual hypotheses. They only comprise a practitioner's theoretical baseline when they become repeatable. Just like a monk's meditative practice, a magickian's spell casting must be personally developed and consistently repeatable over time. Both have to be reliable to be effective.

Because magick is far older than religion, philosophy, or science, precise methods for creating 'magical moments' have been carefully tested and developed since the Stone Age. Thus though all the information is there, perhaps it is the very volume of said that keeps all things magical obscure. I can't remember how many "spell" books I've read – from archaic to modern. Still, had I not known better, I'd have thought I was reading various cookbooks. Small wonder that so many find grimoires useless or mysteriously exotic.

I suppose that if I'd just read a Buddhist chant, I might think the same thing. What neither the chant nor the spell tell you is that your own state of mind is what will ignite their efficacy. Without the mental discipline and creative vigor to bolster your practice (be it meditation or spell casting) you invite disappointment.

I shall not lie to you and say "oh, it's easy; anyone can do it". It's not easy and not all have the required temperament. You have to train your mind to allow magick, just as you must do to appreciate Zen.

In magickal training we use what we call our 'theoretical branch' to accomplish such. The steps vary from family to family and culture to culture, thus I can only speak to what my family required of me. There was great method in their madness. Yet if I outline my training chronologically rather than logically, it will make about as much sense as one of those grimoires.

So, as to not purposefully obfuscate, this is what I was taught over a roughly twenty one year period: the history of magick; how science and religion developed from magick; the 4 Theoretical Pillars (in the West) – Tarot, Alchemy, Astrology and Kabbalah (Judaic, Christian and pagan forms); pantheons in the ancient world and mythologies of those pantheons; sacred dance in multiple cultures; the role of magick in theatre; color magick; numerology; spirit possession; shamanism; necromancy; various forms of divination; animal, stone and tree magicks and basic herbalism. My studies were not restricted to libraries (public and private) alone. I was sent throughout the Old and New World to learn from my elders and practice "in the wild", as it were.

It would have been easier had they a Hogwart's; they did not. After wading through the theory and being steeped in practice, I was set loose to find how magick works with me and in me. That's how it is for all of us. However we get there, whatever route we take, we end up having to develop our own Path atop the wisdom of our ancestors. How magick will shape us is something that we will unravel, develop and express for the rest of our lives.

Of course we no longer have the luxury of noble patronage. Thus we also become doctors, film makers, teachers, scholars, farmers, artists, writers, dancers, humanitarians, tech nerds, biologists, musicians, librarians, military members, athletes, politicians, midwives, astronauts, mathematicians, business folk, jugglers – whatever human endeavor we can select or invent. Regardless through those latter are only our livelihoods, not our identities. Our identities remain magickal. Our occupations are our public personas. When we confuse the two, or neglect one for the other, we throw ourselves out of balance.

Possibly we become like many in the ordinary world who have also lost their balance. We've both shifted our focus and shut our minds to the daily wonders that intrude upon our belief systems. Namely we've either forgotten or chosen to ignore that magick is everywhere in our lives. Even our occupations can be magickal acts.

Remember – magick is natural. In fact Renaissance alchemists, needing to hide from the Inquisition, called magick "Nature". So like many before me have, I won't bow to Aristotle. He was

wrong. Magick is not supernatural; the invisible world is not supernatural. They are just largely unknown. The more physics learns about the universe, the more magick it unveils.

Eventually science will find that magick can no more be denied than can a rainstorm, although they may choose a different name for the former. The trick is to know when you should call the rain, stop the rain, dance in the rain or open an umbrella. Whichever you choose can become either a magickal or an ordinary act.

Your mindset and ability to open up (pay attention) to nature's flow are what make the final determination. Hence magick truly is exotically commonplace. To find it, be aware, pay attention to what is all around you and in you. Then you can chose to play in it, or keep pretending that it is not there. It, however, will always be there - even after we and all that we know are long gone.