

COMPANIONS OF THE STONE

Instructional Letter
First Degree Series - No. 2

The Middle Pillar Exercise

Many spiritual traditions around the world conceptualize, and construct, systems of subtle energy centers within the human body. The number and position of these centers vary wildly from system to system; certain martial arts-related disciplines operate with a single center in the belly, while several traditions of inner transformation make use of as many as 360 distinct centers, located throughout the outside and inside of the body.

The Western esoteric tradition has worked with several different systems of this kind through the years. In the specific branch of the tradition we teach, however, one system using five centers has become standard during the last century. These five centers correspond to the five levels of being we have discussed already in these lessons, as well as to the five elements and to five aspects of the Tree of Life.

The following practice will help you begin to awaken these centers and to work with the energies which can be brought through them.

1. Perform the complete Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram.
2. Standing in the center of the banished space, facing East, direct your attention to an imagined point of light far above your head. Breathe in, and as you do so visualize a beam of intense white light descending from that point. This beam stops just above the top of your head, and there forms a sphere of brilliant white about six inches across. (This sphere should not quite touch your scalp.) Vibrate the Divine Name AHIH (Eh-heh-yeh) on the outbreath. Breathe in, concentrating on the sphere, and again vibrate the Name on the outbreath. Repeat until you have vibrated the Name four times.
3. With another inbreath, visualize the beam of light descending from the sphere above your head to a point in the center of your throat. There it forms another sphere of light of the same size but a pale gray color. Vibrate the Divine Name YHVH ALHIM (Ye-ho-wah Ell-oh-heem) on the outbreath. Repeat, as with the first sphere, until you have vibrated the Name four times.
4. Repeat the process, bringing the beam of light down to your heart with another inbreath and forming another sphere of golden light there. Vibrate the Name YHVH ALVH VDAaTh (Ye-ho-wah Ell-oh-ah Vah Da-at) four times.

5. Repeat the process again, establishing a sphere of violet light in your genital area. Vibrate the Name ShDI AL ChI (Shah-dai Ell Chai, with the "ch" a hard sound as in "Bach" or "Loch") four times.
6. Repeat the process again, establishing a sphere of black or very deep green light between the soles of your feet. Vibrate the Name ADNI HARTz (Ah-doh-nai Ha Ah-retz) four times.
7. Now pause, and visualize as intensely as possible all five of the centers and the beam of light linking them together. Then draw in a breath, visualizing light descending from the point far above your head to the center at your heart; on the outbreath, visualize the heart center shining like the sun. Repeat this four times.
8. Draw in another breath, and this time be aware of the actual air flowing in through your nose and throat to the heart center. Visualize (and, if possible, feel) the breath continuing from the heart center as a stream of light out to the left side of your body, and down the left side to the center at the feet. Hold the breath for a time, feeling it in the center at the feet. Breathe out, visualizing and feeling the breath flowing up the right side of the body to heart level, in to the heart center, and then out through the throat and nose. Hold the breath out for a time, being aware of the heart center. This whole process may be done to the rhythm of the Fourfold Breath, and should be repeated a total of four times.
9. Finally, perform the Qabalistic Cross once more to complete the exercise.

This exercise should be practiced daily, as it is the foundation of ritual work in our tradition and has more to offer than nearly any other aspect of magical training. There are few more useful ways for a magician to spend fifteen minutes. Later on in the work of the Order, a number of further developments and expansions of this basic exercise will be provided, but for now the exercise itself should be practiced and mastered.