

THE SUN GAZETTE

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AKHENATON, HIGH PRIEST OF THE SUN

In 1369 B.C., Ammon Hotep IV, became Pharaoh of Egypt. He was influenced in his education by the priests of Aton (sun disk), at the time, considered a minor aspect of the sun god. He became devoted to Aton and convinced that Aton was the one true, self-created God and that all the other gods were man-made. Early in his reign, he changed his name to Akhenaton, meaning "he who is beneficial to Aton" He considered himself a son of Aton.

He established the first monotheistic religion by elevating Aton over the chief sun god, Ammon and other gods. His mother, Tia, did much to mediate and stem the tide of controversy caused by his bold opposition to the powerful priesthood of Ammon. However, after she died, he turned against the priesthood and their false gods. He told the people that they were not necessary because the one true God was within them. Aton's temples were open-air gardens with no idols; they had no image other than the one Akhenaton devised. A sun disk with rays descending down to bless mankind. Aton's full title meant "effulgence which comes from the sun." He was the heat or life-giving essence of the sun. The worship of Aton was based on the concept of Ma'at, which means "truth" or "justice". Above all things, Aton loved truth. The highest meaning of truth is Christ. This is the spirit of the sun. The physical sun is only a symbol of the Christ Light. Akhenaton never worshipped the sun, but the spiritual Light behind it. As Jaquetta Hawkes wrote in "Man and the Sun," Akhenaton's vision was "very similar to that of Valencio and the Pueblo Indians of a Great Spirit behind the sun disk, but

more subtle, refined, exalted. It was a vision, too, of all of us who believe there to be some higher existence beyond our present human comprehension."

Another definition of Ma'at was "the established order or ideal state." Akhenaton valued Ma'at; he referred to himself as "Living in Ma'at" and his city as the "Seat of Ma'at." He didn't bother much with enforcing law and order, trusting in the positive influence of human and divine love and the concept of Ma'at to guide his subjects' actions. He told his artists to picture him as he truly was with all his physical imperfections. Thus, they portrayed him with a very high, narrow, and receding forehead, a large, sharp, aquiline nose, a thin, weak mouth, and a long, slender neck; his chest is rounded, his stomach inflated, his thighs are large and broad, and in many ways his body resembles that of a woman.

Akhenaton

Hawkes sees this self-portraiture as symbolic of his reign. She wrote, "the religion and way of life he was to initiate gave full expression to the feminine principle." He escaped the formal, fear-based patriarchal priests and civil rulers of Thebes by establishing his own city, Akhetaton, "the horizon of Aton," or what is presently called El Amarna, where he could, as Hawkes wrote, "start anew on uncontaminated soil where his ideals could flower in their own air." The art of the new city was true to life; it was a new naturalism. Akhetaton was, as Hawkes wrote, "a city founded upon the enjoyment of nature, of art, and of mortal and immortal love... The enjoyment of life and love was an essential part of the worship of the true god, so he had himself and Nefertiti portrayed tenderly embracing and kissing one another..."

From what archeologists have been able to gather, it's clear that Atonism was a sensuous and materialistic religion. Incense was burnt freely several times during the day. Hymns sung to Aton, the father of joy and love, were accompanied

by the sounds of harps and other instruments, and the people vied with each other in bringing gifts of fruit, and flowers, and garden produce to lay on the altars. Akhenaton loved to officiate at ceremonies as the high priest of Aton.

(Continued on page 2)

IS ISIS A RELIGION?

Because of the spiritual theme of past and present articles in *The Sun Gazette*, some people have the mistaken impression that sun imbibing is a religious practice and that ISIS is a religion. The constitution and by-laws of ISIS states that "The International Sun Imbibers Society (ISIS) is a non-profit educational organization that seeks to promote an understanding of the importance of the sun in human health and well being." Because these articles promote the use of praying or meditating along with sun-imbibing activities does in no way contradict the above statement. Scientists and medical researchers, as noted in the article on alchemy, are becoming increasingly aware of the power of prayer and intention on the outcome of experiments and the prognosis of patients. Spirituality or our need to connect with a higher source, God, Buddha, higher Self, the universal life force, or whatever name you call it, is becoming more accepted as a vital part of our physical and mental health and well being, and any philosophy or system of healing that does not address this need will fail. The next meeting of ISIS will be held on March 19th, 2006 at 12 noon at The Logos Center, 6401 E. Aster Dr., Scottsdale, Arizona. Please call 623-780-0261 for directions.

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He urged his people to worship in truth, simply and without an excess of ceremony. There were no images of demons and lesser gods. The mural decorations in the temple were less severe and less conventional than those of the older temples of Egypt, and they were painted in lively colors. The chief subject chosen for illustration was the worship of Aton. The form in which he is depicted is that of the solar disk, from which proceed rays, the ends of which terminate in hands. Some

of these hands held the ahnk, the symbol of life, to the nostrils of his sungazing worshippers. This symbolism shows Akhenaton's understanding of relationship between sunlight, prana and breath. (Figure 1) He knew that sunlight is the source of all life and of everything which supports it upon earth.

Fig. 1: Painting depicting Akhenaton, Nephertiti, and daughters sungazing

This quote from a decree made by Akhenaton upon the founding of Anketaton, shows that daily sungazing was a part of Atonism and that its goal was immortality. "Every eye beholds him without hindrance while he fills the land with his rays and makes everyone to live. With seeing whom my eyes are satisfied daily when he rises in this temple and fills it with his own self by means of his rays, beauteous with love, and embraces me with them in life and power forever and ever."

Besides sungazing, sunbathing was also used by Akhenaton to rejuvenate the body. He designed and had constructed the Maru-Aten, or 'viewing temple' outside of Akhetaton, which appears to be a religious structure containing gardens, pools, open-air kiosks and sunshades, or solar altars. The sunshades were roofless structures made of alabaster, sandstones, and granites inlaid with colored stones and faiences or colored glass beads. According to Egyptologist Cyril Aldred, they were used for "the daily rejuvenation of the body by means of the sun's rays."

Although the vast majority of Egyptians did not give much credence to Atonism, and Akhenaton's court followed the rituals of the outer religion out of a sense of duty, there existed an inner circle of initiates that learned from Akhenaton the esoteric teachings of Atonism. Bob Frissell wrote that they studied the "missing knowledge" over a 12-year period and became enlightened, immortal beings. Most of these initiates were women. Unlike other pharaohs, he didn't look down upon women and foreigners but considered them as having equal worth since everyone was blessed by the sun. Akhenaton's school was called "The Law of the One" and its symbol was the right eye of Horus, seen in the logo of this newsletter. Frissell states that it symbolized "male knowledge, the logical side of how everything was created by spirit..."

After the death of Akhenaton, the teachings of Atonism, its rituals and precepts, were almost completely destroyed by the priesthood of Ammon. This is a common theme of all mystery teachings involving the sun. In the last issue of *The Sun Gazette*, we read how the original sungazing monotheistic teachings of Zarathustra were destroyed by the priests of the pantheistic religions of Central Asia and by Arabs and Greeks. Escaping the wrath of the priests of Ammon, the initiates of the Law of the One mystery school went underground (literally), joined with the Tat brotherhood and emerged around 500 B.C. to form the sun-gazing Essenes and later the Therapeuts.

EGYPTIAN RODS

The ancient Egyptians used pyramids, sacred geometry, gemstones, and metal rods as meditation aids to assist in their transformation. Most notable are the rods held in the hands of pharaohs as depicted in statues, carvings and paintings in Egyptian ruins. Actual "Rods" belonging to Egyptian royalty have been found and examined, such as those of Pharaoh Pepi II. The results of close examination revealed that the "Rods" were constructed of copper and zinc and contained a variety of materials that could be substituted based on the intended use of the owner. Some of the common materials used in the "Rods" were coal or charcoal, lodestone, magnetite, quartz crystal, ferromagnetic material, and meteorite or iron.

Fig. 2: Pharaoh Pepi II holding rods

Egyptian Healing Rods are modern versions of the ancient Egyptian rods of power. They were first introduced to the world by the Russian mystic and physicist, Count Stefan Colonn Walewski, who was a member of a sungazing mystery school in the Caucasian Mountains. The rods were researched by Russian scientists from 1914 to 1965. They have also been experimenting with pyramid energy for decades. The Russian company that manufactures the rods combined the research on the rods and pyramids. They permanently conditioned the materials used in the rods by placing them in pyramids for 12 days.

The copper rod, held in the right hand, is called the sun rod. It has masculine yang energy. The zinc rod, held in the left hand, is called the moon rod and has

feminine yin energy. The moon rod acts as a catalyst with the sun rod to get the bioelectric current flowing.

A test subject, hooked up to a prognosis machine, showed that 5 to 7 minutes of holding the rods is equivalent to 30 minutes of acupuncture treatment. The rods quickly heal tissue, but work more slowly on broken bones.

There are four types of rods: Rods Kont, Rods Quartz, Rods Crystal and Free Flow rods. Rods Kont, filled with magnetite and coal, are used for grounding and calming the body. They lower blood pressure, so if you already have low blood pressure, you shouldn't use them. They are also good for heart pain, asthma, insomnia and diabetes. Diabetics will notice fluctuations in their lactose levels at first but this will eventually stabilize.

Rods Quartz, with quartzite crystals, can be used by anyone. The field they create first affects the physical cardiovascular, immune and endocrine systems, and then improves mental or psychic abilities.

Rods Crystal contain faceted crystals and are designed to affect the third eye chakra and mental abilities first, then the body. People with weak bodies shouldn't use them. They enhance meditation and are good for group work. The Crystal Star rod is designed for healers. Connectivity rods made with layered crystals, have intense energy for higher psychic powers.

The Free Flow rods are short and not powerful. They are used with the other rods by Chinese healers to correct yin/yang imbalances. For example, if a patient has a disease caused by having too much yin, he would hold a regular rods quartz copper rod in his right hand and a free flow zinc rod in his left hand.

Certain people shouldn't use rods. These include people with venereal disease, alcoholics, schizophrenics and other mentally ill patients, pregnant women in their first and last trimester, and menstruating women. Also, try to stay positive during and after using the rods or they will magnify any negativity you retain. If someone else uses your rods, you can clear their energy by running them under cold water or hitting them with a tuning fork.

The directions for using the rods are as follows: Stand, sit or lie down, holding

the copper rod firmly in your right hand and the zinc rod in your left hand. Or, if you need your hands free, curl your right toes around the copper rod and your left toes around the zinc rod. You can roll them under your feet as well for a foot massage. Place your left foot in front of your right foot. Hold your arms at your sides. If you want more spiritual energy extend your forearms out so the rods are oriented vertically. If you want more grounding energy drop your forearms so the rods are horizontal. Breathe rhythmically in through the nostrils and out through the mouth. Use the rods every other day at first since their effects last for up to 72 hours. Start every other day with 5 or 6 minutes. If you use them more frequently or for longer sessions initially, you may experience some heavy detoxification. Some sungazers have experienced this when using them during sungazing. You can use the Rods Kont or Rods Quartz lying down in bed just before sleep to help promote deep restful and energizing sleep. Rods Crystal should not be used before sleep. Couples can use one set of rods together to harmonize their relationship. The man holds the copper rod in his right hand and the woman hold the zinc rod in her left hand. Then they hold hands while the current flows through both of them.

Rods of Ra are another brand of Egyptian Rods. The manufacturer claims they're better quality because they're machined out of solid copper and zinc. These rods have screw-on end caps, so material inside can be changed, which is an advantage over Egyptian Healing Rods. However, unlike the Egyptian Healing Rods, the material isn't charged by a pyramid. Which do I prefer? Neither; I like the mudra method of creating a bioelectric current. One morning, while sungazing with my wife, I decided to try an experiment. I held her hand while forming the surya mudra with my right hand, pointing it toward the sun. She formed the Bhumisparsha or earth-touching mudra with her left hand. When I had finished sungazing I asked her how much time she had left. She said "about 10 seconds." I thought to say "just enough time to say 'Hear O Universe, I am grateful!'" But before the words could come out of my mouth, she shouted "Hear O Universe, I am grateful!" I then said, "I guess we don't need rods to harmonize our minds." But if you can afford them and are a healer or feel you need something more to assist in your own healing or transfor-

mation, try the rods. To find out more about the rods, email iamlight@cox.net.

DEATHLESS SOLAR BODY - PART II

What can we learn from ancient and modern mystery teachings to help us "ascend to the sun and the stars?" Take for example, this quote from an ancient text describing a Mithraic sungazing ritual.

"Draw breath from the rays... three times as strongly as you can and you will feel yourself raised up and walking towards the height, and you will seem to be in the middle of the aerial region. The path of the visible gods will appear through the disc of the sun, who is God my father. Likewise the so-called tube, the origin of the ministering wind. For you will see hanging down from the disc of the sun something that looks like a tube."

The "ministering wind" is the prana, which streams from the sun into the soul and fills it with the Holy Spirit. The tube is the Hunab Ku (the Mayan portal/tube) that goes from our Sun through seven spheres or heavens all the way to the Godhead in the Great Central Sun.

Acharya S. in "Suns of God," wrote, "In Mithraism existed a ceremony involving a celestial ladder, by which the person's soul was said to pass through the seven steps representing the planetary spheres [chakras] to reach the 'sun door' through which all souls must pass in order to gain salvation and immortality."

Ascending Soul by Gilbert Mitchell

Edgar Cayce, in one of his readings, described how when you clean out your churches (i.e. chakras, endocrine glands), you "hold the stars in your hands". Therefore, one must clear the chakras first in order to be able to travel the Hunab Ku. There are many chakra clearing techniques, but the one I recommend not only clears and balances your chakras, it attunes you with God's vibration. It is the mantra OM NAMA SHIVAYA. Thomas Ashley Farrand, the foremost Western authority on Sanskrit mantras states that this mantra "uses the universal elements that govern each chakra: earth, water, fire, air and ether.... This mantra is from the tradition of the path of Perfection of the Divine Vehicle, which refers to the human body..." The syllables of this

mantra balance and purifies six of the chakras. The syllable "OM" is the seed sound for the sixth chakra, where masculine and feminine energies meet at the center of the brow. NA fans the fire of the solar plexus, MA shakes the earth of the base of the spine, SHI vibrates the ether of the throat chakra, VA ripples the water of the sexual center, and YA stirs the air of the heart chakra. The sound for the crown chakra is what Kay Gardner, in "Sounding the Inner Landscape," calls the "All Sound," which "contains the entire sound spectrum. Thus it is a most healing and centering sound, whether heard by the ear or uttered by the spirit as a mantra." You can hear it in the silence between repetitions. The meaning of this mantra is "I honor Shiva, the God Force which purifies my body and mind and awakens me to my inner Self" This mantra aligns us with Our Divine Presence Within.

The Hunab Ku is described as a "finger of fire" from the sun in "The Complete Ascension Manual" by Joshua David Stone. He writes, "this invocation by the disciple has now drawn an evocative response from the spiritual triad and the monad, or spirit. The lower projection and the higher projection meet and the antakarana is built. You will get a response from God, and He will meet you with His finger of fire, and/or thread of light substance." Eventually, over time, these threads are woven into the seamless garment of the Deathless Solar Body.

At this point, we can, if we so choose, become physically immortal or drop the physical body and ascend through the tube to the seventh heaven. Some may think that physical immortality is impossible, that we are all destined to die and that to think otherwise is delusion. Others may think that it is unnecessary as the soul is immortal and we can enjoy eternal life after death. This latter view is shared by both traditional religious adherents who look forward to the rewards of heaven through good works or grace, and by new age adherents like Joshua David Stone, who want to ascend to an immortal spiritual state after balancing karma in a final lifetime. This desire to escape the prison of the flesh or to become ascended masters is probably the single greatest hindrance to mankind's spiritual evolution. This quote from "Being, Evolution, and Immortality" by Haridass Chaudhari explains with remarkable depth and clarity the error of this thinking.

"There are some mystics and spiritual seekers who strengthen and purify their bodies just enough to be able to experience the thrilling touch of the Divine. They use the body as a ladder [as in the Mithraic initiation described above], by climbing which the pure spiritual level - the domain of immortality - is to be reached. On attaining that level, the body is felt as a burden, as a prison house, as a string of chains that holds one in bondage. Dissociation from this last burden of the body is considered a sine qua non for total liberation. Continued association with the body is believed to be the result of the residual trace of ignorance (avidya lesa). When the residual trace of ignorance is gone, the spirit is set free from the shackles of the body. The above view is based upon a subtle misconception about the purpose of life and the significance of the body. The body is not only a ladder that leads to the realm of immortality, but also an excellent instrument for expressing the glory of immortality in life and society. It is capable of being thoroughly penetrated by the light of the spirit. It is capable of being transformed into what has been called the "Diamond Body" [i.e., Deathless Solar Body]. As a result of such transformation, the body does not appear any more to be a burden upon the liberated self. It shines as the Spirit made Flesh. It functions as a very effective instrument for creative action and realization of higher values in the world. It is purged of all inner tension and conflict. It is liberated from the anxiety of repressed wishes. It is also liberated from the dangerous grip of the death impulse born of self-repression. Mystics who look upon the body as a burden suffer from the anxiety of self-repression and the allurements of the death wish. Material immortality means decisive victory over both of these demons. It conquers the latent death instinct in man, and fortifies the Will to live as long as necessary, as a channel of expression of the Divine. It also liquidates all forms of self-suppression and self-torture and self-mutilation. As a result, the total being of an individual becomes strong and steady, whole and healthy. There is a free flow of psychic energy. It is increasingly channelled into ways of meaningful self-expression. Under the guidance of the indwelling light of the Eternal, it produces increasing manifestation of the Spirit IN Matter."

Rosemary Clark in "The Sacred Tradition in Ancient Egypt," writes that "the transubstantiation of the body into a divine vehicle [Akh or luminous body] is not only the fundamental basis of all the esoteric imagery in Egypt's religious mysteries, it has been a spiritual goal articulated in all the world's religious doctrines... In these doctrines, existence in the divine body occurs after discarding the material vehicle, but in the Egyptian texts, death is presented as an opportunity for transformation, not a prerequisite."

Those adepts in all spiritual traditions who decide to drop the body must regret this decision because the seventh heaven is perfect and has no need of their service. They must feel as much regret as the ghost of Jacob Marley did in Dickens' "A Christmas Carol." Who said that spirits lament because, "they seek to interfere for good in human measures, but have lost their power forever." Only those in physical embodiment can do the great work of building the New Jerusalem or heaven on earth. So make a vow of service. Tell God or the universal life force that you want to be of the greatest service at all times, and in all places. If you do so, you will be given enough work and the life force to accomplish it to last for an eternity. Immortal Bodhisattvas such as Babaji, Kuan Yin, Saint Germain and Maitreya had such great compassion for suffering humanity that they decided to stick around and help everyone become enlightened.

The Immortal Babaji

Babaji is the master who oversaw the work of the great initiate and teacher of sungazing, Omraam Mikhael Aivanhoh. He is also the guiding Light behind HRM's Solar Healing Center. Babji has given the secret of immortality to those who traveled to his Himalayan ashram. It is, as Sherlock Holmes would say to Dr. Watson, "elementary." As Bob Frissel reported, "It all begins with the knowledge of the energy body. Earth, air, water and fire can clean the mind more efficiently than the mind can clean itself. The conscious use of these cleanses the energy body. The idea then is to use the elements first to clean out our accumulation of toxins, fears, and tensions, and then to stay ahead of the pollution process. "Earth purification means developing a conscious relationship to your body, and to the environment and planet. It has to do with food mastery, movement and

exercise, and experiencing nature directly... Air purification is breathing consciously, breathing energy or prana as well as air. "Water purification is bathing consciously so you can learn actually to feel and appreciate what the water is doing for you. The purpose of conscious bathing is to clean and balance the energy body. Fire purification is sitting by a fire so your energy body or wheels of energy can turn through the flames. It is learning through personal experience what it feels like to have your energy body or aura directly cleansed by fire." I would add the techniques of sungazing, sunbathing and swallowing the sun (see next article.)

Frissel says "these are some of the common practices shared by actual immortals living on the planet today. And they also practice the continual remembrance of God, the One and eternal Spirit that moves through everyone and everything."

THE ALCHEMY OF HUMAN TRANSFORMATION

The word "alchemy" is derived from Al Khemet, meaning "the land of the black earth" or Egypt. This is the source of the esoteric teachings behind alchemy, specifically the early mystery school of Heliopolis and, later, the Hermetic schools of Alexandria.

Alchemy is the science of human transformation and eventual union with God. The alchemical formula for the transmutation of lead into gold is actually an esoteric teaching on how to transform the dense, physical body, subject to disease and death into an immortal light body or solar body. Rosemary Clark wrote, in "The Sacred Tradition in Ancient Egypt," that "the divinization of the body is a theme in Egypt's esoteric tradition. The goal is the transformation of one's physical functions into eternal, supracorporeal powers [siddhis]. This transformation was believed to result in the constitution and use of a higher body derived from the lower, carnal body. Transformation was viewed as a natural and continuing process, called Kheper, evoking the powers of Khepri, 'Lord of Transformation'..." Khepri is often depicted in inscriptions as part of a Solar Triad together with the symbols for Ra (our sun) and Sopdet (the god star, Sirius). Ra represents the life force that renews the body and bestows immortality and Sirius represents cosmic intelligence that be-

stows enlightenment. Clark says that "These powers were not reserved only for the divine beings. The solar power of Ra was transmitted daily to the living, as proclaimed in one of his morning salutations. 'I join with you each day, so that the members of my body may be made new again by your light.'"

The Solar Triad of Transformation

According to Clark and other students of alchemy, the ingredients of the alchemical formula for human transformation are the four elements of matter: fire, air, water and earth, and the transcendental element, ether. These elements make up our being: fire is our spirit, air is our mind, water our emotions, earth our body and sense of stability, and ether is our connection to the divine.

The initial step in this alchemy is to balance the four elements within our psyche. If we have too much or too little of an element, we won't have the balanced elemental foundation necessary for transformation. To use the analogy of a seed, before it can be transformed into a seedling and a plant, before its potential for growth can be released, the four elements must be present in the correct proportion. Too much water or too little air or sunlight will cause it to rot. Not enough earth or water or too much air and sunlight will cause it to wither away. The following are qualities of the four elements and the negative characteristics of people who are either over-expressive or deficient in the various elements:

Fire

Fire represents the life force glowing within us. It is self-expression, creativity, courage and enthusiasm. Fire provides self-confidence to tackle problems head on. Without fire, there's no radiance, conviction or expression. Too much fire can turn assertiveness into aggression, and courage into recklessness. Those who lack fire can be pessimistic, apathetic, depressed, self-centered and look to others for inspiration and motivation.

Earth

Earth represents the practical, realistic and material side of our nature. It seeks to structure a stable and secure environment in which we can function. Feel the Earth under our feet, the soil that sustains all forms of life. Look at the mountains, a symbol of stability and solidity of the

earth. A person with sufficient earth element is patient and reliable, practical and nurturing. The over expression of this element can be seen in a stubborn, rigid personality. Earth-deficient people can be impractical, disorganized, unproductive, compulsive, fearful and ungrounded. They tend to pay too much attention to detail and miss the big picture. They may seek security by adhering to a highly structured system of thought or rigid routine, even if they hate it.

Air

Air is associated with the mind. It is through the influence of this element that we learn to think and communicate. Through air we gain and share knowledge. It enables us to appreciate the differences in people without which there would be a lack of human interaction. An over expression of air's influence can be seen in an overactive mind that blocks inner peace and harmony. Or it could manifest as living in a dream world with unrealistic goals and flights of fancy. Air should be balanced with earth to maintain practicality. Air-lacking people can be very simple, subjective and easily misunderstood. Thus they feel disconnected and isolated from others. More importantly, they feel disconnected from their higher Self or Christ Mind.

Water

Water influences the conscience and the subconscious forces that act on our lives. It enables us to feel compassion for others' pain and suffering and want to heal and nurture them. Over expressed, there is tendency to be overly emotional, deeply sensitive and subjective. Those with a deficiency in water can be cold and aloof. Or they may try to balance this element vicariously through thrills or relationships with intense or highly emotional people. Since they have a hard time expressing feelings, they may do it by being overly concerned or possessive.

We should begin to balance and cleanse these four elements by introduction into our daily routine activities or techniques that will develop and purify all four simultaneously, and activities that will introduce the fifth element, ether.

To increase fire and become more motivated and less depressed, we should sun-gaze. Scientists have documented the fire-increasing effects of sunlight in their search for a cure for Seasonal Affective

Disorder (SAD) which plagues people in northern latitudes during the winter months when the short day and cloudy weather deprive them of sunlight. They discovered that just a few minutes exposure of the eyes to full-spectrum light once a day can significantly reduced the depression associated with SAD because it causes an increase in serotonin, the feel good hormone. Sungazing is an order of magnitude better than artificial light therapy, since no light bulb can really contain the full spectrum of radiation contained in sunlight. Also, artificial light can actually damage the eyes. Sungazing is perfectly safe as long as it's done once a day when the UV index is between 0 and 2, usually up to 1 hour after sunrise or in the last hour before sunset. Remove any glasses and contacts. Either stand or sit erect with bare feet on bare ground. Sand is best, but dirt, pavement, or stone will do, in that order of preference, but don't stand on grass, as grass will absorb the sun's fire as well as your own. Begin with 10 seconds, increasing 10 seconds per day. Use a digital timer with seconds. If cloudy, sungaze but don't increase time. When cold, sungaze indoors through a window but increase time every three sunny days. At 44 minutes, stop sun-gazing and walk barefoot 45 min/day for 1 year. A technique that you can practice while sungazing is Swallowing the Sun. Visualize the yang energy from the sun entering your body through the mouth and swallow it. This yang energy moves down into the stomach, which is near the power center called the hara (just below the navel). You can also increase fire by sunbathing, which has been shown to increase the levels of dopamine, the pleasure hormone, and endorphin, the body's natural opiate, in the blood, elevating a person's mood. Some people associate sunbathing with indolence or lack of fire, but this is due to sunbathing for too long and at the wrong time. Sunbathing to increase fire is done when the UV index is between 2 and 5. Use a UV card or meter or go by feeling. The skin should feel warm, not hot. Wear minimal clothing; nude is best. Move often to get an even tan. Stop at 45 minutes. Never wear sunscreen as this prevents Vitamin D production and traps toxins in the skin and adds its own chemicals to the toxic stew.

To become more connected and communicate with others through the air element, we need to practice connected breathing. In this technique of conscious breathing, the inhale and exhale are con-

nected, without any pauses or holdings. They need to be effortless and unforced, so that you are not pushing beyond normal limits and are not provoking the state of hyperventilation. You pull on the inhale and let go with a sigh. The inhale is to be as full and deep and high in the chest and as gentle as possible, with continuing consciousness of taking it in. And the exhale is simply the short burst of released breath as the intercostal muscles that raised the rib cage are relaxed and the diaphragm is allowed to snap back up, pushing the breath out. Connected breathing oxygenates the brain so that our thinking, communication, and vision, the functions of our three upper chakras are clear.

To bring more positive emotional expression into our lives, it's important to drink plenty of sun-charged water and to bathe or swim daily. To make sun-charged water, put whatever amount of water you drink and cook with in a glass jar with a glass cover. It's best to use water from a purification system, especially one that has an alkalizing element. Leave the water out in the sun for at least six hours. Drink warm, or cool it by pouring into clay or earthen vessels. Never refrigerate as this discharges it. Leaving it sit for a day also discharges it, so use it up within 24 hours. If left in moonlight, leave out till the following afternoon to be recharged. Don't drink moon water as this has a negative charge and can cause emotional turmoil. Bath and pool water should be chlorine-free. This may require carbon filters and chlorine-free purification systems for the house or pool water, but it's well worth the added cost. Swimming in the ocean is best. If you don't live near the ocean add 1 cup of Epsom salt to your bath water. A half teaspoon of sea salt should also be taken for every gallon of water you drink to help maintain the electrolyte balance in your body fluids.

To become more grounded in the earth element, we can literally plug into the earth with our bare feet. This is necessary not only for the alchemical balancing of the four elements but also for the balancing of the yang energy that we receive from the sun with the yin earth energies. To do this, we place our bare feet on the ground while sunbathing and walk barefoot for 45 minutes before or after sunbathing. Start with 5 minutes and add 5 min/day till you reach 45 minutes. Walk at a relaxed pace; don't hurry. The

ground should be warmed by the sun, not cool or in shade. Try hot sand only after you have gone beyond 44 minutes sunbathing. Beach sand is best because it contains mineral salts that are absorbed by the large pores in the soles of the feet. If no sand is available, use dirt. For those who live near or visit a beach, a technique that grounds you and that is also very healing is to have someone bury you up to your neck in sand for an hour. Clay is also very healing, especially if taken internally. If you fast, it's advisable to take bentonite clay with your water to help absorb and eliminate toxins.

Ether

Ether, the spiritual stuff of prayer, is the catalyst that raises the four elements of matter to a higher vibration. In the spring of 1971, while planting seeds for a garden, I came across "The Power of Prayer on Plants" by Franklin Loehr. The book detailed a series of experiments which demonstrated that prayers have a beneficial effect on the germination and growth of plants and that curses have a detrimental effect. I decided to perform some experiments of my own. After laying my hands on and blessing a flat of tomato seeds and watering them with blessed water, they started germinating in less than two days and nearly 100% of the seeds germinated. I planted two rows of corn. The row I blessed grew into tall healthy stalks with many ears. The row I cursed became stunted and didn't produce much. These experiments showed me that if all the elements are present in the correct proportion, a seed will germinate and grow, but with prayer it will grow faster and larger. Thus, for maximum results, prayer should be done along with the exercises for balancing the four elements.

Pray that the fire of holy purpose kindle your spirit. Kevin W. McCarthy, in his book, "The On Purpose Person" wrote that "Nothing adds more meaning and focus to life than discovering your purpose and living it out day by day. When you know your purpose, you can transform your life." Pray that the sacred breath of wisdom free your mind from all confusion, daydreaming, overactivity and isolation. Pray that the holy water of love heal your heart of emotional trauma and depression so that you can feel compassion. Pray that the hallowed earth of creativity ground you in practicality and purify you of all that is less than the perfect matrix for your physical body.



These prayers will have more power to transform the elements or your being if you first undergo the initiation of surrender. In Freemasonry, this is called the initiation of the Third Degree. In this initiation you die to yourself. Jesus said in John 12:24, "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." The seed of our outer self contains the potential to become God. Before the seed of self can be transformed into the God-Self, we must die to our prestige, ego, desires, plans, will, opinions, reputations, affections, thoughts, words, and our own lives. That is why the Masonic tracing board for the initiation of the Third Degree shows a coffin with a skull and bones on it. It also shows an acacia tree, symbol of immortality, growing at the head of the grave, suggesting that the seed of immortality can be encouraged to grow and we can regain our original Divine connection that was lost with the expulsion from Eden.

Tracing board for the Third Degree

The elaborate rituals of Freemasonry aren't necessary, however. This initiation can be prepared for and passed by meditating and acting on one simple, profound statement, three short words that are long in meaning: "LET GO; LET GOD."

LET GO of your self-reliance, pride and the conviction that "it's all up to me," and LET GOD take care of your problems. No matter how good we can do something, God can do it better if we let him take control. We can only go so far with our own strength, insight and self-control, but with God all things are possible.

LET GO of your dependence on others and LET GOD be your sole support. If we depend on others, we'll always be disappointed. Spouses can be unfaithful or careless with money, parents can be hypocritical, children can be disobedient,

gurus can yield to temptations, bosses can be unfair and politicians can be corrupt. People, by nature, until they are transformed, are imperfect. God, by nature, is perfect and the Light of God never fails.

LET GO of your fear and doubt and LET GOD guide your decisions and protect you. Fear is the root of all negative emotions. We hate that which we fear. Worry leads to anxiety and depression. Doubts cause jealousy and greed. Decisions based on fear always lead to suffering for ourselves and others. Decisions based on faith in God always lead to success.

LET GO of your grudges and LET GOD heal your heart. Hatred in all its forms: mild dislike, hardness of heart, resentment, bitterness, and irritation poisons the heart. Before you can apply the antidote, you must first let go of your grudge. Think of a grudge as a parasite in your heart that feeds off your emotional energy, and in return, leaves toxic emotional waste. The longer you keep it in your heart and feed it, the stronger it will become. You may feel justified in feeling hatred for someone who has wronged you. But who is really hurt by your hatred? You are; you're cut off from God, because God is love. When you realize this, you will be motivated to let go of your grudges. If you still feel hurt even after you let go of them, ask God to heal your heart and replace the pain with joy.

LET GO of your attachment to material possession and LET GOD be the focus of your desire. When you cling to money, health, status, home, or relationships, you will have them torn from your grasp, if not during life, then surely at the moment of death. Unfortunately, for most people, it's only at this fatal moment when they come to the realization that all these things really don't matter in the end. What matters, ironically, given the choice of words here, is spirit or God. When you realize this and die to yourself, you will find that the material things you need are provided for. "Seek ye the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you." Luke 12:31.

LET GO of your impatient demands and LET GOD work in his mysterious ways according to his perfect will and timeline. Don't be discouraged when your prayers aren't answered right away and exactly how you want it. Whenever you pray for something, end the prayer with the accep-

tance: "I thank thee and accept it done for the greatest good of all concerned according to your will and timeline." The Spindrift organization in Salem, Oregon spent several years experimenting with prayer in the 80's and 90's. They confirmed that directed prayer works, but non-directed prayer, in which you let it be done according to God's will or the all-knowing wisdom of the universe, always results in "what's best for the organism." This is good because, in most cases, you don't know exactly what to pray for.

Don't feel that you have to let go all at once, give up everything and become an ascetic. Herbert Silberer, in "Hidden Symbolism of Alchemy and the Occultic Arts," wrote that "Patient effort is required. Precipitancy is as great an evil as inactivity. It is, to use the language of the alchemists, just as bad to scorch the tender blossoms by a forced and hasty fire as to let go out the fire which should be continuously kept alight." The initiation of surrender isn't a one-time event; it's an attitude. You can cultivate this attitude like a gardener who plants the seed (LET GO AND LET GOD) in the earth of the subconscious, waters it with the tears of devotion and contrition, aerates it with deep meditations on the above meanings and others you may think of, and lets it grow in the light (sacred fire) of God. Make it a daily initiation. Each morning upon arising, before sun-gazing, walking or drinking your morning glass of sun-charged water, say the following prayer: "Dear God, I am letting go of all self-reliance, all dependency on others, all fears and doubts, all grudges, all attachments and all impatience. I am letting you take care of me, provide for me, guide and protect me and heal me according to your perfect plan and timeline for my life."

standing around the Tree of Life and pointing at Ashur, or the Holy Spirit,

And throughout the day, whenever you face a fear or irritation, think that it's all up to you or someone else, feel tempted by material distractions, or feel impatient, say a silent prayer of surrender. And gradually the immortal tree of your being will grow and blossom and bring forth much fruit.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE OF LIFE by Petre Livui

The Christmas tree is actually derived from the Assyrian Tree of Life and the angel set on top of the Christmas tree is actually the Holy Spirit, who protects us in the absence of the sun, during the longest night of the year. The ritual sprinkling with holy water during this period of winter solstice was symbolic of keeping alive the Tree of Life, in a period when all the other trees lost their leaves and seemed dead.

The British Museum in London has a bas relief from an ancient Assyrian artifact that shows the Trinity with the Father, holding a scepter, and the Son, both

hovering above the tree. Ashur is often depicted inside a winged disk, symbolizing the sun that keeps alive the Tree of Life. He holds in his right hand a stick and a ring, exactly like the Babylonian sun god Shamash.



The angel can also symbolize our guardian angel or higher self. Robin Edgar wrote that “the common religious iconography of angels as human beings with wings can be traced back to ancient depictions of the sun god as a winged human being. This is most notable in depictions of the ancient Assyrian god Ashur

Assur) within a winged sun disk. The Zoroastrian farohar symbol is a later variation of this symbol.”

Zoroastrian Farohar

According to Zoroastrian teachings, “The Farohar is the part of the human soul that is divine, unpolluted, and uncorrupt. It is not only our divine guardian but our guide; its perfection is always within us, as an ideal towards which we can reach. Once a human being has finished life on earth, the farohar, the higher individuality of that person, returns to Heaven. The farohar may be the inspiration for the Jewish and Christian belief in the ‘guardian Angel...’”

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