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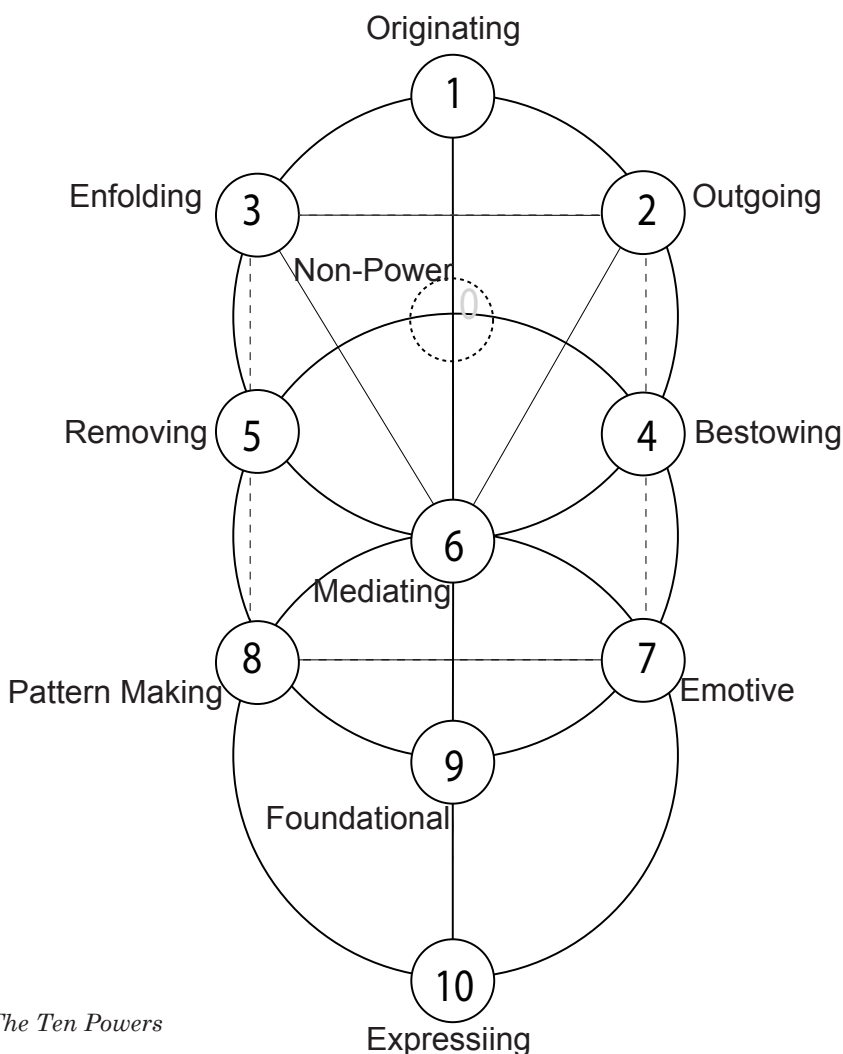
# Enabling the Spirit Tree: the Ten Powers & the Void

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In the pattern of the Spirit Tree there are Ten Primal Powers that flow from the stillness of the Void. The Ten Powers are resonant with the Ten Numbers.<sup>1</sup> But whereas the Ten Numbers express or reveal certain basic relationships on the Tree, the Ten Powers enable the Tree. The word “power” means to be able. To be empowered is to be enabled. The Universal Tree speaks of the Powers that flow between Worlds, Realms, and Beings. These spiritual or magical powers permeate reality and flow in and out of life situations. Contact with these universal energies (which cannot be controlled, only mediated) is transformative and authentically empowering.

The Ten Powers are not the Spheres, for the Spheres are broad fields of influence, holisms, that exceed the commingling or summation of individual forces within them. The Powers are, however, Primal. That is, they are central, core energies around which the influences of the Spheres or Emanations interweave.

The Spirit Tree can be approached from a variety of perspectives, of which the descending flash or Zig Zag is but one. It will be a useful counterbalance, in this chapter, to follow the Powers in ascending fashion from Tenth to First. Like physical lightning, the Lightning Flash on the Tree strikes from both directions – above and below. Physical lightning actually consists of two strokes: a leader that zigzags from the sky to the ground, and a return strike that flashes up the path made by the leader. This theme or cycle of ascent or descent and return is a dynamic encountered often in inner work based on the structure of the Spirit Tree.



*The Ten Powers*

## The Tenth Power: *The Power of Expression.*

Although there are myriad forms and modes of expressing Being, one of the most ancient and enduring patterns is that of the Elements.<sup>2</sup> In the West, these are four ~ Air, Fire, Water, Earth. Being or Spirit (which is sometimes misrepresented as a “Fifth Element”) is the energy that enlivens and unifies the Elements.

That the Four Elements articulate Being is remarkably evident in our own vocabulary. Words such as airy, flighty, earthy, fiery, watery and stormy, show how integral the Elements are to human identity. The Elements, because they express Being, unite all beings. Thus humans, animals, insects, plants, fey, nature spirits and all the rest have in common their fourfold elemental nature, their elemental expression of Being.<sup>3</sup>

There is what might be called the Elemental Way of spiritual development, which attempts to bring balance to a situation or person by harmonizing the Elements. Although apparently simplistic, the Elemental Way is capable of considerable sophistication. But it is a practical method, more than a system of analysis or categorization. Work with the Elements is a primal way of healing and empowerment ~ a fact rediscovered in modern, Jungian-derived psychology where the Elements appear thinly disguised as the four psychological functions of Sensation, Thinking, Feeling, and Intuition. Jung lifted this age-old awareness and understanding of Being out of its original magical context and forced it into the somewhat narrow framework of psychology. The significance of the Elemental Way, however, extends far beyond the therapist’s or theorist’s purview, for it deals with the expression of the essence of Life in the Universe.

Of course, this is a qualitative understanding, not a quantitative formula such as permeates much of modern scientific thought. The Elemental Way is about acknowledging and relating to reality in terms of the expressive characteristics of valued beings, not the grotesque reduction of life to a series of formulas, measurements and calculations.<sup>4</sup>

It could be said that the Tenth Power expresses and realizes the other nine Powers, which flow into the manifest world through elemental forms

### *The Ninth Power: Foundational Power; Sexual Energies.*

The Foundational Power or Life Energy is above all a rhythmic power: it undulates, cycles and spirals; it whirls and turns and rises and descends. In ancient times the vital force was seen to rise from the deep earth or descend from the stars into living things via the primal fluids of water, blood and semen. The Foundational Power is thus intimately linked to sexual energies, which in broadest terms are the energies of life, death, and interchange.

A lot of purported sex magic or polarity work is merely an attempt to escape from unfulfilling personal experiences and relationships by redirecting the sexual energies into romanticized magical partnerships. Such false idealizations are often buttressed by self-inflating methods of mutual infatuation or “flattery magic” (all under the guise of assuming "archetypes"). This is the sad and unhealthy legacy of closed and repressive occult fraternities of an earlier age, whose defunct and dated methods still influence many contemporary students of magic.

The problem extends not only to assumed magical partnerships among living humans, but also to similar relationships with inner or spiritual beings. Relationships with Sacred Presences and inner spiritual beings generally follow patterns that duplicate, or compensate for, the nature and quality of our outer world relationships, and vice versa. In any case, wholesome, healthy relationships, physically sexual and otherwise, go a long way towards making the bulk of so-called polarity work unnecessary and irrelevant.

Few realize that human sexual energy is itself closely tied to the earth and stars through the daily rhythms and fluctuations of light and energy around and through the planet. Part of magical training is to learn to link the human body to deep

power centres in the landscape, under-earth and stars. This is known as the arousal of the Dragon Power, and extends into the mystery of the awakening or rousing of Primal Presences that slumber in the stars and earth.

### The Eighth Power: *Pattern Making, Thinking, Intellect.*

Pattern making is an important power for the spiritual practitioner. The ability to recognize and generate effective forms and structures is essential for the arts of divination, ceremonial and directed vision. Unfortunately (though perhaps understandably), in the past this power has been used to institutionalize spiritual and magical systems by justifying them in terms of strict cultural or religious biases. It may be that such systems ~ now largely dated ~ once had value. By nature, however, they tend to suffocate innovation and stunt growth by fostering false notions of spiritual superiority and promoting unhealthy investment in the system itself.

Nonetheless, despite the potential for misuse, contemporary spiritual practitioners do not ignore or deprecate the intellect, which at its best is an evaluating and clarifying power that is invaluable for keeping our practice and realizations ordered, focused and in perspective.

The intellect enables us to recognize and generate appropriate patterns for mediating spiritual power. One of the more enduring and important spiritual structures is the set of coordinates known as the Seven Directions. Above, Below, Before, Behind, Left, Right and Centre. Each of these has a certain value and significance. Above and Below connect us with the stars and earth; Before and Behind with our journey through life, its potential and our experiences and expectations. Left and Right signify what we accept and reject, or give and take, along the way. The Centre is where all directions merge, end and begin. We all carry this set of magical coordinates around with us, though often not consciously. Most ritual systems, temples, circles and sacred landscapes incorporate this essential pattern of orientation. Through it we relate to forms and flows of sacred

space and time

### *The Seventh Power: Emotion, Attraction, Attainment.*

The idea of attainment or victory evokes feelings of exaltation, of having reached a peak of personal empowerment. Attainment has to do with passion or emotional motivation. On a personal magical level, attainment is engaging or riding emotion for the purpose of transformation.

Attainment is closely tied to attraction. There must be something (a goal or grail) that entices us strongly enough that we are motivated to try to attain it. Often in spiritual work, the goal is the quest itself. The act of striving or seeking embodies its own aim or end.

Emotions are energies generally expressed or released in our relationships (or lack thereof) with ourselves, those around us, and indeed with the world itself. Personal emotional balance aids, empowers, and enables wholesome relations with our planet and the world of nature it is home to.

Repressive attempts to contain or bottle up emotion run through much of nineteenth century derived magical training. Such older magical training systems attest a deep-seated fear of emotional power, which has led to its general avoidance and denial. Like nature, emotions are not “rational,” and normally function outside or in spite of intellectual frameworks. Thus (like nature) they are often perceived either as insignificant or as threatening and dangerous. But emotive force is deeply connected to authentic spiritual practice. The faculty of engaging or relating is directly linked to one of the most important spiritual skills ~ that of empowered participation in inner realms. This is the hidden power of true spiritual practice, the power to feel inner realities.

*The Sixth Power: The Mediating Power, Harmony, Interchanging Radiant Energies, Healing.*

Attaining Harmony is an important goal of magical work, whether on individual or collective levels.

The Power of Harmony is the power to reconcile polarities, to be poised in the face of opposition or conflict. It is also about being centred within as a mediator. Harmonizing a situation or our selves is not always comfortable or pleasant (though it is empowering) and often involves other Powers, especially the Fourth and Fifth Powers. In other words, it is normally necessary to gain something or let something go in order to achieve Harmony.

Harmony is not something that can be held or controlled with tightness and strain, nor is it the product of giddy pleasantness. Harmony is the dynamic, balanced, expression of growth and development; the poised, rhythmic unfolding of natural energies.

Early on in training, magical practitioners learn to align themselves to the cycles of nature. They are able to attain and maintain personal Harmony by engaging the flowing energies of life ~ by knowing, accepting and mediating the powers of nature. They allow their life energies to rise and fall, ebb and flow, increase and decrease in accordance with the cycles of sun, moon and stars.

One of the duties of being a mediator or spiritual practitioner is to enable transformation by ensuring energy does not become stuck or static. Thus it is sometimes necessary to induce a temporary imbalance in order to get energies flowing in or toward Harmony. However, deliberate and extreme polarization of the psyche or of a situation is rarely warranted.

Most often, balance-work ~ and this applies equally to personal as well as planetary issues ~requires the employment of Recovery Work.<sup>5</sup> Recovery Work has many forms, from the practice of soul retrieval for personal wholeness or development, to the recovery and release of spiritual patterns and powers latent or captive in human collective memory or in the Earth

herself. Such patterns and powers are accessed largely through myth and sacred lore.

### *The Fifth Power: The Power that Removes, Catabolic Energy, Taking, Rigour.*

The Fifth Power is catabolic. It is the power that removes, takes, dissolves, strips down, or renders essential. It is the great Power that tears away the veils of illusion and removes the false expectations and ideals surrounding much of our awareness and relationships.

In universal terms this is the Power of unending change, of the breaking down of the old to give way to the new. It is a force inherent in the deep earth and the mighty stars. It is a part of the universal cycle of Birth, Death and Regeneration, whether of stars, galaxies, beings, or on lesser levels of seasonal and developmental change. The Fifth Power can seem disruptive and severe, for it ruthlessly clears out stagnant or ossified forms and patterns. But in this it is really an awakening, liberating energy, a natural force of compensation.

A lot of responsibility rests with advanced magical practitioners as to how and in what form these catabolic energies are awakened and expressed. Discernment is one of the most important abilities the magical practitioner can cultivate. For without the ability to discern spirits and powers, we are open to errors in judgment and appropriateness that can cause needless suffering to ourselves and others.

The Fifth Power also enables self-discipline, concentration and focus by removing or disabling obstructions and distractions.

### *The Fourth Power: The Power that Bestows, Anabolic Energy, Giving, Compassion.*

The Fifth and Fourth Powers equilibrate each other. Removal, Taking and Discipline counterbalance Bestowal, Giving and Compassion.

Compassion is a word that means to feel or experience together. It is the capacity to recognize ourselves in others and, in that moment of recognition, to realize that at the deepest levels of existence we are all one, unified in the Source.<sup>6</sup> If there were no Source, there could be no Compassion. There is no false, sugary idealism in this. The Power of Compassion has no connection at all to the extremes of limpid sentimentality and blind fanaticism that motivate most do-gooders.

Compassion is such a powerful force because it is a direct expression or affirmation of the Source.

Compassion is not to be confused with pity or sentiment; for pity always involves condescension and assumes superiority. Compassion is neither sentimental nor whiny ~ it is strong, fierce, powerful, supportive, anabolic or building. It is a positive force. And it is more a cosmic 'universal' force than an emotion, although it finds expression through human emotion. Compassion is the power to give unconditionally, without ulterior motives or hidden agendas.

The existence of Compassion demonstrates the fact that the universe is a holism. Compassion is the great unifying force because it brings everything into relationship with the One. This universal unity is expressed magically through the sign of the equal-armed cross, wherein the junction of axes or arms defines or reveals a central point.

*The Third Power: Universal Enfolding Power; Ingoing, Enveloping Energies; First Forms.*

The Third Power is about sub-stance; the basis of form or the matrix of matter. That both the word matrix and the word matter probably derive from a root meaning mother (ma, mat), emphasizes the feminine nature of substance.

Time is a kind of primal form – it contains, limits, enfolds our experience – and thus is an expression of the Third Power. The Inner Realms are timeless. Yet when mortal beings<sup>7</sup> connect with inner realities they are able to bring timeless power into physical expression by letting it flow into temporal forms or rhythms. This mediation of Power into spiraling or cycling time-forms is the secret to regenerating consciousness, as any magical practitioner who has worked with the rhythms of sacred time understands.

Human understanding requires merging with particular forms through enfoldment.<sup>8</sup> The key to understanding the Spirit Tree is just this: to allow it to enfold you ~ merge with it. Typically this is done by visualizing the Spheres of the Tree fusing with the physical body. Each Sphere expresses or aligns with a bodily (or bio-psychic) centre or node of power and awareness. By engaging the pattern of Spheres and initiating various energy flows in the body, the student is enfolded in the Spirit Tree and thus understands it experientially.

A practical image of this is enfoldment in the dark cloak of the great Goddess or God. It is an inflowing of power into the darkness of substance, both physical and psychic, even the substance of Being.

### *The Second Power: Universal Outflowing Power, Outgoing Creative Energy, Wisdom.*

Like the Third Power, the Second is primarily a universal Power. Only secondarily is it a human quality or characteristic. Wisdom is not simply an attribute of the illumined, experienced or philosophical. It is an active Power in the universe. In esoteric terminology, a wise person is one who taps the unending primordial stream of universal Power, and understands its Truth. Obviously this has little to do with doctrines, dogmas or other religious understandings, for we are dealing with the

creative force of Being.

Understanding and Wisdom work hand in hand, as the one enables and activates the other. Through experiencing the primal forms and patterns of the Third Power we gain access to the streams of universal Wisdom of the Second Power. Conversely, Wisdom is continually filtered into magical forms, through which it can be tapped into consciousness.

Because it is connected to truth, Wisdom is often embodied in divine utterance. This is behind the ancient magical perception that the universe was created by the primal shout (usually of laughter or ecstasy) of a divine being. This outpouring of creative force or seed-energy can be identified with the Second Power.

In practical terms the Second Power can be linked to magical utterances, such as vowel calls that are aligned to energy centres along the spinal axis of the human body. This is in resonance of the universal axis or vertical streaming of creative energy that flows through the Three Realms.

### *The First Power: The Source, The Summit, Origination.*

The First Power is the Source and originating Energy of the Universe. This is Universal Being in whatever name or under whichever form, whether it be as Creator God or Goddess, or simply pure Light, Brilliance or Universal Energy. The Source is our point of origin as individual consciousness, as a collective or species, as participants in creation.

The Source is both universal wholeness and total potential. In other words, it contains all possible beings and realities. The Source is the ultimate origin of the Real ~ that which has the greatest value and significance because of its quality of immediacy and realness.

The Source is the summit to which we aspire and grow, and also the root from which we descend. Yet, the Source is no static energy or mere memory, but an organic, living Flow (often imaged in spiral form).

Touching the Source means to bridge personal and even collective modes of being and to enter upon the threshold of the universal. In practical spiritual work, such contact is normally experienced in stages, as spurts or flashes of universal consciousness streaming into the mind. The whole can be quite unsettling as the Source brings all into being and trues or rights all being that reconnects with it.

The Source has a universal yet totally personal quality, which reflects or refracts into various utterances and forms (of gods, spirits and other divine beings, including the human spirit). This refraction of the Source enables humanity to approach the One through its manifold forms, names and images.

### *The Power of No-Thing: The Void, the Stillness, the Mystery.*

This is not really a Power at all, but non-power, which paradoxically enables all Powers. There is often fear associated with contact with the Void, for it is the Unknown, both pre-creative or potent and post creative or annihilating. Touching the Mystery tends to shatter all false attachments, belief systems, and habitual patterns of behavior and socialization.

We may consider the Void as the place or mode of original stillness, the Deep Peace from which Being itself was breathed forth. It is the Great Mystery and the condition of Unknowing, experienced by moving being and awareness beyond perception to pure silence and stillness.

If there is a characteristic of the Void, it is paradox. Thus although the Void is beyond all images, it nonetheless expresses itself in images like Darkness, the Dark Light or Dark Cloud ~ images that somehow tinge those of the First Power (Infinite Light, Brilliance, Energy, Movement, Wind). The great paradox of the Mystery is that it is the indefinable Source of the Source.

### Practicing The Powers

The following practices each relate to one of the Powers and to the Deep Peace or Stillness. There is no need to dwell too intensely on each exercise at first, just go through them fairly rapidly to get a feel for the whole sequence. Depending on your experience, needs or goals, you can then focus on each exercise as a specific discipline. Advanced students probably need only a few runs of each practice, less experienced or more dedicated people might spend days or weeks on each individual practice.

This set of practices moves through the Powers from the Tenth to the First and culminates with the Practice of Deep Peace (The Stillness or Void). Each individual practice links with the next, so the whole can also be performed as one practice.

### *Tenth Power Practice: Assembling the Elements*

Holding your hands (palms facing toward you) over your

Throat Centre, say “Air;”

Heart Centre, “Fire;“

Sacral Centre “Water;”

Pointing to the earth, say “Earth;”

Sweep your arms out to the side and over your head. Then say “One Being In Light.”

### *Ninth Power Practice: The Arousal.*

Pointing to the earth, say “Light becomes Earth;” Feel light and power rising from the deeps of the planet into your hands and feet.

Raise your arms to the side and over your head in six steps as follows:

i) Your hands are level with your genitals, say “Earth becomes Water;”



- ii) Level with your heart, say “Water becomes Fire;”
- iii) Level with your Throat, say “Fire becomes Air;”
- iv) Arms over your head, say “Air becomes Light;”
- v) Bring arms down in arcs to either side (describing a circle) until hands meet pointing down in front of you, say “Being One In Light;”
- vi) Cross arms over on chest, say. “One Being In Light.”

As you do this practice feel light and power rising up from the earth through your feet, and into your body in stages to the levels marked by your hands, as indicated in steps i) to iv).

### *Eighth Power Practice: The Concourse*

As you do this Practice, be aware of power flowing in from each direction.

Stand facing North, raise arms over head, say, “Beginning;”

Lower arms to sides, pointing to earth, say “Becoming;”

Turn to East, cross arms over chest, say “Arising”

Turn to South, say “Sustaining;”

Turn to West, say “Descending;”

Turn to North, say “Returning.”

### *Seventh Power Practice: Opening the Centre*

Facing North, arms crossed over chest, say “From Returning Light the Centre is Born” Uncross arms. Be aware of a point of light appearing in your heart. Feel its power grow as it expands to a sphere that encompasses you.

### *Sixth Power Practice: Harmony*

Attune yourself inwardly to the harmony of the diurnal and seasonal rhythms (which correlate to the initiatory cycles of Birth, Sovereignty, Sacrifice and Rebirth.) The following are merely introductory suggestions for each season, you can and should develop the visions more fully and completely (Similar cycles can also be developed based on the rhythms of moon and stars).

Face East. See and feel a spring scene at dawn. The Sun rises as shoots grow and small flower buds open. Birds sing, animals stir, tend their young, and so on.

Face South. The summer sun shines high in the sky. Flowers are in full bloom, trees in full leaf, creatures are fully-grown and in their prime.

Face West. The Sun is setting, Autumn leaves are falling, fruits are ripened and seeds are bursting from flowers and grain. Creatures, mature and seasoned, seek places to shelter from the coming winter or prepare to die in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

Face North. The sky is dark and star-lit. The Trees are leafless, the ground stark and bare. Few creatures are about, for now is the time of sleep and regenerating energy in preparation for the rebirth of the cycles of the day and seasons.

### *Fifth Power Practice: Creation through Destruction*

A common ritual action involving the Fifth Power is to strike a match, which is the explosive creation of a universe in miniature. This deceptively simple act of creation through destruction is an important preparation for all spiritual work. It constitutes a clearing and preparation of sacred space prior to lighting the

central flame around which the ritual energies will circulate. A simple utterance, such as “Light out of Darkness,” is useful when striking your match (which should ideally be a wooden match struck on a sacred stone). Once struck the match should be placed in a bowl of earth and allowed to burn itself out.

### *South Power Practice: The Giver of Light*

This consists of nothing more than lighting a candle, as a ritual gesture resonant with the idea of providing a guiding or stable spiritual light. As you light the flame, be aware that you are raying out compassion to the four quarters of East, West, South and North.

### *Third Power Practice: Enfolding*

This is the extinguishing of a candle, the enfolding of the powers of light into the forms of time and space, which are carried with you into the outer world. Enfolding is an important part of any ritual or practice. Feel the essential power of your spiritual work come upon you like a cloak as the physical light goes out.

### *Second Power Practice: Uttering*

Utter the Vowel Call AEIUO.

A (pronounced soft like “Ah”) = Being or Spirit and Centre, E (long EE) = Air, East, I (long, like “eye”) = Fire, South, U (long, like OO) = Water, West, O (long, like “Oh”) = Earth, North.

This vocalization, independent of any particular tradition, is a way of expressing the flow and rhythms of creative energy in the universe. In a ritual context, such utterances open up channels of wisdom and creative power that set the tone and primary inner directive of the work.

### *First Power Practice: Spiraling*

Simply walk a spiral. For the present, do this from circumference to centre, which is a following of spiritual power to the Source. As you reach centre, feel your self dissolve in a sea of brilliance.

### *Non Power Practice: Entering the Deep Peace*

Breathe regularly. Be aware that the rhythm of your breathing tunes and harmonizes your entire being.

Allow Deep Peace or stillness to penetrate your being. Still your physical body: your tensions dissipate, your muscles relax, your heartbeat slows, and all the internal processes of your body harmonize. Still your desires and emotions, allowing them to become quiescent and harmonized to the great flow of Being. Now let your thoughts too become still. Concentrate only upon your breathing. Empty yourself of all else. There is only the breathing, the rhythm of the Deep Peace.

### *Returning the Powers*

The Tree of Powers can also be worked in reverse, though with some noted changes.

0 Non Power Practice: as above,

1 Spiraling: as above but from centre to circumference, feeling your self coming into being out of brilliance.

2 Uttering: as above

3 Enfolding: Form your forefingers and thumbs into a triangle. Hold apex up before your throat (Air), then heart (Fire) centres, then apex down before genital (Water) centre, and a little lower,

towards the ground (Earth centre). This is an enfolding of the Utterance into form.

4 Face front, right, behind and left in turn, stopping briefly at each direction. At each pause, touch your left hand to your heart and sweep it out before you as you send compassion out to all beings in that quarter.

5 as above

6 as above.

7 as above, but start with, arms uncrossed, say “From Returning Light the Centre is Born” then cross arms.

8 -10 as above.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The ten-based or decimal system is only one of a number of possible expressions of Universal Being and Energy. Six, Seven and Twelve-based systems are also found in various times and places. But the decimal system fits well with modern thought patterns and perceptions, while containing several of the other significant arrangements. With the addition of the 22 Paths of the Tree, this is realized to an even greater degree.

<sup>2</sup> Related, and even earlier, is the sevenfold pattern of orientation ~ the Seven Ways which define Being in terms of the directions of sacred space and time. See the Eighth Power.

<sup>3</sup> The notion put forward by some establishment occultists that mortal beings express less than Four Elements is harmful, inaccurate, and smacks of nineteenth century mechanistic biology. To be sure, all beings have an Element or Elements that are dominant in their makeup, but this is far from suggesting they consist only of two or three Elements. All mortal beings express all Four Elements to some degree, and all are capable of achieving wholeness. This is true even of so-called “Elementals” (One of the great contributions of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn is the teaching on sub-elements, which acknowledges composite qualities such as Air of Fire, Water of Earth, Fire of Earth, and so on).

<sup>4</sup> It is worth noting the works of Gaston Bachelard, arguably one of the 20th century's most important philosophers of science, yet whose greater contribution lies in his (somewhat difficult) writings on the Four Elements and the poetic imagination. Bachelard recognized that the Elements are not about quantifiable knowledge or information, but about qualitative experience. The Elements imbue material reality with inner meaning.

<sup>5</sup> In some esoteric schools this is called the "Work of Redemption," a term that is less than useful because, even though the word "redeem" means to recover or release, it carries unfortunate and often narrowly defined theological connotations.

<sup>6</sup> Obviously, recognizing ourselves in others does not always generate Compassion. In fact, nothing is as likely to arouse aversion in us as when we see our shadow side in others' behavior. In some cases, this kind of self recognition triggers stronger fear-generated responses such as racism, bigotry, injustice and oppression. What distinguishes a compassionate response from a fearful one is that the former affirms and accepts, while the latter denies and rejects.

<sup>7</sup> That is, beings (humans, animals, plants, insects) who are subject to recognizably finite life cycles. Such cycles, of course, resonate with the cycles of the Sun, Moon, Planets and Stars.

<sup>8</sup> In Renaissance philosophy, Understanding (*intellectus*) was perceived as a kind of universal field of consciousness – the realm or modality of archetypal forms. This was linked to the process of learning through contact with a particular spiritual being or god form. For example, visualizing and interacting with Hermes was a means of contacting all knowledge with which he was associated. This process of understanding by identification or envelopment was part of the ancient "art of memory."

