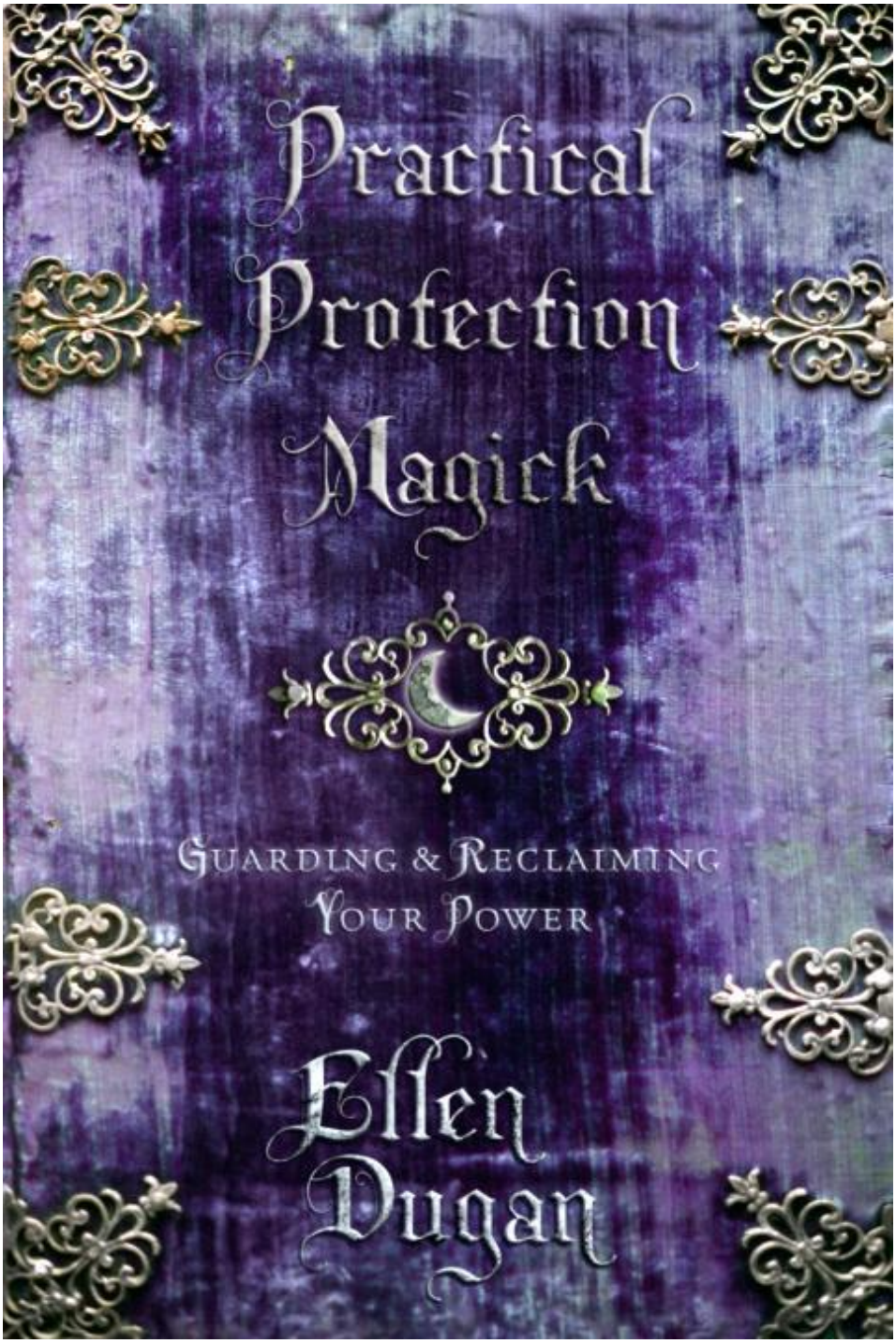
Practical Protection Magick



Guarding & Reclaiming Your Power

Ellen Dugan



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Practical Protection Magick

Guarding & Reclaiming Your Power

About the Author

Ellen Dugan is an award-winning author and psychic-clairvoyant who has been a practicing Witch for over twenty-six years. She is high priestess of a mixed magick tradition coven in the St. Louis area. She gardens and practices her Craft in Missouri, where she lives with her family. Also known as the Garden Witch, she is the author of eleven Llewellyn books, including Garden Witchery, Cottage Witchery, Natural Witchery, and Garden Witch's

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Practical Protection Magick



Ellen Dugan

LLEWELLYN PUBLICATIONS
Woodbury, Minnesota

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First e-book edition © March 2011
E-book ISBN: 978-0-7387-2887-2

Book design and editing by Rebecca Zins
Cover art from iStockphoto.com/naphtalina
Cover design by Lisa Novak
Pentacles in chapter 6 by Jackie Williams

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Llewellyn Publications
Llewellyn Worldwide Ltd.
2143 Wooddale Drive
Woodbury, MN 55125
www.llewellyn.com

Manufactured in the United States of America

Practical wisdom is only to be learned in the school of experience. Precepts and instructions are useful so far as they go, but, without the discipline of real life, they remain of the nature of theory only.

-SAMUEL SMILES

Play by the rules, but be ferocious.

-PHIL KNIGHT, founder of Nike



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To CHARLYNN, WHO keeps me organized and who was literally an extra set of eyes. Thank you for listening (and then gently yanking me back) when I started to babble and go off-topic ... You are a good friend and one hell of an assistant. I still say we should go find those cabana boys!

To my dear magickal friends and coven sisters: no, you cannot have those unedited, snarky pages, but thanks for laughing with me when I realized I needed to rein myself in. Thanks to you all for offering support, for brainstorming with me, and for loaning books and various magickal accoutrements. A special thanks to Ember for her on-the-spot information on crystals and stones-girlfriend, you "rock"! For Kathy, with her handy information about essential oils. Also to Jen-thanks for helping me see the trees in that forest!

A few words of appreciation to Mitchell and Darby for suggesting the warding chapter while we sat in that divine little German bakery in Birmingham. Also, thanks, Mitchell, for cheerfully answering all my questions about Southern magick. To Christopher, Marty, Trynna, Dawn, Heather, and Solstice for listening and for offering good suggestions when I hit the creative wall. For Mary, who tells me war stories about magick and her own experiences, and who makes me laugh when I really, really need it.

To Elysia, who has been enthusiastic about this project from the beginning, and to my editor Becky, who to her credit does not even flinch when I call and ask weird questions like how to list a king in the bibliography. You are simply the best!

Finally, to my family, with love.

INTRODUCTION

Lessons Learned

Time, as he grows old, teaches many lessons.

-AESCHYLUS

I KNOW WHY you picked up this book-probably for the same reason I wrote it. You want true information about psychic attacks and protection magick.

I am going to give this to you straight; in my experience, that is the best way to handle these sorts of situations and challenges. We all have been there. We all have experienced unusual things in our Craft and in our lives, and we all have, at one time or another, questioned ourselves and wondered: is this a string of bad luck, is this just a coincidence, or is it more?

Are the nightmares a warning? Those feelings in the pit of your stomach-are they trying to tell you something? Could you be under a hex or have fallen victim to a psychic attack? And how do you know for sure? What is a psychic attack anyway?

Psychic attack is the purposeful projection of negative thoughts or energy to another person. Yes, it is real. And if you think about it, this is very similar to the description of a curse. You may be experiencing nightmares, a general feeling of dis-ease, or simply the inner knowing that something is "off." Perhaps you are dealing with a person who seems to drain you dry, a covenmate who causes nothing but drama and trouble, or a relative who always manipulates you emotionally. But whatever it is, something in your heart and your head is telling you that it is time for protection work.

I suggest that you listen to it.

Psychic and magickal attack can take many shapes and forms. Some of the effects of these attacks are subtle, and some manifest in ways that are

not. The trick is to study this topic, to learn about it, and then to calmly apply the information in a practical way to your life and Craft. In this book, you will learn not only how to identify when something is afoot but how to ethically work self-defense magick, perform psychic protection, and much, much more.

To be honest, the idea for this book on protection magick brewed in my imagination for a few years before it finally demanded to make itself known. I had basically put this topic on the back burner of my mind and let it simmer; then the universe stepped in and taught me a hard lesson. Fate handed me the opportunity to take all the ideas for this book and put them into practical use in my own life and Craft.

Yes, protection magick and psychic self-defense became more than a magickal topic or principle that I dusted off and used occasionally; it became a way of life. However, it did teach me many new and deeper magicks. It also allowed me the opportunity to study this topic from a fresh point of view-to think about it from a different magickal perspective-and, most importantly, I learned not only to embrace but to enjoy the witchy warrior within.

Over the years, as I have met Witches and Pagans from across the country, I have discovered that this whole question of psychic selfdefense and protection magick really being necessary is a common problem in the community. It embarrasses folks when they admit to having to use magick to defend or to protect themselves. After all, no one likes to appear weak, so this topic gets whispered about in corners and confided only to our closest magickal friends. That way, we feel like we are saving face, and our reputation as super-smart, magickal tough guys stays intact.

Well, that whole idea of being embarrassed about it is just ridiculous, if you ask me. Protection magick is a basic skill that we all should learn. Your challenge here today is, are you willing to take this area of magick and turn it into a strength and a specialty? For it is not only your right to defend yourself magickally, it is also your duty. If you are going to wield magickal power to create change, then don't you think it would be a wise idea to have a firm grasp and deeper knowledge of the skills required to perform effective psychic self-defense and practical protection magick? Why, absolutely.

Practical Protection Magick

Protection is not a principle but an expedient.

-BENJAMIN DISRAELI

Protection magick and psychic self-defense is a way of life that should be embraced by today's modern magickal practitioners. It is both an empowering and a healthy attitude to take, because it takes the victim mentality right out of your magickal life. When you are actively working on your own protection, you are, in fact, standing strong and coming from a powerful place. By studying the concepts of magickal protection and psychic self-defense, you will gain knowledge and rebuild your own magickal foundation. This solid magickal base then allows you to easily work from a strong and centered space.

This new awareness will then boost your personal power and restore your confidence. By embracing a strong magickal standpoint and discarding fear and negativity, you are, in fact, transforming the negatives in your world and replacing them with positive actions and positive thoughts-which, in turn, attracts other positive energies and situations straight into your life. Most importantly, this new consciousness and insight also allows you to gain self-reliance, poise, and wisdom.

It's time to put on our game faces and get down to business. Let's embrace the hands-on work of psychic self-defense and protection magick. We begin by taking an honest look at the topic and tapping into the natural magician and the wise priest or priestess within.

The Magician

The profession of magician is one of the most perilous and arduous specializations of the imagination.

-WILLIAM BOLITHO

As I planned out this book, I turned to one of my favorite divinatory tools, the tarot. Not surprisingly, a few cards showed up again and again. These cards were the Magician and the High Priestess. Now, in the classic Rider-Waite version of the tarot deck, the Magician card shows a young man standing in front of an altar. On this altar are the classic elemental and magickal tools of the Witch/magician. There is the pentacle for the element of earth, the wand for the element of fire, a ceremonial sword to represent the element of air, and the cup or cauldron to symbolize water. The magician is illustrated as pointing one hand down to the earth, and with the other he gestures up to the sky, symbolizing the old adage "As above, so below" The Magician is one of the most magickal cards in the tarot deck, and it beautifully illustrates the point I wish to make here.

In a tarot reading, this card symbolizes a person who has the ability to take all of the elements of nature and to work with them to create their desired outcome. A down and dirty definition of a Witch, if you will, is a person of power who can easily incorporate all the natural elements together to create a magickal change. The Magician is a skilled, articulate, and confident individual. He is a powerhouse of energy and a force of nature.

I fully believe that when this card shows up in tarot readings, it is a none-too-subtle push from the gods. Here is your reminder and your wake-up call to think and act like a Witch. In essence, by studying these topics, you will be invoking your inner priest or priestess.

The High Priestess

A Study in Neutrality

She sat with hands as if to bless, And looked with grave ethereal eyes; Ensouled by ancient Quietness, A gentle priestess of the Wise.

-GEORGE WILLIAM RUSSELL

The High Priestess tarot card continues our introduction by reminding us exactly what her lesson is to teach. The classic Rider-Waite image of the High Priestess card is that of a full-figured, mature, and serious woman. A

crescent moon is at her feet, showing her ties to lunar magick and all that is hidden or unseen. She is wearing a Triple Goddess crown and is seated between a white pillar and a black pillar. The black pillar symbolizes the receptive, feminine energies; the unconscious mind; and the mysteries; while the white pillar is said to represent projective, masculine qualities and also reason and consciousness. In her arms are a quill and a scroll to symbolize the knowledge that she holds within. She represents spiritual and magickal wisdom. This card stands for occult powers, or prowess, if you prefer, and denotes a person who is mature enough and strong enough to wield those powers wisely.

Interestingly enough, the High Priestess sits evenly between the two pillars. She is a study in neutrality. She does not lean to the right or the left, nor is she inclined toward the white or the black. She is in between. She is impartial. Just as nature and magick are neutral, so are the powers of the natural world that she holds.

One clever suggestion for personal magickal protection is that it is ideal to live your life impartially-to have a mindset and behavior that is very aware of yourself on the psychic level. Once you tune in and notice the subtle psychic vibrations and disturbances that are a part of the world, it becomes much easier to avoid and deflect any possible problems or negativity. By remaining neutral and holding your temper, you can easily manipulate and direct away any energy or magick that comes your way.

Also, by being attentive to and aware of potential troubles, you can stop many magickal problems even before they begin. The trick here is to become alert and open to the idea. Now is not the time to hide your head in the sand or to pretend that hexing, cursing, psychic manipulation, energy draining, and psychic vampirism isn't real. It is real. It can happen to even the most easygoing, grounded, and practical of magickal individuals, so let's not pretend anymore.

Over time, as you study the magickal arts, you begin to realize that magick comes in many shades of gray. Magick is equally light and dark. It is both creative and destructive, just as nature is herself. This is a lesson that we all need to personally embrace while working protection magick and

psychic self-defense. It is challenging. However, it will make you into a stronger, more balanced Witch.

Exploring the Middle Ground

There is nothing so powerful as truth, and often nothing so strange.

-DANIEL WEBSTER

It has been my experience that the idea of psychic self-defense and protection magick falls into one of two extremes. In this book, we are going to explore the middle ground, for the truth about this subject lies somewhere in the middle. The techniques and topics covered here are neither white or black; instead, they are shades of gray. Just like the High Priestess illustrated in the tarot deck, we are going to work from a place of knowledge, power, and wisdom, for this is the essence of neutrality. We are standing firmly in the middle, seeking knowledge and exploring the magickal possibilities without leaning from one extreme to the other.

For the average Witch or magician, trying to get honest information about this topic is a real challenge. If you ask around and study this controversial subject for yourself, you will soon discover that there are two main camps on the topic of psychic self-defense and protection magick. To start, there is one extreme school of thought that suggests all magickal problems and psychic symptoms are in some way self-generated by the supposed victim-that somehow all the troubles this individual is perceiving are, in fact, self-created, and it's all in their imagination.

There are magickal individuals who honestly think that other people who work any type of psychic self-defense, or who even believe that protection magick is necessary, are just self-deluded and desperate for attention. They honestly believe that no Witch or magician would ever step over that ethical line-after all, "Harm none" and all that. So anything else is just all in the seeker's imagination. It does feel like a bit of a snub when you go to research the topic, only to have a book or an individual loftily inform you that you are probably overreacting, when all you wanted was some good practical information.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, we have the second extreme view of the subject. This one believes that every hangnail in life is somehow generated by manipulative or destructive magick: every headache and each instance of misfortune was created maliciously by another person, and everyone is out to get you. This is a panic-inducing mindset, and it creates loads of chaos. It's the whole Chicken Little thing-that old "The sky is falling, the sky is falling!" scenario.

Basically, this attitude encourages magickal folks to live in fear and to cower behind numerous amulets and charms slung around their necks before venturing outside the sanctity of their magickally protected lairs. The popular answer for the magickal Chicken Little is to throw an LBRP (Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram) at every little situation and then to go along their way, assured that things are well in hand-for a little while, anyway.

I believe that the truth about protection magick and psychic selfdefense lies somewhere between these two extremes. I also think it's way past time that we look at psychic self-defense and protection magick from a practical standpoint and with some real-life situations, and learn how to handle ourselves, should a situation ever occur.

What You Will Find in This Book

Books are the quietest and most constant of friends; they are the most accessible and wisest of counselors, and the most patient of teachers.

-CHARLES W. ELIOT

This book is filled with information, exercises, rituals, and spells. There are ideas for psychic self-defense, and you will learn many new ways to incorporate protection magick easily and successfully into your life. To begin, we study psychic abilities, with all of their individual strengths and weaknesses. If you want to learn how to effectively defend yourself, then you need to take stock of what abilities and talents you bring to the magickal table.

Everyone has psychic talents of some sort; it is up to you to explore, develop, and then integrate these talents into your own Craft. This is vital to understand; once you know where your personal intuitive talents lie, you are prepared and ready. Plus, no two Witches are exactly the same. This psychic individuality is a gift, and it is what makes you and your protection magick strong.

We will be exploring all of the natural elements in this book and applying them to psychic self-defense and protection magick. You will need this knowledge if you want to have the wisdom to wield these powers. By working our magick with the four natural elements that we so love, we will pull ourselves and our personal energies back into a healthy and strong state. The elements of earth, air, fire, and water will teach you how to protect yourself and how to achieve neutrality, boundaries, a deeper psychic perception, magickal strength, and, most importantly, balance, allowing your own protection magick to sing in a wonderful four-part harmony.

In the air chapter, we study the idea of knowledge being power. We take a look at psychic attack, and you will learn the warning signs and symptoms. Once you know how psychic attack works and how it manifests, then you can easily defend against it. There will also be an honest and practical look at the popular topics of hauntings and ghosts. Plus there are spells and charms to close an astral doorway or portal, and a ritual designed to clear a home.

In the chapter devoted to water and emotions, we will study the effects that emotional vampires and passive-aggressive manipulation can cause. Here we will practice our emotional psychic self-defense. You will learn ways to identify emotional vampires, how to keep these sorts of troublemakers out of your life, and how to establish healthy boundaries. In that chapter, you will find a water-theme ritual designed to dissolve and wash away any negativity you may have picked up.

In the earth-theme section, we will explore the practical concepts of defending yourself from psychic vampires and ways to reclaim your personal power. You will learn to stand tough and stay grounded, no matter what sort of character you encounter or what life throws at you. You will also learn how to take back your power and remain grounded and strong.

In the fire chapter, we'll learn the ways of the warrior Witch. Here, you will take a look at your physical fitness and how it affects your body and aura as well as your protection work, because physical fitness does equal magickal strength. Body awareness, body language, and selfhealing will be explored in this fiery section as well.

The fine art of warding and witchery will also be investigated, with a variety of magickal spells and projects to defend and to protect your home, business, and possessions. From gargoyles to runes to The Key of Solomon, this particular chapter features a wide variety of many different magickal traditions for you to discover and apply to your witchery.

I also want to share with you a few of the enchanting things I have learned along the way. In the chapter called "Hex Marks the Spot," we'll discuss the true cost of hexes and curses. Here you can learn ways to confirm magickal problems with divination and discover the moral to an interesting magickal tale.

In chapter 8, the difference between a crossed condition and a curse are discussed, as well as rules for practical protection magick. There are several spells and rituals here for removing hexes and curses, and for performing an uncrossing. Candle, herbal, and crystal magick for protection are also included.

The book will close up with a final chapter devoted to practical magick. There you will find daily and lunar correspondences, and thirteen suggested deities that you can call on for psychic and magickal protection work. You will also find three more rituals, including an intense solitary ritual where you evoke a goddess for psychic protection, plus a group ritual for magickal protection for your circle or coven that works with Hecate.

Beginning the Journey

We don't receive wisdom; we must discover it for ourselves after a journey that no one can take for us or spare us.

-MARCEL PROUST

Magick is a joy, and it is also a responsibility. It is and always has been up to the practitioners to use wisdom, compassion, and their own intelligence to temper their spells. While this may seem difficult to imagine or to achieve, just like any other skill, you only become proficient at psychic self-defense and protection magick when you practice.

Yes, this is a darker shade of witchery; however, while it may be more intense, there is nothing here to be nervous about. Let's work from a neutral place and take a thorough and fearless look at it together. We can begin our journey right now just by turning the page.



Psychic Awareness and Witchery

You stand in your own light.

-JOHN HEYWOOD

HERE IS AN important fact for you to consider. As a magickal practitioner and a Witch, you are a beacon of light. You will attract the attention of all sorts of physical beings on this earthly plane as well as the attention of beings on the spiritual plane. Those who practice the Craft and live their life in a positive, life-affirming way will attract other lights into their worlds. They will also, from time to time, attract the shadows. Learning how to deal with and conquer those shadows in a balanced way is an important part of the Craft and your training.

For those of us who take our Craft seriously, and who work to live our magickal lives with honor and integrity, dealing with this topic is an emotional one. To live as a Witch is to grow and to gain experience in the Craft. You are always learning, training, and pushing yourself into uncharted territories beyond the boundaries of what is comfortable. As students of the magickal arts, we are always striving to remake ourselves. We have to battle against our own tempers, shortcomings, insecurities, and fears, and go beyond our limits to transform who we are.

Pushing your limits is part of every Witch's training. Taking a realistic and serious look at psychic self-defense and protection magick is yet another step along your journey. Truthfully, in one way or another as a magickal practitioner, you will indeed have to protect or defend yourself on a psychic or magick level eventually.

Yes, we all have to go through the various stages of denial, fear, anger, and then acceptance. Then, once you realize what the problem is, you can finally stopped wringing your hands, second-guessing yourself, and

wondering what in the hell is happening to your world. It's also time to take a deep breath, take a hard look at where you are standing at the moment, and then start asking yourself a few tough questions.

Have you become complacent? Perhaps you simply got a bit lax with the upkeep on your personal protection magick. It happens. And honestly, from time to time, we all forget, and it's easy to become a bit lazy in regard to magickal protection and psychic self-defense. When you become complacent, the universe typically steps in and teaches you a hard lesson. It can happen to anybody.

Do you believe you are too powerful to be blindsided? Seriously, understand what the word blindsided means. It means you have been caught unaware-off guard-and that you did not see the incident coming until after it ran you over.

Did you foolishly assume that protection magick for you personally would never be necessary? After all, as ethical Witches, we know better than anyone that there is a price to be paid for those who cast harmful magick out of spite or envy. Many practitioners honestly cannot conceive of anyone even doing such an incredibly stupid thing on purpose; these scenarios simply do not happen in their magickal worlds, and they will refuse to even consider the possibility. Yes, step right up, ladies and gentlemen-here we have a fabulous illustration of denial.

This notion is perpetuated by the Wiccan Rede, which states "An it harm none, do as you will." With this credo in mind, many folks think the answer is to send love and light in any situation. Well, good luck with that. Love is fine; but if someone is trying to physically assault you, are you going to send them love and light, or are you going to fight back and try to kick them hard in the groin or go for their eyes so you can escape?Think about it.

Face it: there are bad people out there. It's foolish to not consider the possibility that any magician or Witch could ever, for any reason, step over the ethical line. To believe that it will never happen to you is about as irresponsible as walking through a dark parking lot and dangling your cash-filled wallet from your fingertips while verbally taunting any would-be

muggers in the area. This is what I like to call the "Oh, it will never happen to me" mindset.

Do you lock your front door when you leave your home? Of course you do. Do you flash your cash or credit cards or leave them lying about? No, because that's careless. Do you hand out your personal information to every stranger you meet? Why, of course not. In today's world, you have to be smart and savvy. There is no excuse for being naive.

That's when the truth about magickal protection and psychic selfdefense hits you. That's when you become aware.



A Little Something You Did Not Learn in Wicca zo z

Let us not look back in anger or forward in fear, but around us in awareness.

-JAMES THURBER

It has been my experience that most practicing Witches today are either intuitive or empathic to a certain degree. Why? Well, if you think about it, Witches just know when magick is afoot, or they sense when magick is at work around them. This type of knowing, or sensing, is a valuable tool that Witches naturally rely on as they practice their Craft. This is also that same inner awareness that has set them on their magickal path to begin with. They have come to realize that there is more to this old world than most people realize, and so they open up to the possibilities of magick and begin their quest.

In my book Natural Witchery, we explored the different psychic abilities and how they relate to and support your personal power and your Craft. In this book, we will take a look at how to go about defending yourself on both a psychic and a magickal level with your own natural talents. And yes, this is a necessary skill to have. As Witches, we push our boundaries every day to become more-more of an adept practitioner, more knowledgeable and more sensitive to the current of magick that runs through our lives.

It's important to realize that the same wonderful perception that can make a Witch a talented empath and very sensitive to the ebb and flow of magick can also cause the same individual to be bombarded with negativity from others if they are not careful. The same sensitivity that you have been carefully cultivating is like a double-edged sword. It can easily cause you problems and pain if you are not thoughtful with how you handle it.

So what is a Witch to do? You strive for the middle ground. You need to become more aware of your surroundings and the energies at play within your life. Basically, you stay alert and remain attentive to your own inner warning system. Pay attention to your intuition and your instincts. Take notice of your body and your psychic senses. The messages may be subtle or strong; for example, a subtle warning may be feeling uneasy or jumpy for no apparent reason.

The trick is learning to pay attention to the warning signs that are around you. Don't overreact. Rather, listen to your gut hunches and focus on your intuition, as this may just save your magickal behind. There is no need to panic. Instead, I urge you to put your game face on and to become more alert; then you can take the appropriate action and respond calmly and in the best possible way in regard to the situation.

All of the personal training you have undergone and all of the years of experience that you have accrued can help you learn to magickally defend yourself now. That double-edged sword of sensitivity that we just referred to is not to be feared. Instead, it is meant to be honed and practiced with, for it is a part of you-an extension of your magick, if you will. That "sword" defends your weak spots and enhances your strengths. It is not something that can harm you. It is, in fact, a weapon that can be used for magickal defense.

And like a knight of old, you don't go swinging that sword around just for the hell of it or because it makes you feel tough. You keep the sword in good condition while you work on celebrating your strengths and overcoming your weaknesses. And if you develop your own psychic skills, train and practice with this magickal knowledge daily, and work from a centered place, it does indeed become a formidable defense.

Psychic Talents

Discover Yours

It is by logic that we prove, but by intuition that we discover.

-JULES HENRI POINCARE

There are four main types of psychic talents: clairaudience, clairvoyance, empathy, and intuition. The straightforward questions in the quizzes that follow are designed to help you figure out what particular psychic talents you are working with. Their questions are very similar to the ones that were in my book Natural Witchery, though for the sake of convenience the quizzes have been fine-tuned and reproduced for you here.

Natural Witchery showed you how to incorporate these talents into your Craft, which enabled you to "turn up the volume" on your own magick. Now, I'm showing you what the strengths and weaknesses of these particular psychic abilities are. This will teach you how to use them to your advantage and how to defend the weak spots that go along with the psychic ability. This way you have knowledge, and knowledge is power. Take a look at the following four sets of questions, and go over them carefully. When you have finished all four quizzes, see which category has the most yes answers.

Now, please keep in mind that a yes answer should be yes, as in Yes, this happens to me all of the time. Not Oh, that happened to me once, many years ago. Be honest with yourself. If you want to truly know where your psychic talents lie, then honesty is the best policy.

Clairaudient Quiz

i. When I am speaking to friends, I always know what they are going to say before they say it.

z. I hear key phrases or words in my mind that will then play out immediately in my real life.

3. If I have a person's name stuck in my mind all day, I typically receive a surprise visit or phone call from them within twentyfour hours.

4. I will have a song spontaneously pop into my mind that then provides me with insights or information for a particular problem.

5. I always pay attention to my inner voice or my inner monologue.

6. I often hear other people's thoughts.

7. I often hear what is not said (aka "hearing between the lines").

8. I can send a thought or a phrase to someone else, and they can hear it.

9. I can hear it when someone is lying to me.

io. It is essential to me to have a quiet, calm environment to work in.

Clairvoyant Quiz

i. I regularly experience premonitions.

z. When I close my eyes, I can see actual images in my mind's eye.

3. I mistrust people who will not look me in the eyes or who look away while speaking to me.

4. Visualization techniques come easy for me.

5. While being taught something new, I do better by being shown as opposed to being told.

6. I have experienced a clairvoyant vision (see page 2o6) while I was awake and aware of my other surroundings.

7. I would describe myself as a visual person.

8. I have precognitive dreams regularly.

9. I can easily tell the difference between a regular dream and a precognitive dream.

ro. I am most comfortable in a pretty, bright, and picturesque environment.

Empathic Quiz

i. As I enter a room, my first thoughts and impressions are usually about how the room feels to me.

2. I am easily influenced by other people's moods and emotions.

3. Being in a large crowd makes me feel uncomfortable physically and bombarded emotionally.

When I meet someone for the first time, I gather my impressions and assess them by how they make me feel, despite how they act.

5. When I am with another person, I can easily understand just how they feel. I can sense their pain.

6. I dislike and will try to avoid casual touching from strangers in social situations.

7. Having heirloom items or antiques in my home makes me feel uncomfortable because of the memories that they carry.

8. I experience a feeling of "butterflies in the stomach," or a tightening of the solar plexus area, when I am contemplating the possibility of an angry verbal confrontation or physical danger.

9. I am best able to sense another person's emotional state by touching them.

io. I have my feelings hurt very easily and am often moved to tears.

Intuitive Quiz

i. I have experienced a foreboding feeling (which maybe described as "a sinking feeling in the pit of the stomach") about a person, place, or serious situation that then actually happens.

2. I tend to blurt out whatever comes to mind without first thinking it over.

3. I am an excellent judge of character.

4. I act on my "gut hunches," which are followed by positive affirmations that they were the correct things to have done or said.

5. I rarely worry, because I just know things will turn out all right.

6. I let my instincts guide me while searching for a book or other new item to purchase.

7. I make major decisions quickly and correctly, as if by instinct.

8. I wake up right before the alarm clock goes off every morning.

g. I consider myself a quiet and contemplative type of person.

io. I work best and am most successful by following my instincts, despite what others may suggest.

How many yes answers did you get in each section? The section with the highest number of honest yes answers is your area of psychic strength. Oh- and yes, you certainly may have tied in two areas or have more than one psychic strength. People tend to have a mixture of psychic abilities and talents. Now that you have a better idea of your own, let's move on to the next topic.

Psychic Strengths and Weaknesses

The more you read and learn, the less your adversary will know.

-SUN TZU, Art of War

While experienced magickal practitioners or natural intuitives, clairaudients, clairvoyants, or empaths may have a good idea of what their abilities are on a psychic level, they may not realize that they do, indeed, have weaknesses. Understanding how negative energy or manipulative magick affects your particular psychic talent comes in damn handy. For those of you who are naturally psychic, this is information that you've probably had to learn the hard way. As someone who has walked this psychic road for over forty years, let me give you some hints that will help you. It is true that the different types of psychic abilities have both strengths and vulnerabilities, so the goal is to identify and then safeguard yours.

In the following sections, there will be a brief description of the psychic talent and then a description of the weakness of each particular gift. Also keep in mind that many folks are a mixture of two or three types of psychic abilities, so consider each section carefully. Here is more information that will be helpful to you as you work psychic self-defense and protection magick.

Clairaudient Strengths: To begin, clairaudience means "clear hearing." This involves the reception of extrasensory signals as a word, a sound, or a phrase. The strength of a clairaudient is their ability to be tuned in to several things at once (which would be a sort of psychic multitasking). These are the folks who hear between the lines. They receive internal messages-and they do hear the things that are meant but never spoken. Clairaudients follow their inner voice quite often and listen to it without a lot of fuss. They are wonderful co-workers and tend to show up just in time to fix problems or to mediate conflicts. Telepathy is associated with clairaudience, and if this is a strength of yours, then I suggest practicing with a friend and see if you can really send your thoughts to another or have them send their thoughts to you. Clairaudients tend to be calm and grounded. They are very analytical and like to pride themselves on their common sense and their control.

Clairaudient Weaknesses: These are the people who need things proven to them again and again. They are so used to listening to that constant stream of psychic information that they sometimes disregard the more subtle physical/bodily signs or warning feelings. Clairaudients are so practical that they often have to be psychically whapped upside the head with something incredibly bad before they figure out that something negative is indeed afoot. They do not like to feel out of control of any situation, so their weakness is that stubbornness and a hesitancy to trust strong emotions or physical impressions. Clairaudients would rather trust their own mental powers instead.

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Clairvoyant Strengths: Clairvoyants accurately see the future, the present, and the past, and they can helpfully translate the visions they receive to others. The strength of a clairvoyant is their unique outlook and future-based impression of life. Clairvoyance literally means "clear vision." These folks see all too clearly what others would choose to keep hidden. The clairvoyant is tuned in to visual symbols, dreams, and psychic visions in a way most people could only imagine. Typically talented at illustrated or visually stimulating types of divinatory tools such as the tarot, they are mystical folks who can effortlessly envision the outcome of their magick. A clairvoyant is prophetic and is what was called in the old days a seer.

Clairvoyant Weaknesses: Why, they should be able to see anything coming, right? Nope. Often, clairvoyants are so busy weeding through the various visions and psychic pictures they are bombarded with that it can be tough for them to distinguish what is actually meant for themselves and what is meant for another. Clairvoyants spend a lot of time second-guessing themselves. As visions often come in symbols and signs, they typically have to decipher and then sort out what messages they are receiving. If the vision they receive is upsetting or a warning of some kind, it can make even the most talented of clairvoyants falter. This hesitancy-and being distracted by trying to figure out what their visions are actually telling them-makes them lose precious time and energy. Clairvoyants are often so distracted by the unease that accompanies a psychic warning, or the knowledge of negative energy being present, that they forget to stay calm,

to ground and focus their energies, and then to follow their intuition so they can react appropriately.

Empathic Strengths: Empathy is also known as clairsentience. An empath is a person who can psychically tune in to the emotional experiences of a person or place. They sense attitudes, emotions, and sometimes human ailments. The strength of an empath is their compassion. They truly know what it is to feel another person's joy or suffering. Empaths can read the mood or emotions of people and animals. They can also read the memories of an object or a place; this particular type of psychic ability is called psychometry. Well-practiced and shielded empaths can know if an object, area, or person has been blessed or hexed, typically without even having to touch the person or item. They can hold their hands above the surface of the object or above the skin of the person and sense the psychic impressions. Practiced empaths will observe how their emotions react while the sensations flow harmlessly past them.

Empathic Weaknesses: The empath tends to fall into two categories: the shielded and the unshielded. The shielded empath has learned to batten down the hatches when out in public, so as not to become overwhelmed by the swirl of emotions and impressions. When confronted with negativity, shielded empaths will either dodge and let the impressions flow harmlessly past them, or, if the information seems too personal, they tend to shut themselves down tightly. Either situation may cause them to miss the subtle clues that are valiantly trying to tap into their emotions by letting them know something is truly wrong. Sensing an attack, it makes them automatically pull down their psychic defenses even tighter. This causes a boomerang effect that makes trained and well-shielded empaths hunker down and draw their auras in toward themselves. What happens then is that the attacking energy will keep hammering away at them, until eventually it finds a weakness in the shield, or the empath's protection eventually falters, and that allows the energy to get in and do damage while their resistance is low

Unshielded empaths are usually so sensitive and vulnerable that they are overwhelmed and frightened about the constant unwanted personal

information they are receiving. Unshielded or untrained empaths get blasted right away by any strong emotion, and negative energy is very toxic to them. This causes them to feel even more off-kilter, and then they typically become ill. Once their auras are breached from the negative energy attack, the harmful energy really goes to work. This may cause unshielded or untrained empaths to feel paranoid, or they may begin to question their mental health. This situation also tends to scare off newer empathic practitioners, as these intense feelings of dread and alarm frighten them and make them feel that this magick business is too dangerous to pursue. Instead of exploring the feelings and psychic impressions they are receiving, and trying to figure it out and learn from it, they panic and run instead.

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Intuitive Strengths: Intuition may be defined as a quick and ready insight and immediate apprehension or cognition-the good oldfashioned gut hunch. This ability is sometimes referred to as "prophetic knowing." Intuitives rarely worry, are fantastic judges of character, and are seldom wrong about situations and issues that pop up, which can be annoying to the folks who live with them (I should know-I have a very gifted intuitive in my family). Intuitives are confident and clear thinking. They make excellent decisions and are naturally the person in charge. Even if it is not in their personality to be the ring leader, their family, co-workers, and other people are always drawn to them for help, support, and practical advice.

Intuitive Weaknesses: The intuitive's weakness is arrogance. Bless their hearts, those darn intuitives typically "just know" when it comes to perceiving psychic information. They may be overconfident because they are so often correct anyway, and that's what blindsides them. After all, they have already sized up and identified any potential problems. Intuitives may think they would "know" if there was a problem, so they may ignore a psychic vision or an empathic/emotional impression, which may be their body's only way of getting their attention when their mind is already made up. The trick is that sometimes attacking energy or malignant magick is subtle, and sadly, it can be tailor-made to get you in a weak spot, such as your pride.

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So, what did you learn? It's a little humbling, isn't it? However, this is not the time to be embarrassed. This is the time to learn and to put the information to good use. It is important to realize that often psychic attack symptoms and problems are the product or manifestation of baneful magick. By studying this topic from a unique point of view, you have added to your overall wisdom.

And finally, we have another type of scenario to consider. While it does not fall under a psychic category, it is a topic that is rarely touched upon.

The Public Witch

This is not an easy path to follow, nor is it for all.

-MARIAN GREEN

Whether you are a high priest or high priestess, tarot reader, psychic counselor, reiki master, coven leader, community leader, or magick/ metaphysical shop owner, to be a Witch in the public eye is to be an individual with a psychic target painted on the middle of your back-or a sign that everyone else sees that says, "Please, tell me all of your problems."

Just this past week, I got pounced on by a woman I had not seen or spoken to in over two years. We used to work together, and I suppose she finagled my unlisted phone number from my old boss. Three days in a row, I was bombarded with her pleading and begging for a spell to make her new husband take her back. She was in her late forties, had been divorced twice before, and-from what I remembered-she had worked very hard to get back on her own and was happy with her single life. So I was very surprised to hear she was married at all, let alone thrown out by hubby number three.

Here is the interesting thing. She spent a half-hour telling me all about her fifteen-thousand-dollar wedding rings, her vacation to Hawaii, the fancy trips they used to go on, the new car he bought her, the fancy house, even the (I kid you not) state-of-the-art, stainless-steel appliances in their kitchen. She

demanded a spell to make him take her back. She wanted to be back in the big, expensive house with those pretty new appliances.

I tried to explain that I did not work that way, and then she informed me that apparently the gentleman in question suffered from depression and had decided to take himself off of his medications. He completely changed from the man she thought she had married. He became despondent, gained weight, started having problems with his job, and then, in a moment of high drama, threw his wife of six months out of the fancy house. She never once said anything about love. Instead she listed off, twice, all the goodies that she was missing, and how she was now alone, penniless (her words), and without a job for the past three months while she waited for the man to come to his senses.

She begged me to do a spell on her husband. She pleaded, and then, goddess help me, she listed off for a third time all the things she no longer had. I suppose she thought that would make me sympathetic. But it wasn't until I flat-out asked her if what she loved about the guy was his money that she said, almost like an afterthought, "Oh, I love him, too."

Well, how charming.

Long story short, I gently but firmly explained several times about manipulation and how I would not cast a spell on her soon-to-be-ex husband. I did tell her I would work a spell for her so she could heal, find peace, and get back on her feet. I gently ended the conversation and felt a cloud of depression slide over me from all the emotional dumping that I had just been subjected to.

Then I lit a pink candle for the woman and said a quick charm for her emotional healing, as promised. Later, I went for a walk, worked out, and, lastly, took a ritual bath to get any lingering energy off of me. For the next several days, she kept calling my house. Each time I refused to speak to her; answering machines are a beautiful thing. I suppose she figured if she just pleaded long enough, I would do whatever magick she wanted me to do.

Now, while this is not a classic psychic attack, it is draining. It's called "spell begging," and public Witches get subjected to this situation a lot. This

type of behavior is nasty, exhausting, and manipulative. It's the old "I'll just nag until I get what I want" routine. If you are a public Witch, then you need to be aware of this sort of situation so that you can learn to protect yourself from it, as this is an emotionally draining type of attack. So how do you protect yourself from it? Well, you put some boundaries in place. You are allowed private time, so screen your calls and learn to say politely and firmly the following magick word: no.

Besides spell beggars, being a public Witch can also expose you to envy; it might expose you to unwanted psychic attention, and it may draw the crazies of this world straight to your door. It seems that everyone wants a piece of you, as they want you and only you to listen to and solve all of their problems, real and imagined. It's funny and it's tragic all at the same time, and Lord and Lady help you if you decide to help out the dabbler or the New Age individual who is running around all in a panic.

Let's be honest here: do you know what happens to the average Witch when they try to help out a skittish New Ager, spell beggar, or someone who is emotionally imbalanced, or even offer well-meaning advice to a magickal dabbler? The other person will latch on and then hold on to the witch tightly. They can be darn hard to shake loose, too. Why? Because they want to believe that you have all the answers to the mysteries of life. So how do I know that anyway? Been there, done that, bought the T-shirt. I am sure that many readers have been there, too.

Be aware of these occult dabblers and pseudo New Agers who constantly think they are in danger of some type of "dark" being-a shadow creature or entity. These typically are the folks who are curious about magick and the Craft but who are, in reality, actually terrified of it. And you know exactly what sort of person I'm talking about.

Can any of you say you have not been to a metaphysical shop or a Pagan function where some poor unbalanced individual was running around telling anyone who would listen all of their woes and insisting it was all because of baneful magick or bad energy?

The popular answer for the dabbler is to do unto the other person before they can do unto you, which is why books on hexes and curses abound-and

the dabblers just gobble them right up. After all, they have many, many books on Witchcraft, you know. Why, they've been reading about the Craft for years! Sounds way too familiar, doesn't it?

Bottom line: if you are a public Witch, you, too, should be especially vigilant. Not fearful, only attentive. Hold your head up, and look around yourself in awareness.

A Spell to Promote Psychic Awareness

We are all born with wonderful gifts. We begin as children to explore and develop our talents, often unaware that we are unique, that not everyone can do what we are doing!

-LYNN JOHNSTON

Here is a spell that will reinforce what we just discussed. This simple spell is designed to awaken your psychic awareness. No matter if you are clairvoyant, clairaudient, empathic, or intuitive-or any combination thereof-this spell is designed to call those abilities and their gifts forth, to help you learn and grow in awareness with them.

> Supplies: Pen and paper; your quiz answers from this chapter; one white votive candle; a votive cup; matches or a lighter; and a safe, flat surface to set the candle on.
>
> Directions: You may cast this spell on a Monday to tie in to the psychic and mystical qualities of the moon. For more added punch, you could also cast this spell on a new moon or a full moon.
>
> To begin, look over your quiz answers. Take a moment and jot down what your strengths are. Then make a quick list of what other psychic talents you would like to personally improve upon. Now set the list down in the center of your work surface, and set the candle in its holder on top of the list. Light the candle and place your hands on top of the paper, on either side of the candle holder. Finally, center yourself, and repeat the spell verse:

May I become more open to psychic impressions
As my own talents and strengths can teach me many lessons.
Whether empath or clairaudient, intuitive or clairvoyant
Grant compassion and control, confidence and clear vision
For these qualities will enhance my inner wisdom.
As this candle burns away, my spell has begun
For the good of all and bringing harm to no one.

Allow the candle to burn in a safe place until it goes out on its own. Take your list and tuck it away. See how your awareness opens up over the next few months.

The Next Step

A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.

-LAO TZU

Acquiring psychic awareness is a wonderful beginning on your personal journey to a deeper magickal discovery. Let's continue to research the topic, turning our focus and attention on those four magickal elements. Each of the natural elements has a specific lesson to teach and more mysteries to reveal when it comes to psychic self-defense and practical protection magick.

In our next chapter, we study the element of air and the idea that knowledge is power. This will enable you to add to your repertoire and to keep working with the new information that you have just discovered, thus allowing you to become a more balanced and centered Witch as you travel down the path of wisdom.



Chapter Two



Knowledge Is Power (Air)

I have gone out, a possessed witch, Haunting the black air, braver at night.

-ANNE SEXTON

AS THE ELEMENT of air represents knowledge and wisdom, what better way to learn more about ourselves as magickal practitioners than to examine what things make us unique as Witches? Discovering just where your strengths lie can be an amazing tool for self-development. A topic I lecture on frequently and with great passion is that we are not all little cookies cut out of the same "Wicca ioi" mold; we are individuals. Where we live (our climates, the local flora and fauna); our ages and personalities; our families; our individual tastes, experiences, and personal styles of witchery-all make each of us uniquely powerful practitioners. Understanding what affects your own personal magickal environment is an important step.

So with that in mind, and to gain more knowledge of yourself as a Witch, go ahead and answer the following questions:

Magickal Background Quiz

i. Where do you live, geographically speaking? (For example, do you live in the mountains, by the shore, on the plains, in the woods, or in the desert? Do you live in the city, in the country, or in the suburbs?)

2. What are the seasons like where you live? How do they affect your sabbat celebrations and your magick?

3. When it comes to describing yourself, would you say that you are outgoing, laid-back, or shy?

4. Which of the four natural elements (earth, air, fire, or water) do you most strongly identify with?

5. What do you feel are your psychic strengths, and how do you incorporate them into your witchery?

6. What life experiences have most strongly affected your Craft and how you practice it today?

7. What types of magick do you prefer-herbs, crystals, candles, etc.?

8. Are you a hands-on, practical natural Witch, or are your practices more formal and ceremonial?

9. Are you a traditional Witch, or do you consider yourself eclectic?

ro. How many years have you been practicing your Craft?

Look at your answers; this is a definition of what makes you you. All of these things define who you are in regard to magick. It is vital to understand more about just what makes you tick as a magickal practitioner, because honestly, no two people will have the same answers. And that is the point!

Our own lives and personal experiences are what shape us into distinctive magickal practitioners; this is a beautiful thing. So celebrate your uniqueness. You can defend yourself with those abilities in a way that nobody else ever could. This private information is a power, and this knowledge supplies you with a base that you can then easily build upon.

Once you have acknowledged your own personal powers and the unique foundation that you draw strength from, you will have a better idea of how to protect yourself on both the psychic and the magickal levels. This will give you confidence. And magickal confidence looks good on you!

For now, I want you to study your answers from the quizzes from the first chapter and this most recent quiz. Now write a little essay about what you think makes you the extraordinary Witch that you are. List your strengths-both extrasensory and personality-wise-and what you believe makes you

unique. Then tack up that essay somewhere in your home where you can see it every day and be reminded and inspired.

Now that you are feeling optimistic and empowered by this new information, let's tackle the next subject of psychic attacks-not with fear and dread, but instead with a healthy interest and a big dose of confident enthusiasm. At its core, magickal self-defense is mainly psychic work, so it is critical to study the principles of psychic protection.

Here is where we have to walk a fine line. We do not want to create a bunch of panic-stricken magickal practitioners out there! What we are striving for is awareness, because when you have a working knowledge of your own personal and extrasensory strengths and weaknesses, this increases your options so it becomes easier to fight off random negative thoughts or even an intentional energy attack from another without a lot of fuss.

Psychic Attack?

How Do I Know for Sure?

I think that it is very good for people to talk about their paranormal experiences and share stories about things that they cannot explain.

-ROSEMARY ELLEN GUILEY

Okay: if you want to wind somebody up, ask them if they think psychic attack is real. Hot debate to commence in five... four... three... Anyway, you get the point. As someone who has worked psychic fairs since the early 19905 and who has been around the block when it comes to the psychic and magickal communities, I can firmly tell you that yes, indeed, psychic attack exists. Hell, it's alive and thriving.

Psychic attack comes in many forms. For example, anybody who has ever had to face down an argumentative or condescending co-worker, a jealous colleague, a nasty-tempered boss, a spiteful ex, or a disapproving relative has had to deal with a form of psychic attack.

A psychic attack is classically defined as the unconscious or conscious focusing of psychic or mental energies to bring emotional harm to another individual. This is, in essence, a personal attack. It scrapes away at your confidence and your ego until you feel like you are worthless. Basically, it's when you are confronted with the old "big me, little you" scenario.

Or it is a situation where the attacker feels, for some reason, that they are going to be the one to take you down. The reasons for this are many. Typically, it's jealousy-that is often the main motivator. You've got something they want, and they are envious and angry that you have it and they don't. It could be anything-a happy marriage, a good job, a thriving career, even a recent weight loss. Whatever. And these tactics are used all the time, typically by folks who are completely oblivious to what they are doing. You get hit with a big old dose of hatred. It may or may not be on purpose. Either way, if it has enough force behind it, the results will be the same. It is the aggressor's intent that fuels a psychic attack and can make it more powerful.

So, what should you be watching for? Well, there are several physical/ bodily symptoms or real-life manifestations you should pay attention to. Remember to validate these occurrences with your own extrasensory abilities and skills, and recall your personal psychic strengths as well. If you are intuitive, see if you have a strong gut reaction to the situation. If you are an empath, ask yourself how this situation makes you feel. If you are a clairaudient, check in and discover what your inner voice has to say. Lastly, if you are clairvoyant, then take a moment, close your eyes, focus on your third eye area, and see what visions unfold.

Symptoms of a Psychic Attack

As Witches on a path to power, we must move past our fear...

-CHRISTOPHER PENCZAK

The following list is not meant to make you mistrustful or to frighten you; rather, it is a tool to help you put your finger on what the psychic problem may be. It's important to remember that most psychic attacks come from

folks who have no freaking clue what they are actually doing. They are just angry or jealous, and then all of that malignant energy gets directed toward you.

We can all be involuntarily affected by other people's negative thoughts and emotions. The intense energy that is manifested forms emotional strands and astral webs that cling to us. Folks who are psychically sensitive, such as witches, tend to be affected by these attacks most easily-it's the old catch-22. So, the question remains: how do you help a sensitive to protect themselves from such occurrences? Well, you give them information. Once they have the facts and understand what is happening, they can deal with it in a practical way.

Some of these "symptoms" may make you chuckle, and some may cause you to experience a bit of a magickal epiphany, as in "Oh, is that what that is?"-which is followed by the "Aha!" moment: you know, that lovely feeling of having your reactions or intuitions validated. So don't be nervous. Put your game face on, and cop a witchy, warriorlike attitude. Armed with this knowledge, you can now easily protect yourself with confidence.

The heebie-jeebies: You know this one...it's the feeling that something is stuck on you or your face or clothing like a spider's web. On the physical plane, you probably won't see anything clinging to you, but you'll feel it lingering there. It's the uncomfortable sensation that makes people keep brushing off their arms, checking their faces for dirt in the mirror, or making them look to see if they have a stain on their shirt or lint on their nice slacks. Or a person might get nervous and twitchy for no apparent reason-a classic case of the heebie-jeebies. It also makes people jump and think, is there is something crawling on me...and what is it?

Feeling that you are being watched: This is a classic. First off, check to see if someone really is watching you-is it your boss hoping to catch you goofing off, or is it just some hopeful admirer from across the mall, checking out your butt? Maybe it's as simple as someone screwing up their courage to ask you who did your hair. Rule out anything mundane before you start thinking it's a psychic or magickal problem, or even a haunting. Then ground and center, and check your psychic senses. What do your instincts tell you? Is this a friendly energy or not? What you are probably

feeling is that questing psychic energy. If it feels a bit uncomfortable or pushy, then the psychic negativity is probing for a weakness; that's what you are experiencing. The energy is searching, hovering around you and trying to find a way to get in.

Feeling a heaviness on your chest, shoulders, or upper back: Similar to the "I am being watched" situation, only this time the energy is really close-as in, it's already on you. Typically, you'll feel it draped around your shoulders and over your chest and upper back, which means that it is actually covering your body and waiting to get inside of you. That's the heaviness you feel. Your body feels the attempted-and unwanted-energy invasion and is trying to warn you with that bodily sensation of heaviness.

An ache in the solar plexus area: Empaths and intuitives tend to be affected mostly in this area of the body. Think about it: the first thing we instinctually do when we are feeling defensive or upset is to cross our arms over our midsection. The reason we automatically cover up this area is that there are many nerve endings that are spread out over the solar plexus, making this a large area of psychic reception. Consider how people typically describe their intuitive experiences. "My stomach just sank." "I had a gut hunch." It just hit me in the gut." An ache or heaviness in the solar plexus is your body's way of trying to get your attention. This is an early warning signal. Pay attention to it and validate it, and the sensation of pressure or tightening will ease up when the threat has passed.

Feeling empty or drained of all energy: With this situation, you need to rule out a possible physical ailment first. If you are female, could your menstrual cycle be affecting you? Make sure you are not coming down with the flu or a cold. It could just be plain old fatigue or everyday stress too, so rule out those factors initially. If the drained feeling occurs only around a specific person or place, then you have something else entirely. This means you need to focus on your instincts and figure out exactly who or what is causing the problem.

Vivid recurring dreams that are especially violent or disturbing: If you are having recurring nightmares and you have not been watching horror films every night before you go to bed, then you need to understand that your subconscious is desperately trying to communicate something to you, and I

bet that you are blocking these psychic warnings during your waking hours. So this leaves your psyche only one option: vivid dreams. Keep a dream journal and write the dreams down. Then, when you can be calmer about it, go back and carefully read the entry. Now use your intuition and see what you feel the dreams are trying to communicate to you. Acknowledging that part of your mind is trying to get your attention, then validating and decoding your experiences, will make the dreams subside.

Becoming suddenly accident prone or/and a long chain of small, petty annoyances that rolls into bigger and bigger problems: This last section is a two-parter. Indicators of something being "off" include the following: if you unexpectedly find yourself feeling like a klutz, when typically you are not; if you find yourself constantly tripping or having "close calls" in a short span of time; when everything you touch literally breaks or malfunctions; or you suddenly begin to lose valuable objects that you swore were there only a minute ago. Now, we all have days where everything seems to go wrong-those are aggravations, and that's not what I am referring to here. However, when the problems just seem to continue for days, if you are narrowly avoiding bodily harm, and the bad luck seems to have no end in sight, that's when you need to tune in to your own psychic talent and see what your instincts are telling you.

Elemental Solutions for a Psychic Attack

Experience is not what happens to you; it is what you do with what happens to you.

ALDOUS HUXLEY

It has been said that experience is often the best teacher. Now that you've taken a realistic look at how a psychic attack can manifest in the everyday world, you can deal with your experiences instead of wondering what in the world is happening and why.

Basically, I am giving you some practical coping skills. The following psychic solutions are simple, very effective, and easy to use. Do not underestimate these elemental solutions because they are uncomplicated.

There is a beauty and a power in simple rituals and practical psychic hygiene practices. You will get out of these magickal remedies whatever energy and positive intention you put in. These are valuable lessons to learn; as the lessons evolve into knowledge, in time your knowledge will, in fact, become wisdom.

Earth cure: Take a deep, cleansing breath in, and blow it out. Sit in the grass, and ground and center yourself. Another option: hug any variety of pine tree. Evergreens are incredibly protective, and they are very sacred trees. Or, if you prefer, sit with your back against the tree trunk, place both hands on the ground, and stay put for a while. Reconnect to the earth, and allow any negativity or manipulative magick to drain harmlessly away, out of your system, and right into the soil. Once it goes into the earth, it will be neutralized. The earth can recycle this cast-off energy easily, leaving you refreshed and rejuvenated.

Air cure: A classic and time-honored way of clearing and cleansing a person or place is through smudging. Using incense or a smudge stick, wave the scented smoke over yourself or around a room and indulge in a little cleansing aromatherapy. Allow the incense smoke to remove any lingering energy or psychic residue. An alternative fix is to step outside for a few moments and let the breeze or a good stiff wind blow any astral nastiness right off of you. Hold your arms out to your sides and face the wind. Now feel it stream through your hair and pull at your clothes. Visualize those dregs of attacking energy being pulled right off you and harmlessly taken away into the ether.

Fire cure: Stand in the sunlight for a few moments, and let it burn any unpleasant, lingering residue or energy right off of you. On cold days, sit by a sunny window and feel the light and warmth of the sun work its fiery, protective magick. If it's summer, slather on the sunscreen and really get some sunlight therapy for about an hour. Or you could light white candles that have been placed in holders and arrange them in the shape of a large circle. Once that's set up, sit inside the circle of candlelight and focus your magickal intention and psychic talents on finding and removing any attacking energy from your person or home. See the negativity drawn away from you and straight to the candle flames like a big dusty moth and

then zap! Away it goes in a puff of smoke. Don't be surprised if you hear the candles pop and crackle as the negativity gets burned off.

Water cure: Take a bath. Strip off your clothes, then dump them in the laundry and hit the shower. Wash that astral sticky web stuff right off of yourself. Now, if you are not at home and a bath is not an option, then simply wash your hands. Cold water breaks any psychic links. Shake the water off of your hands and picture any residue flying harmlessly away. Another idea is to take a walk in the rain or snow. Make a quick dash out in the precipitation. Ask the element of water to wash it away, or the snow to freeze the problem and blow it away.

Try any of these elemental solutions in any combination that you desire. You could always start by working with your favored element, or work all of these elemental solutions, one right after another. Trust your own instincts. Which type of cleansing practice do you feel would work the best for you, considering your magickal personality and style? Now dive in and get to work!

Down-to-Earth Advice on Hauntings

Advice is what we ash for when we already know the answer but wish we didn't.

-ERICA JONG

It has been my experience that people who have psychic attack issues and need help with protection magick want practical answers and quick advice for their problems. Straight talk is always the best way to go; in keeping with that, we are about to explore the unknown. This is a topic I get hit with a lot: haunted houses and unwanted spirits.

I seriously considered not including this subject matter in the book at all, but I do get asked about this problem often. People who feel that they are dealing with a possible haunting are not going to want to read flowery, over-

romanticized prose, or worse-to go out looking for useful information, only to have to wade through yet another sensational or exploitative book on the topic.

You know how that all goes: Here is my amazing yet horrifying haunted house story that I am lucky to have survived. If you flip over to the back of the trashy tome, you will most likely see the phrase "Soon to be made into a major motion picture."

Oh, please. People want down-to-earth advice and commonsense solutions-and maybe a good chuckle, so they don't feel so afraid and powerless.

Haunted Houses
Who Ya Gonna Call?

What beckoning ghost along the moonlight shade Invites my steps, and points to yonder glade?

-ALEXANDER POPE

It's a pretty autumn day. I find myself sitting at a table under a canopy at an outdoor Pagan festival. Someone approaches me with a few of my books tucked under their arm. We exchange smiles; they ask me to sign the books, and I happily comply. As we chat for a few moments, I get the feeling that the person is leading up to something. They are too nervous and keep looking around, wondering if anyone is close enough to overhear them. As they start to steer the conversation topic to mediums and psychic abilities with a question about whether or not I think Ouija boards are dangerous, I think I know where the conversation is going. Finally the person bucks up their courage and asks with a nervous smile, "So, do you think you could get rid of the ghost that's in my house?"

As if on cue, someone walking by my table starts cheerfully singing the Ghostbusters theme song. I try not to chuckle, and the questioner nervously begins to laugh. They qualify their request with, "Well, I mean, you are a clairvoyant and a Witch; you could do it...right?"

I run into variations on this question all the time. Amazingly enough, many folks believe that if you are a public Witch, you must be a paranormal troubleshooter of sorts. And if you possess any sort of psychic ability or mediumship talents, they really imagine that they have a line into their own personal versions of Ghostbusters, Ghost Hunters, and Ghost Whisperer all rolled into one. My normal response is to ask them straight out why they believe they couldn't handle the problem themselves.

Typically I get a goggle-eyed response, followed by breathless excuses-why, they couldn't possibly tackle this on their own. The reasons tend to go a little something like this: they wouldn't know how to start, their family wants them to call in clergy, they are afraid to try, and (my personal favorite) it isn't their fault. It's enough to make you crazy.

Keeping to our theme of straight talk, here are a few simple suggestions for you to start with. Yes, it is important to start out quietly and without a lot of fuss. Typically this will take care of the situation nicely, and it will do the trick for clearing out negativity and making clients feel more at ease in their own home. It is also an empowering act, and empowerment is always a good thing.

Basic Steps for Clearing a House

If you think there is a presence in your home that does not belong there, then it's time to clean house. I do not recommend that you attempt a seance with the ghost. Sometimes a ghost is just plain ornery. After all, it has been hanging around on this plane with no one to talk to for a long time. Or if it does appear to someone, it usually gets a strong negative reaction. Folks start slapping up crucifixes hither and yon, thinking they should confront a ghost like it is the movie character Constantine or something-which, in my opinion, makes the ghost cranky and sometimes vindictive.

To begin the clearing process, bless the house with sandalwoodscented incense or sweetgrass, saltwater, and candlelight. This represents each of the four elements. The element of air is represented by the smoke of the incense or the sweetgrass; you have fire from the burning candle; and the saltwater covers both the earth (salt) and the water representation.

Set all the accessories on a tray and work your way through the entire house. With the salted water, draw stars or equal-armed crosses on every door, mirror, and window in the house.

Announce in each room: "I bid all energies not in alignment with myself to be gone."

When you finish up, allow the candle and incense to burn until they go out on their own. Flush any remaining saltwater down the toilet.

Typically, when folks think they are sensing a presence, what they are actually sensing is old, leftover emotions and memories that the house has held on to. Most classic hauntings are, in fact, old memories that keep replaying again and again. These are called residual-style hauntings. Basically, something once happened in the home-it may have been a happy memory, or it may be that it was traumatic. The energy of that event seeped into the structure of the building and is imprinted. So along comes a sensitive, and hello-they keep sensing, hearing, or seeing the playback. If you are a clairvoyant, then you need to work on desensitizing yourself to the particular problem area. Try acknowledging the memory; say something out loud like this: "I acknowledge your memories. Go find peace and be at rest."

Then, instead of panicking every time the memory hits replay, you can just acknowledge the residual haunt and move on. If there is not a lot of reaction out of you other than a matter-of-fact response, they tend to (no pun intended) die down and fade in intensity.

If you are sensitive to older homes and vibrations, then keep yourself grounded by carrying hematite in your pocket or wearing amethyst jewelry for its protective and calming purposes. Also, lay off the antiques. Don't haul other people's memories into your home to compound the problem.

You could also set out clusters of clear quartz crystals within your house, one at each of the four corners, and regularly perform a cleansing every month on the day after the full moon; that ought to keep things under control. Another idea is to fill up the house with laughter and love. A home filled with friendship, laughter, and happiness is hard to drag down with old, negative energy.

Ghostbusting for Witches

I have heard, but not believed, the spirits o' the dead may walk again.

-SHAKESPEARE, The Winter's Tale

What do you do if you believe that you may have noncorporeal company in the home or workplace? Let's say you did a cleansing, you cleared the home of negativity to the best of your ability, but things still feel off-or there are manifestations (in other words, you can see or hear something in the physical realm).

First question: has someone been using a Ouija board? I am not speaking of a consecrated spirit board that is used for divinatory purposes in a ritual way. I am speaking of the old-fashioned, pain-in-thebutt Ouija boards-you know, the kind you can still buy at ToysRUs? Perhaps you thought it was cool, or your teenagers got hold of one, burned some black candles for effect, and thought they'd reenact a scene from a scary movie.

Don't roll your eyes at me. Ninety-eight percent of the time when I have been called in to check out a haunting, that is the underlying problem. (Damn Ouija boards!) Spirit boards are tools, not toys. I once had clients inform me that they had used a Ouija board in their home right in a spot where they knew someone had committed suicide-just to see what would happen. Then they freaked out when a ghost came a-calling. Talk about pulling a tiger's tail!

If someone has been playing with a Ouija board, they have opened an astral doorway into your home. And now you need to close it, and close it down tightly and permanently. Those spirits are pissed off and impatiently hanging around stuck on this plane, waiting for you to send them on their way.

Where do you start? Get rid of the board. Go outside and do a basic cleansing spell over the board and announce out loud that the portal is closed. Here is a quick cleansing charm that you could use.

A Cleansing Charm

Say this aloud and with intention, in a confident voice:

By the powers of the four elements
I cleanse this object of all negativity.
By the light of the moon, sun, and stars
I am also cleansed, protected, safe, and secure.
This portal is now closed
And will cause no more mischief or harm.
By earth, sky, and shining sea
As I will it, so shall it be.

Break the gameboard in half and wrap it in red yarn; if possible, tie rowan twigs (this tree is also known as the mountain ash) to the red yarn-that's even better. Then put the yarn-tied board in a brown paper bag. Take a black marker and draw the protective rune Algiz (Y') on both sides of the bag. Shake salt inside the bag and all over the board. Roll up the bag and dispose of it in a public trash can that is located well away from your home.

When you return home, do a cleansing and protection ritual on yourself (and your car, if you drove somewhere to dispose of the board). The first four lines of the cleansing charm (above) would work nicely for that. Just switch out the word object in the second line for car.

Finally, wash the clothes you were wearing, take a bath, and use lilac or patchouli oil in the water. Both of these essential oils are fabulous for cleansing and breaking negativity.

Doing Your Haunted Homework

If we knew what it was we were doing, it would not be called research, would it?

-ALBERT EINSTEIN

If the spirit board is not the issue, then your next step is to discover what the history is of the building and the surrounding property. This means you are going to have to do some research. Consult the local historical society and the public library for records on the home or the property. Also, as long as you are digging for clues, check if a violent crime has taken place there. See if you can track down the previous owners. Why did they move, anyway? Has someone passed away in the home? Are there any forgotten cemeteries close by the location? See what you can uncover. Information is power.

Watch your children and pets. Are there rooms or spaces that they avoid? Pets are good barometers for sensing negative energy. However, if your preschooler is habitually afraid of the closet, this does not necessarily mean that you should do a banishing. It means that you should clean out said closet and make it a fun place to store clothes, shoes, and toys, and maybe put a night-light in there. Use your common sense and creativity.

Now that you know the history of the location and what you may be dealing with, your next step is to cleanse and bless the house. Start by physically cleaning everything in the home. Scrub windows and floors, change the sheets on the beds, do all the laundry, take out the garbage, vacuum, sweep, dust, and pick up. A home that is clean has healthier, more positive energy than a dirty, cluttered house. It really will help.

Next, you'll need to do a cleansing of any leftover negative emotions and a banishing for menacing spirits. Here is where you need to call on your inner warrior Witch. Believe in yourself; there is no place for doubts here.

After all, it's your home-and the best person to clean house, so to speak, is you.

A House Cleansing and Banishing Ritual

Directions and Supplies: I suggest doing this during a waning moon phase. To keep things upbeat and to help you feel confident, work this on a bright, sunny day. Yes, that's right-do the magick during the daylight hours. Let the daylight and the empowering, cheerful light of the sun be your ally in this working.

To begin, turn on all of the lights in the house. Open all the windows in the house and let the sun shine in and fresh air stream in. On a tray, arrange a cup of spring water, a dish of salt, a white candle, and sandalwood or frankincense incense in a burner. Light the candle and incense. Put a pinch of salt into the dish of water and, using your finger, stir it until it dissolves. Hold both hands over the water bowl, and say this line to empower the water:

Salt and water now mixed by my own hand
Bring peace and protection throughout the land.

Bring the tray with you as you work your way through the house. As you enter a room, go directly and confidently to the middle of the space, set the tray down, and then, always working counterclockwise, sprinkle a bit of spring water and salt in every corner of the room.

Draw stars with the empowered spring water on every doorframe, window, and mirror. If it helps you to stay relaxed and brave, sing. Seriously. While anointing the windows and doors with the water, I personally like this classic chant: "We all come from the Goddess, and to her we shall return like a drop of rain flowing to the ocean." This is cheerful, and it's empowering. Go for it!

After the windows and doors are done, pick up the incense and wave the smoke around the room. Keep working counterclockwise, as this

will help banish any discordant energies. Lastly, carry the candle around, exposing each corner to a representation of each of the four elements: the fire from the candlelight, the air with the incense smoke and fragrance, the earth from the salt, and, lastly, the water.

Next step: pump yourself up emotionally and know that you are strong and powerful enough to remove any unpleasant energy from your property. Visualize yourself gathering up the energies in a counterclockwise direction (pantomime this with your hands if it helps you to focus), and then force the old emotions out of the windows and the vents and into the sunlight, to dissipate and disappear harmlessly, burned off in the sun's bright beams.

Repeat this verse after you finish each room. Do it with authority and in a strong voice. This is no time to be timid.

By the powers of earth, air, fire, and water,
this room is now clean and free.
I banish from this building all spirits and discordant energies.
Let the sunshine now burn off all negativity
And as I will it, then so must it be!

Continue to work your way through each room in the building, blessing and consecrating the entire space-even the bathrooms, basement, and attic. Once you have cleansed the entire house, go to the center of the building and repeat the charm one final time. Allow the candle and the incense to burn out on their own.

Afterwards, take a ritual bath and cleanse yourself. Put on fresh clothes. Finally, take the leftover water and salt, mix them up together, and pour them across the threshold of the main entrance to seal the magick.

As you will it, then so shall it be.

Sharing the House with a Friendly Ghost

Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep.

-JOHN MILTON

Now, on the other hand, maybe you enjoy the ghosts that are in your home. I am not suggesting that every ghost is bad; many are friendly and curious. Ghosts that seem to respond to your presence or like attention are referred to as "interactive." In reality, most ghosts are just nosy, lonely, or bored-forget all the movies and television shows that portray every spirit as a demon or an evil entity.

I know those shows frighten some people, but honestly, they just make me chuckle. Perhaps you are unafraid of your noncorporeal company. Maybe you are simply curious and are wondering why they are still there. Well, have you considered just asking them?

If you have a ghost and they are trying to communicate with you, why don't you just ask them what they want from you? Maybe they are trying to help. Recently, I had a fellow author ask me for ghostly advice for a friend who felt that her new flower shop was haunted. Seems that Joanie, the owner of the flower shop, would come in to open up the business in the mornings and find all of the shop's lights on. This was upsetting for a couple of reasons. Number one, she knew darn well that the lights were off when she had left the previous night, not to mention the unwanted expense of having them on all night long.

I recommended that Joanie talk out loud to the ghost and politely tell it that, while she appreciated its help watching over the store, the lights being on were costing her a fortune. I also suggested that Joanie purchase a night-light and turn it on for the ghost at night. I told her to announce out loud, "I appreciate your help keeping an eye on the shop. Please don't turn on the lights anymore; I'm leaving a night-light on for you instead."

A few days later, it was reported back to me that, for the past two days, Joanie had left the night-light on and the spirits had indeed left the other lights in the shop off. Since that had worked out so well, Joanie decided that she would try for a little more. She announced to the spirit of the flower shop that it could say hello during the day if it was friendly, and then a bit later she heard what she described as a high, soft, and hollow voice say in reply, "Hi, Joanie."

Joanie double-checked-she was alone in her flower shop when it happened. Now she says she will buck up her courage and ask for the ghost's name-classic interactive ghost activity.

And see? Nothing horrible, no demons in the daisies, no zombies staggering through the bouquets of roses. There was no need to panic or even be afraid. It's just a ghost who is trying to get Joanie's attention, who apparently loves flowers, and who just wants to help out.

In Annie Wilder's book The House of Spirits and whispers, she writes about one particular interactive spirit in her i8oos Victorian house that she refers to as Leon. Seems that Leon was the previous owner, and he was also a bit of a prankster. He made his presence known and also tried to communicate with Annie and her family for a while. Yes, true story. And no-nothing gruesome happened; actually, something pretty amazing happened instead.

Instead of panicking about the ghost, Annie followed the clues that Leon gave her. Eventually, she discovered in her basement pipes an old coffee-can safe that Leon had stashed away while he was still alive. The coffee can was attached to a shoestring and slid down inside of the pipe.

So Annie pulled the lid off the pipe, pulled the string (which raised the coffee can) and found that homemade safe-and it was stuffed full of cash. Annie tracked down Leon's family and gave the money back to his adult daughter. How cool is that? When I spoke to Annie recently about her haunted house, she informed me that Leon is still the guardian of the old Victorian house and that she, her family, and their visiting friends enjoy his presence there.

Now, just so we are clear, it's not like the ghost is the family's petactually, they are more like his pets. He keeps an eye on them, still plays pranks, watches over the home, and apparently enjoys the companionship, which I think is fascinating and absolutely wonderful.

Now that's my kind of happy, witchy ending.

Standing Tall and Looking Within

Power over others is weakness disguised as strength. True power is within, and it is available to you now.

-ECKHART TOLLE

As we close up this chapter, there are several important points to remember that all revolve around the idea that knowledge is power. This neatly corresponds to the first principle of the Witch's pyramid, which is "to know." It is not by accident that this is the first part of that pyramid. As Witches, we are always on a quest for more knowledge, and if you want to combat any magickal or psychic issue, then you need to have an understanding of exactly what it is and how it works.

Now that you have the information, you are able to comprehend how psychic attacks happen. You have learned some simple techniques for the practice of good psychic hygiene, and you are able to recognize and identify the symptoms of a psychic attack. Best of all, now you know that you can easily defend yourself, and you can do this without a lot of drama.

We also explored the topic of ghosts and hauntings-and we did it with confidence and curiosity, not fear. Isn't it amazing how you can take the fear right out of a topic by dragging it into the light of day and taking a careful and confident study of it?

Armed with this practical information, you can use this air-aligned knowledge to your advantage. Do you recall the idea of that magickal sword from the first chapter? Well, you have indeed added to your skills and now

have a better idea of how to more effectively wield that extension of your magick.

Pull in your power with a deep breath and focus on the new knowledge that you have attained. It is vital to realize that when you pull in power, you are centering yourself and working from a balanced place. You pull in, not to make yourself appear smaller but, in fact, to focus and intensify your personal power.

That internally focused energy now allows you to grow-to expand with awareness and stand in strength, secure in the knowledge that you can handle anything that gets thrown your way, with poise, objectivity, and wisdom.

Call to the Element of Air

A sailor without a destination cannot hope for a favorable wind.

-LEON TEC

To close up this chapter, here is an elemental call that will help you work successfully with the element of air. I recommend working this outside, and don't be surprised when a breeze washes over you in answer to your request-or a sweet floral fragrance may waft its way gently to you. Pay attention for more subtle manifestations. If it is already a breezy day, then turn and face the wind and hold out your arms, embracing that current of air and all of the strength of this element. Let it blow a little freshness and positive change into your world. This is actually a type of smudging, only instead of using scented smoke from incense, you are relying on the element of air to blow away any lingering negativity or fear.

An elemental call is a powerful act of magick, and it requires awareness and personal control. It all depends on what you are willing to put into it and if you are prepared to trust in this natural element and let it do its work as your partner in protection magick.

Element of air, now swirl around
Awaken my senses with a humming sound.
Your fragrant breezes wash gently over me
Removing harm, fear, and negativity.
I am now empowered, refreshed, and brave
Ready to handle whatever comes my way.



Chapter Three



Setting Boundaries (Water)

It is always with excitement that I wake up in the morning wondering what my intuition will toss up to me, like gifts from the sea. I work with it and rely on it. It's my partner.

-JONAS SALK

IN THIS CHAPTER, we are working with the element of water, its power, and its gifts to us, which are our emotions. Water plays a huge role in all of our lives, as the adult human body is approximately 6o percent water, meaning that the element of water rules the body. Love, sensitivity, and extrasensory abilities also correspond to the flowing, feminine, and elegant element of water. Learning to work successful protection magick with this fluid element requires a study of personal boundaries.

If you have a strong, healthy sense of self, then you possess firm emotional and psychic boundaries. If, on the other hand, you are not feeling confident at the moment, or if you are working to overcome the effects of emotional or physical abuse, then your boundaries are not as solid, and they may fluctuate. It's not so much that you are consciously allowing people to "walk all over you"-it's that while you are working to rebuild and reestablish those boundaries, your resistance is low, making you much more sensitive to attacks and draining tactics from other individuals.

Not all of the attention that you receive is constructive, good, or even helpful, and you are responsible for your own psychic and emotional protection. We all go through tough times when, for whatever reason, we don't feel so good about ourselves. This is when our personal boundaries can become a bit murky. When this occurs, you should become especially vigilant with your personal borders, as during this weakened energetic state, you can attract predators such as emotional vampires and passive-aggressive

bullies. They sense a weakness, and they come hunting. Think of them as being like a shark in the water who smells blood. They will hone in on that scent and follow it, looking for a meal. This is only the nature of any natural predator. According to the American Heritage Dictionary, a predator is defined as "an organism that lives by preying on other organisms."

Unfortunately, with people and their own machinations, this brings the idea of predator and prey to a whole new unbalanced level. There is no healthy "thinning out" as in the natural world. This is all about supremacy and taking someone else's power away from them, so the human predator can feel that they have gained more for themselves. Some people have never understood the concept that you don't snatch energy or happiness away from another. You do not exploit someone's personal weakness, or demand power from the elements or from a deity. True power comes from within.

Sadly, there are many magickal and psychic practitioners out there who have never understood this simple truth. They are so busy looking for validation of their own self-worth that they never stop, center, and look inside themselves. So, instead, they are always looking to grab someone else's energy or drain another's personal power all for themselves. This gives the predator a rush and, for a moment or two, makes them feel superior.

Face it: there are predators out there. They do prey on whomever they consider to be weaker than themselves. No, I am not trying to frighten you; I am giving you an up-front and honest look at this particular psychic concern. I don't believe in sugarcoating things. Here is where you have to take a good hard look at the truth about what attracts these types of predatory individuals. Let's clear out the muck and make this emotional and watery element that streams through our lives crystal clear; that way you can strengthen yourself, eliminate any weaknesses, become more educated on this topic, and protect yourself with wisdom, style, and maybe a bit of dark humor.

In the previous chapters, we've been working toward achieving a better psychic awareness. In this chapter, we go from being aware to reacting and then taking action toward our own psychic and emotional selfdefense in the best possible way.

Boundaries are a wonderful thing.

Dealing with Emotional Vampires

Those wacky vampires. That's why I love 'em. They just keep ya guessing.

XANDER, Buffy the Vampire Slayer

An emotional vampire is defined as a person who is needy emotionally. This is a human being who literally feeds upon the attention of others. Sometimes emotional vampires are mistakenly called psychic vampires, but this is an altogether different matter. Emotional vampires have no magick, but they can still suck the life out of you. Remember the following statement: With emotional vampires, it's all about them.

Emotional vampires play by a different set of laws. They believe that their needs are more important than anyone else's and that the rules of polite behavior and fairness apply to other people but never to them personally. They want everything, right at this very moment, and nothing is ever their fault. Be warned that if they do not get their way, they will throw spectacular tantrums or make their victims miserable until they get exactly whatever it is that they want.

Well, you may wonder, who would be stupid enough to invite a character like that into their lives? You'd be surprised. Emo-vamps make, as one writer refers to it, "killer first impressions." They are more attractive than other people, and of course much more talented, fascinating, understanding, or entertaining to be around. They make themselves very easy to relate to and they encourage people to trust them and then to divulge their innermost secrets. They flatter you with deep and direct eye contact and act as if you are the only person in the world who understands them and how they suffer. They also will encourage you to believe that you two share a special emotional bond, which sounds disturbingly familiar to every romantic vampire fiction you have ever read, doesn't it?

So, yes, emotional vampires do prey on humans, after a fashion. No black taffeta cape required. After all, the emo-vamp is a master of illusion and will

show you exactly what it is you think that you need to see. That's how they lure you in. What you need to understand is that emotional vampires will use whoever they can get their little claws into to meet whatever desires the vampire happens to be experiencing at that time. Male or female victim-they don't care. Emotional vampires will take your money and your affection, and they will demand all of your attention, twenty-four hours a day. These folks are extraordinarily highmaintenance friends or lovers.

Emotional vampires, like other predators, groom their potential victims. Whatever victim is the easiest to control and drain dry is who they go after. They use flattery to make you feel special and important in their life. Emo-vamps also employ misdirection to confuse and keep you from seeing the truth about their own behavior. They also like to isolate their victims and keep them away from other friends and family, who might catch on to their draining, manipulative behavior. The vampires are so charming that typically the victim does not catch on until it is too late.

If you feel you may have one of these characters in your life, then you need to wise up and be careful, because if you allow an emo-vamp's demanding, manipulative actions to go unchecked, they will take a chunk out of your very spirit to slake their thirst. Truthfully, you are simply a means to an end. They will drain you dry and then carelessly toss you aside when they can't get anything else out of you. They want it, they want it all, and they want it now... and they don't give a damn what your feelings are on the matter. Because (as I asked you to remember), this is all about them.

How often have you heard someone talk about an old flame or former friend who either manipulated them or took them for everything? Turns out that they had fooled the other person completely, and the bloodsucker was nothing like their victim imagined them to be. Instead, it was all an act, and Mr. or Ms. Wonderful was actually shallow, cunning, egotistical, and manipulative. These types of intimate emotional vampires gain power by knowing your secrets and your innermost needs. They trick you into believing that if you give them what they want, they, in turn, will be the lover of your dreams or the best friend you could ever wish for, which is all an illusion. Emotional vampires are like the classic fictional vampire in many ways. They are shapeshifters, they only have power if you invite them inside, and they have a real issue with mirrors.

Identifying an Emotional Vampire

You can pick out actors by the glazed look that comes in their eyes when the conversation wanders away from themselves.

-MICHAEL WILDING

Beware the shapeshifter: No, no, I'm not saying emotional vampires turn into actual bats. Instead, they do something elsesomething much more frightening and potentially hurtful. Emotional vampires are natural actors. They can and do change their physical appearance and often slip into a different persona. They literally shapeshift into whatever or whoever it is you really want (or think you want) to see. This type of person is an accomplished actor. The first thing they do is to manipulate you into believing how physically attractive they are-whether they are actually attractive or not. The emotional vampire is so compelling, and their act is so polished, that they dazzle you into believing that they are beautiful. They also trick you into thinking that what you two share is extraordinary. Emotional vampires will put on a hell of a convincing show.. .just long enough to lure you right in.

They can't enter your life unless you invite them: This means that just like fictional vampires, emotional vampires have to be invited into your world to "get in" and be able to do the most damage. They have to be in close physical proximity to you, after allit's all part of the grooming process that was mentioned before. Predators always carefully select and then groom their victims; while this is creepy to realize, it is important to comprehend.

Emotional vampires aren't going to leap out of the twilight shadows and select you by chance. They are always on the prowl and are watching carefully for any weakness. Then they will try and get closer to you. They look for a need for friendship, affection, or flattery, and, sensing that weakness, they start to inch their way into your life. Sadly, for people who are lonely or unsure, the vampires only have to start the shapeshifting routine to make you see whatever it is you most desire. Once they have groomed you to their liking and made you nice and

compliant, they'll go straight for the jugular. If you identify emotional vampires for what they truly are and deny them entrance into your life, then they become powerless. Their mind-control tricks won't work on you, and they will eventually have to move along and search out other unsuspecting prey.

The dreaded mirror: While fictional vampires cast no reflection in a mirror-and they are supposed to fear the mirror-emotional vampires love every mirror, because they never can get past their own reflection. Why, there just isn't anything else worth seeing in that mirror unless it's the utter fabulousness that is them! When confronted with a mirror, emo-vamps won't even take the time to acknowledge anyone else, they are so busy admiring themselves and whatever new trinket or toy they just manipulated out of you. Honestly, while they are busy appreciating their own reflection, you do not exist in their minds-except as a means to an end.

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Dealing with emotional vampires is a lot of work. Some people would prefer to run like hell in the opposite direction than to ever get involved with an emo-vamp. But you do have options. There are clever ways to deal with emotional vampires, whether they are a colleague, a friend, a relative, or a romantic partner.

The best thing I have ever found for dealing with emotional vampires is to see them for what they are-pitiful. Also, it really helps to look at them like badly written fictional characters from a trashy paperback. That always gets me chuckling, and then I start to perceive them for what they truly are: narcissistic, vain, and empty creatures who believe that everyone else owes them. You need to understand that emotional vampires, both male and female, believe that they are so pretty and special that other people should want to take care of them just because they are so fabulous.

Don't give in to their demands, and if they throw a tantrum, treat them like a screaming two-year-old: step over them and walk away. Once they realize that you are not reacting or are not particularly impressed or worried about their tantrum, they become confused and stop. If they go running to you and

whining about how cruel you were to them, then you need to slap some boundaries in place and explain explicitly to them exactly what type of behavior you will tolerate from now on. Then stick to your guns: do not reward bad or manipulative behavior. They will either change or get bored and move on to someone else. To that, I say good riddance.

If you want this unhealthy situation to change, then you have to be willing to put some effort into it-to stand strong, define your boundaries, and demand better treatment for yourself. Otherwise, you will have to deal with even more unpleasant types.

Passive-Aggressive Emotional Bullies

When a resolute young fellow steps up to the great bully, the world, and takes him boldly by the beard, he is often surprised to find it comes off in his hand, and that it was only tied on to scare away the timid adventurers.

-RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Fact: not all abusive personalities are big, brawny men. Some of the meanest and worst people I have ever had to contend with were physically small or slight in stature. Sure, they looked nonthreatening to the casual observer, but inside they truly were bullies. A few of the most subtle, nasty bullies I have ever encountered were women-sometimes it is the women you have to watch out for. Power games come from all sorts of people.

The only way that passive-aggressive bullies can feel powerful is to be unkind to another person. They have to show and demonstrate their dominance often. Whether physically, verbally, or emotionally, they will find little ways to tear you down. It's never full-out physical abuse. It's little things: a cutting comment, a cruel joke, or low-scale physical aggression. These subtle bullies get off on the fact that nobody stops them.

Signs of subtle or passive -aggressive bullies are the folks who invade your personal space all of the time. They touch you too often and just a tad inappropriately; they flirt a bit too hard; or, worse, they are the ones who constantly hit you while they talk. It's the whole "smack on the arm with the

back of their fingers" while they speak, to punctuate what they say or to get your attention.

Now, to be fair, occasionally we all do a backhand swat on the arm, lightly and in good fun, to a friend who has just made a really rude comment, which is typically followed by you both trying not to laugh at something funny between the two of you. That's not what I'm talking about here. These smacks on the arm that I am speaking of are not playful. You won't be laughing, as they are a bit painful. If this action is constant or chronic, then, truthfully, they are passive-aggressive maneuvers.

That arm smack is similar to when a person "accidentally" touches another person in a slightly inappropriate way. You know, the accidental brush of your behind or bump into your chest, where you recoil and feel slightly embarrassed, but the predator moves in closer or teases you about it. If the other person apologizes and moves back and never repeats it, then it was accidental. If they don't apologize, or step even closer and make eye contact, then that is a predatory act.

How can you tell for sure? Well, pay attention to your instincts. What do they tell you? Also, the biggest clue is the predator's behavior when you react or complain. No matter if it's about the arm smacking, the inappropriate touching, or the crowding of your personal space, the first thing the bully does is to loudly laugh and tell you that you are overreacting.

This often causes embarrassment for the victim, because let's face it, nobody likes to appear weak or foolish. The bully doles out mild physical abuse or inappropriate behavior and you react, then they laugh and tell you that you are being oversensitive. You get angrier, they feed off of the attention, and then they tell other people in the vicinity so they can all laugh about it some more.. .they feed off that, too, and you lose, which means they win.

Did you catch that last part? They feed off of the attention. This is a type of emotional vampirism. If you listen carefully, you can hear them slurping up your energy just like a kid finishing a milkshake. Don't give them any more emotion or energy to feed off of. You do have power over that and the situation, once you identify it for what it is.

This type of low-grade physical abuse is a way to dominate another person. It's a way of showing other people that they own you and have power over you physically, and that they possess power over your emotional reactions. So the question remains: what are you going to do about it?

The Bully versus the Witch

Revenge. . .it's better than Christmas.

-ELVIRA, from the movie Elvira: Mistress of the Dark

So you've been reading my books for years now, and I bet you think you have me all figured out. I can just hear some of you...Oh, that Ellen. She's so funny! Why, she never has had to deal with anything unpleasant or unfair. . .not like I do. Would you be surprised to know that I have dealt with bullies in a less than friendly way?

Yes, indeed, I have dealt with my share of passive-aggressive situations and even abuse while on the job. As I look back, one particular instance comes to mind, and I admit that how I handled it is funny as hell. At the time, however, I was less than amused.

I once worked with a bullying woman who used that "whap on the arm" maneuver constantly to try and remind you just who was in charge. What was comical about this particular situation was that the individual in question was about five inches shorter than I am and very frail in build. Definite power trip going on there-this type of power-tripping behavior is what some folks would call a Napoleon complex. We had both worked for about two years together in a little shop in the historic district of my hometown. (Yes, this is the same boutique that I wrote about in Natural Witchery. What can I say? I seem to have a knack for ending up working in haunted locations and for attracting the crazies.)

Back then, I had asked the bullying woman several times and very politely to stop the arm-smacking routine, to no avail. She was also the sibling of the previous owner of the boutique. When her sibling was the owner, no one dared to complain too loudly about the problem-if they did, they would find

their hours cut to the bone. Now, with a new owner and no indulgent relative to save her bacon, the bully was frightened. She was also scared to lose her hours, as she was a horrible salesperson, not to mention her skill of manipulating the new owner into buying things for the shop that the bully personally wanted but that would likely never sell to paying customers.

I knew that no matter how polite or pleasant I was to that woman, she was intimidated and terrified of me because she knew that I was a Witch. This constant arm-smacking thing was something she could do to everybody all of the time, and it made the bullying woman feel more powerful. So whenever I worked with her, I became her ultimate target. How pathetic, and how very, very foolish.

So with the thought of establishing healthy boundaries in mind, I quietly approached the new owner of the boutique where we worked to talk to her about the problem. The boss just rolled her eyes and said, "oh, Ellen, come on! She is so tiny. She can't hurt you!"

Thanks for the support there. I found that really upsetting, and not just for me personally. The owner was a nice enough woman, but she had never worked retail in her life. She thought it would be fun to own a boutique, and the passive-aggressive arm smacker was trying to take over everything, and the owner was not doing a good job of it. All of the other employees knew; we tried to help the new owner, but she was totally dominated by our little Napoleon "I will take over the world" employee.

How did I finally get the passive-aggressive arm smacker to stop? At the core of this situation was one important fact: I was dealing with a bully. It didn't matter that she liked to play innocent and that, honestly, she wasn't too bright. She was a bully right down to her toes. So I decided to use a simple tactic that she would respond to and understand: physical intimidation.

This was not an easy decision, but it was one I had promised myself to pursue if I ever found myself suffering physical abuse from a co-worker again. Several years before, a hysterical and emotionally unbalanced male manager had punched me in the arm because he was angry at me for asking him to unlock my cash register. It left a bruise, I reported it immediately, and it was ignored. I also took grief because the store manager did not want any

trouble in her store, and she told me to let it go. I mean, hello, what century are we in? A woman reports physical abuse to another woman and it gets hushed up?

That situation had left me feeling really betrayed and angry. I contacted the national branch of the company and reported the instance and my store manager's reluctance to do anything about it. I calmly told the national office that if they did not act, then I would go to the local police and report it. Then all hell broke loose.

The district manager got involved, and it was ugly. Of course, as is often the case, it was the actions of the complaint-filing employee that were questioned, never the poor managers. But I stuck to the truth and quietly worked a ton of magick for justice, and eventually the man was reprimanded, demoted, and moved to another store. However, when all was said and done, I was the one who was labeled a troublemaker, which taught me a hard lesson about big business, management, and employee relations.

I simply could not believe that now, in the little boutique, I was facing a similar situation. This time I had no other recourse than to deal with the problem myself. As I am not Gandhi, I figured with this new problem (the chronic arm-smacking woman) that physical intimidation was the best option, as it would have the least amount of karmic repercussions. I will admit that I seriously considered zapping her with a vicious spell or two, but I just could not honestly see how that wouldn't be viewed by the gods as magickal revenge instead of a more neutral type of magickal defense. Sometimes it's a bitch to be conscientious with your Witchcraft.

I plotted and I planned. I watched her carefully and figured out her biggest weaknesses, which were her fear of the occult and her lack of confidence, and I considered my nonmagickal options. Yes, I agree, it is somewhat disturbing imagining me sitting and methodically plotting another person's comeuppance, but I had to do something before I really lost my temper and kicked her scrawny butt over the checkout counter. (Okay, okay, I only considered that for a little while. It did make me more cheerful as I visualized it-bags flying everywhere, knickknacks falling, displays crashing down...) Wait, where was I? Oh yes, plotting her downfall in the least violent way possible, sans magick.

So, I waited until the next time the two of us were working alone. I went to work that day dressed for battle in a very gothic-looking outfit-all flowing black, with darker makeup than I normally wore. The effect was very witchy and unnerving to the other woman. But most importantly, it made me feel more powerful. The first time she slapped me on the arm, I stopped; I looked at her and made direct eye contact, then told her in a serious and final tone, "This is your last warning: do not ever hit me again."

She gulped audibly in response but recovered, then laughed, asking me if I was afraid of her. I only smiled quietly and touched my pentagram pendant, which was in plain view that day. Recoiling visibly from the pentagram, she backed off and behaved herself for about a half-hour. A short time later, as I was ringing up a customer, she walked up to the counter to "help," started laughing, and whop! Got me again. This one really hurt and, most frustrating of all, she did it while a customer was standing right there. Strike two.

Within moments, we were alone again, and she strutted up to me and told me that I had almost made as big of a sale as she had that day. I saw her maneuver herself so she would be within arm's reach. Then she started to make what she thought was a clever remark, and I held still and waited.

This time, when she swung her arm out to whap me with the back of her fingers, I was ready. I grabbed her hand, caught her fingers, and pulled her off her feet and up into me. I leaned down into her face and squeezed her fingers together as hard as I could, which made her squeal and scream like a little girl. Then, as I kept mashing her fingers together, I said very pleasantly, "What part of do not ever hit me again did you not comprehend?"

She just stood there, her mouth working soundlessly like a guppy while her eyes bugged out of her head.

I smiled and, as politely as possible, continued with, "These powertripping games of yours will not work on me. Do you understand?"

She only squeaked as I kept applying hard pressure to her fingers.

"Now," I continued in a conversational tone, "let me explain to you how this is going to be. If you ever touch me again, I will do a hell of a lot worse

than just squeezing the crap out of your fingers." I stared hard into her eyes and made sure she knew I was serious. Then I let go of her hand and pushed her away from me.

She stood there, holding her pinched fingers and shaking for a moment or two, while I studied her the way you would if you happened to come across an interesting insect. Then, predictably, she grabbed her crucifix necklace and held it up as if to ward me off.

"You can't talk to me like that! This will protect me from you!" she squeaked.

I raised an eyebrow at her and softly replied with a somewhat evil chuckle, "Really? It did not protect you a few moments ago."

She yelped and ran from the building. Tragically, the new boss was out on an errand, her sibling was out of town, and she had no one to run to, so our little passive-aggressive former arm smacker had to deal with me for the rest of the day.

I'd like to be noble and say I did not cackle about her being utterly terrified of me, but I'd be lying. However, she never struck me again, and she avoided me for months, which was pretty nice and made for much more pleasant working conditions, let me tell you.

oh, and now I hear the new boss is about to lose her business. The tiny little Napoleon is still doing her head games on the owner and is helping to run the boutique right into the ground. The moral of the story? Sometimes you have to establish boundaries in a less than cordial way. When you know that any spells you cast will be from spite, anger, and revenge, it's best to leave Witchcraft alone, to avoid those nasty magickal karmic repercussions. That does not mean, however, that you are defenseless.

Stand up to those passive-aggressive emotional bullies, and see them for what they truly are. This will give you power and confidence. A person who possesses strong, healthy boundaries will always stand up for themselves, rejecting both emotional and physical abuse. You have a right to keep both

your person and your personal space defended. Most of all, stand your ground with a smile; improvise, adapt, and overcome.

Water Ritual for Establishing Healthy Boundaries

Here is a ritual designed to work with the element of water and to establish and strengthen your personal boundaries. This watery ritual was inspired by my trip to Maine. I spent a lot of time with my husband walking the shores of the quiet bays and coves, picking up watersmoothed pebbles and being thrilled by the crash and boom at the dramatic, rocky edge of the Atlantic. Talk about atmosphere ... and it got me to conjuring.

This ritual works closely with the element of water, so to perform it you have some options, no matter where you happen to live. I suggest wearing something blue-shirt, sweater, jeans, blue socks, whatever you have. Get some color magick working in your favor. If you have a seashell or two, slip them in your pockets to reinforce the link to the element of water.

Outdoor Directions: If at all possible, do this water ritual outdoors, at the shore of a natural body of water-whether that is the ocean, a lake or picturesque pond, on the beach of a quiet cove or a bay, alongside a clear natural stream, or at the edge of a mighty river, it will depend on where you live and what bodies of water are available to you. Work with the magick of nature that is found in your area. There is a power there, and this will help to make your protection magick intensely unique. After all, working with the energies that are already in your locale only personalizes and strengthens your spellcasting.

Indoor Directions: If the weather is inclement or if you are not able to work this ritual outdoors, then set up this ritual and place a large clear glass bowl of water in the middle of the workspace. If you are limited to working indoors, you may want to add some blue candles to symbolize the element of water and cluster a grouping of shells around the glass bowl of water. Set up the ritual and get ready to go. Also note that you should adapt the following directions to your own situation-for example, dip your fingers into the bowl of water instead of the body of natural water.

Timing: I would suggest working this ritual at either sunrise or sunset; you decide which time would best suit your purposes. Sunrise brings in the energies of a new day and all those possibilities, while sunset closes out old problems and brings an end to unhealthy situations, thus making room for something new to flourish.

To begin the magick, turn and face the rising or setting sun. Silently hold out your arms and embrace the light and colors of the sunrise or sunset. Feel them fill you up. Now turn your attention to the body of water that is before you. Smell the water. Reach down and trail your fingers through the water as you stand on the shore. Now take your dampened fingers and place a drop of the water on your third eye and on your chest, over your heart. Begin the ritual with these lines:

The magick of the mind and of the heart

Is the root of the strongest Witch's art.

Now center yourself and tap into the energy of the body of water that is in front of you. Focus on it and feel its essence. Now repeat the spell verse:

Element of water, I now call you here

Create around me boundaries both strong and clear.

Confidence and courage will flow in and remove all doubt

Washing fear, uncertainty, and negativity out.

Close up the ritual with these lines:

Today's/tonight's protection ritual is strong and true

May the power of water bless all that I do.

Now relax and have a seat alongside the body of water. Enjoy your time outdoors and in nature. Ground and center yourself, and then, when you are ready, make your way home. Go with confidence and a refreshed and lighter attitude.

If you are working indoors with an altar, then sit down on the floor next to the work area. Take a few deep breaths and relax before you put away your supplies. Snuff out your candles and toss the water from the bowl over your front steps to wash away any negativity from your home.

Defining Your Boundaries

Internal power radiates from a core strength.

-STACEY DEMARCO, Witch in the Boardroom

What you have to do to create a positive change in your life and stop emotional manipulation is stay tough, define your personal boundaries, and not back down. This is where you have to explain explicitly to other people what your expectations are. It's not enough to know-you need to believe that you have a right to healthy boundaries. It's a wonderful thing to be caring and giving, but you need to be caring for yourself and to understand that your feelings count too.

Once you have created some balanced personal boundaries and reinforced your convictions with magick, the next step is to teach other people how to behave while they are in your presence. Learn to say no politely and firmly. This isn't selfish; it is an integral part of healthy boundaries. If you keep on giving of yourself with no reciprocation, then you are living in an unbalanced state. Identify the actions and behaviors from other people that you find unacceptable, then inform them of it. You can inform them by courteously pointing out the unwanted behavior or by asking them to stop. You can also give them explicit instructions on how you expect them to act from now on. You can demand that they stop their behavior, or you can leave, thus removing yourself from the emotional abuse or manipulation.

If you never explain to someone what type of treatment you expect, they will act however they choose. By saying nothing and suffering in silence, you actually allow the other person to have power over you. Speak up and honor the work you are making to bring that positive change into your life. Trust and believe in yourself.

While I was researching the topic of personal boundaries for this chapter, I found a lot of rhetoric about how we, as people, give our power away every day without even knowing it. Typically this occurs when we allow someone to treat us unfairly or manipulate us on an emotional level. Well, as a Witch, I thoroughly reject that idea.

Witches do not give their power away. We gather it up, allow it to fill us, and then direct it to move forward in our lives and create a positive change. Witches are always exploring and searching for new information, acquiring a deeper understanding of their magickal world and of themselves.

You have been made aware of your own boundaries, and you've been given an honest look at the situations that can occur when someone tries to take advantage on an emotional or physical level. You have gained information on how to deal with these types of people and social situations. Best of all, you now have a plan of action and a ritual to back it up.

By knowing yourself and accepting what your personal strengths and weaknesses are, you do become aware and empowered. This information allows you to care for yourself in the healthiest way possible, on both the emotional and the physical levels, for as you learn to trust in your own intuition, this will build self-reliance.

When you calmly assert yourself or defend yourself from emotional manipulation and unsuitable behavior, you are demonstrating confidence. Self-worth, self-esteem, and self-trust are the building blocks of creating healthy boundaries. These empowering actions will keep you strong in mind, body, and spirit. How's that for practical protection magick?

Call to the Element of Water

Like swift water, an active mind never stagnates.

-AUTHOR UNKNOWN

To close up this chapter, here is an elemental call that will help you to work successfully with the element of water. When you call on the element of water it may manifest in many ways, from a sudden shower, to landscape sprinklers suddenly coming on and drenching you as you walk in the park, to something small, like water being spilled on your desk at work. So be aware, be smart and safe and stay away from electronic equipment when you call on this particular element. Again I suggest working this magick outdoors. An elemental call may be uncomplicated, but it is a powerful act of Witchcraft and a way to celebrate your connection to the natural elements that rule our world.

Element of water, please hear my cry
Shower down on me like rain falling from the sky.
I reestablish boundaries in a healthy way
Becoming stronger and more secure every day.
Water, wash away and cleanse all negativity
Link me to the powers of rain, lake, stream, and sea.



Guarding and Reclaiming Your Power (Earth)

> New knowledge is the most valuable commodity on earth. The more truth we have to work with, the richer we become.
>
> -KURT VONNEGUT

THE ELEMENT OF earth possesses a stabilizing, restoring, and grounding type of energy. When it comes to magick, the element of earth is protective and provides us with the capacity for growth and solidarity. It brings permanence and strength. Earth is the hearth and home element, combining all the earthy qualities that make us feel safe and secure, such as prosperity, commitment, and stability.

By carefully studying the properties of this enchanting natural element, we can learn new and more effective ways to work successful protection magick. In addition, we can also enforce very strong psychic self-defense techniques, for within the element of earth is the power of being present in your magickal manifestations.

In this chapter, we begin the personal work of guarding and then rebuilding your power when you feel that, for whatever reason, it has been depleted. At the end of the healthy boundaries chapter, we discussed how Witches should never give away their own personal power. In a perfect world, this scenario would never even be an issue. However, we don't live in a perfect world. All of us make mistakes, and we do feel down from time to time. So whether your personal power was taken from you or you accidentally handed it to someone else or are just down in the dumps, it's time to get to work.

No matter how this occurred, it can leave you feeling drained, exhausted, and less than whole. It's time to pull yourself up by your witchy black bootlaces and dig down deep and reconnect to the earth. There you will find your power and the strength to defend your own personal energies, and then you can start to rebuild and become whole again.

So far in this book, you have become more aware of your psychic abilities and the strengths and weaknesses that go hand in hand with your particular psychic gifts. You linked in with the air element to allow new magickal information to waft into your life, thereby becoming more knowledgeable about what makes you a unique magickal practitioner. You gained wisdom, all while airing out old notions about psychic attack and hauntings. In the previous chapter, we studied the effects of emotional manipulation from emotional vampires, bullies, and predators. You were encouraged to reevaluate your personal boundaries and strengthen them with positive words, positive actions, and waterthemed magick. Now, by focusing on the element of earth, we can dig up new ways that you can defend and reclaim your own personal power and psychic energy.

To begin, we study the psychic vampire. Why? Because when you understand the mechanics of psychic vampirism, then you can more easily guard your personal energies and protect yourself by staying centered, grounded, and in control.

The Psychic Vampire

Intentional and Unintentional, Invited and Uninvited: What You Need to Know

The strength of the vampire is that people will not believe in him.

-GARRETT FORT

Psychic vampires are different from emotional vampires. Sometimes called psi-vamps, they are people who have learned how to take energy from others (or who have a natural capacity for doing so) and then use that acquired energy to raise up their own personal energy levels.

To begin with, there are many psi-vamps who are blissfully unaware of their actions. When they drain away another person's good mood or energy, it is done unintentionally, which is why we refer to them as unintentional. They simply don't know what they are doing and have no idea they are causing harm.

Then there are those uninvited psychic vampires who feed wherever they will, without permission, and it is absolutely on purpose. They are referred to as intentional and uninvited. For these characters, this deliberate taking of another person's energy gives them a buzz and makes the uninvited psi-vamps feel stronger or superior to those around them. It's the whole look-what-I-can-do-and-no-one- can- stop-me scenario (cue the creepy music and add an evil chuckle, mwha-ha-ha).

On the flip side of the coin, there are also psychic vampires who feed only with permission. In other words, they are verbally invited in by the energy donor with full knowledge of what is about to occur. These types of psi-vamps will adhere to ethical behavior when it comes to the energetic feeding from another person, since they would like to be invited back at a future date.

The main thing that separates the deliberate and inadvertent practice of psychic vampirism is, in fact, intention. As with all magick or psychic work, it is all about a person's intention. Some accidental or unintentional psychic vampires simply have no clue. These folks are just sad, miserable, or insecure, and they probably look up to you. They unknowingly want some of your positive energy and happiness for themselves, so being around you and drawing some of your spark and essence into themselves makes them feel better about themselves.

Now, it is true that all of us, from time to time, lean on our friends or loved ones for emotional support. We draw strength from their affection and camaraderie. That is not psychic vampirism, that is love. What makes it different is that we are happy to reciprocate to our friends when they are down and to be there to support and assist our loved ones when they need us. So don't panic when a friend or loved one wants some emotional support. Trust me, you will know the difference.

Typically, this friendly energetic and emotional support is only needed for a short time, because eventually they feel better, stronger, and more enthusiastic, and they heal. They'll begin to laugh at things again, and then they move along their own path in life. If this routine should become habitual, that's when you have a possible, albeit unintentional, psi-vamp problem.

On the other hand, there are intentional psi-vamps who know exactly what they are doing and feed without permission, whenever they feel the need, which is why I refer to them as uninvited. Unfortunately, that purloined psychic energy only fulfills their need for a brief time, and then the psychic vampires themselves become their own victim, which is something many uninvited psi-vamps don't realize. The habit they have gotten themselves into is a very unhealthy one. Truthfully, they will become dependent on the pilfered energy of others, and then that stolen energy begins to sustain them for shorter and shorter periods of time, which makes an uninvited psi-vamp only want more. So, like an energy junkie, they are always on the prowl for the next even bigger psychic energy fix.

Not unlike emotional vampires, intentional, uninvited psychic vampires are masters of illusion. They draw in their victims with a clever combination of wiliness and guile. Intentional psychic vampires work best when they can confuse their victims with misdirection, because anytime your mind is in a state of confusion, you shut down your defenses and focus only on the puzzle that you can't quite figure outwhich makes you completely oblivious to what they are actually doing.

Uninvited psi-vamps stand just a bit too close and will pay you specific and flattering attention. That way, you will hold still long enough for them to make what appears to be light, harmless physical contact. This allows them to link into you so they can do a surface or a contact feed to drain your energy, all while they smile right into your face and steal whatever they want from your own personal energies.

The truth is that uninvited, intentional psi-vamps are energy thieves. Because honestly, if you are taking something from another individual that does not belong to you, without their permission, then it is stealing. I don't even want to hear the whole story about how they can't help themselves and

it's just the way they were born. Well, how tragic and how very romance-novel-gothic of those poor, misunderstood creatures. Let's just staple the back of their hand to their forehead and all let loose a pitiful sigh in unison. (Yes, that was sarcasm.)

Do not buy into that whole "poor psi-vamps" line of thought. The minute you show any weakness for this type of energy thief is the moment they pounce. Do not allow them into your life or into your personal space-unless you like the idea of someone sneaking in and draining you of your life force, and leaving you feeling like crap when they are finished with you. Oh, and any fantasy you may have about "sexy vampires" really gets squashed once you realize exactly what it is that they actually do.

Types of Psychic Vampire Energy Feeding

I don't like vampires. I'm going to take a stand and say they're not good.

-XANDER, Buffy the Vampire Slayer

There are four main types of energy feeding that intentional psi-vamps indulge in, from the relatively harmless to the sneaky to the manipulative to the exploitative. You could argue this point forever, but at the end of the day, it all comes down to the psi-vamp's intention and whether or not he or she was invited and/or had the donor's permission.

Ambient feeding is one way that psi-vamps feed, and it is relatively harmless and the least troublesome. An ambient feed is typically done at a large public event, like a sporting event, concert, classroom situation, or public festival. Basically, psi-vamps sense the energy of the crowd that is out there floating around. In their minds, it's just hanging there, free for the taking. If the crowd is pumped up, rowdy, and boisterous, then that's the type of energy they receive. If the crowd is more serious or learned, like at a public class, then they get that flavor. They focus on it and draw that ambient or surrounding energy right into themselves.

Have you ever heard someone remark after an event, "Wow! I just soaked up so much energy here tonight!" Bingo. That's an ambient energy feed. Maybe it was done accidentally, and maybe it wasn't; again, the difference depends on the intention of the individual who harvested the energy and whether they caused any energetic harm to others.

Deep feeding is an act that is not to be entered into casually, according to the modern psychic vampire. This type of feeding is supposed to occur only with the express permission of the energy donor; anything else is a form of psychic rape. As you would imagine, this type of deep energy feed is typically performed in a private and intimate encounter, where the psi-vamp is literally feeding off of the very essence of their willing donor's life force. It is believed that the donor experiences a rush when they donate, but afterwards his or her natural defenses are low, and the donor will be drained and tired. In other words, they can't keep donating their energy in deep feedings again and again without rest and recuperation, or else the willing donor may experience some unfortunate physical side effects.

Sometimes this type of consensual deep feeding is an energy exchange not unlike tantric magick, where both partners, by mutual consent, give of their own personal energies toward a specific magickal goal. This requires an amazing amount of concentration, not only for the coordinating of the energy release but because most of us are more than a little distracted during our most intimate moments.

Surface feeding is a basic ploy in an uninvited psi-vamp's repertoire. This sneaky trick can occur from a distance of a few feet or even farther away. The surface feeding happens when an uninvited psivamp selects a target and then visualizes and creates an unwelcome metaphysical link from him or her straight into another person's aura. Once the link is established, the psi-vamp then focuses and visualizes the other energy streaming out from the victim and into him- or herself. (These links are often described as tendrils; charmingly, some refer to them as tentacles.) The links, or tentacles, are not physically seen, as they are on the astral plane.

A long-distance feeding act takes a tremendous amount of concentration. The closer a psi-vamp actually stands to their target-if

they can look directly at them and concentrate-the easier the surface feed will be for them. Because, let's face it, uninvited psi-vamps really don't want to expend any energy. They want to acquire energy by using the least amount of effort possible. If the attacker is standing close, it's not so hard for them to tap in. If they are across the room, well, that would require more concentration. If they are touching you, mission accomplished: they already have a link right into your energy.

Contact feeding is just like it sounds. The psi-vamps feed off of their target while they have direct physical contact or eye contact with them. This is most easily accomplished by the uninvited psivamp looking into the victim's eyes for a period of time or touching the unknowing victim with their hands and tapping into a minor chakra point. As one modern psi-vamp points out, there are lots of opportunities for casual touching and contact feeding.

Things to watch for? Well, this is when the classic misdirection tactic is employed. The uninvited psi-vamp begins laying on the charm so thickly, all while trying to distract you from where their hands actually are-and what they are doing with them. Oh, it's not going to be a smash-and-grab maneuver; the psi-vamp won't try to physically overpower you. . .after all, that takes effort and energy. (Which is something they don't want to expend.) The touching will be subtle and, for lack of a better word, "spidery"-a lingering hand on your arm, with their fingers lightly draped on the inside of your elbow... a handshake that hangs on a bit too long... or if they reach beyond the palm of your hand, toward the wrist. Other entry points can be an arm draped over the target's shoulders, or a hand on the small of the back, or even a hug or a casual peck on the cheek.

If an unrepentant intentional psi-vamp has made physical contact, then he or she will try to establish a link and pull energy through that attached tendril, whether invited or not. Bottom line: if it's creeping you out, then that's a big warning!

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Are you noticing anything important in all of these careful descriptions? Uninvited psi-vamps are stealing-as in taking from their victims with out permission. oh, sure, they can class it up and call the people they go after "targets." Uninvited psi-vamps may even claim that they caused no pain because they fed carefully, lightly, or gently, but actually these are people they are preying upon. Do you really think uninvited psi-vamps care what effect this feeding has upon their prey? Nope. Predatory acts are despicable.

However, there is no need to be alarmed at this information. I am sharing this with you so you'll have the knowledge required to put a stop to this type of psychic attack. Also, when uninvited psi-vamps are aggressive in their energy attack or if they are vain (and many of them are), you will feel it right away. How? Well, by being aware of your own psychic abilities. Tap into that awareness we first talked about in this book and check your own psychic senses.

If you are empathic, you may feel the link. A clairvoyant would probably see something-a type of energy or color that looks out of placewhile an intuitive would know something had attached itself to their person. A clairaudient would perceive this type of invasion as something sounding out of tune-a sort of discordant energy that kept teasing their conscience.

If it's there, you can perceive it, and then you can stop it-all by knowing what signs and symptoms to watch for.

Warning Signs & Symptoms of Psychic Vampirism

There are such beings as vampires; some of us have evidence that they exist. Even had we not the proof of our own unhappy experience, the teachings and the records of the past give proof enough for sane peoples.

-BRAM STOKER

At the end of the day, uninvited psychic vampires are energy leeches. They try to attach themselves to you and drain away all your enthusiasm, good

mood, and psychic and physical energy. Here are the signs to watch for:

A person who constantly has to touch you or always wants a long hug, whether it's appropriate or not. I'm not talking about the hey, I haven't seen you in forever type of one-armed hug, followed by the pat on the back as they let go and smile. I mean the kind that hangs on just a bit too long and you are always the one who tries to get out of the hug first. (Ladies, if your boobs are getting squished, then you've got a problem.) And this scenario doesn't just apply to a woman trying to extricate herself from a guy's overexuberant hug. Men in social situations can be victims of an uninvited female psychic vampire as well.

Psychic Vampire Fact: A psi-vamp can feed from a hug. Most people do a happy, contented sigh, tuck their head onto another's shoulder, and exhale gently when they are hugged. They unwrap their arms and let go of each other a moment later, and both parties are comforted by the embrace. Uninvited psi-vamps will take a hug into a whole new and sinister realm. Things to watch for are silence and stillness. Uninvited psi-vamps will not chatter about how great it is to see you, and they won't be doing a happy sigh. They will instead place their hands in the middle of your back, right between your shoulder blades. What they are doing is concentrating their focus as they place their receptive hands flat on your back, creating a firm link to your heart chakra. They hold still, then breathe in and suck your energy along with the air. Freaky, huh? If they are making yummy sounds, then you really have a problem.

Psychic Vampire Fact: They feed from the most unlikely of points on the body. Unless you know what to watch for, you may be unaware of what is actually happening to you. Watch the minor chakras! All of the joints in the body are minor chakras. These would be the fingers, wrists, elbows, shoulders, hips, knees, and ankles. Take a look back at the contact feeding section-what did I warn you about there? I have personally discovered from dealing with one pain-in-the-neck, self-proclaimed vampire that he always tried to get his hands on the inner arms at the elbow area. This maneuver was always done while he was speaking to someone, and it sort of feels like you are being guided along or positioned so the vampire can talk to you privately. It was always the lightest of touches, and it always made my stomach churn.

Psychic Vampire Fact: They employ misdirection and confusion. It can happen to anyone. It is very confusing for people to wonder why they let a specific individual get so close to them when there is nothing about that person they find physically attractive. Yet somehow that person (vampire) still manages to push their buttons. The victim will spend so much time mentally arguing with themselves and wondering why they always let this individual get close that they leave themselves wide open to the energy-draining attack.

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How do you know for sure when you've encountered a psychic vampire? Again, pay attention to your own psychic warning signs. If you find that physical contact with the suspected intentional, uninvited psivamp makes you vaguely uncomfortable or a bit sick to your stomach, you should take this as a confirmation-especially if you find yourself mentally braced before they get hold of you. If this person always has to touch you when they speak to you, or it seems that they are physically guiding you or habitually positioning you so they can speak privately to you, then this is also a confirmation.

If your mind races as to how you will politely get away from them and remove yourself from their clutches, take a deep breath, and ground and center. You do have choices on how to deal with the uninvited psychic vampire. Just remember that if you give them an inch, they'll go for your throat, so tuck away your sympathy. Don't waste it on a uninvited psi-vamp. After all, if you give them sympathy, they'll only gobble that up and come back for more.

In our next section we are going to explore the tools in your psychic vampire protection kit. And no, none of these involves a sharpened wooden stake or a rope of garlic.

Protecting Yourself from a Psychic Vampire

The only thing that differentiates the way two psychic vampires attach is their intention.

-KONSTANTINOS, Vampires: The Occult Truth

Okay, so you have identified the psychic vampire and you see them approaching. Are you going to stand your ground as they slink over, or are you going to panic and bolt? Guess which answer gives a burst of energy to the psi-vamp for an ambient energy feed? The panicking and the running away. Do not panic. Control your emotions, remain calm, and do not channel you inner Commander Riker from Star Trek and mentally shout shields up! That's the worst thing you can do. Why? Because if you start thinking along the lines of "I'm going to raise my protective energy so high that they won't be able to get to me," it only makes you more of an attractive target to a psychic vampire.

Consider that a psi-vamp will be drawn to your flare of energy just like a magnet. Yes, I know this goes against most people's instincts. Do not flare out your aura by raising up your shields. Center yourself. Remain calm. Link in to the element of earth, and stand your ground. Take a deep, calming breath, and put on your game face.

Step One: Make up an excuse when they want to give you an embrace. Say that you have a cold, you have a sunburn on your back, you pulled a muscle, whatever. Move back quietly, and fold your arms across your chest. Yes, this is a defensive posture, but it also closes down your energy chakras across your chest and solar plexus. Those are huge sources of emotional energy, and that's what they (the psychic vampires) are after- whether they realize it or not doesn't matter. Don't let them put their hands on you. Say outright "I am not comfortable with that," and step back. Most psychic vampires have to touch you to really drain you, so don't let them.

Step Two: Purposefully close down your chakras, or at least turn them down like an astral dimmer switch, and then move back and physically distance yourself. Be aware that distance helps youand it hinders them. Take into account that it's easier for psivamps to feed if they are in close proximity to you. It's even easier for them if they are touching you. Simply put: avoid casual social contact. You could also put more distance between the two of

you by using props. A woman could hold her purse across her chest. Or, if you have a shopping bag or books in your arms, use those as props to protect your heart and solar plexus chakras.

Step Three: This is a little something I like to call the "Psi-Vamp Shuffle." If you are in a social situation with a psychic vampire, then put some physical distance between the two of you by making your positions different. For example, if they are sitting down, then stand up and cross your arms over your chest. Conversely, you should sit down if they are standing, and cross your ankles or cross your legs at the knee.

Put a table between the two of you if you are both seated. Place your hands in your lap, crossing your wrists and keeping your hands well away from theirs. Cross your feet at the ankles and put your toes on the floor so you stay grounded. Crossing your legs or feet shuts down or closes your energy circuits so a psi-vamp has a more difficult time trying to draw energy off of you.

Step Four: Look the offender square in the eye and give them a slow, confident, and knowing smile. It confuses them and breaks the link. They don't like to imagine that anybody actually knows what they are up to. Next, send the offender a mental push in a defensive, not manipulative, way. While you are looking them square in the eye, concentrate hard on the image of them backing away or visualize that you are separated by thick frosted glass. Once that image is built in your mind, push it to them. Those seeking tendrils they send out trying to leech off your energy will smack right into that cold frosted glass and recoil. Watch and see if you notice them shuddering or suddenly complaining that it's cold.

Step Five: Use your double-edged sword that we talked about on page 16. Take a moment and focus your will internally. Now visualize that you are slicing through any inappropriate energy tendrils, tentacles, or psychic cords and links with that magickal sword of intention. If it helps, imagine that you hear those tendrils hit the ground with a thud. If you are alone, you can pantomime the movement if this will better help you to visualize the removal of those tendrils.

Step Six: Fight back with vampire tricks they know. This is a last resort but very, very effective. Don't get yourself worked upagain, they'll be more attracted to that swirling emotional and psychic energy. Instead, focus and center, then put yourself in a businesslike frame of mind, or just start invoking your inner badass witchy self. Turn the tables on them by going for and touching their inner elbows or wrists, and see how they react when they think you are trying to feed off of them. Sure, it's a little nastybut hey, it works!

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I once got so aggravated and tired of a certain pompous individual's psivamp maneuvers that I decided to give him a taste of his own medicine, with a little Witchcraft thrown in for flair. So when I saw him coming at me with his arms wide, wanting his hug and with that superior smirk on his face, I made direct eye contact and smiled slowly back at him. I let him hug me, and then I ran my hand flat down the middle of his spine with intention and scrambled his chakras on purpose. He jolted and froze.

Because I wanted this over with once and for all, I then firmly took hold of his long hair with my fist and let him feel me trying to get a loose piece of his stringy hair. The last thing you want is for a pissed-off Witch to have a piece of your hair, since hair is a direct link back to the individual. I tell you what-he let go of me like I was hot and never tried the inappropriate hug again.

At the end of the day, it all comes down to empowerment. Being aware and empowered can ward off psi-vamps. Keeping yourself centered and grounded to the element of earth can help you to stay focused on the task of protecting your own psychic and physical well-being.

Are All Psychic Vampires Bad?

Oh, he's a vampire. Of course! But the cuddly kind, like a Care Bear with fangs.

-CORDELIA, Buffy the Vampire Slayer

In my travels over the years, I have met all sorts of people-yes, and psychic vampires too. I'll admit that there are some types of self-proclaimed intentional psychic vampires who are so obnoxious that you start seriously considering whapping them upside the head with their own shoes. However, I have also met magickal and restrained psychic vampires who were polite, friendly, and some of the most pleasant people you would ever want to be around.

One gentleman in particular stands out. He approached me while I was on tour last year, and he briefly and politely shook my hand and told me how much he enjoyed attending the event and the class, and we chatted for a few moments. My overall impression of him was that he was quietly attractive, casually dressed, well spoken, and-best of allhe had the most polite, restrained energy of any of the students and fans I had met so far that evening. I tend to be very careful with my personal energies while I am on tour, especially for the meet-and-greet section of the evening, because sometimes you do encounter an overexuberant fan or a slightly disturbed person. It is tough to balance friendly and approachable with caution and psychic awareness.

Anyway, we chatted for a moment, and I recall thinking to myself how his handshake had not affected me at all. As a matter of fact, it was so controlled, energy-wise, that I knew this was one hell of a magician. As he turned to leave, a friend of mine rushed up to the signing table and asked me with very large eyes and in a stage whisper if I was all right.

I grinned at her and answered slowly, as if she had suffered a breakdown, "Why, yes...I am fine. What's the problem?"

My friend then explained to me that the gentleman I had just encountered was a well-known psychic vampire from the New York area, and apparently he was one of the, dare I say, head vampires.

I sat there and chuckled. It's not every day you meet a "head vampire." Of course, my sense of humor is a little "off" anyway. . .but how fascinating!

Well, that did explain the very controlled and restrained energy that I had sensed when we shook hands. Here was a practitioner who knew his stuff

and who kept it in check. I looked up to see him shaking hands and saying goodbye to my husband. The gentleman quietly left with a smile and a casual wave. My husband walked up to me and remarked on what a nice guy the man was.

My husband, I should point out, is a very strong intuitive, so his nonreaction told me a lot. He hadn't even flinched, nor did he feel uncomfortable. Later that evening, I privately told my husband about the vampire, and he looked at me and said, "Hmm, well, that's interesting; he was the most well-mannered guy there."

So yes, Virginia, there are honorable psychic vampires out there who adhere to a very ethical code. In other words, they only feed when they are invited and from a willing energy donor, and only with permission.

Not all of them are bad or dangerous; however, some of the intentional, uninvited psi-vamps play at this and get a real vicarious thrill out of stealing energy and generally being a gothically dramatic pain in the neck. Take a look again at the information on psi-vamps in this chapter; it will help you weed out the unintentional psi-vamps from the intentional ones. Also, it will help you learn how to protect yourself and your personal power from an uninvited psi-vamp who is looking to make you their next energetic Happy Meal.

Now that you know more about the topic, you can make your own informed decision. It's up to you to decide how to handle yourself. Remember that the element of earth helps to make us feel stronger and more secure. Work with this element in simple ways to keep yourself grounded and centered at all times.. .even if you have to deal with an uninvited psychic vampire.

Gave It Away?

Here's How to Get It Back

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

-SHAKESPEARE, Hamlet

There is nothing worse for magick users than to come to the realization that somehow they gave away or let someone take their personal power. Yes, it does happen, even to those of us who have been doing this for a few decades. You try to be friendly and kind, you try to be caring, you try to be sympathetic to others, and all of a sudden you feel like someone is taking advantage and has their own agenda, and that you are being used. Or you look back and realize that when you argued with someone or expressed your fears, you just handed someone else power-over you.

Maybe it was a colleague who overstepped their bounds and tried to take credit for your work, all the while pretending to be your friend. Maybe it was a relative who just sucks you dry with emotional vampirism, or maybe you got nailed by the local wannabe psi-vamp and you suddenly clue in as to why you feel so wiped out and drained. Damn it.

What happened to your spark, your drive, your spunk, and your don'tmess-with-me witchy self? Well, apparently, it is on vacation. The question is, did you send it on vacation because you were so stressed out that you kicked into "leave me the hell alone" mode? Have you been sulking and indulging in hurt feelings? Or did the power get taken from you, and it left you standing alone while you wondered what in the world was going on? Well, here's the good news. You have identified the problem and have now realized that you have a walloping case of the magickal blahs because you gave away, in one form or another, your personal power.

Now that you have made the discovery, you need to work on grounding and centering your remaining energies and being stable emotionally. It is hard work and will take a couple of days before you feel one hundred percent again. Basically, you need to do a little psychic detox, but you can restore that personal energy. Here's how you get it back and start to feel like yourself again.

Take a few days and remove yourself from the swirl and hectic craziness of life. Begin by doing a cleansing; any of the techniques listed in chapter 2's "Elemental Solutions" on pages 40-42 will help you. Practice psychic

hygiene daily. Work on staying grounded and focusing only on today. Don't let worries and stress creep back in.

Clear out the negativity, and start taking care of yourself physically. Take some downtime for a day or two. If you are feeling bombarded by other people's demands and requests, turn off the cell phone and turn on the answering machine. If you have vacation days available, use a couple of them and regroup and recoup some of that lost energy.

If taking a day off of work is not going to happen, then go to work, but go outside alone for lunch. Wear your favorite outfit to work and eat your favorite healthy foods. Take a nice long shower, get a massage, or do whatever feels comforting to you when you get home. Pamper yourself. Watch your favorite movies, listen to your favorite music, and indulge yourself for a day or two however you can. This is empowering, and it will give you the chance to begin to heal.

Next step: you really need to stop beating yourself up about the situation. It happened. Acknowledge how it occurred, learn from it, let the hurt go, stop wringing your hands, and move on. Put one magickal foot in front of the other, and move forward.

Identify the troublemaker; see them for what and who they truly are-use your psychic senses here, and take a good hard look at him or her. Pathetic, yes? Now let it go, because anger won't help, but becoming more aware will. Now that you perceive the truth, put yourself on guard against further trouble. Tap into that psychic awareness that was discussed in the early part of the book, and start being more watchful of the people and circumstances in your life.

Put on your game face and get to work. Learn to think defensively and to guard your thoughts, ideas, words, and energy. If you don't, someone else is always happy to take these things from you. Become more aware. Be vigilant, and keep your eyes and psychic senses open. Here is a psychic detox spell that will come in handy during this adjustment and recovery phase.

Psychic Detox Spell

Supplies:

- One green votive candle (green is the color aligned with the element of earth, and it promotes relaxation, healing, and peace)
- A votive candle cup
- A small twig of pine (pine is a classic protective plant, and it is also good for strength)
- An attractive photo of yourself
- Lighter and matches
- Your altar

Timing and Directions: Work this spell in a waning moon phase or on a Saturday (Saturn's day) to help you banish any negativity or psychic goop you may be carting around. Arrange the candle in the holder with the sprig of pine on one side and your photo on the other. Ground and center yourself, and then, when you feel ready, light the candle. Repeat the spell verse:

This simple detox spell will provide a powerful solution
It banishes and removes all psychic toxins and pollution.
By the element of earth, I ground all negativity and stress.
As magick circles around I allow myself to recoup and rest.
By the powers of the earth so fertile and deep
As I do will this healing, then so must it be.

Allow the votive to burn until it goes out on its own (it will take about 4-6 hours). Put away the photo. Keep the sprig of evergreen for a

few days and then, after it fades, return it neatly to nature.

Finally, ask the God and Goddess for assistance as you pull yourself back together during this recovery period. Begin to reclaim your energy with positive actions and strong, stand-up kinds of Witch statements, such as:

"This person has no more ability to upset me or to hurt my feelings."

"From this time forward, you no longer have any negative effects on my life in any way."

"My personal energies and power are protected. I am safe, strong, and whole."

"I take my power back right now, at this very moment in time."

Any of these statements and whatever else you conjure up in a similar vein (no vampire pun intended) will work out beautifully.

Wait, Won't Just "Psychic Shielding" Work?

To protect ourselves most efficiently from psychic disturbances, we must be on the ball.

-CAITLIN MATTHEWS

Ah, the psychic shield. It is aligned to the element of earth, typically envisioned as being emblazoned with a pentagram, and is thought to represent all of the magickal and steadfast qualities of the earth element. Why, it's the wonder of modern Witchcraft and the standard of psychic self-defense ... and if it worked all that great, then books like this on protection magick would not be in such high demand.

No disrespect is intended to authors who have written on the shielding topic before. This magickal principle is sound, but it is only one tool of the magickal protection trade. You do have options! What works for one Witch may not work so well for another; it does depend on your own individual psychic strengths and weaknesses.

Many Witches and magicians just assume that if they run into magickal or psychic problems, all they have to do is to build a psychic shield. There, all fixed. oh, and if only it were that easy...

This mindset always give me the mental image of a Witch standing and ducking random lightning bolts from behind a shield with a confused and somewhat frightened facial expression. See... here's my shield. I'm waving it around at you bad things out there ... what, you're not intimidated? Eeek! The Witch narrowly avoids a blow and scrambles for better footing, continuing to valiantly, if not foolishly, wave said shield. See? I have a shield, there is even a pentagram on it...you can't get me so long as I duck behind my magickal shield. . .right? And on the Witch goes, squealing and cringing as random negativity keeps firing at them, and occasionally nailing them, because they did not duck behind the shield fully or fast enough.

So let us take an earthy, practical view of this protection topic. Here is something else that I would like you to consider. Would a warrior of old strut into battle with only a shield? Hell, no. They'd go in armed to the teeth: shield, sword, axe, knives, and whatever else they could carry or strap on their bodies. Do modern-day soldiers or police officers walk around with just body armor? Ah, no. They have physical training to rely on, and guns, clubs, tazers, back-up guns, and mace. Bottom line: they have more than one line of self-defense.

And as a Witch working practical protection magick, so should you.

A common mistake that is often made by magickal practitioners is the belief that if they simply build their protective shields high enough, then nothing bad will get through. Nope. Actually, what happens is that it blocks your view If the shield walls are too high, you can never keep an eye on the surrounding landscape. You become blind, and before you know it, the bad guys are climbing over the top of the fortress walls, and your shields have

been breached. Unfortunately, you were so busy cowering behind your shield that you couldn't even see them coming until they were already inside.

Think about how castles were constructed. There was a drawbridge and possibly a moat. They had arrow slits in those fortress walls and lookout points, and sentries were always on duty. People didn't just build those high walls and wait blindly inside, did they? No. Do not assume that a psychic or magickal shield will cover your butt in every situation, because honestly, it won't.

As a Witch defending your personal energies, you'd go into an encounter fully loaded. Take that magickal sword of intention-it carries information and the knowledge of how to wield it effectively. Yes, take a shield. The magickal defensive shield is a fine tool, as is your psychic armor/aura, but just remember that it is not your only defense. Recall all of the experience and wisdom that you have acquired along your path; that is your magickal combat training. Don't forget your favorite protection spells, some positive affirmations as were listed before, and your desire to create an affirmative change in your life. Tap into all of that-use all of the tools available to you-and you will become impenetrable.

Call to the Element of Earth

> Touch the earth, love the earth, honor the earth-her plains, her valleys, her hills, and her seas; rest your spirit in her solitary places.

-ERNEST DIMNET

To close up this chapter, here is an elemental call that will help you work successfully with the element of earth. For best results, do this outdoors where you can feel the soil beneath your feet. In a pinch it could be done inside, but I suggest taking off your shoes and visualizing the wood, stone, or surface that you stand on as a link directly to the ground.

Often magickal practitioners who have many years of experience forget that there is a lot of power to tap into while working with the four natural

elements. Don't be one of these individuals. Respect and honor the earth. An elemental call may seem deceptively simple, but even so, it is a potent act of magick and personal power. It all depends on what you are willing to put into it and if you are prepared to trust in this natural element and let it do its work as your partner in psychic self-defense and protection magick.

Element of earth, now answer my call
I am anchored in winter, spring, summer, and fall.
I sink down roots into the soil so rich
Making me a more grounded, strong, and centered Witch.
My personal power is protected at all times
With this practical earth magick, I am safe and fine.



Physical Fitness Equals Magickal Strength (Fire)

Soldiers march and warriors dance.

-KERR CUHULAIN

NEXT ON THE quest for personal knowledge is your level of physical fitness. Seriously. Are you an active person or are you sedentary? Take a wild guess on which one of those two lifestyles is more conducive to psychic and magickal protection: the active one. If you are run down and inactive, this makes for a weak magickal personality and a dull aura, and there won't be a lot of spark when it comes time to work your spells. A person who is physically fit, healthy, and active makes for less of a possible victim. Think of it this way: it's always tougher to hit a moving target.

And here is a bit more information for you to mull over: if you want to be healthy on all levels-spiritual, physical, and magickal-then you need to take care of your body in the best way you can. Start out with the basics-that anyone can do. Lay off the junk food and eat more veggies, nuts, and fruits. Change your diet to one that features lean protein, fresh foods, and less sugar. Drink more water. Go outside and soak up some sunshine. Take a walk, and do it regularly. You should know by now that your general psychic and emotional health is linked to your overall physical condition.

A Witch who is in good physical shape is, in fact, a more powerful Witch. Become more active, and work on living a healthier lifestyle. You will be amazed at the difference it makes in your attitude, your protection magick, and your quality of life. Exercise helps to increase levels of endorphins. Those endorphins help to reduce stress. Walking, for example, drains negative energy and leaves you relaxed. It clears your head and your aura. It also burns calories, raises your heart rate, and tones your muscles. It's good

for you. No, I'm not going to go into infomercial mode, but I am very serious about this. Go-take a walk, ride your bike, take a nice jog around the park. Get out there and move!

Getting Yourself in Shape on All Levels

It's not that some people have willpower and some don't. It's that some people are ready to change and others are not.

-JAMES GORDON

Okay, you may be flipping this book over to reread the back copy and see if something happened and you are reading a workout manual instead. Nah, it's just me trying to make a point about how your body, your health, and your magick truly are linked together.

Work with me here-and I mean that. If you want to remove the victim mentality from your life, then you need to take action and fight back on every level. Just like the title of this chapter, physical strength does equal magickal strength. By getting in better shape physically, you will also gain confidence.

Now, I'm not saying that I expect you all to be able to run a marathon or ride in the Tour de France. What I am saying is that there is no excuse for you not to be able to take a walk, to jog, to ride a bike, or to be an active person. Do you practice any type of martial arts? Try tai chi, which is all about working with energy to bring the body into harmony. Each pose or movement is precisely utilized, and it takes control, practice, and stamina to do them. Tai chi is low impact and a great way to bring the body and mind into balance.

What about committing to a weekly dance or aerobics class? If you are a woman looking for something enjoyable and challenging to do, try belly dancing. It's so much fun, it's a hell of a workout, and it does fantastic things

for your midsection. All dance is a joyful way to exercise. Dance in all forms is life affirming, and it really burns those calories.

For other suggestions, you could lift weights and do a floor routine and crunches at home. How about an exercise DVD...and are you a member of a community center? Do you have access to an indoor pool or (if weather permits) an outdoor one? Come on, put on your thinking cap...how about skating, skiing, or exploring a local hiking trail?

You could take the dog for a mile-long walk every day. That wouldn't take more than a half-hour at a time, plus it would make your dog very happy and healthy. Or you could put your little ones in a stroller and take a nice long walk around your neighborhood or up to the local park. If you have exercise equipment at home, don't use it as a coat rack. Get on the treadmill or stationary bike and use it to make yourself more physically fit, healthier, and stronger. (Yeah, there is that word again.)

Why am I harping on that particular word? Well, if you are physically strong, then you are less likely to be hurt by random negativity or intentional psychic or magickal harm. We should all aspire to be stronger and more fit. And if you don't feel particularly buff at the moment... well, there is no time like the present to whip your witchy butt back into shape.

A few years ago, I had an epiphany. I took a good look in the mirror and realized I wasn't just full-figured, I was in fact overweight and borderline obese. I had gotten my pictures developed from an author event in Idaho and had spent a half-hour trying to figure out what the hell was wrong with my camera. Then I finally comprehended that it was not the camera. . .1 really was that big. Then I realized the truth about a few things. Like how on the flight home my backside barely fit in an airplane seat, and how the seatbelt on the plane was only just big enough to go around my belly. Also, a nasty comment about my size that I had received while on that trip was really stuck in my mind, and comments like "Us fat girls have to stick together" and "You know what I like about you? You don't care about your body shape-you're just funny the way you are." And then there's the dreaded line, "Wow, you have a pretty face"-which is code for Hey, you're not bad-looking for a fat chick-became more and more common. I knew I had to do something.

It was difficult and one of the best things I have ever done. I took myself to a hypnotherapist and tackled the weight issue head-on, and I discovered a lot about myself in the process. (Emotional eater, table for one.) I made a complete lifestyle change and quit using food as comfort. It took about a year and a half to hit my weight-loss goal, but I lost sixty pounds and have kept it off for over two years now No crazy TV meal plans, no counting points.. .what I did do was begin to exercise. I also totally changed my lifestyle and my relationship with food, and I made smarter choices.

Is it easy? No. Some months are better than others, but I am in this for the long haul. You betcha there are days when I struggle. About six months into my lifestyle change and twenty-five pounds lost, I was in Dulles International Airport waiting for a flight home one day and there was some teeny-tiny lady sitting next to me, swirling a jug of chocolate milk and eating a brownie. Oh my god. I felt like a vampire stuck in a room with a person with a bleeding wound. Then I reminded myself that I was a sane person who would not resort to violence to get someone else's chocolate.

These days, my newest addiction is shopping for workout apparel. This past winter, I found a hot pink T-shirt that says STRONG. BEAUTIFUL. ME. I fell in love with it-talk about an empowering messageand I bought it on the spot. Recently, I wore it while I was out on a walk. To say that the shirt caused a lot of smiles from the other people walking in the park or chasing their kids around the playground would be an understatement. I even got a high-five from some lady walking her dog who called out "LOVE that shirt!"

It also made me a little philosophical. Strength truly is beauty. You know, women especially tend to get wrapped up in whatever the fashion industry says is beautiful. But honestly, that goes for men too. They have to see all those ads of guys with six-pack abs and rippling biceps, and I'm sure that's as intimidating for them as it is for us to be confronted by a Victoria's Secret poster. Yikes! There is nothing like seeing a larger-thanlife poster of a double zero-sized woman with the ta-tas of a breastfeeding mother to make you feel insecure. It's almost enough to put you off lingerie.

However, "strong" does not mean massive muscles. Strength is defined in many ways. For example, it can be characterized as a capacity to resist force,

and it can also mean that you have the power to resist attack. See where I am going with this? Just as "beautiful" is not a lowsized number on a garment tag, strength and beauty both have deeper meanings.

With this in mind, perhaps we are better served by saying that a strong and beautiful person is, in fact, a wise individual who is both healthy and confident. Confidence is the key. If I have learned anything in the past few years of losing weight and keeping it off, it's that you have to be happy with yourself on the inside if you want to be happy with the way you look on the outside.

Today, I not only feel better, I am stronger and much healthier. I have also noticed a difference in my magick. It's more defined and focused, and that's the whole point. If I can do it, anybody can. So think about it, and make a change for the better.



Starting Your Own Transformation

Failure will never overtake me if my determination to succeed is strong enough.

OG MANDINO

Why not turn your personal and magickal energies internally and concentrate on becoming a healthier and stronger individual? You can do it. Make your heart stronger, tone up those legs and arms, and work on endurance. Walk a mile-at a brisk pace, it should take you around twenty minutes. Try to jog a little. Hit the local high-school track and see if you can jog half a lap, then walk a lap. Then, if you are able, try jogging another half a lap. If you can jog an entire lap, that's one quarter of a mile. Work your way up slowly and take your time over the next few months. Can you lift weights? I commandeered my son's old weight set. The barbell is sitting in my office so I see it every day and remember to lift weights. It's made a big difference in toning up my arms, chest, and back. just find something physical that you can do, that you personally will benefit from.

For other options, you could take a martial arts class. That would definitely put you in a warrior-type of mind frame. One of my covenmates does tae kwon do. She has her green belt, and wow, you should see her do a kick.. .scary but impressive. Since she started martial arts, she even carries herself differently.

Don't forget about gardening. The Garden Witch part of me is jumping up and down and waving her arms like crazy. Do not underestimate what serious gardening can do to improve your level of physical fitness. It's a great workout. Crawling around on your hands and knees and taking care of your plants in the garden is good exercise. I bet you don't even realize how much work it is to regularly care for garden plants, to haul bags of soil and mulch around, not to mention the digging and lifting. A couple of hours out in the garden a few times a week is a great way to be active, build strength, and improve your overall health. Plus, all that fresh air and sunshine is good for you.

Staying Motivated

No Matter What

Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far they can go.

-T. S. ELIOT

So you started your new regimen of fitness and are proudly working away. The trick is to stay in this for the long haul. Yes, the tough part is staying motivated and sticking with it. Don't slack off after two weeks. Set long-term goals and discover ways to stay motivated. Find something positive that keeps you on track. Do you know what keeps me staying in shape? My kids.

They are so proud of me and have been so encouraging, both while I was losing the weight and maintaining the weight loss, that it has urged me to keep going. Now, my twenty-three-year-old son sees me working hard at the track. As he finishes up his five-mile run, he comes over and says, "Hey

Mom, you're keeping your pace nice and steady. You look smoother when you jog now. Good job." That is so cool!

Now, should you have a physical impairment or limited mobility, I have some suggestions for you. While working on this manuscript, I strained both of my knees and was restricted to walking on flat surfaces for a couple of months-no more hills, hiking, jogging, or belly dancing for a while. And I will admit that I was moping and griping about the restriction. But I decided to bite the bullet and do as the trainer recommended, which was to do the physical therapy and to work on strengthening the muscles around my knees to avoid ever injuring them like that again.

While I was out there, walking my boring flat laps around the loop at the local park and feeling grumpy and bummed out at the restrictions, a guy buzzed past me in a wheelchair, and I mean he was moving. Along for company were two big dogs, a black Labrador and a golden retriever, and their leashes were attached to his wheelchair and they were happily running alongside their owner. If dogs could grin, they were. At first I thought they were pulling him, and then I realized that the man was wheeling his chair around that loop and the dogs were running to keep up with him. You should have seen the arms on that guy. To say they were working out was an understatement. They lapped me twice; I had to grin as they blew past me.

Bottom line: if you are determined to exercise, be more active, and become healthier and more physically powerful, you will always find a way, no matter what your physical impairments. Even with an injury, there is still a way to exercise-it just depends on how much you want to find a way to be active. I have a friend in California who teaches belly dance. About half of her students have some type of physical limitation, and Solstice just works around that with style. If you want this physical transformation to occur and you are willing to put the effort into it, you will find a way

Remember, we are discussing all of this for a very important reason. To be strong and fit means that your magickal and psychic levels of fitness are just as well developed as your body. While we are spending all of this time working on your spiritual strength and health, it would be remiss of us to ignore the physical part of your life as well.

By working with your body instead of cursing its limitations, you begin to honor what you can accomplish. So decide what you can do to improve your health, fitness, and strength-on all levels, for they do support each other and are all linked together: body, mind, and spirit. Our bodies are our temples. We really need to treat them as such and do the maintenance to keep our spiritual and physical bodies in good repair and running in top condition.

Body Language and Body Awareness

The kind of beauty I want most is the hard-to-get kind that comes from withinstrength, courage, and dignity.

-RUBY DEE

Here is some encouraging and empowering news. When you feel better about your physical appearance and are actively working on getting yourself in a better, stronger, and healthier lifestyle, you will carry yourself differently. And as we've explored in other chapters, a person who is perceived as strong is less likely to have their boundaries breached, be attacked psychically, or fall victim to those sneaky psychic energydraining tactics. Why is that? Well, if you look like a tough nut to crack, it typically makes the energy leeches avoid you-because you are just too damn much work.

Have you ever truly considered what your level of physical fitness, general health, and physical appearance tells others when they see or meet you for the first time? Honestly, it tells them a lot. It also conveys to other magick users quite a bit about yourself. Whether you realized it or not is inconsequential; it is the truth. A talented psychic, Witch, or empath can sum you up in seconds-both on a psychic level and a magickal level-by your appearance, your overall health, and your body language.

So this means that it is time to open up your awareness to yet another deeper level. People who are active have stronger and more confident body language. It's very true; by becoming more physically fit, you do become more aware of what your body is capable of, and this is expressed in many ways to others around you.

Are you confident with the overall picture that you present to others? That being said, you may want to stop and consider what message your overall physical appearance and body language does communicate to other people- because it also lets folks know what you think about yourself Do you shuffle around with your shoulders slumped and your head down? There is nothing sadder than people who have let themselves go because they just stopped caring or trying. Maybe it's a defensive thing, maybe it's an anger issue, but it's time to take a hard look at yourself and decide.

Do you self-consciously keep your arms crossed over your middle to hide your tummy? Or do you walk about confidently, with your head up, shoulders back, and with your posture strong and correct? No matter what your budget, you can present yourself well, with attractive and flattering clothes. Add to that a smile, being aware of your surroundings, and direct eye contact, and you have the very picture of a confident and poised individual. Put some effort into it. You are worth it.

What does your own personal body language really say about you? If you don't think that the way you hold and present yourself every day matters on a magickal level, you could not be more mistaken. When I walk in to teach a public class or do an author event, I am standing up straight (or sitting up straight, as the case may be). I am smiling confidently and looking around with awareness. Do I do that because I think I am so fabulous?

Ah, no.

I do this because if a person presents themselves as a confident, happy, and outgoing person, then other people will be drawn to you. Also, while you are speaking they are more likely to actually pay attention to what you have to say because of the way you are presenting yourself. This does not just go for authors or public speakers, this goes for everybody.

For example, if you go slinking into to work with your head down and have a meeting with your boss, how does your posture and attitude affect those around you? You will seem defensive and perceived as if you do not care, which makes everyone else defensive, uncomfortable, or angry. If, on the other hand, you put your shoulders back, smile, and walk confidently

into that meeting, you appear to be on your game (even if you are nervous), and people will pay attention to you in a more positive fashion.

More importantly, you should be aware that positive body language creates a silent "ripple effect," and the other people in the room will respond to how you are holding yourself. To make themselves more comfortable, typically people will mirror your movements and your attitude, allowing you to take control of the situation in a positive way, and all without saying a word.

Becoming more aware of and understanding body language are useful tools for all magick users. I find it very interesting that empaths naturally seem to be more in tune with decoding body language and are aware instinctively to what another person's posture and facial expressions truly mean. This happens because an empath is always examining other people once they experience that person's emotions. Empaths want to see if their psychic clues are backed up by the posture, facial expression, and body language of this person, and the majority of the time they are spot-on.

Did you know that person-to-person communication is thought to be over 8o percent nonverbal? It's a little sobering when you realize that only a fraction of what you actually say makes an impression on the listener. People tend to make up their minds about a new person within a moment or two. What we discover about a person is expressed to us by their appearance, mannerisms, attitude, and how they hold themselves.

This is how we all interpret body language. It only takes seconds to sum another person up. And yes, other people do this to you as often as you do it to others. Now that you realize this, imagine what implications this can have on your protection magick, for a person's own body language is powerful. Learning to communicate what you want and expect from others in this way can be an invaluable tool in both psychic protection and protection magick.

Body-Awareness Exercise

I was always looking outside myself for strength and confidence, but it comes from within. It is there all the time.

-ANNA FREUD

When a magick user stands up straight, smiles with confidence, puts their shoulders back, and centers themselves, their aura flares out all around them. This strong posture is both a life-affirming and positive action. The more you do this movement with awareness and intention, the more positive energy gets radiated out into your surroundings. Try it for yourself, and see how it makes you feel.

This all ties into the element of fire. Look at the way it is described: their aura flares out and positive energy radiates out. You can literally light up a room when you are aware of your body language and use it to your magickal advantage in a positive way. Go ahead-invoke the element of fire. Use this knowledge of body language and body awareness to your advantage, and let your light shine!

Try this charm to go along with your body-awareness exercise. As you are standing up straight and true, feel your aura flare out around you. Now repeat the charm:

Light of confidence, light of beauty shimmer around brightly.
I hold myself with pride; this sways others' perception of me.
By the element of fire, I am strong, beautiful, and true.
I am empowered, aware, and wise in all magick that I do.

Taking Charge of Our Bodies' Health and Healing

Healing is a matter of time, but it is sometimes also a matter of opportunity.

-HIPPOCRATES

As I finished up this manuscript, the gods decided to throw me a curveball, and I came down with a bug. Between travel, stress, work, the holidays, and the seasons changing, I managed to come down with a nasty sinus infection. It took me out for about two weeks. As I had not been sick for a long time, I was really miffed at the situation. I could not be sick ...I did not have time to be sick... however, the reality was that I was sick.

As I drove to the doctor's office for an appointment, I reminded myself that Witches work with the situations that life throws at them. So I listened to the doctor lecture me about waiting too long to come in and to be sure that this time I gave myself plenty of time to rest and recuperate before I dove back into my typical full-throttle schedule. So, feeling miserable, I did as I was told. I gave myself some time off-honestly, I was too sick for anything else-rested, and began to recover.

When I woke up at sunrise on the morning of the winter solstice, I heard my inner voice tell me to go look at the fire chapter againthat it wasn't finished, as I had thought. So I staggered out of bed, pulled open the living-room curtains that face east, snuggled on the couch, and silently watched the sky brighten. While I sat there enjoying the start of the shortest day, I re-read my draft and started to realize that there was much more to the topic of fire and protection magick than just being more athletic or physically fit.

It was during this downtime that I had to wonder. . .what about working magick when you are ill? What about self-healing work? Especially with all the research on protection, self-healing seemed to make a certain kind of sense.

For me personally, the topic of magickal healing complements the element of fire. Our bodies are electric. Our brain sends electric impulses to our muscles, nerves, and so forth constantly. Also, at its essence, all healing or physical fitness magick is basic energy work. This is as simple as you are going to get: you put in the effort-such as the work and the energy to be active-to become more physically fit, to be healthier, or to heal, and you get results that can be very transformative. Magickal energy always seeks to transform, and fire is the element of transformation.

There is a link between our physical health and our spiritual health. We are spiritual beings, but we are in a physical body. We can tell our bodies what to do. As one of my friends likes to remind me, "Yes, the whole mind-body-spirit thing is a bit cliched... however, it is still true." The reason it is so important to be in a good physical condition is that it makes you aware of your body on a spiritual level. This helps to bring your physical system in balance with your energetic system.

Your energetic system is what you tap into to work self-healing and to help put yourself back on a more balanced plane so you can continue to work any type of magick. Illness is often described as the imbalance of a person's spirit, so I had to ask myself, while I was down for a few weeks, was I out of balance? The answer was a resounding yes.

Being a Virgo, I made a list of what had been occurring in my life over the past few months. Well, look at that.. . too much travel, too much stress, a full work and social schedule, plus not eating as healthily as I could or being able to stick with my typical workout routine because of my autumn book promotion schedule (which was a schedule that I had set up myself). It had thrown me off, and I was rundown. I was indeed out of a healthy balance, and I was a prime target for a virus or a cold. So the universe handed me a case of sinusitis and I got to learn a lesson about honoring my body and its limitations, plus a big reminder to put myself and my health first.

With all of the focus in this book on protection magick, I think this chapter's segue into self-healing is a natural one, and not just for fight ing off the occasional virus or cold. When we feel that we are under magickal attack or under the influence of psychic manipulation, it can weaken our immune system, making us more likely to become ill.

So if this happens to you, or you just forgot to take care of yourself and then find that you have caught a bug, here is some spellwork designed to help you to heal. Life happens. If you are under the weather, combine the practical and the magickal, and work on yourself for a healing. I am sure in no time you will be back in fighting form.

Remember: having a healthy physical body means that you have a strong energetic and spiritual body as well. Being strong makes us more able to

defend our physical and spiritual selves from any kind of attack, be it viral, psychic, or magickal.

Self-Healing Magick

The natural healing force within each one of us is the greatest force in getting well.

-HIPPOCRATES

The question of whether or not you can work magick on yourself while you are sick is a good one. It makes you wonder what will happen to your magick. Will it go all wonky and weird? Is that even possible? Does your magick actually work? Yes, self-healing magick does work, because you are casting upon yourself. You are taking charge of your body and its illness and telling your system exactly what you expect it to do. Don't just sit there and say, "Oh, I feel terrible." That's a pessimistic statement that produces an unhappy reaction and a negative reality; besides, it won't get you anywhere.

Instead, say something positive and out loud like "I am programming my system to fight off this cold, flu, or infection in the best way possible. I am healing."

When you are ill, you do need to combine the practical with the magickal. The practical aspects of seeking medical advice and combining a doctor's care with magick only reinforce each other. They do not contradict each other, for you will need these components to work in combination together if you expect self-healing results. This is something that is called acting in accord. Think of this action as an extra tool to deal with illness, as you are now treating yourself both physically and spiritually.

Here is something for you to consider: healing magick is more focused and stronger when you perform it on yourself. This is why you can easily tell your immune system what you want it to do. Imagine those antibodies inside yourself; now program those little guys to attack germs or that cold, flu, or infection with a big dose of positive, life-affirming, fiery, warrior-type

energy. Magickally program those antibodies to do their jobs-to find the invaders and take them out.

If you like, do what I suggested in my book Elements of Witchcraft and add to this process by enchanting your medicine to be more effective. By combining these magicks, you can really boost the healing process, which helps to pull your body back into alignment so the self-healing can proceed with a minimum of fuss, complications, or obstacles. Here is an updated version of the healing spell from that book. Oh-and yes, it was indeed in the fire chapter!

Self-Healing Spell

Supplies:

- A red candle (for the element of fire and for health and energy)
- A coordinating candle holder
- Your prescriptions or your cold medicine
- One glass of your favorite fruit juice
- A safe, flat surface on which to set up the spell, or your working altar
- A lighter or matches

Timing and Directions:

> To tap into the element of fire, consider working this spell on a sunny day or at sunrise or sunset. These are times of the day when the sun and all of its fiery energy seems to be the most dramatic. Take a few moments to visualize your body's own natural defenses, those antibodies we talked about before. Now tell them exactly what you want them to do. Send them out like soldiers to attack the illness, infection, or virus that is in your body.

Now pause and pay tribute your body. Tell yourself that you are in a healing process and that you will honor your body by taking care of it as best you can. Light the red spell candle and repeat the spell:

As the candle flame dances to this healing spell I weave
My mind, body, and spirit are the true power of three
Now working together and in harmony
To restore my good health and vitality.

Place your hands on the juice glass and the medicine. Then say:

Empower and enchant these medicines and this fruit juice
To speed healing to my body and be put to good use.

Drink the juice. Set the empty glass back on your altar and say:

My illness is banished, my fatigue relieved
And as I do will it, then so shall it be!

Let the spell candle burn until it goes out on its own. Clean up your altar and put away your supplies. If you prefer, you could work this spell every day until you fully recover.

Please note: This spell could be easily adapted to a magickal or psychic healing. Just rework the fifth and sixth lines to say something like this:

Empower and enchant this healthy fruit juice
To speed healing to my psyche and give me a boost.

Then drink the juice and complete the spell as directed above. Blessed be.

Witch, Heal Thyself!

Keeping your body healthy is an expression of gratitude to the whole cosmosthe trees, the clouds, everything.

-THIGH NHAT HANH

Self-healing magick is truly very effective. Since you are the one experiencing the symptoms and the illness, no one can focus on the healing process better than you yourself can. Use your magick to transform this negative situation into a positive outcome: a healing. It does not matter if you are healing yourself after exposure to a psychic vampire, manipulative magick, or the common cold. Your self-healing magick will work if you believe in yourself and all of the possibilities of a positive transformation.

Become stronger, healthier, more physically active and physically fit. Call upon the element of fire to fill you up with confidence and determination, and make a healthy and magickal change to your quality of life!

Call to the Element of Fire

The inner fire is the most important thing mankind possesses.

-EDITH SODERGRAN

To close up this chapter, here is an elemental call that will help you work successfully with the element of fire. This call may be worked indoors or out. If you can do this while standing by an outdoor fire pit or chiminea, or standing under a bright, sunny sky, so much the better.

If you have an indoor fireplace or woodstove, then work this while standing in front of the burning logs in the hearth. If not, then turn off all the lights in your room and light several red candles and group them together on

your work area. Feel the heat that comes off of the flames. Notice the light that is radiated out, and watch as their flames dance.

While all of these elemental calls in the past three chapters have been straightforward, they are potent magick that test your personal power and control. As I have stated several times, it truly does depend on how much of yourself you are willing to put into these elemental calls.

Can you truly say that you are prepared to trust in this natural element of fire? Only you can decide if you will allow fire's radiant and transformative energy to illuminate your life and do its work as your magickal partner in becoming healthier, stronger, and more fit on both the psychic and the physical levels.

Element of fire, I call on you
May your flames strengthen and bless all things that I do.
Psychic strength is linked back to physical fitness
Become stronger and your magick knows no limits.
Fire me up to stay motivated and physically fit
For personal power is magnified from a healthy Witch.



Warding and Witchery

'Tis the witching hour of night...

-JOHN KEATS

PROTECTION SPELLS ARE typically designed to avert negativity, to defend the home, and to fend off any magickal danger to your person and property. This type of magick is classically referred to as warding, and it is a powerful line of defense in your arsenal of witchery.

Wards can be classified as permanent or semipermanent. Interestingly, they do actually protect a space on both an energetic level and a psychic level. They can manifest as a physical sensation or as more of an intuitive one. Warding magick creates an atmosphere of sorts that will augment other mundane protection methods for your home or business, such as an affordable security system, locking your doors, using outdoor or security lighting, plus being smart and safe with your person and possessions. Working practical magick with warding will also help you to stay aware of situations and people so your personal safety is enhanced. However, neither magickal wards nor protection spells are designed to replace common sense or your own intelligence.

To be clear: warding magick will not make you burglar-proof, but it may confuse would-be thieves or miscreants and make them so nervous that they decide to avoid your home or business. Yes, sometimes danger may manifest in very physical or mundane ways. Working this type of protection magick on a regular basis and possessing a healthy dose of common sense really improves the odds that you will avoid such scenarios.

Warding the Threshold

Herbal Swags, Wreaths, and Decorated Brooms

Ward (verb): 1. to keep watch over: guard. 2. to turn aside (something threatening): deflect.

-MERRIAM-WEBSTER DICTIONARY

If I have learned anything over the past few years, it's that just because a magickal application appears to be simple, you should never underestimate it. For example, the most mundane-looking items can be charged to pack a hell of a magickal wallop. Sure, I have seen complicated spells and expensive items for sale at stores, all designed to protect the home or business and to ward your threshold. And guess what? I have never found any of them to be particularly useful or powerful.

Would you like to know why? When you take the time to create something yourself and charge it with your own magickal essence, you are creating something that is one of a kind and intensely personaland thereby much more powerful.

If you lovingly arrange and place above (or hang on) your door a handmade floral swag, seasonal wreath, or decorated broom that you have created with magickal herbs, you've got a much more powerful magickal item than something you picked up ready-made in a store, because your time, energy, and care has gone into the creation, enchantment, and placement of the object.

For example, a broomstick that has been decorated and placed in a position of prominence in a Witch's home is traditionally used to denote a place of transition-a threshold. Typically, the decorated broom is displayed next to the fireplace hearth or hung upon the door. Go ahead, live on the edge and get crafty. Make something beautiful with your own two hands for your bewitching home. The sky is the limit!

Perhaps you'd prefer to hang the swag, broom, or wreath on a different doorway. Well, go ahead! The front door is not your only option. Maybe you'd like to ward your bedroom, study, office, or magick room. An artist friend of mine made a wreath for the door to her studio. The base of the wreath is grapevine, and she arranged specific dried magickal herbs, old paintbrushes, and some gorgeous ribbons on it.

It's attractive, charming, and very much what you would expect to see hanging on an artist's studio door. To take it a step further, she then

enchanted the wreath for creativity and for protection from stress and distraction. How clever was that?

You can easily adapt a spell and make it your own. For example, if you made a decorated broom, swag, or wreath for the room where you do your spells and studying, to define the area as your magickal sanctuary, you could do a little something like this...

Wreath, Swag, or Broom Spell for Warding

Gather your supplies and decorate the wreath, swag, or broom to your taste. Once you are done with your final touches, hold both hands above the item and imbue it with your own personal power. Visualize what you want the item to do-in this case, to ward the home and add a bit of cheer to the doorway it is hung upon or above.

Now take a deep breath and let it out slowly. Then repeat the following warding spell:

Magick herbs, flowers, and ribbons make up this warding spell
Bless and protect my personal refuge that's loved so well
By the magick of hearth and home, this spell is spun
Bring contentment and joy to all and harm to none.

Now hang up the item and enjoy. (If you live in an apartment or this is your place of business, and you worry that the wreath will be tampered with, then I suggest using a metal wreath hanger and displaying the item on the inside of your door.)

Also, if you like, you can rework the spell quarterly. I would suggest doing so on days of the spring equinox, summer solstice, autumn equinox, and winter solstice. That way, you are tapping into the power of the sabbats and the natural magick of the seasons, which will give this type of magick a powerful enhancement. To re-empower the item, place your hands upon it and repeat this simple charm:

On this the first day of a brand-new season
Ward us with a rhyme and for all good reasons.

Another idea is to enchant your seasonal decorations that you already own. I have a wreath for each of the seasons. (What can I say? I used to be a floral designer, I can't help myself...) So there is a spring wreath on a grapevine base with dried herbs, silk lilacs, daffodils, and a wee faerie peeking out of the flowers. I also designed a summer-theme straw wreath with dried yarrow and lavender from my gardens and silk sunflowers, butterflies that look real but are not, and satin green ribbons to celebrate the season of growth.

I have a huge autumn grapevine wreath with preserved oak leaves, herbs, acorns, and colorful silk flowers and fall foliage. For the winter holidays, I have a pine wreath with dried pinecones, silk holly, mistletoe, and ivy; papier-mache sparkling stars and a rustic handmade elflooking Santa complete the winter solstice wreath.

Oh, and yes-you can use silk flowers on your warding wreaths, swags, or brooms to decorate them further. As these items are artificial, they have no true magickal qualities-you will have to rely on your magickal intention, the herbs that you add, and the color of the ribbons. However, the silk flowers are lovely and they last for years, allowing you to be thrifty, as that seasonal wreath may be reused year after year.

Each of my seasonal wreaths is enchanted to enforce a bit of cheerful warding magick right at our front door. What I find interesting is that people are unable to resist touching them when they are freshly enchanted. It's like I often say: "Magick is where you find it, and creativity is the key."

Horseshoes and Hex Signs

When we survey the world of art, we find that the geometrical designs used in hex signsstars within circles, and various patterns of stars-have been practically universal from ancient Sumeria to the present.

-DON YODER & THOMAS E. GRAVES, Hex Signs

Perhaps you break a sweat at the thought of a glue gun, floral wire, or floral arranging. That's okay; you do have other options. You can easily hang up a horseshoe on the inside of your front door for good luck and protection.

The horseshoe shape was sacred in ancient times. It has a similar shape to the Greek letter omega (Q). The horseshoe was traditionally hung above the main doorway to the home for luck and to protect the threshold. In some magickal customs, the horseshoe is to be displayed ends-up, to hold all of its luck so it will never run out, while others say it should be open ends-down in the omega shape so all the good luck flows forth and pours over the threshold. Whichever way you choose to hang your horseshoe, it is up to you; just display the horseshoe with intention and understand the elemental properties that make up the object. For example, the horseshoe is made of iron, and the metal iron has interesting magickal qualities.

Iron has the planetary associations of Mars. It also claims the elemental correspondence of fire. This metal is repellent to the Fae; having a piece of iron on your person or touching your skin was supposed to protect a person from being faery-led, which is a charming way of saying "confused by the magick of the Fae."

Today in modern magickal use, this metal wards off negativity and evil of all kinds. It is believed that malicious spirits cannot bear the touch of iron or being too close to it. This makes for very potent warding magick, which explains why, in the old days, folks hung those iron horseshoes right above their doorways. If something malevolent tried to pass through the doorway and over their threshold, the iron would repel it.

I personally love to incorporate the old traditional bits of folklore into modern practical magick. I also have a real affection for American folk magick, such as hex signs. The hex sign is a Pennsylvania Dutch type of art and craft with a colorful and controversial history. Some authors claim that there are absolutely no associations to Witchcraft in the hex signs-that it was just a bit of fun poked at tourists and gullible reporters during the 1930s, and then the rumor caught on-while other historians and authors point out that

perhaps these folks are protesting just a bit too much. After all, Hexe is the German word for Witch.

No matter what you personally believe, the type of art found in the hex sign is bright, colorful, and full of fascinating and magickal symbols. There are some hex-sign designs that are intriguingly called "the Wheel of Fortune." Classic hex-sign designs also feature stars in many varieties, from the five-pointed to the eight- and ten-pointed types. There are many amazing geometric combinations when it comes to the art of the hex sign. You will discover plenty of enchanting designs that feature raindrops, crescent moons, horseshoes, six-petaled open flowers (which are called rosettes), and, of course, tulips, birds, and hearts.

If you'd like to incorporate a bit of American folk magick into the warding of your house, then consider displaying a hex sign on the outside of your home. I personally have two hex signs on the outside of my house: one large one that we designed and made ourselves and a smaller, purchased one on my front porch. (This smaller one keeps the main entrance to the home warded in a friendly way.) I even have a small, colorful hex sign hanging inside my kitchen. This final hex sign encourages prosperity.

If you like this idea, there is more information on hex signs and their magickal colors and symbols in my book Cottage Witchery on pages i6-i8. If you already own a hex sign or are about to purchase or create one for yourself, I suggest that you consecrate and bless it before you display it. Here is a practical protection spell for doing just that.

Blessing a Hex Sign for Protection

> Directions: Hold the chosen hex sign in both of your hands. Visualize what specific task you want the sign to do, be it protection, luck, love, prosperity, or any combination thereof. Now take your first finger, trace an upright pentagram over the hex sign, and repeat the following charm:

The hex sign is a clever bit of folk magick
Now protect my home from the basement to attic
This American folk magick is bright and fine
It will safeguard and bless this house come rain or shine.

To seal up the magick and bind it to the hex sign, with your finger draw around the outside of the sign in a clockwise circle. Say these lines:

This spell is sealed as I draw a circle around
Only peace, joy, and blessings will ever be found.

Now, go hang up your consecrated and blessed hex sign in your chosen place. Blessed be.

• • • • •

So far, I have given you lots of ideas and suggestions for creating or revamping witchy items for warding and protecting your thresholds, from wreaths to swags to horseshoes to hex signs.

So what new ideas are coming to mind? How do you feel you can best adapt these magickal ideas in a way that will complement your own personal taste and magickal style? Go on, get enthusiastic, and be crafty. There are all sorts of unique and protective magickal items that you can create. Hang these above or on your door to ward your threshold and to add some magickal protection to your abode. You will see a big difference immediately.

Gargoyles and Warding Magick

Gargoyles are often the guardians of dimensional doorways into worlds beyond the physical.

-D. J. CONWAY, Magickal, Mystical Creatures

We have been using gargoyles for protective measures on churches and other holy buildings for centuries. This type of decoration came into vogue in the Middle Ages and was intensely popular during the age of cathedral building. Churches such as the famous gothic Strasbourg Cathedral in northeastern France and Notre Dame in Paris are covered in both classical gargoyles, statuary and grotesques. If you look carefully, you will also see gargoyles featured in the architecture of classic buildings all over the United States. Open your eyes, stretch out your awareness, and see how many you can discover.

Technically, gargoyles are defined only as architectural rainspouts for buildings, while a grotesque is used for decorative purposes and had no other function beside an ornamental one. However, today we use the word gargoyle to describe both the rainspout type of gargoyle and a grotesque. Once upon a time, these gargoyles and grotesques were thought to be so hideous that they would prevent any evil from entering the sanctuary, but as time went on, they were thought of more as stone guardians instead of scare tactics.

For magickal applications, a gargoyle is considered to be a protective type of spirit. They offer defense and are a sort of magickal guardian that is preserved in stone. According to folklore, if gargoyles are confronted with evil, they will turn to flesh and break away to do battle on the astral plane. If your gargoyle has wings, then it is free to fly about and guard the property from the air. Gargoyle statues make for an ideal residential warden. Put them to work, and let them guard your home.

It is traditional for a gargoyle to be placed by the front door of your residence. It is also suggested that you place the gargoyle in any place you think may be vulnerable. This can be on the outside of the houseright on the front porch if you wish, or by the back door; it's up to you. Use your psychic awareness and sense where you feel your home may be at risk.

If you live in an apartment, you can hang a gargoyle over the inside front door or position it in a place of honor in the entryway. A coven sister of mine has a large resin gargoyle displayed right above her inside front door. He is a very fierce winged specimen with what appears to be a chain around his neck, flared wings, and a protruding tongue. She uses that gargoyle to ward her home. When you walk into her apartment, you can feel the magickal wards close quietly behind you. It's very comforting and welcoming. You automatically look behind you, and when you see the gargoyle over the door, you simply have to smile. He has such a presence that you want to greet him.

If you would like to empower your own gargoyle for protection, here is a spell that will neatly do the trick.

Gargoyle Warding Spell

Timing and Directions: I would work this spell at sunset on a Saturday; that way, you pull into the spell the astrological influence of protective Saturn, plus the incredible coordination of the energies of the end of the day, the end of the week, and the finality of the sunset. If you work this spell in the waxing moon, work to increase protection. If you work the spell during a waning moon, then use those energies to push away troubles or to minimize problems or intruders.

Place your dominant hand upon the gargoyle. Center yourself, and the repeat the spell verse three times:

Gothic and gorgeous creature made of stone
Ward and protect well my magickal home.
Now bring protection and security to our door
Frightening away all evil with your silent roar.
Alert me to danger, trouble, and negativity
Fierce and fabulous beast, report any findings to me.

To bind the spell and close up the magick, repeat these concluding lines:

This gargoyle protection spell has been cast by my own hand,
Bring us security wherever you sit, perch, or stand.

Now place the gargoyle in the chosen spot and, if you like, give your gargoyle a secret, imposing name known only to the two of you. Should you ever need to call him out, he will respond.

Those Gorgeous Stone Beasts

Whosoever is delighted in solitude is either a wild beast or a god.

-ARISTOTLE

When gargoyles are on the job as wardens of your home, they will help drain negativity and deter toxic individuals who try to worm their way into your life. Ferocious gargoyles do not suffer fools. And while they are able to absorb negativity, they will also keep folks on their toes.

If you are wondering where to find a gargoyle for your own abode, I suggest trying a local garden center or perusing a few New Age, outdoor

living, and gardening types of catalogs. Also, I have noticed gargoyles popping up for sale at various Pagan festivals by some clever artists and merchants. They come in all varieties-from cheerful and humorous to gothic and imposing to frightening and grotesque. It's up to you to decide what style gargoyle would be the most complementary for your purposes.

As for the stone gargoyle just outside the front of my own house, he looks like a combination of a winged lion and a pit bull. He is a gorgeous beast and is the official guardian of our home. He sits in a prominent place in the gardens, surrounded by purple pansies in spring, orange coneflowers in summer, and golden chrysanthemums in autumn. He does appear to snarl at any passersby. Oh-and if you wondered... the flowers do not soften his tough-guy persona at all.

I have actually seen people flinch from that gargoyle-typically disapproving relatives and those unfortunate folks who foolishly come to the door to proselytize. I can honestly say they never come back for another try, which always amuses those of us who live here and earns him a pat on the head from me. I think my gargoyle is adorable, but I would never say so in front of him.

The gargoyle is a classic symbol of protection and guardianship, and is one of the many symbols available to easily incorporate into your own style of warding magick. Now, we will study a different type of magickal symbology. This next section may surprise you a bit, but it is a system of magick that I have worked practical magick with for years. To begin, let's look at how symbolism is defined and how it applies to us today.

Protective Symbols

Symbols work in the most amazing way. They are like codes to speak directly with the divine mind.

-CHRISTOPHER PENCZAK

Symbolism is defined as the use of symbols to represent things such as ideas or emotions. Symbolism presents a creative learning experience that can be

as complicated as the learning of any language. The practice of symbolism is central to all religions. We Witches, Pagans, and other magick users often attach favored symbols to our magickal intent according to the situation and specific need. We do this instinctively, as those symbols give our minds something to work with. In a real way, they grant us stepping stones between our wishes and dreams and the physical manifestation of our magick.

There are many classic symbols associated with the Craft and with protection magick in particular. There is the traditional pentacle, the Egyptian ankh, and the Eye of Horus. Some Pagans may prefer the triskele or Celtic triple knot or even the Norse Thor's hammer. The important thing is to work with a symbol or symbols that personally resonate with you.

There are hundreds to choose from, so see which symbol best speaks to you and your magickal intentions for protection. Some symbols seem to tap into the archetypal imagery that is held deep within the mind. Truthfully, a symbol can have myriad interpretations, and one person's representation for one thing can symbolize something entirely different to someone else. Symbols don't have to have a "rational" meaning, and they don't have to always look like what they are magickally representing either.

The trick is to think of symbols as keys-keys to the higher self, to a higher state of consciousness, and to a deeper connection to the Divine. It is the form of the symbol that will create a key in your mind for the purpose and intent of what you are trying to accomplish.

This is like taking a key and unlocking a door. Your chosen symbol will unlock a certain aspect of whatever you are trying to do. By teaching yourself to focus your mind in the right way, or to see the symbol again and "click," you move to a different level of awareness.

What makes it interesting is that over time, the repeated use of a symbol can build up power. Think of it like charging the batteries in your cell phone; the power is on hand and ready to use whenever you need it. So use your chosen symbols as keys to trigger your mind for a specific purpose-in this case, to invoke protection.

Pentacles from The Key of Solomon

Curiosity is the key to creativity.

-AKIO MORITA

Here is a really simple idea for incorporating the pentacles from The Key of Solomon into your own protection magick. Yes, I said simple. This is a book on practical protection magick, and I am a very practical woman. Now, it is true that the pentacles from The Key of Solomon are often incorporated into very involved kabbalistic types of rituals. However, I personally have been printing out the various pentacles for years onto colored paper or reproducing them in colored ink on parchment. Then (brace yourselves), I use a glue stick to adhere the pentacles, or seals, onto plain white seven-day jar candles to add some boost to my magick.

I have also been known to print out these pentacles on colored scrapbook paper, cut them out, and then run those seals through my scrapbooking repositionable sticker-making machine. That way, I can peel and stick those magickal pentacles from The Key of Solomon wherever I want them. This has always worked out just beautifully for me.

I am sure somewhere, some ceremonial magician just fell over in a dead faint at the mere thought of such irreverence.

Dear gods, she used the words pentacles, Key of Solomon, and scrapbooking sticker-making machine all in the same paragraph! Well, perhaps we should just send them some healing and a big dose of get-the-hell-overit type of energy. Come on, people, live on the edge, and be practical and creative! The sky still has not fallen on my head and, at last check, the sun still rises in the east, and I've been doing this for years.

These symbols are keys for me. When I see them, I enjoy the history and the reputation that they carry. When I create or reproduce them, I focus on their symbolism, and my mind clicks over into another state of awareness. Basically, I get down to business when I work with these pentacles from The Key of Solomon. They put me in a different frame of mind, which is exactly

what we discussed before. These trigger my mind and my magick for a very specific purpose.

The truth is, magick can be as simple or as ritualized as you personally choose to make it. At the end of the day, it still all comes down to your intent. So if you decide to incorporate your arts and crafts supplies or scrapbooking goodies into the creation of these pentacles, or you work with the more traditional colored ink and parchment, that's all up to you. Go with what you have.

For best results, magickal timing is an important part to creating these pentacles, so I do strongly recommend working with the day of the week associated with the astrological body in the title of each pentacle. For example, the pentacle of the moon must be created on a Monday, the pentacle of Jupiter is to be created on a Thursday, and lastly, the pentacle of Saturn should be produced on Saturday. These pentacles can offer you a lot of options for a creative bit of Witchcraft.

On the following pages are three pentacles from The Key of Solomon that I successfully incorporate into practical protection magick. Another creative way to incorporate these pentacles into your own protection magick is to hand-draw them onto three-inch wooden discs purchased from an arts and crafts store. This way, these protective pentacles become permanent amulets. Technically, an amulet is a magickal item that is programmed or empowered for protection. These inscribed wooden pentacles do make a nice visual symbol to incorporate into your spellcraft or even as a portable type of amulet that you can carry with you, offering you the option of placing the disc in your pocket, suitcase, or even in your vehicle's glovebox for some personalized, powerful, and portable protection magick.

Here is a spell verse that you can use to bind the magick of your newly created pentacles firmly to you. Hold the newly created pentacle in your hands and say out loud exactly what you need it to do. Then repeat the spell verse:

Practical witchery combined with the magick of old
To use this enchantment successfully one must be bold.
I unite my magick with this pentacle of power
May it keep me protected and safe in every hour.

Enjoy working with these pentacles from The Key of Solomon. They can really add power and punch to your protection magick.



The Fourth Pentacle of the Moon

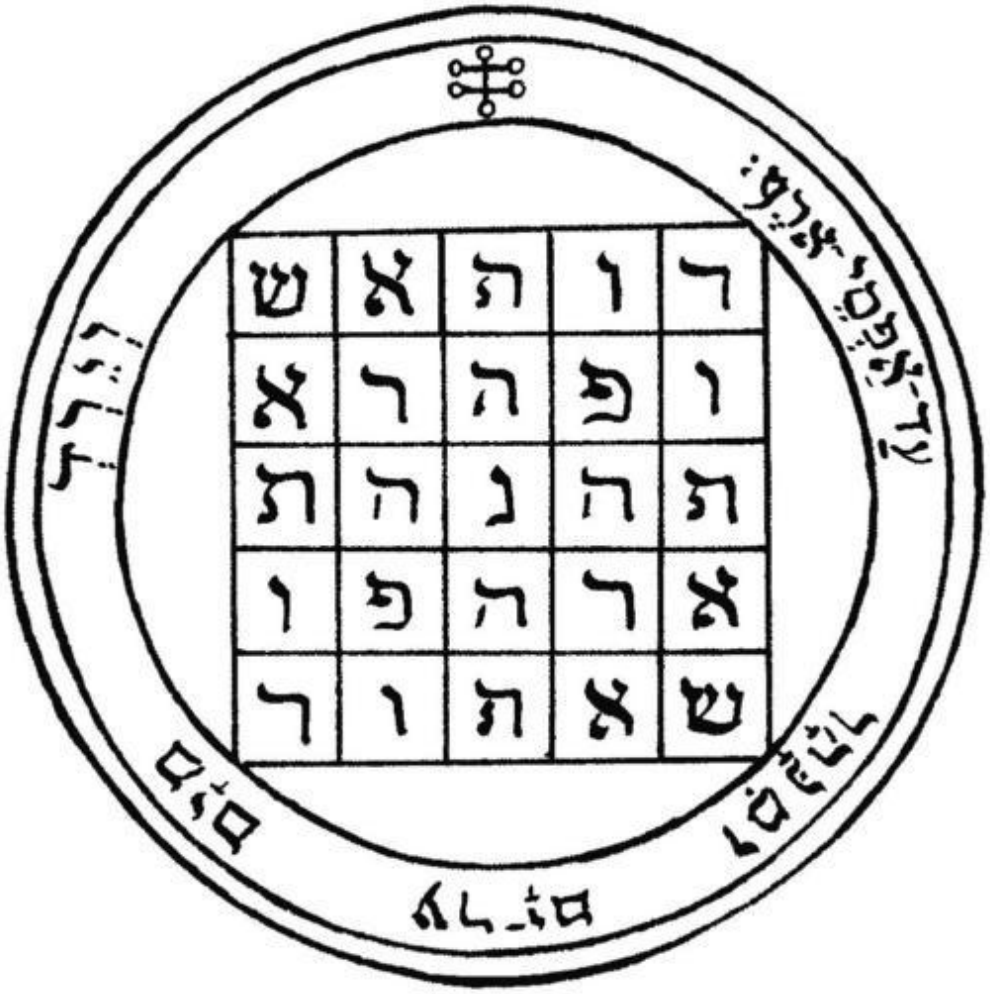
The Fourth Pentacle of the Moon is ideally reproduced in silver ink. You can also print or draw this pentacle on silver craft paper. Only create this pentacle on a Monday, the day of the week that is associated with the moon and all its magick. This pentacle will defend you from all evil and protect your person from harm or injury to body and soul. It is linked to the angel Sophiel. Sophiel is believed to grant the knowledge of all herbs and stones to whoever calls upon him.



The Sixth Pentacle of Jupiter

The Sixth Pentacle of Jupiter is traditionally drawn in blue ink. You can also print or draw this pentacle on blue paper. Only create this pentacle on a Thursday, the day of the week that is associated with the planet Jupiter and

all its magick. Traditionally, this pentacle will gift you with protection against all earthly dangers.



The Second Pentacle of Saturn

The Second Pentacle of Saturn is traditionally drawn in black ink. You can also print this with black ink onto parchment-looking scrapbooking paper. Only create this pentacle on a Saturday, the day of the week that is associated with the planet Saturn and all its magick. This pentacle will help you overcome your adversaries.

This pentacle features the famous SATOR arrangement of letters that is often referred to in medieval magick. This is a square of five letters in five rows, and if you look carefully, you will see that the letters spell SATOR on

the top, bottom, and sides of the box going up, down, and front to back. Here it is translated from the Hebrew characters:

SATOR

AREPO

TENET

OPERA

ROTAS

More Practical Ideas for Warding and Witchery

Ideas are like rabbits. You get a couple and learn how to handle them, and pretty soon you have a dozen.

-JOHN STEINBECK

To close up this chapter, here is a cornucopia of quick ideas for warding magick and practical protection charms. These come from many different types of magickal traditions, from Hoodoo to floral fascinations, herbal magick, and the runes. There is something useful here for everyone.

These suggestions are straightforward and fairly uncomplicated to do, so read over these various magickal ideas and see what you can easily incorporate into your own personal style of warding and witchery.

- Red brick dust: The dust of red clay bricks protects against negative spells, and it repels evil of all kinds. According to magickal tradition, no evil can cross a line of red brick dust. To acquire some, take old red clay bricks and smash them up into a powder. You will want to use the softer clay bricks that were once used in older homes-these are ideal. Look around for old, crumbling bricks (you may find some reclaimed older bricks used in

landscaping projects). You may add the brick dust to a bucket of floor wash and then scrub the threshold, porch, and front steps of your home or business with it. You can also sprinkle a thin line of the powder before your door. I would suggest doing this on a full moon or new moon night, if possible. If you cannot wait that long, then I suggest doing this on a Mars' day (Tuesday) or a Saturn's day (Saturday).

- The iris flower is a protective flower. This flower is sacred to the Greek goddess of the rainbow, Iris. You can easily grow this magickal blooming herb in your gardens at home. If you do not have a garden, visit the local florist and pick up a few stems. Then place the fresh-cut flower in vases around your home or office, or make a small arrangement and then place the flowers close to your doorways and thresholds. If you like, you can incorporate color magick into this floral fascination: red for protecting your health, yellow to keep you wise and secure, orange for vitality, purple for power. . .the iris, as its name implies, comes in a rainbow of colors and sizes. There are even black varieties. A black iris would be excellent for warding off negativity and evil. One variety of iris that I grow at home in my own gardens is called `Before the Storm'. This is a fragrant, large, gorgeous, gothic black iris with an undertone of maroon. It's bewitching.

- A fresh sprig of the herb rue (Ruta graveolens) is often incorporated in Strega (Italian Witchcraft) for protection and to ward off the evil eye. Tuck this pungent herb into charm bags or grow it in your gardens to enforce protection for your entire property. Please note: this herb is not to be ingested. It is an abortifacient and a skin irritant, so handle it carefully.

- Carrying a piece of iron, wearing an iron ring, or tucking an old iron nail into your pocket repels psychic vampires. (The trick is to have the iron in direct contact with your skin.) The iron actually shuts down the psychic centers of your body, which blocks the flow of your personal energy; in other words, it grounds you like nobody's business. This would annoy psivamps and make you much less of an appetizing energetic Happy Meal.

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Runes: Here are some basic, practical uses for a few protective runes. You can paint these above your doorway or on the walls. Inscribe the rune on a

shell, stone, or small circle of wood, and carry it around with you in your pocket or purse like a talisman. Another suggestion would be to do what my friend Charlynn did: embroider the runes inside of your clothes where you can feel them but no one else can see them.

• Thurisaz: I This rune represents the hammer of Thor. It symbolizes pure will and power. This rune will add a boost to your warding magick.

• Hagall: X In magick, this rune is used to encourage protection. It also promotes good luck and a positive magickal outcome to your spellwork.

• Eihwaz: Fl This rune symbolizes the yew tree. One of the more potent warding runes, this rune removes obstacles and increases power. Incorporate this particular rune for serious banishing and protection spells.

• Berkana: B This rune is a protective rune also. Classically, it symbolizes the Mother Goddess and fertility; however, it is also used to protect or to ward structures such as houses and places of worship. This shielding rune brings peace, love, and harmony to the home.

• Algiz: `f' Here is the classic protection rune that most magickal folks will recognize. I find this rune to be particularly potent if it is inscribed or painted on a natural item such as a seashell, stone, or piece of wood. This rune provides protection from your enemies, shields its bearer from evil, brings good fortune, and builds up your life force. It also promotes friendship.



Hex Marks the Spot

May those who love us, love us. And those who don't love us, May God turn their hearts. And if he doesn't turn their hearts, May he turn their ankles So we'll know them by their limping.

-OLD IRISH CURSE

ARE CURSES AND hexes real?The short answer is yes. I know that this goes against the standard Craft line. For years we have had this whole publicity campaign for the Craft where we assure the general public that Witches "harm none," that hexes and curses are very rare, that there is no such thing as an unethical practitioner, and yadda, yadda, yadda.

After all, if you did not have concerns about this topic, you probably would not be reading this book. We talked about this in earlier chapters, but it bears repeating. Many teachers and practitioners will tell you that true curses are uncommon and that only unbalanced people believe they are a victim of a curse, but I am here to tell you that this is simply not true. However, if it makes you feel any better, you are much more likely to run in to a fluffy white-light type Witch than a classic Disney villain-type practitioner.

If you want to wax philosophical, you can always say that without the dark, there is no light, or that the dark is what makes the light appear so bright. But I believe it is more than this. I have always maintained that magick is a study in neutrality. There are many shades of gray. Magick is indeed an impartial force of nature: it can be as soft as a spring rain or as destructive as a bolt of lightning. It has always been up to the individual Witch to harness this power and then use it in the most beneficial, neutral way. That being said, it's time for some honesty, so let's be candid and really look at this controversial topic of hexes and curses from a place of neutrality.

Where do we begin? We start at how accessible the information actually is. Have you taken a good look lately at all of the various types of magickal books that are out there? Seriously, go to the bookstore and really take a hard look at what is available. There are many books filled with all sorts of

curses, hexes, and manipulative spells, and the occult dabblers or Witch wannabes who are bent on revenge just gobble them right up. They are popular topics-only a fool would not recognize this sad but true fact. The information is out there, and it is available in massmarket paperback.

However, the more you understand about hexes, curses, and psychic attacks, the more you begin to see that the majority of the time when there are problems, the culprits are wannabes, weekend witches, or dabblers willing to try anything to see if it works. To be clear, a wannabe or a weekend witch is defined as a person with no real spiritual practices. They are simply playing at, or dabbling with, the Craft. Furthermore, we should accept that there are individuals who are bent on magickal revenge for some perceived slight. They could also simply be on an ego trip, wanting to prove just how much more powerful they are compared to you. But this is what I want you to remember: folks who dabble or who play at the Craft and who toss out curses and hexes do so from a position of weakness.

It is important to keep that fact in mind. If someone has to take the time and energy to throw a curse or a hex, or send destructive psychic energy your way, then you already have them running scared. These pathetic, foolish hexes and curses are always done out of fear or a need for revenge. Nine times out of ten, the magickal troublemaker feels jealous or inadequate.

This is your advantage. So use it.

The True Cost of Hexes and Curses

Curses are like young chickens-they always come home to roost.

-ROBERT SOUTHEY

When people lash out by using negative psychic energy, or hexes and curses, they are looking for a fast, mean, and easy fix to their problems. But here is something else you probably were never told about the people who cast hexes and curses: they may feel great about themselves for a while, but typically they are incapable of keeping their mouths shut about what they have done because it makes them too hyped up and nervous.

Have you ever stopped and seriously considered what the backlash or physical price of sending out that much hatred, spite, or envy would be to the person who threw the hex? To begin, there would be a high, which would last briefly before a sense of exhaustion would rush in. Since all of their energy was fueled by rage, it does not flow out, or depart, smoothly. It explodes and consumes everything close to the point of origin, including the person who cast the hex, as they literally would be standing at ground zero.

Their body immediately reacts with exhaustion as that violently spent emotional energy has rushed out and left them hollow inside, and now they have to fill up with something. Typically, they fill up with nervous and toxic energy. Nature abhors a vacuum, so it replaces that energy with whatever is physically the closest-in this case, the noxious intentions of the caster and that very harmful, negative energy.

Once all that rage is spent, the caster gets hit with a big old backlash of the jitters; think of it as the worst possible kind of caffeine rush. They don't even realize why they feel that way or what they took into themselves right after they finished their hex, because now they have bigger problems. As they can't sit still, they can't focus; they are all giddy, anxious, and wound up; and eventually they have to tell someone about what they have been up to.

They mistakenly feel it's just too delicious not to brag about their own activities. I have never met such a person who could not keep from talking about their curse or hex to anyone who would listen. It's all that toxic and nervous energy-they just can't help themselves. And that's how they slip up. These folks like to show off and boast to somebody, and they hope that others will be intimidated or impressed somehow

Interestingly, the topic of "How to Do Hexes and Curses" is making its way around the festival circuit as well. I once listened to a magician lecture about how the best curses were so subtle and so insidious that the victim does not realize they are under magickal attack until after they are too sick or exhausted to fight back, because the best curses destroy a target slowly. This apparently was the magician's area of expertise, and he was proud of this ability; according to the speaker, this was a family specialty. Well, isn't that nice? I'm feeling all warm and fuzzy right about now

At the festival lecture, the audience was captivated at the horrible things this person bragged about. I sat there, sick to my stomach, while the lecturer went into rapid-fire, glorious detail about how to "do unto others before they can do unto you"-without mentioning all of the unfortunate side effects that are gifted to the person foolish enough to perform a curse or hex.

Why did I stay put at the lecture? Because the last thing I wanted to do was to stomp out of there in a righteous huff and draw attention to myself. (Also, it is considered highly rude for a guest speaker to leave another presenter's lecture unless you yourself have to go to your own lecture.) So I was stuck.

My snarky side sat and silently hatched all sorts of ingenious ways to get myself out of that lecture . .1 considered trying to bend time to make the class finish faster. I wondered if I could send energy to the fire alarms so they would go off, or encourage the lights to go out (I've accidentally done it before)-anything to get out of there. However, I realized that would be just as bad as doing a hex myself, and honestly, to try something that over-the-top would probably knock me on my butt for the rest of the day, energy wise, and I still had clairvoyant readings and my own lectures to do.

What I did instead was ground and center, then turned up all of my psychic abilities to full blast and asked to see the lecturer as he truly was. I checked my empathic abilities and carefully took stock of his body language and gestures. What I "saw" was a hyperactive, spiteful egomaniac with a very poor self-image who was not in the best of health and who was also in financial trouble. That vibe radiated off of him, and because of it, he was desperate to make other people believe that he was a famous, important, and fabulous globe-trotting Pagan celebrity.

Once I realized that, I had to literally cover my mouth with my hand, as I had a bad attack of the church giggles (you know-laughing when it's highly inappropriate, and the harder you try not to laugh or make any noise, the funnier it becomes). So I cleared my throat and discreetly wiped the tears from my eyes. I worked hard to keep my facial expression bland and to try not to laugh at the real show the lecturer was giving. I was semi-successful. Sometimes humor is, indeed, an awesome deterrent to negative energy and

its influence. A few people at the lecture noticed me trying to contain myself and seemed concerned; I quietly told them it was allergies.

That's not a lie. Apparently, I am allergic to self-important, hexlecturing weenies. Instead of hives ...I just break out in the giggles.

Confirming the Problem with Divination

If the apocalypse comes, beep me.

BUFFY, Buffy the Vampire Slayer

Okay, funny stories aside, trying to figure out if you have indeed been hexed is a serious and scary matter. It's frightening because you don't want to overreact, but you do want to be open to everything that may be occurring around you, so your best bet is to make a list. No, I'm not kidding. This is not my Virgo-esque attempt to organize the world...

Seriously: document and keep track of what is occurring in your life if you think that you or someone you love is under psychic attack or has fallen victim to a hex or curse. Knowledge is power. Take note of the type of people in your life, their behavior, and what is happening and when the instances occur. By doing this, it will help you to trace the trail straight back to the perpetrator. In this book, psychic strengths and weaknesses have been discussed; so were the symptoms of a psychic attack. Stay calm. You do have practical ideas and information to help you deal with any of these problems, right at your fingertips.

In the meantime, you will need to ask yourself a few tough questions, such as: what is your weakest area and where are you most vulnerable emotionally? This is important to know. Be brutally honest with yourself, and I want you to carefully consider something...

Remember when you first started to comprehend magick and the way it actually worked? Do you recall the old standard Craft line that "Magick follows the path of least resistance"? Well, take that idea a step further. As magick does indeed follow the path of least resistance, where would that

negative magick find the least amount of resistance if it was attacking you? In other words, if you are rundown, stressed out, or emotionally vulnerable, then take a wild guess where that negative energy is going to do the most damage. The answer is in the place where you have the least amount of resistance or ability to fight back. So, once you have identified what is happening and figured out any problem areas or weaknesses, correct them immediately.

After that, I would suggest that you confirm your findings by consulting your favorite divinatory tool, such as the tarot. Shuffle the cards well and ask if you are under magickal or psychic attack. To begin, select five cards at random. Place the cards from left to right in a straight horizontal line. Now take a careful look at the cards that appear in your reading.

- The first card of the reading will signify the past and what brought you to this point.

- The second card is the present, meaning what is happening right now

- The third card shows the future-what is still to come.

- The fourth card represents the "other people" in the situation: who they are and what motivates them.

- The fifth and final card is the outcome card.

Keep in mind that a tarot reading is always a reading of possibilities. Think of the cards in this type of reading as signs on a road. Now that you have been given the lay of the land, so to speak, you have a better idea about what is ahead... and it is completely up to you how you choose to proceed.

If the cards are basically positive in tone, then the answer is probably no, you are not hexed or cursed. If they are more negative, then your answer is yes, you are under psychic or magickal attack. Also, watch for Major Arcana cards. The more of those that show up in that five-card reading, the more serious the issue is. If it helps, have a friend do the tarot reading for you. They can be more impartial, and you may get a clearer answer.

Most importantly, don't guess. Know. Check your psychic instincts and tap into your own abilities. Combine that with your divination results, and what do they all tell you? Gather as much information as you can, and then get to work to remove the problem and diminish its effects. Most importantly, do not panic, and keep this to yourself. If you run around blabbing to everyone that you have ever met that you are under some sort of magickal or psychic attack, then by talking about it you only strengthen the negative magick and energy.

So zip your lips, put on your game face, and go to work. Be as strong and as brave as you possibly can. Also, you should forget any unrealistic ideas you may have of just "sending it back." Honestly, that's like a magickal water-balloon toss-eventually both parties get tired, somebody drops the balloon, and splat, someone gets soaked (meaning you have about a fifty-fifty chance that you will be the one to lose). However, if someone has sent negative psychic energy your way or thrown a hex at you, you can indeed nullify that negative energy and magick or, better yet, put it to the ground and stop the game there and then.

All of us will have to deal with an enemy at one point or another in our lives. As Witches, it is also within the realm of possibilities that at some point we will have to deal with a magickal adversary as well. How you deal with the situation defines who you are as a magickal practitioner. Here is where I encourage you to not just sit there, fret, and whine about it. Instead, you are going to step up, face it head-on, study, and learn. That way, you are prepared, and you have options. In this next section, I am going to give you a real-life example that I think you will find very illuminating. Read this story carefully, and see what you discover.

A Coven Learns a Hard Lesson

You have enemies? Good. That means you've stood up for something sometime in your life.

-WINSTON CHURCHILL

I once offered advice to a coven that had to remove a few troublemaking members from their group. This coven was a large group and was happily established. Recently, they had expanded their coven and added three new potential members. For the first six months of their being involved with the coven, all three guests were model members. During this time period, they were on a get-to-know-you basis. The three new potential members in question seemed happy, eager, enthusiastic, and fun-loving, so they were promoted to the rank of candidates.

On the surface, all appeared to be going smoothly, but as soon as their trial basis ended, the real problems slowly began. The high priest started to notice that other inner court, or established, members of his coven rarely spoke to these three particular new candidates and literally kept their distance at coven functions. He reminded the other members to take it upon themselves to get to know the new candidates better and to do social events together.

As time went on, he realized that he had a real problem on his hands. Seems like the three hopeful members loved to stir up trouble. It was reported back to him that while at a public class with other coven members, two of the hopefuls were loud and obnoxious and disrupted the instructor. This duo even went so far as to brag to the other nonmagickal people in the class about the coven they were in, boasting about how they had worn their new coven pentacles out to the local bar, looking for a fight.

Meanwhile, back at the covenstead, the third hopeful member was suddenly having a problem abiding by the coven's rules and guidelines. If he was told to dress nicely for a formal ritual with the coven, then instead this candidate showed up in old jeans and sloppy, faded sweaters, sporting a belligerent attitude. To make matters more chaotic, the bar-hopping duo started acting up at the coven gatherings by being extremely loud, boisterous, and disruptive. Thankfully, they usually managed to pull it together and behave at ritual. But as soon as ritual was finished ...bam! They were noisy and more wild than ever.

The high priest chalked it up to excitement and inexperience on their part. After all, the three of them had been perfectly behaved for the first six months. Feeling like he was a part of a sitcom, he then patiently explained

the type of behavior that was expected of the candidates, once again, which they all listened to with wide eyes and hopeful expressions.

Thinking this was a one-time thing, he gently talked to all of them. He kindly but firmly explained what the coven's policy was on public behavior, and he also firmly encouraged the troublesome duo to work on improving their behavior outside of coven functions as well.

Of course, they always had an excuse or made light of the subject, so the high priest met with his high priestess, and they decided together to start watching these candidates even more closely while the established members basically closed ranks, stayed polite, but kept their distance.

Shortly thereafter, the behavior of the three candidates became really obnoxious. One of the prospective members started announcing that he had no further need to study, as just by being in proximity with the high priest and priestess he would learn all he ever needed to know. While this individual was informed that this was simply not the case and that study was an important part of their training, he laughed and then refused to crack a book or do any of the reading assignments or journaling exercises that he was given by his mentor.

As things started to spiral out of control for the coven, it also came to light that one of the three candidates had a substance-abuse problem. The candidate had lost a substantial amount of weight very quickly, bounced from job to job, and displayed manic and hyper behavior all of the time.

This made it very difficult for the priest and priestess of the group, as they wanted to believe that it was simply a crazy string of coincidences. They firmly believed in the whole "perfect love and perfect trust" thing. Goodness, but wasn't it interesting that this person always seemed to be going to the doctor or urgent care center for some injury or household accident, and then complaining to the other members how the physician kept refusing to treat him and accusing him of just wanting pain meds?

To make matters more upsetting, the third and youngest candidate started disrupting scripted rituals to ad lib and even "accidentally" evoke a deity into the ritual circle. Then this individual (the same one who had refused to

study) started to complain that the coven wasn't working with anything dark or edgy enough. It did not seem to matter to the newcomer that those types of more intense rituals were not for a beginner, and so the complaining about coven policy began, along with a lot of whining about how this person's "gifts" were being ignored and squashed by the coven leaders.

Last but not least, the other two candidates then ganged up on another established member and tried to talk him into leaving the group. They played the whole "Hey, listen, nobody will tell you this, but nobody likes you" game. (I suppose since they were reprimanded for picking physical fights in a bar that they decided picking a more subtle fight-playing mind games at a coven gathering-was their next option.)

Sadly, this went on for a few months and was not reported to the other coven members. But after a little while, the younger initiated member who was the victim broke down in tears and confessed his concerns to the high priestess, who was appalled.

She reassured the distressed member that everything was fine, and they spent some time talking about his fears. The high priestess held it together until he left, and then she called the high priest and unloaded. Between the other behavioral concerns over the past few months and this new development, their minds were made up. So, the priest made the calls and removed all three of the troublemakers from the group. He was polite but firm. The rest of the coven was relieved but sad that the situation had ultimately turned out the way it did.

The priest took it very hard and kept reviewing his own actions, trying to see if there was something, a clue or some information or action, that he had missed. He did not like to believe that he was so foolish as to be totally taken in by all three of these candidates. After all, during the trial period they had been exemplary. Apparently once that trial period was over, they decided that good behavior was no longer necessary.

Had he been too hard on them by correcting their behavior, or was he not firm enough? Everything had gone wrong so quickly! To be honest, this trio had caused such a wide variety of problems, and so often, that he and his priestess were exhausted from simply trying to keep up with damage control.

It is hard when you are in the moment and dealing with all of these situations at once. You do not always have the option of stepping back and seeing the whole situation, which is why people always say that hindsight is zo-zo.

He prayed to the gods for guidance, meditated about the situation, and eventually realized that the God and Goddess were teaching him a lesson about leadership. So he accepted the lesson and decided a much longer trial basis (as in one to two years) was probably his best course of action for the future. Perhaps this new coven rule and much longer trial period would give the group more time to assess the personality of a possible new member, and this would help them all avoid similar problems in the future.

Then he and his high priestess rewrote the coven guidelines, and they were voted on and approved unanimously by the remaining coven members. The healing process began, and the priest and priestess worked to repair the emotional damage that had been caused. Then the coven stood together, chalked it up to experience, wished the three former candidates well, and moved on.

Or so they thought.

Within a month, a string of random annoying problems and serious issues started to pop up for all of the original coven members. They ranged from everyday health problems like the flu to serious complications with another coven member's wife's pregnancy. There was an unexpected death of a close relative in one coven member's family, and two other members each had to deal with the death of a pet.

A third coven member's cat became seriously ill and almost died, while a different coven member had furniture delivery snafus and car repair problems-one day she had no brakes while driving home from work-and on it went, from close calls to illnesses to death and back to financial difficulties. At first, the high priest and priestess refused to believe that there was anything funny going on. After all, that whole hex-and-curse business was just movie make-believe-that sort of thing did not happen in the real world, and certainly not to their coven.

Interestingly, the high priestess had been having increasingly violent and frightening dreams during this period of time. As a sensitive, she was growing suspicious and had secretly started to keep track of all of the coven members' problems.

Bless her organized heart, she sat down and made a master list in an effort to make sense of the crazy situations. Her master list included a record of all the incidents that had occurred with each of the coven members and their families and a timeline of these occurrences. Holy cats! They matched up from the full moon date when the trio had first been removed from the group to the following full moons two months later, with the severity of the occurrences flaring up at the new moons and full moon, respectively.

When I was approached with this problem, I was shocked. Then the high priestess handed me her list, and I could not ignore the facts in front of me, especially since I was acquainted with some of the members and knew for a fact that they had experienced problems and losses. I tossed down a quick five-card tarot reading to get a confirmation on my instincts, and the cards were very grim.

The first card represented the past. It was the Tower, which means a blow to the ego or a shocking event that shakes up everything and forever changes your outlook on a person or situation. The second card symbolized the present, and it was the Five of Pentacles. This card means illness, worries, and financial difficulties. The third card showed the future and was the Ten of Swords, which translates to betrayal and being stabbed in the back. The fourth card denotes the other people in the situation and was the Three of Swords. This card signifies sorrow, heartbreak, and delay. I also felt that it represented the trio that was removed from the coven. (Rumor had it that these three had now started their own group.) So this seemed to me to be confirmation that the three ex-members were still together, stirring up magickal trouble. After all, three swords, three ex-members-that's not a coincidence. The final card, which showed the outcome, was the Moon. This Major Arcana card illustrates deception, moon magick, and illusion, and it also shows that people involved in the situation are not as they would appear. What's more, it is the card of the Crone Goddess.

Damn. I went over the list and the tarot reading again. That was an impressive list, and a spot-on yes answer to the question as to whether the coven was being cursed. Obviously, there were some very unbalanced and angry ex-members at work here.

As I read over the list, I jokingly said to the high priestess, "Girlfriend, all you need is the theme song from the movie The Craft and a couple of hormonal girls in Catholic school uniforms, and you'd have the entire package!"

Then the priestess got teary, so I handed her a tissue, gave her a hug in support, and then we sat down and brainstormed, and I made a few suggestions. I also told her to quit beating herself up about the situation-to embrace the lesson that she was just handed and to learn from it. Later, the high priest and priestess met on their own and came up with a plan of action for their coven together.

The entire coven soon gathered together and worked a protection ritual to put an end to the suffering and psychic attacks that were occurring. Considering their outcome card was the Moon, the card of the Crone Goddess, I had suggested that they call on Hecate for help with protecting their group. Hecate is an awesome force when it comes to protecting Witches. I mean, why be subtle? These were some intense circumstances that they were dealing with.

Each of the remaining coven members also did personal protection magick on their own as well. Every member physically cleaned their houses until they sparkled. They were also careful to remove any mementos from the trio and to dispose of any photos of the three former members. In addition, they each performed purification rituals on their own homes and warded their thresholds. Finally, all of them started working daily to build their magickal defenses back up and to maintain the psychic protection and fortification for themselves, their families, and their pets.

Not only did their practical protection magick work, it began to work immediately. All of the crazy occurrences stopped. They rededicated their unity as coven members at the following sabbat, and they began the healing process. I received a follow-up phone call from the high priest a little while

ago. The coven is all doing well, and they are more united and stronger than ever.

The Moral of the Magickal Story . . .

Everything has got a moral if only you can find it.

-LEWIS CARROLL

The moral of this coven's story is to never rationalize things away. Believing that this could not happen to your own coven or circle because you yourself would never do such a thing or because you believe that you are much too clever and savvy and would catch it before it got too bad is very foolish.

We all second-guess ourselves occasionally. We all can make a bad judgment call or trust the wrong person from time to time. That is how we learn. Hopefully you won't go through anything as severe as this coven experienced, but you or your group will probably have your own problems to work through. Telling yourself that nobody would ever purposefully attack you on a psychic level or dare to perform a hex or a curse is simply naive.

I believe that what happened in this situation is that three angry and unbalanced people decided to get even with magick. Add to that a person who is abusing drugs and another who loves to get into physical fights, and a newer practitioner who likes to play with dark and intense deities without the respect those deities deserve, and you've got some wildly dangerous and unpredictable energy in play.

Most folks have a filter of some kind. That filter reminds them when they are right and when they are wrong, and it keeps them out of danger. It's called a conscience, and when you add illegal drugs or ego to the mix, then that safety net, or filter, is gone. They probably refused to admit to themselves that their own bad behavior was to blame for them being removed from the group.

After all, it's so much easier to blame somebody else or claim that your " dark talents" are being ignored than to step up and admit that you are at fault or that you are way over your head with a specific deity. Some deities are not meant to be homogenized or softened. They are what they are. If you do not respect them, what they are capable of, and their history, then you are a fool. It's been my experience that the gods do not suffer fools-at all.

What will happen to the trio who did the hexing? Oh, I imagine their little worlds have imploded by now I also know that the coven members asked for justice and decided to leave the dispensing of that justice in the capable hands of the Lord and Lady. I have no doubts the old Ones will come up with very creative ways to teach the troublemakers a very thorough and hard lesson.

After all, if you cause that much harm to that many people on purpose, it comes with a hell of a karmic price tag. Think about the ground zero effect that was discussed before; it was magnified times three. You know that had to hurt.



A Darker Shade of Candle, Herbal, and Crystal Magick

Character is what you are in the dark.

-DWIGHT L. MOODY

No DOUBT ABOUT it: Witchcraft is popular, and it attracts all sorts of spiritual seekers. Many people are fascinated by the idea of magick and the path of Witchcraft, but very few of these folks are actual Witches. Anyone can study the Craft and some may have a real affection for it, but at the end of the day there are just a few who will have the innate power of the Witch.

How can you tell the difference? There is both humility and responsibility present in a true Witch. We hold a lot of power; with that, you have to be responsible, and you must possess a good dose of humility. Just like the line from Spiderman, with great power comes great responsibility. When you cart that much firepower around, you realize quickly that minor aggravations and petty disagreements are not worth your time or magickal talents, because typically they will work themselves out all on their own-without you having to constantly add magick to the mix. There is no need to throw a spell or to cast a charm every time something minor pops up. As a true Witch, you learn to hold your magick and your temper at the same time.

It is vital to learn how to control your own reactions and emotions. Effective magick does require a healthy dose of accountability and self-control. If you indulge in a magickal temper tantrum, then you are only wasting your very valuable energy. It is much wiser to reserve that personal energy and use it toward a powerful manifestation of protection magick instead.

Walking the path of a Witch develops your innate sense of character and your sense of honor. There will be days when you walk down a happy and light-filled path, and there will also be days where you are surrounded by negativity and shadows. Eventually, all Witches and magick users are put to the test in one way or another. Have you ever considered that this is all a part of the gods' divine plan for us?

So here you are, walking your own magickal path, and now suddenly you are in a darker place, and there are shadows, fears, and possibly baneful magick that need to be dealt with. At this point, you are entering survival mode. Your adrenaline has kicked in, and your first instinct is probably to fight back just as ferociously as if you were being attacked physically. But is that really the correct way to go?

It is certainly true that effective protection magick involves working carefully with our own shadow sides and the darker aspects of our personalities. Real shadow work involves looking inward, seeing all of the aspects of our personality, and then claiming them. To best be able to deal with these types of intense protection magick from a place of integrity, it is vital to be honest with ourselves. If we can't deal with our own tempers and shadows, and work from a place of objectivity and neutrality, then we are not going to be able to truly and effectively defend ourselves from others' psychic energy or magick. It does indeed take personal control, honor, and integrity to effectively counteract baneful magick.

Now that you are standing in the dark, facing the shadows, your first test of character has begun. How will you rise to the challenge? You do have options, and you do have many practical resources. To begin with, you can take the information presented here in this book and calmly work to neutralize and stop harmful psychic energy and negative magick in a responsible way, with a minimum of fuss.

The Seven Rules of Practical Protection Magick

I think it is wonder at the power that gives some humility to the Witch...

-SYBIL LEEK

Before you begin this type of self-defense work, there are a few golden rules that you should follow:

I. Know your psychic weaknesses.

z. Recognize the magickal/psychic attack.

3. Confirm the problem with a divinatory tool.

4. Comprehend that all magick follows the path of least resistance.

5. Be proactive, and nip the problem in the bud.

6. Gather the best, most complementary supplies possible for your spellcraft.

7. Work protection magick from a position of neutrality, integrity, and humility.

Notice that all of these rules are active, not passive, as you have to be responsible, determined, and strong while performing practical protection magick. You also need to be clever and calm while you gather information and supplies, so you will know best how to proceed. If you follow these seven simple rules, you will have superior results with all of your protection magick.

Learning to effectively deal with the problems in our magickal lives does develop character. No, it will not always be easy, but it will make you into a stronger, more balanced, honorable practitioner. Allow yourself to grow and learn in your Craft, and react with humility and integrity in any type of situation. With that thought in mind, here are some candle spells to get you started on your practical protection magick.

Candle Magick for Uncrossing and Removing Hexes

Better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.

-CHINESE PROVERB

Using candle magick to remove a hex, curse, or crossed condition is a time-honored practice. Not only does it work, it works very well. For this type of magick, I prefer the big glass jar candles. These may also be called novenas, or seven-day candles.

Today, rituals designed to break a hex or curse are sometimes referred to as uncrossing rituals. However, to be clear, the difference between a crossed condition and a hex is that a hex is a severe magickal assault or attack, while a crossed condition is something more subtle that may go on for a long period of time. In magick, a crossed condition is often seen as a spiritual problem, not a magickal one.

Think of a crossed condition more like a roadblock in the path of your success. Is it the end of the world? No. But it sure is aggravating when your way seems blocked no matter what you do. Uncrossing magick will redirect a person and can put him or her back on a more open and positive spiritual path. What is interesting to note is that after performing an uncrossing ritual, you may actually gain new insights into yourself.

When it comes time to work an uncrossing, break a hex, or perform curse-removal magick, I find the seven-day glass jar candles to be very beneficial. Remember, as long as that candle is burning, your protection witchery is actively at work. The longer the spell candle burns, the more magickal power it actually builds up-especially when the spell verse is repeated each day.

Jar candles are practical for protection magick, as they do come in a rainbow of colors and sizes. If you take a careful look around, you can typically find plain jar candles in different colors anywhere, even at the

grocery store. Or, if you prefer, head over to yon local magickal or metaphysical supply shop. Don't forget to try the neighborhood arts and crafts store as well. Watch for sales on jar candles and stock up. A wellsupplied and prepared Witch is a smart and practical Witch.

An Uncrossing Candle Spell

This candle spell allows for some personalization by choosing your essential oils for the candle. There are a few different oils to choose from in the supply list, so choose the oil that best resonates with you or simply use what you can easily acquire. I purposely listed essential oils that are easy to find, along with their magickal properties. You can also personalize this witchery by choosing a specific day of the week to begin the spell; see more on this idea in the "daily timing" section below.

Supplies:

- One deep red seven-day jar candle (deep red is the traditional uncrossing color)
- Essential oil that corresponds with uncrossing work; suggested oils include cedar (a classic uncrossing oil), hyssop (for cleansing), and white pine (to bring healing, prosperity, and purification)
- A clean dropper for the oil
- A long, thin screwdriver (to push holes in the candle wax)
- Strike matches (because you want the smell of sulfur to sting the air, plus it adds a nice punch to the magick)
- A photo of yourself or of the person you are working the uncrossing for
- Your magickal workspace or altar (this should be a safe, flat surface to set up the spell where the candle can be left to burn for several days)

Lunar Timing: I suggest working this spell during a waning moon phase. This way, as the moon continues to wane, so too shall the blocks in your life, and any obstacles in your path will diminish.

DailyTiming: You may also utilize the specific days of the week for even more fine-tuning of this uncrossing spell. For example, start the uncrossing spell on a Sunday to remove roadblocks to your success. Begin on Mondays for an extra dose of moon magick. Cast on Tuesdays to diminish blocks to your courage and passion. Wednesday will remove obstacles to clear communication, while beginning this on a Thursday diminishes blockages to your prosperity and good health. Starting on a Friday removes obstructions to your love life, and Saturday eliminates barriers to your personal security.

Directions: Set the candle down on a flat surface, and hold on to it carefully. Then take the screwdriver and gently push the shaft of the tool straight down into the wax as far as it will go. Pull straight up and repeat until you have three small channels in the candle. Then choose your essential oil or oils, and carefully drop the oil down into the channel. (A couple of drops in each channel will do the trick.)

Set the candle down in the spot where you have chosen, and ground and center yourself. Prop up the photo against the front of the candle or attach it with a piece of tape, then strike the match and light the jar candle. Begin this spell by saying the spell verse below. You will notice that the lines in the spell are set up to accommodate whether you are doing the spell for yourself or for another. Take your time and say the spell with intention.

Uncrossed, uncrossed, this spell for thee/me

Removes blockages most swiftly.

No more dead ends and no more blocks in the road

Your/My way is open, allowing you/me to grow.

You/I will now walk a positive spiritual path
Serenity and good fortune will truly last.
This candlelight spell is spun with rhyme and verse
Removing all obstacles and any curse.

Repeat this entire spell verse every day, at least once a day, while the jar candle is burning. Depending on your particular candle, this may be for five to nine days. Finally when the candle is completely burned out, close up the spell with these lines:

The way is opened now for thee/me
As I will it, so must it be.

Allow the candle to burn in a safe place until it goes out on its own. When you are finished with the jar candle, wash it out with saltwater to remove any lingering magick, and place the glass jar in the recycling bin.

A jar Candle Spell to Break a Hex or Curse

Here is another jar candle spell. This one is designed to break a hex or curse either for yourself or for another. I often receive requests for this type of work. Keeping that in mind, I wanted to present you with two versions of the spell. Once again, you will have several options to choose from for your essential oils. The magickal properties of the suggested oils are described in the supply list. Decide which oil, or combination of oils, will suit your purposes the best.

Supplies:

• One purple seven-day jar candle (purple candles are thought to be especially potent against baneful magick)

• Essential oil or oils that correspond with the protection theme of your choice; suggested oils for hex breaking include rose geranium (for balancing and magickal defense), lavender oil (for protection), sage (for purification), and vetivert oil (for protection, and it will also work in harmony with your own essence)

• A clean dropper for the oil

• A long, thin screwdriver (to make holes in the candle wax)

• A stick or cone of dragon's blood incense (dragon's blood drives out unwanted energies and clears out negativity)

• A heatproof incense holder

• A photo of yourself or the person you are working the spell for

• Strike matches (because you want the smell of sulfur to sting the air, plus it adds a nice punch to the protection magick)

• A safe, flat surface to set up the spell where the burning candle can be left for several days

Timing: For best results, work this spell during a waning moon phase. Corresponding days of the week for this are a Tuesday (Mars' day) or a Saturday (Saturn's day).

Directions: To begin, choose your purple jar candle. Set it down on a flat surface and poke the screwdriver's shaft straight down into the wax. Pull straight up and repeat until you have three small channels in the candle. Then choose your essential oil or oils, depending on your need, and carefully drop the oil down into the channel. (A couple of drops in each channel will do the trick.)

Set the candle down in the spot where you have chosen, and prop the photo up against the candle or attach it to the candle with a bit of tape.

Now ground and center yourself, then strike the match and light the incense. Once the incense is smoking away nicely, wave some of the scented smoke from the dragon's blood incense around the work area and around yourself as well. Say these lines:

As this smoke wafts around this place

I do now create sacred space.

Replace the incense and the holder carefully on your altar setup. Take a moment or two to enjoy the atmosphere. When you are ready, light the purple jar candle and begin this spell by saying the verse below Take your time, and say it with intention. There are two versions of this spell listed. The first is to be worked for yourself; the second is worded to aid another.

The Spell Verse for Yourself

By the power of earth, water, fire, and air
By the power of the God and Goddess so fair
With the repetition of this magickal verse
I remove and dissolve any spell, hex, or curse
From your malevolent intent I am free
Released and clear of all negativity
As this jar candle burns throughout the day and night
It beats back the dark and encourages the light
Your hateful spell cast against me is now undone
By the light of the moon and power of the sun.

The Spell Verse for Another

By the power of earth, water, fire, and air
By the power of the God and Goddess so fair
With the repetition of this magickal verse
I remove and dissolve any spell, hex, or curse
From their malevolent intent you are free
Released and clear of all negativity
As this jar candle burns throughout the day and night
It beats back the dark and encourages the light
The hateful spell cast against you is now undone
By the light of the moon and power of the sun.

Allow the incense to continue to burn until it goes out; please keep an eye on it while it is smoking. After the incense is all ash, carefully shake the cooled ash across the outside of your threshold. This is a symbol that nothing with baneful intent can enter your home or interfere with the spell while it is in progress.

Be sure to repeat the entire chosen spell verse every day at least once a day while the jar candle is burning. Depending on your particular candle, this may be for five to nine days. Finally, when the candle is completely burned out, close up the spell with these lines:

By the power of neutrality

As I will it, so must it be.

Please note: This hex-breaking spell candle must remain lit continuously until it goes out on its own. If you need to move it to a safe location while you are out of the house, then do so. I often put my jar candles inside of a large cast-iron cauldron and place the cauldron on my brick hearth. That way, even if somehow the candle was knocked over, the candle stays contained within the fireproof cauldron. Some practitioners place their jar candles inside of a sink or a bathtub (away from drapes or shower curtains) or place their spell candles inside an unlit fireplace. You may have to move the candle around a bit for a few days. I have always found the magickal results to be well worth any minor inconvenience of plotting out a safe spot for the burning spell candle.

When you are finished with the jar candle, wash it out with saltwater to remove any lingering magick, and place the glass jar in the recycling bin.

Shades of Protection

Color Magick

Even in the darkness, every color can be found...

-JOSS WHEDON

Color is the perception of the frequency of light. Technically our observation of color is based on the light absorption, reflection, and sensitivity of the rod and cone cells in the retina in the eye to the different parts of the spectrum. There are three properties of color that are discernible to the human eye: these are hue, saturation, and brightness. There are also the classic seven

distinct colors that the human eye can identify: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. According to science, the wavelengths, or energies, of all these colors are different.

Exposure to certain kinds of color can affect your breathing rhythms and even raise your blood pressure. Color can help with healing; its effects may soothe or excite, and it can also fire you up into action. As Witches and magick users, we are already very well aware that color and its use is a basic tool in spellcrafting. We are also attentive to how the colors around us can affect our mood, our health, and our magick, for the energies evoked by color have a direct effect on our psyches.

Using color in your Craft is a straightforward way to target specific magickal problems. Each of these ten bewitching colors has a specific enchanting application, especially when it comes to psychic protection and self-defense magick. This information may be applied to candle spells, charm bags, or altar cloths-even the cosmetics you paint on your face or the clothes you choose to wear. Think outside the box and come up with new ways to use color magick for psychic self-defense and protection magick.

Red: This dynamic color influences at a primal level. It lifts your spirit and stimulates and generates emotional intensity. Using the bright and pure color red in protection magick can help to bring you back from psychic overload, and it can energize you when you are rundown and exhausted. Red is a passionate and courageous shade. In protection spells and charms, the color red may be used in conjunction with other colors to strengthen your magickal intention. This is a classic color for uncrossing magick, and it is a color of endurance and physical strength. This primary color is traditionally used to represent the Goddess as the Mother. It is also used to correspond to the southern quarter of a ritual circle and the element of fire.

Orange: The joyful color orange has a positive energy and is expressed in a cheerful and instinctive love of life. Magickally, it brings a sense of well-being, openness, spontaneity, happiness, and abundance. It can recharge your personal power when you are tired, stressed out, or ill. Used for protection magick, the color orange can restore health and vitality.

Yellow: The illuminating color yellow brings to light the positive qualities of self-confidence and openness. Yellow bestows clarity and warmth, and on a physical level it enables you to be comfortable with yourself. This is an intellectual color that encourages communication and intelligence. In protection magick, yellow can calm an exhausted nervous system, and it also promotes clear thinking. On an emotional level, this color can be used magickally to restore self-confidence, and it will help you to rediscover the joy in life. This primary color is often used to represent the eastern quarter of a magick circle, and it corresponds to the element of air.

Green: This is the color of life. A bright and pure shade of leaf green brings tranquility and harmony to your entire magickal self on both the psychic and the physical levels. Green is the color of nature and green magick; it can encourage relaxation, healing, and peace. In protection magick, bright leaf green is considered to be one of the more relaxing and healing of the enchanting colors. It can be used in magick to help remove psychic toxins and to aid in physical healing from the effects of hexes and curses. The color green can help calm you down when your nerves are shot, and it aids in restoring both psychic and magickal balance. This lifegiving color is classically used to represent a god of nature, such as the Green Man. Green also signifies the northern quarter of a magick circle, and this color corresponds to the element of earth.

Blue: The inspirational color blue is connected to the sea and the sky. It evokes spirituality and a sense of divinity. The primary color blue is used in psychic healing to trigger the body's own healing abilities. In protection magick, royal blue is employed to heal spiritual and emotional trauma, as pure and brilliant shades of blue bring tranquility and serenity. Work with sky blue to promote self-confidence and clear thoughts. Turquoise blue will promote tranquility and protection. Clear true blue is typically used to represent the western quarter of a ritual circle. It is naturally aligned to the element of water.

Indigo: This color is described as hypnotic and will have a transformative effect on the body, mind, and spirit. This is the color of the psychic center that governs clairvoyance. This shade stimulates creativity and serenity while promoting confidence and tranquility. This deep sapphire color encourages intuition and protection. Indigo may also be successfully

incorporated into psychic protection rituals, as it will allow you to see things as they truly are. It is a mystical color of clear vision and gentle emotional healing.

Purple/Violet: This is an enchanting color and one that is perennially popular with all magick users and psychics. In bright and clear shades, purple is a power color; it symbolizes enlightened thoughts and a deep connection to the spiritual realm. This makes purple a wonderful shade for an altar cloth or to hold ritual tools or tarot cards. The amethyst color can help you connect to Deity and will assist in keeping you calm and in control. Bright shades of this color (which may also be called violet), when used in protection magick, can dispel fears, anxiety, and any magickal imbalance. This is also a powerful color for counteracting baneful magick. Purple/violet is also rumored to balance the body's metabolism and is traditionally used to grant very potent psychic protection.

White: White is a purifying color. It is the color of spirit and of the highest level of consciousness. In protection magick, working with this hue will bestow spiritual relief and peace, and it can also clear your mind. Using icy and bright white in color magick will cleanse your body, mind, and spirit of any psychic tendrils and unhealthy emotional attachments. The color white reflects, and it does indeed clear out any psychic goop that you may be carting around. During the darkest times and when you are in the deepest despair, work with white for powerful healing and protection. This snowy and brilliant color can light your way onto new spiritual paths, and it will restore you to a healthier balance. White can clear your mind, allowing you to have a more balanced perspective of your world. Traditionally, white is associated with the goddesses of the moon and the Maiden aspect of the Triple Goddess.

Gray: Gray is a color of neutrality. In nature, this color is found in rain clouds and fog. It is a part of color magick and is very often underutilized. Gray is an excellent color to work into protection magick when you are unsure of where the source of psychic attack or negative magick is coming from. Mystical gray ensures that your protection magick travels back to the correct point of origin. Using smoky shades of gray in protection magick also helps to reinforce that you are coming from the middle groundyour magick is neither classified as "sweetness and light" nor dark,

destructive, or malevolent. This color signifies a neutral magickal energy that nullifies anything baneful. This type of color magick is meant to shut down and stop anything that was thrown your way, with a minimum of fuss.

Black: Black is the traditional shade employed in protection magick. It is also popular for use in banishing, binding, and warding magick. The color black does appear in nature: the midnight sky and the deepest, richest soils are black. This is the classic shade of witchery, mystery, and magick. When you work protection magick with the color black, you are actually pulling all of the aspects of the other colors into this single midnight shade. The color black absorbs energy, and it is all other magickal colors combined into one. A friend of mine refers to black as the "Mac Daddy" of all protective magickal colors. The color black shields and protects us. It is the color of the Crone Goddess, the underworld, and the cauldron of rebirth. Use it wisely.

A Witch's Dozen of Herbs for Protection Magick

Maybe you have to know the darkness before you can appreciate the light.

-MADELEINE L'ENGLE

The following botanical ingredients are very complementary for protection magick. Use the herbs in their natural form, fresh or dried, to work into protective sachets or charm bags. I simply could not resist including some herbal magick to this book. Personally, I often arrange fresh herbs around the base of a spell candle, or you can grow many of these plants in the garden around your home for some enforced magickal protection for your property. Here you will find the botanical name in italics for proper identification and some folklore on the plant. At the end of each section, the magickal and astrological correspondences are listed.

Angelica (*Angelica archangelica*): All parts of this stately garden herb are incorporated into protection magick, exorcisms, and psychic healing

rituals. According to folklore, angelica brings inspiration and angelic protection. Angelica blossoms and foliage are often scattered around a home to repel evil and negativity. The roots are often added to charm bags to break spells and for protection. The planetary correspondence for angelica is the sun, and the elemental association is fire.

Cedar (Cedrus spp.): This herbal tree and its foliage are often worked into healing and purification spells. Cedar is a popular oil that is often included in ready-made uncrossing candles. You can easily work with cedar shavings by incorporating them into fragrant charm bags, while a wand made of a fallen cedar branch is thought to be especially beneficial for protection spells. The planetary correspondence is the sun, and the elemental association is fire.

Cypress (Cupressus sempervirens): The cypress tree, also known as Italian cypress, is a symbol for immortality and eternity, and it has the startling folk name of "the tree of death." This may be because of its link to Hecate and darker magick, or it may simply be due to the fact that it is a tree often found in European graveyards and was once a popular wood with the Egyptians for building coffins. This tree's foliage is to be used when working with the goddess Hecate. In the language of flowers, the cypress carries the definition of "mourning." It is classified as a feminine plant. Its magickal associations are the planet Saturn and the element of earth.

Hydrangea (Hydrangea spp.): An old folk name for this blooming shrub is "seven bark." The hydrangea is classified as an herb. This shade-loving, blooming shrub is often overlooked when it comes to protection magick, but it is readily available and a wonderful addition to your magickal gardens. The dried bark and the flowers themselves may be utilized in hex-breaking spells, to ward off negativity, and for psychic protection magick. Interestingly, in the language of flowers, the hydrangea blossom symbolizes "moodiness." Consider the colors of the traditional `Nikko Blue' hydran gea. Throughout the growing season, the flower heads range in color from blue to purple, then fade to green with a touch of burgundy in the autumn after the frost tips the flowers. There is a wealth of different color magicks that can also be applied to your protection work, and all on one shrub. I would assign the moon for a planetary correspondence, since

this shrub thrives in cool shade. The elemental association is definitely water.

Lavender (Lavandula spp.): Lavender is a popular Witch's plant. The scent of lavender has a healing, calming influence that soothes the spirit. Lavender is a shielding and healing plant and a protective herb. It also has the qualities of banishing negativity and keeping negative thoughtforms at bay. Lavender is an herb of transformation, so it's a perfect addition to spells and charms for protection magick and psychic self-defense. In the language of flowers, lavender was believed to soothe a troubled heart, and this herb symbolizes devotion, luck, and happiness. Lavender's magickal associations are protection and purification, and its planetary correspondence is Mercury. Its element is air.

Morning glory (Ipomoea spp.): These annual climbing vines can grow over fifteen feet in height in just one season. The deep blue blooms open in September, and the vines, foliage, and flowers may be worked into protection spells and bindings. According to florigraphy, the morning glory conveys the message of being "sustained by your affections." There are several varieties of morning glories available to Witches today. One of my favorites is a variety called `Grandpa Otts'. This morning glory is dark purple with deeper star-shaped markings on the flowers. It is very dramatic and witchy, plus dark purple is a great color for protection spells. Finally, the magickal associations of this blooming vine are the planet Saturn and the element of water.

Periwinkle (Vinca minor): This plant has the enchanting titles of sorcerer's violet and the flower of death, due to its habit of growing on graves in cemeteries. Periwinkles bloom heavily in the spring and again lightly in the autumn. It has five-petaled purple flowers with a striking white star in the center. The vines can be successfully worked into binding rituals. This perennial groundcover is associated with the planet Venus and the element of water.

Pine (Pinus spp.): Pine needles burned as an incense can cleanse a room of any evil or negative intent. The scent of fresh pine is clean and bracing. Pine oils are often main ingredients of hexbreaking and curse-removal oil blends. Pine needles can also be utilized on those occasions when you feel

the need to send the attacking spell back to its sender. If you are interested, in my book Garden Witch's Herbal I have a "Return to Sender" spell that incorporates pine needles. Finally, the pine tree is associated with the planet Mars and the element of air.

Rose (Rosa): The rose is a classic magickal flower with all sorts of magickal applications besides love spells. Rose petals included in a ritual or scattered around a ritual circle make the magick actually manifest much faster. In other words, it speeds things up. Not only the petals can be used in magick. It is also possible to use the rose thorns to prick someone's conscience. Instead of using pins in a candle or poppet, the rose thorns are used instead, to make someone realize the consequences of bad behavior. Also, you can apply color magick to the individual rose to fine-tune the magick even more. These beautiful flowers are classically associated with the planet Venus and the element of water.

Rowan (Sorbus aucuparia): The rowan is also known as mountain ash. All parts of the rowan are utilized in magick: the leaves, blooms, twigs, and berries. Rowan wood is used to bind magick and magickal items of any sort. If you recall, its use was suggested in the removal and binding of a trouble-making Ouija board back in chapter 2. The rowan has the planetary association of the sun and the elemental correspondence of fire.

Rue (Ruta graveolens): Folk names include herb of grace, mother of the herbs, Ruta, Witch bane, and garden rue. In magick, rue is often used for hex breaking and for warding off the evil eye. Rue is also a classic herb for protection magick and to increase your psychic powers. You can easily tuck a few rue leaves or flowers into a protective sachet. The scent of the plant is strong, so I would not recommend wearing the charm bag. Place it inside of a purse, briefcase, or drawer instead-just be sure to keep it out of the reach of children. Also, to be on the safe side, women who are pregnant should avoid contact with rue. Rue is a popular herb with Italian traditional Witches, the Strega. The plant is sacred to Diana and Aradia. This herb is ruled by the sun. Its elemental correspondence is fire. Warning: Rue is a toxic plant. Brushing against the foliage may cause contact dermatitis. Do not take internally. It is also an abortifacient.

Sage (Salvia o f ficinalis): This multi-purpose herb grants wisdom, healing, and protection. The name sage comes from the Latin word salvare, which means "to heal." Bundles of dried sage are traditional for smudging and for cleansing a place or person of negativity. Essential sage oil is popular for adding to spell candles and incorporating into psychic healing and protection spells. The planetary correspondence for sage is Jupiter, and the elemental association is air.

Yarrow (Achillea millefolium): Yarrow is often worked into healing spells. Holding or wearing a small posy of the blossoms of this perennial herb will protect its wearer, and it also enforces confidence and protection. Yarrow blossoms and foliage are used to cleanse any place or person from negative influences. This is a classic Witch's plant, as it is an all-purpose magickal herb. No Witch's garden is complete without at least one variety of yarrow. Its planetary corresponded is Venus, and the elemental association is water.

Herb Magick for Protection

In the woods, we return to reason and faith. There I feel that nothing can befall me in life-no disgrace, no calamity which nature cannot repair.

-RALPH WALDO EMERSON

For a quietly powerful type of protection magick that can be worked at any time or phase of the moon, create an herbal charm bag. Peruse the previous list and choose the botanicals that most resonate with you or that you can most easily acquire. For this spell, you will need to gather your chosen herbs, a six-inch square of fabric, and coordinating colored ribbons to tie the bundle together. (I suggest red for power, black to banish negativity, or gray to neutralize troubles.) Or you may prefer to use premade sheer organza bridal favor bags. These make a good and quick alternative for charm bags for folks that do not sew. See if you can find black, red, or silvery gray favor bags.

Place your herbal ingredients inside of the premade bag and draw the ribbons tightly together, then tie three knots. If you are using a square of

fabric, gather up each corner and make a small bundle. Wrap the ribbon around the bundle and then secure it with three knots. Then say:

With all the power of three times three

As I will it, so shall it be.

Now hold the charm bag in the palm of your hands and enchant the bag by infusing it with your own personal power. Hold firmly in your mind the image of being calmly and quietly protected from any and all harm. When you feel the charm bag starting to warm up in your hands, repeat the spell verse:

Magickal herbs of protection and power

I call your magick to me in this hour.

Now add your green magick gently to mine

I am protected and secure at all times.

By the power of herbs this spell is spun

I close this spell in peace and bring harm to none.

Pocket the herbal charm bag and keep it with you, on your person, for one month. After the time has passed, open up the bag and return the herbal components neatly to nature. Wash the fabric and ribbons (or organza favor bag) by hand and allow to air-dry so you can reuse them again at another time.

Crystals and Stones for Protection and Defense

It's best to get to know stones before using them in magic.

-SCOTT CUNNINGHAM

There is a wealth of power in the earth and the stones, gems, and crystals that come from it.

Here is a quick list of some of my favorite protective stones. These featured stones are typically easy to find, and they are listed in alphabetical order and with a brief description of their magickal associations. Consider how you could employ these down-to-earth protective tools in your witchery. You could wear the stones in jewelry, tuck a few in your pocket or purse, add them to an herbal sachet bag for more power, or surround a spell candle with the stones. There are dozens of creative and practical ways to use crystals and stones in your spellwork.

Amethyst: This gorgeous purple gemstone is a powerful and protective crystal. The amethyst is believed to protect its wearer from psychic attack and manipulative spells and charms. It is also a calming, healing, and stress-relieving stone. The amethyst helps bring body, mind, and spirit into a healthy balance. Its planetary correspondences are Jupiter and Neptune, and its element is water.

Black Tourmaline: One of the best stones for protection magick, it wards off psychic attack, psychic attachments, vampirism, and negative magick. It is a brittle stone, but natural chunks of it can be made into potent magickal jewelry. It is an incredibly powerful crystal for protection work on all levels. Its planetary correspondence is Saturn, and its element is earth.

Bloodstone: A deep green stone with flecks of red bleeding through, a bloodstone is used for healing work, and it promotes both physical and psychic health. It helps to clear out polluting energy in your system and is another great stone to work with when you are recharging and rebuilding

your personal power. Its planetary correspondence is Mars, and its element is fire.

Carnelian: This reddish-orange stone is the one to work with when you are rebuilding your power and magickal defenses. It is a healing, restoring, and energizing stone that is often connected to the root chakra. It stabilizes and strengthens. Its planetary correspondence is the sun, and its element is fire.

Hematite: This silvery black stone is used for grounding and protection. It is a strengthening stone that will enhance your courage and confidence. Its planetary correspondence is Saturn, and its element is fire.

Jet: Jet is actually fossilized wood, and it has been used as a protective stone for centuries. Jet is a lovely black stone, and it is a popular stone along with amber in Witches' ritual jewelry. Jet is a balancing stone. It helps promote the wisdom of the ages, and it will help to balance out turmoil in your life. It promotes stability and lessens the symptoms of depression. Its planetary correspondence is Saturn, and its element is earth.

Labradorite: This blue-gray stone is used for transformation; it banishes fear, reduces anxiety, and helps remove psychic clutter from your life. It also allows you to remove illusions and to see the truth. Its planetary correspondence is Neptune, and its element is water.

Lapis Lazuli: This dark-blue stone is flecked with gold. This stone is sacred to the goddess Isis and is known for opening up the third eye-your psychic vision, or clairvoyant skills. Lapis lazuli has the reputation for not only repelling and blocking psychic attacks, but also reflecting that negativity right back to the sender. Lapis lazuli helps to restore balance between the mind, body, and spirit. Its planetary correspondence is Venus, and its element is water.

Malachite: This gorgeous banded stone in shades of green is used for protection. It will absorb destructive energies and negative magick. A malachite stone may be used to break any psychic tendrils, links, or cords. Just rub the stone over the areas that you feel are affected. If your malachite stone should suddenly break, then it has taken all of the

negativity it could and has to shatter. This is a warning that you should be especially careful. Its planetary correspondence is Venus, and its element is earth.

Onyx: An onyx stone gifts you with strength. It will help get you through times of trial and stress. It is rumored to help you keep silent, and it is a classic stone to stop hexes, ward off curses, and block intentional and unintentional psychic attack. Its planetary correspondence is Mars, and its element is fire.

Snowflake Obsidian: This is actually molten lava that has cooled so quickly that it did not have a chance to crystallize. All obsidian is very protective. The snowflake obsidian has mottled white patches on the stone that look like snowflakes against a night sky. This type of obsidian in particular is a calming stone. It helps to soothe frayed nerves, alleviate stress, and calm your worries. It also helps you to celebrate and to learn from all of the lessons life hands to you. Its planetary correspondence is Saturn, and its element is fire.

Tiger's-Eye: A classic protective brown stone with golden-colored stripes, this stone is used as a talisman to block and deflect the evil eye and curses in general. This is an earthy stone and can help you to feel reconnected, rooted, and stable even during the toughest times. Tiger's-eye boosts your confidence and can help you overcome any blocks in creativity. It can lessen despair and lift your spirits. It's a great all-around and affordable stone for protective and cheerful bracelets, necklaces, and earrings. Its planetary correspondence is the sun, and its element is fire.

Turquoise: This blue-green stone is well known for its healing and emotionally protective properties. A gorgeous stone, turquoise is popular for jewelry; it is typically set in silver. Turquoise is a purification stone. It pushes away negativity and is thought to represent the unity of earth and heaven, male and female. This is a great stone to work with if you are feeling exhausted or are prone to anxiety or panic attacks, as it will help to soothe your fears and let you begin to heal. It bestows tranquility upon its wearer. Its planetary correspondence is Venus, and its element is earth.

Crystal Spell for Protection

Read the following directions carefully and decide for yourself how you can personalize this crystal spell to make it more powerfully unique.

Timing: There are two days of the week that are most opportune for protection magick: Tuesday, which corresponds to the god of war, Mars, and Saturday, which links to the god of karma, Saturn. You may work the spell in either a waxing or a waning moon phase. If the moon is waxing, then pull protection toward yourself. If the moon is waning, then push negativity away from yourself. Should you choose to work this spell on a full moon, tap into that incredible boost of a full moon's magickal power. Lastly, if it is a new moon, then work with the hidden powers of the dark moon to quietly and secretly strengthen the protection magick.

Supplies:

- A small round mirror
- One black candle
- A coordinating style of candle holder
- Lighter or matches
- Your altar, or a safe, flat surface to set up the spell
- Your favorite protective stones from the list above (or use any protective stones that you have already)

Directions: Set the candle and its holder on top of the mirror. Arrange the stones in a circle around the mirror and candle holder. Take a few moments to visualize that you are grounded and centered. See yourself sending stabilizing roots deep down into the earth. Breathe deeply and slowly, and relax. Push any unwanted or discordant energy out of your system and into the earth, where it will be harmlessly neutralized.

Next, pull up new, healthy, and stabilizing energy from the earth, and allow it to fill you up, strengthen, and empower you. Focus on this

energy and pull it straight into your center. Imagine it glowing there, a nice warm ball of light, awaiting your command to release its magick out into the world to create protection and positive change.

Now light the candle and repeat the spell verse:

This round mirror shall deflect any negativity
While the candle burns away any evil sent to me.
These gems symbolize my protection both strong and true
Stones and crystals of power, guard well all that I do.

Calmly, release that ball of light built in your center out into the world. Then close up the spell with these lines:

By the strength of witchery, this crystal spell is cast
My protection and security will surely last.

Allow the candle to burn out on its own in a safe place. After the candle is spent, pocket the stones and keep them with you for one week. Blessed be.

Closing Thoughts

Weather forecast for tonight: dark. Continued dark overnight, with widely scattered light by morning.

-GEORGE CARLIN

The darkness is nothing to dread-not when you are armed with sensible information and the knowledge of how to protect yourself. You do have options and opportunities to turn any challenging situation into something positive and life affirming. This chapter, for example, has been stuffed full of

practical candle, color, crystal, and herbal magick for you to incorporate into your practices.

Don't forget to refer to all of the previous chapters on psychic protection and magickal self-defense. Perform those rituals, do the exercises, and work on developing your magickal and psychic awareness of both the light and the dark energies that are at play within your life. Evoke the elements when you need to find your balance again. Identify and correct your weaknesses, and recognize and celebrate your individual psychic powers and magickal talents. This book can show you how to work from a place of neutrality and strength, no matter what life throws at you.

But that is not all. As a bonus, there are even more correspondences, protection spells, and rituals to be found in chapter 9. These will give you additional options and ideas with which you can conjure up your own personal style of protective magick. I am sure you will find it very useful.

While we have definitely entered the territory of a darker shade of witchery, there is nothing here to fear-not when we stand strong and are willing to be responsible for our own magickal actions. Let's look around ourselves in awareness and then react with humility, grace, and wisdom.

The path is sure. Let your magick light the way.



Practical Magick

Whatever you can do or dream, you can begin it. Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it.

-JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

To CLOSE OUT this book, here is some final practical information that I thought would come in handy for you. You will soon discover that I have this information set up so you can take it and immediately apply it to your witchery and spellcraft. After each bit of information, an accompanying spell or ritual is provided.

Daily Magickal Correspondences

To begin, here are the classic daily correspondences. These illustrate what the magickal theme for the day is. Also refer to page 16z's "Daily Timing" for more ideas on incorporating the individual days of the week into your protection magick. Following this is a ritual that incorporates all of the energies from each day of the week.

Sunday: Planetary influence-Sun. Colors-gold and yellow. Magickal applications-success, fame, and wealth.

Monday: Planetary influence-Moon. Colors-silver and white. Magickal applications-glamour, illusion, and women's mysteries.

Tuesday: Planetary influence-Mars. Colors-red and black. Magickal applications-passion, courage, and banishing fear.

Wednesday: Planetary influence-Mercury. Colors-purple and orange. Magickal applications-communication, travel, and change.

Thursday: Planetary influence-Jupiter. Colors-royal blue and green. Magickal applications-healing and prosperity

Friday: Planetary influence-Venus. Colors-pink and aqua. Magickal applications-love, romance, and family.

Saturday: Planetary influence-Saturn. Colors-black and dark purple. Magickal applications-protection, banishing, and removing negativity.

Putting Negative Energy and jealousy to the Ground: A RITUAL

0! Beware, my lord, of jealousy; it is the green-eyed monster which doth mock the meat it feeds on.

-SHAKESPEARE, Othello

It happens; I'd love to tell you it does not, but there are times when you will deal with another person's jealousy and envy. If you are empathic, or you are an especially sensitive Witch, having these feelings directed toward you can be debilitating, especially when they come from friends who should be happy for you and your success but instead are eaten up by their own feelings of inadequacy. Jealousy and envy are ugly emotions. To say that they are unhealthy is a bit of an understatement, as these destructive feelings are damaging not only for the individual who is experiencing them, but also for the person who is on the receiving end.

Earlier in this book, I mentioned that sometimes your best bet is to put baneful magick and negative psychic energy to the ground instead of just "sending it back." Well, here is some practical magick that does exactly that; this ritual puts that energy and/or magick straight to the ground. Best of all, this ritual incorporates all of the bewitching energies of each of the seven days of the week.

Timing and Directions: This spell is best performed outdoors. Also, like many spells that diminish negative effects, I recommend working this ritual during a waning moon phase.

To begin, perform one of the elemental solutions for psychic attack that were featured in chapter z; choose the elemental cure that

resonates most closely with you. (These begin on page 40.) After you have done that, you may continue with the ritual.

Supplies:

- A tall, clear drinking glass filled halfway with tap water
- Green food coloring
- An outdoor space in the garden or yard where you can pour the water on the ground
- 7 white tealight candles (to represent each day of the bewitching week)
- 7 clear glass candle holders (to keep the tealight flames safely protected and contained)
- A lighter

To begin, arrange the tealight candles in their glass holders on the ground in a large circle. Make sure you leave plenty of space for you to walk safely between the candles. Also, please remember to be very careful with open flames around grass and leaves! Be smart and safe with outdoor candles.

Once your circle of seven candles has been arranged, step inside with the other supplies and have a seat or kneel on the ground. Now, set the water-filled glass and food coloring carefully to the side, and begin to light the seven candles, one at a time, until you are surrounded by their light.

Each candle represents a day of the week and its magick. As you light the first candle, say the first line. Continue with the next candle and each line until you finish with Saturday's seventh candle.

Sunday does bring joy and much success
Monday for the moon and the Goddess
Tuesday for a warrior's courage true
Wednesday will make communication bloom
Thursday's gifts are health and prosperity
Fridays do shower love for all to see
Saturday ends the week with protection true
(Now move back to the center of the circle and say:)
May I be blessed each day in all that I do.

Take a moment and center yourself. Tap into your inner wisdom, find your sense of humility and responsibility, and continue with this verse:

Seven shining lights for all seven charming days
I am protected and blessed in so many ways
Under this slender banishing moon tonight
I put to ground troubles with this magick rite.

Now pick up the glass and add several drops of the green food coloring to the water. Set the food coloring to the side. Stand up inside of the circle of candles and begin to carefully swirl the glass around until the water turns a shade of green.

While you do so, visualize that any spite, envy, or jealousy that is being unfairly directed at you becomes incorporated into that green water. Do not become angry; just let that swirling water draw all of the negativity into

itself. If you find yourself releasing any hurt feelings by crying, let yourself shed a few healing tears. Continue to swirl the liquid around, watching it change from clear to green. Once it is mixed, stop swirling the water, and hold the water glass in both hands out in front of you and repeat the spell verse:

I feel your envy that is turning you to green
Once my friend, now my foe in this unhappy scene
I stand surrounded by light, while you sulk in the dark
This spell will protect me until you heal your own heart.

Now carefully step out of the circle of candles a few feet, and pour the green water neatly onto the ground. Take your time. Don't fling the water aside; instead, lean forward and pour it straight out and into the earth, where it will be absorbed and any energy or magick can harmlessly dissipate. Then stand up straight, and close the spell by saying:

By all the powers of earth, air, fire, and water
I do ground your envy now and forever after.

Return to the circle of candles and have a seat on the ground. Set the empty glass aside. Place both of your hands flat upon the earth and draw up some stabilizing, healing energy. Stay there as long as you like and allow yourself time to heal your own emotions and psychic senses, and begin to recover. When you are ready, extinguish the candles, place your palms flat upon the earth one final time, and say these lines to close your ritual:

No more negativity around me will be found
I have put all envy, spite, and hatred to the ground.

Clean up your supplies and take the candles back inside. If you like, you can relight the tealight candles once you are indoors and allow them to burn out while you keep an eye on them. Wash out the drinking glass that you use with salted water to remove any lingering magick, and then finally wash the glass with dish soap before you use it again.

Notes: If you are limited to performing this spell indoors for any reason, then I suggest instead of using a clear glass that you put the water in a cup with a lid on it. When you get to the part where you leave the circle of candles, stop and extinguish those flames, as you will be leaving them unattended.

Then go and take the water-filled cup to a park and quietly continue the spell from there. Once you return home, you may relight the candles if you wish. You may have to improvise and adapt the spell to your own needs, but I am sure you will come up with something clever if you just put your mind to it. Blessed be.

Moon Phases for Psychic Self-Defense and Protection Magick

Everyone is a moon and has a dark side which he never shows to anybody.

-MARK TWAIN

First Quarter: (from the new moon to the waxing half moon) The waxing moon phase is classically associated with the Maiden Goddess and fresh starts. Look to the western sky to see this moon set in early evenings. Your personal psychic energy will be building now, and you will notice that you are more sympathetic and sensitive to other people's emotions at this time. Awaken your intuition and become more aware of the psychic activity that is around you. This is an auspicious time to work on establishing good, healthy boundaries. Now put this information to use in clever ways.

This lunar phase is a magickal time of beginnings, growth, and creativity. As the moon grows fuller each night, this lunar phase is used to pull positive changes toward you. The waxing first quarter moon is the occasion to celebrate freedom, growth, the learning process, health, and to acknowledge your inner potential. Classically, this is also the time to pull positive changes, new friendships, and positive opportunities into your life, for as the moon grows larger, so will your magickal goals manifest.

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Second Quarter: (from the waxing half moon to the full moon) This phase is associated with the Goddess as a huntress, pathfinder, spell spinner, and creator. During this lunar phase, emotions and instincts are heightened. You will notice that precognitive dreams, empathy, intuition, and clairvoyance will peak as the full moon grows closer. Ride this natural psychic tide and turn up the volume on your psychic talents; see what they show you.

During this lunar phase, protection spells will come to fruition swiftly, especially if they are straightforward, practical, and heartfelt. All of the magickal topics listed in the first quarter are complementary in this lunar period as well. This week-long phase is ripe with potential and all about possibilities. Also keep in mind that the closer you can cast your spells to the actual date of the full moon, the more power and oomph your protection witchery will actually have.

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Full Moon: (the full moon phase lasts for three days: the night before the full moon, the day of the full moon, and the night after the full moon) Typically, the Goddess at the full moon is portrayed as the loving and fertile mother. She is wise, beautiful, generous, and compassionate. However, I would like to remind you that all mothers will protect their children ferociously. If you mess with someone's kids, their mother will find a way to take you down personally. What would possibly make you think that the Mother Goddess would be any different? So keep that type of energy in mind while working protection magick. Call on the Goddess

as the Mother for protection, and then leave the details up to her. She can be very, very creative in the defense of her children.

The full moon is an awesome all-purpose magickal lunar phase, and the sky is the limit. The best magickal tip to remember is that the full moon is all about tapping into one of the biggest jolts of power that is available for each month.

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Third Quarter: (from the second night after the full moon to the waning half moon) I associate this phase of the moon with the Goddess in her dark sorceress/bad-ass chick persona. When the moon begins to wane, it ushers in a powerful time of internal energy and an opportunity to quietly look within. Focus on those dreams, visions, instincts, and gut hunches. If you are clairaudient, pay particular attention to your internal messages right now If there are situations to be dealt with, you can discover them now. All psychic energy is focused within. Be still, listen carefully, and see what you learn.

This is the best lunar phase to banish your own fears, to put to the ground someone else's jealousy or envy of you, to push away illness, and to smoothly dissolve relationships and friendships that you have outgrown. This is a prime lunar phase to push passive-aggressive bullies and emotional or psychic vampires out of your life as well.

Work magick in the third quarter to remove depression, bad dreams, disease, negativity, and any obstacles that you are facing. Now is also the time to carefully dissolve problems and to work uncrossing magick. Cast out troubles in the healthiest way possible for all concerned. Remember that as the moon wanes, the situation or problem will dissipate too.

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Fourth Quarter: (from the waning half moon to the dark of the moon) As the moon becomes smaller in the evening sky, this time of the waning moon is associated with the Goddess as the wise Crone. During this lunar phase, you may notice that your psychic talents either take a vacation or come

roaring out to play. I personally have always found that psychic abilities such as empathy, mediumship, and psychometry are more pronounced at this time. Power is focused internally now, and this is the lunar phase that is complementary for personal spellwork that releases old self- images and that works to drive out fears and any unhealthy habits from your life.

Magickally, now is the occasion to tackle serious issues, such as extreme protection magick, bindings, or banishings, and to keep away criminals, prowlers, or stalkers. This is also the prime time to neutralize baneful magick and to break hexes and curses. Casting your spells in the final days of the moon's cycle, the dark of the moon (when the moon is not visible at all), will increase the force behind your uncrossing, banishing, or hex-breaking magick. This final phase of the moon is often linked to the darker aspects of the Crone Goddess, when she is a wise and powerful spiritual warrior.

Dark of the Moon Ritual:

EVOKING NEPTHYS FOR PSYCHIC PROTECTION

This is a psychic protection ritual designed to be worked in a solitary fashion. Truthfully, some of the most intense and powerful magick you will ever perform will be done solo. This ritual involves evoking (calling upon) the goddess Nepthys (see page 198 for more information on her). To be clear, you are not invoking (calling Deity within yourself), you are evoking-calling Deity to be present at your working and to help you.

Timing and Supplies: Definitely work this ritual during a waning moon phase, as Nepthys is most easily reached then.

• An indigo-colored votive candle (it will burn about 4-5 hours)

• A complementary votive candle cup (votive candles turn to liquid right away; you definitely need the proper candle cup for this or you will have wax all over your altar)

• Tumbled stones of sugilite or blue goldstone (these correspond with Nepthys)

• A dried lotus pod (check the dried flowers at an arts and crafts store)

• A picture of Nepthys (check the Internet and print out a nice depiction of this deity; Nepthys has a tall basket on her head that is her hieroglyph-if it is the throne symbol, then the deity is Isis; both Nepthys and Isis have wings, so look at the depictions carefully)

• Lighter or matches

• Your altar or a safe, flat surface to set up this spell

Directions: Arrange the altar to your liking. I suggest setting the tumbled stones and the lotus pod around the outside of the candle holder. Place the depiction of Nepthys in front of the candle holder, where you can easily see it. Ground and center yourself; be mentally ready to work the ritual.

Now light the candle. Visualize that Nepthys is standing directly behind you. Don't turn and look if you feel a presence, just trust in this deity and take pleasure in the experience. Now that you feel her near, imagine that she takes you gently into her arms and wraps her dark wings completely around you. Take a few moments and enjoy the sensation of protection and love. You are safe from any psychic attacks and negativity. Enjoy her blessings while you are within her arms. Now repeat the spell verse:

Nepthys, please wrap your midnight wings around me
Protecting me from all negativity.
No psychic attack can get through your loving arms
With your help, I'm defended from trouble and harm.
As this candle burns, you'll strengthen my protection spell
When the candle is spent, then all will surely be well.

Remember, this is an evocation: by calling this goddess's presence to your side, you may notice some physical manifestations. For example, you may feel cooler or warmer, or it may feel as if someone has their arm draped across your shoulders. Enjoy the sensation and the feeling of security and strength that she brings to you for the next few hours. Go about your business, and keep an eye on that spell candle. You will continue to feel Nepthys by your side for as long as that indigo candle is burning.

When the candle goes out in a few hours, return to your altar and pick up the picture of Nepthys. Look at it carefully, and thank her in your own words for her assistance today. Now formally ask Nepthys to depart by saying these lines:

Nepthys, I thank you for your tender loving care
Go in peace, with my gratitude, lady so fair.

Clean up your supplies and store the lotus pod. Save that picture of Nepthys and add it to your Book of Shadows, or tuck it in a frame as a memento to be used at another time. Pocket the tumbled stones that were around the candle holder, and keep them with you for one week. They will help reinforce the psychic protection. Having had Nepthys at your side for a few hours will make you wiser and more confident, and able to handle any situations. Blessed be.

Thirteen Deities to Call On for Protection

The glorious gifts of the gods are not to be cast aside.

-HOMER

Here is some information on thirteen protective deities for you to call upon as you design and cast spells of your own creation. You will find a bit of information on the pantheon and the deities' specialties. Also, there are associated colors and, if applicable, stone, crystal, metal, and herbal correspondences to be used in their magick as well.

Anubis (Egyptian): The jackal-headed god. Anubis is the gatekeeper to the underworld, a protector and a guardian. Anubis can walk with you during challenging magickal situations. He can help to remove fear so you can find the courage to do what needs to be done. Colors: green and black. Crystals and stones: malachite and nebula. Herb: myrrh.

Artemis (Greek): The Maiden Goddess of the crescent moon and the hunt, Artemis leads the hunt with her wild women. Artemis can teach you to be brave and courageous no matter what gets thrown your way. She is known for acting quickly and decisively to protect and rescue those who call on her for aid. She is swift to punish offenders, even though she detests violence itself. She a protector of women in childbirth and of mothers and their children. Colors: silver and white. Metal: silver. Crystals and stones: moonstone, labradorite, and selenite. Herb: mugwort, also known as artemesia.

Hecate (Greco-Roman): The triple-faced, torch-bearing goddess of the crossroads. A deity of choices, endings, and beginnings, Hecate is called the Phantom Queen and is a patroness and protector of Witches. She may appear as a beautiful young woman, an attractive matron, or a wise old crone. Hecate is a powerful and no-nonsense deity to work protection magick with. While she has always been associated with darker magick and curses, she is also incredible for calling upon her assistance in turning back and stopping baneful magick. You can always tell when Hecate is near, as dogs will begin to howl and the wind will blow Colors: black,

green, and silver. Crystals and stones: snowflake obsidian and onyx. Herbs: lavender and willow.

Horus (Egyptian): The falcon-headed son of Isis and Osirus. Horus is associated with both the sky and the sun, and he is the patron of matters of law and justice. Naturally, the falcon is linked with this deity. He is a powerhouse of warrior god-type energy. Horus is the protector of Egypt, and his symbol, the Eye of Horus, is a classic protective symbol. Colors: gold and white. Crystals and stones: fire opal, citrine, and sunstone. Herb: sunflower.

Isis (Egyptian): The supreme Egyptian Mother Goddess, Isis is a winged high priestess of magick and enchantment. Her area of expertise is magick-all kinds of magick-and she is very protective of her devotees. Her other specialties include magick for marriage, family, divination, and protection. The cow is her sacred animal, and one of her magickal symbols is the full moon. Isis is typically depicted with a throne on top of her head, which is her hieroglyph. Colors: white and deep blue. Crystals and stones: red chalcedony, lapis lazuli, and azurite. Herbs: water lily and lotus.

Kali (Hindu): The "Great Protector" and champion of women in peril. Call on Kali if you are in physical danger, and she will come to assist you. Over the years, I have heard many stories about women who called on Kali when they were in danger, and each time something amazing happened. I must caution you to invoke her only in extreme situations. Kali isn't the one to call on if you are feeling pissy or just having a bad day. She is a force of nature and is called "the Destroyer"-keep that firmly in mind. Colors: black and red. Crystals and stones: jet and garnet.

Lilith (Sumerian): The divine lady owl and ultimate femme fatale. Lilith is often thought of as a beautiful vampire. She is seductive, powerful, and dangerous, but if you need help fending off unwanted psychic vampires, she's just the deity to call on. The screech owl is her sacred animal. Colors: red and black. Crystals and stones: carnelian and obsidian. Herb: deep red, thorny roses.

The Morrigan (Celtic): The Morrigan is intense. This is a goddess of bloodlust, revenge, and prophecy, and she reigns over the battlefield. She is a ferocious, vengeful, frightening, challenging goddess, but in the best possible way. She will challenge both you and your fears and any preconceived notions you may hold of her. She is a berserker's rage, the washer at the ford, and the Bean Sidhe, all rolled into one. Ravens and crows are her sacred birds, and remember, these are carrion eaters, not just witchy black birds. The Morrigan will test you constantly, and she demands both a healthy amount of fear and respect. Colors: blood red and black. Crystals and stones: bloodstone and garnet.

Nepthys (Egyptian): The green-eyed dark sister of Isis, Nepthys is called the Revealer, and she can help you discover what would remain hidden. Nepthys is excellent for darker magick, general protection, and psychic self-defense. She can show you your shadow side and teach you how to accept yourself as you truly are. Nepthys is best called during a waning moon, and her energy is similar to Isis, just a bit darker and more intense. Nepthys is always depicted with a basket on a stand on top of her head. Color: midnight blue. Crystals and stones: sugilite and blue goldstone. Herb: lotus.

Sekhmet (Egyptian): Sekhmet is the lion-headed goddess associated with Upper Egypt. She was called "the Terrible One," "She Who Is Powerful," and the "Eye of Ra" while she was in her protector form. A mighty solar goddess of fire, power, destruction, and war, her breath created the desert. She is an extremely protective deity and an excellent goddess to call upon if you feel you are under psychic attack. Sekhmet will come roaring to your aid so long as you are respectful of her power. Colors: red and black. Crystals and stones: red or brown tiger's-eye.

Shiva (Hindu): The lord of sweeping change. Call on Shiva if you need change to come right away. He will dance into your life and clear things out quickly. just be sure to be very specific with what your magickal goals are and what you actually need removed from your life. Symbols for Shiva include the crescent moon and the trident. Colors: red and white. Stone: Shiva Lingam.

Thor (Norse): The everyman's god. Thor is a great warrior and is thought to admire acts of bravery and courage. Thor likes a good fight and is always happy to lend his aid to people in need. This is a beloved god and one who genuinely loves his people. Thursday is named after him; it is literallyThor's day. The lightning bolt and the hammer are his symbols. Colors: silver, red, and yellow Crystals and stones: granite, quartz, and slate.

Zeus (Greek): The leader of the Olympians and a storm bringer, Zeus is a powerhouse of energy and magick. He can grant wisdom, cunning, and protection if you approach him respectfully and honestly. His symbols are the lightning bolt and the eagle. Colors: white and gold. Metal: gold. Crystal: amber (I suggest the fossilized resin amber, as it is known to hold an electrical charge).

Coven Protection Magick with Hecate

The Earth began to bellow, Trees to dance And howling dogs in glimmering light advance, Ere Hecate came.

-VIRGIL, The Aeneid

Here is a protection ritual for your coven. There may come a time when you have to clean house. If members have been removed or have left for personal reasons with harsh words, or if troubles arise that are directed at your group, this will help to protect your entire coven and their loved ones.

This ritual calls on Hecate, who has many titles, including Patroness and Guardian of Witches. The basic instructions are here, but this ritual does allow you room to personalize this to your specific coven and your own group practices.

Timing, Directions, and Suggested Supplies: This spell is best cast during the waning moon, or dark of the moon, to remove any troublesome energy that may be lingering around the group. To begin, I suggest setting up a central altar devoted to Hecate. Cover the table with pretty fabric in a dark, bewitching shade. Items that correspond with Hecate are black

candles, old-fashioned metal keys, iron cauldrons, and photos of black dogs. The following herbs are all associated with the goddess Hecate: cedar, cypress, dandelions, garlic, lavender, mint, mugwort, palm, peony, pomegranate, thyme, and willow.

You may need a large card table to arrange everything to your liking. Take your time, and make the altar bewitching, attractive, and personal for your group. I suggest placing a large cauldron in the center of the altar and filling it full of candles; get some atmosphere going. You can choose whatever candle colors you think will be most beneficial (refer to chapter 8 for suggested colors for protection magick).

In addition, have every member of the coven bring a representation of Hecate and contribute to the altar setup; this should definitely be a group effort. Other items that are good to include on the altar are photos of the current members of the coven and photos of their family and pets. If you have a coven logo or coven jewelry, include that on your altar setup as well. All of these images and items will help to link the protection magick straight back to the coven and their loved ones.

Once the altar is set up and you have candles flickering, gather in a circle around the altar and cast your ritual circle together.

Quarter Calls:

(EAST) Hecate Phosphorus, the light bringer, shed your illumination and magich down on us all.

(SOUTH) Hecate Trevia, triple faced, protect us always in the winter, spring, summer, and fall.

(WEST) Hecate Nyketerian, lady of the night, Queen of the Witches, guide our hands and hearts.

(NORTH) Mighty Hecate, protect our coven's good name as we grow together in the magickal arts.

Casting the Ritual Circle: Now start in the eastern quarter and have the first person take the hand of the person to their left, and say:

Hand to hand, I cast the circle.

Then the second person repeats this as they take the hand of the person to their left-and around the circle of members this goes, one at a time, until everyone has spoken the line and you have gone completely around the circle clockwise. Once the last hand is clasped and you are all holding hands, then say in unison:

The circle is cast; we are between the worlds.

You may release hands. Next, the evocation is spoken. All of the coven members should say this together.

Evocation:

We call upon the Triple Goddess Hecate to guard, protect, and defend the members of this coven and our reputations. No spell or curse, no spoken phrase, no written word, email, or phone call shall harm us, our name, or the coven we have built.

To any who wish harm to us individually or to the entire coven, may their negative and spiteful actions be nullified. May their bitter words turn against them, showing the community for who they truly are.

May Hecate herself defend, protect, and keep all of our coven members and our families safe from any and all psychic or magickal harm. Hecate help us to be successful, to stand in strength, and to travel our magickal path together. Let the teachings and practices of our coven bring illumination, joy, and wisdom to us all in the best possible way.

Now raise energy as your coven typically does. You may choose to spiral dance, hum, or clasp hands again and build the energy higher and higher. Once the energy has peaked, release it by tossing your hands up to the sky. Now all of the members should say together:

Our request is sincerely made, and now we close this verse

In no way can this magick turn or bring any curse.

Sink to the earth, and ground and center. After a bit, share cakes and ale according to your coven's own practices. While you are all chatting and relaxing, keep the conversation upbeat and positive. Don't bring any talk of old hurts or negativity back into this ritual. When the cakes and ale are finished, stand up and release the quarters, this time starting in the north and moving widdershins (counterclockwise).

(NORTH) Mighty Hecate, we thank you for your purpose and your strength. Blessed be.

(WEST) Hecate Nyketerian, we thank you for your loving assistance this night. Blessed be.

(SOUTH) HecateTrevia, ruler of the earth, sky, and sea, we thank you for your courage and conviction. Blessed be.

(EAST) Hecate Phosphorus, we thank you for your illuminating presence and wisdom within our lives. Blessed be.

Thank Hecate and open the circle by saying the following as a group:

Hecate, we thank you! Hail and farewell.

The circle is open but unbroken. Merry meet,

merry part, and merry meet again.

The ritual is finished. May your coven or circle be blessed.

GLOSSARY

Stand in the light when you want to speak out.

-CROW PROVERB

Amulet: A type of herbal charm, ornament, or jewel that aids and protects its wearer.

Baneful magick: A modern term for malevolent magick that is used to manipulate, harm, or cause injury.

Banishing: A magickal act that removes (banishes) negativity or baneful magick from your life.

Boundaries: Personal boundaries are the physical, emotional, and mental limits we establish to protect ourselves from being manipulated, used, or hurt by others.

Charge: To fill or imbue an object with magickal energy.

Charm: A rhyming series of words or a simple spell used for specific magickal purposes.

Charm bag: Similar to a sachet, a charm bag is a small cloth bag filled with aromatic herbs, charged crystals, and other magickal ingredients. Charm bags may be carried for any magickal purpose: health, safe travel, protection, to increase your confidence, and so on.

Circle: An informal group of Wiccans or Witches who study and practice magick together.

Clairaudience: Clear hearing. This involves the reception of extrasensory signals such as a word, a sound, or a phrase. Often associated with telepathy, which is the ability of hearing another person's thoughts. The

best way to describe clairaudience is that you are hearing what is not spoken or that you are "hearing between the lines."

Clairvoyance: Clear seeing. The ability to see past, present, and future. In the old days, a clairvoyant was referred to as a seer. A clairvoyant sees images and pictures that may be symbolic, or they can be as intense as watching a miniature psychic movie scene (a vision) inside the clairvoyant's mind.

Correspondence chart: A listing of what items are compatible in magickal use and will work in harmony with each other. For example, deities, days of the week, herbs, colors, and crystals all have magickal correspondences.

Correspondences: A magickal classification system of interrelations by which all things are categorized.

Coven: A group of Wiccans or Witches who practice magick and worship together, with formalized rules, degree systems, training, and ritual practices.

Craft: The Witch's name for the Old Religion and practice of Witchcraft.

Curse: A magickal working intended to bring bad luck, sickness, or injury to its target.

Dabbler: A person with no real spiritual practices who is simply playing at (or dabbling) with the Craft.

Elements: The four natural elements are earth, air, fire, and water.

Emotional vampires (emo-vamps): People who are emotionally needy. Living in a constant state of drama, they demand unhealthy amounts of attention and affection. These are human beings who literally feed upon the attention and emotional energy of others.

Empathy: Also known as clairsentience. An empath is a person who can physically or psychically "tune in" to the emotional experiences of a

person or place. They sense attitudes, emotions, and sometimes human ailments.

Enchantment: A spell. An act of magick. This word is often used interchangeably for the word spell.

Evocation: In magickal terms, an evocation is calling a deity to be present by your side as your honored guest while you are working magick.

Garden Witch: A practical, down-to-earth type of magickal practitioner. A Garden Witch is well versed in herbal knowledge and its uses, and is a magickal gardener.

Gargoyle: Technically, gargoyles are defined as only architectural rainspouts for buildings, while a grotesque is used for decorative purposes and has no other function besides an ornamental one. However, for magickal applications, a gargoyle is considered to be a protective type of spirit. Gargoyles offer defense and are a sort of magickal guardian that is preserved in stone. See chapter 6.

Green magick: A practical, nature-based system of the Craft that focuses on a reverence for the natural world, the individual's environment, and the plants and herbs that are indigenous to the area. Herbal and natural magick are essential to green magick.

Gut hunch: A tightening in the solar plexus area of the body. Typically, gut hunches are connected to intuition and the receiving of psychic impressions.

Herb: A plant that is used for medicine, food, flavoring, or scent. Any part of the plant-the roots, stem, bark, leaves, fits, seeds, or flowers-may be used for such purposes. An herb may be a tree, shrub, woody perennial, flower, annual, or fern.

Herbalism: Also known as herbal magick. The use of herbs in conjunction with magick to bring about positive change and transformation.

Hex: Classically, this word has been defined as practicing Witchcraft. Today, if someone is talking about a hex, they are typically referring to affecting another person by means of a baneful spell.

Hex sign: The hex sign is a Pennsylvania Dutch-type of art and craft with a colorful, controversial magickal history. The type of art found in the hex sign is bright, colorful, and full of fascinating and magickal symbols. See chapter 6.

Intuition: A quick and ready insight and immediate apprehension or cognition-the good old-fashioned gut hunch. This ability is sometimes referred to as prophetic knowing. In the simplest terms, you just know.

Invocation: In magick, an invocation is the drawing in of a deity's essence into your own body; it is also called aspecting or drawing down the God or Goddess. To invoke is where you take a deity into yourself; in other words, divine possession.

Magick: The combination of your own personal power that is used in harmony with natural objects such as herbs, crystals, and the elements. Once these are combined and your goal is focused upon, typically by the act of repeating the spell verse and the lighting of a candle or creating an herbal charm, the act of magick then creates a positive change.

Natural magick: A stye of magick that works in harmony with the various powers of the natural world and four elements of earth, air, fire, and water.

Psychic attack: The unconscious or purposeful focusing of psychic or mental energies to bring emotional harm to another individual.

Psychic detox: This is a way to cleanse your system of psychic goop and negativity. See the psychic detox spell in chapter 4.

Psychic protection: An active way to protect yourself from other people's thoughts, feelings, and psychic energy.

Psychic shield: One of the many tools available for psychic and magickal protection. See chapter 4.

Psychic vampires (psi-vamps): People who take energy from others; they either have learned how or have natural capacities for taking energy from others and then using that acquired energy to raise up their own personal energy levels. There are three types of psi-vamps: unintentional (unknowing or accidental); intentional uninvited (deliberate or predatory); and invited, who only feed with permission, with their donor being both aware and willing.

Psychometry: The psychic reading of an object or place by touch. This talent is linked to empathy.

Rune: A sign or a character in any of the runic futharks. Runes are figures from an ancient alphabet that are used as a divinatory system, and the symbols are often used in spellcraft for warding or protection magick. (See chapter 6.)

Spell: A spell is a series of rhyming words that verbally announce the spellcaster's intention. When these spoken words are combined with specific actions such as lighting a candle, creating an amulet, or gathering an herb, this is then worked in harmony with the tides of nature and, combined with the spellcaster's personal energy, makes the magickal act endowed with the power to create positive change.

Spell begging: Just what it sounds like: when a person nags, begs, or pleads for another person to do spells for them. Typically, this is because the spell beggar is personally frightened by magick, too lazy to do the research, or lacking the confidence to stand up, make a change, and to do the magickal work required to actually fix his or her own problems.

Uncrossing: The magickal removal of roadblocks in your life. Uncrossing magick is typically done to straighten out spiritual problems.

Warding: To magickally defend and protect your home, possessions, or place of employment. A magickal alarm system of sorts.

Wicca: A Neopagan earth religion. Its followers generally believe in harming no one with their magick. Wiccans follow and celebrate the seasons and cycles of the year, and see the Divine as both masculine and feminine.

Wiccan Rede: The absolute rule that Wiccans live by. States "Do as you will, harm none."

Witch: A practitioner of magick. A Witch may not necessarily be a Wiccan. That being said, most Witches will work their magick from a place of neutrality. Witches know and accept that they are fully accountable and responsible for all of their actions, on both the mundane and the magickal levels.

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The fairest garden in her looks, And in her mind the wisest books.

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Mickie Mueller

Ellen Dugan has practiced Witchcraft for more than twenty-five years. The award-winning author of more than ten books—including *Natural Witchery*, *Cottage Witchery*, and *Elements of Witchcraft*—she gives lectures across the country and teaches courses on the Craft. Dugan lives in Missouri.

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ISBN 978-0-7387-2168-2
51695
9 780738 721682

$16.95 US
$19.50 CAN

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