



QUAREIA—THE INITIATE

Module X—Preparation for Adept hood

Lesson 3: Solitude

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WELCOME

Welcome to this lesson of the Quareia curriculum.

The Quareia takes a magical apprentice from the beginning of magic to the level of adeptship and beyond. The course has no superfluous text; there is no dressing, no padding—everything is in its place and everything within the course has a good reason to be there.

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So remember—in order for this course to work, it is wise to work with the lessons in sequence. If you don't, it won't work.

Yours,

Josephine McCarthy



QUAREIA—THE INITIATE

Module X—Preparation for Adepthood

Lesson 3: Solitude

The hardest lesson an initiate has to learn—and I mean really learn—before they step into adepthood is understanding solitude. As humans we feel we need other people: family, friends, partners, community, and so forth. But an adept must cast away that need and be able to be in solitude whilst still living with people all around us.

In the past this was learned through a long period of solitude and withdrawal. In various cultures this was approached in different ways: living alone in a cave, withdrawing into a temple or cloister, or living in a remote area away from people. This physical withdrawal slowly became misunderstood, and was approached by many as either an escape or as something they had to endure in order to suffer. Both are unbalanced ways to approach this step of development, particularly for a magician.

In a priesthood, extreme withdrawal was not done to become alone, but to be of service: some lines of mystical service need their priests not to be in contact with the rest of humanity. But like all things connected to humanity, this quickly became twisted and used in unbalanced ways. The adept magician must learn and understand solitude in its deepest form while staying in the heart of the community and the family: such an understanding can take a lifetime to learn in its deepest form, but its early stages come as the magician steps from an initiate to an adept path.

Some adepts do have to withdraw from society to do their work, but those acts of seclusion facilitate their work; they are not an escape from

humanity or a self-imposed imprisonment. That is something different from the lesson that the budding adept needs to learn.

So what is this lesson that is so important?

It cannot be understood theoretically or philosophically; it must be thought about, acted on, and lived. As the magician learns one layer of this lesson, another one comes along to teach them the deeper truths of separation. And this lesson, truly learned, is one of the hallmarks that sets an adept apart from the rest of society: you step out of society's communal mind and slowly become an echo of the original vessel. This can be hard to bear at times, as society will demand that you be part of the zeitgeist while magical wisdom tells you something very different.

So what are you separating yourself from?

The communal mind

You may or may not have come to realise that we humans are all connected in consciousness and energy. For the most part the modern person will not see this, but if you are observant and know what you are looking for then you will begin to see it for yourself.

For example, when a major tragedy occurs, particularly one focused on a single person well known to society, millions of humans around the world will focus in on that person. All the thoughts, memories, emotions, hopes, and identities of millions are tuned into a single person, which creates a conduit of thought.

Here is a current example. While I was writing the Knocking on the Door lesson, the famous rock megastar David Bowie died. His music and artistic presentations were a formative part of my teenage years, and I was sad to see him leave this world. I said my goodbyes to him, thanked him for his music, then carried on with my work. But his music started to invade my mind as I tried to write, and I had to keep stopping and doing a stillness meditation to refocus. People around the world were shocked in grief, an outpouring of emotion lacking any real, close emotive bond. All the papers were full of people writing about him, his music was everywhere, and he was the only thing discussed on social media. People were fainting from shock, sobbing in the street, and gathering around pictures of him.

An energy pattern quickly built up that was full of noise, that was triggering, then feeding off, the emotional outpouring. It quickly became not only distracting but deeply intrusive from an inner perspective. I had to take an inner step back, as it was draining my energy, interfering with my work, and creating a wall of inner noise. I had no emotion towards his passing, I did not know him, and I had no connection to him; yet this sudden whirlpool of inner disturbance created by millions of people was pulling me into its orbit. I had to disconnect from everything, isolate myself from an inner perspective, and wait out the storm.

In modern society we are trained to react in emotive ways to such deaths and events, and if we do not partake of them then we are viewed as heartless. Yet it is vitally important that an adept is not sucked into any such orbit: they must stand in solitude, like a rock.

Why?

Such emotive outpourings by a small or large group of people creates an inner condition that can pull the magician's magic into a black hole and swallow it up. It pulls the individual into a hive consciousness that can seriously undermine an adept's foundations, which in turn can affect what they do, how they think, and where their energy goes.

The same groupthink mechanism can sway a society to overstep boundaries of behaviour, and it is often manipulated by political and/or religious leaders. It is not hard to program a whole group to behave in abhorrent and destructive ways that would shock any of its members in different circumstances. We have seen this over and over in history when a society has backed vicious and destructive leaders.

This mechanism of group consciousness is dangerous from an outer and inner perspective, and it can divest an individual of their choice and will, both as a mundane person and also as a magical or mystical person. The magician must be able to step out of the raging river of group emotion, observe from its banks, and walk away from it. To do this successfully they must understand and be able to work with the mechanism of inner and outer solitude.

Remember your studies on creation and destruction, and the beings that work within destruction? Those beings are attracted to such group emotive patterns and will feed off their energy: it is fuel for destruction. Once a group of people becomes fuel for destruction, they become pawns in the act of destruction: they become part of the pattern. An adept must never be drawn into such a pattern: their job is to stand aside from the flows of creation and destruction and work on the thresholds

unconditionally. This can be particularly harrowing if you are watching destruction from the sidelines while people scream at you to do something. You know through magical wisdom not to act, but those around you who know you to be a magician will expect you to make everything better.

Going back to the death of David Bowie, this is also a time when Western economies are teetering on the edge of collapse, or at least waiting for a major crash. There is war and conflict at our borders, and major shifts happening in our societies with the massive influx of refugees from the Middle East and North Africa. There is more and more unbalance with how we act as societies, with wealth distribution held by a small number of elites who govern over increasingly poor, badly educated, and disposable workers. Our weather is changing dramatically and becoming destructive, and vital resources like food, water, and air are becoming heavily contaminated. It is a picture that is very unhealthy and unbalanced.

When in the midst of such a picture of unravelling a sudden emotive outburst from millions of people happens, the beings drawn to the rotting social structure can pull on that group emotive pot and use it as fuel. Whoever is connected to that emotive pot also becomes connected to the pattern of collapse.

Though this sounds very Armageddon, it is in fact a fairly regular event for the human species. If you know your world history then you will see this pattern of events as part of the regular cycle of creation and destruction of societies: you have looked at this before. These emotive outpourings are one of many symptoms that such an event is in process.

When there a sacred monarch or key being (from an inner perspective) dies, it often heralds a period of destruction and change, and the two often time in together. The focused emotive outpouring feeds that process and clears the ground ready for the new creative power to come in. The key for magicians is to be aware of this group pattern without being swept up by it, and to withdraw or engage with it according to each adept's individual work.

For us as today's magicians, it is about learning to spot these massive outpourings and sidestep them. And to be aware that when something like this happens, there is often a deeper picture behind it. Not every key figure's death causes such reactions, and it is up to the magician to be able to tell the difference. Sometimes people react by remembering and honouring the person's life and work, and then move on. But when there is a large outpouring of disproportionate emotion, then often something else is going on. The death of Diana, Princess of Wales, is

another example.

The collective mind can also interfere with the magician when it is focused on fear or anger. Such focuses can develop by way of violent internet games played by millions of people, or by the media focusing a population's attention in an expression of fear: it is easy for the magician to get caught up in that collective, and all that is drawn to that group consciousness. This not only affects the magician's magic but also puts them squarely and visibly in the path of anything and everything that feeds on, and in, that collective.

It is easy to become paranoid about this phenomenon, and to wish to completely withdraw from the larger collective—and many do. But an adept must *function* in the outside world, and often has family, job responsibilities, and so forth. It is a fine balancing act of recognising when such patterns are active, and avoiding being sucked in by them without withdrawing from the world.

Not all these patterns of group consciousness are connected to deaths: they can be a political ideology, a religious pattern, and so forth. Just be aware that such hive consciousness exists and can trigger quickly and without warning. When you see such an event unfold and you feel its tug, close your magic down, step back, be still, and wait out the storm without being dragged in.

The act of magical inner seclusion is one of the methods that helps the magician maintain a magical presence in the world while staying apart from it. It boils down to being attentive, being aware, and using your common sense.

The narrow path

There is a lot of talk in Greek texts about the narrow path. This is mentioned in the Gospel of Matthew, and it appears in the Greek texts which in turn have Egyptian maxims as their source. In the Greek texts, it appears as advice on how to live a good life, told through the various trials of Hercules. But a lot of these texts have deeper layers that are advisories for adepts.

As the magician progresses in their training, they become aware of changes in their lives that they bring to themselves by the choices they make. These choices are usually borne of necessity, and the result of these

choices is a life path that is more disciplined, tougher, and more ‘aware’. Through this path the magician also learns about magical seclusion as opposed to physical seclusion. Adeptship puts you apart from the mundane, yet you must also live and thrive in the mundane. This in itself becomes isolating.

The most common thing I hear from people walking an adept path is; “I am surrounded by people but I feel so alone.” This occurs to artists, thinkers, and writers as much as magicians. When you walk a narrow path, the collective becomes very obvious around you, and its emptiness can no longer hold you.

The adept path is a narrow path that can be lonely. It can be a path of discipline that can be hard to bear at times, and it can also be like living among people who speak a different language. Yet it is important not to draw away from that, as that is the life you were put on this earth to live. True and balanced power always brings this narrow path with it, and the more power you wield, the narrower the path becomes until it is a sword edge.

Gnosis is what narrows the path right down: if you *know*, you cannot act in ignorance, which makes you face yourself and your choices. And having power but knowing when not to use it, and knowing not to display it, also isolates. This is why many magicians, as they near true adepthood, sometimes take time out to try and be normal again. In the road of initiation this is known as the *Home and Hearth*. The simplicity of everyday, normal life without magic can be alluring to those who have wielded power and who ‘know.’

Sometimes that time out is needed, and the magician reemerges when they are ready and sets foot once more on the magical path of the sword edge. Others stay in Home and Hearth, and spend the rest of their lives either working magically with what skills they have but pushing no further, or, sadly, trying to impress others with their limited skills.

It is a dynamic you need to know about so that you can recognise it if, and when, it appears to you. If you recognise it then you can make choices from gnosis: wait and rest, or go forward. Whatever choice you make, always ensure that it comes from deep within you and is not something affecting you from outside of yourself, like the collective.

Just be aware that life as an adept is not like having a hobby; it becomes your whole life. Once that level of magical awakening happens within you, you cannot run away from it. If you stop, the magic does not stop: it is always around you, waiting for you. You no longer *do* magic, you

become magic.

How to practise magical seclusion

Necessary magical seclusion in the midst of life, family, and work is hard, but it also saves your sanity and protects your magic. It is not a switch you can throw: there is no ritual or vision that can instantly put you into seclusion. It is something you have to practise and develop.

You are part of, and yet apart from, society. You are with your family, yet you are alone. This is done by understanding that you were born alone and you die alone, and that a true magical path is borne alone. You started to look at this in your apprentice training. First it is developed as an understanding within you: you brought your children in the world, but they are not yours, they are of themselves: their path is not your path, their life is not your life. Your job is to get them safely to adulthood while teaching and guiding them.

Your partner is of themselves, and you do not own them: they live alongside you until it is no longer right for you to be together. You live in society, but you are not part of the collective: the adept steps to one side and observes. You can live without anyone, and anyone can live without you: your existence should not be fatally tied to another, nor should you cling to others. The act of magical seclusion is an understanding that runs deep within you: there is the Divine and there is you. Everything is you and nothing is you. The magician is heavily connected to the nature and land around them, but they make the choice to step back from the societal river and not be tossed around by the waves of manipulation that run through societies.

When you look back in history at great people, we can see this seclusion in action. For every person in the history books, many were also quietly living in seclusion, doing their own thing, and not partaking of the madness of their time. Socrates is a good example of this.

The idea of such an existence is abhorrent to many, as we are trained from birth to be heavily entwined and dependant, and to go with the norm of the time. And if such seclusion was suggested at the beginning of the course, many would pull away from it. But over time and with magical experience, you will come to see how it is a natural progression for the adept, and how it turns many mirrors to face you.

If the idea of apartness horrifies you then you need to ask yourself why—and be truthful to yourself in your answers. What is it you cling to? What terrifies you most? And by answering those questions honestly to yourself, you will be able to find your own level of path in magic, and develop yourself naturally. Everyone approaches this differently and each person changes their approach as they develop and grow on their path: it is always shifting, fluctuating, and evolving, but it is never a black and white, rigid way.

The best way to understand your own necessity, and to trigger that mirror before you, is to put yourself in an isolating situation while still around people. For some this is impractical, but it can be a bit of an eye opener. And sometimes life puts you in that position so that you can learn.

For example, I had always thought myself self-contained and able to isolate myself magically when needed. I used meditation and stillness to withdraw, and I would not get pulled into the various dramas that unfolded around me. However, I did not realise my own limitations, nor did I realise how easy it was to be pulled into the fast river of collective emotion.

I have moved many times in life from childhood, and have had to start again, make new friends, and learn how to live in different societies: I thought I had it licked as a skill. I had experienced what it is like to be in a community where I did not speak the language, and realise how frustrating and isolating it is. But fate sent me to a place to live for a few years where I had the language, but the culture was different. The community was tight-knit, everyone was related somehow to everyone else, and I was the perennial outsider. I had nothing in common with anyone, and I slowly found myself becoming depressed. It surprised me, as I thought I was more resilient than that.

But it showed me my weaknesses and my limitations: it showed me that my ability for seclusion was limited. Once I had understood that, and I mean *really* understood and taken it on board, fate moved me back onto the path of magic, connection, and community. Then I learned to be more self-sufficient, and in turn was better able to seclude myself when necessary.

From that lesson I could then learn magical seclusion in a healthy way, which meant being part of a community but not wholly dependent on it. In turn that taught me how to pull away from the collective mind when necessary to avoid the destructive tides fuelled by the focus of the mind of society. It also showed me my longer-term limitations, which

made me better able to function as an adept: knowing your weaknesses is more important than knowing your strengths.

If you can, go and spend some time in a place where you do not know anyone, even if it is just for a couple of days. A place with a very mundane community, a tight-knit one with no interest in things like magic, philosophy, and so forth. Taking off for a weekend to go stay in a backwater town, and not hide in your motel room, is a way to do it. See if you start to crave someone to talk to, someone to engage with: observe how, or if, your behaviour changes. Some of you may already live in such a place—in which case you will already understand what I am talking about.

Another way to do it, which is a direct exercise, is to pull away from current events. Do not read the news, do not watch TV, do not get into social media conversations about a current event: if a major event comes up, that is a good time to practise this. Keep a presence in your regular life, but do not engage in the movement's focus. Instead, observe what happens to people's emotions, and pay attention to the quality of your sleep at that time, and also how your mind and body feel. Watch how people react when you choose not to engage: often it infuriates them beyond logic. When this happens, it is the power behind the collective, or the consciousness that is driving it, that is confronting you. If your dreams and energy levels are affected during one of these collective emotive outpourings then it is a sign to you that the pattern forming has destructive and/or parasitical beings flowing through it. That is the signal to withdraw, meditate, reflect, and keep a stillness focus like a dripping tap: stop every hour or so and still yourself. Use visionary skill to focus on a sigil, like the Limiter, and use a single word like 'stillness' or 'focus.' This breaks the connections that may have formed to you.

The more spectacular the event, the more reaction there will be. It will be an interesting exercise that will teach you a lot. Learn how to detach from current events: often they serve no purpose for you and there is nothing practical that you can do about the situation, so do not put energy into it. This exercise teaches you to be very aware of what can influence you, and how hard it can be, at times, to pull away from such a collective event. Such pulling away is magical seclusion: you live in the world, but do not place your energy out there without clear thought and reason.

This is particularly important when it comes to Western media, which these days operate to manipulate how you think and act rather than to inform you. Spot the emotional manipulation and pull away from it. You are shown images of death and destruction from one country and

it horrifies you. You are given suggestions on what to think and you become emotionally charged, which unbalances you. Yet these events are happening all around the world, all the time, and always have done. This is the basis of tending to your own back yard, as you were taught in the apprentice section: it really comes into sharp focus in the adept training.

The path of the adept is narrow, and that description means so much on so many different levels. Focus on what is in front of you and ignore the rest, and ensure that your steps are taken from your own inner impulses rather than from the energetic manipulation of a pattern of destruction flowing through your society's collective consciousness. It is not about ignoring terrible things; it is about putting your energy where it can really bring change rather than pouring it down a black hole.

Sorry that this lesson was a bit of a lecture, and I feel like a nagging mother, but really, it is an important issue for you as you stand on the cusp of adepthood.

Task: Historical destruction

Look at periods of history with terrible destruction; times and cultures with newspapers and so forth. World War Two, and the Middle Eastern wars, are good examples. Look online at the media of the time: see if you can spot the media and official manipulation that changed the mindset of the people and triggered collective emotional responses (the propaganda). Terrible things were done (and still are done) with the full approval of societies and communities because the collective consciousness had been steered towards a particular response. Atrocities were committed to the cheers of the people, acts that would have horrified those same people if it had happened around them in isolation. See how the herd is manipulated; then you will understand why an adept must learn to live within their society without being affected by it.

From that point of seclusion, the magician, if asked to, can work to restore balance or whatever is needful for the overall pattern without being spotted by the destructive beings that flow through the collective: if you are not plugged in, you cannot be seen.

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