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THE
PSYCHIC
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THE
PSYCHIC
VAMPIRE
CODEX

A MANUAL OF MAGICK
AND ENERGY WORK

MICHELLE A. BELANGER

 **WEISER BOOKS**
Boston, MA/York Beach, ME

First published in 2004 by
Red Wheel/Weiser, LLC
York Beach, ME
With offices at:
368 Congress Street
Boston, MA 02210
www.redwheelweiser.com

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An earlier, unrevised edition of this book appeared as *The Vampire Codex*, published in October 2000 by Sanguinarium Press.

Abridged portions of the Codex sections appear in the book *V* (formerly *The Vampire Grimoire*), by Father Sebastian Todd under the Vamp Press Imprint, in conjunction with Aangel Publishing.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Belanger, Michelle A.

The psychic vampire codex : a manual of magick and energy work / Michelle A. Belanger.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 1-57863-321-4

I. Vampires. I. Title.

GR830.V3B45 2004

398'.45—dc22

2004004537

Typeset in the United States by Dutton & Sherman Design
Printed in Canada
TCP

11 10 09 08 07 06 05 04
8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

CONTENTS

foreword xi

acknowledgments xv

PART ONE

PSYCHIC VAMPIRISM

chapter I • METAPHYSICS AND VAMPIRISM	3
PSYCHIC VAMPIRES	4
VAMPIRES AND ENERGY	7
AWAKENING	11
chapter II • THE VAMPIRE COMMUNITY	13
GROWING AWARENESS	14
VAMPIRES AND THE SMALL PRESS	15
NEW MEDIUMS OF COMMUNICATION	18
chapter III • A JOURNEY OF MEMORY	23
BUILDING ALLIANCES	25
DISCOVERING A SHARED PAST	28
FOUNDING HOUSE KHEPERU	30

vi
CONTENTS

INTERNET EXPLOSION	32
APPLYING THE CODEX	33
chapter iv • REVISIONING THE VAMPIRE	35
THE POWER OF NAMES	35
OUTSIDE OF THE BOX	38
INITIATORS OF CHANGE	39
AGENTS OF BALANCE	40
chapter v • THE CODEX UNVEILED	43
A SPIRITUAL REVOLUTION	44
NOTES ON THE TEXT	45
FINAL COMMENTS	50

PART TWO
THE CODEX

introduction • KHEPRIAN MYSTERIES	53
1. THE KHEPRIAN CHARGE	53
2. ORIGIN	53
3. FAMILY	54
section 1 • AWAKENING AND RECOGNITION	55
4. AWAKENING	55
5. REMEMBRANCE	56
6. OTHER AWAKENED	57
7. POTENTIALS	58
8. UNCONSCIOUS FEEDING	59
9. THE BEACON	61
10. PROXIMITY AWAKENINGS	62
11. DEDICANTS	63
12. SYMPATHETIC VAMPIRES	64
13. RECOGNITION	65
14. OTHER QUALITIES	67

vii
CONTENTS

15. THE LONELY PATH	68
16. RESPONSIBILITY	69
17. CYCLES	70
18. ALTERATIONS AND CASTE	72
19. ACCIDENTAL ALTERATIONS	74
20. THE CASTE SYSTEM	75
21. THE PRIEST CASTE	76
22. THE WARRIOR CASTE	77
23. THE COUNSELOR CASTE	79
24. VARIATIONS ON CASTE	80
25. THE DISEMBODIED	81
26. SPIRITUAL IMMORTALITY	84
27. THE HIGHER SELF	85
section II • FEEDING AND ENERGY EXCHANGE	87
28. THE ANATOMY OF ENERGY	87
29. FEEDING BASICS	89
30. CYCLING AND REFINING ENERGY	90
31. LEVELS OF NEED	91
32. INTERCASTE FEEDING	92
33. DYNAMIC EXCHANGE	94
34. AMBIENT FEEDING	95
35. INSPIRING EMOTION	96
36. SURFACE FEEDING	98
37. CONTACT FEEDING	101
38. TANTRIC EXCHANGE	104
39. DEEP FEEDING	107
40. DREAMWALKING	109
41. BREATH AND LIFE	111
42. DIMINISHED STATES	112
43. ENERGY AND EMOTION	113
44. RELIGIOUS ENERGY	115
45. PROCESSING ENERGY	116
46. QUALITY OF ENERGY	118

viii
CONTENTS

47. BLOOD AND LIFE	119
48. ASSESSING NEED	120
49. DEEP NEED	122
50. THE EFFECTS OF FEEDING	125
51. FEEDING DANGERS	126
52. CONSTANT FEEDING	128
53. CHOOSING FEEDING PARTNERS	129
54. SUBTLE LINKS	131
55. DEEP FEEDING AND LINKS	132
56. FEEDING THROUGH LINKS	134
57. DAMPENING LINKS	135
58. BREAKING LINKS	136
59. THE CALLING	138
section III • BASIC ENERGY WORK	141
60. SENSING ENERGY	141
61. GROUNDING	143
62. GROUNDING TECHNIQUES	145
63. CENTERING	147
64. SHIELDING	148
65. CREATING FILTERS	150
66. MEDITATION	152
67. OTHER METHODS OF FOCUS	154
68. SEEING ENERGY	155
69. THE ENERGY BALL	156
70. BASIC ENERGY PLAY	158
71. CHARGING AN OBJECT	159
72. MANIFESTING	162
73. AUGMENTATION	166
74. ENERGY AND THE AURA	168
75. PERCEIVING THE AURA	170
76. AURAS AND MEANING	171
77. THE SUBTLE BODY	173

ix
CONTENTS

78. READING THE SUBTLE BODY	175
79. ENERGY MAINTENANCE	179
80. ENERGY ATTUNEMENTS	180
81. PERFORMING AN ATTUNEMENT	182
82. BASIC HEALING	186
83. REMOVING BLOCKAGES	188
84. NERVE BURN	191
85. HEALTH AND DISEASE	193
SECTION IV • ADVANCED ENERGY TECHNIQUES	195
86. LIVING WITH ENERGY	195
87. CLEANSING ENERGY	197
88. HEIGHTENING ENERGY	199
89. BUILDING WARDS	200
90. PSYCHIC ATTACK	202
91. COUNTERING INDIRECT ATTACK	204
92. COUNTERING DIRECT ATTACK	206
93. REPAIRING DAMAGE	207
94. MAKING THE PROPER TOOLS	209
95. AURIC WOUNDS	212
96. SUBTLE BODY WOUNDS	214
97. ENERGY INTRUSIONS	216
98. MALIGNANT ATTACHMENTS	219
99. OTHERSIDE BEINGS	221
100. ORDERS OF BEINGS	222
101. INTERACTIONS BETWEEN REALITIES	225
102. COMMUNICATING WITH SPIRITS	226
103. BANISHING THE UNWANTED	228
104. BINDING	231
105. BEGINNING MEMORY WORK	232
106. EDGE WORK	235
107. MAINTAINING BALANCE	238
108. FULL CIRCLE	240

x
CONTENTS

Afterword • BEYOND VAMPIRES AND VAMPIRISM	241
DISCOVERY OF SELF	241
WISH BRINGS A GUEST	245
LOOKING AHEAD	249
 Appendix I • A BRIEF GUIDE TO THE VAMPIRE COMMUNITY	 251
 Appendix II • A TIMELINE OF THE VAMPIRE COMMUNITY	 259
 Appendix III • THE BLACK VEIL: VAMPIRE ETHICS	 265

glossary of terms 269

bibliography 279

FOREWORD

For the past ten years I have seen everything there is to see within the vampire subculture. It is a living entity comprised of the individuals who make it up. During my own personal explorations within this fascinating subculture, one text has inspired me and countless others to help us define what we are. This influential text is *The Psychic Vampire Codex* by Michelle Belanger.

Every community has its visionaries, personalities, and leaders. Within the vampire community the most influential leaders are our teachers—those who have the strength and conviction to share their visions, dreams, and beliefs with others. The concept here is not to command or dictate what is or isn't correct, but to inspire and challenge, so that others may more clearly formulate their own beliefs. Through the inspiration of such visionary leaders, we can all continue on our *kheper* (transformation), which is a never-ending process in one's life.

When I first encountered Michelle Belanger, I was just newly awakened after a couple years as a Black Swan or associate of the community. My job for the community at that time was serving as an event promoter and fangsmith in the New York scene. Something within me was growing and changing. As I was discovering these deeper aspects

to what I was and what I believed, I saw all around me many others going through the same thing. Until that point there was almost no reliable information available on the mechanics of vampirism, and most people defaulted to ingesting physical blood in order to adequately satisfy their need for lifeforce. This of course carried with it many risks, including social stigmas and a risk of disease.

Shortly after we started working together, Michelle shared the first version of her Codex with me. This immediately gave vampirism an alternate system to work with that was honorable and constructive for all parties involved. More than that, the system put forth in the Codex showed that lifeforce was at the heart of our need and that anyone who could learn the techniques in the Codex had a choice about how they fed.

Within her Codex, Michelle hit on many issues that had never been written down before. Reading this early version gave me many answers, but also created new questions that helped me determine what direction I myself should take. After I read this revelatory text, I shared it with my mentor, Goddess Rosemary, an old-school vamp from New York. She was not only impressed, but stated “finally someone wrote down what we have been doing [and gave us other options to explore ourselves more deeply].”

Michelle’s system introduced a breath of fresh air into the vampire subculture, changing the face of that subculture over the next few years. It freed us to look at ourselves in a new light, and it also helped those outside our community to view us differently. No longer were we parasites or predators, but beings who were a constructive and even necessary part of the world. We no longer had to be victims to our hunger, and we did not have to victimize those around us. Instead, we could even use our inborn abilities to help people heal. Immediately, Michelle’s writings were adopted into the grimoire of my own Family, House Sahjaza, and although we adapted the Codex to our own terminology, it was a perfect fit.

The Kheprian and the Strigoi Vii (the philosophy of living vampirism which Sahjaza practices) traditions merged together in what we

call the Sanguinarium. Since this merger, the Kheperian and Strigoi Vii philosophies have shared many things in common but each has its own unique flavor, showing how powerful diversity can be.

In the fall of 2000, I released a special edition of the Codex along with that year's *Vampyre Almanac* to the community of the Sanguinarium. This was so well received that many houses beyond my own Sahjaza adopted the revolutionary techniques into their own expression of vampirism.

In October of 2003, Michelle gave us the privilege of including our own edition of the Codex as the second part of the Strigoi Vii book V. She allowed us to customize it to our own needs and include it among our presentation to the community. We have moved on to establish the world's first legally recognized church for vampires known as the Synod and based in Amsterdam. Our goal is to support and help guide the kheper of the vampire community through publications, events, online resources, and the ordination of vampire ministers who can go out and further help nurture the community.

From an instructional point of view, the Codex is the perfect tool. It covers almost all of the questions that had remained unanswered in the community's early years. It has helped the community grow and evolve into something that can be more open with the rest of the world, and it has empowered people in their vampirism, encouraging them to be more honest with themselves about who and what they really are.

Not all groups or individuals will ever see things in the same way, but the Codex certainly changed things for me, and I have watched it change things for many other people. Even if you find you don't agree with everything the Codex has to offer, I encourage you to learn what you can, develop your own opinions, and share your ideas with others.

What I have always liked best about the Codex is that it provides a stable foundation for personalizing your own beliefs, and it constantly encourages people to find what works best for them and to go with it. The one thing about vampirism is it does not discriminate. The vampires

in our community come from every conceivable spiritual background, race, ethnic group, gender, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic background. No other community that I can think of has such a wide foundation of dreams, traditions, spiritualities, ideals, and concepts to draw upon. The Codex encourages that diversity while also providing just enough structure to maintain this amazingly varied collection of vampire individuals as a beautiful and empowered Family.

So my fangs and hats off to Michelle and her Family. We thank you for your contributions, visions, and empowerment. Without the beauty of transformation and evolution, things become stagnant and lose their charm. Rebirth is our power and our key to immortality. Together let us continue to transform and celebrate!

Im Kheperu,
Father Sebastian
House Sahjaza
Primus of the Synod

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Over the years of its development, many people have contributed to this work by offering feedback, alternate perspectives, and emotional support. Among the members of the Kheprian Order, I would like to thank Paul, Jay, Sorrowsheart, Andrea, Aarin, Dusteen, Columbine, Joe, Narradas, Polina, and James. Of our loyal friends and allies, I would like to thank Shishain, Cliff, Daemonox, Vicutus, Person, Chris, Father Todd, Windwalker, Zaar, Maven, Wish, Oculus, Mongo, Malcolm, Alda, Carol, Dominic and the members of URN, Ten Clan, and the Three Great Furies.

Many others have come and gone over the years, each adding some new insight or perspective. These are too numerous to name, but heartfelt thanks go out to each.

Finally, I owe a great deal to my mother and grandfather, who have unwaveringly put their faith in a child whose nature tested the limits of belief.

PART ONE

PSYCHIC
VAMPIRISM

CHAPTER I

METAPHYSICS
AND VAMPIRISM

Vampires have titillated our imaginations since Lord Byron imported the concept to English literature almost two hundred years ago. Prior to that, vampires were creatures of myth and folklore, ravenous night demons who gave form to that fear that the living hold for the dead. Folkloric vampires were vile and unlovely creatures, but through Byron's writings and the writings of his contemporaries, a more romanticized ideal emerged. Through these writings, the vampire became more human than monster, more archetype than myth.

The notion of the living dead has lost its horror in our scientific age. However, the figure of the vampire and the concepts it represents have become firmly entrenched in the popular imagination. Vampires went from literature to the stage, from the stage to the cinema, and from the cinema to more modern mediums of expression such as the Internet and computer games. They have served as the inspiration for music, as mascots for breakfast cereals, and even as well-known characters on children's television shows.

A little over two centuries ago, the word "vampire" was barely known in the English language. Now, CEOs who line their pockets with the money of those beneath them can be likened to vampires in the press. A woman who preys sexually on men is often known as a

“vamp,” and in the nineties there was even a lipstick color with that name that intended to evoke that same devilish allure. As the archetype has integrated itself into popular culture, “vampire” has come to mean anyone who preys upon others to sate their own needs.

PSYCHIC VAMPIRES

While the vampires of fiction and folklore are admittedly not real, many occult and metaphysical works have been devoted to a different type of vampire. The “psychic vampire” is a person who preys upon the life energies of others. Psychic vampires are not believed to be undead, but are mortal people whose need for energy metaphorically connects them to the life-stealing predators of myth.

Dion Fortune, analytic psychologist and member of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, was one of the first to write openly on the topic of psychic vampirism. In her seminal work, *Psychic Self-Defense*, she discusses some attacks from an astral entity that preyed upon the vital energy of its victims. She likened this “astral vampire” to the vampires of myth, suggesting that it was the remnant of a powerful magical worker who had refused to succumb to the Second Death, or death of the subtle body. Later in the same work, Fortune discusses unintentional psychic vampires: individuals who prey upon the emotional or vital energies of their partners, eventually weakening the partner to a point where sickness or even death could result.

That was almost a century ago. In keeping with Fortune’s writings, most metaphysicians approach psychic vampires as something to be defended against. Most books on the topic suggest that the majority of psychic vampires are unaware of their condition and that they feed upon energy unintentionally. It is generally assumed that if a psychic vampire were to become aware of what they were doing, they would choose not to do it. It is further assumed that the need for energy arises from some physical or metaphysical weakness, which, once properly addressed, would bring the vampirism to an end.

A few rare books, such as Konstantinos's *Vampires: The Occult Truth*, mention intentional psychic vampires. These are individuals who are aware of what they are and who take energy consciously. In general, it is assumed that this is a learned technique and not a behavior arising from a legitimate need. While Konstantinos's book does feature some letters written by psychic vampires themselves, no book on the market addresses the issue of psychic vampirism completely from the vampire's perspective. Yet it is impossible for an outsider to accurately portray such a way of being.

A thriving community of self-aware psychic vampires exists hidden beneath our mainstream culture. Many of these people refer to themselves as "vampyres," using the alternate spelling to differentiate themselves from the vampires of folklore and myth. This vampire subculture is rich and diverse, and its members have the most reliable information about their experiences. Unfortunately, their voices are rarely heard.

CONFUSION AND SECRECY

There are a number of reasons why psychic vampires are not forthcoming about their experiences. First among these is the fact that not all vampires adequately understand what they are. Because the capacity for psychic vampirism is inborn, most psychic vampires function intuitively. While they may be conscious that they are taking energy, they do not always fully comprehend how or why. Many psychic vampires do not even have a word for themselves until they encounter descriptions in books such as those on psychic self-defense.

Many psychic vampires are also hesitant to speak openly about themselves for fear of being judged. Throughout almost all of the available literature, psychic vampirism is depicted at best as an affliction and at worst as a conscious choice to victimize others. As a result, many Pagans, Wiccans, and other metaphysical practitioners see psychic vampires as a scourge to be protected against, and their opinions on the matter are strongly emotional. It is easier for most to live in silence than to fight such firmly established prejudice.

Further, some vampires have bought into the negative portrayal so typical of the self-defense literature. Many of them feel ashamed of what they are and what this requires them to do. Still others embrace the negativity so completely that they make a self-conscious attempt to be dark and “evil.” These people dive head-first into the archetype of the vampire—cape, fangs, and all—in a confused attempt to reconcile themselves with their natures. Neither approach makes such individuals willing to discuss what they are with outsiders.

Finally, there is the fact that many psychic vampires have conflicting interpretations of what they are and what this means. Although there have been attempts to come to a consensus within the community, there are too many voices competing for attention. The resulting cacophony of definitions, theories, and beliefs insures that very little ever gets officially communicated to anyone outside of these debates.

THROUGH VAMPIRE EYES

Psychic vampirism, on the surface, seems pretty cut and dried. Psychic vampires are people who take energy. Some of them do this consciously; some of them do it unawares. However, it is only from an outside perspective that this simplicity can be maintained. Among the psychic vampires themselves, there are many different reasons for vampirism and many different interpretations of how it is expressed.

First of all, psychic vampires have many different explanations for why they need to feed. Some believe that they feed as a result of a physical or spiritual ailment that has reduced their own vitality. In such cases, the need for outside energy arises either because the vampire's own system does not produce enough vital energy to sustain itself or it “leaks” energy, using the energy it does have inefficiently.

Some psychic vampires believe that they require outside energy because they effectively have a higher spiritual metabolism. They produce vital energy without a problem, but for some reason they very quickly use up a great deal of it. Often the vital energy is being burned at a faster rate to fuel psychic abilities, although this is not always the

case. Because their systems use up energy faster than it can be produced, the difference must be made up by taking energy from others.

Some psychic vampires believe that they have an imperfect connection to the universal sources of energy that fuel ordinary people. This can take one of two forms. Either the vampire's connection to the sources is completely cut off or they process this energy in a limited or inefficient way. Usually these problems arise as a result of permanent damage or alterations to the portions of the subtle body that are connected to these sources of energy and to those that process outside energies for use as vital energy. Weaknesses or blockages in the chakras can have the same effect.

Some vampires believe that they are disconnected from certain sources of energy because these sources of energy are foreign to them. Vampires from this school of thought believe that their spiritual point of origin is elsewhere, and for some reason they have had difficulty integrating here. Many of these individuals are not cut off from all forms of energy but are limited to a specific narrow range. Some even purport to have an "allergy" to certain energies that, although they are sustaining to others, can actually cause them harm.

Finally, still other psychic vampires see their condition as the result of a mutation or some other genetic inheritance. A small and somewhat radical portion of the community maintains it is the result of a virus. Most discount this theory, as nearly everyone in the know agrees that psychic vampirism is something you either have or you don't; you cannot be made into a psychic vampire, nor can you "catch" psychic vampirism from being fed upon. It may seem as if some people "become" psychic vampires, but these individuals are actually awakening to a condition that has been latent within them all along.

VAMPIRES AND ENERGY

All beings, vampiric or otherwise, engage in a constant exchange of energy with their environment. For the most part, this exchange is

unconscious, and it is as instinctive as breathing. Energy exchange is part of the natural flow of the Universe, and it serves to connect all living things. Any being that is cut off completely from all energetic sources will suffer physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Certain magickal or metaphysical techniques can help people become aware of their relation to energy, and some of these ultimately allow them to consciously participate in energy exchange. Taking an active role in energy exchange is beneficial both physically and mentally for any being. Magickal workers, martial artists, and others who channel their energy into extraordinary acts can learn to consciously draw energy from their environment in order to support their activities. So what makes a vampire unique?

Among psychic vampires, it is agreed that their nature is defined by need. While all beings exchange energy with their environment, there is a certain equilibrium that is nevertheless maintained. The draw of an ordinary person is constant and low level, barely noticeable to him- or herself or anyone else. Furthermore, ordinary people give as well as take energy, and there is rarely a huge disparity between the amount given off and the amount taken in.

Psychic vampires require enough energy that they must take significant amounts of it in. The drain this generates is very noticeable, and there is a distinct disparity between energy intake and outflow. The powerful draw possessed by most psychic vampires has inspired some magickal workers to describe them as energetic "black holes."

Even those vampires who are unconscious of their role in energy exchange nevertheless actively reach out and take additional energy from those around them. This is not a once-in-a-while thing but occurs quite regularly. Awakened vampires report that they feed on a weekly basis, consciously taking a significant amount of energy from outside sources. Some feed biweekly, while others have such a significant need that they must actively feed every day. Although frequency varies from individual to individual, any psychic vampire who is prevented from

taking in more energy than he expends will rapidly suffer a loss of physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

Not everyone who takes in more energy than they give out is a true vampire, however. Many people can wear themselves out through illness or overwork and consequently exhibit vampiric tendencies. This increase in energetic need is only temporary, however. Once the individual's system has regained its state of equilibrium, energy intake and outflow will become balanced once more. A true vampire requires a regular and significant intake of energy regardless of the stresses on his or her system. The need is constant, not temporary, and simple rest or healing will not suffice to "cure" vampirism.

SOURCES OF ENERGY

There is a school of thought that maintains that psychic vampires can draw upon any form of energy, including natural, elemental, and celestial sources, in order to fulfill their need. In my opinion, this is not entirely true. The word *vampyre* has been adopted by a community of people for a reason, and this is because there is a certain amount of resonance between what they experience and what they understand a vampire to be. In the myths and folklore, vampires feed upon life, as symbolized through the potent image of blood. Modern-day vampires define themselves as such because they, too, have a need to take the vital life force from others.

While some psychic vampires can supplement their feeding by drawing upon nonhuman sources, it has been my experience that the main focus of their need is *human vital energy*. This is one of the main reasons that the self-defense literature abounds. If psychic vampires were taking energy from nonhuman sources such as the earth, animals, or trees, how many people would care or even notice? But psychic vampires naturally target other human beings because that is the energy they resonate with and that is the energy that most sustains them. Thus, a psychic vampire is defined as any person who must

actively and regularly take in human vital energy in order to maintain their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

A psychic vampire may use several methods to gain this vital energy. There are emotional vampires who use attention-getting behaviors to get others emotionally fixated on them, thus draining the emotion-laden energy. There are sexual vampires who feed upon the energy generated by their partners during intimate play. Energy vampires, sometimes known as "pranic" vampires, feed directly upon human vital energy, often pulling it to them from across a room or draining it with a casual touch. Sanguine vampires often take a small amount of blood from a partner, using it as a potent focus for gaining the life-force they need.

Sanguine practices are not exceptionally common among psychic vampires. Health risks are a factor, but most psi-vamps find that purely energetic techniques are simply more efficient. There is an active portion of the vampire community that maintains that blood is the only substance that will adequately feed their hunger. A few have declared that this is the only method of feeding engaged in by any real vampire. The "psi or sang" debate has occasionally become quite heated, and it has contributed to a rift between the psychic and sanguine practitioners in the community.

In my experience, true psychic vampires can use any of the methods described above to a greater or lesser degree of efficiency. It is not uncommon to use a combination of techniques, especially as heightened emotional states tend to produce large amounts of very intense energy. Some unawakened psi-vamps seem to have an instinct for one method, but may later learn other techniques upon awakening. Other psychic vampires believe they have only one method open to them, and often this very belief prevents them from harnessing any further techniques. On the whole, however, each psychic vampire's ideal method of feeding seems to be derived from a combination of factors, including personal preference and energetic affinity.

AWAKENING

Awakening is what usually distinguishes intentional psychic vampires from those who vampirize energy unintentionally. Awakening is simply a process of self-realization, where the awakened individual becomes aware of latent talents and abilities, learns about these, and begins to consciously harness them.

An awakened psychic vampire has realized what they are and has come to accept that nature. Awakened vampires typically learn to harness their abilities so that they may choose when and how they feed. Unawakened psychic vampires remain ignorant of what they are. However, as psychic vampirism is an inborn trait tied to a fundamental need, this does not mean that unawakened vampires do not feed. Those who are ignorant of what they are still take energy unconsciously, and since they are not aware of this capacity, they have no control over when or from whom they feed.

Unawakened psychic vampires are typically the kinds of people the self-defense literature is written about. The unawakened are drawn to people who can provide them with the most energy. Often they unconsciously create situations that will provide them with even more energy. As they are operating unconsciously on basic instinctual drives, their feeding can be aggressive and efficient, with consideration only for their own needs. Although unawakened vampires can be a nuisance, especially for those who have been victimized by them, it is important to understand that their actions are not necessarily evil. Without conscious control of their abilities, there is no way for them to make an ethical choice concerning their needs.

Awakening so that conscious control can be achieved is ideal for both psychic vampires and everyone else around them. Awakening, however, is not an easy thing. While it is often difficult for outsiders to accept the existence of psychic vampirism, it is even more difficult for vampires themselves to come to terms with their nature and accept all that this means.

CHAPTER II

THE VAMPIRE COMMUNITY

Widespread awareness and acceptance of psychic vampirism, even among the vampires themselves, did not occur until very recently. A number of factors were responsible for this. First, there was a huge stigma attached to psychic vampirism because of the self-defense literature. For those who were even familiar with it, it depicted such a negative image of psychic vampirism that it made the reality very hard to accept. Because of the stigma associated with psychic vampirism, many awakening psi-vamps resisted what they were from feelings of guilt, while others who accepted their natures tended to do so silently for fear of the prejudices others might hold.

Furthermore, there was not a widespread acceptance of many esoteric or metaphysical issues until relatively recently. These topics were marginalized in mainstream culture in favor of more materialist or scientific worldviews. As a result, many individuals wrestled with the possibility that psychic vampirism could even exist. There was no widespread understanding of vital energy, and practices like Reiki and Qi Gong were so poorly known that most people had no notion such energy was even real.

In this atmosphere, some psychic vampires assumed they were simply delusional. Many of these individuals turned to modern psychology

for an answer to their needs. Others, self-destructive and confused, sought outlets for the hunger and alienation that they experienced through extreme and risk-taking behaviors.

GROWING AWARENESS

The 1990s brought with them an unprecedented awakening among psychic vampires. This awakening was concurrent with a widespread growth of awareness in metaphysical issues throughout Western culture. The Wiccan and neo-Pagan religions gained greater acceptance, and a number of publications on magick and the occult began appearing in mainstream bookstores. In the New Age circles, practices like Reiki and Qi Gong gained in popularity, and some of these alternative practices began to gain adherents even within the fields of traditional medicine and psychology. Some feel the explosion in metaphysical interests occurred because more people were gaining an awareness of such things on a personal level, while others believe that personal awareness increased because more information was available. Whatever the case, it spurred the growth of what was later to become a uniquely defined vampire community.

Most of the awakening vampires of the 1990s did not truly comprehend their natures. There were scattered individuals within the community who understood their psychic vampirism as a metaphysical process. However, many of these assumed they were isolated and alone in their understanding. Few had the courage to come forth about what they knew, and fewer still were willing to publicly admit to their nature. There was a widespread hesitancy among the entire community, and even those who suspected the metaphysical reality of their vampirism wrestled with acceptance and belief.

Nevertheless, there was an almost overwhelming drive among many of the awakening psychic vampires to express some aspect of their nature and to begin exploring what they were. While vampires remained isolated from one another, this drive had to be dealt with

on an individual basis. However, a phenomenon of the 1990s provided both a creative outlet for awakening psychic vampires and a convenient method for networking and communication. This phenomenon was the growth and popularity of what became known as “zines.” Zines are self-published amateur magazines focused on particular subcultures. With the advent of desktop publishing and the explosion of copy shops such as Kinko’s, anyone with a little drive and creativity could design, publish, and distribute their own underground magazine.

VAMPIRES AND THE SMALL PRESS

The zines of the vampire community at first were devoted almost exclusively to art, fiction, and poetry. These subjects were safely removed from the controversial occult and metaphysical issues that most isolated psi-vamps were still not willing to openly explore. From the late 1980s to the early ’90s, Gothic titles proliferated, such as Chad Savage’s *Necropolis*, Mark Williams’s *Onyx Magazine*, and my own *Shadowdance*. Replete with dark and decadent themes, these artistic little magazines featured stories that were a unique blend of horror and erotica. Vampires and other supernatural creatures were a mainstay, and it was not uncommon for poems to speak in metaphoric terms about psi-vampirism and feeding.

The zines provided a comfortable façade for the early community to safely explore its beliefs. Writers could address metaphysical issues through the mediums of poetry, fiction, and art without officially endorsing these ideas. Pseudonyms and “scene names” allowed individuals to maintain some distance between their public lives and their vampiric pursuits, giving them freedom to express and explore their more unusual beliefs without fear of criticism or attack from “normal” friends and family members. Expressing a belief through a fictional medium also gave the zine writers the luxury of judging widespread response to that idea before committing to it as fact.

A few publications at the time did feature nonfiction, although the focus almost invariably lay upon the vampire in literature and folklore. Rob Brautigam's Netherlands-based publication, *International Vampire*, was among the forerunners of such nonfiction zines, followed later by John Franc's *Journal of the Dark*. Although not technically a published zine, Martin V. Riccardo's "Vampire Studies" is also worth mentioning. Marty was behind publications exploring the figure of the vampire as early as the 1970s, but by the 1990s he had graduated to cataloging individual reports of dreams, fantasies, and other vampire-inspired beliefs as part of an ongoing research project. This project ultimately culminated in the 1996 publication *Liquid Dreams of Vampires* by Llewellyn Press.

Behind the open publication of the zines, a voluminous correspondence emerged. Eric S. Held's *Vampire Information Exchange Newsletter*, based in New York, was a formalization of much of this correspondence, encouraging those interested in vampires and vampirism to reach out and stay connected. In addition to such pen-friend networks, writers who had expressed similar ideas in their published works contacted one another privately in order to initiate dialogue. Cautious at first, they tentatively began discussing their theories and experiences. Through this correspondence, awakening psi-vamps began to realize that they were not alone. This realization gave them courage to more openly express their beliefs, and the fiction and poetry of the zines began to give way to nonfiction articles on metaphysics and the occult.

Soon zines of fiction and poetry were joined by newsletters and journals that openly discussed psychic vampirism. The Florida-based *DarkRose Journal*, published by Lady DarkRose, was one of the first zines that pioneered this new open format. As more such publications came to the fore, individuals became more comfortable with declaring their natures, although most still hid behind elaborate personas and scene names so that employers or family members could not discover this other aspect of their lives.

AN IMPERFECT BEGINNING

Although the small press was integral to the beginning of the modern vampire community, the zines were not a perfect medium for communication. While the publishers and writers of these small press ventures tended to be intelligent, highly creative college-age adults, they also tended to be free thinkers and rampant individualists who rebelled against any notion of organization, hierarchy, or dogma. They had a natural suspicion for authority of any kind as well as a marked distaste for capitalism.

The severe distrust of organization worked against the early community, for it discouraged any significant cohesion or cooperation between individuals. Few trusted anyone who adopted the role of a leader, and many were so suspicious of authority figures that they did not even trust themselves in roles that verged upon leadership. There was a general sentiment that the very establishment of a structure would naturally lead to abuses of that structure. The rights and freedoms of the individual were held paramount over everything else, often to the detriment of the identity of the group.

The universal distrust of capitalism virtually ensured that the zines would never support themselves, as few publishers were willing to charge rates that could support their ventures, and few subscribers were willing to pay them. Those individuals that did attempt to make any kind of money at their craft were considered "sellouts," becoming the focus of censure and criticism.

Although most of the zines featured at best a tentative exploration of the notion of psychic vampirism, organizations devoted to the occult aspect of vampirism had existed as early as 1991. The Temple of the Vampire (TOV), based out of Lacey, Washington, ran several ads throughout the 1990s in magazines such as *Fate* and *Gnosis*, proclaiming "Vampires are real! Join us."

Yet the information that the TOV possessed on vampiric techniques was jealously guarded. Members were sworn to secrecy, and graduated lessons in metaphysical vampirism were sold at fees ranging

from twenty-five to fifty dollars each. Between the secrecy, fees, and hierarchical structure, the TOV scared off many early seekers in the nascent community. Although a great many vampires at the time were desperately seeking insight into the metaphysics of their nature, unless this information was shared freely with no strings attached, few wanted anything to do with it.

Fear, distrust, and obstinate independence marked the first faltering steps of the early vampire community. Although the primary aim of many small press writers and publishers was the establishment of an open information exchange, little widespread communication occurred because of the overwhelming atmosphere of hesitancy. Further, most vampires were isolated geographically, finding one another through pure luck even with the numerous underground vampire publications of the early 1990s. The magazines and newsletters almost never advertised themselves openly, often lacking the funds even for classified ads. The cost of publishing and distribution, never offset by the amount charged to subscribers, limited the number of issues any single publisher could produce. At best, a self-published zine had a distribution numbering in the hundreds.

Finally, due to the many real-life factors that affect any costly and time-consuming labor of love, most zines had a lifespan of only two to three years. Although the zines served to initiate dialogue between several key figures of the nascent community, many more vampires remained confused and isolated, having never even heard of a zine.

NEW MEDIUMS OF COMMUNICATION

Two things helped bring the community out of the limited medium of self-published zines. First, there was the advent of a vampire-themed role-playing game known as *Vampire: The Masquerade*. A sit-down version of this game had been published by White Wolf in the early 1990s, but when a live-action version came out, it provided a whole new social venue for vampires and those sympathetic to the vampire.

In the live-action version of the game, dubbed "The Mind's Eye Theater" by its creators, players adopted their characters as personas and acted out plots and storylines in a type of improvisational theater loosely bound by gaming rules. This style of the game became wildly popular among the Gothic and vampire subcultures, reaching a peak in popularity in the midnineties. By 1995, various live-action versions of the game were being played at conventions, nightclubs, and public universities across the country.

While the game itself was based upon fiction and heavily influenced by the novels of Anne Rice, it still attracted many isolated psychic vampires. The live-action version provided them with a social outlet where they could openly adopt the identity of a vampire, even if this was only within the context of a game. More helpful than being able to play at being what they already were, was the fact that vampirism became an acceptable topic of conversation among players who met socially outside of the game.

While most psi-vamps rarely "came out" among the role-playing community, the live-action games nevertheless put them into contact with Pagans, Wiccans, occultists, and other open-minded twenty-somethings, many of whom were also attracted to the fantasy role-playing game. The social network created by live-action Vampire: The Masquerade ultimately provided a place where psi-vamps could get comfortable discussing what they were in small group settings, thus paving the way for many of the more formalized groups that would develop in the later nineties.

The second vital development that changed the vampire scene was the advent of the Internet. Chat rooms, message boards, newsgroups, and Web sites rapidly replaced the self-published newsletters and magazines. The cost of copying, binding, and mailing physical publications was completely eliminated by free Web hosting from sites like Angelfire, where anyone with a basic knowledge of coding could publish an online zine. The vampire community online flowered in 1997. Between June and August of that year, several sites of note went

up, including Sanguinarius's resource site, Sphynxcat's Real Vampires Page, and Vyrdolak's vampire pages. (Interestingly, that year also happened to be the centennial anniversary of the publication of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, perhaps the most influential piece of vampire literature to date.)

Instead of reaching audiences numbering at best in the hundreds, the new generation of electronic publications was able to reach thousands with just a click of the mouse. In a few short years, even the most isolated vampires out there were aware that they were not alone. There were many others just like them, and encouraged by this knowledge, they began opening up about their beliefs and their experiences. Numerous vampire "houses" were founded, and networks that served to connect these houses, such as Father Todd's Sanguinarium or Damien DaVille's Vampire Church, started formalizing a vital new community.

THE SANGUINARIUM

Father Sebastian Todd had gotten into the vampire underground through Goth clubs and role-playing games, but he had always sensed that there was something more just beneath the surface of the scene. Even in the growing atmosphere of openness, accurate information on the mechanics of psychic vampirism remained scarce, and so, like many, Todd stumbled along his own path for several years. As he experimented with many different expressions of vampirism, Todd nevertheless always remained fixated on one thing: a dream of uniting all the many vampires in the community in a global "Vampyre Nation."

Todd's Vampyre Nation saw realization through the Sanguinarium. The Sanguinarium was loosely fashioned after the network of vampires depicted in the novels of Anne Rice. Other preexisting communities factored into Todd's inspiration for the early Sanguinarium, including the Renaissance festival he was involved in and the fetish underground of New York City. Both of these communities had codes of conduct intended to protect those participating in

the community. Drawing from aspects of these communities, Todd developed the Black Veil, a guideline of ethics for the Sanguinarium.

For people familiar with the vampire role-playing games, this code was very reminiscent of the so-called "Traditions of the Masquerade." These seven laws formed the foundation of the fictional vampire society created for *Vampire: The Masquerade*. In order to distinguish it clearly from the "traditions" of the role-playing game, the Black Veil was revised in 2000. Changing attitudes within the vampire community inspired a second revision in late 2002. Observance of this code was a requirement for anyone that wished to be an active part of the Sanguinarium.

As the Sanguinarium grew and defined itself, it pulled further and further away from its original fictitious inspirations. However, as accurate metaphysical information continued to be hoarded by a clandestine few, the network was still mainly comprised of individuals who lived the "vampire lifestyle." These were people who acknowledged an affinity with the archetype of the vampire and who often dressed the part, yet who understood very little about the actual mechanics of energy, psi-vampirism, and feeding.

This is where my work comes in. I had been aware of energy all my life and had stumbled on the notion that I was somehow vampiric in early high school. I had begun recording my experiences at that time, seeking a better understanding of my nature and my needs. I knew of no others like myself back then, and so I started delving into world mystical traditions, metaphysics, and the occult in order to find corollaries to what I innately understood.

College brought me into contact with a few others who also tentatively considered themselves "psychic vampires." As we cautiously connected and began exchanging experiences, it became clear to me that I had an understanding few others possessed. Moreover, this understanding was not to be found in any of the available literature on psychic vampirism. Uncertain how to react to this inborn knowledge, I opted to gather as many ideas and opinions as I could, reaching out

and connecting with more and more members of the growing community and encouraging them to tell their tales so I could compare them with my own.

I had the key to unlocking a deeper meaning to psychic vampirism. But first I needed to learn how that key could be applied to the community, and also how it applied to me.

CHAPTER III

A JOURNEY
OF MEMORY

Throughout the early nineties, I was constantly seeking out open-minded Pagans, Wiccans, occultists, eclectics, and of course, other psychic vampires. I was driven by an overwhelming need to collect information and compare it against what I myself had remembered and experienced. I often hosted informal open houses where up to a dozen individuals with various views and levels of experience shared ideas and often performed experiments with energy work and psi-vampirism.

I was struggling at this time with belief, for what I remembered was extraordinary, and I was not sure at the time if I *wanted* it to be true. During these early years of involvement in the scene, I was too cautious to ever speak of my own beliefs except in generalities, although I frequently taught the basics of the energy work I instinctually knew. I was constantly networking with others and reaching out in order to gather as much data as I could on metaphysics, the occult, energy work, and psi-vampirism. The notes I gathered at this time would later become the document entitled "The Codex."

From 1991 to 1996, I edited and published the Gothic literary magazine *Shadowdance*. Beyond indulging in my love for Gothic poetry, I used this to make contact with others who shared my metaphysical

interests. Outside of the magazine, we corresponded, and I probed them for as much information as I could get regarding their experiences, theories, and beliefs. Like many in the early nineties, I was very hesitant to publicly announce my beliefs, and so the magazine never spoke openly of psychic vampirism, even though vampires of a more traditional stripe were a recurrent theme in the poems and fiction featured in the amateur publication.

In 1995, I had gathered enough courage to start up an openly vampiric newsletter, the *Midnight Sun*. This was the publication associated with the International Society of Vampires (ISV), a side project that had grown out of the correspondence with contributors and subscribers to *Shadowdance*. The newsletter was pretty much a formalization of the letters many of us had been exchanging all along, and functioned very much like a pen-and-ink version of a modern e-list. I would often propose questions and theories with the express purpose of seeing what others had to say on the topic. In some cases, I created a pen name in order to promote alternate views or to voice something I myself was not daring enough to express, just to see how others would react to this notion.

Most of the members of the ISV were very far flung, and while I learned a great deal from them through our correspondence, face-to-face contact was necessary to perform adequate exercises and experiments in energy work. Also by that time, I knew I was looking for some very specific people. Although I had not yet met these people in this life, I was certain I would be able to find them if I started to look.

To this end, I had gotten involved in the Vampire: The Masquerade scene, running live-action role-playing games (orLARPs, for short) at national conventions. During the game, I would study the players, noting who wore jewelry or other symbols typically associated with occult practices and getting a feel for these people's energy. I learned to identify certain types of people by "feel" alone, and once the game was over, I would approach them and invite them to a closed-door discussion on beliefs, practices, and experiences. Many

were hesitant at first, which was understandable given the resistance so many of us had encountered in response to our ideas. However, once the right atmosphere of trust was established, we found we had much to share.

It was through these closed-door discussions after the games that my group was born. For years I had been seeking people, and I had finally started finding them. At first, the group did not have a name, nor did it need one. Identity was implicit: we knew who and what we were. While it was tacitly agreed that I was "in charge," there was no formal hierarchy. Everyone came to the table with what they had learned for themselves, and knowledge and honesty established credibility and respect. I began hosting my own games outside of the convention circuit, and these naturally concluded in intense metaphysical discussions at my home. Eventually, the group began meeting at my home on a weekly basis, and the cover of the game became unnecessary, although we still occasionally played for recreation.

BUILDING ALLIANCES

Father Todd had heard about my work while I was still publishing in the midnineties, and he had been trying to track me down for several years. By 1996, however, I had become very difficult to find. Earlier that year, I had made significant steps in outing my nature, working with authors Jeff Guinn and Andy Greiser on their study of the community, *Something in the Blood*. Even though I styled myself as nothing more than a researcher, it was clear to both the authors that I had a deeper and more personal involvement in the vampire community. During the Cleveland leg of the book-signing tour, Jeff Guinn urged me to write a book revealing what I knew, but by then I had learned it was not yet time.

Nineteen ninety-six was not a good year for the vampire community. In the summer of that year, freelance reporter Susan Walsh disappeared while working for the *Village Voice* on an exposé of the New

York City vampire subculture. Later that year, troubled teen Rodney Farrell's obsession with vampires culminated in his brutal murder of a female friend's overprotective parents. Public universities across the country were banning their live-action games, despite the fact that the vampire LARPer had no real connection to either incident.

On a more personal level, issues of my magazine were mysteriously not arriving at their destinations. In some cases, this amounted to more than 50 percent of the total copies mailed out. One copy of the *Midnight Sun* took three months to arrive in a friend's mailbox in nearby Erie, Pennsylvania. When it finally did arrive, the newsletter had been shredded, then painstakingly taped back together by an unknown individual. Strange phone calls to my home, hate mail, and other incidents contributed to an uneasy paranoia. Rumors of federal investigations involving other members of the community did nothing to assuage my growing concerns.

Distinctly unnerved by the public reaction to the vampire community, I withdrew completely from the national scene not long after the fêted release of *Something in the Blood*. I became a recluse, focusing on my writing and working exclusively with select members of my private group. A paradigm-shifting conversation with a Hindu metaphysician had inspired me to tentatively begin reexploring the community through the medium of the Web in late 1998, but it took a mix-up with the *Vampyre Almanac* to get me in contact with Father Todd in 1999.

In 1997, I had done research for a Gothic arts calendar published by Cleveland-based Monolith Graphics. A year later, Father Todd had published the *Vampyre Almanac*. In the back of the *Almanac* was a calendar that contained a good deal of my work for Monolith, yet with no sources cited for the research on the calendar. Somewhat annoyed, I got Father Todd's email address from Christine Filipak of Monolith Graphics and presented my concerns, asking that I be mentioned among the sources for the calendar. The response I received in return surprised me. Father Todd's first words to me were, "I've been looking all over for you, girl!"

Where I had expected a dispute over publishing rights, instead I found a new partnership. The misunderstanding over the calendar was easily cleared up, and Todd encouraged me to collaborate with him on other projects. In addition to requesting assistance on the next edition of the *Vampyre Almanac*, he told me of the Sanguinarium and proposed that I formalize my private group in order to become part of this international network.

I had run across a few of the cultish vampire groups in the early nineties while I was still collecting data to compare with my own experiences and beliefs. An active proponent of open information exchange, I had gone so far as to contact several of them, offering to share what I knew in return for some of their own views. When I was dignified with a response at all, it was invariably pretentious, dismissing any value my opinions might hold. A letter I received in 1996 from a priest of the Temple of the Vampire was typical of this. The two neatly handwritten pages started off by implying how little I could actually know about real vampirism, then informed me that the only way I could learn the “true” ways was to join their temple and purchase their instructional texts. I found the letter deeply offensive, and it permanently colored my opinion of the TOV and all similar groups. (Years later, a bootleg copy of their “Vampire Bible” showed me that our techniques for feeding were essentially the same, although our ethics differed radically. So much for the only “true” vampire religion).

A few of my Internet contacts at the time sternly warned me away from Father Todd and his project, the Sanguinarium. His group was compared to vampire cults like the TOV. Given my deep-seated biases, I probably would never have cemented the partnership with Father Todd if it weren't for these warnings: so many people had such conflicting things to say about him that I had to see for myself what he was really like.

As I continued my correspondence with Father Todd, he clarified his vision for a network within the community. He sought to support this network with commercial ventures that capitalized upon the lure

of the vampire as an archetype: His company Sabretooth sold movie-quality acrylic fangs and special-effects contact lenses as well as vampire-themed jewelry, such as the Sabretooth signature “Sanguinarium Ankh.” Father Todd’s commercialism had brought him criticism from a number of people in the growing community, but having published *Shadowdance* for many years, I understood how expensive running something like the Sanguinarium could be. I was willing to forgive a little commercialism.

After several months of correspondence, I decided to give Father Todd and the Sanguinarium a chance. I had reached a wall with the small press and the vampire games. I wanted access to a wider audience, and the Sanguinarium was an attractive means to this end. Those networked within Todd’s community numbered in the thousands—two or three times the number of people I had ever been able to reach through *Shadowdance*, the ISV, or the vampire role-playing games.

When I emailed him the news, Todd was excited to have my group onboard with his project. From the questions he started asking about us, I could tell he actually knew very little of my group and its beliefs. He had formulated his opinions of us purely from various articles of mine that still circulated through the community. But those works had been born from the tentative, hesitant years of the nascent vampire community. The story that they told about us was partial and incomplete. The intense interaction my group had shared in the years since my withdrawal from the greater community had taught us all a great deal about who we were and what we had to share with the community.

Todd didn’t know it at the time, but the Sanguinarium had just added a very unique collection of people to its ranks.

DISCOVERING A SHARED PAST

From my youth onward, it was evident to me that I needed to take energy in order to maintain a certain level of physical, emotional, and spiritual health. As I delved into metaphysics and the occult, I learned

that this made me a psychic vampire. However, in addition to my vampirism, I could use energy to heal others as well as myself. I also had practiced certain types of meditation and dream work from early childhood onward, and I later found that these were relatively advanced skills often associated with certain forms of shamanism and Tibetan Buddhism. Finally, from age three onward, I had spoken vividly of my past lives, and my recollection of this past always struck me as being profoundly tied to who and what I was.

As I studied and explored my vampirism, I learned to recognize others who had this capacity as well. Some were ordinary psi-vamps, but others were immediately familiar to me on a much more profound and personal level. Almost invariably, they recognized me as well. When we compared our beliefs and experiences, we found that we not only had aspects of psi-vampirism in common, but we also shared other energy-related abilities, as well as the recollection of shared past lives.

As more of us connected with one another, it became clear that we shared a common tie deep in the past. We remembered belonging to an ancient temple. Part of the mysteries sacred to this temple involved the style of energy work we all still instinctively recalled. There had been three sacred castes within the social structure of this temple: priests, guardians, and temple concubines (these have been updated to "counselors" to emphasize their roles as emotional guides and confidants in a culture with a negative perception of concubinage), and most of us still retained ties to one of these three groups on a deep and archetypal level.

We had all retained the ties developed with one another in the service of this temple, and these had often drawn us together over the intervening lives. Something about our shared connection helped us find one another even when we were physically distant, bringing us into contact with one another through strings of apparent coincidence and happenstance. Each time we encountered one another, there was recognition, and this sparked memories of other lives.

The group that ultimately grew out of this contact was our attempt not to recreate the previous temple, but to explore and celebrate the ties that connect us to this day. All the searching throughout the nineties had been born of my struggle to accept these things about myself, then to reach out and find the others who I knew must be there.

FOUNDING HOUSE KHEPERU

There were several steps that had to be taken in order make my group officially a part of the Sanguinarium. Most of these were formalities of structure. Structure within my group had always been tacitly understood yet never formally declared. We organized ourselves loosely into the three castes, and each of these had different responsibilities but equal footing within the group. The castes were very integral to how we worked with energy and the roles we held in ritual. This was a radical departure from the structure the Sanguinarium paperwork implied, and it was something unique to us at the time. We didn't really want to surrender our unique identity just to belong to a larger group, but my instincts kept telling me that joining the Sanguinarium was a good move.

I discussed my concerns with Todd. I explained how I felt that the Sanguinarium structure was a decent guideline for groups that were just beginning to form, but didn't think an already established group like our own should be forced to change everything just to belong. Todd was understanding enough to grandfather us into the Sanguinarium without requiring us to change our structure, although he asked me to try and use the Sanguinarium terminology when writing articles for Sanguinarium publications like the *Vampyre Almanac*.

Once the hurdles of structure were overcome, all that remained was to give our group a formal name. Prior to our involvement with the Sanguinarium, we had never really bothered to name our group. We were just "Family." Many of us remembered several incarnations of

our temple from the past, and the names we were known by had changed over time. Our identities and the connection we all shared had been more than enough to define our group in its early, private years.

But the application for the Sanguinarium required that every group, or “House,” have a name that somehow embodied its core values and beliefs. To go with its unique name, each House had to choose a symbol, usually based around an Egyptian ankh, that could be worn by its members. Furthermore, each House had a specific theme that encompassed its particular take on vampires and vampirism.

Because we were tied to several different time periods, it was difficult at first to choose a theme and a name for our House. We wanted something that would speak of our transformational natures, but we also wanted something that held some sense of the antiquity we all shared. A symbol was even harder, as there were many symbols from a number of different cultures that were almost appropriate, but not quite. Egyptian iconography appealed to many of us, but even this was not precisely appropriate. We did not trace our origins back to the Egypt of the pharaohs; in our memories, there was a culture that predated this, and this was more properly the culture of our temple.

As we were trying to research the validity of a pre-Egyptian age, I purchased a copy of Lucy Lamy’s *Egyptian Mysteries*. When I first paged through this slim but informative little book, there was a phrase that electrified me. *Kheper-i kheper kheperu* is part of the opening passage of a papyrus dating to the third century CE entitled, “The Book of Knowing the Modes of Existence of Re and of Overthrowing the Serpent Apophi.” The first few lines of this papyrus are comprised almost entirely of different variations of the word *kheperu*, represented by the Egyptian scarab beetle and translated variously as “to change,” “to transform,” and “to come into being.”

The opening statement of this papyrus speaks of coming into being through a process of personal metamorphosis and transformation. Furthermore, the papyrus directly refers to a time known as the *Sep*

Tepy. The Sep Tepy is an ancient Egyptian concept translated as the “First Time,” or the “First Age”. It refers to a primordial age that the Egyptians believed predated their own culture. This First Age was a mythic golden age from whence the ancient Egyptians themselves claimed to have inherited their wisdom. Here was our pre-Egypt, and here was our notion of empowerment through personal transformation.

Not long after reading Lamy’s book, and finding correlating phrases in chapters 17 and 85 of the *Per Em Hru* (more commonly known as the Egyptian Book of the Dead), it was decided. We were henceforth to be known as House Kheperu, the House of Transformation, and our symbol would be the ankh paired with the scarab. Taken as hieroglyphs, this symbol could read “Life is change.”

The paperwork was submitted, and before the end of 1999, House Kheperu was an official part of the Sanguinarium.

INTERNET EXPLOSION

Although the Sanguinarium connected people in real time through vampire-themed publications and events, the main expression of the network was on the Internet. Most houses within the Sanguinarium hosted their own Web pages, and many also featured message boards, chat rooms, and e-lists. To become an official part of this community, Todd strongly encouraged me to design a Web page for House Kheperu.

Before designing our own site, I took a look at the Web pages that already existed for houses in the Sanguinarium. These were universally dark, with self-consciously Gothic themes. Most pages had black backgrounds with text that was purple or blood red. There was more graphics than substance, mainly in the form of animated ankhs, skulls, bats, and dripping blood. This was not the look we wanted for our page, as it in no way captured the spirit of our house.

A little uncertain how the rest of the online community would react to us, I set about designing a radically different “vampire” page. We chose

a light papyrus-style background with accents in gold and blue, suggestive of lapis lazuli. The text was designed to be aesthetic and readable, and graphics were simple and few. The goal was to share our particular interpretation of vampirism and to find others who shared these views.

As our views were such a radical departure from what was common in the vampire community at the time, I wasn't certain how much we could come right out and say about ourselves. At the time, there weren't many sites that presented a spiritual interpretation of vampirism, and the few that did were mainly left-hand path offshoots of Satanism. We weren't a typical "white light" tradition, but we also weren't *that* dark. When it came right down to it, we weren't even really "vampires" as most of these people defined themselves. Our understanding of the transformative aspects of vampirism put us in a category all by ourselves, and on top of that, there was so much more to our spiritual experience than just the need to take vital energy.

APPLYING THE CODEX

Instead of trying to explain our differences in a series of pedantic articles, I fell back upon the Codex, the document I had been compiling since 1991. Developed as the instructional text for the members of my household, we also used the Codex as a tool to draw out individuals' memories of our remembered tradition. All of our basic metaphysical practices were outlined in the Codex with clear and accessible descriptions. Further, woven throughout the text were our more profound and extraordinary beliefs.

Many of these beliefs were not directly stated, but were gently implied. This was done to aid in the process of memory without overwhelming new Kheprians. A line here or a few words there would trigger the shared recollection of our ancient tradition, yet still allow the students to formulate full ideas on their own. It had the effect of giving brief glimpses of what we really were, but the reader had to know what they were looking at in order to put the whole picture together.

What we hoped to accomplish by sharing this with the greater community was to subtly introduce some of these deeper concepts about ourselves without seeming to make wild and unsubstantiated claims. If someone read and understood, then they could initiate dialogue with us and ask further questions. If they missed this other aspect of the text, then hopefully they would at least find the material on psychic vampirism helpful. If the majority of the community seemed open to these implied concepts, then we could think about explaining a little more. Perhaps in time we could be completely open about who we were and what we remembered ourselves to be.

When I put the Codex up on the Web page, it was with the intention of building bridges with other traditions and opening lines of communication. I knew we had something extraordinary to share, and I was pretty sure a lot of these ideas had never been put into words before. But what this ultimately accomplished within the greater vampire community came as a surprise even to me.

CHAPTER IV

REVISIONING THE VAMPIRE

I have often been asked why anyone in their right mind would want to be called a vampire. The truth is, it is not something most people start off wanting to be. The majority of self-defined psychic vampires did not wake up one day and decide that they were going to identify themselves with a folkloric entity believed by most people to be damned. Typically, these individuals were vampirizing energy long before they had a term for what they were. Their abilities frightened and confused them, and they searched wherever they could for answers, and especially for a name.

When anyone first embarks on the journey of self-discovery, they start by asking a few fundamental questions: *Who am I? What am I? What is my place in the Universe?* The answers to these questions are very crucial to the direction of a person's spiritual journey. Although the answers can and do change throughout the course of that journey, it is the name a person finds for themselves at the very beginning that determines the course that the journey first takes.

THE POWER OF NAMES

Names hold great power for people. Humans as a species have an overwhelming need to put labels on those things that we do not understand.

Nowhere is this need more prevalent than when we are dealing with issues and qualities within our selves.

Labeling ourselves and finding names that embody our most important qualities is a process psychologist Carl Jung called individuation. Essentially, it is the process of finding and defining our own identity, and it typically begins in adolescence. This is where young people start breaking away from their parents and establishing themselves as individuals. Suddenly, they're styling themselves after celebrities and rock stars, or declaring one day at the dinner table that they're now vegan. This process is most marked during adolescence because of the extremes of experimentation that typically go on, but it actually continues throughout much of our lifetime. Individuation is a fundamental part of the soul's journey, which Jung termed the *Heilsweg*.

Whenever we go through a period of defining ourselves, we try on various labels and archetypes to see how they fit. Because these universal principles are based in generalities, the fit is never going to be perfect. Sometimes people realize this, and they tailor the archetype to make it uniquely their own. Other people change themselves to more fully embody the archetype. Typically, a little bit of both goes on, so the archetype influences the person, but the way the person embodies the archetype also helps add nuances to how it can be defined. This is precisely what has occurred in the vampire culture with the term "vampire."

AN ILL-FITTING SUIT

Because the West has a very materialist worldview, people's relations to energy are poorly understood. It is telling that all of our words for vital energy are imported from other cultures. *Chi* is Chinese. *Prana* is Sanskrit. *Ki* is Japanese. For Westerners who have a fundamental and undeniable experience of vital energy, there is neither a language nor a context for them to put this in. This places awakening psychic vampires in a very difficult position. Here they are having these profound and extraordinary experiences that have a significant impact on

their physical, mental, and spiritual well-being and yet they have no word for this, no guideposts to show them where to even begin to formulate a definition.

Along comes the vampire. As an undead being romanticized in fiction and film, the vampire really has very little in common with psychic vampires. Yet for those who encountered the archetype through books or movies, there was an obvious connection. The vampire feeds upon life. The need to take vital energy is typically the first and most undeniable quality awakening psychic vampires notice in themselves. Thus, even though they realized the term did not quite fit, there was enough of a resonance for these people to begin tentatively identifying themselves as vampires. Within the community, it was tacitly understood that someone who claimed to be a vampire was neither undead nor physically immortal, but had this underlying hunger for life energy.

For those who encountered the term through the self-defense literature, it was an even clearer choice. While the psychic vampires portrayed by people like Konstantinos and Dion Fortune are somewhat distorted from the real thing, still, the descriptions of how these people interact with energy is too close to deny. In both cases, there are plenty of qualities that are not quite right, but when there is nothing else available, the discovery of even an ill-fitting suit is a great relief.

LIMITING PERCEPTIONS

As liberating as a label may be, it can also become a trap. Even if the person using the label understands which aspects do and do not directly apply to them, they are still telegraphing all of the connotations and other associative baggage that that label contains to every other person who encounters it. Furthermore, no matter how objective a person tries to be, these associations ultimately have an effect upon their own relationship with the label. It was this interaction that firmly placed the early vampire community within the darker regions of the occult underground.

There is no denying that there are negative connotations associated with the word *vampire*. The vampires encountered in popular culture are ravenous predators who stalk and often kill their prey. They are depicted as soulless, inherently evil beings who live the life of the damned. Even in the self-defense literature, which distinguishes between folklore and reality, a psychic vampire is still perceived as a predator and someone to be guarded against. The act of vampirism implies a taking, and a vampire is someone who preys upon others, ultimately doing them harm.

Certain individuals need life energy from sources outside of themselves. Even though this taking can be done in a positive and mutually beneficial way, our culture has no other word for it but vampirism. Once this process was labeled vampirism, any of its more positive and transformational qualities were almost immediately erased from perception. And since the self-defense literature was the most widespread authority on what psychic vampires were supposed to be, the negative perception was reinforced even for the vampires themselves. In finding a label and a “box” to put themselves in, the majority of psychic vampires became psychologically boxed in, unable to perceive themselves outside of the predatory vampire paradigm, even when they felt this paradigm chafe against what they really were.

OUTSIDE OF THE BOX

When the Codex was first made available online, it created a revolution of sorts within the vampire community. Not only did the Codex present clear descriptions of energy techniques, it also presented ethical choices psychic vampires could make in how they exercised their abilities. More important than even that, it was perhaps the first document to express the notion that psychic vampirism was not by nature a negative and harmful activity but instead was part of a natural cycle that ultimately benefited all involved. The Codex challenged psychic vampires everywhere to look beyond the basic definition of feeding

and to ask deeper questions such as, what purpose do psychic vampires serve in the ultimate scheme of things? And, why do some people need to take energy while others seem to need to give?

As the Codex became more widely read, the face of the community started to change. More and more vampire houses began to have positive, spiritual overtones. They were no longer trapped in trying to emulate an imperfect archetype, but instead were freed to explore the transformative and vital aspects of what they were. The ubergoth pretensions that had typified many of the earlier Sanguinarium sites became passé, and fewer groups dwelt upon the melodramatic image of the vampire as a predatory outcast.

There were certainly plenty of groups and individuals who clung to the old ways, but these were now generally considered gauche, misdirected, or confused. Terms like “poseur” and “lifestyler” gained widespread use to distinguish those who played at being vampires from those who understood the deeper truths of what they were.

Several attempts were even made to get away from the word “vampire” entirely. In 2002, Canadian-based House *Quinotaur*, an international organization that includes a version of the Codex among the texts it recommends to members, moved from the word “vampire” to the term “*Quinotauri*” to describe its members. For the *Quinotauri*, this seems to have worked so far, although most other attempts at coining an alternative for the word “vampire” have not had widespread appeal throughout the community. Due to the limits of the English language, there is simply no other recognizably appropriate word.

INITIATORS OF CHANGE

House *Kheperu* set a precedent in the community that was widely emulated by many houses, orders, and courts. The *Kheprian* structure, particularly the use of castes, was widely adopted, although not always properly applied. Under the names *Ramkht*, *Mradu*, and *Kitra*, the *Kheprian* castes became a fundamental aspect of the core of the

Sanguinarium, and in the new Order of the Strigoi Vii, the ultimate evolution of Todd's personal House Sahjaza, the castes play an integral role in both structure and ritual.

Throughout Sanguinarium and non-Sanguinarium groups alike, the Codex became the definitive text on psychic vampirism, and many other occult groups used it for its clear presentation of fundamental metaphysical techniques. A number of groups linked to it or reproduced it in whole on their own sites. In the fall of 2000, a limited edition was published by the Sanguinarium Press, and soon after, partial translations were appearing in everything from Spanish to Japanese.

Some of the more traditional members of the vampire community objected to the publication of the Codex, as it revealed information they felt was best kept secret or reserved for an elite few. Some even tried to restrict access to the Codex, forbidding their initiates and lower-ranking members to learn from the text. But the material was out and accessible to anyone who knew where to look, breaking the silence that had left so many confused.

AGENTS OF BALANCE

The basic premise of the Codex is that all beings participate in a universal cycle, and a psychic vampire's relation to energy is an integral part of this participation. This cycle is founded upon a dynamic balance of opposites. This balance is a complicated dance of polarities: male and female, destruction and creation, darkness and light. Each aspect is necessary to the healthy functioning of the whole, and thus even darkness, death, and destruction are vital and desirable experiences within the proper context.

Psychic vampirism fits naturally within the context of this cyclic balance. There are many people who naturally produce more energy than they require to sustain themselves. Many of these are called to be healers, and there is an aura about them that just seems to reach out to others and give and give. For every person who has a natural abun-

dance of energy to give away, there is another person who has a natural need to take that energy in, and so the energy of the Universe remains in a constant and vital flow.

Taking energy away can be as helpful and healing as giving energy to another person. Too often energy becomes blocked or stagnant, and this blocked energy must be removed from a person's system to maintain a healthy flow. Furthermore, when energy is removed from a person, their system naturally responds by generating more energy to replace it. This new energy is fresher and more vital than that which was removed, and typically the individual feels cleansed, refreshed, and renewed.

This positive interpretation of vampirism revolutionized the community, freeing many individuals from a negative self-image that had held them back from exploring all that they were. It was no longer an unbearable curse to be a psychic vampire; it was a transformational journey to be celebrated and enjoyed. Through the Codex, many people have learned that even things that seem dark on the surface have a vital and important universal role. When this darkness is your nature, there is no reason to repress it or to feel automatically condemned. The challenge is simply to use these potentially harmful abilities respectfully and responsibly, and in this way facilitate balance, growth, and flow.

CHAPTER V

THE CODEX
UNVEILED

The version of the Codex in this book is a vastly expanded new edition. It has never before seen publication. The previous versions of the Codex were roughly half the size of this document, and those were only released to the limited audience of the vampire community. Most of the topics comprehensively discussed in this text have only been touched upon in the previous versions, and as far as we are aware, there is no book currently on the market that covers these subjects with as much honesty or detail.

Those who are intimidated by the existence of psychic vampires may feel that spreading information on how to perform these techniques is potentially dangerous. Certainly the knowledge provided within this book could be abused. However, the potential abuses are outweighed by the fact that educating psychic vampires about feeding empowers them to make ethical choices about how and when to feed. Additionally, the information contained in the Codex opens them up to the realization that they are much more than beings that “feed.” Psychic vampirism is a misleading term for a very vital and dynamic gift.

Within the greater vampire community, I have often encountered what I call the “I feed, therefore I am” mentality. In this line of thinking,

a person realizes his or her connection to energy but never takes things any further than this. Such individuals develop their skills to the point of minimal personal maintenance, never questioning why they have this need or how these skills can be applied in other ways. It is a very self-focused approach, but because this process is so poorly understood, it is an attitude that is sadly widespread.

As we of House Kheperu are not just psychic vampires, we know there is much, much more to this process than taking energy from others. Inherent in this very process is a deep and vital truth about the nature of the Universe, about give and take, and about destruction and renewal. Conscious and active participation in this revitalizing universal dance should not be taken for granted. It is in every respect a wonderful gift. We are aware of energy at a profound level. We are able to touch others beyond the flesh to the very essence of their souls. And we are able to take away what has grown stagnant or blocked, utilize this for ourselves, and through removing, renew. This is not vampirism in the sense of taking and giving nothing back in return. This is a vital and transformative exchange that enriches both participants through an intense alchemy of soul.

A SPIRITUAL REVOLUTION

The self-defense literature exists because there has always been a lack of education among metaphysicians and vampires alike. This lack of education has occurred because the information has long been hoarded, suppressed, and misunderstood. In publishing the Codex to a wider audience, we are breaking a long-held code of silence. However, we of House Kheperu feel it is time to share these ideas. There was a time when the notion of psychic vampirism was impossible to accept because few people even believed in the existence of vital energy. Now we are moving into a time where this process can not only be accepted but also understood as something far beyond its superficial definition of taking energy.

In the past ten years, healing traditions such as Reiki and Qi Gong have become so widespread that even the illustrious Cleveland Clinic is experimenting with energy healing and integrating it into their more traditional therapies. The practice of meditation has become commonplace. Community recreation centers offer courses in energy work, yoga, and psychic techniques alongside swimming and basket-weaving lessons.

While there is still a vocal and active conservative element working against the promotion of these New Age ideas, it has become increasingly apparent that these conservatives are fighting a losing battle. On the whole, our culture has discovered that there is more to the world than material existence, and there is an increasing push to balance materialism with spirituality.

Many people now have discovered their abilities to send energy out into the universe. What remains to be appreciated is the necessary counterbalance to this generative capacity, the process that helps to break down energy and clear a path for change. That is the wisdom that we Kheprians carry, and we feel it is a skill that lies at the heart of the psychic vampire phenomenon. It is a secret that we experience everyday, and it is a secret that, as a House, we seek to share.

NOTES ON THE TEXT

Although this version of the Codex is intended to be shared with a wider audience than any version published privately before, it is still written as an instructional text for Kheprians. Throughout the text, I employ the pronouns “us” and “we” to refer collectively to Kheprians. Readers should not assume that they are included in this collective. This does not mean that non-Kheprians cannot benefit from the information contained in this document. Nor does it mean that non-Kheprians cannot learn and apply the techniques discussed herein. However, it does mean that reading this text will not automatically make you a Kheprian. Neither will learning how to feed necessarily

make you a psychic vampire of any sort—true psychic vampirism is inborn. These Kheprian-specific passages are included to give you a peek inside a previously secret tradition, and also to reach out to those of our scattered Family who still have yet to remember themselves.

Whenever I address the general readership, especially when explaining exercises and techniques, I use the pronoun “you.” This is intended to make a distinction between ideas and issues that are Kheprian-specific and those that can be applied to anybody. In the original Codex, this general “you” technically addressed a Kheprian student, but the purpose of this edition is to share many of our teachings with a wider audience. A general “you” is appropriate, as nearly all of the techniques covered within this document can be learned not just by psychic vampires but by anyone with an interest in energy. Thus, whenever possible in these universal sections, Kheprian-specific statements have either been qualified or removed.

ORGANIZATION

As you look through the text, you will find that the Codex is separated into numbered divisions, each about a page to two pages in length, with a heading that suggests the general content. Each division covers its topic as thoroughly as possible. The language throughout is direct and concise. This is intended to make it easier to study the material within the Codex. Each new idea is presented clearly and completely within a space of text that can be read easily from beginning to end.

Accessibility is one of the major strengths of the Codex. Too many metaphysical texts make use of complicated occult terminology when explaining techniques, assuming that the reader has a significant background in metaphysical practices. Other texts adopt a self-consciously mysterious tone. While the authors of such texts typically employ such language in an attempt to give their work a greater sense of legitimacy, they ultimately succeed only in making an already obscure topic more obscure.

We Kheprians understand that metaphysical techniques do not need to be described in pretentious terms in order to be valid and useful. The simpler the language, the easier it will be for others to learn. When occult and metaphysical techniques were highly guarded secrets, such verbal legerdemain was acceptable. However, this is not the era of secrecy. The purpose of the Codex is to share our ideas, revealing things that others have kept secret. Clarity is favored over artifice, and highly esoteric concepts are presented in hands-on language most laypeople can understand.

The divisions themselves are collected into four main sections, not including a short introduction that features material from some of our prayers. Overall, the four sections of the Codex progress from simple to complex. It is recommended that the first reading of the Codex be taken in order from start to finish. The level of difficulty increases from section to section, and so, especially toward the end, it is very easy to get confused by skipping ahead. Each division typically builds upon the one previous to it, so it is essential to follow the progression of thoughts in the order they appear in the text.

CONTENT

The first section of the Codex deals with awakening and recognition. This is the most Kheprian-specific section of the Codex, as it describes qualities, characteristics, and values definitive of Kheprians. Although the section is addressed to Kheprians, please note that the qualities and abilities described in this section are not necessarily exclusive to Kheprians. We have found that many of the traits described in this section can be applied to a wide variety of psi-vamps. Our Priest caste, especially, is the most traditionally vampiric within the Family. Thus, most typical psi-vamps will find they share a number of traits in common with Kheprian Priests.

The second section of the Codex details feeding and energy exchange. This section is applicable to almost any form of psychic vampirism, although there is still some Kheprian-specific material

present here. Probably the most notably Kheprian information here deals with the energetic interaction of the castes. As something that involves an individual's fundamental energetic structure, caste is inherently a Kheprian thing. However, over the years we have learned that the castes can be used as spiritual archetypes by others. Several vampire houses, such as House Scarlet Moon, have successfully applied the caste archetypes to their own work in ritual and energy exchange. As others have found this information both interesting and useful, we have retained it here.

The third section moves into general energy work, addressing basic to intermediate material. This is perhaps the most widely accessible portion of the Codex. Almost all of the material contained in this portion details useful techniques that can be learned by vampires and nonvampires alike. The fourth and final section details advanced techniques. While many of these are founded upon complex methods of energy perception and manipulation, the techniques are still such that anyone can learn them given enough practice and dedication.

I have placed the material on feeding and psychic vampirism in the second position, giving it priority over basic energy work such as grounding and centering. This may not immediately make sense to readers for whom this material is foreign and difficult to comprehend. However, for those with vampiric qualities, these abilities are inborn, and it is through their experience with feeding that most psychic vampires learn to work with energy in other capacities. As this has been my audience for over a decade, and as I still have a strong desire to reach this audience in order to educate them in both ethics and techniques, I felt the feeding material had to appear immediately after the introductory Kheprian information.

As for the fourth section, there was some debate as to whether this material should even be included in this edition of the Codex. Several of my members very nearly convinced me to leave it out. The material is admittedly complex, but I personally feel that a great number of people will be able to benefit from it. I have attempted to detail the

advanced theories and techniques as clearly and simply as possible, but this level of energy work does get into some very complicated and subjective territory. The perception and methodology of most of these techniques can vary widely, depending on who is performing them, and while I have tried to be as all-encompassing with my descriptions as possible, these divisions will inevitably be influenced, and in some respects limited, by my own perspective. Keep this in mind when reading this final portion of the text.

REGARDING CASTES

One of the most controversial beliefs presented in the Codex is the concept of the castes. Please keep in mind that the caste system is a fundamentally Khepriian phenomenon. For us, caste is something we experience on a basic, energetic level, and it influences our perception and interaction with energy as well as our preferred archetypes of identity. We include the material on castes in this edition of the Codex in order to better communicate who and what we are. However, the caste system cannot and will not apply to everyone. Especially within the vampire community, this system has frequently been misused and misunderstood. Since the underground publication of the Codex, many other vampire groups have adopted the use of castes. Those that use castes in energy work and ritual, like the aforementioned House Scarlet Moon, have grasped the real meaning behind the castes. Those that have adopted the castes as a hierarchical social structure have missed the point.

Despite the connotations of the word, our castes are in no way intended to represent a social or spiritual hierarchy. It is true that the castes are derived from an ancient social structure pivotal to our remembered history, but that society has long turned to dust. The strengths, weaknesses, and innate abilities that we developed over many lifetimes because of the caste we were back then are what remains, and these qualities are what make it necessary to mention the castes at all. The castes can be used in a limited fashion as spiritual

archetypes by non-Kheprians, but the unique energetic, physical, and emotional signatures defined by each caste can be found among Kheprians alone.

FINAL COMMENTS

Finally, let me state that the Codex is a living document. It is intended to change and grow as we change and grow. This is not the first version of this document, and it is by no means the last. For now, it is the most complete version, but I expect it to expand over the years. Life is a journey of constant discovery, and I approach energy work as I would any scientific discipline. Everything is treated as a working theory, and when new data presents itself, the old information is revised. My group and I are constantly learning and experimenting, remembering forgotten material, or seeing old memories in a new light. Thus nothing within this book is set in stone.

This book is not gospel, nor is it intended to be. The opening will read a little like scripture. That is because it is the equivalent of scripture for our House, but it is our scripture alone. Read it as if it were a window into the beliefs of House Kheperu, and do not feel compelled to take our truths for your own. We share this with you, the reader, in its entirety, not to convert you to our ways, but in the hope that it can ultimately help you to better understand your own path.

Read. Enjoy. And always, *seek your own truth.*

PART TWO

THE
CODEX

INTRODUCTION

KHEPRIAN MYSTERIES

1. THE KHEPRIAN CHARGE

We are the many-born. We are the Immortal. Eternal, we wander the eons, moving to the rhythm of our own inner tides.

We are active elements moving through passive worlds.

Endlessly we die and are reborn, changed yet unchanging through the years. We move from lifetime to lifetime, taking up bodies as garments.

Ours is a journey toward understanding, and our charge is knowledge and wisdom. We are the catalysts, and as we Awaken to ourselves, we serve to Awaken the very world.

2. ORIGIN

We have been known by many names throughout the ages, but few have understood the truth of our existence.

We are Watchers and we are wanderers. We are shapers of spirit and soul.

We came here, and we forgot ourselves. Yet we were haunted with a sense that we had been something more.

The limits of the flesh chafed upon us, and our spirits yearned to be free. We would not bow before the cycle of forgetting between rebirths. We would not accept the limitations of the flesh. We had once known power and we would reclaim it as our own.

Setem-Ansi was the first to make the transition. He cut away the umbilical that nourished but tied his spirit down. In the First Age, he Became, and from his transformation, all transformations followed.

Each were altered in their turn, Priest, Counselor, Warrior. We claimed for ourselves a Temple, and the Family was born.

Half spirit and half flesh, we are beings who walk both worlds at once. We direct the course of our incarnations. We are conscious and aware in the Between. We carry our skills and memories throughout lifetimes. And our Will shapes both spirit and flesh.

3. FAMILY

We have been many things to one another over the years: brothers, lovers, friends, and bitterest enemies. Yet throughout it all, we have remained tied together, soul to soul, in this our ancient Family.

Our people are drawn from many places, and our spirits are diverse. Yet the Family unites us, and this diversity becomes our strength.

Our Family is one that is three. Priest, Warrior, Counselor: we are Kheprians all. Each is an integral part of the Family, acting and being acted upon by the rest.

We function ideally as a Triumvirate, an embodiment of the cycle of life, death, and rebirth. These mysteries unite us, and while each may act separately, we are only complete when we act as a whole.

The bonds that we share defy easy definition. From lifetime to lifetime, we are drawn together, and we always recognize our own. Recognition brings Awakening and Awakening brings recollection of Self. As we remember, we Become. Thus we reclaim all that we once were.

SECTION I

AWAKENING AND RECOGNITION

4. AWAKENING

We are neither wholly born nor wholly made what we are. The choice for us to Become was made millennia ago. From that time onward, we have been reborn again and again, carrying in every lifetime the seed of what we are.

Sometimes we forget ourselves, and we wander our lifetimes like sleepwalkers, only half aware. Yet even when sleeping, we are born with the potential to Awaken.

Awakening is a process of expanded awareness and the acceptance of what that awareness brings. Awakening opens us up to the totality of the soul so we may look beyond the boundaries of one little life. Awakening allows us to become aware of our spiritual talents, and it brings these talents under conscious control.

Awakening is a long process, occurring in stages throughout our lives. The progression of Awakening often depends on the flexibility of the mind—what can be accepted and understood at that time and how far the psyche is willing to bend in order to accommodate new definitions of Self and reality.

Awakening most often occurs with the onset of puberty for it is at this time that one begins to question the things they have been taught

about the world. The mask that is the little self learned in this lifetime begins to slip away so that the Higher Self may be seen.

Some may be born Awakened, although this is very rare. The stress of being a young child yet simultaneously remembering something more is too much for most psyches to bear. Also, few parents are understanding enough to encourage an Awakened child. The Awakened is instead pressured to deny their perceptions and conform with the unaware. Those who are born Awakened typically slip into a self-induced forgetting, simply to survive their childhood. Those who cannot escape their awareness can be driven mad.

Awakening is stressful for anyone, but for Family it can be especially traumatic. Our nature can be a burden, for we are equal parts darkness and light, and we each have secrets that are hard to accept. We cannot look upon the Truth all at once or we may be blinded. Sometimes, we may turn our faces away from what we have seen and put out our own eyes, rather than accept it. But for beings such as us, such a denial of Self is the real death.

5. REMEMBRANCE

Our memories move into consciousness during Awakening. However, they have always been with us, carried throughout our childhood. The memories surface in unexpected ways, especially when we are not conscious of them.

In the stories that we were drawn to and in the stories that we've told ourselves, there will be images of our previous lives reflected as in a distant mirror.

A persona we were drawn to or a character that we have often played may be a shadow of a previous life that echoes in us still.

Innate preferences and innate interests are often influenced by our memories. Times and places for which we possess a strong fascination are often tied to portions of our past.

Many of us possess latent knowledges and skills, and these are also

carried over from the past. When there is a subject we have never studied in this life yet we learn quickly and with ease, seeming to know most of the answers already, this learning is truly a remembering.

Quirks and fears, manners of dress, and habits of speech that hold no discernable source within this life are often holdovers from previous lives.

People we have just met who seem hauntingly familiar to us are souls we have built connections with in the past. Some of these are Family, but there are many others we have lived with, hated, or loved.

Our chosen professions, our favorite hobbies, and our preferred styles of life: these are often strongly influenced by who we have been, for although we are agents of change, we are also beings of habit, and we tend to return to what is familiar to us, again and again.

The past is everywhere within us, and who we are now is a sum of all that we have been. Conscious recollection is not necessary to draw upon these things, although it facilitates integration and a true comprehension of our path.

6. OTHER AWAKENED

We are not the only beings that undergo a process of Awakening and who may recollect past lives.

There are the spiritually cultivated, sages and mystics, who have devoted previous lives to gaining spiritual awareness. These may Awaken in this lifetime as well. There are the psychically gifted, whose latent talents of spirit and mind require that they accept a greater reality. As their abilities manifest, these also undergo an Awakening. Additionally, there are the Othersouled, those that have come to this place from another. As they realize what they are, these undergo an Awakening, remembering and harnessing their Other nature.

Like ourselves, the other Awakened can perceive and manipulate the many layers of reality. They call themselves by many names and they follow many diverse paths. Most tend to draw upon positive,

generative forces, and in this they may misunderstand our connection to darker things. This is one thing we have to teach them: reality is a never-ending drama of Balance, and we each have our roles to play. Though we are darkness and they are light, we are all working toward the same goal. Each in our way brings Awakening to the world, and we serve as catalysts to everything around us.

You will be attracted to the Awakened, much as you are drawn to our own kind. There will be a feel about them, and their energy will stand out to you. Much of your awareness may be unconscious at first, so you will have to learn to recognize the cues. Whenever you feel a strong pull toward someone, trust that your greater Self is guiding you. Reach out and speak with them, for there is always much we can share.

7. POTENTIALS

Those among our own kind who verge upon Awakening are termed Potentials. They are those who carry the truth of what they are latent within them. At times in their childhood and their youth, this power may have come to the surface, only to be ignored or denied due to a restrictive upbringing or other negative circumstances.

A Potential of our kind, though unawakened, still has power. We are blessed and cursed in the fact that our very natures require us to interact with the subtle reality. We cannot shut it away from us for it is a part of our very souls. Thus, even when slumbering, we affect energy and we feed. It is important to understand this about a Potential of our kind: Although they do not understand what it is they are doing, their ignorance by no means prevents them from accomplishing the feat.

When we come upon one who is undergoing their Awakening, it is our duty to guide and instruct them. If for some reason we cannot help them, then we should make an effort to steer them toward someone who may. We should facilitate their Awakening, but this should be done gently, with care toward the boundaries of their psyches.

We should take care when facilitating Awakenings. Not all are

intended to Awaken in this lifetime. Some Potentials are not strong enough mentally or emotionally. If forced to Awaken, these individuals will be unstable, and they can be dangerous to themselves and to others. Such Potentials are best left to slumber so they can come to maturity in their own time.

Finally, do not mistake every Awakened for a Potential of our kind. There are many paths to follow and many ways of being. Ours is only one.

In all cases, remember that we function as catalysts. When we come into contact with someone who verges on Awakening, we may help to open the door. What lies on the other side is theirs and theirs alone.

8. UNCONSCIOUS FEEDING

Whether we are Awakened to our natures or not, we process energy and we feed. This is a deep aspect of what we are, written into the very fiber of our energy bodies.

While Potentials have not harnessed their natures enough to thoroughly exercise their gifts, they still unconsciously do what they need to survive. Thus the unawakened feed, although they rarely have any knowledge of what it is they are doing.

Many Potentials unconsciously put themselves into situations where they can take energy. If asked about this, they will understand only that they are drawn to such situations and that such situations just "feel right" for them.

Potentials are often drawn to the performing arts, for when we are the center of attention for a large group of people, we may feed upon the energies of those people as they focus on us. Every actor knows that the audience gives energy to the people on the stage, and the emotional level of the material heightens this energetic interplay. Potentials of our kind can harness this cycle and use it to sustain themselves with little effort.

Other Potentials will be drawn to situations where they can engage in intense or deeply emotional conversations with people. Again, this places the Potential at the center of attention. These conversations can be debates or arguments—so long as strong emotions are involved, the energy is easy to acquire.

Some Potentials will naturally take the role of confidant for this reason. Everyone they know will go to them and bare their souls, crying on their shoulders and discussing their most painful issues. Potentials like this will just have a knack for gaining people's trust and for drawing these painful secrets out of them. These Potentials will rarely understand the real reason that they enjoy this role of personal confessor, but they will know that it is a role they are "meant for." They may also genuinely care about these people and seek to unburden them of their problems, but they are still feeding upon all the tears and heartache poured out to them.

Many Potentials are driven also by a need for touch. Physical contact is a powerful focus, and the more intimate the contact, the more energy is exchanged. For this reason, many Potentials can be promiscuous, taking energy from an endless string of sexual partners. Some Potentials can sate this need through more casual contact, and these excel at the art of massage, literally draining away other people's stress.

Finally there are those Potentials who find far less functional ways to become the focal points of attention and strong emotion. These individuals become drama queens, engaging in histrionics and manipulating people and situations to place themselves at the center of their social stage. Even the negative attention that this nets them is still attention, and it can be fed upon. Potentials who go this route often give us a very bad name, for they are ill behaved and very needy. They capitalize upon their instabilities, and because even the negative attention fulfills them, they rarely make an effort to better themselves and change.

One of the best arguments for Awakening and instructing Potentials is the simple fact that is it impossible to make an ethical decision about a behavior one is barely conscious of engaging in. Left unaware of what

they are and what this drives them to do, Potentials can bring grief upon themselves by inadvertently abusing those around them. Additionally, those Potentials whose hungers drive them to use others can reflect badly upon all of us, for not everyone will understand that they are not willfully bringing about harm. With help and guidance, Potentials may begin to recognize what they do, and as they gain mastery of their skills, eventually they can choose when and how to fulfill their needs.

9. THE BEACON

We are drawn to Potentials by the Beacon. The Beacon speaks to our subtle sense of a person, and it allows us to recognize our own kind. It speaks to us on a very deep level, and for this reason we often react unconsciously to it without even realizing why.

On its most basic level, the Beacon manifests as an attraction to an individual. We are drawn to the person with a Beacon. It makes them stand out from all others in a crowded room. We may feel an overwhelming urge to feed from this person, or to simply be near them and to touch them. The Beacon may manifest as a sexual attraction as well, and for this reason we should learn to recognize it, for its pull can be overwhelming at times.

Those with Potential who are unawakened to what they are often have the strongest Beacons, although the Beacon is present among nearly all of our kind.

The purpose of the Beacon in unawakened Potentials is to draw us near to them so that we may engage them in an energy exchange. This energy exchange inspires Awakening.

For many, the Beacon creates attraction and inspires need. There is often a drive to feed from a Potential, and this is especially common to the Priest caste. This drive should be recognized as an instinctual urge to Awaken the Potential. Feeding from a Potential will almost invariably inspire an Awakening, however this Awakening can be severe and traumatic. Other methods of Awakening should be considered before a

Potential is simply fed upon. Even casual contact initiates a limited energy exchange, and such a Proximity Awakening carries less risk.

If we learn to recognize these instinctual reactions, we can refine our awareness of others so we may consciously pick the Beacon out in those around us. By learning to consciously recognize the Beacon, we may also choose when and how we Awaken a Potential, and we may choose to resist the sometimes overwhelming urge to engage in an exchange of energy with them.

Simply because someone has a Beacon does not mean that it is appropriate for them to Awaken. We must let our judgment rule us in this matter, and we must sometimes resist the instinctual pull of this subtle sense. Not all of those with Potential are fit for Awakening, and if we act rashly, we may unwittingly bring the other person into a life they are not equipped to live.

10. PROXIMITY AWAKENINGS

It is not always necessary or advisable to actively Awaken someone. In many cases, a passive Awakening is much easier for mentor and Potential alike.

Simple proximity to one of our kind will prompt Awakening over time. While a more active method involves feeding and energy exchange, the sudden Awakening inspired by this method can be harsh and traumatic.

Proximity Awakenings hold less danger of psychological trauma than any rite that involves feeding. Sometimes opening a dialogue with the initiate is all that is required, and you will know by the questions being asked where the initiate is along his or her personal path.

Proximity Awakenings involve being close with the Potential as a mentor and friend. By their proximity to us, the Potential is exposed to our energy and the myriad minor abilities we harness everyday. In a Proximity Awakening, the Potential learns by example, questioning assumptions about themselves and their reality based upon what they

perceive in us. Through this method, the Potential progresses at their own pace, never pushing too far beyond the psychological boundaries of what they can accept.

Proximity Awakenings are strengthened by our numbers. Thus, if there is a large group of us working together, those Potentials who become involved in that group will make their transition with great rapidity. The more Awakened who work together in that group, the easier all future Awakenings will be for all those who come into contact with that group.

The simple presence of a large Awakened group can cause a subtle influence on their geographical area such that individuals who have never even come into direct contact with members of the group may begin to Awaken. Furthermore, the collective energy of the group serves as a focal point, drawing Awakened and those verging upon Awakening into the area. As the group heightens and refines the energy in its area through ritual and other work, the subtle and physical realities are drawn closer together, thus further facilitating Awakening within the area of effect.

By being true to ourselves and doing what it is in our natures to do, we create a ripple effect in the world around us. Spontaneous Proximity Awakenings are but one result of such ripples.

11. DEDICANTS

Dedicants are those individuals who have chosen to actively pursue what you have Awakened in them. Understand that they are Dedicated not to you, but to themselves and to the pursuit of their individual path. You are but a guide and mentor, and while they will certainly share a special relationship with you, it is a relationship that will teach you as much as it teaches them.

It is a sacred responsibility to instruct those you Awaken, and one that should not be undertaken lightly. You must guide them through the stages of Awakening, answering their questions and easing their concerns

as they pass from one level of awareness to the next. You must never abandon those you have Awakened, even if you have unintentionally inspired awareness in them. Be aware that even by associating with one who verges on Awakening, your proximity may bring them across.

You must teach them discretion so they do not draw negative attention to themselves. They must understand that their actions can impact our entire Family so that if they make a spectacle of themselves, they could bring shame to us all.

You must teach them responsibility, for you have awakened in them a great power. They must follow their natures but should never abuse what this enables them to do.

Teach them respect also—respect for the vital force that sustains them and respect above all for those who provide this energy. Those whom we feed upon give us a great gift, and even if they are unaware of this giving, we should never fail to appreciate what we receive.

Those whom you awaken and give guidance to will be as your children. They will share a very deep bond with you. You will know their very hearts and souls. The mysteries of who they have been will be unveiled to you. No distance will separate your awareness of them.

The link goes both ways, and they can feel you and know your thoughts when they so choose. You may use the link to exchange energy with them at a distance, and they may also reach out to you. In this way, you may both share your strengths in times of great need.

Never fail to cherish this bond, for it is one of the greatest strengths of our Family. And if you are irresponsible enough to abuse this connection, be forewarned that the great love your children hold for you can turn into a hatred that is just as far-reaching and deep.

12. SYMPATHETIC VAMPIRES

Not all who feed are of our number. Over the eons, countless of our brethren have been scattered and lost, but there also are those who take vitality as a learned skill.

Do not be fooled by learned vampires. Many make a mockery of our need by engaging in feeding for pleasure or sport. Some will learn how to feed on vitality for the power it gives them, and some will learn in order to pass for our kind. Yet they do not understand that this is but one part of all that we are. It is our most obvious trait, but we are not defined by taking energy alone.

Among our kind, there is always recognition. Even if we do not consciously perceive the Beacon, we will be drawn to one another. We will settle into companionship with the ease of old friends. When this knowing of another is not present, always be wary. Trust your instincts and proceed with care.

Not all who emulate feeding do so intentionally. Sympathetic vampirism can arise in others as well. Typically a sympathetic vampire is a long-term feeding partner whose energy has been diminished past a point of natural recovery. In order to replenish themselves, consciously or unconsciously, they feed.

Given time, if they are separated physically and/or emotionally from the individual vampirizing them, such a person will recover. In some cases, however, the afflicted person does not wish to return to their normal nonvampiric state. It is not uncommon for those who have been over fed upon to become fixated on the vampiric process. If the person understands even a little of what has happened to him, he can maintain this quasi-vampiric state indefinitely. Such a one is on a par with learned vampires, for he will then proceed to pass himself off as one of our number and accept that he is nothing else.

13. RECOGNITION

It is easy for us to recognize our own kind. The Beacon is present in those who have Awakened as well as those who still slumber. Also, there is a familiarity to us, especially around the eyes. If you encounter one of your own kind, it will seem as if you could look into that person's eyes and see their past. Upon making introductions with this person,

there will probably be an instant bond between you, like picking up a relationship between old friends.

Beyond the Beacon there are many ways to recognize our kind. We may be known by our distinct auras: deep purples or blues surrounded by a nimbus of gray or black. The outer layer often has a mistlike appearance and will stretch into tendrils that extend far beyond our physical form. To those who can perceive that level of reality, we often appear to be a nexus of such tendrils.

The tendrils tend to be varying shades of gray, often with a smooth, ropelike appearance. They are not perceptibly present in everyone: They can be filaments so fine even the most experienced seer will have difficulty perceiving them.

We are often noted for our pallor, but more often it is the intensity of our eyes that gives us away. It is very common for our eyes to change color, and this is especially influenced by our mood. Our eyes also are very complex in color. Our irises have many different shades, and they are often surrounded by a striking ring of darker color.

We tend to be attractive and well built, and if our features are not beautiful in a classical sense, we nevertheless possess a certain otherworldly quality that gives us a distinctive charisma. For many, this takes the form of a powerful and intimidating presence that wraps around us like a shroud. We frighten and we fascinate at the same time.

Certain body types and facial features tend to recur among us as well. Those of the Priest caste tend to be tall and thin, with an androgynous quality about them. Warriors are stoutly built with a powerful presence. Their energy is masculine, regardless of the bodies that they wear. Counselors are often lithe and sensuous. Their energy is feminine, in spite of physical gender. There are exceptions, of course, to these rules, but more often than not we are drawn toward recreating the bodies we have worn over many, many lives.

14. OTHER QUALITIES

We have a natural sensitivity to energy of all types, and in some this manifests as a hypersensitivity to extremes or fluctuations in energy. Our Priest caste is the most sensitive, reacting to sunlight, extremes in temperature, and electromagnetic energies. Many of us prefer homes that are cool and dark, well protected from shifting energies.

Our bodies, in all castes and all cases, are very responsive to shifts in our energy. If our subtle and physical bodies are in balance, then we are strong and rarely fall ill. If our balance of energy fluctuates, however, then we succumb easily to sickness and disease. Spiritual, mental, and physical health are tied together for all beings, but our sensitivity to this balance is particularly extreme.

Body temperature is also influenced by our energy state. This trait is especially marked among the Priest caste. If our energy is low, our temperature drops and our hands especially become remarkably cold. This is an unnatural cold that saps away heat and lingers past the touch. When our energy is heightened or active, our hands are hot, and our entire bodies can radiate heat.

Many of us have acute senses and can hear in the more than human range. Some of this is physical hearing, while a portion is limited clairaudience, for our subtle senses extend far beyond our physical selves. We tend also to be skilled at empathy and telepathy, and these qualities are inborn.

Even the most frail among us are stronger and quicker than we look, for the body is merely a vessel for a much more powerful Will. We tend to carry remembered skills from lifetime to lifetime, and for this, many consider us gifted.

We have an innately predatory nature, and we are marked by a strong sense of elitism. We have difficulty integrating into modern society, for our values linger from times long ago. These qualities can be balanced and controlled, yet they remain a darkness that we carry within.

Many of us have a sadistic streak, and we are easily addicted to the energies generated by power, fear, and control. These, too, are a part of our darkness, and if they are not balanced with more positive traits, such qualities can bring destruction to everything we love.

Even the unawakened have a sense of us. They often stare, then look away. They find it hard to meet our gaze. They rarely understand their perceptions, but on an unconscious level, they react to what they perceive.

Children may see us for what we are, for their eyes have not yet been clouded by this world. Those who are drunk or who are truly insane may also have true sight.

The Awakened will recognize us as we recognize them. They may hesitate to put a name to what we are, but instinctually, they will know. Some of these may fear us, but some can become our truest friends.

15. THE LONELY PATH

The journey we follow is a difficult one, often misunderstood. Many will judge us for what we are, but we must endure these judgments and stay true to our Selves. Fear and self-doubt are great obstacles for us, but we must never hesitate to move forward and strive toward our goals. In the face of all trials, we must persevere.

Ours is the lonely path. The spirit within us sets us apart. All that we experience and all that we know makes us strangers among ordinary folk. Even if we refuse to act upon our more destructive impulses, we keenly feel the difference between us and those who do not share what we are. No matter how hard we try to blend in, we can never truly belong.

Despite this, we should never reject what we are, even though the truth of it may be difficult at times to bear. We should not feel ashamed or guilty for what it is in our natures to do. Good and evil cannot be applied to our state. These are human terms, limited by human perceptions. They fail to take into account the dance of polarities in the

grander universal plan. Even so, we should not act selfishly, but accept our natures and harness them to achieve the role we have been given in this life. Everything is a balance, and we feel this more keenly than most.

Our strength and our weakness is life. Our need opens us up to a level of experience that few others even dream about. This is a blessing and a curse, for though our lives are fuller and more dynamic than those of others, there are few aside from the Awakened who can share our experiences and our insights. As a result, we tend to be solitary in nature, rarely interacting with those who would not and could not understand our experience of the world.

This utter separateness forms a gulf between us and those who are unawakened. We may find friends and allies among other Awakened, but even they may find it difficult to fully accept what we are and what that drives us to do. Those who attempt to be allies should be honored and cherished by us, but we must recognize that there are some experiences they will never truly comprehend.

This is what makes our extended Family such a great treasure to us. Those of our own kind know what it is we experience. They experience these things themselves. And there are levels of interaction that can be shared among our kind alone. Some of the bonds that are forged over lifetimes can never be broken, and these bonds serve to unify us in every place and every time.

Like a true family, we can love and hate one another with a great passion, but in the end we are forever connected to our own.

16. RESPONSIBILITY

Every power comes with a price, and we cannot hide from this responsibility. We are agents of both destruction and renewal, touching everything with change. This is our burden. Yet this is also our prize.

By our nature, we take in energy constantly, and this endless cycling affects everything around us. Although we feed upon energy, that which we take into ourselves is never completely destroyed. We

alter it. We change its state. Our feeding heightens and refines energy, tearing away stagnation.

When we take energy away from a person, we remove something old so that something new may come in its place. We empty them out so that they may be filled with new vitality. By taking, we can help them appreciate what they already have. And in taking, we give a little of ourselves as well, catalyzing their energy.

Change can be terrible. It tears away familiar things, creating something new and uncertain. But things that are familiar are not always beneficial. Uncertainty forces beings to struggle and to grow. Everything must change or die, and even death is a change that promises progression.

We are both participants and tools in this mysterious cycle of the Universe. Every person we come into contact with, no matter how casually, is changed. Wherever we go, awakening and transformation follow. Our dynamic spirits stretch out all around us, and the wake we leave with our passing is like ripples on the ocean—only the ripples we leave behind can grow into tidal waves.

As beings in a threshold state, we are living embodiments of the dynamic complementariness that keeps the Universe in constant motion. In the gray area between two opposites lies revelation: We feed upon all around us, yet we can also harness that energy to heal. We are death and life, creation and destruction: the flame that purifies and renews.

There is no rebirth without destruction. Light only blinds without shadow to throw it into relief. Understanding comes from balancing all these things within the Self. We are that Balance. We affect it, and it affects us. We are facilitators of the universal flow. And to accept our natures, we must never fear to move as part of that flow.

17. CYCLES

Energy is fluid, and it ebbs and flows in rhythm to universal tides. The tides of energy shift between spirit and matter, as each side struggles against the force of its pole. The passage of the Moon, the passage of

the Sun, and the movement of bodies more distant still all influence these complicated cycles.

We are sensitive to the rise and fall of these cycles. Each caste reacts differently to the tides, though there are also variations within caste as well. Peaks of sensitivity, changes in power, and even our health and moods can be influenced by the shifting energies.

The tides represent oscillations of spirit and matter. The subtle realm is woven throughout the physical world, but the two are not evenly intertwined. The overlap of the realms is unstable, and as the tides shift, things drift together or farther apart.

Some resonate more with the realm of spirit, and when this side is in ascendancy, their power achieves its peak. Others are grounded in the physical realm, and their power grows as spirit drifts away. Still others flourish in the times of transition, when a fusion exists between both sides.

The movement of heavenly bodies allows us to estimate the shifting of the tides. The simplest rhythm to measure is the cycle of night and day. As darkness falls, spirit holds sway and it becomes easier to reach across to the subtle. The patterns we can observe each day are further influenced by the cycles of the Moon. When days turn to weeks, spirit's proximity waxes and wanes, changing subtly over the course of the month.

A larger cycle flows through the course of the year. These shifts in power were recognized as holy days in times of old. The Midsummer Solstice is the peak of the Lightside, when life and material things hold greatest sway. Beltane and Lammas are the Gates of this time, and these transition points are great zeniths of power.

At the Autumnal Equinox, a balance is reached, but in the weeks before and after, there is tumult as the two opposing forces strive for control. Erratic shifts in energy mark this tumultuous time, with a still point occurring when fleeting balance is achieved.

Samhain and Imbolc are the Gates of Death. These surround the Darkside of the year. This is the ascendancy of spirit, when the subtle

draws closest to the physical realm. In this time, spirits are most active, for their voices are heard with the greatest clarity and they can most potently influence the physical realm. The Midwinter Solstice marks the peak of this haunted time.

Again, at the Spring Equinox, balance is achieved, but only after striving and tumult. The transition of power between matter and spirit at each point brings unrest and change.

And there is a greater cycle still, marked with the passage of eons. As Earth's rotation around the Sun measures the pattern for the Wheel of the Year, so the Sun's rotation around the core of the galaxy measures the pattern of Scission and Conjunction. From our vantage point here, this cannot be numbered in human lives, but in the progression of precessional ages. One full precessional age marks but half of this cycle, for it spans fifty-two thousand years.

Points of this Great Cycle correspond to the Wheel of the Year, so there is a precessional Darkside and Lightside, solsticelike peaks and equinoxlike periods of striving and balance. The points that would be holy days on the Wheel of the Year span centuries within this Great Cycle, and the quarters that would be seasons are great Ages, thirteen thousand years in length.

One with the cycles, we ebb and we flow, and in the dance of the eons, each caste claims an Age. This is the progression: Counselors create; Priests shape; Warriors destroy. There is a period of fusion, and the cycle turns anew. Our power defines and is defined by each Age.

18. ALTERATIONS AND CASTE

There is an alteration on our subtle bodies that we carry with us through all our lives. This severed us from the universal umbilical, giving us conscious control of our incarnations and allowing us to exceed the limitations of flesh. But the alteration is also why we are removed from many sources of energy. In this respect, the Khepriian brand of vampirism is a condition of the spirit, as it is the spirit that predisposes

each life to manifest the characteristics associated with vampirism. It is not all that we are, but it is an identifiable aspect of our kind.

The alteration is permanent and has been worked upon the very substance of the subtle body. It does not heal between lifetimes, for that would defeat its original intent.

The alteration is focused in the energy centers, although there are additional changes in the subtle body as well. The most noticeable change is in the navel chakra, although the precise nature of this varies according to caste. The alteration has a significant and lasting effect upon our connection to energy, and it influences what energies we can process as well as how we cycle them. There are three basic variations to this alteration, and these three variations form the foundation of the castes.

The Priests' alteration is so extreme that it almost completely inhibits them from processing anything but vital energy for their own energetic maintenance. It suspends them between physical and spiritual existence, and it makes their connection to life weak and thin. However, it allows them to harness the full benefits of the threshold state, interacting with the subtle reality as any spirit native to that state. The anchor point of the Priests' alteration is located at the solar plexus chakra, the focus of Will.

For those Priests who have not Awakened, this fragility is manifested in physical disorders. Allergies, nervous disorders, heart conditions, or other weaknesses are not uncommon. Through feeding, a Priest compensates for these debilities. However, once they have learned how to compensate, if they are unable to feed enough to keep their energy in balance, then their weaknesses will return with greater force.

Among the Counselors the alteration causes a constant taking in and cycling of energy. Their anchor point is the navel chakra, the center of connection. As a result, they connect energetically and empathetically with everything around them, and this can lead to emotional or mental instability. They can also inspire obsession in partners, and identify so strongly with others that they lose themselves. Emotional disorders are the primary weakness experienced by unawakened

Counselors, and those that Awaken must learn to balance their part in the cycle of energy or face the recurrence of such things.

The alteration in the Warrior caste grounds them and shields them from much of the subtle reality. Their anchor point is the root chakra, center of instinct and survival. As a result, their connection to life is the strongest, and they are the most enduring of our kind. The energy of the Warriors is sharply contained, and for this reason it is exceptionally intense. When they are unawakened, Warriors often have problems with temper and rage. Dampened sensitivity also results from their natural shields. As they Awaken, they must learn how to modulate their energy to contain their rage, and they must learn how to work through and around the ever-present shields.

Often well-meaning Awakened will take note of our change and misinterpret it. They will see it as an energy blockage or subtle-body wound. They may offer to heal us, not understanding that no healing is required. Their efforts should be discouraged, for they do not comprehend our nature. The alteration is what makes us Khepriian. It is intentional and need not be repaired.

19. ACCIDENTAL ALTERATIONS

There are others who may manifest a similar style of vampirism. These have suffered lasting damage that partially or completely destroyed an energy center. Such damage is more permanent than the physical flesh, and the subtle body can take several lifetimes to heal. This damage is most often the result of an accident, yet like the intentional alteration, it may produce a diminished ability to process energy.

Those who have been damaged in this manner will find that they need to feed. The actual center that has been damaged will determine the physical side effects that manifest when such a person cannot feed, so these will often vary.

Individuals who have been wounded in this way are not of our number, but they should not be left alone. Even if they have incar-

nated several times under the burden of this condition, they may not understand its nature nor what it is driving them to do.

Whenever we encounter them, we should offer them instruction. We should explain to the best of our ability what has happened to them and what this means. We should also inform them that there is hope for them to heal, and if they find this desirable, we should steer them toward individuals or practices that might help speed this process along.

20. THE CASTE SYSTEM

Among Kheprians there are three castes. The castes are a part of our ancient heritage, and at one time, they were part of a rigid social structure within our Family. Those days are passed, and that structure is gone. Nor should it ever be used again to create a hierarchy among us. However, who we have been and the roles we have played over many lifetimes influence us still. Caste is an integral part of what we remember, what we are drawn toward, and what skills and abilities we carry with us over the years.

Caste is defined by the changes our subtle bodies bear. The alteration influences our sensitivity to, and connection and interaction with energy. It also influences how much and how often we must feed. Changes to the subtle body impact the physical body as well, and thus caste has an influence on what bodies we tend to incarnate in and what traits these bodies are most likely to have.

Caste should not be seen as an insurmountable barrier. Caste is *what* we are, not *who* we are. Within this energetic structure, there is still room to grow. Many of us have diversified over the ages, and, so long as we Awaken, we can move beyond the limits that our basic structure may impose.

While a person's caste is integral to the way they process energy, how they apply their skills and how they seek to define their lives is up to them. Used as a guideline for self-knowledge, caste can be very

liberating. Understanding the strengths and weaknesses that derive from caste can help us move forward on our paths. If we remain ignorant of our inherent tendencies, they can easily control us. Once we understand why we have a particular strength or weakness, we can make a conscious effort to develop it or work around it.

Finally, the castes are not intended to work apart from one another, but rather to work as an integral whole. This was true in the past and it is something we must remember now if we are to move toward the future. Each part has its function, and each works in complement to the rest. Our greatest strength comes from the interaction between the castes, but we are only strong when it is balanced equally on all sides.

21. THE PRIEST CASTE

Those who comprise our Priest caste have the most heightened sensitivity to energy. This is both their greatest weakness and their greatest strength. The Priests long ago severed themselves completely from the umbilical of the Universe. This allows an unprecedented freedom from the limitations typically experienced during incarnation. However, as a result of this radical severing, the Priests are no longer sustained by Universal energies and their ability to process most other energies for personal maintenance is severely inhibited. For this reason, Priests must directly take life energy to sustain their connection between the subtle and the physical, and they must additionally take energy to fuel their subtle powers.

A being who walks more in spirit than in flesh, a Priest has a weak connection to all things physical, including his or her own body. While this makes a Priest's skills at energy manipulation formidable, the Priest's physical well-being is inextricably linked with his or her energetic health. When energetically out of balance or unable to obtain the needed energy, a Priest's health will suffer, often in alarming ways. Irregularities in the heartbeat, nervous disorders, lowered immune responses, depression, and digestive problems are among

some of the more common responses to unhealthy energetic states.

Priests who are unawakened are often chronically ill, plagued with cardiac, immunological, and nervous disorders. Priests' high energy signatures literally burn their bodies out, and unless they learn to compensate by maintaining their spiritual health, they will always be frail and sick. Even those who are Awakened tend to be gaunt and pale, with hands that are almost always cold.

The Priest caste treads the places between: between spirit and matter, between death and life. Their energies are both masculine and feminine, so that, whether male or female, they embody qualities of both.

In order to exist in such a delicate balance, Priests must develop a very strong Will. While that Will allows Priests to harness their formidable power, it can also lead them into arrogance and megalomania. At one time, the Priest caste was our ruling caste, and while that age is long gone, for the Priests, the memories have yet to fade. For this reason, many Priests are domineering and obsessed with control. They have a tendency to be cold and detached, and this detachment can lead to abuses of power.

Despite these weaknesses, Priests are great visionaries among our kind. Their existence upon the threshold opens up for them sensations and experiences few completely physical beings may access. The Priests hold within them great metaphysical power, but they must ever observe moderation or else this power will consume them.

22. THE WARRIOR CASTE

Members of the Warrior caste are those among us who are the least sensitive to energy. Because Warriors naturally shield against nearly all energies in their environment, this makes perception of energy very difficult for them. This can affect the progression of their Awakening. However, these self-same shields protect the Warriors from the hypersensitivity suffered by Priests as well as make them virtually impregnable

to psychic attack. The Warriors are the hardest among us as well, and although they exist as we all do upon a threshold, they are balanced more toward matter than spirit.

Of all the castes, the Warriors have the least need to take in energy. Ambient feeding will sustain them, but they can also take energy from Priests when there is great need. The Warriors' connection to Earth has not been completely severed, and this sustains them as well as helps them to ground. The grounding effect of a Warrior stabilizes the energy of both Priests and Counselors. For this reason, they serve as the pillars in ritual and the fulcrums in energy work.

Warriors have a volcanic energy, highly intense and heightened by their rage. The energy generated by this rage is harnessed for most of the Warriors' attacks, both physically and metaphysically. The intensity of this energy, combined with his or her own natural immunity to other energetic attacks, renders the Warrior a formidable foe. But in this new day and age, Warriors have no useful outlet for the natural violence within them, and their greatest struggle is to keep their temper in check. If left to boil inside, the energy will manifest in high blood pressure, irritability, insomnia, and severe headaches. If allowed to burst out, it is destructive to everything in its path.

The energy generated by the rage does not just go away: it needs to be either channeled into something productive or grounded out of the Warrior through another means. Many Warriors find that channeling the otherwise destructive energy into creative pursuits effectively gives it a release. Counselors also are capable of taking this intense energy and either altering it into something useful for themselves or neutralizing it and discarding it harmlessly into the environment. This is one reason why a good relationship between a Warrior and a Counselor is essential in a Triumvirate.

Warriors tend to have a metabolism that demands high physical activity. When Warriors cannot meet this need to be active, they easily gain weight. Most Warriors are tall, with broad shoulders and deep chests. They also carry a great deal of muscle, even when overweight.

Warriors also tend to be very intense, with a formidable presence. They require little sleep, and oftentimes are plagued with restlessness and insomnia.

The Warriors are the stability of the Family. They endure, they organize, and they get things done. Warriors' greatest difficulty comes from the ease with which they shield. These barriers lie between them and everything around them. This makes it difficult for the Warrior to sense energy and sometimes even to feel anything at all. A Warrior who does not wish to be consumed by rage must overcome this detachment and find a balance within him- or herself.

23. THE COUNSELOR CASTE

Counselors engage in a constant interaction with the energy in their environment. They take energy in, alter it, then release it back into the flow. They are an integral step in the balance between spirit and matter, and in many ways they embody the dynamism between these two states of being. While Counselors need to take some energy for themselves, their greatest need is to perpetuate the flow and to keep things connected. They can do this through surface feeding and through physical contact. They tend to take and give energy without thinking about it, constantly seeking out situations where they can interact with others emotionally or physically in order to facilitate this flow.

Because Counselors naturally connect with the energies around them, they interact very readily with subtle entities and the disembodied. Entities that are pure energy tend to be attracted to Counselors because they can communicate through them due to their constant connection to external energy flow. The energies Counselors constantly put out are also easily assimilated by entities on the Otherside. For these reasons, Counselors tend to make good channels and also excel at invocation.

Counselors can be very vulnerable to external energetic influences. Their natural empathy can lead them to be subsumed by the emotions

of others, to the point where they can actually lose their own identity in the person they have connected to. Conflicting and chaotic energies can easily throw them out of balance, and when this happens, they often suffer a mental or emotional loss of control. A Counselor who has been thrown out of equilibrium by outside energies will have difficulty focusing, may be hyperactive and disoriented, and can undergo radical alterations in personality and mood. An unbalanced Counselor may be excessively emotional or may have a complete shutdown of emotional responses as their empathy overloads them to a point of being numb.

Counselors have feminine energy, and this is evident whether they are male or female in body. Furthermore, Counselors tend to be attractive and charismatic, and while their physical appearance can vary widely, they always possess a natural sensuality and allure.

Unawakened Counselors are often drawn into repeated codependent relationships. The energetic connection they make with others is easily mistaken for love. So long as Counselors remain connected to a person, interest in that person will be retained, but the moment they synchronize with someone else's energy, all of the Counselor's attention will shift to that new individual. However, the previous partner's connection to the Counselor does not fade, and this often grows into obsession.

It is essential for a Counselor to achieve a balanced emotional state. The constant flow of energy within them can make them chaotic and impulsive. Furthermore, a Counselor needs to develop a strong sense of Self, so this may function as an anchor when they interact with others. The Counselors are the heart and unity of the Family. However, unless they surrender their need to control others through their desires, the love they can enrich us with could easily turn into hatred and confusion.

24. VARIATIONS ON CASTE

The three basic castes are the foundation of the Khepriian Order. Everyone who can be described as a Khepriian will fit generally into one of these three castes. Many individuals will feel a pull toward a

secondary caste because they have developed or been instilled with certain leanings toward the skills and behaviors of that secondary caste.

Most of these cross-caste structures, regardless of their other innovations, will fall loosely within the bounds of either Warrior or Counselor. These are the two most versatile castes, and there are many permutations possible within either of these alterations. Priests, because of their radical alteration, are almost always readily apparent as such because of their heightened energy need. A secondary class of Priests is somewhat more grounded in their bodies and thus have a slightly altered relation to energy, but in nearly all cases, these still can be identified clearly as Priests.

It is important to keep in mind that those who can rightly be called Kheprian comprise only a small minority of Awakened beings in this cycle. Even the many branches of the Kheprian line still amount to a small number of actual incarnated beings. Not all who require the taking of energy have the Kheprian alteration, and thus a great many people will not fall into any of the castes at all.

For most Awakened, the castes can function to a limited degree as archetypes. This can be useful in ritual or in providing a guideline for learning a particular path of energy work. However, for non-Kheprians caste is not something that directly affects the structure of the energy body.

For Kheprians, however, caste has such a significant affect on the manner in which energy is processed that understanding and accepting one's caste is crucial to understanding oneself. To outsiders, caste may at first seem like a needless limitation, but for Family, denying our caste and failing to understand how it affects us creates a greater limitation still. It is only once we understand what we are that we are able to move beyond it.

25. THE DISEMBODIED

From our many past-life memories, we Kheprians know that we do not cease to exist once the body has died. However, we do not always

incarnate immediately after death, either. Years can go by between incarnations. Sometimes many centuries pass before we take up flesh again. In this interim, we do not cease to function. We are as conscious and aware as we are in any of our lifetimes. We are simply Between.

When we are in this Between state, we remain in the subtle reality, disincarnate, yet still able to interact with Family on the level of energy. We retain our core personality and the memories of our lives, although often our most recent life has a strong influence on our continued sense of self. We also retain all of our connections to Family, and we can draw upon these links to find those we are connected to.

Those who exist in the Between state are known to us as the Disembodied. They are as much a part of our Family as any who currently wear flesh, and their interactions with us are just as important and fulfilling.

Some of us have existed more on the Otherside than we have within physical lifetimes. There are many reasons for a hiatus between incarnations. Sometimes we have an agenda that we can best fulfill while on the Otherside. Physical existence has its limitations, and while we often prefer the benefits of a body, there is a certain freedom to be had outside of one. Sometimes we are waiting for the proper place and time to be born. Many of us consciously choose our parents. We may select parents who will provide the best chance of inheriting the qualities we desire. We may choose parents that will put us into a specific situation, or we may choose parents from a favored family line. If we are very particular when seeking parents, we may wait a very, very long time.

The conscious choice to wait between incarnations may be inspired by frustration with the previous life. If we lived through something particularly traumatic, or if we suffered severe disappointment or great loss in a lifetime, we can become disillusioned with living. At such times, we withdraw from the cycle and remain on the Otherside. Sometimes we withdraw entirely into ourselves, brooding over the failures of the previous life. This spiritual depression generally lifts after a

while, and most often it is our ties to other Family members that call us back into flesh once more.

Sometimes we are caught between incarnations because of damage done to the subtle body. Quick and violent deaths usually damage the physical body alone. However, deaths that are long and drawn out, involving a great deal of mental torment and pain, tend to wear away at the subtle body as well. Some methods of psychic attack can also cause enough damage to the subtle body to prevent incarnation for many years. Subtle body damage heals over time, although the healing is slow and often requires a great deal of energy.

Our perceptions and abilities while in this Between state are limited. First of all, there is a separation between the realm of spirit and that of matter. This separation is not a static wall but a gulf that is fluid. Sometimes the two realms are closer, and it is easier for interactions to reach across from one to the other. At other times, it is as if the physical world is separated from that of spirit by a great distance. At times like this, any attempt to influence one side from the other takes a great deal of energy and focus, for it must successfully traverse the distance. Furthermore, any perceptions of the Otherside are muffled and distorted, like voices carried across a great valley.

When between incarnations, we can strengthen our connection to the physical realm by relying on a link to someone who is currently incarnated. This allows us to use the incarnated person as a sort of anchor, and we can then perceive more clearly through them and retain a stronger focus on the physical side.

We are also limited on the Otherside by the strength of our Will and energy. If something about our death has caused us to become disoriented or to forget ourselves, it is much more difficult for us to interact consciously with either side. Everything is accomplished in the subtle reality through an action of Will, and if we do not have the strength of Will to affect things, we will drift, only half aware of our surroundings. If our energy is excessively low, we will drift as well, for we do not have enough power to fuel our intentions. We must feed on

the Otherside just as we feed here, but since our entire existence at that point is pure energy, there is a significantly increased need.

Although we cannot starve to the point where we cease to exist entirely, interaction will become more and more difficult. In the worst cases, we can become trapped within ourselves, unable to perceive anything but our own thoughts. In this self-absorbed state, we can drift indefinitely unless something actively breaks us out of it.

26. SPIRITUAL IMMORTALITY

Remembrance of past lives is an integral part of Khepriian Awakening. Part of the alteration was intended to cut us from the period of forgetting that accompanies the natural cycle of death and rebirth. This increases the wisdom that we carry, and speeds our development through each subsequent life. As we remember who we are and who we have been, we gain access to the lessons we have already learned. Furthermore, we can begin to see the greater picture of our existence. Through this, we are able to understand and actively participate in the journey of our souls.

Each of us has a path that spans our lifetimes. This is our dharma, our universal role. Within the context of our universal role, we both teach others and learn lessons of our own. Our dharma determines the nature of these lessons and how they must be learned. When we do not follow our dharma, we fail in our duty to the Universe. This sets us back in the journey of our soul. Harsher versions of the same lessons will be presented repeatedly until we successfully forward our growth and fulfill that role.

The lessons of our past can help us understand our present and work toward our future. The lives we have led have brought us into contact with others, and these other people are often drawn to our lives now. The intersection of our lessons can grow complicated over the years, and by remembering what we have learned before, we can resolve many lingering issues with those we are connected to in the present. Among Family, these issues can be consciously resolved, for

we are each pieces in one another's puzzle, and we all have an active relationship with our pasts. For others who do not consciously recall what they have been to us, the lessons are still there, and it is our responsibility to ensure that they are learned.

Remembrance of past lives is a skill that must be carefully developed. Although we each carry within us the sum of our memories, we do not have conscious access to every life all the time. Remembered material, especially during Awakening, often presents itself when it is most pertinent. This is usually when we have the greatest need for the lesson that was learned. The Higher Self is the guardian of all these memories, and sometimes it hides things from us that we are not ready to accept. The process of Awakening includes a stretching of our psychological barriers, and as we grow in our awareness, we become open to information about ourselves that we would not have benefited from before.

With past lives, more than with any other aspect of our development, we must exercise patience. We cannot remember everything at once, for this could bring about severe psychological trauma. Most of our past lessons involve very emotional issues, and there are good reasons why some memories have been suppressed. We will be able to access these consciously only when we are able to deal with them, and rushing this process could impede our progression.

27. THE HIGHER SELF

The part of us that is conscious of our agenda over the course of many lives is the Higher Self. The Higher Self integrates all of our past lifetimes, yet it is greater than the sum of the individual parts. The Higher Self is truly immortal, and it is the seat of our Will. In the Between state, we are most fully in union with our Higher Self, although even during incarnation, union can be achieved.

Contact with the Higher Self is achieved during Awakening, although it is not always recognizable as such. Quite often, our identities

through different lifetimes manifest as multiple aspects of our being. As we explore these aspects and learn the lessons they provide, they become integrated over time. When we are capable of perceiving the sum that is above and behind all of these myriad aspects, then we have connected with the Higher Self.

Union with the Higher Self is the culmination of our Awakening. This union brings with it a deepened awareness and a true harnessing of the Will. At this point in our development, we truly Become. Masks and habits that have been imposed upon us in this little life begin to fall away, and the sum of our being shows through. This can be accompanied by a change in mannerisms, in speech patterns, in personality, and even in our physical appearance, so that who we grow into is more in keeping with who we have always been.

Complete union with the Higher Self cannot be sustained indefinitely in our current state, however. When incarnated, we exist in a finite world, and the perception of the Higher Self verges upon the infinite. This is simply too much for the little self to endure day to day.

A balance between Higher Self and the little self of this life must always be maintained, for we live here and now, and the vision of millennia is often too expansive for the minutiae of daily existence. Thus, as long as we are incarnated, conscious awareness of the totality of our Higher Self is fleeting. We exist in partial union, but the Higher Self is often obscured in our subconscious, like the sun behind clouds. A great deal of our development after Awakening involves learning how to consciously connect with the Higher Self, and when such a conscious connection is appropriate for our lives.

SECTION II

FEEDING AND ENERGY EXCHANGE

28. THE ANATOMY OF ENERGY

You are a being of both spirit and matter. Just as you have a physical body that interacts with the physical world, so too do you have a subtle body that interacts with the subtle realm. The point of integration between these two bodies is known as the *pontus*.

The pontus is the bridge between the subtle and the physical, and it is halfway between them. It is a juncture of energy where the vital force is translated between the subtle and physical forms. The near physical structures of the pontus are the chakras. These vessels are receptacles of energy that redirect that energy through key systems in the physical form. The chakras are fundamental points of crossover between the physical and subtle forms, and through them the best connection can be made from the physical to the subtle energy.

The major chakras of the pontus have been described in numerous metaphysical traditions the world over. It is generally accepted that there are seven of these points situated along a central axis that runs parallel to the spine.

The crown chakra is located at the top of the head and is often seen to extend beyond the physical limits of the body. The third eye chakra is seen as being located in the middle of the head, behind the

eyes. The throat chakra is located roughly above the base of the neck around the voice box, while the heart chakra is located in the center of the chest, between the breasts. The solar plexus chakra is located behind the base of the sternum, while the navel chakra is located approximately six inches beneath the belly button. The root chakra is located at the base of the spine, approximately at the perineum.

Running parallel to the chakras and their main axis are the laterals. These are structures within the pontus that provide anchoring points for the many energy channels that go to and from the chakras. The laterals run approximately from the collarbone to the hip on each side of the body, and while they are not energy channels in their own right, they are focal points of connection where many channels converge.

Energy channels run to and from the chakras in an intricate web-work that extends throughout the limits of the physical form. The physical correspondents to the energy channels are the blood vessels and nerves. These follow roughly the same pattern as the energy channels, and interaction between these three interwoven systems exchanges both information and vitality between the subtle and physical forms.

Significant junctures of energy within the pontus are often seen as minor chakras. Such energy centers exist at the joints of the arms and legs as well as in the palms of the hands and the arches of the feet. Typically, they correspond to large bundles of nerves or junctures of major blood vessels. These junctures provide points of contact from the physical to the subtle, allowing energy to pass between the two.

It should be noted that not every system recognizes precisely the same structure. Some recognize five major chakras, others recognize as few as three or as many as ten. The difference in numbers is influenced by conflicting opinions of what exactly defines a chakra as well as individual variations in subtle anatomy.

While a general framework of the pontus can be described, it is important to keep in mind that not every person you encounter will have precisely the same structure. Furthermore, a different anatomy

should not necessarily be viewed as unhealthy or abnormal. Subtle anatomy, like physical anatomy, can vary widely from person to person, and what may seem like a deformity to one person is a treasured asset to another.

29. FEEDING BASICS

All beings, Awakened or not, interact with energy. In a certain sense, everything feeds, for all things are connected by the web of the Universe, and all things take in, generate, and exchange energies of different kinds.

We who define ourselves as Kheprians are unable to process the majority of energies. This was not the intention of the alteration enacted so long ago, but it was one of the most telltale results. While the Counselors and Warriors retain a limited ability to process natural or elemental energies, the Priest caste relies almost completely on the vital energy of other people to meet their needs.

When unawakened, those who are vampiric unconsciously take energy from the people around them. Through the process of Awakening, they can learn to harness their talents and choose when and how they will take the energy that they need.

There are roughly three levels to the feeding exchange. These levels are measured by how deeply one must delve into the other person's energy in order to fulfill one's needs.

Ambient feeding does not take the energy of an individual at all, but takes the energy naturally generated by strong emotions or large crowds. Although generated by individuals, it is no longer attached to them, so this is the least intrusive and most ethical method of feeding.

Surface feeding takes from the personal energy of an individual, but mainly it skims only the surface of their energy bodies, leaving their deepest cores untouched. Surface feeding can produce a moderate empathic connection with the person targeted, but this quickly fades. Contact feeding is a more personal form of surface feeding, for

it requires the feeder to physically touch the person being fed from. The physical contact tends to reinforce the emotional connection, thus forging links with people that linger over time.

Deep feeding is the most profound level, reaching into the energy that lies at a person's very core. This style of feeding forges a connection between both partners that can linger not just one lifetime but many. The connection can inspire an empathic and often even a telepathic bond. For this reason, it is an exceptionally intimate style of feeding, and it should only be done with the full knowledge and consent of the person being fed from.

30. CYCLING AND REFINING ENERGY

You can take energy into yourself and cycle it without necessarily feeding. This allows you to refine and later redirect the energy. Counselors innately perform this technique, constantly cycling energy, refining it, then projecting it back into their environment. This often occurs unconsciously, although anyone can learn to perform the process consciously.

Cycling improves the state of the energy, clearing it of residues and stagnation. Cycling can also be used to refine or process energy. By refining energy, you increase its quality, giving it more intensity. When energy is intensified this way, a small amount becomes effectively equal to a much larger amount of energy. This can be useful for dynamic exchange as well as for numerous techniques that rely on projecting energy at an object or a person.

To cycle energy, you gather it into yourself, but you do not assimilate it. Hold on to the energy consciously and circulate it through your system. Some people gather this energy at their solar plexus and cycle it there in a sphere. Others find it more helpful to gather the energy in the belly, holding and cycling the energy in the navel chakra. Use whatever visualization works best for you. The important aspect of cycling is that the energy is gathered within and consciously circulated.

To refine energy, you hold the energy and continue to consciously cycle it. As you circulate the energy, begin to condense it. Focus the energy into a smaller and smaller space. It may help to visualize the energy as a pulsating sphere that grows denser and brighter the more you compress it. You can continue to take in energy while focusing on that which you have already gathered. Add the new energy to the existing sphere within you and continue to compress it. Imagine that the energy is going through a process of fusion until it seems very heavy and intense. You may choose to then assimilate this intensified energy into your own system, or you may release it and redirect it outside of yourself. Such intensified energy is very potent for use in ritual or other workings, and you can harness it yourself or through others working with you.

31. LEVELS OF NEED

The choice in feeding is not only a matter of ethics, but also one of personal need.

Those of the Warrior caste can sustain themselves for long periods of time with ambient energy alone. However, if they are called upon to expend a great deal of energy in ritual work or through other means, the Warrior caste will have a heightened need. Generally, this can be satisfied through surface feeding. Only under rare conditions will a Warrior need to deep feed.

Counselors often need to supplement ambient feeding with surface and contact feeds. Counselors are very sensual beings, and they require physical contact almost as much as the energy they gain from such contact. If they are stretching their abilities to their limits, then Counselors may find that they need to deep feed.

The Priest caste have the deepest level of need and almost always require surface and full contact feeding. Some may feed only every couple of weeks. Some may need to sate their hungers every couple of days. In addition to surface feeding, most of the Priest caste must also

deep feed. Again, the frequency of this requirement will vary from Priest to Priest, but as with both the other castes, when Priests push their limits their needs will be increased.

When one is ill or injured, this will increase the level of need. It is natural to try and heal oneself with energy, and so the amount put into this healing must be replaced. If out of balance, you will also have an increased need, as you are spending energy inefficiently and may have blockages that prevent you from properly assimilating your energy.

Finally, those who engage in constant metaphysical workings tend to require a finer quality of energy. If such refined energy is unavailable, then they will require a greater quantity of less refined energy in order to make up the difference in their need.

This is the main reason why the energy of the unawakened can be both unappealing and undesirable. Their energy, as they are unaware of it, has a low frequency and is stagnant, often with blockages that have been left to build up over time. The Awakened are more energetically healthy, for not only are they aware of their energy, but they also cultivate it, reducing blockages and stagnation, and raising the frequency through their work.

Of course, Kheprians do best to feed within Family. Not all outsiders can engage in an equal exchange, and feeding within Family is more of a sharing and less of a taking that benefits only one. Our energy is uniquely tuned to one another, and the structure of the castes creates a synergistic process by which we all energetically relate. Feeding between Family is a matter of both take and give, and ultimately all involved benefit.

32. INTERCASTE FEEDING

The Kheprian system is ideally a closed system. The castes exist so that we do not have to resort to feeding off the unawakened or unaware. This was a solution to the need inspired in the first group who underwent the alteration, those who established the caste of the Priests.

The cycle between the castes echoes the universal cycle of death and rebirth. The Counselors are makers. They refine energy to a state of vital potential. The Priests are shapers. They give the energy structure and focus. The Warriors are destroyers. They ground energy, breaking it down to its original state.

As we take energy and process it, a second energy is produced that we cannot use. This energy is a by-product of the act of energy assimilation, just as carbon monoxide is produced as our bodies take oxygen out of the air. Most of this energy is naturally expelled, but some builds up in the system. Over time, the buildup of this other energy can be as detrimental as any energy need.

The by-product, however detrimental to the individual, is still an integral part of the Kheprian exchange. It is another function of the caste system, and why the ideal Kheprian exchange involves not two but three individuals, one from each caste. The energetic by-product of the Counselors is used by the Priests. The energetic by-product of the Priests is used by the Warriors. And the energetic by-product of the Warriors is used by the Counselors. Thus, the cycle is complete, and we become a microcosm of the macrocosmic ideal.

Because of this synergistic relationship, the ideal Kheprian pairing is called a Triumvirate. When a Priest, a Warrior, and a Counselor function together in a balanced exchange, all three share the appropriate energies. In this ideal exchange, there is no harmful buildup, and there is minimal outside need. Furthermore, this special interaction creates a synergy between all three partners that heightens and refines energy, increasing its potency. Because of this natural dynamic exchange, a small amount of the energy cycled through a Triumvirate has the equivalent strength and efficiency of a large quantity of unrefined energy. Thus Triumvirate work essentially produces more energy than all three partners consume. This aspect of the caste system is a uniquely Kheprian function, and it binds all three castes together in a mutually beneficial exchange.

33. DYNAMIC EXCHANGE

A dynamic exchange occurs quite naturally in Triumvirate work. However, anyone can learn to enact a dynamic exchange. In order to initiate a dynamic exchange outside of Triumvirate work, at least one partner must make a conscious effort to actively cycle and refine the energy. The active partner in this sort of exchange is typically the giving partner, and so this individual must be well versed in the manipulation and cycling of energy.

All Kheprian Counselors have a natural affinity for dynamic exchange, although the technique can be learned and mastered by others.

Dynamic exchange is useful when someone has reached deep need. Through dynamic exchange, the giving partner is not exhausted by the demands placed upon them by the one feeding. Furthermore, the giving partner has some control over the rate at which energy is taken from them, making it less dangerous to deal with someone in deep need.

Dynamic exchange is also useful between partners who both have a high requirement for energy. The dynamic exchange allows one partner to give to the other without completely depleting themselves. This is most commonly used between members of the Priest caste when no other sources are available. Such an arrangement cannot be maintained indefinitely, however, as a small amount of the giving partner's energy is inevitably consumed in the exchange.

To begin a dynamic exchange, the giving partner initiates. If you are the giving partner, you reach out with your energy and connect to the other person, actively sending some of your energy into them. This is best done with physical contact as a focus, usually by placing your hand over their heart.

Once your energy has entered them, you must take some energy back into yourself. This energy is not immediately assimilated into your system as is common with feeding but is instead held within. As you hold it, you should cycle the energy, intensifying its state. As you cycle the energy, you must also retain your connection to the other

person. This requires a good deal of concentration, and if the other person is in deep need, it may be difficult to keep the energy from flowing naturally into them immediately.

Once you have cycled the energy enough to produce a more intense amount, begin feeding this cycled energy back to your partner. At this point, you should allow your partner to also connect to you so they may actively feed upon the energy. It is usually not enough to simply shunt energy into the feeding partner. For most, there is an active element that is necessary to feeding, and many find it difficult to process energy unless they have actively taken it into their systems themselves.

It is best to allow your partner to meet you halfway through the connection you have already made, for this makes it easier to control how much they take. You must be careful to allow them to only take the energy that has been cycled between you, for if they take anything else, they will deplete your own system. As they feed from you, continue to take energy back from them, holding it and cycling it. In this manner, a sort of feeding loop is set up between you that refines the energy. A small amount of refined energy will do the work of a much larger amount of unrefined energy.

34. AMBIENT FEEDING

We do not always have an ideal situation where we have a partner of the appropriate caste to feed from. True Triumvirates are even rarer. Our Family has been long scattered, and we have had to learn to adapt. Therefore it is often necessary to take energy from other sources. Unfortunately, when taking from sources outside of Family, there may be no mutually beneficial exchange. If a partner has no concept of energy or cannot direct it for an exchange, energy is only taken from him or her, and the energy must then be replenished over time.

For this reason, it is not always desirable to take directly from others. Many have ethical objections to this process, and the repercussions to the partner who is being fed from should be seriously considered before

any interaction occurs. If for moral reasons you do not wish to feed directly from others, you can feed instead by the ambient energy generated by crowds.

Ambient energy is energy no longer connected to a specific person. This energy rises off of people like heat from a flame. It is everywhere to one degree or another, but it is most concentrated among people in large groups. A heightened emotional state serves to increase the amount of energy individuals generate, and so nightclubs, sports arenas, concert halls, and even shopping malls serve as excellent sources for ambient feeding.

You may feed ambiently through either a passive or active draw. In passive feeding, you simply go to a high-energy place and allow the energy to flow into you. There is no effort in this—you are a vacuum, and a vacuum by nature will be filled.

If you are conscious of what you are doing, you can extend yourself just a little bit and form a sort of net to draw more of this energy in. This requires that you send some energy out in order to gather what surges around you. This can be quicker and more satisfying than allowing the energy to simply flow in. If you have no opportunity to feed directly from other people, this will sustain you in times of great need.

Extending your personal energy and setting up a kind of whirlpool that draws the energy in is another way of initiating an ambient feed. Envisioning your energy as an amorphous cloud that stretches out and envelopes the crowd will work just as well. For each person, the visualization will naturally differ, but the fundamental process remains the same. The key is to take in only the energy given off by those around you and not to connect in any way directly to them.

35. INSPIRING EMOTION

Ambient energy is often charged with emotion. This intensifies the energy, improving its quality. A crowd that is experiencing heightened emotion naturally cycles energy, so energy is released by some people,

taken back up by others, charged more intently, then rereleased into the atmosphere. This has the effect of intensifying the energy in an area, making the ambient energy more effective to feed upon. For this reason, highly charged situations such as those found at concerts or public events provide excellent sources for ambient feeding.

You can actively harness ambient energy to inspire emotion, consciously redirecting this through a crowd so that the energy becomes even more intensely charged. This technique encourages the natural cycling of energy within a crowd, and it can also ensure that, when feeding, you do not drain the area of all emotion, literally “sucking the life” from the room.

The best place to do this is at a club or a concert. It is especially effective on the stage or the dance floor where you are interacting at least in some way with the crowd and may have some peoples’ attention focused on you. In such a situation, you can harness the attention to take more ambient energy, and you can use the music as a focus to pull in, intensify, and redirect the energy.

The simplest method is intensifying the emotion that is already present in the area. For this, you should simply take in some of the emotionally charged ambient energy, cycle this in order to intensify it, then redirect the energy back into the crowd. You may want to target specific individuals with the intensified energy, although it works just as well if you release the energy in a general net or cloud that can then be picked back up and cycled by everyone present.

You can also inspire a specific emotion, charging energy and diffusing it through a room. If the emotion you wish to inspire is already present in the ambient energy of the room, take this in and cycle it. Once it has been intensified, redirect it to the crowd, focusing on filling the room with that specific emotion. You can also generate the emotion within yourself simply by focusing on experiencing it. As you cycle some ambient energy from the crowd, charge it with this emotion, then release it as before.

It is relatively easy to inspire an emotion that is already somewhat

present in a crowd. Charging the ambient energy of a place with an emotion that is foreign to the crowd or that goes against the majority of emotions already being experienced by the crowd is more difficult. It can be done; however, this will often cause you to expend more energy than you will take in.

You can also use this technique to the reverse effect: that is, to remove a specific energy from a room. This can be useful in cases where a room is filled with some emotion that you have trouble dealing with, and this is interfering with your ambient feed. One method of doing this is to gather neutral energy and extend this out through the room like a net. Direct this energy so it has a dampening effect, pushing the unwanted emotion from the room.

A secondary method that requires you to come into partial contact with the unwanted energy is to cycle it out of the ambient energy in the room. You can do this by taking a little of the emotionally charged energy in and cycling it with the intent of clearing it of emotion. Ground out the unwanted emotion, discarding it from what you have already taken in. Once the energy has become neutral, redirect it through the room in a net as before, retaining some control of the net of energy and using this extended energy to catch and neutralize the remaining ambient energy in the room. This technique also will require you to expend more energy than you can ultimately take in, but it can be useful if the emotional atmosphere in a room is exceptionally detrimental.

36. SURFACE FEEDING

For many, feeding upon ambient energy barely sustains. Most require a deeper connection, something that is more personal and fulfilling. For some, surface feeding will suffice to fill this need. This can be accomplished either from a distance or through direct physical contact.

The focus of a surface feed is always an individual. Whereas ambient energy is that which has been given off by a person and is no longer

attached to who they are, surface feeding skims the surface of their energy body, taking energy that is still a part of the person. Surface energy is charged with the emotions of that specific person, and this makes the energy more intimate and more intense.

By extending a thread of yourself, you can surface feed from a distance. Many do this unconsciously when they are actually trying to ambient feed, so the process should be paid attention to, especially if you have any moral objections to anything beyond an ambient feed.

The thread, or tendril, is an extension of the stuff of your subtle body. Most tendrils are relatively thin, being somewhat thicker at their base and tapering at their end. The tendril functions as a conduit through which energy passes. The conduit can be used to draw energy away from a target, although it can also be used to shunt energy in. It functions on the same principles as the natural energy channels that occur within the subtle body.

The mechanics of surface feeding are simple. You select a target from the crowd and concentrate on him or her. While focusing on the target, extend a tendril of your energy toward this person. It can be helpful to direct the tendril from one hand, focusing the energy into that hand, shaping the tendril there, then cupping your hand to receive the energy drawn from the target. Others may choose to visualize the tendril as arising from the center of the forehead, the eyes, or the center of the chest. The tendril can also be guided with a sustained exhalation of breath, and when you choose to pull energy in, breathing again can serve as a focus, drawing the energy in with the breath.

With this tendril, you can gently latch onto the outer layers of your target's energy. Once the connection is made, you then focus on the person through the tendril and start pulling energy from him or her to you. Wanting to take the energy is usually enough to initiate this process. Quite often, your nature will unconsciously guide you through the rest. However, visualizations can aid in focus and help to take a greater amount of energy. This process can also be supported by small gestures, hand motions, and breathing techniques. Some find

these very helpful as focusing techniques. Some feel that even the slightest gesture that indicates what you are doing is indiscreet.

Some will use a single tendril in a very aggressive fashion. Instead of gently latching onto the outer layers of the target's energy body, they will attempt to punch right through. This can create a more significant draw, and a great deal of energy can be taken from the target in a short amount of time. However, not only is this technique more violent, it also causes more perceptible symptoms in the person being fed from. If they are Awakened, they will view it as an attack, and they may respond just as violently. While it is a matter of personal choice, it is strongly recommended that this aggressive technique be avoided whenever possible.

More than one tendril can be extended to the target. More tendrils can increase the amount that is taken and the rate at which it is taken from the target. More tendrils can also be used to spread the draw out so that small amounts can be taken slowly from all over. This second technique is often less aggressive and less noticeable than a one-pointed drain. Furthermore, with more than one tendril, if your main connection fails for any reason, there are still connections allowing you to draw from the energy of the person you have targeted.

As a general rule, subtlety is suggested, for this sort of feeding is perceptible, especially if your target is Awakened or verging on Awakening. By feeding in this way, especially from unwilling or unknowing targets, you are opening yourself up to justified attacks. While taking surface energy from a person is not likely to be harmful in any significant or long-term ways, it is still an invasion of the person's energy. As such, surface feeding can be interpreted as an act of aggression. If your target notices what you are doing and seems to object to it, the best course of action is to withdraw and seek elsewhere for what you need.

If ambient feeding cannot meet your needs and you are concerned about surface feeding, one option is to surface feed from multiple targets at once, taking only a small amount from each. You may also take

just a little successively from several different people. Both of these techniques spread the taking out so that no one person suffers the burden of your need.

If you are taking small amounts of energy over a long period of time from your target, the person will most likely suffer no noticeable effects from your drain. If you take a good deal of energy from a person through this technique, at most, he or she will develop a headache or suddenly become very sleepy. The energy taken with this technique is minimal, and in most cases, the person fed from will recover their lost energy in a few hours, or at most over the course of the next day. In extreme cases, someone fed upon in this manner will grow dizzy or feel suddenly weak. If you see your target begin to swoon or stumble, it is best to stop. Even in the most extreme cases, the lost energy will inevitably be replenished by their systems, but this is no reason to cause someone unnecessary pain or distress.

If you follow a strict code of ethics or have any personal qualms about these methods of feeding, you may wish to hone your skills at contact feeding and then only engage in this with donors who are both informed and consenting.

37. CONTACT FEEDING

Surface feeding can also be initiated through physical contact. This contact does not have to be intimate, and in fact a sufficient connection can be made with a target through little more than a casual touch.

There are two main focal points for taking energy: the mouth and the hands. The hands are the best focal points for casual contact feeding. There are numerous opportunities for initiating casual touch, and if you must be covert about your feeding, casual touch is discreet and detached enough that few will observe what you are doing.

To initiate a contact feed through casual touch, begin by concentrating energy into the hand you intend to make contact with. Then, establish a connection with your target at a suitable contact point. In

a truly casual contact feeding, you may simply shake a person's hand and slightly extend your fingers up the heel of his or her palm to connect with the center at the wrist. In the case of a handshake, you will have to break contact, but if your concentration is good enough, that brief touch will be enough for you to extend a tendril of your energy into the target's energy body. From there, you may draw energy out just as you would for a long-distance feed. A hug is also sufficient for casual contact feeding, as is a pat on the back, especially if your hand is placed on the spot between the shoulder blades just over the central energy center.

As you draw energy into yourself, you should inhale. This is a part of the focusing process, for the energy rides upon the breath. The breath you should take when feeding is a slow, deep, sustained inhalation that will seem to fill much more than just your lungs. It may feel as if you are breathing thin water or thick air. Energy is a subtle substance, and it is fluid and malleable, like spiritual mercury. As you inhale, this energy will fill you, and there will be a spreading warmth from your center throughout the rest of your subtle and physical bodies.

If a more lingering contact is possible, there are several contact points that you can use to help you connect to the other person's energy. You can lay your hands on either side of the throat or at the base of the neck. You can also make contact at the center of the back or at the small of the back. All of these places are ideal if you are making physical contact through something like a neck or back massage. Depending on the situation, contact can also be made at any point over a major or minor chakra, such as over the heart, at the wrists, or inside the elbows.

Charge your hands with energy and lay at least the tips of your fingers against the contact point. Focus on your energy, and extend a bit of it into the energy of your target. Draw energy out through this connection, relying on the breath as a focus. You may be able to extend enough energy to practically envelop the other person with it, and thus initiate a slow but all-over draw. Worked into the process of a backrub,

this can be very pleasant and have a deeply relaxing effect for the target. If you focus too intently upon the point of contact made with your fingers, do not be surprised if you leave marks on the skin of your target. If your draw is intense enough, this can occur even if you have barely made physical contact. Energy that rapidly rises to the surface of the body can burst capillaries in the skin.

Contact feeding can be done without the knowledge of your partner, although it is generally more fulfilling when the partner is aware of what you are doing. Also, keep in mind that those who are Awakened or verging on Awakening will usually notice what you are doing whether you have revealed your activities to them or not. Since a physical touch is involved with your act, your target is very likely to interpret your actions as an attack. There are many Awakened who view such an infringement on their personal energy as something tantamount to rape, so keep this in mind before choosing to feed upon unwilling targets. Also, many Awakened can manipulate energy to feed regardless of actual need, so they may utilize the contact in order to take energy back from you. If you must covertly feed from unwilling targets, always be aware that there are consequences.

For most, the mouth is a much more potent focal point than the hands, mainly because the mouth is so connected to the breath. Feeding with the mouth, however, is usually much less casual than feeding with the hands and is best reserved for intimate situations. You can easily feed through the medium of a kiss, and you can establish a strong connection by laying your lips gently over any major or minor energy center and breathing in. As with your hands, drawing too intently through the point of contact will often result in a physical mark or rosette.

When initiating contact with the mouth, a favored point of contact is of course the throat. There are several reasons for this, but a very practical one is that the throat is easily accessible and rarely covered with clothes. Feeding from the throat chakra also allows you to face your partner, and line your energy centers up with his or hers. This

alignment deepens the connection and can make it easier to focus on drawing energy away. The person's pulse can also serve as a potent focus for connecting with his or her vital energy, and it is quite easy to feel the pulse in the throat.

When feeding with the mouth from the throat chakra, resist the urge to bite, as there are many nerves, veins, arteries, and tendons that could be damaged if you get out of hand. While biting is a great temptation for many, ultimately it serves no purpose, for the real focus is something subtle far beyond the flesh.

Feeding with the mouth, on the whole, initiates a much stronger connection and a much deeper drain. However, it is very difficult to disguise this technique as anything other than feeding. For this reason, you should strongly consider only feeding in this way from willing partners. If your partner has not consented to being fed from and finds out that this has been done, he or she may be justifiably angry, for in feeding without the person's knowledge, you have betrayed the trust that is implicit in any intimacy.

38. TANTRIC EXCHANGE

A feeding exchange can be enacted during sex, and if properly done, this Tantric exchange can generate more energy for both partners than is consumed by either one. This technique should be used with caution, however, for many who have tried to employ it have succeeded only in mistaking any kind of sexual exchange for a feeding exchange. It should be realized that there is always an exchange of energies during sex, and this does not necessarily indicate that one is feeding.

First and foremost, penetration is not required to initiate a Tantric exchange. Any kind of sexual interaction where the goal is the orgasm of one or both partners will suffice. Also, it is not necessary for the taking partner to achieve orgasm during a successful Tantric exchange. In a true Tantric exchange, the pleasure of the giving partner should be paramount, and the taker cannot get lost in his or her own physical needs.

In most cases, it is better for the taking partner to remain focused not on the sex but on the energy manipulation involved in the exchange. This does not preclude the participation of both partners in the sexual activity; it simply requires a great deal more focus and concentration on the part of the taking partner. It is the taker's responsibility to heighten the physical sexual interaction to the levels of a subtle and spiritual energy exchange.

The focal point of a Tantric exchange is of course the root chakra. This chakra is the source of very raw, primal energy. Anyone who has engaged in sex magick understands what kind of energetic wellspring this center can be, and when that energy is harnessed for the energetic satisfaction of both partners, the results can be impressive.

Because of the intimate nature of the exchange, a Tantric exchange should be enacted between two consenting adults. A Tantric exchange can be enacted with a partner who is unaware of the energetic aspect of the exchange, but for various ethical reasons, this should be avoided. A Tantric exchange is certainly more fulfilling when both partners are aware of the energetic interplay so that both can expend some effort to making the exchange work. It is possible to achieve a truly deep interaction between the partners in such an exchange, and such an interaction can have lasting effects similar to those of any deep feeding exchange.

The mechanics are simple in theory, but they require skill to put into practice. Sex is a powerful drive, and it is only through significant self-mastery and concentration that the taking partner can avoid getting lost in the physicality of the act itself. If such concentration is lost before the end of the exchange, the taking partner will still have established a significant feeding exchange, but the energy shared with the giving partner will be minimal and the giver will most likely be exhausted by the attempt.

To initiate a Tantric exchange, the feeding partner must first establish a basic connection to his or her partner's energy. Because of the intimate circumstances, this can be done with the mouth, although

the hands will serve just as well. In general, the first connection is made during foreplay.

The dynamism involved in a Tantric exchange takes place within the root. Here the feeding partner must focus his or her energy, extending it into that of their partner, and setting up a cycle that raises this energy to a higher and higher degree. Utilizing techniques that also inspire or intensify emotion improve this effect. The progression of energy should follow the intensity of the act. By the time orgasm is imminent, the energy should be raised to a significant peak, to be released by the taking partner just as climax is achieved.

If the exchange has been successful, not only will the giving partner experience an extremely intense and prolonged orgasm, but the feeding partner will be able to experience this sensation through the giver, regardless of his or her own physical state. The cycling of energy will also become a cycling of pleasure, so that both partners share and amplify what they are feeling. The pleasure significantly increases the quality of the energy, and the intense connection will ensure that energy is exchanged at all physical points of contact. There will be a sensation of the bodies falling away or into one another, and all points of contact will generate a great deal of heat. The heat and energy generated by this sort of exchange is often enough to noticeably alter the ambient temperature in a room.

Through continued manipulation of energy, the exchange can be prolonged until gradually the waves of pleasure and intensity decrease. At the end of this, both partners will be vitalized, although the amount of energy will be so overwhelming that the best course of action is to just sit back and bask in it for a while. After such an exchange, it is not uncommon for both partners to feel dizzy or lightheaded, albeit in a rather pleasant way, and all sensation is likely to be heightened to an intense degree.

Because of the intensity of this interaction, and because of the rigorous mental demands it places upon the taking partner, this manner of exchange should only be engaged in occasionally, and it should be reserved for very special partners. The kind of intimacy that is shared

not just on the physical level but on the energetic and spiritual levels will inevitably draw both partners very close. A deep connection can be forged that will have long-term emotional and psychological ramifications for both people involved. Especially if the giving partner has never experienced this manner of exchange before, it can be irresponsible and cruel to introduce them to such an exchange only to leave and deny them that level of experience with you ever again.

39. DEEP FEEDING

Surface feeding allows you to interact with the energy of a person, but this is the energy in the outer layers of the energy body. You use the chakras and other minor energy centers as contact points, but you do not delve into the absolute core of your partner.

Deep feeding is a process wherein you draw from the utter essence of the other person. This is the deepest and most intimate level of energy interaction, and it should be reserved for a very few partners. There are several reasons why you should treat deep feeding with caution and respect. For one, when you deep feed from someone, you are extending a bit of yourself into the deepest place that his or her energy resides. You take a little of this deep self away with you, and you leave a little of yourself behind. This forges a connection that manifests as a subtle link, and this can last not only years but lifetimes.

Additionally, by engaging in such a deep exchange, you come into contact with the most intimate thoughts and emotions of your partner. Oftentimes, things that the person hides even from him- or herself become open to you, and this can be disturbing for both people involved. An empathic bond, which can deepen to telepathy, will be established, and this can linger for days or even weeks. With a partner who is regularly fed from on this level, that bond will be ever-present for both parties of the exchange.

Deep feeding is not something to play with lightly, although there are some for whom nothing but this level of interaction will suffice.

While the energy at the core of a person is the most intimate and emotionally charged, it is also of the finest quality and is exceptionally sustaining.

Even with surface feeding, it is possible for both you and your target to achieve altered states of consciousness, but deep feeding is always a numinous, mystical experience. The echoes it creates in mind, body, and spirit are profound, and this can initiate changes that many people are not prepared for.

As far as technique, deep feeding differs very little from surface feeding. With skill it can be accomplished with nothing more than the hands. Typically, however, the main connection is made with the mouth on a major chakra. Generally deep feeding occurs between two intimate partners who have built up a long-standing rapport. This is not always the case, but those individuals who can initiate such a deep draw upon the first or second contact with a person are rare indeed.

Deep feeding should not be confused with a Tantric exchange. While deep feeding can be initiated during sex, and while a Tantric exchange may develop into a deep feed, the two are nevertheless separate and distinct. Some individuals can initiate a deep feed through misleadingly casual contact, such as the simple touch of a hand. The real process hinges upon how deeply you can press your energy into the energy of your partner or how completely your partner is willing to open up to you. A partner who trusts you completely and who is willing to give him- or herself over to you, mind, body, and spirit, will facilitate deep feeding. However, if you lack the energetic strength and focus of will to take advantage of this, all you will accomplish is a very sustaining surface feed.

A deep feeding begins as you focus on a contact point, generally over a major chakra. You extend your energy into that of your partner. Your energy will go in through the first few layers of your partner's energy body, just as with surface feeding. Using the energy center as a focus, aim for the core of your partner. Guide the extension of your energy with the focus of your breath. At some point, there will be a sen-

sation of reaching something deeper than the chakra and deeper than even the core of the chakra. It is likely that before this occurs you will have felt as if your physical body and that of your partner have melted away. Time will become drawn out, and you will feel/see things almost completely on the level of pure energy.

It is much simpler to convince yourself that you have achieved a deep feeding than it is to actually achieve one. You will know whether or not you were successful by the level of energy that you receive from the exchange and by the sensations experienced by both you and your partner. These things cannot be adequately captured in words. Also, if you have any doubt, and you truly have achieved this level of exchange, the lingering effects between you and your partner will be proof over time.

Deep feeding should under no circumstances be initiated with a partner who is not consenting. Nor should you deep feed from anyone who is not aware of energy and somewhat versed in its use. The long-term effects of deep feeding require that both partners be aware and capable of adapting to them. This cannot be stressed enough. This is the most intimate and beautiful level of energy exchange, but it is also the most potentially destructive. Even for those who need this level of feeding, it is best to limit such interaction as much as possible.

40. DREAMWALKING

Remember: you can feed through a touch, but your spirit extends far beyond the limits of your body. Under the proper circumstances, you can achieve long-distance draws that are almost as intimate and intense as feeding flesh to flesh.

When you are starved for energy and there has been no opportunity to adequately sate your needs, you may find that you will send yourself out in dreams. This is much like astral travel, although it is largely an unconscious activity. You will dream of someone close to you. This can be a family member, a good friend, or a current or former

lover. This person need not be located physically close to you, as distance does not function in the subtle reality as it does in the physical world. Your body may be confined to your bedroom, yet your dream self may wander hundreds and even thousands of miles away.

In dreamwalking, you focus upon a connection you have with a person, and you follow that connection down to their energy. You may actually send your spirit self out, and thus project much as in astral travel. Or you may simply extend your energy along this subtle connection, just as you would extend a tendril to feed. This second technique of dreamwalking is much closer in mechanics to bilocation, for you can remain in your physical body yet have a distinct perception of the person you have reached out to.

The dream will seem unusually vivid. It is very likely that the dream will also be lucid, and you will realize at least in part that you are dreaming but that this other person is somehow actually present in the dream. In the course of the dream, you will have an exchange with the target person. The exchange can be overtly vampiric, or it may manifest erotically. Even if you do not recall the specifics of the dream, you will know that you have had a dream of this nature, for you will awaken feeling unusually refreshed, often in direct contrast to how low your energy felt upon going to bed.

The person who you have visited this way will wake up tired and worn, just as if you had fed directly from them that night. They will often recall the dream with greater clarity than you yourself will. If it is possible to compare experiences, you will find that certain elements of the dreamscape were shared by both people involved in the dream. It is not uncommon for individuals visited in this way to retain some mark or bruise from the encounter, just as a partner in a direct skin-to-skin feed may have a rosette at the physical point of contact.

With practice, you will come to be able to distinguish between your ordinary dreams and these dreamwalking experiences. The process does not always have to be unconscious. You may gain mastery over this ability and dreamwalk at will. Learning how to consciously dreamwalk

is relatively easy. Learning how to suppress the instinct to do so is often far more difficult. Dreamwalking remains a survival technique innate to your nature. Therefore, especially in periods of dire need, you may find your soul wandering regardless of your waking intent.

41. BREATH AND LIFE

When feeding, the hands and mouth serve as a focus, but the most significant thing that serves to direct the flow of energy is the breath.

In most energetic systems, it is believed that breathing brings vital energy into the body, just as it brings in air. This vital energy is then processed by the subtle body just as oxygen is processed by the physical lungs. In this way, breathing sustains the organism on both the physical and subtle levels.

Everyone unconsciously takes in this vital energy with the breath. When feeding, it is necessary to become aware of this process and to consciously direct it as you take in the vital energies that you need.

The kind of breath used when you are feeding is a slow, concentrated intake of breath. It is very similar to the feel of inhaling through a cigarette. A small amount of air is brought in through the nose or open mouth, and the inhalation is sustained for a long period of time. It often feels like you are breathing a warm, thick liquid.

The proper application of this breathing technique will create a warm sensation in the center of the chest, and this warmth may spread throughout the torso and into the limbs. A pleasant tingling may accompany it, and so may a heightened, euphoric feeling.

This type of breathing is initiated deep in the chest, from the diaphragm, and not from the throat. When enough control has been achieved, there will be almost no sound generated by this inhalation, and the exhalation, likewise sustained, will sound like little more than a whisper of breath. Such an inhalation can seem to be sustained almost indefinitely, and there is clearly more to the process than simply acquiring air.

This breathing technique is used to focus and direct any kind of feeding, from ambient to Tantric and deep feeds. The extension of your energy should occur as you slowly exhale, and the act of pulling the energy in should be done in tandem with your intake of breath. The energy rides upon the breath, and the more focused and sustained the breath, the more efficiently you can feed. If the air passages are in any way impeded, it becomes more difficult to efficiently feed.

Problems that interfere with clear, sustained breathing can for this reason interfere with feeding. Sinus problems, allergies, asthma, and head colds can make it difficult if not impossible to focus with the breath. At such times, it is simply too easy to be distracted by the physical discomfort and lack of airflow. If the level of concentration necessary to overcome these physical limitations is impossible, then you must wait until the condition passes before you can adequately feed again.

42. DIMINISHED STATES

All active feeding techniques require a slight expenditure of your own energy. When feeding directly from an individual, this energy expenditure is almost always more than repaid. But when trying to ambiently feed, those who are running low on energy may encounter difficulties. The amount and quality of energy gained from an ambient feed is poor, and especially for Priests, it barely sustains. Often, when in deep need, an individual who attempts a draw of this kind expends more energy than they regain. Thus they find themselves in a worse position than before they attempted to feed.

Furthermore, when one has reached a point of starvation, it may be difficult to expend the energy even to make a direct contact feed. Deep feeding as well can prove difficult, because there must be an initial amount of energy in order to connect with the other person. When you have dropped to a point where this energy cannot be spared, taking more to replenish yourself can seem impossible.

There are several solutions to this problem. The first, of course, is

to become aware of your own energy needs. Know the minimum amount you need to get by, and know how much you need in order to feel well. If you have an exceptionally high energy need, be aware that you will probably never feed to satiation. The Priest caste especially have a hunger that grows the more it is fed. Knowing you have greater needs, you should never take so much that you endanger any of those who provide for you, but neither should you starve yourself and suffer.

The second solution comes from your providers. If you know someone who is adept at cycling energy and can initiate something like a dynamic exchange, that person should be able to help you when you cannot spare the energy even to feed. Counselors, especially, are excellent for this, and they can often help someone to passively feed until the person has regained enough energy to initiate an active connection. Counselors can even actively send enough replenishing energy into an individual to allow him or her to initiate an active feed. This is especially crucial for someone who has starved so long they cannot even process the energy they have gained through feeding.

You may also try simply going out among people and allowing the energy to flow around you. As water runs downhill, so the energy will slowly seep in. Be patient with this method, for if you try to actively feed before enough has been replenished, you will only cast away what little you have gained and put yourself into an even deeper need.

Sleeping in a bed with a partner will also allow you to passively feed, and when this partner is someone you have established connections with, this will make it that much easier to passively get what you need.

Find your balance and listen carefully to your hunger. Your best course of action is to feed regularly and in moderation. Make certain that your basic needs are met, and thus you will never slip into perilous need.

43. ENERGY AND EMOTION

In general, energy coupled with some strong emotion is more fulfilling than simple energy alone. Strong emotion tends to make people

produce more energy, sending it out in spikes as the emotion rises and falls. Energy that is flavored with a particular emotion is said to be charged with it, and in addition to gaining the benefits of the energy, when you feed upon such energy you will experience the intensity of the emotion as well.

This is why ambient feeding from a crowd that has been brought to some heightened emotional pitch is exceptionally fulfilling. Intense group situations, such as concerts and dance clubs, create a great deal of ambient energy, and that energy is flavored with the intense emotions experienced by the crowd.

When you are feeding directly from a single target, the effects of heightened emotion are more intense still. You must take care, however, with the emotions you choose to feed upon. Fear, for example, can create a profound wellspring of energy, but its effects can be almost intoxicating. The intensity and intoxication you feel from fear can make this and related emotions addictive. Furthermore, intentionally inspiring fear in others can raise ethical questions, especially when your targets are unwilling and unaware.

It is possible to flirt with fear in certain controlled situations. The BD/SM community provides a potential outlet for this need. As a rule, both partners should be consenting, and the person being fed upon should be amenable to such play. However, caution is strongly recommended, for even in the most ideal situations, the intoxicating effects of this emotion can make it very easy for even the most well-intentioned people to lose control.

Passion and ecstasy are two other emotions that can add a significant charge to the energy you feed upon. These are more desirable than fear simply because they can be inspired in a manner which is mutually beneficial for both people in the exchange. Although these emotions seem on the surface to be less negative than fear, caution should still be employed when dealing with them. There are intoxicating effects inherent in the intensity of these emotions as well, and they can prove addictive not only to you but also to those you are feeding upon.

In general, when dealing with energy that is charged with emotion, you should take care not to get caught up in that emotion overmuch. When feeding upon emotionally charged energy, you will feel an initial rush from the intensity of it, and you will vicariously experience the effects of that emotion. While this can prove a very pleasant experience, it will be tempting to get caught up in the emotion. This makes it very easy to lose control and overfeed just for the sensation. As with all feeding, moderation should be observed, and you should never overlook the long-term repercussions that this can have on your partner.

44. RELIGIOUS ENERGY

Passion and ecstasy are not experienced exclusively in the bedroom. Religious ecstasy is a passion experienced by the spirit, but its effects are no less profound. When groups of people gather to worship, they generate a significant amount of energy, and this energy is charged with the emotions experienced by everyone in the group.

The fundamental purpose of ritual is to encourage the generation of this energy and ultimately to give it a direction. Many of the world's organized religions have lost touch with their knowledge of energy, however. Far too many gather to worship now without ever realizing what they can really accomplish, and for this reason, they often fail to adequately direct their religious energy toward any specified goal. New Age and neo-pagan traditions tend to work more consciously with these energies, and these relatively new religions have not yet forgotten the power they have in their hands. However, even in the most conscious ceremonies, a certain amount of energy escapes the focus of the group.

Because of the nature of religious energy, churches, rituals, and other spiritual gatherings are excellent places to ambiently feed.

Some religious traditions produce more energy than others. Pentecostal celebrations, for example, where the celebrants are

actively encouraged to work themselves into a religious frenzy, generate a vast amount of charged energy. The old Catholic High Mass could generate a great deal as well, although after the reforms of the Vatican in the early twentieth century, the ceremonies lost a great deal of the mystery that added to their intensity. Pagan and Wiccan ceremonies, because they work very consciously to raise religious energy, are significant sources as well.

You should not attend church or ritual simply to feed, for that betrays the trust of the participants, who truly believe their energy is directed toward divinity. However, you can harness your nature to benefit the members of these congregations while also fulfilling yourself. By your nature, it will be easy for you to capture stray energies and redirect them toward the common goal. You can also help the general congregation raise and harness their own energy, for among many, this skill has been lost.

Treat religious energy as you would any emotionally charged ambient energy. Extend yourself through the excess energy generated by the crowd and pull it in. Cycle this within yourself to make it more intense. As you cycle the energy, take a little for yourself, then redirect the rest outward, giving it a greater focus for the group.

45. PROCESSING ENERGY

When you have taken in a good deal of energy, you may feel lethargic and relaxed. This is often a heavy, pleasant sensation, and it might inspire you to curl up and take a nap.

This may at first seem at odds with the energizing effects of vital energy. However, it is actually an integral part of how feeding works. Some energy is immediately assimilated into your system through the very action of feeding. This is why it is easier to take energy than to have it given or pushed into your system: the taking itself is an action that changes the energy into something you can use. However, this tends to assimilate only the energy that you immediately need. If you

take in more energy that you can immediately use, this energy must be processed after the feeding or else you will lose it.

Processing is largely something you do unconsciously. You do not really have to understand how it works to gain its benefits. But much like digestion, the more you have taken into yourself, the harder your system has to work to change its state. If the excess energy you have taken is not processed properly, it dissipates, bleeding out into the world around you in a form you cannot reclaim.

At minimum, after feeding, you should take a little time to sit back and relax. This is especially true after a heavy feeding, as in the case of a deep feed. If you take time to reach a meditative state or even take a nap, your system will process the energy for you. Some of the energy will be lost, and there is likely to be a by-product that can make you headachy or agitated if allowed to build up, but enough will be processed that you will have some in reserve.

If you take a little time to consciously aid this process, you can get a great deal more out of each feeding. By processing, you conserve energy, making use of what you need at that moment, and storing away the rest.

The first step to consciously processing energy is cycling and refining it. Consciously hold the energy within yourself and circulate it, clearing it of residue and raising its state. Ground this residue out, expelling it from your system. Part of the residue you remove will be the energy's by-product. The more you refine, the more this will be produced. Unless you are in a functional Triumvirate, you should make a conscious effort to release this by-product so it does not linger in your system.

As you refine the energy and intensify it, you also want to focus on making it resonate with your frequency. Each person has a unique energy signature, and part of processing involves taking the signature of the energy and making it your own. Once you have compressed the energy into a dense and powerful sphere, release this and focus on making it a part of you. Visualize the energy spreading out from your

center, carrying warmth and vitality to your very extremities. Hold on to as much of this energy as you are able, until it has circulated through your entire body and been assimilated.

46. QUALITY OF ENERGY

When feeding, oftentimes quantity of energy is not so important as the quality of that energy. Those who are asleep and unaware of their spiritual natures have a very poor quality to their energy. They have done nothing to spiritually cultivate themselves, and their existence is focused almost purely in the physical realm. They are barely aware of their energy. They do nothing to cycle it, so it simply stagnates within them. If there is anything at all worth taking from them, it is as dust in our mouths.

The old and the weak, the ill and the infirm—particularly those who are unawakened—have a terrible quality to their energy. Not only should you avoid feeding from them, but you should also avoid physical contact whenever possible. With physical contact it is sometimes difficult not to make a connection and passively feed. Not only is it unpleasant to take in energy of such a poor quality, it can be harmful to your system as well, like fueling a racing engine with motor oil.

Among the Awakened, energy tends to be much more refined. The Awakened are not only aware of their energy, but almost all of them make some use of it as well. They are generally aware of damage and blockages in their subtle bodies, and they practice a variety of healing methods to take care of these problems. Some of the Awakened are very powerful, and the more they have worked to cultivate themselves spiritually, the purer and more potent their energy tends to be.

For these reasons, you will find yourself attracted to the Awakened. You will be able to relate better with their perceptions of the world, and find their energy easier to connect to. You may find it very tempting to feed from the Awakened, for their energy is powerful and pure, and much more sustaining than that of the unawakened.

Caution should be used in this, however. Awakened beings are far more likely to notice when their energy is taken, even from a discreet distance. You should think twice before feeding upon them without their consent. Under the best of circumstances, the Awakened perceive such behavior as rude. In the worst cases, it is seen as the equivalent of rape. If you are to avoid fear and bad feeling from the Awakened, you must respect their boundaries and take only what they are willing freely to give.

47. BLOOD AND LIFE

Do not mistake mere blood for life. You feed upon something far subtler.

However, do not be surprised if, in feeding, you taste blood within your mouth, for blood and life are intricately interwoven.

You are a being of both spirit and matter, and thus you affect others on both of these levels. Blood is the physical substance of life, and so you are bound ever so slightly to this material expression of your spiritual need.

Do not be misled by the juxtaposition of energy and blood. No cut or puncture is necessary for the transfer to occur. As you draw out vital energy, you may inadvertently draw out a small amount of blood with this vitality. Even when there is no physical contact between you and your partner, if the draw is intense enough, this may occur.

It is the connection between spirit and matter that causes marks to sometimes appear when you are feeding, even when you have only casually touched your target with your hands. A puncture in the subtle body can result in bruising and ruptured capillaries in the physical body.

Because of this interaction, always take care who you feed from, for a taint in their blood may carry over to you. The level of crossover is unpredictable, and the potential repercussions are too serious to risk.

Do not feed from those who have drugs or alcohol in their system unless for some reason it is your intent to vicariously experience their effects.

Avoid feeding from the ill or diseased, especially when it is known they have a blood-borne illness. It is wrong to tax the system of someone who is sick with the demands feeding can place on them, but furthermore there is the possibility that their illness will transfer over to you.

You will often know those who are sick or tainted by the sensations you get when near them. You may have an instinctual aversion to touching them or you may avoid getting close to them without consciously realizing why. You may feel suddenly uncomfortable if you attempt to draw from them, or you may experience a sensation of sudden and unpleasant warmth or cold.

Given time and careful observation, you will learn to discern these sensations in order to identify the taint. Always heed your instincts in this matter, for they will guide you well.

48. ASSESSING NEED

In order to know when and how much you need to feed, you must be able to accurately judge your level of need. Some have little need to actively take in energy. Others, like the Priest caste, have a significant need. For these, especially, it is important to know the signs of mild, moderate, and deep need.

Those who have a significant need for energy feel a certain amount of hunger almost all the time. This is something you simply have to learn to accept. Your energetic metabolism may be such that it will make use of whatever energy you take in, and the more you take, the faster it will be used. This will invariably burn you out or give rise to a hunger so constant and severe, your sanity will break in its grip.

Fulfilling your needs, then, becomes a balancing act, where you learn how much you need to comfortably exist, then limit yourself to this and no more. This path of moderation is difficult to uphold, but for many it is the wisest and best course. The Priest caste especially can become slaves to their hungers, and this is destructive to them and to everyone they love.

When assessing need, there are roughly three stages. These are mild, moderate, and deep need. There are hallmark symptoms experienced at each stage, and while not everyone will experience all of these, most individuals will experience some. Please keep in mind, however, that many of these symptoms can be indications of a serious physical condition. The best way to rule out a traditional medical explanation is to pursue a mundane approach to treating the symptoms first. You will know that the cause is metaphysical in origin when the symptoms have responded to nothing but an active and regular intake of vital energy.

Mild need is the least severe of the stages. At this point, an individual's energy has become depleted, but it has by no means reached a dangerous state. Most people will feel restless at this point in their hunger. They may become agitated or moody, and they may have trouble staying focused on things not related to their need. Headaches also are not uncommon. Metaphysically, an individual's sensitivity to energy is heightened at this stage. In the later portions of this stage, there may be an intensity about the individual, a kind of clarity brought about by need.

Mild need is easy to accommodate. In most cases, ambient feeding will take the edge of this hunger away, and even those who have a significant energy requirement can probably get by in this stage with a minimal surface feed.

If allowed to progress unanswered, mild need will give way to moderate need.

When moderate need is reached, the symptoms of mild need become heightened. Headaches are more persistent. The moodiness becomes depression. There is a reduced ability to concentrate, and the edge typical of mild need has been lost. There is no clarity inherent in the hunger here. Instead of honing or intensifying the senses, moderate need just distracts.

Instead of a heightened sensitivity to energy, those who are in moderate need will begin to feel distanced from the metaphysical. Their subtle senses are impaired, and many of their psychic and energetic

abilities are dampened in effect. They are, however, often hypersensitive to light and to extreme changes in temperature. Most will be pale with very cold hands. There is an overwhelming feeling of lethargy, and they may be more vulnerable to injury and disease. Those in moderate need will tend to sleep more without feeling rested, and their joints will stiffen and begin to ache.

Moderate need also affects the physical appetite. There is often a sense of hunger that cannot be sated or of thirst that cannot be slaked. Some individuals overeat in this state even though physical food is not what they need. Others will lose all appetite, and all but the simplest foods will make them sick.

Moderate need can be answered for most through surface feeding. A rare few may get by at this stage with a prolonged ambient feed. For Priests and others with a heightened energy requirement, the best course of action is a direct contact feed. Enough energy will be taken at this stage that the feeding partner should be consenting and aware of what is being done to them. Those who do not have consenting feeding partners should take care not to let themselves get to moderate need. In their hunger, they will be tempted to prey on the unwilling. This is risky and flirts with exposure, for those fed upon will invariably experience some effects from this exchange.

49. DEEP NEED

Deep need is the most severe stage of hunger. You should strive not to let your needs progress to this state, for feeding from anyone could put them at risk. The symptoms experienced when in deep need should act as incentive not to go here. The need at this point is so severe that it can drive you to rash decisions. It can be very hard to maintain control at this point, and even the most experienced partners will have to be wary of you.

When someone has reached deep need, their lack of energy has a visible impact on their physical bodies. Many will appear wasted or

gaunt. Their pallor is severe, and they are cold almost all the time. They will suffer through alternate bouts of oversleeping and insomnia, with an ever-deepening lethargy. They tend to feel breathless, with a rapid or irregular heartbeat. They get sick very easily. They tend to experience joint aches, stiffness, and even tremors in their limbs. They may also experience headaches, dizziness, and waves of nausea.

The difficulties with food experienced at moderate need have increased, and those in deep need may not be able to handle anything solid at all. Some experience intermittent pains throughout their bodies, and many feel a tightness in the chest as well as chest pains. Those in deep need can become severely depressed, often withdrawing from the company of others. Some become paranoid. Others may experience panic attacks, becoming excessively nervous or emotionally fragile.

Metaphysically, such individuals are in an extremely weakened state. Their metaphysical senses are hampered, and they have difficulty accomplishing even the most basic energy work. Although their ability to consciously sense and perceive energy is significantly dampened, those in this state are nevertheless vulnerable to environmental energies. Heightened emotional energy easily overwhelms them. They can no longer adequately shield and they have difficulty grounding and stabilizing themselves.

Most individuals who have reached deep need no longer have the energy to ambient feed. Some will find it difficult to initiate any kind of contact at all. In extreme cases, when those in deep need do begin to feed, they will be like a starving man relearning how to eat. They will have to take small amounts over an extended period of time and ease themselves back into things, otherwise their systems may reject the energy, causing a reaction that is painful to both their subtle and their physical bodies.

If you experience deep need, at the very least you must surface feed. To really recover what you have lost, however, ideally you should deep feed. Nevertheless, when you are in this state, you should

approach feeding with caution. The depth of this hunger can be maddening, and it will drive many to extremes. It is very tempting to lose control at this point and feed without regard for the person providing the energy. Even when you have begun to lose the ability to adequately process the energy, the drive to take will remain, and you will feed without a care for the discomfort this causes your partner or yourself.

If you are prone to deep need, you should take care to avoid it. If you are approaching this level of need, it is crucial to recognize the symptoms as quickly as possible. There is a certain threshold with deep need, and once that threshold has been crossed, it is very difficult to recover. Catching things in time can save you—and your eventual feeding partner—some misery.

When in deep need, it is inadvisable to feed upon anyone who is unaware and unwilling. In the most ideal situation, the person that you feed from should be experienced with energy work. They should also know what to expect from you when you are in this state, and be able to handle themselves accordingly.

Both partners should be careful to give feedback during an exchange when one is in deep need. For yourself, if there is a problem taking or processing the energy, let your partner know this. They may be able to help you get to a point where you can adequately feed. A Counselor, for example, should be able to help passively get energy to a Priest until a point is reached where the Priest can actively feed.

The best course of action if you have arrived at a deep need is to slowly work back to a healthy level. This may require multiple feedings over the course of many days. It is better to take a moderate amount and then take more again after that has been processed than to try to take everything all at once. The system after such an ordeal is delicate, and it is not wise to strain it by overdoing things.

If you have been in deep need, you should supplement your surface feeding with ambient feeds. If possible, a low-level drain should be enacted at all times to rebuild your reserves. Once a comfortable level has been achieved, it is best to feed regularly and even a little

more frequently than usual. This will aid in recovery. The physical symptoms of deep need will be the first to dissipate. It will take longer, however, to regain the spiritual strength that was lost. For this reason, stressful emotional situations and excessive energy work should be avoided for a while. If you put a strain on your system too quickly, there is always a danger of slipping right back into deep need.

50. THE EFFECTS OF FEEDING

When surface feeding, or initiating a deep feed, you extend some of your energy into that of your partner. This energy actually pierces their subtle body. Afterward, a wound is left in the aura of the partner, though this will close on its own in a few days. It can sometimes be echoed in the flesh in the form of a small rounded bruise or rosette. In very rare cases, blood can be drawn up through the pores in such a rosette, even if the contact was merely with the fingertips. In the case of long-standing partners, the wound can become a permanent weak spot in the aura, which can be easily penetrated to gain access to the partner's energy.

Generally speaking, feeding is not harmful to the partner. Those that naturally process other energies will easily replenish themselves, usually overnight. Most partners will just feel sleepy or deeply relaxed after being fed from. Others describe a feeling of floating, or of all-over body tingles. Some experience euphoria during feeding and feel they are riding intense waves of pleasure. Others can achieve an altered state of consciousness with intense dreamlike visions. Their sensitivity to energy is always heightened after an exchange, and this may extend to a heightening of the physical senses as well.

For this reason, feeding partners may be a little hypersensitive to bright light after the exchange. This effect can last for a few hours to a few days. Some may experience a sudden feeling of cold, and they can remain hypersensitive to lower temperatures for a little while after the exchange. Most partners will want to sleep after an exchange, particularly in the case of deep feeding. It is not uncommon for them to sleep

longer and more heavily than usual, although this is generally coupled with unusually vivid dreams. When they awaken, they will probably have a lingering feeling of lethargy. It may be difficult for them to feel fully awake, and they may have trouble concentrating throughout the next day. Some report a headache much like a hangover. Some people actually become energized and even hyperactive after being fed upon, although such individuals are rare. Most partners become hungry not long after the exchange, but they will probably have problems eating heavy or greasy foods. Most will feel dehydrated, and they will feel better if they drink some pure, cold water just after the exchange. Drinks that help rebalance the electrolytes are also helpful after an exchange.

Under ordinary circumstances, these are the most severe symptoms feeding will produce in a partner. Many find the exchange quite pleasant. For individuals who often carry around too much energy, feeding can reduce the risk of blockages and encourage a freer energetic flow. The heightened awareness that feeding brings about can also serve to awaken someone to their energy. Among the castes, a certain amount of energy interaction is necessary, and therefore the exchange is always beneficial to both partners.

Caution should be used when feeding from those who are not accustomed to it. Many of the sensations experienced during feeding push the limits of what many people understand. We have lived with these sensations all our lives, so it is easy to underestimate how unsettling they can be to others. When a partner does not know what is a normal reaction, they may panic. For this reason, it is best to keep your partners informed about the effects and possible dangers of feeding. Always get their feedback and make certain they are comfortable with the exchange.

51. FEEDING DANGERS

Those who are unaccustomed to energy exchange may find the experience unsettling or even frightening. Generally, these reactions arise

simply from a fear of the unknown. If partners are taught what to expect from the exchange, most of this anxiety is removed, and the experience can be mutually pleasurable. However, there are still things that can go wrong with feeding. For this reason, you should be careful even with partners who are experienced with energy exchange.

Nearly all of the dangers inherent in feeding arise from an error in judgment regarding your level of energy or that of your partner. If you initiate an exchange and you do not know the depth of your own need, your hunger may overtake your good intentions and cause you to lose control. If you initiate an exchange expecting your partner to be in a better state energetically than what is actually the case, you can end up taking too much from him or her as well. For these reasons, you must pay attention to your energy level as well as that of your partner, taking care that neither ever gets too low.

If you feed too quickly or too deeply from your partner, or if you take more than can safely be given, he or she may experience a number of physical symptoms. First of all, the partner may feel a pain or pressure in the chest. This is often accompanied by difficulty breathing. Some may experience a burning sensation or a sensation of severe cold, especially around the points of contact you have made.

Irregularities in the heartbeat may follow. The pleasant tingling associated with feeding may become painful and give way to numbness. There can be a sensation of intense cold throughout the entire body, and they may shiver uncontrollably. Instead of feeling merely relaxed, the partner may begin to feel sluggish and heavy. It may become hard to move, and the limbs will be clumsy and uncoordinated. Some have reported a sensation not of pleasantly floating but of being sucked down, as into a deep, dark pool. Further symptoms include lowered body temperature, lowered blood pressure, slowed heart rate, severe dizziness, and a general weakness or trembling in the limbs. Some partners may experience such a sudden loss of energy that they pass out or lose all ability to move.

When a partner begins to exhibit any of these symptoms, you should cease taking energy from them *immediately*. Talk with them and help keep them calm and awake. You may attempt to give back some of what you have taken. Do this slowly, for it will be easy for your partner to be overwhelmed. If your partner is not versed in energy, you may have to actively push energy into them, as it is unlikely they will know how to take it.

In extreme cases, you may have to seek medical help for your partner. Spirit and matter are interlinked, and if you throw someone's energy severely out of balance, there can be significant physical repercussions. In very rare cases, people have stopped breathing, gone into shock, suffered heart attacks, or experienced convulsions in reaction to a rapid and severe energy drain. For this reason, you should always take care when feeding directly from a partner, and you should never lose track of the state your partner is in no matter how intense the exchange.

52. CONSTANT FEEDING

You should always work to maintain control and to know how much energy can be safely taken from a partner. This will help to avoid those panic-laden situations where you are alone with someone who has passed out completely and cannot be roused.

While these crisis situations are alarming and should be avoided, they are not as potentially damaging to the partner as a long, drawn-out cycle of constant feeding. Even if you feed only moderately every day or so, placing constant demands upon one partner will eventually wear the person down. It may take months or even years, but your partner will reach a point where he or she can no longer replenish as much as you take. This is where the real danger lies.

Constant feeding, and especially constant overfeeding, will begin to take a toll on a partner's immune system. If partners are not allowed to replenish their energy to a safe level, they will be tired all the time,

sickly, and weak. They may sleep a great deal, or they may find themselves unable to sleep despite their overwhelming lethargy. Eventually, they will begin to experience the same symptoms that we do at moderate or deep need, and there will be no way for them to recover but to take energy from someone themselves. This is where sympathetic vampirism occurs, and for some, it becomes a cycle they cannot break.

For this reason, it is always wise to have at least one other reliable source to provide for your needs. When there is no Family available to you, the best course of action is to have three or four individuals you can safely feed from. Rotate through these, making certain not to overtax any of them. This way, you will be able to meet your needs without bringing pain or discomfort to those around you.

It is also wise to supplement your feeding with ambient energy. If you have significant energy needs, try to master ambient feeding so that you have a constant, passive intake of energy. You should eventually be able to ambiently feed without even thinking about it, and this will help prevent you from falling into deep need. Also, through ambient feeding, you will be able to go longer between direct contact and deep feeds, thus removing more of the burden from your feeding partners.

53. CHOOSING FEEDING PARTNERS

In crowds or when performing a general, long-distance drain, it is nearly impossible to gain the consent of those you are feeding from. When ambient feeding, such consent is not strictly necessary. When taking a small amount through surface feeding, you may also get by without achieving consent, depending upon your personal ethics. However, when you feed deeply upon someone, especially through physical contact, it is advisable that you make certain your partner understands what it is you are doing. This way, he or she knows the risks and cannot accuse you of being invasive. Lying and dissembling to someone you must be so close to will only make that person's reaction to you all the more violent if and when your true nature is exposed.

This requires you to choose your long-term feeding partners with great care. It is suggested that you establish strong links with two or three regular partners, and that you rotate feeding on them as the need arises. This way no single partner will be exhausted by your demands. This is true even among Family. While you may have one primary feeding partner, it is always a good idea to have a few others who are comfortable with you and who will provide for you in case of emergencies.

Although it is ideal energetically, you do not have to feed exclusively on Family. However, when seeking partners outside of Family, discretion must be used. Partners should not only willingly consent to what you do, but should fully comprehend the process, especially as it impacts them. This is another reason you will find yourself drawn to the Awakened. They have the skills and the awareness to meet you on your own terms.

You must carefully build a relationship with any prospective donor, sounding out his or her beliefs until you feel comfortable entrusting that person with the truth of what you are. If you cannot feel comfortable in revealing what you do to a donor, you should not use that person as a regular feeding partner, and you most certainly should never deep feed from this person.

Select partners who are emotionally strong and mentally stable. The bond that you must share with partners in order to feed deeply from them is profound. It encompasses all levels of being: physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional, and it can be more than most ordinary folk can safely handle. Your lovemaking and often even your casual contact touches them profoundly on a more than physical level. For many, this is something they have probably never experienced before and may never experience outside of their exchanges with you.

Some partners can become addicted to being fed from. They can also become obsessed with you, and especially obsessed with what you can do to them. Such an obsession is unhealthy for them as well as for

you. Thus, you must give your love carefully. Those whom you are close to should be watched diligently for signs of instability so that you may protect them from the destruction your nature may bring.

54. SUBTLE LINKS

Each time you feed from someone, you forge a subtle link with that person. Every time you feed from him or her after forging the initial link, you make this link stronger and deeper. The link is also reinforced through ordinary interactions with the person, so that whenever you come together socially the link is strengthened bit by bit.

The link is like a permanent astral tentacle or a silver cord. It connects your subtle body to the subtle body of the person you fed upon. It is more permanent than a mere strand of energy; constructed of the same stuff as your subtle body, it has the same ability to endure.

The depth with which you fed from the person generally determines the depth and strength of the link. Ambient feeding creates no links, but surface and deep feeding will. In the case of a surface feed, the link will be shallow, connecting only to the first few layers of the energy body. In the case of deep feeding, however, the link that is established is profound. It connects you to the very core of a person, and this forges a very significant bond.

The link does not merely connect you to this person energetically. There is a definite emotional bond that is forged as well. With a link, the other person becomes closer to you mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. This can easily be mistaken for attraction or even love.

The link serves as a constant energetic connection to a person. Information is exchanged along this connection. You can feel the person's emotions. You can gain a sense of where he or she is. You can initiate an exchange of energy. You may pick up what the person is thinking, and you may even be able to perceive things through his or her senses. The deeper and stronger the link, the more complete this communication can be.

You can use the link not only to receive information but to send it as well. You may consciously project your feelings to the other person. You may send the person thoughts and even suggestions. You can send energy if you feel that there is a need for it, and you can tug gently on the link to pull the person to you.

Unless you are consciously trying to block it, a certain amount of communication will naturally happen along the link. When you are in situations of strong emotion, your feelings will be telegraphed to the person on the other end. Likewise, you will receive that person's feelings when they are intensely emotional. If you have no idea where these emotions are coming from, you may mistakenly accept them as your own. This is one of the main reasons it is best to become aware of your subtle links. They can explain a lot about random moods and sudden shifts in feeling. The key is tracking these sensations down to their original source.

55. DEEP FEEDING AND LINKS

The links you forge with others can be a great asset or a terrible curse. This is especially true of the links forged through deep feeding.

When you deep feed, you extend some of your energy into the person you are feeding from. You penetrate the subtle body and reach toward the person's energetic core. If he or she is very open to you, they facilitate this by allowing your energy further and further in. Even if the other person does not fully open up, the connection this makes is still profound. After you withdraw, you leave a little bit of yourself in the person fed upon, and you take a little bit of that person away with you. This exchange of personal energy forms the root of the link.

A link forged through deep feeding creates a significant emotional bond. The other person experiences profound feelings of attraction and love. The attraction follows the flow of the energy, so if you have taken energy from the partner, the energy and the attraction flowing down the link will be directed toward you. The depth of emotion expe-

rienced by your partner is determined by the depth of the root of the link.

This means that the link forged through deep feeding is not always equal. When you send energy out to the other person, the origin of this energy determines the root of your end of the link. If the energy you sent into your partner arose from a superficial place and not your core, then the emotional bond that is part of the link will be superficial for you as well. You will not feel as deeply for the other person as he or she does for you. Furthermore, if the flow of energy is only going from the partner to you, then the attraction will also be one-sided. If the link is not as deep for you, you will be able to block it more easily. When the link is very deep, it is difficult to block what is sent or received along the connection.

The repercussions of an unequal connection can be severe. First of all, if you deep feed from someone who then falls in love with you, you may never know if that love is real. Also, it is easy to underestimate the power the attraction holds for someone caught in an unequal link. Your continued distance can cause him or her great pain, which can grow into resentment. No one can hate you more than someone who once loved you. Furthermore, if the bond is not reciprocal, it becomes very easy to use and abuse the person connected to you through the link.

For these reasons, you should never deep feed casually, and you should always make certain there is an equal exchange. The emotional and psychological repercussions of an unequal connection are too severe. If a mistake has been made, there are still ways to fix it. An unequal connection can be balanced if the other partner deep feeds in return. The link will not be severed, but this will neutralize the one-sided affection. Also, a deeply rooted link can be worked out to a less intimate layer, but this requires a great deal of time and effort. Generally, both parties must cooperate in this, and at the very least, the dominant partner must be successfully blocked from using the link.

56. FEEDING THROUGH LINKS

A minimal amount of energy is always being transferred down a link. For this reason, links can provide a certain amount of support energetically. When you passively feed through your links, it is much like enacting a passive ambient feed. Energy flows to where it is needed, and if you open yourself up to this flow, any excess from the person on the other end will naturally come to you.

For those with a high energy need, this makes open links with other people invaluable. Passively allowing the energy to reach you can cut down on how often you must actively feed.

You can also use a link more actively to long-distance feed. A link serves as an anchor to another person's energy. Through this connection you can reach out to the person no matter where he or she is located physically. A link can help you connect with someone over great distances of physical space. The connection you achieve through a link like this can be as potent as a direct contact feed.

There are two basic methods for actively feeding through a link. In the first method, you don't really have to extend any of your own energy to the other person. Instead, you use the already established connection of the link. Simply focus on the link between you and actively pull energy through it. This is really just a more intentional version of the passive method described above. The amount of energy you get from this will depend on the strength and depth of the link. A link that is really well established will provide a good deal of energy, as it is essentially larger and allows for a greater energy flow. A thin link that is not really well developed will have a minimal flow of energy.

The second method requires an extension of your energy along the link. You will be using the link like the web of a spider. First you focus on the link, and then you follow it down to the person on the other end. You will gain a sense of the person, and although your physical perceptions may be vague, you should have a very clear impression of his or her energy. By doing this, you are essentially using the link as an

anchor to bilocate. Once you are "present" near them, you can feed as if through direct contact.

Often, because of time and distance, it is impossible to ask permission from the person you are linked to. Generally, you should make prior arrangements so that it is understood that you may draw upon his or her energy if you need it. If the person does not consent to this, take care to avoid making active use of the link.

57. DAMPENING LINKS

It is difficult to sever a link with a person. Deep links, especially, are almost impossible to remove. Most links can be dampened, and some of their effects, with effort, can be blocked. Links, however, are persistent. Given time and diligence, you can wear a link down to a mere filament, but the moment you put energy back into it, it will reassert itself, as strong as before.

For this reason, you should take care when forging links with a person. Whether you like that person or not, the link will tie you together for a long, long time. Deep links in particular can last not just years, but lifetimes. Through this connection, you will find yourself drawn to that person over and over again. While this may seem like some people's definition of a soul mate, keep in mind that the person on the other end of the link is not necessarily your perfect love. Depending on how the link was forged, he or she may be your bitterest enemy. And even lovers can become enemies after too many tumultuous lives. Also, there is no limit to the number of people you can be linked to, so things can get complicated, especially in a culture whose ideal is monogamous love.

You can erect a barrier that limits the amount of energy interaction you have with unwanted links. One way of doing this is to envision a wall or a shield that blocks the energy of the link just as it enters your energy body. Although it is harder to do and generally more noticeable, you may also erect a barrier at the point of the link just outside the other per-

son's energy. A barrier that occurs within the link somewhere between the two of you can also be effective.

Sometimes you may want to block some but not all of the energy passing through a link. If for some reason you do not want to send but you still want to receive energy, you can erect a barrier that will allow energy to pass only one way. This is usually helpful in situations when you are very emotional and you don't want this bleeding over to the person on the other end. With practice, you may be able to erect discerning barriers that will, for example, block emotions, but allow vital energy to pass through. Consult the Codex divisions on shielding (64) and filters (65), and then simply apply these techniques to links.

When you are linked to someone who is undergoing emotional turmoil, the effects can be very difficult for you. A lot of the other person's emotion will echo down the link to you, and sometimes you will take that person's bad mood for your own. Sometimes this can create a vicious cycle wherein your partner's bad mood creates a bad mood for you, then your bad mood amplifies your partner's bad mood, and back again. This can go back and forth until you are caught up in an emotional feedback loop.

Selectively blocking the link is one way of preventing this. Sometimes this is too severe, however, and you want to retain at least some sense of the other person in case there is a real problem. In this case, you can envision a dense fog between you and the other person. The fog will obscure most low-level impressions, but strong emotions resulting from any kind of crisis will still come through.

58. BREAKING LINKS

Breaking links is not easy. The stuff of a link is very elastic. It resists being cut, and it almost never tears. You may have some success by pulling the link out by the roots, but this comes at a cost. The link is made up of the combined energies of the people on each end. The roots, even if they are in a more superficial layer of the energy body,

still encompass a wide area. Tearing this out will harm the person and leave a deep auric or subtle body wound. This wound is very difficult to heal, and depending on its placement in the person's energy body, it can create a lot of problems. These problems will not be limited to the subtle body but will usually cross over to the physical body as well.

Even cutting a link, if you succeed, will cause some damage to the people on either end. Usually, cutting the link does not stop the flow of energy along it, and so each person now has a leak in his or her energy that is exposed to anything and everything that may wish to latch on. If the link is a very small one, this may not pose a significant problem. For a well-established link, however, the energy loss can prove very detrimental.

One solution to this problem is to try cauterizing the link by applying an intense heat to it either with a tendril or your hand (see Codex division 96). This will still cause some damage to the persons involved, but cauterizing will seal the link so there is no future leakage. Cauterizing, however, does create a scar. This scar will cause damage to the subtle body, and this may manifest itself as a chronic physical problem. Depending on the location of the link, that person's ability to process energy may also be impaired. This may come back slowly, or it may never come back at all. For these reasons, you should not try to remove a link through cauterization unless it is absolutely necessary. You should weigh the potential harm that cauterizing will produce against the long-term harm brought about by leaving the link alone before taking any action.

All of the above techniques require a great deal of knowledge and skill with energy work. Regardless of the level of skill employed, there is no guarantee they will work.

If you have undesired links, your best course of action is to completely sever your relations with those persons and let the links wear down over time. Every time you focus on a person, you send energy down that link. Even if the person is just a passing image in your mind,

a little energy has been put into your connection to him or her. Remove every reminder of undesired links from your life. Try not to even think of these individuals. If they do happen to cross your mind, try to regard them with as much emotional detachment as possible. Do not love them and do not hate them, for strong emotions, even negative ones, will only feed into the link.

If you are diligent with this, such undesired links will eventually be worn down to the barest filament. They will never completely go away, however, and so you will always have to maintain your distance mentally, emotionally, and physically from these people or else your connection to them will come back just as strongly as before.

59. THE CALLING

It is possible for you to use the links you have with people to draw them to you. When you establish a link with someone in this lifetime and he or she travels far away, you can pull on that link. This is a Calling. The process is very simple. You focus on perceiving your energy until you can become aware of the link. You focus your attention on the particular link with that person, and you give it a mental tug. You can reinforce your visualization by symbolically wrapping your hands around the subtle cord and pulling it to you. Pulling gently is best for the person on the other end. Yanking the cord can be felt, and sometimes this manifests as physical pain.

By pulling on the link, you are trying to pull that person closer to you, not just spiritually but physically as well. Many who are pulled in this way will find they suddenly have a need to visit or return. You will be in their thoughts, and then circumstances will conspire to bring them to you. This often occurs through a chain of unlikely coincidences. A person Called in this way will often say, "How strange I ran into you. Just the other day, I was thinking of you."

It is easiest for the Calling to work when the other person is not aware you have put out a Call. This way, the Calling creates a sub-

conscious influence, and the person neither resists the urge nor second-guesses it. When someone who is the focus of a Calling is aware of what you have done, he or she can consciously resist it. Sometimes this takes the form of overthinking the impulse so much that the person ultimately rejects it.

It is recommended that you only Call someone who would want to come to you. This can be helpful in an emergency when you truly need this person by your side. If you use the Calling frivolously, remember that the link goes both ways. The other person is perfectly capable of pulling on the link and Calling you.

Because links can last over lifetimes, it is possible to enact a major Calling as well. This is especially useful if you are the first to Awaken in an area and you know there are others connected to you. Even if you are not certain who these people are in their current incarnations, you can reach out blindly along your links and Call them to you. You can choose to focus on just one link or on several. In general, major Callings will take time to yield results. It is not unusual to wait six months to a year.

Keep in mind that you have had past relations with anyone you may Call this way, and that they undoubtedly have karma with you. Also, simply because they share a connection with you does not necessarily mean they will be happy to see you. Sometimes the strongest connections carried between lives are with those with unresolved issues. By bringing these people into your life, those issues will often come to the forefront. If both of you are Awakened enough to remember your past connections, you will have to consciously work these issues out between you. If either one of you is unawakened and has forgotten your Self, then you will work through the issues unconsciously, with little understanding about why certain things happen between you.

Calling someone who is unawakened can begin the Awakening process. You will further the progression by drawing the person into proximity with you. This is a very useful effect if you are one of the first born in a particular time period and you are trying to reestablish the Family around you.

Some people function as Keystones for this very reason. Keystones played pivotal roles to a large number of people in the past, and the connections forged through these interactions make them a kind of anchor in the present. When a Keystone is born in a particular time and place, many of those connected to them will be born in close proximity. Others are drawn to a Keystone as if through a Calling, even when no Calling has consciously been done. This will draw people together at an exponential rate. In this way the Family is reestablished, even after being sundered for many, many years.

SECTION III

BASIC
ENERGY WORK

60. SENSING ENERGY

An ability to interact with energy comes naturally to all of our kind. However, we are not always conscious of this interaction, and for many, the ability to sense and direct energy must be learned.

For the Priest caste, an awareness of energy is crucial if they are to meet their greater energy needs. Therefore, many of the Priest caste learn how to sense and direct energy at an early age. Counselors are also naturally sensitive to energy, but sometimes it is so much a part of them that they do not consciously recognize it when they interact with it. Therefore, many Counselors must learn how to consciously sense and direct energy as they Awaken to themselves. The Warrior caste has the greatest difficulty sensing energy because of their innate defensive shields. With their sense of energy naturally inhibited, it takes an extra effort on the part of the Warrior to learn how to perceive energy. This makes learning slow for them at the outset, although once they have overcome the hurdles particular to their caste, they can be as potent at the manipulation of energy as either Counselor or Priest.

When learning how to sense the energy we manipulate, our best starting focus is our hands. The hands are potent tools in energy exchange, but this can be so instinctual to us that we do not consciously

understand what we are doing. Becoming conscious of our ability to focus energy to our hands allows us to direct that energy to other purposes, such as healing, charging ritual objects, defense, or attack.

To gain a sense of the energy that we work with, begin by focusing energy to your hands. Do this by first getting a sense of your energy. You can do this most easily by centering yourself. Close your eyes and visualize energy gathering at your center. As you gain internal awareness of your energy, hold on to this perception. Then, visualize some of your energy running down your arms into your hands. See the energy filling your hands to the point where a little of it is spilling out of the skin. Imagine that your hands are surrounded by a nimbus of this energy, like a light coming from within.

If you are successful in focusing energy into your hands, they will begin to grow warm and to tingle. The capillaries will expand, which may be visible as a splotchy pinkening of the skin as, on a subtler level, the energy channels also expand. A thrumming sensation may encompass your hands. You may feel it running up your arms all the way to the elbows. In some cases, this may even be perceptible to those around you, so that someone who touches your hands will not only notice the increased heat, but will also feel an electrical vibration coursing through your flesh.

Other sensations will verify that you have succeeded in focusing energy in your hands. The joints of your fingers may begin to feel swollen or stiff. They may feel creaky, as if there is something caught in the joint. As energy flows naturally in straight lines, it tends to get caught at the joints, and a buildup of energy will result in this stiff, creaky feeling. The veins of the hands will also become prominent for much the same reason that the skin blotches as the capillaries expand. The hands may also feel swollen and heavy, as if they are filled with something that weighs them down, and you may have the impulse to shake or rub this off.

Often when you are focusing energy into your hands, you will also become aware of your heartbeat. You will probably be able to feel your

pulse in the very center of your hands. If you lay your hands upon someone else, that person will immediately feel the heat of the energy and may feel this pulse as well. This is part of the delicate interaction between the subtle and physical bodies: the energy and the nerves and the blood vessels are all intricately intertwined.

Once you have gathered such a charge to your hands, you may direct the energy toward a specific goal. To do this, you must visualize what you wish to do, accompanying the visualization with actual physical contact and motions to help maintain focus. Most commonly, energy gathered into the hands is used to heal. The energy can also be focused and shaped, or given a specific charge. The first step to any application of this energy, however, is simply to sense it so that you know how to consciously call it up and direct it.

61. GROUNDING

One of the most basic exercises for energy work is grounding. This is a fundamental concept that will help immensely with your own handling of energy. Before you attempt any further subtle reality exercises or energy work, you should have at least a basic understanding of how and when to ground.

Metaphysical grounding functions just like grounding a wire in electronics. Energy, if allowed to build up in something, can be destructive. If enough current is run through them, wires will short out. Your body is no different. If too much energy or too much of the wrong kind of energy is allowed to build up within you, it will begin to have negative effects on both your subtle and your physical selves.

Grounding forms a connection between you and a stabilizing force. The excess or incompatible energy is then allowed to pass harmlessly from you into that stabilizing force. Most people use the earth for grounding, shunting the excess energy literally into the ground. However, do not be constrained by this visualization, for grounding is simply a metaphor. Any technique that allows you to get rid of excess,

distracting, or detrimental energy so that you may achieve stability is grounding.

Some people are naturally very grounded, so their energy rarely gets erratic or out of control. Others tend to be very ungrounded. Excess energy usually manifests itself first in erratic behavior and mood swings. Those who are very ungrounded can have trouble concentrating and will often jump from activity to activity without any ability to focus. They can be excessively fidgety or hyperactive. If a great deal of detrimental or incompatible energy is allowed to build up in a person, it will commonly collect first in the joints, causing stiffness and pain. It can also create tension in the muscles and eventually muscle cramps, especially in the neck and back because of the massive amount of energy constantly being transferred along the spine.

Too much energy can make your mind and emotions spin. Sensations will bombard you from both inside and out, and after a certain point, you may no longer be able to distinguish between sensations originating inside of you and those you are picking up from the world outside. By grounding, you will calm this effect and bring order to yourself once again.

Counselors tend to benefit most from grounding. Counselors are constantly taking energy into themselves and cycling it. Thus, they are always bombarded with many different energy types, and they often suffer from a buildup of energy they cannot easily disperse. Grounding this out helps them to maintain a solid sense of self amid all that changing energy. The Warriors ground naturally, and one of their roles in the Family is to help others ground. It is possible for Warriors to be too grounded, however, and this can contribute to their lack of sensitivity to heightened states of energy.

In Priests, the severe alteration affects the energy channels in their legs. These channels ordinarily complete the circuit between the body and the earth. For this reason, the Priests are the least grounded of all the castes. However, Priests should ground only selectively. The Priests' disconnectedness to their body and to the physical world is the

main source of their heightened perceptions as well as their spiritual threshold state. Only when Priests are overwhelmed by energy or surrounded by energy detrimental to them should they seek to ground. Further, because of the weakened channels in the legs, Priests may have difficulty using visualizations that ground energy through these channels. Instead, Priests do best to ground through their hands, facilitating their visualization by laying their palms flat against the earth.

62. GROUNDING TECHNIQUES

The basic process of grounding is very simple: You take the excess energy and send it into the ground. You also use the stability of the ground to add order to the energy that remains within you.

Many people will feel excessively heavy or slowed down if they are grounded only to the earth, and so a secondary step to grounding is to pull your energy up and send it to the sky just as you sent it to the ground. Once the energy feels spread out and airy, pull it back down to your center and find a balance between the heavy order of the earth and the airy openness of sky. When you are finished, you should have grounded out the excess and potentially harmful energy as well as stabilized what remains.

Most people ground through their feet. They simply visualize the energy passing from their feet into the ground. Some people imagine spikes coming from the bottoms of their feet and rooting them to the ground. The energy then passes through the spikes and anchors them to the ground. Others imagine that they are a great tree, with massive roots that reach deep into the earth. The energy passes through these roots into the ground, and the roots in turn take stability from the ground. This visualization is especially helpful in the second step, where you can visualize the sky-bound energy as reaching up through your branches. You can reinforce this visualization by stretching your arms upward as you send the energy up, then bringing your hands down and clenching them over your heart when you find the balance between earth and sky.

A more earthy approach involves taking off your shoes and going for a brief walk in the grass. Take some time to scrunch the grass between your toes and feel the earth beneath your bare feet. As you do this, allow the energy to pass from your bare flesh to the ground beneath you, and take stability and focus from the feel of the ground beneath your feet.

You can ground also by sitting. This is especially helpful for the Priest caste. Cross your legs beneath you and sit on the grass. Visualize the energy running straight down from your spine and into the ground. To reinforce the grounding and stabilizing effects of this particular method, you can also touch one hand lightly on the ground, sending additional energy down through the contact you have established with your fingers. Finally, you can sit down and thrust a blade into the ground, sending energy in a spike down through the blade. Metal is a great conductor of energy, and the dramatic aspect of this technique really adds focus. It is a particular favorite of the Warrior caste.

It is a good idea to ground when you are in a large crowd and you feel overwhelmed by the energy and feelings of all the people around you. If you are an empath, you should ground any time your empathy is causing you to get overwhelmed by the emotions of another person or persons. You should also try grounding when the energy of a person or place is making you feel sick or agitated.

If there is an imbalance in your own energy that is making your thoughts race or making you experience radical shifts in emotions and sensitivity, grounding may often be able to help you. It may not completely solve the problem, but it will at the very least bring you a little more focus and stability. Also, when you are in a heightened energy state that has started to make you feel spacey, dizzy, or shaky, you probably want to ground. While a heightened energy state is desirable for most energy and ritual work, everyone has a threshold of tolerance. Once this has been exceeded, the heightened energy will start to hurt you, especially by burning out the energy channels in your system. This burnout is usually only temporary, and is rather like the muscle

fatigue a runner experiences after a marathon. However, grounding will negate most of the negative effects and will prevent any possible long-term damage from occurring.

63. CENTERING

Grounding helps to get rid of energy that is causing a problem. It also helps to gain some measure of stability and balance. Once you have gone from an ungrounded state to a more stable state of being grounded, you will also want to take a few moments to refocus yourself and find your center. This step is called centering. In most metaphysical practices, centering goes hand in hand with grounding. While you can center without grounding first, and you can ground without centering, the most effective method of balancing and refocusing your energy is to both ground and center.

When centering, you simply find your center. In grounding, you have already taken the preliminary steps for doing this by reaching into the ground, then reaching up to the sky, then balancing back at the midpoint. Your center is that place of balance. Especially when we expose ourselves to a myriad of different energies, it is very easy to get out of balance, and centering is basically a recalibration of our internal scales.

Start by gathering your energy at your core. This energy should not be lumped together in a static ball, but in a vital, rotating sphere. As you gather this energy together, keep your mind on what is *you* and hold on to that alone. Let go of anything that does not belong. Ignore anything from the outside that distracts from the whole of you.

Once you have gathered this dynamic core of energy, extend it out to all parts of your body. Do not extend it past the limits of your body, but press it right up against the inside of your skin. As you do this, become aware of everything inside of you. Allow yourself to feel with perfect clarity every aspect of your physical body, every aspect of your subtle body, and everything else in between. You should have a whole

awareness of Self, and for a few moments, your awareness should extend to nothing but you.

Some people center while standing up, oftentimes bowing their heads and lowering their focus to the central part of the chest, over the solar plexus. You may fold both your hands over this spot for additional focus. Non-Kheprians may find that their center is naturally lower, in the navel chakra, and thus focus should be shifted here. Some people close their eyes and turn their focus inward, often toward a spot located behind and slightly above the eyes. This is a point often associated with the third eye, and some people place their center here, as opposed to the navel or the solar plexus. Other people center while sitting down, often in conjunction with the grounding exercise where you place one hand lightly on the ground in front of you. Finally, you can lie back, cross your arms at your chest, and cross your legs at the ankles. This way, you make yourself a closed circuit, and as you focus your energy, you symbolically hold it within you.

Centering should give you a renewed sense of Self and a renewed sense of focus. You should feel both your subtle and your physical bodies with exceptional clarity. When you have centered, your energy should be balanced, and any distractions should have been stilled. You should do this at least once a day to maintain your balance, and you should repeat the exercise whenever it feels as though something has disrupted that balance.

64. SHIELDING

The subtle body has several defenses against intruding energies that may harm or imbalance you. The first layer of the aura is a protective barrier that functions much like your skin. Additional layers of the aura also help to repel external energies. However, you do not have to rely upon the aura alone to protect you from unwanted intrusions on your energy. Through a conscious act of Will, you can extend some of your energy around yourself to construct a subtle barrier. This technique is known as shielding.

Shields are used for a number of reasons. Many Awakened construct shields to protect themselves from psychic attacks. Shields can guard against malignant attachments by preventing parasitic entities from connecting with your energy. Shields can also be used to keep out chaotic, negative, or conflicting energies. This is especially useful for very sensitive people who can easily be overwhelmed by their perceptions of these energies. An empath should shield when in a large crowd, for example, to avoid being bombarded by the cacophony of everyone's thoughts and feelings.

The most basic shield is a simple bubble of energy that you project around yourself. Close your eyes, ground, and center yourself. Begin to gather energy within, focusing it in the area beneath your solar plexus. Begin to shape this energy into a large sphere. You may find it helpful to cup your hands over your solar plexus, as if you were shaping a ball of energy half inside your chest. It is best to visualize the outside of the sphere as something tough but flexible. Rigid shields are not as effective as shields with a little give to them. Under a strong assault, rigid shields may break, whereas more flexible shields will bend. It helps that in its natural state, energy tends to be very elastic.

As this sphere of energy begins to take form, expand it. Guide this expansion with your hands, pulling the exterior of the sphere farther and farther away from your chest. There will be a point where the sphere grows so large that you are no longer pulling the energy outside of it with your hands. Instead, you are pushing from the inside to stretch the sphere around you.

When you are finished, the center of the sphere should remain rooted at your core, but the outside should surround you completely. At first, it will feel very strange to have this artificial barrier around you, and you will have to think about it almost constantly in order to keep it in place. The shield is by no means a permanent structure. Unless you reinforce it, the energy of a shield will deteriorate over time. In order to maintain the shield, you have to periodically refocus and replenish its energy.

There are many variations on this basic form of shielding. As much of shielding is conceptual, the manner in which you shield depends on your method of visualization. You can give specific form and function to your shields through your visualizations, and you can further charge the energy of your shields with specific emotions or intents. The limits of how elaborate you can get with shielding will depend upon your imagination and your ability to apply this to energy manipulation.

There is one major problem with shields of any sort, especially for those who feed upon energy: keeping energy out means that you also cannot take energy in. Most shields are nondiscerning barriers against energy of all types, and this includes the ambient energy that you may be accustomed to taking from your environment.

Shielding too heavily can make you feel distanced and detached from things around you, and your perceptions will feel muffled and dimmed. This is especially disconcerting for members of the Priest caste. You will be blocked from your accustomed interaction with ambient energy, and the lack of sensation may make you feel disoriented or numb.

While Warriors shield almost all the time, Warriors also do not require a great deal of energy to function. Counselors, on the other hand, exchange energy constantly with their environment, and they often feel uncomfortable if this interaction is blocked. Priests, because of their heightened need, must be open to ambient energy. Due to their sensitivity, however, there are times when certain energies must be blocked by both these castes or else they will suffer from imbalances or sensory overload. If shielding is too restrictive, however, a filter may be preferred.

65. CREATING FILTERS

Filters are basically selective shields. They are set up in such a way as to be porous so that some energy is allowed to get through. Filtering is not as restrictive as shielding, and it is preferable for those individ-

uals who need to retain some connection to the energies around them.

A filter allows you to sort through all the energy you take in and block certain elements of that energy out. A filter may target certain emotions that you do not wish to vicariously experience, or it may filter out the taint of alcohol, drugs, or disease so that you do not draw these things into yourself. The fundamental key to a filter is intent. You may use a number of images to visualize putting it into place, but these are simply mental tools that reinforce intent.

First, target the specific energy that you do not wish to take in. Visualize a filter, like a cheesecloth or sieve, that will allow everything to pass through except this particular energy. If you are actively drawing from the crowd around you, imagine the targeted energy getting caught within the filter while everything else freely passes through. You may create an even more selective filter that allows only one specific sort of energy through.

This manner of filter can take a great deal of concentration to maintain. As with a shield, unless you are very used to this sort of filter, you will have to keep focusing on the filter, constantly keeping in mind the types of energies you do and do not want to allow through. A less demanding method is to surround yourself not with a solid barrier of energy marked with selective holes but with a large nimbus of energy that is spread out and amorphous, like cotton or fog. This does not keep selected energies out so much as it catches and absorbs them. This type of filter is especially useful for dampening the effect of the energies surrounding you. Overwhelming or aggressive energies are spread throughout the entire filter, and these are rendered mostly harmless by the time they trickle through.

You can use filters in order to cleanse a certain type of energy from a target's system. To do this, simply connect to their energy and begin cycling it into yourself. As you cycle the energy, use a filter to remove what is harmful or unwanted. Ground this out or discard it, redirecting it elsewhere. Pass the cleansed energy back to your target, and continue

cycling energy from them until their entire system is purged of the unwanted element.

Although it is typically preferable to filter energy before you take it into your system, you can also filter energy once you have drawn it inside of you. In this case, the filtering is done as you cycle the energy. The cleansed energy is assimilated into your system while the filtered residue is collected together and retained until it can be discarded or otherwise grounded out.

Because the subtle and the physical realities are intricately interwoven, this method of filtering can be used to reduce the effects of certain intoxicants on you or on others. Treat the intoxicants just like any other unwanted energy and begin filtering and cycling them out of your own or your target's system. Purging the system in this way will reduce but not completely negate the effect of the intoxicant.

If you are filtering an intoxicant out of another's system, you may choose to ground the intoxicant out, or you may retain it. Taking the purged intoxicant into your own system will allow you to vicariously experience its effects. As this residue is merely the energetic component of the intoxicant, this can be easily purged from your own system once you no longer wish to experience these effects.

66. MEDITATION

For anyone working with energy and the subtle reality, meditation is an indispensable tool. Meditation allows you to intentionally enter an altered state of consciousness that is more focused and more profound than ordinary consciousness. While meditation is associated mainly with Eastern religions, it is important to understand that meditation is not necessarily a religious practice. Meditation is simply a tool that helps harness and balance spirit and mind.

The heightened and focused state of meditation gives you a greater awareness of your energy. It also helps you balance that energy and achieve a greater sense of clarity. Finally, meditation helps you achieve

the kind of internal concentration that is necessary for advanced energy work and visualization.

One of the most basic aspects of meditation is breathing. By focusing on your breathing, you heighten your awareness of the movement of both breath and energy. Once you are aware of the flow of breath and energy, you can easily achieve a heightened state where your consciousness is balanced between spirit and body.

When meditating, you typically take deep, regular breaths. This is not the kind of breath where you inhale sharply all at once and your entire upper chest expands. Instead, you must breathe with your diaphragm and imagine the breath being pulled down to the very bottom of your lungs. It is helpful to imagine that you are breathing through a very small straw. You need to exhale just as slowly as you inhaled, letting go of the breath in a controlled and steady stream. Some systems suggest that you breathe in through your nose and breathe out through your mouth, though this is not strictly necessary.

If you are breathing correctly, you will naturally begin to relax. If you are having trouble relaxing, you may want to try a simple but effective muscular exercise. As you breathe in, tense the muscles throughout your body and hold this tension for a few moments. When you exhale, release the tension and imagine all of the tension leaving you with the breath you exhale. Do this several times, and you should begin to tingle all over, feeling very light and relaxed.

Once you have gotten the breathing and relaxation, close your eyes and turn your attention inward. Focus your eyes as if you were looking into the middle of your own head. Now still your thoughts so all you can feel is the low hum of awareness that is *you*. If random thoughts and images flit through your mind, do not allow them to break your concentration. Instead, simply do not focus on them and allow them to pass away. Do this until nothing you do not want to focus on is entering your mind.

Once you have achieved this point, take a few moments to enjoy this stillness of mind. Your whole body should be thrumming, and you

will have a refined awareness of your energy. You will also have a heightened sense of focus and mental clarity. If your only goal in meditation is stress reduction and the balancing of energy, then remain in this state for five to ten minutes before slowly bringing yourself back out.

This stilled mental state is very useful in its own right, but it also can be harnessed as a very potent tool. Clearing the mind through meditation will give you a one-pointed focus that allows you to direct all your energies to a single, chosen task. This focus can greatly aid in visualizations, past-life work, and any other application of Will. This is the real benefit meditation holds for anyone engaged in energy work.

67. OTHER METHODS OF FOCUS

Meditation is a crucial component to spiritual awareness and internal balance. However, you do not have to sit still and perform breathing exercises to gain the benefits of a heightened state of consciousness. There are numerous other methods that help you achieve the same kind of internal focus.

Dancing is a method that has been used by cultures all over the world to achieve altered states. From Tungus Siberian shamans to modern Voudounistas, such cultures make use of the mind-altering effects of ecstatic dance. Dance occupies the body in a rhythmic set of repetitive motions. The rhythm and flow inherent in dance also heighten the awareness of energy. When dancing is performed consciously as an exercise of both body and energy, it can have the same effect of intensifying focus and awareness that traditional meditation has.

Drumming, singing, and chanting are also powerful tools for helping to achieve this state. Music and rhythm provide a powerful focus, and they have a potent effect on both body and energy.

A unique clarity can also be achieved when the mind is forced to overcome extremes in stimulus, whether this is a sensory overload or the complete lack of sensation. Sensory deprivation can inspire an altered state by occupying the body with the absence of stimulus. In

this case, the mind has no choice but to focus inward, heightening awareness of more than the body. Sustained experiences that overload the senses, such as suspension, can have the same effect of elevating awareness to more than the body. Binding the body can also free the mind to focus inward and transcend.

Of course, the achievement of altered states does not always have to be extreme. Many people automatically slip into an altered state while driving a car. Driving, especially over long stretches of highway, involves repetitive motions that allow part of your mind and body to go on autopilot while the deeper part of you can explore memories, dreams, and subtle perceptions. Once you recognize this as an altered state, you can harness it just as you can harness any other style of meditation.

Do not let yourself be limited by your expectations of what meditation should be. You may find that you achieve the same state of consciousness while performing strenuous physical activities, while dancing, painting, or working with your hands. There are many legitimate methods of achieving clarity and focus, and these vary greatly from person to person.

Any activity that you can perform consciously in a balance of body and spirit and that also helps you achieve heightened focus and awareness will have the same beneficial effects as meditation. The key is to discover what this is for you, harness it, and integrate it into your regular routine.

68. SEEING ENERGY

There is a visual component to the energy you manipulate. This is best observed in low lighting, as strong ambient lighting can easily overpower the energy's subtle glow. Candlelight is ideal for viewing energy, although very low electrical lighting can work as well.

Center yourself and gather energy into your hands. Place your hands in front of you with the palms facing one another about an inch apart. Concentrate on gathering the energy into your hands until they

are warm and tingling. If you push your hands toward each other slowly, you should feel a slight resistance.

Once you have reached this point, focus your gaze on the space between your hands. Try moving your hands at different angles, all the time keeping the palms about an inch apart, pressed against that invisible barrier. You may want to move your hands slightly from side to side or move them closer together and then farther apart. If you are having trouble seeing the energy in the space between your hands, try focusing on a point just beyond the skin of your fingers. Do not stare too fixedly at one point for very long, for this will result in a visual effect that may seem like a kind of light but will actually be an optical illusion created by your eye as the receptors become fatigued.

The energy will appear to be a dim, grayish mist. It will be translucent and diffuse, growing most dense closest to your flesh. It will hug your skin, extending into the space between your hands, often with an oily or rippling effect. If you move your hands slowly back and forth, trails of the energy will linger on the air, dissipating quickly after your hands have passed.

Nearly all of our kind can perceive this visual component to the energy. The Priest caste are in general the most sensitive to it, followed closely by the Counselor caste. The Warriors, with their dampened sensitivities, may have difficulty with this exercise. Their perception of energy is frequently not visual, and they are more likely to perceive energy indirectly, through instinct. It will take time and patience for Warriors and those who function like them to learn how to interpret their perceptions.

69. THE ENERGY BALL

Once you have learned how to focus and direct energy into your hands, the most basic form of external energy manipulation is the energy ball. This technique is a logical extension of the exercises you have already done involving sensing and seeing energy. Simply start

out by centering yourself and gathering energy into your hands. Just as you did when trying to see energy, hold your hands close to one another with the palms about an inch or so apart. Shift the positioning of your hands while you concentrate on focusing energy to them until you can feel that slight resistance that tells you that the energy is there.

Now, keeping the energy between your hands, cup your palms as if you were holding a ball of putty between them. Focus energy into this space between your hands, gradually adding to the ball of energy you are holding. The energy between your hands will begin to feel weightier, and it may even push your hands somewhat farther apart as it grows. If you try to press your hands in around it, you will feel a subtle tension, although if you press too hard, this tension will be lost, and the energy will collapse in your hands.

Take a little time just to feel the energy you have gathered between your hands. The alchemists considered subtle energy to be spiritual mercury, and you will find that, like mercury, the energy is malleable and fluid. There is also a certain amount of thickness to it, but if you push at it with too much force, it will break up and disperse into many individual little drops. Like mercury, energy is easier to gather if you cup it and guide it, always being gentle and never using too much direct force.

An energy ball is the most versatile building block of external energy manipulation. An energy ball may be allowed to remain neutral, or you may charge the energy with a particular emotion. To do this, you simply focus on that emotion while you are also focusing the energy into your hands. Imagine that the energy is being infused with this emotion. If you are working with a second person, see if they can try to guess this emotion from the feel of the energy. You may find it helpful to visualize the energy as having a particular color that you associate with this emotion. Others find it helpful to give the energy a particular feel also associated with the emotion. There is a great deal you can do by charging energy, so you will want to experiment with this variation for a while until you are sure of your results.

Once out of your hand, an energy ball will hold its shape only for a little while. As energy has the consistency of mercury, once it no longer has your hands supporting its shape, it will naturally flow into the space around it. Generally, this means that discarded energy will drop toward the ground, spread out, and eventually disperse among the energy that naturally flows throughout the environment.

With focus and concentration, you can infuse the energy ball with a little more cohesion. Take the energy ball in your hands and press it slowly together. As you do so, focus on concentrating the energy so it becomes tighter and denser. You will find that the energy ball has about the same heft to it, but now it takes up much less space. Add more energy to the energy ball and then compress it again. You may do this repeatedly, and with each compression, the energy ball will become denser. This concentrated energy will take longer to dissipate, although even the most compressed energy will eventually lose its cohesion and be dispersed back into the universal flow.

70. BASIC ENERGY PLAY

An energy ball can be passed from person to person, and so long as it is held carefully, it should retain its shape as well as any charge you have infused it with. In this way, you can pass a charged energy ball around among your friends and see if any of them can guess the emotion you have infused it with.

In addition to charging an energy ball with a particular emotion, you can also mold an energy ball into a particular shape. This is a somewhat more advanced application. While it helps to shape the energy with your hands, this is only a focusing technique. The real work is done through a conscious act of Will. By concentrating on a particular shape, you can impose that shape on the energy. You are essentially taking the raw stuff of the energy and infusing it with a structure. Some people are much better at this than others, but the skill can be developed over time. This technique is the first step to learning how to fashion energy constructs.

Energy balls and constructs can be thrown. If you experiment by tossing them back and forth between you and a partner, you will find that an energy ball feels something like a water balloon when it hits you. When it impacts upon your energy, it will hold its shape for an instant and then burst, spreading itself all over the outer layers of your energy body, then eventually dripping off or soaking in. If you are hit with a charged energy ball, you will probably feel a momentary rush of the emotion it was charged with. Not everyone is sensitive enough to feel this, however, and individuals who have significant shields will probably feel nothing at all. Consciously shielding will of course repel the effects of an energy ball, and the energy will burst against the shield, dispersing harmlessly into the environment beyond the shield.

It is not recommended that you throw energy balls randomly at people. Some individuals may view this as an attack, although tossing around basic energy balls is less like firing a gun and more like shooting psychic spitballs. Much like shooting spitballs at people, it is sometimes hard to resist the urge to do it once or twice, especially in the early stages of learning.

If you do happen to throw an energy ball at an unsuspecting individual, watch the person's reactions carefully, as these can provide valuable confirmation of the effectiveness of your work. Many people will jump or look up suddenly when hit with an energy ball. Even the unawakened often react to being hit with energy, although they are rarely conscious of their reactions.

71. CHARGING AN OBJECT

Once you know how to gather energy into your hands and give it form, you can transfer some of this energy into an object. This technique is a simple extension of the energy ball exercise.

Hold the object you wish to charge. As with the energy ball exercise, center yourself and begin to channel energy into your hands. Once you have gathered a good deal of energy, direct this energy into

the object. As with an energy ball, you can focus a particular emotion into the energy, and this emotion will linger in the object so long as the energy does not degrade. You can also focus simple concepts or functions into the energy. This is an advanced application of charging that involves a concentrated act of Will. For this, you must have a clear idea of your intent before you begin. It may help to represent this intent with a simple word or phrase. Concentrate on your intent and focus this into the energy. You may wish to speak your intent out loud. Think of successive waves of the energy as building or weaving this intent into the object. Paired with spoken repetitions of your intent, this technique can be quite potent.

You can consciously charge an item to temporarily store energy. However, this tends to be very inefficient. Since energy degrades so quickly once it is disconnected from its source, it is almost impossible to reclaim the same amount of energy that was expended in charging the item in the first place. For this reason, most items are charged only for ritual purposes or to produce a specific effect when another person comes into contact with that item. Many people charge an item with their particular energy signature so it is easier to work with that item. If an item is used as a focus or tool in energy work, charging it in this manner often makes it easier to run energy through it.

You can also use an object as a physical focus for an energy construct. This gives the construct an anchor that helps slow the dissipation of its energy. An item with an energy construct anchored to it exists in both aspects of reality. Depending on the nature of the construct, this may allow you to use the item energetically just as you would use it physically. If you build an energetic vessel around a bottle, for example, you can then trap or store energy in the bottle. Try to always choose an object in keeping with the nature and intent of the construct. This helps build your focus, and it will make the end result more powerful.

The effects of charging are by no means permanent. Energy, once it is projected outside of its source, will eventually degrade and dissipate. The energy infused into an object tends to last longer than

energy given shape without any corresponding physical form, but you will still have to regularly infuse the object with energy in order for it to retain its charge.

Some items will hold charges better than others. In general, it is best to use items that are partially or entirely made out of metal. Metal is a natural conductor of energy and it holds a very strong charge. Whenever possible, avoid using inferior metals. Some metals, like tin, nickel, or lead, are not very receptive to this sort of energy. Silver is ideal, as are platinum and gold, although the cost of such metals often prohibits widespread application. Some people have an affinity with iron and steel while others have difficulty working with these metals. It is best to experiment so you may learn what works best for you. Because metals are the most receptive to this kind of energy work, items like rings, pendants, and blades are most commonly charged for ritual and other workings. Crystals, especially quartz, are also naturally conductive, and this makes them another good choice for charging. Synthetics, such as plastic, do not hold a charge very well.

Not all charged objects are the result of a conscious working. Personal items and objects you keep close to you will naturally become charged with your energy. Necklaces and rings that are worn constantly, for example, will retain your unique energy signature. Objects that you work with in ritual will gain a certain charge based on what they are used for. The more importance an item holds for you, the stronger a charge you unconsciously give it. Thus, a necklace with specific symbolic meaning will hold a good deal more energy than something that you wear for mere ornamentation.

Once these items are no longer in contact with you, this unconscious charge will degrade just as a conscious charge will. However, the lingering energy of both consciously and unconsciously charged items can be "read" by someone who is sensitive. This technique is widely known as psychometry. A person's individual energy signature can be picked up from an object this way, as can emotional material, such as the importance this item held for the individual who owned it.

Skilled individuals can also use the energy of the item to trace it back to the owner, and in this way, a personal object can help you forge a connection with someone over a distance.

For those who naturally take energy, it is very easy to remove the charge from an item. This can be accomplished by holding the object in your hands and concentrating on pulling the energy out of it. Removing this energy is very similar to feeding, although the quality of energy in an object is rarely refined enough for assimilation. Rather than taking this energy into yourself, you will probably want to ground it out or discard it. If additional focus is required for removing the energy, hand motions, as if you were cleaning the item or wiping the energy away, can be helpful.

72. MANIFESTING

Everyone's personal energy extends beyond the limits of their physical body. Depending upon the person, this energetic field can extend a few inches to a few feet. This energy radiates outward into the environment, carrying with it a person's distinct energy signature, any strong emotions being experienced at the time, and even resonance of the thoughts running through his or her head. As other people come into contact with this energy field, they pick up this information and are affected by it, whether consciously or unconsciously.

Those who are Awakened typically generate larger fields of energy with stronger effects. Furthermore, the Awakened can consciously choose what information they wish to charge their energy with, thus influencing the energy those around them are exposed to. Many of the Family instinctively make use of this effect to increase their charisma, to make themselves more persuasive, or to make themselves more intimidating. Learning how to consciously project certain effects through one's personal energy field is known as manifesting.

Manifesting requires you to focus on a particular thought, feeling, or effect; charge your energy with this; then consciously extend

that energy around you. When manifesting, you also project your personal energy field, so it extends farther around you for a greater area of effect.

If you charge your energy with a strong emotion, then those around you will naturally pick this emotion up from you and respond accordingly. Whenever you experience a strong emotion, you naturally project it; however, by manifesting, you are making a conscious choice about what and how much you project.

Projecting emotions is the simplest form of manifesting. A somewhat more advanced technique is to project a simple but specific command, such as "Go away." As you focus on this command and project it throughout your energy, all those around you will pick it up on a subconscious level. This means that even the unawakened will process the command and respond to it, although in some cases the response will be simply to dismiss the information being received and ignore it. By manifesting, you are essentially using your body and its surrounding energy field as an antenna and telegraphing signals into the air. How well these signals are received and what response they get will depend on each individual receiver.

You can use manifesting to cut a path for yourself in a crowded room by projecting "Get out of my way." You can use manifesting to draw attention to yourself by projecting "Look at me." You can even use manifesting to hide in plain sight by projecting "Ignore me." Manifesting is of course not limited to simple commands but can encompass an abstract idea such as love, attraction, trust, or loyalty. These are often a little more difficult to master, as each person who receives your information may have a radically different set of criteria by which they judge attraction, love, or trust. However, with practice, you can develop an energy signature that is general enough to affect the majority of those you will come into contact with.

You can couple a general projection of charged energy with the spoken word, allowing the feelings or impressions you are trying to manifest to translate through your voice. By modulating the voice with

a conscious emission of charged energy, you can imbue your words with a melodic, commanding, or hypnotic effect.

Obviously, manifesting can be a very potent social tool. Manifesting from a stage when performing in any capacity can be exceptionally potent, as the audience is already primed to receive and respond to your telegraphed energies. You should use discretion with this ability, however, for there are some ethical concerns in how strongly you influence the behavior of those around you. Manifesting in order to impress a potential employer at a job interview is not much of an abuse of this ability, whereas manifesting in order to get someone to buy useless junk from you is. Ultimately, however, you are not strictly imposing your Will on those around you; you are simply projecting it. How your audience chooses to respond to what you project is still up to them.

When you manifest, take a few moments to concentrate on the effect you wish to inspire. If it is an emotion, name the emotion and repeat it several times to yourself. As you do, concentrate on what that emotion feels like. Visualize others responding to you with that emotion. If it is a phrase, like "Leave me alone," say it several times to yourself while concentrating on the feel of it and how others will pick up on and respond to that command.

While you are concentrating on the desired effect, gather energy into your center. Imagine that this energy is becoming infused with the chosen emotion or command. When you have gathered a sufficient charge, begin expanding the energy around you, much like you would a shield. Unlike a shield, however, visualize this energy as flowing and dynamic. It should not hang about you in a perfect sphere but spread around you like a billowing cloak, reaching out to all who come into your path. Anchor the energy at your center but otherwise allow it to drift in every direction around you.

You can experiment with how far you wish to extend this energy, although two to three feet on either side of you is a good distance to begin with. Those who are proficient at manifesting can extend their

energy through an entire room, and those who are truly powerful can influence an entire geographic area.

Once you have extended your energetic cloak, continue for a little while to visualize it flowing around you. For as long as you wish to extend it, keep the effect it is charged with in the back of your mind. If you feel the energy beginning to weaken or dissipate, name the emotion or command once more to yourself and take a few moments to recharge and reinforce the energy flowing around you.

While manifesting has the potential to influence an entire room, the most potent area of effect is in the direct radius of your projected energy field. Thus, anyone who comes into contact with your "personal space" will bear the full brunt of what you are projecting. Someone you are having a face-to-face conversation with, for example, will be standing immersed in your personal energy. When someone is directly in contact with your energy, you can focus on that person and target him or her with a spike of the effect you are projecting. If you physically come into contact with this person, such as through a handshake or a pat on the back, you will further amplify the effect.

Shielding will block manifesting partially or completely, depending on the strength of the shields as well as the potency of the projection. You can also use shielding to dampen the effect of your own projection. This comes in especially handy if you find that you manifest without really meaning to. Learning how to shield so that you keep your energy in will help prevent unconscious abuses of this ability.

Finally, while everyone naturally exudes energy into the world around them, consciously projecting a focused charge of energy requires a significant expenditure of energy. If you are not accustomed to such an expenditure, manifesting can quickly wear out your reserves. If you manifest constantly, your energy needs will significantly increase, requiring you to feed more often in order to make up the difference. Especially if you already have a high energy need, be sure to weigh the usefulness of the manifested effect with the potential exhaustion and do not use this ability frivolously.

73. AUGMENTATION

Energy directed by the Will can be used to push your body beyond your ordinary physical limits. This technique is known as augmentation. By augmenting, you can temporarily increase physical endurance, strength, or speed. This is a capacity that many individuals, Awakened or otherwise, will demonstrate in crisis situations. This crisis response can be harnessed, however, and applied consciously as a learned skill.

Augmentation comes easily to the Warrior caste. Generally, Warriors will augment without even thinking about it, always being as strong as they need to be. Priests can augment, although this is often as compensation for a preexisting physical debility. Counselors augment as well, although it does not come as naturally to them as it does to the Warrior caste.

Augmentation involves an internal concentration of energy. The first few times you augment, you will want to take a few moments to calm your mind and center yourself. Once you are centered, begin to gather energy within, focusing it in the area beneath your solar plexus. Picture the energy as a bright, pulsating ball. As you continue to gather the energy, begin to focus on your intent. You may want to verbalize your intent as a word or a phrase. You can repeat this silently in your head, or you can speak it aloud like a mantra. Verbalizing the intent will help to focus your Will, and it is through your Will that most of the augmentation is accomplished.

When you have gathered enough energy, release it, directing it toward whatever part of your body is the focus of the intended effect. You can support this through visualization. If you need to be stronger, think about the task at hand and imagine the energy going to your muscles and increasing their strength. If you need to be faster, imagine the energy shooting through you and quickening your movements and your reflexes. If you need to increase your stamina, picture the energy spreading throughout your body, supporting everything, so that your heart and lungs, muscles, and blood vessels all work together to resist fatigue.

As you grow proficient with this ability, you will not have to consciously gather energy or make an effort to visualize its effect. Simply Willing the effect will be sufficient. This holds true with practically every skill that involves the direction of energy: spoken commands, visualizations, or hand gestures are only tools that assist your focus. Once you can achieve that level of focus purely with your mind, a thought will accomplish as much and often more than all the visualizations you can imagine.

Augmentation can also be used to improve your body's ability to heal. If you are wounded, direct the energy to the affected area, and Will the healing to increase in speed. Visualize the blood flow in the area increasing, and imagine the energy increasing the production of new cells. If you are sick, Will the energy to increase the rate at which your body fights the germ. It may help to visualize the energy as a purging flame that burns the invading organism from your body. This sometimes results in a short but intense period of illness, where the disease runs its course in the span of several hours as opposed to several days. In this case, you will experience a rapid and intense progression of the symptoms, but afterward you will recover quickly.

Augmenting can further be used to increase pain tolerance, some immunities, and metabolism. Senses, too, can be augmented. In all cases, you accomplish the effect by focusing your energy and directing your Will. Intent is everything. You do not need to understand how the energy interacts with your body in order to bring about the effect. What you need to know is that you want that effect to occur.

Augmentation burns energy, and the more you augment, the more energy you will use. This will increase both how much and how often you need to feed. In general, the amount of energy required to accomplish an augmentation will depend upon how profound a change the augmentation creates. Sustaining an augmentation for a prolonged period of time will rapidly burn you out, so you should avoid any frivolous use of this ability.

Caution should further be used when augmenting because the

body can only be pushed so far. Increasing strength, stamina, or speed beyond your natural limits puts a tremendous strain upon your body. While you will be able to force yourself to accomplish something you ordinarily couldn't, once the augmentation fades, you will find yourself weaker than before, often with tears and strains throughout the areas you overused.

After a while, augmenting can be accomplished with very little thought. Warriors, especially, are capable of maintaining the focus necessary to augment on a semiconscious level. Unawakened Warriors tend to augment without even realizing they are doing it. Furthermore, because of their skill at augmentation, a small amount of exercise will go a very long way for a Warrior. Strength-building exercises especially will have increased results if Warriors supplement the physical exercise with a concentrated intent at making their muscles stronger.

The Priest caste often have to learn augmentation in order to overcome a physical debility. Given time, Priests can augment without thinking about it constantly, but for them this is less an inborn capacity than something that is developed out of need. As Priests Awaken, they learn how to manage their energy in order to compensate for their weakened physical connection. Compensating adds to the amount of energy Priests need to sustain themselves. Furthermore, once a Priest drops below a certain point energetically, he or she can no longer afford the energy to counteract the physical weakness. This results in a much more rapid and severe decline as the latent physical problems resurface, combining with the symptoms already being experienced from need.

74. ENERGY AND THE AURA

The energy field generated by each living thing is to some extent both measurable and perceptible. The visible extension of living energy that surrounds the physical body is known as the aura. The aura is made up

of the outermost layer of the subtle body as well as emanations of energy extending from that body.

A person's aura can generally be seen in layers or shells of energy that extend out beyond the body. The first shell extends only an inch or two away from the skin. This is the outermost layer of the subtle body, and it clings like an energetic skin to the physical form. The energy of this first layer is dense, making it the easiest layer of the aura to see.

Successive shells extend beyond this layer, each radiating out farther and farther, often up to a foot or more beyond the physical body. These outer layers are not as dense as the first auric layer, and consequently they are not as easy to see. These outer shells can be compared to the shells of energy surrounding the nucleus of an atom. The farther the shell is from the center of the individual, the more spread out the energy of that shell will be, until a point is reached where there is simply not enough energetic cohesion to support another shell. At this limit, any energy that extends beyond the shell detaches from the individual's energy field and is released into the environment. This shed energy joins other free-floating environmental energies as ambient energy.

While everyone has an aura, not everyone's aura is of the same strength or size. Individuals with strong, well-cultivated energy can support more extensive energy shells than individuals with weak or poorly cultivated energy. Thus, such well-developed individuals can have visible auras that extend as far as three feet or more around their physical bodies. Little more than the first layer may be visible in individuals with weak or stagnant energy. Energy blockages further affect the strength of the aura, so when the subtle body is not healthy, the aura will be thin and weak.

The aura functions as your energetic skin, and as such, it is your first line of defense from energetic intrusions and other attacks originating in the subtle reality. When you extend a tendril of energy toward a target, it pierces the person's aura in order to penetrate the

subtle body. Anything that seeks to attack or take energy directly from an individual must pierce the aura first. Auric wounds can take time to heal, and they may be reflected on the physical body with bruises, red marks, or sore spots. Such a wound opens a person up to further energetic intrusions, just as a cut in the skin will allow infection to enter the body. Many such wounds can make the aura weak, and an individual will literally leak energy and become exhausted, frail, and prone to physical illness and disease.

75. PERCEIVING THE AURA

The aura can be perceived in several relatively thin layers of almost-light that extend just beyond the skin. If you look for actual physical light extending around the body like a rainbow-colored halo, you will miss the subtle nuances of the actual aura. The aura is energy, and viewing it is more like seeing heat rise from the pavement in summer. There is neither light nor color, but this is how it is processed and described because light and color comprise the bulk of visual experience. The intuitive perception of the aura can involve a rich palette of colors, but this goes beyond the level that is immediately perceptible with the physical eyes.

The energy of the aura is usually first visible as a grayish mist that hovers just beyond the skin. This is the first layer of the aura, and the outermost layer of the subtle body. It will often appear textured, like oil or rippling water. It is not static but fluid and is constantly though subtly changing.

The aura is perceptible to other senses as well. If you hold your hand an inch or so above someone's flesh, you may first perceive a warmth. By moving your hand slightly away, then slowly moving it back so that it is almost but not quite touching the skin, you will eventually encounter a resistance. This will be like the surface tension on water. If you press too hard, you will easily break through. However, with practice, you can run your fingers through this primary layer of

the aura just as you would run them through a shallow pool of water. The resulting ripples will be perceptible to you as well as to the person you are doing this to.

The best place to first look for a glimpse of the aura is around the fingers. Look closely at the area just above the flesh. A very small layer, perhaps only millimeters thick, should be perceptible. It will differ in texture and quality from the air around it, and after a time, colors may suggest themselves to you. At all times you should trust your instincts and impressions and allow them to guide you to your conclusions. Do not doubt your perceptions until after you have explored them fully. Once you are finished, you can step back and analyze your experience all you wish.

After you have focused on the first layer, another layer, like a misty ring above the first, may become perceptible. This is the first outer shell of the aura. The energy in this shell is still charged with your personal energy signature and as such still resonates you, but it has been given off by your body and is on its way into the environment. Energy regularly works its way up through these successive layers, eventually reaching a point at which your individual system can hold it no longer and it disperses into the environment around you.

76. AURAS AND MEANING

Many books exist that attempt to interpret the various colors and textures of the aura. The main failing of such texts is to assume that the colors of the aura are perceptible to the actual physical eyes. While a certain frequency of the aura is visible to the naked eye, the colors and textures are perceived on an intuitive level, beyond the range of the five physical senses. Because perception of the aura's colors and textures is intuitive, the colors that an individual perceives will vary according to the meanings that that person attributes to various colors.

There is no measurable standard for the intuitive level of aura perception. Quite simply, everyone perceives the aura in his or her own

unique way. Some people do not “see” auras at this level at all, but nevertheless get an intuitive sense of their energy that is just as informative. Some perceive light only; others perceive only color. Still others may interpret the intuitive level of the aura as a physical sensation, such as hot, prickly, or cold. Others may get scents or even sounds.

We all filter our perceptions through our individual symbol systems. Thus, intuition has proven to be the only set rule for aura interpretation. If you see a particular color, analyze what that color means to you. Not everyone has the same meaning behind black, yellow, red, or blue. As your symbol system is uniquely your own, you must come to understand the meaning of your individual symbols if you are to accurately interpret your perceptions of the aura.

General guideposts, particularly if your experience of the aura is visual, can be established, however. Almost universally, very deep, vivid colors indicate strong energy. Pale, watery, or muddy colors often indicate weak energy. These reflect differences in the quality of the energy but not necessarily the quantity.

The amount of energy someone has tends to affect the size of the aura more than the intensity of its color. When one of our kind is low on energy, for example, the aura loses little of its intensity. Instead, the first layer of the aura shrinks in closer to the physical body, as it has less energy it can afford to extend. This can be compared to the constriction of blood vessels when the physical body is trying to conserve its warmth. With less blood going to the extremities and to the surface of the skin, less heat is lost.

If you are looking at someone’s aura, and all you seem to be seeing is a thick, whitish barrier, you are probably perceiving this person’s shields. Shields are energy, and as such, they are also perceptible. They may hide what lies beneath, but with skill, you can learn to see the energetic barrier itself, and, through this, a way inside.

Finally, wounds and intrusions are often visible in the aura. An auric wound almost invariably shows up as a dark spot or smudge located in the area of the wound. Links and tendrils can also be visi-

ble. These will show themselves as grayish cords that are attached at the primary layer of the aura, extending through the energies beyond. These can be as thin as piano wire or as thick as electrical cables. The thickness of these cords will reflect how deep and developed the attachment or intrusion is. Those that are worn down to filaments are generally old and have weakened over time. Those that are ropy and very thick are well established and are probably being reinforced on a regular basis.

Even with these guidelines, remember to trust your own personal impressions above all else. You are the best interpreter of what you may perceive, because only you know how your mind works and what symbols it is likely to choose to represent the aura's nonphysical subtleties.

77. THE SUBTLE BODY

The subtle body is energy given form. It is the spiritual flesh that you wear, and unlike the physical body, it does not age and wear out over time. The subtle body is solid in its own way, having a consistent overall shape and internal structures that define its anatomy. The subtle body maintains this shape as separate from the physical form it takes up during each incarnation.

Although the subtle body is made of energy, the stuff of the subtle body is not precisely the energy you work with when feeding or doing energy work. The stuff of the subtle body is solid energy. This subtle flesh can be shaped, but only to a limited degree. Tendrils can be extended from the flesh of the subtle body to reach out within the subtle reality, but the whole of the subtle body cannot be molded and changed completely. Although it is flexible to a point, the subtle flesh yet has its own essential structure and form.

The solid energy of the subtle flesh can be pierced or cut, but it is not fed upon. What is taken in feeding is the vital, fluid energy that courses through the subtle body much like physical blood. This is the energy that is harnessed in energy work. It replenishes itself over time

in most typical individuals, and it circulates throughout the subtle body. This vital energy flows between the subtle and the physical flesh, and is the vitalizing principle of both aspects of the body.

The subtle body, like the physical body, can be wounded. The physical body can heal to a point, although with severe trauma it can be permanently damaged and scarred. In the case of the physical body, healing can only occur within the scope of one lifetime, and any lasting physical damage is discarded once disincarnation occurs. With the subtle body, damage can last over multiple lifetimes. However, the scope of healing is also drawn out, so that virtually any level of subtle damage can be healed in time.

Just as physical bodies have different sizes and shapes, so subtle bodies possess varying forms. The subtle body does not have to have the same overall shape as the physical body it incarnates in. There can be significant variations between the subtle body structure and the corresponding physical form. As long as certain key points of interface are achieved, incarnation is possible.

This means that not everyone you encounter in the physical world is going to appear the same on the subtle level. In most cases, the variations are negligible. However, there are cases where the difference between subtle and physical forms is significant.

When a person loses an arm, the loss typically extends only to the physical flesh. The subtle structure corresponding to that arm remains, and this lingering nonphysical aspect is responsible for the sensation of a phantom limb. In some cases of incarnation, subtle structures exist that, from the moment of birth, have no corresponding physical form. Yet these structures are perceptible subtly and can often be sensed by the individual much like a phantom limb. Energy still flows through these extraneous structures. On the subtle level, they not only have shape and form, but they may also have function. Like a wholly disembodied spirit, these structures do not cease to exist simply because they lack a corresponding physical aspect.

It is also possible for portions of the physical body to lack a corre-

sponding subtle form. This is especially common in cases where the subtle body sustained a great deal of damage in a previous incarnation and has not yet recovered. While certain types of extensive subtle-body damage prevent incarnation, it is possible to incarnate without the equivalent of a limb. In this case, the physical flesh will be present, but the energy channels and minor chakras will be missing, so energy flow will be greatly reduced throughout the limb.

The fundamental "shape" of the subtle body seems defined by the earliest incarnation. Yet the subtle body, being solid energy, retains some of the fluid characteristics of energy. This means that its shape can be altered somewhat over a great deal of time. Repeated, successive incarnations seem to influence the subtle body to "remember" that particular form. This memory is responsible for the variation in form when the subtle body progresses to a radically different incarnation.

78. READING THE SUBTLE BODY

Reading the aura involves perceiving the energy that radiates beyond the limits of the physical and subtle bodies. Reading the subtle body simply involves a deeper focus so that you may perceive the energies within the subtle body itself. When you do a reading of the subtle body, you can identify energy blockages and isolate problems in both subtle and physical bodies. In this way, you can determine the cause of many illnesses. You can also determine if a particular problem is physical in origin or if it is purely a matter of energy. This information can help you develop a useful strategy for future healing work.

Reading the subtle body is best done through the medium of the hands. Have your subject sit or lie down on his or her back. Make certain he or she is comfortable. Make it understood that if anything you do begins to feel like an intrusion, your subject should ask you to stop immediately.

As your subject relaxes, you should take a few moments to center yourself. Gather energy into your hands with the intent of increasing

your sensitivity. When you are ready, return to your subject. Cup your hands just around the crown of the person's head. Hold your hands about an inch or two away so you are almost but not quite touching him or her. Move your hands a little closer and a little farther away until you can feel the resistance of the outer limits of your subject's energy. Once you have connected with this, close your eyes and focus on that connection. Extend some of the energy in your hands into your subject's energy. Rest your hands above the crown of the head for a little while as you adjust to the perspective your senses now present to you.

When you are comfortable that you have connected to the subject's energy and are getting an accurate feel for the subtle body, begin to slowly move your hands down the person's face, and over the neck. Continue to hold your hands about an inch or so away from the body, but also extend your energy gently inside of the person.

For this first pass, simply run your hands along the perimeter of the subtle body, following the structures of energy as best you can. You may want to close your eyes for this stage of the reading, as your perception of the subject's physical body may influence your judgment of what is a legitimate impression. As you do this first sweep of your subject's subtle body, keep in mind that not everyone's subtle body is in keeping with their physical form. Although you should not expect to see this in everyone, be open to divergences between your subject's subtle and physical forms. Only by allowing yourself to accept these perceptions as valid will you be able to develop an accurate impression of the person's subtle anatomy for future energy work.

If your subject has told you of a particular problem, do not let this influence you. Try to put it out of your mind and focus only on the impressions you are getting. Focus your attention in a line going down the major chakras. Each time you come to a significant concentration of energy, extend your energy into it as far as you can. Do not do this aggressively, but visualize the energy as many tiny feelers that gently reach out and probe the energy. Try to determine if the energy you feel

inside this area is stagnant or blocked. A healthy energy center is in constant motion. It should pulse or spin.

Once you have gone the length of your subject's torso, move back up to the hollow of one shoulder. Run your hands slowly down the length of one arm and then the other. When you are finished with the arms, move on to the legs. Pay special attention to the joints, for energy often gets caught here and blockages can build up.

At this point, if your subject is lying down, have him or her roll over onto the stomach. Start again at the crown; only this time move your hands down along the spine. Do the backs of the arms and the backs of the legs. When you are finished with a general reading of the entire body, go back to any of the places that stood out to you. Try to pinpoint the sensations you experienced in these areas. Once you have reached this stage, you may want to share some of your impressions with your subject. His or her feedback may help you better interpret what you feel.

When reading the subtle body, it is important to keep in mind that your impressions may bridge over into the physical body. The subtle and physical bodies are intricately intertwined, and a problem in one can easily influence a problem in the other. You are using your subtle senses to perceive your subject, but these senses receive information from both the energy and the flesh. You may find it very difficult at first to distinguish between information coming from the physical body and information coming from the subtle body.

As a general rule, impressions of the subtle body will be in the form of energy and light. There is a certain delicate unreality to these perceptions. Impressions tied to the physical body are typically accompanied by a sense of what part of the body the impression is coming from. In some cases, it will seem as if you are literally seeing inside the body, or even perceiving it on a microscopic level. These impressions are not necessarily exaggerated or inaccurate; your subtle perception of the physical world is not necessarily bounded by familiar physical laws. With your subtle senses, it is possible to "see" inside of physical things as well as to "see" several perspectives simultaneously.

Because you are working with a level of perception beyond your familiar five senses, the impressions you get during a reading of this kind are going to be hard at first to interpret. Many people will get a visual component to these sensations, such as the impression of light or color. For both physical and subtle bodies, dark areas are generally areas that are blocked or diseased. Areas where the energy is light and clear are usually healthy. You may also get tactile impressions during a reading like this. Cold spots usually indicate blockages, but hot spots can also indicate a problem. In all cases, use your intuition and trust your instincts.

Sometimes whole images will present themselves to you. Often, the images are symbols that imply what the problem is. Pay attention especially if colors and shapes present themselves to you, for these may be accurate impressions of the organs themselves. You may want to familiarize yourself with basic anatomy before experimenting with this so you have a better frame of reference when locating impressions. It is also possible to read the energy of the body as you would read the energy lingering on an object such as a watch or a ring. In cases of such biological psychometry, you may be able to pick up not only a sense of what is wrong but also a sense of the people, emotions, or events that are associated with that problem.

Until you are very skilled at this type of reading, the impressions you get will rarely be as clear as an X-ray. It will take time and practice to even realize what you are sensing. Your greatest enemy in these impressions is expectation. To expect that you will accomplish something is also to fear that you may not. The moment you fear, you also have doubt. The moment you doubt, even the truest impressions will seem wrong to you, and you can easily talk yourself out of accepting them. Practice first by detaching yourself from expectation and any desire to succeed. Relax and simply *feel*. Once you can let things come without overthinking them or attempting to exert control, the rest will flow easily.

79. ENERGY MAINTENANCE

Just as you should eat right and exercise for the benefit of your physical body, so too should you perform regular exercises to promote the health of your subtle body. If you do not regularly work with your energy, it can stagnate, and once your energy stagnates, blockages may result. Energy blockages create imbalances in your energy, impeding healthy flow. Given time, the problems in your subtle body will become severe enough that they will interfere with your physical health as well.

To maintain healthy energy, it is not enough to simply feed. Regular meditation is strongly recommended, for this helps you find balance and focus. Meditation will also improve the quality of your energy, increasing your sensitivity.

Other exercises will help prevent stagnation, removing blockages as they begin to form. Tai chi, yoga, and related practices combine meditative states with movements that exercise both your physical and your subtle bodies. This promotes physical fitness while also encouraging healthy energy flow. Both bodies should be developed together.

Doing any kind of low-impact exercise while also concentrating on channeling energy through your body will work much the same as these more traditional practices. Dance, for example, can be a potent tool for maintaining flow and flexibility in both your physical and subtle bodies. The key is to combine physical movement with the conscious movement of energy, thus integrating the exercise for both sides of your being.

You can also perform energy exercises during meditation, consciously cycling energy and channeling it through your system as you rest and focus your mind. By cycling energy during meditation, you can increase your vitality, intensifying and heightening the frequency of your energy. By consciously channeling energy as you meditate, you will break up blockages and prevent stagnation. As you learn to focus your attention inward, you will be able to perceive the trouble areas. If some portion of your energy seems dark or dense, you should consciously direct energy to that area, encouraging circulation so that any

blockages are broken up and carried away. Regularly focusing on your major energy centers and consciously circulating energy through them is an excellent technique for maintaining a healthy flow.

If you are aware of subtle body structures that extend beyond your physical form, it's important to exercise these as well. Concentrate on the structures and consciously encourage energy to flow through them, past the limits of your physical body. You may also find it helpful to exercise these structures as if they were truly physical, at the very least occasionally stretching them. This sort of exercise often reduces the pain and muscle cramps that often occur at the divergence point of such subtle limbs. In the case of portions of the subtle body that do not extend throughout the physical form, the conscious direction of energy through these limbs can be helpful as well, encouraging circulation, reducing pain and cramping, and helping the subtle body to heal.

Do not make the mistake of exercising only your subtle body while allowing your physical body to degrade, however. True well-being is achieved when both bodies are in balance and vitality flows evenly throughout. A weak physical body decreases your vitality, and obesity greatly impedes energy flow. Individuals who are heavy and physically inactive have a greater than normal propensity for blockages and stagnant energy. This can create a vicious cycle, for stagnant energy may produce reduced mobility, lack of energy, and depression, all of which lead to an increasingly inactive lifestyle, perpetuating the problem.

80. ENERGY ATTUNEMENTS

When people do not regularly maintain their subtle body through meditation and other practices, their energy will begin to stagnate. After this has been allowed to continue for a while, there is a point where their systems must be actively cleaned out. Even with regular energy maintenance, it is often helpful to perform an attunement on one's energy on a semiregular basis simply to clear out any buildup of incompatible energies and restore overall balance.

An energy attunement is an exercise that actively cleanses the energy, restoring balance to the subtle body. Attunements remove blockages, eliminate stagnation, and promote a healthy energy flow. Attunements can be accomplished by pairing internal energy work with physical motion, meditation, or the use of sound. Many people are not versed in energy work, however, and so they may need someone to perform an attunement for them.

When performing an attunement for someone, it is best to have your subject sit or lie down. You will need to be able to move around the person without difficulty, so consider this when you set up your working space. An attunement is different from a reading of the subtle body in that it works best if you actually lay your hands on your subject's body. Make certain the person you will be working on understands this. Subjects always need to be comfortable with the idea of you touching them, and they should know that if at any time they become uncomfortable, they can draw the session to a close.

The first few steps of an energy attunement begin with you. Take a few moments to focus yourself. Ground and center if you need to. Then begin to gather energy into your hands. When you are satisfied with the charge you have focused into your hands, you are ready to begin work on the subject.

If your subject is sitting, step behind and lay your hands on his or her shoulders, just on either side of the neck. The heels of your hands should be just over the shoulder blades, and your fingers should angle out toward the shoulders. This is the primary position for building a rapport. If the subject is lying down, he or she should be supine. In this case, sit just behind the subject's head and lay your hands over his or her chest. Place your palms just under the collarbones and angle your fingers toward the center, over the heart. This is the alternate rapport position. In both cases, keep your fingers straight and close together.

Close your eyes and extend your energy out to the subject's energy. As you connect, the space between the subject's shoulders and your hands should grow very warm. You may feel a cycling begin

immediately as your energy engages the energy of the subject in a dance of give and take.

The goal of this exchange is to build a rapport with your subject. You should consciously direct this exchange, extending your energy into his or her energy. Pull some of the subject's energy into you, and then send energy back into the subject. Do this until a regular cycle is achieved, and the energy between you and your subject begins to match up. You are essentially tuning the subject's frequency to something that more closely matches your own. This facilitates the attunement because it is much easier to direct your own energy. If you work the subject's energy to a point where it feels like an extension of yourself, you will have a much clearer sense of his or her energy, and it will be much easier for you to manipulate.

81. PERFORMING AN ATTUNEMENT

Once you have connected to your subject's energy and you are comfortable with the rapport you have built, you are ready to begin the real work of the attunement. Whether your subject is sitting or lying down, begin at the crown of the head. Lay your hands on the top of the subject's head, keeping your fingers straight and close together. As with reading the subtle body, you will extend some of your energy into the crown, but instead of just feeling it, you will now use your energy to move the person's energy around.

Extend your senses along with the energy just as you would in a subtle body reading. If you sense dark spots of blocked or stagnant energy, you want to use your energy to make these move. Imagine your energy as many little tendrils reaching in to break the blockage up. When the blockage has been broken into little pieces, use your energy to scoop whatever you can out. You may want to accompany this with a scooping or swiping motion with your hands.

It is best not to take this stagnant energy into you. Instead, pull it out and discard it. You can take a moment to ground this energy,

although constantly stopping to do this throughout the attunement can become a distraction. Some people prefer to dump the discarded energy in a bowl of salt, basing this on the notion that the salt cleanses and grounds the energy for them. It is perfectly acceptable to throw the energy in the general direction of the floor, provided no one is in the immediate path of the energy, so you can clean it after the attunement is over. Clearing the energy from a room after you have performed an attunement or other intensive healing is never a bad idea. Further, clearing the room of any built-up energies or lingering entities prior to engaging in an attunement or other healing is also helpful. Think of your workspace in terms of more traditional medicine and always try to maintain a safe, sterile environment for your healing work.

Once you have removed any blockages and stagnant energy from a given area, you should use your energy to encourage a healthy flow. Healthy energy is very dynamic. It is always moving, generally in some kind of cycle or rotation. You will usually get an intuitive feel of what is the right speed or direction through the rapport you have established with your subject's energy. Trust your instincts and encourage the energy to flow in this manner.

It may help to visualize the energy as a glowing sphere of smoky light. As you begin, the sphere is dim and the energies within are sluggish and slow. With your own energy, gently swirl the inside of the sphere. Reach in and stir it up until it begins to glow more brightly and continues spinning regularly on its own. You can also visualize the energy center as the bud of a flower. As you begin working with it, the petals are tightly clamped together. As you reach your energy out to it, you coax the energy up and outward, encouraging it to open. The energy center is at its peak function when it is fully blown, and you can see an endless array of petals opening farther and farther from within.

Hand motions and breathing techniques that help you move energy can also help direct and encourage a healthy flow. As with everything, trust your impressions and go with what seems to work. While visualizations can help many people focus, others are prone to

get too caught up in the imagery. Try not to take the symbols too literally. Visualization will only be a hindrance if it makes you overthink things or makes you think too rigidly. You, as well as the energy, should be dynamic and able to flow.

From the crown, move onto the throat. Repeat everything here just as you did for the crown. From the throat, move onto the heart, then the solar plexus, and so on. When you get to the root, do not actually touch your subject. Let your hands hover just above the area and do your work from that distance. In all other regards, treat this area the same as every other one.

Just as with a subtle body reading, once you have finished with the main portion of the body, move onto the arms. You should place your hands on each joint: the shoulders, the elbows, and the wrists. Finish with the center located in the palm of the hand. Once you have covered all the points along the arm, go back up to the shoulder and, with a swiping motion, wipe away any stagnant energy that might remain. Do this with a swift, straight motion angled down toward the floor. It is best to almost but not quite touch the subject when doing this. If your subject is lying down, move his or her arm so it is angled away from the body. Make certain it is straight, then swipe your hands down the surface of the arm, pulling the energy swiftly away from the subject.

From the arms, go on to the legs. Begin at the juncture of the thighs, and then move to the knee and ankle. Finish with the energy center located in the foot, at about the middle of the arch. As with the arms, also wipe down the energy of the legs, keeping the motion swift and straight, and always moving the energy away from the subject's body.

If during the subtle body reading you detected extended subtle structures, do not overlook these in the attunement. Subtle body structures, even if they lack a corresponding physical form, have their own network of energy channels. Some are large enough to have minor or major chakras as well. Especially because these are ordinarily overlooked in the maintenance of the physical body, you should take care to ensure that the energy flow within these structures is healthy and

clear. Also pay special attention to areas that may be lacking a complete subtle structure, manually moving energy through these areas and helping the subtle body to repair itself.

When you have completed the legs and any other structures, return to the head. If the subject is sitting, stand behind the chair and, starting from the crown, repeat the swiping motion. Start with both your hands side by side over the head and bring them diagonally down and away from the subject's body. Repeat this motion down the line of the neck, over the back, and to the base of the spine. If your subject is lying down, you will do this motion over his or her face, throat, chest, and hips, starting with your hands side by side roughly over the center of the subject and moving the energy diagonally away from the body.

If you feel you are finished, then return your hands to the primary rapport position (or the alternate position if your subject is supine). Focus on the cycle between your energy and that of your subject. Begin to withdraw your energy and awareness from the subject so the rapport gently slips away. Take a few moments to feel that you and the subject have two distinct energies. When your energy has completely withdrawn, take your hands away and allow the subject to rest for a bit and adjust to the changes inside of them.

People who have received an attunement like this may be a little lightheaded or shaky immediately afterward. They should be cautioned to move slowly and to not get up all at once. They may be thirsty, and you should encourage them to drink some pure, cold water. They will have a lingering sensitivity to energy, and this can cross over to affect their physical body as well. They may be a little photosensitive afterward, and they should avoid eating anything heavy or greasy for a day or two.

It is possible to perform an attunement like this on yourself. You can do this sitting or lying down. You can use your hands as a focus, although this really isn't necessary. The mechanics are the same as attuning another person. Turn your focus inward and extend your perceptions to your energy body. Move from the crown to the root, then

down the arms and down both legs. Locate any blockages or stagnating energy. Break these up, remove what you can, then coax the energy centers into regular motion so your system will naturally process and filter out whatever is left.

82. BASIC HEALING

While you are still learning about what you are, it is easy to use your skills exclusively to feed. However, you limit yourself and cheapen your abilities if you assume feeding is the only useful application of your skills. Your ability to harness and manipulate energy can make you a powerful healer.

Basic healing is a very general technique. It can affect both the physical and subtle bodies, and it can be applied to a wide range of problems, from broken bones to infections and even cancers. One of the great benefits of basic healing is that you do not need to understand the nature of the illness in order to help it heal. Basic healing is a supplementary treatment that floods a particular area with energy and allows the energy to do the work. While it does not directly remove the cause of a problem, basic healing can still effectively reduce pain, decrease the severity of symptoms, and speed recovery.

Basic energy healing builds upon the skills already established with the energy ball exercises and the attunement. In order to perform a basic healing, you must first ground and center yourself. Gather energy into your hands, and then lay your hands upon your subject. A good starting position is on the back, just over the shoulders, where you also typically start when doing an energy attunement. Take a few moments to connect to your subject's energy here. As you do this, you will probably feel the space between your hands and the subject's flesh grow very warm.

Once you have a solid focus on the subject's energy, begin building a rapport just as you would at the start of an attunement. Extend some of your energy into the subject's, then use this to pull some of his or her energy into you. Return the energy back to the subject with a

little more of your energy, and continue the cycle. As you exchange energy back and forth with your subject, work to match frequencies with him or her. You may not have to think about this very much, for the cycling of the energy will often do the work for you.

When you feel that you have established a rapport, reach out with your subtle senses to determine where your healing is needed most. Following your impressions, lay your hands over the area closest to the troubled spot. Just as with an attunement, this works best when you keep your fingers straight and close together. In addition, line your hands up right next to one another, thumb to thumb.

Focusing on the problem you have sensed, begin to send energy to that area. Concentrate on healing what is wrong. At the most basic level of healing, you do not have to understand *how* to heal the problem. You simply must want to heal it and know with all certainty that you can. Your Will and the energy will do the rest.

It is important that you maintain the rapport with your subject when you are doing this. Many beginning healers will exclusively use energy that is their own to effect a healing. You can use your personal energy for healing, of course. You do this whenever you heal yourself. But when healing others, this is not such a good idea. If you have a high energy requirement, sending a great deal of your energy into another person will lead you quickly into exhaustion and need. Even those who have an abundance of personal energy will eventually run out if they heal using this approach.

Techniques like Reiki use energy that is channeled from an outside source in order to affect the healing. This allows healers to work with an almost unlimited supply of energy while never exhausting their own reserves. You may not be able to access these outside energies, but you will be able to harness your subject's own energy to effect the healing.

Extend your energy into the subject and build a rapport. By creating a continuous cycle of energy, you are not drawing only upon your personal energy. If you are skilled at dynamic exchange, you can further use the rapport to increase the amount of energy between you and the

subject, thus generating an abundance that can be redirected into the healing so neither you nor the subject become drained by the healing.

When you do a basic healing, do not be surprised if your hands begin to generate a great deal of heat. Sometimes this will extend to your entire body, especially if you are cycling the energy between you and your subject intensely. Often this heat will rise and fall, building up to a peak. After this peak, there will be a falling off of the heat. This is usually an indication that you have accomplished all you can with the energy at this level of healing. When you have reached this point, slowly let go of the rapport and withdraw from the other person's energy. What could be done has been done, and any further effort will be spent in vain.

As with an attunement, your subject is likely to be a little light-headed and dizzy. Let the subject rest for a while before getting up while the intense effects of the energy work dissipate. If the subject feels especially shaky, give him or her a little cold water to drink. He or she should also be advised to avoid heavy or greasy foods for the next twenty-four to forty-eight hours.

83. REMOVING BLOCKAGES

Stagnant energy and energy blockages are the most common problems you will encounter in the subtle body. These blockages slow and impede energy flow, and they can result from a number of conditions. If allowed to build up over time, the unhealthy condition they create in the subtle body can eventually create physical problems as well.

Negative emotions build up as stagnant and blocked energy. Depression and prolonged stress are especially damaging to people's energy, wearing them down, diminishing their vitality, and producing blockages throughout their subtle body.

Issues in a person's life that require resolution can also impact the state of that person's energy. When someone remains in an unhealthy emotional environment and refuses to change the situation, this will

wear away at his or her energy. Constant emotional abuse is like an assault on the subtle body. Not only does it diminish a person's energy, but it can also weaken the aura and even create subtle body wounds.

Obesity and a lack of regular physical exercise also promote energy stagnation and blockages. Physical motion helps encourage the proper circulation of energy, and when someone remains immobile for prolonged periods of time, the energy begins to stagnate. Stagnating energy will collect in the joints, typically following the pull of gravity and gathering in the feet and legs first. This causes swelling and stiffness in the joints and can inhibit circulation as well.

Prolonged physical illnesses will also begin to impact the health of the subtle body. There is always interaction between the physical and subtle bodies, and so a problem in one can quickly become a problem in the other. However, chronic or severe illnesses have the additional effect of encouraging depression, stress, and anxiety, and these wear down a person's energy. All the negative emotions build up over time as blockages in the person's energy, diminishing vitality and making it even harder for the body to heal itself and fight off disease.

A subtle body structure that extends beyond the limits of the physical body can develop blockages at the point of divergence between the subtle and physical forms. As the nerves, blood vessels, and energy channels are part of an integral system of energy flow between the subtle and physical bodies, the flow will be inhibited where two of these suddenly drop off and only one energy-carrying system remains. As blockages build up, the flow of energy becomes even further diminished, choking off vitality necessary for the healthy maintenance of the extended subtle limb. In the case of an amputation, this results in pain and cramping at the stump as well as numbness or shooting pains in the phantom limb. Similar effects will be experienced when blockages build up even if the extended subtle structure never had a corresponding physical form. In cases where the divergence involves physical structures that lack subtle counterparts, the results are much the same, and blockages will occur where one body stops while another continues to extend.

Energy blockages can range from mild to severe. Generally, getting the energy to move in a mildly blocked or stagnant area is enough to solve the problem. This can be accomplished simply by extending some of your own energy into the blocked area and Willing the energy to move. In the case of a blocked chakra, remember that the energy spins or rotates when it is maintaining a healthy flow. Once the energy flow has been restored, the system will naturally filter out the dense and stagnant energy.

For extended limbs and other structures, break up the blockage and then manually sweep energy into the subtle extension. Think of this like massaging circulation back into a limb that has fallen asleep. Drag the energy past the point of physical and subtle divergence and spread this throughout the extent of the subtle limb. Repeat this several times, sweeping the energy through rapidly in order to build up a current that the energy will continue to follow despite the dropping off of the physical form.

For more severe blockages, you will need to break the dense matter up into particles small enough for the subject's own system to filter out. One approach is to break the matter up using short, intense bursts of your own energy. Place your hands over the affected area, and instead of filling the area with a steady, sustained flow of energy, send your energy out in several concentrated spikes. It may help to think of a tone or musical note and concentrate on this while generating the energy. You may also find it helpful to exhale sharply each time you send a spike of energy into the blockage.

Another technique for breaking up and removing dense blockages is to suck them out, like poison from a snake bite. This technique should be used with caution, as you do not want to take this energy into yourself in any way. It is often helpful to place your mouth directly on or just above the area where the blockage is most severe. Then, focusing inward on the energy, withdraw the energy as you would with feeding. It may be helpful to couple this with breathing techniques, sucking in air as you focus on sucking out the energy. Hold the energy in your mouth and then expel it away from your subject by exhaling.

Once the densest portions of a blockage have been broken up, the natural flow of energy will pick up and filter out the small particles that remain. If some of the particles seem too big to be removed safely by the subject's own system, you can manually remove these yourself. Simply insert tendrils of your energy into the area, wrap them around the chunks of stagnant energy, and pull them out. You can help yourself focus on this activity by cupping your hands around the problem area and lifting the energy out and away with hand motions.

This denser energy will tend to cling to your own energy, so you may want to literally shake it off your hands. Do this with a swift downward motion, directing it to the floor. It will either be grounded or eventually dissipate, and if some residue remains, you can clear the room later.

84. NERVE BURN

When channeling energy through your hands, be careful that you do not force too much through at once. It is possible to overtax your system and become nerve burned. This occurs after prolonged or intense energy work, and it can range in cases from mild to severe. Mild nerve burn results in a tingling sensation that is no longer pleasant. This will feel very similar to a pinched nerve. More severe cases can produce numbness in the hands and arms, temporary loss of fine motor control, and shooting pains that run along the channels of energy deep within your limbs.

Nerve burn results from an overload of energy that has literally burned out the channels that support the flow of energy. The energy channels are like the wires of the subtle body, and running too much current through them can short them out. The state of the energy channels directly affects the nerves because the nerves correspond physically to the subtle channels, and many of the major channels and nerves run concurrently with one another. This is a significant point of body-spirit crossover.

A mild case of nerve burn can subside after a day or so of rest in which you channel no more energy through your hands. A severe case of nerve burn can last several days. As the channels that transfer energy are burned out, subtle sensitivity in the area will be diminished, and a feeling of cold will result from the interruption in the energy flow.

In extreme cases, you may lose the ability to channel energy through your hands entirely, as the vessels and channels that ordinarily support the energy are no longer able to function. The numbness in such cases is severe, often accompanied by a deep burning sensation arising from the channels themselves. Your hands will be cold and stiff, with marked trembling and weakness. In such extreme cases, the energy channels will recover slowly, but only if you are careful not to further overload them through additional energy work.

Nerve burn commonly affects the hands and the arms, but any part of the body required to channel intense amounts of energy over extended periods of time can become nerve burned. Warriors have experienced nerve burn in their legs after grounding unusually intense energies. Others who ground more energy than they're accustomed to or are required for some reason to ground intense energy for an extended period of time can become nerve burned as well. In the case of the legs as with all other parts of the body, the symptoms and healing times are the same.

The energy channels should be seen as equivalent to any other part of your body. Pushing them beyond the limits of what they can safely handle will result in fatigue, trauma, and pain. Like muscles, they can be overworked and strained so that actual damage occurs, and it may take weeks or even months to heal. It is entirely feasible that pushing them well beyond their limits, especially over a number of times, will result in permanent and irreparable damage.

Do not allow this to discourage you from doing energy work, however. Simply realize that you have limits and that working with energy can have very tangible effects upon you. Take care when working with energy and know your limits. Pay attention when things start to hurt.

Be reasonable in your expectations of what you can do, and do not attempt something demanding without working up to it first.

Recovering from nerve burn can be difficult, especially if you are accustomed to healing yourself with energy. With the energy channels burned out, you will not be able to run energy through the affected area, and if you try, this will only make the condition worse.

If you know someone who is adept at working with energy, they may be able to carefully lay threads of energy over the burned-out channels, effectively creating temporary channels for your energy to pass through. This technique is the energetic equivalent of laying an artificial skin over a severe burn. It helps the burned channels heal and protects them from further harm. You must still avoid actively channeling energy through the area if things are to heal completely, but having these temporary channels in place will reduce the feelings of numbness, cold, and pain that are the most uncomfortable aspect of nerve burn.

85. HEALTH AND DISEASE

Meditation, exercise, and regular energy work promote the health of the subtle body. However, unhealthy states can still occur. Almost all ailments affect both the physical and the subtle bodies on some level. These two aspects are so interlinked that a problem in one quickly becomes a problem in the other. A prolonged physical illness will eventually develop an echo in the subtle body, and damage from severe and traumatic physical injuries can cross over to affect the subtle body as well. In these cases, unless both sides of the problem are treated, it will be difficult to achieve a total recovery.

Additionally, some ailments are purely energetic at the outset. Severe blockages, energetic residues, and malfunctioning chakras can all produce an unhealthy state in the subtle body. Such problems, if allowed to go untreated, will inevitably begin to have an impact on the physical body as well. Many chronic ailments that have repeatedly failed to respond to traditional medicine have a significant subtle factor.

Western medicine has no context for these subtle ailments, and so typically only the physical manifestation of the problem is addressed. However, if the subtle factor is allowed to remain, over time the problem will recur. Only when the energetic root of the problem is addressed will the physical body successfully recover.

The health of the subtle body is strongly influenced by the mind. Thought creates energy, and energy creates results. The hypochondriac who is convinced he has cancer can, through focusing on this illness, eventually create this disease. Even though the disease started out as a delusion, once enough energy and Will have been focused into it, it will become very, very real. Through the same activity, some people can cure themselves of illness, and people's attitudes toward their health can significantly impact things for good or for bad. This demonstrates the delicate interplay between mind, body, and energy and shows that this interaction cannot be ignored.

Even unconscious thoughts can have significant repercussions on the subtle level. For this reason, people's mental and emotional states are crucial to their overall health. Depression, anxiety, and negative attitudes can all have an impact upon the state of people's energy and the health of their subtle body. In situations of extreme emotional trauma, a person can develop a blockage or other problem that is a symbolic expression of his or her emotional woes. If allowed to go untreated, any of these subtle problems can eventually cross over and inspire physical ailments as well.

Prolonged exposure to unhealthy energies has a distinct impact on the state of the subtle body. Psychic attack and malignant attachments, although more rare, are also responsible for unhealthy states. Environment, outside energies, attitudes, and interactions with physical as well as subtle entities all play a role in the delicate balance of health between physical and subtle bodies. In the final section of the Codex, we will consider these larger issues and explore in depth various methods of repairing damage to the subtle body once it has occurred.

SECTION IV

ADVANCED ENERGY TECHNIQUES

86. LIVING WITH ENERGY

You walk in a world of both matter and spirit, and you cannot help interacting with both aspects at once. The energy in the world around you can have a significant impact upon your physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being, even when you are not consciously aware of it. The energy in your living space is especially important, as you are exposed to this energy on a daily basis. As you cultivate your perceptions, your sensitivity to energy will increase, thus making it vital that you know both how to assess the energetic environment you are living in and how to maintain that environment in the healthiest way possible.

Energy is the fluid and dynamic aspect of the subtle reality. It moves in eddies and flows, and its currents are influenced by objects and entities in both subtle and physical realities. A healthy state of energy relies upon a constant, regular flow. However, just as in the subtle body, the energy in the subtle reality can become blocked and stagnant, building up as energetic detritus and emotional residues. Energy of this nature can have unhealthy effects on those that come into contact with it, and for those who live around it constantly, the effects are more severe.

Many factors influence the natural flow of energy. Living beings stir up energy as they move, leaving cast-off ambient energy in their wakes and carrying off other energies they have connected with. Objects and items in the physical world often have an echo in the subtle reality, and these can form barriers that impede energy flow. As energy tends to travel in straight lines, energy can get “caught” at bends and junctures. Energy also tends to collect on certain objects, and in places that have little activity or motion energy can stagnate, piling up like drifts of dust.

Buildings are cut off from the natural flow of energy in the environment around them. Some energy naturally flows in through windows, doors, and other apertures, but the majority of energy that enters and exits a building travels with the people moving in and out of it. This makes any building prone to buildups of stagnant energy, as more energy is typically brought in or produced by the individuals who enter it than is taken out as they leave. While you have little control over the energetic environment of public buildings that you frequent, you can do a lot to improve the energy within your home.

You can reduce the buildup of stagnant energy by keeping your home physically clean and uncluttered. The placement of furniture can also play a role in whether or not a home is prone to collecting stagnant energy. Cluttering a room with too much furniture can encourage a buildup of energy in the corners where very little activity occurs. An open floor plan that does not contain nooks and crannies of wasted space can help reduce this effect.

Closets, basements, attics, and other areas that are cut off from the regular traffic of the home also tend to collect drifts of stagnant energy. Making regular use of all the rooms in the house will help promote healthy energy flow throughout. Certain sounds can also help move energy so it does not stagnate in one place. Soothing music, bells, wind chimes, and fountains all help break up stagnant energy and encourage a healthy flow.

The ambient energy shed by the inhabitants of a home is often charged with emotion. When ambient energy is not swept away or taken

up and used by another being, it collects where it is shed. This energy does not become inert, however. Typically it retains its emotional charge, and over time this builds up as an emotional residue. Such residues constantly emanate the emotion that produced them, and individuals exposed to such a residue often unconsciously pick up this emotion and react to it. As negative emotions tend to create the strongest residues, this can create a significantly unhealthy living environment.

To reduce the buildup of emotional residues, try to avoid having highly charged emotional confrontations in the home. When a conflict does occur, take time afterward to "clear the air" between those involved so the energy they exude becomes more positive. If you can feel tension building in the home over a matter, have everyone leave for a while so they are not perpetuating the tension. Do something that takes your focus from the issue and come back to the home with an intentionally positive frame of mind.

Energy, like dust, is constantly being produced by the residents of a home, and so some buildup of energy is unavoidable. While the preventative measures outlined above will slow this process down, in order to promote the most ideal energetic environment, you will have to regularly cleanse the energy of your home.

87. CLEANSING ENERGY

You should regularly clear out the energy of your home in order to maintain a positive, healthy living environment. Cleansing the energy in your home will remove any buildup of stagnant energy, prevent blockages, and remove heavy emotional residues. It is a particularly good idea to cleanse the energy in your home when one or more members of your household are undergoing a period of extreme stress or emotional turmoil. The highly charged emotional energies generated by these situations are especially detrimental to anyone exposed to them, and if allowed to build up, they can create a very negative and unhealthy atmosphere.

Cleansing energy is comparable to performing an attunement. However, instead of focusing inward on an individual, the focus is outward, on the energy of a room or even an entire home. Rooms do not have energy channels or chakras as living beings do. However, the passing of individuals throughout the home creates currents in the energies there, and walls and other objects can have echoes in the subtle reality, creating barriers that then catch energy and allow it to build up in one place.

To cleanse the energy in a room, you must first ground and center. Then, focus energy into your hands. Start at one corner of the room and extend the energy to the walls. With this energy, scrape any stagnant energy or emotional residues from the walls of the room. You may want to reinforce this visualization by performing a scraping motion with your hands. Move forward slowly, taking care to remove as much as you can. Push what you have scraped away ahead of you, collecting it in a rough pile in the middle of the room. Go through the entire room, scraping down each wall. Be certain to get in all the corners and any closed-off spaces as well: nooks, closets, or small spaces created by the placement of furniture.

When you have gathered all the stagnant and residual energy into the middle of the room, take hold of this messy bundle and release it out an open window or through an open door. You may want to accompany the release with a firm throwing motion in order to reinforce the idea that this unwanted energy is being ejected from your living space. It may cling aggressively, so you may have to shake it and scrape it off of your hands. Outside, energy flows more freely than indoors, and this negative buildup will be carried away and dissipate naturally once expelled. You can also choose to ground this energy once you take it outside, so it passes harmlessly into the earth.

For a proper cleansing, you will want to go through every room in your home. It is best to start from the top down and to move from the back of the house to the front. Push everything so that it collects at the main door, and when you are finished, open that door and take the

energy outside. It is also helpful to open all the windows and doors to the home after this cleansing to increase the flow of energy and to allow any excess detritus to be carried away on its own. Burning incense in each room can also help reinforce a cleansing. As the incense smoke rises and flows throughout the room, imagine that it is cleansing the ambient energy, breaking up stagnation and carrying leftover negativity away.

It is helpful to reinforce the spiritual cleansing of a home with an actual physical cleaning. This intensifies the focus of the working and allows you to remove any clutter or other objects that may be impeding a healthy energy flow.

88. HEIGHTENING ENERGY

Many advanced techniques are easier to perform in a heightened energy environment. In an area where the energy has been heightened and refined, the separation between the subtle and the physical is significantly reduced. This makes it much easier for you to affect both sides of reality through the manipulation of energy.

If you practice ritual of any kind, you already know how to heighten energy. The heightened energetic environment created through ritual work is known as sacred space. Within the confines of sacred space, a crossing-over point is established between the realm of spirit and the realm of matter. Such a crossing-over point helps you to move beyond the confines of ordinary reality so that you may better interact with the subtle reality.

You do not have to rely upon ritual and religion to create the equivalent of sacred space. If you engage in focused, intentional activities to heighten your connection to the subtle reality, a heightened energetic environment will naturally result. Setting aside a specific place in your home where you regularly engage in such work will enable you to establish a relatively permanent heightened energy environment.

In order to create such an environment, select a room that is relatively quiet and will not be disturbed by a lot of people coming in and

going out. Constant traffic in the room can upset the energetic environment you seek to establish. The room also should have a minimal amount of electronics, as electronic devices generate a constant level of energy that will also interfere with the environment you wish to create. Finally, the room should not be cluttered, and there should be enough clear space in the center of the room to enable you to perform any of your energy exercises as well as work with at least one other person.

Once you have selected the appropriate room, begin by thoroughly cleansing this room's energy. Once the room is clear, make visual changes that help you perceive the room as being removed from your ordinary space. You may wish to set up a personal shrine, or you may simply wish to decorate the room with statues and art that remind you of more spiritual things. Incense, meditative music, and candles can also be used to help distinguish this room as different from your ordinary space.

Once you are satisfied with the physical changes you have made to the room, make a point of doing the majority of your energetic work here. Perform your exercises with the focused mind-set and solemnity of ritual. When you meditate in the room, allow the heightened and focused state you experience to spread out and fill the space. Consciously refine the energy in this room and Will it to become your crossing-over point between spirit and matter. You may use the room for other purposes, but each time you do, be sure to clear the energy afterward in order to return it to its elevated state. With time and usage, the heightening effect will increase and you will have established a semipermanent structure of sacred space.

89. BUILDING WARDS

Once you have established an environment of heightened energy, you may wish to protect it from intrusion by undesirable entities. Astral entities and other spirits are attracted to heightened energy and will be drawn to the space you set up. Consciously reinforcing the walls of the

room will establish boundaries in the subtle reality that most entities will find hard to cross. Setting up wards at the windows and doors will further prevent unwanted energies from infringing on your space.

To consciously reinforce the walls, simply stand in the center of the room and gather energy. Form this energy into a sphere at your center. Expand this sphere as you would a shield, pulling it away from your body with your hands, then pushing it once the perimeter has expanded beyond you. Continue pushing the sphere out around you until it is roughly equal with the walls on all sides. As with a shield, do not overlook either the floor or the ceiling, but be certain the sphere encompasses everything completely.

Unlike a shield, release this sphere from your own energy. Will the energy to infuse the walls and become a barrier to everything outside. If there are some things you would like to allow to pass freely through this barrier, concentrate on these for a moment, and consciously Will the barrier to let these things through. You may wish to think of a phrase that allows safe passage for certain things, and you can speak this to yourself or out loud as you reinforce the walls. With your arms held out and your hands pressing against the energy, infuse energy into the barrier once more. When you are finished, bring your hands back together over your solar plexus and center yourself again.

The energy you focus into the walls, as it is no longer attached to your energy, will degrade over time, and so you will have to reinforce the walls on a semiregular basis. Keep in mind that your very perception of walls as barriers to the outside world infuses them with a little energy. However, when reliable barriers are desired, it is best to consciously reinforce the walls at least every few months.

Once you have reinforced the walls, you may choose to set up additional wards. Wards are complex projections of energy, consciously constructed to create a barrier in the subtle reality. Generally, wards are placed over breaks in the walls, such as windows and doors. Wards can be simple seals of energy or they can be shaped to produce specific effects.

The easiest way to construct a ward is through clear intent. Develop a clear idea of what you want the ward to accomplish. A ward can be charged to go off like a trap when something attempts to breach it, or it can be constructed to serve more as an alarm, so you are alerted to the presence of certain entities.

You may wish to come up with a word or short phrase that embodies the intent you wish to work into the ward. When you have clearly formed your intent, gather energy into your hands and shape it over the door or window. Some people find it helpful at this point to trace a symbol or image in the air that represents the ward. As you trace the symbol, continue focusing on the intent of the ward, repeating the phrasing to yourself or out loud. When you are finished tracing the symbol, press your hand against the center of it, charging it with additional energy. See this energy infusing the symbol, then spreading out beyond it to create a subtle barrier.

Like the energy in the walls, the energy of a ward is not permanent. In the current subtle reality environment it will quickly degrade. For this reason, wards should be reinforced semiregularly. If a ward is particularly complex, you will want to reinforce it more often because it requires more energy to keep up.

Wards and shields can be used in individual rooms or they can be set up to protect your entire home from intruding entities. However, keep in mind that setting up thick shields around your living space can stifle the energy. This will make it necessary to cleanse the energy more frequently. In general, it's a good idea to find a balance between a well-protected home and one that has clear and constant energy flow.

90. PSYCHIC ATTACK

Any conscious attempt to harm someone through the manipulation of energy constitutes a psychic attack. By this definition most methods of feeding, when performed on an unwilling or unsuspecting target, can be considered psychic attacks.

The methods of psychic attack vary, as do the manner of beings responsible for attacks. Despite widespread paranoia about psychic attack, the phenomenon is neither as pervasive nor as severe as many would imply. Most psychic attacks are performed by newly Awakened individuals who are trying out their newfound abilities. In most cases, they have neither the wisdom nor the discretion to use these abilities responsibly.

Psychic attacks of this nature are comparable to egging people's houses or throwing stones at passing cars. While destructive in intent, these attacks are generally more a nuisance than a threat. This is compounded by the fact that those who practice this manner of psychic attack are generally not in complete control of their powers, so these powers are rarely harnessed to an efficient degree. There are instances where such immature abuses of power have resulted in significant harm, however, and so they should not be completely ignored or dismissed.

Older, more experienced Awakened do engage in psychic attacks, and these can be more formidable. The attacks initiated by more mature Awakened tend to be much more premeditated and personal. Where the newly Awakened will often randomly select targets to "practice" on, more experienced individuals will rarely attack without reason. Therefore, their targets are people they know who have somehow unintentionally crossed them or who have initiated an attack of their own. Attacks of this nature are not as common as the juvenile attacks, but they are more focused and have a much greater potential for harm.

Psychic attack does not occur purely in the realm of incarnated beings, however. Other entities can be responsible for psychic attacks. The denizens of the subtle reality all feed upon energy. Some of these can and will attack people in order to gain that energy. Usually, these attacks are random, and once the entity has taken what it desires, it leaves. Such attacks have about as much reason and meaning behind them as an attack from a wild dog. Such an attack is not pleasant, but neither is it an instance of premeditated evil.

Other entities are parasitic in nature, and these do not just attack and leave. Instead, they latch onto their target and remain in order to

perform subsequent attacks over an extended period of time. Although parasitic entities are more persistent and bothersome, most of them are no more sentient than ticks or leeches. Few are capable of premeditated evil; they simply do what is in their natures to do.

Not all attacks from entities in the subtle reality are random, however. There are sentient beings on that side as well, and they are as capable of premeditated acts of violence as beings here are. Sometimes an entity is acting in what it considers its defense. Sometimes there is an old score to settle, whether the person being attacked realizes this or not. And sometimes the entity attacks for reasons only it can discern. Attacks from these entities are formidable and severe. The subtle reality is their native realm, and so they manipulate energy with an inborn skill.

91. COUNTERING INDIRECT ATTACK

Shielding is most often used as a protective measure against psychic attack. As shielding is not always the best option, there are a number of other ways to repel an attack. Most of these rely upon various methods of energy manipulation. Some of these are defensive, while others seek to repel an attack through offensive means.

There are really only two methods of psychic attack: direct psychic attack and indirect psychic attack. Direct psychic attack throws energy at a target. Indirect psychic attack takes energy away. All psychic attacks that you encounter will be variations on these two techniques.

At this point, you should be quite familiar with indirect psychic attack. It is simply an aggressive form of feeding. When feeding is used as a psychic attack, an individual or entity lashes out with a tendril of energy. If the attack is successful, this tendril punches through the target's aura and latches onto the subtle body. The energy drain that follows is fast and deep, and is usually intended to deplete the target's energy as quickly as possible.

There are several defenses against this type of energy drain. Most Awakened will rely upon shields to prevent an attacking entity or indi-

vidual from making contact with their energy. However, as shields are constructed of energy themselves, they can also be latched onto and drained.

A better avoidance technique is to spike your energy with an undesirable emotion or other quality that will essentially make it taste bad to your attacker. You can do this by focusing on an unpleasant noise, like static or a high-pitched whine, and spreading this effect throughout your energy. You can also charge your energy with an unpleasant sensation, like pins and needles, or even an offensive smell. This technique assumes that you know to expect an attack, however, as it is impractical to maintain such a charge throughout your energy indefinitely.

If you are too late to repel the attack and the entity or individual has already latched onto your energy, there are several courses of action you may take. The first option is to willfully send energy down the tendril to your attacker—all at once. Gather a significant charge of energy, focus on the link the attacker has made to your energy, and hurl the energy down at them. This works well for repelling attacking entities that are not acting out of anything but brute hunger. Usually after such an unexpected mouthful they will detach and seek elsewhere for their meal.

If you are feeling particularly vindictive, you can spike your energy with something unpleasant, as described above. In this case, however, you will willfully take a concentrated spike of that energy and send it down the tendril to your attacker. If you have some idea of what frequencies of energy your attacker finds incompatible, you can also connect to a source of such incompatible energy and send this down the line. If an attacker latches onto your energy expecting to withdraw vital life force and instead gets a mouthful of deep earth energy or solar energy, the shock will typically inspire them to detach as they essentially choke on the incompatible frequency.

Another method for dealing with an energy drain is to grab onto the tendril and begin pulling energy through it yourself. This inevitably becomes a battle of Wills, and whoever is able to enact the strongest drain will win. This tactic will drive off just about anything

that might go after your energy, with the possible exception of someone who has singled you out for a premeditated attack. Even willful attackers may think twice about feeding off of you if you have successfully taken their energy through their own tendril.

92. COUNTERING DIRECT ATTACK

The second method of psychic attack sends energy at a target. Generally, this energy is charged with a negative emotion or some other destructive intent. Energy balls charged with a negative emotion and thrown at a target constitute a direct psychic attack. Those that have been focused to be dense or sharp can also be used in direct psychic attack. They are thrown like missiles, and when they strike the energy body of a target, they can pierce the aura, make wounds in the subtle body, and occasionally even get lodged in the subtle body of a target.

Tendrils are most commonly employed to drain energy away from a target, but they can be used in direct attacks as well. A tendril can be used like a whip, striking fast and hard at a target's energy in order to damage it. Such a tendril can carry a charge of harmful energy at the tip, thus conveying this energy to the target when it connects. Through an effort of Will, a tendril can be shaped so it is sharpened like a blade on the end, and a tendril of this nature can slash and cut into a target's energy body, doing significant damage.

A more insidious method of direct attack involves creating an ambience of emotion or other harmful energy over a widespread area. This technique is most often employed by disembodied or other subtle entities. Ambient emotion typically causes no direct harm. However, the pervading emotion can strongly influence how a target feels, and these feelings can in turn influence how they react.

When used correctly, this can be a subtle but very potent attack. Thus, if an individual experiences a sudden spike of anger and is focused on it, that person may not notice when something connects to his or her energy and begins to feed off of it. If a person is too distracted

by the disquieting sensation pervading an area to think clearly, this may make him or her vulnerable to a further, more aggressive attack.

Energy that has been released as a general emotional ambience can be taken in like any other manner of ambient energy. Cycling will neutralize the emotional charge. Be careful to dump the emotion once it has been filtered out, for assimilating it into your system with the rest of the energy will cause you to experience the emotion. Another method of dealing with this manner of attack is to simply recognize the emotion as something that has been generated artificially and to consciously resist reacting to it. Grounding and centering will help shake off the effects of such an attack, as can filtering.

When shielding is not an option, the easiest way to defend against direct attacks is to grab onto the energy and either feed on it or ground it out. If the energy is still connected to the attacker, then you can trace this back to them. You can then focus a direct attack down the energy or use it as a conduit to feed from them. This strengthens you and weakens your attacker. Quite often, once an attack has been responded to in this way, the attacker will withdraw and retreat.

Even if the energy directed at you has been given a harmful charge, as in the case of spiked energy balls, you can still actively take this into yourself. This might not be an entirely comfortable process, but the effect is rather like catching a baseball that has been thrown at your head. By taking an active role and grabbing the ball out of the air, your hand may sting, but you have avoided a nasty blow to your temple. You can then shunt this energy away from you, ground it out, or cycle it to remove its harmful charge. It is also possible to grab the energy and slingshot it back at your attacker. This is another surprise that will usually convince them to seek a victim elsewhere.

93. REPAIRING DAMAGE

A successful psychic attack will damage the aura of the target, the subtle body, or both. Depending on the success and potency of the attack,

the resulting damage can range from something that is mildly inconvenient to wounds that can echo across to the physical form. While the aura and the subtle body will naturally heal over time, some damage may be too intense for a person's system to handle. In such cases, supplemental healing will be necessary to repair the damage.

The techniques used to repair damage to the aura and subtle body are advanced healing techniques. Basic healing requires you to know very little about the source of a problem. Rather than directly addressing the problem, basic healing techniques send a general wave of energy at the target, allowing the energy itself to do most of the work. Advanced healing techniques are far more specific. With advanced healing, you need to know precisely what the problem is and precisely what you need to do in order to fix it. This requires a strong working knowledge of the subtle body, refined perceptions, and a strong capacity to shape and manipulate energy.

Because of the delicate nature of the work, you should always do a reading of the subtle body before you begin any advanced healing technique. Consider this step exploratory surgery. In this reading, you are looking for the source of the problem. Not only do you need to identify where the problem is located in a general sense, but you also have to determine the exact nature of the problem as well as the extent of the damage. After analyzing the problem you have to develop a strategy for addressing it. This strategy will depend on the nature and severity of the problem.

Whenever you do advanced healing work, you should make certain that your work area is clear of any negative energies and protected from intrusion by subtle entities. A room in which a heightened energetic environment is regularly maintained is ideal for carrying out advanced work. The wards and shields in such a room should be solidly in place. A person who is undergoing advanced healing work is especially vulnerable to harmful and malevolent energies. Not only is the person's system worn down by whatever damage has been done to it, but with advanced techniques, you will be laying open portions of

the subtle body and aura, thus making the person vulnerable to further harm.

If no suitably maintained space is available for your energy work, take a few moments to prepare the space you will be working in as best as you can. Before you begin work on your subject, cleanse the room. Take a few moments to heighten the energy within the space, and then set up shields and wards to maintain this energy and to keep unwanted entities out. You should also take a few moments to ensure your own stability and focus so nothing about your own energy will interact jarringly with the energy of your subject. A distracted mental state or an erratic emotional state can seriously unbalance the energies of someone who has already been made vulnerable through subtle damage.

Once you have performed the energy work, you should make certain to follow up on your subject as well. A person who has undergone advanced healing techniques should be carefully observed for several weeks following the procedure to make certain that it took and that healing is proceeding at an acceptable rate. You should further scan the subject's energy to make certain that malignant attachments, intrusions, or other possible complications from the work that was done have not developed. If at all possible, you should take time to instruct your subject in basic shielding so he or she will be protected while convalescing. And you should give further instructions on how to maintain a healthy energetic environment in living spaces to prevent further occurrences of harm.

94. MAKING THE PROPER TOOLS

Before you attempt advanced energy healing, you should know how to create the tools you may need to accomplish your work. All of the tools in advanced healing are constructed from energy or the stuff of the subtle body. Most of these are shaped from your own substance and are used as an extension of you within the subtle body of your subject.

Typically, these extensions are focused through the hands, and various hand gestures can be used to guide them. By tying these extensions to something physically concrete, such as the movements of your fingers and hands, you aid your visualization of the subtle level of interaction. It should be noted that physical gestures are a focusing tool only and are not essential to the work. It is possible to accomplish all of the effects described below simply through an exertion of Will.

As you have learned through many feeding techniques, you can extend portions of yourself and use these to manipulate the energy of others. In the case of a feeding tendril, you extend a small feeler in order to connect to another person's subtle body, piercing the subject's aura and withdrawing energy back to you. The tools that you use in advanced healing work are based upon the same principles of extension, visualization, and focused Will.

One of the primary tools you will need is a tendril imbued with a cutting edge. This tendril does not have to be long, and it's best if you make it sharp only at the tip. You will focus the energy at the end of this tendril to make it hard and dense just like you would focus the energy of an energy ball. This must be a delicate and refined tendril, like an energetic scalpel, for you want to do as little extraneous damage to the target's subtle body as possible. This will be used to cleanly cut away attachments and intrusions and anything else that must be removed from the target's subtle body.

The second tool you will find most useful is a tendril tipped with an intense and concentrated point of heat. This will be used to cauterize wounds and to seal off damaged links. Again, this does not have to be a long tendril, as you will be using it for relatively close work. You can visualize this tendril as being tipped by a tiny, searing flame, much like a small blowtorch, or you may visualize it more like a tiny metal brand, glowing hot at the tip. Another approach is to envision it more like a laser, with a concentrated, controllable beam at the tip. In the case of the laser, you may find that this can be used to cut things away as well as to cauterize gaping wounds.

In addition to these extensions of yourself, you will need to learn how to weave energetic threads. These have a variety of applications. They can be used to suture shut small wounds and tears within both the aura and the subtle body. They can also be woven together to form a larger patch that is then laid over a vulnerable spot much like a bandage. When layered over damaged energy channels and connected to the flow of energy, they can help support a healthy flow while the damaged channels heal.

As energy does not hold its form indefinitely, threads of this nature will last for a short time and then be absorbed into the subject's own energy. This temporary quality is both good and bad. While it means that you may have to replace such threads in the case of something that is healing very slowly, you will also not have to remove them at any time to prevent them from becoming intrusions.

Threads of this nature can be woven from your own energy, or you may choose to draw upon your subject's energy for the construction of threads. Simply gather energy as you would for an energy ball, and then begin to spin small filaments out from this. You will have to use these threads almost immediately as they will not hold their shape outside the subtle body for very long and they are easily picked up and carried off by the natural currents that flow through the energy all around you.

When something more permanent is required, you can spin filaments out of the substance of the subtle body itself. This is more difficult than simply shaping threads of energy, but subtle filaments are more permanent than energetic threads. When such threads are required, it is best to spin them directly from your subject's own subtle body, taking a very small amount near the point you will need to repair and carefully stretching this out and shaping it into a thread.

It may occur to you to attempt to graft very small portions of one person's subtle body to the subtle body of another in order to construct these threads. However, this is a very delicate procedure fraught with problems. Not everyone's energy is compatible, and unless a suitable donor is found, it is very likely that the subject's subtle body will reject

the graft, treating it as an intrusion or expelling it entirely. The problems involved in person-to-person grafts far outweigh any benefits that may be had.

Also keep in mind that when you are grafting the substance of the subtle body, whether from one person to another or within the same person, you are essentially creating a wound to heal a wound. By tearing away portions of your subject's subtle body, no matter how minuscule, you are causing further damage to that body. When a wound is severe enough, this technique is justified, but always weigh the damage you will create against the damage you intend to fix. Especially in the case of a donor, make certain that the donor understands what he or she is volunteering and what effects this may have over time. Absolutely under no circumstances should you attempt to withdraw connective material from someone who has not consented or is unaware of what you are doing.

In addition to the tools outlined above, you will need to be able to extend multiple tendrils into the subtle body of your target to use as feelers and probes. These tendrils may additionally be used to grab onto intrusions and other matter that must be removed. The tendrils you use for this kind of work, although based upon those you use for feeding, will necessarily be smaller and more refined. You want to cause as little disturbance within the subtle body of your target as possible, and so your control of these tendrils must be carefully honed before you attempt any of these techniques.

95. AURIC WOUNDS

Auric wounds result from actions that have pierced or torn the aura. Psychic attacks that direct sharpened tendrils or missiles of energy at a target can leave wounds upon the aura. Feeding tendrils also pierce the aura of a target when they connect with that target's energy. When someone feeds carefully, the puncture wound is minimal and will quickly seal itself. Those who feed aggressively tend to leave much

larger, messier wounds, and these may not easily heal on their own. Connecting to the same point on a target repeatedly in order to feed also creates a lasting hole in the aura that, even as it heals, remains weak and easy to repuncture.

As the aura is the equivalent of the subtle body's skin, wounds of this nature leave a person's energy vulnerable to intrusions and other attacks. Usually with an auric wound there is also a certain amount of energy leakage. Various subtle entities are attracted by this leaking energy, and the already existing hole makes it easy for them to connect and feed upon the target's energy. Individuals with significant holes in their auras are also more vulnerable to harmful energies, increasing the effect unhealthy environments will have upon their physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

When a tear in the aura has been detected, you can address the problem in several ways. You may attempt to seal the hole simply by directing energy at it. This works best for minimal holes or areas that have been weakened but not completely punctured. In the case of larger wounds, you will want to seal the aura with threads of energy. This essentially places a bandage over the vulnerable area, protecting the subject's energy until their aura finishes healing on its own.

To seal a large hole or tear with energy, weave filaments of energy drawn from yourself or from your subject, then lay these over the affected area. When a large enough patch has been constructed, place this over the wound and lay your hands over the area to generate warm, healing energy. Press this energy against the patch until you are satisfied that it has sealed itself on the hole and will not come off.

You can also use a stitching technique with threads of energy. For this method, spin filaments of energy and anchor them to one side of the wound. Carefully pull the edges of the wound together and seal it by anchoring the threads into the other side. Only if filaments of your own energy are not sufficient to hold the wound closed should you consider spinning filaments directly from the subtle body of your subject.

Whether you are using threads of energy or the stuff of the subtle body, these stitching techniques work just like stitching a wound in the skin, and the same limitations apply. Large, gaping, and ragged wounds will be more difficult to seal. If the edges of the wound are excessively torn, there will be no adequate anchoring point for the threads, so stitching it closed will prove very difficult. In such a case, especially if there is significant energy leakage, you may consider cauterizing the wound, but be advised that this often leaves a different kind of wound that is prone to collecting energy blockages.

96. SUBTLE BODY WOUNDS

Wounds on the subtle body are much deeper than auric wounds. Especially potent psychic attacks that pierce the subtle body as well as the aura result in subtle body wounds. Also, wounds in the subtle body can arise from improperly removed links. The root of a link can go very, very deep, and when it is torn out, it invariably takes a large portion of the subtle body along with it. Unless this is cauterized or otherwise healed, the damage left behind can be severe.

Subtle body wounds leak massive amounts of energy, and depending on their location, they can interrupt healthy energy flow. Serious subtle body damage tends to echo in the physical body as well. It is not uncommon for a person to experience physical pain as a result of a subtle body wound. Although not as common, it is also possible for the physical body to manifest bruises, abrasions, sores, and even cuts that correspond to the subtle wound.

Small wounds on the subtle body can be treated much like small auric tears. Concentrate healing energy on the affected area and allow the subject's system to do the rest. Slightly larger wounds can be closed with filaments of energy. Follow this up with general healing energy to speed the process of recovery.

Larger wounds may present a problem with energy flow while they are still healing. In such cases, you will not only want to use filaments

of energy to seal the wound, but you will also want to use slightly thicker filaments to reroute energy around the affected area. Be certain to anchor these filaments in a healthy area with a good energy flow. Use your best judgment when spinning these filaments from energy or directly from the stuff of the subtle body.

You will probably have to manually encourage the energy to flow through these temporary channels at first, guiding it from the healthy area and pulling it along through the channel to its point of reattachment. Hand motions can serve as a focus for this, as can breathing techniques that pull, then direct the energy.

Treating a truly deep, ragged wound, such as that left behind by a large, uprooted link, can be problematic. Such wounds are difficult, if not impossible, to stitch closed, even when you draw out portions of the subject's subtle body and try anchoring them on the other side of the wound. Usually, there is simply not enough healthy substance to work with. These wounds not only leak energy, but they also present a potential point of reattachment for the removed link. Further, they almost always result in a physical crossover, including pain, muscle spasms, and occasional bruising in the related area.

To treat cases like this, you will have to cauterize the wound. You can hold your hand over the affected area and concentrate on generating heat. You can also extend tendrils that do the same thing. Note that you will use a significant amount of your own energy in order to produce the necessary level of intensity. Start off with a moderate heat and gradually increase this until you sense a noticeable effect. It is not a good idea to apply something too intense at the outset as you can easily exhaust yourself in addition to causing your subject a great deal of discomfort.

Remember that you are doing damage to your subject's subtle body in order to cauterize a wound of this type. You do not want the damage to extend beyond the original wound. Further, this is not a comfortable procedure for your subject. He or she will typically be able to feel the heat you are generating, both on a physical and a subtle

level. Further, the searing effect this has on the substance of the subtle body frequently causes physical pain. Pace yourself and the subject, and if at all possible, have a third person present who can do supportive energy work to minimize discomfort and immediately repair any damage extending beyond the desired area of effect.

Cauterizing a wound will leave a scar on the subtle body that may create lasting symptoms in the person's physical body. The scar may heal over time, but there is no guarantee. An area that is scarred in this way will have reduced energy flow. It will also tend to collect blockages. These can cross over to the physical body in the form of muscle cramps and localized pain. To minimize this effect, reroute some of the flow of energy by constructing minor channels around the scar. Use filaments spun from the substance of the subject's subtle body for this, as the scar and its effects will outlast anything constructed merely of energy.

97. ENERGY INTRUSIONS

An energy intrusion is a mass of energy that does not belong in the subject's subtle body. It may have been put there during some manner of energetic attack. It may have been picked up by the subject at a time when his or her aura was weak enough to allow foreign energies in. It can be a buildup of the subject's own energy, often poisoned with stagnant energy and negative emotions from long-term stress, emotional trauma, or repeated exposure to physical toxins.

Energy intrusions are largely inert. However, their very presence in the subtle body is harmful and invasive, for they are made up of energy that does not belong. While blockages tend to occur within energy centers and along energy channels, intrusions can occur anywhere within a person's subtle body. If left to remain in the subtle body, energy intrusions will eventually affect the physical body, inspiring physical ailments that echo the nature and placement of the invading energy. An intrusion close to the heart, for example, will often result in

chest pains, while one located in the head can cause chronic headaches.

An intrusion should be treated like a subtle body tumor. Malignant or benign, it should be removed. Keep in mind that, much like a tumor, removing an intrusion will damage healthy parts of the subtle body as well. For the removal to be completely successful, this additional damage must also be healed.

To remove something from the subtle body, it is better to cut than to tear. It is possible to remove something by wrapping your extended energy around it and pulling it away. However, this invariably causes damage to the surrounding portions of the subtle body, and it leaves a ragged subtle-body wound. Cutting something away from the subtle body will leave a wound as well, but it is generally smaller with much cleaner edges. This makes it much easier to heal.

To cut something away from the subtle body, you extend tendrils of your energy gently into the subtle body of your subject. Once you reach the source of the problem, visualize the ends of these tendrils hardening into sharp little knives. Get in as close to the intrusion as possible, then carefully cut away at its edges until the mass comes free. If you use hand motions to assist with your internal vision, wrap your fingers around the intrusion and begin to pull it away.

You may find that the intrusion is still attached in places, and you will have to carefully cut away at it until it comes free. If it does not seem to pull free easily, do not tear it away, as this will cause damage in healthy areas as well. Also, it is best to keep the intrusion intact and not remove it in pieces, otherwise fragments may lodge elsewhere in the subject's subtle body. Only when there seems no other way to remove the intrusion should you consider cutting it out piece by piece.

When you have removed the whole thing, discard the intrusion either by placing it in salt or grounding it out. You may not have time for this, as you should first attend to the resulting wound in your subject's subtle body. If you set the intrusion aside for later disposal, it is best to place it in a receptacle that has a construct worked into it. This

will ensure that it is held in one place throughout the remainder of your work so there is no danger of it reentering your subject's subtle body through any of the vulnerable areas.

Another type of energy intrusion is the root end of a link. A link is a subtle filament that has been inserted into the energy of another person. Links usually arise from feeding, and they can be anchored at various depths within the subtle body. Most links never attach past the aura, though links forged through deep feeding or particularly intense, extended interactions can work their way practically into the core of a person. When a link has been forged nonconsensually, it is energy that has invaded the subtle body of the subject, and his or her system will respond to it as if it were an intrusion.

It is possible to sever a link without removing the root that is anchored within the subtle body. In such cases, a portion of the link, however small, will still extend beyond the subtle body of the subject. As a link is directly connected to the subject's energy, unless a severed link has been sealed in some way, it will leak energy. Depending on the size and depth of the link, this leak can be like a slow drip or a running faucet. Practically anything running around in the subtle reality can attach itself to such a link and feed upon this energy. The original creator of the link can also easily reattach to an unsealed link, so it is always in the subject's best interest to cauterize these severed ends.

Cauterizing the severed link does not resolve the problem of the intrusion that is the root, however. This, like all intrusions, will have to be cut out if it is to be removed. While it is possible to simply yank a link out by its roots, this causes a great deal of collateral damage to the subtle body of the subject and is strongly discouraged. Before you attempt to remove the root of a link, you should determine just how extensively it is rooted to the subtle body of your subject.

Keep in mind that you will have to cut around the entire root structure in order to adequately remove it, severing the subtle body of your subject from every fiber of foreign energy that has intruded upon his or her being. This can be painful and traumatic for your subject,

and until the resulting wound is adequately sealed, it will cause a great deal of energy to be lost. In the case of very deep links, weigh the risks of removal carefully against the long-term damage that is likely to result from the continued presence of the root end of the link. If you deem the risk acceptable, and if the subject knowledgeable consents, then and only then should you attempt to remove such an intrusion.

98. MALIGNANT ATTACHMENTS

A malignant attachment occurs when an entity latches onto a person's energy, attaching itself to the subtle body. If something chooses to seize the end of an improperly severed link, this would create a malignant attachment. However, an attachment does not require the presence of a preexisting link. Most entities in the subtle reality are perfectly capable of creating their own links. Generally if a person's aura is healthy and strong it will repel such attacks, but if there are wounds in the aura or the energy is especially weak, that person is vulnerable to attachments.

Entities form these attachments in order to feed. Some of these are sentient entities, but most often they are mindless parasites, comparable to leeches or lampreys. Like most parasites, these entities will remain attached to a person's energy until they are actively removed. A malignant attachment further weakens a person's energy, often leaving him or her vulnerable to further parasitic attacks.

Malignant attachments must be removed. Not only do they constantly eat away at a person's energy, but they can also negatively influence their host's emotional and mental state. Sentient entities that have become attached to a person's energy sometimes do this expressly to influence a person, and they can produce effects akin to possession.

When dealing with malignant attachments, keep in mind that these are not inert collections of subtle matter but active and sometimes aggressive entities. As a general rule, entities that have been sustaining themselves upon a person's energy will not want to be

removed, and many will resist efforts to detach them. Sentient entities can sometimes be reasoned with and asked to leave, although this is not always the case. Entities of the lower orders, which function more like animals or vermin, are not really sentient and will only respond to force.

Some of the smaller, verminlike entities will attach themselves directly to the aura of the subject. These can be pulled away, although this will leave a ragged wound at the point of attachment. Bombarding the entities with unpleasant energy usually forces them to detach on their own. In this case, there will be less additional damage to the aura of the subject, although still a hole at the point of attachment. If all else fails, you can cut around the point of attachment, directly removing the entity. This method should be used as a last resort, however, for it will create an auric wound larger than the point of attachment itself. In all cases, you must take care to ensure that the entity or entities do not simply reattach themselves at another point upon the person's aura. Shielding yourself and your subject will repel most such attempts.

Many larger entities will attach themselves to a person's energy using subtle links. These will be perceptible as subtle filaments that stretch out beyond the aura of your subject. Frequently, links of this nature go no deeper than the outer layers of the aura, attaching just enough to siphon off some of the person's energy. Severing and cauterizing the link will address the most basic problem presented by such links, cutting the invading entity off from the subject's energy. When you have ensured that the entity's connection has been severed and it will make no effort to reattach, then you should be certain to remove all of that entity's energy from the subtle body of the person. Any invading energy you leave behind will become an intrusion.

Be aware that an entity may have more than one link attached to the energy of your subject. Once you have removed the most obvious link, check your subject's aura thoroughly to ensure that there are no smaller, secondary links. If you do find additional links, remove these

using the same methods that proved effective for the first one. Be certain to repair any wounds left in the aura or the subtle body of the subject. Anything that connects to a person's energy must make at least a small puncture in the aura to siphon off this energy. Some manner of wound will occur even in cases where the energy is being freely given. If these wounds remain untreated, they can leave the subject vulnerable to further attachments.

99. OTHERSIDE BEINGS

The subtle reality is immense. Because distance and physical boundaries do not exist there as they do in physical space, any single space may be populated by hundreds of subtle beings, resonances, and impressions, all layered on top of one another yet not precisely occupying the same space. Even the most desolate, empty space here in the physical world is peopled with things on the Otherside. Some of these can perceive and interact with beings here, but most are largely too out of phase with this reality to notice anything but their own small sliver of the realms.

Most ordinary people are like these out-of-phase beings. They are too intent on their one small aspect of reality to respond to anything else. Those who are sensitive cannot help but perceive and respond to at least some of these other beings. Furthermore, those who exist in a threshold state firmly exist in both realities at once. Not only can such individuals perceive and interact with both realities, but beings on the Otherside also can easily perceive and interact with them.

Some find it intensely disturbing to feel and be felt by such otherworldly things. Counselors in particular seem to be unsettled by subtle entities. This may be because many Counselors are natural channels, and some entities may attempt to communicate through them forcibly. Priests are most at home with the disincarnate, for they exist most completely in the subtle reality and interact with subtle entities as if native to that realm. Warriors also tend to be comfortable with the

disincarnate, but for the opposite reason. Being more grounded and shielded against much subtle sensitivity, Warriors cannot really be affected by subtle entities unless they allow themselves to be. The Warrior, however, is perfectly capable of interacting with the subtle entity, providing the Warrior with a very strategic advantage.

Although subtle entities are profuse and often exist in tandem with this reality, they rarely interact with people in a conscious or intentional way. Yet, all things that exist in the subtle reality feed upon energy. Many feed exclusively on energetic detritus, seeking cast-off energy and emotional residues. Others are more predatory, feeding directly from the energies of the living.

Many of these entities feed covertly, and they take such a small amount of energy that they escape notice. Those that take a great deal from a single target, however, are often hard to ignore. The Awakened almost always notice such attacks, while sometimes even the unawakened become aware that *something* has happened to them. Often, there is no intent behind an attack save for the need to acquire energy. Rarely do subtle entities take enough interest in the incarnate to bring about conscious and malevolent harm. There are occasional exceptions to this, however, and entities have been known to attack people for pleasure or sport. Still, most Otherside beings are little more than a nuisance. The majority that interact with this reality have less than an animal's intelligence, and these almost never intend harm even when they cause it. In general, it is best to ignore them except on those rare occasions when their activities infringe upon your own.

100. ORDERS OF BEINGS

There are many orders of beings in the subtle reality, and it would be impossible to classify them all. Most are not even native to this reality, but are merely passing through the fringes of it. Others have wandered accidentally into contact with people. Many of these are comparable to wild animals. They are driven by basic needs like survival and

hunger and have little comprehension of anything here. Like raccoons prowling around a house, they have their own world outside of this one, but occasionally those two worlds intersect.

When this crossover occurs, it is rarely intentional. The entities may be seeking food (energy) or they may simply be exploring the boundaries of their own environment. Either way, their reaction is often bestial and without reason. They may attack because they feel threatened, or they may attack out of hunger. They are also just as likely to flee. There is no malignant intention behind any of their actions. They are simply behaving according to their natures.

Another order of subtle entities is comparable to the vermin of this world. They tend to be small entities that are drawn to refuse and stagnant energy. They gather in closed spaces, like cluttered basements and closets, where energy has been allowed to stagnate in drifts. These entities feed upon cast-off energy, and they will rarely venture out beyond the safety of their cramped corners and holes. While they feed upon detritus, they also seem to have detritus of their own. When there are large numbers of them, this detritus builds up and is even more stagnant and detrimental than the original energy they have fed upon. There is often a sickly feeling to this energy, suggesting that, like physical vermin, they may carry energies that can negatively impact health. Such entities will rarely attack the living, but their presence in workplaces and homes can create a very negative and unhealthy energetic atmosphere. They are one of the many reasons stagnant energy should be regularly cleansed from a place.

Similar to the vermin are subtle parasites. These entities are of an animal intelligence or lower, but instead of feeding upon cast-off energy, they latch onto the living and feed directly from them. There are many varieties of subtle parasites, but in general, the ways they affect people are the same. They tend to pierce the subtle body of a person and form a permanent connection. Through this connection, they remain attached to that person until removed, continuously siphoning away energy. Their actions are not generally malicious,

although they are certainly undesirable. They are often drawn to places with stagnant and unhealthy energy, and for this reason, care should be taken to avoid picking up such parasites when coming into contact with such energy.

The last order of subtle entities is a broad one. It includes any subtle entity that is sentient. These can be disembodied spirits that once were human, or beings that have never been human at all. Some of these entities are native to the subtle reality and cannot hold a physical form. Others are the wandering spirits of other places, disincarnate for the time being. Still others are the spirits of our own kind, caught between incarnations. Human spirits that are between lives also fall into this order.

Sentient entities may be drawn to humanity in order to feed, though this is not always the case. Some interact with the living for good or for ill according to agendas of their own. They can think and they can reason, which also means that they can manipulate, develop strategies, and lie to get what they want. Because the subtle reality is their native realm, interaction with energy comes easily. Like any Awakened, they can harness energy through a focusing of their Will and affect things in the subtle reality according to intent. They can form attachments and become parasites on people, but unlike the lower orders of parasites, there is often a further agenda for such an attachment. Some will attach themselves to people mainly because they cannot for some reason achieve a physical form of their own, and they then use their host to forward their own ends in the physical world.

Many of the sentient beings that exist on the Otherside are very alien to this reality and its way of thinking. They are complicated and unpredictable, and this makes them the most potentially dangerous of all Otherside beings. Caution should always be used whenever dealing with these beings, if they are dealt with at all. Some are noble and beneficial. Others have more insidious agendas, and may only offer help for a price. Still others are of such an alien order that they barely take notice of this reality. They interact with things here by accident,

sweeping lesser beings up in their wake. It is rare when something of this nature intersects with this reality, but when it does, it is best to simply stay out of its way.

101. INTERACTIONS BETWEEN REALITIES

While subtle entities can interact freely with energy and the subtle reality, they have a limited ability to affect the physical world. Occasionally, they can affect electrical devices or move small objects, although this requires a significant expenditure of energy on their part. More commonly, they affect the physical world by working through beings who are already incarnate. This can be a willing interaction, although quite often the host is unaware of the spirit's influence.

Probably the most powerful ability subtle entities can exercise on the physical world is in the influence of thought and emotion. Subtle entities can charge the ambient energy in an area in order to influence the physical beings there, generating a particular emotion or impression that most people unconsciously respond to. These entities can also use empathy or telepathy with those who are receptive to such communication. Many people are unaware of their sensitivity to such impressions. Instead of questioning where a particular thought or feeling has come from, they will simply react to it, assuming it is their own. This subtle manipulation can be used to devastating effect.

Entities of this order can be consciously communicated with, although they are not always easy to understand. Some individuals can channel beings of this order, temporarily allowing these entities to act and speak through their physical bodies. This is a capacity that many Counselors have. Others can simply interact with these entities directly, communicating purely on the level of the subtle reality. This is how the Priests and Warriors most commonly interact with subtle entities.

The "voice" of a subtle entity is heard most commonly like a whispering in the back of the mind. Depending on the strength of its energy, this voice may seem to mutter and mumble or it may be as

clear as the voice of someone speaking in the same room. Each entity has a voice of its own, and with time and practice these can be distinguished by the listener. The voice usually comes with a particular feel and sometimes a visual impression that represents the being you are in communication with.

The presence of such a being is often accompanied by a drop in temperature. This drop in temperature can affect an entire room. However, it tends to be concentrated in one particular area, often known as a cold spot. This cold spot is the crossing-over point of the entity, where the space that it occupies in the subtle reality touches upon our physical world. Occasionally, the entity can be perceived visually at this point as well. The entity will most often be seen as a concentration of energy. This energy may take a particular shape implied by the nature of the entity, but most often it will simply appear as an amorphous cloud or sphere. Like the energy collected in an energy ball, it will be misty and gray, with a rippling effect on the air, like oil upon water.

102. COMMUNICATING WITH SPIRITS

There is really no trick to communicating with subtle entities. Generally, the intent to communicate is enough. As subtle entities naturally interact with energy, they are often sensitive to thoughts and to moods. Much of their communication is telepathic, although sometimes this poses problems for reception on this end.

If you suspect that a sentient entity is in your home and you wish to communicate with it, the simplest way you can do this is to talk out loud as if it were just another person in the room. While the actual sound of your voice does not exactly carry to the Otherside, the intent of your words will be felt. Speaking out loud is more for your benefit. You can just as effectively think your questions at the entity. However, formulating words forces a certain amount of order to your thoughts and helps you to distinguish between your own mental voice and the responses of the entity.

Rarely, if ever, will the entity's reply be physically heard. Some entities are powerful enough that the thoughts you receive from them will *seem* like actual speech. However, these are still communicated through energy and received through the subtle senses of your mind.

Your ability to "hear" subtle entities will depend on several factors. First, there is your own level of sensitivity. Some individuals are telepathic, while others are more empathic. Empaths tend to *feel* communications of this sort, gaining a general sense of emotion and intent without specific thoughts or words. Telepaths tend to perceive whole thoughts. Frequently these come across as images, but sometimes the communication is word for word. While sensitivity is important, so is expertise. Thus, your ability to interpret your sensations will also play a part in how effective these communications are.

The strength of the entity will also affect how well it can communicate. If an entity is weak or its energy is low, its communications will not be as clear. Furthermore, the subtle reality does not intersect evenly with the physical reality. It drifts closer and farther away. To a certain extent, this effect is seasonal, but the peaks and valleys are also subject to cycles that can barely be discerned. Certain places also allow for a more complete crossover. Many of these have long been recognized as sacred sites throughout the world. Consciously creating sacred space can facilitate crossover, and so intentional communication is best done in an environment of heightened energy.

When communicating with an entity, remember that you cannot always take a spirit at its word. Spirits, like people, have their own agendas. Most are perfectly willing to lie or at least manipulate the truth in order to achieve their goals. Treat entities just as you would incarnated beings. Get to know them before you trust them, and even then, analyze what they say and what they do. You would be wary if a complete stranger approached you on the street and started an intimate conversation. Exercise the same caution when you are approached by an unknown spirit for no immediately apparent reason.

103. BANISHING THE UNWANTED

As you continue to develop your abilities, you will begin to attract spirits. There are several factors involved with this. First of all, by heightening and refining your own energy, you begin to carry a heightened state around with you. This heightened state of energy makes it easier for spirits to interact with the physical reality, and so there will be a natural amount of crossover wherever you go. The effect is heightened the longer you stay somewhere, so your home, and even your workplace, may begin to show signs of increased spiritual activity.

Furthermore, spirits typically can sense those who are able to perceive and interact with them, and they will often approach such individuals. Human ghosts, especially, are hungry for any kind of interaction that reminds them of what life was like, and so they will seek you out to get this kind of interaction. Finally, most spirits prefer to feed upon higher frequencies of energy, and as your energy grows more refined, it will become more attractive to certain types of entities. Fortunately, as you develop yourself, your ability to resist such attempts increases as well.

The majority of entities that you will encounter are harmless. If they interact directly with you at all, it will be out of boredom or a need to communicate. Sometimes an unwanted spirit can become a real pest, however. This is especially true of mischievous entities that have taken up residence in your home. In such cases, you will need to actively persuade them to go away.

The first and easiest way to remove an unwanted entity is to simply ask it to go away. When you have sensed the presence of something that you do not wish to have around you, address the entity directly. Acknowledge the entity's presence and explain to it why you do not want it around. Do not be openly insulting or combative. Express yourself as firmly and politely as possible. You may also want to make it clear that you do not want the entity coming back; spirits can be very literal, and they may also seek to twist your words. Unless something is very specifically stated, it may be ignored.

If asking the entity to leave seems to have no effect, you should next try chasing it away. Performing a cleansing on the energy of a room will chase off most spirits. You can add potency to the cleansing by ringing a bell as you go through the room. The vibrations of some tones have a disruptive effect on subtle energies. Care should be taken when employing bells to chase out entities, however, for some of the incarnated are sensitive to this effect as well. The Priest caste especially, as they tread the line between spirit and matter, may find the use of such bells very uncomfortable. It is possible to grow used to the sensation, but shielding against the effect is strongly recommended.

Take the bells and make a sweep of the room. Strike the bells in every corner. As you do this, mentally or verbally instruct every unwanted presence to be gone. As the chime of the bells reverberates upon the air, visualize the waves of sound rippling through the energy, chasing everything away. You may follow this up by cleansing the room with incense. In ages past, smoke was often used to chase away vermin, and this is essentially its application for banishings. Visualize the incense smoke spreading throughout the room, smoking out all the unwanted presences gathered there. You can follow this up with a complete cleansing of your entire home. This sort of banishing is usually effective for most wandering spirits and for the lower orders of subtle entities that have no sentience to guide their actions. Sentient entities can be more stubborn, however, and remain despite these measures.

If the entity has remained, your next course of action is to actively remove it from your home. You can accomplish this just as you would remove unwanted energy. Prepare yourself to do a cleansing, and instead of grabbing onto stagnant or blocked energy, reach out and grab onto the entity itself. Beings of the subtle reality are completely made of energy, and you can manipulate their energy just as you can grab onto and manipulate the energy of anything else.

If the entity has not been actively destructive, you should not outright attack it. Simply grab onto it and firmly escort it out the door. As

you toss the entity from your home, make it known silently or out loud that you do not want it coming back. Once you have removed the entity, you may want to do a complete cleansing of the home, finishing this up by reinforcing the walls and warding doors and windows against reentry.

If an entity has been destructive or outright malicious, stronger measures will be required. Most entities that choose this course are rather powerful, but you should not let this intimidate you. If your Will is stronger and you refuse to allow the entity to harm you, there is little it can do. By fearing it, however, you give it power. Therefore, it is best to stand firm against even the most intimidating presences, for if you believe yourself to be stronger, you will overcome anything it can do.

To remove a malicious entity from your home, begin the cleansing as you would any other time. Locate the entity and grab onto its energy. You will undoubtedly encounter a struggle, and so fall back upon your inherent nature. As subtle entities are beings of pure energy, anything you can do to take that energy away will diminish them. Feeding upon subtle entities has a significant and immediate effect, and quite often even the most formidable beings will retreat rather than be treated in this way.

If feeding off of the subtle entity does not get it to immediately step down, you will have to engage it in a battle of Wills. If it lashes out and attacks with energy, you must be ready to defend. When you have successfully defended the strike, attack the entity with equal or greater force. You can use any method of psychic attack when dealing with subtle entities. Also, a blade that has been imbued with a construct can strike at things on the Otherside. This is the concept behind a Tibetan *phurba*. Once you have subdued it, grab onto it, envelop it with your energy, and expel it forcibly from your home.

When you have ejected the invading entity, do a complete cleansing. Reinforce the walls energetically, and set strong wards upon all the windows and doors. Powerful entities often attract smaller entities as

well, so search the house for any of these. If they are found, subdue them and eject them just as you did the original entity.

104. BINDING

One problem with banishing an entity from your home is the fact that it may return. If you do not regularly cleanse the energy of your house and reinforce the wards and walls, a persistent entity will eventually find a way back in. Furthermore, a particularly malicious entity may leave your home only to seek out someone else. Removing the entity from your home does not destroy it. Some of the more aggressive methods of removal may reduce its energy to a point where it will be inactive for quite a while, but over time even its worst subtle wounds will heal.

The only way to ensure that an entity will not return is to bind it. Binding is a very potent method of dealing with subtle entities, and it should be reserved for only the most extreme cases. Binding requires you to trap the entity so that it is no longer free to roam the subtle reality.

Most bindings use a physical object as a focus for the actual prison of the entity. Objects that are in keeping with this purpose, such as bottles, boxes, and jars, tend to work best. The ideal vessel for binding is a simple earthenware jar with a cork or other stopper that will hold a wax seal.

The process of binding is involved, and care should be taken to complete every step. Furthermore, you should be aware that in the current environment of the subtle reality, no binding is permanent. Energy degrades too quickly, and unless it is regularly reinforced, the energy you infuse into the binding will eventually dissipate, allowing the entity to get loose. Most entities do not respond well to being bound, and given that you are recognizable to subtle entities from incarnation to incarnation, this is a good way to make an enemy that will follow you for a very long time.

Even so, sometimes binding is the only answer. In such an extreme case, you must first prepare your vessel. Build a construct into the item, making the prison real in both the physical and subtle realities. Be sure to weave energy into the bottom of the vessel as well as the sides. Leave an opening at the top, but be certain to work a construct into the cork or stopper.

When you are satisfied with your vessel, you must overcome the entity in question and force all of its energy into the vessel. This usually requires that you compact the energy so all of it will fit, although if your Will is strong enough, a clear intent will be enough to guide it in. When you have placed the subdued entity into the vessel, physically shut the lid, reinforcing this with energy on the Otherside. You will want to ward and seal the lid with energy, reinforcing this by sealing it physically as well. Wax works nicely and allows you to imprint a symbol representative of your ward on the vessel. Tying string or thread around the vessel also reinforces the spiritual binding.

When you have bound an entity in this manner, you cannot simply place the vessel on a shelf and forget about it. Because the energy will degrade if left on its own, you must reinforce the binding on a semiregular basis. Depending on the strength of the entity, you may want to do this weekly for as long as you wish to contain the entity. Periodically check the physical vessel for cracks or weakened spots, especially around the seal, and repair or reinforce these as necessary. The amount of time and effort this entails should prohibit binding in all but the most extreme cases, so do not undertake this process frivolously.

105. BEGINNING MEMORY WORK

For the Awakened, it is typical to recall portions of previous lives. Often, these memories hold clues to issues that need resolving in the current life, and they can offer insight into the overall path of the soul. Not everyone easily remembers past-life material. However, although

this information can become deeply buried, it is never truly forgotten. Actively mining the memory for forgotten information can help shed light on past lives.

When you begin doing memory work, it is best to start with this life now. Everyone has a particular way of remembering things, and this method tends to hold true over multiple lives. Some people are very visual, and they will remember the way things looked down to the smallest detail. Others are more focused on their own internal landscapes, and so even in the middle of a raging battle, they will more clearly remember what was going through their minds. Still others code memory into sensations and feelings. Such memories have strong emotional content but little physical detail. It is imperative to learn your particular style of memory so you can differentiate between legitimate memories and imagined material.

A starting point for memory work is within your own childhood. Set some time aside each day for a week and meditate upon your past. Begin by remembering your first ten years. At first, it will seem that there are very few memories, but the more you look, the more you will begin to see. Your mind is constantly recording things, but unless there is a need for the information, you are rarely aware that it is there. By learning to bring unconscious material into your conscious mind, you will have developed your first essential tool.

The second tool you must develop for memory work is an attention to detail. As you meditate on your past each day, pay close attention to the images in your mind. Take note of what you notice in your memories, and after you have meditated, record your observations in a journal. As you sift through the details of your recollections, you will learn how memory is processed for you. Once you are familiar with your style of memory, you will be able to more accurately distinguish past-life material from imagined material.

The final tool you need to develop for memory work is detachment. As you meditate upon the past of this life, carefully consider your actions and your motivations. Do not get caught up in praise or

blame, but see things in your past as objectively as possible. Try to determine not only when you made mistakes, but also why you made them, for it is this information that will help prevent you from making similar mistakes in the future. Developing an ability to accurately judge your actions is indispensable for past-life work, for the whole point of remembering past lives is to see the truth of who you are, both good and bad, and apply what that teaches you to the life you are leading now.

Once you have worked upon remembering your life now and you have developed these three essential tools, then you are ready to begin working with memories of your past lives. Oftentimes, past-life recollections will come spontaneously to you without any special effort. Sometimes, however, you need a bridge to help you cross from this life into the past. Various visualizations can work for this, but the most common one involves the Hall with Many Doors.

Put yourself into a meditative state. Ground yourself and center; then focus on your breathing for a little while. When everything in your mind has become still, imagine that you are in a long hallway. The hallway is inside of you. This hallway is lined with many doors. Each of these doors goes to a different memory, and each in some way represents an aspect of you. Some of these doors are open. Some of these doors are closed. Others are locked and barred. Go to the door that appeals most to you. Turn the handle and walk through, knowing that you are opening a door into a part of yourself that has remained closed until now. Experience whatever this reveals to you, and when you are finished, record your impressions so you may consider them later.

This is a very basic bridge into memory work, and it can be repeated countless times with different results. There are many visualizations besides this one that can help you gain access to your memories. Dreamwork, guided imagery, meditation, and even hypnosis can all be used to delve into the unconscious records of your past. The methods that work best vary from person to person, and discovering your ideal technique is largely up to you.

When you have a past-life memory, you may not know how to interpret it. Most memories come in fragments. This can be like looking at snapshots in someone else's photo album. Memories are often out of order as well. Very rarely will you remember a life from start to finish. Sometimes, all you will recall is how that life came to an end. Traumatic events tend to impress themselves upon you, so it may seem like every lifetime was made up entirely of terrible things. This is simply because the terrible times and the emotional times have the most to teach you. The quiet days where nothing was happening rarely challenge a person to learn.

The best way to approach a past-life memory is to take it simply as it is. In most cases, it is impossible to verify the accuracy of a memory. If you have enough detail to determine a place or a time period, you may be able to do limited historical research. Sometimes the smallest details are most convincing, particularly when they involve information that you could not have learned outside of actually living in that time. But the very nature of memory is imperfect, and even recollections of this life are often somewhat flawed. The purpose of remembering is not about proving something to yourself. The purpose of these memories is learning who you are.

Memory work is about what your past can teach you. Within any image or scene that occurs to you, there is insight. Apply what you see there to your life now. Even if the memory is just something constructed by your subconscious, there will be a lesson for you to learn.

106. EDGE WORK

The Priest caste walk Between. Between genders. Between realities. Between life and death. They are in essence a juncture, a threshold. While their status as Between beings makes the Priest caste fragile, it also gives them a great deal of power. None who are embodied walk as completely upon the Otherside as they do. They perceive and interact with spirits as if they were spirits themselves, and when they die

physically, their transition from one state to the next is as simple as letting go.

Sending their spirits out beyond their bodies is a very simple matter for this caste, but these skills are not the exclusive property of the Priests. Anyone with sufficient mastery in directing energy can with practice learn these techniques.

Extending yourself so that you interact more completely with the spiritual realm while yet retaining a thin hold upon the physical world is termed Edge Work. Edge Work takes advantage of the threshold state. While remaining anchored to the body, you can stretch yourself beyond the realm of flesh to what lies beyond. With this technique, you can effectively travel great distances without leaving your room, and you can with practice even maintain a presence in multiple "places" at once. When doing Edge Work, there are always at least two points of awareness: the anchor of the physical body and its physical location, and the extension of the spirit and whatever Otherside "place" it has extended to.

Edge Work can be used to achieve effects such as bilocation, but it can also be applied to various clairvoyant and extrasensory techniques as well. Thus, you can extend yourself and see through another's eyes or hear through another's ears. You are also not limited to travel only through the physical realm, but can use this technique to extend yourself to various Otherside locations as well.

Unlike traditional astral travel, where the physical body is left behind completely, in Edge Work, awareness of the physical body is retained. This splits your perceptions between the physical and subtle realities. You perceive and can potentially interact with both "places" at once, so long as you are able to balance your perceptions along the edge of these two places. Invariably, such interaction uses a great deal of energy, so if you practice Edge Work you will find that you have a heightened level of need.

Various techniques make use of different levels of Edge Work. Storm magick, for example, can be accomplished by extending the

Self energetically up into the clouds and spreading your energy through the atmosphere. As you extend your energy, your perceptions will expand along with the energy, allowing you to sense the forces and currents among the clouds. Depending on your level of skill, this perception can be limited to your immediate area or can extend for miles. As you perceive the currents and eddies in the atmosphere, it becomes a small matter to extend energy into them in order to harness them, pulling in cold or warm fronts, encouraging an increase in wind, or inspiring the clash of forces that will produce a thunderstorm.

Interacting with spirits within their own territory of the subtle reality also qualifies as Edge Work. While many can hear or in some manner perceive spirits from the vantage point of the physical realm, a more involved interaction and communication can occur when you step mostly outside of your body and meet the spirits as equals and peers. The process here is almost identical to that described for storm magick. You must simply split your perception between physical and spiritual realms, then extend your spiritual, subtle Self to the location of the subtle reality. This is rather like stepping sideways from one reality to the next, as the subtle reality is woven within and throughout the physical realm. Once you have extended yourself energetically to the subtle reality, you can expand your perceptions along with your energy and focus your energy to harness or interact with the other energies present.

With weather magick, you project your subtle Self far above the body among the clouds. With spirit work, you project your Self simply to the Otherside. This may be the Otherside as it exists near the immediate vicinity of your physical body, although it does not have to be. Space and distance are very different in the subtle reality, so with a thought and a concentrated effort of Will, it is possible to extend the Self to just about any "place" in the subtle reality. Kheprians seem to be limited to the subtle reality immediately attached to this physical realm, although it is sometimes possible to reach through to realms verging on or adjacent to this subtle reality. While Kheprians often

cannot access further realms, we can nevertheless Call into them, thereby inviting beings from other realms into the Between space, which seems to serve as a common ground for many diverse places and realms.

Edge Work is a very versatile technique with numerous potential applications. You are limited only by your level of concentration and your ability to focus your energy and perceptions between both realms. You should take care, however, that you know how to handle yourself when spiritually attacked, for Edge Work can make you vulnerable to other entities. As you walk Between, you are essentially a spirit yourself, and you can act and be acted upon by other spirits just as if you were native to the subtle reality. If you are attacked in that state, it can potentially do more significant damage to your subtle body, and this can also place a greater strain on your physical self.

107. MAINTAINING BALANCE

We are beings that exist upon a threshold. Matter and spirit, present and past, finite and infinite all are united within us. For this reason, balance is essential to who and what we are.

As we progress along our journeys, we must take care to maintain this balance. Because of our awareness of energy and the subtle reality, we are driven toward experiences of the spirit. But we cannot forget that we are physical beings as well. We must lead ordinary lives in the real world in order to balance the extraordinary aspect of what we are. As we look to the past for insight and lessons, we cannot lose sight of our lives here and now. There is a reason we have incarnated in this moment, and if we live in the past, we cannot move toward the future. Finally, as we cultivate union with our Higher Selves, we must remember that the self of this little lifetime has something to add to that greater whole. The Higher Self is evolved and powerful, but if it had nothing else to learn on its journey, we would not be here.

Anything in our nature, when taken to an extreme, is potentially

destructive. For this reason, balance must also mean moderation. We should never go to extremes in feeding, when influencing others, in doing past-life work, or in relying upon the Higher Self. Instead, we should follow a middle path that allows us to be true to our natures without bringing destruction on ourselves or those around us.

Balance is not an easy thing to maintain. Even the most advanced of us will waver at times in our focus, putting all of our energy into our mundane lives, then swinging over to an almost purely spiritual existence, then swinging back again. The key to balance is knowing when it is most appropriate to focus on which aspect of our lives and finding the middle road between all things.

It is important, however, to note that balance does not mean stagnation. True balance is a dynamic interplay between opposing forces. A seesaw with all the weight on one side is going nowhere. A seesaw where the weight is distributed equally on both sides is no better. It is only when one side strives against the other that motion is attained.

We must keep our lives in constant motion. Similarly, by our very natures, we must keep energy in a constant flow. Stagnation leads to blockages and to a variety of difficulties. This is part of a universal cycle that affects the largest and the smallest aspects of our lives. We have three castes for a reason. Two would be too balanced, but three allows for a positive, a negative, and a state in between. All of them working together create a fourth state: dynamic fusion. This is a microcosmic reflection of the macrocosm. The goal of balance, then, is to achieve this dynamic fusion—which is not static but constantly shifting between its constituent parts—in order to adapt, change, and grow.

Our alteration was not an accident. Neither did we achieve this state purely through our own means. Our choices played into a universal plan, and through our actions, we became universal tools. We are living embodiments of the universal flow, and it is our responsibility to maintain that flow. This is the price of our power, and it is something we should never forget. Between shadow and light, true form is revealed.

108. FULL CIRCLE

We are the many-born. We are the Immortal. Eternal, we wander the eons, moving to the rhythm of our own inner tides.

We are active elements moving through passive worlds.

Endlessly we die and are reborn, changed yet unchanging through the years. We move from lifetime to lifetime, taking up bodies as garments.

Ours is a journey toward understanding, and our charge is knowledge and wisdom. We are the catalysts, and as we Awaken to ourselves, we serve to Awaken the very world.

AFTERWORD

BEYOND VAMPIRES AND VAMPIRISM

As I'm sure you've noticed by now, House Kheperu is not really about vampires. Vampirism is just a word, and it is a very clumsy word at that. You could just as easily say that House Kheperu is about "magick" or "ESP" or attaining "higher vibrations of being." All of these are just words that capture a little bit of meaning but fail to convey the whole truth. Our teachings do not fit neatly into a word or a tradition, because they strive to capture what lies beyond these things.

It has been a difficult task learning how to communicate such a complicated and all-embracing wisdom tradition. Carrying around such a profound tradition in the form of intuitive knowledge and past-life memories has been even harder.

DISCOVERY OF SELF

When I first started asking those key questions—Who am I? What am I? What is my place in the Universe?—I knew the answers were going to be interesting. I had had extraordinary experiences all my life, to such an extent that they were, for me, quite commonplace. It was sometime in middle school that I started to realize that these things were not a regular part of many other people's lives. Prior to that point,

seeing spirits, knowing things about people that no one had told me, and being able to heal with energy and Will alone were not things I really wondered about. I did all of these things and more on a regular basis, but with about the same level of attention that I ate, slept, and breathed. As things that were completely natural to me, there was no need to really think about them or ever ask why.

Being a loner and a bookworm, I did not have much contact with people prior to college, so it was not until my college years that I started developing a basis for comparison. And this is when I really started asking why I was the way I was and how I could do all the things I regularly did.

At first, I didn't really credit my abilities. I had read enough and heard enough from people to know that true metaphysical abilities came with hard work and study, and only those who had mastered such skills could perform truly reality-bending tricks. I certainly hadn't worked to achieve what I could do. Further, it seemed that everyone else I knew who practiced what they called "magick" had to go through extensive rituals and other preparations in order to initiate any manner of change. For me, frequently, a concentrated thought was more than enough.

So for a while I thought that I was doing something else. The thought that I was delusional also crossed my mind, but through empirical evidence alone, it was obvious that I was doing *something*. The presence of numerous witnesses in event after event made it quite clear that this was more than just delusion. When it takes more mental gymnastics to come up with a "rational" explanation for an experience, you know you have reached the point where you should simply accept it for what it is.

MY HIDDEN LIBRARY

So what was going on with me? That was the question I wrestled with throughout the early nineties. I seemed to know a lot of things intuitively. I wasn't sure if the theories and techniques that I recalled had

any basis beyond my imagination, so I studied everything I could on metaphysics, magick, and the occult. Although the language differed, each book I opened seemed to contain another aspect of what I already knew.

I'll admit that at first it was kind of creepy. I would regularly find ideas I had formulated many years before represented almost word for word in the works of mystics, metaphysical teachers, and occultists from a myriad of times, faiths, and cultures. Sometimes there were differences, but these were more often differences in perception or technique than intent or meaning. It was as if I carried this huge metaphysical library around in my head and had been familiar on some level with every book on those shelves since the age of three.

By 1992 or 1993, my studying had become a sort of backward engineering. I already knew how to do many things, but I often operated blindly on instinct. By reading up on current metaphysical thought, I slowly learned what I was doing and what basic metaphysical principles it was founded upon. This served to give me the language necessary to convey my understanding to others.

PAST-LIFE CONNECTION

I knew that this extensive knowledge of metaphysical techniques had to be tied to my past-life recall. I had carried memories of other lives around with me since as early as I could remember in this life. These were such an integral part of me that when I was a child, there was no distinction between the memories of these other selves and the memories from this current life. I frequently told my mother about different places I had been and the different roles I had held. As a child, it just didn't seem strange to be thinking about playing in the sandbox one moment, then thinking about how hot and wet it had been in Vietnam the next. Even though age and gender frequently differed in these recollections, all of them were essentially me, and the memories just slid from one to another along this unbroken thread of personality.

The question I started to ask in college was, *how long?*

How long was that unbroken thread of memory? How far back could I really recall? These questions led to other questions, such as, why did I remember any of this at all? And, when did this string of memories really begin?

I am fond of telling my students now that if you don't really want the answer, you have no business asking the question. Well, to be truthful, at the time I was asking these questions, my nineteen-year-old self didn't really want the answers. And when some of those answers started to surface, I tried to run and hide from them. There is an amazing weight that settles on your shoulders when you first realize that you are more than what you assumed yourself to be. While it was great to have all kinds of metaphysical knowledge and past-life memories while I was young, it was not so great when I realized that this meant I had a lot of hard work and responsibility in the life—and *lives*—ahead of me.

FLIRTING WITH DENIAL

It was very tempting to settle into the image of the vampire, as ill fitting as it was, and never look beyond my need for energy. It was similarly tempting to take the past-life memories as interesting curiosities and never try to figure out why I carried so much around with me. As undeniable as my experiences were, denial was very a seductive state indeed.

Throughout the nineties, even while I was pursuing my path and its deeper meanings, I flirted with the notion of sticking to the surface and never facing what lay beneath. I didn't really want the responsibility that some part of me understood I must have. Lives with that kind of responsibility are hard lives, and it would have been so much easier just to write articles on nineteenth-century literature and teach college English for the rest of this life.

To be honest, in 1996 it looked like a *really* good idea to cut and run. I had been involved with journalist Jeff Guinn's book *Something in the Blood* in the spring of that year, and I participated in the media

promotion when it came to Cleveland that August. After that, it started getting pretty weird in the vampire community, and I wasn't sure how safe things were anymore. So I backed off. I folded *Shadowdance* and the *Midnight Sun*. I stopped all of my correspondence, and I ran and hid in my comfortable little backwoods hometown. I focused on relationships and on other things I hadn't had time for before, and I shared my teachings only with a few close members of my cherished Khepriian Family.

So how did this book ever get written, and how did Todd convince me to reintroduce myself to the scene? That is a very strange story indeed, and even though it happened to me, sometimes I have trouble believing it.

WISH BRINGS A GUEST

In the fall of 1998, my friend Wish from Chicago was on his way to hear a revered Hindu teacher speak in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He and I hadn't seen one another for several years, so he figured Michigan was close enough to make a side trip to Ohio and stop by. He said he was bringing a friend with him, and he wanted to see what this friend made of me. He also wanted to see what I thought of this mysterious friend, so he only told me that the friend's name was Vinay, and he practiced some kind of metaphysics.

The first time I saw this Vinay was when Wish pulled in and they both got out of the car. It was dark out, but the parking lot was well lit, and I could see both men clearly from my balcony. Vinay looked really familiar, in an eerie sort of way, and at the time he appeared to be of Arabic descent. When Wish and Vinay arrived at my door, however, Vinay looked nothing like the man I had just seen getting out of the car. Still strangely familiar, he was clearly Hindu, nondescript, and a little pudgy. He was ruffled and sleepy from the car ride, and so he settled down in my computer chair and dozed while Wish and I caught up on old times.

When Vinay finally spoke, it was with a voice like that of Sean Connery. I learned that he was part Hindu and part Scottish, which explained the accent, and he had spent the last six years or so in Chicago. He was also heavily involved in an ecumenical confederation of mystics. He himself practiced a Hindu mystical tradition, and he was on his way, after the lecture in Ann Arbor, to retrieve a Sufi mystic from New York City and escort her to some appearance in the Midwest.

THE SWAMI AND THE VAMPIRE

Wish knew me as a vampire, but he had told Vinay nothing of this. Once we started talking, Vinay was clearly curious about my practices and beliefs. Knowing how others had reacted, I hesitantly explained to him about my vampirism. He was skeptical that I was actually taking energy when I fed. From his experience, he felt that when I interacted with people energetically I was simply raising their energy to a higher level. In his opinion, since this was new to them, it seemed like something had been taken away when it had simply changed states. I acknowledged that in part an exchange with me caused energy to reach a heightened state. But I insisted that I still took a significant portion into myself, retaining this to fuel my own physical and spiritual being.

After some amicable disagreement, I offered to demonstrate. I took his wrists in my hands and performed an exchange, and his reaction was puzzlement and wonder all at once. He admitted that I was indeed taking energy, but I was also cycling it and raising the frequency, too. He professed that he'd never encountered anything like it before.

As he asked me more questions about what I felt I was, I explained that my almost nonexistent connection to life energy as I understood it was related to my remembrance of past lives. I explained that I had an unbroken thread of memory over a number of lives, and most of these had seemed to carry the same metaphysical traits and abilities I had now.

His next question was by then familiar: "How far back does it go?"

SPACES BETWEEN LIVES

I hesitated to respond at first. This was mainly because I had recently recalled a period of time spent between lives, unable to incarnate. I had written the memory out as a story, because it had been so vivid and unusual. I had been involved in a battle, and I, along with many others, had been captured. Some of the captured were ransomed. A few were imprisoned and tortured. I remembered that the person who tortured me had not only recognized me for what I was, he had also made it clear that he wanted to teach me a lesson about the responsible use of my powers. Somehow the way in which he tortured me made it impossible to incarnate for about five hundred years. At the time, I was still struggling to accept everything from this memory, and I had told no one about it.

Carefully, I started trying to explain what I understood about this gap in my incarnations. At the time, I had no idea that people sometimes did remember the period between lives, and that it was not uncommon for people to spend some time outside of the cycle. I was intentionally sketchy in giving the details about who I had been, where I had been, and what battle I had been fighting, because some of this was historically significant. All I really said was that the torturer had somehow known me, called me by a very ancient name, and proceeded to hurt me in ways that damaged more than just my physical flesh.

Up until this point in my life, I had been very guarded about my past lives. I had only ever been able to verify two lives within history books, and since one of those had been a well-known poet in his day, I kept pretty quiet about it. Friends knew that I had past-life memories, but I rarely gave specifics. In a few cases, Family shared memories of certain times and lives with me, but I had only encountered this with other Kheprians.

So it came as something of a surprise when Vinay regarded me very carefully for a moment, and then filled in the details of this unusual memory—from the perspective of the man who had tortured me.

Suddenly I realized who he had appeared to be as he got out of the car and why he had triggered such a strange, uneasy sense of familiarity.

As accustomed to extraordinary experiences as I am, I still have moments of amazement and wonder. This was one of those. There was a momentary flash of pent-up feelings from that long-gone life, but this was quickly replaced by a burning curiosity. Truth be told, I had wanted the opportunity to talk openly to my torturer even as he tortured me just to find out how he knew me and where he had learned the techniques that ultimately prevented my incarnation for more than five centuries.

About eight hundred years later, we had that conversation.

OF GODS AND REVELATIONS

Vinay and I talked for thirty-six hours straight. We were too engrossed in sharing and learning from each other to even consider sleep. There was so much for us to discuss.

During this conversation, Vinay explained that in this life he was a follower of the Hindu god Ganesh. Ganesh is an elephant-headed deity, one of the sons of the god Shiva, but more importantly, he is Remover of Obstacles and Opener of Ways. Ganesh is the god who sits above every threshold, the god every Hindu gives offering to before any important undertaking in his or her life.

In his service to this deity, Vinay often found that he was drawn to people at a time in their life when they needed an extra push to accomplish their dharma. He and I both felt that our “chance” encounter as facilitated by Wish had been part of the larger machinations of fate. It came at a time in my life when I had run out of conventional answers for much of what I knew, but it also came at a time when I needed a little extra motivation to really commit myself to the less-than-conventional answers that everything kept pointing to.

During that mind-blowing day and a half, we discussed the process of incarnation, universal sources of energy, connections between beings, and how these things related to what I recalled. There was even more in that intense conversation, but some of that I

am not ready to share because even now it still stretches my boundaries of belief.

Vinay knew things about me that I had told no one, just from reading my energy. And he told me point blank that I had a spiritual legacy. He scolded me for hiding from my responsibilities and made it very, very clear that I needed to start trying to find all of the Kheprians I had ties with. We had karma together that needed resolving, but more importantly, we had something we needed to accomplish on a much larger scale. We carried these memories for a purpose, and that purpose was to teach and share what we knew. The Universe does not give power without a price, Vinay cautioned me, and my payment would be to pass on what I remembered.

It is not every day that I have a conversation with a mystic who is essentially the spokesperson for a God. I was duly chastened for running and hiding when things got rough back in 1996. Almost as soon as Wish and Vinay left, I pulled out the Codex and started looking around on the Internet. Intuitive as always, I knew my next step was there. It was not long before contact was made with Father Todd, and all the grand adventure related at the beginning of this book was off to its true start.

LOOKING AHEAD

This has not been an easy journey, but it has been an exciting one. The ability to reconnect with my scattered Family alone has proven worth it, despite some rough spots along the way. And I know some amazing things still lie ahead. The world is changing around us, becoming more like the world I remember from so long ago. People are no longer blind to the spiritual half of their existence, and as their perceptions expand, they want to learn more.

A great deal of knowledge has been lost over time. Material that was passed on as oral tradition has been corrupted through too many retellings. Written texts have been translated and retranslated until the

original meaning has been completely obscured. And many other works have simply been destroyed through the passage of time. All that remains is what is remembered, for wisdom carried on the soul cannot be corrupted or destroyed by the turning of the years.

There are many wisdom traditions the world over that speak of spiritual immortals who carry their teachings from lifetime to lifetime. I know that we are not the only ones. Yet I do not know how many of the others remain, or why so many of them seem to be keeping silent right now. I only know that I feel it is time to say these things and that people are ready to hear.

This is so much more than vampires and vampirism, I cannot even begin to explain most of what I know. I just ask that you look beyond words, because this language is clumsy and imprecise. Listen instead to the truth in your heart. All of you, even if you do not remember yourselves, know how to do wondrous things. Many of these things you do already without consciously realizing it. Or perhaps you simply have no words to name the things you can do. Without language, you have never spoken of these things, so you have never found until now that others do these things, too.

Even if this culture has divorced body from spirit, there is no way to truly cut off our spiritual selves. You know who you are. You know what you can do. All you need is to trust, remember, and Become. The world is Awakening around us, and we must all take up our role.

APPENDIX I

A BRIEF GUIDE TO THE VAMPIRE COMMUNITY

In case you are curious about the vampire community and you want to learn more, I've compiled a brief list of Web sites that will introduce you to this fascinating network of individuals. This is by no means a complete list of all the different groups that are out there. The vampire community is amazingly diverse, and it is in a state of constant change. New groups and houses are formed almost monthly, and others break apart or fade into obscurity with just as much speed. Prepare to be enlightened, overwhelmed, and confused: for as many people that are involved in this fascinating community, there are almost as many interpretations of what a real vampire is and isn't.

Because my own interpretation of vampirism runs along metaphysical lines, most of the groups I am in contact with also have a spiritual element to them. Although the Codex has influenced a large portion of the community, the reader should be aware that there are still many groups that identify with the vampire simply in terms of fashion, or as a sexual fetish, or simply as a literary and folkloric archetype. There are even a few groups that believe the vampire is a very physical entity, something that can be dissected with science and reduced to a viral infection or genetic mistake.

Still, this list is a good starting point for any who wish to learn more about the people who have integrated the vampire into their lives. I have only listed groups or organizations that I have had direct dealings with so I can offer an informed opinion on the type of information they offer. Exclusion from this list should not be seen as any sort of judgment against that group or individual. Further, inclusion in this list is not necessarily an endorsement on my part. Each organization within the community is responsible for its own statements and activities.

As with everything on the Internet, use caution and common sense when making contact with people, and never give out your real name and contact information unless you are absolutely certain you can trust the person on the other end. Every community has its extremists and crazies, and this one is no different.

RESOURCE SITES

DRINK DEEPLY AND DREAM

www.DrinkDeeplyandDream.com

Run by MemoryandDream, this highly aesthetic site is as useful as it is attractive. Filled with level-headed information, the site is also replete with useful resources for meeting other like-minded individuals such as chat rooms and message boards. Like many of the individuals who run good, solid resource sites, MemoryandDream owes allegiance to no one but herself, choosing to eschew the politics of houses and courts in favor of creative independence.

SANGUINARIUS.ORG FOR REAL VAMPIRES

www.sanguinarius.org

This is one of the oldest and probably one of the most complete resources you will find on the Web. Run by Sanguinarius, this page caters to every aspect of the vampire community and contains extensive collections of articles, links, and other information for both the

beginner and the veteran of the scene. Although allied with many, Sanguinarius is not a member of any specific group. Therefore, the material she presents is democratic and representative of a wide variety of views. Sanguinarius.org is not a group or club, so there is no need to become affiliated with anything in order to make use of the information contained within this site. Sanguinarius also publishes a semiregular newsletter with updates and information of interest to those in the community through *yahogroups*.

SPHYNXCAT'S REAL VAMPIRES SUPPORT PAGE

<http://sphynxcatvp.nocturna.org/>

SphynxCat has been around at least as long as Sangi, and it's a toss-up as to who has the better page. Like Sanguinarius, SphynxCat is not a member of any specific group. Thus, as an independent, she offers a democratic and unbiased view toward all the different resources out there. Her extensive page contains information and articles on every aspect of vampirism as well as plentiful links to other sites. Intelligent, articulate, and accessible, SphynxCat is also very active online and can frequently be found on various e-lists and message boards answering direct questions from those seeking more information on the community.

THE VAMPIRE LEGACY SOCIETY

www.100megspop3.com/vamplegacy/legacy1.htm

This is an extensive and eclectic resource with information on vampire folklore and fiction in addition to material concerning the real vampire community. Possibly the most useful part of this site is its who's who listing. Another independent group, the Vampire Legacy Society offers what amounts to a review of various high-profile members of the online vampire community. This is a good site to consult if you are planning on joining any major e-lists, as it will introduce you to many of the key voices you are likely to encounter there.

VAMPYRES.ORG

www.vampyres.org

A new initiative established in 2003 by a coalition of North American vampire groups, Vampyres.org seeks to provide a nonpartisan resource for the myriad aspects of the community. In addition to its function as a resource, Vampyres.org seeks to encourage communication and cooperation between the founders, leaders, and organizers of the world vampire community.

NETWORKING ORGANIZATIONS

BLOODLINES INTERNATIONAL

www.bloodlinesint.com

An international organization of geographically based chapters dedicated to bringing real vampires together. Bloodlines is run by OldWorldVampire, and since its founding in 1999 it has blossomed into countless chapter houses in the United States and abroad. Although a membership organization, Bloodlines does not have a hierarchy among members, nor does it have a specific set of beliefs that it requires members to adhere to. Rather, it is intended to be more of a social network that respects individual interpretations of vampirism and encourages its members to express their beliefs in whatever manner seems most appropriate for them.

THE SANGUINARIUM/ORDO STRINGOI VII

www.vampyrealmanac.com

One of the original networks established to bring real vampires together, the Sanguinarium was founded in the late nineties by Father Sebastian Todd. Although it was heavily populated by lifestyle and role-players in its earlier years, the Sanguinarium now includes a number of metaphysical and spiritually-based households as well. Members of the Sanguinarium typically wear the Sanguinarium Ankh, a highly visible symbol intended to help vampires find one

another in clubs and other events in real time. Those active in this community agree to uphold the tenets of the Black Veil, a set of commonsense ethics intended to keep the community healthy and safe (See Appendix III, page 265). Much more structured than the many networking organizations that came after it, the Sanguinarium/OSV has an inner and outer circle as well as graded levels of involvement.

THE SCARLET MOON

www.thescarletmoon.org.uk

British-based informational society established and run by Hirudo. Hirudo has some fascinating and unique theories on the origin of modern vampires, which makes this site worth looking into if only for a different perspective. Like many other sites that serve as information clearinghouses, The Scarlet Moon also has a plethora of articles, links, and other resources available for all who enter. A real-time group as well as being online, The Scarlet Moon also hosts get-togethers that allow members of the community to socialize and connect.

SHADOWLORE

www.shadowlore.net

Founded by Mairi, one of the many fifty-something vampires at work in the heart of the vampire subculture, ShadowLore is another chapter-based network that helps connect the community. The sole purpose of ShadowLore is to put adults of like interest and like minds in touch with one another, both online and off. Branches can be found in most major cities across North America and in Europe.

MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATIONS

THE COURT OF LIGHTNING BAY

www.lightningbay.org

In the Sanguinarium structure, a House is a group unified by a common symbol, name, and theme. A Court is a collection of Houses,

independents, and other groups that come together to socialize and share ideas. While houses do not necessarily have to be geographically focused, courts typically do, as the main function of a court is to provide a meeting place for a variety of individuals. The Court of Lightning Bay is based out of Tampa, Florida, and it is one of the best examples of a vampire court. It long ago grew beyond the merely social function of most Sanguinarium courts and developed into a place of learning where many different people come together to share and to teach. Lady Eden is one of the driving forces behind this successful organization, and one of her main contributions to both the court and the larger community is a set of detailed lessons with influences from the Codex and other occult sources that serve to introduce students to vampirism and other metaphysical techniques.

HOUSE CRIMSON BLADE

www.housecrimsonblade.tk

Founded by Lord Oculus in 1999, Crimson Blade is a House that has begun to evolve into a network. The two central clutches are located in Biloxi, Mississippi and Laurel, Mississippi, but chapters have recently been established in both Oklahoma City and Kansas City. Crimson Blade is a model household, combining the social, aesthetic, metaphysical, and spiritual faces of the community into one mutually supportive and family-like group.

HOUSE KHEPERU

www.kheperu.org

PO Box 1120, Brunswick, OH 44212

Originators of the Codex, House Kheperu maintains an extensive collection of informative articles on reincarnation, energy work, ghosts and spirits, awakening, psychic vampirism, and other metaphysical topics. Although it maintains a Web presence, House Kheperu is primarily a real-time organization that provides one-on-one instruction as well as group lectures and workshops for Kheprians and non-

Kheprians alike. We also host an Open House every spring that features an intensive weekend of hands-on lectures, workshops, and panel presentations.

HOUSE SEKHEMU

www.sekhemu.org

Founded and run by the vampire Vicutus, House Sekhemu was inspired in part by House Kheperu but has an identity all its own. With influences from Luciferianism, the Illuminati tradition, and ceremonial magick, House Sekhemu is comparable to many of the ancient mystery schools. Although it has associations with the left-hand path, the Sekhrian tradition is ultimately transformational, with a strong emphasis on personal growth and empowerment. House Sekhemu is also distinguished as one of the few bilingual vampire sites, with material available in both English and Spanish.

HOUSE QUINOTAUR

www.quinotaur.org

Based in Canada, House Quinotaur was one of the first vampire networks that strove to be truly international. Portions of the site are offered in several languages, and further translations of material are forthcoming. The House derives its name from a curious myth concerning the Merovingian line of French kings. Also called the Merovingian witch kings, the line's founder, Merovec, was believed to have been sired by a strange sea creature known only as a quinotaur. Taking some cues from *The Bloodline of the Holy Grail*, the organization's founders, including Narradas and Shishain, posit that vampirism is an inherited trait that can be followed back to individuals like the Merovingians. House Quinotaur is among an increasing number of groups in the vampire subculture who seek to pull away from the term "vampire" and its many negative and misleading connotations, and to this end they have begun removing the word from their site, replacing it with the more neutral "Quinotauri."

THE VAMPIRE CHURCH

www.vampire-church.com

Founded by the Reverend Damien DaVille, the Vampire Church is a large, sprawling organization that spans at least two continents. The VC is a membership organization, and prospective members must successfully pass entrance interviews with already established members. An active organization both online and in real time, the VC is geared toward bringing people together to explore and understand their vampirism. One of the strong points of the VC is that it recognizes many expressions of vampirism and does active outreach with other groups and networks within the community.

APPENDIX II

A TIMELINE OF THE VAMPIRE COMMUNITY

- 1748 The vampire goes from folklore to literature through the work of Heinrich August Ossenfelder, who publishes his German-language poem, "Der Vampir."
- 1788 George Noel Gordon, sixth Lord Byron is born on January 22. Inferences drawn from his writings and the writings of those who knew him indicate that he may have been one of the first individuals to identify himself metaphysically as a vampire.
- 1819 *The Vampyre*, written by John William Polidori and inspired by Lord Byron, is published.
- 1888 The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, a London-based occult group, is founded.
- 1892 On December 11, Flying Roll No. V, a Golden Dawn instructional essay, is published within the Order. It contains details of an encounter with a psychic vampire.
- 1897 Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula* is contracted for publication in May and arrives on the stands in August. In addition to basing his title character upon the historical figure of Vlad Tepes, Stoker also drew inspiration for *Dracula* from the person of Sir Henry Irving. A renowned actor at Stoker's Lyceum Theater, Irving was credited with hypnotic and mesmeric powers much like those of the undead Count.

- Circa 1910 Aleister Crowley, the self-styled "Great Beast," has his eyeteeth filed and greets women by biting them on the wrist. He calls this the Serpent's Kiss. This is perhaps the first instance where an individual consciously adopts a vampiric persona in order to harness its seductive mystique.
- 1927 Supernatural fiction writer H. P. Lovecraft completes his novel *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward*, in which a young man struggles against the possessing force of his dead ancestor, who has become an astral vampire.
- 1930 Dion Fortune publishes *Psychic Self-Defense*, which contains details of attacks by psychic and astral vampires. Fortune formulates the theory that astral vampires are powerful magickal workers who have resisted the death of the subtle body and maintain this "undead" existence by vampirizing the energy of others.
- 1965 Dr. Jeanne Youngson founds the International Count Dracula Fan Club. Based in New York City, this organization grows to include a Dracula museum and an extensive research library. Although dedicated to the vampire in fiction and folklore, the organization nevertheless attracts individuals with an interest in the vampire as reality.
- 1966 Gothic soap opera *Dark Shadows* premieres. The tortured, seductive figure of its vampire, Barnabas Collins, inspires a generation of vampire lovers.
- 1975 The Temple of Set, a Left-Hand Path occult group that grew out of the internal collapse of the Church of Satan, is founded by Michael Aquino. In later years, the Temple develops the Order of the Vampyre, an elite internal group that teaches its initiates how to harness the compelling, seductive archetype of the vampire for personal empowerment.
- 1976 Anne Rice publishes her novel *Interview with the Vampire*. Countless readers long to be a vampire, just like the sexy and arrogant Lestat.
- 1977 Martin V. Riccardo founds Vampire Studies and begins publication of the *Journal of Vampirism*.

- 1979 Bauhaus releases "Bela Lugosi's Dead," an extended musical track featured in the opening scenes of the vampire film *The Hunger*. With this song, Gothic music is born. The Gothic movement romanticizes all things dark and macabre, including the vampire.
- 1985 Date given by folklorist Norine Dresser for a young woman's encounter with a private group of practicing vampires. Small, isolated groups are springing up around the country at this time, primarily on the East and West Coasts. The vampire community begins to develop as a distinct movement within the Gothic subculture and is especially concentrated in New York City and Los Angeles.
- 1988 Gothic and vampire fanzines begin to proliferate. The vampire small press is firmly established by the early 1990s.
- 1989 The Temple of the Vampire, which teaches methods of psychic and astral vampirism, claims that it became a registered U.S. church.
- 1991 Vampire: The Masquerade, a role-playing game heavily influenced by the novels of Anne Rice, is published. I begin my foray into the vampire community and establish the magazine *Shadowdance*.
- 1992 Poppy Z. Brite publishes her novel *Lost Souls*. Though not as widely read as Anne Rice's works, this vampire story realistically portrays elements from the Gothic/vampire scene, ultimately feeding back into that scene. Television series *Forever Knight* debuts, and its depiction of the underground vampire culture influences Vampire: The Masquerade as well as aspects of the real vampire community.
- 1993 Father Sebastian Todd marks this year as the beginning of his involvement in the vampire community. Live-action role-playing games, or LARPs, based on Vampire: The Masquerade begin to proliferate.
- 1994 Publications openly written by vampires for vampires begin to appear, including *The DarkRose Journal*, and *The Journal of the Dark*. Steven Lessing establishes the Vampire Access Line to bring together the vampire community of New York City. Dr. J. Gordon Melton publishes the first edition of *The Vampire Book*, which includes valuable entries on influential groups and individuals within the vampire scene.

- 1995 The Vampire Access Line hosts events that draw the community together in New York City. Clan Sabretooth, which will later grow into the Sanguinarium, is founded.
- 1996 This year sees a glut of books on real vampires, including Viola Johnson's *Dhampir: Childe of the Blood*, Jeff Guinn's *Something in the Blood*, and Konstantinos's *Vampires: The Occult Truth*. Real vampires are featured on several national talk shows. The vampire community in New York City is thriving. Sadly, this year also marks the disappearance of reporter Susan Walsh and the murders committed by vampire enthusiast Rodney Farrell.
- 1997 This year marks the blossoming of the vampire community on the Internet. Sanguinarius, Sphynxcat, Vrydolak, and the Vampire Church all establish sites online. Several celebrations also mark the centennial anniversary of Stoker's novel *Dracula*. Mick Mercer publishes *The Hex Files: A Goth Bible*, openly acknowledging the interconnectedness of the Gothic, vampire, fetish, and pagan communities. Joss Whedon's television series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* debuts.
- 1998 The first edition of the *Vampyre Almanac* is published. It contains a prototype of the Black Veil and establishes the Sanguinarium. Katherine Ramsland's exploration of the vampire community, *Piercing the Darkness*, is also published.
- 1999 House Kheperu establishes a presence on the Internet and formally joins the community under the auspices of the Sanguinarium. Bloodlines is founded to provide a less hierarchical alternative to the Sanguinarium network. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is fast becoming a smash-hit. Through this TV series, the vampire goes mainstream.
- 2000 *The Vampyre Almanac: Millennium Edition* is published by Sanguinarium Press. The first printed edition of the Codex is released in October under the title *The Vampyre Codex*. House Kheperu hosts its first Open House. The Black Veil, which serves as a set of ethics for the Sanguinarium, undergoes significant revision.

- 2001 An open dialogue is established between the vampire and Otherkin communities at the Ontario-based gathering, Kinvention North. House Kheperu continues to be a presence both online and in real time, serving as the inspiration for numerous other groups, including Houses Quinotaur and Sekhemu.
- 2002 Dialogue on the state of the community occurs between representatives of the Sanguinarium, the Vampire Church, Bloodlines, and numerous independent groups at the Endless Night Festival in New Orleans, Halloween weekend. Partly in response to this dialogue, the Black Veil is again revised.
- 2003 The Sanguinarium evolves into the Order of the Strigoi VII. A book detailing the teachings of the Order is released in October under the title *V. The Vampire Codex* is contracted for widespread publication, becoming the first book by a vampire for vampires to move beyond the limits of the vampire subculture.
- 2004 The SciFi channel gives a nod to the vampire subculture by featuring the vampire Don Henrie as one of its alternative lifestyleers in the reality TV show *Mad, Mad House*. As a result of unprecedented cooperation among disparate groups within the community, the largest gathering to date of elders, organizers, and community leaders is planned for the annual Endless Night festival.

APPENDIX III

THE BLACK VEIL

VAMPIRE ETHICS

The Black Veil is the official code of conduct for the Sanguinarium and Order of the Strigoi VII. A commonsense set of ethical guidelines, it has been adopted by a number of groups beyond the Sanguinarium community. Over the years of its existence, the Black Veil has become so widely known that those outside of our community view it as virtually synonymous with the vampire subculture. As proof of this, the Black Veil is given mention on the SciFi reality TV show, *Mad, Mad House* and is cited in an episode of *CSI Vegas*.

An early version of the guidelines was drafted by Father Sebastian Todd in the late 1990s and appeared in the first edition of *The Vampyre Almanac*. In 2000, through a collaborative effort, I worked with Todd to revise the original Black Veil into the "Thirteen Rules of Community." As a result of further community feedback, the guidelines were revised again in October 2002 to produce the document reprinted here.

DISCRETION

Respect yourself and present yourself so that others also respect you. Take care in revealing yourself. Explain what you are, not to shock, but

to teach and to inform. Do not flaunt what you are, and know that whether you want them to or not, your actions will reflect upon the rest of the community.

Share your nature only with those with the wisdom to understand and accept it, and learn to recognize these people.

DIVERSITY

Among us, there are many different practices and many points of view. No single one of us has all the answers to who and what we are. Respect each person's individual choices and beliefs. Learn about them and share what you know. Our diversity is our strength, and we should not allow misunderstanding to weaken our community.

Find the path that is right for you and uphold this freedom for others.

CONTROL

Do not allow your darkness to consume you. You are more than just your hunger, and you can exercise conscious control. Do not be reckless. Always act with a mind toward safety. Never feed because you think this makes you powerful; feed because this is what you must do.

Be true to your nature, but never use it as an excuse to endanger those around you.

ELDERS

Give respect to those who have earned it. Anyone can claim a title, but a true leader will prove him- or herself through dedication, hard work, and great deeds. Even so, leaders should be guides and not dictators. Look to them as examples, but always decide for yourself what you must do.

Respect the person, not the position, and understand that your choices are always your own.

BEHAVIOR

Know that there are repercussions to every action, and that you alone are responsible for your decisions. Educate yourself about risky behaviors, and then always act with wisdom and common sense. Do not allow others to abuse you, but also, do not selfishly abuse.

Respect the rights of others and treat them as you would be treated.

DONORS

Feeding should occur between consenting adults. Allow donors to make an informed decision before they give of themselves to you. Do not take rapaciously from others, but seek to have an exchange that is pleasant and beneficial for all.

Respect the life that you feed upon and do not abuse those who provide for you.

COMMUNITY

Reach out to others in your community. Exchange ideas, information, and support. Be hospitable to others, and appreciate hospitality when it is extended to you. Do not engage in illegal activity, for this can endanger us all.

Seek to nurture our community and support all those who do the same.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

altered state of consciousness (ASC): A state of consciousness that differs from ordinary, everyday consciousness. Altered states are usually typified by a narrowed and heightened focus, intensified sensitivities, and an altered pattern of thought (typically from rational to intuitive and from linear to nonlinear). Some assume that altered states can only be achieved through the use of hallucinogenic substances, but fasting, drumming, dancing, meditation, and other repetitive activity can be used to attain an altered state.

ambient energy: The energy shed by living beings, particularly people. Ambient energy floats freely in an area, tending to flow along currents in the subtle reality, and it may be charged with emotions.

astral construct: A being or thing, created through a combined process of Will and active imagination, that exists on the astral level but may be tied to a physical object. Most often, astral constructs are intentionally created by magickal workers to carry out some specific magickal function.

astral death: In modern magickal theory this is the second death, which occurs after the death of the physical body. In astral death, the astral shell or subtle body of the individual dies, releasing the immortal spirit into the Wheel of Death and Rebirth.

astral projection: The process of projecting the consciousness within the vehicle of the subtle body beyond the physical form. While it is projected, the subtle body remains connected to the physical body by means of a thin, silver cord. It is believed that if this cord is severed, the physical body will die.

- astral realm:** Nonphysical level of existence that is one step further removed from physical reality than the subtle realm. This is typically the realm accessed by those who practice astral projection.
- astral shell:** According to occultist Dion Fortune, the astral shell is the subtle corpse, which, under ordinary circumstances, dissipates a few days to a few weeks after physical death has occurred.
- astral vampire:** A being that moves through the astral plane and/or subtle reality and feeds off the energy of others. Astral vampires can be wholly nonphysical entities, or they may be living, physical beings who have the ability to move and interact on nonphysical levels of existence. According to occultist Dion Fortune, an astral vampire is created when a particularly powerful magical worker resists the second death and perpetuates this unnatural existence by preying upon the energies of others.
- aura:** The energy of an individual as it extends out beyond the limits of the physical body. The aura exists in layers, or shells, of energy that move outward from the core of a person, with each shell being less cohesive and dense than the last. Some individuals are capable of perceiving the aura with the naked eye, and with practice many people can cultivate this ability.
- Awakening:** A process of expanded awareness by which latent memories, abilities, and perceptions move from a repressed position in the unconscious to conscious realization. Although there is usually one initial experience that can be seen as the beginning of an Awakening, it is actually an ongoing process that occurs in stages throughout a life. Each step along the process of Awakening includes the breaking or expanding of psychological barriers regarding what the individual accepts as “real” or “true.”
- Beacon:** A particular energy signature given off by Awakened individuals or those who verge upon Awakening. The Beacon is typically strongest in people who are right on the edge of Awakening and generally draws other Awakened to them so they can assist with this process. All Awakened seem to give off a Beacon of one form or another, although the strength varies from person to person and the effect can be shielded or enhanced through conscious act of Will.
- Between:** The state between life and rebirth, or the level of reality where many entities reside while in this state. The term *the Between* is inspired by the Tibetan word *bardo*, which means “gap” and refers to the period of time immediately after death and prior to the next incarnation.

bilocation: A technique, often confused with astral projection, by which an individual's consciousness and perceptions are split between two or more locations. In bilocation, some portion of the consciousness remains with the physical body, allowing this body to remain active and aware, while a subtle projection is also extended to another location. The bilocator is able to perceive and interact in both aspects at once.

Byron, George Gordon (1788-1824): Sixth Baron Byron, a hedonist, womanizer, and Romantic poet with a marked fascination for the occult. At various times in his career he identified with the mythic figures of Cain, Lucifer, Shemyaza, and ultimately the vampire. Byron's cruel, seductive personality as well as his own fascination for the vampire served as the inspiration for Lord Ruthven, the title character of John William Polidori's 1819 novella, *The Vampyre*.

chakras: In the Hindu mystical tradition, the seven main energy centers that are believed to run down the center of the body from the crown of the head to the base of the spine. A central axis of energy, parallel to the spine, connects all of the chakras. These "wheels of light" are believed to process energy, and each is connected to various functions of body, spirit, and mind.

chi: The Chinese term for vital energy. Connected to earth and the breath, chi is believed to be integral to the healthy functioning of the body, and the proper harnessing of chi is thought to greatly extend life. Many martial arts teach how to build and focus chi for increased strength and endurance.

Crowley, Aleister (1875-1947): Onetime member of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and perhaps the most infamous occultist of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Styling himself as the "Great Beast," Crowley split from the Golden Dawn and founded the Astrum Argentium. He became the head of the Ordo Templi Orientis and founded a magickal tradition known as Thelema. Crowley started the convention of spelling magick with a "k" to differentiate it from sleight-of-hand and parlor tricks. In his teaching material for the higher grades of the OTO, Crowley interprets vampirism in terms of sex magick and details methods of feeding and energy exchange.

Dedicant: One who has formally accepted his or her latent nature and is actively pursuing the process of Awakening. Dedicants typically receive instruction and guidance from one or more Awakened, most often the person responsible for catalyzing their initial Awakening. The term "Dedicant" reflects their dedication to their own self-realization.

dharma: Often translated as “duty,” a Sanskrit term that indicates the path one must follow in one’s life. The idea of dharma is inextricably linked to the notion of karma, for it is in following one’s dharma that one can gain release from karma.

disembodied: Specific term for a Kheprian spirit. Whether in a body or on the Otherside, Kheprians are conscious and self-aware. Thus they possess a degree of volition and control beyond that of most ordinary ghosts. Some Kheprians are disembodied by choice, while others are unable to incarnate due to subtle-body trauma.

emotional vampire: A term used within the vampire community to describe an emotionally needy and clingy individual who feeds upon the attention of others. Within the larger magickal and metaphysical communities, such an attention-craving individual is widely referred to as a “psychic vampire.” Self-defined psychic vampires use the term “emotional vampire” to distinguish themselves from such persons.

Fortune, Dion (1891-1946): Born Violet Mary Firth, Dion Fortune was an analytic psychologist, novelist, occult author, and magician. A member of the Golden Dawn, she founded the magickal order the Fraternity of Inner Light. Fortune’s first metaphysical experience of note was a psychic assault launched at her by a domineering employer. Her encounter with the woman left the twenty-year-old Fortune feeling wounded and drained, and she lay in bed for three days afterward in a state of mental, physical, and emotional exhaustion. This experience set the stage for her attitudes on psychic vampirism, which she addressed in her seminal work, *Psychic Self-Defense*.

ghosts: Human spirits that are earthbound due to unresolved issues and attachments from their previous life. Ghosts frequently remain near the people and places that figured prominently in their lives, although many roam freely through the subtle reality.

Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn: A London-based occult society founded in 1888. Headed by S. L. MacGregor Mathers, the Golden Dawn was devoted to the study of ceremonial magick and boasted among its membership Irish poet W. B. Yeats and English actress Florence Farr.

Jung, Carl (1875-1961): A student and later rival of Dr. Sigmund Freud, Jung is one of the fathers of modern psychology. The Swiss-born Jung had a lifelong interest in spirit mediums, psychic phenomena, and mystical experience, although these metaphysical interests are often downplayed or suppressed by

proponents of modern psychology. Nevertheless, Jung is responsible for defining several key concepts that have seen widespread use within the occult and metaphysical communities, including synchronicity, active imagination, archetypes, and the collective unconscious.

karma: A Hindu concept related to reincarnation and the evolution of the soul widely adopted by the West. Karma is frequently misrepresented as a sort of rule of return where what you do, good or bad, will come back equally to you. However, karma is not necessarily about qualities of good and evil so much as how a person follows his or her dharmic path. If one fails to fulfill one's dharma and learn the lessons therein, that person will return again and again in progressively difficult incarnations until the dharma and its lessons are fulfilled.

Keystone: An individual who served a pivotal role in a number of peoples' past lives. The Keystone subsequently serves as a nexus point for these souls in their current incarnation, drawing them together both energetically and geographically. In addition, a Keystone often has a catalyzing effect on these individuals, facilitating their Awakening as they are drawn closer to the center.

kheperu: Ancient Egyptian word that means "to become, to change, to transform." Kheperu in its various forms is connected to concepts of death and rebirth, personal transformation, and self-creation as a divine being. The same term is rendered "xeper" by the Temple of Set and figures prominently in their belief system.

Kheprian: A member of House Kheperu. Kheprians have a unique relationship with energy, maintain a constant thread of past-life memory, and share a close, familial bond. The term "Kheprian" is derived from the Ancient Egyptian verb, "kheperu."

laterals: Two channels in the subtle body running parallel to the central axis of energy that corresponds to the spine. The laterals are not conduits of energy themselves but provide a structure of secondary support for the chakras, containing anchor points where numerous energy channels connect and converge.

magick: The act of altering internal or external reality through a conscious exertion of Will. In most systems, magick harnesses the divine principle inherent in the individual to effect a desired change, and in this respect can be seen as an active form of prayer.

meridians: Energy channels that run throughout the body. Traditions such as Qi Gong recognize numerous meridians and tie them to the healthy functioning of various bodily organs.

mundane existence: One's material existence in the mainstream world. Mundane existence encompasses dealings with regular society, maintaining a job, paying bills, feeding and clothing oneself, and keeping an apartment or house. People who are entirely focused on this material existence to the exclusion of all things spiritual are generally termed "mundanes."

New Age movement: A positive system of personal empowerment and growth, the New Age tradition seeks balance and harmony within the individual, the world, and the Universe. New Age techniques address the holistic being through meditation, energy work, and other practices derived from a blend of Eastern and Western metaphysical traditions.

Otherkin: Individuals who do not identify themselves strictly as human. Some feel that their difference is purely spiritual, while others believe there is a genetic difference between themselves and humanity. Otherkin differentiate themselves from the New Age concept of extraterrestrials, identifying instead with mythological beings.

Otherside: The nonphysical "space" immediately tangential to physical reality and inhabited by ghosts, the disembodied, and other discarnate entities. The Otherside is another term for the subtle reality.

Paganism: General term for any number of modern nature-oriented religions. Paganism, more properly termed neo-Paganism, is a revival of pre-Christian practices and beliefs that often include the practice of magick, a celebration of divinity in both male and female aspects, and a belief in reincarnation.

pontus: Latin for "bridge," the point of juxtaposition between physical and subtle forms through which energy and information are exchanged. The pontus is comprised of the central energy axis, the major and minor chakras, the laterals, and the network of energy channels that intertwines with the nerves and blood vessels throughout the body. When the subtle body connects to and integrates with key points along the pontus, incarnation is achieved.

Potential: A person who carries the latent qualities necessary for Awakening. A Potential typically has natural psychic abilities, an affinity for energy work, and an aptitude for magick, but has yet to fully explore or embrace these

things within him- or herself. Given time, most Potentials can Awaken on their own, although the process can be greatly facilitated through the catalyzing effect of another Awakened. Some Potentials have underlying mental, emotional, or psychological instabilities that make Awakening a difficult if not dangerous process for them and for this reason should not be actively Awakened.

prana: Sanskrit for "vital energy," prana is strongly tied to the breath. The practice of yoga, which involves meditation, stretching, and breathing exercises, is intended to cultivate and maintain a healthy flow of prana throughout the body.

psi-vamp: A contraction of the term "psychic vampire." The term "psi-vamp" is completely interchangeable with the longer "psychic vampire" and is widely in use on the Internet.

psychic vampire: An individual who, for one reason or another, must actively take in human vital energy in order to maintain mental, physical, and spiritual well-being. A psychic vampire's need can result from a number of factors, including a heightened energetic "metabolism" or an inability to process other more abundant forms of energy. It should be noted that within both the Church of Satan and the Temple of Set, the term carries very negative connotations, referring to manipulative and emotionally needy individuals.

Qi Gong: A Taoist practice that harnesses energy for healing. One of the aims of Qi Gong is to cultivate and refine personal energy so as to improve physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

Reiki: A Japanese practice, imported to the United States by way of Hawaii, that harnesses Universal Light Energy (ki) for the healing of the self and others. In Reiki, someone who is attuned to this beneficial frequency of energy becomes a channel and conducts this energy into others to effect healings.

reincarnation: A belief, predicated on the immortality of the soul, that individual spirits incarnate over a succession of lifetimes. Reincarnation generally implies the evolution of the soul, so that each lifetime becomes a learning experience geared toward enlightenment. In some systems, it is believed that the spirit chooses the circumstances of its birth in order to achieve certain life lessons, thus directing its own course over many lives. In other systems, it is believed that the circumstances of birth are dictated by universal principles such as karma and dharma, or determined by tutelary spirits and/or deities.

residue: The detritus of ambient energy, often emotionally charged, that has been allowed to build up over time. Regular spiritual house cleanings that attempt to break up stagnant energy and clear out lingering emotions will help to prevent the buildup of energetic residues.

ritual: A set of actions, often repetitive or formulaic, performed by an individual or a group with the intention of achieving a higher spiritual state and focusing the Will toward some predetermined goal.

sacred space: A nonordinary space that encourages a more complete interaction between material and subtle aspects of reality. In another sense, sacred space is any space specifically set aside for the purpose of experiencing this heightened state and coming into union with the spiritual and the divine.

Sanguinarium: A network of individuals who identify strongly with the figure of the vampire. The Sanguinarium includes vampire fans, lifestylers, blood fetishists, and psychic vampires. All of the members of the Sanguinarium community abide by a code of ethics known as the Black Veil, which serves as the main, unifying factor of this worldwide community.

sanguine: An individual who expresses their vampirism through blooddrinking. "Sang vamp" and sanguinarian are two other terms that may be encountered when referring to this group of people, especially on the Internet. The practice of sanguine vampirism is controversial, especially since the advent of the AIDS pandemic.

shamanism: A spiritual tradition, often associated with primitive cultures, where those initiated into the tradition become walkers between worlds. Shamans are the healers and the psychopomps (guides of the dead) of their communities, specializing in soul retrieval, ridding individuals of possession, removing illness-causing energetic intrusions, and leading the spirits of the dead to their proper realm.

silver cord: a cord or thread, exceedingly thin and tensile, believed to connect the body double or astral body with the physical body during astral projection. The silver cord is made of the same stuff as the subtle body and serves as an energetic umbilical between the physical and astral selves.

spirit: A being of energy that has no corresponding physical form. Spirits can be the ghosts of human beings, or they may be entities that were never human at all. It is a common misconception that spirits are evil or malevolent. Many are neutral toward humanity while others are outright benevolent.

subtle body: Also called the energy body, the subtle, spiritual counterpart to the physical form. It is believed that through astral projection the subtle body can travel beyond the physical form.

subtle reality: The energetic counterpart of the physical realm, the subtle reality extends throughout and beyond what we can perceive with our five senses, layered over our physical world like a double exposure on film.

Tantra: A mystical tradition in which empowerment and transformation are achieved through the unification of the male and female principles. In most Eastern Tantric practices, this unification is strictly symbolic and occurs internally by way of complicated visualizations. Most modern Western interpretations of Tantra put the unification into practice quite literally, and for this reason, Western Tantra is closely associated with sex magick.

threshold state: A threshold between spirit and matter. A being in a threshold state interacts with both physical and subtle reality but properly belongs to neither of these. Such a being has a liminal existence, neither here nor there but constantly between.

unawakened: An individual who has not yet realized his or her full spiritual potential. Although they often unconsciously sense and respond to the subtle reality, the unawakened are only conscious of the experiences of their five physical senses within the limits of a single, current life.

vampyre: The alternate spelling of "vampire," used in order to differentiate from the vampires of fiction and folklore. Some individuals in the community use this spelling when referring to themselves. This is especially common within the Sanguinarium/Ordo Strigoi Vii.

visualization: A technique based on Carl Jung's principle of "active imagination." In visualization, a series of images and symbols are vividly imagined and used as subconscious cues to aid in the focusing of the Will. Visualizations are most commonly used for personal transformation, although they are also helpful in healing, the retrieval of memories, and the alteration of external reality.

vital energy: The energy of life, generated by living things. Within the context of this book, vital energy refers specifically to the energy generated by living people, as true vampires are limited to feeding primarily upon this energy. Vital energy can be seen as the equivalent of prana, chi, and ki.

Wheel of the Year: A calendar that marks the passing of the year by the progression of the seasons. The Wheel of the Year, widely used by modern Pagans

and Wiccans, has its roots in ancient Celtic traditions, though it has corollaries in a number of systems around the world.

Wicca: A modern religion that focuses on the positive and generative forces of nature. Wiccans have revived the old Pagan ways, celebrating Sabbats marked upon the Wheel of the Year and worshipping divinity in its dual aspects as God and Goddess. All Wiccans uphold the Wiccan Rede, which states, "An it harm none, do what ye will."

Will: The focused desire of an individual that is harnessed to bring about internal or external change. The efficacy of the magickal Will is predicated on the notion that all beings are an expression of divinity and therefore can call upon the divinity within themselves to achieve numinous results.

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In a little more than three decades, Michelle A. Belanger has studied Reiki, Qi Gong, shamanism, and a wide variety of other metaphysical traditions. As founder of House Kheperu, she has taught her Kheprian style of energy work at gatherings and conventions across the Eastern United States and Canada.

In the early nineties, Michelle attended Cleveland's John Carroll University as a National Merit Scholar. During her time at JCU, she edited and published the Gothic literary magazine *Shadowdance* and founded the International Society of Vampires. It was also during this time that Michelle produced the first version of the Codex.

Over the past fifteen years, Michelle has become an influential figure in the international vampire community. She has been featured in numerous interviews, documentaries, and books in addition to producing a great deal of writing of her own. Although she is most widely recognized for her work with the Codex and House Kheperu, Michelle is also the author of the revised *Black Veil*, a code of conduct originally created by Father Sebastian and recognized by vampires around the world.

When Michelle is not writing, she is teaching or doing administrative work for House Kheperu. In her down time, she performs as a guest vocalist with Chicago-based band URN. Michelle lives in Northeast Ohio with several cats and a number of Kheprians.

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examines the history and current status of the vampire community and culture. It contrasts those who have adopted vampirism as a lifestyle with those merely out for thrills. She also delves into the difference between sanguine and psychic vampirism, and why the term “psychic vampire” does not necessarily contain the usual negative connotation associated with it.

The real heart of *The Psychic Vampire Codex* is the Codex itself, a complete manual that reveals a path of discovery and development for psychic vampires—from how to identify if you are one or are in the presence of one, to techniques and guides for working with psychic energy. Most importantly, for those working with such energy, it provides a solid structure and ethical framework in which to live.

“Michelle has created a magical system geared to psychic vampires, and it’s about time!” —Raven Kaldera, author of *The Ethical Psychic Vampire*

“A fascinating and informative glimpse beneath the cloak of the real vampire world amongst us, Michelle Belanger gives a frank and honest account of what it is like to be a psychic vampire—an individual who feeds upon the vital energy of others.”
—Storm Constantine, author of the *Wraeththu* trilogy

“For any student of new spirituality, this look inside an evolving belief system is a must-read on generating stuff.” —Christine Wicker, author of *Lily Dale: The True Story of the Town That Talks to the Dead*

“The definitive guide to psychic vampirism. Michelle Belanger’s book has the power to change the way you see those around you, and perhaps even the way you see yourself!” —Sean Fernald, President of Apropos of Nothing Entertainment



Michelle Belanger discovered her psychic abilities at an early age and has been deeply involved with the vampire community since the early 1990s. She edited and published the Gothic literary magazine *Shadowlands* and is a member of the Chicago-based band URN.