

GOOD HEAVENS TODAY



HAVE THE BRANCHES OF YOUR TREE
REACHED THE HEAVENS?

**Spiritual development: from the development of the personality to
higher consciousness**

Free Online magazine of the Hermetic Order of the Temple of Starlight®
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THE HERMETIC ORDER OF THE TEMPLE OF STARLIGHT®

This free E-magazine is offered to you by the Hermetic Order of the Temple of Starlight®. We are a Western Mystery School with a direct lineage to the Order of the Golden Dawn. We learn you how all the disciplines of the Sacred Sciences are parts of one general teaching. We offer an in depth training in Spiritual Ceremonial Magic. Learn more about our order and the training we offer and visit www.templeofstarlight.eu

TO HELP YOU DEVELOP MORE SPIRITUALITY WITHIN THAN JUST THE TOP OF THE ICEBERG

This second issue of 'Good Heavens Today' contains the following subjects:

1. The 'Inner Circle' button on our website.
2. The start of the new group in Eindhoven.
3. A few places available for the international workshop 'The Black Goddess of Miracles.'
4. Magic, the Basics starts in Eindhoven in February.
5. Return of the Goddess in Assen.
6. Article of the month 'Have the branches of your Tree reached the Heavens?'

1. Inner Circle

The Inner Circle button on the website is for people who receive the free online magazine. The newsletter will inform you about the login code which gives you access to this part of the website. Here you will find articles from former newsletters.

<http://www.templeofstarlight.eu/content/innercircle-314/inner-circle>

The login code this month is **openingtheseason**

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2. The start of a new group in Eindhoven

In Eindhoven we have made a flying start with a new group of students, and we aim to have this group form a new lodge. From next February on, we will therefore be starting the seminars 'Magic, the Basics' in Eindhoven. Information about these classes will be published on the website in a few days. If you are interested in the Western Mystery Tradition and you live near Eindhoven, from the beginning of next year on you will have the opportunity to experience the beauty of white spiritual Ceremonial Magic. Five meetings have been planned on Saturdays.

<http://www.templeofstarlight.eu/content/contactform>

3. The Black Goddess of Miracles

Twice a year, the Hermetic Order of the Temple of Starlight® organizes Temple Retreats. These are residential weekend workshops which work around varying mythological themes.

The workshops are always greatly anticipated events, drawing students of the Order from different European countries. If you want to experience for yourself how intensive and transforming temple work is and why people travel hundreds of kilometres to attend these events, make use of this opportunity now:

We always reserve a few places for people who want to experience and get to know this kind of intensive magical work. If you are interested in such intensive temple work and want to witness how the Talismanic Magic of the Black Goddess can help you, see our website for more information about this workshop.

<http://www.templeofstarlight.eu/content/black-goddess-miracles-ina-c%C3%BCsters-van-bergen>

4. Magic, the Basics starts in Eindhoven in February.

You can enrol for the course 'Magic the Basics' in Eindhoven from this week on. These seminars are a part of the Temple Training. You will be taught the ins and outs of ritual work and methods of generating large quantities of energy in a solidly built magical circle.

<http://www.templeofstarlight.eu/content/contactform>

5. The Return of the Goddess in Assen

The Return of the Goddess is a healing workshop for women. The workshop offers a small group of women the opportunity to work intensively with the Goddess for one day and to develop an intimate bond with her.

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6. This months article:

HAVE THE BRANCHES OF YOUR TREE REACHED THE HEAVENS?

Spiritual development: from the development of the personality to higher consciousness

Every process of spiritual growth begins with the preparation of the mystic or magician. This is the way it has been since classical times. Then, 'Know Thyself' was written above the entrance to the Temple. Today too, many seekers start with the search for the Self. On the spiritual market various forms of therapy are offered to help people take their first important steps and guide the seeker in the development of a thorough self analyses and self healing. But how do you take the step from personality development to spiritual growth?



Article and illustrations: Ina Cüsters-van Bergen

*The World Tree
Ina Cüsters-van Bergen*

Spiritual development is a process by which you develop and experience your connection as an individual with the creative forces of the universe: connecting yourself with a metaphysical reality that transcends the borders of time.

To experience this you also need to prepare your neurological system. In ancient times the emotional clearance of negative emotions was an important part of the training of neophytes in the temples of Egypt, Sumer and Greece. It was of the utmost importance when aspiring toward higher degrees of initiation and handling increasingly greater quantities of spiritual energy.

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Consciousness, subconsciousness and higher consciousness

Within the Western Mystery Tradition, spiritual energy is known by different names. Sekhem, LVX, Manna, Pneuma and Ruach are some of these names. The tradition teaches us of a division of three layers of human consciousness, in which different layers can again be observed.

1. The subconscious: this part of consciousness remembers everything that the human race has experienced. It can be divided into the personal subconscious, group subconsciousness and the collective subconscious.
2. The conscious mind; this is the main seat of the ego. It is urged forward mainly by desires. All our memories and expectations for the future are shaped by our expectations. It finds its challenge in reasoning, it deduces and takes decisions.
3. Higher consciousness consists of different thoughtforms, also called bodies. We have emotional bodies, mental bodies and spiritual bodies. Higher consciousness grows gradually.

Spiritual growth

The growth of higher consciousness is activated by mental patterns that are created by spiritual exercises. In this way neurological connections are made. Regular and daily meditation over longer periods of time create such neurological connections. These are the physical organs of higher consciousness. Everyone is born with an ability to experience higher consciousness. However, in order to fully activate this consciousness, the neurological highways must be used and exercised.

By means of physical control, incantations, visualisations, concentration and meditation we activate the higher mind, the neurological cell structure. The neurological channels for the subconscious mind change, and we gradually start to experience higher consciousness. This leads to the creation of a connection, which in turn causes the collective subconscious to generate super consciousness.

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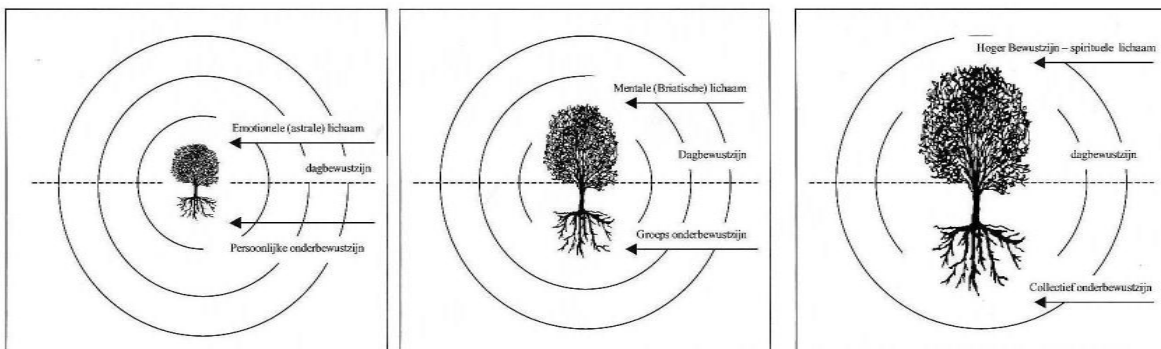
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Planting the Tree

Spiritual development follows the pattern of a tree. Starting from waking consciousness, this means that as the roots develop and reach deeper and form a broader network, the branches and the leaves of the tree can in turn reach higher into the sky: an increase in depth causes an increase of consciousness. Spiritual development has its starting point in waking consciousness when the physical body reaches maturity. This development is also called the 'Way Back': the process whereby humanity searches for healing and unity with the 'Creative Source'. The first step that is necessary for healthy spiritual growth is the purification of the personal subconscious.



During this part of your spiritual development, meditation, contemplation and ritual bring you into contact with the first layer of your subconscious mind: your personal subconscious where all emotional stumbling blocks are stored. It is this that makes meditation such a difficult and confronting process for some people. Here, people with unfinished emotional business firstly encounter a process of self-confrontation.

Others with fewer stumbling blocks sometimes experience this starting point as boring: there is not much happening yet. Especially in the first phase there is hardly any difference between contemplative waking consciousness and the state of consciousness achieved in meditation exercises. Meditation appears to be a waste of time and superfluous. It is really hard to stay focussed on the symbolic language. Events taking place in everyday life often break your concentration and realizations are not particularly enlightening.

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Meditation starts to bear fruit when you use the right techniques for a prolonged period of time on a daily basis. In the beginning the only real exercise is self discipline.

Drifting or grounding

This first phase is a very important and necessary phase. It is here that you must make sure that the tree of your spiritual development is grounded in fertile earth. If you skip the Know Thyself phase you will run the risk of your consciousness starting to 'drift' or alternatively getting stuck in the rational mind. This happens when you withdraw into escapism in order to avoid the confrontation with yourself. Self knowledge is an important instrument in the process of purification that starts at this phase. Purification has been a major requirement of spiritual development since ancient times. In the oldest temples in antiquity there were strict rules for the purification of both mind and body before even entering the temple.

When your spiritual tree takes root, it is important to get to know and to purify your personal subconscious mind and your emotional body. During this purification process negative emotions and limiting opinions have to be solved first. At the same time male and female energies within need to be balanced.

During your spiritual exercises symbols now slowly come to life and become 'contacted'. A simple visualised chalice suddenly becomes charged by penetrating light. On the Qabalistic Tree, three roads take us from the Earth to the higher realms. Their energies need to be combined to allow the Tree to grow as a healthy organism. The first path connects the earth to the heavens by means of neurological processes. The second path activates the creative mind and connects it with the astral areas. The third path of aspiration connects vital Sekhem energy with the spiritual LVX. Together these three paths are called the 'Rainbow', the symbol for the union between heaven and earth.

Transpersonal growth and beyond

Slowly the roots of the Tree dig deeper into your subconscious mind. It gradually becomes easier to be aware of the processes of the subconscious mind and transform them. It is important to realise that the method of self reflection does not end when reaching the next phase of the process. But take care not to get stuck in the therapeutic spectrum, grow further!

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In the next phase the mental body starts to form. The mental body formulates abstract forms of thinking. It formulates penetrating questions, and it creates mental concepts and can hold them as a focal point. The mental body has the capacity to penetrate different layers at the same time. In the subconscious mind a new layer is accessed whereby the personal level is transcended and symbolical language becomes a tool used to communicate with the transpersonal layers of the mind. Meditating in this layer is like fishing. With a lot of patience you fish valuable spiritual food from the waters of the subconscious mind. Incantations and visualisations now slowly become a language enabling communicate with the deeper layers of the self, and a biochemical circuit starts to form. This causes the transformation of the pearls of the subconscious mind into aspects of higher consciousness.

All this makes it possible to purify the energies circulating in the subconscious mind and transform them into sources of power. The purification process deepens, and not only the physical and the emotional body are purified, but now the mental body starts to join the process.

Emotions and feelings now serve as traffic signs and stepping stones to make growth possible. The increasing life-force starts to propel impulses of Sekhem energy. Your awareness spreads further out into your environment. You become sensitive to the emotional upheavals of the group consciousness that you yourself are a part of. You learn to gauge the group of people you belong to as an organism. The symbols and incantations used during meditations open parts of the brain, and slowly the 'Holy of Holiest' starts to open and the LVX starts to radiate in the temple of the human mind.

The tree reaches the heaven

As in previous phases, a crisis can be the prelude to a breakthrough to deeper layers of consciousness. Without strong fundamentals you run the risk that with the increase of Sekhem energy circulating through the neurological system, repressed traumas are suddenly activated. The rising energy then encounters blockages in the neurological system. But if the tree is rooted in solid soil, you now arrive at layers of consciousness where ecstatic visions are generated.

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The roots of the tree now penetrate deeper into the layers of your subconscious mind and reach the area where the images of the collective consciousness are stored. Here, contact can be made with the deeper and older layers of the brain. The symbolic language now works directly on neurological feedback mechanisms. The images that rise from the subconscious are propelled forward by Sekhem energy and translated into spiritual visions and experiences that change your consciousness.

Meditation, ritual, so called Pathworkings and energy work aid the spiritual body in its further growth. But to keep this spiritual growth balanced and rooted it is important that the previous phases have been thoroughly integrated into your system. The capacity of the neurological system to process larger quantities of Sekhem energy is increased as a result of the exercises. Higher consciousness spreads and reaches the world of the Gods and the Spirit of the Time. Movements in the world consciousness of the human species as part of the planetary spirit are felt like waves of the tides. As we become capable of raising more life-force energy, we are able to give more power to our thoughtforms on the astral level and that which needs to be manifested on a physical level. Manna falls from the high heavens, irrigating the Land. In this way the Heavens also serve the Earth.

IN OCTOBER TWO NEW TRAINING PROGRAMMES WILL START!

In Both Amsterdam and Dordrecht there are just a few places left for people who want to start the Temple Training Programme. Please see our website under Temple Training Noord Holland and Zuid Holland

http://www.templeofstarlight.eu/events?tid=5&date_filter_1%5Bvalue%5D%5Bdate%5D=2009-09-30
http://www.templeofstarlight.eu/events?tid=16&date_filter_1%5Bvalue%5D%5Bdate%5D=2009-09-30

In Eindhoven you can join us for an in-depth study of the hidden layers and symbolism of the Tarot:

<http://www.templeofstarlight.eu/content/contactform>

And last but not least, there are just a few places left for our residential workshop 'The Black Goddess of Miracles' which will be held in November in Ossendrecht, the Netherlands.

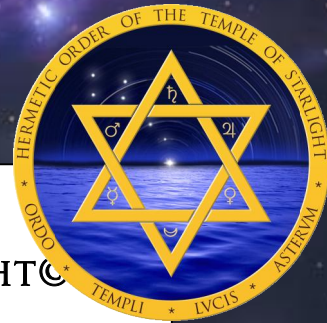
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We offer intensive training in Spiritual Ceremonial Magic. Learn more about our Order and the Temple Training that we offer. We invite organizers and groups who are interested in this programme to visit us or to contact us to organize this programme in their own environment.

We also offer weekend trainings and week courses about various subjects, all related to the Western Mysteries and Spiritual Ceremonial Magic. In November we will be holding an international residential weekend workshop. The theme this time will be the Black Goddess of Miracles.

If you want to know more about our events, take a look at the photo gallery on our website, where you will also find information about booking an event for your group.

<http://www.templeofstarlight.eu/content/ina-c%C3%BCsters-van-bergen-trainer-events>

Events planned for Autumn-Winter 2009-2010 can be found in our online brochure

<http://www.templeofstarlight.eu/content/folder-autumn-winter-2009>

INA CÜSTERS-VAN BERGEN

Ina Cüsters-van Bergen is the Magister and the Director of Studies of the Hermetic Order Temple of Starlight®. She teaches the Western Mystery Tradition. Ina is a so called Cosmic Mediator and a Third Degree Initiate. She is a very experienced practicing ritual magician. Her lineage comes from the Golden Dawn via Dion Fortune, W.E. Butler and Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki.

Ina is a trained psychiatric therapist, sociotherapist, and healthcare manager. She is a certified NLP practitioner. She designs all her training modules in such a way that they integrate modern therapeutic systems and archaic magical systems such as Qabalah and Ceremonial Magic into one system. In this way your spiritual practice increases emotional, mental and spiritual health and growth.

Ina is the author of the Solo Magical Training of the Hermetic Order of the Temple of Starlight, called 'The Order of the Exalted Land' and the author of the book 'The Temple of High Magic', ISBN-13: 978-1-59477-308-2

Ina teaches spiritual Ceremonial Magic through intensive training weekends all over Europe.

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MORE INFORMATION

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- *if you want to book Ina to organize an event in your hometown*
- *if you want to start the Solo Magical Training*
- *if you want to become a member of the Hermetic Order of the Temple of Starlight*

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