

The Left-hand Path

That phrase conjures images of Satanism, necromancy, and other “taboo” worship and ritual, and “do my bidding” magic.

Most people who ask MEM’s clergy about “the left hand path” are talking about summoning demons, controlling inhuman spirits, raising the dead, blood sacrifice, and other manipulative practices meant to win them power over other people.

Mother Earth Ministries’ opinion of all that? At best, it’s a waste of time and energy and training for spiritual and social failure. At worst, it’s giving up your personal power and involvement with truly dangerous individuals.

Here are some of the reasons MEM clergy do not support or encourage anyone to follow “the left-hand path.”

►Nature’s example is peaceful co-existence among all beings, in all realms. We do take sustaining energy from other beings, but we give that energy back to maintain other lives, too. When this exchange gets out of balance, the planet and all its dimensions suffer. To throw it out of balance deliberately for the sake of a personal agenda is only inviting the trouble it causes to focus on your life.

►The Gods of most Neo-Pagan pantheons appreciate the work we do in their names – the personal fears we face, the joy we create and share with others, the convenience we may relinquish for the good of our communities, the responsibility we

take for our mistakes. The Gods of some pantheons allow some retaliation against injury. But none of them ask us to put other people’s misery on their altars. Most of them reject any offerings made at other people’s expense. Deceit, cruelty, insensitivity and exploitation are not appropriate gifts to any Neo-Pagan Gods.

►The Three-fold Law is at work in all the worlds. What you put into the world comes back into your life amplified. So if you work manipulative magic, or if you “play” other people mundanely, you must expect to be “played” yourself. You cannot outwit the balance of the Universe. The intentions you project – whether you cast them as formal spells or not – might take a short journey or a long one, but they will eventually end up back at home with you.

►The more disrespectful your attitudes and behaviors are, the less credibility you’ll have in any world. The longer you wait to take responsibility for yourself, the more difficult it will be to put your own life back together.

Is It Real?

What about those demons and evil spirits and ghosts you try to control to your own advantage? Are they real? Are they just scary stories you tell to bully other people? It doesn’t actually matter!

If you believe, then your conjuring will either call or create the demons and spirits you hope to manipulate.

If they are real, they will challenge you, and likely win. If they come out of your

own shadows, they’ll confront you, and may put your power out of your conscious mind’s reach.

If you succeed in dominating someone else’s mind or spirit, you’ll have their shadow self to deal with too, and you will soon enough lose control.

On the physical plane, it takes more muscles, and thus more energy, to frown than it takes to smile. As above, so below: manipulative magic always takes more energy than cooperative magic, and its results won’t replenish you.

If you think you’ve had experiences with baneful magic that did you good, then you’re fooling yourself – or there are some surprises in store for you.

Some people think they are “powerful” and that they deserve more than others. These people are very often magically incompetent; not in control of their own energy, they play at controlling someone else’s.

The magic they do doesn’t go far beyond their own aura. They may be able to reach those close to them, but often as not end up casting their curses on themselves, and then being surprised when the three-fold effect kicks in.

Everything any of us does affects other people. When we work without caring what happens to anyone else, we make the world a little worse for everyone, including ourselves. “It’s a fool who plays it cool by making the world a little colder,” as the Beatles sang in “Hey Jude.”

Changing Your Path

If you've been following the left-hand path, is it too late to change your ways? Never!

The first thing to do is . . . stop. Don't do any more baneful magic. Don't cast any more manipulative spells. Stop trying to control other people.

When you shower, use the water to cleanse yourself of the negativity you've been nurturing. Release your fears and anger. Ground and center in the knowledge that you have the power to change your life, and accept that your life is the only one you have a right to control.

If you cannot apologize to people you have "dissed," then apologize to the Gods, to the Universe, for your disrespect. If you can't make it up to the people against whom you've worked, then pay your debt forward: learn to appreciate other people as beloved of the Gods, rather than as your minions.

Don't wallow in guilt, but accept responsibility, and realize that it will take time to compensate for the wrongs you have done to others. The effort that requires is a legitimate offering to the Gods of Nature, and it will teach your magical mind a powerful lesson.

Our book, Enchantment Encumbered: the Study and Practice of Wicca in Restricted Environments, is available from The Blue Eyed Witch, at P.O. Box 475, Tombstone, AZ, 85638, for \$17 + \$2 shipping.

In a Nutshell

None of us need to rely on bully-magic to realize our full potential. The *Charge of the Goddess*, written by the late Doreen Valiente, is one of Wicca's most beautiful liturgical pieces, and it offers good advice to followers of all Neo-Pagan religions.

"Let there be beauty and strength, power and compassion, honor and humility, and mirth and reverence with you," it says – and the meaning is that these qualities are not opposite or mutually exclusive, but go together.

We can appreciate others without thinking of ourselves as less.

We can care about how other people feel without being weak.

It is honorable to be humble, even about our accomplishments. There is no honor in arrogance or disrespect.

And in mirth – in laughing at ourselves, and laughing for joy at being alive – we show reverence.

It's recognizing beauty that makes us strong. It's understanding what matters to others and helping them achieve their goals that makes us powerful. Realizing that we are all "only human" is what makes our honor shine. Joy, not fear, is reverent.

The left-hand path leads you away from community, away from your true self, and away from everything sacred.

That's what MEM clergy has to say about the left-hand path. If you choose to walk it, we'll part ways. If you're on it and wish to find another path, we're here to show you another way.



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Most people understand "the left-hand path" to be Satanic, or otherwise manipulative and exploitive. Mother Earth Ministries doesn't teach, endorse, support or encourage anyone to follow this left-hand path. We don't recognize it as a legitimate aspect of Neo-Paganism – but we do get a lot of questions about it from people who think it might be. This brochure explains why we don't support it.



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