

Lone study – what that means and how to approach it

Lone study in magic (or anything) is a concept that many people are not familiar with as it is not an approach taken in mainstream learning. However, in the magical mysteries it is an important approach that has almost been lost in the last hundred years or so.

It is of the utmost importance in the deeper magical mysteries because it forces you to rely only on yourself – you have to develop your own discipline, rely on your own instincts, make your own decisions for good or bad, and you have to learn from your mistakes: there is no one to make it better for you. There is also no instant feedback or gratification from doing a good job – that is one of the hardest and most important lessons to learn in magic.

So how should you approach lone study? Here is a quick guide.

No study groups

Don't be tempted to start or join an unofficial study group (there are no official ones in Quareia). When you study magic you are not learning information and facts, you are learning skills that need practice, and you are slowly learning to step into worlds beyond your current understanding. That needs self-reliance and autonomous decision making if you are to stay sane and healthy.

In a study group, there is always someone who emerges as a dominant force who the others then defer to. That in itself disengages the inherent protection built into the Quareia training. The Quareia course was constructed with inner protections and boundaries which allows a student to make mistakes, get 'bumps and bruises' without them doing themselves any real damage. A study group or 'advisor' that you defer to in your basic decision making disconnects you from that protective pattern. Instead it becomes a situation of the blind leading the blind.

While in the earlier phases of training, it is important that your experiences are your own and not coloured or inspired, even subconsciously, by other people's experiences. It is also very important to be able to cope with studying and developing discipline alone for a while – you will be surprised by how tough and strong you really can be when you put your mind to doing something with determination. It develops a base strength that your foundation of training can stand upon.

If you are tempted to start a study group, you should ask yourself why you wish to do that. Yes you may want 'study buddies', but it is very likely you are looking to place yourself on a pedestal – to be important and in charge. That is the first trap in magical training, and there are many traps you can fall into if you allow your weaknesses or ego to take charge. Self-honesty and self-reflection are paramount in magic.

There are also some people who wish to start a study group in order to be able to 'harvest' people for their other magical pursuits. And then there are those who are just predators.

A study group will not help you. If you need a group to keep you on track and make you accountable, then you are not mature enough to study real magic. If the idea of self study

terrifies you but you really want to train in magic, then take it a step at a time and become your own overseer. It is also wise not to try and use social media or things like youtube to keep yourself accountable by posting your work/progress etc – if you constantly need feedback or encouragement, then this magical path is not the one for you yet. Each student needs to be in a frame of mind where they do not seek feedback, encouragement or a round of applause for their study steps.

Community and loneliness

Once you have completed the first four lessons of the first apprentice module, and if you have kept journals/notes and done the required work with notes to prove it, then there is an online community of students and magicians which we call 'The Porch'. The porch of the ancient temples was the place where learning and also justice was dispensed.

The Quareia porch is a free private discussion forum for members only. It has various levels (entry, Apprentice, Initiate, Adept) and to start with you only have access to the entrance of the porch, where students can discuss, socialise etc. As you progress in your studies and you present your work to the school for assessment, then you are given wider access to the boards. The Porch also is the home of the Quareia student council, where students can be elected to the council and serve for a couple of years. The brief of the student council is to be a voice for all the students to the board of trustees of Quareia, to ensure that the community is free of abuse, racism, sexism, and that the course is as accessible as possible to all people who choose to put in the work. The student council also keeps an eye on how the trustees use the donations to Quareia for the benefit of the students as well as the upkeep of the school.

Magical study can be a very lonely place, but once a student has shown commitment by correctly doing the first few lessons, the Porch offers a virtual meeting place for students all around the world where respectful and intelligent magical discussion can happen.

True lone study is tough, but a magician needs to be tough, and the training is designed to not only develop your skills, but to develop your own maturity and independence – in a world where dependency and helplessness is encouraged, these foundation skills are even more important for the mystic and the magician.

For more information on the approaches of training, and advice for students, please see the free download of the Apprentice Study guide on the free books page.