

SCIENCE OF SUCCESS:
BRINGING THE HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS INTO THE REALM OF THE MUNDANE THROUGH
RITUAL AND SACRED SPACES

By

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The more I unearth knowledge, the more my desire to be in the pursuit of wisdom, and the more wisdom applied, the more I realise that I first seek to know the Creator in all of His infinite majesty, and seek to work with my Higher God Self in order to fulfill a greater purpose of service to my brothers and sisters, lightworkers and metaphysicians.

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Introduction

I became interested in sacred spaces, use of daily rituals and their impact on mental wellbeing when I started practicing Wiccan rituals and receiving holistic life coaching, and it caused me to think that the use of an altar, and creating spells and rituals, and using these in conjunction with holistic life coaching helped to completely eradicate my generalised anxiety disorder and improve my general daily outlook to be far more optimistic and successful in terms of life achievements. I experienced more satisfaction and progress in my life having access to these tools. I paid off debt, had better relationships with family and friends, improved my physical health, and my mental health and wellbeing improved drastically. My feelings of self worth also increased significantly.

That led me to further study the science of neurobiology and how the brain is affected by performing regular meditation, so I researched the works of Dr Caroline Leaf, and the Danish concept of hygge. **This thesis claims that sacred rituals, such as meditation, tarot, setting up a prayer altar and rituals such as burning incense** should be practiced in partnership with a holistic life coach, and integrated into each day of a person's life, in order to assist in promotion of mental health and wellbeing, and reduction of subjective feelings of anxiety and depression. This means that it will create lasting life change in positive and

meaningful ways, through the use of spiritually transformative rituals and meaningful goals.

In this thesis, I will show you how I came to that conclusion by discussing the literature I read. Then I will tell you how through clear evidence demonstrated by science in practice of meditation (as a widely accepted ritual regardless of belief system) and its improvement in brain structures, can leave one with no other option but to realize these daily tools are effective in creating lasting and permanent positive changes in a person's life.

Review of Literature

Science of Belief

Neuroplasticity is a new scientific discovery proving that we can literally change our brains through our thoughts and choices. We can physically create new neural pathways and destroy old ones. We can wire out toxic beliefs, experiences, and thinking patterns and wire in truths, good habits, and outstanding thinking patterns.

Neurogenesis means the creation of new brain cells. Each morning we have new cells that are waiting to be programmed to do whatever we are thinking about! This is why it is so important to start your day filled with positive thoughts, truths, scripture, and vision.

Each thought we think is a physical structure in our brain. The more we think about something, the more that structure grows. We have the power to choose what we think about and therefore what neural pathways will be in our brain- which shape the way we see reality.¹

Dr Narveen Dosanjh has been incorporating mindfulness and meditation into her practice for a large number of years, seeing a noted and significant benefit in health of patients in terms of mental, emotional and physical health. As a psychiatrist being aware of the neuroscience of the brain she notes that meditation increases the density of gray matter in the brain, where new neurons are formed on a daily basis. When one performs meditation, one is able to focus, create new thought patterns and therefore rewire and consciously create a healthy brain.

“Every thought you think starts out psychically, but then returns to you in physical manifestation ... whether it be as a person, thing, condition or circumstance. Therefore, as you choose your thoughts, you choose your life.” Dr Paul Leon Masters, Meditation Dynamics

Meditation works to clean up the brain, enhancing the brain’s ability to reorganise itself, particularly the pre-frontal cortex, the area in the brain associated with the expression of ourselves as a person (regulates personality, self expression, impulse control and executive functioning). Meditation also augments the size of the amygdala which means that a significant amount of anxiety is alleviated with the restructuring of this part of the brain.

If epigenetics is unfolding the science of how our thoughts (consciousness) affects the expression of our genes and ultimately our health, it is vitally important to gain mastery over our thoughts. Meditation is a critical key in this. When we practice meditation, we can improve outcomes in terms of our physical and mental health and wellbeing.

“The recorded history of religious movements has shown that it was not theologians, but mystics who were aware of this SECOND SIGHT, and who used it to discover the Presence of an Ultimate Reality, or God. Most religious mystics, however, have been satisfied simply to know

¹ <https://renewingallthings.com/spiritual-health/switch-brain-dr-caroline-leaf/>

that the Presence exists, and have not taken it further. They did not apply this awareness to improving their own lives and/or the lives of others. Hence, they did not use what we call Practical Mysticism.” Dr Paul Leon Masters, Bachelor of Metaphysics Curriculum

Our consciousness is affected by our Higher States of Awareness, or our God Selves, or Higher Selves. We can access our Higher Selves through the practice of being consciously aware of the existence of things beyond our third dimension experience. Dr Paul Leon Masters stipulates that no success is available without the connection to our God Self, and without knowing our life purpose and blueprint, we can often wander aimlessly, and enter into the despair of the existential vacuum.

The metaphysical life coach as an holistic practitioner can assist the client to get in touch with the Divine self, and practice meditation and develop some meaningful spiritual practices and rituals, which help to bring more of the God-Consciousness into the mundane existence of the person. This results in far more success personally (as a person is generally made more aware of his or her progress through doing journal work) and being accountable to the metaphysics life coach (or therapeutic practitioner) as the God-Consciousness facilitates the process of change from within, resulting in a total transformation of the client.

Dr Paul Leon Masters outlines the outward practical demonstration of success, through the daily practice of metaphysical meditation, a core ritual that should be practiced, and made accountable to a metaphysical life coach, as these are the results:

“As the Ultimate Mind or Mystical Power within you takes hold of your life, you will very likely experience numerous positive changes. These will not necessarily happen all at once, but you should begin to detect the following signposts: You notice an improvement in relations with co-workers, friends and family. You observe an increase in personality magnetism. People seem more drawn to you. You notice more optimism about yourself and your life. You have a more positive attitude in reaction to daily events. You have an intuitive feeling that you are more in control of conditions rather than having conditions control you. Your thinking is more flexible and adaptable to daily circumstances. You have an increased sense that your mind and thoughts are more creative. As you conduct your daily business, you discover ways of doing things and on-the-spot inspirations that move your life forward. You begin to sense and finally realize that a Higher Intelligence is guiding your thoughts, and thus, your life. More opportunities, both personal and financial, become available to you as a result of the mystical influence of your Higher Mind on your conscious mind. Increasingly, you become intuitively aware of the real motivations of others. You find yourself being accepted more by others. Through the Mystical Power of Universal Intelligence, Spirit, or God-Mind working through you as you engage in your daily activities, you become aware that, at last, you have ‘got it all together’! You become aware that the Mystical Trinity of Mind, Body and Soul have synthesized, and you are a walking manifestation of continual Positive Success.” Dr Paul Leon Masters, Bachelor of Metaphysics Curriculum

Beliefs, Goal Setting and Success

Larry Squire, a professor who studied the neuroanatomy of memory. He examined parts of the brain that are critical in functional processes of behaviour, and his research revealed that most of our decisions were the result of a lot of urges that most of us barely understand (we are a series of habits).

A lot of our subconscious programming comes into our minds and lives before the age of seven. These create the habits that are formed in later life. Some of these habits do not serve us, and cause destructive negative situations and erode our sense of value and self worth. Meditation is one of the most valuable habits that helps to create a more healthy brain, and when it is fused with belief, these two work in partnership to bring about success.

Deeper inside the brain and closer to the brain stem - where the brain meets the spinal column - are older more primitive structures. They control our automatic behaviours, such as breathing and swallowing, or the startle response we feel when someone leaps out from behind a bush. Toward the center of the skull is a golf ball-sized lump of tissue that is similar to what you might find inside the head of a fish, reptile or mammal. This is the basal ganglia, an oval of cells that, for years, scientists didn't understand very well, except for suspicions that it played a role in diseases such as Parkinsons.

In the early 1990s, the MIT researchers began wondering if the basal ganglia might be integral to habits as well ... the brain converts a sequence of actions into an automatic routine ... known as "chunking," and it's at the root of how habits form.²

When we perform the act of meditation, and act towards healing the brain, we help mitigate any of the negative situations, thoughts and contexts that have occurred around us, and we start the journey inwards. The journey inwards and in surrendering to our Higher God Power helps create strong circumstances for success.

In 2005, scientists from Berkeley, Brown University and the National Institutes of Health (USA) looked into the correlation between success rates of sobriety, and what those people's beliefs were. The difference between those who were able to stay sober during a stressful life event, and others who fell back into habitual patterns of alcoholism was belief. Alcoholics Anonymous encourages members to surrender to God, or a Higher Power, and that belief would help carry them through difficult times.

"Even if you give people better habits, it doesn't repair why they started drinking in the first place. Eventually they will have a bad day, and new routine is going to make everything seem okay. What can make a difference is believing that they can cope with that stress without alcohol," Tonigan, University of New Mexico Researcher.³

When this evidence is presented, it makes absolute sense that a client who wishes to turn their life around and become an outward manifestation of success, should work with a Metaphysical Life

² pp 15-17, The Power of Habit

³ p85, Power of Habit

Coach or Minister in order to focus on replacing unhelpful beliefs, and in creating healthy routines and rituals.

Habits that are healthy, such as meditation, and other constructed rituals (a variety of examples are covered in the following chapters) when tuned in with belief in the power to adapt and change and maintain these levels of success will help alleviate any forms of anxiety, depression and create systems of success.

Goals should be outlined with the life coach, and these should include a number of different parts of life, including:

- spiritual goals
- physical health goals
- financial goals
- relationship goals
- community goals

A wealthy, successful life is not just an accumulation of financial resources, it is a life well lived, and an examination of various aspects of a person's life should audit all aspects. Many millionaires experience depression, and many famous people experience personal issues (e.g. overdoses and suicides in Hollywood). The emotional, physical and spiritual health of someone should be considered, not just looking at financial goals.

This can put the Metaphysics Holistic Life Coach in a position where they gently guide a client out of a place of being in an existential vacuum, and into a place where they can surrender to their Higher Life Purpose (ikigai) and God Power, and truly find how they can be happy. Goal setting should be explored through where a person comes into alignment with a number of facets that create an enjoyable life.

Ikigai is the Japanese concept of "reason for being," and it is what gets people up in the morning. Some of the happiest people in the world (such as those in the Blue Zones) have communities where they are all focused on supporting one another, focus on their passion (which also becomes their source of income) and take time for gentle pottering and eating healthily. They look at all facets of their life in healthy ways.

Sometimes, a person, who does not already belong in a supportive community, will find it beneficial to join a spiritual community (or supportive community) where the group collectively contribute to supporting the greater good of the all, and believe in mutual support. A holistic life coach (particularly one who is also a Metaphysics Minister) can help a person look at all aspects of their lives, in order to facilitate setting of goals.

Goals will be more likely to be successful, if they are meaningful. They must be of worth to a person, in order to create a plan in order to follow through with them. The why of achieving something provides a strong foundation for success, and helps address any obstacles that may present themselves.

Ritual Craving: Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

Religious rituals have been used as a mental response to some triggers in people with obsessive compulsive disorder, for example a mother may repeatedly utter prayers of forgiveness for her children who swear⁴. Other mental responses including counting, self-soothing mantras or affirmations, making mental lists or reviewing actions and situations.

Mental rituals are believed to provide some relief from the stress of obsessive thoughts, so the compulsion to perform magical rituals has been adopted by some people as a way to be able to transform their anxious mental states into something that is a compulsion, but is viewed as “socially acceptable,” such as prayer is in religions such as Christianity. In the field of psychology, with the condition of obsessive compulsive disorder, the obsessive thoughts create distress, and the compulsions function as a way to mitigate the stress.

Some witchcraft practitioners and ceremonial magic practitioners experience anxiety still yet with the practice of rituals, ensuring they perform rituals perfectly, or they constantly second guess which tarot card to select. A holistic life coach can help a person with obsessive compulsive disorder or generalised anxiety disorder through working with the client to focus on creating rituals that are meaningful and that mitigate the anxiety associated with having to have a more perfect performance.

Chaos Magick may be a better form of ceremonial magic, where the practitioner replaces prescribed rituals with ones that are liberating, and where the intention is far more important. A life coach can work through a process of identifying where the triggers are in a person’s life, and replacing certain unhelpful rituals that are time consuming and do little to alleviate distress, with far more functional ones.

For example, a holistic life coach can deconstruct a series of rituals that a person performs as a response to obsessive and distressing thoughts, and attach new forms of meaning to these. For example, lighting some incense and a candle and meditating can and does help the brain, and prior to the meditation being performed, the Metaphysics Holistic Life Coach can instruct the person to write down their petitions, and intentions, visualise how they will be successful, and then repeat this at night, and this then starts to bring about less invasive types of rituals, as the brain works to rewire itself, the neurosis tends to dissipate and slip away. Science has evidenced this through clinical trials.

*Mindfulness is also key. When the symptoms start bubbling up, simply taking a few minutes to feel them is often enough for them to subside.*⁵

One of the ways that many disorders are treated (particularly of the mental health variety) is through meditation and mindfulness, being fully present to where one is. When you focus on what

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<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/think-act-be/201601/mental-rituals-in-obsessive-compulsive-disorder>

⁵

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/shekhinahcalling/2015/08/21/dont-listen-to-your-gut-practicing-witchcraft-with-anxiety-and-ocd/>

is before you, it assists in putting everything else out of the mind. The ritual of meditation (a critical component in all magical systems where one learns to control the focus of the mind and learn intention setting) is a powerful transformative practice.

Healthy rituals that are in alignment with goal formation include:

- meditation and progressive relaxation
- applied relaxation
- phytotherapy (herbal medicine - available from naturopathic consultations)
- Bach Flower Remedies and homeopathy
- yoga
- tai-chi
- Qi-Gong
- counselling and talk therapy (challenge of beliefs that do not serve the person)
- massage
- nutritional modalities (such as vegan diet)

While these goals are being outlined, it is important to put them into mindful aspects of habit building, looking at triggers and rewards. This is addressed later under Habit Formation.

Witchcraft Spells and Perceived Outcomes: Mental Aspects

Franz Bardon, Magus and author of *Initiation into Hermetics* condemns popular social culture's opinion of magic and its social stigma in light of views of black magic, witchcraft and paganism. He emphatically explains that magic, and rituals are essentially a sacred (and secret) science that those with the maturity to master it do so for the reasons of assisting others, and to further the benefits to society as a whole.

Similarly, as *black magic* is viewed as the method by which people seek to gain control of others, and gain advantage through the use of suppression of another's will. *Black magic* rituals include performing hexes, curses, crossing someone, summoning entities to make pacts with in order to go and influence another, and incept nightmares and certain psychosomatic symptoms in another in order to cause distress upon another individual. These are usually done from the position of ego, and of only placing the needs of the self above the wellbeing of others.

Use of *black magic* in order to cause harm to another is regarded by true magi as a despicable practice, and Franz Bardon is very clear in his conveyance of this. In his work, *Initiation into Hermetics* he is very clear to establish that it is a system of spiritual development and enlightenment. He outlines an entire curriculum of understandings, rituals and studies in order to support the entrance into the world of the magus, and essentially it is metaphysical at its very core.

Whilst *black magic* may be used by some in order to alleviate some anxiety and feelings of loss of control over a situation, and therefore used to gain an advantage, it is the author's opinion that this use of ritual is debased. Use of white magic, metaphysical practices, hermetics and mastery over the elements and the real nature of the universe is regarded as the "high road" of magic.

It could be regarded that as the Wiccan covens who gather together to perform rituals in order to provide for mundane world needs such as food, clothing, shelter and relationship rites, and other things are quintessentially about focused intention, goal setting and wish fulfilment. A deeper look at one witch's website indicated that all of her spells that she performed for others, including career, love and money spells were really a focused intention for each of those.

The use of ritual, across any type of discipline, brings a repeated mastery. So as witches are encouraged to perform daily rites, and ensure that their altars are maintained, and to ensure they cast circles, and don't generally deviate from certain principles this is really about created a focused intention.

Prayer, meditation and ritual prayer are analogous to ritual, in that they bring about focused intention, and the realisation of that. Repeated petitions are the cycling persistence of ritual, in order to press towards a goal. Didn't Jesus Himself require of his disciples the following?

Ask and keep on asking and it will be given to you; seek and keep on seeking and you will find; knock and keep on knocking and the door will be opened to you. Matthew 7:7, NKJV

In a study of the perceived efficacy of rituals, the psychological aspects of how effective performing a ritual would be, in terms of its causal effects. Generally there was little evidence given for the outcome, save that many formal metaphysics, mystery schools and magical disciplines encourage the keeping of a journal, and maintaining a record of rituals performed and the outcomes of such.

Carl Jung⁶ examined manifestation and synchronicities. For example, when working with one patient regarding wanting to bring about something, the patient was encouraged to bring into the present reality a particular type of flying insect. Much to the patient's surprise about how intention and expectation bring about real outcomes, a beetle did in fact fly in to the therapy session, thus acting as qualitative proof of Jung's theories on intention, expectation and manifestation. In terms of psychological outcomes, there is no direct linear causality in terms of results of efficacy in rituals, however there is an equivalence (think in terms of Einstein's theories of parallel universes and quantum mechanics) where results do become evident, at least in terms of how they are perceived by the individual performing the ritual.

Tarot and Oracle Cards as a Supportive Ritual

During a personal interview with a psychic telephone counseling line manager, Lauren, of All Star Psychics⁷ mentioned that 'most people seem to call our line before they seek professional help,' with respect to career matters, legal matters, relationship matters and even financial issues. Although as part of the code of conduct for All Star Psychics readers are not permitted to give advice on these things (as they are outside of the realm of jurisdiction) they are permitted to assist the client to come to his or her own conclusions.

⁶ Carl Jung and Synchronicities <https://www.awakeninthedream.com/articles/catching-the-bug-of-synchronicity>

⁷ Lauren, Human Resources, All Start Psychics UK, Personal Interview 6th April 2018

The Tarot exists as a tool to tap into the subconscious thought stream. The Tarot therapist, or metaphysician can use the tarot as a therapeutic tool in order to help a client access his or her own Higher Self. They are useful for divining into the subconscious, and Tarot have been used to communicate the language of the metaphysical. Reading Tarot, according to Tarot Therapist Reverend Sensei Derek James Healey is a way to connect to one's inner source. He acts in his sessions as a facilitator⁸, and to pull forth the intuition of the client.

Often people are seeking their own inner knowing and being completely present to oneself, and one's own intuition can be assisted through a tarot therapy session. Often most people are going mindlessly through each day, completely oblivious to the deeper meanings of life, and it is when a situation of difficulty or challenge arises that a person seeks the assistance of a metaphysical counsellor, pastoral care officer, minister or other type of therapist. Even before seeking assistance from a psychologist or trained counsellor, spiritual advice tends to be sought by many in order to confirm that they should proceed in a certain manner.

Carl Jung understood much about the subconscious, he elaborated on synchronicities, intention setting, and explained that the tarot used a lot of symbols in order to help a person make sense of events⁹. People use the tarot as a divination tool, and as they unfold a reading, there is an unfolding of symbols in relation to events. The sequence of appearance, as well as the context of the reading, the questions asked and the predisposition of the client act in a way as to confirm certain serendipitous events.

Really, the Tarot, in my own personal experience has been a way for me to assist people to get present back to their own subconscious and become more in tune with their own desires. Similarly, Alistair Crowley¹⁰ who has received much condemnation for his metaphysical writings, and his spiritual law of "do what thou wilt," has often been misinterpreted. Alistair Crowley however took ancient metaphysical teachings, and the principles of Hermetics with the intention of applying them for his own selfish gain. It is imperative to merge "do what thou wilt," not in the self-will of indulgence, but to rightly reflect our divine mandate to serve humanity and the greater good. To say that Alistair Crowley misused sacred teachings in order to promote himself is an understatement. Many have taken his teachings in order to exploit and to abuse the will of others. So, in the living out of our will and our own volition, align this with our divine imprint, and refuse to exploit the will of others. To really delve into his works, one can see that "do what thou wilt," really is about getting into alignment with our Higher God self. When we are in alignment and following spiritual (more accurately metaphysical) principles, using divining tools such as tarot, we are getting more in alignment with our divine blueprint, or what the Japanese call *ikigai*.

One of the reasons for despair and anxiety in people is they do not know who they are, feel no reason for being, are still questioning what they are here for and a feeling of a lack of purpose leaves a person to being vulnerable to issues with mental health. Simon Somlai, a

⁸ Reverend Sensei Derek James Healey, *Tarot as Therapy*,

⁹ Carl Jung on the Tarot, <https://marykgreer.com/2008/03/31/carl-jung-and-tarot/>

¹⁰ Thelema and Spiritual Principles: <http://www.thelema101.com/intro>

social commentator on his blog *Basic Growth* talks about finding purpose, and moving away from a position of being in the existential vacuum. He puts the reason for these feelings perfectly¹¹:

*The existential vacuüm is basically a feeling of emptiness, confusion and lack of direction in your life. Something I (and many others) have been struggling with for a loooooong time. So, how come we're experiencing this feeling? The existential vacuüm was created by the current **absence of traditions and instinct**. What do I mean by this? Most of us live in a rather wealthy country (if you can read this blog you are part of the 34.3% of people that has access to the Internet). Therefore I can conclude that all of our basic needs have become mostly fulfilled (shelter, sleep & nutrition). By doing so **we've become detached from direction** since our instincts are no longer telling us what to do in order to survive (Survival is pretty much guaranteed) and traditions (religious, ethnic, familial, rites of passage,...) no longer buttress our behavior.*

Tarot and Oracle Cards are an extremely useful and supportive tool in the framework of daily rituals, that help people get present to themselves, their higher selves, and more in alignment to their life purpose. Being in better alignment to your true life purpose and higher will brings about a mitigation of the feelings associated with the existential vacuum.

In a personal situation where I felt anxiety over a particular situation, where I was renewing a relationship with my former fiance, mending bridges, I was feeling anxious. His patterns in our relationship were that he would withdraw after a very intense interlude, and I had anxiety associated with that (in therapy I have attributed that to some childhood wounds that I have worked through with my holistic counsellor). In order to mitigate my feelings of anxiety, I drew instinctively upon my Oracle Deck, *The Power of Surrender*.

My reading, after asking my deck, "what do I need to surrender in order to control my feelings of anxiety associated with his withdrawal?" came up with three oracle cards. The first was to 'Surrender my Desire to Control People,' which read back up, regroup and allow some space in the situation. The second card was 'Surrender to What Is,' which was about compassionately accepting the way things are, and the way that people are. The third oracle card was 'Surrender to Your Fear of Change,' where being fearful of being in a relationship should be surrendered, and I should have faith that all is well.

I noted a distinct drop off in the level of anxiety that I felt, meaning that adopting Tarot and Oracle cards as a sacred ritual in my daily life has assisted in mitigating feelings of anxiety over "not knowing," and allowed me to self-soothe and be reassured. As a metaphysics counselor I also am able to reassure others.

¹¹ Simon Solamai, *Basic Growth*, <http://www.basicgrowth.com/finding-your-purpose/>

Meditation, Ritual and Other Tools and Their Use in Hermetical Orders such as the Golden Dawn

One of the requirements for being a part of the Hermetical Order of the Golden Dawn, Alpha and Omega is that one performs the 'Daily Four Fold Breath' meditation, keeps a ritual journal, and performs the magical rituals. There is also an encouragement as part of the requirements of the order to study astrology and tarot cards.

The use of ritual, and meditation in the Golden Dawn order is in alignment with becoming a better version of ourselves, and being mindful of what our thoughts are. In order to embody all of the principles of spiritual growth, being disciplined to perform daily rituals assists in empowering the person to be clean and functional in all of his or her daily aspects of life.

Golden Dawn is regarded as a "higher form of magic," rather than merely used as a tool to conjure up intentions for mundane necessities of life, and used as a tool of spiritual transformation, and to create a healthier version of oneself, one that is in alignment and purposeful in his or her being. Lesley McQuade, High Priestess of the Egyptian College of Isis, a part of the Golden Dawn, Alpha and Omega explains that they desire to allow people who are members of the Alpha and Omega division to experience spiritual liberation, and to work in harmony and peace with others.

Men and women are viewed as equal and complementary. The teachings and rituals, based on the work of Israel Regardie, focus on working one's way through the initiatory process, represented as the spiritual path through the Tree of Life. The Tree of Life, has different aspects and is based on sacred geometry, and represents the path that man (or woman) takes in order to fully realise his or her divine self, and connection the Divine.

As a neophyte practices the rituals, meditates daily, notes his or her dreams, practices visions, takes on daily tarot and also keeps a record of studies and thoughts towards results from the rituals, they report to a mentor, who can advise on when the neophyte is ready to progress to the next level of initiation.

It is, in all of its real glory, a path of spiritual and personal development, which has results in the real world. Many of its members reveal that they feel a real sense of personal empowerment and an enrichment from being associated with like minded souls.

Sacred Spaces

While altars and their purpose have evolved over the millenia, their use seems to fulfill a fundamental needs that transcends spiritual orientation. There is a certain power to an altar. It is not just a thing that holds a collection of objects. Intention and energy transforms an altar into a space that transcends the mundane world. When we use it, we step outside the boundaries of our everyday lives.¹²

Altars place our lives in a place of present focus, and act as a pervasive reminder that we are making progress in our journey through our lives. Economic progress has been maligned

¹² Sandra Kynes, *Your Altar: Creating a Sacred Space for Prayer and Meditation*, 1.

traditionally by spiritual seekers as a worldly activity, yet the unfolding of a happy and fulfilled society at large occurs when all people are able to receive their daily needs such as food, clothing and shelter. Progress, such as that espoused by Abraham Maslow in the Hierarchy of Needs (taking care of basic life requirements, social relationships, virtues and beliefs, and progressing towards self-actualisation) is being embraced as a very important spiritual pursuit.

Happy Science¹³, an organisation dedicated to the betterment of mankind and society in general purports that the individual self-reflection (being mindful of one's own spiritual path and how that is in alignment with the divine order) and getting in tune with oneself through reflection and rituals will lead to an overall achievement in economic progress and stability not just individually but throughout society.

Sacred rituals, meditation, a sacred space for contemplation and performance of rituals, and being mindful of one's ikigai (or divine blueprint) and mindful goal setting in all facets of life (physical, spiritual, relational, vocational etc) that progress towards alignment merge into the outcome of having a happy, fulfilled, successful life that is generally free of anxiety and depression.

The Emerald Tablets talk about Hermetic Principles. From ancient times, those who were deemed as worthy to be initiated into the priestly and divine mystery schools were taught the seven hermetic principles (typically a western tradition). The second hermetic principle is the Law of Correspondence¹⁴. This means as above so below, so within, so without.

When we are mindful of our spiritual daily rites, and our sacred space is present before us, it soaks into our subconscious mind as a reminder of our obligation to ourselves to be mindful and self-reflect. As we take the time to tend to this sacred space, it follows in cadence that we tend to take better care of all of the other facets of our lives.

In Sacred Spaces, Denise Linn¹⁵ speaks about how everything is composed of constantly changing energy, we are at one with everything around us, and everything has a consciousness (this is also consistent with the Hawaiian Shamanic Practice of Ho'oponopono). When we honour our homes as sacred spaces, they resonate with us, and our sacred rites, rituals and altar therefore become a centrepiece of mindfulness in our homes.

We can be mindful of the practice of gratitude, have a pervasive reminder to meditate, remind ourselves of our abundance, and remember all the whys of what our goals are. It is also beneficial in this circumstance to maintain a journal, and to come back to what our intentions are. Our beliefs help form our desires, our desires our goals, and our goals are undergirded by habits. When these habits are spiritually entwined with our belief systems they become dual purpose, and align with who we truly are.

¹³

<https://happyscience-na.org/about/teachings/the-basic-teachings/the-principles-of-happiness/the-principle-of-progress/>

¹⁴ <https://exemplore.com/misc/The-Seven-Hermetic-Principles>

¹⁵ p1 Sacred Spaces

Habit Formation

There is a theory¹⁶ that humans have two different ways of taking decisions and processing information. Daneil Kahneman, a Nobel Prize winning psychologist speaks about the 'dual process theory' in his book *Thinking, Fast and Slow*. The fast system is based on automatic responses and is based on effortless processes. The slow processing system requires conscious attention.

The implications for being successful, is that we require forming habits that support our goals, and giving these conscious attention until they become automatically formed habits. The methods of habit formation are to examine what triggers a certain behavioural response and then to work a process of replacing "non-helpful" habits with more assistive habits.

In *Think Small* the focus is on breaking goals down into achievable small habits, and then working consciously to create systems of habits that become embedded into those neurological circuits in the brain, where we simply end up working towards our goals.

Habits are series of actions, started by a trigger, bringing out an automatic response, and is ended by a reward being given. For example a stressful situation may bring about a person desiring to have a cigarette, and the reward is to feel the stress being alleviated. Non-serving habits include emotional overeating, avoidance patterns, being passive aggressive, cigarette smoking, overindulgence, sex addictions, in fact any addiction (regardless of what it is) that becomes a habitual crutch or coping mechanism, that the person becomes slave to. Even some seemingly health habits such as hand washing or cleaning can pervade a person's life, to such extent that they cannot function in a healthy way or engage in life meaningfully. This is manifested in conditions such as obsessive compulsive disorder.

Whilst working on replacing coping mechanisms with healthy habits, mindful awareness of thought, meditation and also creation of healthy spiritual rituals will support a person in developing habits that eventually become the realisation of their goals.

¹⁶ p4 Think Small

Discussion

Many people are hurting and failing in their lives, becoming victims of their circumstances. With the power of belief and internal programs then reflecting what is then their external reality, it becomes evident that stress, anxiety, depression and internalised anger, leading into a space of despair, and existing in the existential vacuum leads to addiction and covering up of pain.

Working with a holistic life coach, one can deal with the problems that exist in the now. It is worthwhile that a person speak to a counsellor, or a psychologist (for interpersonal counselling or grief counselling) for past traumas, and work towards healing these. It is possible to work towards healing with a metaphysics psychologist, and have these addressed.

When a person is cycling through the void of depression, anxiety, using television, drugs, alcohol, sex addictions or other coping mechanisms in order to compensate for the pain that they feel inside, it becomes an insidious cycle of self destruction. A person who was formerly reasonable functional, then goes through some sort of grief often ends up in a downward spiral of dysfunction.

Often it isn't until a person gets to a seriously low point in his or her lives, that change is sought, and sometimes a psychologist or other health professional can offer substantial assistance through counselling, life coaching work and also case management. In complex situations, case management is often beneficial, as viewing the person as a

whole person, engaging the spiritual, psychological and physical aspects of his or her life, and addressing these each in order to assist cover some of the very basic necessities of life.

Abraham Maslow, a psychologist who created the Hierarchy of Needs, explains that people are motivated to fulfill certain needs, and some take precedence over another. Biological needs have to be taken care of, and a sense of stability and place needs to be enacted in order to assist a person gain some stability and put down roots in a community.

Deficiency needs that have to be fulfilled when they are absent (such as food, clothing and shelter) generally drive people to want to have them satiated. As people rise through the Hierarchy of Needs, the motivation for these is more ambiguous. People who are wealthy financially can still be deprived of happiness, and fulfilment.

It doesn't matter where a person sits in terms of their socio-economic status, there are some present voids that can be worked on, and when a person becomes uncomfortable or stressed enough in a situation, they may wake up and realise that they wish to grow and transcend through a certain comfortable rut in their lives.

Like anything in life, without a plan, there is generally not a great level of achievement. A distinct lack of fulfilment leads to feelings of emptiness and a lack of direction can also lead to subjective feelings of depression, anxiety and create a need for coping mechanisms such as addictions.

When a client is informed that change is possible, and he or she works in conjunction with a metaphysics coach or counsellor, he or she can look at the areas where it is desired that improvement occur. Goals can be formulated in partnership with the

Metaphysics Coach, and then a client can look at creating and practicing healthy rituals that trigger a series of other habits, leading to routines that also form a pathway to success.

Conclusion

The literature that has been examined in this paper assists in clearly establishing that it is conclusive that the practice of rituals in conjunction with a Metaphysics life coach, counsellor or psychologist can help to scaffold a path to wellness. Meditation creates healthier pathways in the brain, and science also provides evidence that habits that are conscientiously formed become automatic.

As a person can work towards their goals, synergistically tying them into the power of their beliefs, and thereby having a number of sacred and meaningful rituals that help reinforce their undergirding beliefs (that I can do things successfully without wavering) as tying rituals and goals in to belief in a Higher God Power has also been demonstrated in this paper as being a keystone in having a successful outcome (regardless of the type of goal).

Success is created from building rituals and beliefs into daily practice, making these automatic, and tying these into the belief that these sacred rituals help to do things like “surrender a person to making better decisions,” or to “protect them from causing themselves any more self-destructive behaviours,” just as two examples of the types of rituals and goals that are connected into creating better mental health and wellbeing.

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