

Control Of The Astral Body

Now that Winter is firmly established in the Northern Hemis (Oceania laughs) it's time to look at activities for shut-ins. This question was originally asked back in 1977 e.v., but it has been brought up again recently.

Q. How do I "switch on" my astral body? I am having problems getting out of my physical body. -- originally from UT, but lately repeated.

This matter of switching on the astral body is a personal trick. It's a straight forward exercise in imaginative projection to visualize the thing in the first place. The main work of building it up and using it is approached by Crowley in his essays on Yoga, in *Liber NU*, *Liber E*, through a number of the rituals and in some other Libers. Crowley's *Magick in Theory and Practice* contains a good deal of material on astral bodies, methods of working and the like. To a limited extent, the terms "astral body", "body of light", "diamond body", "subtle body", etc. signify the same thing; but these terms also refer to different theories, practical approaches and gradations of success. The main problem addressed here is getting the astral body to function as a vehicle of self instead of an expression of imagination. This can be automatic in the act of visualization. If the automatic part isn't working, you need to experiment. A few people seem to get into this very easily; but most need to grope about until the trick is learned.

I will be analytical, in as much as I have Virgo rising. Here is a list of possible problems.

- I. Disbelief barrier -- "I can't do it, therefore I can't do it".
- II. Threshold problem -- a visualization trick is needed to "spring you." III.
- Misconception -- You may be expecting something that is not essential.
- IV. Dual consciousness problem -- consciousness split between the physical and astral bodies in a manner that is not evident to you.
- V. Already there problems -- In order to transfer to the astral body, you must first be soundly in the physical body. Otherwise, no clear transfer may be perceivable.
- VI. Reflex problem -- This is a tendency to check the astral body with the physical body, a bit like moving the lips while reading.
- VII. Multiple Astral working -- It is occasionally difficult for a person to monitor the visualized Astral body from another in use, but not visualized.
- VIII. Lust of result. IX.
- Weakness of intent.
- X. Environmental problem.
- XI. Lack of the secret of Luna. XII. Something else...

We will look at each of these twelve problems in a bit, but first let's go over what to expect from an astral body transfer.

The experience of being the in astral body can be very different at different times. One should not look for exactly the same experience. True, there are things in common among the variations; but the astral body need not be a standardized model for most purposes. Also, the world inhabited by the astral body may not be in anyway like the one of he physical; or it may be practically the same. Moral: Don't expect a particular result at first. Be ready to perceive what is happening, not to preconceive it. FORM: The astral body may be any size. It may be larger, the same size or very much smaller than your physical body. It will usually be simpler in appearance. The face may be indistinct or may resemble a face from a previous incarnation. The body may be concealed in a shapeless robe. In general, a highly detailed astral body is harder to activate from inside than a more indistinctly featured one. This is not true after much experience, but it is usually the case at first. The astral body may or

may not be "human." It can be an animal, real or imaginary. It can be an object. It can be a "god/goddess form." Symbols and abstract geometric shapes, including the "Tatwas", are more often used as "doors" to astral states or as foci. In exercises of yoga mediation, one may identify with such a symbol as an astral incarnation.

MOVEMENT: The motions of an astral body are usually like those of a partly animated cartoon. Unless either the power of visualization is unusually strong, or the transfer is unusually complete, it is difficult to independently move parts of the astral body. This is not significantly different from independent motion of parts of the physical body. When we are very young, we cannot walk. It takes a lot of practice to make the body learn how to obey the brain. It is not at all different for the astral body. At first, you will be able to make it move about as a lump with little independent motion of things like feet or arms. Later you will be able to handle it like you do your physical body. This takes practice.

SENSES: All the senses of the physical body are potentially present, but usually only sight and kinesthesia are active. Color vision may not be present, especially at first. These senses have the same character as those of your physical body, but they need not be subject to the same limitations. Physical sight is two dimensional, with the addition of a ranging factor in the third dimension. Astral sight is not limited to two dimensions, but may be restrained to produce a two dimensional effect. The most natural form of astral sight is true three dimensional. Fourth dimensional astral sight is often possible. Higher dimensional astral sight is also possible. To produce an astral body that can be easily used for full transfer of self awareness, it is usually necessary to employ full three dimensional vision. Three dimensional vision is of two general kinds: 1. Source oriented. 2. Area oriented. Source oriented 3D vision signifies that there is one point that you consider the place from which you are looking. Either in a particular direction or in a complete spherical field, you see every object in the complete round. That means you are aware of every surface that an object presents. It does not mean that you are aware of every detail on every surface. Area oriented 3D vision means about the same thing, but there is not a particular place from which you are looking. You are bodiless as far as the vision is concerned. There may be a structure inside or outside the field of 3D vision that is "yours," but you don't use it as a center for the field. One proper sequence for transfer to an astral body is this: A. Place the physical body in a state of minimal distraction. B. Define an astral working space with Area Oriented 3D vision. C. Create an astral body for your use within this space. D. Use the astral body to center your attention and switch to Source Oriented 3D. E. Collapse the dimensionality from three to the more normal physical two + sense of depth, using the eyes of the astral body as your eyes. In time, you will be able to expand the sight back to three and higher dimensions without losing the state of transfer to the astral body.

Since I mentioned it, I will discuss higher dimensional vision a bit. This may be too technical for some; and it is not essential for the present. The character of 4D vision is often this: The ability to see through objects, including their interior parts OR the ability to perceive an object now, as it was in the past and as it will be in the future, all at the same time. 5D may involve all the above (time and transparency). In these cases the object is always seen in the complete round. for 6D sight, you can add alternative forms and figurations of the object while also seeing in the round, the time line and the interior.

A magical operation of the type known as "shape changing" involves exchange of the alternative form with the normal form. This is a 6D operation. Less drastic effects can be obtained through the use of fewer dimensions. The act of consecration is similar, but need not go so far as replacement. For that reason, consecration is easier than shape changing. Astral consciousness transfer is not stable unless accompanied by kinesthesia. This may occur spontaneously, but it often must be deliberately produced. This sense is the one your physical body uses to track its status of posture, orientation and motion. It is a sort of 3D "vision" that can act independently in the astral experience. In a healthy human body, physical sight is supplemented by kinesthetic body awareness. This kinesthesia is a natural "astral" sense. Devise experiments to discover and heighten this body awareness. Here are two practices to start: 1. Look straight ahead and at the same time imagine your physical body in its actual position. This is like "wearing a body at the back of your eyes." The image in this exercise should not be of a visual body, but of a body-shaped "itch." Rough clothing will help in this, as will sand in your shorts. Ditto poison oak or ivy (not recommended). 2. Stand in an absolutely dark closet and slowly move your arms horizontally up and

down in front of your face. Keep your eyes open. When you can see the shapes of your arms in the absolute dark, kinesthesia is working and transferring to visual analogue. Most people will see these shapes in "occult ultraviolet," a ghostly pale violet light. If the arms appear simply to be dark shapes, light is entering the closet. Test this by placing one arm over your eyes but in contact with your face. If you can still see the other arm moving in the same pseudo color, you have succeeded. The color appears to be neurological in origin, a product of the visual centers of the brain trying to see in the dark. With the eyes open, the visual cortex is tricked into believing that it can see. The actual information comes not from the optic nerves but from the brain stem. Because the visual cortex "believes" it can see, this information is transposed to create a visual image similar to what the eye sees while dark adapted. This differs from true dark adaptation in that the image can be clearly seen straight on. Slow motion and direction reversal enhances kinesthetic acuity.

Here is an abbreviated comment on the problems listed earlier: I. Best cured by startling or scaring yourself.

II. Typical tricks: Physical body laying down, astral standing. Physical body a different size from the astral body. Astral body coincident in space with physical body -- separate the two by moving the astral or the physical body (astral back flip through a hole in the ceiling often works.). Kundilini rush -- most effective, but very hard on the comfort factor.

III. Discuss your expectations with people who do astral projection.

IV. Cause the visualization of your astral body to walk or pass around you in a full circle. If you can get all the way around without having to move your physical eyes, you should be alright. The usual point of failure is at 180 to 270 degrees, based on a point before your physical eyes. Astral projection of the Lesser Pentagram ritual is particularly good for this. The exercise is difficult, and can only be fully accomplished when consciousness of the "Hadit" or smooth point of self is completely free of the physical body at the "break angle." If nothing else, this exercise will help you identify and avoid these "breaks."

V. Try projection and transference after resting and after vigorous physical exercise. If it goes better the second way, this is the problem. Cure it through Hatha Yoga and body awareness exercises.

VI. This is similar to # IV, and getting high on mantra helps. It's mainly caused by identifying with the physical body as the true self.

VII. Don't expect to be inside your astral body and still be able to see it. That can wait. You will be able to do it later if you cannot do it now.

VIII. Obvious. Relax first. Distract or occupy the mind by a simple rote exercise like mentally reciting the alphabet forwards and backwards. As proficiency with the exercise increases, you may have to complicate it. For example, mentally recite all the pairs of letters: AB AC AD ... AZ BC BD ... Then add reversed recitation of the pairs. In advanced form, visualize the shapes of one pair of letters while mentally hearing your voice recite the names of the others. This is a good way to learn the Hebrew alphabet, and the exercise is known in that case as a part of "the 231 gates of the Yetzirah."

IX. Just wanting to get into the astral body isn't always enough. Try astral transfer for a definite purpose; e.g. wanting to pass through a wall and watch an attractive neighbor take a bath.

X. First try a more quiet place, or one with less memories. Experiment at different locations, including a crowded, noisy place --- you may be a Zen natural!

XI. Find it. Read imaginative fiction. Keep a dream diary. Track your physical and mental acuity over 28 days and through 24 hours to identify lunar and diurnal cycles. Learn the effects of different foods and liquids on your mind and reflexes.

XII. Check your past, especially early childhood memories having tactile elements or recollections like photographs of your face and body.

-- TSG (Bill Heidrick)

Mantrik