

Spirit Communication 101

Lesson Three

Hello and welcome back! I've been told that people are enjoying this course, finding value, and overall really resonating with what I am saying. I'm ecstatic to hear it - thank you! I have plans for a print version of the course, and premade Tellbone sets of various types too. In the meantime, please feel free to send questions and comments to wightdoctor@gmail.com. I want this to be as helpful to as many as I can, and your questions help me do that.

Or Not!

Heads up! The Principle of Or Not will theoretically apply all over the place in this lesson. I'm going to talk about Dividuality, which is how we're all a bunch of Wights all glommed together, and that will involve a good chunk of information that may not agree with you. Or vice versa. As usual, apply that Or Not and just skip on by. Also as usual, I'll hope you'll consider it, and at the very least work out how you think those things actually work. Is reincarnation real? How come most of us don't have the strong experiences of those lives? Where do the spirits come from? Where do souls come from? Is there anything consistent about them all? How many do we have? Answers to these questions, to the ones that occur to you as you read through the lessons, and to the strong responses you get (Not a chance it's like that! It's just like that! I wonder if it's really like that!), will help you clarify what exactly your path really is, and provide all sorts of important guidelines as you continue to explore it.

Adapting the Tellbones to Your Path

Now, so far, you've had the chance to fiddle with the Tellbones as presented. We've gone over the three Forces and how the Tellbones build on them, and there's more to come to elaborate on their use. In the meantime, though, it seems that if you are relevant to how you talk to the Wights (and you'd better believe it is), it seems to me that some guidance on how to adapt to your needs and the aesthetics and lore of your path is a good idea.

If you have one, of course. It may be that you're currently sorting out what your path actually is. One thing is for sure - wherever you go, whatever you do, your path is right beneath your feet, and it's what you're doing and where you're going. That may lead to a tradition that other people follow, maybe not. Your aesthetics and what you want to accomplish is really all the "path" you need. Keep that in mind when I mention it throughout.

Whatever your path, the first obvious place to look is at three-fold structures that already exist, and then build a correlation to the Tellbones. It may not be exact, and that's okay. Just be aware that there is almost never a direct correspondence, so you may need to tweak meanings and understandings a little. We'll look at some examples in just a bit.

Another thing to consider is the physical form. It may be that a red bone, a piece of blue wood, and a green stone just don't do it for you. Just find pieces that are appropriate and have a decent connection to the three-fold structure you picked above, even if that's the Three Forces I already gave you. You want pieces, in general, that are about the size of your thumbnail, when you're using them privately in your own communications, or with just a few people who can huddle up close. If you're going for public use, then you want pieces as large as you can get but that can still be easily held in your palm (or cupped hands). The idea here is that you want them as visible as possible to the people in the group.

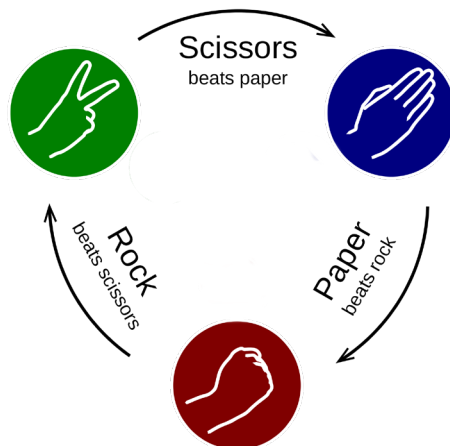
You also want to find pieces that won't roll around a lot, or else you'll spend a lot of time chasing them down and re-throwing. Don't ask how I know this. What you want are items with flat sides that will stop them from rolling away (different colors of regular six-sided dice work great). You also don't want anything particularly bouncy (glass is bouncier than you'd think, and super-bouncy rubber is right out). If you use a mat or tray (more on those in a later lesson), then they can help with the bouncy, so that will be relevant to the materials you use too.

Shape is important. You want pieces that are vaguely spherical, so that it's never a question of "is this one closer or is that one"? Round shapes as opposed to long sticks make determining closeness much easier. This is actually how the 4th "Center" bone came to be. It was hard to tell which bone was closer to me when I just threw them. "That one is closer to my foot, but this one is closer to the 'center' of my body. What do I do?" The way to counter this, if you're stuck on your pointy stick, is to mark or designate a point on that stick to use for closeness. "THIS point that I've colored red is the designated point", and the like.

Lastly, you need to decide how the meanings stay or are tweaked to correlate more closely with your tradition. You need to make sure that they can apply clearly to any question too (this is why the "yes, no, maybe so" thing is so universal). If you can't smoothly and easily separate any answer into one of the three categories, you need to do some work to clarify what they mean.

For example, suppose you divide things up by Mind, Body, and Soul. You need to figure out what it means when you ask a Body question and get a Soul result - is that a yes? You need to keep those meanings very focused too - it should be obvious what the categories are and how they apply to question and answer. Roshambo / Rock-Scissors-Paper might be a good model in this case.

The point is that however you tweak the meanings, make sure that you use them consistently. If you don't use them consistently, neither will the Wights you contact, and then everything will be confusing all the time. Save yourself that stress.



Now, there are other ways to build a Tellbone set too, and we'll cover those as well (Your information is in another lesson, Mario!). They'll affect all of these ideas, so we'll revisit adapting your Tellbones as more details are presented. For now, let's look at some examples of ways you could transform the Tellbones based on various traditions you might follow.

The Tellbones meet Jesus

If you're Christian, the obvious structure to use is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Given the way things are usually discussed in the Trinity, it seems to me that an obvious correspondence would be:

Fire / Red	God the Son, Jesus, who actually DID things
Earth / Green	God the Father, YHWH, who provided the foundation
Water / Blue	God the Holy Spirit, who enlivens and mediates

There are other ways to break it up too - God, Satan, and Man seems like another obvious one. Urim and Thummim might be in there somewhere. Maybe something related to the tribes of Judah, or the main figures in the Crucifixion (Jesus, Pilate, and Judas?). Go for what fits your beliefs and aesthetics best.

Druidic Tellbones (na Cnámha a Labhraíonn - the Bones that Speak)

It's very fashionable to add "Druid" or "Celtic" to anything and otherwise leave it as is. Druidic Voodoo - I've seen it suggested, no joke. Luckily, the Tellbones were developed in part out of my own explorations in all things Celtic (remember, I have a Master's in this stuff), and those traditions are rife with trinities.

As far as Reconstructionism is concerned, those traditions that try to follow the ancient lore we have as closely as possible, the obvious choice is Land, Sea, and Sky. Connect Sky to Fire (via the Sun or its Light), and the rest follow obviously. The three Cauldrons of Poesy would work too:

Coire Goiriath, the Cauldron of Warming/Maintenance	Earth
Coire Ernmae, the Cauldron of Vocation/Motion	Fire
Coire Sois, the Cauldron of Wisdom	Water

Depending on your understanding of the Cauldrons, you might shift those correspondences around. For example, Coire Ernmae mediates between the basic needs of Goiriath and the lofty ideas of Sois, so it would be better as Water instead of Fire. I went with the Fire in the Belly, the Fire of Inspiration, but it's really up to you. It's YOUR journey after all. You could use the three Worlds of the Barddas: Abred, Gwynfyd, and Ceugant. Goddesses of Ireland (Ériu, Fódla, and Banba). Forms of Brigit (Smith, Poet, Healer). There are lots of paths to follow here.

Tellbones Indian-style

If you follow a Hindu (or Hindu-inspired) path, then the Trimurti or Tridevi is probably the perfect focus for a Hindu-flavored Tellbone set. You can use colors or symbols associate with the three Deities. You may need to adjust meaning a little:

Brahma	Sarasvati	Creator	Yes / start it, create it
Vishnu	Lakshmi	Preserver	Maybe / keep it, save it, explore it
Shiva	Parvati	Destroyer	No / destroy it, finish it

Can you see the subtle differences? The Brahma bone (maybe represented by a book charm as a symbol of the Vedas, or perhaps something white for his white beard), doesn't really mean "yes" per se - it means to start or create something. If you ask "Will I pass my Physics test?", I'm not sure that getting the Brahma-bone would really mean yes; I think you'd want Vishnu here, as a preservation of your grade / efforts. You need to work out how these apply to the questions you ask. Sarasvati is the goddess of learning and wisdom, so perhaps all learning and thought goes with her. However you sort it out, be sure to be consistent.

Wiccan Tellbones

Maiden, Mother, and Crone. Boom. Or maybe Youth, Father, and Sage.

Actually, like the Hindu example, those trinities might need a bit more massaging, to make them work well. Maiden/Youth doesn't really correspond cleanly to "yes" - or to "no" or "maybe" either. Same goes for the other archetypes. You could look at them like this:

Maiden/Youth	maybe, possibility
Mother/Father	yes, manifested reality
Crone/Sage	no, it's deeper / more complicated than that

This is a very subjective way of looking at them, so if it resonates, great, but I don't expect it. You might try Mother, Father, and Child, which seems appropriate to the fertility and gender focus of Wicca. Elementally, Wicca is very closely focused on the Four Classical Elements, so elemental correspondences don't seem very fitting. On the other hand, Wicca does tend towards eclecticism, so maybe the Tellbones as they are works well for you as is.

Other Possibilities to Think About

	Red Fire	Blue Water	Green Earth
Alchemy	Sulfur	Mercury	Salt
Hero Cycle	Boon	Hero	Challenge
Astronomy	Sun	Moon	Earth
Dumezilian	Priest	Warrior	Serf
Taoist	Tian / Heaven	Ren / Man	Di / Earth
Kemetic	Horus	Isis	Osiris
Hellenic	Zeus	Poseidon	Hades
Family	Father	Child	Mother
Platonic	Mind	Soul	Body
Sumerian	Anu	Ea	Enlil
Zelda	Din	Nayru	Farore

There are so many possibilities here. Explore as you see fit!

Dividuality Unpacked

I briefly explained the idea of Dividuality in the last lesson, as a tenet specific to the Way of Spirits / Embodied Animism. In essence, it is the idea that we are all composed of, and compose, many other beings. We have many Selves, and are parts of greater Selves as well. There are more implications to this idea that are important to unpack, in part because the idea really impacts how we relate to and with the Wights around us.

Long ago, as a kid investigating all things religion, mostly out of rebellion against the extremist tradition I was raised in, I discovered this idea of reincarnation. It was about as opposite to what I was raised with as you could get, and I was therefore *extremely* attracted to it. As I learned more, it seemed that the idea of reincarnation, especially here in the West, has often been overused and overemphasized, and hasn't really played out in the ways we expect.

For example, there have been so many people blaming their bad behaviors on past lives. Obsessing about past lives and ignoring this one. And there's of course the Occult Law (TM) that there must always be 23,000 reincarnations of Crowley at any one time. Besides that silliness, I just found that most of the time, past lives weren't really relevant to the lives of the people I saw claiming them, and tended to distract them from what was actually going on in their lives.

But then, there clearly *were* people where there was something going on. Five year old kids who knew about the past inhabitants of a house three towns away, details about their lives, and the location of their home. Toddlers that grew up in midwest America but somehow spoke fluent French. And so on. There definitely is something to it, but it just doesn't apply as strongly to everyone somehow.

I was already very familiar with one approach to this sort of quandary, which is to say "You're worshipping demons!" That's not a very enlightened way of approaching it, if you ask me. I struggled for years, trying to figure out how to come to terms with this, and finally got some explanation from my Wights as they led me to the idea of Dividuality. In addition to explaining reincarnation in a way that made sense and explained what there was out there, it did so respectfully, and further explained a bunch of ideas about totems, spirit guides, and various other resonances that people feel.

The Sea of Quiddity

quiddity (kwid-i-tee) the quality that makes a thing what it is; the essential nature of a thing. A term for the essence of an object, literally its "whatness" or "what it is".

I'll admit I stole that name from Clive Barker - the Sea of Quiddity is a mystical sort of dream-sea in his novel "*The Great and Secret Show*". It was supremely inspiring, made me look up the word, and do more investigating, which led me to all sorts of magical wells and cauldrons.

These wells and cauldron are sources of wisdom, but more than once I came across this idea that life is pulled from them, and that sparked a bunch of thoughts. What if these wells are full of soulstuff (aka Quiddity) that is continually recycled? At death, our soulstuff returns to the well, and at birth, we each receive a scoop of it?

Clearly, we wouldn't be getting a pure scoop very often. Our scoop would have soulstuff from lots of beings and wights in it - a dab of old woman from the 14th century, a solid measure of generic human to direct the identity, a good dose of deer, perhaps a bit of the energy from a tennis shoe factory that was demolished. And of course, there's very likely a bunch of brand-new, freshly-manifested Quiddity too, with no flavor or color to it at all.

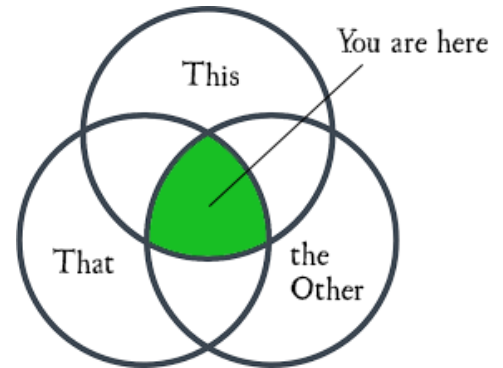
In a scoop like that, we might expect that soul to resonate with deer and tennis shoes and medieval women's lives. There's your totem spirit, the deer, a Wight with whom they share a strong connection in the form of Deer Quiddity. There's your past life - that old woman. I imagine there's probably many other bits of other lives in there too. And that explains why so many people claim specific lives as their reincarnations, while at the same time not being a jerk about it (who *doesn't* have a drop of Crowley in there?). And the obsession with tennis shoes? Covered.

But sometimes, I imagine there are scoops that are pretty pure. That ladle goes in, and out comes a significant amount of THAT specific life. Now we have a toddler who speaks French. Or someone who remembers all the details of this specific event that happened centuries before they were born. Or is mostly that animal, or that creature, or that landwight, or... Transgender

folk are explained spiritually. There are people out there who feel strongly that they're not human-souled either - they are beings who've "stepped into" a body, or who are animal souls stuck in human bodies, or any number of other unique takes on existence. The Sea of Quiddity provides respectful answers for these people. All the diversity of the world's experience is suddenly accounted for in one fell swoop.

Your Mix, My Mix, Everyone Has a Mix

We're composed of many Wights, and of an initial scoop of energies or Quiddity from that Sea. No wonder we're all individuals - there are an infinite number of combinations here, at every level. Infinite Diversity. This is why your path is distinct - not only are you a distinct center-of-the-Venn-diagram of all of these things, but your distinct center is also moving through the world, interacting with other centers and occasionally acting as parts of greater centers too. So what does that mean for you?



Well, besides the obvious about how no path other than your own is going to be a perfect fit (and that should have been obvious right from the start), it also explains how and why we relate to the Wights in the ways we do. It explains that not only do we have a mix, so does everything else. Wights are as complex as we are, and we shouldn't expect them to be "pure energies" in any way.

What about the Wight of Wolves though? Isn't that pure? Well, yes and no.

Consider this. If we compose other beings up the chain, then at some point, there is a being that embodies all of humanity, for instance. The Wight of which every human is a part. In a way, that is pure. It is all of humanity - one thing. When we talk about the Wolf-spirit or the Wolf-totem, this is sort of what we mean. It is the Wight that every single Wolf is a part of. And that spirit does exist (and so does Fred the Wight of Floor Coverings), without a doubt - we can call on that spirit and communicate with it, as demonstrated in the experiences of everyone who has ever reached out to Wolf (or Fred).

That said, each of the Beings-as-Centers that compose Wolf have all sorts of other sub-Wights in them. I'm one part of the Wight of Men, for example, but there's a bit of Spiderwight in me too, a little bit of Treehouse, a smear of Myopia, and so on.

The Way of Spirits addresses this by recognizing two kinds of Wight. There really is no difference, just how we approach these spirits and the expectations we can hold about what they're like. The first of these is the Sheerwight, a Wight seen as embodying a specific energy only, the Spirit OF something. The Wight of Floor Coverings is the energy of Floor Coverings alone, and the Spirit of Wolf is the ultimate and pure energy of Wolf in all its forms. It's called a Sheerwight because in Old English, sheer comes from *scír*, meaning bright, clear, and pure. Think about when we use the word sheer and you'll understand - even though the fabric is made of lots of threads, sheer fabric seems transparent, and we can look through it without seeing all the parts that make it up.

Compare that to the Tanglewight, where every thread and knot is very conspicuous. Here we're looking at the fabric and we're not able to see through it unless we smush it right up against our faces. Tanglewights are the Wights that are things, the Souls of things. That tree is part of the Sheerwight of Trees, but it has/is its own Tanglewight (which we might call a dryad). My soul (pick one, any one!) is a Tanglewight, but I am part of the Sheerwight of Humanity.

Hierarchies

So there's the complexity of Wights, human, spirit, and otherwise. It should be clear now that working with a Wight is just a matter of which "center" you're paying attention to, and that we're all complex fractals of relationships. This plays out in communication in lots of ways. When you get an answer from Fred the Wight of Floor Coverings, it's entirely possible that you're actually talking to a center slightly less precise. It's Fred plus or minus a few of those other Wights. Or possibly even many of them!

This is like Mall Santas. Many parents have explained how there's a Santa, but the other Santas are representatives working on behalf of Santa (because he's so busy, of course). When you think about Santa as a whole, those mall Santas are part of the overall definition of Santa in the same way that a specific wolf is part of the Wight of Wolves. This idea of companion as component is not unheard of; arguments abound about whether Wight X is a different entity or just an aspect of Wight Y - Venus and Cloacina, Frigg and her handmaidens, Saint Lazarus and Papa Legba (any lwa/orisha and a syncretized saint, really), and so on.

This complexity plays out in other ways too. It explains some hierarchies, for example. On one hand, hierarchies are always created social constructs, which can be ignored at any point for any reason. On the other, hierarchies exist whenever people interact - someone is louder, taller, prettier, angrier, etc. than others. These situations create hierarchies organically, without anyone doing anything specific to establish them. These processes just happen, regardless of whether you're human or something else. Animals for example - cats, dogs, lions, seals, and so on - there are hierarchies. Traditionally, especially in Western traditions, those hierarchies are vital to the ways in which we communicate.

Some spirits expect to be directed aggressively, because that's the way their hierarchies work. I know people who work the same way, who won't do a thing unless directed to by their boss. Lots of reasons why that might be the case, but in the end, what's important is that this is sometimes how a Wight expects to work with you.

We can't expect the hierarchies explained to us to be absolutely true, though. If anything is clear to you, please let it be that Wights are beings with needs, wants, lives, and anything and everything constantly changing, just like we are. New Wights hop out of the Sea, and sometimes they jump back in or otherwise contribute their Quiddity. Over time, they change - the Sheerwight of Television is most definitely quite different than it used to be. In *American Gods*, Media does a great impersonation of David Bowie and Lucy, but where is she now? That grimoire might have laid out the hierarchy of Heaven or Hell or whatever, but there's no reason to expect it to be the same hundreds of years later.

That doesn't mean you're up a creek, though. For one, since there are an infinite number of Freds, it's likely someone else could step in and fill the role. It's not that same demon that was once part of the

legions under Lucifer (since demonic hierarchies are especially attractive to the writers of medieval grimoires, it seems), but there's a Wight who's stepped up and is observing all the niceties described.

It's possible that all those demons that make up the legions of Whomsoever are actually composite Wights. You can take this thought and go further. If you're having trouble with a Wight giving you guff, appeal to a Wight above them. "Since you're playing with me, Carpetwight, in the name of Fred, Wight of Floor Coverings, quit it! Or else!" Sometimes, the threat is required to make a change (more on that in a later lesson).

It's Not All About You

I know some people will react strongly to those ideas above - it's not a hierarchy, those are Bad™! I've been there too, very firmly in the camp of cooperation and happiness and light. The problem is that's not a very healthy way to see things, because it's very clearly (and quickly) contradicted by reality. People who take that approach are often poorly prepared for those contradictions. There is always someone with more friends and bigger sticks. Hierarchies exist. They're something for you to consider on your own, about whether they're relevant to your path and how they work, but it does bring up something else that needs to be addressed in any communication.

Look at the title of this section. Yeah, it's true. You're one of a gajillion or more beings in the universe. Just because you want something doesn't mean you get it or deserve it. It doesn't mean that what you think is correct, or accurately describes reality. And resorting to hierarchical Wights may not be the way to handle this particular Wight - there are people who get upset when you go over their heads, and Wights can be just the same.

Ultimately, what this all means is that I could be wrong - just because I think this is how it works doesn't mean it actually is. Same goes for you - your explanation is not necessarily any better or worse than any other, more accurate or not, as an explanation of metaphysical reality. Just because you think the Wights should talk to you, answer your questions, give you the MacGuffin doesn't mean they will. Obligations are based on many things, but "I want it" is rarely one of them.

Sometimes, as mentioned last week, a Wight just doesn't like you, for no good reason that they could explain. Just as you sometimes dislike others in exactly the same situations. Don't expect every conversation to be a perfect meeting of minds, because it won't be. Don't expect that just because you know what you mean, that everyone else will get it too. Or that you wanting means everyone wants. Just don't assume that anything about you will have anything to do with anyone else ever. Then, when those commonalities show up, those bridges are built, you'll be surprised, excited, and inspired, and you'll come to it honestly open to whatever the Wights want to bring.

These are all aspects of a kind of block to clear communication, both hierarchies or the lack thereof, and your attitude towards them. Your expectations about how what you think or want is relevant to anyone you talk to can be just as great an issue as anything else. About the only time you can expect a modicum of cooperation is when you're talking about certain component Wights of your own Self, because at least then you might both have self-preservation in common. Generally so, anyway - sometimes that Heartwight is just dead set on attacking you.

You may ask that if it's so much trouble, not about me, and so on, why bother? Why can't I just work with my own internal Wights? There are two parts to an answer here. For one, even those Wights that compose you have their own agendas. Their agenda is not the same as yours, yours is not the same as theirs. Your agenda to have more butter rum ice cream is in direct contradiction to their agenda of "no more sugar". And completely irrelevant to another composite agenda of "kill that bacteria". The idea of "Not About You" applies even when you're just looking within, at your component Wights.

The second part is about why you should bother. Let's start with those "internal" Wights. If you work with them, make a point of understanding their needs, try to get them to understand yours, don't you think that your whole being would work that much more efficiently? That life would be better all around? It will, I can guarantee it. I quit smoking after 20 years by appealing to my component Wights, the Wights that wanted me to keep smoking. Once I figured out what it was that they got out of smoking, and found a replacement, I was well on the way to quitting (10 years now).

The same applies to all the "external" Wights too. Working with them, even when there are communication issues, when some are mean or dumb or don't like you, means that on the whole, you're still improving the world for people. You're still improving lines of communication, finding ways for everyone to get their needs and goals met. Better communication among all the parts is always better for everyone. Improve the world, one Person at a time. Even if that one Person is you.

The First Date starts with...

How can you possibly work with Wights, then? I mean, if it's like I just said and it's not about me (or you, or Fred) at all, then why bother? The thing is that you CAN establish relationships, just like in the material world, and those relationships change things. Sometimes drastically.

If you go up to random stranger #3 in the street and ask for \$100, odds are not good that they're going to give it to you. Your best friend, though - odds are very good, depending on their situation. Once you establish a relationship, it's not about me, or you, but US, and that changes a lot of what we know, think, and want.

How do you establish relationships? Well, how DO you? Most people introduce themselves to start with, and that's always a good idea.

"Hi Fred, I'm the Wight Doctor, and I notice you know all about Floor Coverings. It so happens that I'm interested in Floor Coverings at the moment - can you help?"

It really is that easy. After the introduction, there are plenty of other things you can do to strengthen the relationship, most of which you'll learn from that Wight directly.

What's the answer to that question in the title? Dinner is usually the first date, breaking bread, also known as Communion. Yes, those little crackers and that wine is how you establish a relationship with God, according to Catholics, and they're not wrong in many ways. They take it even further, and make it a fundamental sacrament, and they're still not the only ones to do so. More than just introducing yourself, "breaking bread" goes the farthest in terms of creating a relationship and showing faith in the potential of that relationship.

The Eucharist, cakes and ale, the Red Feast of Traditional Witchcraft, these are all ways in which we share food or other sustenance. In a sense, these are offerings. Offerings are generally thought of as something we give to someone, to a Wight or God or what have you. More precisely, the offering is to the Relationship between us, and we both benefit.

This isn't even a surprise really. Sure, I may have paid for that Wight to have some tasty incense, but I benefit too from the aroma. Last time, that Wight gave me a little extra oomph by connecting to me more strongly, and it benefitted from that connection to reality too, even if only in a "vicariously living" sort of way. Over time, these threads created back and forth create a strong relationship.

There's a name for that idea, recognized for centuries. The Romans phrased it as "*Do Ut Des*" - I give that you give. You can think of it as a cosmic bubble gum machine if you'd like, but it's only like that in the most superficial way. That approach is like the "friend" who gives you a ride only so that you'll buy them some booze. They only show up when they want something, and only do something if you give them something.

This isn't like that, regardless of that Roman bluntness. It's about reciprocity, the energy that you exchange with someone as you build a relationship. Eventually, you and your best friend stop counting dollars or the meals, you just share. And that's what an offering is for - it's the first step to starting that exchange and building that connection.

Reciprocity in this sense is a different name for Hospitality. Did you know that Hospitality, Host, and Guest are all linguistically related? They all come from the Proto-Indo-European root **ghos-ti-*:

The word *ghos-ti-* was thus the central expression of the guest-host relationship, a mutual exchange relationship highly important to ancient Indo-European society. A guest-friendship was a bond of trust between two people that was accompanied by ritualized gift-giving and created an obligation of mutual hospitality and friendship that, once established, could continue in perpetuity and be renewed years later by the same parties or their descendants.

Calvert Watkins, "American Heritage Dictionary of Indo-European Roots"

(As a side note, it's also where the word *ghost* comes from - ghost, spirit, wight... it's all about the hospitality.)

There's plenty out there on this concept, so I leave it to you to investigate further, but when it comes to offerings and establishing friendships, isn't that really how it usually starts for us? We share. Why would it be any different with any other consciousness? It isn't different, of course, and whether you're giving your dog a bone, your buddy some pizza, or leaving honey and eggs for Hekate, it's all the same: the first steps of a relationship.

Feet on the Floor

Strengthening your relationships with the Wight by presenting offerings is a great way to make for clearer communication. After all, when you talk to your best friend or your spouse, they know you well and are better at understanding the meaning you're trying to get across. After decades, they can probably finish your sentences. Communication is clearer, simpler, and easier.

There are other ways to clear communication too, and one of the less common ones is grounding. Yes, grounding! I know, that seems crazy, that letting energy flow out and into the earth could make

your communication clearer, but it's true. How many times has a conversation you were in gone haywire because someone was too emotional? Angry or depressed or super happy, they can all lead to assumptions and expectations that cause problems.

Grounding actually help keep you on an even keel. When you're super excited, it's difficult to be calm, focused, and on track, and the same applies the other end of the spectrum. You need to understand how to ground so that you can have clear and easy to understand conversations.

What that means, specifically, is going to depend on your tradition - there are lots of ways to understand what grounding is. The lines between this practice and others is not always going to be the most precise, so you'll have to figure what is specifically means to you and your path. There are traditional ideas about it, though, and they're a good start.

Basically, grounding is the idea of draining excess or otherwise interfering energy off and into the Earth (hence "grounding"). It's also commonly discussed as a way to refocus, to allow the hectic energies to settle back down into the normal channels. For some, it can include severing energetic bonds of various sorts, or it may merge into or with Centering or Purification practices. I think of grounding as a process dealing with external grunge, and so my practice reflects that understanding. There are plenty of websites and books out there on how to ground, so you can investigate and find one that works for you, but here are some of my practices:

- Breathe deeply and direct it to wherever you feel most excited/angry/etc. As you exhale, allow that breath to take that energy with it, dissipating in the air around you or falling to the ground.
- Allow your consciousness to reach out through your feet into the earth. Feel yourself digging into the earth like roots in a tree. Keep going until you feel connected, then push all the extra energy out into the earth.
- Take time to feel each separate body part of group of body parts . I work with head first, then neck, shoulders, arms, chest, belly, hips, legs, and hands and feet together at the end. Sense the stress or energy from each section move into the next, continuing down your body, like water flowing to the lowest point. One you've finished, allow your hands and feet to release it all.
- Inspired by the Tellbones and the Three Forces, I came up with this technique for when I have the time and space to lay down. Allow your body to sink down, like compacted earth. Feel the pressure compress you, and let the extraneous energy, stress, and what have you rise up like a mist or a flame out of your body. Take a deep breath or two, allowing everything to calm and be still. After a few of these breaths, take another and let it blow across those energies, picking them up and flowing them off of your body and into the earth.

Creating your own technique is not too difficult. Anything can work, if you think creatively. You just need to determine how that idea or thing releases its energy, and then replicate it in a slow, calm way. Volcanoes? See the energy flowing out of you and down into the sea. Kittens? Imagine yourself as a bunch of energetic animals, which turn on each other to groom and calm, countering each other's energy, until they're all asleep. I'm sure you can figure out a method that works for you.

Your Backup Team and Sovereignty

Sovereignty is generally about being who you are, being the best you, but that doesn't mean that all the work is on you alone. The People and Wights around you can have a huge affect on your ability to stand tall. There are elements of protection in here as well - a safe place makes for a place when you can be yourself. You need a support team to provide protection.

Think of your support team as a shield, the armor that keeps away the worst of the dangers, the net that catches you when you fall, or the people that are there to do either of those. Having them there to catch you, guard you, and otherwise help you stay healthy and safe is almost never a bad thing to have (there actually are situations where you need that lack of safety, but that's a different class).

Really, once you think about it, the "internal" Wights are support all the time. Whatever their goals, they're generally looking out for you. The Heartwight really does not want to have an attack, and your Liverwight is happy to keep filtering out all sorts of bad stuff. Even less physically-connected Wights, like that Tennis-Shoe-Factory Wight, or the Deerwight, have a vested interest in your connection to them. They all act as support for you, all the time, because ultimately, you are part of their whole.

Leaving your internal Wights aside, it's easy to think of physical people who do this for you; family and friends are at the top of that list. As you interact with Wights and the Otherlands, having some people on your support team who aren't at all physical, or that aren't internal to you, to handle the more mysterious and spooky of the dangers you'll face, is really something you need to have in place. The first of those Wights? Your Ancestors, also known as your discarnate family and friends. Of course! Why wouldn't you want the people who care about you the most around?

You can name specific names, but it's fine, in my experience, to just work with the generic name "Ancestors". The Wights know if they claim you or not, and it's almost a given that they won't be just deceased blood relatives, so remain open. Some of those deceased relatives won't claim you, either. Go to your altar, or wherever you usually interact with them (you really should have an Ancestor altar, you know), and ask that they protect you. It's that simple: "Ancestors, please protect me".

Generally, that's not terribly emotionally satisfying, so expanding this into a more flowery invocation or prayer often proves useful in making it tangible, so you can feel it. Most traditions have something that serves this sort of purpose, whether it involves your Ancestors or not, and you should definitely make use of them. The Lord's Prayer is a well known one, and among the Celtic Christians, there's the Breastplate of St. Patrick. It's also known as the Lorica of Patrick (a lorica is a kind of breastplate) and as the Deer's Cry, because the prayer turned Patrick and his followers into deer.

There are lots of Hindu chants that serve this purpose, invoking the protections of various deities. The Gayatri is a famous one (that's even been deified - or maybe it was a goddess first...), as are various chants to Ganesh, Hanuman, and Durga. Most of the various Egyptian texts out there serve as some sort of shield and protection too.

Protective prayers are all over the place, but finding ones that speak to you can be difficult, because some traditions overwhelm the search engines. If you can find a protective prayer or charm that you like, you can start there and massage as needed to work with your own tradition, path, and Wights. As an example, here's one I like and use - its short and simple, so I could memorize it easily. I say and/or repeat it as needed.

Ancestors behind me, Descendants before me,

To my left, the People, To my right, the Wights,

Above me, my Self, Below, the Worlds,

By all, in all, I am protected. (or supported, or whatever it is you need)

A prayer is great for when you have the time and energy to be conscious of the need, but that's not always the situation. Saying the prayer right before you go call on Libritox the Demon of Inappropriate Page-folding is probably not a bad idea, but you should have something a bit more constant too. You may be busy, or don't feel like it, but someone could still cause some problems and stir stuff up. It's a good idea always to have a little protection.

An icon or charm consecrated specifically to or by your Ancestors would fit the bill here. Every tradition has some way of keeping a constant presence, but here's a simple charm method that you can adapt or elaborate on as much as you like, to start with.

- Create a symbol of yourself. This could be a photograph or drawing of yourself, your signature, a personal sigil, 3 hairs and a little spit, or what have you.
- Draw a circle around that symbol (or put them in the middle - glue or tape might be useful)
- Around that circle, write the names of any Ancestors or Wights that have agreed to protect you. If you haven't asked them (and why not? You have the tools, and it was the exercise last lesson!), you can write any well-known generically protective spirits from your tradition. If worse comes to worst, you can write the word "protection" around, to invoke the powers of the Wight of Protection.
- Draw another circle or three, as you see fit, around that.
- If you want, you can anoint this with protection oils, sprinkle on protection powders, or wrap it around a protective crystal or herb, or shavings from a protective root like Angelica or High John the Conqueror. There are plenty of protective and supportive materia out there - investigate to discover one appropriate to your tradition.
- Fold the sides of the paper towards you (you're drawing in protective spirits), turning clockwise, until it's all sealed up. Keep in your purse or wallet, in a pouch around your neck, or wherever else seems right.

You can bump this up a little to create something a bit more permanent still, an icon or protective fetish. There are many ways to go about it:

- Drill a hole in something, and stuff the charm above in there. A whole High John or Angelica root would work, but you could use a rock, a piece of wood, a little wooden doll, and so on.

- Find a small jar you like. If it's clear or transparent, you'll want to paint it or cover it somehow (wrap fabric, glue on sequins and rhinestones, knit a wrapper, go crazy). Add dirt from your most common locations (home, work, friends' homes, i.e. places you visit and spend a lot of time at), the charm created above, and a few little toy weapons or army men.
- Work with the Wights directly to come up with a sigil of protection, and then have it tattooed, drawn, or painted where needed. There are so many websites, books, and videos that talk about how to create a sigil, so if you don't know how, or even what a sigil is, go search on the internet. Just keep in mind that there really aren't any rules - if you just draw what feels right to you, create a seal or symbol, that works.
- Paint or draw a picture of your protective spirits and frame it. Draw a protective sigil on the back of the image (or hide it inside the frame). Add herbs and oils, if you want, between the image and the cushion of the frame.

Be creative. Globally, almost anything you can imagine has been done, so there's a technology precedent in every case, so there's no reason to not try the craziest coolest ways that you can imagine.

You may want to consecrate the charm or the fetish. Consecration marks the object as magical and set aside for specific powers, kind of like putting a "Reserved" sign on a table at a restaurant. In this case, the consecrated object is now set aside for specific Wights, which gives it a boost of power. Other Wights will recognize it, which does it's job before it even has to do its job.

In a way, this charm is like a servitor, a created entity. Given my concept of Dividuality, I would say that no entity is ever created, just recognized or created from the parts that already exist. It's also entirely plausible that we are creating energy shells for that center / combination of Wights to inhabit. Consecration in this context is a process of awakening that new center and establishing a relationship and focus.

How to consecrate is really up to you (no surprise there, right?). You can go very complex, a la the Grimoiric traditions, with circles and banishing and cleansing every little thing ("I conjure and cleanse you, O creature of left-handed doily lint, that you serve and..."). You can go minimal ("I bless and consecrate you, image of my Protective Ancestors"). And anywhere in between is appropriate too. Modify your favorite consecration text, or use this really simple one to start with:

By the Wights that form you, and the Wights that you form,

I ordain this icon, Support in every storm.

Getting Confirmation

When it comes to getting the message, we've talked about a few different checks to put in place, to make sure you're getting it. You want to validate that you're connected and talking to who you think you're talking to. You want to make sure you're hearing things correctly too, by means of a clarity check. Another useful bit to add is a confirmation. I've actually mentioned it before, but here I'm calling it out specifically.

Clarity checks are to make sure you're "hearing" the message clearly. Confirmation is to make sure that what you've got really is what you were supposed to get. It's the final "Really?" when you're asking questions. There's wind, someone jostled your elbow as you throw the Tellbones, some other Wight took hold and shouted over the others. You have the message clear, but it's the wrong message altogether - confirmation discovers this, so you want to add a double-check to your divination.

This is really common in systems that use yes/no methods like this, for obvious reasons. In Asia, questions are confirmed with 3 consecutive and identical answers. Some of the ATR systems have similar confirmations, to ensure that there's nothing wonky going on. It's just plain useful.

Making a confirmation is super easy:

Did I get the message that was intended?

Throw, get Fire, yes!

If you get Water, then maybe parts of it are right, and you'll need to investigate.

And Earth would mean no, generally.

You could ask for confirmation a second time too, as in China. Three times spoken is true, right? Or maybe you know that as "Third time's the charm".

You can add specifics to the question too, such as who the message is from or what it's about. "Did I get the message that Fred intended, about dealing with the unhelpful Carpetwight?" Once you know you got the right message, you can move on to whatever is next on the agenda.

Whatchu Talking Bout, Wight?

A common problem, when you're deep in the conversation, is that things can start to become unclear and confusing. It can happen with any divination method, and the Tellbones are no different. One moment, Fred The Floor Covering Wight is telling you how to get help with your unruly rugs that won't stay put, and the next he seems to be talking about stains in your shirt and Karen from Accounting. What?!

Sometimes, you just need to think about it for a while before you'll get it. I've had plenty of moment myself where I realized hours later "Oh! THAT is what they meant!" and I bet it's happened to you too. Sometimes confusing is just your own self being dense. Don't be afraid to put a conversation on hold if you're not getting it, to take a moment to think.

That said, there are plenty of other reasons for the confusion. It could just be noise on the line. In my experience, some people are more susceptible to this, and some systems are definitely susceptible. If you have a lot of components in the divination system you're using, they can make things too complicated and introduce noise - Tarot and horary Astrology are easily influenced by line noise. You just paid attention to the wrong part, and things went sideways.

Too few components can be open to line noise too - too many meanings covered in one token, and you chose the wrong meaning. Very simple card systems, or the plethora of poorly designed

oracle systems out there, fall into this trap all the time. If you're asking the Ancestors about whether Whats-a-name is cheating on you, and you get the "Angel of Clarity" card - well yes, dammit, I WOULD like some clarity! Trying to interpret these systems almost guarantees that you're going to go off the rails, because the system doesn't account for the answers you need. A well designed system is paramount.

Other times, the problem arises because you're being obtuse or paying attention to the wrong things. You keep asking questions to dig into the details of what kind of socks they're wearing, all the while the Wight keeps saying "No! That doesn't matter!" and you just don't get it. That happens a lot when you've got expectations and hopes getting in the way. If you find yourself asking the same question multiple times when the situation hasn't really changed or otherwise warranted more discussion with your spirits, this is probably why you're getting unclear answers.

If you're not being obsessive or expecting too much, it could also be you're just heading in the wrong direction. Somehow, you understood that you needed some white willow bark, but what they actually meant was white oak bark. You're asking questions then, with the wrong understanding, and they're doing their best, given the limitations, to turn you around. When things start getting confusing, take a moment and do your checks - connect, clarify, confirm. Or take one of those breaks to think a bit.

There's also the possibility that you're speaking the wrong language. You need to take the context of the Wights you're working with into account. It's easy to think you've got a nail situation because you're working with a Hammerwight, but what other words would Joe Hammerwight use to talk about connection and relationship? You don't need to beat anyone into submission, it's just a hammer because that's what Joe knows. Clarity might not be useful here ("Yep, he said hammer") but confirmation would ("Do you really mean to beat them with a hammer?" Throws Earth/No. "Do you just mean to interact and connect with them?" Fire/Yes! "Really?" Yes again - confirmed).

There's not a little common sense involved here too - it probably should have been obvious right from the start that when you asked about making the move on Hottie, Joe Hammerwight did NOT mean to beat them about the head and face with a hammer. Think about what kinds of things someone would say in the context, given the goals and the questions. Common sense will go a long way towards making the conversation go smoothly. It doesn't always apply, because this IS otherworldly stuff after all, but more often than not, there's a consistent reality at hand and common sense will apply. The Wights are not going to suddenly demand virgin souls wrapped in pink bows.

Those are the most common ways that communication can go sideways before, after, or during confirmation, but there are other tools you can use to make sure that the conversations stay clear, to the point, and that they can be confirmed in the end. Strengthening the connection is the first of those, and I've brought it up before. Sovereignty helps there, setting the mood, making sure you've got the right Wight at the other end, and so on are some of the previously mentioned methods.

One that can be very useful and that hasn't been mentioned before is an intermediary spirit. These Wights act as translators, among other things, and if you have a good relationship with them, they can speak clearly on behalf of others.

The Wights Between

Right now, the occult community is kind of obsessed with all things St. Cyprian. As the Sorcerer Saint that works with Heaven and Hell, the divine and the demonic, he plays intermediary for lots of Wights, and this is one of the main reasons for his popularity. He's far from the only one, though.

Various ATRs (African Traditional Religions) have Exù, Eshu, Elegua, and Legba. Different spirits with some similar roles and origins. They're all intermediary spirits of one kind or another. Many of these mediate between the gods and humanity, the dead and the living, and otherwise cross boundaries left and right.

Hermes/Mercury plays that role too, if you want to look at Western traditions. Ganesha from India. Both are messengers, who cross the boundaries and sometimes mark them. Both can act as road openers, breaking through obstacles, and though Ganesh is more closely associated with that role, any boundary spirit can do the job. St. Peter in Catholicism, Janus in Rome, the Menshen in China, Agni... this is a common role, worldwide. Whatever your tradition, there is an Intermediary Wight.

For the Wightway, there is the Mistmother. Pictured as woman with antlers, long dark hair, and a blue stripe across her eyes, she is the patron spirit of the Way of Wights, the Wight of Embodied Animism. She usually appears to me in worn jeans and loose "hippie" blouses. For the longest time, I couldn't figure out why the Wight of Animism wanted to be called Mistmother, but she eventually explained it so I got it.

I've mentioned how people draw lines in different places. There's a line there for this tribe, and everything on this side is a spirit, and everything on that side is not. The next tribe draws that line differently - this mountain, but not rocks; that tree but not all trees; all trees, and rivers, but not rocks at all, and so on.

Well, She doesn't draw lines. When you're in the mists, you can't see the lines. There aren't any, just the voices of People. They're all Wights in Embodied Animism. That's why the mist is important. The mother part comes in because she is an intermediary for all. She doesn't care about your tradition, culture, or anything else. She just wants to connect People with People. So she'll be an intermediary spirit for you, if you don't have one.

She's a great introducer of Wights. People have lots of Wights around them (their spirit court, among other names), and there's generally at least one spirit that will work for you specifically as an intermediary. It might be a Doorwight like Janus, or the Spirit of a specific Bridge or River, a method of travel, a cultural and religious standard, or even just a simple Wight of Squirrels (that one is pretty common, in my experience - or maybe it's just the people I hang around).

Working with the Mistmother is very easy. She's been very casual and gracious every time I've gone to her, one of those just love all kinds of People and can find what you have in common with someone at the drop of a hat. A natural matchmaker, even. Deer (another common intermediary and/or gatekeeper), the color blue, and a good peaty whiskey are some of her favorite things, but she's one of the most gracious Wights I've ever encountered.

Just say her name 3 times, clap your hands three times, and make a simple offering. A glass of cool water, a stick of gum, a french fry or two - she's not picky, and recognizes the gesture for what it is. (Don't be stingy, of course! That's still disrespectful. You just don't need to go overboard.) Then ask her in plain language what you need. She'll answer in equally plain language, in my experience.

How do you find out who your own personal Intermediary is? There are lots of ways, from the extreme (Vision Quest!) to the fairly boring (get a reading from someone you respect). I always recommend going straight to the source, myself - pick a Wight that has that role already and that resonates with you, and ask them to put you in touch with your specific Wight, who you should work with. The exercise for this lesson will walk you through the whole process - it's not complicated.

The Ancestors, the Mighty Dead, the Blessed Before

If you've followed the exercises in the previous lessons, then you've already interacted with your Ancestors. We all have a vague idea about them, that it includes your great-grandparents and people like that, but that's not entirely the case. There's more to Ancestors than you think.

Your physical body has a discrete bloodline, an Ancestral River of Blood, to quote Orion Foxwood. There's a lot of detail about you that this river holds - genetics and all the implications thereof, ancestral memories, ancestral wounds and debts, and more. These are tied to your physical body, and so these are the Physical Ancestors.

Of course, you've got the people who have shaped your mind in some way. The teachers and writers from across the ages, all the people who have shaped your language and education, influenced science and invented cell phones and skyscrapers and liver transplants. Your friends lie here too, as they're part of that deep Ancestral River of Mind too. They've introduced you to ideas, influenced how you think about things, informed who you are just because of that relationship. Just as with physical Ancestors, these come with all sorts of benefits and baggage. So, Mental Ancestors.

And in the last big chunk of that trinity, there are your Spiritual Ancestors. The People and Beings who have influenced you on a spiritual level. The Wights in your scoop of Quiddity. The relationships you have which influence you on a magical, spiritual, or energetic level. Totems, allies, guardian angels, and all the other members of your spiritual court come to you through the Ancestral River of Quiddity.

I'm betting that you've thought of your mental ancestors versus your physical ancestors before. There are plenty of books and blogs that touch on it. What I bet is new is how they've been classified here. Usually, there are the 4 categories or so: blood family, friends, mental, and spiritual, with the lines between all of them blurring considerably. The only hard requirement is that they're dead. After that, you decide who counts or does not.

For me, anyone who is dead and has a strong connection to some part of me is an ancestor. All the Fabulously Dead (all the LGBTQ dead folks) are my ancestors as much as my five-times-great-grandfather, if not more so, because with them at least I have similar experiences. There's no reason, in my mind, for an ancestor to be human either - if you go back far enough, we were all just cells floating in primordial soup. And if you accept the Sea of Quiddity, then there's a strong spiritual connection to all those other Wights who compose you. They're ancestors too, in a way. Food for thought...

It's common to think about Ancestors in a very concrete, "I know your name" sort of way. That's great, if that works for you, but I know many of us have huge gaps of knowledge about who our blood ancestors are. DON't worry about it though - they know who you mean when you call on "My Ancestors". Names are nice, but hardly important. After all, many of the spirits people work with don't start with names - they're just Spirit of Wolf or Wight of Floor Coverings. If you work with them and they're important, you'll learn names. For now, just call them by a title or description, and that will be enough.

One last thing to note - there's a strong idea out there in the metaphysical communities and ethers that you should work with all your Ancestors, even the ones that were less than pleasant in life. Somehow, death induces a personality transformation and they're suddenly all wonderfully enlightened people. This comes from spiritualism, especially Kardec's variety, and has propagated worldwide. The New Age movement is partly responsible as well. In particular, there's an idea that you have debts to them, and should elevate them, by performing masses or elevations.

I don't buy that, and you don't have to either. There are too many examples of spiritual dingleberries, and too many others who are worthy of my respect, honor, and veneration. If you choose to honor or work with problematic ancestors, that's wonderful, but don't think it's required. Standing up to bullies, even if they're dead, is part of Sovereignty too.

Exercise

This lesson, our big practical topics are Grounding, Confirmation, and Intermediary Spirits. As usual, now is the perfect opportunity to practice these. Specifically, start some conversations to see who will work with you as an intermediary.

Self-Care / Protection

- make sure you're feeling well, rested up, etc. for best results

Set Mood

- collect items, ask at an altar, set out offerings

Grounding

- take whatever actions you need to ensure your energy is calm and flowing smoothly

Make the Call

- call their name, ring the bell

- in this exercise, ask for an Intermediary Spirit, either one you've chosen to work with, or one that will act temporarily to help you find your own specific spirit

Connection Check

- Am I connected?
- What is the disconnect? My state? Their state?
- If it's my state, is it my expectations? Hopes? Mood? Energy?
- If it's theirs, are they busy? Ignoring me? Unhappy with me?
- Am I connected to <Wight>?
- Who am I connected to? Specific ancestors? Landwights? My own Spirit(s)? Allies?
- Validate connection (Am I really connected to Fred?)

Converse! Ask your questions

- on the topic of intermediation, ask:
 - are they your intermediary spirit? Will they work with you?
 - if not, can they help you identify who can?
 - if still no, thank them and try connecting to someone else, an ancestor, a totem, or some other Wight you've worked with
 - once you've identified an Intermediary, do they have a name you can use?
 - do they have anything they need or want you to do when you work with them?

Clarity Check

- Have I heard the message clearly?
- did I misunderstand? which part?
- did I forget something?

Confirmation

- Is this really the message? That X-Y-and-Z?

Say Thanks! Leave an Offering

Let us know how it went

Resources

Ishmael / Story of B / My Ishmael all by Daniel Quinn

These books are about a telepathic gorilla named Ishamel and his message to the world. It sounds wacky, but it's an interesting way to present the ideas Quinn has about civilization, animism, tribalism, and what needs to be done. Highly recommended just for the things it will make you think about.

Talking to the Spirits: Personal Gnosis in Pagan Religion by Ravel Kaldera and Kenaz Filan

Kaldera and Filan discuss the UPG - the Unverified Personal Gnosis - in all its implications. When you're talking to spirits, having a book like this at your side, to guide you through the inevitable doubts (if you're doing it right) is necessary, required, and a must have. They two address many of the problems, including the interaction of mental illness and spirit communication, along with plenty of examples from actual spirit-workers.

Bones, Shells, and Curios: A Contemporary Method of Casting the Bones by Michele Jackson

If you're interested in bone reading, this is a decent foundation. A little history, a bunch of suggestions, and a lot of examples make this ancient art approachable. She teaches you how to build your set, how to read them, and how to care for them. It's the next stage of evolution from the Tellbones I'm teaching here, which will be more obvious as we move further through the system.

Coming Next Lesson

Where in the World Do They Exist

Summoning and Thees and Conjuring and Thous

Cleansing - including a couple recipes

Establishing Authority

Closing the Conversation

Preparation for the Return to Normality

Blocks to Clear Communication

Benevolent But: Nice != Good for You

Spirit Court and Who Is In It?

All ABOUT The Mat