

Bardic Exercises/Solitary Level One

Keep an ongoing copy of tapes you make to listen back at other times as you go through the series of exercises. The exercises are meant to do over at other times and to be used as 'tools' for knowledge.

*As these questions and exercises are meant to guide one along the Bardic Path, write a paragraph which describes your current views of what a Bard is.

*What do 'you' believe Bardic power to be?

Ex 1) Make a tape of yourself and, perhaps, a few others, intoning (intoning is the elongation of a word, such as when one chants "om". You shall be effectively 'chanting' your own name.) your own names several times. Do it enough times that you are able to relax and listen to the sound with some sense of gaining an impression. Listen to the tape and write out your impressions of each person's intonations and try to become aware of what this may be telling you about each person.

Ex 2) Listen to one or more versions of a chosen chant from some type of tradition or system. Write out your impressions, remembering that the Chant contains threads of energy weave that helps builds the astral web of this especial system you have chosen.

Ex 3) After working the first two exercises a few times, get drawing paper and crayons to set before you as you listen again to the tapes. Close your eyes the first time and, without thinking, grab up crayons and color. DO NOT try to draw a picture - one should let the sounds move your hands, whether in circular motions, quick darting lines, scrubbing motions, etc. As you feel comfortable with this, open your eyes and chose colors, though quickly and without any real thought.

Ex 4) Describe what would take place if we were to all join in a Circle, hold hands and chant. How would it feel? Have you ever experienced this? What could be accomplished with this energy and in what way would you suppose a Bard might use this energy? In other words, would a Bard use the energy the same or differently and in what sense?

Read aloud onto a tape a list of affirmations for yourself in the following roles:

as yourself

as the Divine Feminine

as the Divine Masculine

Take time beforehand to sit and meditate until you feel a sense of becoming and being that personality before you begin reading. Listen to the tape you made and write out your impressions. Repeat this exercise two or three times if at all possible.

Ex 5) With this exercise and the ones done previously, what overall impressions do you now have of 'energy?' Have these impressions changed any from your original conception?

Ex 6) Intone (chant) several Names of the Divine Feminine. As you listen back to the names (recorded as you intoned), what impressions do you receive and what might that tell you about the Energies in tones?

Write a brief poem/prose of one of the Divine Feminine based upon your impressions.

Ex 7) Record yourself doing The Ritual of the Lesser Banishing Pentagram or some comparable ritual. Write down your reactions as you listen back then, do a coloring of your performance as you listen. (The Ritual referred to is from the Golden Dawn via Israel Regardie. It uses a lot of intoned 'God' names. Almost purely so, with very little movement. A ritual with much intoned chanting could be substituted.)

Ex 8) Record yourself doing a series of emotional 'sounds'; i.e. fear, love, anger, joy, etc. No actual words may be used. Play your sounds back for others and let them guess what sounds they are. Listen back to the sounds yourself and do a coloring for each sound, noting the color you find yourself ascribing to each emotion you have sounded.

Ex 9) Ascribe an emotional sound to each element, make a tape of those sounds to keep.

Ex 10) Provide five adjectives for each of the four elements and/or directions. Create a poem using these adjectives.

Ex 11) Write poetic definitions for: Eurus, sylphs, Notus, salamanders, Zephyrus, undines, gnomes, dryads, Boreas.

Ex 12) Gather three or four people, each person choosing to do an emotional sound. [This can be done as a 'fun' project and can certainly be done with friends or family. Any of these exercises ought be done with others in this vein, realizing that these exercises can be a source of understanding our friends and families better-games that can and do enlarge our feelings for one another.] Do these sounds all at the same time with the objective that each person is trying to either get the others to come to their sound and/or be affected by their sound the most. Write about your reactions to this in a creative format, i.e. a poem, a drawing, etc.

For possible solitary working, if there is no way to gather others to do this exercise: Tape various emotional sounds and play back writing your reactions to each. Take your written reactions and put them into a creative format, i.e. a poem, a drawing, etc.

*Why are Artists of any kind a sort of 'natural magician'?

Ex 13) Get a tape of a foreign language (singing, speaking, video, audio or whatever); maybe more than one language but no more than three. Shut your eyes and listen. What feelings do you get? What emotions? Colors? What does this tell you about the effects of language and the people who speak it?

Ex 14) Listen to a tape or to the television (etc.) in English, blocking out the meanings of the words in order to simply listen to the sounds themselves. (I find newscasts are excellent for this). What does this help tell you about the English language? How does it help you understand the people who speak it?

Ex 15) Listen to a tape you make of you and your friends just talking for a while (especially one with several people on it) blocking out the meaning and just listening to the sounds themselves. What emotions, colors and adjectives do you get? What does this help tell you about some of the people/friends?

Ex 16) Tape yourself doing a reading of a powerful piece of poetry. Block out meaning as you listen back to yourself. What are your reactions and feelings to it? What colors, emotions (etc.) come to mind?

Ex 17) Listen to a chosen Chant blocking out meaning. Write out your reactions (colors, emotions, etc.). Compare these with your reactions to your reading of above poem.

Ex 18) What feelings are stirred within yourself when you say, "So Mote It Be?"/"So be it". Do you sense colors or patterns when you say it?

Ex 19) Practice with someone. Hold your hands three inches away from them, palms up, intoning emotional sounds as you move your hands throughout their aura. Use a little caution with this; go slow, perhaps using soft tones and only increasing the volume and intensity as comfort allows.

If this is impossible at this stage, a solitary might try intoning with their own two hands facing each other to see if there is an effected change as they do so. I would ask that this exercise be done at some time with someone as there will be dynamic differences. Write out one's reactions to the sounds.

Ex 20) With an especial piece of jewelry, sing a song (just emotions!) of sounds to it in protected space. Write about this and how you felt about it as you did so.

Ex 21) Obtain an especial cup or piece of glassware that you may fill with blessed water/liquid. Before using it the first time, close your eyes and sing to the cup/glassware. What energy patterns do you see? Can you draw them?

Ex 22) Choose some favorite music to play. As you listen to the music, stand with your eyes closed and let your body move to the music. This movement does not necessarily have to be dance at all. Rather, allow your body to ‘move’ with the sounds-flow with the sounds themselves. Write about how you felt about this.

Ex 23) Find music that you feel is appropriate for a chosen chant that has untranslatable words (this does not mean you must ‘fit’ the chant to a melody). Recite or sing the chant as the music is playing and record the combined sounds. Play back the recording and listen to it. Write and explain how this may have changed your perceptions of the chant and why this might happen.

Ex 24) Recite one of the (untranslatable) words from the chant several times using your tape recorder. Elongate the word in a chanting manner. Do the same with the another of these words. Listen to your recording while in a meditative state. Write what each word ‘explains’ to you.

Ex 25) Even if using a wooden flute, get an instrument that you can ‘play with’ to make sounds. This exercises is not for learning an instrument-this is to learn to express your feelings through the instrument. It is something to make ‘sounds’ with. Nothing more is asked than that you obtain something and begin to use it in said fashion.

Ex 26) Pick one or two Holidays

Write down:

What its colors are

What its tastes are

What its smells are

What its sounds are

What it feels like

Ex 27) Get something that tastes like the Holiday.

Look at a color of the Holiday as you taste.

Smell an aroma of the Holiday as you smell its aroma.

Now interchange all these elements,

i.e. look at colors as you play sounds, touch as you taste, etc.

Ex 28) Write a poem using the ‘wrong’ sense for the descriptions.

Example:

The liquid sky flowed through the leaves

cool as crystal,

Melting like tingling chimes within my spine.

An acrid taste of red bit my tongue

As I heard the Moon’s pulses

vibrate white across the night.

Ex 29) Go back to the tape of your own name and that of any others you’ve intoned. Tell me its taste, smell, color and feel.

Ex 30) Listen to several versions of a selected chant.
Write down the taste, smell color and feel.

Ex 31) Choose a Holiday.

With colors, tastes, sounds, smells and the sense of touch, tell me how you would set a ritual up and interconnect all the senses. Tell me ‘how’ these things are all one sense.

Choose four to eight Holidays and repeat process for each Holiday in the order they appear on the calendar.

Ex 32) Find music that is that Holiday to you.

Play and meditate as you visualize that Holiday as a person.

Tell me the colors, smells, sounds, tastes and feel.

Ex 33) Using the ‘wrong’ sense descriptions describe this person in a poem.

Example: (for Halloween)

The black scent drifted
about him
as leaves screamed in
pungent tones from
his hair.

Ex 34) Choose music for each Holiday and create colorings for each Holiday. Meditate with the corresponding coloring as you listen to its music. Write out brief impressions of your experiences of each ‘musical’ Holiday.

Ex 35) Make a recording of an instrumental piece with your acquired instrument that describes to you each of the Holidays in the order those Holidays appear on the calendar.

Ex 36) Using some especial personal jewelry, meditate and visualize yourself as that jewelry. Write out what you taste, feel, hear, see and smell. After this visualization, spend a week surrounding yourself as much as possible with the sensations you received as that jewelry. At the end of the week, do a drawing of yourself as that jewelry.

Ex 37) Play on your instrument what a circle (sacred space) ‘sounds’ like. Erect a quick Circle or Sacred Space and play on your instrument what a circle sounds like within the Circle. Write about your experience.

Ex 38) On a New Moon erect a Circle (Sacred Space) and see it as an information center of the Universe. Ask the Universe a question (though not a personal one). Raise energy, sending this question out into the Universe.

On the following Full Moon, pull the energy from the Universe back to you seeing it as the ‘answer to your question’. Afterwards, write down what you get and thank the Universe before closing your Sacred Space.

Ex 39) Create a ‘Candle Dance’. Choose some music that you feel is the color of the candle. Light the candle, play the music. See yourself becoming the candle, then dance to the music, being the candle as you dance. Write about your experience.

Ex 40) Create a small ritual using your ‘candle dance’ with your Candle with the objective of releasing the energy at the end for healing of some kind (Earth, self,etc.).

Ex 41) Play your instrument to candle creating a ‘candle song’ and tape this.

Here we are going to start using ‘tongues’. Tongues is akin to emotional ‘sounds’, although it is more like wordless speaking or singing. One allows the mind to relax, forget meanings, then to speak without engaging meaning other than on an emotional level.

Ex 42) Imitate the ‘sounds’ of another language who’s meaning you do not know. Sing those sounds. Tape yourself.

Ex 43) Tape your voice just making sounds-tongues.

Ex 44) Make a tape of yourself reciting a powerful poem.
After listening back to the poem, do a ‘tongues’ version of the poem on tape.

Ex 45) Play your instrument on tape to relay feelings about poem. Then play back the tape doing a tongues version ‘with’ the tape. Write about how this made you feel.

Ex 46) Choose a particular ‘favorite’ piece of music to dance to. Play the music and let yourself be moved by the music rather than trying to actively dance. Close your eyes and weave the music about you with the music. Think of the music as bands of color that you are weaving about yourself. Write about this.

Ex 47) Stand, close your eyes and begin to do tongues in a song voice. When you feel in sync, begin to dance, seeing yourself weaving these sounds as you dance. Write about this.

Ex 48) If I told you to go ‘inside’ the Tolkien stories-explain what you think I would mean by this.

Ex 49) Take a piece of music and consider what it would mean to go ‘inside’ the music.
Exercises

Ex 50) Recite an entire ritual on tape and give to Teacher(s).(The memorization of an entire ritual may be required of a Bardic student. What ritual you would choose is up to group/ Teacher.)

Ex 51) Begin work with Crystal Meditation.
Write feelings about this meditation.

**Music
Meditations
Crystal/Spine**

1) Lie down quietly on your back as comfortably as possible in a darkened room with as few sounds and scents as possible. Try to keep your spine as straight as you can. Envision a white light about yourself, making that image as you are able. It is important that you already know where the main chakras are down your back and along your spine to its base. After a few moments of slow and measured breathing and you feel totally relaxed, imagine yourself getting up and turning around to look at your body. . Then imagine seeing your spine glowing within you (it may be good to look at charts that show the spine clearly beforehand to help you envision this). After this is firm in your mind, envision the main chakra points from the top of your head to the base of the spine. See the ones along the spine as anchored to the spine. This must be envisioned clearly before proceeding to the next step. You must see the bones of the spine and the energy of each chakra. This may take one or more meditations to accomplish. Be easy on yourself, as it is important that you see these things clearly, not how quickly you move through the procedures. The clearer the visions, the more satisfying and pleasurable the end results shall become.

2) Once you are able to envision your spin and the chakra points clearly, begin to see them turn into a crystalline structure from the bottom of the spine to the crown chakra or from the top to the bottom, whichever feels the most comfortable to you. Be able to hold this vision clearly in your mind before proceeding to the final step. At the end of this meditation, release the image of the back as crystalline, letting it be a normal back again.

Music

3) When you are able to envision the spine and the chakras as crystalline, you now can begin the pleasurable part! Any music may do, but choose your first music from what you are most attracted to. Lay down and relax as you begin the music, surrounding yourself with light. As you breath in, breath energy down your spine from the top of your head, envisioning yourself pulling in the music as you breath in and ‘playing’ it along your spine as you breath out. If you know how to breath through your kidneys, you might also apply that breath for a little while at staggered times as it helps activate the spine and clear it out so the music may rush in. Feel the notes literally play the structure of your spine/chakras and vibrate your whole being.

As you stimulate and play this wonderful instrument, you are restructuring your neurological system, you are changing your vibrational rate. It stimulates your psychic abilities and begins to create pathways into alternate reality.

The Valve

Is between the Heart and Throat Chakra. In order to go from the normal position of this Valve to the Bardic position, the 'petals' must be flipped from the tips of the petals down and out to the Bardic position. Pulling it the other way will give a person a 'bent' sensation that can even be very painful. It might even cause damage if done hard or forced.

The square/rectangle shapes are Orange in color, whereas the 'round'/petal shapes are Indigo. It represents a balance of masculine/feminine energies.