

F A Q

GENERAL

What exactly is this „chaos magic“, actually?

That is an excellent question, but unfortunately not an easy one to answer. There is a saying: „Ask 100 chaos magicians what chaos magic is and you will get at least 101 different answers.“ Chaos magic is characterized above all by the fact that there are no common definitions, no common rules or dogmas, no common worldview. Nothing is fixed, not even the definition of the actual word „chaos magic“. You often hear buzzwords like „paradigm shift“, but even those don't really explain what chaos magic actually is. The word „paradigm shift“, for example, only describes the change of different world views, depending on which is currently useful and which is not.

We don't even want to try to make a general definition of chaos magic here, because that simply doesn't work. Instead, we suggest that you understand chaos magic as a kind of „metaparadigm“, not as a specific magical technique, not a specific belief, but rather the relativization of such techniques and beliefs as „one of many“ that are all effective and that all have their reason for being.

What are temples? How can I contact a temple near me?

Temples are small, regional working groups that meet to work together regularly in magic alongside the large national and international gatherings. Usually, working in small temple groups is more intimate than at large gatherings and can become very intense due to their regularity.

Some of our temples also have occasional open meetings to which novices can be invited. These open meetings are also suitable for the curious who have not yet entered the novitiate. If you are interested in such an open and non-binding meeting, please send us an email to: kontakt@iot-d.de

In the German IOT section, there is also a working group specifically for novices, which holds a meeting every few months for the novices to give them a helping hand, ask questions, listen, give tips, and develop magical workings together. Here, too, the mentor will contact you and inform you about all the dates in good time.

Finally, there are the IOT seminars, which basically anyone who is interested can come to. At these seminars, which normally take a weekend, experienced IOT members demonstrate rituals and magical techniques. What exactly we show you will be decided at the meeting and depends on the participants and their interests.

All information regarding the next seminar dates and registration can be found here on the homepage.

Do I need to come to an open temple meeting before starting my novice training?

It is not necessary to visit an open temple meeting, but it is required for all applicants to visit one of the open seminars that we offer twice a year (in spring and in autumn) before the novice training can start. On these seminars, you can get to know some IOT members, which makes it easier to decide whether the IOT is actually the group you're looking for. And also we can get to know the candidates and see if, when and with which mentor a novice training would be possible.

Are there any requirements for membership, such as age, language, nationality?

Basically, there are no basic requirements except that you have to be at least 18 years old. If you don't live in Germany, it depends on whether there is an IOT section or satrapy in your country. If that is the case, we would direct you to the appropriate section or satrapy. If there is no section or satrapy in your country, there is the possibility of looking after you remotely. In this case, your mentor would mainly keep in touch with you via e-mail, telephone and/or Skype, etc.

THE NOVITIATE

What is the novitiate good for?

First and foremost we would like the novices to train the basic magical techniques during their 6 months novitiate. These basic techniques are the minimum requirements for membership in the IOT because they are required for the magical work we do at our meetings.

For our novices, the novitiate is a period of focused work on their individual magical path. For example, it can serve to accelerate personal development or be a challenge that you want to grow with. It also helps in making a personal decision as to whether practicing magic is really something you want to do consistently. The motivations for this are as varied as the people themselves.

During the novitiate we can get to know each other better. We are interested in your uniqueness, your individual creativity. It is important to understand here that the relationship of mentor and novice is not that of student and master. The novices are responsible for what they learn and how they learn. However, you can always consult the mentor for help. The mentors give feedback during the novitiate and try to help the novices as much as possible on their way. The feedback can also be critical if it serves the development of the respective novice.

Beginning a novitiate marks the beginning of a new phase in life. It shows us that you are seriously interested in us and don't just want to get a taste of it. To underline the seriousness of the intention, other organizations take membership fees or fees for admission. But we're not interested in money, so that point does not apply to us. We are only interested in your magical practice and development, which is documented in the novice's journal. In addition to your mentor, a few other IOT members will also read this diary at the end of the novitiate.

What happens if I fail the novitiate or realize IOT is not for me?

In such a case you can simply break off the novitiate. There are many different reasons for dropping out and none of them are ridiculous or anything to be ashamed of. Lack of time, for example, or other life circumstances, other interests, etc. Many novices have already dropped out of their training, which does not mean that they are not good witches or magicians.

There is no commitment on our part as a novice, so there will be no attempts on to keep you as a novice and persuade you to continue. If you realize that this is not for you at the moment or in general, that is your decision, which we will respect.

Starting the novitiate again at a later date is generally not a problem. However, you have to reckon with the fact that the novitiate will last another full six months. It is important for us to see that the candidates can keep up with the training for half a year and are disciplined enough for it.

How can I meet other novices?

If you would like to get in touch with other novices during your training, that is of course possible. It is best to ask your mentor if there are other novices in your area. In this case, the mentors can establish contact and you can exchange ideas.

What is the novice diary good for?

The magic journal is important for the mentors. Only through the diary can they understand what exercises you are doing during your novitiate and what progress you are making.

The diary shows us that you do exercises in a disciplined manner every day for half a year. Magic is an art that requires a lot of training and discipline and a strong will. You prove all of this by doing magical exercises for six months and documenting the process in your diary.

Furthermore, the diary enables the mentor to draw conclusions about your magical development. We are interested in how the exercises and their processing change over time. It is important for us that the novices realize that this is not only about discipline, but also about understanding what these exercises are good for, what we need them for.

Also, with most of the novices, there will come a point, sooner or later, when they encounter difficulties. What is particularly exciting for us is how these difficulties are dealt with, what ways you find to solve the problem.

Apart from that, the novices also write the diary for themselves. One of our youngest members wrote a text about this, which you can find as a footnote* below

How should I keep my diary? Digital? Handwritten? Both?

That is entirely up to you. The only important thing is that you agree with your mentor on how to send the diary. If you keep it by hand, it is best to take photos of it or scan the diary and send it to your mentor at regular intervals so that the mentor is up to date. In this case, please also remember to write legibly so that we can read the diary without difficulty. This is easier with digital diaries, which are quickly sent as an e-mail attachment and can be read without any problems. But if you prefer to do it in the classic way by hand, that is of course OK, we don't make any specifications here.

Are there any guidelines for journal entries?

The date and the approximate duration of the magical practice or ritual should be given. Furthermore, the result of the respective magic is interesting for us. Did the spell work? In what way? And if it didn't work – what do you think are the reasons? And how do you want to change your magic in the future to have more success? It's all part of the magical development we want to see from you.

Can I get sample magic journals anywhere?

We do not publish or share original diaries as these are very personal journals of the novices and are of no concern to anyone outside the IOT. It is best to discuss the details of the journal with your mentor.

Is there a minimum number of pages that must be reached in the diary?

No. More important than the length of your diary is the regularity of your practices and the development you go through in the six months of the novitiate. We ask you to not flood us with unimportant details in the diary. Please don't write five pages a day describing the whole day from start to finish, unless important things happened that day that affected the course of your training in some way. We don't want to read a novel with the diary, but rather a log of which exercises you have done, whether they were successful or not and how you deal with them over the course of time.

What happens if I get sick or have to take a break for other reasons during the novitiate?

In this case, please talk to your mentor so that you can find a solution together. In principle, of course, we understand if illness or other circumstances mean that you have to take a break from your training. In cases of long breaks, the novitiate may need to be extended accordingly.

Do you really (like... REALLY?!) have to work every day?

Basically yes (yeah, REALLY! :D). However, it can always happen that you absolutely don't have the time. This is usually not a problem as long as you continue to work regularly. However, gaps that are too large are not good and may mean that you have to add the lost time to the six months. Just try to work as regularly as possible and talk to your mentor early enough if there are gaps (especially larger ones). So far we have always found a solution that is acceptable to both sides.

Can I add forgotten entries in the diary later?

Normally, the recordings should be made as soon as possible after the recorded activities. Simply because the memory is still fresh and you can describe all the impressions of the exercise better. If this is not possible, for example because you are travelling, you can also make the entries later, but please mark this clearly. Experience has shown that if you don't have the journal with you, a few short notes right after the practice or ritual help to write the later journal entries. Otherwise you quickly forget one or the other detail.

What happens if my journal is lost?

PLEASE avoid this! Without a diary, the completion of the training and acceptance into the Pact is not possible! Please take good care of your journal!

What role does the „Book of the Novice“ play in the novitiate?

You can find the „Book of the Novice“ at the very end of the book „The Secrets of the Illuminates of Thanateros“, in the appendix. You can download the book as a PDF here on the homepage in the

section „Who are we?“.

It imparts the techniques and skills expected of all novices at the end of their training. They are foundations upon which all further magical work is built. It is imperative that these techniques be fully worked through during the novitiate. We want to be able to trust that all participants in a magical working or ritual have mastered it, even if you are in a circle with covenant members whom you do not yet know personally. The principle is the same as on a construction site, where you can only work if you wear a helmet and can read blueprints.

Does it make sense to work through the exercises from the „Book of the Novice“ individually or can the exercises also be combined?

You are relatively free in dealing with the exercises presented and can also organize your novitiate accordingly. You are welcome to tackle the techniques or exercises one after the other in order to familiarize yourself with them. However, the actual goal is then to use these basic techniques in further developed rituals in order to lead these rituals to success. It is therefore desirable and should also be your aim that you develop your own rituals in which the techniques you have learned are used, at least towards the end of the novitiate, if necessary with the support of your mentor.

Do I have to have previous magical knowledge to be able to carry out the work successfully?

No. There have already been many novices who started with us and had already gained a lot of experience with other groups or on their own beforehand. This can be an advantage, but it doesn't always have to be. From time to time, the experience gained gets in the way when it comes to learning new approaches. Letting go of old habits and paradigms can mean a great difficulty in such a case.

Apart from that, there have also been just as many candidates who came to us as absolute beginners and went through considerable development in small steps and are now seasoned magicians and witches. If you don't have much experience with magic, then don't expect too much from yourself at the beginning. Take small steps and consult your mentor on how to proceed.

Do I have to be able to show concrete verifiable results, i.e. magical successes?

No. However, you must expect to be given a task when you are initiated into the Pact. Irrespective of this, however, it is advisable to carry out a personal success check during the novitiate, which you should also enter in your diary. An honest analysis is important because it also helps you to consider how you can make your rituals more effective. The important thing here is that it is not at all bad to fail. It's OK if not all rituals are successful. This is perfectly normal and, in a way, even desirable. As magicians, we also develop, research and become familiar with new techniques. Magical failures are therefore pre-programmed to a certain degree. Nobody is perfect from the start. We can grow from our failures and develop our magic and ourselves. It is therefore all the more important to write everything down and analyze it. It is not for nothing that magic is not only referred to as an art, but also as a science.

MENTORSHIP

What are the responsibilities of the mentors?

Mentors always have a dual role. On the one hand they support the novices, on the other hand they protect the interests of the Pact. This means that the mentors during the novitiate also pay attention to whether and to what extent you fit in with us or with chaos magic in general. However, since we are as colourful as we are diverse, in 99% of the cases this does not pose a great challenge.

The mentors also inform the novices about events such as open temple meetings, seminar dates and contact possibilities in their area. They are, so to speak, the official contact point of the Pact for their novices.

As mentioned above, mentores are NO teachers or masters! They help the novices to cope with their training, give advice, tips and constructive criticism. But they don't prescribe anything directly. The novices should organize their diaries and their training independently and on their own responsibility. Everything else does not make sense. On the one hand, the mentors don't have the

time capacity to look after their novices like a real teacher, with students who don't really do anything on their own and wait for the next instruction. And on the other hand, making independent decisions and looking after oneself is also part of doing magic. You yourself need to take care of your magical progress.

Chaos magic with a fixed, given framework that is not flexibly adapted to the respective candidates is a contradiction in terms.

How often should I contact my mentor?

Please discuss this directly with the respective mentor. It is advisable to have as frequent contact as possible, especially at the beginning, so that the mentors can tell the novices early enough if they make initial mistakes or have obvious misunderstandings. If this does not happen, habits creep in right at the beginning, which it becomes more and more difficult to unlearn the longer the novitiate lasts. Regular feedback helps the novices, especially at the beginning, to understand the exercises well and to understand their background. Also, initial conversations can be a source of great inspiration and creativity.

If possible, you should also meet up with the mentor from time to time during the novitiate so that you can do magical exercises and rituals together and the mentor can give you appropriate feedback.

Who can I contact if I don't get along with the mentor?

Please contact the mentor first. It is not a problem at all if you two „do not fit“ personally or communicatively or for any other reason. We are aware that in the case of very different personalities, problems can arise, especially with such intimate and intensive matters as supervising a magical training session. In such a case, we may find someone else for you. If you cannot or do not want to talk about it with your mentor, you can also devote yourself to the official contact e-mail address of the German IOT section: kontakt@iot-d.de – in this case we will (of course also confidential) try to help you.

Can I suggest the mentor myself if I already know someone from the IOT?

Basically, it is intended that not the novices choose their mentors but that we choose the mentors for them. Of course, you can make suggestions for a mentor, but the probability that we will respond to this wish is very low. Especially if there is too close a bond between you (for example, partnership, kinship or very close friendship), we would rather look for someone else, as the mentors should be impartial if possible, because they must also represent the interests of the Pact. Mentors who have too close a bond with their novices are, so to speak, too biased, and we would like to avoid that.

****FOOTNOTE: THE MAGICAL DIARY***

If you deal with the topic of magic, sooner or later you will come across the topic 'magic diary' through a book or through a friend. Most of the time, it is pointed out in unctuous words or even in an imploring tone that the diary is something like the magician's Holy Grail and should be kept daily under all circumstances. At least that's what happened to me.

If you now think that I am writing something like „All nonsense, no one needs this!“ then you're absolutely... WRONG! - because the magic diary is, at least for me, one of the most important „magic“ tools I have. The first thought that came to me at the beginning of my magical career was actually the one mentioned above. Ultimately, this led to the fact that I did not keep a diary for the first 5 years of my magical activity and therefore only have incomplete and in some areas perhaps somewhat glorified memories available about my exciting first occult attempts at walking. Have I been successful in my attempts – or do I just think so? Did my little magic really lead to the desired result – or am I arranging my memories just the way it suits me? Well, I guess I won't be able to figure it out anymore.

I think it gets clear what I'm getting at. I certainly don't go through my diary much these days (which I DID start to write at some point...), I don't write it on parchment or even in blood. My entries are short and pragmatic, full of abbreviations and probably only make sense to me. But I write regularly

and if possible daily. I am always in full control of my rituals, ritual processes and their results, as I have made it a habit to meticulously keep records of the success or failure of a magical act. I know what I did and when I did it. This simple remedy alone helps immensely in personal development and of course also protects against overconfidence.

So, please take your notebook, your tablet, your fountain pen or whatever and start writing, because that too is a magical act and the success is guaranteed.

There are many good reasons to keep a magical diary. Here are a few of the ones I find most important:

Success control: The most obvious of all arguments – With honest application, it becomes clear, sometimes painfully, whether a magical act was successful or not and whether there are still gaps in knowledge that need to be closed.

Progress: The diary helps to recognize whether you are really developing or just would like to.

Structure: You can easily develop an exercise structure and check the process and compliance.

Grounding: The diary helps not to lose touch with the ground, because on the one hand you deal with the profane writing and on the other hand you quickly know how good you really are through the success control.

Discipline: Through writing, one almost inevitably gets used to showing a certain consistency and perseverance in dealing with magic. And as we all know, nothing works in magic without discipline.