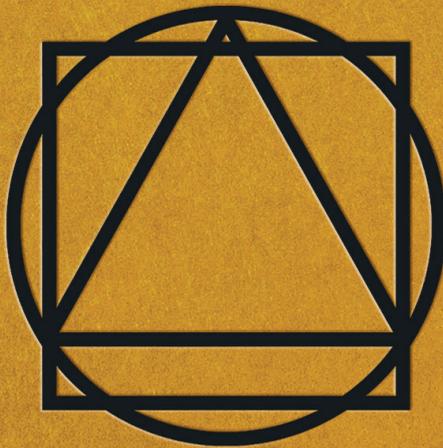


John Michael Greer

THE OCCULT  
PHILOSOPHY  
WORKBOOK

A One Year Course in  
the Secret Wisdom



AEON BOOKS

# THE OCCULT PHILOSOPHY WORKBOOK



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A One Year Course in the  
Secret Wisdom

*John Michael Greer*

AEON

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## INTRODUCTION

**T**he *Occult Philosophy Workbook* is an introduction to the basic concepts and teachings of contemporary Western occultism. While it is designed to accompany my book *The Way of the Golden Section*, and draws its teachings from the tradition presented in that book, it can be used equally well as a supplement to any other course of occult study.

Readers who set out to read this book from cover to cover in a sitting may find this a frustrating experience. As the title suggests, this is a workbook; it is divided into fifty-two lessons, each of which is intended to occupy one week of study, meditation, and practice. Approached in this way, it is the equivalent of a year-long correspondence course in occult philosophy, and will provide the student with a solid foundation for more advanced studies and practices.

You are not expected to believe the material in this book, or for that matter to disbelieve in it. Belief and disbelief are equally useless to the student of occultism. The teachings in this book are meant to train the mind, not merely to provide it with information; their goal is to guide you into an unfamiliar way of thinking, which will open many unexpected doors to you. The more time you spend pondering these teachings and working with them in meditation and other occult practices, the more effectively it will accomplish that task.

The main course of study in this book is divided into four units of twelve lessons each. The first, “The Planes of Being”, outlines the nature of occultism and sketches the universe as it is understood in occult philosophy. The second, “Spiritual Evolution”, sets out the process by which our souls have descended into incarnation on the material plane and what awaits us in the future. The third, “Cycles of Life and Death”, focuses more closely on the process of reincarnation and on the cycles of history, which are simply reincarnation on a larger scale. The fourth, “The Way of Occultism”, outlines the principles of occult practice and presents seven laws which can be used to make sense of the flow of events in the cosmos and in our individual lives.

Four additional lessons are included at the end of this book. These are not part of the four units just described. They have to do with the four gates of the year—the two solstices and two equinoxes, which are traditionally celebrated by most occult schools. Most calendars list the solstices and equinoxes each year, and you can also look them up online or in an almanac. Their approximate dates are given below:

<i>Gate of the Year</i>	<i>Northern Hemisphere</i>	<i>Southern Hemisphere</i>
Spring Equinox	March 21	September 21
Summer Solstice	June 21	December 21
Autumn Equinox	September 21	March 21
Winter Solstice	December 21	June 21

For the week in which one of these days occurs, study and meditate on the additional lesson for that date instead of the lesson you would otherwise be studying. It makes no difference where you are in the lessons; when your calendar shows you that the spring equinox will take place during the next week, set aside your scheduled lesson for one week, and work with the first additional lesson during that week instead. In the following week, go on to the next lesson in the unit you were studying.

### *Working with the course*

As a workbook, this book is meant to be used as raw material for occult practice, not simply read or studied. The lessons are designed to be used for three specific exercises, and you may also practice any other occult exercises that are taught by the tradition or school you follow, or that you yourself have found useful. You may also find it useful to keep

a practice journal, in which you take notes each day on the meditations and other exercises you have practiced.

The first and most important of the exercises to use with these lessons is discursive meditation, the Western approach to meditation, which trains the thinking mind instead of silencing it. Each lesson has been divided into seven numbered paragraphs, so that one of these can be used as a theme for discursive meditation every day during the week you spend on the lesson. Each lesson also has a diagram, which is meant to be used as an emblematic focus in the preparatory stages of those meditations.

The second exercise is an awareness exercise, which is intended to be done in spare moments over the course of your daily life. The third is an affirmation, which is intended to be practiced first thing each morning during the week you spend on the lesson. Both of these are meant to help you work with the concepts central to the lessons.

If you are unfamiliar with any of these practices, the Appendix gives detailed instructions for how to do them. You will want to read this section of the book and, in the case of meditation, work your way through the preparatory exercises, before you start work on Lesson 1 of this book. On the other hand, if you have already learned these exercises in the course of your occult studies, and especially if you start this book after completing the course of study set out in *The Way of the Golden Section*, you already know everything you need to know to get the most out of this book, and all you have to do is begin.

Students are encouraged to work through the lessons in this book at least three times, preferably with an interval of at least one year between repetitions. The concepts and images given here are capable of a great deal of development, far more than a single pass through the lessons will make possible.

## A One Year Course in the Secret Wisdom

Intended to train and stimulate the mind, this book aims to open readers up to unfamiliar ways of thinking through various new techniques and challenges, such as discursive meditation, awareness exercises and affirmation.

This thought-provoking book was not written simply to be read cover-to-cover in one sitting. It is instead a stimulating and well-crafted raw material for occult studies and readers are encouraged to read the fifty-two lessons across an entire year. Throughout the book, students will be taught through four in-depth and engaging modules: 'The Planes of Being', 'Spiritual Evolution' 'Cycles of Life and Death' and 'The Way of Occultism' and will exit the year with a solid foundation in occultism, preparing them for more advanced future study.

*The Occult Philosophy Workbook* is a must-have introduction to the concepts and teachings of contemporary Western occultism and can be read as an accompaniment to Greer's previous book, *The Way of the Golden Section*.

**John Michael Greer** is the award-winning author of more than fifty books. An initiate in an assortment of Masonic, Hermetic, and Druid lineages, Greer served as the Grand Archdruid of the Ancient Order of Druids in America (AODA) for twelve years. He lives in Rhode Island with his wife Sara. Greer is also the author of sixteen fantasy and science fiction novels and more than fifty nonfiction books.

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