

Basic Guide

to

Charms, Amulets and Talismans

MAGICKAL CHARMS

Since earliest times, in all cultures, certain items, materials and designs have been believed to have magickal power. These items fall into two categories: those which are innately magickal, and those which require human manipulation in order to acquire power. Special items persist in these times. Religious medals and crystal pendants are the latest form which magickal items have taken in the current society.

According to those who practice magick, there are definite qualities and ``rules'' pertaining to the use of magickal items. A person applying these rules can supposedly imbue an item with power. Does that seem odd? Catholics believe that a religious medal gains a sort of ``holy'' power when blessed by a priest. Some Christian sects give ``blessed'' handkerchiefs and similar items to their followers. Jews regard the Torah as especially holy, and have specific rules as to its manufacture and handling. In principle, these are not very different from the magickal practice or operating theory.

A folk version of magickal items is prevalent in some places. Visit a bingo hall or casino, and you'll see people with any number of ``lucky'' items placed before them. These range from small totems to rabbit's feet, miniature horse-shoes, clover, to any number of things. The players believe their small charms bring them additional ``luck.''

Occasionally, tabloid ads will promote the ``mysterious powers'' of a particular charm - more often than not, it is a religious symbol, exotic icon, or manufactured version of a particular folk charm. Though unwilling to admit it, many people do attach validity to old charms, icons and lore. The sight of a black cat is enough to scare some. Many feel somehow ``disarmed'' if they cannot find a certain pendant, charm or item. They equate loss of a lucky item with ``bad luck,'' and feel that they are somehow vulnerable or ``jinxed.'' Superstition is one thing. Magickal use of special items is more deliberate. We'll look at ways in which magicians design and prepare magickal items, and show you a simple process to try it for yourself.

IT IS THIS SIMPLE!

According to tradition, the talisman can be filled with a magickal charge by holding the talisman and imaging yourself filling it with

magickal force from your hands. Then, simply tell the magick what to do for you. Ancient spellcasters would make the charm of the appropriate crystal, wood or metal. Some of these are:

Clear quartz: good for any purpose
Rose quartz: for love and harmony
Amethyst: for wisdom and psychic powers
Aventurine: for healing and prosperity.
Moonstone: for emotions, peace and love
Tiger's eye: for wealth and protection
Iron: for protection and strength
Silver: for protection, Lunar power, love, prosperity
Gold: for prosperity and protection
Tin: for wealth and honor
Copper: for love and healing
Aluminum: for travel, communication

Colors:

Gold: for wealth, protection, a God
Silver: for prosperity, the Moon, psychism, the Goddess
Yellow: for healing, finding employment
Orange: for communication, messages, travel
Green: for prosperity, abundance, friendship, growth, Nature
Blue: for peace, calm, wisdom, benevolence,
Purple: for wisdom, mysteries, wealth, grandeur, justice
Red: for success, strength, romance, protection
Pink: for love, friendship, healing
Brown: for houses, home, justice, Earth, permanence
Black: to absorb and dissolve negativity

SIMPLE CHARMS

Since times immemorial, specific things have been felt to have special powers. These range from plants to stones to natural objects and animal parts. Common to this day is the ``lucky rabbit's foot.''' It is believed that carrying that part of the rabbit will bring the bearer luck. No doubt, the practice is unlucky for the rabbit! The rabbit's foot is relegated to the realm of common superstition, rather than magick. There are other, older charms which still abide in the magickal annals:

Acorn: The acorn is believed to be a bringer of luck, prosperity, protection from lightning, and sexual potency. It is attributed to the Norse God, Thor. In some parts of ancient Germany, Scandinavia and England, the oak was believed to be favored by Thor.

Pine cone: The pine cone is a charm of luck, favorable influences, protection from harm, and sexual power. Some believe that it also embodies healing power and that it repels negative influences. The pine is attributed to the Norse God, Frey, a bringer of abundant harvests, luck and fertility.

Clover: A four-leafed clover is felt to be especially lucky. This Irish charm is very old, although it was later Christianized. Clover is a symbol of life, luck and abundance.

Toadstone: The toadstone is believed to be the ``jewel'' that is found in a toad's skull. Actually, toadstone is a fossilized shark's tooth. It is believed to heal illnesses and to repel evil.

Salt: Salt is considered to be a hallowing substance that purifies, repels evil, and attracts wealth. In Roman times, salt was considered a substitute for money. The saying ``worth his salt'' derives from the Roman practice of paying part of its soldiers earnings in salt. The word ``salary'' derives from this practice. Salt is used to banish evil. Catholic baptism employs it for purification. Some believe that it will repel demons.

Silver: According to legend, silver is a holy metal which can injure evil. Only a silver object can harm a werewolf. In late medieval times, a silver bullet was used to dispatch a condemned felon who was believed to be in league with the devil. Silver is related to the Moon. Many believe that it brings protection, wealth, and the blessing of all Goddesses. Symbols made of silver wire were cast into wells to honor Eostre, the Saxon Goddess of Spring.

Lightning-struck wood: A piece of wood that has been struck by lightning is believed to be a most powerful talisman. It is empowered by Divine forces, and is protection against all harm. Thor, the Norse God of Thunder, was once believe to have hallowed wood by hitting it with lightning.

Manmade items can be amulets. Some of these are:

Horseshoe: The horseshoe is a talisman of luck. It is placed on a barn with the open end upward, so that luck will fill it. Placed the opposite way, the luck will run out. Horseshoes are related to smith Gods such as the Roman Vulcan, Norse Volund and English Weyland; they also connect with Frey, whose special animal is the horse.

Horn: A small, gold horn worn as a pendant is believed to repel the ``evil eye,'' according to Italian legend. In pre-Christian times, the goat was a symbol of nature and fertility. The goat's horn denotes the power of vibrant life over evil. It is also a token of sexuality.

Broom: The broom is the magickal staff of the household. A small broom is believed to ``brush away'' negative influences. It also ``sweeps in'' luck. There are many spells involving brooms as bringers of protection, wealth and good into the home.

Religious symbol: Symbols of various religions are held to be protective. The Cross, Star of David and Crescent are felt to be magickal by the adherents of their respective faiths: Christianity, Judaism and Islam. This has carried over into legends where vampires and ghouls are warded off by a cross.

Key: A key brings luck, especially if it is found and the finder does not know which lock it opens. Keys are a symbol of access and power. They denote access to hidden things. Keys are given to the wife in the old Norse wedding ceremony.

Hammer: The hammer is a bringer of luck and a means of driving out

evil. Hammering a nail into a beam is believed to restore calm and even cure toothaches. Hammering a stone invokes Divine power. The Hammer is given to the husband during the Old Norse wedding. It is a symbol of Thor.

MAGICKAL SYMBOLS

Just as religious symbols are believed to have special properties, so magickal signs are felt to invoke certain powers. This takes more than just writing or carving the symbol! The magicians of old would perform certain routines in order to fully empower the symbols. There are many kinds of magickal symbols. Each particular culture, sect and group developed its own means of picturing subtle forces and energies. The ways of coming to design a symbol vary as much as the people themselves. Within the processes were additional considerations, such as Astrological factors, materials, colors, number symbolism, etc. Amulets bore the images of Gods, sigils and sacred beings. The power of the particular entity would be invoked to empower the amulet.

By choosing the right symbol to place on an amulet, you are better able to load that power into the item. You may use symbols from the many religious and magickal schools.

A SIMPLE WAY TO CHARGE AN AMULET

Take the materials for making the amulet. Mark the appropriate symbol on it. Now, hold the amulet in you hands. Imagine power flowing into your head from above. Mentally envision this energy coursing into your arms, and will it into the amulet. As you do so, image the symbol and the desired outcome of the amulet. Invoke power - call on it to fill your need and infuse the amulet with power.

For added effect, place the amulet beside a candle. The candle should have the same symbols scratched into it as are on the amulet. You may also wish to have an incense which is harmonious with your intention and a candle of the appropriate color (see the booklet, Crystals, Candles, Incense, Herbs and Stones, for this information). Light the candle and incense, and invoke power. Pass the amulet through the incense smoke and over the candle flame (be careful not to burn it!). Then, place it beside the candle. Imagine power flowing from the candle into the amulet.

Some people will place the amulet in a charm bag. A charm bag usually includes herbs, crystals and other items which are considered harmonious to the intention. It is charged as above, and either carried or kept in a safe place.