

4 De-Stressing Exercises using Alchemical Water  
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In terms of Alchemy, stress is jumbled, compressed Air. It is Air subjected to too much Fire and Earth. In the vernacular that translates into ambition on a deadline. Since alchemical Air is an amalgam of Fire and Water, it can be calmed effectively using Water.

Often, because most have no idea how to deal with it, you will see it explode in a Fiery outburst – like a heart attack or violent spree. So let's tamp it down – but not suppress it. The latter would happen if we added too much Earth to the equation. In the vernacular that means holding the stress in and allowing it to fester. All manner of stress related diseases develop that way.

So let's use alchemical Water. I'll relate 4 Exercises taken from my 1984 article "*Alchemy of the Elements*", published in *Magical Blend* magazine. Though first, let me relay a bit about alchemical Water. It is an Element of absorption, attention and discipline from which deep understandings grow.

It is not an Element of trite sentimentalities or superficial emotions. While magickal systems stress the *Will*, which is born in Fire, note that without understanding one's will, there can be no magick. When Water is lacking then will degrades into common volition, losing its magick. To de-stress with alchemical Water and gain understanding via attention, try these:

*Purification Rinse:*

Ideally this is done in a bathtub, but you can use a shower if a tub isn't available. It can even be modified, I'll tell you how later, for a pond, stream or the ocean.

Go relax in a warm water bath. Close your eyes and breathe. Submerge everything but your nose, if possible. When you're ready, draw the watery warmth in through your pores. Feel it bathing and cleaning your organs. Allow it to wash over your anxiety, your knotted stomach, even your blocked mind. As you breathe in and out, allow the water to cleanse you. Give your stress to the water, actually feel it slip out through your pores and swim away.

When you're ready, and you'll feel it, stand up and get out of the bath. Pull the drain plug and send your spiritual muck down the drain. Rinse the tub, rinsing the remnants and dry off.

Laying in a stream allow your stress to flow out through your pores, into the current to be carried away; in a pond allow it to be absorbed by the Earth (pun intended); on a beach lay at the water's edge and let the surf wash over your body, cleansing, rejuvenating and carrying away your pain, your worry, your grief. When ready stand up from the stream, pond or beach and gaze briefly to the sun. Close your eyes and inhale imagining its glow infusing your body with strength and composure. Open your eyes and exhale long and slow, smile.

### *Gnome Games:*

This one is enchanting in a natural cave. Rock or crystal collections, single gems, lapidary stores, museum exhibits or hand-blown art glass objects will also work. Find an object that attracts you. If you can hold it, do so; if not just gaze. Focus on the object and let all else fade from your senses. Examine it in-depth, notice its contours. How does light play inside of it? What colors and patterns do you see? Breathe softly and normally. You're not in a rush.

How does it make you feel? What does it say to you? Often jewels, crystals and rock formations hold delightful stories. Listen and see, perhaps you will hear some. When you're ready, thank the object for its time and return to your life.

Go back to the object or place in your mind whenever your stress re-surfaces. Allow the object or place to draw the stress from you. Thank it and return to your life.

### *Water Blossoms:*

This is Gnome Games played with plants. House plants, garden plants, jungle plants, arboretum plants, forest plants, desert plants, water plants – all growing plants, wherever you find them will work. Focus on your plant of choice – yes, selection and focus are Watery traits. They are prerequisites for attention, without which we can never learn to understand.

How Water Blossoms differs is that now your focus must include yourself. In Gnome Games you were a detached observer. Here you begin detached, but end by being fully engaged. In your final observation you must bring yourself into the overall picture and notice how you connect. That will engender an appreciation for the natural world and your place in it. That appreciation will not be intellectual, which you may already have; it will be sensual.

### *Undines Delight:*

This is Water Blossoms played underwater. If you know how to scuba dive (which I don't), this would be phenomenal in clear temperate or tropical waters. For those of us who can't, any great public aquarium works brilliantly. I've done this at the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park and at the Monterey Bay Aquarium. Actually I developed this in the former. If none of those are available to you, a home fish tank, or koi pond, though less intricate, can still be useful.

Get comfy, still and focus on the scene before you. Observe shapes, colors, patterns and interactions between the plant and animal life. Watch their behaviors closely, focus on algae, urchins, anemones. Each time place the minutiae of what you see into the larger picture. Pretend you're a camera with a zoom lens. Notice how elements in the immediate environment are interrelated to those surrounding. Watch long enough, to notice each creature's interdependence. Yes, I was a biologist and this is a natural history technique.

Lastly add yourself to the equation. How did your observation change, or stay the same? How do you feel about what you saw? What did you understand, in a sensory way, which you hadn't before? File those in your library; they'll be useful as you progress through the Elements.

Short Questions can be addressed to: [chris@magicalnotions.com](mailto:chris@magicalnotions.com) RE: 4 Water Exercises