

Cooking to Ground from *Magical Notions* ©2018 Christine Carmines

The Alchemy of Cooking: A Magical Exercise & More

Here's my spin on a popular notion: that cooking is a kind of metaphoric alchemy. That is, the process of melding ingredients, spices, time and temperature to create a culinary masterwork is akin to the melding of Elements to create alchemical Gold. It's a nice allegory.

What if you could become more than a physical enabler in that process? What if you could perform an alchemical feat? Let me show you how, using the everyday example of cooking.

Because we're in autumn now, it's the season of manifestation (alchemical Earth). Subscribers please refer to the Free Seasonal Feature for background. The prime exercise of Earth is *Grounding* (subscribers see Autumn Bonuses 1&2). As exemplified there, grounding (aka connecting with the earth) is an exercise that links you, sensually, with your inspiration (Fire), dreams (Water), goals (Air) and biosphere (Earth).

Grounding is a basic exercise in both magic(k) and spiritual alchemy because it creates the state essential to any magickal working and essential to living in the moment as a balanced human being. That is why I introduced it in the Seasonal Feature and why I'm now demonstrating it with a universal procedure: cooking.

Everyone does it, even if their skill level doesn't exceed boiling an egg. Please don't use a microwave though. Here you need to get your hands involved.

Start with awareness (Fire) of what you wish to eat (ie. steak, spanokopita, mango salsa, crème Brule, chicken soup, etc.). Imagine it; assemble your utensils and ingredients (Water). Sequence their application, as per your recipe (Air). Then manifest the result (Earth). Each of the prime Elemental Exercises can be found in the Exercises That Make Living Magical section of the Blog.

When those steps are done with focused intent, you'll find an increase in your appreciation for both your creation and the qualities of the plants and animals whose lives enabled it. *Cooking to Ground* fosters a very personal, unique awareness. It's quietly emotive, yet sneakily powerful – sponsoring sensations of profound gratitude, centering and humility. Fast food just doesn't allow that. Hence our hurry-up culture wobbles along, seeking balance, while careening from arrogance to alienation. Slow down and cook something!

If you do this exercise as part of a social event, as opposed to cooking for yourself, it holds a surprise. The connection you make with the biosphere suddenly includes a connection with the larger human society. It sort of embraces us solitary hermit types in a most delightful way.

The &More I promised:

In the other Seasonal Features, exercises and Bonuses I eluded to the mechanics of spell casting. From winter's Hot Chocolate Drinking Game onward through the seasons I kept adding pieces to the puzzle. No, I won't spell it out here. You'll have to go find the exercises and do them. Eventually I will add such treats for subscribers. However, I will offer some interesting pointers here as they relate to cooking.

When practicing this exercise you have the opportunity to infuse your meal with love, protection, bonding, joy, even healthfulness. How? Those sensitivities are just invisible ingredients that can flavor a dish as powerfully as any spice. Actually my mother taught me that spices carry magical intent and to know the given intent of any spice enables you to design spells using culinary tools. But for now, that's a bit off topic.

Let's just work with the easier task of infusing meals with our positive intent. Examples include homemade chicken soup and the teas our mother's made us when we were sick. While mom may not have consciously been practicing magic with those time-honored restoratives, the strength of her intent was no different than a wizard's and the effect clearly skirted magick's realm (subscribers refer to my article *Aristotle was Wrong*).

My point is: magick is vast, more useful and certainly more abundant in our lives than ever we've been led to believe. It's not mere superstition (a simpleton's view). Nor is it anti-science. Even anthropologists agree, Magick is the mother of both science and religion. So stay tuned, to discover even more magick in 21st century life.