

---

# QVAREIA - THE APPRENTICE

Module 3 - The Power Dynamics of Creation

*Lesson 3: The Grindstone*

---

BY JOSEPHINE MCCARTHY

QVAREIA

---

# WELCOME

*Welcome to this lesson of the Quareia curriculum.*

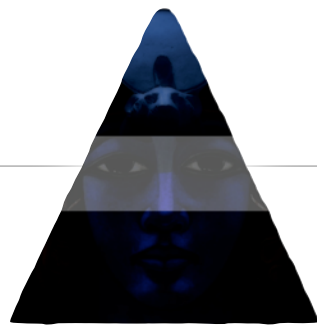
*The Quareia takes a magical apprentice from the beginning of magic to the level of adeptship and beyond. The course has no superfluous text; there is no dressing, no padding – everything is in its place and everything within the course has a good reason to be there.*

*For more information and all course modules please visit  
[www.quareia.com](http://www.quareia.com)*

*So remember - in order for this course to work, it is wise to work with the lessons in sequence. If you don't, it won't work.*

*Yours,*

*Josephine McCarthy*



# QVAREIA - THE APPRENTICE

## Module 3 - The Power Dynamics of Creation

### *Lesson 3: The Grindstone*

---

You have already begun to look, in small ways, at the polarised threshold powers that act as a barrier to the deeper inner worlds, and therefore to deeper magic. For an apprentice magician to try and engage directly with these powers would be folly: they are non-emotional angelic powers that simply fry anything that reaches too far across the threshold if that reaching is done in ignorance.

So first the apprentice is introduced to these powers through simple outer ritual and understanding that has no power behind it, and through basic magical and none magical acts.

Then they inch in a bit more in vision, but still staying within their own realm. You have done both of these, even if you did not realise it at the time. This step-by-step approach allows you to strengthen, become aware of and learn the rules of engagement before you stumble across the power lines.

The next step in your learning about these threshold keepers is to learn how their power expresses through the human life and mind, so that by learning consciously, your subconscious also learns, adapts and develops. The mind, emotions, actions and energy drives in a human are the filter through which these powers express first.

By approaching these aspects of our own existence, we are then better armed in our subconscious to be able to walk in a balanced way between these two powers in order to enter the depths of the inner realms safely and productively. Once you have seen and recognised how these powers operate in your life, you will come to see how they operate magically and mystically. The key words of the Grindstone in its manifestation through life are restraint, labor, perseverance and patience: the qualities of Saturn.

Through engaging these qualities with magical intent in our everyday lives, our deeper spirit also engages these qualities, and they subsequently flow through our magical acts. That in turn allows us to work with far greater amounts of power without serious risk of damaging our minds and bodies.

---

### *The Angelic power*

---

Although we will look in depth at angelic beings later in the apprentice section, it is useful to look at the angelic powers that flow through, and are the source of, these two polarised powers: the angelic manifestations of the Grindstone and the Unraveller. These two powers are not the type of angelic beings that we have been exposed to through religious or magical teachings. Rather they are a step removed from the material and human world, and they do not have the dressing that we usually associate with angels. In essence, they are strong powers that each do one specific job, like two giant magnets: they create a barrier.

In the inner worlds, that barrier appears as guardians who challenge you, and also as an unseen energy that bounces you out of vision. In life, their power expresses through fate patterns and they trigger events, or they pour power into events. In magic, those two presentations become more immediate, more powerful and more direct in their actions.

Each of these two polarised powers have many different expressions; hence each one has its own lesson in this module, so that we can look at them in depth. Some of you who already have some experience of magic (or who are magicians revisiting training) will already have an understanding of what I am saying. For those who are new or relatively new to magic, what fol-

flows may all seem a bit difficult to understand, but stay with me, as we will approach this from a human perspective which you will indeed recognise.

Although these are powerful, deep angelic beings, and they operate in depth throughout creation from a single cell to a species, landmass or nation, how they directly affect you as an apprentice magician is best viewed, understood, and worked with through life experience and visionary ritual. This way, your conscious mind, subconscious mind and physical body can slowly absorb the knowledge, adjust to the power flows and learn to be around and work with these vast beings without getting fried or going mad. It is also a much more direct way to learn than to sit and try to philosophically or intellectually understand them.

This lesson looks at the Grindstone, the left hand side of the polarity (which has nothing to do with the 'Left Hand Path' in magic). In magical ritual, this power is externalised in its weakest form as the sword and as the Grindstone that your left foot stands upon. That is the baby step. But then we need to grow up. So the next stage is to look at the dynamics and effects this power has on our lives. The Grindstone does not just flow through the lives of magicians: it flows through all life, and in humans you will instantly recognise its influence once we get to look at it.

The only difference for a magician is that the magician learns to consciously engage and work with this power, first through their life and outer ritual, and then in deeper vision and direct contact as an adept. To get to that adept stage and be able to have that direct contact without being destroyed, first the magician must recognise and understand its weakest most outer influence in human life. That awareness opens the doors within you, and starts a deep energetic conversation with your subconscious and with your eternal spirit.

First we will look at the actual power dynamic of the Grindstone, and look at why it does what it does. Then we will look at the practicalities of how that expresses through your daily life.

---

## *The Role of the Grindstone in Creation*

---

In its deepest role, the Grindstone slows down the speed and vibration of energy so that it can be formed into matter. Through restriction the energy becomes denser, stronger and more able to be contained in a vessel. The Grindstone's opposite is the Unraveller, which frees up over-restriction or breaks down the density of something in order either for it to become more fluid or to break it down and compost it.

At a magical level the Grindstone creates barriers that protect the inner worlds from stupid humans, and protects stupid humans from the onslaught of power that is inherent within the inner worlds. It limits your magical actions so that you become more solid in your power as a magician, and also helps to prevent you overreaching (unless that overreaching is necessary for you).

In terms of magical power, it is the dynamic which shapes power and gives it boundaries in order for it to be contained: a ritual is an extension of the Grindstone power, as is the sword, the key steps within visionary magic, the use of a sigil, etc. It is the power that constructs a magical form that is then filled with contact and energy. So you begin to see why it is so vital for a magician to understand it. But it cannot be understood intellectually; it has to be experienced both magically and through everyday conscious life—that way, you truly understand it on every level. Once you understand it, you can engage it magically.

On an individual level, for humans, this power weaves into your fate pattern, which is a dynamic pattern that is constantly shifting and evolving (it is not a fixed, rigid path) and drops the energy of restriction into that fate weave. This is to slow the person down, and to present them with barriers that they must overcome in order to strengthen and mature physically, emotionally and mentally. It can present tough life experiences, external influences, cultural restrictions, physical restrictions, disciplined training, or through mental or emotional issues. A developing magician learns to spot that action and engage it by applying the Grindstone power consciously and directly to their lives where it is needed.

The presentation of the Grindstone in the fate pattern is energy, not events: how that energy expresses itself in your life is very much dependant on your choices, actions, the society you live in, your body, mind, and the state of the species. It is both personal to you and also impersonal; it affects the individual and the collective.

The task of a magician is to recognise this energy when it is present and active in your life and work, and to work with it, fully engaging it rather than being swept along by it. That is one of the major differences between a magician and a non-magician. When the Grindstone is expressing through the collective, through your society, it is important as a magician to spot that and work with it so that you are neither its victim nor 'swept up' by the current as it passes through. Rather you recognise it, and then see where you can work with it or side-step it—which ever is appropriate to the situation.

At a creation level, this power also dynamically works through nature and is part of the constant change and evolution of the planet, the landscape, and the elements: it is one arm of the rebalancer. Once you learn to recognise this power in action in your own life and in your own society, then you will more easily also spot it in action in nature.

Throughout history, religion and magic, or aspects of such, Man has sought to control, limit or deflect this power, which has always simply resulted in disaster at some level or other. You cannot control this power and you cannot stop it; it is a part of life itself. Once we look at the aspects of this power in everyday life, you will start to recognise where magicians throughout history have tried to dodge its power or have been swept along by it unconsciously, in ignorance.

And yet, to understand this power and to work with it in your life and magic is to tap into one of the greatest resources of power known to man. But to do that and not be destroyed, the magician needs to tap into this power with gnosis. So let's look at how this power expresses itself through the human life.



---

## *The Grindstone in life*

---

In a non-magical life, the Grindstone presents through life situations which prevent you from doing what you want to do or which force you to do something you do not want to do. That is the simplest way to put it. That power triggers the energy on the fate path, and how that presents depends on the person, their situation and their culture. It is much stronger in some individuals than in others. If a person does not need that power in their lives to restrict them, or if they overly self-restrict, the opposing power is more dominant in their lives (the Unraveller). Essentially, one major way this dynamic expresses is to teach you the difference between what you want and what you need. That in turn highlights to you your weaknesses and vulnerabilities.

This same dynamic that appears in the life of an individual also mirrors or appears in a society or culture. This power, like all powers in creation, works in octaves: the deepest pattern of the power repeats at different frequencies as it steps down and becomes more formed and personal. But the actual underlying dynamic stays the same.

When we look back in history, and we come across powerful and dynamic shifts in a society, we can often spot the activation of the Grindstone, or the Unraveller, or both. People who have little internal strength or are 'switched off' are often swept along by these power tides, and the result is a huge shift in how a nation thinks or behaves. When a nation is involved (1930's Germany is a good example), there are often many different types of beings involved that are mediators of the powers of Grindstone and Unraveller: they work behind the scenes in various manifestations. An adept magician can often spot these manifestations and either get out of the way, or work carefully to clear the road ahead for that nation.

In a magical life the same dynamic applies, but it is recognised for what it is: a necessary step that needs to be understood, learned and worked with. As the magician gets deeper into magic, one of the two dynamics may (though not always) engage more powerfully than the other, the result of which being that fate is 'sped up,' or, that is to say, that the lessons come thick and fast.



So for example, an apprentice magician engages the Grindstone by being aware of where they need to apply self-restriction or patience in their life, and rather than fight blocks in their life, they learn to engage them and work with them. The initiate learns to use the magical sword in ritual/vision to create a restrictive pattern that contains and limits power in a magical act or project. The adept learns to mediate, or 'bridge' through themselves, the raw power of the Grindstone into a magical pattern, a land area, a person or an event.

In order for the initiate and the adept to do that powerful work safely, their mind and body must already be tuned to working with the Grindstone in their outer and inner lives so that they hold a better power balance within them. This is because every power you mediate or bridge passes through you first, affecting everything in your sphere before it is then externalised into its vessel, pattern or project.

If an adept attempts to bridge this power and they have not reconciled the Grindstone within themselves, then it will get to work on them before it works on anything else. The adept will find themselves confronted by the Grindstone power in their health and in their everyday life.

The safest and most successful way to tune to the Grindstone power as an apprentice is through its actions in your everyday life. It is a lifetime process, and at first the apprentice magician struggles to first recognise and then reconcile with the power. As they progress, the power re-presents in ever more powerful ways, working through the life pattern, the body, the mind and the emotions. At some point (hopefully earlier than later) the magician learns to spot the triggering of this power, recognises what it needs to do, and then instead of waiting for the life bomb to drop, steps voluntarily into a situation or pattern that would obviate the need for the lesson: the step of letting go, self-limiting or self-releasing.

Let's have a look at some practical examples of the Grindstone activating in life. We will look at some very different situations that nevertheless all have the same dynamic, and look at the outcomes relative to the way the person dealt with the power. Bear in mind that life is a very complex weave indeed, and although these two opposing powers are very present in all of life, there are also many other lesser and greater dynamics, powers, energies and life patterns that flow in and out of a person or a nation's life.

---

## *Examples of the Grindstone in action*

---

These following short examples are not here to bore you silly (they will be obvious to some and not to others), nor are they anything to do with moralising: morals have no place in magic. They are simple, externalised life expressions of the Grindstone which in turn prepare us to work more deeply with the inner aspects of this power.

### ***HUMAN SOCIETY'S CONDITIONING***

Each society and religion has its boundaries of 'good behaviour' and 'bad behaviour.' Some grew out of mystical understanding and devolved down to dogma, and some are simple societal control methods. The hardest thing for an apprentice magician who has grown up in a religious society or family is to step away from such dogma in a balanced way.

Usually as a young, budding magician, the person carries the dogma with them as a mode of thinking, and simply transplants it onto another dogma: we see this many magical systems and alternative religions. They are simply rehashing the same issue. This stems from the as yet inability to spot and then disengage from the inappropriate restriction and engage a deeper, more magical one.

This dogmatic restriction, which often appears in magical systems as a 'code of ethics' or patterns of self-development rituals, continues to trap the young magician in an unproductive cycle of destructive restriction. The magician feels comfortable in the safety of the dogma, but is unable to truly progress to any power as a magician. The unbalanced restriction triggers the opposing power in the magician's life, and they slowly unravel.

Once the magician spots this and steps away, they restrict their desire for a predictable system with a set of rules. They learn to recognise that the true power of the Grindstone comes from the restriction of not having predictable walls and rules: you have to actively engage it and understand it for yourself, alone and without guidance. That means falling back upon yourself as the maker and keeper of your own limits. That is an example of magical engagement, in the first simple step, with the Grindstone.

Alternatively, the young budding magician walks away from the dogma they were raised with, and rejects all boundaries. They immerse themselves in self-indulgence, emotional and physical experimentation (Left Hand Path magic, for example) and they either self-destruct through that process, or they learn to self-limit from direct experience. Again, this is engaging the Grindstone magically and consciously, but this way is reached through immersion in the power of the Unraveller.

A third way is where the magician steps away from the dogma they were raised within, and steps into a discipline of some sort, be it martial arts training, sports, or arts training: a discipline that is hard, long, and challenging. Through that process, the young magician learns to self-discipline, understands the necessity for boundaries, be they physical, emotional or otherwise, and learns how to transplant that learning into their magical practice. This is why it is easier for lone magicians who have intensively trained in some form of discipline over a long period of time to progress well in magic.

### ***DRAMA/EMOTIONAL CONDITIONING***

The Grindstone can also engage through emotional dramas. When we are young, many of us project internal imbalance through emotional swings and dramas: it is the body and mind's way of trying to release the toxicity of imbalance. Think hormonal teenage outburst.

As we go through life and we have hard knocks (the Grindstone in action) we either degenerate down into a life of victimhood, or we get to a point in our life where we see that our reactions often come not just from outer situations, but also from our own need for emotional expression—"I am angry/sad and I don't know why, but it's not your fault." The ability to get to that stage of self-awareness, to acknowledge imbalance and not project a reason onto someone or something else, is the first step of engaging the Grindstone. For an everyday person it is a step towards emotional maturity. For a magician it has the added bonus of alerting us to some imbalance, be it in our own minds, our own bodies, or because of some power imbalance somewhere.

The next step a magician would take is to find out, usually through divination, where that imbalance is coming from. Sometimes it is something within us that needs physical rebalancing (hormones or depression), or it is

coming from unbalanced magical practice which needs changing (the engine limiter), or it is the result of magical interference from outside of the person.

The magician would identify the cause and act accordingly. If it shows up as a necessary process, the magician would then decide to ‘suck it up,’ tread water, and see what is coming out the other end of it. Often this happens if a lot of power is due to come into the magician’s practice and they need either to go into a phase of withdrawing and waiting, or to adjust their life ready to accept the power in a balanced way when it arrives. This is the Grindstone being engaged with: it is limiting the magician in order to prepare them for something.

Through working with the Grindstone in these simple ways, the deeper aspect of the magician’s psyche learns, through sideways application, how to self-limit for necessity when it comes to deeper magic and power: it becomes a second nature. That in turn allows the magician to work with large amounts of power and not go mad or get greedy. That then opens up a whole new aspect of magic for the magician, as they are stable and self-disciplined enough to work in depth in the inner worlds without temptation.

### ***THE GRINDSTONE OF MAGICIANS***

Once the magician is working with the Initiate level of training (though this can also happen to an apprentice) and the powers are being consciously engaged, then the Grindstone presents around the magician in a constant dynamic I call the Sword of Damocles.

Here is a way it triggers for me, so that you can see it in practical action. I do a lot of magical writing and I write from my own magical experience, not from other books. I believe in ‘hiding in plain sight’ methods of writing and not holding information back. Occasionally though, I inadvertently cross a line. I will start to write something without realising that it should not be written about. When I do that, I begin to burn—literally. My skin, my organs; they will all burn furiously. My face will go red and I will feel very ill.

When that first started to happen, I would do a reading to see if I was ill. The answer was always the same: “No, you are not ill, but you have triggered the Sword by acting in an unbalanced way.” The sword would appear in my health reading with it hanging over my head—this type of situation is

where the story of Damocles comes from. It is a deep magical dynamic that has nothing to do with systems or dogma; it is an energetic response to crossing a power line that should not be crossed.

When this happened, I would look back over what I had written, and would then see how that text could be badly misused in a powerful and destructive way. Sometimes it was not that it could be destructive, but rather that I had, by writing a magical detail, taken away the student's chance to find out something deep and powerful for themselves; I had potentially short-circuited the magical development of another human being.

As soon as I deleted the text and then began writing with more care, the burning would instantly stop and peace was restored. That is the Grindstone in action in a magician's life.

A completely different magical application of the Grindstone is one where it is purposely engaged. Here is an example. A magician is being attacked by another adept (sigh, humans are such dicks sometimes) powerfully and dangerously: the curse or attack is to the death. An inexperienced magician would lash back, but the adept knows better (not because of ethics, but because they understand how power works). The adept does not retaliate. He simply cleans the attack off himself and carries on about his business. The attacker becomes enraged that the victim has not died, and so piles more and more magical power into the attack.

The adept on the receiving end still does not respond. Nor are they badly damaged by the attack (usually bruised but not battered); they simply clean it off again, patiently and without emotion. The adept on the receiving end is intentionally engaging the Grindstone. They may also work with the Grindstone magically, not on the attacker, but upon themselves: ritual/vision work with the sword to guard their own temper, stay their hand, and draw strength from Saturn to persevere.

This approach does two things. The first thing is that it slowly grinds the attacker down: they are outputting a lot of their energy to use magic to kill someone—that takes a lot of energy, a lot of work, and a lot of focus. Soon they begin to obsess and pour all of their magical resources into the attack: they are emptying their inner and outer resources. This in turn weakens them considerably and eventually kills them (the effect is usually in relation to the magical intention).

The second thing that happens is that the Unraveller is triggered for the attacker. When you attack magically, you set up an energy relationship or line of energy contact. The attack travels down that route and the attacker and victim are connected energetically. As soon as the adept on the receiving end consciously and magically engages the Grindstone, it sets up a see-saw effect. And the Unraveller is the opposing power of the Grindstone: if the Grindstone appears at one end of the energy connection, that will automatically trigger the Unraveller on the opposing side.

So the attacker has the power of the Unraveller flowing through him in an unconscious way. That manifests as the magician finding it harder and harder to hold a magical pattern, and they mentally, physically and emotionally begin to unravel as a result of their own imbalance. And if the attacker had intentionally used death magic, that triggers the death aspect of the Unraveller and speeds up their own death.

Clever, huh? So the adept on the receiving end does nothing at all towards the attacker; they simply work on themselves and let the attacker blow himself up in his own time. By not engaging with the attacker, the adept has not bound themselves up in yet more energetic loops with the attacker, and has not outputted any energy that would potentially feed the attacker. It can be a long and laborious process, particularly if the attacker is a long holder of grudges, but the strength the adept on the receiving end gains through such restraint of action is considerable indeed.

The end result is a dead or seriously weakened attacker, and a stronger, wiser adept on the other end. In the next lesson I will look at a similar situation from the perspective of the Unraveller, and also look at a slightly different way of dealing with the same issue.

---

### *Practical work*

---

1. Using the four directional reading layout, use your tarot cards to look and see if the Grindstone is in action in your life. To focus the reading on your outer life, use the centre for your health, the east for education/writing/learning or daily work, south for creativity, west for relationships,



and north for family/home. Then look at your inner energies using the same layout and use the ‘magical directions’ attributes. If you identify the Grindstone in action (it will show as a difficult restrictive card), sit and think about how instead of fighting it or trying to avoid it, you can first recognise where in your life it is playing out, why it is playing out, what you need to learn from it and then engage it through your actions, common sense, emotions or mind. Remember the key words for the Grindstone and apply them.

**2.** Choose a time in history where something major happened that changed a culture, religion, race or land. Do the same readings that you have done for yourself: look at the outer manifestation and then the inner one to see if the Grindstone was in action. It may or may not have been. If it was in action, read up about the history of the event, people’s eye witness accounts, and pay close attention to any art that came out of that time. See if you can see an unconscious or conscious expression of the Grindstone in the writing, thinking, art or poetry of the time. What you are looking for is major restrictions or disciplines that brought major growth, strength or change to a nation. If the change was a restoration of balance, the Unraveller will also be seen in the events. If the change ultimately brought imbalance, look to see if the Unraveller was absent from the dynamic. Write up your findings on computer, and also log your readings.

**3.** Revisit your astrology chart and look at the natal position of Saturn and the current transit of Saturn. Look at where it is in action in your chart; see if there is any correlation between your chart’s transits and the reading you did about your outer and inner life. Think about where that transit of Saturn sits in your personal pentagram pattern, and take note of the nearest direction and tool, and what power flows through them. Bring all of the information together and see if there is a need to consciously engage the Grindstone in your life in some way.

**4.** If you are embarking on a new course of study (Quareia, for example) or college study, a new job, anything that is a major project, work ritually to draw the power of the Grindstone into that path in order to help you learn better, apply yourself consistently, and to strengthen you. Design your own ritual to invite the Grindstone power into your life to work with you. In the design, draw upon what you already have learned about ritual and use the four directional pattern to open the gates and directions. Look at aspects of the Pentagram work you have done and choose key aspects of that ritual

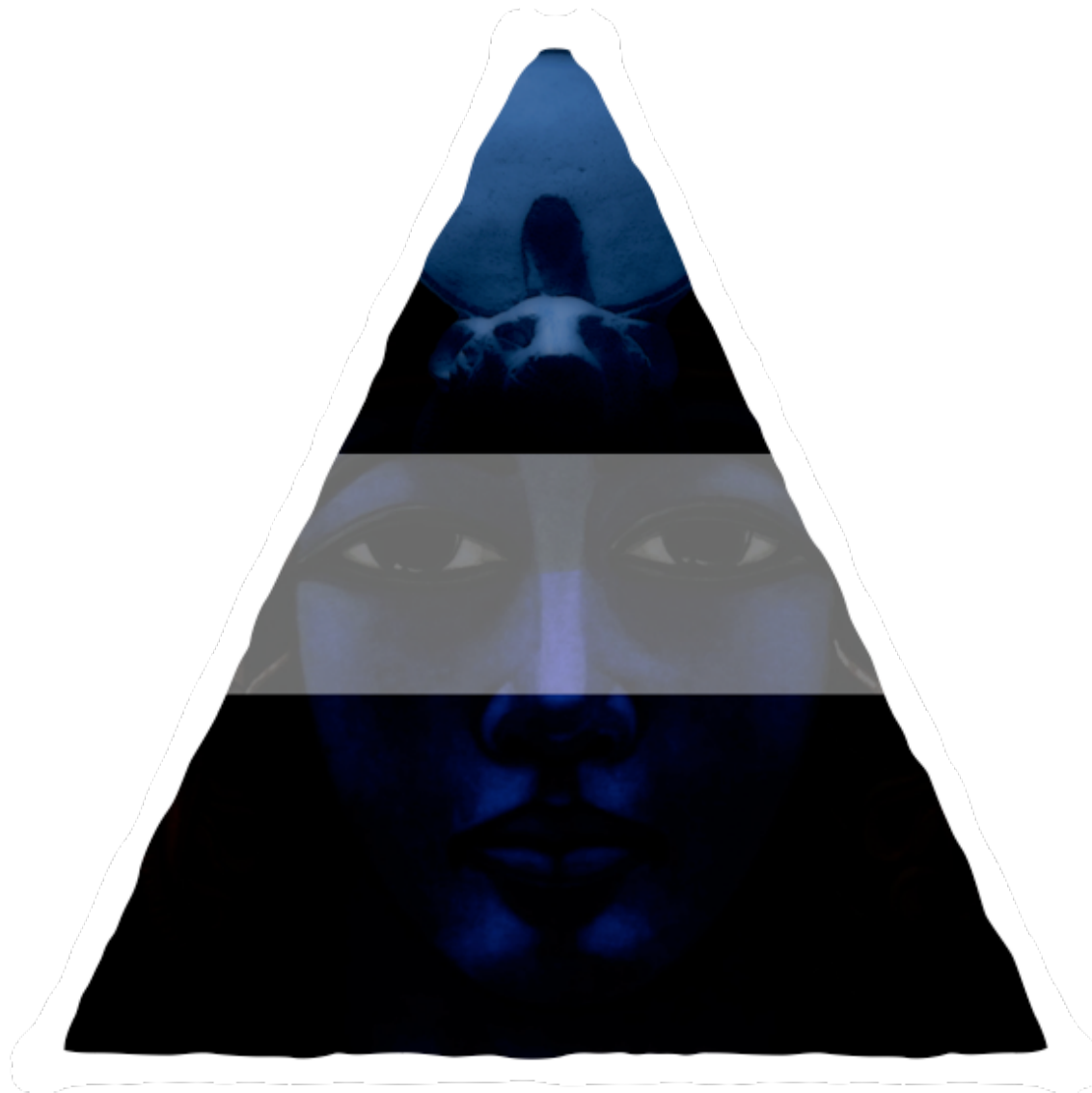


work to construct your own personal ritual. Include in the ritual a recitation to call upon the Grindstone power of the east, the Noble ones of the south, and the Unraveller in the west to guide you in the engagement of the Grindstone in your life: invite that power to work with you. Write down the ritual in your computer log and keep diary entries over the coming weeks of any observations you may have about that power triggering in your life

QVAREIA

---

# COPYRIGHT



© Josephine McCarthy 1993-2014

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior written permission of the Author. Permission granted to reproduce for personal use only.