

Episode #003 – The Secrets of My Success

The Infinite and the Beyond

An esoteric podcast for the introspective pagan mind hosted by Chris Orapello
www.infinite-beyond.com

❖ Show Introduction

- Its Thursday, March 12th 2009 Thanks for joining us again. MM, BB, 93, hello and welcome to the third episode of “The Infinite and the Beyond,” an esoteric podcast for the introspective pagan mind. Where we explore a variety of topics which relate to life and one’s unique spiritual journey. I am your host Chris Orapello.
- Intro music by George Wood.
- In this episode we discuss anomalous pets and what to do when you think you have one. The benefits of backgrounds and the freedom to wander through your path. We learn about famous occultist Eliphas Levi in A Corner in the Occult. We hear what Kristian Stout has evolved into. We begin a new show segment. And we continue with our discussion on community by addressing covens.
- Hello and welcome again. I’m glad to be back and thank you for downloading the third episode. I’m sorry this episode took an extra week to get out as I managed to have the first two episodes out within three weeks of each other.

❖ Announcements

- Our ranking in the Religious and Spirituality category on Podcast Alley by the end of February was at a surprising #18. Thanks so much to everyone who voted for the show and I hope to have your continued support this month on Podcast Alley. And voting for the show is as easy as visiting the show website, just click on the VOTE Podcast Alley button on the right-side of the homepage and submit the form that pops up. The email address it asks you to include is just for voter validation and to ensure one vote, per person, per show for each month.

❖ Thank You!

- (Background Music: “The Eternal” by Lumiloop)
- Thank you to Robyn, droopy615, Kurt, Blackbirds, Andy Guthie, Gyptiad, and Ruthie from the Celtic Myth Podshow for joining the show’s Frappr Map and thank you to those of you who joined our new group on Facebook as well!
- Thank you Greywolf Moonsong from A Pagan Heart in Maine, Sparrow and Mojo from The Wigglian Way, and Dee and Heather from Pagan FM for mentioning The Infinite and the Beyond on your shows. And thank you

Greywolf for adding this show to your Podcasts for the Pagan Heart section of your website. Links for these shows can be found on the links page of the show website which can be found at www.infinite-beyond.com.

- Thank you to Gary and Ruthie from the Celtic Myth Podshow for giving the show a little place in your 23rd episode and for playing the show promo as well.
- And also a very hearty thank you to our subscribers, it's great to have you all aboard! I just wish I knew how many there were of you. *laugh* Though, I do have some idea of how many there are of you judging from the over 300 downloads there were for each episode. Thank you very much!

❖ As of Late...

- The Weather has been kind of wacky as of late. Right now it's beautiful outside but the other week we had the most snow yet the other day and today was actually beautiful out. I tell you I'm getting extremely excited for spring as I can see it coming. The days are getting longer. The birds are singing. It's like a Disney movie out there. When I think of nice spring nights and comfortable day time temperatures my stomach gets all weird, I'm really looking forward to spring this year. I was trying to think about this and why I'm getting so excited? I think we had an early winter if memory serves me right? I think we had relatively cold temperature since early October and maybe that's why I'm so excited for the coming of spring? That and we all know what else is coming up? ...The Equinox! I can't wait to see all those friendly Pennsylvanian strangers again. *sigh* *laughs* No, but seriously I can't wait for Ostara, unfortunately I think this ceremony will be inside as have all the sabbat ceremonies been since the fall because of the colder weather.
- I love it when we have outdoor ceremonies because dancing outside around the burning cauldron under the night sky, with the drummers playing and torches lit is such a great time. I remember my first time at one of their circles. I was so flabbergasted that I had not known of this group until that moment, but I was so extremely thankful to have found them. There was a lot of glitter being used that night. Yes, I said glitter. Glitter has a fun place in the Midsummer ritual and is one of several unique elements found in that ceremony. I remember coming home that night almost two years ago, covered in glitter. My girlfriend said that I looked like I motor-boated a stripper. If you don't know what that means, motor-boating a stripper is when you...er-uh ask your father. I remember that night, dancing around the fire; being covered in glitter it was a blast. I must have been a site entering the local convenience store to get a drink on my way home.

❖ The Ghost Cat

- (Background Music: “Seeing Things” by Alexandre Falcao)
- The other weekend while lying in bed, lost somewhere in the hours of the night my girlfriend turned to look by the side of the bed and then said, “I saw the cat” to which this had been her first time. Apparently it had been

walking across the bedroom floor of which was a small space and my girlfriend was watching it for what seemed like 3-5 seconds. The cat in question was something I had been seeing in my apartment for a couple of years, but was never sure as to what it was since I never had a cat and the snakes I own could have never pulled off such a clever ruse despite their wit and charm.

- Though I have been seeing the mysterious cat like form for several years now, it was always in short glimpses which had caused me to wonder if what I was witnessing was merely a result of me being use to seeing my girlfriend’s cats while at her place. The unclear reality of a potential ghost cat in my apartment lingered in the realm of optical hallucinations since all the sightings I experienced were short and occurred usually as I was looking away, but always in similar locations. And since no seeming physical occurrences had been noticed I could only conclude that the cat was a figment of my imagination or that my eyes were simply playing tricks on me.
- In the past I had thought to have seen the cat walking in the hallway as well as entering and leaving my bedroom, but now since my girlfriend has seen it I have to wonder if the cat is more than just my imagination and could instead be what is known as a residual haunting. That being more like a recording which plays itself over and over with no hope of interaction or sign of consciousness present in the anomaly.
- Though, my stories of the cat have been known to my girlfriend for a couple of years she has never seen it at least not until the other night when she saw it walking by her side of the bed. I have to now at least be curious as to the reality of this apparent ghost cat. So, to test the reality I placed three toy mice on a piece of paper which I taped to the carpet. I traced the mice on the paper so I could monitor their position and I even made a further record of the mice by taking several photos of them for future reference. So, far nothing has occurred and if nothing continues, the most I can say about the cat is that it is residual as it has been witnessed by two separate people, with no physical interaction noted. Though if no sightings persist the presence of the toys could have possibly stopped them, so I will have to make a note of what happens when the toys are removed after a significant amount of time has passed.
- Similar hauntings that involved cats have been known to include the feeling of an animal jumping on the bed during the night or objects being mysteriously moved or knocked over. I have yet to notice such phenomena and if anything like this occurs, I will be sure to let you all know as I will be more aware of this issue as long as I continue to live where I do. In truth, I like the idea of having a ghost cat as a pet. After all, there is no litter box to clean or any other things that go along with having a living cat such as dead animal gifts, clawed up furniture, not to mention veterinary expenses.

❖ **Segment: My Background and Path**

- (Background music: “Telepathic Communication” by Alexandre Falcao)

- Since this is only the third episode, I feel that this episode would be an ample time to provide you with some of my background. I always had an interest in the occult and the paranormal ever since I was very young as they always had this wonderful alluring quality since they conveyed a side of life that I had only known in TV and movies.
- Like many neo-pagans I was raised Catholic, at least if you call celebrating a seemingly secular Christmas and Easter, never going to church, and only having 4.5 years of CCD being Catholic? I received communion, but never experienced confirmation. For those of you who don't know, CCD is Catholic religious schooling, it was done at night once a week, and goes from first to eighth grade, which upon completion you get confirmed. I only got 4.5 years of CCD which is why I never was confirmed.
- Catholicism wasn't for me and I didn't consider anything religious for years to come, though in eighth grade I did experiment with magick when I found *Earth, Air, Fire, and Water* by Scott Cunningham which is a book full of element based spells. When I found his book I remember thinking, “this stuff actually exists?” I was shocked to say the least, as I'd always thought of magick as being fantasy. I remember my favorite spell to do from the book was *The Pot of Flame* because to me it could be adapted to any need and involved fire which was always impressive. I did several workings from this book during this time in my life. I would often sneak outside after everyone had gone to bed to do magic and found the whole process to be quite peaceful, inspiring, and emotionally therapeutic. It was probably these late night excursions that prompted me to begin enjoying the night sky and appreciating the light and presence of the Moon as it shone down from above. There was a field behind my parent's house so we always had a wonderful view of the Moon and the stars, which was always peaceful and magickal in its natural beauty. As a result I would often go outside with no magickal intentions to just sit among them during the night. Their beauty and vastness often caused me to wonder about life, reality, and my own minute existence within a much greater universe. Sitting here now doing this show I can't help but realize that this was a very inspiring time in my life and in my adolescent development. I remember not only looking up at the sky, but writing poetry, and secretly smoking cigarettes unbeknownst to my parents. The quiet solitude that these nights offered is something that I will always treasure.
- My magickal practices waned as I entered High School and wouldn't begin again for several years. I hesitate to mention this, but it was integral to my current path as it jump started me to continue with what I was doing a couple years prior. Along with having an older manager at work who was Wiccan it was the movie *The Craft* that reminded me of what I had been doing years before and made me wonder why I ever stopped. It wasn't that I wanted to have experiences like the girls in the movie, but *The Craft* caused me to revisit that time in my life. So I began asking my manager at work what books to read and how to get involved with pursuing studies in witchcraft and magick and he recommended several books and authors to me, one of whom was Scott Cunningham.

- I began buying and reading an assortment of books and the metaphysical section of the book store became one of my favorite places to visit. I read and purchased any book which sounded good or caught my eye. I read up on The Church of Satan, Wicca, Witchcraft, The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, Aleister Crowley, High Magick, Enochian Magick, Black Magick, Chaos Magick, Thelema, right hand path, left hand path, candle magick, you name it and I have probably looked into it at one time or another over the entirety of my path. I am very thankful for the many turns and wanderings I had done over the years as I did not always consider myself a Wiccan, but I did always feel that I was pagan in some way. The enjoyment that I now have for Wicca and my personal path is a result of all that I explored.
- After my re established interest in the occult and magick I began looking for others with whom I could at least talk with. It wasn't until my second year of college that I found someone in one of my classes who was Wiccan and then shortly after that I found the Wiccan/Pagan Organization at my school which sadly no longer exists, nor does any current equivalent to my knowledge.
- Also during my college years I was an outsider member of a coven for a brief time and left shortly before my dedication as I began to not entirely trust some of the people in the coven. Some of them simply liked calling themselves witches to seem impressive and mysterious. While others, seemed too new to Wicca to already be in a coven. I thought it was odd that the High Priestess would permit people who were as new as they were to the religion to be in the coven. Not that they were bad people or did not deserve to be, but I thought that having people who were so new to Wicca in a coven seemed irresponsible on the part of the group leader and possibly cultish to some degree. By the end of my time with them I began to wonder if they had other motives behind what they were doing as leaders, and in general, the overall situation no longer sat well with me so I peacefully left and have never talked so publicly about my overall experience with them.
- In 2000 I formed the Marlton Witches' Coalition which lasted for five years during which time my path meandered through some of what I mentioned earlier. I met a lot of my current friends from this group and from the people I met through it. I even met some people who were once members of the coven I was with after I had left it and we got to exchange some stories, which only confirmed my understanding of the situation.
- In 2004 I became a Freemason and soon after came back around to Wicca where I have been for nearly five years. I guess I needed to really explore my path options and react to my personal philosophical questions and understandings to enable my individual growth; a decision which I recommend to all others who feel inclined to change directions at some point or another. If you feel yourself being drawn in a particular direction then follow it because it may be just what you need to do in your life at that point in time.
- The last text that I consider as my personal “great find” is *The Kybalion* a somewhat recent text on Hermetic Philosophy. Have you ever had one of those finds? Something which puts everything into perspective for you, or something which opens up your world in a way that you could not have anticipated? That was what *The*

Kybalion did for me. It was the book that made me say, “It’s about frakking time!” Because everything it described and explained was similar to what I already thought for the most part, but could never find such a level of understanding in anything I came across until that point. It explained chaos magick, magick in general, and broke down perceived reality into its essential counterparts. It illustrated the world as it was without preconceived notions and it was what I needed at the time.

- So, why am I telling you all this? Other than sharing my background with you, I want to use this background segment as a way to lead into a discussion about forming covens and joining covens. As well as to introduce and emphasize my appreciation for *The Kybalion* which is a text that we will be looking into during the following episodes.
- And another reason I’m telling you all this is that I wanted to establish more of who I was as a person and pagan. I wanted you to know more about myself and where I was coming from and where I had been. I really don’t intend this show to be me talking about myself so please don’t think that. This is the third episode and I still feel like I’m in introductory mode. I hope you at least enjoyed or got something of value from my background.
- I know this is not a music based podcast, but music does offer a nice breaking point in the dialog and the vibe. I don’t intend to play music very often, but I do have the great honor of bringing The Evolutionaries back to pagan podcasting. You may remember them as they were featured on Episode #10 of deos’ Shadow and Episode #19 of Thelema Coast to Coast. I contacted Kristian Stout of The Evolutionaries and he was more than happy to grant me permission to play his music on the show which I am happy to do so. If you haven’t heard them, they are an industrial band local to the New York City music scene. From their album *We Are Evolving* I give you “Simple Pleasure” by The Evolutionaries.

❖ Music Track

- “Simple Pleasure” by *The Evolutionaries*.
- Thanks Kristian! You can find The Evolutionaries by checking out the website or the show notes, but in case you’d rather find them now they can be accessed at www.the-evolutionaries.com. Be sure to tell them Chris from The Infinite and the Beyond sent you!

❖ Pagan Chaos Magic with Ki’a Dragon

- I want to take a moment to send out a special thank you and some words of appreciation to Ki’a Dragon from Pagan Chaos Magic. In episode #4 of his podcast he made it a point to say some absolutely wonderful things about me and this podcast and I just wanted to say thank you so much to Kia Dragon for the nice things he had to say. When I was listening to his podcast and he began addressing the show I couldn’t believe what he was saying because it took me by surprise. I was very humbled by his kind words and amazed at how this show was

received by him. Thank you very much man! I would give you a podhug if I could. All the best and brightest blessings to you and your family!

- If anyone listening has yet to listen to Pagan Chaos Magic you can find it with the rest of the Pagan Podcasts on Podcast Alley or visit his blog online at www.paganchaosmagic.com. He does not spell magic with a “K”.

❖ Show Segway

- Later in this episode we’re going to talk about covens and teachers as well as having an introduction to one of my other favorite texts and the start of a new show segment, but first it’s time for the sounds of Mozart layered with smatterings of occult history with A Corner in the Occult.

❖ Segment: A Corner in the Occult “Eliphas Levi”

- (Background Music: “Piano Quartet in g 3rd Movement by Mozart” performed by Linda Holzer)
- Hello and welcome to “A Corner in the Occult” Where we focus on one part or person from the history of occultism. In these regular segments, I hope to introduce and touch upon many aspects of the occult and I hope to offer you something new or at least something to think about. There is a lot in occultism that one may never choose to look into, and here you have the opportunity to learn about something which you may have never bothered to investigate. And oddly enough there a lot of people who may not be that aware of who today’s topic is on...
- Born Alphonse-Louis Constant, in Paris on February 8th 1810, Eliphas Levi, as he is more commonly known in western occultism, was the only son of a shoe maker; the name Eliphas Levi, being the Hebrew translation of his birth name Alphonse Louis, would be a working pseudonym for him during the latter half of his life.
- Due to not having sufficient earnings to provide him with a proper education, Levi’s father sent him to a Catholic school for underprivileged children where during his early years there he learned about the Catholic faith and the Hebrew language. As a result of his affinity for Catholicism, Levi attended the seminary of Saint Nichols du Chardonnet at age 15 to pursue his interests and then in 1832 he went to Saint Sulpice Seminary, which was attached to a very lavish and beautiful historic Parisian Church by the same name, to be further educated and trained as a Roman Catholic priest. It has been said that this is where Levi formed his fascination for the occult as he was informed of the laws of animal magnetism by his headmaster who was convinced that such things where from the influence of the devil. The idea that forces and influences permeated existence fascinated Levi and led him into researching such anomalies. One author that influenced Levi greatly was Francis Barrett who wrote the classic occult text *The Magus*.
- In 1835 he became a Deacon and was suppose be ordained in 1836 but he never was. Some say that the love he felt for a woman was far stronger than his desire to become a priest and that he could not submit himself to

living a life of celibacy. Other sources reveal that he was expelled from seminary for teaching doctrines that were contrary to the Roman Catholic Church. Regardless of the reason, Levi never became ordained which allegedly made his mother very upset and which reportedly caused her to commit suicide as a result.

- After parting with the seminary Levi published several tracts those being *Of the Moral Custom and Doctrines of Rationalism in France* published in 1838, *The Gospel of the People* published in 1840, *The Mother of God* published in 1844, and *The Testament of Liberty* which was published in 1848 during the year of the French Revolution. As a result of publishing some of these, Levi experienced several brief prison sentences. It is apparent that the theme of re-enlightenment, revolution, and new ideas of that time were fostering in his writings during this period of his life and may have even had a hand in influencing the developments of this period in French history. It has even been said that during this time he was also friends with Flora Tristan, a socialist writer, activist, grandmother of post-impressionist artist Paul Gauguin, and considered as one of the founders of modern feminism.
- During this time back in 1846 at the age of 36 Levi met and married Noemi Cadiot who was only 18 years of age. However, they separated thirteen years later in 1853 following the early death of their only child and their marriage wasn't annulled until 1865. To earn money after the ending of his marriage, Levi worked as a journalist and taught occultism. It was during this time that he began going by his penname *Magus Eliphas Levi*, which is what we know him by.
- In 1854 Levi visited England in the attempt to teach private lessons in occultism as a means to earn a living, but his difficulty in speaking English made teaching impractical and instead Levi got involved with performing miracles and acts of magickal conjurations. During this time in his life, he met the popular and versatile writer Edward Bulwer Lytton who coined such phrases as, “The pursuit of the almighty dollar,” “It was a dark and stormy night,” and “the pen is mightier than the sword.” Lytton was a Rosicrucian and often allowed this part of his life to enter into his writings. Through his association with Lytton, Levi was requested by a mysterious lady, who was dressed in all black, to summon the spirit of *Apollonius of Tyana* a Greek philosopher and teacher. The Lady claimed to be a friend of Lytton and further instructed Levi to ask of the spirit two specific questions. It is not clear if Levi did this for money or as a favor for the woman, but Levi reportedly undertook the request whole heartedly though he had never done such a conjuration before. His friend Edward is said to have previously instructed him on performing rites of Necromancy and so for twenty-one days Levi fasted, meditated, and prepared for the ceremony which was conducted on July 24th. Levi performed the rite in a lavishly decorated ritual space complete with four concave mirrors; a new white lambskin on the floor; an altar of white marble which bore a pentagram and a copper chafing dish filled with charred alder and laurel wood of which there was a similar chafing dish located on a tripod to the side of the altar; and around this setup was a circle made of magnetized iron whose intended use was to repel hostile spirits. Levi himself was dressed in a white robe,

donning a protective vervain wreath entwined with gold upon his brow and armed with a sword and the ritual manuscript. He first lighted the chafing dishes to provide the spirit something in which to manifest in and then began with his chanting and incantations to bring forth the spirit of the ancient Greek teacher. According to occult author Richard Cavendish, closing his eyes *he summoned the ghost three times to appear*. Levi is quoted as explaining the incident as such, *when I again looked forth there was a man in front of me, wrapped from head to foot in a species of shroud, which seemed more grey than white; he was lean, melancholy, and beardless*. Levi is then reported to have gotten unusually cold and found that he was unable to articulate any words by which he could use to communicate with the spirit. Placing one hand on the pentagram and pointing his sword at the being he mentally commanded the spirit to obey which caused it to vanish. Levi then commanded it to return upon which something was reported to have touched his sword arm causing it to go numb from the elbow down which caused him to lower the sword. The spirit then reappeared which by this point Levi was beginning to feel weak and allegedly passed out. This was reported to have been Levi's only real magickal working and he would mostly be an armchair occultist for the rest of his life.

- After this time, it was Lytton who helped Levi to conceive of his well known treatise titled *Transcendental Magic, its Doctrine and Ritual* as so later translated by Arthur Edward Waite who felt that Levi possibly revealed information of which he was obligated to keep secret judging from what was written in the text. It is in the second section of this text that we can find Levi's famous image of Baphomet, a discussion on the Great Work, and his good and evil interpretation in regards to the pentagram depending on its orientation. One point up for good and two points up for evil, a limited though common distinction that has continued to this day and one that is often used by those who harbor an oppositional black and white understanding of existence. This distinction could be the influence of Levi's deep seated Catholic background which often enters into his writings and understandings of occultism and magick.
- To list his other works, in 1860, he published *The History of Magic*; in 1861, he published *The Key to the Great Mysteries*; in 1862 he published *Stories and Images*, then in 1865 he published *The Science of Spirit*; and in 1868, he wrote *The Great Secret*, also known as *Occultism Unveiled*, however, this text wasn't published until 1898 which was twenty three years after his passing which occurred on May 31st in 1875 while at the age of 65.
- In 1861 Levi became a Freemason for a brief time and was a member of the Lodge *Rose of Perfect Silence*, but due to a personal conflict with another member regarding a lecture he gave, Levi left the fraternity shortly after becoming a Master Mason.
- Among his many contributions to western occultism and magick, Levi established the Hebraic correspondences with the major arcane of the Tarot. And he did this by relating the twenty-two cards of the major arcana to the twenty two paths of the Tree of Life which in themselves each bore further correspondences. Doing this enabled the two systems, European Western Occultism and the Jewish Qabalah to come together, which later

served as a significant structural influence to the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, its founders, members, and hundreds upon thousands of practitioners over a hundred years later as Levi’s teachings continue to influence and shape our understanding about occultism and magick.

- Thank you. This has been another Corner in the Occult
- Suggestions for A Corner in the Occult are welcomed and encouraged so please be sure to contact the show online via the website or through the show forum.

❖ Pagan Podcast Bumper

- Promo: A Pagan Heart in Maine with Greywolf Moonsong

❖ Letters and Messages

- Since the last episode....
- We’ve had some great feedback on Podcast Alley and I want to say thank you to those who left comments for the show. Your support and messages are always appreciated.
- Also it appears that we have some people who came to us from the Haunted New Jersey Podcast.
- Kurt from Atlanta, Georgia wrote: *“I heard about you on Haunted New Jersey and this caught my attention because I have been reading and studying paganism the past year. I also have a strong interest in the paranormal. Anyway, I just wanted say that I love your show so far and look forward to new episodes. I am also a fan of deo’s shadow, too bad they retired. Keep up the good work.”*
 - (Adlibbed response)
- Gyptiad from Sammamish, Washington wrote: *Hi Chris, You may remember me from the Wigglian Way comments page, where you answered my question about 93. Thank you for that. You may not know that I am one of the many Deo mourners, and to me, you are the new, more understandable Deo with shorter words, and a history section, which to me is very appealing. You are a great person and a very interesting one at that. Thank you for your contribution to the ever expanding Pagan Podcasting community.*
 - (Adlibbed response)

❖ Segment: The Kybalion: Introduction and History to a new series of show segments

- (Background Music: “Exodus” by Alexandre Falcao)
- If you would permit me, I would like to begin a series of show segments which involve one of my favorite texts. If you guessed the Book of the Law, you’re partially right as that is one of my favorites, but if you’re a friend of mine on Paganspace.net you may know the other text I am actually referring to. The text in question? *The Kybalion* which I mentioned earlier in this episode.

- Upon one’s introduction, the book itself is presented as being authored by a collection of individuals who are only referred to as the Three Initiates. Their identity is debatable and what they are initiates of is beyond me, but perhaps it’s some Hermetic based tradition since the book claims to be about Hermetic Philosophy.
- Now available in the public domain, the text itself was first published in 1912 by the Yogi Publication Society and it has been rumored that it was authored by William Walter Atkinson who was known to write under many pseudonyms and who also happened to be the owner of the Yogi Publication Society. Atkinson is also rumored to be the book’s author because *The Kybalion* bore a strange similarity to other texts actually written by him as well as some which are speculated to be. The idea of the Three Initiates has also indicated that this may be alluding to those who Atkinson may have corresponded with when writing this book. However, with his apparent history of writing such texts, some further speculate that Atkinson didn’t need the help of any other person to author *The Kybalion*. Though lists have been made arguing potential co-authors, the most likely co-author mentioned was Golden Dawn initiate and later Freemason, Paul Foster Case.
- Regardless of who wrote it and under what conditions the book was compiled, the value of its teachings outweighs its mysterious and even misconstrued origins. The only version of *The Kybalion* that one may find claims to be a translation of an older text by the same name, providing quotes from the apparent original text throughout the book, but being included along with contextual references to the late 19th century. It claims to be an ancient Hermetic Text, but many of its concepts were apparently taken from the New Thought Movement which developed in the United States in the late 19th century; a movement which was not unfamiliar to Atkinson as he was also a part of it.
- So, it is extremely likely that *The Kybalion* is an early 20th century text which refines Hermetic Philosophy into seven principles some of which may seem New Agey at times while other principles convey a very practical breakdown of the world, and those that remain actually sound extremely similar to what can only be referred to as magickal theory.
- Is *The Kybalion* hokie? I would say that *The Kybalion* comes across just as hokie as any book on magick, occultism, paganism, or what you might find in the New Age or Metaphysical section of your local book store so weigh your judgment on that comparison. However, I will say that it is not as hokie as what you might find in the Self-Help section of your local bookstore. In fact some of the authors found in the Self-Help section probably own at least one copy of *The Kybalion* of which they use for influence and writing material. I know I can think of at least one popular Self-Help author, who will remain nameless, that discusses seven laws which bear a striking similarity to what is listed and explained in *The Kybalion*. Coincidence? I think not and if you’ve read *The Kybalion*, then you know that there really is no such thing as coincidence; which is something we will discuss in a later episode.

- Some known recent texts that have personal connections to *The Kybalion* and its teachings are *Divine Magic: The Seven Sacred Secrets of Manifestation* by Doreen Virtue which is a self-proclaimed modern interpretation of *The Kybalion*, *Summuns* a text affiliated with the Summum religion which was founded in 1975, and the popular text “The Secret” by Rhonda Byrne which in itself has been compared to alleged *Kybalion* author, William Walter Atkinson’s 1906 book *Thought Vibration or the Law of Attraction in the Thought World*. The title alone should be evidence enough as to the connection between the two.
- I am aware that *The Secret* by Rhonda Byrne may be a point of contention among listeners because of deo’s Shadow’s episode on it. I don’t condone *The Secret*. I’ve never read it. I’ve never had an interest in it and judging from what deo said about the movie which was based on the book, *The Secret* sounded like watered down occultism and magickal theory that somehow got perverted into a supernatural form of self actualized positive thinking that would get you whatever you wanted in life. In no way am I claiming to be quoting or paraphrasing what deo said and if you have not heard what was said on deo’s shadow about *The Secret* then you should. Their show can be found at www.deos-shadow.com and their discussion of *The Secret* is featured in Episode #37 of their show archive. Let me just say that *The Secret* is NOT what *The Kybalion* is like or about. *The Kybalion* is a listing of philosophical principles that allow one to contemplate and consider, and makes no outlandish claims about how to get what you want in life by simply wishing for it! *sigh*
- Why am I telling you about the weird history of *The Kybalion* and its apparent family of flakey and potentially manipulative influences? I’m telling you this because, if you’re like me you’re going to do research on this text and not simply take my word for it. Meaning, you’re going to find this stuff out if you dig deep enough and I want you to at least realize that I know this about the text as well.
- Though despite its history and modern associations, I think that *The Kybalion* is relevant to this show and its pagan audience and will offer us some wonderful food for thought to be utilized for future show segments. I wouldn’t be mentioning it if I didn’t think this was the case and a lot of what it offers is very applicable to magickal practice and theory, let alone daily life. In fact when I read it I had been immersed in chaos magick at the time and found that much of what *The Kybalion* discussed to be almost word for word of what I was learning in regards to chaos magickal theory as well as being similar to Golden Dawn magickal theory and principles which I had been into previously. So, I hope you can begin to see why I would like to include and discuss this text during the next seven episodes of this show discussing one principle from it in each episode as a show segment.
- If you would like to get a head start, just remember that this text is available in the public domain so you do not need to buy it unless you want a hard copy of the book. Web searches for *The Kybalion* will yield a lot of links that contain information as well as online debates over the text. And two links for the text are provided in the show notes. One sends you to a nice website that contains an internet version of the text and the other link is

there in case you would like a PDF file. Also if you don't have Adobe Reader and therefore can't read the PDF version. Included for your convenience on the show website there is a link to Adobe Reader 9.0 on the manuscripts page. So, if you like, get a copy of *The Kybalion* to read and follow along with the show. A section for this new segment will be created in the show forum for future debate and discussion. I do check the forum every day, so if you post something, rest-assure that I will respond to you and that your post will not exist in a vacuum. Thank you! I'm really looking forward to these segments.

❖ Pagan Podcast Bumpers

- Promo: The Wigglian Way with Mojo and Sparrow
- Promo: Celtic Myth Podshow
- (Background Music: “Drum and Bass” by Ted Tunes)
- Thanks Sparrow and Mojo of The Wigglian Way, Ruthie and Gary of the Celtic Myth Podshow, and Greywolf Moonsong from A Pagan Heart in Maine, who you heard earlier, for providing me with those bumpers for your show. I really appreciate your support as well as all your podcasts.

❖ Podcast Shout Outs!

- I would also like to give a shout out to some of the other podcasts out there.
 - Darkly Fey from the Darkside of Fey
 - Dee and Heather from Pagan FM
 - Garrett, Al, and Gordon from Haunted New Jersey
 - Gene and Bryan from Hometown Tales
 - Kia Dragon from Pagan Chaos Magic
 - Tahlea from the Geek Witch
 - And Tommy Elf From the Edge of the Circle
- All Your hard work does wonderful things for the podcast community! Thank you so much and keep podcasting!
- If you haven't listened to any of these podcasts, then please check them out by visiting the links page on the show website.

❖ Segment: Covens and Teachers / Forming and Joining Them

- (Background Music: “spaces” by 3vr3n)
- In extension of the community discussion from Episode #002 I thought it would appropriate if I elaborated on covens, forming covens, and why I haven't. Let me preface this segment by saying that a coven or group

experience can be very valuable in that they can help one to grow much faster in their religious development because of the interaction that they provide with others which a solitary path can't always offer.

- To elaborate on what I touched upon earlier, when I was around twenty years old, I was briefly associated with a coven of which I never fully joined. I was one of only two men among six women. So needless to say, I was a commodity and as with many covens the number of men is often lower than the number of women. My first problem with the coven was that I noticed that I was being rushed into becoming a full member it. So, instead of waiting a year and a day, it was more like 180 days if memory serves me right? My second problem was that I began to notice that I was slowly being paired up with one of the woman in the coven. When I realized that this was occurring, I became very suspicious and uncomfortable with the situation and left shortly after. My third problem being the issues that they were having with one of the other covens that they were affiliated with.
- Looking back, I should have known something wasn't right before I even got involved with them, because the leader, who was an older woman, visited the college group I was a part of. I later understood this one time visit as her fishing for coven members. She would make who she was and where she was from known to those present thereby making her appearance more like an advertisement for her coven than her actually wanting to commune with a local group. It all seemed innocent enough, but in my later experience I realized that she was looking for followers and for legitimacy as it was also her habit to have her group attached to an already established tradition or coven family as a means of enhancing the legitimacy of her coven and her role as a High Priestess. Though what I am telling you here is simply my understanding of the situation based upon what I observed, and so could very be assumptive on my part, however the patterns speak for themselves and the later reports from other people go to support my understanding of what was going on with this particular High Priestess and how she conducted herself.
- Another interesting point of note is when she later contacted the Marlton Witches' Coalition via email which was the group I ran years after leaving her coven. She emailed the group not knowing who facilitated it, and introduced herself as the High Priestess of Blah-Blah-Blah Coven. To which I heartily and friendly replied by letting her know who I was. And if memory serves me right, she did not respond. It appeared that she was attempting to fish for coven members in my group similar to how she did years prior when she visited the college group I was with.
- Other stories I know of in regards to covens and teachers involve self proclaimed High Priests and High Priestesses forming adult-covens when it was obvious that they had no experience or background upon which to base their fancy title. I don't mean that they were not initiated or had received proper training, far from it; I only mean that it was plainly obvious that their knowledge was rooted in watching too many episodes of Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Charmed. The people I am referring to just reeked of nonsense and stupidity and I found myself thinking, “You have to be kidding me,” as I stood there listening to one particular individual talk

about summoning Dragons. In another instance, a friend of mine, who had been learning from someone online, became extremely disappointed and disheartened when they found the website that their alleged all knowing teacher was stealing information from and claiming it as their own. Because my friend saw every lesson that they had received from their teacher over the past several months listed word for word on the website.

- I’m not telling you about my personal experiences to deter you from covens or of learning from others, but to provide you with some insight so that you may be better aware of what to look for and avoid in those who you may chose as leaders and personal mentors.
- If you decide to become involved with an established coven please take the following into consideration, including the fact that this is coming from me. I mean who am I? I’m just a guy who does a podcast and I have about as much authority as any other person who has read their share of occult and religious books and has been among such situations in the past. Meaning hear me out, but don’t take what I say as being gospel if you would be so kind as to allow the use of the term.
- Be on the lookout for unqualified leaders, teachers and other similar religious and or spiritual charlatans. As they will be sure to offer nothing of substance or value to your spiritual growth and may actually create a host of problems and concerns for you.
- Beware of covens that follow a professed egalitarian structure, being one with no set hierarchy or leaders is almost more a form of wishful thinking, in my opinion, than a functioning reality. Because there will always be people who have a better understanding than the rest and as a result, will have others who look up to them. Hierarchy, in some form or another, will always establish itself in time. So, don’t be fooled by a group that claims to be egalitarian because, sure all members may have a say, but there is always someone who calls the shots in end. Don’t be fooled.
- Also, anyone who welcomes you with a more than casual pair of open arms should be cautioned and or avoided, in my opinion. As individuals such as these could possibly be using such methods as a means of gaining acceptance and lowering the guards of some people. This is akin to what is referred to as Love Bombing by those who study cult behavioral techniques. Love bombing is a means to make people feel instantly welcomed and may even cause them to become addicted to the sense of love and acceptance offered by the group and its leaders. I’m not suggesting that covens are like cults, but that any unwarranted affection or appreciation should be regarded as a warning indicator of potential trouble. As far as I’m concerned, people who are openly loving to an uncomfortable degree to a complete stranger are usually trouble or under the influence of some chemical or substance. Either way they’re probably a bad idea and should be avoided, but use your judgment. Unfortunately there are many people who form groups or take on students as a means of feeling important which could be the cause of such behavior. And any uncomfortable actions, advancements, or requests made by a leader to a student should be regarded as a form of harassment and ended immediately. Developments

such as these have been known to lead into sexual situations often used as a means of obtaining favoritism or knowledge from the leader or group. Obviously behavior such as this is not proper and should be avoided or if necessary, reported to the proper authorities.

- In many instances study groups as opposed to covens are often more practical as they provide a variety of instruction and experience without the social pressures, responsibilities, and rigidity that a coven can possess, and tend to avoid any form of a group hierarchy. Though I never attempted to start one, I imagine covens are like groups in a way. They're easy to start, but extremely tricky and even more difficult to maintain.
- Why easy? Well unfortunately, anyone can claim to be forming a coven, or be the head of one, but if the cheese is standing alone it's still standing and can still call itself cheese. So, anyone can start a coven that's easy. The difficulties are in running and maintaining it while still living up to and fulfilling the purpose of the coven while fulfilling the needs of the members if any happen to join. All which involve careful and thorough planning similar to anything which one builds. The more thoroughly planned in the beginning, the better the coven will work as a whole.
- If you decide to form your own coven please be aware of the following...
- Know why you want to form a coven and some of its basic tenants. Will it be more eclectic, traditional, or culture specific? Will it be focused on a particular deity or on a pairing or a group of deities? Are you forming one to have a group to practice with or to teach? Whatever the reason, be sure to have a game plan ahead of time because people will want to know.
- Probably the best approach is to form a coven with people whom you already know, trust, and care about. As this provides a solid foundation which can be built upon rather easy given the preexisting relationships with those involved. The difficulties would be in resolving your religious differences and so the group you form may be more eclectic than you would like and so it may not wholly pertain to your personal religious path, but it can provide you with some instruction, growth, and an opportunity to celebrate the sabbats with friends. This type of situation already comes with a bond which will allow you to build upon the love and rapport already present between the members, an obstacle that many covens have to struggle to form before such growth can occur. Just because they're in a coven doesn't mean they're going to get along as if they've been friends for the past five years.
- Be sure to keep in mind the allure that a coven can have to some newer members of the pagan community who anxiously want to be a part of a coven or have a mentor. Before you know it you could become the leader you had never intended to be whether that is for better or worse. Try and be aware of these potential scenarios and to keep a level head about your needs, the needs of the group, and the individual needs of the group's members. While there is nothing wrong with teaching and helping others along in their spiritual paths; there is something wrong with never being wrong.

- Another concern for those of you who may be forming a coven is when you come across someone who has a more established background than you do. The concern here being if this person sticks around then whose coven is it really? Yea, you may have started the coven, but remember what I said about hierarchies? Regardless of your intentions, the hierarchies will most likely form around those who seem to have the most knowledge and experience and if you’re not that person guess what happens? At some point your group will splinter and when this happens hopefully it occurs peacefully, because covens can have bitter endings similar to a broken marriage.
- This then opens up this conversation to the cold reality of if you’re even qualified to start the type of coven you wish to start? By that, I mean a coven which provides spiritual guidance and religious development and an environment in which others can learn, grow, and mature in.
- If you’re heading a coven, then you’re not just a leader of a coven. You are in fact more than that, to those around you. The demands required of a High Priestess or High Priest stretch far beyond ritual and magick and tend touch upon being parental figures, counselors, life coaches, people of inspiration, consolation, and can be the bearers of everyone’s problems and concerns, and heavily depended upon by all involved. The background, insight, level of responsibility, and performance require of such a figure head is often more to bear than most are able to live up to. Not everyone is qualified and worse yet not everyone realizes this. So, if you’re thinking of starting a coven are you really qualified? If you’re looking for a coven or are a part of one are those who lead really qualified to do so? Is this a problem for you? These are tough questions, but they are realistic questions and one’s which need to be addressed as the answers they provide will only go to strengthen and support your local community.
- Covens are not for everyone and they don’t need to be as there are a variety religious and social situations which can fulfill an assortment of needs on the part of the practitioner.

❖ Episode wrap up

- Well this concludes Episode #003 of The Infinite and the Beyond.
- If you have any thoughts about this episode or about what I’ve said in one of its segments please let me know by sending me a message through the website. www.infinite-beyond.com. Simply visit the contact page, fill out the form, and be sure to click the submit button when you’re done. I may even read what you have to say on the air. Or if you prefer a public venue then, visit and join our online forum by clicking on the link at the top of the show website.
- If you liked this show and are interested in hearing more or subscribing then visit our website at www.infinite-beyond.com where you can find links to where this show can be found online as well as links to the show blog

and forum. And by chance, if you use or prefer a particular podcast service provider that does not have this show listed, please let me know and I will be sure to add it to that provider for you.

- If you like, visit the about page on the show website and feel free to find me online at myspace, paganspace, coven-space, facebook, or even challenge me to a game on chess.com.
- **Show credits:**
 - To find an index of this show and other pagan podcasts visit The Pagan Podcast Index at <http://paganpodcastindex.wordpress.com/>
 - The several music tracks heard in this episode were
 - “Proteus” by composer George Wood
 - “The Eternal” by Lumiloop
 - “Seeing Things” by composer Alexandre Falcao
 - “Telepathic Interplay” by composer Alexandre Falcao
 - “Simple Pleasure” by The Evolutionaries
 - “Piano Quartet in g 3rd Movement by Mozart” performed by Linda Holzer
 - “Exodus” by composer Alexandre Falcao
 - “Drum and Bass” by Ted Tunes
 - “Spaces” by 3vrn3n
 - “Universe Inside You” by Persian Paladin
 - "Some of the music provided tonight is from the PodShow Podsafes Music Network. Check it out at 'music.podshow.com'"
 - Remember that all notes for the show can be found at our blog which can be accessed through our website.
 - This show is happy to be a member of the Proud Pagan Podcasters which can be found at paganpodcasting.org
 - The Infinite and the Beyond and its segments are copyrighted by Chris Orapello.
 - Thanks for listening, thanks for subscribing, and until next time Merry Part, Blessed Be, and 93!

Show Notes: Episode #003 – The Secrets of My Success

❖ Show Summary:

- In this episode we acknowledge the use of glitter and discuss anomalous pets and what to do if you think you have one. The benefits of backgrounds and the freedom to wander through your path. We learn about famous occultist Eliphas Levi in A Corner in the Occult. We hear what composer Kristian Stout has evolved into. Respond to listener email and have some laughs doing it. We begin a new show segment with an introduction to my other favorite text. And we continue with our discussion on community by addressing covens.

❖ Breakdown:

- (00:00) – Introduction
 - Music : “Proteus” by composer George Wood
 - Music: “The Eternal” by Lumiloop
- (3:33) – “As of Late...” by Chris Orapello
- (5:27) – “The Ghost Cat” by Chris Orapello
 - Music: “Seeing Things” by Alexandre Falcao
- (8:50) – “My Background and Path” by Chris Orapello
 - Music: “Telepathic Communications” by Alexandre Falcao
- (17:35) – Featured Music:
 - “Simple Pleasure” by The Evolutionaries
- (24:21) - “A Corner in the Occult: Eliphas Levi” by Chris Orapello
 - Music : “Piano Quartet in g 3rd Movement by Mozart” performed by Linda Holzer
- (34:08) – Promo:
 - “A Pagan Heart in Maine” with Greywolf Moonsong
- (38:29) – “The Kybalion: Introduction and History” by Chris Orapello
 - Music: “Exodus” by Alexandre Falcao
- (45:55) – Promos:
 - “The Wigglian Way” with Sparrow and Mojo
 - “Celtic Myth Podshow” with Gary and Ruthie
- (47:09) – Podcast Shout Outs!
 - Music: “Drum and Bass” by Ted Tunes
- (47:55) – “Covens” by Chris Orapello
 - Music : “Spaces” by 3vrn3n
- (1:00:55) – Episode Wrap Up

- Music : “Universe Inside You” by Persian Paladin

❖ **Music:** (in order of being heard)

- “Proteus” by composer George Wood - <http://podsafeaudio.com/jamroom/bands/1454/>
- “The Eternal” by Lumiloop
- Alexandre Falcao - <http://www.soundclick.com/bands/default.cfm?bandID=613461>
- “Simple Pleasure” by The Evolutionaries - <http://www.the-evolutionaries.com/>
- “Piano Quartet in g 3rd Movement by Mozart” performed by Linda Holzer - <http://www.ualr.edu/lrholzer/bio.shtml>
- “Spaces” by 3vrn3n
- “Drum and Bass” by Ted Tunes - <http://podsafeaudio.com/jamroom/bands/939/ted-Tunes.php>
- “Universe Inside You” by Persian Paladin - <http://podsafeaudio.com/jamroom/bands/2644/>

❖ **Links**

- The Evolutionaries – <http://www.the-evolutionaries.com/>
- The Kybalion (text website) - <http://www.kybalion.org/kybalion.asp>
- The Kybalion (pdf) - <http://www.hermetics.org/pdf/kybalion.pdf>
- A Pagan Heart in Maine - <http://www.paganheartinmaine.com/>
- Celtic Myth Podshow - <http://celticmythpodshow.com/>
- The Wigglian Way – <http://thewigglianway.libsyn.com/>

❖ **Credits**

- PodsafeAudio - <http://www.podsafeaudio.com/>
- Podsafe Music Network - <http://music.podshow.com>