

be of the type that light with friction upon any surface, and of wood rather than impregnated cardboard. One match ought to be sufficient, but two others are set there in case the first one breaks or burns out before the candle is lit. Should more than three be needed then the implication is that conditions within yourself are not appropriate and some other activity should be found.

The appropriateness of creating fire by friction on actual wood should be borne in mind. Although a flame might with efficiency be produced by gas lighter it is not immediately "fitting." In all of this, it is not meticulous rules that we seek to provide, but a developed sense of symbolic appropriateness. We seek efficient function that is a clear expression of a spiritual intention within consciousness. It also has to be within the bounds of practicality. The latter is a containing factor. Ideally, for example, an altar flame might best be kindled by the friction of a fire stick. The rapid twirling of a rod within a depression in a surface with perhaps the use of a bow is one that epitomizes within itself the function of all four quarters (bow of the east, rod of the south, cup of the west, shield or disc of the north). However, except in highly skilled and practiced hands, the length of time it would take to produce fire and the uncertainty of the operation would render it inappropriate, except perhaps in very special circumstances. A wooden match being struck on stone is in our suggestion, a satisfactory compromise.

Flame Meditation

The match should be ignited with due intention and realization of the miracle that is occurring. Were you alone in a wilderness you would the more readily appreciate the wonder of the flame, so easily taken for granted in the midst of modern civilization.

As you strike that match and bring to birth the living flame be aware that you are participating in the lighting of all the flames and fires that ever existed, from the hearthstones of the most primitive men to the great solar fires that shine upon you as stars from the deeps of the cosmic heavens. And be aware that it is all part of the single living flame, that has its originating spark in the heart of God.

In skilled and practiced hands, the lighting of a match and a simple candle can bring with it reverberations and realizations of the very primal creation—of the original *Fiat Lux*. The power rests entirely within your own imagination and depth of spiritual intention.

As fire is struck from the stone, banish from your mind all negative

doubts—about whether in fact the match will break, or whether it will fail to ignite, and so on—the demons of negativity are legion and prolific as flies. Simply *know* that you are going to create fire, that you *are* creating fire, causing light to shine where there was no light before, bringing warmth, bringing change, bringing all the necessities of created life's expression. This is a moment of supreme affirmation and confidence. In performing this simple act in a spiritually oriented manner you are bringing profound powers of healing to your own soul. You are expressing the divine principle within your environment and sphere of influence. Your whole aura will light up, and the brighter and more vibrant your aura becomes, the greater and wider your powers for good, far beyond your immediate physical confines; they will transcend space, and even time.

If so much can be gained by such a simple act, performed with spiritual intention, think what power for good you have when you bring your spiritual will to bear, in love and intelligent activity, upon the other symbolic realities you build within your circle. The kindling and tending of the flame is a great feminine principle and function. Thus the vestal virgins of ancient Rome were keepers of the hearth fire of the city.

Candle Lighting Ritual

Now take the flame to a waiting candle. The lighted match should take on the significance and power of a mighty flaming archangel, or even the Spirit of God, proceeding through space, to bring light and life to a new creation, waiting in deep latency. See the unlit candle, its wick and its combustible wax as a dark planet, or an unlit solar system, or an as yet uncreated soul, awaiting the touch of the Creator to bring it flaming to life, expressive with light and life and love.

In such a simple action so very much can be expressed. In the course of time and practice of this controlled and spiritual intention, think how your whole life could be transformed, however limited its outward expression might seem.

You are a creative spirit. Only choose to *be* one. Act out your noble destiny—be its current expression in the confines of hospital, prison, or broken home; in overcrowding or loneliness. The greater the darkness, the greater can your light shine. Only start with the small things. Perform them in faith, and the greater will follow, as surely as noon follows the dawn, as the verdant spring the barren indrawing of winter.

The ethic of the physical plane is order. The smooth running of the