

Accessing the Power Within...

Initiated into an ancient secret knowledge in the Moroccan desert, **Will Gethin** walks on fire to attune to his latent inner magician

Perched on cushions in a candle-lit Berber tent, we were gathered before a picture of a mythical figure, mounted on an artist's easel. Garbed in medieval dress – green frock coat, pixie boots and feathered beret atop golden curls – he stood before a mountain precipice. A stick over his shoulder bore a satchel, and a white rose glistened in his hand. The picture was entitled, *The Fool*.

From the inverted perspective of the Tarot and magical thinking, The Fool is no idiot, our retreat leader Hugh Lillingston pointed out: 'He is a divine fool, symbolizing the opportunity to take control of our lives. He is us starting out on our journey.'

The intention of this 'power holiday' with the Thorpe Institute (a personal development centre), was that fired up on a potent synthesis of neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), hypnosis and Huna (ancient Hawaiian esoteric teachings), we would be challenged to break boards, bend metal, and walk on fire, swiftly surpassing all previously self-imposed limitations. Reclaiming our power and redefining our personal realities as a result of these experiences, we would cast off all negative emotions, set compelling new goals and return calm, centred and powered up.

Our journey began in Marrakech on the last day of Ramadan. From the roof of our Riad hotel, I watched the clouds ripple pink and a New Moon rise, as cries from a mosque echoed across the city. The call to adventure! The following day we travelled 320 kilometres south east over the Atlas mountains, to the desert, reaching our Berber camp near the Algerian border after nightfall. The sky was a crystalline feast of shooting stars and asteroids.

Sunrise unveiled a spectacular desert oasis surrounded by pink mountains. Our camp was a tribal gathering of luxuriant Berber tents. Renowned as a magical spot, the oasis is popular with Nomads, as well as psychologists who come here to treat depressed clients.

Waving a stick of burning sage, Hugh Lillingston kicked off our first





“ We are already magicians, the more we realise this, the more prosperity we can create ”

seminar by introducing anthropologist Joseph Campbell's metaphor of The Hero's Journey adapted from the great world myths. Our hero's journey was to be played out in the desert.

A hero's journey involves responding to the call of adventure and facing challenges often symbolised by demons, in our case board breaking, metal bending and fire walking. Overcoming these tests, we create a new world map, incorporating the growth and discoveries of the journey.

The key tools to guide our journey were drawn from Huna and NLP.

In *The Secret Science Behind Miracles*, Max Freedom Long, who came to Hawaii in 1917, described how the kahunas (local shamans) used Huna, which means 'The Secret' to heal and perform numerous miracles. But their practices were outlawed by Christian missionaries in the 1820s, and they disappeared underground.

Max Freedom Long discovered that Huna was hidden in a secret language and that this same secret language and magic was also used by Berber kahunas in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco. Elements of Huna can be found across several worldwide traditions – among the Native Americans and the Maori, and in alchemy, Egyptian magic and the Kabbalah.

Developed in the 1970s, NLP is a system based on copying models of

successful people, which helps to change your perception or state at will by creating 'anchors' and pictures to make you feel a certain way. Music, places and smells are all strong anchors.

Two flat-ridged mountains bordered the desert wastelands like colossal digital fortresses. 'Allow me to introduce my associates,' grinned Lillingston. 'El Mdaour Kibir and El Mdaour Sirir are very powerful anchors.'

Our challenges took place over the first three days and Lillingston taught us how to access empowered 'unconscious' states.

For the board break, we covered our boards with lists of things we wanted to break through to in our lives, so that they became potent symbols for transformation. We drew up a shortlist of empowering words and created mental pictures of times we'd managed to generate these vital resources. Lillingston taught us how to construct a 'circle of power' from which to source these anchors and he suggested creating personal anchor movements to ignite our inner power.

The pinewood board (12 x 6 inch long and 1 inch thick) was positioned between two concrete blocks (1.5 ft high). When my turn came, I was apprehensive, but entering my circle of power, I felt a surge of conviction and turning fear into power, I slammed my hand through the board. I felt euphoric and anchored this feeling with a mental snapshot of mountain and moon.

For the metal bend, we had to bend an iron bar (1.5 metres long and 8mm in diameter) in pairs, placing the ends of the bar just above the V of the neck. It is about overcoming resistance. If both people make 100% commitment, the unconscious mind takes over and you give in to your immense strength.

Beaming up my anchor of mountain and moon from the board break, my partner and I swiftly crushed the bar between us.

I was ready for the fire walk.

Fire is an age-old symbol for initiation into esoteric knowledge. In the past,

having this knowledge was heresy and could make you liable for torture or death, so it was kept secret. Lillingston thinks this knowledge should be made freely available via self-initiation.

So the fire walk symbolised self-initiation into secret knowledge. Lillingston outlined various ways to walk across burning coals, such as 'devotion' (belief in divine protection), 'distraction' (focused attention on something other than the fire) and 'motivation' (focus on getting to the other side). 'It's your decision how you do it,' he said, 'make your own cocktail of reasons. It's time to take responsibility for ourselves.'

FireWalking

We built the 20ft fire lane together. Once alight, the olive wood logs were smashed and raked until the coals were around 1,200 degrees Celsius. (Volkswagen cast engine heads at 900 degrees Celsius).

Lillingston went first, stomping quickly over the coals like a Maori warrior to our group chant of 'Cool Moss' to distract the conscious mind. When my turn came, I felt an intense waft of heat as I neared the lane of glaring red coals. Tuning into my higher self and my motivation for doing this fire walk, I stepped forward and breathed chaotically to spur myself into a state, and closing my eyes, I conjured up my anchor of mountain and moon, urged fear to move into energy and walked slowly and deliberately over the coals with my arms raised outwards like a Navaho Indian. While calm, confident and unruined, I felt a burn on my left foot towards the end and speeded through my last paces.

I felt mixed emotions of elation and confusion – I'd walked on fire, unharmed until losing focus. I was in awe at the magnitude of what I had achieved, while a stinging blister played teacher to my errant mind. The whole group made it across, half of them with blisters, of varying degrees. Momo, one of the Berber staff, trod the coals, summoning his faith in the divine. 'Allah Akbah,' he cried, crossing unscathed.

'I wanted people to be responsible for themselves,' Lillingston said later, 'but sadly some people were distracted and unfocused and I have to take responsibility for this miscommunication. Those who got burnt learnt, the fire is the teacher.' While no one was badly hurt, Lillingston decided that orchestrating fire walks in the desert is too much of a responsibility, and fire walking will be replaced with archery for this desert retreat. Fire

“ All religions are mixed with magic. Everything we do to gain benefits for ourselves in this life or the next is a part of magic. ”

Max Freedom Long, *The Secret Science Behind Miracles*



walking will be reserved for pupils who have graduated to an intermediate level.

For Lillingston, the mystery with fire walking is the burning: 'If scientists can do it without burning and Momo can do it believing in divine power, why do some get burnt and others don't?'

The following day, there was the option of camel trekking across the sand dunes. Regrouping at dusk, the seminar tent had been repositioned to face onto El Mdaour Kibir and the interior walls displayed a procession of tarot cards. Lillingston explained how the Tarot system for self-knowledge contained wisdom from all ages and was used to hide secret information in the face of persecution in the 1500s. We examined the symbols contained in the cards and their reflection of aspects of ourselves on our journey.

The Hangman card (depicting a man upside down) represented inverted thinking, the Death card symbolised death to our old ideas and a new beginning. All the cards reflected how in gaining secret knowledge on our journey and tuning into the unconscious mind, we were starting to create our own reality.

Forgive & Forget

Lillingston expounded on the Law of Cause and Effect: to gain maximum power we had to take responsibility for everything that happened to us. Since the unconscious mind hears every thought in our heads, we had to focus loud and clear on the things we wanted.

We were now ready to become apprentice kahunas and Lillingston was going to de-mystify magic and show us how to use it for transformation, calling on our unconscious minds and higher selves. The formula was: Attention-Intention-Action-Result. 'Magic is the old word for science,' Lillingston enlightened. 'We are already magicians, we materialise things. The more we realise this, the more prosperity we can create.'

Our first assignment was to remove unresolved negative emotions, abetted by the unconscious mind, which contains memories of everything that has ever happened to us. The kahunas say the

conscious mind can ask the unconscious mind to tell it things.

Using a combination of Gestalt and Timeline therapy and our imaginations, we floated up above our bodies and travelled back and forth along our timelines, between the past and future, looking down over the events of our lives and calling upon our unconscious minds to help us uncover the root causes of our unresolved emotions. We repeated this technique to remove self-limiting beliefs.

For me, the most empowering Huna technique was Ho'o Pono Pono – 'Forgive and Forget' – which releases stuck negativity in relationships with others. In our imaginations we constructed a stage and invited people from our lives onto it. You tell each one whatever needs to be said and let them have their say. Then, inviting love and healing, you ask forgiveness and forgive.

'Change yourself and you can change the world,' Lillingston declared. 'If you forgive your parents in this process they'll no longer treat you the same way. But if you return to the same behaviour, you'll get the same result.'

On the final morning in the desert, we released our future goals into the timeline, having constructed powerful pictures symbolising their achievement. The pictures needed to be as colourful as possible, with movement, smell and audio.

We could now use these techniques to manifest whatever we wanted in life. 'Focus on feeling what you want, go into it and see how it feels. Put intent behind it, take action and you can have it.'

Back in Marrakech, after dinner in our Riad hotel, Lillingston produced the picture of The Fool and pointed to the satchel at the end of his stick which contained symbols for an eagle and an eye.

'This means he carries memories which are focused and targeted. The Fool has tremendous knowledge which he applies consciously with a spirit of upward inquiry. The last day represents the first day of another journey, the journey home. With our own satchel of memories, it's up to you to apply them.'



more information

- The next 'Power holiday' in Morocco is 4-13 March 2006, a 10% discount is on offer to *Kindred Spirit* readers. For further information and bookings, contact the Thorpe Institute, tel: 01827 839066. Email: hugh@thorpeinstitute.com; www.powerholiday.com
- Royal Air Maroc, the national carrier, operates daily direct flights from Heathrow to Marrakech with fares from around £180 return. Tel: 020 7307 5800. www.royalairmaroc.com