



## Western Magic: The Sacred Science

*An Interview with Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki,  
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**The Western Mystery tradition is spiritual path that blends meditation, ritual, and exploration of heightened states of consciousness. Though it is built on the mystical wisdom of the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, Celts, Hebrew Kabbalists, and many others, this tradition is often misunderstood by modern spiritual seekers. Here, Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki—a third-generation occultist and founder/director of the Servants of Light school—discusses the authentic practice of magic.**

**Sounds True:** How does the magic of the Western Mystery tradition differ from what we see in the movies?

**Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki:** It differs quite considerably. I really prefer to call it the “sacred science” rather than magic. This practice has been described as “the art of changing levels of consciousness at will.” It is the ability to flow with life’s change—and the ability to create change when and if it is needed. This is what the Western Mystery school teaches: the ability to change, and the patience to allow change to occur in its own good time.

Change might be something down-to-earth, like saying that you’re going to learn a musical instrument now to expand your horizons. Or it might be something larger. Perhaps you had dreams when you were a child where you believe you saw the future. It might have frightened you. The change might be to know that now is the time to go back and look at that power you have forgotten for so long.

**ST:** What do you tell a new student about the training?

**DAN:** Magic is like any other area of serious study. It takes time, it takes effort, and it takes a good teacher. It’s real work. There were times in my

training when I would have loved to have thrown my books out the window. But I realized that the foundation work was the most important part of it. You can’t build a house straight off the floor. You need a foundation. And then it will stay up for a hundred years if you’ve built it well. Magic’s the same.

**ST:** If you’ve done a practice like Buddhist meditation or yoga, is there still a reason to take up magical training?

**DAN:** I go back to what Ernest Butler, my teacher, told me. What he learned about Eastern practices when he lived in India is that they are very concerned with the spiritual, and very adept at opening up the spiritual level. But they can forget that the physical part is just as holy, and just as in need of lifting. There is a tendency in the East to concentrate on the spiritual and on getting away from the natural world.

Whereas with the Western Mysteries, we say everything is holy. The whole life, from the physical to the astral, to the mental, to the spiritual—it’s all holy. For students who come to us trained in an Eastern way, we say that you know about spirituality, you know about the different methods of meditation and opening yourself. Now, let us show you how you can use that spirituality to enlighten, to awaken, and to lift the rest

of you.

**ST:** So is there an idea of enlightenment or awakening in magical practice?

**DAN:** The true practice is all about light. The light of reason, the light of knowledge, the light of compassion, the light of an understanding of our place in the universe. It's the light of the ultimate divinity of all life. In the Servants of the Light, we "awaken" or "enlighten" students slowly and carefully. We don't take any beliefs away. We show students how to stretch their spirituality to new horizons, and understand their beliefs on different levels.

**ST:** That sounds much like Ken Wilber's stage theory of enlightenment. It's surprising to find that kind of overlap in a tradition many dismiss as superstition.

**DAN:** There are some people who are always going to look at magic in that way. Magic can and will happen, to, with, and around you all the time. Sometimes its effects can be explained by science. Sometimes not. It doesn't ask permission to exist. It has always been there. It will always be there. It helps to believe in it, but it's not a requirement. Magic. Sacred Science. Call it what you will. Learning it can uplift you, awaken you, and bless you. It will give you inner balance and harmony. It will teach you to take responsibility for what and who you are.



Learn more about Dolores' teachings, books, and audio CDs on her site at [www.DoloresAshcroft-Nowicki.com](http://www.DoloresAshcroft-Nowicki.com)

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