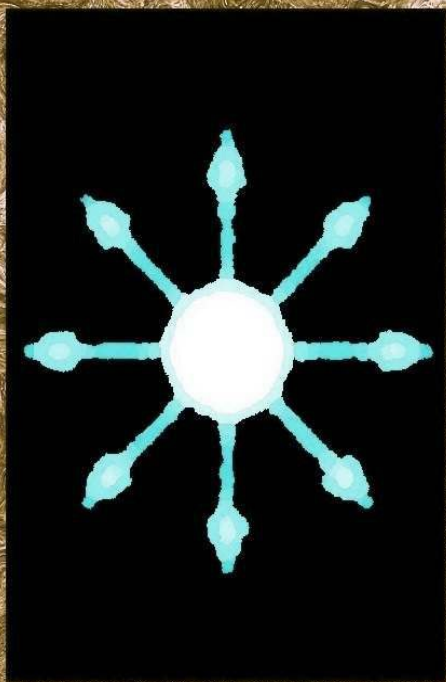


# BELIEF MAGIC

BELIEF AS A MEANS OF MAGICAL POWER  
A BOOK OF CHAOS MAGIC



# **Belief Magic**

*Belief as a means of Magical Power*

*A Book of Chaos Magic*

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# 1

Chaos magic is nothing without a utilitarian and pragmatic approach to belief. Though the focus is often on desire, belief is always in the background, standing is the unseen and hidden hand. There is no chaos magic without the conscious manipulation of belief and it is this aspect which separates it from other forms of magic. The traditional view is to be informed of a certain truth and then accept it. One hears of a spirit's existence, for example, and believes that it exists. Then the spirit is summoned and magical power is released. For a Chaos magician (hereafter called Chaote), this approach is not enough: belief is a power and must be treated as such. It cannot be looked upon as a mere reaction. To do so would be to

limit belief and, ultimately, to limit power. And chaos magic is nothing without the actively and consciously transgressing limitations.

The Chaote chooses her belief. She then, by this, chooses her desire. And by choosing her desire, she is free from external influences – at least as far as this is concerned. Her intent is autonomy, not allowing desire to be dictated to her from outside herself. It is the same with belief: in a magical setting, facts do not compel her belief. Reason does not compel her belief. Plausibility and past experience also do not compel her belief. *She alone compels her belief.* She decides – no one else. She may be quite content to engage in total rationality in common life, but when magic is involved, there is only power and ways to manipulate it. Belief, in this case, is no exception.

Desire almost always arises unintentionally. Belief follows desire in this respect. However, if belief can be manipulated intentionally, desire can be made to conform with belief. For instance, a theist believes in God. Though her desires arise unintentionally, she will find that her belief in God causes in her the desire to do God's will and to experience a knowledge of God. An atheist, in contrast, will have no such desires. But though desire arises unintentionally, it arises in the context of belief. Belief constitutes the mental world in which desire takes shape. If belief can be controlled intentionally, desire will follow. And if desire can be molded in this fashion, then it can be consciously directed to all manner of magical endeavors – many of which the Chaote may not have thought possible.

But belief – or lack thereof – is also a

source of restriction and bondage. If we do not believe, we do not even attempt to attain. We desire only what we believe in, also. Some even believe only what they desire. To open these restrictions and allow desire to flow consciously in any direction is part of the transformative nature of chaos magic. As a discipline, it is not merely a means of achieving desire. It is also a means of changing *what is desired*. If belief is liberated, desire is also liberated. And to have free belief and free desire is to reach a higher order of freedom. Thus the Chaote also makes use of many different systems, pantheons and hierarchies – most all of which are mutually exclusive, representing vastly different conceptions of the universe. If the Chaote had intellectual fidelity to only one system, this would bar the doors to all the other great systems, limiting the Chaote quite substantially. Magic is

always more intense when it follows a particular belief system, for belief is the scaffolding *upon* and *in* which power manifests. As belief follows desire, power follows belief.

Evocation is a practice which especially requires a degree of belief manipulation. If there is not a belief in the spirit being evoked, the powerful manifestation of its presence is put in doubt. It is very important that evocations take place with a degree of sincerity.

Belief is also identity, and identity is the desire for control, or the outcome of control. Carl Jung spoke of the *persona* or public mask that one wears as a social strategy. Though unreal and devastatingly self deceptive, this persona is often on the level of a miniature God for most people. It is fed and worshiped through sacrifice: the sacrifice, that is, of reason, honesty

and integrity. These are all placed upon its altar, their throats are slit, and they are offered as immolations, casting a sweet fragrance into the nostrils of the God, persona – the God who is composed entirely of false beliefs.

This tendency towards belief is so entrenched that it is not possible to slay all beliefs at once. Like attacking Russia from the West, it is possible to gain a little ground, but the Russians can always retreat and regroup, to attack with even greater force at a later time. And winter is always around the corner to devastate one and all. So too, if one belief dies, it makes little difference: the landscape of the mind is characterized predominantly by belief and, after a small retreat, new beliefs will reemerge to fight with even greater force. Thus the man who wisely gives up the fables of

Christianity in his youth then finds himself a dogmatic atheist, committed to the principle of materialism. When presented with evidence of psychic phenomena, he reacts just as any Christian would to a clear contradiction in the Bible: he sides with his belief, not the evidence. His belief is his identity and his identity is his belief – he has not given up God, just changed God's outfit. And like all believers, his slavery is unending.

To destroy belief entirely, though, is unnecessary. The path is clear: belief must be treated as a familiar spirit rather than a God. It must be employed and put to use. This can be done in a friendly and even sweet way, but there should be no mistake as to who is master and who is slave. The Chaote knows that every belief is false, even the true ones: she does not care to believe, nor does she care to see. For

her, there is only the glory of the dance – the display of power and the passive enjoyment of its reveries. Truth is found in action, not in any sort of acceptance. One can *be* truth, but the idea of knowing truth is absurd. Again, the dance is all, and if belief is part of the dance, all the better. But a dance is a series of many gestures and movements, and none of them are meant to last. In fact, a dance of one movement, without change, is no dance at all: it is self torture and a method of torturing the audience, too, with boredom.

The testimony of the dream state gives us a clear demonstration of the true nature of belief. In a dream, it is accepted by all that the various personas, landscapes, events and encounters are all the work of a single mind. The mind becomes other people – whether friend or foe – and serves as

its own environment, separate and distinct from all perception of the outside world. You, as the center of the dream and unaware that you are dreaming, believe wholeheartedly in the real existence of these false phenomena, reacting to them with as much drama and intensity as if they were real. Clearly, the mind can become anything. The mind can become someone else just as it can become another self. The mind can become landscapes, sublime or mundane, and it can do all of this without the slightest awareness of itself. It can wield all manner of power and have zero concept of what is truly going on. Is this, perhaps, a metaphor for the entire universe? We need not go that far, but it is clear that the mind is an altogether different animal than what we imagine it to be. Its capacity to believe, to sink into delusion, yet to wield immense power is without

evident parallel.

Waking existence is merely a dream of consensus. The consensus is imposed upon us from the outer world – or at least appears to be – but its experience is quite similar to that of the dream state. The two are not entirely distinct, as the dream state replicates a more unconscious and desirable form of the waking state. But in both cases, all experiences are ultimately derived from the mind itself, even though they may take their cues from outer influences. I'm not suggesting that consciousness alone exists, but experience *is* only consciousness, ultimately. If the belief changes, the experience changes, and if belief changes, powerful can flow in a new way. If you could dream while awake, reality might even take its cues from you. And dreaming while awake is believing what you wish, sending

power through belief and experiencing the results of power.

Such an unfortunate mental illnesses as schizophrenia demonstrate a mind which has great power, but which has lost control. The schizophrenic horror takes hold of the conscious mind and brutalize is it till death. This is the exact opposite what is intended and magical practice: in magic, and in chaos magic in particular, the Chaote creates a condition of controlled schizophrenia (so to speak) and is able to draw upon the wild power of the mind without losing the position of authority. However, many human beings live very functional lives but also at the mercy of their belief. They too have lost control. As such, their beliefs limit them in their power is restricted to very isolated in specific areas. The shattering of this citadel is the work of magic.





But how can belief be manipulated?

The easiest way to manipulate belief is to act out beliefs that you do not possess. For example, you may not be of the Christian faith, but for the sake of manipulating belief you can spend some time immersing yourself in Christian literature and acting out typical Christian behavior: reading the Bible, praying, listening to hymns, gazing at a crucifix or image of a Christian saint, etc. You can also follow the Christian moral code to the letter. Though it may seem unnatural and aesthetically displeasing at first, you will soon find that your mind begins to change in accordance with your actions. Though you may have had strong anti-Christian opinions formally,

these begin to dwindle and you find yourself entertaining a typical Christian worldview with relative ease. Once you are able to do this, you can then perform magical spells and the vocations in the context of a Christian worldview such as summoning Saints or using the Psalms for magical purposes. There is no inherent power in the symbolism or belief itself, of course, but power can be channeled and expressed through these beliefs.

To make a practice of this is most rewarding: the Chaote devoted to it will make use of multiple belief systems over time, treating each as an absolute truth for the moment and then discarding it when it is no longer useful. In this way she gains control over all beliefs and her own mind: she is no longer a slave to belief but rather has made belief her trusted servant.





### 3

#### *A suggested regimen of belief manipulation*

Write down a series of your "core" belief, listing them by number and touching all the main points of your belief-system. For example:

1. Atheism (theology)
2. Darwinism (ethics)
3. Anarcho-Capitalism (politics)
4. Materialism (metaphysics)
5. Individualism (social values)
6. Omnivorism (eating habits)
7. Functionalism (psychology)

## 8. Determinism (philosophy of causation)

Set a week aside to explore an entirely different belief system, living by its code and doubting all your former contentions. Read the literature of the belief system and devote your full emotional attention to it. Do what it commands (within reason) and do not allow thoughts to the contrary enter your mind. You need not express these beliefs to others, of course, but you must let it regulate your internal state of mind. Perform the rituals of this new belief system, and work magic based upon its symbols. See what happens.

Here are some examples of contrary beliefs, and beliefs which stand wholly opposed to each other:

*Christianity / Theistic Satanism*

*Buddhism / Hedonism*

## *Materialism / Vedanta or Idealistic Buddhism*

## *Communism / Capitalism*

It is possible to find some parallels and commonalities between them, but they cannot ultimately be harmonized without doing significant damage to one of the other. If a Chaote is successful with her practice, she will be able to maintain these opposite beliefs for the sake of a ritual practice. She would be able to sit still, peruse the literature of one of these belief systems, look at its imagery and aesthetics, etc. and find herself in agreement with it, fascinated by it and able to work a ritual based upon its premises with sincerity. You may think that it's not sincerity in the same way that a true believer in any of these faiths has sincerity, and perhaps you are correct, but it is sincerity in the

sense that her belief channels a sufficient degree of psychic energy to bring forth magical results. So long as she can do this, she has done what is necessary – at least from magical perspective.

Not all these beliefs have a magically beneficial component. Hedonism, for instance, may be a proper attitude to take in certain circumstances, but it does not have an inherently spiritual or supernatural component to it, and therefore rituals based solely upon hedonism would not be especially worth pursuing. The same is true of materialism, communism and capitalism. Yet part of belief manipulation is not only to believe in a certain thing for the sake of a ritual practice. The Chaote can and should adopt and discard different beliefs periodically in order to train her mind. This has personal and psychological

benefits, above and beyond what may be achieved through magic. It will allow her to see the perspectives of other people and develop a deeper and more understanding empathy empathy – both highly valuable personal traits to have and develop. It will also allow her, over time, to break the stranglehold that her own ingrained beliefs may have upon her, for, like a muscle, if she contorts and strains that part of her mind which believes in various ideas over time – pushing it into new and unexpected positions and directions – it eventually becomes quite strong and flexible. From this aspect alone it becomes a powerful tool, increasing general power.

However, if the Chaote is specifically pursuing a magical act, belief systems which involve the supernatural should be utilized rather than those which deny the supernatural. It is possible to

perform an effective spell in the context of a non-supernatural belief system, but this is not because of any benefit found within the belief system itself. The Chaote is successful in spite of the belief system. It is ultimately unnecessary.

With that being said, it is also true that different belief systems have specific advantages when it comes to certain types of magic. Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Christian iconography and beliefs are very potent when it comes to works of healing, for example. This can also be said of Mahayana and Tibetan Buddhism, though all forms of Buddhism are very potent in terms of increasing concentrate of power and personal growth. The same is true for Hindu and Taoist iconography and beliefs. The fact that millions upon millions of people have devoted their

psychic energy to these forms should not be overlooked or underestimated. That amount of mental energy directed to images and thought-forms will endow them with incredible power – power which can be tapped into by the Chaote. If the Chaote develops her own belief system or her own aesthetic, this also has certain advantages to it, but in terms of harnessing raw and cumulative power, it is a good strategy to utilize existing belief systems. The excess of power which resides in them can sometimes make up for any personal lack that the Chaote may have in her own practice. For instance, if the Chaote finds that her own concentration abilities tend to disperse too easily she can make use of Buddhist symbols and beliefs for a period of time in order to increase her power in this area. That so many others before her have directed their energy into these forms means that she will be

able to draw on some of that energy, for the power that is within a large and established belief system often exceeds a single person's power – at least as far as a novice or intermediate Chaote is concerned. Eventually, as she becomes more in tune with power and how to direct it, she will find equivalent power and perhaps even greater power. Until that point, however, she can derive a great deal of power by simply utilizing powerful and pre-existing forms of belief.

If you are interested in learning how to do this in a structured way, the best strategy is to investigate miracles associated with different religions – miracles that have a fairly wide attestation, that is. Obviously there are cranks who make claims about every religion and its miracles, and there's no reason to take these people seriously. However, if there are a wide variety of

miracles associated with a particular icon, image, prayer etc. and it has a powerful heritage over time, you can reasonably assume that there might be power there. As such, you can engage in your own experiments and see if this power is useful to you. The Medicine Buddha which is worshiped in the Far East is a great example of an icon or image that is specifically associated with healing. Millions of people focus on this image for the express purposes of being healed or for healing someone else. Therefore, if you want to make use of a energy that corresponds to healing, this would be a good option to try. Acquire an image of the medicine Buddha, find out it's various chants, and perhaps read some scriptures which explain the history and origin of the medicine Buddha, as well as its powers. Then engage in different rituals of worship before its image, visualizing the person you want to have

healed or visualizing what part of your body you wish to have healed. After doing this routinely for a few weeks, you will be able to sense what sort of energy is actually there. I hope that it does result in healing, but we also must be realistic in our approach to magic and understand that not every spell works. But the parallel is also true: not every spell fails.



It is not only belief which must be attacked and placed under control: preferences, opinions and the very idea of the self must all meet with the same fate if inner powers to be set free. The self is a prison – it is a prison far before any world becomes a prison. We are always at the mercy of what we love and hate until love and hate are both made one's familiars. In truth, all the elements of ourselves can be reduced to an ultimate core of fear. Afraid of the natural and irrevocable uncertainty of existence we then build ourselves small iron citadels of opinions and preferences, hoping we will keep the enemy cosmos at bay. But no particular opinions or preferences are ever necessary. Desire is necessary, just as belief is necessary,

but they are only necessary *in potentiality* – not actuality. No particular desire is necessary and no particular belief is necessary: the *fact* of their existence and presence is vital to experience, but the masks they wear can be set aside. Preferences and opinions are quite the same in this regard: if you move, you have a preference. This is necessary. Yet where you move is of no ultimate importance: the fact of motion is necessary, but not the direction.

You can thwart yourself at every step of the way, and you should. Do not be satisfied with the way things are, even if it feels right and true. What is right and true today makes you a slave tomorrow. The Chaote is not concerned with making the prison cell comfortable – she would far prefer to see it disappear, first, and then behold the open sky.

Just as you listed your core beliefs, you can list a series of core preferences. As an example:

1. Music (industrial, black metal)
2. Art (futurism)
3. Literature (sci-fi, cyberpunk)
4. Cinema (sci-fi, crime)
5. Cuisine (Italian)
6. Hobbies (painting, PC games)

As with core beliefs, set aside a week to engage yourself in the exact opposite of your core preferences. Listen to music you dislike and learn to enjoy it; eat food you are not accustomed to and that you do not normally enjoy; read literature you hate as if you love it, etc. Though it may seem difficult at first, with practice it will become quite easy

and open up many unexpected and hidden doors within your own consciousness.

Some may find it questionable whether this attitude towards belief as possible, and while I might be able to defend it on philosophical grounds, only experience can answer this question. Try it. See what happens.

Once you have mastered the ability to believe anything at any time, and to dispense with belief at will, you find yourself in the free position of control. No form of magic is unavailable to you when you can believe all things and nothing. Systematically rearranging and reforming your preferences also facilitates this.

Historically, system such as tantra, Gnosticism and some of the more transgressive European mystery

schools of all utilized drastic alterations to behavior as a means of establishing power. To learn to like what you do not like, and to learn to want to do what you do not wish to do are both sources of immense power, and though you cannot perhaps hope for perfection in this regard, you can certainly expand your borders. A persistent and systematic expansion and inversion of one's values opens up thousands of new doors within the psyche – thousands of new doors of power. Such an ability, once achieved and expanded, cannot be valued too highly. If you are successful, you see all areas of magic influence and sight increase exponentially, in precise proportion to what degree you can become *other* than what you imagine yourself to be.





## 5

These practices are much harder than they sound. Many a Chaote will attempt them and fail without her knowing it. Belief is far more than telling yourself something, or running a particular series of thoughts in your head, while you secretly doubt them. To truly manipulate belief in an intentional way, you must enter into an entirely new state of mind – a state profoundly different than that of ordinary consciousness. It can be likened to a controlled insanity: there is a baseline of disregard for the truth of anything, but this disregard is only the initial posture. It is soon swallowed up by an aesthetic appreciation of the belief itself, and this appreciation soon turns to desire. Once it reaches the level of desire, it

then naturally reorganizes perception/power in its favor and according to its specifications. Then doubts simply disappears as a conscious element and belief becomes a source of power.

The wrong way to attempt this is to smile at a belief, and "play along" with it, while at the same time having no particular love or desire for it. This is why it is important to not begin with beliefs which are so radically different from your own. I cited the example of Christianity as an extreme case in order to illustrate just how far one can go in this practice of belief manipulation. However, you should begin with things you already find aesthetically pleasing. If you do not find Christianity to be especially aesthetic to you, choose something that is a little bit more to your taste. In my experience, Chaotes almost always

have a deep fascination and appreciation for the works of H.P. Lovecraft. Assuming his pantheon and philosophy of cosmicism as objectively true realities is a decent choice for a Chaote novice on the path of manipulating belief. Already you want to believe it – scholarship and lack of evidence is all that gets in your way. Disregard these and *dive in*. Practice strange rites with fear and trembling, pushing your mind just to the brink of madness but not quite beyond. The day will come when you will notice that these rites do indeed have an effect and your belief in them will strengthen. But once you find yourself at the point where you are willing to seriously debate a college professor in favor of the existence of Yog Sothoth, it is time to abandon the ship and find something else. (Perhaps devotion to the Hindu god Bhairava, for instance.)

Once you have walked the path of many interesting beliefs, taking them up and discarding them at will, you will then be able to do the same with beliefs that you ultimately find boring and useless. In time you can even make use of beliefs which you find quite repugnant. Once you have mastered even that, it will no longer be so important to adopt different belief systems, for your mind will have trained itself to believe or disbelieve anything at will, putting the requisite power into the belief then withdrawing it once is no longer required.

There is a deeper and more transformative aspect to this practice, however. Some reading this will no doubt ask: but where is my true self in all these practices? Who am I really, if beliefs can be used in this fashion?

That is just the point: there is no true

self. There is no fundamental core or identity to us. There is only a series of masks and an impersonal understructure. Once you have seen the limits of yourself expand and contract many times, able to assume many different forms at will (and I mean this in the psychological sense, not in the sense of shape-shifting into a lizard or some other such nonsense), then the notion of identity as an inherent thing is entirely dismantled. The self exist so long as it is believed in. If you can disbelieve it, it disappears. The nature of all thought is this way: quite malleable and quite changeable. Our psychology only appears solid because energy is channeled towards different facets of it to an extreme degree, and this creates an illusion of a fundamental personality – a "true self", "the real me", etc. If you wear a mask long enough, you see yourself as that mask, and begin to think of the mask as

inseparable from your identity. But the practice of chaos magic will eventually introduce you to states of consciousness where there is no sense of self at all. The idea of a "true self" is seen as the intellectual equivalent of idea of a "true set of clothes". Can we seriously make an inquiry into something like that? Well, we actually can if we stretch our mind enough, but it is still a useless question.

There is, however, a center in the midst of these storms: over time, the Chaote can attain a deep awareness of the different elements of her own psychology. Just as one may go outside and perceive trees, grass, sky, clouds, mountains, etc. psychological existence can also be perceived in terms of its constituent parts as if it were a landscape. Belief is not required one way or another in this regard, for the experiences simply present themselves

in certain patterns which are noted, accepted and registered in memory. It is natural that certain beliefs will be assigned to these experiences, for that process does appear to be unending, but the Chaote will see them as mere beliefs and be able to distinguish them from actual experience. As such discernment increases and becomes more penetrating and exacting, the Chaote will then no longer have a need to see herself as anything in particular, but will behold the flow of experience as it is: a continuous stream of phenomena, all of which occur in the presence of a witnessing awareness. Identity is simply one of these phenomena, and there are many others – some useful for magical purposes, some useful for other purposes, and some not at all useful. This constitutes the calm and deep center of experience, where assumptions are experienced as assumptions and

beliefs are experienced as beliefs, but nothing is forced into a conceptual box. God floats in a godless space, like an autumn leaf. The soul, the self, I, me, mine, you, them, this, that, it, etc. – all are similar to him, all floating in a space where they are absent. And in such a center is found true sanity. That which parades as "sanity" by the bulk of humanity is nothing more than a fragile pose of functionality, and it can be swept aside at the slightest instigation – the proofs of which are scattered everywhere throughout the historical record. Sanity, when it is real and true, is nothing more than the ability to know when you are lying to yourself, and to be able to know this in all cases. But this cannot be done until belief is seen for what it actually is: empty experience, like any other, without significance and without necessity. The center is to behold and not elaborate, to see and not imagine,

to be aware and not to believe – then the door of vast potential opens, and the Chaote can work in any system, believe in anything (or disbelieve) and still retain her position of power. Belief is her weapon and, holding such a weapon, she is not easily defeated.

The cynic, hearing of these things, can and should point out the obvious: isn't everything I have just written a belief of some sort? And therefore, am I not a slave to my own beliefs? I have committed the same sin that I have accused the world of – am I not a shameless hypocrite, self-deluded and worse off, perhaps, than the most committed Pentecostal, Sunni or Marxist? At least they do not deny belief in the midst of believing.

Cynics and pessimists are a quite similar breed, however. Some animals, when cornered, fight to the death.

Other animals roll over, resigned to their fate. The cynic, early in life, does not get the answers he wishes. The pessimist, too, realizes that the life he wants will not be handed to him. Both find themselves too weak or too cowardly to press on, despite these initial setbacks, and they then play the next logical role: that of the perpetual naysayer. This way nothing can hurt them. They know nothing, so their knowledge is safe and secure from refutation. They want nothing, therefore their desire is never thwarted. They hate nothing, and therefore can never be attacked and overpowered by an enemy. They love nothing, and are thus never in fear of losing their beloved, losing hope. So afraid of life, they cease living, and derive their power from the blanket criticism of all things – and yet they do not die, do they? They continue to eat and breathe, a hero and sage in their own minds. They

are like a child who quits a game of checkers after losing the first two pieces. The only reason I write of them here and now is because I have this tendency in myself and am sympathetic to it, though I have no patience for it. There is room for these people in life, perhaps, but not in magic. Cynics never question their cynicism and pessimists never sour of their ennui. They are best left to their mud pond – at least when they look in the muddy pool, the reflection is somewhat undistorted. You need not worry about these things, however. You have a sky to see – blue changing into black.

But to answer this question from an intellectual perspective, consider it this way: if you examine experience, you will see that certain aspects of it change with belief, and certain aspects do not. Those aspects which change proportionate to belief can be looked

upon as potential tools, if one knows how to use them. Those aspects which are unchanging – the senses, for example, or the fact of consciousness and mentation in themselves – do not require belief or any other intellectual prop. They are useful also as potential tools, and the same rules apply to them, with this exception: they constitute the actual limits on experience for now. Since they cannot be changed, we can, perhaps, call them "realities" independent of our belief. It is true that you can compose a sentence which says "I believe in the existence of my consciousness" but this does not mean that the sentence has any real validity and experience. No one need believe in consciousness: it is simply there. You will find many such things like this, but the factor which divides a discerning Chaote and an undiscerning sheep is the ability to recognize a belief is a belief when it is present,

and the ability to recognize a reality as a reality. Recognition is not the same as belief. This should be quite obvious. If you can't understand the difference, take some time with it. Maybe you will, and maybe it will be very soon.

But with that, this book ends. Good luck.