

# The Art of Prayer – 7 Keys to Intentional Manifesting

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Do you know how to pray? There is more to it than just asking God for something that you want. **In order for a prayer to be answered, it must be done well; it must be mastered.** It is like a novice picking up a guitar and trying to play a song. If the novice has not learned how to play the guitar, they may get lucky and produce something resembling music, but most likely, the sound will be nothing more than irreconcilable noise.

What would it take to produce the beautiful music you would like to hear out of a guitar? The answer is that in order to consistently create the desired sound from a guitar, you will have to learn and practice the art of playing the guitar. The laws of physics will not allow you to haphazardly bang away on the strings, and have the vibrations re-compose themselves before they reach your ear.

**Likewise, in order for the Universe/God/Nature to answer your prayer, it must receive the precisely accurate and coherent vibrations of the experience that you are asking for.** In other words, you have to become good at the art of prayer, if you want it to work well. Most of the ways that we have been taught how to pray by parents or religion are not very effective. It is as though they have told us, just pick up the guitar and ask it to play like Jeff Beck, and you just start strumming the strings. The guitar cannot make up for your lack of skill and your ability to artfully express yourself. Instead, the instrument is a benign channeler and enhancer of your desire and effort.

This is the way to look at God or that which you are praying

to; a benign force that channels and enhances and gives you a manifestation of that artful prayer that you have initiated. I will share with you the seven keys to mastering the art of prayer.

## **First Key: Ask for the Experience, Not the Specific Form You Think Will Provide It**

Whenever you have a desired experience relative or in contrast to your current experience you have picked up the instrument and begun strumming whether you are aware of it or not. The trick is to be aware and send your signal, your prayer, artfully. **I speak of experience instead of a literal manifestation because the first key to praying well is to understand that you are not asking for a specific thing, person, or event to come into your life, but you are really asking for the experience that you think a specific thing, person, or event would give you.**

Not understanding this key greatly reduces the possibility of your prayer being answered. Just as thinking that you will enjoy the song from a guitar if and only if the player produces a very specific sequence of notes, and only those notes. Whereas, if the guitarist were allowed to vary the notes, chords, and timing, she may actually be able to give you the truly enjoyable auditory and emotional experience you want.

A simple example would be that you may desire a warm, loving, and fun relationship, and you are certain that the person you just met is the one to fulfill that desire. So you may be praying, consciously or not, for that specific person to want to be with you in the same way. The problems come in when you realize that person is not available or doesn't seem as interested in you. Now your signal, or prayer, unconsciously transforms into how you cannot and may never have the relationship experience you desire. And since that is more

the obvious current reality, that signal is pretty clear, and the Universe just keeps giving you that. **You end up with the opposite of what you thought you were praying for.**

**Also very important here is to feel and think about how what you are asking for will benefit others as well.** It is important to remember the interconnectedness of all of life. **It adds great power to your signal to take into consideration how it will positively effect everyone and everything else.**

## **Second Key: Feel, Feel, Feel the Experience and Use Ritual to Engage the Body**

The second key is that you are able to feel the desired experience even though it is not there yet. This is a great skill and perhaps the most challenging part of the art. It requires a honed imagination, and a powerful connection to your body. **Just imagining or visualizing is not enough. You must feel it in your body, both physically and emotionally.**

This is very similar to what a great actor or performer must be able to do in order to convince the audience that the drama or part is real. **A great theater artist knows that if at any moment the audience doubts the validity of the role, they have failed in their art.** Likewise, you must fully convince God/All-that-Is, that you have already received the answer to your prayer; that you are already experiencing it. If you fall back into the role of you current contrasting experience, then your prayer is negated, or indeed swung around completely.

That seems very difficult, in fact almost impossible doesn't it? Well perhaps that explains why we are not all capable of composing like Mozart, or painting like Monet, or that most prayers seem to go unanswered. It wouldn't be an art, if it

didn't require that you through all that you are, and all that you are capable of into it.

**This is where the shamanic arts of ritual and ceremony, movement and acting out are of great help.** The movement, images, and symbols required in ceremonies, vision boards, and role playing bring us into our bodies making it easier to feel the experience and engage our subconscious in the process as well.

## **Third Key: Start With Something Easy**

**One of my first great martial arts teachers put it so well when he said, "the key is not that practice makes perfect, instead you need to understand that practice makes permanent, so only perfect practice makes perfect."** Like mastering any art, start with small and simple steps first, then gradually increase. Start by thinking of an experience that really doesn't matter to you whether you have it or not. Make it something that you are not currently experiencing any contrast around. **Keep it very much close to the current realm of possibility within a short time period.**

**Make it easy for the Universe to answer.** For example, imagine something like finding something unexpected today. You might say to yourself, "it would be nice if I was pleasantly surprised today", and then remember with your mind, your emotion, and your body what it feels like to be pleasantly surprised. And if you can't remember, just pretend that you do know how it feels, and feel it.

**Do this for a while to build your confidence in yourself and in the Universe.** It has been so long since we have known and practiced this art well, that it may take some time to rebuild the confidence and trust required to continue on toward mastery. **Focus on the successes, and let the rest go.** Focusing our thoughts, attention, emotions, and body on the positive outcomes is also an important part of the process.

It aligns with the inclusiveness of the natural Universe.

## **Fourth Key: Ask for What You Want, Not for What You Don't Want**

No matter how much you don't want an experience, or the person, thing, or event that is providing it, the Universe ignores the "not wanting" part. Just like in physics and the guitar, there is no vibration or note that you can prefix to the note you are about to play, that makes that note come out the opposite. **There is no exclusion switch in reality, only in our language; so looking at an experience and saying "no, no, no, not that!" gets read as "yes, more of that!"** This is in large part because what you are *feeling* in the moment is the experience you don't want in spite of the words.

Two-year old children are another great example of this phenomenon. Tell them not to touch something, and they head right for it. The theory is that two-year olds have not yet learned the intricacies of the language. They instead behave much like the benign natural Universe from whence they very recently came. It isn't until the age of three or four that they begin to understand that "don't do that," means "do something else." But that which answers your prayers, doesn't bother with the trickiness of language, and instead responds to pure vibration. **It really is key that you maintain the vibration of the desired experience, or at least a neutral or no vibration regarding the experience once the prayer has been sent.**

## **Fifth Key: Diversionary Prayer – The Art of Distraction**

I learned a little trick when once helping a very strong minded friend get the weather he needed to sail a notoriously difficult stretch in a limited window of time. He is a very experienced sailor, having circumnavigated the Earth twice

single-handed; the kind of guy that has all the answers and advice, and could smell a storm from a thousand miles away, not to mention cheap whiskey, but that's a whole nother part of the story.

Furthermore, he had sailed that stretch several times already, and was fully prepared for the same wretched experience. **I, of course, in the spirit of the relationship, had already bragged about what a great shaman I was, and how its shamanism 101 to change weather.** If I couldn't give him a highly unusual south wind and calm seas within a couple of days, I might as well hang up my rattles.

I have always succeeded at changing the weather, but I had never tried teaching a hardened old sailor a new trick. I needed a diversion. I figured that if I could get him focusing on praying for something else for the next couple of days, we had a chance with the weather. So first I got him to remember a day out on the sea when all the conditions were ideally in his favor. No problem, he had plenty to choose from. Then I said, "Look, forget about it, regardless of the conditions, you know you are tough enough to make it anyway, so who cares."

**Then I changed the subject to work to help him forget about the weather.** He had a few prospective job possibilities, but he was not very encouraged from the interviews. I suggested that we do the feeling-based prayer around him having good and gainful work. I told him to focus on how he always ended up finding work, some way, some how during his tumultuous life. I used the prayer for work in this instance to take him off of the more entrenched subject of what his sail was going to be like in a couple of days. And of course it worked, or I wouldn't be writing about it.

I got the text message from him on his journey a few days later reading – "South wind 7 knots." He even calls me his shaman now – at all the bars. I'm not sure that helped him

get a job though; although the next diversion eventually did. This method is also somewhat analogous to musicians and writers who find themselves blocked going out and focusing on something completely unrelated to their project. **It takes an otherwise counter-productive signal, and cuts the power to it, allowing its vicious cycle to dissolve into neutrality.**

## **Sixth Key: Staying in a Receptive Attitude and Allowing the Mystery, or Feminine over Masculine**

Just as in the example above, once I got my friend to send the original prayer, the art shifted into the ability to not get in the way of receiving the desired experience. **It is true that the Universe/God works in mysterious ways. Not only can you not be sure exactly what form your experience will come in, you may not know exactly when either.** So much depends on what the rest of All-that-is is asking for, as well as the momentum required to rearrange things.

**Again, it takes mastery to be able to wait and be open to what the Universe has in store.** There is a degree of surrendering that whole spiritual practices and religions are devoted to. Do you really know the **ONLY** way you can possibly get your desired experience? If you really think so, you may already be in trouble. **Like the old master filling the student's teacup until it overflowed; if you do not empty your teacup first, the Universe cannot fill it.**

If you do not tame your mind by reminding it that it has limits, it will not allow you to receive new possibilities, and the possibility of receiving the answer to your prayer. **Your mind can be your best ally in the art of prayer, and it can also be your worst enemy.** Train yourself to let your heart and body rule your mind. Make the feeling more important than the thought. **This is what I have referred to in many articles as the Return of the Feminine as it takes charge**



**over the Masculine.**

Like the rudder on a boat, the mind may precisely point in the right direction for where you want to go, but is completely useless unless the boat is propelled forward by your feelings. And if the boat is allowed to be propelled backwards by feelings of what you don't want, then the rudder takes you in exactly the wrong direction.

**Likewise, allow your emotion and guidance, which comes from you heart and gut, to determine the effectiveness of your mind.** The direction or focus of your thought should be as though you have already reached the goal of your prayer. This is also true for steering a boat on the ocean. You must keep your eye on the point of shore that is your desired destination, because simply pointing the rudder in that direction will not account for the influence of the wind and tides. The rudder must be adjusted to compensate for these external influences. **Likewise, the mind must be flexible and allow for new possibilities and new paths.**

## **Seventh Key: Be Adaptable and Allow Yourself to Change**

The experiences you desire move around a lot. Old desires become launching pads for new desires, and Nature waffles; as a part of Nature it's what we do. **Allow yourself to change your mind. As we take in new observations and new contrasting data, our desires change.** Everything eventually changes in Nature; stones more slowly than viruses, but it is natural to change and to want to change.

We want new experiences and greater complexity. Don't be confused if your life has been more of the experiences you don't want, or has been overly complex. This may make you pine for the old good experiences and simpler times. Certainly anything would be better than a life of mostly pain. **But when life is working well for you, when you are**



**creating more of the experiences that you do want then you will continually seek greater complexity new experiences, just as Nature does.**

Let's go back to the guitar analogy. As you begin to master the guitar and together you are producing good music, you will find the natural desire to try new songs, new ways of putting notes and chords together in more complex ways. **We measure the level of virtuosity of any great artist, by the level of complexity they have attained without losing the quality of their art.** So allow yourself to continue to pray for more and new experiences. Allow yourself to change your prayer even before it is answered.

## **Final Note: Help is Available and There is Nothing Serious About It**

**And finally, there is no score keeper or judge, no authority above you to determine whether or not you are doing all of this right, or living life correctly or not. It is your gig, your sandbox to play in as you wish. It's just as valid to go through life letting the winds of influence blow you to and fro and just see what happens.**

And if you do try to be more intentional and it just seems to difficult, this is also where the gentle, yet powerful work of the shaman can help to release the deeper influences that may be flowing against your practice and progress. There are infinite possibilities in the eternity of this play of consciousness, and you can find them all in the center of your heart where laughter originates. Laugh without moving your lips, and you will feel it.

With Love and Gratitude,

Jon Rasmussen

## About the Author



Jon has over 35 years of experience in the fields of ancient and modern shamanism, healing, science, spirituality, and consciousness. He's the author of the book [Dreaming Your World Into Being](#), the CD's [Shamanic Journeys to Empower your Life](#) and [Practical Meditation for the Modern Lifestyle](#), as well as the DVD [Let Success Find You](#). After several near death experiences at an early age, and extensive shamanic training and initiation, Jon leads a life of service for the healing of humanity primarily through the principle of the return of the powerful Feminine as spoken of in the prophecies of his Q'ero shaman lineage. He travels extensively to conduct sessions, teach, and lead ceremony for individuals, couples, families, groups, and organizations. Learn more about Jon's work at [dreamingintobeing.com](http://dreamingintobeing.com) and connect with him on [Facebook](#). You can book sessions with Jon in person or by phone and Skype by sending an email to [jon@dreamingintobeing.com](mailto:jon@dreamingintobeing.com).