

Mudras & Hand Symbolism: Mudras of the Egyptian Tradition

The ancient Egyptians possessed a fount of occult and mystic wisdom. In those days the Egyptian mystical brotherhoods or "Mystery Schools" at Luxor, Thebes, Memphis, and Heliopolis, collectively represented one of the several portals leading to the Universal Great White Brotherhood whose existence was established by cosmic beings for the purpose of advancing the evolution of man through the application of spiritual disciplines and the apprehension of Cosmic laws. These teachings were given in secluded places, in subterranean temples, and at night under the canopy of the heavens. Many eminent Greek sages studied at these Egyptian schools of metaphysics, among whom were Plato, Thales, Pythagoras, and Democritus. In these Mystery Schools, the goddess Isis was especially venerated. She personified Nature and according to one Greek interpretation she signified occult knowledge. Isis also represented the Mystery Schools and those undergoing training therein later emerged out of her womb and became known as the "twice-born," for they were newly born of the Holy Spirit.

Contrary to what is popularly believed, the Great Pyramid of Cheops was not built as a tomb, but as a "House of Initiation," a place where the teachings of the gods were given by the "Master of the Secret Places" to those who successfully passed the severe tests of earth, water, air, and fire. Spiritual disciplines were taught that ultimately transformed each spiritual aspirant at the point of their graduation into an embodiment of a god, or in our modern metaphysical vernacular, "a perfect human being," or a "Christ,"--an anointed one. In these sacred temples of learning and wisdom were to be found countless statues, most of which were considered and worshipped as gods by the ignorant masses, and as idols by the equally ignorant religious fanatics of succeeding generations. Those involved with the initiatory temples, however, regarded these statues as teaching devices and used them to portray certain aspects of the microcosm and the laws or principles of Nature.

Many metaphysical disciplines were given to the tyro to practice in these Mystery Schools; among the spiritual exercises given were the mudra disciplines. Some of the statues and pictograms of the Egyptian gods are portrayed with certain mudras. The neophyte was taught to assume these mudras while conducting meditation, breathing, and visualization exercises.

Below we present just a few of these Egyptian mudras that you may incorporate in your daily spiritual routine. You may choose to do only one at a time in a single session. This is permissible; however, these Egyptian mudras, would confer the greatest effect when all are done together successively in a single work-out.

1) The Sun-Bearer Mudra. Place both hands outstretched above the head holding an imaginary sun. Palms upward. Visualize the microcosmic sun as a divine fiery radiance--it is in fact the presence of your Higher Self. Imagine the rays of the Higher Self pouring into your upturned hands. Maintain this visualization and hand position for five to ten minutes. Chant the mantra, "HU" over and over. This Egyptian mudra helps one to absorb higher energies. The hands being positioned beyond the lower layers of the aura and above the head makes it easier for one to contact the magnetic-field of the superconscious Self and thereby empowering the lower aspects of the microcosm. Unless otherwise indicated, let the breathing rhythm be natural in this and the following exercises.

2) The Cross-Chest Mudra. This is an Egyptian gesture of royalty. The left hand is placed on the right side of the chest, and the right hand on the left side--as may be seen in the statuette of Osiris. As you will recall, this is the Sign of Resignation. If you are standing or sitting upright with the spinal column erect instead of in the lotus position, keep your feet together. This will close the circuit at the lower region and allow energies to circulate. Take a deep breath while in this position and hold it for as long as comfortable. Then release the breath slowly. Repeat three times. After three cycles of deep breathing maintain the mudra for five to ten minutes more while breathing normally and chanting the mantra, "AIM" several times. This mudra draws the energies of the aura into the physical body, especially in the chest region. It helps to strengthen and awaken psychic centers there such as the anahata chakra, or heart center. The thymus gland being empowered via the heart chakra, the immunity level of the physical body would naturally be fortified. This is one of the mudras taught by the Rosicrucian Order, a mystical fraternity perpetuating the ancient occult wisdom. According to the Order's oral tradition it was founded in ancient Egypt by Thutmose III--one of the enlightened pharaohs that ruled the land of the Nile. This mudra integrates the positive/solar and negative/lunar forces in the body. Divine power in the physical system results with the use of this hand pose.

3) The Praise Mudra. The members of the Egyptian Mystery Schools were well versed in the meaning and art of praising their gods. The temple hierophants knew that the secret effects of praises were upon the person giving the praise rather than the god receiving it. About two thousand years ago we were told to love our enemies by an Initiate of the Egyptian Mystery School. Why? Because love ennobles us. It does not matter if another deserves our love or not. The act of loving unfolds our divine nature and causes a greater force of our Higher Self to indwell in the physical form. The same principle applies to praising God, or any higher being more advanced than humanity. Divine beings or the Source of all do not care if we praise or adore them in any way. They are egoless and therefore unconcerned if we respect them or not. In religious and spiritual teachings channeled down from the intelligences of Light, we are taught to give praise and thanks to higher powers. This is not for their sake but for ours. The celestial beings are concerned over our spiritual development. The act of praising with a sincere and selfless heart causes us to be energized with a renewed power and a zest for life and is a healthy and a most essential spiritual discipline. Although praises may be given in any bodily position, the Egyptian Masters have

found that a particular pose with a certain mudra offers a maximum effect. This is done by squatting with the right knee touching the ground while the left knee is raised. The left hand closed in a fist, is placed on the chest. The right arm is extended upwards to the side of the head and the hand also is in a fist pointing upwards. A variation of this is to use the right index finger to point upwards. Anubis, the god of the dead, has modeled this pose nicely for us. Maintain this position for 5-10 minutes while giving silent thanks to God for the life within you. During which time breathe normally while chanting the mantra, "EMA-HA." In a little while you will feel regenerated. You will feel joy pervading your being.

4) The Solar Plexus Energizer Mudra. All felines are symbols of solar energies. So it is apt that Sekhmet, a feline goddess as depicted here, assumes a secret pose that strengthens the sun center of her physical being, or in other words, her solar plexus. The solar plexus has nerves connecting to almost every organ in the body. By channeling energies or concentrating it in the solar plexus, we cause our organs to function optimally. But one must be careful, as over-polarization might cause problems. Assume this mudra while standing or sitting. Breathe normally. Close the left hand into a fist and place it over the solar plexus as shown by Sekhmet. The right hand, should also be in a fist but placed to the side of the body. After 5-10 minutes of maintaining this position reverse the hand positions. The right hand in a fist over the solar plexus, while the left hand to the side of the body. Do this for another 5-10 minutes while mentally asking your Higher Self to energize your solar plexus and also chanting slowly the mantra, "RA-MA" about 9 times.

5) The Magnetizer Mudra. This mudra has a twofold purpose. It is used to absorb pranic energies from the environment or from some specific source; it likewise is employed for the purpose of magnetizing one's aura so as to strengthen it against invading metaphysical forces. This mudra confers various benefits, it may improve one's health, augment one's store of psychic energy, acquire charisma, etc. To execute this mudra one may sit or stand, or assume the asana as portrayed by the goddess Nephthys: place the left foot underneath the buttocks and sit on it. The right foot is placed on the ground with the knee pointed upwards. Now put your two hands in front of you, palms outwards. If you are doing this mudra to absorb energies then visualize and feel the energy from infinite space streaming into the palms of your hands as sparks of golden and silvery lights. Or if you wish to attract energy from a specific source--from the sun, for instance, then visualize and feel the "yod" or "rain" drops of power entering your palms from the sun. Do this for 5-10 minutes. Visualize the cosmic forces entering your being as you inhale.

To magnetize your aura with this mudra, simply imagine and visualize a flow of golden energy flowing from your palms and filling your aura--a circumscribed space surrounding you. See your aura being permeated with this effulgent energy. This should be done for 5-10 minutes. Visualize psychic energy flowing from you as you exhale.

Whether you are absorbing energies or magnetizing your aura, chant the following mantra several times while visualizing: "EMA-BA." This mantra will anchor the power to wherever you are directing the energies. Chanting may be done verbally or mentally whichever is comfortable and appropriate. The mudra is also used to confer or empower others with energy. After generating the necessary energy, focus your palms to the back of the recipient about an inch away from the physical form. Then, visualize energy flowing from the palms of your hands and into the body of the subject. You may visualize the energy as a brilliant white, silver or golden light. While thus channeling energy from your palms, move them upwards and downwards along the right and left sides of the spine where the ganglia of the nervous system are located. This operation will have a healing and strengthening effect on the subject and if done in conjunction with specific powers possessed by the operator--these could also be transferred or channeled.

6) The Pyramid Mudra. This mudra strengthens the negative polarity of the physical body and generates a strong magnetic force for attracting cosmic energies of the positive polarity, thus balancing the "Yang" and "Yin" of the microcosm. This mudra is to be done prior to the magnetizer mudra above. The animated image shown is an excellent portrayal of this hand-mudra, though it is unnecessary to move your head as shown by the toon-image.

To do this mudra, simply place the palms of your hands together and above the head. Place your two feet together while in the standing position. Now hold this position for 5-10 minutes while chanting and vibrating the word "Ma." After several minutes of chanting, inhale deeply and then exhale and hold your lungs empty for as long as comfortable. When you need to breathe, do so, and then as you exhale, repeat the above. Do this special breathing for several cycles, after which you may continue with the other mudras.

The above represent just a few of the Egyptian mudras that have come down to us, the explanations of which are simply guidelines. Feel free to improvise and experiment.

[Note: This paper contains images which may be seen as originally published at our website]

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