

Hidden Thoughts

Part 2

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Introduction

Greetings! Welcome to Part 2 of the Hidden Thoughts series. The first part did not contain much in the way of clear presentations or methods, and I wanted to change that in this part. The following pages are primarily magic related, with only a couple sections of other writing.

Also, this part is more organized than the last. The next part I expect will be reminiscent of Part 1, but as long as we're talking about methods, I decided it would be helpful to keep everything in some sort of order.

If you like the ideas, then you're welcome to use them in your own sets and shows, or in everyday life. But also make them personal to you – magic is best when it comes from the heart.

The Divination

This is a challenge I posed for myself a few years ago: Give a deck to an audience member, have them shuffle it, take a card out, remember it, replace it, and then they shuffle the deck. I cannot touch the deck during the process, nor use any kind of equivoque or other technique to influence which card they pick. I wanted to be able to do this with my back turned/blindfolded. In other words: I wanted this to be the fairest way to have a card randomly selected, and shuffled back into the deck..... The trick of course, is figuring out which card they picked.

The shortened process is this:

- I turned my back
- They shuffle
- They pick a card and replace
- They shuffle
- I figure out which card they picked.

Sound impossible? It is. Almost.

Here are the problems I ran into:

- I can use a stacked deck || won't withstand 2 shuffles
- I could use a mirror system || too complicated and unreliable
- I could use a confederate who watches the process || I don't like confederates

So here's the answer: Use a stooge.

Only joking, I don't like stooges much either.

I can use a stacked deck; I just need to stack it in such a way that it won't breakdown after 2 shuffles. I also need to ensure that the first shuffle is a riffle shuffle. And the selection needs to be placed in a different position than where it came from.

The solution:

- Separate the deck by suit, then put each suit in order from A – K
- Put the Diamonds on top of the Hearts, then the Spades, then the Clubs
- So the order is: A – K (H), A – K (D), A – K (S), A – K (C)
- Do a couple false shuffles yourself
- Split the deck EXACTLY in half – you’ll have two face-down piles, one of (H) and (D), and the other of (S) and (C). We’ll treat each of these piles as an independent stack.
- Do the riffle shuffle motion, and then push the piles towards them, *implying* they should do a riffle shuffle.
- If you now spread the deck face-up, you’ll see that you essentially have the same two stacks, they’re just mixed into each other.
- Have the participant spread the deck face-down, and randomly select one card (let’s say the 3 of Hearts: 3H)
- Tell them to replace it wherever they want.
- Tell them to gather up the deck and give it a shuffle, then place on the table.
- You now turn around, spread the cards face-up, and figure out which card they picked.

How can we figure out which card they picked? If, on that second shuffle, they do a riffle shuffle, the one card out of order sticks out like a sore thumb. If they do an over-hand or Hindu shuffle, it will take a bit more time for you to find the card that is out of order.

When your back is turned, you’re listening to which shuffle they do – a riffle sounds quite a lot different than an over-hand. So if they do an over-hand/Hindu, then once you spread the cards, move your hand over the faces, and tell them to imagine their card is getting warmer and warmer, and you’re acting as if your feeling for a temperature difference. What you’re actually doing is buying time to look for the break in the pattern. Depending on exactly how they shuffle, there may be a few cards that are out-of-place, so just do a quick anagram to work out which was theirs.

And there it is: the solution to figuring out which card someone picked in the fairest way possible.

Some fun notes: When you tell them to replace it wherever they want, this implies that they should put it somewhere else (which needs to happen for this to work, otherwise there is no break in the pattern that we can recognize later).

Here's something I absolutely love saying: "Replace the card far away from where it came from. That way, even if I knew the order, there's no way I could figure out where it came from or where you put it."

When people hear this, they think: "Yeah, he's right, he would have no idea where I put it." But when you think about it, this statement "even if I knew the order..." is a complete contradiction. I give the answer to the entire trick in that one sentence. And it flies under the radar every time.

Have fun!

Pre-Show Cover-Up

Here's a way of covering up pre-show work and getting a 'free hit' on a name guess. This was created off the back of something Kenton Knepper mentioned in a Q&A about miscalling a spectators' name (who you pre-showed).

During your pre-show work, off-handedly ask for their name.

Once the spectator is on stage (or in front of the group you're performing for), hold a hand to your head, as if you're thinking, and say, "Wait, wait, don't tell me..... Starts with a 'D' ... Davis?"

They reply: "David".

You say: "Ah, yes, I was feeling Davis for some reason."

To them, it seems like you are struggling to remember their name from earlier, but to the audience, it looks like you are guessing their name... And you almost got it right. So whatever their name actually is when you ask for it during pre-show, think of a name that is similar and use that in presentation.

Examples:

- David | Davis
- Tom | Tim
- Carol | Caroline
- Stephen | Steve
- Anna | Hannah

Shooting Stars

What if we could have someone think of a memory, equate that memory to a star, imagine plucking one star from the sky, then have that star materialize in your hands? What if we could then take that star, hold it between our fingers, and have it jump from our fingers, then fly into the sky and land among the stars? How would that even be possible?

Ladies and gents, I give you, the invisible thread slingshot. It's kind of a cheeky method, it's impractical, but when you pull this off, you will be a god on mortal ground.

You need the right situation, and you need to wear a dark, long-sleeve shirt/jacket and dark gloves (not mittens). You'll need a large rubber band (dark color, so it blends in with your sleeve), some fishing line, a small slip of fabric, and a glow-pebble. Thread the fishing line through the fabric, and then tie the fishing line in a loop. This creates the 'cradle' for the stone to sit in. Attach the fishing line loop to the rubber band. Now, anchor the 'cradle' inside your shirt collar and anchor the rubber band to the underside of the bottom of your shirt (down near your right hip). For the anchors, I bent paperclips into hooks, and wove them into the inside of my shirt.

The glow-stone goes in your left pocket. To produce the stone, you'll put in the fingers of your left hand, then cover it with the fingers of your right hand, as you cup your hands. Have them imagine the memory, and hold their hands above yours (NOT touching yours). Tell them to look up and imagine taking a star from the sky. As soon as they look up, you switch the positions of your hands, which will put the glow-stone in your cupped hands, but their hands are covering yours, so they can't see it yet. Have them imagine this star coursing through their veins, and materializing in your hands. When they take their hands away, they see the 'star' in your palms.

Note: This method of producing the star is the same method I use in “The Forest”, which has been published in my “**Book of Light**”, and will also be included in the “**Urban Shaman Manual**”.

Put the stone in your right hand and reach your left hand inside your collar, grab the cradle between your fingertips, then pass the stone into your left fingertips, loading it into the cradle. With your right hand, reach down and grab the rubber band, hook it with your middle finger, and insert your index finger into the band – this prevents the stone from hitting the back of your hand once it is released.

You point out and up towards the sky, and release the stone, sending it flying into the sky. As soon as the stone is clear of the cradle, swing your arm down, and let the rubber band drop on the ground behind you.

You will need a certain environment:

- It must be nighttime.
- If there are street lights, they must be behind you, so the rubber band is not noticeable in the shadows against your shirt.
- There should be a building or a tree in the general direction you will shoot the stone. These stones are not visible from farther than about 50 feet, so you should be okay when the stone hits the ground, but it is nice to know that the stone landed on top of a building, rather than hoping they don't see it start to come back down.
- Try not to shoot at windows. Or animals. People are 10 points each.
- Grass is nice, so the rubber band isn't noticeable once you drop it.
- This works really well in the winter, because you need to wear dark, thin gloves, so the rubber band doesn't show up against your skin.

I've only done this once. For obvious reasons – it's bold (bordering on stupid), the environment has to be just right, and the person needs to be

willing to go along with what you're saying. But more importantly, it's one of those things that only needs to be done once.

Runes to My Memory

In this song: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Zn_hc5uNZY , there is a certain amount of power leading up to and especially after the 1:33 mark.

A friend of mine decided he wanted to work out with me, and he hadn't gone to the gym in... a few months, so he needed some amount of motivation to get up off the couch, and get into the gym (he's got great genetics – his diet is terrible and he hardly ever exercises, yet still looks lean).

When we were doing bench presses, he was giving up too easily, didn't have the will to push out those last repetitions. Of course, he hadn't worked out in a while, but when it looked like he was just starting to have trouble pushing the bar, he would say "Okay, I'm done", and the same thing went for every other exercise.

The next day, he asked about how long it will take for him to start seeing changes, and I told him: "Well, if you want to see change, then you need to push yourself past what you're comfortable doing." Just like in any other field, if you want to get better, you need to challenge yourself to BE better.

He doesn't like listening to metal, but I showed him this video, and said: "the time between 00:00 and 1:32 represent your first eight/nine repetitions. And you give up right when it starts to get difficult. What you need to do, is push yourself through those next three/four repetitions – you need to stop stopping the song at 1:32. Once you feel like the bar is really starting to get heavy, imagine that you're that badass Viking sitting at the table, staring Death in the eye. Flipping over the table needs to be you pushing that bar farther than you thought possible."

You know what? It worked. The next night, when we were at the bench press, he got through eight repetitions, and I could see he was starting to

struggle, I said: “C’mon man, be that Viking, tell Death you are NOT giving up that easily!” He pushed out four more repetitions, for a total of twelve, there was a fire of determination in his eyes, and both of us knew he would be stronger tomorrow than he was today.

Double-Miscall

Sometimes, when I'm performing card magic, I'll use this subtlety as a convincer for the card that is supposed to be in my hand. Let's say I'm doing a transpo:

- I pick a card (King of Spades – KS)
- They pick a card (Seven of Hearts – 7H)
- I secretly switch the cards, so now I'm holding their card, but they think I'm holding my card, but actually they are holding the KS.
- “Imagine my card (gesture to your own hand), the King of Clubs... King of Spades, sorry, slowly dissolving then taking form in your hands, while your card takes form in my hands.
- Then reveal the cards have switched places.

The line: “Imagine my card...” is split into two sections. Once you miscall your card as the KC, glance down at the face and then correct yourself. This reinforces in their mind that you are indeed holding your KS, when in fact, you are holding the 7H.

The Justification that Never Happened

Something that comes up quite often is this question: “If we could really read minds, why would we ask the audience to write stuff down?”

Of course, the reason is so we can get the information using a center tear or peek or impression, but there are two main ‘answers’ for this:

- So there is a tangible verification when we nail the information
- That’s just what we do; it’s part of our process

The second case is hardly ever mentioned to the audience so as to not raise suspicion, and the phase of writing something down is glazed over in the “re-cap” phase. The first case is generally a justification used to satisfy those who are not confident enough or are in company who will not settle for the second case.

Those of you who have read some of my other work, know that I rely heavily on just asking for information, then making it look like I already knew, or as if the information *revealed itself* later on.

With this in mind, here is my justification for writing information: Make the billet *relevant* to them. Make it a piece of them – make it symbolic. For example: let’s say you want to know someone’s life goal, using a peek.

- Hand them a billet/impression pad
- Tell them to write down a life goal (if they want to be an artist, then write: ‘artist’, if they want to be an actor, write: ‘actor’, etc.)
- Get your peek
- Do the rest of your routine
- Come back to their life goal
- Reveal the information however you choose
- Ask if they have a mirror they look in every morning (most people do)
- Tell them to tape this goal to their mirror and ask themselves each morning what steps they will take to get closer to their goal.

Now, you've given them a personal reason to write on paper what they are thinking. To everyone watching, this makes perfect sense to write something down, because the billet itself represents a goal.

In the case of a center tear (assuming you kept the pieces and didn't burn them), use the same process, but at the end, say: "When you go home, take these pieces, tape them back together, and keep it on your desk/mirror/refrigerator, as a reminder that when everything seems to fall apart and lay in pieces, YOU CAN find a way to put everything back together."

With regards to the title: "The Justification that Never Happened" – our 'justification' is not used to 'justify' our action, it is to *cause* their action – we provide the cause, they provide the effect.

Beyond

Do the "rose force" over the phone. Under this presentation: Have the person walk to a mirror and place one palm on it (obviously elaborate on this a bit), then you say: "I'll walk over to a mirror as well and place my palm on it." Now tell them to imagine seeing a flower in the mirror, imagine reaching in and pulling it out, so now they are standing in front of the mirror holding an imaginary flower.

At this point, ask if you are correct is saying that they are holding a rose. If this works, great, if not..... Here's the out: just ask what kind of flower it is. Then tell them you have been taking a video of what you're doing, and you'll send them the link once it's uploaded.

As soon as you're off the phone, get a camera and record a video of you talking on the phone and walking to the mirror, placing your hand on it, etc. Then look at the camera as you say: "I'm taking a video of this..." You'll need a flower palmed in the hand that is on the opposite side of your body as the camera (mirror in front, camera on right side, phone in right hand, flower in left hand). Left hand goes against the mirror, tilted so they can't see the flower. Then you pull their imaginary flower out of the mirror.

The video they see is of you having a fake phone conversation that sounds exactly like the one you actually had with them.

Alternatively:

If you're pretty sure the person will say "rose", then you can do this over Skype (or other video chatting application) and just point your camera towards the mirror and palm a small rose.

Now, imagine doing this with two mirrors in the same room, under the premise of traveling between the plane of imagination and that of the material. Put the mirrors a few feet apart (facing opposite directions), the participant stands in front of one mirror, and you stand in front of the

other. If the audience is on your left side, the rose/force object goes in your right hand, then as you bring your hand up towards the mirror, be sure to turn your palm outwards.

Put a ring of stones and candles between the mirrors, etc., to really spice this up.

The idea came partially from this album cover:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1tuPc2FGvs>,

and something that a friend of mine said.

What do You See?

This is something I came up with more-or-less on-the-fly. It's not really a magic effect/routine, but it can be very magical for the person on the receiving end.

There was a time a couple years back, when I saw a person who looked like she had had a terrible day. So I asked how she was feeling and what was wrong. Turns out, she wasn't having a terrible day, she had a terrible week. She felt like she had no idea what she really wanted to do in life, and that combined with the stress of class work was really starting to wear on her. I don't remember what her college major was, but it wasn't one of my strong points, so I couldn't help her there. I asked if I might give her a hand, and she said sure.

This next part is something I remember reading in a book a very long time ago, I think it may have been somewhere in the Eragon series. I walked her over to a window that was wide enough for both of us to stand in front of (the blinds were down on the inside, so from our side it worked as a mirror).

I asked: "What do you see?"

She said: "...I see us."

I replied: "No, not what are you looking at – what do you *see*?"

She didn't say much.

I just gave her a sixty-second 'reading' of what I saw when I looked at her. I ended with this: "I think you already have a general idea of what you want to do, and if you genuinely have no idea, then just try something you've never tried before and see how you like it."

The point of this story is something that I think most, if not all, people struggle with at some point(s) in their life (I've definitely gone through a couple of these phases), and that is self-identity. Who am I? What do I want to do? And why do I want to do it?

'Seeing' something and 'looking' at something are two different things. To 'look' is to observe or acknowledge the existence of something. To 'see' is 'looking' + understanding.

Of course, in everyday speech, I use the two words interchangeably, but sometimes it's nice to make the distinction for the sake of helping someone 'see' the world in a different way.

And there is Part 2 of Hidden Thoughts. Part 3 should be good to go in two or three months. Send an email to: wanderingmagic@yahoo.com if you're interested in Part 3.