

# The Seven Hermetic Principles

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Many have sought to understand the natural laws that govern our universe. Some say there are 12, while others, like Hermes Trismegistus, say there are seven. Trismegistus explains the foundational laws of our reality in his seven hermetic principles. Here's what these principles are all about and how we can all use them as a source of inspiration and empowerment.

## What are the 7 hermetic principles, and where did they come from?

The seven principles are the foundation of Hermeticism, a branch of spiritual philosophy dating back as early as the first century A.D. They were outlined by famed author Hermes Trismegistus, who is believed to have written the Emerald Tablet and the Corpus Hermeticum (two highly influential, ancient teachings).

His work would go on to influence both ancient Greek and Egyptian cultures, with both adopting him as a god of wisdom. (In Greece he was called Hermes; in Egypt, Thoth.) He was known in his time as a great master of the universe and is said to have lived for thousands of years.

Over time, the seven hermetic principles were passed down by word-of-mouth from teacher to student, and eventually, one day in the early 20th century, the teachings were compiled into a book called *The Kybalion*, written by "The Three Initiates." Today, they remain an occult source of wisdom, separate from any real religion but powerful nonetheless.

And while the seven principles are just one way of understanding the universe, they aren't so constricting that they cannot be studied alongside other spiritual philosophies. Here's what each of the seven principles is all about:

### 1. **The principle of mentalism.**

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*"The All is Mind; the Universe is Mental." —The Kybalion*

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The principle of mentalism states that the universe is akin to a mental projection. This is like manifestation 101, which is all about using your thoughts to shape your reality. For anything to be, a thought must precede it. Through this principle, it's believed

that God is consciousness, or thought, and the universe is a manifestation of the mind of God. Using this law, we, too, can harness the power of our minds to create the life we want.

How to apply it:

Consider the initial thought that led you to be able to read this, on whatever device you're on. Or even the thought that is most influencing your mood right now.

When we recognize how much our thoughts manifest every day, whether internally as a physiological or emotional state, or externally, as the things we do or places we go, we see that when we can control our mind, we control our lives. We can get better at this through spiritual practices such as meditation, which help us train the mind.

## 2. **The principle of correspondence.**

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*"As above, so below; as below, so above." —The Kybalion*

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We've all heard this quote before, but maybe you never knew it was Hermes who first coined it. It's closely related to the first principle of mentalism and states that what we hold in our thoughts and mind will become our reality. It explains the many planes of existence, including those of lower and higher vibrational frequencies and how they're connected.

How to apply it:

Applying this law is all about understanding your connection to the world around you and how you're showing up for yourself and the universe through your thoughts, and subsequently, your actions. When we have a firm grasp on how we're interacting with life and how it's affecting us, we can recognize and break patterns, live in alignment with our highest good, and feel harmonious with everything there is.

## 3. **The principle of vibration.**

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*"Nothing rests; everything moves; everything vibrates." —The Kybalion*

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Yes, believe it or not, the idea of "vibes" has been around a long, long time. The principle of vibration states that all things, both physical matter and spiritual energy, hold a certain vibration. Basic science tells us atoms are in constant motion, as is the

universe itself. Even our hearts, as they beat, give off different vibrations depending on our emotional state. And when we're "vibing high," we're able to avoid low-level frequencies that don't serve us.

How to apply it:

This will look different for everyone, but to apply this third principle, you want to not only do things but think thoughts that allow you to be in a state of ease, where your body is "vibrating" at a more positive level. Applying the first two principles can help you start to do this. (You might be noticing all of these principles are deeply interwoven.) With this principle, we acknowledge that we have the power to control our vibration rather than our vibration controlling us.

#### 4. **The principle of polarity.**

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*"Everything is dual; everything has poles; everything has its pair of opposites; like and unlike are the same; opposites are identical in nature but different in degree; extremes meet; all truths are but half-truths; all paradoxes may be reconciled." —The Kybalion*

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The principle of polarity explains that seemingly opposite things are actually one and the same at varying degrees. A simple example of this is hot and cold. Cold is just the absence of heat, and they're both one thing: temperature. Physical matter and spiritual energy are the same thing, with spiritual energy vibrating at a much higher level, such that it can't be perceived by our senses. Love and hate are two ways of experiencing the same thing, a relationship toward something. This is the foundation of alchemy, or the ability to "transmute" your experiences at will.

How to apply it:

Applying the principle of polarity takes a degree of mental stamina and involves shifting the way you look at something, potentially completely on its head. Take the hate you may feel for someone: Is there any way you can shift it to feelings of love, for example? Any time a lower vibrational emotion is bringing you down, can you recognize it, feel it, and transmute it to a more positive one?

#### 5. **The principle of rhythm.**

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*"Everything flows, out and in; everything has its tides; all things rise and fall; the pendulum-swing manifests in everything; the measure of the swing to the right is the measure of the swing to the left; rhythm compensates." —The*

Closely related to the principle of polarity, the fifth principle states that between the opposing poles, there exists an inherent rhythm. The tides move in and out. We inhale and exhale. Everything is in motion. Nature has its seasons and so, too, do we. Understanding this principle allows us to recognize our life's—and the universe's—natural rhythms, so we can actually work with them rather than having them working against us.

How to apply it:

Know that nothing lasts forever, and things are ever-changing. As you get deeper into working with this law, you'll be able to work with your own emotional states to avoid a dramatic pendulum swing of feelings. It's thought that eventually the master will be able to completely transcend duality, but if you're just getting started, try becoming more aware of your emotional state and using polarity (No. 4) and rhythm to start getting more comfortable with the natural fluxes of your life.

## 6. **The principle of cause and effect.**

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*"Every cause has its effect; every effect has its cause; everything happens according to law; chance is but a name for law not recognized; there are many planes of causation, but nothing escapes the law." —The Kybalion*

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Everything is connected through the principle of cause and effect, for each cause of one thing is merely the effect of something else, going back to the very beginning.

Ask yourself, are you a cause? Or are you an effect? This principle is all about acknowledging the effects of our thoughts and behavior and how we may change them to bring about greater effects.

How to apply it:

When something doesn't go as planned or you find yourself unhappy, ask yourself, what was the cause? Many times, we find ourselves reacting to the world around us, trapped in a back-and-forth of reacting to our circumstances rather than forging our own path. When we take action to get the effect we want, we move from feeling like a victim to feeling empowered.

## 7. The principle of gender.

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*"Gender is in everything; everything has its masculine and feminine principles; gender manifests on all planes." —The Kybalion*

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The seventh principle states that all things have masculine and feminine qualities. Yes, the two sexes can be thought of as a physical manifestation of this principle, but as we're all coming to understand, on an internal level, all of us hold both energies. (Think the left and right brain.)

Masculine and feminine energy exists in not only the physical plane but the mental and spiritual plane as well. The unity of these two energies is essential for creation, and when one has a balance of both, they're better able to apply all of the principles together for maximum benefit.

How to apply it:

Accept all the parts of yourself, and understand that balance in all is key for self-mastery. Buddha called this the middle way, and it's all about the balance of masculine and feminine; of heavenly and Earthbound; and of the mind, body, and spirit. When we can achieve this balance within ourselves, we're well equipped to harness all of these principles and use them in our lives for good.

If this all sounds like a lot—don't worry. These principles run very, very deep, and it can take a long time to fully understand and embody them. Each time you come back to them, you may understand them in a new way, or on a deeper level. And in time, these principles can help you master your own mind and your life as a whole.

Source: <https://www.mindbodygreen.com/articles/7-hermetic-principles>



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