

DREAM DOOR 2.0

(A Revised Excerpt from *Magic Inside Out*)

By Robert E. Neale &
Lawrence Hass

LH: Bob Neale's Dream Door is the first performance piece in *Magic Inside Out* (Theory and Art of Magic Press, 2021). When I read the routine in one of Bob's unpublished manuscripts, I immediately asked him if we could feature it as the opening effect in the new book, and he was delighted by the idea.

As a close-up version of Bob's Trapdoor effect, Dream Door creates a strong sensation of mystery, and its theme — realizing our dreams — is resonant for nearly anyone we meet. Further, the prop can be inscribed and given away as a souvenir, making this a fine piece of "gift magic." In my view, Dream Door is far better than using a bill for the effect (as with the marketed Wonderland Bill, also based on Bob's Trapdoor work). Indeed, the visual clarity of Bob's prop here makes the magic effect instantaneous. And magicians who perform for people in the real world will immediately understand that Bob's positive message of the fourfold path is pure gold.

Since September 2020, when *Magic Inside Out* went to press, I have performed Dream Door a lot, through which I have discovered some important things that are not in the book. Thus, what follows is Bob's original text with my very latest insights inserted in brackets along the way, along with a link to a video explanation that shows how to make the fold. (The fold is simple, but difficult to describe in print.) For these reasons, I call this appearance of Bob's first-rate creation, "Dream Door 2.0."

SCRIPT: The performer shows the participant the blank side of a small card with a flap in the center, without letting the stars on the opposite side be seen yet (Figure 1).

"Do you see this door? Are you curious about it?" The participant is encouraged, by example, to hold the door. *"Please take it and open it. See the star?"* The participant and audience can see the stars on the other side. *"You can peek inside and see more stars."*

"And now you know. This is the Dream Door — an entrance to realizing your own dreams. But getting there often looks impossible, so we end up dreaming our lives rather than living our dreams. How often is the magic for entering our dreams missing?"

"Hold on tight, and we will supply the missing magic — the ritual of the fourfold path." Four folds are made as they are mentioned. *"A fold of conflict. A fold of courage. A fold of compassion. And a fold of celebration. Now we can unfold so easily."* The unfolding is open and straightforward. *"Conflict. Courage. Compassion. Celebration."* The participant and audience are helped to see both sides of the prop and they can see the participant is now on the side with the stars.

"Look at what we have done! See all the stars. Our magic puts you inside the Dream Door. You are now on your way to realizing your dreams!" The prop is given to the participant.

"May you remember your path — conflict, courage, compassion, and celebration!"

SOURCES: This is a presentation and handling for my origination "Streamlined Trapdoor," first published in *Robert E. Neale's Trapdoor Card* by Karl Fulves (1983). Another presentation, "Crossing the Threshold," was inspired by a short story by H.G. Wells and published in my March 1994 column in *The Linking Ring*.

Both Terri Rogers and David Britland have offered other interesting versions. See Terri Rogers' *Star Gate* (1985) and David Britland's *Parallax* (1986). Unlike my original, both require folding a creased card rather than merely bending it and leaving no visible trace of the method. Although this limits the effect to a puzzle, I have been stimulated by them to develop my own folding version. The purpose of my specific method here is to use a folding method that is difficult to duplicate and conceals the process from the par-

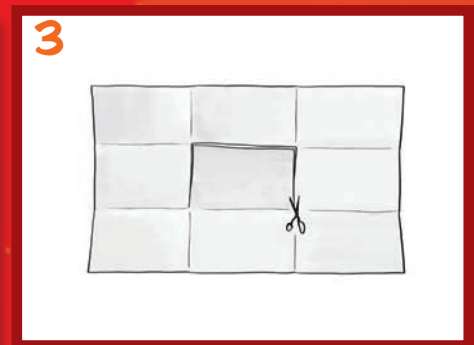
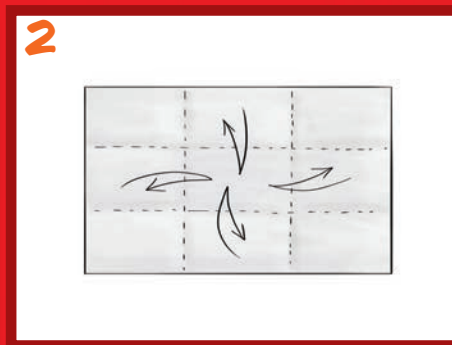
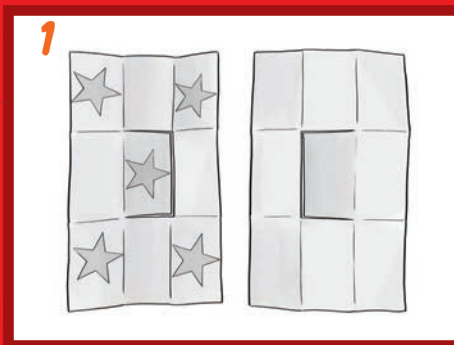
ticipant and audience. The script's fourfold ritual of folding ("conflict," "courage," "compassion," and "celebration") can be adapted in a variety of ways for different people and situations.

PROP: The effect can be impromptu by folding and tearing an index card. For a more formal presentation, use an index card that has been carefully

reversal to be instantaneous — thus causing greater impact.]

CONSTRUCTION: As Figure 2 indicates, crease an index card into thirds each way. The creases don't need to be absolutely exact for impromptu performance. Figure 3 shows the result.

As Figure 3 indicates, cut or tear out the center



cut or leather-type vinyl. The card can be made of any size.

During the performance, it is essential the participant and audience are clear on the beginning and ending situations. A prop like the star card, that distinguishes the sides from each other, establishes this. Although the stars relate to my script, coloring one side of the card can achieve this. If performing impromptu, using a lined index card works fine, as does marking one side with a pen or pencil. A simple option is to draw a few stars, one in the center panel and the others in the four corner panels. For something more polished to be given away, use a blue card with gold sticker stars. Unruled blue cards that are 3" x 5", 4" x 6", or 5" x 8" are obtainable from Amazon and elsewhere.

[LH: I have found the very best material to use is 36 lb. scrapbook paper. This has enough weight to keep the model from tearing but not too much that it becomes overly thick and ugly. Best of all, scrapbook paper, found at most craft stores, is white on one side and colored or patterned on the other. I choose to use blue on the colored side, so the stars appear to be in the night sky. Strongly differentiating the sides of the model maximizes the instantaneous experience of the change.]

More simply, use a dollar bill and talk about getting into the green side for money. Or use a playing card or business card. [LH: As noted above, I don't care for the bill idea because its similarity on both sides causes people to pause for a few beats to understand the bill has reversed; I want the experience of the

panel to form a door. This is accomplished most easily by first folding the card in half. Figure 4 shows the result.

Mark the card on one side as desired. The illustrations show a star on the side of the door covered in performance by the thumb of the participant.

MANIPULATION: [LH: You will want to read this description carefully to understand the subtle touches of the fold. Even so, to facilitate your understanding I have created a short teaching video to help you especially understand the two difficult steps, at Figure 6 and Figure 7. The video is available at: www.theoryandartofmagic.com/dreamdoor. With practice and a model that has been broken in, the entire reversal happens very quickly.]

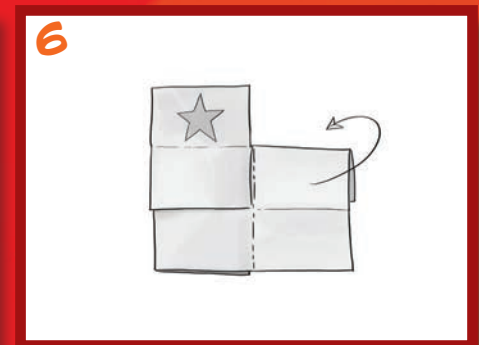
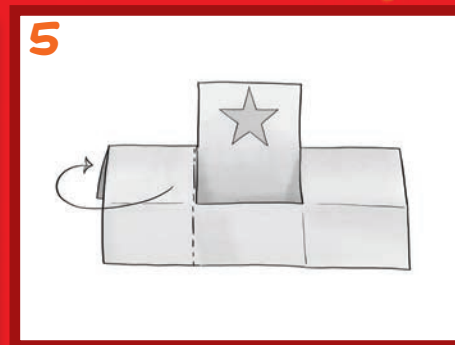
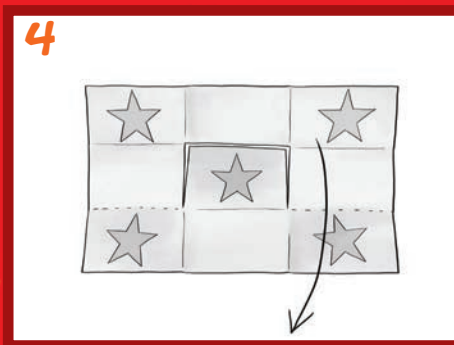
For the following instructions assume you are sitting or standing opposite the participant in a close-up setting, and surrounded by the audience, if there is one. Have the participant hold the edge of the door at the center between the thumb and fingers. Their palm is up and the thumb is on top of the tongue, on the star. The participant's hand is *below* the door. The starred (or lined or otherwise marked) side of the card is facing upward, and again, their thumb is resting on the lined side of the door. Be sure the participant notices the rest of their body is "outside" — on the other side — of the starred side.

[LH: I have come to the view that the routine is less effective when standing before a group

holding the prop vertically so everyone can see. In my experience, the impact of the transformation is fastest and strongest when the prop is held horizontally with my participant holding the door and directly facing me. In this position, the unfold happens, as it were, right “in their face,” which is a big wow.]

As Figure 4 indicates, valley-fold the upper

moves up to become a horizontal valley fold with the former lower left corner now matched up below the lower right corner of the flap. But don't stop there! Keep moving that left corner up and over to the left, so it ends up below the left corner of the flap. That left-side lower-third mountain fold has ended up as a left-side valley fold on what was the middle row. Figure 8 shows the result.



two-thirds of the card down toward you. Figure 5 shows the result.

As Figure 5 indicates, mountain-fold the left third down underneath to the right. Figure 6 shows the result.

As Figure 6 indicates, mountain-fold the right third down underneath to the left, *inserting it into the pocket at the left*: that is, between the two layers of the left third. Note that this happens most easily when you have held on to the left third and kept the two layers open. Figure 7 shows the result.

The bottom third of the folded card consists of three layers. As Figure 7 indicates, open up the right side of the bottom third, and shove at the lower corners of the left side to reverse that left crease and so move the former top and middle layers together inside the bottom layer of the middle third, allowing the former bottom layer of the bottom third to follow them into the pocket as well. To do this, push the lower left corner up to the right, inside the layer; the mountain fold that was the bottom left side

The above two folds into the pockets are a little tricky to do out of sight at first, but they do effectively conceal the method from the audience. With a little practice, the handling is simple, clear, and quick. [LH: Again, these last two folds are hard to comprehend from the words, but the video makes them obvious. Again, go to: www.theoryandartofmagic.com/dreamdoor.]

With the card as in Figure 8, with the participant's thumb on top of the star, the unfolding is uncomplicated, straightforward, and obvious. The folded packet of eight panels is divided into upper and lower groups. Fold the upper group up and away from you over the participant's thumb (or hand, if you are using a larger model). Fold the new upper layer up and to the right. Fold the new upper layer up and down toward you. Fold the remaining bottom layer up and to the left. The opened card has the unmarked side facing you. Quickly turn the card vertical so the participant can see the stars are now all on her side — that she has, in effect, passed through the “Dream Door.”

For a stand-up setting, the performer and participant face each other in front of the audience. The participant holds the door with the prop *vertical* throughout the routine. The performer is opposite, sees the star side, and uses the same manipulation as before. [LH: As noted above, I have found the impact to be diminished in this setting, but perhaps you will have a different experience than me. Above all, have fun with Bob Neale's wonderful piece of meaningful magic!] ♣