

Waterfall: opening your backspace

The Waterfall rod exercise is one of the most-loved exercises, as it gives you a chance to move your rod in a great full-body sweep and culminates in the challenge of catching the rod behind your back. To achieve this, you will stand tall and upright, experiencing yourself as a pillar of light connecting heaven and earth. This is the prerequisite experience for feeling the awakened I-am spirit consciousness in the body, and it is strengthened with this fourth exercise.

Standing tall, place your hands shoulder-width apart on your rod, and hold it in the “down” position, in front of your legs. Feel yourself grounded and weighted.

Keeping your arms stretched, lift your rod up and over your head in a beautiful arc, always feeling not only the rod, but also the space between yourself and the rod, thereby connecting with the space as you move through it. Be sure to stay grounded in your feet even as you bring the rod high into the light.

Do not stop with the rod above your head, but continue moving it around behind you, noticing as you do so how you enter a new dimension as the rod passes into the space you cannot see. Feel your “back space,” the space of miracles and archetypes. Let the path of the rod continue until you are holding the rod just behind your head.

Take an instant to prepare yourself and then drop and catch the rod. Do this by quickly lowering your hands as you drop the rod and placing them behind your legs, turning your palms so they face backwards. When you learn to be faster than the rod, your hands will be ready to catch the rod as it simply falls into them. Feel yourself grounded once again.

Bring the rod around the *left* side of your body to do this once again.

This exercise can be done without the aid of counting for your timing, but it is also possible to count. If you do so, you can count to twelve with each waterfall. The rod is in front of you for counts 1-6, is behind you on count 8, drops and is caught on 9 and 10, and brought to the front on 11 and 12.

Once you have become adept at dropping and catching the rod, you can practice walking with this exercise. Walk forward as you lift the rod and place it behind your head, drop and catch it in standing, and walk backwards as you bring the rod to the front of the body. This movement sequence is very elegant and satisfying.

It is possible to create other variations for catching the rod. For instance, some people like to actually rest the rod on the shoulders before dropping it, while others like to keep it a few inches behind the neck.

Others will challenge themselves by not lowering the rod behind them to their necks, but by dropping it from the very highest point of the arc. And still others will take it one step further, dropping it from the highest point of the arc, but then quickly stooping down into their knees to catch it behind themselves as far down and close to the floor as possible.

All these possibilities help you to awaken your sense of space in the dark and un-seeable space behind you.

You now have learned the first four primary rod exercises. Continue to work on them diligently for at least a month, and preferably longer. You will find yourself awakening to your body and your sense of yourself in space in simple but profound ways. Many people find that these exercises help them become more agile and graceful in all aspects of their lives, beyond the hour of their eurythmy practice.

The Journal Box

Journal on your experience doing the waterfall exercise.

Have you learned to catch the rod consistently each time?

What were your experiences along the way—did you drop it a lot, did you hit your wrists or elbows?

Were you able to make a beautiful rainbow arc all around you as you lifted the rod---or were you so focused on catching the rod that you forgot to enjoy the journey?

How did it feel to flow fluidly forward and backward with the movement?

*Are you beginning to feel the grace of free eurythmical movement in space as you integrate all your capacities? **If you like, share your experiences on the community page at eurythmyonline.com.***