

*Tarot:
The Symbolic
Language*

*Your Cosmic Apprentice
Guide*

By

Marilyn J. Muir

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My work is dedicated to my personal giants
upon whose shoulders I stand:

Margaret Baker, Teacher
Rev. Pearl Fernandez
Rev. Kathryn (Roz) Hall
Rev. Harriett Smiley
Rev. Kay Stillman
Rev. Pearl van Aalst

Thank you to the authors of numerous books and workshops who have helped me learn my craft.

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examples,
and through hundreds of provocative questions.

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Tarot: The Symbolic Language

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Introduction

Through your study of this book *Tarot: The Symbolic Language*, you will become acquainted with me, my background, my mindset, and my motivations for writing and recording this hardcopy and / or audio book. This information should allow you to make informed choices as to the value to you of the material I am sharing. Essentially self-taught, over the years I have availed myself of courses, books, tapes, workshops, etc. whenever it was possible. I stand on the shoulders of giants, those seekers who have gone before me and who have given me a “leg-up” in terms of learning. There is no way to say thank you individually to all those faceless and nameless teachers, but I do honor their gifts to me. I quote (and perhaps misquote) freely, but rarely know who I am quoting as the sources have become lost in the barrage of learning.

I believe you should always evaluate any author or teacher with whom you choose to study because they will influence your mind and therefore affect, or infect, your life. No author, reader or teacher can completely remove their own personalities from what they do or say unless they are entranced. Even when entranced, the channeling entity’s personalities and prejudices must enter into the material given. If general background information is not offered, then you should ask. You do have the right to know the qualifications, the philosophic mindset, and the potential prejudices of those whom you allow into your mind. You do not have the right to private or personal information about anyone, and that includes your authors or teachers, your friends, family, or personal readings you may encounter in your studies.

Remember always to respect the privacy and the rights of others, and to be discreet in any information you generate. You may not realize it now, but when in possession of such personal information and trust, their lives can be open books to a talented or gifted reader. Ethically, morally and karmically, “Do unto others what you would have them do unto you,” and “Do *not* unto others that which you would *not* want done to you.” The more modern saying “What goes around, comes around” especially applies in karmic circumstances. The more you work on evolving your consciousness, participating metaphysically, and developing your spiritual talents and skills, the more responsible you must be and act. You may have to own what you generate, or you may someday or in some lifetime be on the receiving end of a karmic backlash.

On a higher level of consciousness, you wrote your own script (which you probably do not remember doing), and you must assume total responsibility for it. While it is possible and probable to have guidance, I will approach experience as self-selected and purposeful. Remember too, the planning of an action is easier than the experience itself, especially when you are not consciously aware of the game plan. It is difficult at times to see how a small piece of experience fits into our life as a whole. In reading symbolically we attempt to understand the purpose to your existence. This knowledge, along with positive use of your free will, can improve your experience.

At no time should any psychic, astrologer, teacher, counselor or reader negate your free will choices, or threaten or try to intimidate you. Should this occur, run (don't walk) to the nearest exit! That person is on an ego trip, no matter how they present themselves. Spiritually motivated, metaphysical types, with or without physical bodies, will consistently try to empower you to make your own, hopefully better, personal choices. Walking in the light necessitates the right use of knowledge and skill. True, we don't always pull this off every moment of every day, but the motivation and the effort are clear – education and enlightenment, not interference or control. As a healer, I have encountered many instances where readers, counselors of all types, non-physical entities, chain-letters, etc. have used a variety of threats to control lives through fear of reprisal against the individual and their loved ones or to coerce payment of money, multiple visits or referrals to others. While such referral to others might occur spontaneously, it never contains a threat – if spiritually motivated. Light workers do not threaten in any way, are quick to recognize threat, and do not feed any negativity implied.

Learning Methods

Over the years, I have encountered and adapted two methods of study which you may find helpful. I am sure there are many other methods of study just as useful, and I would be happy to learn about methods you have encountered – if you wish to share them with me. Method #1 is presented here for use with this course. Method #2 is presented in Appendix A as it requires detailed explanation.

Method # 1: There are several stages to learning. First, we have to access the information, grasp the principles involved, retain the material, and then apply the knowledge gained. Learning is completely individualized. We are all unique in our skills. Primarily, we access information visually (sight), audibly (hearing) and/or kinesthetically (by doing). Each of those methods have value, and each of us use those methods individually or in various combinations, depending upon our unique personal skills. Perhaps I need to “see” what you’re saying to grasp the principles and retain the knowledge. Perhaps I need to “hear”, or to “put my hands on” to learn and retain. Retention of the material is critical to our use of it. Each of the access methods cause at least partial retention. Using a combination of those methods is what offers the best percentage of retention, and retention is the key to success.

These classes in this book include diagrams. If you choose, you can record this workbook for use while meditating, studying, driving, or relaxing. Feel free to use your own voice to record these lessons. Play your audio, and whenever possible reading the transcript as you listen. Then create your own set of notes. It is important for you to study in this manner as it is auditory (your own voice), visual (the transcript and diagrams), and kinesthetic (your handwritten notes). This combination offers you the best opportunity to retain what you’ve learned. With the audio, you can study at your own pace, and review or listen as often as necessary. Putting the information into your own words and noting your grasp of a principal is the key to success.

Repetition is good for you. Any metaphysical study requires memorization of many principles. Audio may be played while driving, cooking, relaxing, etc. to reinforce your understanding and your memory. Do not play meditation or relaxation tapes while driving a car or operating any equipment or machinery. The purpose of such tapes is to lull you into a receptive and relaxed state. Be sure you are in a safe position when they are played. Hopefully this material won't be quieting, but will be stimulating instead.

Please use loose leaf paper for sketching your notes. Spiral or hardbound notebooks are not flexible, limiting your use of your notes. You will note this workbook has wide margins and is ready for print with a loose-leaf, three-ring binder, affording you some flexibility for note-taking. Once you have grasped some of the principles involved, please transfer your permanent notes to 5 x 8 index cards, putting one principle only on each card. For example, we will be studying symbology, numerology, and astrology as well as the tarot cards themselves. Please prepare one index card individually for each principle. You may make as many additional subject index cards as are useful to you in your studies. Make these principle cards as thorough as you can since we will use them extensively as the lessons progress.

Remember also that as I am describing the various principles, try to get a "feel" for the energy. Allow your instincts and your emotions to get in on the learning process. You will understand and retain far more.

Method #2 is a more comprehensive study system with an involved explanation. I have included it in Appendix A at the back of this book.

Records

Take notes from your readings, your own and others. Your various notes could eventually become your personal history. Arrange to read for several people you know well and who are willing to give you feedback on the information you generate. People do love personal readings – especially free ones. Use those for practice along with your own personal readings. Do not work with negative people at this point in your studies. If you have a problem obtaining cooperation from family or friends, let people know you are studying, developing and learning. You should have no shortage of people who love mini-readings. At this stage in your studies, ask those you read for to "take it with a grain of salt". You must practice, but you must exercise caution in the material initially generated until it has proven itself to you. Once you have studied and practiced, you will develop trust in what you generate, and so will those for whom you read.

Throughout this course I will promote self-understanding, self-help, and self-study. I truly believe that if you know who you are, why you are, where you are, what makes you tick, where your problem areas are, and what your assets are, you will know what you can do to help yourself.

I have to assume that you are going to do a great deal of work on your own. Each lesson is going to cover a specific subject and you will gradually build your knowledge into a full reading. I have taught myself by reading and by applying what I have learned through trial and error. Surely if I can teach myself, you can learn it with the aid of a teacher.

While the intention for this course is to establish a thorough tarot groundwork for you, you must be aware that this series is only going to scratch the surface. I am not the only teacher. You are embarking on an open-ended course of study in which there are no limits. You will always be a student, with all of human experience awaiting your examination and understanding

And so we begin...

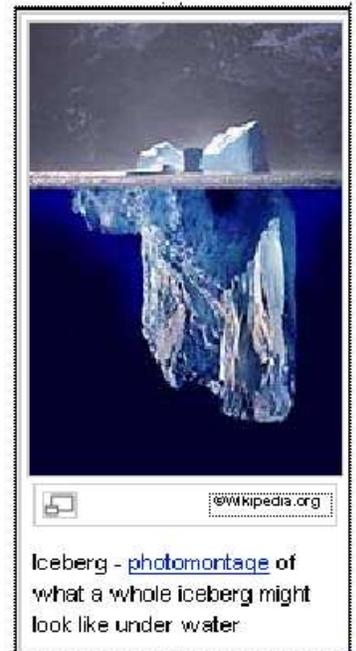
Let's Get Started

*History, Schools of Thought
Decks, Personal Deck
Symbology, Symbolic Dictionary
Astrology and Elements, Suits
Minor and Major Arcana*

Did you know that humans conduct their whole lives using only a portion of their potential? Our greatest genius in the early 1900s was Albert Einstein, and even he was capable of greater thought. A more modern-age genius, Stephen Hawking, had enormous potential caught up in a body that did not work for him that well - and yet he was also a genius. Can you imagine what we could do and who we could become if we could tap into more of our brain's capabilities?

Our conscious mind is only the tip of a very large iceberg of consciousness floating in a sea of consciousness. The bulk of that iceberg is hidden beneath the surface of what we call mind and is usually unconscious to us. Referred to as the un- (not) conscious (aware) or the more recent term sub- (beneath) conscious, what is hidden is the much larger portion of our mind, yet it is not the whole of consciousness. Using the iceberg analogy, just the tip is visible (conscious) and the bulk (unconscious) is hidden beneath the surface of the water in which it floats. The iceberg itself floats in the larger sea of consciousness from which it was formed and from which it can draw. That sea is called the super-conscious.

Have you ever tried to recall something you experienced, unsuccessfully at first, only to have the information rise to the surface of your mind at later moment? Where was that info? Was it in your memory warehouse? Why couldn't your conscious mind access it? Unfortunately, over the years your conscious mind has totally ignored your subconscious. Does your subconscious return the favor and ignore the summons for information? Perhaps the door of communication between those two parts of your mind just gets stuck. It is possible the parts of your consciousness are not speaking the same language. How do we fix that?



Do we need to learn new information? Not necessarily. We need to access and unlock the information we already possess. The word “education” comes from the Latin “ed-u-car-e” which means to draw forth. Notice that the intention of education is not to teach, but to draw out what already exists within.

The history of mankind is rich in symbolism. Through our genetic memory, myth, environment, cultural or family conditioning, and personal experiences, our subconscious is filled with symbols. How do we get in touch with that inner world and the wealth of symbolism it contains? Enter the tarot cards - a conscious, visible system to get in touch with our hidden, subconscious, potentially super-conscious knowledge.

Study Methods We will be studying the Scorpio way – from the researcher’s standpoint, probing the symbology inherent in the cards themselves, while availing ourselves freely of the information found in astrology, numerology, color, meditation, cycles, etc. My Scorpio way is to “feel” the way through the situation, with in-depth observation of all that goes on within the situation and the people. No memory trick of 78 cards upright or reversed is used. We will instead develop a subjective flow of information. In the introduction I suggested two ways to take notes:

1) A three-ring notebook for general information, collection, and storage (helps to store your notes within your workbook). As you progress, you will want to transfer all or part of your notes to a more useful tool.

2) 5 x 8” index cards, at least one for each of the 78 cards, which I suggest you create as you study. In addition, you can create index cards for general explanations, such as a card for each layout, suit, timing, direction, etc. These cards can serve as a temporary crutch until you develop your abilities. This crutch is okay, but just remember that it is a crutch. With study and application your need for the crutch will diminish and eventually disappear. I suggest 5 x 8 cards to allow you room to insert additional information as you continue your tarot studies. You only want to do such card work once!

Once you have created your index cards by learning the basics for each of the cards and noting your continuing perceptions on the cards, you will be able to use them while practicing your reading layouts. Pick out the index cards that correspond to the tarot cards selected. Develop your reading from the index cards as well as from the cards themselves. Add to your index cards as you develop information. When you no longer need a crutch, put the index cards away. They are not intended to become a permanent crutch. Do not create a dependency! Simply use them temporarily to assist you as you develop your understanding of the cards.

Please study in the order in which I have presented the material. I tend to teach in a stair-step method, with each step building on previous lessons. If you skip around in your study, you will not get the best results with this workbook. When I teach live classes, I control the order and the flow of the material. In a book, I am not able to do that unless I can persuade the student to do so up front. Straight through in the order presented is the best way to learn this particular workbook due to my stair-step teaching style.

History

The history of Tarot can be a frustrating and confusing subject. Available references can be contradictory and inconsistent. In order to familiarize yourself with one version of tarot history, I suggest you read the historical section of Robert Wang's *The Qabalistic Tarot*.

There is some humor in the personal and petty wrangling of our western adepts. Some must be wrong in expounding their pet theories. So many versions cannot all be right! We may never know where it began, how old it really is, or which culture evolved the cards. I do not believe the confusing history of the tarot will make you a better reader. Our time is better spent working with the cards as they are currently available. I would like to make a few comments on the pet theories I have encountered in my studies. I have placed a bibliography at the end of this workbook enumerating my sources.

1) 35,000 years old! The oldest primitive cave drawing is 35,000 years old and it was of a bison, not a tarot card. (I watched an television program about anthropology the evening before I wrote the original version of this chapter.) The bison was drawn by a Neanderthal. We have few records this old. Was there a prior civilization that destroyed itself? Possibly. We seem to have no records. Is this psychic information? While valuable, it does not lend itself to proof. How do we know if the information is true or false? We don't. This is theory, not provable fact. Theory is okay, but just remember that it is theory only.

2) Main argument: + or - 1400 A.D.: 1390 is the earliest physical record of tarot in written form, therefore the concept pre-dated this record. Artistic style can date the general period of issue. Carbon dating, one of the most accurate forms of dating, destroys a minute portion of the object. In a rare art object, destruction is not usually an option.

Schools of Thought

Egyptian Suggestions that the tarot is Egyptian in origin predate the finding of the Rosetta Stone. Before the discovery of the Stone which decoded or “broke” the language pattern of Egyptian hieroglyphics, there was no solid way to know what influence the Egyptians may have had on the tarot. There are many references that the cards (particularly the Major Arcana) are representations of underground temple murals, but those murals have never been uncovered and the horrifying burning of the library at Alexandria destroyed many of the ancient records. Until the murals are found, this is theory or speculation only! Many of the current decks portray Egyptian symbolic keys. Remember, Egyptian references used prior to the discovery of the Rosetta Stone are theoretical or esoteric in origin. These references may eventually prove to be the most accurate of all, but as yet they are unproven.

Gypsies Did gypsies bring the tarot to Europe? There are actual records of tarot decks in use prior to the immigration of the gypsies to Europe, so the answer is probably not. Did the gypsies have their own cards or did they adopt what was available in Europe? The gypsies came from the eastern part of the continent of Eurasia. Did they bring Hindu or other oriental divination methods with them? Did ordinary playing cards pre-date or develop from the tarot? Again, we are dealing with speculation and not provable, factual information, which is very sketchy due to the large-scale destruction of many older records. Such speculation does not help you read, and reading is our purpose.

Kabbalah The Kabbalistic origin of the tarot is a favorite theory. Many of the current decks use symbolic Kabbalistic keys. The Kabbalah (or Caballah, Qabala and many other spellings and pronunciations) represents Hebrew mysticism. While the spelling is important to a Numerologist, it is not critical to the study of Tarot. Originally all teachings, including the Kabbalah, were passed verbally from teacher to student. The Kabala was not reduced to written form until the last few hundred years. Earlier dating

of the origins of the Kabbalah are speculative and unproven, again due to the scarcity of written records. It is doubtful that the tarot originated from the Kabbalah, since the Hebrew belief system precludes the creation or spiritual application of a graven image. A Tarot card would be considered a graven image. Perhaps general cards were available and Kabbalistic keys were added at a later time. Or perhaps in the need to preserve the tradition under religious persecution over centuries, the Tarot was developed and camouflaged as a game of chance.

Some decks, particularly those of the Order of the Golden Dawn, have both Kabbalistic and Egyptian keys on the cards. Since Egyptians and Hebrews throughout the centuries have been mutually antagonistic, it is doubtful that the originals contained both references. Historical accuracy is in question. Such dual symbolism has been developed culturally over centuries and is probably very valid in spite of its questionable origin. There is such a thing as “literary license”. The creator of a deck may place whatever symbols he / she deems valuable to that deck. The current adage, “If it isn’t broken, don’t fix it” works here. The system works. Adapt it to your needs. Just don’t blind yourself to possible problems of validity.

Somewhere in my older files is a letter written in the 1960s by a lady who did clinical research on the history and evolution of the tarot for the purpose of commercial marketing. The letter states that the original decks had 22 cards and that 56 cards were added in the fourteenth century. She considered the older Venetian art (Italian) as the best occult source. She also stated that the 22 original cards were based on the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. She refused to consider the Zolar cards for publishing as, in her opinion, they were not authentic tarot.

Decks

Which deck should you choose? This is an extremely important decision for you as a potential Tarot reader and I would suggest you not try to make it at this time. Multiple decks, while beautiful, can be very expensive. As a researcher and a teacher, I have many decks (50+) available for my students to view in my live classes. Unless you want to start a collection, I would suggest waiting to choose. Give me an opportunity to acquaint you with the field in general and your personal subconscious symbolism in particular.

While I am not advocating the use of the Rider-Waite deck as your permanent deck, please use this deck for this workbook. More written study material is available for this popular deck than for any other. All the information you learn, whether it be from a teacher, a book, the deck itself, or through experience in reading may eventually be applied to any deck you choose, with appropriate discernment.

I would suggest that you use this one deck only until thoroughly acclimated to the material presented. Interpretations are going to vary, even when dealing with one deck, and can be very confusing to the beginner when using multiple decks. Remember that interpretations are based on personal observations and subjective opinions. Just because someone wrote a book does not mean they know “the truth” (including me)!

In reproductions of decks, it is possible that designs and colors have been subtly changed or redesigned. Some colors or designs may not be commercially expedient. Damage or loss may have occurred and originals may not be available to determine accuracy. Old definitions may be based on colors or symbolism that no longer exist in current decks. All decks which claim ancient origin must be viewed with this in mind.

Also remember that life goes on, with changes. Meanings cannot remain unchanged through the centuries. New experience must be added to what is known. References that are no longer a part of human development or experience must be dropped.

There are no accidents in the universe! The available cards for which you have the best affinity are the cards that will give you the best information. You might want to make a distinction between those that are pretty (collect them) and those that have impact and meaning (your reading decks). Read whatever cards you have available, whether they be your favorite deck or a deck you have never seen before. Allow your own subconscious to feed you information. Use your ongoing experience to validate that information. Once you have completed this workbook, you will be better equipped to choose your own personal deck.

There are so many decks it will be impossible to describe them all. As I mentioned, I personally have about fifty decks in my collection. I would like to share some of my personal experiences and observations on a few decks:

- ✓ *Brotherhood of Light*, C.C. Zain. This was my first deck and it totally confused me. To read this deck easily, I feel you must be versed in Egyptian symbology. At that time, I was not a student of Egyptian lore. Only the Major Arcana and the court cards had pictures. This deck also employs Kabbalistic interpretations. Remember the Hebrews and the Egyptians never did get along, except on this deck.
- ✓ *BOTA, Brothers of the Adytum*. This is a black and white deck to color, along with a coloring course. Coloring provides total focus and concentration, a meditation of sorts. First you color a small deck then send for the next larger size. You then color that middle-sized deck and send for the next deck. You then color the largest deck. By the time you have studied the course material and colored the deck three times, you should be totally acclimated to tarot symbolism in general and the BOTA deck in particular.
- ✓ *Keystone Tarot Symbols*. This is available as a book and 22 black and white major arcana in a box with instructions for coloring. The pictures are similar to, but not exactly like, the Waite-Rider deck. I made photocopies of the cards on which to practice before coloring the deck itself. In the last few years, I have not found this deck in bookstores. You might have to find this in a used bookstore if it not in print. The references to color and symbol are among the best I have ever seen.
- ✓ *The Tarot Design Coloring Book*. Exactly as it sounds - lovely, modern, 8 1/2 x 11, fantasy art. I have never seen a deck. Definitely worth spending the money, time and attention because the drawings are so beautiful. Remember that each time you color, you imbed the symbols and the colors deeper into your subconscious, regardless of the deck or its size.
- ✓ *Thoth Cards* by Aleister Crowley. Thoth is the Egyptian representation of Mercury. Crowley, magus, occultist, master, adept, who consciously took the dark path (occultly known as the left-hand path, Darth Vader's dark side), was the designer. The cards are powerful, beautiful, artistically done, and sexually oriented. A member of the Order of the Golden Dawn, Crowley was a white master initially, but through his development chose the dark path. The descriptive material in *The Book of Thoth* that matches the deck is excellent.

In our field, we do not unnecessarily open negative doors, make questionable experiences, or ask for trouble. 99% of what we do is safe, but 1% may be questionable. I believe that the Crowley deck falls into that 1%. If an adept, a white master can become misled, and so could you or I. My suggestion is don't tempt fate! This is known as "falling off the path". If you fall off the path, where do you land? If God is all there is, is there any place where God is not? Is there more than one path for spiritual development? Doesn't any path you travel lead back to the same place? Would you like to do it the easy way or the hard way? How long do you wish to take? How long do you have? Use caution and discretion in your choices.

The Rider deck was designed by Arthur Edward Waite and executed by artist Pamela Coleman-Smith (PCS on deck). Mr. Waite was an accomplished occultist and member of the Golden Dawn. This most popular deck is based on his understanding of the symbology of cards already in existence. Although his interpretations are not always easy to understand, and can sometimes be quite negative, he is the best source relative to the deck he designed. In his book on this deck, he does make what I consider to be "catty" remarks about other decks and their interpretation. He reportedly was a very advanced metaphysician, as was Mr. Crowley. Metaphysicians are people who have good days and bad days like everyone else.

Remember that all interpretations, including Mr. Waite's, are based on personal, subjective evaluations and opinions and these vary from person to person. Each interpretation can be different, not necessarily right or wrong. The Rider deck comes in standard deck size (the deck used for this workbook) and in a miniature, pocket-sized deck. The Major Arcana also comes in a large teaching deck that I use in my live classes. The coloring sheets suggested for this workbook are from this deck as is our study of symbology. This is my personal reading deck. If you can obtain a copy of *The Pictorial Key to the Tarot* by Arthur Edward Waite, the pictures are black and white and can be photocopied and colored as suggested as homework.

Italian, Swiss, German or French Decks These decks are based on more ancient packs. For the most part, the Minor Arcana do not have the rich symbology of the courts or the Major Arcana. Interpretation tends to rely on numerology, suit, or memorized, rote meanings. According to the letter previously mentioned, the older Italian deck was thought to have the best esoteric symbolism.

There are many decks, with new decks issued frequently, too numerous to go into in detail, though equally meaningful and beautiful. You may find one of these other decks gives you the best psychic link and therefore the best results. You may find that you read several decks, each with its own purpose. Your personal reading deck(s) should be selected after your initial studies, when you are able to tune into the symbolism inherent in each deck. You will be drawn to your personal deck(s) instinctively.

Personal Deck

New Deck Ordinarily I, personally, would not read someone else's deck unless circumstances dictated it. As a beginner, you want to start with a new deck, factory packed, hopefully by a machine, not handled extensively by any other person. Refuse to purchase a deck whose seal has been broken as previous handling is unknown. At this stage, you want a pristine deck to season the deck for your own use, imprinting it with your individual vibrations. How do you do this?

Seasoning Handle the deck consistently for about a two-week period. Sleep with the cards, tied in a cloth (not in a box), near you, under your pillow or at least alongside your bed. You want the cards in your personal space as much as possible. Carry them with you if convenient and handle them frequently. Study and meditate with them. Attune them to you, your aura, your vibes, creating a magnetic link. If this were a piece of jewelry, you would only have to wear it for three days to acclimate it to your energy.

You are seasoning the cards for your own personal use. Once the cards have been fully seasoned to your energy field, other people can handle them (including your clients). Later in this lesson you will learn how to clear the deck of vibrations deposited by others. Once your deck has been seasoned to your energy, you may handle the cards in any way you choose, but always with respect for their use.

Covering Pure silk is very expensive unless you buy a remnant or find a large man's silk handkerchief. Silk is a natural fiber. You may also look at other natural fibers to protect your deck from outside vibrations. Synthetics are not thought to protect. I don't know the technical reason for this. Saran Wrap, the brand name, is used in other psychic defense techniques. You might try it to insulate your cards if you do not have raw natural fabric, but I do not have direct proof of Saran Wrap's efficacy. If your cards are wrapped, you can carry them with you and they will not potentially become contaminated by whatever they may encounter. The covering you choose should be dedicated to this single purpose.

Surface Consciously select the surface where you place your cards or do a reading. If the cloth you use to cover your cards is large enough, use that as a layout cloth. If not large enough, use another piece of solid or natural fiber as a layout cloth. At times this is not feasible. Remember what you are trying to do... provide a clear, uncontaminated surface on which to place your cards. You can also use a flat piece of wood similar to a checkerboard as your layout board. It probably won't be convenient for travel, but will do fine in your personal environment. If you use raw wood, be careful of splinters, for yourself and others.

I have a large violet print synthetic kerchief (a gift from a friend) which I use for layouts. I look ridiculous in a head scarf, so the gift had another purpose. It is not silk, but it is dedicated to this use. It is wrapped around my silk handkerchief, which covers the cards themselves, and is kept in my deck container. It is never used for anything else.

Container The outside of the box or container is not as important as the inside. The cards themselves should be exposed to either raw wood or natural fiber to keep the cards as clean and as uncontaminated as possible. Lacquer or liner inside isolates the cards from the wood, defeating your purpose. Lacquer, decoration, or paint on the outside is fine.

Clearing As you practice and give readings, others will be handling your deck. From time to time, particularly between readings, you may wish to clear your deck of previous or unwanted vibrations. The cards themselves can pick up vibrations from those who have handled them. They may potentially exert some influence on you, especially if you are not paying attention. If you are super sensitive, do not carry on your person or sleep with or near a contaminated deck. Clear it first - a simple procedure which takes mere seconds. Your mental state is far more important than any required physical action. Use any one method or combination.

1) Stroke the deck with your hand with the mentally focused intention of clearing the deck. Shake your hands off away from the cards or wash your hands with water. Or simply blow a cleansing breath on the cards.

2) Shuffle the deck vigorously, similar to the two-handed riffing of ordinary playing cards, mentally focused on clearing the deck.

3) Sharply fan or slap the cards vigorously on each end, against your hand, again with the mentally focused intention of clearing the deck.

4) Pass the cards quickly through incense smoke or a candle flame. Don't accidentally set the cards on fire or burn yourself! Do a more elaborate ritual if you know how or choose to do so - any combination of techniques. Your state of your mind controls the outcome.

Prevention If doing a simple preventative maintenance clearing, you may choose to breathe softly on the cards as you fan them, implanting, emphasizing, and again imprinting your personal vibrations. Once a major clearing has been done, you may wish to keep the cards on your person or sleep with them again for a day or two to re-acclimate the cards to your personal vibration. The cards will accept your influence and intention readily since you have previously tuned the cards to your personal vibes.

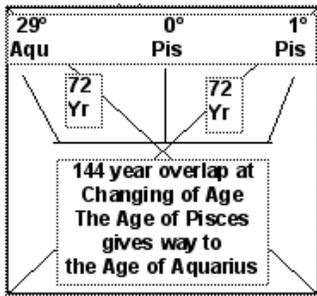
Color Your Own Deck I wanted to include colored photos of the 78 Tarot cards from the Rider-Waite deck, but due to copyright issues that is not possible. I had also hoped to provide you with a coloring book of black and white blanks for you to color as you studied. The older Waite book I suggested is such a book. If you can find a copy, keep it as a master and photocopy what you are studying on an as needed basis. Alternatively, you can Google for black and white public domain images. As a study aid, the time and effort spent in coloring these black and white versions is invaluable. Our conscious mind uses language, structure and specifics. The Tarot uses the language of the subconscious - pure symbolism in all its forms, particularly color. The focus involved in coloring a card while you study is a form of meditation. Each time you meditate on, read, or color the card, you embed the card's symbolic meanings deeper into your subconscious. Conversely, your subconscious delivers more meaning for the card symbols as you progress, continuing to develop your ability to retrieve what should be instinctive information. I would suggest that you color the entire deck three times to embed essential symbology.

When coloring a deck, be careful of the medium used. Magic markers give harsh, dark colors that may soak through thin paper, and it may be difficult to blend delicate shades. Watercolors are great, but will also soak through thin paper. Oils are lovely but take a long time to dry and may leave oil lines, which may not be suitable for decks handled constantly. Perhaps water colors or oils would be better for a study on canvas. If you have the talent, please do so. I would if I could! Chalk or oil pastels may brush off and cannot be handled unless they are sealed with a clear glaze. They would allow for more shading and delicacy of color. Acrylics, crayons or colored pencils are easily handled; colored pencils allow for subtle shading. The choice is yours - the details provided above is my experience talking.

Symbology

To explore the symbolic references portrayed on the cards would require volumes. We will explore many, but definitely not all, possible symbolic references as we study the individual cards. As with other esoteric disciplines, several lifetimes would possibly be sufficient to learn any one of them. In doing so, you would find your studies seeping into many other disciplines as they are inter-related. Many times, what is learned for one system of study can be applied to another study. As you study the cards, you will be studying many of the other esoteric disciplines, at least in part. What is the meaning of an esoteric discipline? The word discipline in this context simply means concentrated effort, devotion, responsibility, structure and definition. Since there are many areas to study in our field, any of those areas that may be approached from a systematic study would be referred to as a discipline.

The difference between esoteric and exoteric information is the difference between information that is available to the many (exoteric) and that which is available only to the few (esoteric). A memory trick to differentiate is that the EX refers to the external or easily available studies. We take for granted much of the information flow we currently enjoy, forgetting that such information has rarely been available to the masses. Only a few centuries ago, reading and writing were known only to a privileged few. In our own culture, we are now appalled to find young children who do not read and / or write. We expect that all can and will. In ancient times (and more recently), this was not so.



My grandmother was born in the early 1880s, over a century ago, and had only a fifth-grade education. This was normal for the time and for European culture. She was very proud of her ability to read and write and justly so. But circumstances at the time did not allow her to go past fifth grade. Even in this day and age, across the world there are many cultures that do not get a rudimentary education. If reading and writing were once esoteric, known only to the few, what other information do we take for granted which was once considered esoteric?

Bibles became available to the general public only after the invention of the printing press. Before that, all biblical study was done by the church whose appointed clergy gave their interpretation to the masses. You don't suppose that interpretation was possibly manipulated to serve personal, organizational or political purposes, do you?

As we move from the Piscean Age into the Aquarian Age, much information that has been traditionally esoteric shall become exoteric, available to the many. Look at what is going on in metaphysics at present. I am not just talking about Tarot. Look at meditation, psychic development, Astrology, Numerology and other interests, which have developed in the last few years. Needless to say, traditional or fundamental orthodox religion is doing a war dance on these beliefs and will continue to do so as this changing of the ages occurs. Still, that which was available only to the few is now increasingly becoming available to the many. Many formerly esoteric practices have gone mainstream and are being incorporated into everyday life. The esoteric is becoming exoteric. Progress demands that we attempt to be all that we can be.

What we as students, and eventually readers and teachers, must remember is the extreme defensiveness practiced within our own field. Considering the persecution and abuse of occultism in the past, some defensiveness is understandable. But in light of the emerging age, that which has been protected and hidden must be exposed. At the same time we must be careful not to offer ourselves up as sacrificial victims. Sacrifice is a Piscean concept, not an Aquarian concept. We must carefully thread our way through the defense mechanisms imposed on esoteric information by well-intentioned, learned devotees or power and control machinations.

Much esoteric information was intentionally clouded or misrepresented in order to prevent the teaching from being misused. It was assumed that if a student were sufficiently developed to handle the correct information, the student would "intuit" the errors. I don't know about you, but there are times when I am pretty thick-headed. I'm sincere, but can be dense! There are other times when I look at a piece of information and it clashes with

something inside me that “knows” something is wrong. I may not know what is right, but I can feel the wrong. What I am not sure of is how many errors I might miss and draw into my consciousness as useful and accurate information. Since I do not see myself as infallible, I try to keep an open mind, remain somewhat skeptical, and try to use my intuition and my common sense. What else can we do, short of clear, concise, accurate information or good teachers?

Universal Symbolology Those symbols which remain the same between disciplines and which may be applied unilaterally throughout human experience are called archetypes. In other words, a symbol within one area may be applied to other areas under study. The Tarot is filled with such archetypal symbology because the Tarot seems to embrace or use so many other metaphysical disciplines. Taking the time to study each card individually and to develop a symbolic dictionary not only adds to or aids in your understanding of the cards, but may be applied to many other fields as well such as dream interpretation, psychic messages, psychology, healing, etc. I’m going to suggest just that. Start a personal symbol dictionary, a book embodying both archetypal symbology and your own personal and private language. If you are sharing with another, remember your personal symbology may not be appropriate to them. For example, not everyone likes the color red. Your personal symbolism can be different from every other person’s symbology.

Symbol Dictionary

My suggestion for your personal symbolic dictionary is to get a large loose-leaf notebook such as the one for this book (pages 8 ½” x 11”). The ever-popular spiral notebook does not lend itself well to corrections and additions. Set up the pages alphabetically, allowing extra pages for those letters that seem to have more references. As you take classes, study books, or use and study the cards themselves, note in your dictionary whatever you learn relative to the symbology. Later as you practice and read, make additional notes as to meanings that develop through use. I suggest that the notes developed during readings be entered in a different color pen than the archetypal symbol notes so you will readily know the difference in the sources. Preserve the difference between what is given symbolically and its interpretation.

Archetypal symbols hold their value regardless of time, place, person, or discipline. Just realize that what might be allowable in an individual reading may never be applied again in that same manner, and is, therefore, not archetypal - it is personal.

This dictionary should be an ongoing, very personal experience. No two dictionaries should be alike. Your personal developed dictionary will be different from mine because we are individual and not copies of one another. Remember, everything you develop in terms of your understanding of the cards becomes a part of your ability to read. If a symbol conveys a message, it is an element of a reading. Archetypal symbols are common to all. Individual symbols may be just that: individual and personal. I have provided a two-page excerpt from my personal early Symbol Dictionary as a suggestion (see Appendix). This can grow to gigantic proportions, so stay simple but clear.

As we study each card, symbolism will be heavily interpreted. Be sure to make notes that may be applied to other cards we encounter. A rose on one card could have a similar meaning when found on another card.

Foreground, Middle Ground, Background Placement of symbols on the card can give you much information. Foreground, middle ground and background placements are easily taken for granted. You have personal issues that are in the forefront of your experience: job, family, relationships, personal problems, goals or aspirations. You also have issues that are more in the background of your experience such as planning for the distant future, old age family obligations, etc. You also have issues which are not immediately essential, but are more than peripheral or distant effects, which we'll place in the middle ground of your experience such as laundry, watering the lawn, your next vacation, etc. What is readily available in the very front of the picture on the card, relevant to the moment? What is distant or in the extreme background, peripheral? What is middle ground, neither immediate nor distant, relevant or peripheral? There is a lot of such symbolism to cover on a card-by-card basis.

To study Tarot, it is not essential that you know Astrology. Any astrological knowledge you do have or can develop should make the cards easier to read as you will be able to apply whatever you know about Astrology to your readings. The same would be true for any information you have about Numerology, dream interpretation, color, etc. Whatever you know you can apply. Just keep your sources and your references clear in your head. As you work with the Tarot cards, you will see the intermingling of disciplines. As you learn from the Tarot cards, you will be able to apply what you have learned in your other disciplines. In this way, to study one is to also study the others. For deeper information on Astrology, see my *Astrology: The Symbolic Language* and *Numerology: The Symbolic Language* workbooks.

Elements

Astrologically, the main key in the Tarot seems to be the use of the elements as they apply to the four suits. The four astrological elements are fire, earth, air and water. Let's look at the principles inherent in the elements so we may apply the information to the Tarot cards.

Fire as an experience is electric, dynamic, activating, and vivacious. A fiery situation or person is to experience dynamic activity, enterprise and involvement. Jungian intuiting.

Earth as an experience is material, physical, and more tangible in nature. Physical reality, practicality, and dollars and cents would be the nature of an earthy experience. Jungian sensing.

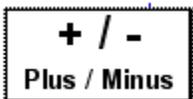
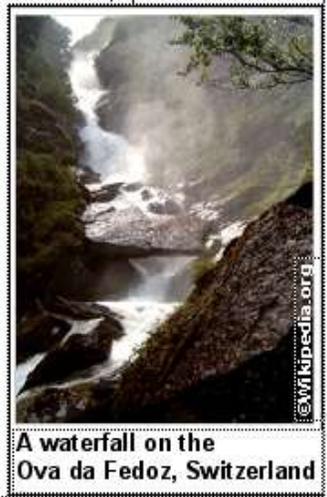
Air as an experience is communicative, relational, mental or idea-oriented, definitely not as tangible as physical earth. Ideas act as a catalyst to generate movement, solicited or unsolicited, at times necessary and at times antagonistic. Jungian thinking.

Water as an experience is emotional, caring, affectional, sensitive, nurturing, psychic or artistic. Water acts as a joining, merging, blending agent. Jungian feeling.

These are necessarily brief descriptions to give you a feel for the elements. Study or meditate on the principles to expand your feel and your knowledge of them.

Positive or Negative I have mentioned mostly positive keywords with the elements. Remember that every energy has both positive and negative expressions intrinsic to its nature. Every front has a back. As exciting as fire can be, it can also be destructive. As practical as earth is, it can also be intractable. As communicative as air is, it can also gossip. As nurturing as water is, it can also be manipulative.

Positive and negative are determined by personal perception. Meat to a starving person sounds like a positive – unless the meat offered is in contradiction to their personal religious beliefs. Even a starving person may not see undesirable meat as a blessing. Destructive activity is thought to be negative, unless the act of destruction is necessary because of safety issues or progress. Be sure to examine both the positive and the negative of each symbol and element of the card as well as the overall tone of each card.



Establishing correlation between astrological elements and the suits of the tarot deck, the following applies:

fire = wands earth = pentacles air = swords water = cups

Few have difficulty with the association of pentacles with earth and cups with water. Many dispute the association of fire with wands and air with swords. I had this same problem when I began my studies. I will refer you to the face cards (courts) of each suit. If you lay each of the courts out by suit, you will notice the elemental references quite easily.

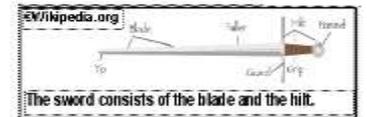
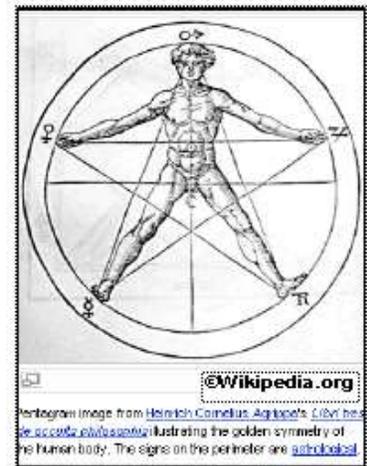
On the flowering wands, lions and salamanders (fire lizards) are prominent, as are flames on some of the helmets indicating fire as the element.

On the pentacles, lush landscapes, bull's heads, grapevines, plowed fields, etc. show the Earth in growth and harvest.

On the swords, butterflies abound. Storm clouds, implied winds, birds flying indicate the principle of moving air.

On each of the Cups, water plays a significant role... fish are jumping, waves are visible, there are flowing streams, cups are used to contain liquid, etc.

In any event, the four astrological elements / suits are the place to turn your attention to begin your study of the cards. You will encounter other astrological symbolism on a few cards. As you handle the cards, you will gradually see astrological references. Simply apply what you know of Astrology to the meanings of those references. The same would be true if you had knowledge of dreams, psychology, Numerology, etc. We will be developing specifics as we do each card individually.



Suits

The astrological elements are the four ingredients necessary to use and master on the way to becoming an adept in the study of ritual magic. The four symbols are found on the table in front of the figure of The Magician on the Major Arcana card. These are the tools as his disposal - he is or should be the master. Experientially, the Magician will master those tools through the sequence of each suit as previously indicated. There are actually two decks within your tarot deck, the Minor Arcana and the Major Arcana. This will be more fully described in the next section. Using our basic grasp of the astrological elements and the symbolism of a goblet, a coin, a sword and a budding wand, let us apply that knowledge to develop our understanding of the four Tarot suits in the Minor Arcana deck, ace through king: Again,

fire = wands earth = pentacles air = swords water = cups

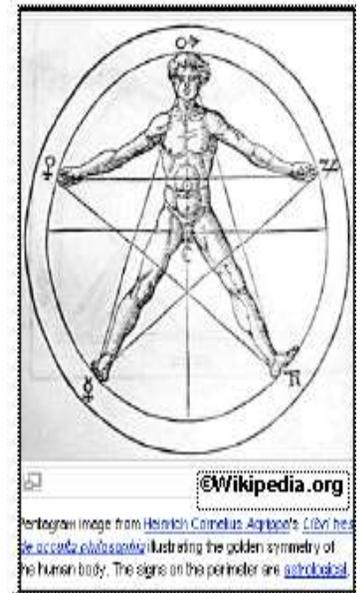
Wands On each of the fourteen cards contained within the suit of wands, budding leaves indicate that emerging life permeates the sticks. The staff of life is dynamic and expressive, creative, mobile and growing. This is the fiery spark of life, the masculine discharge of lightning into the primordial feminine ocean that gave rise to living creatures. Within recent years, we have duplicated (in a very minor fashion) this earthly seeding process in scientific laboratories. This is symbolic of the Creator, Brahma of the Hindu trinity and the Kabbalistic World of Activity. This is growth itself, the energy of unfolding life, virile, renewing, active, potential as it unfolds.

The suit of Wands represents the world of enterprise, animation, excitement, entrepreneurship. Wands are what put Christopher Columbus and his crew in search of a new land, not quite sure if they would fall off the edge of the world or were sailing into oblivion. Wands are what sent the Plymouth pioneers into a world unknown to them with the exciting idea of building a new nation where they could begin their lives all over again. Wands are what sent brave families into the western frontier in the face of hostile natives to populate our American territory. Wands represent the drive that lures astronauts to strap themselves into a cockpit on the side of a monster rocket to push into outer space to plant our seeds on distant worlds. Also known as a vine stave by the ancients, it was originally a symbol of office for a Roman Centurion.



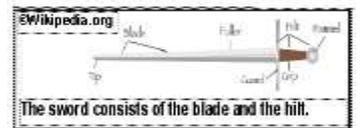
Pentacles On each of the fourteen cards contained within the suit of pentacles, five-pointed starred coins are the primary symbol. A coin is an obvious symbol for material prosperity or finance, gain or material value. Using that theme, it is easy to see the development of trade, industry, mercantile interests and banking. As the representation of the Kabbalistic Material World, the coins represent accomplishment or symbology of a material nature, real, physical, practical and tangible - the form side of life. Symbols of fertility abound. This is symbolic of the Vishnu face of the Hindu trinity... the Preserver.

The five-pointed star represents physical man with his five extremities (two arms, two legs, one head). Five represents the five physical senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch) with which man identifies his physical reality. Five represents the elements of nature that imbue all life and from which life springs: fire, earth, air, water, plus the ether from which it all forms. In oriental philosophy, all the earth and its experiences are composed of the elements of wind, water, wood, iron and fire.



Swords The symbol contained on the fourteen cards of the suit of swords is a sword with cutting edges on both sides of the blade, double-edged, not just sharp on one edge. This blade cuts both ways - one edge towards that to which it is aimed and one edge towards the wielder of the blade itself. This is the cutting edge of the idea, the decisiveness and divisiveness of thought, and the spoken word, the Kabbalistic World of the Intellect. Jesus said, "I have come not to bring peace, but a sword (division)." The sword requires courage, boldness and forceful action.

In all cycles there comes a moment when that which exists has served its purpose and must now be eliminated. At times destruction, which may be necessary for new growth, is viewed as negative. Its qualities at that time may be aggression, force, misfortune, war and strife, all represented by the Swords. This is symbolic of the Shiva face of the Hindu trinity.

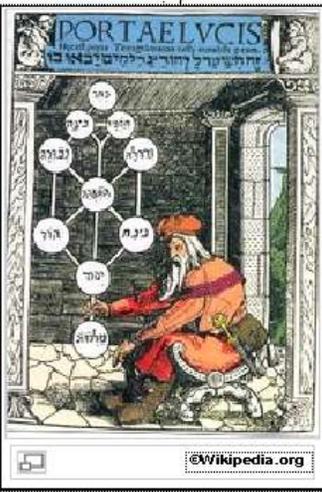




Cups On each of the fourteen cards contained in the suit of cups, goblets are the common and primary symbol. Often referred to as the Holy Grail, the chalice was used by Jesus at the Last Supper. Jesus broke the bread indicating it was his body and offered the wine to his disciples as his blood. Used in traditional Christian religious ritual, it is the partaking of wine and wafer as communion, the symbolic consumption of the body and blood of the Christ, a sacred act. The Crusades in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were prompted by the search for the Holy Grail and control of Jerusalem.

A cup, as a container, holds liquid, symbolic of life as evolved from the primordial water of Mother Ocean. It is fertile, life-giving, the womb, pregnant with possibility, feminine. Cups belong to the Kabbalistic World of Emotion, our subconscious minds. Cups are sensitive, artistic, psychic and instinctual. If we look at the soma, psyche, and pneuma divisions of the Greeks (body, soul and spirit), water represents the soul of man, instinctually imaginative and creative.

As an experience, water represents affection, love, feeling, union, happiness, beauty and pleasure, friendship, and the good life. Water cares for and about, or involves its feelings. Cups also represent religion and the strong feelings of faith. When we look at each of the fourteen cards within the suit of cups plus any other cups we encounter on other cards, the symbolism of both the cup and the astrological element it represents, water, is prompted. It is symbolic of the World Mother, or the Kabbalistic Shekinah.



The tree of life as represented in the Kabbalah, containing the Sephiroth

Queen Alethia's Speech of Acceptance as ruler of the Land of Alkyra

from *Shadow Magic* by Patricia C. Wrede

“By the power of the Sword
will I win justice for this land;
by the power of the Shield
will I guard it wisely;
by the power of the Cup
will I hold it in mercy;
by the power of the Staff
will I rule it in peace.
This is promise to all the people
in the light of the crown before you.”

Minor and Major Arcana

As mentioned, the Tarot deck is divided into two sections: the Minor Arcana and the Major Arcana. Combining both decks is referred to as the Great Pack and is the current use of the Tarot and its two components. The Minor Arcana consists of 56 cards, four more than the standard playing deck. The minor deck consists of four suits of ace through ten (forty cards) and sixteen courts, four for each suit (page, knight, queen and king).

How Ace through ten of each suit represents what is circumstantial in nature, the how of activity. Ace through ten cards seem to imply activity itself that may or may not be under the control of the querent (the person asking the question). These represent actual conditions or experiences on a mundane, earthly level.

Who Court cards (pages, knight, queens and kings) denote the people who play a part in the circumstance, the who, but can also refer to the situation itself. Court cards can always represent events, circumstances or situations, but more often they can represent the people to whom the events happen or who cause the events to occur. Since other people are not usually within our control, these cards can represent situations or people who are beyond the control of the querent. Control of the situation can actually be in the hands of the “others” represented by the court cards. The courts may also be used for character or physical descriptions of the event or the people involved in the events.

Why The 22 Major Arcana cards represent the archetypal principles or forces underlying the activity or behind the activity, the lesson to be learned, destiny. They tend to control both the action and the people involved. Rarely is the querent or any participant in control of these issues or activities or their outcome. If several majors occur in the spread, it can mean powerful outside spiritual forces at work in the situation. Destiny is involved.

As we progress through the study of the individual cards, we will deepen these meanings.

Where and When Many times the Minor Arcana ace through ten cards will be the key to the location and timing of the experience, depending on how they appear in the spread. This will be covered in spreads.

What We have briefly explored the how (minors: ace through ten), the who (courts), the why (majors), the where and the when (timing) of experience. The “what” of experience is determined by the question being asked for the reading. All answers in the cards respond to the question as it was asked, directly and specifically. We must be very careful to define the question precisely and not waffle in that definition or to apply the reading to a question never asked.

Initial Conclusions Interestingly enough, we have barely scratched the surface of the symbology inherent on each of the tarot cards. The cards, in turn, barely scratch the surface of universal symbology. If we had:

- 1) potential (and we do have), and
- 2) lifetimes to study (and we do),
- 3) guidance of a higher order (it is available to us upon request),
- 4) motivation to learn (some do, some don't),
- 5) sincerity (notice the field is getting smaller), and
- 6) tenacity of will (do you realize how few have survived this single sentence?),

we could begin our journey of understanding symbols and our path to God. Since white light (consciousness, visible knowledge) is available to all of us, the potential of all is available to each of us. God is not tantalizing us with the impossible, but is giving us an infinite variety of experience with which to travel (outward) the return to God (inward). Remember, God is the only game in town. Eventually you have to face the divinity within.

Psychic Ability If you are psychically gifted, or if the potential resides within you, your study of tarot should help it blossom. Anyone who is psychically able to tune into the client or situation can deepen and broaden the reading and its effects. As you tune into the cards in each reading, accept the first impression conveyed by a card. You can always broaden or deepen the reading, just identify that first impression.

Sources The most amazing symbolic and tarot research is available on the world's largest library, the internet. Just perform a search on Google or your preferred search engine. E.g., search for tarot, pentacle, tree of life, etc. For example, I Googled “*Tarot images black and white public domain*” as suggested in the coloring section. Excellent imagery and illustrations are available on Wikipedia. You can also find specific information for single common subjects such as icebergs on both Google and Wikipedia. Those are only two of the possibilities available on the internet.

Additional Study Lesson One:

- Season deck, handle every day, construct storage.
- Meditate for five minutes on one subject each day or night: fire, earth, air, water, majors, minors and courts.
- Take notes as you study for points you wish to remember.
- Google for black and white individual card photocopies to color as you progress.

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Numerology and the Minor Arcana

*Symbology continued / Numerology
Minor Arcana: Ace through Ten, Courts
Color: Primaries, Secondaries, Tertiaries
Suits; The Cards Themselves: Ace, Two*

Numerology has its roots at the very beginning of human time as man attempted to make some order out of his universe. One of the earliest intellectual functions man developed was his ability to keep count of his family, his animals and his possessions as he emerged from a purely primitive, animal origin with an instinctive state of awareness. Although it is fiction, the *Clan of the Cave Bear* book series by Jean M. Auel depicts that primitive life and state of human emergence. Ms. Auel did an incredible amount of sociological and general research to write her books. She was able to create a life, a culture and a personal attitude as realistic as possible within the confines of a medium of entertainment. I truly felt more in touch with our primitive origins through her very entertaining series.

The crippled Creb was the shaman or medicine man of the original more ape-like tribe, the holder of esoteric wisdom. The heroine, Ayla, was of a different tribe, one of the emerging human futures. She was adopted by Creb after a geologic catastrophe wiped out her family. As Ayla and Creb counted on their fingers, he was astonished that she could spontaneously count higher than the five fingers on one hand. To Creb, this was arcane and esoteric knowledge of the highest degree, available only to the mystical initiate. Counting... numbers... with so profound an impact, they could be understood only by the wisemen of that day.

As man searched for higher meaning in life, his understanding of the cyclic nature of numbers evolved. The concept of sequencing and the underlying spirituality of certain numbers emerged... and Numerology was born. The study of Numerology is well documented throughout history. The tarot student is encouraged to develop a basic grasp of numerological principles. All we will be able to do for the purposes of this workbook is to touch on the general meaning of numbers.

Numerology uses only single digits as base numbers. We in the U.S. employ a base ten counting system. There are other base numbering systems - consult new math. In base ten, only the numbers one through nine are considered to be digits. While usually counted as a number by the general population, zero (0) is really a cypher, a place holder. A number above nine is considered to be a double or multiple digit and is therefore reduced through the addition of its digits to a number which falls between one and nine. Simply add any multiple digits together until the total becomes a single digit. The only multiple digit numbers which are preserved in Numerology are doubled numbers such as 11, 22, 33, etc. Because these are unusual, they are considered to be master numbers, but they are not pertinent to our *initial* study of Tarot. You might want to come back to this in the future and see if adjustments to your knowledge are in order. According to Numerology, life progresses through sequential steps, one to nine. Let us look at the progressive nature of numbers.

O

Zero The cypher (not number) zero is a circle like all circles, implying no beginning and no end, the symbol for perfect spirit, potentially all somethings before becoming any one thing. The best Tarot representation for the zero is the Major Arcana card The Fool, implying the potential of experience, innocence and naiveté, but with an inherent lack of fore-knowledge of such experience.

Number one proceeds from the zero as life manifests or focuses to some specific thing initiating experience out of that which is formless, inexperienced and potential.

That one, in order to acknowledge such experience, needs a reflection just as the light needs the darkness to experience itself. The duality of the two is created – polarity.

The interaction of the one and the two, the masculine (projective) and feminine (receptive) principles, produces a third element, which carries the characteristics of both the one and the two, but is in itself different from either, and so on.

Numerologically, one represents the setting in motion of a cycle or an experience. Nine represents the culmination or completion of that cycle or experience. Five, since it is exactly halfway from either the beginning or the end, represents a pivotal point in the development from initiating to culminating. Numerology is a study of cycles, with definite beginnings, endings, and intermediate steps.

To go beyond nine, for instance to ten, is to go beyond the culmination of the cycle itself into the initiatory stage of the next cycle. The addition of the zero cypher (Spirit) to the one (initiation) indicates a new beginning on a higher turn of the spiral - accomplishment. Therefore, there is the spiritual uplifting of the one with the addition of the zero, the Circle of Spirit. Twenty, therefore, represents the spiritual upliftment of the two, and on through the basic nine digits.

Eleven (doubled ones) is a higher application and demand of the single one. Eleven is a master number but reduces to a two. Twenty-two (doubled twos) is a master number that reduces to a four. Ordinarily, once a multiple digit is reached, numerology reduces those multiple digits to a single number, keeping a mental note of any extraordinary numbers in the background, such as the master numbers.

Applying these numerological principles to the Tarot cards, we see the following representations. Please recognize the ancient mystics did everything with purpose. Not even the number of cards in a deck is coincidental. The Minor Arcana has 56 cards, divided into four suits of 14 cards each. 56 reduces to 11 (higher demand), which reduces to 2 (reflection). The Major Arcana has 22 cards (higher demand) that reduces to 4 (application). Add $1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8+9+10+11+12=78$. This is the number of cards in a complete tarot deck with the 12 representing the zodiac.

Because this is not a book on Numerology, our definitions must be brief. For a deeper treatment of numerology, see my *Numerology: The Cosmic Language*. There are many more keywords and concepts to each number, but this should get you started for the purposes of our Tarot reading.

Ace (One) Through Ten

Aces Beginnings, individuality, creative power, movement, idea, male, electric, positive, independent, doer, initiator, “go for it” energy.

Two Duality, two sides to an issue, choices, gestation, female, mating, union, balancing of forces, negative, magnetic, receptive, dependent, polarity, relationships, cooperation.

Three The trinity of life: spirit, mind and body, the material result of the use of initiative, fruits of labor, growth and expression, aesthetic activity, communication, education, transportation, hope.

1
2
3

4

Four Reality, logic, reason, structure, four walls, the material universe, incarnation as form, hard work, duty, obligation, responsibility, foundations, laying groundwork, applying self in a structured, defined way, work and organize, do what is necessary.

5

Five The pivot point between the beginning and the culmination, uncertainty, forward or backward, no constant vibration, chance taking, uncontrolled activity, flexibility, change, the number of man, five physical senses.

6

Six Balance, equilibrium, harmony, affection, family, marriage, motherhood, teaching through love and example, loving responsibility.

7

Seven Wisdom, private, searching, not easily understood, mystical, soul development, introspection, inward-turning, can become own counselor, alone yet not necessarily lonely, science, research.

8

Eight Justice, judgment, material progress, regeneration, balance of opposing forces, organization through laying groundwork and doing homework before beginning, business attitude of success.

9

Nine Attainment, height or depth, all planes of being: physical, mental, emotional, spiritual. The sum of all other individual forces, fruition, culmination, letting go, clear the decks for the higher turn of the spiral to come with the ten.

10

Ten Perfection through completion, the ultimate in good or evil. The achieved result of each card suit upon which man begins again on a higher level, upgraded to the next round of experience.

Court Cards

Activity cards give way to the court cards. Although the court cards are not numbered in most decks, let us continue with our base definitions.

Page Youth (boy or girl), messages, immature aspect, not fully developed, young, single, budding, talking about doing rather than doing, physical body. In older decks this was the princess, once considered the strongest card of the suit. The 11th card, the imagination which perceives the future, 1+1=2, a contemplative stage.

Knight Young men not yet fully matured or seasoned, young thoughts, actions, activity, process of that suit, doing something about and not just talking about. Coming or going of a matter; ego. The 12th card, $1+2=3$, the fruit of the imagination.

Queen Woman, social, female authority or impact, competency and skill of that suit, emotional or subconscious needs, soul, the mature feminine aspect of that suit. The 13th card, $1+3=4$, safety or stability of experience, feminine.

King Mature or seasoned counsel, men in authority, mature aspect of that suit, doesn't rush in, realizes that not all things are as they look. Consciousness fully developed, spirit, the mature masculine aspect of the suit. The 14th card, $1+4=5$, pivotal, able to create change or to hold the pattern at will.

Color

The study of color is a subject unto itself with volumes written about it. You can find many references as to the scientific study of light and the color spectrum. Do not discount the material found in hard scientific sources. You can get a good education and eliminate many misconceptions. I do not have a strong scientific background, but I am open to learning. I am continually changing my understanding of light and color through whichever methods reach me. Much material is available relative to color and aura or color and healing, or the psychological use of color. Any of these, and others not mentioned, can give you the archetypal information about color that may be applied to any of your disciplines, including our study of the Tarot. I have developed my knowledge of color for the purpose of healing applications. For the purposes of this workbook I will give only a basic or archetypal description of the colors as they apply to the symbolic values of the Tarot.

Color, as we experience it, is the spectrum of visible light itself. We primarily define light as white. But in its broadest sense, it is an absence of dark and is the polarity to what we call darkness. Light and dark are a contrast. We see light because of this contrast to darkness. According to the Bible when God created (He / She) (said / spoke), "Let there be light." This implies that light must not have existed at the time prior to this moment of creation. Dark (black) therefore represents unconsciousness, the unformed, potential, invisible, and chaos. Light (white) represents visibility or consciousness, illumination, and order. The first act of the Creator (the Creator must have pre-existed its creation, living in or as that

undifferentiated darkness) was to bring light out of darkness, introducing polarity or duality. Paying close attention to the Biblical moment of creation, first sound, then light, were the first acts of creation. Manifest creation is dual in nature, existence and experience. After the creation of light out of darkness, or consciousness out of the primordial substance or unconsciousness, the Creator then went on to create the balance of the known, and probably mostly unknown, universe.

Primary Colors If we take white light and pass it through a prism (a crystal), it will refract or break down into the well-known rainbow as seven continuous, seemingly undivided colors. In the order of the rainbow spectrum, there is red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo (purple) and violet. Within that rainbow of seven colors there are three primary colors and four secondary colors. The primary colors are red, blue and yellow. Do you see the trinity of archetypal religious symbolism?

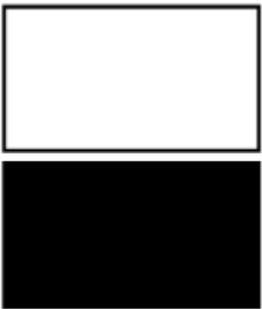
Secondary Colors are produced by combinations of the primaries. The secondary colors as combinations of the three primaries are:

- ✓ Red and yellow combine to produce orange
- ✓ Yellow and blue produce green
- ✓ Normal red and strong blue combine to produce indigo or purple
- ✓ Strong red and normal blue combine to produce violet

If you were to pass the rainbow through a second prism, you would recreate a beam of pure white light. This implies that the white light is a composite of all the colors. It also implies that white light contains all the potential of that which can be visibly experienced.

Since most people are not aware of how we experience color, a simple explanation will help you understand how color works in our lives. We see color by reflection. All colors are absorbed by whatever we are viewing except the shade or color we can physically see. The beam (oneness) of light is seen by its reflections (twoness).

White and Black Since white light contains the potential of all the colors of the spectrum, white is considered to be the spiritual color of perfection, purity, clarity, etc. It is considered positive since it reflects back to us all that is potential. Since black absorbs all the colors and reflects nothing back in terms of light energy, it is considered to be negative in influence – taking everything, giving back nothing, the proverbial “black hole”.



Gray The union of black and white forms various shades of gray - very prominent on our Tarot cards. Gray implies a union of opposites, neutrality, or an experience including both the positive and the negative, or which can go either way.

Rainbow colors help us define symbolism on the tarot cards, reflecting our experiences.

Primary Colors

Red is raw energy, desire, activity, passion, dynamic, energizing, forceful, active (physical.)

Yellow is mental, intellectual, communicative, mind or idea-oriented, optimistic, uplifting, hopeful, stimulating (mental.)

Blue is sedating, mellowing, emotional, nurturing, caring, gentling, healing (emotional.)

Secondary Colors

Orange is the combination of the physical vitality of the red and the intellectual ability of the yellow. Orange is ambitious, goal setting, organized, proud, and loyal.

Green is the combination of the intellectual yellow and the sedating, emotional blue – a mixture of head and heart. This is also the exact center of the rainbow, the balance point. Green therefore represents healing, balancing, harmonizing, growth and abundance in all things.

Purple or Indigo is a combination of the vitality of the red and the emotional, sedating urges of the blue, with more blue than red. Purple is the color of royalty or spirituality, but it is a deep, introspective, studious color. Purple represents passive or deep spirituality.

Violet is made of the same mix of red and blue, but with stronger red than in the purple. The addition of extra red energizes and vitalizes the spirituality implied in the purple and is more dramatically used. Violet represents active spirituality.



File:Solid green.svg - Wikipedia - en.m.wikipedia.org



Image of Indigo color on Wikipedia - en.wikipedia.org



Indigo - Image of Indigo color on Wikipedia - en.wikipedia.org



Violet - Image of Violet color on Wikipedia - en.wikipedia.org

Tertiary Colors

The next level of colors is called tertiary (three generations) and they are combinations of the primaries, the secondaries, white (which lightens) and black (which darkens).

Lighter tones represent finer, subtler qualities of the colors.

Darker tones represent deeper, more intense, internalized qualities of the color.

Muddy, motley tones and colors represent just that in experience - muddy, not clean or clear.

Sharp, clear, vibrant tones, regardless of shading light to dark, are considered the most positive colors.

Combinations of color require combined readings:

Pink tones represent love. Lighter tones are more personal and darker rose tones are more universal and express unconditional love.

Brown tones represent earthiness and materiality. Muddy tones represent greed or sensuality.

Gold, the color of the Sun, represents a higher octave of yellow. Yellow represents intellect and *gold* represents God wisdom.

Silver represents the Christ principle of the white light. *Silver* is the color of the Moon, our subconscious.

The Cards Themselves

Before we dive into individual card symbology, know that you can always take a card at face value. Each card is a storyboard. Intuition springs to mind when a card is revealed. Make careful note of any first impressions before you dive into potential meanings symbolically. In the case of the 3 of swords, three swords penetrating a huge heart offers a first impression of heartbreak or emotional wounding. That is a valid reading in and of itself. Symbolically we can take it deeper. Therefore, we study symbology.

We will systematically study each card for its symbolic meaning. *Do not* attempt to memorize 78 upright and 78 reversed meanings, especially when most reversed meanings in the books tend to be negative. Several of the cards in the deck have negative connotations without any outside help! A rigid set of meanings will not lend itself to all occasions and all questions. To memorize by rote will limit your use of the cards. Allowing the cards themselves to subconsciously trigger your personal symbolism will give you the best continuing and progressive meanings. This systematic study allows your conscious mind and your subconscious mind to interact in the most productive way possible. We will look at suit (element) meaning, numerological meaning and sequence, color, foundation, process, aspiration, background, middle ground, foreground, individual symbolism, direction, etc. for each card and within its grouping.

Remember that many decks reflect life in a much earlier time, before the industrial revolution, a time of queens and kings, knights and pages. As we develop our meanings, we must make the transition between that age and our own, and between that environment and our own. First, we will broaden the concept of the suits, and establish some keyword concepts for the four suits to be used with each card. You can use this synopsis to start your suit study cards.

Suits

According to Charles San in his preface to the reprint of A.E. Waite's *Pictorial Key to the Tarot*, the suits accurately depict the world of the Renaissance, when the currently used decks were commissioned by the nobility and were readily used by the general public. Grand processions, wherein tarot themes were depicted by correctly attired and posed participants, were quite popular in fifteenth and sixteenth century Italy. The suits accurately describe that society. The wand was the agricultural community, the cup was the clergy, the sword was the warrior, and the pentacle was commerce... the "framework of society" for the middle ages. Ordinary folk were depicted in the numbered cards and the nobility of "manor-born" in the court cards. That was then, this is now. We must adapt.

Wands The World of Activity, ideas, concepts, inventive, skilled, enterprising, dynamic and creative. Representing the element of fire, its elemental form is the salamander that has the ability of transformation or regeneration. The constant renewal of life, always in leaf, sprouting, budding and brimming with life and growth, agriculture. Wands are entrepreneurial, virile, animated and energetic. They are weapons, but not of war. They are a phallic symbol for the projective, creative, masculine drive. Its correspondence in a regular deck is clubs.

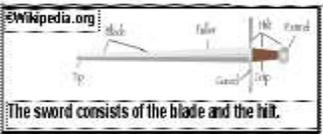
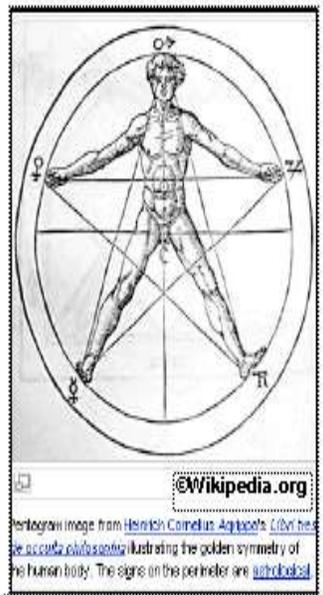
Positive: creative, enterprising, animated, progressive, expansive
 Negative: cunning, conman, wanderlust, inconsistency, boisterous

Pentacles The Material World, symbolic of the development of physical, material and financial values, trade, industry, merchants, profit, business, accruing interest. Financial attainment, material gain, status, position, money, acquisition, influence and affluence as symbolic values. Representing the element of earth, its elemental creature is the gnome with its treasures of the earth. The golden circle is a spiritual womb symbol with its feminine connotation. This Circle of Creation contains interlocking triangles in the form of a 5-pointed star, symbol of the magical arts. Five represents the physical senses, the oriental elements of nature, and the extremities of the human body. Its correspondence in a regular deck is diamonds.

Positive: tangibility, manifestation, organization, form
 Negative: avarice, decadence, sensuality, lust, gluttony, indulgence

Swords The World of the Intellect, the quest, constructive or destructive activity. The Sword of Spirit penetrates matter and informs it. Representing the element of air, its elemental creature is a sylph, similar to a fairy, the individual life spark within all of creation. The sword is also a phallic symbol, a masculine connotation. This sword is the double-edged Sword of Truth - it cuts both ways. The wielder must beware and be aware. Swords also mean the elimination of outworn forms, often necessary, but normally seen as an act of destruction (personal perception). Construction, preservation and destruction is a prominent and normal cycle of life. Correspondence in a regular deck is spades.

Positive: assertion, courage, boldness, transformation, combativeness
 Negative: aggression, conflict, force, warfare, hatred, misfortune



Cups They represent the World of the Emotions, subconscious, instinctual, emotional, the Seat of the Soul, the chalice called the Holy Grail in Arthurian legends. A feminine, circular symbol for the womb of life, cupping, containing and holding life's liquid state, fertility. Representing the element of water, its elemental form is the undine, similar to our common concept of mermaids and mermen, at home in the deep, emotional (water) secrets of life. As feelings, the desire to develop and participate in relationship, family, and union. Knowledge gained by an immersion in, and not an avoidance of, life's experiences. Its correspondence in a regular deck is hearts.

Positive: love, happiness, beauty, pleasure, gentle, good life

Negative: moody, supersensitive, smothering, cry-baby, manipulative

Please remember that my descriptions are for the Rider deck. Please use your personal Rider deck cards to follow this narrative. You will be able to change to another specific deck once you have learned in this workbook how to read the symbolism for all decks.

The Minor Arcana

The Aces An ace represents the first act of manifestation or creation, the concept or idea, start of a matter, initiation, beginning, initialization, individuality, creative power, "go for it", a gift of spirit. This is the embryonic seed ignited into manifestation, with a suggestion of potential victory. All seeds are initially plunged into the ground, germinating in darkness, sprouting, and eventually thrusting their way into the light. They experience growth in the form of stem, leaf, bud, blossom, fruit and new seed, with eventual decay and return to the matrix from which they spring. The ace is that initial concept or act, the seed itself from which all process flows. The suit determines the type of initiation and eventual manifestation that occurs. Astrologically, the ace can symbolize the conjunction as a uniting or focusing of energy.

All the aces have a gray background in common (union of opposites, positive and negative, neutrality). Gray might also imply that period between night and sunrise or sunset (called dawn or twilight), when the sky is gray, neither light or dark. With the ace concept of beginning, dawn would make better sense as our choice. In other cards, gray could represent evening twilight or dusk. Perhaps gray could show an overcast day with storm clouds on the horizon.



A white (purity), glowing (spiritual) hand (grasp) is issuing from a fluffy cloud in mid-air (heavenly). A heavenly hand (the Hand of God?) on each of the symbols of the four suits is almost a gift-like setting. These definitions would be the metaphor for experience. Ace equals the 1 of initiation - something shall begin.

The landscapes at the bottoms of the cards are varied. Mountains (lofty aspirations) are seen in the wands, swords and pentacles, but not in the cups. Water (emotion) is shown in cups and wands, but not in pentacles or swords. The clouds on all four aces are similar but are somewhat darker on the wands and swords, and much lighter on the cups and pentacles (shades of gray?). Human experiences do not usually come in black or white.

None of the aces are shown in threatening gestures or circumstances, although the sword is formidable. The wands and the cups issue from the right side of the card (dynamic, assertive), the swords and pentacles issue from the left side of the card (passive, magnetic). Use your own hand to emulate the grip shown on each ace. A tightly closed grip is security-based. A looser grip is more open in connotation.

Remembering the suits' masculine (assertive) / feminine (receptive) polarity, know that wands and swords are masculine, cups and pentacles are feminine. While the ace of wands and swords (masculine) grip their implements, the back of the hand is visible on the swords and the front of the hand is visible on the wands. Would you like to receive the back of someone's hand or their palm extended towards you? Therefore, the wand is a friendlier presentation.

Also on the wands, the thumb is upright, a definitely looser grip than that of the swords. The thumb represents the will of the individual, implying that this act of initiation carries with it a deliberate act of will. While the hand on the ace of cups and pentacles (feminine) support or hold their implements, the palm is more visible on the cups and only the side of the palm-up hand is visible on the pentacles, representing various degrees of receptivity and caution.

Ace of Wands

The Ace of Wands is a heavenly glowing right hand issuing from a somewhat darker (implying potentially more stress) cloud. The palm is turned openly toward the reader. The wand is gripped (assertion) by the hand (grasping), but the thumb (will) is upturned along the wand. This symbolizes the alignment with a higher source to apply such will with higher guidance. The wand is renewing, budding, leafing, showing growth and regeneration. The eight (planning and organization) falling leaves are shaped like yods (droplets of higher consciousness).

The scenario is a river winding through a somewhat green valley. There are some trees, but not lush vegetation (not barren). There are hills (modest spiritual aspirations) in the background and distant ranges. A castle (cultural, developed) appears to surmount a closer hill and appears to be higher than the distant ranges. Perhaps the aspirations are tuned to modest accomplishment.

The Ace of Wands indicates the initiation of a creative or enterprise-based issue, or a gift of spirit for such an enterprise or issue. Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, you can develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

The Ace of Pentacles shows a heavenly, upturned, glowing hand with the thumb side showing. The palm is hidden behind the thumb which is lying passively along the side and bottom of the coin. At the same time, the hand seems to be both open and giving, and also containing and reserved. The pentagram (five-pointed star) represents the senses, the streams of consciousness, and the extremities of man – all contained within the Womb of Creation.

The scenario is a cultivated (not wild or primitive) grassy knoll, with white lilies (pure thought and motive) growing profusely. There is a smooth, golden path (the path to our spiritual selves) leading to and through a thick (abundant growth and virility) hedgerow and circular arbor (spiritual entry) of red roses (passion and desire.) Lofty mountains (aspirations) can be seen through the rose arbor at the end of the path, implying a climb to the heights.

The Ace of Pentacles indicates the initiation of a physical / material-based issue, or a gift of spirit of such an issue or manifestation. Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Ace of Pentacles

Ace of Swords

The Ace of Swords is the double-edged Sword of Truth, gripped firmly (assertively) and resolutely (a personal power grip) in the heavenly right glowing hand that issues from a darker gray cloud (even more tense). Surmounting the sword is a golden crown (terrestrial authority), which may not always be in accord with celestial authority or guidance. The laurel branch (victory) and the olive branch (peace) hang from the crown, a symbol of mastery on the material (secular) level. Note that the masculine sword penetrates the circle of the crown, symbol of the masculine penetration of the feminine, wisdom through experience. Six (responsibility) small flames or yods (droplets of higher consciousness) are just above the hilt of the sword.

At the base of the card are blue (emotional) and purple (passive spirituality) austere (no frills) mountains (aspirations). This can be read as bleak, barren or almost militant aspirations or as emotional / spiritual aspirations, acetic in nature. No easy path is shown to the mountains, yet the mountains exist to be climbed. This will not be an easy task.

The Ace of Swords indicates the initiation of a mental or tension-based issue or a gift of spirit for such a venture or issue. At times, that force is excessive or can be used for conquest. Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

The Ace of Cups is an upturned hand, palm totally visible, as open a gesture as is possible. The thumb (will) is behind the cup (container for emotions). The hand seems to be openly giving or is open to such giving. Issuing from the cup (Holy Grail, chalice of Spirit) are five streams of consciousness, which are flowing back into the great sea (the Great Unconscious), in a continuous flow. From the source, returning to the source, there is a continuous flow of water (feeling). You may also see water on the cards as a tranquil well of emotion. 26 droplets of life force (yods) are falling all around (there are 26 letters in the English alphabet.) Water lilies or lotus pads (purity of thought and motive) float on this great sea, the Womb of Creation, and their flowers are red (desire). All the water flowing as streams in the balance of the suits stem from this card, which in turn stems from the hem of the High Priestess.

The white dove of spirit (the Biblical symbol of the Christing), anciently a symbol of the planet Venus, descends with a wafer. It is bestowing “manna from heaven” or spiritual food, blessings or nourishment. The wafer (the host, bread of life) has the equal armed cross representing the

Ace of Cups

balancing of the four elements. The vertical bar represents spirit informing matter (masculine / projective), the horizontal bar the material plane and its connecting linkages (feminine / receptive.) The W-shaped symbol on the cup is a symbol of Great Mother, the womb of life.

The Ace of Cups indicates the initiation of an emotional- / family-based or spiritual issue, or a gift of spirit relative to such an issue, or perhaps birth. Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Two

Two is the concept of duality, polarity and union. In contrast to the masculine projection of the aces, twoness is feminine, reflective, mirroring, polarizing, double-sided, unifying, and paired. This is the balancing of forces, creativity being fulfilled, mating, negative (not bad), receptive, divergent, relating, cooperative, with an automatic assumption of choice, a set of issues, not initiating, denoting activity previously set in motion. Astrologically, the 360° circle is divided by two (giving two 180° halves). The forms an opposition, an aspect of contention and sometimes division. It represents opposing points of view and reflection.

Normal, friendly sky-blue backgrounds are found on the two of swords, cups and pentacles. A light gray background is found on the two of wands. A blue sky would be normal daylight, non-remarkable. On the swords, please note the waning (decreasing in light) crescent moon which occurs a few days before the new Moon when it is visible in the daytime. The basis, foundations or footings of all four cards (general understanding; personal understanding is show by foot coverings), are flat, level and secure. This foundation on the swords, wands and pentacles is gray (union of opposites) and on the cups is golden (wisdom). Water (emotion) in some form exists on swords, wands and pentacles.

All the twos contain human figure(s) in non-aggressive states of experience. Single figures are found on swords, wands and pentacles, and a male / female couple is found on the cups. The swords and pentacles figures face the reader. The wands figure is facing away from the reader and the couple is facing each other. The position of the figures and the direction they face can be part of your reading. Face forward is direct. Facing away is retreating or private. Side view is partially hidden, silhouetted or outlined.

Two of Wands

Hilly land (modest spiritual aspirations) is found on swords, wands and cups. A lush (fertility) background is found on wands and cups. A water (emotion) background is found on swords and pentacles.

Two of Wands A male figure is standing atop a building, gazing out over the surrounding countryside. He is richly and warmly dressed. His undergarments, leggings and boots are somewhat orangish (ambition and goal-setting) in color, and his robe is brown (materiality.) His cap is red (passion or desire), a containment for his mental abilities (head, brain).

In his right (active) hand, with the palm up (receptive gesture), he holds a globe, a symbol of dominion. This globe happens to be the world globe itself. In his left (passive) hand he loosely holds a budding staff (wand). This staff is either footed atop or is embedded within the thick, flat, stable wall of the building. Please note the polarity. He holds the masculine staff on his feminine side and a feminine globe on his masculine side. To the right (masculine) side of the man is a second flowering wand that is solidly anchored to the side of the retaining wall. He has his back to this wand and is not physically gripping it.

The man is standing on the ramparts of a castle on a highly placed building, with strong, thick, gray walls and a firm footing, denoting both attainment and the ability to oversee. A shield device is on the left wall, containing the white lilies of pure thought and motive crossed with the red roses of desire, another implication of duality.

The landscape is below and the roofs of two other buildings are seen lower than his standing. The lush landscape is dotted with buildings showing a developed community, cultured, cultivated and fertile, on the shores of a peaceful lake, bay or large body of water (emotions). Purple (contemplative) mountains (aspirations) are at the far end of the body of water (emotion) pushed into the gray background.

Is this man looking out over “his” world or “the” world? Is this the master or the manager of all he surveys? Has he sent forth activity in some prior experience and is awaiting or anticipating the results? Remember that twos are not cards of initiation. Is he a scholar? Is the world and all its knowledge his oyster? In older societies, scholars were supported by royalty or the affluent. Is he contemplating, yearning or dreaming about what he would like to accomplish or the results of what has already been set in motion?

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Two of Pentacles A single male figure, appearing as a juggler, holds a golden pentacle (feminine) in each outstretched (reaching forward), palm up (receptive) hand. The coins are joined by a figure eight loop, the Cosmic Lemniscate (infinity / time). The juggler wears a red / orange (ambition emphasized with activity) undershirt, red (desire) leggings (covering for his forward motion), belt (encircling his inner and outer motivations) and hat (containing his consciousness). His over-garment is orange (goals or ambition). His shoes and the cosmic loop are green (balance).

A normal light-blue sky covers about 4/5ths of the card. Directly behind the figure are turbulent waters (emotions) with two ships bobbing on the churning surface. They look precarious, particularly the larger, full-sail vessel. Ships are vehicles to convey goods or people across the turbulent waters (emotions) and can also be referred to as relationships.

The juggler stands on a flat (stable), gray (union of opposites) surface, but appears to be jumping from one foot to the other, moving or dancing in some way. His expression is one of focus on the coin in his left hand, or dismay as he realizes what he juggles. His expression does not appear gleeful, as we usually think jugglers are.

Regardless of the question asked or the circumstance, the answer is that of a juggler: money, relationships, demands on time, business vs. home, circumstance, property, health, etc.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Two of Swords A blindfolded (cannot see), seemingly female figure sits on a bench, arms crossed over her chest, hands shoulder high. She is poised, holding in her hands and supported by her shoulders, two of the double-edged Swords of Truth. The crossed swords are at balance, yet not threatening. She is wearing a white robe (purity of thought) with yellow sandals on her feet (intellectual under-standing).

Two of Pentacles

Two of Swords

Two of Cups

Behind her head is the sky - darker, foreboding, holding a last quarter (waning) Crescent Moon. This Moon denotes a period of allowing the results of prior activity to be cleared to prepare for a new cycle. Behind her torso is lightly turbulent (not smooth) water (emotion), with some rocky shoals. The water (emotions) is at her back (behind her in time or background). At the far end of the water is a barren, hilly, austere countryside - not very welcoming. The bench is square, adequate, sturdy, and reasonably comfortable under the circumstances. The foreground is level, secure and gray (union of opposites), and her yellow- (intellect) sandalled feet (her under-standing) are firmly placed. She is safely seated, and no threat of being unseated exists - provided she does not move or alter the current circumstances. Stalemate!

Regardless of setting or circumstance, the question will be best answered by waiting. Things are at a standstill, balance with impasse. As long as the situation does not move in any way, balance exists. Movement of any type would be blind and unknowing.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Two of Cups Two richly dressed figures, male and female, facing each other, present golden cups to each other, symbolic of pledging or betrothing. She holds the cup with both hands (receptive and giving). He holds the cup in his left hand and reaches towards her cup with this right hand (receptive and aggressive). Are they exchanging cups or is the exchange complete? Keep your first impression.

Both figures have wreaths on their heads - forces of nature containing the consciousness. She is dressed in the white robe of purity and chastity which is covered by the sky-blue over-drape of emotion. Red sandals of desire are on her feet, and a laurel wreath of victory is on her head. He is dressed in a white (purity of intent) undershirt, covered by a patterned outer garment of yellow (intellect). The pattern appears to be four-leaf clovers, although it is possible that detail has been obscured through the printing process. His leggings are bright yellow, and his boots (which cover his under-standing) seem to be golden tan or leather. On his head he wears a circle of red roses or flowers symbolizing passion and desire.

Between the two human figures are two other figures that appear as one continuous unit. The caduceus of Mercury (communication), now used as a medical symbol, is the staff around which two snakes (sexuality) are coiled. From Hindu mythology, these can be the “Ida” and “Pingala” coiled around the “Sushumna”, the male and female energies coiled around the central spinal column where union and fulfillment take place (you might think orgasm).

Above the staff is a red / orange winged lion. Wings usually indicate the spiritual aspect of a symbol, or that which takes place above and beyond the visible physical experience. Red (activity) / orange (combined with the yellow of intellect) would indicate goal-setting, organization, ambition, and a certain structuring. The lion is a representation of Leo, one of the four fixed signs which are known as the four Lords of Karma (Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, and Aquarius). A lion is a symbol of strength and honor. Fixity denotes durability, longevity, and stability.

Full daylight and a normal, light blue sky cover 3/4 of the card. A rolling grassy knoll is in the background, along with a red-roofed home with bushes and trees, all symbolic of the fertility of nature. The figures stand on a light golden (wisdom), flat (stable) surface.

Regardless of the situation or the question, this is a commitment, a contract, an engagement, a pledging, a union, no coercion, open and prosperous, a pleasure match.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Additional Study Lesson Two:

- ✓ Create your index cards that pertain to this chapter.
- ✓ Create your personal brief definition of each card studied, using your own words.
- ✓ Meditate once on each card: elements, colors, numbers, suits, symbology, aces and twos.
- ✓ Color black and white photocopies of each card as you encounter them.

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The Cards Themselves, Part II

*Three, Four, Five, Six
The Minor Arcana, continued*

Continuing our systematic study of each card for its symbolic meaning, we will now work with the threes, fours, fives and sixes. Again, do *not* memorize 78 upright and 78 reversed meanings. Allow the cards themselves to trigger your personal symbolism to develop the best meanings. Your conscious and subconscious will be able to interact in the most productive way possible. Lay out the cards from your Rider deck as you need them so you can follow the narrative more thoroughly.

Systematically, we are studying the suit and its element meaning, numerological meaning and sequence, and color. We study the foundation, process, aspiration, background, middle-ground, foreground, individual symbolism, direction, etc. for each card and within the groupings. As we develop our meanings, mentally make the transition between the age depicted by the authors of the cards and our current age. Review the suit keyword concepts given in Lesson Two before you proceed with this lesson so they may be combined with these number concepts. Briefly:

Fire = wands Earth = pentacles Air = swords Water = cups

Wands the creative side of life, enterprise, animation, excitement, entrepreneurial, dynamic and expressive, creativity, movement and growth.

Pentacles the form side of life, material, real, physical, practical, tangible, finance, gain, trade, industry, mercantile interests, banking.

Swords the mind side of life, cutting edge of ideas, decisiveness or divisiveness of thought, courage, bold, forceful, destructive, aggressive, misfortune, war, strife.

Cups the feeling side of life, affection, love, union, happiness, beauty, pleasure, friendship, fertile, sensitive, artistic, psychic, instinctual.



Pentacle

Sword

Cup

Three

Three is the result of the combination of the projection of creativity (one) and the womb of manifestation (two), initiating activity (one) and form (two), the child of the combining of the masculine (one) and the feminine (two). Three is the trinity of life (spirit, mind, and body), the material result of the use of initiative coupled with choice, the hope of the future; luck or benefit, fruits of labor, growth and expression, aesthetic activity, education, communication, transportation. Esoterically, Ray One is will, Ray Two is love / wisdom, and Ray Three is intelligent activity. Astrologically, the 360° circle divided by three equals 120°, the trine, an aspect of luck, good fortune and ease.

There is little commonality in the threes as a group. A lone figure stands on wands, three maidens celebrating on cups, three men on pentacles, and an object with no human form on swords. The pentacles and swords have a gray sky and background, wands has a yellow sky, and cups has a normal blue sky.

Three of Wands A lone, somewhat masculine-looking figure stands safely and securely on the edge of an uneven, patchy (not lush or fertile) green hill or cliff, his back to the observer. Does he appear to you to be lonely or hopeful, watchful or dejected, or a dreamer of things that cannot be? In each reading, the tone can change so be sure to accept your first impression. The hue of the card is yellow (mind). His right hand (masculine, projective) firmly grasps one of three flowering wands (creativity and enterprise that are firmly embedded into the ground - grounded).

His clothing is warm and adequate, but definitely not rich in fabric or style. In fact, the robe could possibly be patched. His inner garment (internal motive) is blue (emotion). The main color in the outer robe (visible motive) is red (physical activity), with the left (receptive) shoulder in green (growth and balance). The diagonal, checkered (varied) patch (potential symbol of repair or healing) is located below the right shoulder on the outer garment. A golden (wisdom) circlet (binder) is around his head (repository of the mind). Is his mind elevated (golden circlet) or bound (circlet)? Is he imagining (positive) or vexed (negative)? What is your first impression? Your perception can be different each time you do a reading, so be sure to note that first impression. Violet (spiritually active) thin sandals or stockings seem to be on his feet (under-standing), not the usual boots you would expect for the uneven terrain.

Three of Wands

The man is gazing out over an expanse of yellow (intellect) water (emotion), an unusual color for emotion. This is a symbolic play between the use of the mind and the emotions. Several vessels are moving about on the water. Ships are vehicles of conveyance, trade, enterprise or ambition. Ships may also be thought of as relationships. What is your first impression? Are those ships coming into port, moving out of port or milling around? In the distance, austere, purple mountains (spiritual aspirations) ring the far side of the water. Again, first impression.

This can denote a coming or going of a matter of enterprise or growth, and may involve travel, particularly by water. Airplanes did not exist when these cards were designed. Possibly waiting for communication; not seen as an action card.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Three of Pentacles Three men stand in front of an archway which appears to be the entrance or portal to a church or other building. While the arched building is usually seen as a religious structure, the pentacles could also suggest a building pertaining to money or finance such as a bank or business. Two smaller, lower entries connected by the elaborate and ornate fresco of three pentacles are all contained within the main archway or edifice. I am again reminded of the Ida, the Pingala and the Sushumna of Hindu literature, the union and unity of the masculine and feminine principles and the results of such union.

The color of the bricked and substantial superstructure, the archways themselves and the floor is a single shade of gray, the union of opposites, neutrality. While the card can imply religious overtones because of the building and the characters, please note that we are dealing with its outer form and not necessarily its inner reality. The inner part of the building is hidden in the shadows.

One figure is a monk or robed clerical figure. The second is a brilliantly and richly robed and hooded figure holding a set of architectural plans. The third is a workman of sorts, holding a tool of some kind in his right hand. He is standing atop a level and sturdy bench and is head and shoulders above the other two figures. The monk represents spirit or the

Three of Pentacles

Three of Swords

idea behind the activity. The architect represents the mind or the planning of the activity. The craftsman represents the physical manifestation of the activity. Body, mind and spirit are shown, but the body or physical manifestation is elevated (higher than) mind and spirit. Perhaps the connotation is that the idea and the intellectualizing of the idea are not enough. We must put the idea into manifestation.

This is considered to be a card of a master craftsman on every level and situation - architecture, construction, organization, finance, and even relationships. It is the card of disciplined knowledge about the matter or the question itself.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Three of Swords A large red (passion) heart (heartfelt or the heart of the matter) dominates the center of the card. The heart itself is pierced by three double-edged swords of truth. Two of the swords appear to be crossed, with the center sword placed down the center of the two crossed swords. The entire background of the card is of a gray, overcast, rainy day, with storm clouds at the top. In other words, the sky is crying. This is a card that cuts both ways. At times, the truth can hurt.

Since reading stems from analogy and metaphor, could the swords represent people in a hurtful aspect to each other? The crossed swords in this instance would be a pair of people who belong together but who are at cross-purposes or in a hurtful relationship to one another. The third sword can be coming between them, intrusive, or separating the crossed swords for their own good.

Once upon a time, my two teenage sons were snarling and fighting, and I inserted my angry self between them. Competition is normal between teenage boys / men / brothers, but it does get old after a while. Sure, they have to learn to work it out between them to become successful adults, but how many parents have the capacity to stand by while their children try to annihilate one another? And just how many times does that parent want to listen to the nonsense? Was this action pure anger, or was this action justified? Was the disagreement justified or was it hormones? Was my insertion intrusion or prevention? Positive and negative are personal perceptions, not necessarily “the truth”. Learn to read without judgment. Learn to let the cards give you the reading, and do not read through your own prior conditioning or prejudice.

In the ancient Hindu tradition, the life force is shown as two snakes spiraling around a central column. As a non-Hindu, my interpretation is that the Ida and the Pingala represent the male and female energies that coil, and the Sushumna is the central channel where union and unity take place. The arrangement of the three swords is similar to this Hindu symbolism for the working of the life force itself. The crying sky would imply a more negative connotation. Depending upon its position in the reading, this is, has been, or will be uncomfortable.

Kahlil Gibran in *The Prophet* speaks of “Joy and Sorrow”

“Your joy is your sorrow unmasked.
And the selfsame well from which your laughter rises
was often times filled with your tears.
And how else can it be?
The deeper that sorrow carves into your being,
the more joy you can contain.
When you are joyous, look deep into your heart
and you shall find it is only
that which has given you sorrow that is giving you joy.
When you are sorrowful look again in your heart,
and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for
that which has been your delight.

I say unto you they [joy and sorrow] are inseparable.
Together they come,
and one sits alone with you at your board,
remember that the other is asleep upon your bed.
Verily you are suspended like scales
between your sorrow and your joy.
Only when you are empty
are you at stand-still and balanced.”

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Three of Cups

Three of Cups Three young, richly dressed maidens lift their cups in joy or celebration or as a pledge or toast. First impressions are always key. They appear to be in motion as in a dance or circle, frolicking in the fruits of a harvest, a field of plenty. Their actions and attitudes seem to be those of joy. The maiden on the right of the card has a bunch of grapes (fruits of labor) in her left (receptive) hand. Two of the maidens have flowers or leaves (fertility) on their heads (containers for their minds - consciousness). A bright blue (normal) sky is in the background. They stand on a stable, golden (wisdom) footing (under-standing).

The maiden on the left is dressed all in white (purity of motive). The maiden on the right has a white undergarment (inner motive) and a yellow (intelligence) outer garment (outer, visible or known motive). The maiden in the front has an undergarment of deep red (passionate motives) and an outer garment (visible motives) more orange (ambition) in color. The maiden on the right has blue (emotion) shoes (under-standing). The maiden in the foreground has yellow (intellect) shoes (under-standing).

This is definitely a card of celebration however and whenever it appears in a spread. Whether you are celebrating a business victory, a birthday party, friendship, marriage, or any other celebration, this card supports a positive outcome.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Four

Four represents incarnation into form, foundation, structure, the material universe, four walls, boundaries, framing, limitations, stability. It is reality, logic, reason and order; practicality, hard work, duty, obligation, responsibility; doing your homework, laying the groundwork, applying yourself in a structured, defined way; work and organize, do what is necessary. Astrologically when you divide 360° by four you achieve four quadrants of 90°, the square aspect (the aspect of challenges, problems, obstacles and sharp edges).

Three of the fours have passive, single human figures. Wands show several moving figures in the background. The pentacle and sword have gray backgrounds or sky, cups has a normal, cheerful blue sky, wands shows a yellow sky and foreground. Cups and wands show a certain amount of greenery or growth.

Four of Wands

Four of Wands Four budding wands (growth and enterprise) are spaced and decorated to create a welcoming bower or entrance gate. The wands are firmly embedded in the yellow (intellect) foreground and stand tall against a yellow (intellect) sky in the background. Perhaps this is a canopy for a ceremony or a homecoming. With all the yellow, a great deal of thought has gone into the preparation, or the activity itself is thoughtful.

In the middle-ground of the picture are two robed, welcoming figures, arms raised in celebration, with garlands in their hands and their hair. More figures are behind them to the left, and they appear to be a bridge from the foreground to the large, solid, substantial castle in the background. The castle has several red pinnacles (achievement of desire?). The bridge is decorated with more flowers, or the flowers grow lushly around the base of the bridge (a crossing point from one activity to another – a bridging). Other definitions suggest the great bounty of the harvest, a welcomed place of refuge and respite, a place of acceptance and rejoicing.

Regardless of where this card is positioned or what it represents, it indicates a welcome, an open door, a port in a storm, safe haven, the sense of coming home.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Four of Pentacles A crowned, robed figure sits facing forward on a solid, sturdy bench in front of a large, developed city, the fruits of his labor(?). He has a steady, unblinking, direct look. The gray ground under the coins and the bench is level and stable. The gray sky indicates neutrality or the union of opposites. It is not stormy. In his arms he holds a pentacle, on his head and crown is a second pentacle, beneath each foot are the third and fourth pentacles. He clutches or grasps, his thoughts are impressed by and his under-standing is the coin of the land. You have no doubt as to his priority, intention, obsession and love of earthly goods.

Appearances can be deceiving. Once upon a time I knew of a metaphysical bookstore owner who charged higher than retail for their stock. Does this sound spiritual to you? Their reasoning? They wished to start an orphanage. Now does it sound more spiritual to you? Did they ever actually use the money generated in the manner professed, or was it just an excuse to gouge their customers? There are layers of meaning even to such a simple experience. Again, appearances can be deceiving.

Four of Pentacles

Four of Swords

The man has riches and position (he is crowned). His empire is evident. His inner robe is red (passion) and it is hemmed in light blue (emotion). His boots (under-standing) are orange (ambition). His outer robe is black (taking all, giving nothing back).

This can be the miser whose aims, direction, life and meaning are riches and power. He who surrounds himself and immerses himself in dollars and cents alone denies himself the gentler side of life. In a general reading, perhaps cautious spending or budgeting would be called for. Whether this be about money, time, or attention, it represents selfishness.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Four of Swords A lone man rests, slumbers, or meditates on a long bench within a church or chapel. The man, the bench and the sword are golden (wisdom). He is at rest and his hands are held in prayer position over his ribcage. Despite the presence of four swords, there is no current threat implied on the card. On the upper left wall of the gray (union of opposites) building (structure), a stained-glass window (a metaphor for vision) implies a religious scene, one of supplication or blessing. Because the swords are present, the man is probably a knight or warrior, or this is an effigy (resemblance) of a knight. A church in Glastonbury, England has a turret room with ten of these knight effigies on the floor of the chamber.

It is possible for you to perceive it as a tomb or coffin. Use your first impression. His swords of truth are all at rest, one golden (wisdom) sword along the front side of the golden couch, three white (purity of motive) swords suspended on the white wall over and behind the figure.

Several hundred years ago, it was common for the knights of the realm to be on a spiritual quest. The knight might be seeking spiritual guidance. Whether or not their motives were pure, as implied by the white undergarment, their actions were sanctioned by the church. As a matter of fact, some early Popes were military leaders. The pole along the right side of the window terminates in a knob that reminds me of a bull's head. The bull's head could be a symbol of the papacy, not only in the sense of a church, but in the sense of sanctified knightly duties. There is such a thing as a papal "bull", which is a published edict. One of my students suggested it was not a bull's head but a fox's head. The fox is a symbol of cunning. Take your first impression for each reading.

Convalescence after illness, exile or hermitage has also been suggested for this card. This is not usually a card of death unless other surrounding cards suggest the possibility. Regardless of the question or issue, this is a card of meditation, repose, and rest, not action. There is a cycle to all life and part of that cycle is the pause between the inflow and the outflow.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

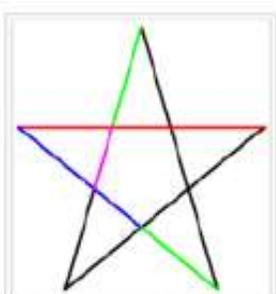
Four of Cups A young man sits solidly and comfortably on a grassy, cultivated knoll, under a sturdy, leafy tree. He is leaning (using outside support) to sustain his position. There are more shrubs or bushes on the left of the card with a greyish (ambiguity?) mountain (aspirations) showing in the distance. There are three upright cups (containers for liquid – feelings) on the ground in front of him and a disembodied (spiritual) hand with a fourth cup issues from a golden (wisdom) cloud to his right (on the left side of the card facing us). The sky is a bright blue (normal) and there is only a single small, fluffy cloud.

The young man is well-dressed, with a red (passion) undergarment, a mottled green (not a good indicator for balance) outer tunic, blue (emotion) stockings, red (passion) shoes (under-standing). While he is seated stably, his feet are turned and do not rest solidly on the ground. His arms are crossed (contained within) and also his legs are crossed (lotus position?). The young man appears to be looking down and does not seem to be happy or open. He is either choosing to ignore or is ignorant of the hand (gift) from the heavens. This may be interpreted as ignoring possibilities and / or refraining from any action. At times we are unaware of our blessings because we are dwelling on our have-nots.

Four of Cups

Pythagorean use ©Wikipedia.org

The [Pythagoreans](#) called the pentagram *πεντα ἰγίωια* ("health" also the Greek goddess of health, [Hygieia](#)), and saw in the pentagram a mathematical perfection. Among other things, the pentagram hides the [golden mean](#) $\phi = (1 + \sqrt{5})/2 = 1.618...$. When drawn with perfect angles each line is divided into several smaller segments, and if you divide the length of the longer segment with the shorter segment of any pair of segments you will get ϕ .

$$\phi = \frac{\text{red}}{\text{blue}} = \frac{\text{blue}}{\text{green}} = \frac{\text{green}}{\text{purple}}$$


Five of Wands

Since Cups represent relationship and affection, perhaps the young man has several relationships to choose from and is not clearly drawn to any. A few years ago, Peggy Lee sang, "Is that all there is?" There are those of us who are never satisfied. And there are times for all of us when we aren't content, no matter how much we have, regardless of the issue or the question. Sometimes we have a lot going for us and do not even know it. Perhaps the young man is contemplating his options, or re-evaluating his accomplishments or values. Use your first impression.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Five

Five is the pivot point between the beginning (one) and the culmination (nine). The point of change itself is represented by the five, movement that can take multiple directions; uncertainty, flux, no constant vibration, uncontrolled activity; adaptability, flexibility; the ability to take chances, risk; the number of man and his five physical senses. Astrologically one-fifth of the 360° circle is 72° - the aspect of a quintile signifying talent, skill or aptitude. Flexibility, adaptability, and creativity all contribute to talent and skill.

The skies or backgrounds of the number five cards are quite different. Although wands and swords have blue skies, the sky of the swords card is mixed with gray as if it has been or will be stormy according to its position in the spread. The sky of the five of Cups is dreary gray and the background of the five of Pentacles is dark and stormy. There is uneven ground (problem with stability) on Wands, and even ground (stability) on the other three suits. There are multiple figures on all except the five of Cups.

Five of Wands Five well-dressed youths (all boys) are waging a battle with staves or sticks (flowering wands). They stand on a somewhat uneven, barren foreground against a clear, blue sky background. Although each of the youths wears tight leggings covered by a tunic of some type, the color of the clothing is varied as are the foot coverings, suggesting a thorough mix of motives, ambitions, reasons, understanding. Reds (passion) and yellows (intellect) seem to predominate overall, which is not surprising for a group of young boys. Only one youth wears a hat (covering or containment for his consciousness), perhaps hoping that it will cushion a blow?

While this appears to be a battle and lumps and bruises are a possibility, this does not denote deadly combat. One figure in the center to the back of the conflict is holding his wand aggressively and seriously, his stance and appearance is threatening; his clothing is dark and mottled. The youth in the center front, the only one with headgear (protective?) is holding his wand in both hands, more defensive than aggressive. He cannot strike that easily, but he can defend. The other youths are holding their wands in their right hands, posturing, perhaps more gesture than effect.

Perhaps this is training or practice, preparing or readying the youths for life's activity or battle. They must learn to stand up for themselves, their principles and their rights. This can be a mock test or fight - no one youth seems to have an advantage. Size and equipment are matched and attitude will determine the outcome. This is possibly friendly rivalry, perhaps conflict based on immaturity, perhaps just some boys having fun. Another suggestion from a student was preparation for an interview, or modern street gangs.

Many years ago I read a sales letter from Mazure Realty, Inc. It seemed to be appropriate to this card and to the concept of preparedness.

“Every morning in Africa, a gazelle wakes up.

It knows that it must run faster than the fastest lion or it will be killed.

Every morning in Africa, a lion wakes up. It knows that it must outrun the slowest gazelle or it will starve to death.

It doesn't matter whether you are a lion or a gazelle,
When the sun comes up, you had better be running.”

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Five of Pentacles Two seemingly derelict people are moving through the snow on a dark and stormy night, passing in front of a well-lit stained glass (church?) window. The lead figure appears to be female, shabbily dressed in tattered rags, holding her cape around her head and throat to protect herself from the falling snow and cold. Her faded orange cape may be symbolic of her tattered goals. She has been beaten by life. She is facing the direction in which she is traveling, but looking down towards the

Five of Pentacles

ground as if in defeat. Or... could she be doggedly determined to keep moving, knowing that otherwise she and her companion will freeze to death in the snow? Is she aware of her companion? Probably... as he has a bell around his neck. She can find him by the sound of the bell should they get separated. She has no shoes or covering on her feet as she trudges through the blanket of snow. She is really destitute.

The figure behind her appears to be male, on crutches (dependency), head bandaged, bell around his neck. The female energy is leading the male energy. As long she is in motion, he can be found by the sound of his bell, typical of diminished behavior many years ago. He too is in tattered rags, but he has a boot or heavy covering on his left foot and a bandage on his right foot. His expression is slack-jawed, almost imbecilic. He is looking upward, but is not looking where he is stepping. He is following the lead figure, or perhaps his upward look is prayerful or petitioning. She leads, but he can see the light. Can he convey what he knows? Is she so resolute in movement that she can't hear him?

The stained-glass window with its five coins is a symbol of shelter, prosperity, a safe haven. Five is the number of chance. Throw the dice. Do the figures see and recognize help when available? Should the figure take a chance and enter at the beacon? Have they taken a chance and their current condition is a result of that risk? Stay with your first impression.

The window is lit from within, serving as a beacon for travelers or spiritual seekers. Please note this is a window and not a doorway. The leader appears not to notice the brightly lit window or has decided that while the light looks good and inviting, it is not a door. Is this a card of the haves and the have-nots?

This is obviously a card of deprivation, destitution, hopelessness, symbolic of our modern-day street people. Spiritual or material poverty is the message - ill fortune and ill health. The figures are so intent on their misery, they may not be open to solace or hope. The materially impoverished do not have food, shelter and warm clothing. The spiritually impoverished do not have hope. At times we are unable to see positivity within a negative situation. Although help is standing by, we are unable to grasp its waiting hand. At other times, seeming help and safe harbor is a window and not a door, a promise and not necessarily a reality.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Five of Swords

Five of Swords Against a blue sky riddled with gray storm clouds (storm could be a scene of conflict), a victorious figure stands in the foreground holding three swords. Two more swords lie at his feet. In the middle-ground, two figures (obvious losers of the battle) walk dejectedly away from the field of battle towards a body of mildly turbulent (not smooth) water (emotion) and dark (unrealized) mountains (aspirations) far in the distance. Perhaps they got more than they bargained for?

None of the figures have head coverings - their consciousness (mind) is free and unfettered. The closest of the retreating figures has an extra piece of clothing slung over his shoulder; he did not lose all his possessions. The figure in the background has his head in his hands, losing all. The figure in the foreground appears to be gloating over his spoils of battle. He does not appear to be wounded and his clothing is not torn.

There is no graphic suggestion of blood or wounding, merely the impression that the battle has already been decided. He holds two swords in his left, upturned hand, leaning the blades against his shoulder. One sword is supported by his right hand, though not in an aggressive stance, sword point to the ground. This battle is done. Could it have been decided without a fight because the foreground figure has all the weapons in his arsenal, a foregone conclusion?

His inner garment (closest to his body) is red (passion), as are his leggings (your legs are your forward motion). His tunic is green (growth, balance or healing) and his boots are orangish (ambition). *Note: This could simply be the artist's rendition of the color of leather.*

“To the victor goes the spoils” of war or of life - perhaps a bloodless coup. This is an air (intellect) suit card. Was the battle one of wits? Think about the degradation or dishonor implied. This can suggest an experience of infamy.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Five of Cups

Five of Cups Against a gray and dreary sky, a dejected figure, head bowed, stands in the foreground of the card. The figure (male?) is dressed in a long black (dwelling in the darkness or negativity) robe (outer display) as if totally absorbed in guilt, grief or problems, covering all except his head and feet. His boots seem to blend right into the ground on which he is standing. Is this familiar ground, his under-standing blends into the background so well? This blending seems to indicate that he is bound to the situation no matter what.

He is apparently looking at three fallen cups and their spilled contents directly in front of him. He seems to be discouraged, distressed or depressed at his loss. He is “crying over spilt milk”. Behind the figure, close to him but out of his direct view, are two cups standing upright, their contents apparently still intact as spillage is not shown. Absorbed in his grief and problem, the figure does not appear to recognize the existing potential or that “all is not lost”. Perhaps his experience did not meet his expectations.

The golden ground (grounding or lessons of wisdom) the figure and the cups occupy is flat and level (enduring). The environment did not cause the spillage. The ground becomes slightly hilly moving towards the back of the card. A bridge (means of passage – a bridging) is visible behind the figure, spanning a mildly turbulent (not quite smooth) stream of water (emotion). Could this be a “bridge over troubled water”? Could the bridge be a situation, an option or even a person? Does the figure realize that the bridge or way out of his troubles is so close, that all he has to do is look up and around himself? Beyond the bridge is a building of some sort, a habitat (safe haven), home(?) with some greenery or landscape (fertility), available, but difficult to discern at that distance (time or space?).

When we find ourselves in a dilemma of any type, we need to be sure we are taking a full accounting of the situation, looking not only at our losses, but what we have managed to save, and what our options are. Crying over spilt milk serves no purpose. Regroup. Do not allow your emotions to dominate your experience.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Six

Balance gained through and because of the preceding change, equilibrium as redefined movement towards the goal commences, six represents harmony, affection towards family, marriage and parenthood, teaching through love and example, loving responsibility. Astrologically, when you divide the 360° circle by six, the 60° aspect formed is a sextile, opportunity for benefit, with some work or effort required.

Two of the sixes, wands and cups, have traditional unclouded blue skies. Two suits, swords and pentacles show gray skies. Wands has a single human figure, the other suits have multiple human figures. Two of them (wands and swords) show modes of transportation, potential travel statements.

Six of Wands A caped horseman sits astride a draped and bridled horse. We see the right side of his face (profile) as he is facing forward in the direction he is going or towards his attendants. In his right hand he grasps a budding wand (enterprise). A red (passion) ribboned laurel wreath (victory) is suspended from the top of his wand. He is crowned (leadership) by another laurel wreath (victory). The horse appears to be high-stepping as horses tend to do in a parade situation. Beside the horseman is a group of men who appear to be marching alongside. They all seem to be moving in the same direction as the horseman. It looks like a victory parade.

When a human figure firmly sits atop an animal, and the animal is docile or tamed, it represents the human side of man triumphing over his animal nature. The horseman seems to be well-dressed. Closest to his body is a yellow (intellect) undergarment, covered by a somewhat violet (spiritual) robe. His exposed sleeve and cuff, his leggings and his high boots are either orange (ambition) or tan (earthy). His horse (animal nature) is gray, (neutrality or union of opposites). The drape on the horse is green (growth, balance and fertility), trimmed in orange (ambition) or tan. His lead-lines (reins) are green with small red squares and his bridle is red (passions are bridled).

All the other people in the background seem to have differing color robes, but their headdresses (covering for their consciousnesses) appear to be identical, and either yellow (intellect) or red (passion). This is a specific troop. This card is often thought to represent victory, acclaim, triumph, diplomacy, meditation or truce, a card of victory, applause, support, acknowledgement, and triumph.

Six of Wands

Six of Pentacles

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Six of Pentacles A well-dressed, affluent man with his right (assertive) hand, palm upward (open and friendly), dispenses coins to two poverty-stricken individuals. In the central figure's left (receptive) hand he holds the perfectly balanced scales of justice. This can be a sharing of his success with those less fortunate, balancing with benevolence the good he has received. The man is dressed in an undergarment of blue and white vertical stripes (alternating purity of motive with emotion), with a red (passion) sash (containing or encompassing) around his waist. He has on red or burgundy (passion) leggings, outer robe, hat and muffler, and brown / green (earthy / abundance) boots (under-standing).

The other two individuals on the card are both kneeling, huddled on the ground, wrapped in tattered and patched robes or blankets. The robe of the man on the left, although he is poor, is golden (wisdom). The robe of the man on the right is blue (emotional). The head of the man on the left is bandaged. Both appear to be seeking or accepting alms or aid. The giver appears to be dispensing the coins to one of the beggars. The picture does not specifically show both the beggars receiving the coin. I am reminded of the weighing and measuring of the scales of justice in terms of worthiness and personal attitude.

There are those who are unfortunate and are very deserving. There are also those who created their own bad fortune and have the attitude of "you owe me!" Remember the teaching in the Bible when Jesus was crucified - he was suspended between two thieves. One of the thieves repented. The other cursed the fortune he had created for himself and those who judged him, and did not repent. To the one who showed contrition, Jesus said, "You will be with me this day in heaven." To the other, what could be said or done? The man was neither remorseful nor open to receiving. Remember also, justice can be misrepresented and the innocent convicted in any society.

All three figures are on level grey ground (sturdy foundation), with a line of trees (fertility) on the horizon between the figures and the walls (structures) of a city or town (urban development) showing on the far right of the card beneath the scales. The sky is gray (union of opposites). There are six pentacles or coins positioned against the sky, three in a vertical line on the left of the card, one high above the head of the giver, two in a vertical line on the right of the card (almost the shape of the scales of

justice). The high position of the coins on the card would indicate the overall spiritual lesson to be learned from balancing our own scales and the spiritual value of giving of your material prosperity, such as in tithing or charitable contribution. Once of my students suggested this would be a card of good news for a question of a loan.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Six of Swords In the foreground of this card, a boatman uses a black (unconscious or invisible) long pole (means of steering as well as the propellant) to maneuver his wooden flatboat (vehicle) towards a distant shore. A boat is a small ship and therefore can also represent a relationSHIP. The hatless man (consciousness unbound) is wearing a mottled blue undergarment (mixed emotions). His belted tunic is orange (ambition) and may be patched. His leggings are tan (earthy) and his boots are an unusual shade of brown (earthy?).

Huddled in the center of the boat appears to be a woman(?) turned inward, within a tan (earthy) or orange (ambition) robe, and a small child in a blue or purple costume (perhaps the spiritual innocence of any child), his / her light hair visible under the edge of the pole.

Six double-edged (truth) swords (weapons or indicators of strife) pierce the front of the boat, the base of which is in darkness. Even though pierced, the boat does not seem to be in any danger, nor is there any sign of it sinking. Perhaps as long as the swords are left alone, they may act as plugs to the holes created.

Where the black pole (steering mechanism) enters the water (emotion) to the right (masculine) side of the boat, which appears to be the area the boat is leaving, the blue water is agitated (passing out of troubled waters). To the left (feminine side) of the boat, the direction towards which the boat seems to be navigating, the blue water is smooth (calmed emotions) all the way to the shoreline (safe harbor). The shoreline is not all that far away. As long as the boatman continues steadily in that direction, he and his companions will pass out of troubled waters to safe harbor.

A group of low bluish hills show some grey trees growing, the land is not totally barren, just not quite distinct. The grey could indicate bleakness, but it could also represent color lost in the distance or lack of clarity as to just what the safe haven represents. A gray sky (neutrality – union of opposites) is in the background of the card.

Six of Swords

Six of Cups

There could be a suggestion of cutting your losses, working with a junior partner, movement and travel out of a tense or troubled situation. The trouble is behind, safe haven is ahead, passage is unthreatened.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Six of Cups A seemingly male child stands in or near a bed of green, leafing plants (cultivated fertility), bends to offer a golden (wisdom) cup of white lilies (purity of motives) with his right (projective) hand to a younger, smaller girl, who looks up expectantly. The giving of the gift and the childlike expectancy speak of the innocence of childhood and the flowering of friendship.

Both children appear to be very warmly dressed. The boy wears a blue (emotion) outer robe and the inner robe is not visible. His red (passion) hood is over his head (consciousness) with the tailing end like a ski cap, and falls in folds over his shoulders. His leggings are red and his high boots are orange (ambition) or tan (earthy). The girl has a light blue (emotion) undergarment, with a yellow (intellect) overdress, with a small, indistinguishable (to me) design on it. Her blond hair and her shoulders are lightly covered by a patterned orange (ambition?) scarf. She is wearing a white (purity) mitten (her grasp is covered) on her left (receptive) hand; her right hand is not visible. She shows red (high energy?) slippers or possibly boots on her feet (under-standing). Remember, small children are often dressed by their parents. The choice of garments may not be the child's.

To the side of the children, in the foreground of the card, are four more standing golden cups of flowers. Behind the larger child are steps and a large stone wall holding a sixth standing golden cup of flowers. On the face of the wall is a coat of arms. Could this be a castle? Walking away from the steps on a stone tiled patio is a third figure who appears to be holding a spear of some type, perhaps a some kind of sentry. Could this be the passing away of a guarded situation? Tall, sturdy yellow buildings (intellectual structures) with gray (neutrality or union of opposites) roofs (coverings to the structures) fill the background, and a light blue sky is at the top of the card. This could be early spring with the clothing, the flowers and the light blue sky.

The ground on which the children stand, the girl's outer dress, the cups and the main walls of the buildings are all of a golden yellow color (wisdom), broken only by the black lines which outline each figure. Often used as an indicator of childhood memories, this card speaks of friendship, giving, innocence and secure relationships. As we grow older, some of our memories turn out to be better than the real thing!

Regardless of the question or issue, open-handed friendship is available, perhaps a childhood friend or one of long standing. The situation or the question is well-guarded, the conditions are not harsh, and security is the message as well as friendship.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and on the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Additional Study Lesson Three:

- ✓ Create your index cards that pertain to this chapter (threes, fours, fives, and sixes).
- ✓ Create your personal brief definition of each card studied, using your own words.
- ✓ Meditate once on each card: elements, colors, numbers, suits, symbology.
- ✓ Color the black and white photocopies of each card as you encounter them.

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The Cards Themselves, Part III

*Seven, Eight, Nine, Ten
The Minor Arcana, continued*

Continuing our systematic study of each card for its symbolic meaning, we will work with sevens, eights, nines and tens. Again, do not memorize 78 upright and 78 reversed meanings. Allow the cards themselves to trigger your personal symbolism to develop the best meanings. Your conscious and subconscious will be able to interact in the most productive way possible.

Systematically, for each card and within the groupings, we study the suit and its element meaning, numerological meaning and sequence, color, foundation, process, aspiration, background, middle-ground, foreground, individual symbolism, direction, etc. As we develop our meanings, make the transition between the age depicted by the authors of the cards and our current age. Review the suit keyword concepts given in Lesson Two before you proceed so they may be combined with these number concepts. Briefly:

fire = wands earth = pentacles air = swords water = cups

Wands: the creative side of life, enterprise, animation, excitement, entrepreneurial, dynamic and expressive, creativity, movement and growth.

Pentacles: the form side of life, material, real, physical, practical, tangible, finance, gain, trade, industry, mercantile interests, banking.

Swords: the mental side of life, cutting edge of ideas, decisiveness or divisiveness of thought, courage, bold, forceful, destructive, aggressive, misfortune, war, strife.

Cups: the feeling side of life, affection, love, union, happiness, beauty, pleasure, friendship, fertile, sensitive, artistic, psychic, instinctual.

Seven

Numerologically, sevens represent the loner. This can infer aloneness yet not loneliness, as in science, analysis, research, introspection. Tune in and turn inward to become your own counselor - mysticism, soul development, wisdom.

Each of the sevens contain a single male figure. The wands and swords are in motion, signifying activity. The cups and pentacles are still or passive. Normal blue skies are on cups and wands, a yellow (intellect) sky on swords and a gray sky (union of opposites or reflection, neutrality) on pentacles. The ground is even (stable footing) on swords, somewhat even (agricultural field) on pentacles, uneven (hilly) on wands and not visible (could be implied or does not contribute to the reading) on cups. Contemplation or study is indicated on cups and pentacles, wariness and defensiveness on wands and swords.

Seven of Wands A young man brandishing a flowering wand stands on uneven footing (precarious position) atop a mottled green hill, which is neither barren nor fertile. He holds the high ground (advantage). He appears to be defending his position from the advance of six flowering wands, looming up from the bottom of the card, beneath his position. Friend or foe? Both hands grasp his wand firmly in a defensive position. He appears willing and able to use the wand as a weapon. His expression is alert, startled or intent and he is not wounded. He has his wits about him and can take whatever action is necessary. He also appears to have no other options.

He is reasonably well dressed (middle class) and his clothing is in good shape. His undergarment is yellow (intellect), his tunic is green (growth, money, balance), his leggings are orange (ambition and organized effort). Note the coverings for his feet. A boot (capable of traversing rougher terrain) is on his left (receptive) foot (under-standing). On his right (assertive) foot (under-standing) he wears an untied shoe (less suitable for his environment or circumstance, not secure). Although the contending wands are visible, their movement (advance or retreat) or possible hostility is implied. Other than the solitary figure, no bearers or wielders of the advancing or potentially threatening wands are visible. (The threat may be implied but the wielders are not visibly known.) The sky is normal blue and uncloudy, a nice day for a battle.

Seven of Wands

The person appears to be waging a lone battle against formidable odds. The weapons (wands) are not deadly but could inflict some recoverable wounds. His position is not stable even though he occupies the high ground. He is holding his own, his attention needs to be on several positions at once, dividing his strength to combat any one attack. He has either been caught unaware or was not as prepared as he should have been because of the boot / untied shoe symbology.

Holding this possible scenario in mind, recognize also that perhaps the battle or confrontation implied is in the past and that the card shows the wary victor and the retreat of the threat. It would be important that you use your first instinctive impression as to advance or retreat, threat implied or past, friend or foe.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Seven of Pentacles A standing man (potential of activity) rests his chin on his crossed hands (a moment of study or reflection), atop what appears to be a farm implement (a hoe, rake or shovel - the type of tool is indistinct). The circumstance suggests previous hard physical effort or the need to begin hard physical effort (use your first impression in a reading). He is gazing pensively or patiently at a lush bush or shrub of green and grown leaves (fertility) containing six coins (practical or material value). A seventh coin (a symbol of the value of the soil itself?) rests on the ground between his feet (under-standing). Curly tendrils suggest a vining plant such as grapes or perhaps some other agricultural crop.

The sky is gray (neutrality or union of opposites) and cloudless. He is reasonably well dressed (lower middle class). A white collar suggests his undergarment is partially, or perhaps totally, white (purity of motive). He has blue (emotions) sleeves and leggings (coverings for his ability to reach and his forward motion), with tan (leather?) / brown (material / practical) tunic (outer appearance). His boots are substantial (outer covering or protection to his under-standing) and appear to have two colors, brown (earthy) and orange (ambition) - a combination of both. Perhaps it was only the artist's intention to show one boot shadowed. Perhaps the current distinction is the choice of printer's colors. The ground on which he stands is covered with leaves (cyclic, fertile nature of life) and is reddish / brown (material, practical) and blue (emotional) in color, with distant purple (spiritual) hills or mountains (aspirations).

Seven of Pentacles

Seven of Swords

Regardless of circumstance or issue, there are those times in our lives when we have put forth the effort and now must patiently wait for the results. We have planted seeds and now must allow the necessary growth. Imagine the faith of the farmer, year after year. The fruits of the labor are not guaranteed, but all the work was done with faith and knowledge, with the calculated risk that there would be a payoff. You have made the investment and must await the results.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Seven of Swords A richly dressed (affluent) man tiptoes away from an established encampment. He is carrying five double-edged swords (of truth) in his arms. He has left two doubled-edged swords (of truth) implanted in the ground behind him. Is this because he simply can't carry more or because he has chosen not to strip the encampment bare? He has a white undergarment (purity of motive), a brown (material / practical) leathery (substantial and protective) tunic, blue leggings (the equivalent of modern pants), red boots (hardy passion covers his under-standing) with fur ruffs (decorative or warmth?). The hat atop his curly hair (both covering his consciousness). Perhaps with his curly hair no one took him seriously – mistake!

His body English shows a stealthy withdrawal. While he is on tiptoe, he is taking large and purposeful steps away from the encampment. He is looking carefully back over his shoulder, but he appears to have a gleeful expression on his face. Apparently, he is getting away with something or “pulling a fast one”. There are no obstacles in his path. It seems to be safe for him to watch behind him as he walks forward.

The ground (foundation) on which he walks is flat (stable) and yellow (intelligence) in color as is the cloudless sky. Three more visible tents in the foreground are large and elegant, flags flying from their peaks. Peaceful and serene, the loss of most of their weapons is not known at the moment. Two other tents show against the hills in the background. This is apparently a good-sized encampment. The ground to the side of the tents is uneven, yet not rocky, mottled gold / tan, yellow and green in color. Purple (passive spirituality) hills (aspirations) seem to be far in the background.

At the point where the rolling ground meets the mountains, near the background tents, a group of people (men?) appear to be sitting around a campfire. One person is standing with a stick or spear in hand (a guard?). This circle of men seems to be unaware of the actions of the lone man (sneak thief?) although he should be visible to them as he is standing in the open with no camouflage available. It appears he will succeed in what he plans and will have no resistance.

One meaning could suggest a sneak thief. Another could be that carelessness creates loss. Sometimes we are not nearly as smart as we think we are. The loss is not total, but it certainly was preventable. Who is the “good guy” in this scenario? If the thief were on our side, then we would believe he was the good guy. If we were victims, he is the bad guy.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Seven of Cups A normal blue sky is the background for this card, with seven filled golden (wisdom) cups (containers, wombs of creation) issuing forth from a large grey (union of opposites) cloud (dreams?) through the center of the card. A silhouetted (implication) male figure is in the foreground of the card, standing facing the cups, with his back to the viewer. His right (aggressive) arm (ability to reach) and hand (ability to grasp) are visible (known), fingers are spread (openness) as in expectancy and entreaty. His left (passive) arm (ability to reach) and hand (ability to grasp) are hidden from view (not known), but they are not lying docilely along his left (passive) side. Perhaps the left hand and arm are also outstretched towards the cups and are just not visible to the viewer. If both arms and hands are outstretched, the conscious and unconscious are acting in unison. If only the right is outstretched, the conscious mind is reaching, the unconscious mind (left) is not.

The image is that of a dream, imagination, or visualization sequence. He seems to have to make a choice and is could be in awe or startled by these options. Perhaps the choice governs the present moment. Perhaps the choice governs a life pattern. *Do not underestimate the impact* of such a choice.

Three cups are in the top row, four in the bottom row. Luck or communication (3) supported by a stable foundation (4). The lower left cup contains a castle on a mount (property or position). The cup to the immediate right contains jewels and riches. The next cup to the right contains a laurel wreath, but note the skull figure just beneath the wreath.

Seven of Cups

This combination suggests symbols for posthumous fame. The lower right cup contains a coiled and hissing dragon or demon creature, a symbol for the “black arts” or negative power. The upper left cup contains a nice-looking head (beauty). The upper right contains a serpent coiled within and flowing out of the cup, perhaps representing the Kundalini or spiritual development. The middle upper cup contains a shrouded (mystery), glowing (spiritual?) figure, with arms outstretched. This appears to be the symbol of potential spiritual enlightenment, which is different from spiritual development. This is definitely a card of choice, highly dependent on the circumstance or issue, but most assuredly major in nature. What is valued most? What motivates?

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Eight

As a double four, numerologically eight represents learning to work smarter, not harder. Get your ducks lined up in a row, organize your efforts, do your homework, know what you are doing before doing it. Eight represents justice, judgment, material progress, regeneration, health, the balance of opposing forces, ambition, attitude of success, state of or attitude towards affairs, business or organization.

A normal blue sky is on wands, gray skies on swords and pentacles, and a night sky is implied on the cups. A lush countryside is on wands, a muddied, uneven foreground on swords, a stable level foreground on pentacles and cups. A single figure is contained on swords, pentacles and cups, and no human figure is on wands. Movement is implied by wands and cups, working in place by pentacles, inertia or immobility by swords.

Eight of Wands A normal, blue, cloudless sky through which eight flowering (growth) wands (enterprise) are in motion (transit). The wands appear to be descending towards a fertile, rolling green countryside through which a large but gentle (no rough water markings) river (water = emotion) meanders (easy motion). The wands all appear to be somewhat equal in length and pattern of descent except for the fourth wand from the top, which is shorter or is lagging behind the other wands (perhaps some items not as developed as others?). Some sort of building perches atop the distant hill on the left side of the card. This is a developed area, not primitive.

Eight of Wands

A journey card... the matter or situation is in transit, in motion, not finalized or determined, on the threshold. Such finalization or determination is in the not-too-distant future. The impression given is that the wands are coming in for a landing, close to completing their passage, “on the threshold”. Their landing pad is cleared and fertile, complete with the life-giving river (symbolic of the river of life), implying receptivity to the incoming flowering wands and continued fertility and growth. Because of the “in-between” state of this card, it is often thought to imply communication, messages, go-between, mediation, and detente.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Eight of Pentacles A workman sits comfortably astride a substantial and sturdy workbench. He uses a hammer and chisel to cut a design into a pentacle (symbol of financial value), which is supported by a block of wood. Beneath the bench, lying on the ground, is another pentacle, and six more are fastened to a wooden beam on the right side of the card. Both the bench and the workman are on level (stable, secure) golden (wisdom) ground (basis).

The hatless (uncovered consciousness) workman (blue collar, directed effort) wears a blue (emotion, psychic, artistic) tunic (outer covering), with a white (purity of motive) sash (binding), covered by a black (absorptive) work apron (protection). His leggings (coverings for his forward motion) are red (passion) and his soft shoes (gentle under-standing) are brown (practical, material). He is absorbed in or focused on his task.

The sky is gray (union of opposites, reflective). To the left of the bench, the background contains a fertile countryside with a group of red-roofed buildings or a town (culture and development). The objects he makes are probably intended for or commissioned by that culture.

This is thought to be the card of an apprentice, work or employment, using a craftsman’s skill. However, this looks like repetitive work, perhaps assembly line-style. Regardless of the circumstance or issue, handling detail or the nitty gritty of life, nose to the grindstone, put your head down and keep working.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Eight of Pentacles

Eight of Swords

Eight of Swords A female robed figure stands bound (unable to act in her own behalf) and blindfolded on a muddy (the situation is muddied, unclear) field. She does not appear to be in any immediate danger as no weapons specifically threaten her. However, she personally is immobilized in her reaching (arms) and grasp (hands) of the situation. She cannot see (blindfolded) her immediate circumstance or any potential solution to her dilemma. She appears to be unable to proceed through both her binding and blinding. Please note that her feet (under-standing) are not bound, so she does have forward motion as an option. Would you exercise such an option? Would you move out of a known situation into the unknown, bound and blindfolded? Or, as bad as the situation might seem to the viewer, would you remain because at least your current state is familiar?

A fence of double-edged swords (truth) is embedded in the ground on both sides of the figure. Were the swords placed around her before or after her binding? Is she moving or standing still? Has she walked through the fence of swords through her forward motion? Or is it her intent to step backwards through the swords? Or is she best served by standing still, listening or observing?

Her clothing has a brown undergarment (materiality), an orange (ambition) outer gown, with golden (wealth or wisdom) sandals (under-standing).

A hill rises up to a series of towers or turrets, such as in a castle or a fortified town. Was this a battle to take the town or to defend the town? Who won? Was the figure a ruler who has been deposed?... an ambitious person whose plans have been defeated?... a spy, a turncoat, a hostage, an innocent bystander caught in the cross-fire? She is a prisoner. Is she a tool of barter?

Regardless of the situation or issue, she must accept the limiting circumstance as there is not a clear way out of the problem at the moment. She is not in any immediate danger as long as she stays put. There is no direct threat, but she is bound by the current circumstances.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Eight of Cups

Eight of Cups A red- (passion) robed (completely covered, shrouded or withdrawn) figure walks away from a stack of eight golden (wisdom) cups (containers). Is the figure moving purposefully towards another distant goal, or is he defeated or dejected? He is climbing (effort) up uneven ground (base or standing) supported by a walking stick. In the middle-ground is a darkened (not easily visible) flowing stream (stream of life?), containing dark and craggy rocks (danger, obstacles) and dark (unknown) hills (aspirations) are in his path.

A full-faced Moon (the Full Moon, an experience or relationship has grown just as far as it can; all conditions, like them or not, are visible) and waning crescent Moon (letting go, dissolving old conditions or issues, clearing the decks to prepare for future growth) shines down on the figure. He is bare-headed (his consciousness is uncovered and unfettered), his leggings (coverings for his forward motion) are golden tan (a blend of wisdom and materiality) and his boots (substantial covering to his under-standing) are red (passion).

The eight cups in the foreground are stacked regularly and neatly, five on the bottom and three on top. There is a gap in the lineup of the upper cups, between two to the left and one to the right. If the left side is feminine (passive, emotion) and the right side is masculine (aggressive, intellect), the gap is between the passive and assertive sides of the nature or perhaps between emotion and the intellect. Could the conflict be between what was emotionally felt and what was intellectually known? Is the figure seeking to fill the gap in the cups? Is he cutting his losses and moving on from an impossible impasse or gap? Is this a desertion of previous concerns or perhaps that which had been thought to be important was really not? Is this abandonment? Your first impression is key.

The conscious decision is to walk away, whether to fill in the apparent gap, or because the situation or issue was no longer viable or preferred. Much effort went into the situation up to this point, but the figure has chosen to leave. Perhaps a partnership (marital or business) of many years is just not worth the cost. Perhaps a “break” is needed to gain a better perspective.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Nine of Wands

Nine

Numerologically, nine represents attainment, either height or depth, on the three planes of being: physical, emotional / mental, and spiritual; the sum or results of all other individual forces; fruition, culmination. At times nine represents the necessity of letting go to prepare the way for the next level of development that begins at the ten (one up-leveled by the addition of the zero cypher).

A yellow sky and base dominate cups and pentacles, a friendly, normal blue sky is on wands, and swords has a stark, black, interior background. The bases for each of the nines are level and secure, gray on swords and wands, yellow on cups, golden on pentacles. Single figures are represented on each card, seated on cups and swords, standing on pentacles and wands. Males on cups and wands, female on the pentacles, and possibly female (difficult to judge) on the swords. None of the figures are in motion.

Nine of Wands A man with both hands (grasp) clutching a flowering wand (growth and enterprise) stands guard. There is a bandage (covering for a wound?) on his head (container for consciousness), and he's facing forward (facing the situation). His expression is wary and alert as he gazes up and past his right (masculine side) shoulder ("shouldering the load"). His clothing is adequate but not fancy and seems to be well constructed. If he has done battle, he is not in disarray and his clothing is intact. He wears a white undergarment (purity of motive), with an orange (ambition), belted (containing, circling) outer tunic, tan (earthy) leggings (coverings for his forward motion) and high boots (substantial coverings for his under-standing). While the head dressing implies that he is wounded, he does not appear to be in any immediate discomfort or danger.

He stands on a firm and level gray (neutrality, union of opposites) base that may be man-made and not just earthen or natural. Note the back edge of the foreground where it meets the flowering wands - there is a lip or indication of a constructed edge. Behind him is a hedge or row of flowering wands implanted in the ground, or along the edge of the construction. In the far background are green, yet seeming barren or distant, hills. The sky is normal, blue and cloudless.

The attitude is one of a guarded circumstance, where enterprise is growing and yet protection is necessary. Perhaps a skirmish has already been fought, yet peace is not in this man's experience. In a circumstance or issue, vigilance and caution are the order of the day. Things have not gone well in the past, but all was not lost. The objective is to protect what you have saved or gained, better to be safe than sorry.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Nine of Pentacles A beautifully robed woman stands in a harvest field, burgeoning with ripe grapes. Along with the grapes, pentacles are growing on the vines, six to the left and three to the right of the figure, a total of nine indicators of prosperity, harvest. The lushness of life continues in the background, showing a manor or castle (cultured or cultivated) on the right, and tall trees (permanence with age and maturity). Low purple mountains (spiritual aspirations) rise up in the distance. While they are hilly, they are not overly high. Therefore, the spiritual aspirations are modest.

A golden yellow sky and golden ground under her feet indicate her basis of wisdom and abundance. Her yellow and white robe (wisdom and purity of motive) is lined with red (passion) or violet (spirituality) sleeves and cowed neck, depending on the coloring on your personal cards. On her robe are symbols which could be flowers, but which bear a perfect resemblance to the astrological symbol for Venus (goddess of love and plenty). Her undergarment is almost visible, with a piece of jewelry that resembles grapes (the abundance of the field), hanging at her neckline. She has a matching cap (covering) on her head (consciousness).

Her right (assertive) hand (ability to grasp) is resting on one of the coins in the grapevines, a proprietary action. Her left (receptive) heavily gloved (protected) hand is raised and a hooded (at rest) falcon is perched on her hand. In past centuries, trained falcons or hawks were mostly owned by the “landed gentry” or affluent, cultured members of society. Mostly used for hunting, it is also possible, but not likely, that the bird could be used for messages. She appears to be gazing in the general direction of the falcon.

This is the lady of the manor, enterprising, successful, self-assured, and in charge of her realm. Proof of her success is all around her. Did you notice the small snail in the immediate foreground of the card? Do you remember the story about the tortoise and the hare? Paraphrased, “The race does not always go to the swift, but to the slow, steady application of the self.” Harvest is the culmination of effort, beyond which the fertility shown will be allowed to return to the soil, and then go into its dormant stage (winter) to prepare for the renewal of fertility in the spring.

Nine of Pentacles

Nine of Swords

Do you suppose that the faith of the seven of Pentacles has paid off? The patience to wait for the results of the seeding and work makes for abundance in product and finance, the fruits of the labor. This is a card of success, regardless of issue.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Nine of Swords A single figure (male? female? pertinent? - use your first impression) sits up on a couch or bed, head in hands. Although the person is in bed, they are not resting and they appear to be grieving. Nine double-edged (of truth) swords (weapons of affliction) are fixed in a resting, yet ominous position on the black wall (absorbs all without giving back) behind (background) and looming over the couch on which the person sits (or is the room dark – night?). “Heavy heavy hangs over thy head.” “What goes around, comes around.” “Be careful what you wish for, for dreams come true.” Perhaps we are witnessing the effects of desire.

The card presents a side view of the figure (not seeing the situation head on) who is robed in white (purity of intention) or grey (union of opposites or perhaps in this instance depression). The view shows the legs (forward motion) at rest, covered by a quilt or block design comforter or blanket, alternating the red roses of desire with dotted patterns with astrological symbols. Both the signs of the zodiac and planetary symbols are very evident. I personally can see very clearly Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, and Pisces, plus the Sun, Moon, Mercury, Mars, and Saturn. Missing symbols are the signs of Capricorn and Aquarius and the inner planets Venus and Jupiter. The outer planets (Uranus, Neptune and Pluto) are never visible to the naked eye and have been known and in use close to or after the time the cards were designed. It takes astrologers time to define and express meanings for newly discovered bodies.

The couch on which the figure rests has a base, a mat (slim comfort) and a pillow (standard equipment for a bed). The base depicts a scene of two figures fighting. One has fallen, and the other is standing in an aggressive stance holding a sword over the fallen figure. The feeling of the card is one of sorrow and depression. Has the person “taken to his / her bed” due to sorrow, illness or withdrawal? Is the dire scene on the base of the bed the figure’s reality? Has the person awakened from a dream of premonition or foreboding? He / She appears to be desolate, full of despair and disappointment. This has also been used to indicate miscarriage. Again, first impressions are paramount.

Regardless of the question or issue, the results are in and they're not good. This card indicates grief, mourning, and loss. It is very emotional in nature. Hopefully you are only the victim and not the cause.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Nine of Cups A robust, somewhat rotund, man sits squarely and comfortably on a solid, wooden bench, arms crossed, feet firmly planted on the ground. He seems to be successful. Behind him is an arched table covered with a blue (emotion) drape. Atop the table are nine golden (wisdom) cups (containers) lined up in a row. The background and the floor are bright golden yellow (intellect) as are the cups.

The figure has a gray (neutrality) striped tunic (outer covering), a feathered (a feather in his cap?) red (passion) cap (covering for his consciousness), red (passion) leggings (coverings for his forward motion) and tan / brown (leather? / material) shoes. He faces forward (facing the situation), with a smug and satisfied expression, suggesting "the cat that caught the canary". The shape of his arms and head is a triangle upward (spiritual). The shape of his legs and feet are four square (material)... the spiritual atop the material.

Reward is obvious, but for what situation or issue? The accomplishment is also obvious - no more needs to be done, it is all done. Sit back and enjoy your success, accept compliments, just do not be too smug. "Resting on our laurels" or "riding on our success" might not be enough, so stay prepared.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Nine of Cups

Ten of Wands

Ten

Numerologically, ten represents perfection through completion, the ultimate in good or evil. The achieved result of each suit after which man begins on a higher level. The point of breakthrough to a new level: $1 + 0 = 10$. Culmination of effort is shown in the nines, and the tens show how life has evolved through the previous experiences of one through nine.

Blue cloudless skies are on cups, wands and pentacles. A black and yellow mottled sky is on swords. Golden bases are found on all four cards. Swords, cups and wands are level, and the pentacles have ridging, suggesting texture, tilling or wooden strips. Single figures are found on swords and wands, masculine, air and fire suits. Families are found on cups and pentacles, feminine, water and earth suits. The cups and pentacles (feminine suits) show life in fulfillment. Wands and swords (masculine suits) show life in various stages of effort, conclusion and transition.

Ten of Wands A lone figure (suggesting the result of activity which causes you to function on your own), his back to the viewer (turning his back on his past or focused on the task at hand), trudges steadily towards habitation (journey's end or destination). He is carrying a heavy burden of flowering wands (growth and enterprise). His head is down and he is persistently and relentlessly completing his task. The Wands appear to be almost more than the man can comfortably handle, yet he continues and seems to be mastering the situation. In Roman times, bound bundles of rods were carried before a Roman magistrate as symbols of authority.

The ground (base) on which he travels is yellow and golden (intellect and wisdom), and the sky is friendly, blue and clear (normal). The village or castle (a cultured setting) towards which he travels is large and secure. The destination is definitely close enough to be reached, and he will accomplish his task if he "keeps on keeping on". The plowed field and lush surrounding landscape show cultivation, fertility, growth and abundance - all positive statements of sustained effort.

The man is dressed in a white undergarment (motivated by pure intent), with an orange (ambition) belted (contained) tunic, tan / brown (physical, material) leggings (covering for his forward motion) and brown, sturdy boots (earthy understanding). His blond head is uncovered (consciousness unbound). This is not an older man. He is a strong, sturdy and determined younger, but maturing, man.

The overall picture is of a person carrying a burden of growth and enterprise, reaching his destination or conclusion. Steadiness of effort, focus on the goal, patience and determination will pay off as he brings his enterprise and budding growth to a developed area that should support or welcome that which he carries.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Ten of Pentacles In the foreground, a white haired, elderly man (wisdom through participation in experience) sits (rests) comfortably. He is richly and warmly robed. His robe is covered with symbols of heraldry (royalty or recognition), and also with alchemical symbols (mystical representations of knowledge) and bunches of grapes (harvest). He is petting two greyhounds (tamed animal instincts which now are his friends and serve him instead of running and possibly ruining him).

Standing nearby is a younger man holding a spear which is resting on the ground in his left (passive) hand. Although the environment looks safe and secure, he maintains the peace. He is watchful. He is the instrument for preserving this environment. This younger man wears an orange (ambition) or brown (practical) undergarment and a blue (emotion) outer drape. He is in simple garb, definitely a guard, perhaps a companion.

A well-dressed woman appears to be talking with a younger man or is passing by him. She is wearing a red (passion) robe. If she is talking with a guard, she could be passing pleasantries, asking about current conditions, flirting, etc., but remember she would be speaking with a subordinate. If this is her younger male counterpart, brother or husband, the talk would be more intimate, familial or as equals. Look at the costumes. Do they look like equals to you? Take your first impression on each individual reading.

A very small child is at the woman's knees. The child is wearing a blue (emotional) outfit and white shoes (purity of under-standing). Note that the child is also petting one of the two dogs, as is the older man. The older man pets the head (consciousness) of one dog, the child pets the tail (bringing up the rear) of the other dog. Please notice that many family traits show distinctly between grandparent and grandchild, perhaps this is what is denoted by this connection.

Ten of Pentacles

Ten of Swords

You may perceive that all the figures on this card are bare-headed (their consciousnesses are unfettered). To me, it is not clear whether the woman is wearing a cap on the back of her head. Whether her consciousness is covered or bound would be determined by the appearance of the card to the reader during a reading (first impression).

Behind the figures a castle, fortress or impressive family manor rises, substantial and solid. An archway covered with scenes and symbols separates the man from the inner (or is it outer?) courtyard. On the archway itself are, again, two heraldry (recognition or family heritage) symbols. One is of the castle (family or baronial crest?) itself. The other symbol is the scales of justice (fairness or equality in experience, or a symbol for a judge or judgment). Along the far, left side of the card, another partial scene shows what appears to be a castle promontory. The rest of the fresco is indistinct. Generational matters are possible. Ten pentacles are placed randomly (?) around the card. If you study the Kabbalah, Hebrew mysticism, the coins are actually placed in the positions of the ten Sephiroth on the Tree of Life.

This card represents the passing of success from one generation to another, old money or values, family tradition, respect between the stations of life, a good, full life as time marches on. It is a card of established values.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Ten of Swords Ten double-edged swords (of truth) pierce the body of a single figure (which appears to be male). His life fluids (not a pool of blood or red-colored liquid) are spilling out onto the ground near his head. (Blood to the ancients was the life spirit.)

He wears a white undergarment (purity of motive), covered by a golden brown (physical, material) tunic (outer representation). Do good guys always finish first? Does good always triumph over evil? The lower half of his body is covered by a red (passion and desire) drape. He is bareheaded (his consciousness is unfettered). Only his right arm (masculine side) is showing. Look at the positions of his fingers. His thumb and his little finger have formed a circle, with his middle fingers showing to the left of the circle, a symbol for peace(?). Perhaps peace could only be achieved through death or willing sacrifice.

The sky is black (night or death) at the top of the card, mottled (stormy) as you descend, giving way to bright yellow (intellect or wisdom) at the bottom of the sky. This could be sunrise as the skyline brightens when the Sun rises over the horizon. The upper sky is still dark like night. At sunset, the upper sky is bright. Darkness descends as the Sun sinks below the horizon. Sunrise represents the birth of the day and sunset the death of the day. This card could imply an end to physical life (sunset) signifying birth into the bodiless, spirit side of life (sunrise?).

Distant and stark, light blue (emotional) or gray (neutral) mountains (spiritual aspirations) rise at the far end of what appears to be a large body of still, blue (normal) water (quieted emotions), grayed or muddied (murky emotions) at the shoreline where it meets the mountains. The mountains and the lake are tantalizingly close, yet were unreachable by the figure. He never reached the far goal. Conversely, perhaps he had come from those heights finding only death and destruction on the material plane. What is your first impression?

“He who lives by the sword, dies by the sword.” To me, this is the most dismal card in the deck and denotes inevitability, termination, and finality. . . unless the figure was aware of the necessity of his fate and willingly sacrificed himself for a cause or a greater purpose. The crucifixion of Jesus is a perfect example of fore-knowing and willing personal sacrifice of an individual for a greater good.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Ten of Cups A couple, man and woman, raise their arms in greeting, celebration or enthusiastic acknowledgement of the pink and yellow glistening rainbow of cups hanging in the cloudless blue sky over their heads. Two small children, a girl and boy, dance nearby, denoting a complete family. Blues (emotion), oranges (ambition), violets (spiritual) and yellows (intellect) predominate in their clothing. Their heads are bare (consciousness unfettered). All figures are well dressed, comfortable, non-threatened and secure, and joyous in demeanor.

A lush, cultured landscape (fertility) is in front of them, with a winding, peaceful river (emotions) and a home (security) nestled in the trees. They stand on level (stable) golden (wisdom) ground.

Ten of Cups

No immediate or implied threat appears on the card. In the Bible, God (Jehovah) promises that he will never again destroy the Earth by fire or flood and places his “bow” in the heavens as a symbol of his covenant - our rainbow, a promise of joy and fulfillment.

In terms of completion and the initiation of the new cycle, this card is very specific as there is a clear indication of the next stage of evolution shown by two generations, mother plus father have created the next life wave’s boy and girl – life will go on and life will be joyous.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Additional Study Lesson Four:

- ✓ Create your index cards that pertain to this chapter (sevens, eights, nines, tens).
- ✓ Create your personal brief definition of each card studied using your own words.
- ✓ Meditate once on each card: elements, colors, numbers, suits, symbology.
- ✓ Color the black and white photocopies of each card as you encounter them.

The Cards Themselves, Part IV

*The Minor Arcana continued: Courts
Page, Knight, Queen, King*

Continuing our systematic study of each card for its symbolic meaning, we will now work with the Minor Arcana court cards. Again...do not memorize 78 upright and 78 reversed meanings. Allow the cards themselves to trigger your personal symbolism to develop the best meanings. Your conscious and subconscious will be able to interact in the most productive way possible.

Again, we will systematically study the suit and its element meaning, numerological meaning and sequence, color; foundation, process, aspiration, background, middle-ground, foreground, individual symbolism, direction, etc. for each card and within the groupings. As we develop our meanings, make the transition between the age depicted by the authors of the cards and our current age. Before you proceed, review the suit keyword concepts given in Lesson Two. Briefly:

fire = wands earth = pentacles air = swords water = cups

Wands: the creative side of life, enterprise, animation, excitement, entrepreneurial, dynamic and expressive, creativity, movement and growth.

Pentacles: the form side of life, material, real, physical, practical, tangible, finance, gain, trade, industry, mercantile interests, banking.

Swords: the mind side of life, cutting edge of ideas, decisiveness or divisiveness of thought, courage, bold, forceful, destructive, aggressive, misfortune, war, strife.

Cups: the feeling side of life, affection, love, union, happiness, beauty, pleasure, friendship, fertile, sensitive, artistic, psychic, instinctual.

The Courts

In the Minor Arcana deck, there are four suits of ace through ten, plus the face cards: page, knight, queen, and king. The face cards are called court cards because the figures originally represented a medieval governing system outdated in our century. However, the characteristics represented by each card are quite simple to adapt to society's current status. The page can be either a boy or a girl, but the figures on the cards look like boys; the knight, a young man; the queen, a mature woman; the king, a mature man (where's the young woman card?). In past centuries, pages were princess cards and were once considered the strongest card of the courts. That is not the reading format of this century. Watch for instructions from old systems which do not apply to the current system or environment. In a standard playing card deck, the page and the knight are both represented by the jack.

In a reading, courts can represent the querent, the people to which the events happen or who cause the events to happen. If not representing the querent, control is in the hands of others represented by the courts. Court cards can also represent the character itself of a person and a physical description of that character, or a description of both the character and / or quality of the event, situation or process involved.

In the 20th / 21st century decks, through the stages of spiritual development, the maturing process which leads to wisdom is represented by the courts. Looking at the developing human nature, the page would represent the physical body, the knight the ego, the queen the soul, and the king the spirit.

Pages represent the youth of the person, matter, circumstance, experience or process. On each of the page cards, a youth (which can be boy or girl) represents each suit. Pages in medieval courts were message bearers (communication), "go-fers" or errand boys, assistants to the knights – it was a service role. Their female counterparts were ladies in waiting, potential virgin brides (barter goods), children of royalty. Both boys and girls could be used as good faith hostages in warfare negotiations (and we thought our century was a problem).

As a matter, circumstance, experience or process, the page represents the embryonic or immature quality, budding, young, not fully developed, perhaps the plan or discussion phase of an activity. In horary astrology zero to three degrees rising indicates a question that has not "ripened", may be too early to question, or not enough has developed to give a prognosis. This may be a useful analogy.

Knight On each of the knight cards, a young man sits astride a horse. Using our previous analogies: the human nature has triumphed over (is higher than, atop) the animal nature. The men and the horses are in various stages of animation. The knight, while more mature than the page, has not fully matured to the wisdom of the queen or the king as he serves both. The knight represents the ego development stage for humanity, with an emphasis on individual accomplishment. The knight is the “doer” of the deed, at times headstrong and reckless, at times patient, at times ready for the “parade” of virtue, ready to do battle or to abide by the king / queen’s decisions. These are all necessary components of developing wisdom. Initially we learn that we can... and we do. Once established, we learn *when to...* and *when not to*. We learn that just because we *can*, does not mean we *should*. Re-read the last two sentences. It will tell you why the knight is not yet mature.

As a matter, circumstance, experience, or process, the knight represents stage two, the coming or going of a matter, the quality of action (i.e., contemplation, patience, or aggression), young thoughts, actions, activity, process of that suit, not fully seasoned.

Queen The queen represents the soul development stage for humanity. The feminine aspect protects its own, builds fences or moats, contains, and is instinctive. Feminine energy tends toward herding, culling, encompassing rather than aggression, foraging, and taking new territory, which is a more masculine projection. Don’t be mistaken, the queen is perfectly capable of all rational judgment, strapping on weapons and going to war to preserve the peace. Some women are greedy, predatory, and vindictive - that is true. But in general, feminine energy surrounds, preserves and protects rather than attack and conquer.

As a matter, circumstance, experience, or process, the queen represents stage three, the emotional maturity, competency and skill of a suit, the fully matured feminine aspect. Queens have developed through the page and knight stage and have achieved wisdom through those experiences.

King The king represents the fourth and final spiritual development stage for humanity, maturity itself or “seasoned” counsel, wisdom attained by having “done” and “been”. Capable of all of the previous stages developed by the pages, knights and queens, kings will do what is necessary for the situation: protect or attack, plan, organize, time, judge. The quality is more aloof and intellectual than emotional, intuitive rather than instinctive.

As a person, matter, circumstance, experience, or process, kings represent maturity or completion, wisdom through experience, power and the ability to wield it.

Coloring and complexion Since we have people, let's add the coloring of eyes, complexion and hair. Traditionally:

- ✓ ***Swords:*** brown hair, brown eyes
- ✓ ***Cups:*** light brown hair, hazel eyes
- ✓ ***Wands:*** light hair, blue eyes
- ✓ ***Pentacles:*** black hair, dark eyes

These definitions are fine if you live in a tightly controlled circumstance and social circle. However, the 20th century opened the world to global travel and to the intermixing of all peoples and races. So these previous meanings can be quite limiting because they do not address all circumstances. For example, in the orient dark hair is most common so almost everyone would be represented by pentacles, but that is not a true representation of an entire people. In Ireland and Scotland, red hair is common. In Europe, light skin and light eyes are common. In Africa, dark skin and dark eyes are common. Perhaps it would be easier to look at eyes, complexion and hair as lightest, medium, darker, and darkest. Remember not to give those people represented by swords a negative connotation. You cannot make a generic statement that 1/4 of the people in the world as represented by one suit are negative.

If we stay with the traditional meanings, the lightest coloring is represented by wands and the darkest by pentacles, with cups for medium coloring and swords for darker but not darkest. Staying with traditional values, from lightest to darkest, the range would be wands, cups, swords, pentacles. Use this until you develop your own personal symbolism. Always remember it is okay to use your own personal symbolism, but just realize the rest of the world may not use the same.

Wands: lightest Cups: medium Swords: darker Pentacles: darkest

Sun sign While the following may also be true on the ace through ten cards, it is specifically applicable to the courts and may add helpful insights. As previously mentioned,

- ✓ The court cards offer proof of element: flames, plowed fields, stormy weather, flowing water.
- ✓ Each of the elements represent astrological functions: creativity, practicality, intellect, emotion.

Twelve astrological signs divided by four elements allows three signs per element.

- ✓ Fire cards (wands) are Aries, Leo, Sagittarius.
- ✓ Earth cards (pentacles) are Taurus, Virgo, Capricorn.
- ✓ Air cards (swords) are Gemini, Libra, Aquarius.
- ✓ Water cards (cups) are Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces.

It is possible to identify the people represented by the court cards by the triplicity of sun sign. I.e., the Queen of Wands is a fire sign woman: Aries, Leo or Sagittarius.

Pages

Pages are the embryonic quality of each suit, immature, not fully developed, the talking stage, many times the messenger or good faith.

Environment Normal blue skies show on swords and wands, a yellow sky on pentacles, and a gray sky on cups. Three skies are placid, and one is turbulent (swords). Sky covers 3/4 of each card from top to bottom. Three are in natural environments, and one (cups) is standing on a man-made surface. Three grounds (foundations) are even, swords is uneven.

Figures The youths on three cards are standing quietly contemplating their suit symbols, but the figure on swords is vigilant. No other figures are evident - the youths are alone at the moment. One is in profile (wands), three are in 3/4 front-facing view. Three are facing the situation more directly, but one is not, instead viewing the situation obliquely. Three wear hats (coverings for their consciousnesses), one is bare-headed (consciousness unbound – swords). All the youths are well-dressed, no rags or casual clothing. Two youths are looking up (pentacles and wands),

Wands:
Aries
Leo
Sagittarius

Pentacles:
Taurus
Virgo
Capricorn

Swords:
Gemini
Libra
Aquarius

Cups:
Cancer
Scorpio
Pisces

Page of Wands

one is looking out (swords), and one is looking somewhat down (cups). Vision (perception – is the cup half empty or half full) follows the direction of the gaze. Three youths hold their implements with both hands, and one (cups) with a single hand. The grips are all quite different. Swords shows a definite grip with both hands (assertive posture). Wands shows a more casual holding, not as a weapon. Pentacles has upturned hands with the implement resting on top. Cups is firmly held by the right (masculine, projective) hand, but looks more like an offering.

Page of Wands – Environment A calm, blue sky (lovely day) dominates $\frac{3}{4}$'s of the card. The foundation is arid earth, with three pyramid-shaped hills (not mountains, too small) on the right side. The energy of a pyramid is life-prolonging or energizing in nature. One definition for the pyramid is enduring.

Figure The richly-dressed youth is in right profile (not facing the question or the situation), contemplating the top of the upright flowering wand (enterprise). Red undergarment, leggings, lining to cloak (passion closest to body, lining the external garment, and his forward motion), yellow / gold (intellect) outer garment (externally seen) and boots (covering for his understanding), blond hair (light coloring) covered by gray (union of opposites) hat (covering for consciousness) with red (passion) flame (fire symbol) on front. Salamanders (fire lizards - regeneration) are the pattern on the tunic, and the tops of boots look like flames (fiery covering for his understanding).

Message What is his message? The World of Intellect, ideas, enterprise, energy, growth, creation, the constant renewal of life, dynamic creativity. Is he a wanderer or an explorer, seeking new lands and new experiences? He is standing still. Could he be using his wand to determine his direction? Just how does fertility occur in a desert? It must be fertile somewhere because there are a billion Arabs who must achieve their living from a desert-like environment. Currently we are contemplating the terraforming of Mars, a desert-like planet with little natural atmosphere. This phallic symbol indicates assertion, creation, enterprise.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Coloring light.

Sun sign Aries, Leo, Sagittarius.

Page of Pentacles

Page of Pentacles – Environment The yellow (intellect) sky covers $\frac{3}{4}$'s of the background of the card. The lower $\frac{1}{4}$ shows a lush green landscape, grass, flowers, trees, a plowed field (lots of symbols of fertility), with a distant (not close by) blue (emotion) mountain (aspiration) on the right. The youth is standing firmly on a grassy, abundant field.

Figure A well-dressed youth contemplates a pentacle in his upturned (open, not clutching) hands. The gesture is one of supplication or elevation of the object. His leggings (covering for his forward motion), boots (covering for his understanding), inner garment (intention), and belt (containing all his motivations) are light brown (practical, material). His outer tunic is green (growth, money, abundance). He has a white wristband (purity of motive). The wrist connects the arm (ability to reach) and hand (ability to grasp). His fancy red (passion) hat (covering for his consciousness) has a swag or drape across his right (masculine) shoulder. He is contemplating the pentacle (Material World, money, acquisition, trade, industry, value).

Message Physical, material reality, material gain, symbolic values. This womb symbol preserves, endures, builds, stabilizes. His message will be about those values or value systems in general or study, scholarship and reflection.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Coloring darkest. **Sun sign** Taurus, Virgo, Capricorn.

Page of Swords - Environment Grey (union of opposites), billowing clouds dominate the blue sky which shows flock of birds. Wind is blowing the clouds, the youth's hair, and the trees near the bottom. Can this be the approach of stormy conditions or are the stormy conditions already present (no darkness or dark clouds)? There are blue mountains (emotional aspirations) in the distance (not close at hand) near the bottom (foundation) of the card. The youth is standing on a green (growth), uneven (not a firm foundation or under-standing) hill (vantage point), poised in readiness, watchful, looking over his shoulder with his upright double-edged sword of truth firmly grasped by both hands. Is he defensive, expecting trouble, or assertive, and willing to do battle? Accept your first impression.

Page of Swords

Page of Cups

Figure This youth is wearing a mottled yellow / green (lime green can indicate jealousy or envy) undergarment and leggings (uneven or untried intelligence in motivation and forward motion), a purple (spiritual) tunic (over-garment / external view), red boots (vitality and dynamic activity cover his understanding). His head (consciousness) is unbound (he is not conditioned to one form of thought). But he does not also have any protection other than the sword, no shield or helmet, no warriors to back him up or protect him. Is this a budding warrior, a knight wannabe, a watchful spy, a defender of the hilltop?

Message What is his message about? With his imperfect intelligence and his aggressive demeanor, can he precipitate a problem through his immaturity? Perhaps his white neckline indicates his purity of intention. Remember, “The road to hell is paved with good intentions?” This phallic symbol is assertive, aggressive, and dynamic. The youth is mostly face forward, facing the situation or the question. Another modern possibility is that the page is a spy or a secret service agent. He is vigilant.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Coloring darker, not darkest. *Sun sign* Gemini, Libra, Aquarius.

Page of Cups – Environment Gray (union of opposites) clear sky is in the upper $\frac{3}{4}$'s of the card. The youth is standing firmly on a yellow / gold (intelligence / wisdom), smooth (stable) foundation. Rolling water (emotion) is in the background just above this stable foundation. The youth does not seem to be affected by the somewhat turbulent emotions indicated by the rolling water, but it is in his background.

Figure This fancily-dressed youth is wearing orange (ambition) or leather (normal) substantial boots (covering for his understanding), variegated red leggings (covering for his forward motion) and undergarment (passions close to his body), a colorful blue tunic (emotional external view) decorated with red (passion) and white water lilies (pure thought, divine love). His costume is belted (contained) and he wears a blue (emotional / creative) hat (covering for his intellect) with an interesting flowing form that looks like sloshing water. With his right (assertive) hand (ability to grasp) he is holding a golden cup (World of Emotion) containing a fish (another water symbol), which he is contemplating. His other (left, feminine side) hand is on his hip or waist. He looks amused...or is he annoyed? Is this the proverbial “fish out of water”? Does he think this is silly or is he wondering either why the fish is in his cup or how he can drink anything since the fish is in the cup?

Message He is a messenger. But he is not active, he is quite passive. He is facing forward, facing the situation or the question. What is his message about? Feelings, love, beauty, pleasure, preservation (womb symbol), instinctual knowledge.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Coloring medium. *Sun sign* Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces.

Knights

Knights represent a quality of action relative to the matters of the suit. While more mature than the page, the knight is still youthful and subject to the commands of the queen and the king.

Environment Three knights have normal, blue sky backgrounds, and one is yellow (pentacles). Two blue skies are clear and untroubled (wands, cups). The sky on swords is stormy with gray clouds and high winds showing through the trees and birds in the sky. The sky portion takes up most of the cards, all but the very bottom of each. Foregrounds are level in two cards (wands, cups) and uneven in two cards (swords, pentacles). All the knights are in natural settings, none in man-made surroundings.

Horse All knights are astride horses (animal nature), two are gray (swords, cups), one is black (pentacles), and one is a palomino (wands). All horses are adult and substantial. Three horses are in some sort of motion, and one is standing still (pentacles). The cups horse is sedately moving forward in a parade-type walk. The wands horse is cantering or doing “airs above the ground”, playful or showy. This could show the difference in activity between physical exercise and warfare. The knight of swords and his horse are plunging ahead in an attitude of aggression and determination. To me, the horse looks fearful as well as fearsome. Each horse is controlled by his rider through the reins. The horses all face the same direction as their rider (that’s helpful). All riders sit on a saddle of some kind. (You will see a bareback rider in the Major Arcana.) The metaphor here is that the human side controls the animal side.

Knight of Wands

Figures All suit symbols are held in the right hand. One figure grips its symbol tightly (swords), two grip less aggressively (wands, cups), and one holds the symbol in his upturned (open, not clutching) hand (pentacles). Two suits (swords and wands) have both hands (ability to grasp) active: the right (masculine) holding the symbol and the left (feminine) guiding the reins of a moving horse. Two suits (cups and pentacles) have only the right (masculine) hand active, with the left (feminine) hand seemingly resting on the pommel of the saddle.

All the figures wear helmets, but with the visors up (not in battle mode). Three helmets have chin / neck pieces, one does not (swords). Three faces are in profile (not necessarily facing the condition head-on), one is 3/4 face front (wands), more nearly facing the situation or the question. Two mailed shoes have spikes (weapons) at the heel (swords and cups), one shows nothing (wands), and one has a spur (prod – pentacles).

Knight of Wands – Environment A cloudless, soft, blue sky (good day) dominates 4/5ths of the card, with an arid landscape at the very bottom. No fertility shows on the sand dunes, but three pyramid-shaped hills (endurance?) show in the background on the left side of the card. The energy of a pyramid is life-prolonging or energizing in nature. Shifting sand dunes are the foundation.

Horse Knight and horse (animal nature) are facing the same direction to the left of the card. The horse is rearing up, pawing the air, and appears to be playful or is dancing to get started. Saddle and bridle are ordinary. The mane appears to be flame-like (fire symbol). The small green neckband on the horse has the same flowering buds as on the wand the figure carries. The horse's color is brown (material) / red (passion) - either palomino or bay.

Figure The knight is fully armored (protected), covered with a yellow (intellect) tunic (pretty covering, but do not forget he is armored) decorated with salamanders (fire lizards). Flames shoot from the figure's back and helmet. The helmet (protection for consciousness) itself has a chin / neck piece and the visor (covering for vision) is up (vision is clear). The face is 3/4 turned to the front (nearly facing the question or the situation) and the rider appears to be looking at the horse (human figure contemplating the animal nature?). The left (feminine) hand (ability to grasp) which holds the reins is gloved (covering or protecting the ability to grasp). The right (masculine) hand, which holds the flowering (growth and creativity) wand (enterprise) is bare (uncovered ability to grasp). The knight's grip on the flowering wand appears to hold it in position, not to use it as a weapon.

Activity The knight looks as though he is leading a parade - festive, not aggressive. The activity appears to be one of joy and exuberance, such as the flush of excitement at the beginning of a creative endeavor.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Coloring light. **Sun sign** Aries, Leo, Sagittarius.

Knight of Pentacles – Environment A clear, bright yellow (intellect) sky dominates most of the card. At the bottom of the card is a plowed field (fertility in potential or implied) with a silhouette of trees on the right, soft green hills in the distance. The horse and rider are standing on an uneven rise of ground (foundation) overlooking (from the high ground) the plowed field.

Horse The horse and rider are facing the right side of the card. The horse (animal nature) is very black (absorbs all, gives nothing back) and standing still (situation at stand-still?). The saddle and bridle are not remarkable - red (passion) leather. The neckband is adorned with the five-pointed stars from the pentacles. A sprig of greenery (fertile, growing) is on the horse's forehead (forefront of instinctual consciousness). There is some sort of brown (practical / material) cloth draped from the saddle on which the figure sits.

Figure The knight is fully armored (protected) with a bluish (emotional) cast, and with a red (passion) and black (absorbs, gives nothing back) striped tunic. His helmet (covering for his consciousness) has the visor (ability to see) up (clear) and a chin / neck piece. There is a plume of greenery (lushness, growth) on his helmet (covering for his consciousness). The figure is in profile (not facing the question or situation), and appears to be looking past the pentacle (symbol of the physical / material kingdom) in his right (masculine) orange (ambition) or leather (normal), gloved (covering for his ability to grasp) hand (ability to grasp). His upturned right (masculine) palm (open and receptive) supports his suit symbol. His left (feminine) hand (ability to grasp) is somewhat hidden at the pommel of the saddle, but appears to be passive. He is observing or contemplating, not physically active, a symbol of patience which would be required by the plowed field. Agriculture takes time and patience to produce material value.

Knight of Pentacles

Knights of Swords

Activity There are many stages of an experience, from the excitement of the initiation, to the hard work and patience of awaiting results, to the eventual conclusion, bad or good. This knight seems to represent the vigilance and patience required after inception but before conclusion. The farmer must wait for results, but he must be vigilant and do all in his power to maintain and assist growth and eventual harvest.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Coloring Darkest. **Sun sign** Taurus, Virgo, Capricorn.

Knights of Swords – Environment This is an abrasive looking card with a windy, possibly stormy, blue sky. The wind is shown by blowing trees and clouds and birds flying, as well as the cape and feathers on the rider's costume flowing back with his passage and the wind itself. The mottled yellow / gold (intermittent intelligence or lack of it) and brown / purple (muddled or practical spirituality?) ground (foundation) on which he travels is uneven and mostly barren, a little hilly, not mountainous. The trees shown are silhouettes, not lush, fertile or abundant.

Horse The gray (union of opposites) horse (animal nature) is both saddled and bridled, in full galloping stride, both legs stretched out in front (is he jumping?). His head is up and his mane is flying back with the rush of air. Both horse and rider are facing in the same direction. The horse's halter has a small red heart (love or affection) at the center of a visible cross (material cross to bear) of straps. From the bit at his mouth back to the rider's gloved hand is a ribbon of flying bird (air) symbols. Lower on the horse's neck is a banner-type neckband containing red birds and butterflies (rich symbology of the air element).

Figure The rider is wearing full armor (fully protected), a blue / white (emotional / pure motives) tunic close to his body, with a red (passion) / brown (material) cape (external covering) across his shoulders. There are red (passion) markings on the material on his upper legs (forward motion). Both hands are active. He is wearing an orange (ambition) or leather (normal) glove (covering for his ability to grasp) on his left (feminine) hand (ability to grasp). The right (masculine) hand (ability to grasp) holding the sword has no glove (uncovered or unfettered ability to grasp). The double-edged Sword of Truth is held in an aggressive position. His mailed heel has a spike showing (not useful for kicking forward, but vicious if kicking backward, goading the horse or "digging in his heels").

His helmet (covering for consciousness) visor (ability to see) is open (clear) and there is no chin strap. If he is in actual combat, he should have closed his visor – he is vulnerable. Feathers (air symbol) come out of the top of the helmet and trail in the wind of the charge itself. The Knight's face is focused forward to the left of the card, intent on his task and not necessarily looking at the question or the concept.

Activity This knight is charging into an existing situation and may be heedless of danger or fully committed. This is battle symbology, full of stress, haste or anger, hostile and intense. He is a doer, committed, but perhaps not fully prepared or aware.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Coloring darker, not darkest. *Sun sign* Gemini, Libra, Aquarius.

Knight of Cups – Environment There is a soft blue, cloudless sky (a good day). A peaceful river (emotion) winds gently across the bottom of the card, a sandy bank to the left of the card, and trees and hills along the far side of the river and right side of the card. Water and some landscape (not much) indicate some fertility, but this is not dominant. There are no threatening symbols on this card. It is a tranquil scene.

Horse The horse (animal nature) on which the Knight rides is moving forward. It is moving placidly, no stress, at a sedate walk or canter. His head is down. He is not pushed or stressed (or is he exhausted?). The horse is gray (union of opposites). There is nothing unusual about the saddle and bridle. There is a blue (emotion) saddle blanket against the side of the horse (an emotional security blanket for untamed instincts?). There is a neckband on the horse which looks like waves or moving water. Both horse and rider face in the same direction, to the right.

Figure The fully armored (protected) figure has a print tunic (pretty covering, but remember that he is armored) over the armor with symbols of water and fish clearly showing. His helmet (protector for consciousness) visor (ability to see) is up, away from his face. He does have a chin strap (which could restrict his ability to speak), and his face is in profile to the right of the card wearing a passive expression. While he seems to have a wing (air symbol) attached to his ankle, he also has a spike

Knight of Cups

(weapon) on the back of his mailed heel. Again, this is not useful for kicking forward, but it's vicious for kicking backward, goading the horse or "digging in his heels". The figure holds a cup (container for emotion) in his right (masculine) hand, and it looks as if he is bearing a gift. His left (feminine) hand rests passively on the pommel of the saddle. Neither hand (ability to grasp) is gloved (ability to grasp protected).

He has wings (air symbol) on his heels and on his helmet, with small red (passion) and white (purity of intention) rings (links or closures) at the joining of the wings and the helmet. Wings usually represent the air element and this is a water element card. The wings could be a higher (heavenly) representation for water (emotion, affection, happiness). The cup is often a symbol of union or pledge of union. Astrologically, the water sign of Scorpio has several symbols, among which are bird symbols for higher expression (the eagle and the phoenix).

Activity Again, there is the impression of a parade, a social occasion, perhaps the pageantry of an entourage or escort, possibly more show than substance. He does have spikes on his heels so his elegant plumage may fool you. The ancient story of the Trojan horse teaches us that a gift from an enemy may be our undoing.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Coloring medium. *Sun sign* Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces.

Queens

Queens represent the mature feminine aspect of command and usually represent negotiation, conciliation, or detenté. Queens are quite capable of command decisions, but will normally try to determine the circumstances first.

Environment Normal blue skies are on three cards, clear on cups and wands, billowing gray (union of opposites, stormy) clouds on swords. Pentacles have a clear yellow (intellect) sky. Live animals are shown on pentacles (rabbit – fertility) and wands (threatening black cat). There is a possibility that the odd figure at the bottom right of the cups card is a fish (symbol of emotion). While the bases (foundations) vary, all figures are securely seated. All are in natural landscapes, not inside buildings.

Throne All four queens are securely seated on ornately carved thrones (position) with symbols of their authorities. Three thrones are gray and obviously man-made. One is yellow / gold (intellect / wisdom) with what appears to be a scroll for a back (wands). Two thrones face toward the left of the card (cups and pentacles), one faces sharply to the right (swords), and one throne faces straight forward (wands). The thrones are of varying heights. One has a back so high it goes off the top of the card (wands). One has a back higher than the figure (cups). One has a back level with the top of the figure's head (pentacles). One has a scrolled back that is neck high (swords). It is possible that the height of the back of the throne relative to the seated figure has additional meaning and could present itself to you during a reading. Or it could mean the height of the queen's authority from swords (lowest), to cups, to pentacles, to wands (highest). Trust your instincts.

Figure The figures on the pentacles, cups and swords are facing or contemplating their symbols. All faces are serious, none angry or joyful. Two are gazing straight ahead (swords and wands), and two are gazing downwards towards their symbols (cups and pentacles). The cups and pentacles figures seem to be more slump-shouldered or relaxed than the swords and wands figures. Each figure holds the symbol of their authority before them. The wands figure is holding her symbols but looking away from them. Two figures are in profile (swords and cups), one is 3/4 face-forward (pentacles), one has her full face showing although she is looking off to the right of the card (wands). All are richly dressed. All are bare-handed (open to acquiring new information) and none are wearing gloves (covering for ability to grasp). Not one queen is looking directly forward toward the situation or the question. Does she lead obliquely or could this be a reference to detente, negotiation, or conciliation?

Queen of Wands – Environment A clear, light normal blue sky covers the upper 2/3rds of the card. The base (foundation) of the card appears to be a square (practical-material) block of gray (union of opposites) concrete (man-made structure). On the left of the card are three yellow (intellect) pyramids (enduring). The energy of a pyramid is life-prolonging or energizing in nature. On the right are gray or shadowed dunes or hills (not mountains of spiritual aspiration, but not level ground either - perhaps modest aspirations). A snarling black cat (threatening) sits at the base of the card in front of the figure. Because of the snarling cat, this is often referred to as the "bitch" card (she looks benign, but looks can be deceiving). Be careful not to cast such judgment on any woman represented by this card, particularly fire sign women (Aries, Leo, Sagittarius).

Queen of Wands

Throne The base (foundation) of the throne (symbol of position) is two lions (fire symbols – king of animals) in profile. You will see similar figures on The Chariot card in the Major Arcana. Atop each lion’s head (consciousness) is a level armrest (the implication is that the lions are tamed or controlled). The back of the throne appears to be a heraldry mural that extends past the top of the card. There is no visible support for the mural, so the implication is that support is from “on high”. The mural shows two red (passion) leaping (active) lions facing each other, with a sunflower (fertility symbol) between them. Their tails are flames (fire symbol). Sunflowers (face the Sun or son? or contain seeds of Sun power) appear near the shoulders of the figure. The background is orange (ambition).

Figure The figure is seated solidly, facing straight forward, but her face is slightly turned to the right. Her gaze is serious but not angry, nor is it joyful. Her undergarment (inner motivation) is yellow (intellect), with a detailed vee-shaped neckline. Her cape (outer covering) is white (purity) / gray (union of opposites) clasped at the center by a lion’s head. Notice the white cape shows more on the left side of the seated figure. A brown (material) slipper (covering for her understanding) barely peeks out from the hem of her garment. Her hair is light brown. She is wearing a small yellow (intellect) crown, the top of which is filled with greenery (fertility). In her right (masculine) hand (ability to grasp) she firmly holds a flowering (fertility) wand. In her left (feminine) hand (ability to grasp) she more gently holds a sunflower (seeds of life force) on a stem (cut from the living plant), both symbols of her authority.

Reading The queen of wands and her symbols don’t look particularly aggressive or powerful, but looks can be deceiving. She is the authority. She rules from creativity and enterprise and she produces what she promises. Don’t forget the black cat - she would not be one to cross.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Coloring light. ***Sun sign*** Aries, Leo, Sagittarius.

Queen of Pentacles

Queen of Pentacles – Environment A bright, clear, yellow (intellect) sky covers the top half of the card. A flowering garland of leaves (fertility) is rooted in the right side of the card. It grows up the right side, across the top and down the left side of the card (this took much growth and much time), framing the throne and figure. Soft blue hills or perhaps mountains (somewhat shadowed, emotional aspirations) are background to both sides of the throne. (Is this the background of the authority symbolized by the throne or the background of the queen herself?) Lush green (fertility) / brown (material) / orange (ambition) vegetation surrounds the sides and base of the throne (again symbols of the authority of the throne or the figure of the queen?). A small brown (material) rabbit (fertility) is running across the lower right corner of the card.

Throne An ornate, man-made, gray (union of opposites) sculptured throne (symbol of position) sits firmly in the natural but somewhat uneven landscape (not a level playing field). The top looks like a cherub angel (a heavenly advisor or observer) which watches over the figure. The back and interior of the throne look like fruits and vegetables (fertility). The level armrest is capped by a goat's head (symbol of Capricorn, mastery of the animal nature). There appears to be a baby or small child (fertility) sculptured on the side of the throne base. Perhaps the position is inherited through family lineage. The throne faces slightly to the left, in 3/4 profile, facing forward but not exactly directly towards the situation or the question.

Figure The queen has on a white (purity) undergarment (inner motivation), with a red (passion) tunic (outer covering) over it. The green (balance or fertility) cape or robe appears to flow from her crown (authority and consciousness). Her crown is a yellow (intellect) dome with what appears to be red (passion) wings or a bird (higher thought) on the very top. Pairs of small red dots are at the base of half circles (soul) on the crown. She holds the symbol of her authority, the pentacle, in her upturned (open) right (masculine) palm (ability to grasp). Her fingers are curled around the pentacle. Her left (feminine) hand (ability to grasp) rests in her lap and appears to be touching, but not gripping, the pentacle. She is facing the left side of the card and is gazing down at the pentacle in her lap, somewhat introspective. She is not facing the situation directly (which would be face-forward). She is wearing orange (ambition) / brown (material) slippers (covering her understanding).

Reading This queen understands economics, production, and necessity. She lives in a fertile world, she will preserve her world, and she will do what is necessary to ensure harvest and plenty. Physical production is primary.

Queen of Swords

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Coloring Darkest. *Sun sign* Taurus, Virgo, Capricorn.

Queen of Swords – Environment There is a clear blue sky (normal) with billowing light gray (stormy?) clouds near the horizon. A single bird is in the sky and the few trees at the base are blowing in the wind (all air symbols). The throne is either on an odd green square or it represents grass. The foundation is stable. A blue strip on the left bottom of the card looks like flowing or falling water. The landscape is not totally barren, but not especially fertile.

Throne One side of the throne is shown clearly. The scrolled back is neck high. The main carving on the side of the throne is a cherub (baby angel) with wings and head. Three butterflies (air symbol) and two crescent moons (waxing, growing / waning, diminishing) and curliques decorate the rest of the chair. If you look closely, the legs look like feet similar to a claw-foot bathtub. Is this a reference to the talons of a bird (air symbol)?

Figure A regal queen sits comfortably with the double-edged Sword of Truth held upright with her right (masculine) hand in a firm grip. Her arm is not resting on the edge of the chair. She has the personal strength to hold the sword in balance without outside support. She is richly dressed in a gray (union of opposites) / white (purity) undergarment (inner motivation) with a red (passion) vee-neckline (symbol for the Hebrew letter Vau?) and red (passion) at her wrist (connection between her ability to reach and her ability to grasp). Her cloak is sky blue with clouds (air symbols) and flows onto the ground (this flow from the consciousness to the foundation could be material to a reading). The cloak is lined and edged with a red (passion) / yellow (intellect) strip, fastened at the neck. She has a red (passion) slipper (soft covering to her understanding) on her foot at the hem of her garment (this is deliberately shown, so it does have meaning).

Her left (feminine) hand (ability to grasp) is raised, palm open and showing (gesture of openness.) She shows both the ability to wield power and openness to the situation, mastery of her position as queen. She has a bracelet hanging from her left wrist. The ornament is not clear. If it is a key, it would indicate the key to the kingdom. Perhaps it is just a

decoration, but I doubt it because the cards were prepared for the purpose of symbology. Her golden crown has butterflies (air symbol of metamorphosis) on a circlet (binding her consciousness). There is a red (passion) scarf (covering for her consciousness) between the crown and her hair. Her hair is brown. Her face is serious. The sword is the symbol of her authority.

Reading This queen represents truth, fairness, judgement, and clean and clear intellect. She could also be represented by the scales of justice. Her sword cuts both ways. She can also be stern or non-emotional.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Coloring darker, not darkest. *Sun sign* Gemini, Libra, Aquarius.

Queen of Cups – Environment A cloudless, clear (normal) blue sky covers the top of the card. The throne and figure are based on a sandbar protruding into a river or body of water (emotion). The water is shown both in front, to the left of and behind the throne. A yellow promontory (height or vantage point) topped with a layer of green (grass?) is behind the river (flowing emotion in the background), with rocks (rocky, not smooth) at the foot of the cliff. The sandbar also contains colorful stones (jewels?) and what appear to be a fish (symbol of emotion) in the lower right corner.

Throne The back of the throne (position) is higher than the figure's head and crown. The round top appears to be a seashell surrounded by merchildren (half human and half fish). Another merchild is on the side of the throne along with wavy lines that represent running water. This merchild is holding a fish in his right (masculine) hand (ability to grasp) and his left (feminine) hand is raised to the heavens (many symbols of water, emotion).

Chalice The ornate chalice is covered at the top and has multiple symbols. There is a cross (of matter) at the very top supported by a knob at the bottom of which it looks like grapes (fertility). There are three unreadable (but not unimportant) symbols along the center of the chalice. The far right one appears to be an unclear four-legged animal of some kind. The stem of the chalice has two opposing arms like a candlestick,

Queen of Cups

atop which are angels in a prayerful position. The angels remind me of the figures guarding the path of Atreyu in the movie, “*The Neverending Story*”. The wings also appear to be waxing (growing) and waning (diminishing) crescent moon symbols. The base is substantial but the symbols are unreadable (this can be part of your reading). The chalice is the symbol of her authority.

Figure The queen is in profile, facing the left of the card (not facing the situation or the question directly). Perhaps the situation or question she is deciding is on a tangent to the way the reading is being conducted. The chalice (symbol of her authority) is in her open (receptive) palm-up, right (masculine) hand (ability to grasp). She is intently focused on the symbol in her hand. Her fingers are curled around the base of the substantial chalice. She does not seem to be experiencing difficulty holding it up. Her left-hand (feminine), palm down (passive position), is tentatively touching the base (basis of the emotional question or concept) of the chalice.

Her undergarment (inner motivation) is white (purity) with blue (emotion) highlights. Her robe is white (purity) / blue (emotion) rippling (unsettled) water (emotion) lined in red (passion), fastened at the neck with a red (passion) clamshell. The folds of the robe at the neck appear to be a hood (potential covering for her consciousness). The watery-looking robe pools on the sandbar on her left and into the water on her right. One blue slipped (covering for her understanding) foot rests on the sandbar at the edge of the water. Her hair is light colored. Her crown is large and tall (heavy for the slight woman). Two complete patterns consist of a large circle (spirit) surrounded by eight smaller circles. It is possible that this is an astrological reference to the full eight-phase aspect cycle of the Sun / Moon (Mother / Father).

Reading This queen is contemplative, absorbed by whatever the chalice contains or represents: family, relationships, creativity, beliefs. She feels deeply and her decisions are colored by her feelings (and beliefs).

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Coloring medium. *Sun sign* Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces.

Kings

Kings represent the fully matured aspect of each suit, seasoned counsel, men of authority or government.

Environment Sky occupies most of the background on three cards, but only the upper third on pentacles. Two kings have normal blue-sky backgrounds, clear on wands and billowing gray (storm) clouds on swords. Pentacles have a yellow (intellect) background. Cups have a clear gray (union of opposites) sky. Two kings face directly forward (swords and pentacles), facing the question or the concept. The figure is turned 3/4 left on wands and the figure is turned slightly off front to the right on cups. The foundations are platforms on cups and wands and uneven ground on swords and pentacles. Each suit has a critter of some sort - a tiny salamander on the bottom of the wands card, a leaping fish at the left edge of the water / sky on the cups, an armadillo under the foot of the figure on the pentacles, and birds in the sky on the swords.

Throne The thrones are substantial for the pentacles and cups, less so for the wands and swords. There appears (assumed) to be a structured base on wands, but it is covered (hidden) by the robe of the figure. The throne on the pentacles card is quite ornate. Hanging banners are the backdrop for the thrones of wands and swords, although there seems to be a pole of some kind or fringe along the right side of wands. Three thrones appear to have armrests, but wands does not.

Figures All figures are richly garbed and crowned. The figure is in profile on wands, slightly to the right on pentacles and cups, and face forward on swords. All figures are looking up and out except pentacles, where the figure's gaze is on his symbol or at the armadillo under his mailed foot. All of the figures wear crowns and caps of maintenance (ceremonial caps for nobility). None are gloved (their grasp is unrestricted). Feet are showing on all cards. All are clean-shaven and fairly young.

King of Wands

King of Wands – Environment Cloudless, clear, normal, blue sky tops 2/3rds of the card. The throne is set atop a man-made or concrete platform that rests on brown sand, dirt, or boards on which the symbol of the suit rests, a budding wand. On the bottom right of the concrete platform is a salamander (fire lizard).

Throne The base of the throne is barely visible, with no discernible detail. The back of the throne appears to be a fringed (?) banner which is higher than the figures head and higher than the limits of the card (authority from heaven?). Rampant lions (symbols of kingship) and salamanders (regeneration) that appear to be touching or swallowing their tails (looks like serpent-wisdom or the circle of life) adorn the banner. The throne and the figure are stable and secure.

Figure The figure has a red (passion) / yellow (intellect) undergarment (inner motivation) with yellow (intellect) flame-like cuffs (the joining point of the ability to grasp and the ability to reach). The elegant outer (visible) robe is yellow (intellect) with salamanders (regeneration) as the outside pattern, with a dotted pattern as a liner. The liner extends over both sides of the throne, which appear not to have armrests (the king remains alert, not relaxed?). A green (abundance) shoulder drape extends from the neck to the upper chest, atop which is a necklace with what appears to be a lion's head (regal and a fire symbol). The green drape is edged with what looks like flames (fire). Both feet (understanding) show, clad in green (abundance), firmly planted on the platform (stable). His crown (symbol of achievement) is a gold (wisdom) circlet with flames (fire symbol) at the top and a red (passion) head covering (covering for his consciousness) lines both the crown and down to his neck on the sides and back. His face is in profile facing left (not facing the situation or concept directly) and he appears to be looking towards the symbol of his authority, the budding wand. His look is serious.

Authority The king of wands is the final arbitrator of business, enterprise, industry, an attorney, judge, legislator, or leader for those issues.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Coloring light. *Sun sign* Aries, Leo, Sagittarius.

King of Pentacles

King of Pentacles – Environment A clear, yellow (intellect) sky dominates the top 1/3 of the card. A castle with its towers (urban or man-made) dominates the lower 2/3s of the card with a combination of man-made buildings and walls (structured living) and lush vegetation. Leaves, grapes, flowers, bushes or trees all contribute to a sense of fertility and abundance.

Throne The throne is centrally located on the card, face forward (facing the question or the concept), black (absorbs all, gives nothing back), four-square (rigid), and very ornate. Bulls' heads (symbol of Taurus / earth) are on the four corners, left and right top, and left and right bases to level armrests. The throne appears to rest on natural ground rather than a platform.

Figure The figure is richly and ornately dressed in a black (absorbs all, gives nothing back) cloth robe covered with grapevines and leaves (fertility). A neck cowl of red (passion) is attached to a capelet from the base of the crown. An orange (ambition) / leather (natural) band goes around the cape chest high and around the tops of both arms. His left (feminine) foot (understanding) is showing, with full armor (protection), atop what I think is an armadillo (armored animal nature). The gold (wisdom) crown (achievement) has a base of laurel leaves (victory) and is topped with yellow (intellect) and red (passion) flowers (gifts, fertility).

His left (feminine) hand (ability to grasp) is sitting easily atop a pentacle (suit symbol) that appears to be resting on his left (feminine) knee (joint between understanding and locomotion). In his right (masculine) hand (ability to grasp) he loosely grips a gold (wisdom) scepter (symbol of authority) with a round ball (circle of spirit) on the top. He is facing mostly forward with his face and eyes cast downward towards the pentacle (mostly facing the question or the concept but with a practical twist).

Authority The king of pentacles represents the final arbitrator of monetary issues, agriculture, trade, mercantile, the banker, finance officer, mortgage broker, judge of those issues.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Coloring Darkest. *Sun sign* Taurus, Virgo, Capricorn.

King of Swords

King of Swords – Environment There are three billowing, gray storm clouds against a light, clear blue sky, two at the base of the card, and one behind the back of the throne and figure. Either the situation is stormy or the king is stormy (he is bearing a sword). The trees in the lower background appear to be in silhouette or blowing in the wind. Two birds fly on the right (many air symbols). The ground is an uneven green (fertility) / brown (material), but the king on his throne seems stable. This appears to be a battlefield command rather than a social court scene.

Throne No part of the base of the throne is showing, but the figure is obviously sitting on something substantial or level. The panel representing the back of the throne shows several butterflies (air) and the waxing (growing / beginning) and waning (ebbing / ending) crescent moons. Located at about the King's neck on the right side are human figures, who appear to have no clothing. The drawing does not detail their activity. If the first impression is of naked people dancing, trust your instinct – it could be a morality issue. If the two people appear to be fighting, trust your instinct – it could be a battle or mortality issue.

Figure The king is well, but not ornately, dressed. His undergarment is blue (emotion), his robe is purple (regal or spiritual), lined with orange (ambition). His headscarf (covering for his consciousness) is red (passion), his crown (achievement) is golden (wisdom) with a winged cherub (angelic achievement or heavenly-blessed) on the front. The king faces directly forward towards the question or concept, eyes open, gaze direct, perhaps even grim. The double-edged sword is firmly gripped in the figure's right (masculine) hand (ability to grasp), with the flat of the sword showing. This king takes his duty seriously. There does appear to be a ring (signet?) on his left (feminine) hand (ability to grasp), which is resting on his lap.

Authority The king of swords is the final arbitrator for the military, law, government, a judge, a general, leader, perhaps executioner for those issues, plus he can be the surgeon in health issues.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Coloring darker, not darkest. ***Sun sign*** Gemini, Libra, Aquarius.

King of Cups

King of Cups – Environment A clear gray (union of opposites) sky covers the top 2/3rds of the card. In fact, most of the card is gray, not the usual light-hearted tone of the suit of cups. The sea (emotions) on the bottom 1/3rd of the card is very turbulent and the substantial throne appears to be floating on the turbulent water. The turbulence is more pronounced at the back of the throne and on the left side of the card. In front of the base on which the throne sits, the water is much calmer, although not completely calm (calmer feelings). A large fish leaps out of the top edge of the water on the left of the card. To the right side of the card at the top edge of the water is a sailing ship (relationship).

Throne As mentioned, the throne sits on a stable concrete (man-made) base, but this base is floating on turbulent water (or is the base on some sort of solid pillar or promontory not visible under the water?). The figure and the throne appear to be quite stable. While it does not have the markings of a seashell, the high back of the throne is clamshell-like in its curved shape, about head high. The only other visible part of the throne is the armrest on the right of the card that appears to be level or flat. The design on the front of the armrest is a long-necked chalice. Perhaps the shape of the throne itself is symbolic of a chalice.

Figure A richly dressed figure sits securely on the throne. His inner garment is blue (emotional motivation). His robe is yellow (intellect) with red (passion) trim. His outer cape covers one side of the throne up to his neck. A chain appears to be hanging low on his chest, with a fish (water symbol) dangling from the middle in the center of his chest. His left (feminine) hand (ability to grasp) is resting on the armrest of the throne and he is holding an upright scepter (symbol of authority) that resembles the chalice marking on the front of the armrest. This hand appears to be gripping (assertive) the scepter, thumb (will) up. His right (masculine) hand (ability to grasp) is more passively holding the usual symbolic suit cup.

Both feet (understanding) are showing beneath the hem of his garment, firmly planted on the base of the throne assembly. His feet are either mailed (armored) or covered in an amphibian-like and mottled texture – similar to the scales of a fish, somewhat yellow (intellect) in appearance. His face is 3/4s forward, looking slightly to the right of the card, gaze level, not quite directly facing the question or the concept. His head (consciousness) is completely covered by the ornate gold (wisdom) crown (achievement). Light blue (emotional) flaps seem to be covering his ears (ability to hear), which appear to be part of the crown assembly. Wavy lines (water / emotion) are along the bottom of the crown, with three visible red (passion) ovals (jewels?).

Authority The king of cups is the final arbitrator for the family, psychology, divinity, the arts, family court, the clergy, the doctor as caretaker, artist.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Coloring medium. *Sun sign* Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces

Additional Study Lesson Five:

- ✓ Create your index cards that pertain to this chapter (Page, Knight, Queen, King).
- ✓ Create your personal brief definition of each card studied, using your own words.
- ✓ Meditate once on each card: elements, colors, numbers, suits, symbology.
- ✓ Color the black and white photocopies of each card as you encounter them.

Practice reading Use only the forty experiential cards of the Minor Arcana, well-shuffled and face down. Have someone ask you a simple question aloud (nothing complicated) for a reading. Write the question down in the form you (the student and reader) understand. Be sure the question is clear and that you have recorded that question accurately. Why? The cards' chosen response will be to the question asked and understood by the reader. You cannot change the question itself in any way.

Have the querent (questioner) choose three cards at random from your Minor Arcana (Rider) deck of forty cards. Keep these three cards in the order of their selection and keep them face down.

- ✓ The first card chosen is the past of the question.
- ✓ The second card chosen is the present of the question.
- ✓ The third and last card chosen is the future of the question.
- ✓ As you turn each card over, use the index card you have generated to help you with your reading.
- ✓ Keep the reading for each card in the past, the present, or the future *as it was chosen*.
- ✓ Do *not* mix up the time frames.
- ✓ Card one is what brought the question to the table.
- ✓ Card two is the current situation regarding the question as it was asked.
- ✓ Card three is the outcome or direction of flow for the question as it was asked.

Remember that you are a beginner.

- ✓ Stay simple.
- ✓ For the moment, stay within the index card meanings.
- ✓ Stay within the timeline given.
- ✓ Do *not* re-word the question.
- ✓ Do *not* choose any other cards to deepen or clarify at this time. That will be possible once you know what you are doing.
- ✓ Ask for feedback now and as the process unfolds. Learn as you go.
- ✓ Decide if your index cards are complete and helpful as constructed. Adapt or adjust as necessary.
- ✓ You may practice on more than one reading or querent. Practice is advised.

Follow the instructions for each question. Keep them separate and private.

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The Cards Themselves, Part V

*Major Arcana: Zero, One through Five:
Fool, Magician, High Priestess,
Empress, Emperor, Hierophant*

Continuing our systematic study of each card for its symbolic meaning, we will work with the 22 Major Arcana cards in the next four lessons. In this lesson we will start with the zero card and the first five numbered cards. Again, do not memorize rigid upright and reversed meanings. Please spend your time and effort allowing the cards themselves to trigger your personal symbolism to develop the best continuing and progressing meanings. As we develop meanings, remember to make the transition between the age depicted by the authors and our own age.

As previously, we will look at the numerological meaning and sequence, color, foundation, process, aspiration, background, middle-ground, foreground, individual symbolism, direction, etc. for each card and within the groupings. Notice I did not mention the suits. The Major Arcana (“majors”) is a deck unto itself, not conditioned by the four suits of the Minor Arcana (“minors”). As a matter of fact, it is the majors that use the minors and the attendant suit symbology to accomplish the majors’ purposes. It is possible to do a reading using only the minors or only the majors. In that instance, the minors would be used to describe experience itself. The majors would be used for overall symbology guidance.

As previously mentioned, the majors represent the archetypal principles or forces underlying or behind the activity and the people involved. Rarely is the querent or any participant in control of these issues or activities, or their outcome. If several majors occur in the spread, it can mean powerful outside spiritual forces at work in the situation. Destiny may be involved.

As with the minors, know that there is a complete process being described in the majors deck. Each card, while powerful in itself, is also one step in a process. Again, not all the authors and teachers agree on the order of each step and the numbering system on the cards. There are many methods and arguments for and against. Each is personal opinion and experience. Once you have developed your basic skills, come back to this issue and do

some personal research and meditation. You are attempting to develop your personal reading skills. You will have philosophical differences with others, including the authors of various books or courses (yes, including mine.) Eventually, you must use that method which is most comfortable and accurate for you. At this point in your studies and your evolving skills, keep your motivations clear. You want the highest and best form for your skill and you want your motivations to come from sincerity and spiritual purpose, not judgment or ego / power.

Waite, the designer of the deck used in this workbook, deplored the use of the majors for divination to the point of revulsion. His use of the majors would have been more like meditation or contemplation, seeking the inner mysteries of the energies and the symbols of the cards.

For a moment, I would like to explore that spirituality as it relates to the purpose of the majors and their application in this 22-step process of life. A study of the 22 Hebrew letters as they apply to this process will aid your understanding of each card (beyond the scope of this set of classes). Metaphysically, there is so much talk about having a goal or achieving your destiny. I think the focus is on the wrong issue. While it is not within the possibility of this book to wax too philosophical, a brief explanation is in order.

Source

According to our western belief system, God (Deity) always was, is and evermore shall be, alpha and omega, beginning-less and endless, omnipresent (everywhere present), omnipotent (all powerful), and omniscient (all knowing). God just *is*! If that single creative principle (which we call God) started the ball rolling, that start would have come from Itself. If there were nothing in existence but the Creator (singularity) when creation (multiplicity – universality) sprang into existence (the big bang?), the Creator must have created from Itself, of Its own substance. If that is true, everything that exists must be within what we call God and must have God as its source. If you take that thought a bit further, all that exists must be God. If God is all there is, there can be nothing other than God, no person, place or thing that is not God.

In my experience, I have certainly found circumstances or people that do not seem to be God-like. Does that mean that something, someone, some experience is outside of God? No. It means that I have a problem with perception. All experience is conditioned by our personal perception. “One man’s meat is another man’s poison” is an old saying. In my

perception, if I feed a hungry man, I have done a “good” thing. If I feed that hungry man a food that compromises his religious belief, will he see my act as a “good” thing? He will be internally at war between his need to physically survive and his need to practice his personal faith. How will he feel about my good deed? What are his perceptions?

Have you ever offered assistance only to have it misunderstood? Or have you had people first defend, then retaliate against what you offered innocently and blithely as assistance? What went wrong? Were you wrong to offer? Were they wrong to rebuff and eventually attack? This can happen quickly or take a long time to develop. The key is personal perception.

All experiences (multiplicity) are contained within the singularity (Deity), including all pairs of opposites. As I initially wrote this section, our country was fully involved in our second Iraq war. Each side prays for their personal national and religious beliefs, our personal and collective perceptions. Christians pray to God and Muslims pray to Allah. If you believe that Deity is singular – one God – then both factions are praying to the same Deity. Does it really matter what you call God? Does the language you use matter? Does the form (religion) matter? There is only one Source, and that Source is not hung up in words or labels. That is all too human. The Source is not human. The Source is Deity and hopefully beyond puny human perception.

Destination

Where are we going? We are here and must concede the start because we are here. We are examining our existence. What is the purpose of life in general and our life in particular? If God is all there is, where are we bound? Our destination must be within what is...God. If destination is reunion with Deity, we must travel full circle. So we have a process that starts from singularity and eventually returns to singularity. Why? What would be the purpose of starting and returning to the same point? Or is it the same point? Does our experience count for nothing? If God is all there is (omnipresent) and knows all things (omniscient), why does God need life, experience and us? Was God bored? The concept of Deity containing the potential of all, yet seeking experience, is one of comparing theory with practice.

On a human (not Deity) level, you can theorize or plan all you want, but your actual experience will tend to be somewhat different than either your theory or your plan, especially if you have no remembrance of either the theory or the plan. Picture yourself flying over a town. You have a project in mind and a bird's eye view of what that town has to offer for that project. You can clearly see the layout, the ins and outs of the town, and the people. You can organize your project, project the journey and the timing, select the actors for your stage, assign the roles, etc.

Now the plane has landed and you get to do it for real. Several potential problems immediately come to mind. Your perspective has shifted from the grand aerial view to the finite and very small view of physical reality... from the overview to the street corner on which you now stand. Do you suppose that in the short time it took to land the plane, anything changed about the town... electricity failed, traffic picked up, an accident delayed travel? What about the people and the roles you assigned? Do they know they are playing a role for your project? Are they cooperating, especially if they do not remember volunteering? Are they on the same timetable? Does the experience mirror the theory or the plan?

Let's add a factor...incarnation. While you were in the potential stage, flying high above the crowd, plotting, planning, assigning, timing, etc., you were without form. The landing of the plane on physical reality equates to birth. It took you a while to grow into the physical stature and capability to perform your intended project. You do recall what you came here to do, don't you?

My very wise friend Dutch Whelchel said, "It is difficult to remember the objective is to drain the swamp when you're up to your ass in alligators." Did you get so caught up in coping with physical-level demands that you forgot your original purpose? Now that the project is underway, do you even remember that you have a project? Do you remember the details of the project? Do you remember the purpose of the project? Are the town, the actors performing the roles you provided, and the timing cooperating? If you do not clearly remember, do you care?

God is all there is, both source and destination, and more. We spring forth from the Creator with the potential contained within that individual spark. Once we have exercised our potential, we return to the Creator, forged in experience. We are no longer potential. We are realized. We have infinity of time and experience at our disposal. We are souls or spirits with purpose who sometimes lose our way. Thank God there is only one game in town because we truly cannot be "lost" to God. We may "lose our way" from our personal perspective, but God does not "lose" us!

Many metaphysicians fear “falling off the path”. Where do we “land” when we have such a “fall”? If God is the only game in town, we must land within God, on another part of a path, with infinity of time and experience before us. Return is inevitable. Do you really think God would create from Itself and refuse entrance of a part of Itself upon the return? Does that make sense to you? Do you think God would allow the destruction of a part of Itself because *It* was naughty? Take all the time and experience you need, travel whatever path you choose, your return to Deity is inevitable. Your destination is your destiny.

Process / Path

We have explored a concept that starts from singularity, eventually returns to singularity, and runs the gamut of experience within that multiplicity or universality. Which part is more important: creation, destiny or experience?

I doubt if you can assign degrees of importance to the acts of Deity. I don't feel nearly smart enough to do so. Without creation itself, we would not exist. Without destiny, the return to the Source, all of this would be purposeless. Experience is what turns potential into reality, potential of spirit to actualization. Our experiences, of whatever variety, success or failure, however long they take, is the process of actualizing our potential. Everyone is so ready to reach their destination that they lose sight of what will help them achieve that destiny...experience.

Look at the first sentence in the paragraph above, a process...which runs the gamut of experience...within. All paths stem from God and lead to God. Therefore, the path from one to the other exists within God. You can fall off your path as many times as you need and you still land within God, because God is all there is. You can make as many mistakes as you need or want, and God is still the only game in town. Just as electricity will exist even if we deny its existence, the creative principle exists, with or without our permission.

It would be far easier to reach for the highest and best within you each time in each experience, but that probably is a lot more difficult to do than it sounds. The universe wastes nothing. If you degenerate into the most negative expression possible, you are still a spark of God and you exist within God. It may take you more time and experience to eventually achieve reunion, but I doubt seriously if the Creator will forsake some part of Itself and deny re-entry into the singularity we call God. Sometimes I mask my divine spark in such negativity that I have a hard time finding it myself...but it is there, awaiting a better experience, a better choice, so it too can progress to conscious reunion with the Creator.

The Fool

The Major Arcana of the Tarot is a story in 22 chapters of the journey, the process. Just remember that the majors are not just about experience, but they can adequately describe such experiences. The majors are about our spiritual journey and the experience we need to master facets of our own nature. We need to meditate deeply on these majors. Look to more spiritually motivated books, such as psychology or mythology books on spiritual questing and initiation, rather than mundane experience. Look to the 22 paths between the Sephiroth on the Kabbalistic Tree of Life.

The Fool

A white (purity of mission) sun (solar parent) rides high (upper right corner of the card) in a clear, yellow (intellect) sky. Snow-capped, light blue (emotion) mountains (aspirations are clearly below the figure) range across the mid-high background of the card. At the bottom left are gray (union of opposites) foothills. At the lower right is a bare, brown (material), rocky (definitely not fertile) promontory on which the figures stand.

A youth is standing on the edge of the rock formation which appears to be a cliff. He appears to be walking forward, face raised to the sky, carefree, and not looking where he is walking. His companion, a white dog (tamed instincts, man's best friend), appears to be yapping at his heels, dancing, or trying to warn him of his impending danger (edge of cliff).

In his right hand, with no apparent effort, the youth balances a black (absorbs all, gives nothing back) staff on his right shoulder. The staff has a gold (wisdom) knob on top, from which is suspended a travel bag or purse (container for possessions?). Although difficult to see, the decoration on the bag appears to be the head of an eagle (a symbol of the Holy Spirit).

The youth is dressed in a rich black tunic with twelve (zodiac – experience) golden yellow (intellect / wisdom) circles (all-ness) decorated with red (activity) patterned all over the garment. There is also an abundance of leaves and vines (fertility). Most of the circles contain an eight-pointed star (solar disk, identification with self, incarnation). One circle on the chest contains a red heart (affection). One circle on the upper

right of the skirt contains a flame (passion). One circle at the lower hem looks like a curved English letter E. I have checked the shapes of the Hebrew alphabet (common on these cards) and do not find a letter of that shape. The decoration on his shoulder is not contained within a circle and is not an eight-pointed wheel or a heart, but may possibly be another flame, difficult to define. His belt consists of seven linked small circles (the seven inner planetary bodies, Sun through Saturn, physical experience).

The flowing sleeves of the tunic look like flames and are lined with red (passion) or orange (ambition). Accept your first impression. The inner garment is white (purity of motive.) The markings on the neck and sleeves appear to be random as do the markings in the cliff face. His leggings (covering for his forward motion) are gold (wisdom) and his soft, high-topped boots (covering for his understanding) are yellow (intellect). In his left (feminine) upturned hand he holds a white rose (purity of thought and motive). His face is in profile and he is looking up to the left, not directly to the front or watching his foundation or options. He has blond hair (please, no blond jokes). His head (consciousness) is covered (contained) with laurel leaves (victory) and a long red (passion) feather rises out of the top of the cap (a feather in his cap?).

His attitude is carefree, buoyant, and trusting. His face is full of a heavenly vision. He does not seem to know he is about to walk off the edge of a cliff. His little dog (tamed instincts) appears to be warning him or is also playing foolishly at the edge of that cliff. Is he an innocent or is he just plain foolish or foolhardy? What are the readings you can develop? Remember, first impressions are very important. Each reading can generate new meanings. Is he foolish or just innocent of the danger? There is a great deal of difference between taking an action when you know better and having a bad experience because you do not know better.

Zero This is the cypher of potential, all before it becomes any one thing. Every child learns how to walk and to climb. Parents guard them nervously as they learn these skills. They are not foolish if they fall and hurt themselves, they are merely innocent and naïvé because they lack experience. Was your first impression one of innocence and joy...or foolishness? Trust yourself in each reading as each reading is unique.

Reading If the Fool falls off that precipice, it will not be nice. With years of experience behind us, we can imagine the pain, if not death, of such a misstep. Whether it is from innocence or from foolishness, there will be pain. Landing is going to hurt, whether it be bouncing down the mountainside or just the sudden stop at the bottom! Does the youth have the option of staying where he is? He's certainly not dressed adequately for the harsh conditions. This is a question of preparation. If we do not plan, we can be caught unawares. He does not look uncomfortable...at the moment. His head is in the clouds and the sun is bright and hot. What happens when night falls, or when he falls?

If the Fool is "flirting with danger" he certainly has picked the right spot. That can be part of the reading. Choose your circumstances well because some circumstances have inherent danger, visible or not! If he has no clue because he lacks experience, he is about to have an experience. We can learn from all experience if we are open to its lessons. Perhaps he needs to trust the dog (tamer instincts). Perhaps he needs to pay attention to what he is doing before he does it. Look before you leap, do not step in front of a speeding vehicle, get your head out of the clouds, pay attention, etc. The small protective dog could also equate to a "seeing eye dog" in our current society.

There is a lot of difference between theory and practice, between dreams and reality. We reviewed this earlier in this lesson. Life is only too willing to teach us what we need to learn. It has variety and all the time in the universe to bring our needed lessons home.

The scene is barren. The Fool has only himself, his dreams and his small dog on which to rely. Regardless of the choice he makes and the results of those choices, he has no physical support. Perhaps he is relying on spiritual support - the descent of possibility into harsh reality. The Fool, whether foolish or naive, is initiating himself into physical experience. All the possibilities must be subjected to the reality of experience. The lights are about to come on. Surprises may be in store.

Laurel leaves (victory) cap (contain) his head (consciousness). They must be earned. He may be focused on his success to bring himself to this point in his experience and may not be paying attention to a foolish misstep. "You cannot rest on your laurels," is something my daughter discussed with me this week as I wrote this script. But he does have a "feather in his cap"! The young or naive often see themselves as "bullet-proof". They learn the hard way though experience.

In American Indian lore, there are shamanic journeys. These are stepping stones to spiritual development, the metaphysical equivalent of initiation. This Fool appears to be on a vision quest. Did he receive adequate instruction? He certainly has more equipment than usual for a vision quest. American Indian youths (innocents) are sent alone to a mountain or desolate place, almost naked, and with no food, water or companionship. They must remain there until the vision instructs them as to their mission in life. It could take days. If successful, they move into their adult phases. Many societies re-name their children as they become adults. Waite refers to this card as “the Mystic Fool, folly at the most insensate stage”.

Determine if it is in the past, the present, or the future. Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question? Or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing (layout) is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

The Fool introduces possibility of experience and the process begins...

The Magician

The Magician is the number one position of the spiritual process itself, initiation, individuation.

There is a fertile field of flowers: red (passion) roses, white (purity) lilies, and some blue (emotion), with green (balance and healing) leaves and vines and a red rose (passion) upper bower. These frame the clear, bright yellow (intellect) background (sky?). A single figure dominates the center, but is in the middle-ground. Between the field of flowers at the front bottom and the figure is a substantial table displaying four implements. Towards the left of the card, the table has three symbols carved into the sides of the top: a winged bird, rippling lines like water, and a reclining animal (lion?). These can refer to three of the zodiac's four fixed signs, Scorpio, Aquarius and Leo. Perhaps the Magician himself represents the fourth fixed sign, Taurus. Fixity relates to perseverance, fixity of purpose, and self-discipline. One substantial table leg is showing, dark or in shadow, and appears to be indistinctly carved at the top. The implements are suits in the minors, pentacle, cup, double-edged sword, and wand. All are at rest, available to the figure as he chooses.

The Magician

His costume is a white inner robe (purity of motive) with gray (union of opposites) natural shadowing covered by a red (passion) outer (visible) robe. The markings on the robes appear to be random and not symbolic. His belt is a gray (union of opposites) snake (originally a sign of the wisdom of God until its fall in the biblical Garden of Eden when it became a sign of cunning and deception or sin) swallowing its own tail. This is a serpent-cincture, the mythical Ouroboros – a symbol of magical power and currently the symbol for DNA. Gaskell's Dictionary devotes several pages to the snake in ancient myth. For our purposes, the snake represents the function of contained or defined time and space (the material universe) and transmutation (the snake sheds its skin as it grows and evolves).

The Magician is facing forward (facing the reader or the circumstance), intent on his task. A white (purity) circlet is around his forehead (contains his consciousness), and within his dark hair. His left (feminine, receptive) hand (ability to grasp) points towards the Earth (material reality). His right (masculine, assertive) hand (ability to grasp) is raised towards the heavens (spirit) and is firmly gripping a white (purity) double pointed scepter (symbol of power or polarity). A reclining figure eight, the cosmic lemniscate (eternity) is above his head.

One This is the number of initiation, setting into motion, the spiritual counterpart of the experience indicated by the four aces, stands alone, relies on self, the electric, dynamic projection into possibility to achieve individuality and incarnation.

The Magician is the occult master or adept. Mastery of the physical plane and its implements is his task. All the elements are represented. The figure represents intent and his motivations are pure. He acts alone and directs the energy from above into physical existence. He is the master of time or time serves him, or he has come into his own time to achieve his task. He achieves fertility and beauty as he develops and perfects his skills.

In many decks, this energy is depicted as a juggler, but not in the same sense as the Rider two of pentacles, juggling experience, This is in a divine or inspirational sense, such as juggling priorities.

I remember a time when I was asking guidance for a very difficult emotional experience. I sure didn't feel like a master at the moment, but that is what I was given as guidance. It reminded me that I had all the tools for my own healing at my disposal. It reminded me to remember the

objective and not focus on the alligators chomping at my feet. I eventually did master the situation, but at a great emotional cost. I have never regretted the lesson, self-discipline, or choice, even though the situation did not work out as I personally would have wished. The final result was the best solution.

Reading How would you read this card? You have the skills. You have the tools. You have the tenacity and strength to do what is right. Apply what you have learned, discipline yourself, focus on the task, keep your motives pure, allow higher guidance to govern your emotions and your choices. You can produce wonderful results. Time is on your side. You control the timing and the application of this lesson. Trust in that higher guidance. Accept that your role is the best use of resource and skill, not necessarily what your ego would like as a result. You can manifest a spiritual experience onto the Earth plane. You command the elements (of the situation). For example...

Betrayal of trust in marriage or business partnership is a common theme in card reading. The betrayed person feels victimized and weak by position. The betrayer either has been or wishes to be with someone else and often does not offer much choice as to whether they will stay or go or continue the original partnership. I do not deny the painful feelings that come with such a betrayal. I do not deny that it is legitimate to feel victimized. But the betrayed is not weak by position. They are merely convinced they are...and that perception has nothing to do with reality. They do have choices, uncomfortable though they may be.

Two original partners usually have a contractual agreement and history, extended relationship ties, economics, progeny (whether a physical child or a product or service of a business) etc. For the most part, people can make bad choices, but they are not necessarily bad people. Occasionally, you will find a selfish stinker in the mix who really does not care about the pain inflicted. Rarely is blame one-sided. There is usually a contribution from both sides. Do not be afraid to “own” your own complicity. It is the only way you can learn, grow and move on.

Reasonable trust in partnership is absolutely necessary. Blind trust is a poor choice. Not everyone deserves absolute trust. Not everyone who gets absolute trust knows how to handle it. If you put your partner on a pedestal, the situation is ripe for disaster - whether it be disillusionment, deceit, or dishonesty. People are not the ones to disappoint us. Our expectations are the real villains. When people do not live up to our expectations, they disappoint us - or rather, our expectations do the disappointing.

The Earth is a giant schoolhouse. We are not here because we are perfect, but because we are going to school. In the initial phase of a relationship, we make promises that we may not be able to keep with the passage of time and experience. The betrayed person feels just awful when someone they trust falls off their pedestal and betrays that trust. Unfortunately, the betrayed gravitates towards victimization and weakness through their feelings. No one likes to be betrayed. What is not usually recognized is that the betrayer can also feel awful about not meeting expectations. The betrayer first gravitates towards guilt, then anger, then reprisal - sometimes within one conversation. No one likes to feel like a betrayer!

The Magician surfaces as the card of guidance. The betrayed has more power than they realize, with an arsenal of weapons at hand: contractual agreement, history, extended relationship ties, economics, progeny (remember those?), etc. Time can be a punishment or a tool. Unfortunately the alligators (pain) tend to confuse the issue. What does the betrayed want as an outcome? They must focus on their objective, use all the tools at their disposal, and choose the direction for eventual acceptable resolve.

Is the breach of trust irrevocable? Move on. Give thanks that your eyes are open and that you will waste no more time on a losing situation. Is the relationship paramount? Use the tools at your disposal, especially time, to move steadily towards your goal of retaining the relationship. A court of law can be a place to gain time or position. A new romantic interest will be screaming to make the legalities happen fast. Slow it down - you have the tools. Be sure you are acting for positive reasons, and not in retaliation. Vengeance is a poor companion and it is not healthy for you. Be prepared to change the relationship as you knew it. What was is now dead and can never be again. What can you build for the future? What do you have to do with yourself to attain that goal?

What determines outcome is to focus on your motivation, not the alligators of pain, forced decisions, economics, etc. Now, this is easy to say. I do not have to pay the bills. But I do believe you understand the message of the Magician. You are more in charge than you realize. You do have choice, skill and time at your disposal. Use them wisely.

Determine if the Magician is in the past, the present, or the future in a layout. Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question, or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

The High Priestess

Two pillars dominate the sides of this card. Leaf decorations adorn the divisions between the upright pillars and the flares at the top, which I have seen described as lotus leaves (symbol of evolution). The pillar on the left is black (black, primordial, takes, gives nothing back) with the letter “B” affixed, representing the Kabbalistic Boaz (the biblical Tree of Evil, the Mother or the Pillar of Justice). The pillar on the right is white (purity of motive), with the letter “J” affixed, representing the Kabbalistic Joachim (the biblical Tree of Good, the Father or the Pillar of Mercy). Suspended between the pillars is a drape of light gray (union of opposites) cloth patterned with pomegranates (feminine fertility, eggs in the womb) and palm fronds (masculine fertility, phallic symbol). The fertility symbols are in the background, not sexually active, but definitely a part of the story. The blue background behind the pillars is divided with the clear evening blue sky at the top and blue waters below. It is divided by a small expanse of low-lying land. The figure is firmly seated on a square block of stone mostly hidden by her gown and robe.

The female figure sits quietly, face forward (facing the question or the situation), and with a direct gaze. She is draped in a blue (emotion) / white (pure motive) inner robe, and covered by a blue (emotion) outer robe which appears to hang from her headdress (a covering for her consciousness). An equal-armed cross (of matter) is positioned in the middle of her chest (over her heart). She holds a scroll (ancient book) in her lap inscribed as the Torah (wisdom / the holy book, the whole of Jewish law, the first five books of the Bible). At her feet, the waxing (growing in light) crescent moon (a few days after New Moon when whatever was started in the reading begins to become visible) is woven into the hem of her gown. The gown trails off like running water.

It is thought that the High Priestess is the progenitor of the streams of water found through the balance of the cards, majors and minors, including the five streams of consciousness on the Ace of Cups. On her head is a crown consisting of a solar (individuality) disk in the middle, and with two crescent moon shapes on the sides. Look at the left or the right crescent on the headdress and continue the shape into the trailing blue part of the headdress down to her shoulders. The two-part crescent shape resembles the complete crescent moon at her feet. The crescent Moon over her right shoulder is the waxing crescent. The crescent Moon over her left shoulder is the waning crescent (decreasing in light as the Moon head towards its next union with the Sun).

The High Priestess

Two While the Magician represents the assertion and objectivity of the one, the High Priestess represents the reflection and subjectivity of the two. This is emphasized by the bright, daylight sky of the Magician and the quieter, night sky of the High Priestess. So much of the High Priestess symbology points to that which is hidden. The landscape is hidden behind the drape and the pillars, not barren or clear, but merely hidden from view. The scroll is partially hidden in the fold of her robe. The crescent moon at her feet is partially buried in her gown. The symbology of flowing water is hidden as folds and ripples of her gown. She is the mistress of hidden knowledge, that which is achieved through study, meditation, and reflection (Isis). The Magician commands the elements and the High Priestess is the repository of knowledge. Repositories do not command armies, they inspire them.

The High Priestess by position is the pair to the Magician. Many authors and deck designers see her as the Papess, the nun, the counterpart to the Pope or Hierophant, major #5. If she is such a counterpart, she would represent Mother Church as the Catholic clergy marries the church at ordination.

The Priestess holds the Divine Law in her lap. As such, she is the Kabbalistic Shekinah, the Celestial or Divine Feminine. She is both Divine Law and Gnosis (knowledge, not faith, is the key to salvation). She is the Spiritual Bride and potential Mother. Waite saw this as the holiest card of the majors.

I see her as the pair to the Magician, particularly because of the 1 / 2 positioning - Magician active, Priestess passive. Please note that in ancient societies, the female oracle or wisewoman was:

- 1) virgin as it was felt that worldly physical appetites destroyed her gift of vision, Diana or Artemis, or
- 2) crone, past her reproductive cycle, a woman wise with experience. Since, to my knowledge, the crone is not depicted on any of the other majors, this High Priestess serves as both virgin and crone. In both states she is deemed sexually inactive.

In this and in every other instance, don't blindly accept the impressions of others. Accept your first impression. Each reading is different.

When the sun goes down and darkness descends and external cues and conditions are no longer available to us, we turn inward towards a point of safety. This may be home, safe haven, or church. It allows for subjectivity, relaxation, and restoration. The blue of emotion signifies internalization, meditation, deep feeling, instinct, knowledge contemplated, study, reflection, inspiration, secrets, and wise counsel.

Reading When the High Priestess is introduced in a reading, how do you relate her as a principle of guidance? Stop all the external searching. You already have the answers within you. Pause, shut your door, turn off all the distractions, light a candle, turn inward, meditate, listen. You do not need to do all the external activity - the phone calls, the letters, the internet, the friends, the psychics, the frantic do, do, do. You already know the correct answer. You just need to listen. Through your experience and your knowledge, you have the internal skills to locate the correct answer and to act upon it. You do not need me as reader. You already know.

It says in the Bible to pray and to do your good acts in secret. That way the good acts are between you and God, and not self-promotional advertising for the external world. Your good acts are just that, and they should not be exploited for personal gain. Meditation is a singular act. In prayer you talk to God. In meditation (if you are lucky), God will talk to you. Become receptive to life and to experience. You have two ears and one mouth. Learn to use them in that proportion. Listen and learn.

Perhaps the High Priestess represents secrets themselves. If the card represents you, you are the keeper of the secret or the secret is yours. If the card represents the past, the secret is from the past or exists in the past. If the card shows in the future, a secret may become necessary or be revealed. Accept your first impression. The timing would be at the time of the crescent moon, about 3-4 days past the next New Moon or in a “two” (two days, two weeks, two months, two years) time period. Either look at an astronomical / astrological ephemeris (table of planetary places) or check the newspaper or an online source.

Determine if the Priestess is in the past, the present, or the future in the layout. Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

The Empress

The Empress

A lush, fertile landscape covers the card, from the ripening corn or wheat at the bottom of the scene to the forest in the back. The top of the card is a clear yellow (intellect) sky. A flowing stream (fertility / emotion) exits the woods on the right descending as a gentle waterfall into the pooled water at the base of the stone or sandbar on which the figure sits. (*Note: Did you know that waterfalls create negative ions which are conducive to good health?*) The figure sits comfortably cushioned on a solid bench or settee. A large heart (affection) with the astrological symbol of Venus (love and relationships) is propped against it. Three cushy pillows and a cloth drape adorn the bench. The black (absorbs all, gives nothing back / or in shadow) pillow in the background is decorated with more symbols of Venus. The round red (passion) bolster pillow is tasseled, and the red drape seems to be associated with this pillow. The large, comfortable pillow on which the figure rests is orange (ambition). The decorations are indistinct to me.

The figure is a beautiful, richly dressed and elegantly crowned woman. Her white (purity of motive) / gray (shadows or union of opposites) dress is covered with red pomegranates (active fertility and sexuality). She is fruitful. The neckline looks like yellow (intellect) lace, elegant, lovely, not quite transparent. Her pearls (globes) are seven in number (seven inner planets). She is facing forward, looking directly at the reader or the issue. Her left (feminine) hand rests passively on her leg (forward motion at rest). Her right (masculine) hand is raised face high firmly grasping her symbol of power, a short scepter with a globe on the top. She has long blond hair crowned first by a laurel wreath (victory) and a diadem of gold (wisdom) with twelve (zodiac of experience) white (purity) stars (rewards or inspirations.) According to Gaskells, the crown of twelve stars is a “symbol of supremacy over the conditions of the lower planes during the cycle of twelve divisions (zodiac) as mentioned in the Bible, Rev. xii.1”. The tip of a red (passion) slipper (covering for her understanding) is barely seen under the hem of her dress.

While the High Priestess represents feminine energy in its virgin state, the Empress represents that same feminine energy in its active, fertile state. Venus (Ishtar) was the primary lusty mythological goddess.

Three Three is the result of the union between the assertion of the one and the reflection and polarity of the two. The Empress represents the most powerful communication tool known to the human race...affection and the results of that affection. Under her influence, the world is fertile, beautiful and livable. She inspires and represents the energy of hope for ongoing life - Demeter (as World Mother) and Persephone (her daughter and goddess of spring and renewal).

Reading When the Empress is presented in a reading as a card of guidance, how you read it? If it is the card representing the questioner, they are a successful person, either personally or in business, someone in a position of gentle authority. Under their influence, life and projects come to fruition. If in a future position, the matters in question should be positively resolved, possibly with the help of a woman of the description or character of the Empress. If in the past, success and fertility have been (but not necessarily are now) the circumstance and influence of the question. If she is in an enemy position or at cross purposes with the question, she is formidable with her quiet power, but not a warrior.

There is an old saying, "You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar." While she is obviously the authority, she presents it with dignity, beauty, and seductive grace. She is more apt to offer her hand in friendship than to provoke a battle or be aggressive. She will attract, magnetize, and draw in her subjects, rather than beat them into submission. She is approachable, yet she leaves no doubt that she is regal in her authority. In our society, this can represent the self-made, successful woman.

Use your communication and relationship skills, but remain firm in your position. Negotiation, grace, nobility of purpose, arbitration, and quality of experience are primary. Dress well for the occasion and bring along your best manners. Your motivation should be productive service, a product that contributes to the general good, and a willingness to partner or participate in a cooperative way.

Determine if the Empress card is in the past, the present, or the future. Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing (layout) is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

The Emperor

The Emperor

This card is very austere with no vegetation and little decoration. A stern figure on a massive throne dominates the card. The sky is red (passion) striped over yellow (intellect), giving an overall orange (ambition) look. In the center of the card from top to bottom, the background features craggy mountains (aspirations are forbidding and difficult). The bottom of the card shows the constructed (not natural) base of the throne (seat of power) on what appears to be sand or loose gravel (questionable footing). Between the sand and the mountains is a slim blue (sedating) river (emotions). While necessary to life, this river seems out of place in the barren wasteland.

The plain, massive throne is four square on a solid foundation (order, system, organization, no frills). Rams' heads adorn the top corner edges and the fronts of the arms. If a ram's head, the connotation is Aries. If you perceive this as mountain goat heads, the connotation is Capricorn. Accept your first impression.

The king wears a mailed suit of armor (defense against what?) under his robes (intimate motivation). The knee (flexibility), legs (forward motion) and feet (understanding) clearly show the armor. His feet are firmly planted (no nonsense) and the king is facing directly forward towards the questioner or the issue. The king's right arm may be armored. The sleeve looks blue, but it's difficult to be certain if it is fabric or armor. The robe covering seems to be in two parts. The lower part is definitely red (passion). The cape part appears to be a different shade of red, more crimson (more mature passion, deeply felt). The king's left shoulder (shoulder the load) shows an unknown (to me) design in the fabric. Even with the use of a magnifying glass, I cannot make out the design. I do not see any extra symbology embedded in the robe, the throne or the mountains.

In his upturned left (feminine) normal-looking hand (ability to grasp) the king holds the symbolic orb of power. His right (masculine) hand (which appears to be yellow (intellect) on my deck (strange color for skin) firmly grips the crux ansata (the Egyptian symbol for eternal life). His thumb (will) is turned up along the staff similar to the ace of wands in the minor deck. It is a less rigid grip than is possible. As mentioned, his face is stern and he is looking directly at the reader (eye to eye). His hair and long beard are white - this is not a young man. His crown is substantial and looks quite heavy. Five gems (rewards) are mounted in individual panels, two red (passion) and three white (purity), alternating.

Four A lack of ornamentation does not minimize the reading of the card. In fact, it defines the card. Four walls, foundations, solid, reliable, hard work, function, stick-to-it-iveness, stubborn, intractable, pragmatic or realistic, no frills, austere, no nonsense, cut and dried, life on its harshest terms, sharp, hard reality.

The king can be compared to the Magician. While the Magician develops his skills and abilities, this king is firmly planted in his rulership. His is a material kingdom with no frills. Each figure holds some sort of a staff or scepter in their right hand. While the Magician's is held aloft (signifying a heavenly or spiritual source for the energy), the Emperor's scepter is firmly based on the throne, and the king has a tight grip on it. The Magician directs the flow of energy into the Earth plane with his left hand. This king loosely holds the orb of power, with the back of his hand resting on the throne once again. The Magician and the King would not see eye to eye with their differing approaches to power, yet each is part of an ongoing process.

Look at the previous card, the Empress. This is her consort. Talk about opposites attracting! While she shows grace, plenty, beauty and fertility, her consort shows reality, austerity, dominion, and sternness.

Reading If you were to encounter the Emperor in a reading, what can you expect as guidance? Black and white thinking, with no shades of gray. Do your duty and fulfill your obligations. Be prepared to work or fight. Take charge of your life. Do not expect frills or a life of ease. If the card represents the questioner, I would be amazed that he / she came for a reading as they are so pragmatic. If in the past, that is the influence that brought them to this point. If in the future, this is what is coming, and they should prepare for it. This is not a card of loss, it is card of actively working for what you get.

Determine if the Emperor is in the past, the present, or the future (layout). Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

The Hierophant

The Hierophant

The overall tone of the Hierophant is religious. The name comes from the high priest of the Eleusinian Mysteries. The background is clear gray (union of opposites) between the two giant gray pillars on either side. Are these also representations of the Kabbalistic pillars Boaz and Joachim as shown on the High Priestess card? Waite says NO! Some ancient authors called this the Papess, a religious movement in early Christianity. The roots are in earlier goddess belief systems. Women who attempted to ascend the papal throne were not tolerated and were martyred. This card is often referred to as the Pope because of the many papal symbols.

The solid chair or throne on which the figure sits is also gray, and has small carvings near the top. The only symbols I clearly see are the two circles with dots which resemble the astrological symbol for the Sun. If the decorations on the throne are Sun symbols, they are very small. Since the Sun symbol is the representation of self-identity, perhaps the size indicates that the ego or self-identity must be diminished to the role one plays. The floor or base on which the figure sits appears to be raised (dais?) and carpeted or covered. Two checkerboard stripes (strategy?) are on either side of the carpet and four circles with crosses (symbols for the Earth) show clearly. At the front of the platform, in the immediate lower center of the card, are crossed keys (the keys to the kingdom, the keys of St Peter). Except for what is specifically identified, the many other markings in the pillars, clothing, and rug appear to me to be textural or random.

The figure shows several layers of clothing. His neck and the bottom hem of his garments show blue (emotion or deep feeling). His sleeves are white (purity in his reaching out). His robe is completely red (passion). He wears a collar of white over his ear area, and a white yoke (yoga / union / also a primitive form of the Hebrew letter Vau) with three Christian crosses down the front. Both hands are upraised. His left (feminine) hand (ability to grasp) loosely grips a long-handled staff (scepter) with a three-tiered (trinity) cross plus a small knob at the top, a symbol of his religious authority (three = trinity, four = material plane). In Egyptian lore, the three-tiered cross was the symbol of the unity of the two kingdoms, Upper and Lower.

His right (masculine) hand is raised in benediction or blessing. His thumb (will), index and middle finger are raised, and his two outer fingers are bent towards the palm which is facing the reader. Ecclesiastically, it is a symbol for that which distinguishes between the manifest and concealed parts of the doctrine, a symbol for Mother Church. He is face forward, directly looking at the reader or the issue. His crown (symbol of position) is also three-tiered (trinity /symbol for the mother goddess, the World Mother) and at the very top there appears to be the letter “W”. Again, does this constitute three layers or four? The English “W” corresponds to Vau in the Hebrew alphabet (U, V and W are all represented by Vau). The divinatory significance of Vau is temptation.

Two figures stand or kneel in the bottom foreground of the card. They appear to be monks or priests, subjects or servants of the papal figure (lower in stature and position). Each figure has his hair cut in a “tonsure”, typical of initiate ecclesiastical figures. Their inner garments are white (purity). Their outer robes are richly patterned. The one on the left has a white background with black leaves (choice of the printer?) with vines and red roses (passion). The figure on the right has a blue (emotional) background with white lilies (purity of thought). Each wears a yellow (intellect) yoke (yoga / union / Hebrew letter Vau). “The Hierophant is the channel for race for the institutionalized world, a leader of salvation for the world at large,” according to Waite.

Five Five is the number of change, choice, risk taking, the clear demarcation line between before and after, the pivot. Why would the dogmatic, ritually-based Hierophant represent the flexible number five? I find five an interesting placement for the Hierophant, until you look at sequence. We started with possibility in the Fool, perfected our skills in the Magician, acknowledged our inner needs in the High Priestess, saw those inner needs bear fruit in the Empress, consolidated our material lives in the Emperor, and now we must risk to become part of a larger belief system with the Hierophant. Remember that there has been much controversy among authorities as to the sequential placement of each card.

Reading How do we interpret the Hierophant when it shows up in a reading? It is possible to use the symbols directly. E.g., the crossed keys can represent the key to a situation or a solution. The keeper of the keys is a person with ultimate access. The guidance or solution is a religious or spiritual person, one with spiritual authority over the questioner or the question itself. The priest is the spiritual teacher, one to show the meaning behind external activity.

Perhaps the issue is between religion and spirituality. Religion is not necessarily spirituality. I remember driving past a Christian church in Fort Lauderdale, Florida many years ago. The large sign out front read. "Wanted spiritual fruit, not religious nuts." Made me laugh! That is the most appropriate definition for the difference between religion and spirituality I have ever seen.

Religion is collective belief that has become ritualized into an acceptable form subscribed to by the believers. Word of mouth advertising and conversions increase the numbers of believers until a critical mass is formed. The believers "know" their religion to be the one true way to God. All outsiders take up the role of non-believers, or possibly heathens. In the formation of a religion, it is possible to be victimized or martyred for other emerging beliefs. As the religion becomes stronger and eventually dominant, the former victims can become the victimizers as they judge, shun, or punish those who do not wish to participate in their "faith". Unfortunately, when the belief system is strong, the subscribers are so caught up in their faith that reason, logic and communication may not exist for them. Discussion is not possible as it is a total waste of time if minds and possibilities are not open. When belief is built on emotion, and faith is emotional in nature, other opinions may not be tolerated and communication and knowledge (both qualities of mind) suffer. Religion, as the only judgment, unfortunately eliminates actual spiritual qualities.

The gift of spirit...spirituality...allows for the beliefs and rights of others, non-judgemental and open-minded discussion. A spiritual person is what they say they are, every moment of every day, in every circumstance, and to the best of their ability. They "walk their talk", an Alcoholics Anonymous tenet. The best example of your belief system is you and your actions. Metaphysicians realize that unless the student is receptive, metaphysics is not a possible experience. Spirituality is the gift of spirit, open and growing. Religion is form, driven and rigid. The Hierophant is the symbol of religion and all that implies. Where you are in this distinction and where do you want to be?

How does all this information apply to the reading? The person you are reading for, the past which has brought you to the present moment, and the future as guidance? Perhaps religion will determine the outcome. For example, divorce is difficult and almost impossible for a Catholic, regardless of circumstance.

Determine if the Hierophant is in the past, the present, or the future (layout). Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Additional Study Lesson Six:

- ✓ Create your index cards that pertain to this chapter (Fool, Magician, High Priestess, Empress, Emperor, Hierophant).
- ✓ Create your personal brief definition of each card studied, using your own words.
- ✓ Meditate on each card: elements, colors, numbers, suits, symbology.
- ✓ Color the black and white photocopies of each card as you encounter them.

Practice reading As before, use only the forty experiential cards of the *Minor Arcana*, well shuffled and face down. We will read the Major Arcana once we have completed the study of all of them. Have someone ask you aloud a simple question, nothing complicated, for a reading. Write the question down in the form you (the student and reader) understand. Be sure the question is clear and that you have recorded that question accurately. Why? The cards' chosen response will be to the question asked and understood by the reader. You cannot change the question itself in any way.

Have the querent (questioner) choose three cards at random from your Minor Arcana (Rider) deck of forty cards. Keep these three cards in order of their selection and keep them face down.

- ✓ The first card chosen is the past of the question.
- ✓ The second card chosen is the present of the question.
- ✓ The third and last card chosen is the future of the question.
- ✓ As you turn each card over, use the index card you have generated to help you with your reading.
- ✓ Keep the reading for each card in the past, the present, or the future *as it was chosen*.
- ✓ Do *not* mix up the time frames.
- ✓ Card one is what brought the question to the table.
- ✓ Card two is the current situation regarding the question as it was asked.
- ✓ Card three is the outcome or direction of flow for the question as it was asked.

Remember that you are still a beginner.

- ✓ Stay simple.
- ✓ For the moment, stay within the index card meanings.
- ✓ Stay within the timeline given.
- ✓ Do *not* re-word the question.
- ✓ Do *not* choose any other cards to deepen or clarify at this time. That will be possible once you know what you are doing.
- ✓ Ask for feedback now and as the process unfolds. Learn as you go.
- ✓ Decide if your index cards are complete and helpful as constructed. Adapt or adjust as necessary.
- ✓ You may practice on more than one reading or querent. Practice is advised.
- ✓ Follow the instructions for each question. Keep them separate and private.

The Cards Themselves, Part VI

*Major Arcana: Six through Eleven
Lovers, Chariot, Strength,
Hermit, Wheel of Fortune, Justice*

As we continue with our study of the Major Arcana, keep in mind that these represent energies that contribute to our evolving self and are transcendent to the personality. Each is a stairstep in a process of 22 such steps. In this lesson, we will study the next six major cards: the Lovers, the Chariot, Strength, the Hermit, the Wheel of Fortune, and Justice. Remember, the minors describe the earthly experiences of the personality. The majors describe the energies behind the experiences, initiation and development on a soul or spirit level.

Be aware that this sequence is not written in stone. Many authors disagree, particularly about the placement of the Fool (first or last) and Strength and Justice (in juxtaposition). I, myself, have questioned the positions of the Hierophant and the Chariot. You can use your symbolic reference once you attune yourself to your personal subconscious symbols. That is the purpose of all this work we have been doing / learning. Times and circumstances change and the cards must adapt themselves to new applications and definitions. Repeating: when we begin a study, we can stay with what is given. Once you are more experienced and proficient, experiment with such rules to find your own comfort zone. This is symbology with application to the world at large. There should be *no* one-size-fits-all definitions!

I am giving you the best of my conclusions after 40+ years of study. I am constantly developing new material and applications, encountering books I have not read before, and being taught by the experiences of my students and clients. By the time I have finished this book, I may be on my way to new insights and eventual conclusions which may change my own outlook. Evolution of consciousness promotes and evidences continual change. The material presented is a function of consciousness in a continuing development of that consciousness. If a definition helps me at the moment, but later I no longer need that definition, I can choose to disregard the old one. Grow and move on in consciousness...and your readings.

The Lovers

The Lovers

A very large angel (heavenly guardian), wings and arms outstretched in benediction (hands of angel with palms out and down) dominates the card. Its arms and face are the yellow of the Sun (reflection or demonstration of solar energy). The wings are red (passion) and the robe is purple (deep spirituality). The hair of the angle looks flamelike, red (typical – passion) and green (abundance). The angel's eyes appear to be closed with some red shadowing on the lids. When eyes are not opened, they are awaiting vision or awakening, more meditative. Perhaps the angel is waiting for individual choice and actual reaching out for its wisdom and gifts of spirit (ask and you will receive). The face of the angel is calm, perhaps patient.

Behind the angel is a gigantic yellow (intellect) Sun (heavenly body, symbol of the Father). There are billowing clouds (demarcation between physical and spiritual realms) at the bottom of the angel. It is difficult to determine if those clouds are white (purity) or gray (union of opposites), trimmed with red (active, passionate) markings. The sky (in the middle of the card) is clear blue (normal). At the bottom of the card is an uneven but natural yellow (intellect) / green (abundance) / brown (materiality) ground (foundation), with a purple? (deep spirituality) mountain (aspiration) rising in the background.

Standing on the ground are two blond, naked (the way we are born and shall pass into spirit when we die / “what you sees is what you gets”) figures. In the Bible, Adam and Eve were unclothed before their fall from grace, covering themselves after they ate the fruit of the biblical Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Behind each are green trees (growth). A woman is on the left of the card, with a fruit-bearing tree (possibly the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil itself) behind her. That which has been withheld from on high has been performed, similar to Prometheus and his gift of fire in the Greek myths.

There is a snake (serpent power / kundalini or cunning) wrapped around the trunk of the tree, with its head in the leaves, head high. The snake appears to be looking at the woman and the fruit appears to be apples (Adam and Eve with the apple?). On the right, the man stands in front of a tree with twelve (zodiacal) flames (passion). Think about this Biblical passage, with the Creator (non-gender) and Its Creation, Its children. You be the parent in this analogy.

You tell your children that this Tree with hanging fruit in the garden the Creator provided cannot be touched or sampled. What do you suppose is going to happen? Children are innately curious. They want to know and try and will find a way to do exactly what you said not to do. This is not from being bad children, but because that's what children are and do - they follow their innate curiosities. Would you be an angry parent, punishing your child for eternity (by gender) for following the curiosity you gave them? I don't know about you, but I see the Creator as God-like, and this story and its symbolism must go much deeper. Think deeper about the symbolism on this card.

Moving on, the hands (ability to grasp or dispense) of the angel and the two figures are all palms open. However, since the angel is above, the direction of his hands is downward towards the figures beneath him (in blessing or benediction). Both bottom figures' hands are open (not fisted), palms up and forward for the left hand of the woman and the right hand of the man, seeking to receive what the angel is dispensing. Their other hands, while open, are directed more downward, towards the Earth. Use your own hands to illustrate the hand positions. Be sure to turn your body to match the figures to keep left and right as depicted on the card. The robe (outer covering) and undergarment (closest to the body) of the angel are purple (spirituality).

In the first paragraph of this book, I described an analogy of the mind as being like an iceberg. The tip of this iceberg equates to our conscious mind, the smallest portion of mind, but the one most visible. We conduct most of our lives based on this tiny part of our mind. The bulk of the iceberg is hidden beneath the surface of the waters in which it floats. Depending upon whether it is a freshwater or saltwater iceberg, the fractions run from 6/7ths to 9/10ths of the total mass being beneath the surface, the percentage we refer to as sub- or un-conscious. I noted that the iceberg is comprised of water and floats in a vast sea, which by metaphor equates to the super-conscious. Just as a droplet of ocean water contains the qualities of the ocean but *is not* the ocean, our personal mind is a droplet of consciousness, containing all the qualities of consciousness, but not complete consciousness itself (God).

As spirits, we are sparks of the Divine, but we not *the* Divinity itself. We have the qualities of that which created us, but we are not the Creator. We are the heirs to the kingdom, "made in the image and likeness of God" according to the western Bible. By the way, the word Elohim (the word for God in this Bible passage) is a plural word, just as the word "scissors"



Iceberg - [photomontage](#) of what a whole iceberg might look like under water

is a plural function described by a singular word. What would be the value of one side of a scissor? So are we “made in the image and likeness of God(s)”? Keep in mind that the Creator is either gender-neutral *or* gender has no part in the description. Can we co-create with God, attuning self to our highest possible dimension, which is not our earthly personality, but is instead our spiritual self?

This iceberg analogy of consciousness is clearly shown on both the Lovers and the Devil cards. In fact, the Devil is the negative image of the Lovers card which we will study in the next lesson. Using the concept of the conscious, the subconscious and the super-conscious, look at the figures. The man is the conscious mind (the one in visible charge). The woman is the subconscious mind, with its wealth of possibility. The angel represents the super-conscious mind. The man is looking to the woman, the woman is looking to the angel. They must make a conscious decision to reach for and develop the sub-conscious which is the agency that can put them both in touch (through their cooperation, marriage) with the super-conscious (the realm of pure thought and creativity).

I have spent extra time on this particular analogy because to me this is one of the most profound cards in the tarot deck. We are asleep in life, not realizing the richness of consciousness that we are and have, and into which we can reach. We use only a small percentage of our minds. If we start to awaken and recognize that there is more to us, if we use our consciousness to explore our personal dimensions, we will tap into the larger part of our consciousness and allow it to expand our lives. Once the two are in harmony, then we have the opportunity to reach for super-consciousness. The angel’s eyes will open and flood our being with universal consciousness (the ocean in which the iceberg floats). There is no limit to what we can become and achieve. Not just one of us, you or me - this is each and all of us. We simply have to elevate our consciousness and make the choice. We are the heirs of the kingdom. The kingdom is ours to claim. Each of us. All of us. We are all “our brother’s keeper”.

Six Numbered as the sixth card in the Major Arcana (the Fool is a zero, a cypher and not a number). From Chapter 2, six numerologically represents balance, equilibrium, harmony, affection, family, marriage, motherhood, teaching through love and example, and loving responsibility. While the mundane 6 (the minors) illustrates the material plane, this major six represents spiritual purpose behind such experience.

Reading When the Lovers card is introduced into the reading, how do you apply its wisdom and motivation? Look at the choices to be made, couple or marry disparate sources of consciousness or information in order to seek the highest possible outcome of the issue or question. Look deeper through dreams, inspiration, affection. You can also take it at face value - it is a card of lovers, marriage, engagement, and partnership.

Can you look at the question itself or the querent (person asking the question) to see a three-fold process which must be recognized, harnessed and utilized? If you strip the outer coverings off the experience, can you see its naked truth? Are there literally three elements that must be addressed in order to resolve a situation? Should you look to higher expressions or possibilities? Should you reach for quality or accept quantity?

Determine if the Lovers card is in the past, the present, or the future. Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing (layout) is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

The Chariot

The upper half of the card is a clear yellow (intellect) sky. There is a castle (civilized, structured), a regal residence with red (passion) roofs (coverings for physical / material activities) in the background across the middle of the card. Just in front of the castle wall (boundary, limitation) is a field of green (abundance) trees (fertility) on uneven (not threatening) ground (footing). Moving towards the bottom of the card, behind the chariot, is rippling water similar to a flowing (active) river (emotion / hem of High Priestess's robe). This water is between the chariot and the walled fortress. At the very bottom of the card is level, green grass on which the chariot and its sphinx-like creatures rest.

A substantial chariot (vehicle of transportation or aggression) dominates the card. The grey (union of opposites) carriage with canopy looks more like a standing, moveable throne than the vehicle for combat usually associated with the chariot. The blue canopy with white stars (covering for the activity) is supported by four (structure) grey (union of opposites) poles. The canopy appears to cover the top, sides and back of the throne-

The Chariot

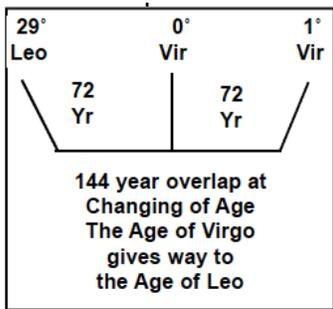
like chariot. Does this suggest to you a celestial or heavenly influence? There are substantial yellow (intellect) wheels on the chariot. On the front of the bottom of the throne is a lingam / yoni (Hindu male / female union) or mortar and pestle on a shield (emblem of authority), topped with blue (emotion) wings (heavenly influence) surrounding a small yellow (intellect) circle (orb of Sun's influence).

Instead of a horse or horses to power the chariot, two full-breasted, red-lipped (female) sphinxes are at rest on the ground. (Female lips swell and become reddened when sexually aroused, which is considered attractive to the male.) On the left of the card, the lion-bodied sphinx is black with white striping around the human head. On the right of the card, the lion-bodied sphinx is white with black striping around the human head. The reversal reminds us of the Yang / Yin (male / female) oriental symbol or the pillars of severity and mercy of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life. Both sphinxes are in positions of rest, holding the tips of their tails between their paws (this must be a metaphor, but I have not figured it out). Both have eyes open and are looking forward.

Egyptian in nature, the sphinx is “a symbol of the higher nature arising from the lower, or of the Spirit triumphant over matter” (*Dictionary of the Sacred Language of all Scriptures and Myths* by G.A. Gaskell). In the Legend of the Winged Sun-disk, the Egyptian god Horus changed himself into a form with the body of a lion (a four-legged beast of prey) with the breasts of a woman and the head of a man wearing a triple crown (the higher triad) - Horus' aspect as conqueror. In Hindu literature, Lord Krishna exhorts the warrior to be the best of what he has been given to do regardless of the price he must pay (in the example's story: to fight his family).

Astrologically, the combination occurs at the changing of the age between Virgo and Leo. Precession of the Equinox causes the Ages to progress backward through the normal order of the zodiac signs, explained more fully in my astrological series material. The age progresses from the end of the sign (30°) to the beginning of the sign (0°). The symbology would then represent 0° Virgo (the head of that sign) to 30° Leo (the end of the previous sign), ergo the head of the Virgin to the body / tail of the lion.

A fairly young, regal male figure stands in the carriage, fully armored, richly dressed, looking more like a king in a moveable throne than the usual fighting figure associated with a chariot. (Is this a movable throne with the charioteer actually a king or a prince?) The armor is blue (emotion) with flared sleeves, a yellow (intellect) breastplate with a square (material kingdom) symbol near the neckline. The neckline of his garment is blue (emotion).



Crescent moons with smiling faces are on each shoulder, with the waxing (growing in light) crescent on the right, and the waning (decreasing in light) crescent on the left. Metaphysically, the faces represent the Hebrew Urim and Thummim. Urim represents illumination, revelation, understanding and enlightenment. Thummim represents completion and perfection, truth and wholeness. Together they represent truth and light or revelation. The two were placed in the breastplate of the high priest of the Israelites (*Metaphysical Bible Dictionary* by Unity School of Christianity.) Notice the two are placed at the shoulders of the breastplate of the charioteer. The scepter (symbol of moderate power or rulership) in the figure's right (masculine) hand (ability to grasp) appears to be based in the carriage itself (material / structured).

Both of the figure's hands are passive, even though the right (masculine) hand (ability to grasp) is loosely holding (claimed or assumed) the scepter (symbol of power or rulership). The fingers of the left hand are curled under, resting on the carriage (passive). The charioteer has blond hair, and is wearing a laurel leaf circlet (victory) and a gold (wisdom) crown (achievement) with an eight-pointed solar star in the center. Notice that the crown of the charioteer has three levels mentioned in the material about the sphinx: the laurel wreath, the base of the crown and the elevated eight-pointed star, the three levels of manifestation.

The charioteer is wearing a black (absorbs all) undergarment (closest to motivation) and skirt (outer covering), with a thin blue (emotion) belt (confinement) at the natural waist. The skirt has what appears to be multiple ancient cuniform letters in vertical panels. Would these be read top to bottom or right to left in the Hebrew pattern, rather than left to right in our western reading pattern? Slung across his hips is a zodiac (twelve types of experience) sash, with five visible symbols, Leo, Cancer, not quite legible but possibly Sagittarius, and Moon. The figure is looking directly forward. If this is a chariot, it seems strange that there are no reins with which to guide the sphinxes, and no leads or whips. The figure must direct the chariot through an act of his will.

Seven Numbered seven of the Major Arcana, this card numerologically represents wisdom, private, searching, not easily understood, mystical, soul development, introspection, inward-turning, can become own counselor, alone yet not necessarily lonely, science, research. An interesting play between three and four exists. Four is represented by the

squareness of the chariot bottom as well as the canopy top, the castle walls and the square emblem on the charioteer's chest. The three is symbolized by three live figures: the charioteer and the two sphinxes as well as the mortar and pestle (male / female) emblem on the chariot with the angelic presence (wings with solar disc) above.

Waite sees it as the triumph of the mind, not of spiritual grace - physical and rational. The Charioteer could not open the Torah or holy writ. He is not a priest or king.

Controversy As previously mentioned, there has been much controversy between tarot authorities as to sequential placement for each card. For myself, the Hierophant seems to fit the seven definition better than the Chariot. Know that through the centuries, some esoteric material was deliberately confused, for fear that the material could fall into the wrong hands. It was believed that the true student would decipher the deliberate error. That was the Age of Pisces, the age of belief, blind or otherwise, emotionally based (Pisces is a water sign), the sign of pageantry and ritual. We are entering or have recently entered the Age of Aquarius (again, authorities are in conflict as to when each age commences). If you are interested in pursuing this, see my Changing of the Ages material in my intermediate astrology titles.

Since we are discussing controversy, the position of Strength is also a subject of controversy among tarot authorities. Many feel position eight should be occupied by Justice, moving Strength to position eleven. Since this is personal opinion on the part of each authority, it should be a matter for further study once you have become comfortable with your developing knowledge. For the time being, stay with the sequencing as assigned by Waite. Until you establish your base, it is difficult to change horses in midstream, just know you have another layer of meaning to study in the future. Remember you are looking at a progressive story, a sequence of spiritual activity and motivation, which is or should be orderly. Do not be afraid to learn, and grow, and change. A supportive biblical passage is 1 Corinthians 13:11 - King James Version*, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." Once comfortable with the symbols, decide which order makes the most sense to you. It is very difficult to get coherent and meaningful readings unless the cards are coherent to the reader. What works for you may not work for others, so allow them to develop their own meaning and sequence.

Reading If this card appears in a spread, what is its guidance or wisdom? This figure has position, authority, stature, and equipment - all driven by an act of will. The animal nature has been conquered resulting in a personal act of will that is driving this experience. In the spread, does the Chariot fall into the placement for the querent (the questioner), the question itself, the reader, the enemy, whatever is at cross purposes, the support system, etc.? That placement denotes who or what is in the position of winning through will or personal determination.

Does the Chariot card fall into the past (history), the present (current circumstance or influence, or the future (prophetic)? (*Note: As soon as we finish with the majors we will develop the spreads.*) Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing (layout) is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Strength

A plain yellow (intellect) sky covers the upper 3/4s of the card. A blue (emotion) small mountain (aspiration) far in the distance (some journey or time away) shows towards the bottom of the yellow sky. Green (abundant), fertile, rolling (not difficult or dangerous) land is in the foreground (current time / experience) with an uneven standing surface.

Dominating the card is a young woman gently and effortlessly holding the head of a lion (the feminine energy tames the wild beast). She is dressed all in white (purity of motive) with no discernible symbols on her gown. Bending slightly, she is serenely looking down toward the lion. She does not appear to exert any effort and seems to be stress free. She faces 3/4 front, but is not gazing at the questioner or the issue. Her focus is on her petting or taming of the lion. Above her head is the reclining figure eight, the cosmic lemniscate, thought to represent eternity or infinity, a symbol of universal time.

Her beautiful but simple gown has a plain neckline and long sleeves. A flowering garland (flowers are gifts of spirit) is fastened around her waist and flows down the right side of her gown. A circlet of flowers is in her blond / brown hair which is swept back from her face. According to Waite, the chain of flowers between the lion and the woman signifies "the sweet yoke and the light burden of Divine Law when taken into the heart".

Strength

The red (active) / orange (ambition) lion is in an awkward (un-lion-like) and passive position. The woman appears to be closing its jaws or scratching its chin. Is this her pet or has she tamed the beast? (Accept your first impression.) The lion's tail is between his legs, his tongue is hanging out or he is licking the woman's right (masculine) hand (ability to grasp). Her left (feminine) hand (ability to grasp) is either resting on the lion's head or pushing his upper jaw towards his lower jaw. He appears to be obeying or has been conquered by the woman through her gentle strength.

There are many different kinds of strength. There is the obvious strong-man physical strength, which does not appear to fit the picture on the card. The woman is exerting no effort. There is also strength of character, fortitude, endurance, patience, compassion, selflessness, stamina, faith, and many more such qualities. Meditate on the concept of strength itself. Look up the word in your dictionary. Watch for examples of personal strength in everyday living so you may apply those examples within your readings.

There is quiet strength (sometimes desperation) of a man or a woman with a large family with many demands, getting through their daily routines. There are abused families in difficult circumstances who hang in there and do their best given their situations. Sure, we can ask why they do not get out or do something about it, but we are not in a position to judge them until we have "walked a mile in their moccasins". Just recognize different forms of strength when they apply. There is also the patience, compassion and fortitude (strength) of health care workers who face difficult duties. There is personal strength in rescue workers and first responders, such as ambulance workers, police, firefighters, and brave citizens who face enormous odds and personal risk, in sometimes appalling conditions.

There is strength in silence just as much as there is strength in apparent bravery. There is strength in not acting as well as acting. In my own family, I have had instances where I have believed that someone was making an error. Sometimes I've voiced my concerns, sometimes I've stayed quiet. My children have watched me make errors, sometimes with warnings and sometimes silently. About the time I point out someone else's shortcomings, I run into the same shortcoming in my own character (Karma at work).

Bearing up under poor choices requires strength. Recognizing your own error, admitting it, and acting to correct it requires strength. Any twelve-step program is a test of personal strength. Whether you are addicted in some form, an enabler, compulsive or obsessive, re-growing your self-esteem, or paying for a crime against society and reclaiming your life, all are acts of strength. Standing up for what you believe because of your innate personal character is strength. Putting your own needs aside because of the greater need of others is strength.

For many years, I taught a ministry class for Mission: Aquarius, Inc. One of our meditation words was strength. Students were required to write a short dissertation on their concept and then share that dissertation with the class. Every dissertation was different, coming from different directions, but each showing the concept of strength. The word "fortitude" is often found on other decks.

Eight Major eight Numerologically represents justice, judgment, material progress, regeneration, balance of opposing forces, organization through laying groundwork and doing homework before beginning, and business attitude of success. You may use the number to assist you in the reading if the material suits the question or the questioner.

Reading It is not difficult to figure out what to say in a reading. This card does not necessarily represent a test of physical strength or aggression, but strength will be required in some form - patience, courage, perseverance, fortitude...strength in all its forms - physical, mental, emotional and spiritual.

Again, the position in the reading determines who is strong or requires strength. Is it a person or a situation? Is it the querent or the question itself or is it a part of the solution? Or is it at cross purposes to the solution or eventual outcome? If at cross purpose I would suggest trying a negative connotation.

Is it part of the history of the question (past), the current state of affairs (present) or a formula for success (future)? Determine if it is in the past, the present, or the future (layout). Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already exerted influence? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Again, timing is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

The Hermit

Hermit

A deeper blue, clear sky (signifying night) covers most of the card, with ice caps and a mountain (aspiration) promontory (safe footing) covering the very bottom of the card. The light from the lantern contrasts strongly against the night sky.

A grey (union of opposites), hooded and robed figure dominates. He grasps a simple, plain yellow (intellect) staff (aid in walking or climbing, or for balance) in his left (feminine) hand (ability to grasp), with the back of the hand visible. A lantern is suspended from his raised, palm down but visible, right (masculine) hand, fingers closed. The figure is in profile toward the left of the card. His eyes are cast downward or closed. His hair and ample beard are white.

The eight-pointed (solar) star inside the lantern (cage or form for the light or structure so the light can be contained and useful) gives illumination. It appears to be a beacon or may be used to light the way for others climbing that particular mountain. If a beacon, it defines the location to attain. If a light on the path, it aids the aspirant in his climb, as in “follow the light”!

The card is austere, simple with no adornment. The name of the card emphasizes the individuality and the aloneness. Conditions are sterile, even forbidding, yet the figure appears to be helpful or welcoming and not uncomfortable. The figure stands at the pinnacle of the material plane. There is nothing above him except sky. This is an older man, wise with years. It is late in the day, dusk, or perhaps it is actually night. Both concepts suggest the recognition or the achievement comes late in the game.

Nine Attainment, height or depth, on all planes of being (physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual) is represented in the nine. The sum of all other individual forces, fruition, culmination, then letting go, clearing of the decks for the higher turn of the spiral to come in the ten (return to initiation - one, but on a higher turn of the spiral with the addition of the zero cypher). All that is possible in this experience and all that has been earned for what had been sought is evidenced by the nine. In order to realize our spiritual aspirations, we must be willing to release the glue that holds us to our lower, material goals. That is not easy. We work very hard to achieve on this level and the price tags are enormous. Once we achieve, we must let go. I do not think that happens easily or without personal cost.

In the Hindu faith, home, hearth and family, and business success is earnestly sought throughout the early life. As old age approaches, it is common for a man (in particular) to renounce his family, business, success, and position for the purpose of spiritual advancement. He may walk away and choose the life of an ascetic, either becoming a wanderer or joining a spiritual community. The achievement of what has gone before, followed by the letting go, is an indication of the energy of the nine. It culminates the effort made, then allows the decks to clear in preparation for the new beginning to come with the 10th card.

Reading This is the sage, the Capuchin (a Franciscan monk wearing a habit with a pointed hood), a truth seeker, all roads lead to God. How do you read the card? There is a metaphysical concept that says (paraphrased) that one should be careful of what one wishes for because dreams do come true. What if you spent years of your life, fantastic sums of money, extraordinary effort, invested yourself in the achievement of a goal, only to find that you have concluded your life work...and that you no longer know what to do with yourself? What if you must let go of everything just to achieve one thing or anything? Could you do it? What if you feel empty right after your accomplishment? The old Peggy Lee song fits the bill, "Is That All There Is?... my friend, then let's keep dancing..." Each achievement brings us to the need to move beyond that achievement. In order to progress, we need a clear space from which to launch ourselves.

Metaphysical truisms point to the ladder of spiritual growth...every rung you climb allows you a broader vision. What you learn with each rung, each achievement, is that you have barely begun to learn. Every answer brings 100 new questions. In spite of development, epiphanies, realizations, there is always more to learn and to do. Each accomplishment has within it the seeds of the next turn of the spiral. In order to pursue the new order of business, you must be willing to turn your back on the old. You cannot rest on your laurels. You must enjoy the accomplishment but not become stuck in it...there's more. We must accept our accomplishments but be willing to move beyond them. The Hermit lights our way.

Determine if the question is in the past, the present, or the future. Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Wheel of Fortune

Wheel of Fortune

This card is rich with symbolism. A normal blue sky is the full card background for the Wheel of Fortune. Greyish white (shaded) clouds are situated on all four corners. Against this positive sky backdrop, four golden (wisdom) winged figures (man, bird, bull, lion) are perched on the clouds. The two top winged creatures have wings unfurled (active), and the two bottom creatures have their wings furled (at rest). All are holding open, blank books, symbolic of the Book of Life. Each of the creatures seems to be intent on the book in front of them. Either there is something written there that we cannot see or they will be writing in those heavenly books.

The four creatures are representative of the four astrological fixed signs, Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, and Aquarius. They follow in that order from the bottom left to the bottom right, to top right, and to top left (counterclockwise). These are also known as the Four Lords of Karma. The wings represent the celestial or heavenly aspect. The four zodiacal signs represent four elements, fire, earth, air and water. In ancient astrological records, the zodiac started with Taurus, so it is not a surprise to see this layout.

When in grade school, my oldest son came home with a poem that really touched him. It is so beautiful and feels right for this card.

Abou Ben Adhem
by Leigh Hunt

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight of his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold:-
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
'What writest thou?' - The vision raised its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered 'The names of those who love the Lord.'
'And is mine one?' said Abou. 'Nay, not so,'
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still; and said 'I pray thee then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men.'

The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names who love of God had blessed,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

The golden (wisdom) figure on the top left is a seated, winged (heavenly) angel, intent on his open book (Aquarius?). Could he be like the angel in Abou Ben Adhem, writing in a heavenly book about the deeds of man? Could all the figures be writing on the same subject? Is this Akasha, the memory of all that has been? Or is it a judgment book of what will be based on what has been? Use your first impression in a reading.

The golden (wisdom) figure on the top right is a very large bird which has been referred to as an eagle or a phoenix (a bird which transforms by burning completely and then reincarnating from its own ashes - Scorpio). This bird is perched on the open book, its wings are spread in benediction or flight (landing or taking off?).

The golden (wisdom) figure on the bottom left is a winged bull (horns) at rest (Taurus). Not only is he lying down, but his wings are furled. He is contemplating, reading or writing in the heavenly book.

The golden (wisdom) figure on the bottom right is a winged lion (Leo) at rest. Again he appears to be reading, contemplating or writing in the heavenly book.

According to Aleister Crowley in *The Book of Thoth*, the four creatures represent “four magical virtues: to know, to will, to dare, and to keep silent”.

The triple center wheel is covered with layered symbols. The small wheel in the center is just that, with eight spokes, a hub, and representative of the solar disk. The middle wheel contains both spokes and four alchemical symbols.

The space between the middle wheel and the outer wheel has two sets of symbols interspersed. The word T A R O can be read clockwise. The word R O T A can also be read clockwise as can O R A T. The word T O R A can be read counter-clockwise. Taro is self-evident. Rota means wheel. O R A T could be construed as “orate”, to speak. Tora(h) is the scroll of the bible found on the High Priestess’s lap. The Hebrew letters signify the name of God (Y or I, V, H, V.) The eight-segment nature (eight-pointed solar star – the astrological phase wheel) suggests organization, discipline, systematization. The solar nature suggests its central importance as a spiritual guidance card. In older decks, the wheel had seven radii (spiritual, introspective).

Astrologically, this positioning has meaning. There are two motions implied in such a wheel. One is counter-clockwise (widdershins) and the other is clockwise. These two motions mimic the rotation of the Earth and its encounters with the Sun, Moon and planets as the Earth rotates. The Earth rotates west to east, causing the planets to rise above the horizon in an east to west visualization. That’s why we see sunrise in the east and sunset in the west.

Astrologers and astronomers use map directions opposite to map makers. The map maker faces the Earth while making a map. West is left, east is right. To measure the heavens, we must turn our back on the Earth and face the heavens, so east is on the left and west is on the right. North and south are also reversed. A map maker places north at the top and south at the bottom of an Earth-based map. The Sun rises near the equator, so astronomers and astrologers must face south to see the trajectories of the Sun, Moon and planets as they traverse the heavens. Thus, south is at the top and north is at the bottom of an astrological chart.

The interior part of this three-wheeled diagram is in counter-clockwise motion like astrological house divisions. The T A R O and Hebrew letters rotate clockwise like the planets which rise in the east and set in the west. Astrologically, the T is in the south, the O is in the east, the R is in the north, and the A is in the west.

There are three figures arranged around the outside of the outer wheel. On the left there is a snake slithering head down. On the bottom and along right of the outer wheel, there is a human-bodied, jackal-headed figure. A sphinx (similar to the sphinxes on the Chariot card) sits erect atop the wheel. The head of the snake approaches the feet of the jackal / human figure. The head of the jackal figure approaches the back of the Sphinx. The Sphinx's head faces forward, or toward the tail of the snake. The animals and their positions describe the wheel flowing counter-clockwise.

This sphinx is blue (emotion) with a black and white striped headdress. It is carrying a double-edged sword against its left shoulder, cradled near the right chest / breast with its paw (not a hand) near the hilt. The sword is at rest, implied and available, but not active. The sphinx's stance is sitting and passive, with its tail between its hind paws. It is facing front (directly facing the situation or the issue, similar to the stance on the Chariot card. It occupies the zodiacal position of the astrological Midheaven, the point of success, the mountain each of us must climb in life. The sphinx appears to be in balance, not stressed in any way, but vigilant and somewhat smug in expression. Waite (the designer of the deck) saw "the perpetual motion of a fluidic universe and for the flux of human life. The sphinx represents the equilibrium therein."

This snake is not ordinary. According to Waite, it is the Hermanubis, a combination of Hermes (Greek) and Anubis (Egyptian). In ancient literature, the snake was not a wicked creature - that definition occurred with the biblical Garden of Eden. The ancients saw the snake as wisdom. Anubis was the god of the underworld, the dying and the dead, the gatekeeper to the afterlife, and was given the shape of a jackal. Anubis was the one who weighed the heart of the dead against the feather of Ma'at (the concept of truth). All feathers may be indicative of the feather of Ma'at. According to Gaskell, Hermes was the Greek god of boundaries and the travelers themselves, of shepherds, orators, literature and poets, athletics, weights and measures, invention, commerce, the cunning of thieves, and a messenger from the gods to humans. The Hermanubis is a combination of these concepts and probably more.

The animal-headed / human-bodied creature on the lower right of the wheel is Typhon (Egyptian). Most Egyptian deities have human bodies with animal heads, with the heads signifying the traits associated with the animal which are attributed to the deities. Typhon was a monstrous deity, the offspring of Gaia (Mother Earth) and Tartarus, one of the earthbound

gods or spirits of the underworld. Typhon was a fire-breathing giant, with 100 serpentine heads. He was the cause of eruptions, “a chthonic figure of volcanic forces”. Chthonic is a Greek word related to the earthbound, the underworld, the tidal properties of earth and its violent propensities. Gaskell saw Typhon as Set / Seth, a symbol of the lower principle or of the desire-mind, the part of the soul that is subject to passions.

Zodiacally, time can be determined by the way the signs pass over the visible horizon. Each sign (of the twelve) takes approximately two hours to pass over the horizon. 12 signs x 2 hours each = 24 hours. The sphinx is at the culmination position, high noon, as is the T in the letters in the most outside ring. The O is located at the sunrise position on the left with the center of the Hermanubis. The R is located at the bottom of the wheel, near the legs of Typhon, opposite the T and the sphinx at the top. The A is located near the head of Typhon at the sunset position on the wheel. The four Hebrew letters are located at the 9 o’clock and 3 o’clock positions on the clock with the H’s at the 9’s: the I at 3 pm and the V at 3 am.

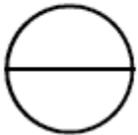
The outer ring letters (TARO) are positioned alternately with the four inner ring symbols, which are I think are alchemical or astrological.

- ✓ O: appears to be the alchemical symbol for salt
- ✓ R: Aquarius zodiacal sign
- ✓ A: right pointed triangle on the spoke with an attached equal-armed cross, appears to be the alchemical symbol for sulphur
- ✓ T: looks like the letters IOC, or the zodiacal Mercury symbol that can also stand alchemically for quicksilver.
- ✓ Additionally, there is a small flick of black at the base of the R on the middle circle. I don’t know if that is another symbol or a print error.

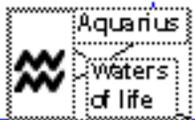
The 4 (quaternity) gives way to (produces) the 3 (triplicity): sulphur (active, dynamic, solar), salt (magnetic, lunar), mercury (quicksilver, double-natured, consciousness, fusion), which gives way to (produces) the 2 (male / female), of which unity produces an incorruptible 1.

From *The Book of Thoth*, “Three forms of energy which govern the movement of phenomena.” Typhon represents the alchemical element of salt, Hermanubis represents mercury, and the sphinx with the sword represents sulphur. In the Hindu system, the correlation would be the Gunas, Saatvas, Rajas and Tamas. Guna defies direct translation, phase or potential is our closest definition. “Tamas is darkness, inertia, sloth, ignorance, death, etc.; Rajas is energy, excitement, fire, brilliance, restlessness; Sattvas is calm, intelligence, lucidity and balance. The Gunas revolve, continual change: sulphur, mercury and salt.”

Salt



Sulphur



Ten The number of initiation (1) has moved to a higher turn on the spiral (the addition of the zero cypher). More is required of this one. Ten represents perfection through completion has occurred, the ultimate in good or evil. This is the achieved result of each card suit upon which man begins anew on a higher level, upgraded to the next round of experience.

Reading There is such richness in this card. To me, it's the richest card in the deck. All of the above symbolic information can apply to a reading. Simply put, you are ready for a new layer or level of life. "You spins the wheel, you takes your chances!" Destiny at work, a change of fortune.

Determine if it is in the past, the present, or the future. Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Justice

A yellow (intellect) background covers 3/4ths of the card at the top. The bottom 1/4th (foundation) looks to be of gray (union of opposites) man-made material. The raised platform is level with a sturdy grey bench as a seat. The two gray pillars with the drape remind you of the High Priestess card, the Kabbalistic pillars Boaz and Joachim. According to Waite, the sets of pillars on the two cards are not to be compared. On the High Priestess card, the drape does not completely fill in the background between the pillars, and some of the background shows through on the two sides. On this Justice card, the purple (spirituality) draping is edge to edge with the pillars, and no other background is showing. The purple drape against the yellow far background is in color polarity (yellow to purple – intelligence to spirituality). If you stare at one color in a polarity, then close your eyes, you will see its polarity.

The figure, which could be either male or female, dominates the card and faces directly front (facing the situation or the querent). They actually appear to be looking directly into the reader's eyes. The eyes are the doorway to the soul. If you are able to look directly into someone's eyes

Justice

as this judge is doing, not much can be hidden. A direct gaze is thought to be a gaze without blemish. It is honest, straight-forward, and not dissembling. This direct gaze can be part of the reading. This figure represents Astrea, the Greek goddess of justice.

The figure is seated fully and comfortably on the plain but sturdy bench. They are wearing a red (passion) robe (outer covering), the cuffs to the undergarment (closest to body) are green (balance). They have an impressive green cape or over-robe with two streamers down the front. The robe is fastened at the center between the throat and the heart. The fastener is a white (purity) square (four-square) with a red (passion) circle (spirit) in the center. The toe of one white (purity) slipper (covering for their understanding) is showing.

The figure's hair is blond and they wear a gold (wisdom) crown (achievement), with three (communication) square tips that look like the top of a castle, with a blue (emotion) square (structured) or jewel in the center. The figure's right (masculine) hand firmly grasps an upraised double-edged sword (sword of truth). The left (feminine) hand is suspended in the air from the shoulder, palm down, loosely holding a balanced scale of justice. The figure weighs and balances the situation or the people involved, and is also able to dispense justice. The random marks all over the card don't appear to me to be symbolic.

Eleven Any double-digit number is considered to be a master number, i.e., 11, 22, 33, 44. Eleven is the number of the dreamer, one who has the vision to go farther than the usual run of experience. A judge must be able to see all sides to a situation, to weigh all the elements, to take into account not only the views of the participants, but the structure of the law itself. Once all is presented, a judge must make an impartial judgment, to balance the opposing views and to render a judgment. The sword gives not only the authority for such a rendering, but the ability to enforce that judgment. These are qualities that can be read into the person, situation, and circumstance of the reading.

As the sword of truth cuts both ways, the judge should be able to hold themselves to the same accounting, the same laws, the same weighing and balancing, the same call for judgment as well as its enforcement. In our society, this has become a problem. Our legal system is fraught with error. Our law givers and makers, our law enforcement, our law in practice, our judgment of law, the aftermath of such judgment, and the enforcement of

that judgment has suffered at the hands of those who demean their high offices. Our supposedly highest and best do not always live up to such lofty expectations or to the oaths they took to uphold and defend the law, which does include that they live up to the law themselves. Our whole judicial system needs reformation. This figure stands for the spirit and the letter of the law, its upholding, and the implied personal honor and responsibility.

What is the difference between the letter of the law and the spirit of the law? The letter is pragmatic, codified, and systematic. As the law is written, errors and all, the law must be followed. The spirit of the law addresses the reasons behind the law, the considerations of right and wrong, and whether the written law supports such conclusions. The spirit is much more difficult to judge because it is an abstraction, easily influenced by emotion, personal opinion, and non-legal reasoning. The letter of the law must be interpreted. It is, at least in part, subjective, but it has more logic and reason as its basis.

If a law is enacted to protect the citizenry against a crime, that provides the spirit behind the law. The words chosen for the law become the letter of the law. If the laws are not well written, have loopholes, or are not fairly apportioned, then the judge must work within the framework given, regardless of their own personal misgivings. Unfortunately, miscarriages of justice are common. Those who perpetrate the crime can get off on a technicality. Those who are victimized can become further victimized, or feel slapped in the face by a system that rewards those who work letter of the law mumbo jumbo. The spirit behind the law is not served, the community is not served, and the victim is not served. One who would commit crime could be turned loose to commit more crime unless there is a judge who can look you in the eye directly, serve a balanced scale of justice, and who has a sword to enforce such judgment. Therefore, fair judgment should be expected from a justice system. But be careful - reality does not always match our idealized concepts.

One application of this card could be the difference between morals and ethics. An old friend of mine, Gina Price, and I once held a marvelous discussion on this subject many years ago. I think it was the first time I clearly understood the difference, and I thank her for her insight. Her example was a cat in a well. Morally, we feel obligated to rescue the cat from the well. Ethically, we are not required to do so. We may not make the cat's lot worse by throwing stones at it, but ethically we do not have to rescue it. Ethics are based in the mind through logic and reason. Morals are based in the emotions. We behave in a certain manner out of a sense of community, responsibility, faith, etc., all emotionally-based triggers for action.

Reading When the Justice card is introduced into the reading, how do you apply its wisdom and motivation? Look to the legal, ethical, moral, or fairness questions involved in the experience or the circumstance. Is there a person acting in a judge-like capacity? Is there a need for equity, balance, or judgment? Has judgment been declared and the experience been moved to the enforcement stage? Is the situation being decided by the letter of the law or the spirit of the law? Is the querent the judge or is the querent being judged? Is it a formal court, or a court of public opinion? Trial by media or public opinion has become common in our society, much to its detriment. Is it a matter of behavior or a matter for a court? What are the higher expressions or possibilities inherent in the experience, the attitude or the circumstance?

Determine if it is in the past, the present, or the future. Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Additional Study Lesson Seven:

- ✓ Create your index cards that pertain to this chapter: Lovers, Chariot, Strength, Hermit, Wheel of Fortune, and Justice.
- ✓ Create your personal brief definition of each card studied, using your own words.
- ✓ Meditate on each card: elements, colors, numbers, suits, and symbology.
- ✓ Color the black and white photocopies of each card as you encounter them.

Practice reading As before, use only the forty experiential cards of the *Minor Arcana*, well-shuffled and face down. We will read the Major Arcana once we have completed the study of all of them. Have someone ask you aloud a simple question, nothing complicated, for a reading. Write the question down in the form you (the student and reader) understand. Be sure the question is clear and that you have recorded that question accurately. Why? The cards' chosen response will be to the question asked and understood by the reader. You cannot change the question itself in any way.

Have the querent (questioner) choose three cards at random from your Minor Arcana (Rider) deck of forty cards. Retain these three cards in order of their selection and keep them face down.

- ✓ The first card chosen is the past of the question.
- ✓ The second card chosen is the present of the question.
- ✓ The third and last card chosen is the future of the question.
- ✓ As you turn each card over, use the index card you have generated to help you with your reading.
- ✓ Keep the reading for each card in the past, the present, or the future *as it was chosen*.
- ✓ Do *not* mix up the time frames.
- ✓ Card one is what brought the question to the table.
- ✓ Card two is the current situation regarding the question as it was asked.
- ✓ Card three is the outcome or direction of flow for the question as it was asked.

Remember, you are still a beginner.

- ✓ Stay simple.
- ✓ For the moment, stay within the index card meanings.
- ✓ Stay within the timeline given.
- ✓ Do *not* re-word the question.
- ✓ Do *not* choose any other cards to deepen or clarify at this time. That will be possible once you know what you are doing.
- ✓ Ask for feedback now and as the process unfolds. Learn as you go.
- ✓ Decide if your index cards are complete and helpful as constructed. Adapt or adjust as necessary.
- ✓ You may practice on more than one reading or querent. Practice is advised.
- ✓ Follow the instructions for each question. Keep them separate and private.

*1 Corinthians 13:11, King James Version, Bible Gateway
<https://www.biblegateway.com>

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The Cards Themselves, Part VII

*Major Arcana: Twelve through Seventeen
Hanged Man, Death, Temperance
Devil, Tower, Star*

As we continue with our study of the Major Arcana, keep in mind that these represent energies that contribute to our evolving self, transcendent to the personality. Each is a step or a guide in a process of 22 increments. In this lesson, we will study the next six cards: the Hanged Man, Death, Temperance, the Devil, the Tower, and the Star. The majors describe the energies behind the experience, development of the soul or spirit.

Again, many authors particularly disagree about the placement of the Fool (first or last) and Strength and Justice (juxtaposed). You can use any symbolic reference once you attune yourself to your personal subconscious symbols, the purpose to all this work. Times and circumstance change, and the cards must adapt themselves to new applications and definitions. To begin with, stay with what's given. Once you are proficient, experiment and find your own comfort zone.

The Hanged Man

The whole card has a background of grey (union of opposites). At the top is a crossbar tree limb with an upright tree trunk up the middle of the card. The practical, material brown color would be normal for a tree trunk and limb. Fertility itself is shown by growing leaves and vines similar to the flowering wands suit. The shape of the cross is a "T", or Tau cross. Tau is a Hebrew letter.

Positioned on the cross is an upside-down human figure who is suspended from his right ankle. He is in an unusual position (not straight up and down). His left knee is bent behind his right thigh so that the lower part of his left leg forms a crossbar behind his right leg. His arms are folded at the

Hanged
Man

elbows and his hands are behind his back. You cannot tell if the hands are bound in any way or if this is a freely chosen posture. There would be quite a different interpretation if the figure is bound, without choice and recourse, or if he has simply placed his hands in that position to convey a message, not bound, but by free choice.

The total picture created by this pose is that of a six-pointed star - foot at the top point, head at the bottom point, elbows create two points, and left knee and foot create two points. The six-pointed star was the Star of Solomon and reportedly the astrological pattern purported to be emblazoned on the shield of King David. This astrological Grand Sextile is very rare and would convey the ultimate blessings of heaven. Placing it on a battle shield would be like an announcement, "Do you want to come up against this? God is on my side!"

If you look strictly at the lower torso and legs you will see presented an equal armed cross, up to the chest. If you look at his upper torso and head, you will see an inverted triangle. The cross with the triangle represents the element of sulphur. I don't believe these are accidents in design. I believe the figure and his pose are instructions or at the least highly symbolic. It is our job to decipher the meaning.

The figure is wearing a belted (bound) blue (emotion) covering, which appears to be a shirt / short pants ensemble, red (passion) leggings (covering for his forward motion), red (passion) belt (it encompasses his middle similar to the way the equator encircles the earth ("as above, so below"), with yellow (intellect) slippers (coverings for his understanding). His long blond hair is hanging down towards the bottom of the card and there is a golden- (wisdom), rayed (higher intelligence informing lower intelligence) halo (aura) around his head (consciousness). He has no head covering. His eyes appear to be facing front toward the reader, directly facing the situation, experience or circumstance. If you turn the card over, the eyes appear to look heavenward, similar to entrancement. The other marks on the card appear to be random.

Initially, this does look like the person on the cross has been sacrificed. But if you look at the possibilities and the comfortable look on the figure's face, you question your initial perception. Is this truly a card of sacrifice? Or is the sacrifice really a deliberate, conscious act, not personally seen as a sacrifice?

Back to our reference about King David. At the time of his confrontation with Goliath, he was thought to have been a foolish youth, incapable of besting a warrior giant, a sacrificial victim. But he won the battle. His Grand Sextile went before him as a shield, leading him to victory. Of course, the surprise of a rock from a slingshot toppling a giant gave the victory to the lad.

The ultimate western religious sacrifice is that of Jesus. The question is whether or not Jesus saw his position as sacrifice. He apparently was aware of the flow of his experience. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus asked that the cup (of experience) pass from his lips so that he did not have to drink of its bitter brew. He knew what was coming. At the last supper, he remarked that one of his own would betray him. Again at the Garden, he tells Peter that he will deny him (Peter will deny Jesus) thrice (three times) before the cock crows...and Peter did just that. Jesus knew the outcome of what was to transpire. IF this were a willing sacrifice, Jesus was consciously aware of the unfolding of events.

Jesus, through his works and demonstrations, showed that he was quite capable of almost magical feats. Through his teachings, he showed his wisdom and his compassion. Through his willingness to “be about his Father’s work”, he showed the depth of his faith, loyalty and fealty. Do you really think he was incapable of controlling what was happening? Perhaps he recognized there was a greater purpose to serve and he was willing to be the servant of that greater purpose. He was human, born of a woman. He no more wanted to suffer than any one of us would want or choose to suffer. He wished that the cup of betrayal and sacrifice could be passed by. Who among us wouldn’t wish that? He asked on the cross if God had forsaken him. But when it was all done, he said, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” He gave it all...a willing, knowledgeable, faithful servant of his belief in God. Was that sacrifice or was that service? In my personal estimation, Jesus is far superior to me as the man who won the battle and emerged as the shower of the way – more than a God-like being who could do no wrong. Is the Hanged Man an unwilling victim or a willing servant of a greater purpose?

Many years ago, during my own spiritual development (a continuing work in progress until we reunite our spirits consciously with the Divine), I asked for a card to represent me, my life and my guidance. I was not sure it was a good idea when the Hanged Man became my personal symbol, not sure at all that I had that kind of courage and understanding. I have spent many years contemplating the message of this particular card, and the above is the result of my search.

There is always more than one meaning to a card. A student asked me, “Is this life in suspension rather than death?” What a great question! Perhaps at the time of the design, such was not possible, but it is possible now in our society. Our technological advances have allowed us to prolong life, at times past the point of common sense. While it is commendable that we rescue and keep people alive with hope, there comes a point when that prolonging could become cruel, purposeless, greedy, punishing, and all the other human and inhuman concepts you can think of.

We euthanize pets to limit their suffering when we do not have the skills to restore them to normalcy. We are not nearly as kind to people. Instead we hook them up to machines and tubes and at times keep them alive when it serves no real purpose. What would be a real purpose?

Quality of life, the ability to live somewhat normally, knowing that we are alive, contributing, interacting. In my thinking, those are some of the descriptions of quality of life. If people are in dire pain, with no relief, with no possible cure or relief in reasonable sight, and they wish to escape the pain and the suffering, for themselves and also for those who care about them or care for them, why isn't it their right to pull the plug on their own lives? Euthanasia is very controversial.

Dr. Jack Kevorkian has been punished for helping people follow through on their personal choices to end their lives. He, himself, does not pull the plug. He assists them in their choices. I am not advocating for anything. I am merely examining possibilities and perspectives. As a species, mankind has the incredible ability and propensity to misuse rights and privileges.

In the case of Terry Schiavo in Florida, the main question was about her state of awareness and personal participation in her own life. The extreme polarity between her husband and her parents clearly demonstrated both sides of the issue. The overall community of thought was fairly evenly divided. This was a difficult issue, complicated by the fact that the medical authorities were as evenly divided as the general community of thought. I was caught up as everyone else was in the drama, trying very hard to see both sides of the issue. My firm opinion was that withholding food (starvation) was unnecessarily cruel. There are more humane ways to end a life. I sincerely hope, as many doctors insisted, that she was unaware of her circumstances. And we have not even mentioned the political and legislative issues that were raised. It is enough to note the controversy and the thoughts generated.

There are other examples of the use of this card. Not so much at the moment I write these words, but a few years ago, there was much controversy about preservation of corpses after death by a freezing process called cryogenics. The purpose is to preserve the body in such a way that in the future, if a cure is found, the body can be resuscitated and perhaps cured. I am not sure what purpose that would serve, but that's my personal opinion (as is this whole book). Everyone important to the resuscitated person would probably be gone. Perhaps the most current and public example was the preservation of ballplayer Ted Williams after his death. His own family disagreed. The courts sided with his preservation. What if this works? What if he is awakened centuries into the future? How exactly does he belong to that society? Will he have a meaningful and productive life? Or will he be a specimen under a microscope 24/7? Interesting questions.

Twelve Twelve disciples of Jesus, twelve tribes of Israel, twelve zodiac signs, twelve gates...Twelve is a spiritual number that permeates Christianity and other religions. Twelve may be equally divided by 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6, and was considered a sacred number. Usually it is used in a group connotation. It is comprised of the 1 of initiation and the 2 of duality. Added together $1 + 2 = 3$, the trinity and the result (the product of the unity of Father,1, and Mother,2). Three is the number of communication, conversation as a by-product of a talker, and a listener.

Interestingly, numerologically, the number 13 is the number of sacrifice. Jesus was the 13th member of his cultural party and was considered the sacrifice itself. If you start with the Fool, The Hanged Man would be the 13th card in the Major Arcana even though the card indicator is 12.

Readings would center around the concept of sacrifice, enforced or chosen, or perhaps the suspension of life. Or perhaps you can contribute suggestions to this body of information. If you have contributing thoughts, please contact me through my website.

Determine if the Hanged Man is in the past, the present, or the future. Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Death

Death

A clear grey (neutral) sky occupies the top half of this card. About midway down on the right is a setting Sun (sunset of ego or life) between two gray towers (sentry posts or perhaps the Kabbalistic pillars Boaz and Joachim). In front of the towers is a profile of either black mountains (darkened or non-viewable aspirations) or a distant forest. The balance of the landscape across the center of the card is either darkened (twilight or approaching darkness) or is blue (emotion) water (also emotion). There appears to be either a cliff (material drop off) or a darkened waterfall (falling emotion) on the right behind the standing figure. On the left middle of the card, there appears to be a somewhat hilly surface with black trees (approaching night or night itself?).

Beneath all of this is what appears to be a river (flowing emotions) with a boat (relation-ship) in full sail (full-blown) heading left to right on the card (the prow of the bow is to the right of the vessel and the sail is blowing towards the right of the card, a shape reminiscent of a crescent Moon). There is a pennant flying on the top of the sail pole, representative of a ship in motion. This ship could be the ferry for the dead to travel across the River Styx, to their kingdom. The bottom of the card is a yellow (intellect) and muddied battle(?) field with a patch of blue water and a few scrub bushes (not entirely barren).

The main character is a black-armored (totally absorbed, nothing reflected back) skeleton (death and disintegration) comfortably riding an albino horse (plain white with red eyes). The horse appears to be sedately moving through the scene, left to right. The skeleton's bony head (consciousness?) shows through the open visor of his black (absorbs all, gives nothing back) helmet (covering for his consciousness). Its skeletal hands (ability to grasp) are guiding his horse with the right, and the left is holding a staff with a standard. The flag has a flowered center with pinecones (male symbol), with either a pomegranate (female fertility symbol) or sunflower (seeds of life) in the center. The helmet, visor up (his view is not impaired), has a bedraggled hanging red feather (the feather of Ma'at / truth because the modern: "a feather in his cap" is just not appropriate to the scene). Around the neck of the horse, a neckband alternates the skull and crossbones insignia. The bridle of the horse is black (ordinary) and the saddle is pink (unusual seating for a warrior or the printer's choice of color).

In the foreground, a king is lying on the ground, apparently dead. He has an elegant, white (purity), furry cape (outer covering for display) and white hair (aged), blue (emotion) robe (outer covering) or blanket, and red (passion) shoes (understanding). His gold (wisdom) crown (symbol of position) with red (passion) jewels (value) is by the horse's left front foot, discarded or fallen. There is a spiral staff (symbol of office) on the ground next to the king, but in front of the religious figure. This staff could belong to either. All positions of earthly (temporal) power are discarded and useless under the circumstances.

The richly dressed clergy figure to the right of the card is a priest, cardinal or pope. His gloved (covering for his ability to grasp) hands (grasp) are in the prayer position (supplication). There is a small equal armed cross on his glove and he is wearing a yellow (intellect) gold (wisdom) robe (external covering) with many designs, crosses, earth signs, plus some indistinct red patches. He also wears a gold and red (passion), jeweled (valuable), mitered (higher placement in church) cap, with white flaps (common costume or impaired ability to hear) over his ears. His face is in profile. He is facing towards the representation of death in supplication, or praying to a deity for deliverance from his own impending death. His spirituality (real or assumed) and his position do not influence the natural flow of life and death, which comes to all.

On the lower right corner of the card a young maiden, head averted from the rider, has her eyes closed (perhaps in surrender or denial). She is wearing a simple, white (purity) gown, and is kneeling, hands along her sides (she is resigned to her fate, not struggling). There are flowers (gifts of spirit) in her blond hair.

A kneeling child is in front of the maiden. The child (male or female) has dark hair, a blue (emotion) dress or outfit (outer covering), and flowers (gifts of spirit) in their hair and in their left (feminine) hand (grasp). The child's right (masculine) hand (grasp) is extended back behind him / her and may be holding the right (masculine) wrist (connectedness) of the maiden. The right (masculine) knee (hinging) appears to be white (purity), and the left (feminine) lower leg (forward motion) is reddish (skin toned?). The child appears to be calm, perhaps even curious.

Thirteen In numerology, the number 13 represents sacrifice or martyrdom, which also sounds like it might belong to The Hanged Man (which is card number #12 if you do not place the Fool as the first card). $1 + 3 = 4$. The one of initiative is joined to the three of communication, totaling the four of structure, form, and definition.

The Death card could represent death itself, but it may also represent change and transformation, or might imply rebirth and / or renewal. Death is not always physical death. It could signify the death of a relationship (such as divorce, lack of interest, moving, estrangement), the death of a job (termination, quitting, sale of business, lack of need), the death of a house (destruction, disuse, sale). It could also be a card of the inevitable or could represent the destructive aspect of the Hindu trinity (Shiva).

Determine if the Death card is in the past, the present, or the future. Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Temperance

A clear grey (neutrality) sky covers the top 2/3rds of the card. A gold (wisdom) Sun (in the shape of a crown) hovers over blue (emotional) mountains (aspirations) in the distance on the left middle of the card. A brown (dirt?) path cutting through rough countryside and leading to the mountains from the water at the foot of the card is descriptive of a spiritual journey. On the right center, a field of yellow lily-type flowers (gifts of spirit) blooms, with a grassy (fertility) patch in front of the lilies down to the reasonably smooth water (untroubled emotions) at the bottom of the card. There are a few small rocks (natural or stumbling blocks?) scattered near the shoreline, and an indistinct gray (union of opposites) patch near the left (feminine) foot (understanding) of the figure onshore.

A winged (feathers) angel (heavenly being) dominates the card almost completely, left to right, top to bottom. Its red (passion) / purple (spirituality) wings are unfurled (active, encompassing). The angel is wearing a white (purity) gown (outer covering). His bare (unadorned) hands (ability to grasp), face (directly facing the situation or the experience), and feet (understanding) are showing. His sleeves appear to be pushed back or rolled up (a symbol of physically working).

Temperance

The markings at his neck seem to be the letters of the Tetragrammaton, IHVH, Jehovah, the Hebrew name of God. The angel has a square (structure) emblem at its chest containing a gold (wisdom) triangle (trinity). This combination is the square plus the trine of septenary, the number seven of introspection, privacy, inner dependence on self. The angel is facing forward (facing the situation or the experience directly), with its eyes (window to the soul) looking at what it's doing. Or perhaps the eyes are closed because what he is doing is so natural it does not require vision.

The angel's hands (ability to grasp) hold two goblets (cups, containers) passing / pouring water (in this instance, the essence of the life force) between them. The appearance of the water on the card (wavy lines) is the astrological symbol for Aquarius, which is not a water sign (Aquarius is an air sign). The essence of life is information, intelligence, and wisdom, not emotion.

The angel has golden hair, with a golden (wisdom) solar disk at its forehead, and with illuminating or informing rays around its head (consciousness). It has one foot (understanding) in the water (emotion) and one foot (understanding) on dry land (physical reality), representing the balancing of such understanding between the emotional and the physical, the balancing of essences expressed by the goblets. The water is clear, not muddied, indistinct, or turbulent, indicating a peaceful, although unusual, footing.

Fourteen $1 + 4 = 5$. One is the number of initiation and individuality. Four is the number of structure, discipline, and responsibility. Five is the number of change, the pivot of numbers 1 through 9. The base number five card is The Hierophant. There is an implied tie between the Hierophant and Temperance (if this number placement system is valid). The Hierophant references concrete religion. Temperance references God's direct influence through Its angels (messengers).

Reading If Temperance appears in a spread, how do you determine its influence? To me, this is one of the most positive cards in the deck. I see learning through the duality implicit in the pouring of the waters of life between the goblets, plus the one foot in the water and one on land. Temperance is a word that speaks of not going overboard, of tempering one's appetites or indulgences. Perhaps this indicates awaiting guidance, or active guidance in terms of living a balanced life.

When I first started studying in 1970, I received much in terms of spiritual guidance. An important message to me was that I be open to studying many subjects, and not to blindly follow one teaching or one path. I think it's referred to as "eclectic interest". In following that guidance, the metaphysical world and community opened up to me. By becoming versed in more than one subject, I have been able to see how each discipline fits into a far larger picture. Those studies have intermarried, crossed imaginary boundaries, and blended into the ability to see how a symbol from one area fits so neatly into another area.

So many times I have watched people pray for guidance, only to negate what comes to them. If you believe in guidance, you are in the right place doing the right thing. You cannot believe and disbelieve at the same time - one must come to the forefront. Many times I have been in an uncomfortable situation and thought, "Where is my guidance?" The answer is always that you either believe or you don't believe. You are guided or you are not. A beautiful example of the point I'm trying to make is the conclusion to the poem "*Footprints in the Sands of Time*"* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

"Lives of great men all remind us, we can make our lives sublime,
and, departing, leave behind us, footprints on the sands of time."

The advice indicates patience, a willingness to take that from which you can truly benefit, walking the middle path, neither white nor black, balanced. In American Indian lore, this is the good red road. Temper your passions, your indulgences, your involvement, and your choices so you may walk in balance. Learn to trust in your spiritual guidance. Even in the middle of human and earthly chaos, there is a purposeful pattern to your experience. Trust.

Determine if the Temperance card's influence is in the past, the present, or the future. Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

The Devil

The entire background of the card is black (absorbs all, gives nothing back) except for the grey card title at the bottom. At the center bottom (foundation) is a black (absorptive), rectangular (structured), tall column or pedestal (human expectations). A huge ring hangs from the pedestal and attached to it are chains binding the two naked human figures on either side of the column. A devil-looking creature with extended hooked, grey batwings (definitely not heavenly) is crouched atop the column.

The top half of the devils body looks like a naked human. The head is a demon-like inverted trine (pointing down toward the material kingdom). The black and white (no union here) figure looks like a bearded mountain goat with large, curved, gray goat horns curling from the center of his head. There is an inverted five-pointed star (black magic / the misuse of energy) stemming from the region of the figure's third (spiritual) eye. The bottom half of the figure is feathered or furred (animal nature). Hooked, clawed (cruel-looking) feet (understanding) grasp the black column. This is a Baphometric figure**, the Horned goat of Mendes, Christianity's impression of the devil. Astrologically, Capricorn is the sign of the mountain goat.

The figure's right (masculine) hand (ability to grasp) is raised, palm forward (open but postured, not receiving from on high), with the astrological glyph for Saturn in its palm. The split finger posture is a Hebrew gesture for "be well and prosper" (remember Star Trek's Spock). Waite says this position is the reverse of the sign given by the Hierophant. The figure's left (feminine) hand (ability to grasp) grips a large lit torch pointed down toward the Earth with the back of its hand facing the reader. The raised right hand and the lowered left hand are similar to the hand positions of the Magician, but this application is far more negative.

A standing, naked, human woman is on the left of the card, with a tail of grapes (wine, materiality), red (passion) hair (covering for consciousness), small horns on head (devil-influenced consciousness?). She is looking mostly forward toward the situation or experience, but slightly to her left. Her hands (ability to grasp) are extended slightly outward and downward, both palms down (open but not receptive).

The Devil

A standing, naked, human man is on the right of the card, head and face turned somewhat downward and to his right (not directly at the situation or experience). He has red (passion) hair (covering for consciousness) and small horns on his head (devil influenced consciousness). His right (masculine) hand (ability to grasp) is palm up (open) extended towards the woman, his left (feminine) hand is resting against his hip, palm out towards the devil figure's torch (receiving the devil's fire?). The man's tail of flame (passion) appears to have been lit from the nearby devil's torch.

Fifteen #15 = 6. Numbers 1, 5 and 6 are key to this card, and there is a tie to the 1, 5 and 6 majors. The 1 of initiation, and the 5 of change as the pivot leading to the 6 of personal responsibility and love. I have already referred to the similarity of the pose of the Magician (1). The Magician is the mastery of oneself. The Devil is the perversion of that ability, the left-hand path. Five is the Hierophant, the spiritual made manifest in the human. The Devil is the perversion of that concept also. Physically look at the #6 card, the Lovers. The three figures again are in place, in roughly the same position. In the Lovers card, the man looks to the woman who looks up to the angel, the play between the conscious and subconscious that leads to the super-conscious, the expansion and consolidation of the mind. In the Devil card, the emphasis is on physical desires and appetites, a perversion of the beauty of the Lovers card, its mirror opposite.

Reading Notice that the chains binding the two humans to the pedestal are loose around their necks. They are imprisoned only by their own individual choices. Neither figure is looking up for guidance or seeking assistance. Neither figure appears to be uncomfortable. They are prisoners of their own desirous natures, the man for passion, the woman for greed. When this card appears in a reading, the person or situation it represents must make a choice between the light and the dark sides, a choice of path and experience. Nothing is set in stone, choices are open, cause and effect are called into action, and potential karma is your choice.

This can represent the initiation called the "Dweller on the Threshold". Each of us contains both the positive and negative expressions of all facets of being. Personal choice is what determines if we tread the right- or the left-hand path - the seeker's path of righteousness or the seeker's path to disintegration. We cannot deny our own darkness. We must face the shadow within in order to master ourselves to remain on the path of the return to the Source.

Determine if it is in the past, the present, or the future. Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

The Tower

The background is stark black (absorbs all, gives nothing back) except for the gray card title at the bottom. Gray (storm?) clouds spot the black background. A tall gray (union of opposites) tower (man-made edifice) situated atop a craggy mountaintop (in the clouds – man’s material accomplishment) dominates the middle of the card. A huge, jagged lightning bolt (sudden, dramatic message from on high) emanates from the top of the card striking the Tower and destroying it. The lightning bolt dislodges a huge gold crown (worldly achievement or crowning glory) from the top of the tower. The crown is falling toward the ground. The edifice and all that it represents is destroyed. Flames erupt at the point of the lightning strike and at the three small black (darkened) openings (portals for viewing the kingdom) on the face of the tower.

There are also 22 small droplets (yods) of flame or lightning, ten on the right and twelve on left of the card, the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet, the 22 paths of the Kabbalistic tree of life, or the 22 paths of the Major Arcana itself. Zodiacally, that could represent the ten planets and the twelve signs, but at the time the cards were designed, Pluto had not yet been discovered (1930). What was in common astrological usage prior to 1930 was the Lunar Node, if you want to pursue the question.

Two human figures have been thrown off the tower and are falling from the mountain peak toward the ground, heads down, presumably to their death or destruction. The figure on the left is stomach down to the reader, with head thrown back so his face shows. He is definitely surprised and frightened. He wears a blue (emotional) inner (closest to personal body) covering, a red (passion) outer (external) cape, gray (union of opposites) leggings (leg coverings) and boots (covering for understanding). His hands (ability to grasp) are open, either in shock, or he is grasping desperately and pointlessly at thin air to save himself, dark hair streaming back, face visible, an expression of shock on his face.

The Tower

The figure on the right is falling downward, stomach up to the viewer, hands open, palm up, wearing a blue (emotion) gown and red (passion) shoes (covering for understanding). If you reverse the card, it appears to be a woman with an odd expression (sort of uh-oh!) on her face. She has blond hair with a golden (valuable) crown (symbol of position) on her head. The man on the left is surprised. The woman on the right is more chagrined than surprised.

Sixteen #16 = 7. The number 16 is comprised of the 1 of individuality and personal effort, and the 6 of personal responsibility and love - leading to the 7 of internalization and spirituality, or, if negatively achieved, to ultimate destruction.

Reading On the surface, indications are confusion, unforeseen catastrophe, ruin, destruction by falsehood on the material plane, chastisement, misery, adversity, calamity. On a deeper level, the manner in which we conduct ourselves as we build our successes and achievements in life determines the outcome. When we achieve positions of power, prestige and substance, we must remember that it is an empty victory unless it is conceived, earned, practiced and respected as a gift, a privilege, and a responsibility. When we forget that achievement carries responsibility, when we forget we are spiritual beings having a physical experience, we invite destruction of our material reality. What has taken us so long to climb and produce can vanish in an instant. Our high position can take us down, and success can become failure.

Determine if the Tower Card is in the past, the present, or the future. Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerical significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

The Star

A clear, pale blue sky (normal, daylight) covers the top half of the card. Centered left to right, and near the top of the card against the background of the blue sky, is one large, yellow (intelligence) gold (wisdom) eight-pointed (solar) star (heavenly body) around which are seven smaller eight-pointed (solar) white (purity) stars (heavenly body): $1 + 7 = 17$ (number of card) = 8 (number of stars).

The Star

A dim and thin (distant) purple (spiritual) mountain (aspiration) separates the sky (heavenly) from the land (materiality) in the left background. The foreground is grassy (fertile), slightly rolling (not level, but not forbidding) with a small pond (pool of emotion) on the lower left. Ten (the nine of conclusion leads to a beginning on a higher scale) small flowers (gifts of spirit) dot the grassy area, perhaps indicating new ideas in bud. A small hill (uplift of the material) rises on the right topped by a tree (fertility) with a red (passion) bird (heavenly messenger) in it. There also appears to be a cluster of plants at the base of the hill above the woman's foot.

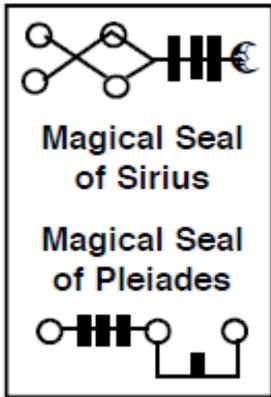
A naked (unadorned) human figure (woman since she has breasts) kneels (flexibility) on the grass on her left (feminine) knee. Her right (masculine) foot (understanding) is in a flat-footed position, knee bent, her foot on but not in the water (emotion) of the small pool. The woman is holding two (duality or polarity) jugs (containers) of water (could these be the waters of spirit – inspiration?). She is pouring the water into the pond (pool of emotion) with her right (masculine) hand (ability to grasp) and onto the grass (fertile material) with her left (feminine) hand (ability to grasp).

Note that the pouring of the water on the land creates the five streams of consciousness from the High Priestess' hem, which also appear on the Ace of Cups flowing from the cup itself back into the pool of water at the base of the card. Four (structure) streams lead off of the card to the bottom and right. One stream (individuality) leads back to the pond.

Seventeen $1 + 7 = 8$. The one of initiative and selfhood coupled with the introspection and faith of the 7 accomplishes the organization and accomplishment of the 8.

Reading This is the most or one of the most positive cards in the deck. It is thought to be guidance and illumination from the higher self or a higher source such as a ray of divine light or inspiration. It indicates hope, truth and faith, spiritual vision or insight, a transcendence of physical / material thought, understanding, illumination and awareness.

According to Waite, the Star represents hope and truth unveiled, a pouring forth of the beauty and understanding of the Great Mother, the Kabbalistic Binah.



Fran Rosen, in a magazine article I have in my files, saw the seven smaller stars as the Pleiades, which in ancient times were thought to be a source of human origin, particularly the main star Alcyone. The eighth larger star is defined by Waite to be Sirius, the dog star, the brightest star in the constellation of Canis Major and a star of supreme importance to the ancients. This can represent guidance of the highest order.

Look at the water symbology and examine it on other majors for connection to other cards. The water on the minors stems from the majors. The pouring of water from the jug can be symbolic of the zodiacal sign Aquarius (the waters of life, spirit, illumination, information), with the same analogy of one foot on land, the other in water. Look to the other cards which portray a woman as the main character. They may be connected, as are the streams of water on the Ace of Cups.

Should the Star card appear in a reading, it is considered to be one of the most positive answers possible. It is the balancing of forces between the material and the spiritual, the ability to live in the two worlds in balance, simultaneously. There is equal distribution of both information and application, organizing your life and your abilities in such a way that all your needs are met and in harmony.

Determine if it is in the past, the present, or the future. Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing is always critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerical significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Additional Study Lesson Eight:

- ✓ Create your index cards that pertain to this chapter: Hanged Man, Death, Temperance, Devil, Tower, Star.
- ✓ Using your own words, create your personal brief definition of each card studied.
- ✓ Meditate on each card: elements, colors, numbers, suits, symbology.
- ✓ Color the black and white photocopies of each card as you encounter them.

Practice reading As before, use only the forty experiential cards of the *Minor Arcana*, well-shuffled and face down. We will read the Major Arcana once we have completed the study of all of them. Do *not* start with a verbal question. This reading will be done “blind”. If you are reading for another person, allow them to shuffle the cards while focusing on the knowledge they are seeking, then hand the deck back to you for layout in our standard practice format. Start reading anywhere and generate *their* reading from the layout and card information. If you are reading your own spread, focus on the knowledge you are seeking as you shuffle and layout the standard practice format. Start reading anywhere that you are comfortable and generate *your* entire reading from the information and layout of the cards.

Have the querent (questioner) choose three cards at random from your Minor Arcana (Rider) deck of forty cards. Keep these three cards in order of their selection and keep them face down.

- ✓ The first card chosen is the past of the question.
- ✓ The second card chosen is the present of the question.
- ✓ The third and last card chosen is the future of the question.
- ✓ As you turn each card over, use the index card you have generated to help you with your reading.
- ✓ Keep the reading for each card in the past, the present, or the future *as it was chosen*.
- ✓ Do *not* mix up the time frames.
- ✓ Card one is what brought the question to the table.
- ✓ Card two is the current situation regarding the question as it was asked.
- ✓ Card three is the outcome or direction of flow for the question as it was asked.

Remember, you are still a beginner.

- ✓ Stay simple.
- ✓ For the moment, stay within the index card meanings.
- ✓ Stay within the timeline given.
- ✓ Do *not* re-word the question.
- ✓ Do *not* choose any other cards to deepen or clarify at this time. That will be possible once you know what you are doing.
- ✓ Ask for feedback now and as the process unfolds. Learn as you go.
- ✓ Decide if your index cards are complete and helpful as constructed. Adapt or adjust as necessary.
- ✓ You may practice on more than one reading or querent. Practice is advised.
- ✓ Follow the instructions for each question. Keep them separate and private.

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https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/henry_wadsworth_longfello_12460

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** <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baphomet>

The Cards Themselves, Part VIII

*Major Arcana: Eighteen through Twenty-One,
plus Zero revisited
Major Arcana: Moon, Sun
Judgement, World, Fool*

As we finalize our study of the Major Arcana, keep in mind that these represent energies that contribute to our evolving self, transcendent to the personality. Each is a step or a guide in a process of 22 increments. In this lesson, we will study the final few majors - Moon, Sun, Judgment, and World. Reminder: the majors describe the energies behind the experience and the development of the soul or spirit level (*why* rather than *how*).

Many authors disagree about the placement of the Fool, first, last or between Judgment and the World. You can use any symbolic reference once you attune yourself to your personal subconscious symbols, the purpose of all this work. Time and circumstances change, and the cards must adapt themselves to new applications and definitions. We have examined the innocent naivete of the Fool at the beginning of the majors. We will finalize our study of the majors by looking at the position at the end.

We are approaching the culmination of the process, full circle, alpha and omega, birth, through death and rebirth, to enlightenment. When we are asleep in matter, we are endarkened. When we become aware to the tiniest fraction of who and what we are and can be, we start to awaken. And with a lot of work and celestial grace, we can become enlightened, fully awake and aware of our potential as heirs of our Source. We can know that we live and move and have our being within that Source, that which gives us existence, as well as that which welcomes us home within itself. Plus the entire journey or process takes place within that Source itself. Why?

The Moon

If God is all there is in your world, then here is no other place to be but within God. You cannot fall off your path without falling into some other part of God. You cannot be lost since you are within God. You cannot lose God and you cannot find God, because God is never lost. If you lose your way, stand still and reach within yourself because God is there, silently awaiting your acknowledgement. Remember, you are a spiritual being having a physical experience. Align your physical self and existence with that spiritual source. Be what you are capable of being. The hand from Heaven depicted on the ceiling of Italy's Sistine Chapel is always reaching out to you. All you have to do is accept that hand.

The Moon

A clear, blue (normal daytime) sky covers the top half of the card. Because the Moon is showing in its fullness, the sky should be darker as an indication of night - especially since it represents the Full Moon. But the use of a darker blue would obliterate much of the symbology on the card. Know that a blending of light and shadow can be strong at the time of the Full Moon. The most ancient known form of astrology had to be lunar-based because the ancients developed their references based on what they could see with the naked eye, which was the night sky. The brightness of the Sun obliterated most (not all) viewing of the daytime sky. Thus, material currently used as solar-based must have originally stemmed from a lunar-based observation. Translation is in the hands of the interpreter.

The yellow (intellect) / gold (wisdom) Moon with 32 rays dominates the top of the card. There are sixteen chief (longer) rays and sixteen secondary (shorter) rays, a multiple of eight (solar) rays. I have not yet found a specific reference for sixteen or 32 rays.

The full round shape usually symbolizes the Full Moon, the point at which the Moon in its orbit around the Earth is on the outer space position from the Earth (the view of the outer orbits of our solar system). The observable face of the Full Moon is completely illuminated by the brilliance of the Sun. In case you are not aware, the Moon has no light of its own to offer. The light we see is reflected sunlight. And the same is true of all the planets and other space objects as well. Their observed light is reflected sunlight. By analogy, that means only the Sun (ego, identity, etc.) provides actual light (conscious awareness). All the other facets of being are illuminated as reflections of the Sun (ego, self- identity, etc.).

According to Waite, the slice of the Moon on the top right is the waxing (growing in light) crescent Moon (mercy). The face in the Moon with closed eyes covers the top horizontal half of the Moon. Half a Moon is the shape of the First Quarter Moon (vertical side on the left of the Moon) that occurs about seven days after the New Moon. The New Moon phase occurs when the Moon, in her earthly orbit, joins the Sun in the sky. Sunlight is cast on the side of the Moon away from the Earth. Therefore, we cannot see the Moon from Earth's perspective. Three lunar phases are combined in this card's lunar symbol. Every 28 or so days, the Moon shows several faces, fluctuating between light and darkness. This is symbolic of Moon power and application in multiples of its fluctuating guises or expressions. A simple study of astrological Moon phases would be useful to you.

The face on the moon card appears to be looking down at the landscape or the activity. Fifteen (not eighteen, which is the number of the card) droplets (yods, common to Semitic languages including Hebrew) are suspended in the lower part of the sky between the towers. Additionally, from Egyptian lore, lunar dew is thought to represent the tears of Isis.

Just below the sky, the same medium blue (think of night sky and shadows) denotes a hilly, somewhat forbidding terrain with two grey (union of opposites) towers on the far left and the far right of the card. Each tower contains a window on its front side (sentry point?). The towers look like sentinels or pillars against the landscape. Is this yet another reference to the Kabbalistic pillars of justice and mercy?

Immediately below the landscape of the towers is a grassy, somewhat irregular or hilly (but not threatening) green (balance), grassy (fertile) area. At the very bottom of the card appears to be the edge of a reasonably peaceful body of water (same color blue as sky). Small dark (shadowed?) plants and rocks mark the shoreline (common).

Three creatures seem to be affected by the Moon - they appear to be facing the Moon and responding to it. A domesticated brown (practical) dog is on the left (feminine side) of the card, a yellow (intellect) wolf (untamed animal instinct) or wild dog is on the right (masculine side of the card). Both animals are from a single species. The wild becomes tamed, but can always revert to wild. Both give the appearance of baying or howling at the Moon. Animal fears or recognition and communication?

A purple (shadowed or spiritual) lobster-like creature (primitive) emerges from the water (emotion) onto the land (physical reality), pincers raised (self-defense or attack, accept first impression). Such creatures can represent that which can and does rarely emerge from the depth of our consciousness. The dogs may not be aware of the silent creature as it is behind their backs on their blind sides.

There appears to be a golden (wisdom) path leading from the point where the lobster emerges from the water, across the grassy area between the dog and wolf, continuing up through the hilly area between the pillars to the edge of the small mountain beneath the Moon. Is this the path to the unknown or to enlightenment? If so, it is really well lit by the Moon itself.

Eighteen $1 + 8 = 9$. The one of initiative and individuality couples with the eight of organization and ambition, producing a completion or an attainment, whether for good or for ill.

According to Waite, this is an occult card representing imagination separate from spirit and reflected light as opposed to active, direct light. The aquatic animal is one that comes from the depths of the sea (emotion), but rarely remains above the surface.

According to *Maps of Consciousness*, by Ralph Metzner, “the way of liberation was often called ‘escape from the power of the Moon’”.

Reading This denotes a need to calm the emotional nature and to separate imagination from spirituality within our lives. Negatively, this card can represent deception, false friends, and secret enemies. Even though we have progressed a long way towards our evolutionary goal, we are still subject to error and misconception. We can confuse the spiritual with the purely psychic, and they are not the same thing. Embracing the spiritual can automatically include the psychic. But embracing the psychic may not automatically include the spiritual.

Symbolically, the Moon can represent hope, truth unveiled, pouring forth of the beauty and understanding of the Great Mother, and the Kabbalah Binah. The Moon can also represent irrational, primal fears trying to surface. The animal forms symbolize animal consciousness or the instinctual nature in its primitive phase. Fight or flight, reptilian brain reasoning (or lack of it), are cellular imprints. As the astrological symbol for memory, the Moon is the reactive in us, that which responds to prior conditioning or experience, and not necessarily the current circumstance.

We have been taught that if someone seriously yells the word “fire”, we need to be on the outside looking in, without thought. Mindless panic can be our experience, because our conditioned memory bank reacts before we think. If the conditioned memory includes others, we will be on the outside with the baby, looking on - reaction, not thought, from memory.

In an astrology chart, negative interaction between Saturn and Neptune can be referred to as the “dark night of the soul”, the point in life where you can reach bottom, your illusions being torn apart in the cold, harsh light of reality. Eventually, we will be glad we recognized our illusions and the false promises inherent in them. But at the moment of realization, giving up our dreams is painful. Neptune is our capacity to dream and, unfortunately, sometimes to dream falsely. Saturn strips away any useless illusions, turning on bright lights so we can face those illusions. This can be a painful awakening.

The Moon can be a difficult card depending on who or what it represents and the time frame it governs. Determine if it is in the past, the present, or the future. Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

This would be a good place to point out the importance of the Moon astrologically, a subject for deeper study. The Sun and the Moon are thought to be the parents of the planets in our solar system, equal in position but very different. The daily changing shape of the orbiting Moon is particularly useful, a good reason the Moon is thought to be moody and changeable. Each shape contributes to the whole but is a stand-alone reference when depicted on a card. The phase wheel should be an area of study, focusing specifically on the Moon or lunar cycle.

The Sun

A clear, light blue (normal) sky is at the top half of the card, which is dominated by a huge yellow (intellect) / gold (wisdom) Sun with a larger-than-life but somewhat human face. Biblically, we are made in the image and likeness of God. The rays of the Sun could be construed as the hair surrounding the human face. There are 22 rays (22 majors, 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet), eleven straight rays and eleven wiggly rays. One ray is difficult to see along the right side of the XIX card number at the top.

The Sun

If you stare at the Sun on the card for a few seconds, an interesting eye trick occurs. The two rays that bracket the XIX number at the top and the vertical ray just below the chin of the sun, emerge as a single astrological pattern called the Yod, the Finger of God aspect (*you will*, rather than *will you?*). In addition, as you stare, the Sun face and rays take on an appearance of a Pharaoh. Since the Pharaohs were all considered divine manifestations of God itself, it is not a surprise you would see this. Your eyes can provide the optical illusion when you stare at the card.

Beneath the sky is a gray (union of opposites), constructed, tiered or stacked (substantial) wall (enclosure or container) of some sort with four blossomed sunflowers (both a fertility and a female symbol). Three are clustered on the left and one is on the right ($3 + 1 =$ communication plus initiation). The large leaves are more yellow than green, but that may be the printer's choice.

Dominating the bottom of the card is a child on a white / gray horse. The child is holding a banner. He is quite young and completely naked (au natural, unadorned), with blond hair (covering for his consciousness). There are yellow (intellect) circles (life in its fullness) with red (passion) centers, similar to the sunflowers (gifts), in his hair. The Fool's red feather (feather of Ma'at, truth) extends straight upward between two of the small flowers. He is face forward (facing the question or the situation), smiling (happy), and has both arms extended as in welcome or largesse. The right (masculine) hand (ability to grasp) is palm forward (openness). The left (feminine) hand (ability to grasp) holds the black or dark pole around which is wrapped the red (passion) / orange (ambition) flag or drape. Turn the card sideways to the right, with the right side down, the drape again appears to be the symbol of Leo, which is ruled by the Sun.

The white (purity) horse (animal instincts) looks docile (the beast has been tamed), his eyes are cast downward, and his tail shows somewhat on the bottom left of the card. There is no saddle or bridle - the child rides bareback. The consciousness of the child controls the animal. Various markings on the wall and drape appear to me to be random. At some point, study such ambiguities for additional meaning.

Nineteen $1 + 9 = 10 = 1$. The one of initiative and individuality is coupled with the 9 of completion or fulfillment, which opens the door to a new cycle of initiation that builds on the success of the prior level (eventual reduction of the figure to a 1).

Solar consciousness, the internal knowing of the self, is depicted by this card. Pro-active, functioning in life as a self-realized being, is the ultimate point of evolution for us. Facing life with an unfettered consciousness allows us the full use of information and the full choice of experience. The naked child represents that innocence of experience that transcends past conditioning or jaded responses to life. This child has tamed its animal instincts and all of life is spread before it. Attainment on all levels is possible and probable. Envision in a child-like, clear and innocent manner.

Once upon a time, I returned to Fort Lauderdale airport from a trip. My ride home was nowhere to be found. This was before the advent of cell phones. After a long wait, I decided to take the shuttle. As life would have it, I was going to be the last stop on the lengthy ride. I had lived in that area for about fifteen years, and sighed in my realization that I was going to go on a long tour of the familiar and time would drag. Instead, I told myself I was going to view the trip around Fort Lauderdale as a tourist, a first-time visitor, with everything new and exciting. And I did just that. Even when we had to wait for the bridges to open and close for boat traffic, even when late afternoon traffic made the going incredibly slow, I saw the trip with fresh eyes. It took about an hour and a half (I lived twenty minutes from the airport), but I saw my town as new arrivals did, and loved it. What a great excursion!

In Biblical words, Matthew 18:1-5:

He [Jesus] called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

We can do that. The child in us views life differently from the adult. We can empty ourselves of cynicism, old programs, ho-hum or hostile responses, and have the excitement of a child. Everything is new, exciting and fun. We can get down on the floor of experience, let the child within us express, and just enjoy ourselves. We can discard our preconceived notions by deciding to do so and then acting that way. We can remember how to laugh and to express happiness and joy in our experience. We can create peace, beauty and bliss. This will give victory to our spirit. We can trust in the universe.

Judgement

The Sun is the giver of light and life. It is not reflective. It is direct light for all of our solar system. All other light in our solar system that reaches our eyes is reflected light. That includes Jupiter, which *is* a small sun-let and does give off some light that does not ever truly reach us here on Earth. This is consciousness of spirit. We can experience cosmic consciousness if we allow ourselves to do so. Cosmic consciousness restores us and elevates us to our positions as heirs to the kingdom.

Determine if the Sun card is in the past, the present, or the future. Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

Judgement

A blue, clear (normal) sky covers the top half of the card. Fluffy grey clouds (unity) roll across the bottom of an angel. The bottom of the card appears to be blue, rippling (not completely calm) water (emotions) with some sort of sketchy landscape in the back. I see three trees (fertility and growth?) against the blue (emotional) / white (purity) mountain (aspiration) or iceberg (structured emotion).

An angel (a non-gendered heavenly being) dominates the top of the card, with its red (passion) / purple (spirituality) wings open and unfurled (active). The angel is wearing a blue (emotion) garment and is only depicted from the chest up. The angel's hair is blond with some red (passion), and some of it is flamelike (fiery). The eyes are open and looking forward and somewhat down.

The angel appears to look towards the figures in the containers at the bottom of the card. It is holding a trumpet with both hands. The backs of both hands show. It is sounding the trumpet that is held up to its lips, with short lines indicating noise or vibration coming out of the wide end pointed down towards the landscape. Attached to the trumpet is a white flag with an orange (ambition), equal-armed cross (the cross of matter). The angel is Archangel Gabriel, God's messenger or announcer. In the bottom third of the card, there are several floating boxes with open lids and six naked people appear to be standing in them. These boxes could be caskets - they certainly don't look like boats. If these are caskets, this card will represent resurrection, or at the very least, renewal (life after apparent physical death).

In the foreground are a man, woman and child. A similar trio appears towards the back of the scene. All appear naked. The people in the back are facing forward. In the foreground of the card, the man is facing back and up and the child is facing back with arms out in embrace. The woman in the foreground (in profile) is facing up and to the left side of the card. Since we come into this life naked and cannot take anything material with us, perhaps this is a statement about trusting in Spirit or our own spiritual journeys. What survives after physical death is consciousness, awareness, spirituality, and continuance of what we have achieved in this physical experience.

The eyes of these people appear to be on the angel. The man in the left foreground has black hair. The woman in the right foreground has long blond hair and her profile is half turned toward the angel. Hands are raised openly toward the angel or its message. The woman seems to be reaching across the vibration marks or towards the man, her arms almost in a beseeching or welcoming gesture. There is no trepidation present here as there is in the Death card.

Twenty $2 + 0 = 2$. The two of duality, polarity, and the womb of creation is coupled with the cypher of zero which raises the possibilities of the 2 to a higher level. Two is not a number of initiation, it is a number of working through what has already been initiated, a pairing, a union or blending, but on a higher turn of the spiral. This can be the great work of transformation, eternal life.

Reading This represents judgement pure and simple, all forms, all levels of application. From a court of law, to a relationship crisis, to an epiphany of spirit, judgement seems to be the human condition. But we should ration our judgement of ourselves and others. Judgement for blame, and guilt, and posturing - no! Judgement for the purpose of clarification, for progress and evolution, for a positive outcome - yes!

The primary message of the overall symbolism is awakening or resurrection. The call of spirit is coming to those who have made the transition. All have awakened from the deep sleep. There is a passage in the western holy book, the Bible, that says that the corrupt (physically dead) shall put on incorruption (life without physical form). Notice that the universe wastes nothing. That which appears to have died simply slips

The World

into a new form, such as the transition between matter and energy. This card can represent the ascension or immortality of the soul, unexpected, or the opportunity for elevation, the call from within. Not all who are called this way will respond. Many will doubt. Many will be unable to work up the courage. Many will wonder if there's something better out there. Some will hear and heed the call and reach for their salvation.

The Judgement card can represent judgement in general, and the last judgement in particular. Judgement of what? Can this represent physical death or other forms of death? What element or need within us requires the message of this card and the judgement it implies? Is it time to transform our lives or some facet of them? You cannot transform what does not exist. Transformation presupposes that there is a pre-existing energy that can be transformed. Atonement becomes at-one-ment.

Determine if it is in the past, the present, or the future. Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

The World

A clear, light blue (normal daylight) background covers the card except for the title at the bottom, which is a gray background. On the four corners of the card are the heads of the four characters encountered on the Wheel of Fortune, #10. Each head is surrounded by a white billowing cloud. At the top (aspiration) left (feminine) is a man. At the top (aspiration) right (masculine) is an eagle. Bottom (foundation) left (feminine) is a bull's head. Bottom (foundation) right (masculine) is a lion. The bull and lion seem to be facing forward towards the reader. The man and the eagle are in profile. These four figures represent the four zodiac signs, Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, and Aquarius. (Reminder: an earlier zodiac started with the sign Taurus. In the zodiac, Taurus is opposite Scorpio, so diagonally from bottom left to top right are those symbols. Likewise, Leo is opposite Aquarius, so diagonally from bottom right to top left are those symbols.)

The center of the card is dominated by a huge green laurel wreath (victory) encircling a naked woman (with breasts). At the center top and bottom of the wreath, there is a crisscross of red ribbon. If you visualize the shape created by each ribbon, you will see the cosmic lemniscate, the symbol for infinity (time).

The woman in the center is beautiful and young. She is dancing or celebrating. She has a purple (spirituality) drape strategically wound around her body (perhaps showing modesty in the era in which these cards originated). Again, if you turn the card with its right side down, the drape appears to be an exaggeration of the symbol for Leo. Her hair appears to be colorful - perhaps there are flowers (gifts of spirit) in it. Her face is about 90% forward (facing the situation or the question) and she appears to be looking slightly to our left (her right).

In each hand (ability to grasp) she loosely holds double-pointed white wands, similar to the wand in the Magician card. Her wands are basically vertical and identical in size, position, and importance.

Her legs (ability to move forward) are in the same crossed form as the figure's position on the Hanged Man. If you count the extended arms (two), the crossed knee, the head and the single extended foot, you again can see the six-sided figure (the Grand Sextile) presented by the Hanged Man. However, this woman is upright while the Hanged Man was upside down. Because of the similarity of pose, the two cards are tied - the experience of the Hanged Man is connected to the experience of the World.

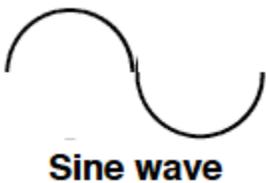
Twenty-one $2 + 1 = 3$. The two of union or polarity is coupled with the one of initiative and selfhood, the pairing of the parent numbers, father and mother, but with two leading the way. In the 12 card, one led the way. So there is a numerical tie between this card (21) and the 12 card (the Hanged Man), plus the 3 card, the product of the union or intelligent activity.

According to Waite, this card represents the Soul's intoxication with its earthly paradise and the rapture of the universe - when the Soul understands itself in God. That is awesome!

Reading This denotes universal consciousness, the perfection of knowing your oneness with God. The World represents success or attainment, worldly or otherwise, a united soul, and knowing that freedom comes from within.

The apparent sacrifice of the Hanged Man has its fulfillment in the World. That which seems to be a reversal of fortune rights itself. The Hanged Man, who was so comfortable with his fate, has been vindicated. The Hanged Man has attained selfhood and universal consciousness. Do you think the Hanged Man paid the price voluntarily and was it worth it?

The Fool



What a marvelous card - attainment on all levels! The zodiacal figures represent experience, so this is attainment through experience. Theory is interesting, but practice tends to rearrange the theory. That which is planned may be far more difficult to carry out or complete especially when life comes with no printed directions. Attainment is precious. The prize, the recognition and the journey is complete.

Determine if it is in the past, the present, or the future. Has it shaped the current circumstance because it has already influenced it? Is it a part of the current question or does it influence the questioner? Is it a precursor to what will be? Timing is critical in a reading.

Using all this specific card information, as well as the material previously studied on the suits, the colors and the numerological significance, develop some personal thoughts about the meaning of this card.

The Fool

Twenty-two Is this 22 or 0? There are 22 cards in this deck. In numerology, 22 is a master number, as is 11. While 11 is the visionary, 22 is the visionary who is further able to manifest the vision, to make it concrete and not just an abstraction.

We have completed a process, but are we finished? Who really knows where the cycle begins and ends? Each cycle of life is really a circle. The sine wave, which is our current symbol for a cycle is really a circle that has been arbitrarily halved and elongated. Circles have no real beginning and no real ending, only those we collectively agree upon. So choosing a beginning point (and the assumed ending) is arbitrary. Because the Fool is noted as a zero, a cypher, it can be placed at the beginning or the end of this or any cycle.

When I first started to study Metaphysics in 1970, I was given a spiritual message that the answer to an unasked question was circular, but with a step forward. Since I was brand new to the field, I had no idea what the message was about. I reminded myself as I learned and developed, but never found a solid answer to that long ago message. As our Astronomers search the Heavens and its secrets, we learn more. This last week (2021) I

found several short videos that visually showed the true nature of the orbital path of our solar system. There is both a circle and forward motion involved, the concept of that long-ago instruction. I have provided the website at the bottom of this chapter.* When I opened it, I thought there was just one amazing video. When replayed, it turned out to be a series of short, provocative videos, well worth the few minutes to view.

We started from potential or possibility, ran the gamut of experience and have returned to the same point, but on a higher spiral of evolution. We started from possibility, completed that journey, and we have now arrived at new possibility. The Fool symbolizes the journey outward into experience. His wallet stores the subconscious memories that have been stored up in the Soul. Again...is this a point of folly or delirium? Is the Fool intoxicated with possibility, not paying attention to what he is entering into? Is the Fool like a child, full of possibility and innocence? What will a new round of experience offer him? What will he offer to life? How many times do we do this on the wheel of life? Sometimes we play the Fool. Sometimes we are innocent, sometimes we are foolish. Which is this one?

According to Gurdjieff, it takes seven stages to complete any cycle of transformation. The Major Arcana offers three cycles of seven, plus the Fool.

This completes our study of the Major Arcana and the whole deck of 78 tarot cards. Next, we will tackle the fine art of spreads and reading and will tie up all the loose ends to complete this basic course in Tarot.

Additional Study Lesson Nine:

- ✓ Create your index cards that pertain to this chapter: Moon, Sun, Judgement, World, plus repeat Fool.
- ✓ Create your personal brief definition of each card studied, using your own words.
- ✓ Meditate on each card: elements, colors, numbers, suits, and symbology.
- ✓ Color the black and white photocopies of each card as you encounter them.

Practice reading You may make a choice to practice read only the Major Arcana we have just completed, *or* you can read the whole deck, both minors and majors. Whatever you choose, be sure your deck(s) are well-shuffled and the cards are dealt face down. If you choose the Major Arcana only, know that you are receiving guiding principles, more like the reason behind the question or experience. If you choose the blended decks, know that you are looking at both individual experience *and* the guiding principles combined.

As before, have someone ask you aloud a simple question, nothing complicated, for this more advanced reading. Write the question down in the form you (the student and reader) understand. Be sure the question is clear and that you have recorded that question accurately. Why? The cards' chosen response will be to the question asked and understood by the reader. You cannot change the question itself in any way.

Once you have practiced this, advance yourself to reading blind. You can't practice too much - every effort teaches you and embellishes your reading skills.

Have the querent (questioner) choose three cards at random from your chosen deck. Keep these three cards in order of their selection and keep them face down.

- ✓ The first card chosen is the past of the question.
- ✓ The second card chosen is the present of the question.
- ✓ The third and last card chosen is the future of the question.
- ✓ As you turn each card over, use the index cards you generated to help you with your reading.
- ✓ Keep the reading for each card in the past, the present, or the future *as it was chosen. Do not mix up the time frames.*
- ✓ Card one is still what brought the question to the table.
- ✓ Card two is still the current situation regarding the question as it was asked.
- ✓ Card three is still the outcome or direction of flow for the question as it was asked.

Remember, you are still a beginner.

- ✓ Stay simple.
- ✓ For the moment, stay within the index card meanings. Keep learning.
- ✓ Stay within the timeline given.
- ✓ Do *not* re-word the question.
- ✓ Do *not* add other cards to deepen or clarify at this time. That will occur with experience.
- ✓ Ask for feedback now and as the process unfolds. Learn as you go.
- ✓ Decide if your index cards are complete and helpful as constructed. Adapt or adjust as necessary.
- ✓ You may practice on more than one reading or querent. Practice is necessary. If you want to play the piano, you must practice the piano!
- ✓ Follow the instructions for each question. Keep them separate and private.

[*https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=showing%20the%20movement%20of%20the%20planets%20in%20the%20solar%20system&&view=detail&mid=691CB0C26800E75F6698691CB0C26800E75F6698&FORM=VDRVRV&fbclid=IwAR2aCfta5e6OrkYpuQs0O44U3f7e_5WwOD3TMwpFzovZJrpBwFcwXuE15e4](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=showing%20the%20movement%20of%20the%20planets%20in%20the%20solar%20system&&view=detail&mid=691CB0C26800E75F6698691CB0C26800E75F6698&FORM=VDRVRV&fbclid=IwAR2aCfta5e6OrkYpuQs0O44U3f7e_5WwOD3TMwpFzovZJrpBwFcwXuE15e4)

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What do we do with all this?

Reversed Cards
Shuffling and Cutting
Layouts or Spreads
Timing
Direction, Predominance
Combinations, Potpourri

Reversed Cards I want to start here because it's controversial. So many authors assign specific meanings to reversed cards, and those meanings seem to be mostly negative. There is enough inherent negativity in experience and the upright cards without deliberately adding more. Life is tough enough. You can memorize all that data if you choose but I do not find it necessary. I believe rigidly memorized phrases limit your readings, as I have mentioned many times in these lessons. There are 8.9 billion people on this globe as I write this in 2021. An extremely limited 78 upright and reversed meanings cannot possibly cover the experience of almost 9 billion people!

To use the three of swords as an example, the heart is suspended in a weeping gray sky, pierced with three blades. How can you make such a difficult card more difficult? If upright and in a position of the present, this is a difficult card. Someone's heart is broken, pierced by experience. If in a position of the past, this has been the background for the current experience. If in a future position, this will or can occur. If reversed, the seeds for heartbreak are there, but perhaps have not fully developed. This is pending, possible, or suggested. Since it is pending, is it preventable? What if the seeker is having an affair? Heartbreak is all around, but they may be the actual heart breaker; and they do have a choice.

Gail Fairfield in *Choice Centered Tarot* gave an excellent and simple method for reversed cards. It is my chosen method. When you encounter a reversed card in a reading, it simply means that the usual meaning of the card and the influence it has on the position being read is not fully developed or has not yet physically manifested.

Reversed Cards

Read reversed cards in the same manner as upright cards influencing the issues of the position they occupy, but read them as not fully formed, possible yet able to be influenced, pending, in the works, embryonic, seeds have been planted but have not fully developed, etc. Works for me.

Shuffling and Cutting

While there are multiple methods of thoroughly mixing the cards, two are common: riffing and hand-over-hand.

Riffing To me, it does not matter if the cards are all in one direction or mixed upright and reversed. You do not need to change the direction of reversed (head-to-foot) cards. One full stack, divided approximately in half, equals one smaller stack for each hand. Hold the bulk of the cards in your closed palms and use your thumbs to “riffle” the cards, allowing both stacks to mix thoroughly into the other stack. Do this several times until you know they are thoroughly mixed. If the deck is not mixed top to bottom, and you prefer that mix, simply turn one of the half decks around so you can get a thoroughly reversed mix. Be careful not to mix fronts and backs as you will then have to restack the entire deck. Some readers prefer their deck to be a single direction, without reversed cards. I prefer the natural selection that occurs as you use the deck and that there are usable reading differences for reversed cards.

Riffing is good for a new deck, one you may have divided for study purposes, for clearing the deck between readings, or just because you have the urge to do so. As mentioned about clearing the deck in chapter one, if you riffle the cards with the intention of clearing the deck, or riffle just the top edge of the pack with your thumb with the intention of clearing the deck of unwanted vibrations, the deck will clear. Plus, you may blow your own breath into the cards to re-stabilize your own imprint. Whatever action your hands perform will be by the instruction of your mind. What you do with conviction just *is!*

Hand-over-hand For the express purpose of a reading, use hand-over-hand to shuffle. Stack the deck as described in riffing, divide it approximately in half, and gently and deliberately shuffle, mix and separate the cards while concentrating on your specific question or the reading in general. To me, this is the best shuffling method for an actual reading. The same instructions apply for a client to shuffle their subconscious into the arrangement you will then read for them.

Cutting

Not all readers partition the deck. I prefer you know how to do it, but as you proceed with reading, you may choose to not divide the deck in any way. Stay with your personal instincts as you develop connections between your conscious and subconscious. I could easily offer the client the duty of shuffling or partitioning and choosing the deck that will be read for them.

When you have shuffled the cards enough (after a few shuffles, it will feel ready), set the cards face down in front of you. Again concentrate on a specific question or on an overview reading. Your dominant hand is the one you use to write. With your *non*-dominant hand cut the deck into approximate thirds stacking each 1/3 deck next to each other. Again using the *non*-dominant hand, choose which 1/3rd deck you wish to read. Do *not* look at the cards on the bottom. Set the two unselected decks aside, they will not be used in this general reading. Note: If this were a life reading, most of the full deck will be read. More specific instructions for that will be given later in this chapter.

Why? The left side of your body connects with the right side of your brain. The right side of your body connects with the left side of your brain. We are attempting to encourage the sharing of information between the dominant hemisphere and the non-dominant hemisphere of your brain, to link the conscious with the subconscious. If you were to read for someone else, you would instruct them as to how to shuffle and cut. You would not tell them why until after they had done the shuffle and cut so as not to unduly influence their work with the cards. You want this to be as natural a procedure as possible. You do *not* want the dominant conscious mind to stack the deck, intentionally or otherwise!

Your own mind knows almost all the answers you will ever need. Allowing your sub- or unconscious mind to shuffle and cut the deck brings the correct cards into proper position at the top of the partial or full deck as chosen. On the rare instance that the shuffler's mind might not know the answer, then the pattern of the cards as spread and the skill of the reader will determine the outcome. Psychic flashes are possible. The cards can be a psychic focus if you have that particular skill.

Layouts or Spreads

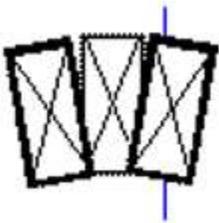
Using the partial deck chosen, start your card layout face down in whatever spread you choose, keeping them in order. You must keep the cards in the order dealt and spread. Do not adjust the question once shuffling is done or your answer will be compromised. It can be confusing at first to have too many pieces of information facing you. Face down allows you to read one card at a time. Turn the cards over as you need to read them. Once you are proficient, you can change your method, such as dealing the cards face up. Start with the easiest layout and progress into the more involved layouts as your skills develop. Practice, practice, practice!

Three card reading At the end of each Minor Arcana lesson, you were asked to practice a simple three card reading. Initially, the question was given aloud, clearly stated (this question cannot be re-worded once the cards are selected). The three cards represent the past, the present and the future of the question as it was asked. At first, you used ace through ten, then later added the courts. Once the study was done on the majors, you could then add them to your deck.

Now you must graduate to a more abstract general reading. Some people are more comfortable with the reading providing all the information. Some people have specific areas they wish addressed and will point out the subjects they are interested in. I offer them the choice. Progressing, you would then need to develop a reading for a silent question. Since you will not know the subject, you must let the selected cards give you the information you need. At times, you will directly answer the question in the mind of the seeker. At other times, you will give information that has nothing to do with the posed question. This is not a mistake. There are all forms of seekers and all forms of answers. There are...

- ✓ those who are open and forthcoming
- ✓ those who have no clue what they are doing or asking
- ✓ those who are afraid to commit and will question something meaningless, hoping you will give them the answer to what they really want
- ✓ those who are negative or wish to trick or trap you (unavoidable - denial runs strong in human experience)
- ✓ and more...the variety of human experience is endless.

Three Card Reading



Give the reading as you uncover it. Trust your subconscious knowledge and the information flow regardless of the attitude of the seeker. If you have ever watched television psychic John Edward as he practices his gift of communication with the dead, he is skilled because he has learned to accept his information flow and not deny it. This is a difficult thing to learn. We all want acceptance, but sometimes we do not get it. I watched him for several months and never once saw him fake anything. Rare!

Yes or No You may also use this card spread for a simple yes or no answer. Upright cards are yes, reversed cards are no. Use an uneven number of cards (3, 5, 7). Which answer predominates? You may also use two suits as yes and the other two suits as no - a simple, straight-forward choice, with no memory trick. However you enter the reading, stay with that system. Do *not* “change horses mid-stream”.

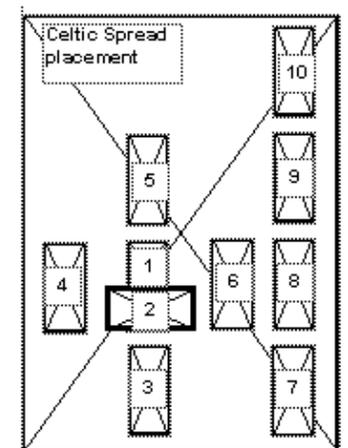
Celtic Cross This most common Tarot spread has been in use for centuries. The ten top cards are spread, face down, as diagrammed. Other authors may vary the order.

Placement of cards

- Position 1 is in the center of the spread
- Position 2 crossing card #1
- Position 3 below cards #1 and 2
- Position 4 to the left of cards #1 and 2
- Position 5 at the top of cards #1 and 2
- Position 6 to the right of cards #1 and 2
- Position 7 starts a new stack to right of card #6, bottom edge aligned with #3
- Position 8 at the top of card #7
- Position 9 at the top of card #8
- Position 10 at the top of card #9

Yes
or No

Celtic
Cross



Description of position

- ✓ Position 1 is the question, the issue, or the questioner, the signifier card.
- ✓ Position 2 is the obstacle or challenge to the question, issue or questioner. It is at cross purposes.
- ✓ Position 3 is the foundation, the basis on which the issue rests or from which it stems.
- ✓ Position 4 is the past of the question or issue, that which has been an influence but is now losing power.
- ✓ Position 5 is the pivot, the card of change, the immediate future, opportunity. This is not a final outcome card.
- ✓ Position 6 is an outcome card and represents the longer-range future of the question or issue.
- ✓ Position 7 is fears, concerns, worries, apprehensions of the question, the issue or the questioner, real or imagined.
- ✓ Position 8 is the support (or lack of it) from the environment and the pertinent people (friends, family, co-workers, etc.).
- ✓ Position 9 is the best you can hope for in the question or issue, your prayers and aspirations.
- ✓ Position 10 is the overall outcome, what *will* occur as opposed to what you *might like* to occur.
- ✓ Positions 6 and 10 are outcome cards and hold their value.

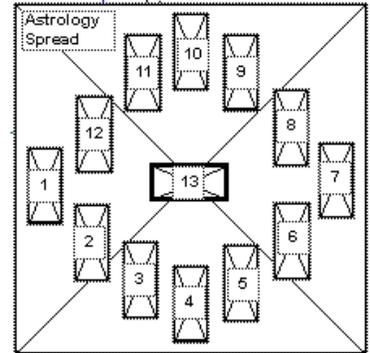
According to some authors, it is possible to gain more clarity by taking card #10, move it to the position of #1, and then use more cards from the chosen deck to offer more depth on the outcome (different focus). I find nine more cards to be more confusing than useful. If you use enough cards, you could answer almost anything, but I am not sure you could trust the answers.

Astrological Spread Based on the standard astrological house system, the meanings of the cards are related to the matters of the house in question. Thirteen cards are spread face down, in order from the cusp of the first house (the usual nine o'clock position on a standard clock, also known as the Ascendant) and are placed counter-clockwise around the perimeter of a circle (similar to the positions on the clock) with the thirteenth card placed in the center. This layout is easiest if you have an astrological background. Turn the cards over as you read them. If you are an astrologer, use the natural house ties to deepen the reading. Turn the cards face up as you read each segment. Astrologers will also note the #10 card as the Midheaven position in a chart.

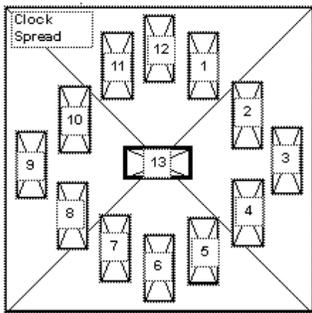
Meanings of placements

- ✓ #1 is the questioner, the question, the issue
- ✓ #2 is personal resources such as money, talents, values
- ✓ #3 is education, communication, transportation, siblings, neighbors and neighborhood
- ✓ #4 is the foundation - home, family, parents and personal security
- ✓ #5 is creativity - all children of the mind and the body, pleasure, lovers and uncommitted relationships, gambling and speculation
- ✓ #6 is service, work, job, illness, aunts, uncles and small pets
- ✓ #7 is partnerships - personal and business, open enemies, lawsuits
- ✓ #8 is partnership finances, debt, insurance, tax, destiny or fate, catastrophe, death and estates
- ✓ #9 is higher education, philosophy, religion, universities, teaching as opposed to learning, foreign involvement, the courts and law in general
- ✓ #10 is business, profession, achievement, reputation, and honor
- ✓ #11 is aspiration, friendships, groups and clubs, results of career
- ✓ #12 is self-sabotage, hidden obstacles or enemies, secret activities
- ✓ #13 center is the overall lesson, the ambiance of the reading and the reader, the message for overall guidance and growth

Astrological Spread



Clock Spread



Clock Spread In more modern parlance, think of the cards in a spread as a storyboard layout for telling a tale in a sequential manner. For non-astrologers, this is the easier layout. It uses the same information and compartmentalization, but places the blocks of information on the face of a standard clock. Turn the cards face up as you read each segment.

- ✓ 9 o'clock is the questioner, the question, the issue
- ✓ 8 o'clock is personal resources - money, talents, values
- ✓ 7 o'clock is education, communication, transportation, siblings, neighbors and neighborhood
- ✓ 6 o'clock is foundation - home, family, parents and personal security.
- ✓ 5 o'clock is creativity: all children of the mind and body, pleasure, lovers and uncommitted relationships, gambling and speculation
- ✓ 4 o'clock is service, work, job, illness, aunts, uncles and small pets
- ✓ 3 o'clock is partnerships - personal / business, open enemies, lawsuits
- ✓ 3 o'clock is partnership finances, debt, insurance, tax, destiny or fate, catastrophe, death, estates
- ✓ 1 o'clock is higher education, philosophy, religion, universities, teaching rather than learning, foreign involvement, general courts / law
- ✓ 12 o'clock is business, profession, achievement, reputation, and honor
- ✓ 11 o'clock is aspiration, friendships, groups, clubs, results of career
- ✓ 10 o'clock is self-sabotage, hidden obstacles / enemies, secret activity
- ✓ 13 in the center is the overall lesson, the ambiance of the reading and the reader, the message for overall guidance and growth.

Many readers will place additional cards on questionable positions. I prefer to keep the reading simple and allow the single card to give me the information needed. Keep the deck in the order shuffled and cut if you are going to use more cards only from the selected 1/3rd of the deck.

Deep Readings

Deep Readings are adapted from spreads authored by A.E. Thierens and are usually reserved for major therapy. I would not use these on a regular basis - it could take hours to read, with an enormous energy drain. Been there, done that, won't do it again. Two diagrams are provided, the astrological spread and the clock spread. If you are not an astrologer, use the clock format. If you are an astrologer, use the familiar astrological format.

Separate your major and minor decks (two). Shuffle each deck separately and thoroughly. All cards are spread face down. Start with the majors, spread positions 1 through 12. The balance of the majors become Daath pack #1 (a 13th position in the center of the wheel). Using the minors, spread three rounds of cards on each position 1 through 13 (the 12 outer wheels positions and the center position). The balance of the minor cards become Daath pack #2 (the equivalent of position #14 in the center of the circle.) Using the pack of cards on one position, flip over the cards for each of the 12 outside positions. As you do, the bottom card becomes the top. All cards will now be visible all at once.

To read, cards 1-12 (majors) are the governing principles for each position (see previous position information for either the clock or the astrological spreads and stick with your easiest chosen concept. The first layer of minors, cards 14-26, are the past of the position. The second layer, cards 27-39, are the present of that position. The third layer, cards 40-52, are the future of that position.

- ✓ Daath pack #1 must be shuffled (keep face down) while concentrating on clarification of the major spiritual lesson to be gained from the reading. Choose one card at random from that pack to read.
- ✓ Daath card #26 clarifies the position of the self
- ✓ Daath card #39 clarifies the environmental influence
- ✓ Daath card #52 clarifies an incoming or upcoming influence

Daath pack #2 must be shuffled as above (keep face down until selected) and may be used to clarify one individual position if necessary. While shuffling, know your choice of card *will be* the first card in the deck or a card at random from that pack as clarification. Do not change your mind when selecting.

Note that the majors provide the governing lesson or principle. The minors provide a past, a present and a future for each position. The Daath packs are very selective. They are for clarification and guidance only.

Life Reading

Life Reading Using similar principles as the Thierens spreads, this reading is meant to be a once in a lifetime reading. Be very careful when spreading the cards and write down all the positions and cards so that, if necessary, you may lay them out again for further study. The whole deck of 78 cards is shuffled, and 52 cards are used. Again, choose the clock or the astrological positions according to your skills and preference. Spread four rounds of thirteen cards each (the thirteenth goes in the center). Cards 1-12 are the past (majors or minors). Cards 14-25 are the present. Cards 27-38 are the near future. Cards 40-51 are the more distant future. The Daath pack in the center, Cards 13, 26, 39, 52, are the overview, life lesson, guidance and message. Turn the position deck cards face up so the bottom card becomes the top. Remember, there should only be *one* life reading, keep a record of the cards and positions for review.

In my possession, I have and have studied about 25 books on Tarot, with all sorts of layouts, from the hopelessly confusing to those of ultimate simplicity. Once you have practiced the Celtic Cross and the Astrological or Clock spreads (simple or deep), then experiment with other layouts. Design your own layout - after all, *you* are the reader. For example, an accomplished reader in my area, an old friend, uses every seventh card for her reading. She places a card on the reading layout of choice, discards the next six cards, places a second card on the layout, discards the next six, etc. It works for her. You are building links to your personal subconscious. Trust your instincts.

Whatever works for you is fine - just stay consistent. Your subconscious needs some pattern when it is arranging the cards in the deck while shuffling. Also, don't switch horses in midstream. If you have shuffled with one layout or intent in mind, stay with it for that layout and reading. To change methods, do not do it *during* a reading, as the reading itself may not be trustworthy.

Spiritual Guidance A tarot reader from many years ago, Charles San, used only the majors for a spiritual, personal reading. Thoroughly shuffle the majors. Deal six cards face down, then one face up (7th card). The face up card is the querent or the significator. Set the significator in the middle and return the six cards dealt (unread) to the bottom of the dealing deck. Then deal two cards down, and one up, seven times. The seven upturned cards provide the reading and are placed in a circle about the significator card (no particular beginning point). The balance of the cards are discards and should be returned to the bottom of the dealing deck or you will run out of cards. Should you wish, you can use this spread for another person, but no question must be asked or answered. This spread is for spiritual guidance only.

Spiritual Guidance

Feng Shui (Bagua)

Feng Shui The layout (called bagua) is a cube of 9 squares with cards dealt three cards each, face down, 1-2-3, left to right across the top. 4-5-6, left to right across the middle. 7-8-9, left to right across the bottom. Place three cards on each position before moving to the next position. The three cards can represent the past, present and future, or you can use the cards as a complete story. You can read positions in any order, except that card #5 should be read last. Use clarification cards sparingly. Too many cards confuse the reading. This layout was contributed by my friend, Tarot reader Hyla K. Bucy and is used with her permission.

- ✓ Position 1: wealth and abundance
- ✓ Position 2: fame and reputation
- ✓ Position 3: love and relationships
- ✓ Position 4: family and ancestors
- ✓ Position 5: overall and health*
- ✓ Position 6: children or creating
- ✓ Position 7: wisdom and knowledge
- ✓ Position 8: career
- ✓ Position 9: beneficial friends or travel

*Use caution when doing readings on health. Many people do not handle this information well, especially astrological earth signs (Taurus, Virgo, and Capricorn). Choose your words wisely. From the movie and story Mary Poppins, “a spoon full of sugar helps the medicine go down!” This could also have legal ramifications.

Hindu Chakras In the ancient Hindu systems, chakras are energy vortices uniting the spiritual bodies with the physical body. They channel available energy. Each chakra serves a specific purpose. While the usual study is of the seven main chakras up the center of the body from the pubic bone to the crown of the head, there are many other smaller chakras. My knowledge of them comes primarily from my work as a healer. If you have deeper knowledge of the chakra system than I am able to give in this necessarily brief section, please expand this reading to include your knowledge. Use the instructions to set up only. I would consider this to be an advanced spread, perhaps not one I would encourage beginners to use. I did want to make it available to those who wish to explore the more spiritual dimensions of self.

Hindu Chakras

We will limit this tarot spread to the seven main chakras. Deal three cards in each position in a straight line, bottom to top, one for each of the main chakras. Place the three cards on each position before moving to the next position. The three cards can represent the past, present and future or you can use them in a single position as a complete story. Read the card in relation to the meaning of the chakra itself. Use clarification cards sparingly. Too many cards can confuse the reading. This layout was also contributed by my friend, Tarot reader Hyla K. Bucy.

- ✓ *Root* The bottom chakra at the base of the spine governs our physical basis in life, the primal quality of personal survival and being grounded in reality. The solid parts of our anatomy.
- ✓ *Sacral* The second chakra, located near the belly button, governs the primal quality of survival of the species, our sexual drive, our drive to relate, sometimes driven by lust rather than affection. It is the fluid portion of our anatomy.
- ✓ *Solar Plexus* The third chakra is located near the stomach area, and is the primary focus of assimilation, physically through food, liquids and bodily processes, psychically through absorption or siphoning of energy from others, the emotionally charged center of will.
- ✓ *Heart* The fourth chakra is located near the heart, the center or pivot of the chakra system. Evolving metaphysicians need to operate from their heart or higher. Learn to operate from the more objective heart center rather than the emotional control of the Solar Plexus.
- ✓ *Throat* The fifth chakra is located at the hollow of the throat on the front of a person's neck and has a great deal to do with all forms of communication, giving and receiving, withholding or ignoring.
- ✓ *Brow* The sixth chakra is located at the 3rd eye region in the middle of the forehead, between the eyebrows, and just above the nose. This is the command post for the lower centers and has a great deal to do with all forms of visioning, seeing, and prophecy.
- ✓ *Crown* The seventh chakra. is the seat of spirituality, the connection between the physical reality we all live in and the spiritual reality which is the larger part of our life and contains the physical within itself.

Tree of Life

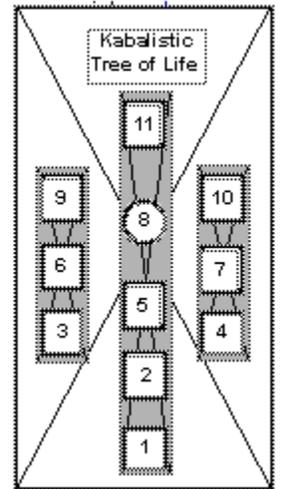
Kabbalistic Tree of Life This is a more advanced reading for those who are working on their spirituality and their evolution, and is not intended for beginners. My chosen material largely stems from my long-time friend Mark Glugover's *Grounding the Energy of the Tree of Life*, an incredible book on learning how to ground the various energies in your life through meditation. Although Mark does many forms of reading, he did not contribute specifically to this layout. This is my adaptation using his correspondences.

Lay out eleven cards, face down in the shape of the Tree of Life (see diagram), starting with the bottom and working systematically to the top. There will be three columns of cards.

- ✓ The left column will consist of cards 3, 6, and 9.
- ✓ The right column will consist of cards 4, 7 and 10.
- ✓ The middle column will consist of cards 1, 2, 5, 8, and 11. Cards 1-7 and 9-11 are Sephiroth.
- ✓ Card #8 is Da'at – the Abyss, not a Sephiroth.
- ✓ The left column is the Pillar of Severity.
- ✓ The right column is the Pillar of Mercy.
- ✓ The middle column is the Pillar of Perfection (unity).

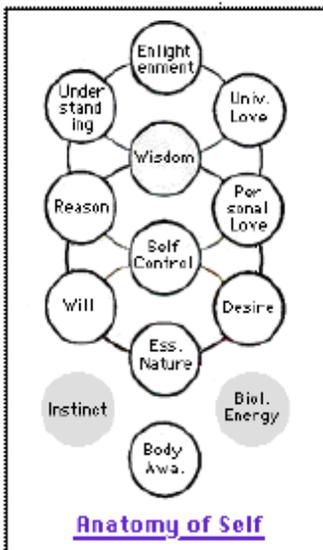
Material on the columns was suggested by *The Holy Kabbalah* by A.E. Waite. There are many renditions of the Kabbalah available, with attributes of each Sephiroth in question. Kabbalah is a lifetime study. This layout is meant as an introduction only.

Use clarification cards sparingly. The cards may be read individually as they apply to each position. In addition, read them collectively as columns. Turn the cards over as you read them - it eliminates confusion. You should not need clarification cards as this is deep reading and may require meditation to obtain the depth of meaning for each card. Again...should you be well versed in the Kabbalah, please apply your own understanding to each position and reading. This is a marvelous area for you to study. Feedback would be appreciated. There is a wealth of enlightenment in the Kabbalah, a multi-lifetime study.



- ✓ Position 1: Malkhut, The Kingdom, the Presence. Physical reality and presence, grounded presence, crystalline clarity.
- ✓ Position 2: Yesod, Foundation. Imagination and creativity.
- ✓ Position 3: Hod, Majesty. Communication, logic, listening, timing.
- ✓ Position 4: Nezah, Endurance. Patience, trust, virtue, harmony.
- ✓ Position 5: Tif'eret, Beauty. Integration, synthesis.
- ✓ Position 6: Gevurah, Power and Might. Activation.
- ✓ Position 7: Hesed, Mercy and Love. Expansion.
- ✓ Position 8 Da'at, Knowledge. Regeneration, transformation (not a Sefirot).
- ✓ Position 9 Binah, Understanding. Structure.
- ✓ Position 10 Hokhmah, Wisdom. Inspiration.
- ✓ Position 11 Keter, the Crown, Divine Will. Dissolve blockages.

Anatomy of Self As I was preparing this lesson, researching symbology from all the sources I could locate, I found a modern Tree of Life. It looked very interesting, but I have not had personal experience with it. I have appended it to the diagrammed layout pages for your experimenting and research along with these suggestions to get you started. Draw a practice board with these positions. Use one card per position, or a significator plus one card per position. As you are preparing the deck for the spread, have in mind how you plan to lay it out. Whatever you decided when shuffling, keep that pattern intact and do not change it. Once you get the feel of it, try more than one card per position.



Timing

Again, it's a personal choice. Practice with the possibilities until you find "your" preference. Trust your instincts.

Simple Use the number on the card as a starting point. If you were to turn over a "two" card – major or minor decks – you can read it as "in a two" (i.e., two days, two weeks, two months, two years.) Occasionally this will need to be pinpointed more specifically.

Seasons Use the suits as seasons. Look at the symbology on the cards themselves. In the northern hemisphere, spring is the season of budding plants. Summer is the season for rain and fertility. Fall is the season of harvesting crops. Winter is austere and least hospitable (authors vary).

Spring: Wands; Summer: Cups; Fall: Pentacles; Winter: Swords

Our world has become so accessible. Seasons are reversed below the equator. Winter in the northern hemisphere is summer in the southern hemisphere. You may need to condition your reading if this hemisphere concept becomes a part of it.

Use equinoxes and solstices as beginning points

- ✓ March 21 is the Spring Equinox,
- ✓ June 21 the Summer Solstice,
- ✓ September 21 as the Autumnal Equinox,
- ✓ Dec 21 is the Winter Solstice, all northern hemisphere.

Weeks If you need further clarification, once you have selected the suit for the season, use cards ace through queen (thirteen cards) for each of the thirteen weeks of that season. Use the king of the suit as already fully matured and, therefore, governing the last week of the previous season. Four weeks out of the 52-week year will have double representation (not usually within the same reading). If doubling should ever occur, take it as confirmation. For example, using the seven of cups as a card of timing:

- ✓ In a seven: seven days, weeks, months, or years
- ✓ Arbitrary season: cups = summer, starts June 21
- ✓ Seventh card of suit: seventh week of summer season

Duration A common question is, “This reading is good for how long?” Usually, I limit the effectiveness of a card reading to three months - that is my usual personal experience. Occasionally, the question asked will determine the duration of the symbology. For example, “Will I get pregnant this year?” The reading would then represent a year. “Will I ever become a movie star?” indicates an answer of longer duration. Since so few people ever achieve stardom, you could guess the answer would automatically be, “No” forever. “No” is not necessarily true.

Each year in Hollywood, California, the most impossible dreams come true. I am an “*American Idol*” TV fan – three years running as I originally wrote this. I have watched the contestants become successful against great odds, including many of the “losers”. I now own the albums of two such

“losers”. Their voices are marvelous. The overall worst singer of year three, William Huang, has (at this moment) many TV and public appearances, a video and a CD to his credit. To my mind, he made a success of singing terribly. How long he would be able to ride this particular success train may be shown by the cards. “*American Idol*” started with two announcers - one has made an incredible success of opportunity but the other has disappeared from public view. Miracles do occur, but so do tragedies. Let the symbols on the cards give you the information and the answers you need.

Direction

So many authors, so many opinions. Some use simple map directions. East is to the right, west to the left, north is up, south is down. Because of my extensive astrological background, it is easiest for me to use astrological directions which are reversed from map directions. Why? A cartographer (map maker) faces the Earth as he assigns direction. An astrologer, with their back to the Earth, faces the heavens and the actual motion of the Sun to assign direction. The Sun only rises 23.5 degrees above the Equator at its most extreme northerly position and 23.5 degrees below the Equator at its most extreme southern position. In order to see the full movement of the Sun in the northern hemisphere, the astrologer must face due south. That places east on your left (sunrise), west on your right (sunset), north behind you (bottom of chart), and south at your face (top).

Once you have learned a method (again, mine is astrological), it is difficult to use another method and the difficulty has nothing to do with validity. It is simply difficult to make your mind go in two directions at the same time. Once orientation has been solved, the assignment of suits is arbitrary as are all assignments of beginning and ending points. The ancients started their zodiac with Taurus. Currently, we start the zodiac with Aries. It is not a case of right or wrong, it is a case of what works at the time and the effect of the Changing of the Ages. I am not an expert in geographic representation, so I prefer to use a credible source for this assignment of values. Temporarily, it would be wise to start with an established, long-standing system and experiment at a later time. *The Golden Dawn*, authored by Israel Regardie, is a system of correspondences from a highly-regarded occult group that has been in existence since the middle ages. They produced the BOTA deck. The Golden Dawn assigns:

Pentacles: north; Swords: east; Cups: west; Wands: south

What about directions on the card itself? Up, down, right, left, forward, back, or diagonal. Is this your right or the figure on the card's right? There is a difference. Both are valid, just distinguish the perspective to determine the effect on the card and the reading.

A human's left side, as previously mentioned, is considered feminine in nature, passive, magnetic, and receptive. (But what if you are a left-handed person? This needs to be addressed personally by you.) A human's right side is considered masculine in nature, assertive, electric, and dynamic. As we have noticed with the figures, it is possible to have your assertive hand in a receptive mode. Is this contradiction or paradox? Possibly. Convenience? Possibly. To the most feasible degree, assign direction according to the perspective of the figure on the card itself (e.g., the *figure's* right shoulder). If necessary, read from your perspective, and simply say so (e.g., to the right of the *card*, not the figure's right). Any perspective is valid - just identify that perspective to keep the reading clear. The reader creates metaphor to describe the experience.

- ✓ Up (towards the heavens, seeking guidance?)
- ✓ Down (towards Earth, practical application)
- ✓ Facing forward (facing the experience)
- ✓ Facing away (not facing directly or avoiding the experience)
- ✓ Back of figure (back to or moving away from the experience)

Predominance

You are aware that there are two decks contained within the 78 tarot cards, 22 majors and 56 minors, about 2 1/2 times as many minors as there are majors. When you are working with the full deck of 78, you can expect, on average, to average about 2 1/2 times as many minors in any spread. For example, with ten cards spread, two or three majors would be average. More than three would call attention to itself.

- ✓ *Majors* If you notice that you have far more majors than average in any spread, it is a statement that higher energy is in control. Perhaps this experience contributes to the overall destiny with universal concepts afoot.
- ✓ If that same dealing of ten cards contained no majors, it would indicate that the issue is experience and process, not necessarily influenced by higher states of consciousness or awareness. Everything cannot be critical or we would not survive!
- ✓ Many majors can also indicate higher guidance needed such as from a doctor, lawyer, or priest.

- ✓ Courts 56 cards in the minor deck are divided into forty cards of experience and sixteen court cards.
- ✓ If many court cards show up in a reading, expect that the reading is about people, or that multiple people are involved in the situation.
- ✓ Anytime you introduce others into the equation, the seeker has less control.
- ✓ Some control must reside in the hands of the “others”.
- ✓ The larger the number represented, the higher the percentage of control.

Suits At times, an unusual number of one suit will dominate the reading. If you have four suits possible and are laying out ten cards, and many are of one suit, that indicates that the qualities of the suit are primary to the question or are the answer to the question. Medieval feudal society saw:

- ✓ the wand as the weapon of the peasant, agriculture;
- ✓ the cup as sacred vessel for the clergy,
- ✓ the sword for the warrior,
- ✓ the pentacle (money) for commerce.

Multiples of:

- ✓ cups could indicate, home, family, relationship, religious issues
- ✓ wands could indicate business, entrepreneurialism, commerce, creativity
- ✓ pentacles could indicate money, possessions, agriculture, property
- ✓ swords could indicate strife, ideas, aggression, defense, surgery

Multiples by number or face Rev. Harriet Smiley was my long-ago spiritual teacher. She is one of my personal giants identified on the dedication page of each of my books. She was in her seventies when I met her and had been an operating psychic since age five. She was awesome in her ability. She was not an Astrologer or a Numerologist, but she had devised her own method of reading sign, number and suit. She absolutely refused to have anything to do with Tarot cards, considered them evil, and was pragmatic in her belief. I was curious and so I learned both methods.

Instead Harriet taught how to read a standard playing deck, which can easily be used here. Harriet used a form of mnemonic with the cards, several examples:

- ✓ aces = places,
 - ✓ ten = dens,
 - ✓ nine = time,
 - ✓ eight = state,
 - ✓ five = life,
 - ✓ four = door,
 - ✓ kings = authority,
 - ✓ queens = women,
 - ✓ jacks = young adult men,
 - ✓ pages = youths, no gender.
-
- ✓ If four of a particular card showed up in one reading, Harriet considered it positive and definitive in interpretation.
 - ✓ If only three of a particular card showed up, it meant the same issues were being talked over or planned.
 - ✓ For example, four kings meant a court of law, three kings meant necessary counsel with an attorney.
 - ✓ Four aces meant a positive change of places (move), three meant a move was under discussion.

Play with this when you get an opportunity. There's more to it than is initially apparent. I have only five copies of Harriet's out-of-print book, more will never be available. She was born April 1, 1900, and died in 1985. Thank you to my giant on whose shoulders I stand!

Combinations

This is particularly useful with court cards.

- ✓ If you have a king and a queen showing in a spread, are they of the same suit? If so, they are a couple that belongs together.
- ✓ Positionally, are they facing each other? If so, there is an open and agreeable state between them.
- ✓ Do they have their backs to each other? They may belong together as a team, but they are in a mode of disagreement or have turned their backs on one another.
- ✓ Is one facing, the other ignoring?
- ✓ Is there another card interspersed between their positions? It could be interfering or mediating, depends on the card and the form of question.
- ✓ If the king and queen are not of the same suit, they may be forced into a situation they would not have chosen, similar to marriages of state or convenience. They are not suited.
- ✓ Same considerations apply: facing, turning back on, interfering, mediation.
- ✓ A knight with a queen may have aspirations, but is over-reaching his position, especially if not of the same suit. Trouble can come out of this combination.
- ✓ Where is the gaze of the figure on the card? The eyes show the direction the figure will take.
- ✓ How does that apply to the question or issue?

Overall Impression

Get an overall feel of the spread before you attempt to define each card (details). Look for similarity in the cards as spread.

- ✓ If the Lovers, the two or three of cups, the four of wands, the Hierophant, or the Ace or ten of cups show up in the same reading, there's going to be a wedding!
- ✓ If pentacles and wands show up in one reading, the reading is about business, resource, ambition, enterprise.
- ✓ If there are many swords with the five, seven or nine of wands, there may be a fight or a severe health problem looming, particularly if the nine or ten of swords is/are drawn.
- ✓ Messages may be shown by pages, the two or eight of wands, or the four or six of cups.

When studying the cards in general, make groupings to establish connections. Notice external landscapes predominating on the minors. For example, majors only, sky or background:

- ✓ Yellow: Fool, Magician, Empress, Chariot, Strength, Justice
- ✓ Blue: High Priestess, Lovers, Wheel of Fortune, Star, Moon, Sun, Judgement, World
- ✓ Red: Emperor
- ✓ Gray: Hierophant, Hermit, Hanged Man, Death, Temperance
- ✓ Black: Devil, Tower
- ✓ Yellow, blue and gray are the most common on both majors and minors.
- ✓ Unusual, and therefore significant because they are unusual, are red and black.
- ✓ Black does appear in the minors, particularly in the swords.
- ✓ Emperor is the only major with a red (very unusual) background.

Another example, majors only, is the number of figures on the card (possible tie):

- ✓ One: Magician, High Priestess, Empress, Emperor, Hermit, Justice, Hanged Man, Temperance, Star
- ✓ Two: Fool (with dog), Strength (with lion), Tower, Sun (with horse)
- ✓ Three: Hierophant, Lovers (with angel), Chariot (with sphinxes), Devil (two humans with devil), Moon (three animals),
- ✓ Five: Death (skeleton, priest, king, woman, child), World (center plus four figures in corners)
- ✓ Seven: Wheel (four in corners, three on wheel), Judgement (angel plus six humans)

As you develop your reading skills, combinations will make themselves known to you. Jot them down as part of your permanent notes.

Potpourri

Coloring of eyes, complexion and hair. Previously chosen:

Wands: lightest; Cups: medium; Swords: darker; Pentacles: darkest

Colored drawings If possible, depending upon the size of your colored drawings, paste each completed coloring on the back of the appropriate index card. You will have the information on one side and the colored sample on the back. Be sure your index cards are complete - that is more important than gluing your colored sample on the back. It is recommended that you color the deck *three times* to firmly embed the symbols and the color cues in your subconscious. Coloring is relaxing, and the information is easily absorbed. The size of the black and white drawing is your choice.

Why readings? There are many applications for your reading skills. Aside from the human desire to generally learn about themselves and their lives, specific areas of interest are common to readers. Relationships, money / business, and health were the topics most requested of me, but there are many more areas of interest.

Relationship questions take many forms:

- ✓ Will I have a relationship – ever?
- ✓ Is my current relationship safe?
- ✓ I'm having an affair. Please give me permission.
- ✓ Is my partner having an affair? Please blame them.
- ✓ Should I get a divorce?
- ✓ Should I commit to my relationship?
- ✓ My children (or parents) are difficult. Advice?
- ✓ Should I go into a business partnership?
- ✓ Is my partner honest or lying? Etc.

Money / business are also common issues and take many forms:

- ✓ I'm broke; do you see money coming in?
- ✓ Will I win the lottery?
- ✓ Am I being cheated?
- ✓ Should I invest, buy, sell?
- ✓ I'm really dissatisfied. Am I in the right career?
- ✓ Should I change jobs?
- ✓ Am I about to lose my job?
- ✓ Will I get the promotion or position? Etc.

Health. This is a legal quagmire. Be careful.

- ✓ I do not feel well, tell me - what is wrong?
- ✓ My doctor says I should have surgery. Should I?
- ✓ My medication bothers me. Should I stop taking it?
- ✓ If one pill is good, are two better?
- ✓ I am a chronic complainer. Give me some ammunition.
- ✓ Life is too hard. I am thinking about ending it. Advice?

Privacy and legality

I have been asked amazing questions under very public circumstances, questions that should have been asked in private and of a doctor or lawyer. People give total strangers the most incredibly intimate and personal detail and ask them to make life and death decisions or judgments that have far-reaching effects on their lives. My middle name is not God. I am not qualified to make decisions for strangers (or even friends) and I refuse to do so. I have enough to keep me busy running my own life. I will give what information is present for the reading and allow the person to make up their own mind. I never advise anything contrary to medical or legal advice - that is social and legal suicide. But I can ask questions. I can point out discrepancies suggested by the cards. I can suggest that authorities be consulted or re-consulted.

For example... Many years ago I was doing a reading on a client. I got the strongest impression that there was a problem with medication, that something was poisoning the client. She was taking blood pressure medication at the time. I suggested she go to the doctor's office and be re-examined, which she did. Her blood pressure was taken three times by different nurses. Apparently, the medication had done a great job...too great a job. She had started with high blood pressure but was now registering low blood pressure. The medication had served its purpose (and it was supposed to be a continuing medication) too well. She was immediately pulled off the drug and monitored by her doctor to bring her system back into balance. We got the job done, but I did *not* make the changes myself. I allowed the experts do it. Probably she never told her doctor that her Tarot reader suggested she be re-checked. Darn...another opportunity for conversion and documentation lost! Give the information you get, and give it responsibly. Do your job. Do not diagnose or prescribe, get them to professional help.

Escapism

There are those who are so overwhelmed by life and responsibility that they really do want you to “do it for them”. Don’t do it! Do not allow yourself to become someone’s crutch. In modern parlance, this makes you an enabler. You help them most by encouraging them to stand on their own two feet and face life and decisions themselves. Have faith in them and be their cheerleader. Know your limitations. Send them for professional psychological, medical or legal counseling. You are not qualified in all ways to know when a person is beyond the scope of your help. Not even the professionals recognize all the problems up front. Set your own personal parameters and stick to them. Strengthen the person by encouraging their self-reliance. They may be scared, but sometimes we all are scared. Life is tough!

Self-fulfilling prophecy

This can be a tough one. There are people who will listen to what you say and then do their very best to make that come true - largely unconsciously, but effectively. They are hard to recognize up front, but they can give you an incredible reputation in a very short time, good or bad, earned or not. Disclaimers are handy here. Add provisos, conditions, and tell them not to create the given outcome but to be educated and observant, and to act on opportunity (also called Serendipity).

Who asks for a reading?

Almost anyone in the world can ask for a reading - except very left-brained pragmatists, who identify themselves as realists. The implication is that we, as readers, are not realists. All races, creeds, colors, sexes, ages, vocations, intelligences, economics, and types are potential seekers. Over the years, my clientele has turned from the general to the metaphysical. I don’t know if that is a general trend, or just my experience. At one time I had a large practice. Since I have retired to write my books, I have less time to read and only a few long-time clients.

How often should you read?

I mentioned under “timing” that I see a general Tarot reading as valid for about three months. The type of question asked may demand a longer time frame. I do not want to provide a crutch, so I do not encourage frequent readings. More frequent readings can mean more money, but that is not why I read. I read to assist the seeker with an information flow, and to better equip them to make good choices and decisions in their lives. Personally, I would rather teach a person to read than to read for them. The old saying (paraphrased) rings true for me, “Feed a man and you help him for a moment. Teach him to grow food and you help him for a lifetime.” The same is true of spiritual practices.

Above all, be kind when reading for yourself or another. Your middle name is not God. Truth and prophecy are not usually written in stone. Perspective determines positive and negative. Life is difficult enough without some well-meaning person (you) spewing warnings and negatives. You can still always say what you have to say. As a matter of fact, if someone asks for your input, they deserve the truth. Unfortunately, they may not be able to handle the truth. The very wise Mary Poppins once said, “A spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down.” Kindness, compassion, caring, manners, and discernment should all be part of every reading. Say what you have to say - nicely, kindly, with an eye to how the person will respond once they are alone with the information.

You have a lot of study, practice and experience to do, but you are well on your journey.

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Learning Method #2: the Sorbonne Method

Reading Method # 2: The Sorbonne Method of Reading and Learning as demonstrated in *The Art of Study (The Sorbonne Method)* by Edmond Bordeaux Szekely. The highlights of the method are:

1. Be selective as to your reading material. Since you will be spending more time with each book, pick only the very best sources. Be eclectic in your selection, read diverse topics, with a cross-section of cultures, paying particular attention to masterpieces. Compile a list of the primary books you desire, revise the list as necessary. Society in general is on information overload - you will want *quality* in reading, *not quantity*.
2. Read the entire text through once including the preface, introduction, table of contents, jacket, etc (to gain insight as to who the author is, why the book was written and the method used). Do not stop to comprehend each individual paragraph, you are reading to obtain an overview. *Do note any original ideas or insights as they occur*. When you re-read the material, it is not possible to exactly re-experience the insight, or at times to even locate it (see note 7).
3. Create landmarks in the book, underline main concepts, separate different groups of ideas. Do not separate organic units – but definitely separate incompatible groups of ideas. You can also number each section on the margin, to tie together separate pages, referring to the same idea by their numbers.
4. Use your creative imagination. Translate the words into feelings and/or pictures, parables, pageantry, or rituals. Think in pictures. Intellectual perception is insufficient, “*truth must elevate human reaction*” (author unknown).

5. Translate concepts into your own language and note this along the right margin. Summarize and number according to respective text numbers. Key the table of contents to the main themes in your marginal notes by subject number for quick reference.
6. To develop your memory, note questions relating to the text along the left margin, the answers to which are your summaries on the right. To test your memory, cover the text and summaries and try to answer your own questions. Repeat the test as needed. Number questions to correlate with the text and summaries. Read your right margin notes again the same day, then one week later, one month later, and one year later. You will create a lifetime memory.
7. As you are reading and studying, you may stimulate original thoughts or extensions of thought. Once passed, these insights are difficult to re-achieve. Summarize and retain these on the top margin, numbering according to the text. Develop those concepts and become an author.
8. Make note of everything you do not understand on any page in the bottom margin (again numbering according to the text). Diagnose your own intellectual deficiencies or weaknesses.
9. Correct those deficiencies by looking them up in an encyclopedia or dictionary, or use other methods. Use a separate page if necessary, noting page number and text number. Now you know why I suggest that you use a loose-leaf binder.
10. File these notes for the future as intellectual pictures of your individual evolution. Occasionally check back on your own progress. Use the knowledge you have learned and put it into action in your life.

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* Over twenty years ago, as I write this section, I had the unusual good fortune to meet Eden Gray, one of the Tarot authors cited above. We were both interviewed for a local television program. We got to have a quick dinner at a nearby fast-food restaurant as we worked our way through the filming. What an intelligent, thoughtful, considerate metaphysician! It's a lovely memory that I treasure.

Symbolic Dictionary (A Sampling of Possibilities)

A good place to begin would be: Astrology, Metaphysical Dictionary,
World Mythology, Numerology, Psychology (Dream Dictionary)

Astrology

Elements: fire, earth, air, water

air: mind, intellect, relational, communication, ideas

earth: material, tangible, physical, practical, down-to-earth

fire: electric, dynamic, activating, vivacious, enterprise, initiative

water: emotion, affection, sensitive, nurturing, psychic, artistic

Planets:

Seven inner: Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn

Sun: higher self, God in individual incarnation

Moon: symbol for astral plane and desire nature.

Mercury: messenger of the gods, everyday mind, communication,

Venus: circle love, giving with expectation, relationship, value system

Mars: action, power, force, astral projective

Jupiter: benefic, expands consciousness and self

Saturn: limits, defines manifestation, teacher and tester

Three outer (transcendent, outside Saturn's boundary and limits):

Uranus, Neptune, Pluto

Uranus: original sky god, husband of Gaia / Mother Earth, Father of other gods, creative principle, intuition, insight

Neptune: spirituality, inspiration, spiral love, giving for sake of giving, not to inspire return

Pluto: unconscious, transforms, regenerates,

Zodiac: twelve modes of energy, celestial forces

Kabbalah

Hebrew letters in order: Aleph 1, Beth 2, Gimel 3, Daleth 4, He 5, Vav 6, Zayin 7, Heth 8, Teth 9, Yod 10, Kaph 20 (500 final), Lamed 30, Mem 40 (600 final), Nun 50 (700 final), Samekh 60, Ayin 70, Pe 80 (800 final), Tsade 90 (900 final), Qoph 100, Resh 200, Sin 300, Tav 400

Three mother letters: beginning, end, middle

Aleph - fire, Mem - water, Shin - air

Seven double letters: Beth, Daleth, Kaph, Phe, Resh, Gimel, Tau, possess two sounds, one strong, one weak, representing active / passive principles, related to planetary principles, which are dual (seven visible planets - seven spirits before the throne),

Seven opposites: life / death, peace / strife, knowledge / ignorance, wealth / poverty, grace / sin, fruitfulness / sterility, dominion / slavery

Positive / science, negative / divination

Twelve single letters: He, Vau, Zain, Teth, Nun, Samekh, Ayin, Tsaddi, Heth, Yod, Quoph, Lamed, (twelve zodiac signs?)

Six directions: E / W / N / S / depth / height, all sustained from central point (seventh direction),

Seven names of God

Aleph and Ayin are silent (vowels)

Aleph– silent, Hebrew for “ox” (Taurus was first sign of ancient Hebrew zodiac), creative energy, motive power, mother letter (1 - fire), A

Ayin: eye, silent, (70) O

Beth: the mouth of a man, house, abode, temple of Living God, (2), B

Caph or Kaph: Palm, the hand in the act of holding, (20, final 500) K

Cheth: fence, (8) CH

Daleth: the bosom, door, passage, ingress, egress, (4), D

Gimel: hand in act of taking, camel, commerce, link between places, communication, (3), C

He: window, 2nd / 4th letter of Tetragrammaton, silent H, (5), H

Lamed: ox-goad, (30) L

Mem: water, (40, 600 final), M mother letter

Nun: fish, (50, 700 final) N

Phe or Pe: mouth, tongue and back of mouth, (80, 800 final) P

Qoph: back of head (100) Q

Resh or Resth: head (200) R

Samekh: support (60) S

Shin: tooth, Holy spirit, fire, (300) Sh

Tau or Tav : sign of the cross (400) TH

Teth: serpent, (9) T

Tzaddi or tsade: fishing hook (90, 900 final), *Tz Vav or Vau*: third letter of Tetragrammaton “nail” or “hook”, used as “and” to join things, (6) V

Yod or Jod: hand, (10) J

Zayin: sword, weapon, (7), Z

Temp subconscious mind through remembered or suggested sensation

Tree of good and evil: five fruits of five senses which *Tree of life*: twelve symbols = Zodiac for the healing of nations

Tree of Life: stands between the *Trees of Good and Evil* and represents immortality, the union of Jachin and Boaz, kabbalistically known as the *Shekinah*.

Boaz: left pillar, Tree of Evil, Mother or Pillar of Justice

Jochim or Jachin: right pillar, Tree of Good, Father, Pillar of Mercy

IHVH: incorrectly called Jehovah, Yahweh, Divine Name of God, Tetragrammaton

Thummim: Metaphysically, the faces represent the Hebrew Urim and Thummim. Thummim represents completion and perfection, truth and wholeness. Urim represents illumination, revelation, understanding and enlightenment. Together they represent truth and light or revelation The two were placed on the breastplate of the high priest of the Israelites (*Metaphysical Bible Dictionary* by Unity School of Christianity).

Urim: see Thummim

Torah: “Law”, life powers, perfect memory of orderly sequences

Positioning on card:

Foreground: current and primary

Middle-ground: involved, participating

Background: history or backdrop

Bottom of card: Foundation, stable basis?

Middle of card: process for achievement

Top of card: Aspiration, inspiration, goal

Secret Doctrine Rays

1: will

2: love / wisdom

3: intelligent activity

4: harmony through conflict

5: science

6: passive spirituality, devotion

7: active spirituality

Polarity: means for productivity, truth found between extremes, contradiction and crucifixion, all action rooted in opposition of forces

Knowledge:

Esoteric: known to the few

Exoteric: known to the many

Precession of the Equinox: approximately 26,000-year cycle

World Ages: zero year not known, ages may be equal or unequal, not known

Age of Taurus: approximately 2160 years, worship of bull, fatted calf references

Age of Aries: approximately 2160 years, lamb offerings, Moses spiritual leader

Age of Pisces: approximately 2160 years, fishes and loaves references, Jesus as spiritual leader, ending...

Age of Aquarius: approximately 2160 years, development, innovation and knowledge emphasized

Sphinx: Egyptian in nature, the sphinx is “a symbol of the higher nature arising from the lower, or of the Spirit triumphant over matter” (*Dictionary of the Sacred Language of all Scriptures and Myths* by G.A. Gaskell). In the legend of the winged sun disk, the Egyptian god Horus changed himself into a form with the body of a lion (a four-legged beast of prey) with the breasts of a woman and the head of a man wearing a triple crown (the higher triad). This was Horus’ aspect as conqueror. Astrologically, the combination occurs at the changing of the age between Virgo to Leo (precession causes the changing of the age to progress backward through the normal order of the zodiac signs). The age progresses from the end of the sign, 30°, to the beginning of the sign, 0°. The symbology would be from 0° Virgo (the head of that sign) to 30° Leo (the end of that sign), ergo the head of the Virgin to the body and tail of the lion.

Trident: symbol of the lower consciousness raised to union with the higher. Three crowning points signifying love, wisdom and action (Atma, Buddhi and Manas)

The preceding is a brief sampling of my symbolic dictionary.

Tidbits and Example Readings

Common questions are about love / relationships, money / business, and health, but there are as many possible questions as there are people. Be sure you have a very clear question. For example, there is quite a difference between...

What do the Tarot cards tell me about my relationships? (non-specific)

versus

Am I going to get a divorce? (specific and clear)

Most people come for readings about themselves and their own lives. It is also common for a person to state that they are asking the question or getting the reading for another person, which may or may not be true. They might be embarrassed by the personal nature of the question or may be concerned about their own privacy.

Keep the reading of the cards as dealt, and simply convert the person being read. Tell the person sitting in front of you that you prefer to read directly and not for a third party. You will do the reading as if they personally asked the question and they can later make whatever adjustments are necessary to convey the answer to another person. That keeps the reading between the reader and the client less complicated.

Initially, I threw out a simple question for myself...*how do I approach example readings for this book?* I shuffled the question into the deck, drew the Sun upright, 8 of Swords reversed and Two of Cups upright.

Sun

8 of
Swords
(Rev.)

2 of
Cups

- The Sun represents me: a very positive, upright card, in the now, signifying who and what I am, my sense of accomplishment and my role as author / teacher. The card defines my role or status in a positive light.
- The 8 of Swords shows a woman in a bound, unmovable situation, not specifically endangered at the moment, but unable to be effective for the question. The card is reversed, so the issue is up in the air, not resolvable at the moment, at a standstill, the way is not clear, and the status quo is to wait. Have I told you I am not a patient person?
- My actual answer is the Two of Cups. I need another person to play the other role. The card is upright, so the timing is now. This is a card of “relating” for success. Perhaps since I am not asking the cards for a personal reading or personal guidance, I am asking an impossible question. I need that other role to be filled in order for the questions and the examples to be effective. The cards show a positive outcome (two positive cards upright).

In this case I did *not* read them as past, present, and future. I read them as indicators of a single issue, storyboard-style. What if I *did* read these three cards as past, present, and future? Using the same three cards:

- Past: the Sun upright – I have studied Tarot for over 45 years and read thousands of spreads. The card of personal knowledge and accomplishment makes that statement.
- Present: Eight of Swords reversed – I am stuck at the moment, attempting to mentally create examples for the book, and I cannot see my way clear in the present circumstance, nor move in any direction, because I am bound by the current conditions. I’m not threatened, but immobilized.
- Future: Two of Cups upright – introduce another person to the equation, use live and not concocted examples, available in real time, cooperation or exchange of some sort, a give and take.

So I called our local metaphysical group and volunteered to do free readings one evening in exchange for the right to use those questions and the cards that provided the answers as examples in this book. Of course, such use would be anonymous and privacy respected. They accepted my offer and the group readings (ten) were done the following weekend. The following brief instructions preceded the readings:

- ✓ These readings are being done in an open, not private, format. Please use your discretion in what you ask because I never know what I am going to get from the cards. If you ask a question, I will answer you directly. The choice for privacy is yours, up front, in this quite public situation. The questions should be about yourself, not friends, family, of public figures. Ask questions that have specific meaning to you. If a card flips out of the deck while shuffling, make a mental note of it, and put it back into the deck you are shuffling.
- ✓ I will first riffle / shuffle the cards to get a thorough mix. I will then hand you the deck, place a small cloth (scarf) down in front of you to avoid exterior influence and ask you to shuffle your question, hand over hand, into the deck. Put the deck on the scarf and cut the deck into three parts. I will read the top card from each deck section.
- ✓ Once read, I will riffle /shuffle the cards again and snap the deck to clear it of prior vibrations and then I will personally hand the deck to the next person. There will be no passing of the deck back and forth between people so we can keep the cards and readings as clear as possible.
- ✓ While reading, one participant asked about so many reversed cards and what could be done about it. It is not an error. The cards should be thoroughly mixed both card-wise and direction-wise (upright or reversed). [The cards are dealt and turned purposefully by the querent's subconscious.]

These necessarily brief readings were done storyboard-style, not past / present / future-style. Upright cards are manifest. Reversed cards are not yet manifest. I do not read reversed cards as automatically negative or denied - I see them as in a formation or planning stage.

Question 1: "Will I be buying a home for me soon?"

- ✓ Cards: 8 of Pentacles reversed, Sun reversed, 8 of Wands upright.
- ✓ Reading: two cards reversed, so overall issue is still up in the air; not saying no, just that the time or timing is not right.
- ✓ 8 of Pentacles reversed: the workman I see as the querent. Are you thinking about a "fixer upper?" [Response: Yes]
- ✓ The Sun (major) reversed: you need to talk to someone knowledgeable about what it is you want to do first. [Understood]
- ✓ 8 of Wands: message or missing information coming in quite soon to help with decision.
- ✓ [Note: did not mention double eights: organization, have a plan, work the plan]

8 of
Pent.
(Rev.)

Sun
(Rev.)

8 of
Wands

Question 2: "Will I make it to Europe this year?"

5 of
Wands

Hermit
(Rev.)

Page of
Swords
(Rev.)

- ✓ Cards: 5 of Wands upright, Hermit reversed, Page of Swords reversed.
- ✓ Reading: two cards reversed, issue is still in the offing, not fully formed.
- ✓ 5 of Wands, boys playing at war, toying with idea, mock battle, not serious, need to focus.
- ✓ Hermit (major): the trip should be more of a sabbatical and not just a pleasure trip, a meditation, purposeful, and spiritual.
- ✓ Page of Swords: posture is defensive. Does the idea of the trip need to be explained to another person, or must the querent defend the decision to travel to someone else?

Question 3: "Is the timing right for me to resume teaching now?"

Judge-
ment
(Rev.)

Emperor

Queen
of Wands
(Rev.)

- ✓ Cards: Judgment (major) reversed, Emperor (major) upright, Queen of Wands reversed.
- ✓ Reading: two cards are reversed, so parts of this issue are not fully formed, iffy, something that needs to be done or defined before moving forward.
- ✓ Judgment (major) needs to be a calling (trumpets), something specific to do, a specific type of class.
- ✓ Emperor: very structured, specific, set of parameters, control, organized, professional yet subtle.
- ✓ Queen Wands reversed: Is something or someone working against you or interfering? Can it cause a hardship with another person? [Response: Maybe.]
- ✓ [Note: did not mention two majors, life lessons involved].

Question 4: "I'm coming to so many roads in my life. Is there going to be a significant change in my life? Many ways can open. I have a vision. Am I going to get there?"

- ✓ Cards: Knight of Swords reversed, 5 of Pentacles reversed, 2 of Swords reversed.
- ✓ Reading: all three cards are upside down, some of it is a dream, many dreams at once, not focusing enough, one issue has to come to the forefront.
- ✓ Knight Swords is heedless, rushing, hasn't bothered to close helmet / visor, scattered.
- ✓ 5 of Pentacles financial: do you have the finances to push through? Need dollars to pursue. If you don't have finances, will someone else provide and you won't be ripping them off? Which avenues take money, which avenues are more easily done for less monetary consideration?
- ✓ 2 of Swords: stalemate, impasse, everything is in your head, ideas, no threat to figure on card, blindfolded, seated, balanced, but can't see where they are going. For advice, ask self, do a process of elimination. If I can do only one thing, which one idea / avenue will it be?

Knight
of Swords
(Rev.)

5 of
Pentacles
(Rev.)

2 of
Swords
(Rev.)

Context: I had a very significant dream in which I met a particular lady. She prepared a meal for me after we talked. I woke up crying and stayed in bed an hour. *Question 5: Is it this lifetime or next?*

- ✓ Cards: Queen Cups reversed, Knight of Pentacles, 10 of Cups reversed.
- ✓ Reading: two cards reversed, issue not fully formed, up in the air.
- ✓ Queen of Cups can represent the woman in the dream, internalized person, contemplative, intuitive, very positive card.
- ✓ Knight of Pentacles - horse is not moving: steady, plowed fields, stay steady, faith of the farmer, staying true to who you are, down to earth reality, this lifetime.
- ✓ 10 of Cups is a beautiful card. The rainbow in the sky represents God's promise, a celebration card, upside down - success or fulfillment to be experienced in the future, but still in this lifetime.

Queen
of Cups
(Rev.)

Knight
of
Pentacles

10 of
Cups
(Rev.)

3 of
Pent.
(Rev.)

Empress

2 of
Swords
(Rev.)

Question 6: "Is now the appropriate time to sell my business?"

- ✓ Cards: 3 of Pentacles reversed, Empress (major) upright, 2 of Swords reversed.
- ✓ Reading: two reversed, one upright, concept not fully formed, outstanding issues.
- ✓ 3 of Pentacles: three men, workman, architect, building supervisor or cleric, making, checking plans, coins - building looks like church but can also represent commerce. Card of accomplished business or person, the question is: are all the elements ready to sell in place?
- ✓ Empress (major) is a card of plenty, viable business, worthy, accomplished person, material involved, does the selling have anything to with a woman or women? [No] This is a fruitful, protective, encompassing, cocooning, safe, solid, business. Feminine energy tends to hold or build a moat around the castle signifying a holding steady, a card of strength, a beautiful card energy.
- ✓ 2 of Swords reversed - stalemate, safe, secure, on solid ground. Yes, you are getting ready. Are you ready yet? No!

Question 7: Should I stay or should I go? Should I move or should I stay?

Queen
of
Pent.

Knight
of Wands
(Rev.)

Sun

- ✓ Cards: Queen of Pentacles upright, Knight of Wands reversed, Sun (major) upright.
- ✓ Reading: two reversed cards means issues are not ready, concept not fully formed, indecision.
- ✓ Queen Pentacles: where you are is pretty good, you do not have to move, no danger, no one is pushing you out and you like where you are living [querent shook head "no"]. Reaffirmed not necessary to move, choice is involved.
- ✓ Knight of Wands, upside down, happy-go-lucky, horse not going into battle, sort of cantering around. Desert showing at bottom of card - possible destination? {No} Card is barren, you have options, ambling along. "I think that's how I feel inside," but the card shows barren.
- ✓ The Sun [major] is hoping for something better, this is a card of accomplishment. I would suggest that you move FOR a reason, move TOWARDS something, and NOT AWAY from something.

Question 8: Will I be successful if I continue to pursue my fine arts career?

- ✓ Cards: 5 of Swords upright, Queen of Pentacles reversed, 3 of Wands upright.
- ✓ Reading: [2 cards upright, one reversed, more known or manifest than impending].
- ✓ 5 of Swords - had to fight a battle to get to this point. Battle is already done, but there was a battle in the past and you have won it.
- ✓ Queen of Pentacles reversed - because it is a Pentacle, it is a money card, probably going to take money, time, attention, there will be a need to invest such as equipment, promote self, hire someone to promote, female energy.
- ✓ 3 of Wands - figure on cliff-side looking out over water, wants to be elsewhere - "out there". Wants to expand. I think you have already made concrete efforts. You are waiting for the results of something you have already set in motion.

5 of
Swords

Queen
of Pent.
(Rev.)

3 of
Wands

Question 9: What is going to happen to me health-wise?

- ✓ Cards: Star (major) upright, 8 of Cups reversed, 4 of Coins reversed.
- ✓ Reading: Star (upright) - querent knows a lot about how to answer her own questions and has the skills to help herself, an asset, but apparently this is not enough.
- ✓ 8 of Cups reversed - man walking away from a whole stack of cups, walking away from something he has already built and done, needs to move away and forward. What has worked is not now working. Needs different modality, another answer or way. Figure is moving on, trying something else, reaching beyond what he already knows. Water card, very emotional. #8 is very organized, systematic.
- ✓ 4 of Pentacles reversed - the miser card, caught up in money. Perhaps the question is how much money she would have to put into the question of her own health. The card figure is holding, standing on, on head / mind, an economic issue. Is it coveting? Or is it an economic issue? Could someone withhold money? Card is reversed, up in air, not manifested yet.

Star

8 of
Cups
(Rev.)

4 of
Coins
(Rev.)

There was one more question at the end of the session about the spiritual development of the querent. The three card spread was inadequate to the task, so that reading would have to be done separately using a card spread with a wider basis. Intensely personal or meaningful questions are not suitable for exposure within a group.

Many thanks to my friend, Jackie Chakhtoura, for her assistance in documenting these readings.

[Notes in brackets = after-the-fact personal commentary.]

Celtic Cross layout: As previously mentioned, this is the most common Tarot spread and has been in use for centuries. The ten top cards from the shuffled deck are spread, face down as diagrammed; other authors may vary the order. Stay with this diagram. Once you have become experienced, you can speculate with other suggestions to decide your personal preference. Instructions are repeated from Chapter 10 layout material as applied to a specific question.

Placement of cards

Position 1 in the center of the spread

Position 2 crossing card #1

Position 3 below cards #1 and 2

Position 4 to the left of cards #1 and 2

Position 5 to the top of cards #1 and 2

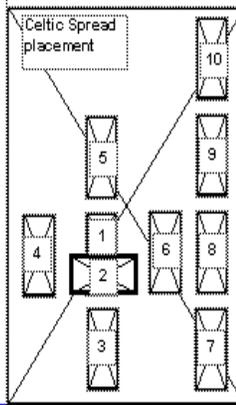
Position 6 to the right of cards #1 and 2

Position 7 start new stack to right of card #6,
bottom edge aligned with card #3

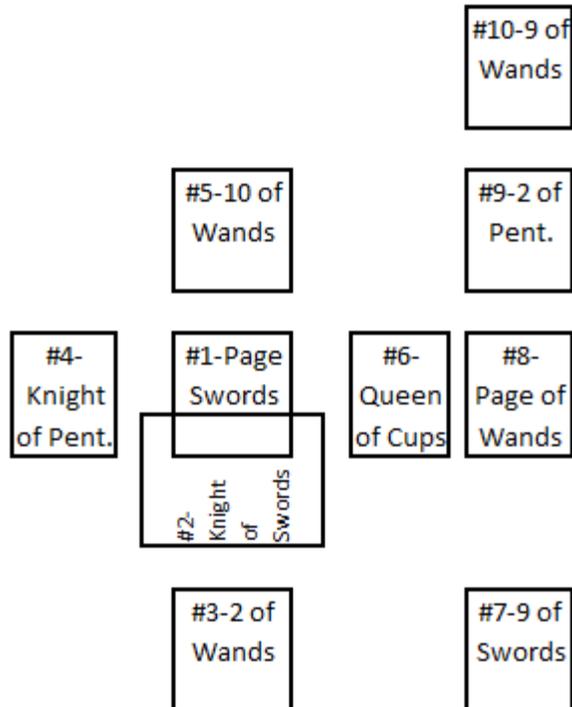
Position 8 at the top of card #7

Position 9 at the top of card #8

Position 10 at the top of card #9



The question asked of me...a long-time friend of the querent experienced a difficult life circumstance and asked to come to live with the querent. Because of the long friendship, the querent immediately agreed, so proceeding was not in question. The Celtic Cross layout offers a much larger picture of what is going on in any situation and was employed to understand not only the obvious but the surrounding circumstances and potential outcome.



Description of position

- ✓ Position 1 is the question, issue, or the questioner, the significator card. The **Page of Swords** provides a wary, vigilant, defensive posture. The ground on which the Page stands is uneven, the surroundings are bare and no growth or potential is shown. Pages tend to be messengers, so the dialogue was by text and phone. A very old promise of being there for each other precipitated the contact.
- ✓ Position 2 is the obstacle or challenge to the question, issue or questioner. It is at cross purposes. The **Knight of Swords** is full battle cry, charging into the battle or future, at times reckless, in a hurry to change the situation or circumstance.
- ✓ Position 3 is the foundation, the basis on which the issue rests or from which it stems. The **Two of Wands** is contemplative. The figure may be looking to the past, remembering, or towards the future, contemplating or questioning the possibilities available. Answers away from the present circumstance are being sought.

- ✓ Position 4 is the past of the question or issue, that which has been an influence but is now losing power. The **Knight of Pentacles** is about money and values, unmoving, reviewing or re-evaluating its basis. What has been experienced is not satisfying. What is more important - continuing the unsatisfactory situation, or risking a change? This is a warrior card, but this warrior thinks it through before acting.
- ✓ Position 5 is the pivot, the card of change, the immediate future, the opportunity. This is not a final outcome card. The **Ten of Wands** shows a male figure carries ten flowering wands, trudging towards buildings. His journey is almost done. The ground on which he walks is level. He just has to “keep on keeping on” to reach civility.
- ✓ Position 6 is an outcome card and represents the longer-range future of the question or issue. The **Queen of Cups**, a female elder or authority in a comfortable seated position, secure in what she is and knows, is easily approachable. Cups represent emotional, familial, and relational issues. These two people are old friends. This is one of the two outcome cards that hold their value as an answer.
- ✓ Position 7 is fears, concerns, worries, and apprehensions of the question, the issue or the questioner, real or imagined. With the **9 of Swords**, this is not going to go down well or easy as the past is relegated to the past, but the symbols represent what must be given up in order to accept such a massive change. This grieving is serious.
- ✓ Position 8 is the support (or lack of it) from the environment and the pertinent people (friends, family, co-workers, etc.). The **Page of Wands** is a message card often found in communication questions, learning, growing, and becoming at an initial stage.
- ✓ Position 9 is the best you can hope for in the question or issue, your prayers and aspirations. The **2 of Pentacles** indicates a juggling act involving finances, and emotions. The figure is on level ground, not in trouble, just attempting to achieve balance.
- ✓ Position 10 is the overall outcome, what will occur as opposed to what you might like to occur. The **9 of Wands** indicates the figure is previously wounded, watchful, guarded, and vigilant, but has steady footing and a clear sky. The figure may need to be watchful because his stance indicates he believes the war is not over.
- ✓ Positions 6 and 10 are outcome cards and hold their value.

- ✓ There are three Sword cards (strife, antagonism, and anger), four flowering Wand cards (growth and potential), two Pentacles (money and value systems), and one Cup card (emotion, family, and relating). Although the deck was well mixed, there were no reversed cards in this spread. This indicates real time, now, all cards are on the table. There are no Major Arcana cards in this reading, so this is *not* a spiritually driven experience, this is an ongoing life experience, circumstance and reading.

Hopefully you can see the difference between the much simpler three card layout and the much broader Celtic Cross layout.

As mentioned previously, according to some authors, it is possible to gain more clarity by taking card #10, move it to the position of #1, then use more cards from the chosen deck to offer more depth on the outcome (different focus). I find nine more cards to be more confusing than useful. If you use enough cards, you could answer almost anything, but I am not sure you could trust the answers.

And a final note. . .

Spiritual Development Over the years, as I developed my understanding of the Tarot cards, I used the cards to deliberately develop my spiritual understanding in different meditative ways. Each day, I would meditate on one Tarot card chosen randomly and examine the experiences of that day. If I “retired” a card I had already meditated on, it would take me 78 days to complete the entire deck. It was also possible to just reinsert the used card back into the deck and it might come up again shortly. Not all experiences are like TV sitcoms with all the learning experiences neatly wrapped up in a half hour. Some experiences have stages or repeats, or something of an ongoing nature, and that card might reappear. Also, if I chose the card early in the morning, I could watch that card lesson as it unfolded. If I chose the card before bedtime, I could reflect on the happenings of that day in terms of the implied card lesson. Both systems worked, but differently in terms of comprehension and application. As I did these simple exercises, my comprehension of the cards and their application in experience increased. There is no one right way to meditate and learn - just do whatever works for you!