

NEOPHYTE'S GUIDE to TAROT

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INTRODUCTION to (OLLI's Neophyte's Guide to) TAROT CARDS

TAROT is a formalized set of 78 artistic cards illustrating aspects of human life, used for centuries for a wide variety of purposes. There are two parts of the deck:

The **22 cards of the MAJOR Arcana** follow developmental stages of life, at an "archetypal" level (quintessential universal model)—often called the "Fool's Journey," a personal-growth path leading to "individuation" (Carl Jung's term) or enlightenment (spiritual term).

(*Arcana* means mysteries or secrets. *Major* refers to BIG Picture, the Forest.)

The **56 cards of the MINOR Arcana** (Details, Trees) are like playing cards, with **4 suits (elements) of 10 numbered cards plus 4 "court" cards**.

Minor Arcana address daily life areas--physical, mental, emotional, spiritual.

Tarot cards evolved over an unknown time and history, and symbols from many cultures are included. The artwork for typical "court" cards refers to medieval European royal courts; the Minor Arcana people are often peasants, soldiers, and tradesmen. (This has inspired modernized variations; thematic decks are many.) Modern society is more gender-neutral, so gender references don't matter.

The art carefully symbolizes the concepts associated with each card. Symbols are multi-layered, so can suggest a variety of associations--some personal, others cultural. Some of those symbols will "re-mind" you of situations, issues, people, places, etc. in your own life or in stories and news around you, past and present. Reminders are how symbols connect your consciousness with your subconscious.

Your personal subconscious is connected somehow with the universal or "collective unconscious" (Carl Jung's term). That may make perfect sense to you—or not! But if you use or have used the tarot, numerology, astrology, I Ching, runes, or studied your dreams, you DO develop a belief and trust in that mysterious connection!

For me, and therefore for you in this class, the tarot is an inspired TOOL for personal growth through exploring one's subconscious. Traditionally, it was used for insights into situations & activities and for fortunetelling (*regular folks*) or divination (*elite people*), LOL. The psychological use of tarot seems to be new in the past century. Your tarot projects could include refining your purpose or direction in life; expanding your understanding and appreciation of your own past; healing your Inner Child; and working through issues, past and present.

The cards' images and symbols trigger your subconscious intuition, often making surprising connections. The strength of your reaction helps show you the relative significance of the card/symbol/issue. The cards, which you choose randomly in response to your carefully-designed questions, show you hidden truths beyond your often-unconscious biases, filters, projections, and expectations.

TIPS on USING YOUR TAROT CARDS & Books/Booklets

All tarot books discuss preparing, handling, storing, and learning about the cards at great length. Some are fussier than others. All plead with you to respect the cards and the process, since they connect your outer & inner worlds and nurture your inner awareness. Careful treatment and some personal ritual will help train your mind to become more receptive to intuition when you use the tarot for clarity and guidance. Have fun setting up a peaceful space and calming ritual.

Learning the cards takes time; you have to work with them regularly, to see how they compare & contrast and to establish a connection with them. You will soon realize that any one card means something a little different every time you use it! That's a little disconcerting at first, but remember that each question and issue is different, too. YOU are different, even day to day, and more over time as you grow.

FIRST, you should look at cards with your own eyes and imagination, making as many associations as you can. Does a card remind you of something, someone, someplace, some time? Does it remind you of a theme song, advertising slogan, old saying, or myth? Which parts strike you in particular; those are important.

All the tarot books will give you some sense of what each card and its symbols mean. Do NOT depend on the books for the meanings. YOUR OWN associations and interpretations are far more important. The books can help get you started, but develop your own intuition. You will learn to trust it. And remember, when you do a multi-card "spread," each card's meaning is affected by the others around it.

MAJOR Arcana cards are archetypal, BIG Picture references. If you do a multi-card spread and get mostly Major Arcana cards, this is a big deal, for you and maybe for many others, probably long-term, and not under your control. The Major Arcana cards in a spread are often further supported & clarified by the Minor Arcana cards with them. MINOR Arcana cards relate to everyday details of life. If you do a multi-card spread and get mostly Minor Arcana cards, you may have strong, immediate control over the probably-personal, short-term situation.

Try not to be judgmental--that's fear projecting. No card (or situation, in the long term) is good or bad. There are always pros and cons, upsides and downsides. Disasters often turn out later to be blessings in disguise. These are SYMBOLS, not to be taken literally. The "Death" card does NOT mean someone is going to die!

All cards have a variety of meanings, varying with context. And when you think you DO understand the card's meaning, you also have to decide whether it's advising you to be or do MORE of "that"—or LESS! Another point is that the cards can only provide insights; you still have to DO the WORK of resolution.

RELAX. CALM YOUR MIND. FOCUS ON QUESTION. BE SINCERE. ENJOY.

Ginny's KEY WORDS #1-10 in Tarot's Minor Arcana:

- 1)** New beginning; leadership; full of energy and potential--the essence of the suit's element/power. A gift, opportunity—go for it with enthusiasm!
- 2)** Partnership, choice, OR balancing polarities; choice to incorporate/unite with a second/new factor OR choice between alternatives.
- 3)** Creativity (1st + 2nd forms new 3rd); self-expression/expansion; action/growth. Often about communication or artistic activity. Something is emerging. This exuberant energy can scatter; keep focus on higher goals.
- 4)** Stable foundation set. Ideas manifest into form. UP side is grounded, organized success; DOWN side is stuck---complacent & stuck OR fearing loss/limits & stuck. Must balance need for order & security with need for growth & change.
- 5)** Midpoint of the cycle; unsettled energy, conflict; instability requiring adjustments; time for evaluation and possible update of direction.
- 6)** Time of harmony, peace, and rest, recuperation, cooperation, and celebration. Indicates social involvement, responsibility, compassion. Polarities tend to be balanced—feminine/masculine, intellect/intuition, physical/spiritual. Time to recoup and regroup before next phase.
- 7)** 7 = 3 (Trinity/ Heaven) + 4 (earth/material). Advises withdrawal for introspection. Dreams and soul-searching bring new insights and energy for further/future creativity and self-development. Often comes with trials by temptation or obstacles, sorry. (Transformation is a good cause, tho', right?)
- 8)** Often refers to overall (but especially material) success and leadership; a time of balance, renewed energy, and hard work. There is also a need to keep positive and focus on higher goals—an invitation to empower others.
- 9)** Pinnacle of achievement for this cycle, so now ready to share with others. Also check for achieving inner fulfillment. Now is time to tie up loose ends and look for any last insights; new cycle starting soon.
- 10/1)** Celebrate finishing old cycle; honor the higher wisdom earned. This is the transition time between cycles. Don't get stuck here in comfort; CHOOSE next project, before the Universe assigns one and propels you onward.

Ginny's KEY WORDS for SUITS in Tarot's Minor Arcana:

Minor Arcana cards refer to everyday life, supplying more explanatory detail. The specific suit provides a clue for which general aspect/plane of life is involved. Of course, the number and symbols on each Minor Arcana card and the interrelationships between the cards in a "spread" also affect the meaning.

The meanings will be EITHER one observation OR its opposite! For example, do you need to think more logically than usual? Or are you TOO intellectual and detached and need to FEEL your emotions or intuitions more?

These are the broadest guidelines. YOUR own intuitive sense of what a card shows takes precedence over anyone else's guidelines. YOU are the analyst!

CUPS. Emotional plane; Water element; Yin/feminine energy; North; Summer.

Mostly about relationships OR the subconscious. Jung's Feeling Function. Inspired, intuitive creativity here is more of the self-expressing art variety. Receiving emotions & intuitions and learning from them. Managing, maybe healing, emotions and relationships with other people. Seeking a sense of fulfillment. Downside is getting lost in irrationality or fantasy.

PENTACLES/coins. Physical plane; Earth element; Yin energy; South; Winter.

Mostly about material resources & practicalities. Jung's Sensation Function. Centeredness, grounding; often involving security/money/property, maybe manifesting ideas. Often involving daily work, tasks. Also may involve sensing and appreciating what is perceived. Physical health may show. Downside is getting stuck—to past, to greed, to addictions, etc.

SWORDS. Mental plane; Air element; Yang, masculine energy; West; Autumn.

Mostly about ideas, analysis, & communication. Jung's Thinking Function. Thoughts can be confusing and conflicting; Swords can cut through the illusions. Working to turn experience into wisdom and sharing it with others. Mind over matter. May involve detached researching and reporting. Upside is logic providing clarity. Downside is paralysis by analysis or rigid judgmentalism.

WANDS/rods. Spiritual plane; Fire element; Yang energy; East; Spring.

Mostly about inspiration, self-growth, & action. Jung's Intuitive Function. Creative, often involves career and/or projects. Inspiration incites action, especially launching, initiating new action. Comes with passion, optimism, energy, and the time to use them constructively. Intuition is more useful here than logic. May involve taking some risks, being assertive. Downside is taking too wild a risk and acting rashly.

Ginny's KEY WORDS for Sample of Tarot SYMBOLS:

Common ANIMALS:

Birds in flight	spiritual freedom
Phoenix	bird that dies by fire, then <u>reborn</u> /rises from egg in its ashes
Cat	feminine symbol, instinctive, intuitive, independent, sensuous
Dog	masculine symbol; tamed instincts when with wolf; loyalty
Wolf	wild, untamed instincts when with dog
Horse	ancient transportation, carrying you thru' life; power; speed; freedom; also, oneness with nature. Another masculine symbol.
Lion	instinctual nature, strength, power; also feminine (cat)
Serpent, Snake	awakening spiritual growth; rebirth (sheds & grows new skin)

ASTROLOGY & SKY

Zodiac all potentials exist; cycles of life, not under personal control

Planets:

Sun	acting/doing; shine your light!; male/yang energy
Moon	nurturing, receiving intuition; being; female/yin energy
Phases of Moon	emotional
Stars	heaven; lights in the darkness; spiritual guidance
Mars	acting/doing; passion, more aggressive; male/yang energy
Saturn	symbol of discipline and challenges; male/yang energy
Venus	symbol of relationships, love, beauty/arts; female/yin energy

Weather:

Clouds, Fog	vision is clouded; uncertainty
Lightning	sudden, unexpected, harsh change
Sunrise	better times are coming, keep the faith

MISCELLANY:

Nighttime	symbol of subconscious and intuition
Fire	energy, action; purifies beliefs
Water	symbol of emotional plane, notice smooth/rough & small/vast; & cleansing--especially the mind of obsolete beliefs, attitudes
Boat	traveling over water, so dealing with emotional issues
Machinery	human doings, busyness

MEET YOUR CARDS & CHECK CORRELATIONS

The cards are supposed to represent you and your situation at this point in time. So, let's try two exercises, to interpret a card and then match up YOUR personal self-awareness with what the Universe wants you to see in yourself. We'll start with the less complex Minor Arcana, Ace through 10 cards.

a) **Lay out all the numbered Minor Arcana cards**—in order, 4 rows of 10.

b) Look at all those situations portrayed! Remember which suit represents which "plane": **Cups**/emotions & relationships; **Swords**/thoughts & attitudes; **Pentacles**/material wealth & health; **Wands**/intuition & spirituality.

1) **Let's ALL compare our assorted 6 of WANDS** cards.

The Wands are focused on personal growth and inspiration.

6s represent personal success with social involvement & a sense of well-being.

2A) Now, EACH person pick one (or two) cards that BEST represent you in your current life, over the past month or so. You'll need to ignore gender and medieval setting and occupations, of course. Match the emotional tone.

WRITE DOWN your/another's NAME and CHOSEN MATCHING CARD(s).

c) Now thoroughly mix all 40 of those cards, which will take a while.

2B) Finally, deal one card, face down, for each person on your list. Cards will NOT MATCH, probably; however, look for similarities and/or rationalizations on why the Universe "chose" its cards.

(Example: I chose 9 of Pentacles for my good days and 8 of Swords for my bad. The cards say I am overall like the 5 of Cups, focusing on the empty cups instead of the remaining ones. Darn, I am still too negative! However, the 9 of Wands is more encouraging than my 8 of Swords. I know I am too negative and self-limiting, and know I need to defuse the old programs running my life so I can upgrade myself and express the lighter & brighter self inside.)

3) Later, you can also list any other person who fits a card perfectly, or yourself at another age, your parent, spouse, child, etc. if you are so inclined. This is a great exercise to see personal connections & meanings of many cards.

1-CARD DRAW: (Class activity, if time.) **What's the best use of tarot for me?**

BIBLIOGRAPHY for Neophytes Guide to Tarot

TAROT BOOKS used for OLLI's *Neophyte's Guide to Tarot*

The Easiest Way to Learn the Tarot Ever!!, by Dusty White, published by Booksurge Publishing, 2009.

Easy Tarot Handbook (for Gilded Tarot), by Josephine Ellershaw, published by Llewellyn Publications, 2007.

The Gilded Tarot Companion, by Barbara Moore, published by Llewellyn Publications, 2004.

Jung and Tarot, an Archetypal Journey, by Sallie Nichols, published by Weiser Books, 1980. (Major Arcana) (I loved the introductory sections and hope to read through the whole tome someday. She focuses on psychology.)

Numerology and the Divine Triangle, by Faith Javane & Dusty Bunker, 1979, published by Schiffer Publishing Ltd. (This is a deep numerology book, but connects tarot cards to numerology in the back—hm, interesting.)

Osho Zen Tarot, by Osho, published by St. Martin's Press, 1995, rather Buddhist with strong psychological flavor. This book comes with the deck.

The Pictorial Key to the Tarot, by Arthur Edward Waite, now published by U.S. Games Systems, Inc., latest copyright 1971. (This is THE most erudite and hardest to read but THE accepted standard meaning for the tarot cards. I did not read the whole book, but can refer to it for particular cards or symbols---rich vocabulary, with often grim meanings, ick!)

Tarot 101, Mastering the Art of Reading the Cards, by Kim Huggens, published by Llewellyn Publications, 2010. Great, readable, broad & deep background, with comparisons between Waite and Crowley standard decks.

Tarot as a Way of Life, a Jungian Approach to the Tarot, by Karen Hamaker-Zondag, published by Weiser Books, 1997.

Tarot in the Spirit of Zen, The Game of Life, by Osho, published by St. Martin's Griffin, 2003. Later, larger book with new text for Osho Zen Tarot.

Tarot for One, the Art of Reading for Yourself, by Courtney Weber, published by Weiser Books, 2016.

BIBLIOGRAPHY for Neophytes Guide to Tarot

Tarot for Yourself, A Workbook for Personal Transformation, 2nd Edition, by Mary K. Greer, published by New Page Books, 2002. First published in 1984, this is one of the first tarot books focused on personal growth! Extremely informative, with woo-woo exercises I cannot do.

Tarot Mirrors, Reflections of Personal Meaning, by Mary K. Greer, published by Newcastle Publishing Co., 1988

The Tarot of Transformation, by (artist) Willow Arlenea and (writer) Jasmin Lee Cori, published by Dancing Willow Tree, 2002—very insightful, psychologically (Jungian).

Understanding Aleister Crowley's Thoth Tarot, by Lon Milo DuQuette, published by Weiser Books, 2003. (Crowley was another studious associate of Waite. The Thoth deck is the other standard of reference. The minor arcana is not illustrated, and the Strength and Judgment cards have switched numbers, although THIS is apparently the earlier custom.)

Who Are You in the Tarot, by Mary K. Greer, published by Weiser Books, 2011. I used this in my first numerology class—great combo workbook.

Ginny's Favorite TAROT BOOKS

(Naturally, whichever book came with your own tarot deck is useful and probably most important for you.)

My personal experience has given me **four favorite "go to" references**:

The Only Tarot Book You'll Ever Need, by Skye Alexander, published by Adams Media, 2008. Small, brief, and includes some meanings for reversals.

Tarot 101, Mastering the Art of Reading the Cards, by Kim Huggens, published by Llewellyn Publications, 2010. Different organization from other books, which I find extra-informative. Compares Waite/Crowley decks.

The Tarot Bible, by Sarah Bartlett, published by Sterling Publishing Co., Inc., 2006. Smallish book with color print of each Waite card, and includes helpful, succinct interpretations for commonly-used spread card-positions.

Spiritual Tarot, 78 Paths to Personal Development, by Signe Echols, Robert Mueller, and Sandra Thomson, published by Avon Books, 1996. My favorite & main reference. Long out of print; Amazon may find.

BIBLIOGRAPHY for Neophytes Guide to Tarot

TAROT DECKS Seen in OLLI's *Neophyte's Guide to Tarot*

THE Standard for modern Tarot decks:

The Universal Waite® Tarot Deck & the ***Radiant Rider-Waite® deck***, copyrighted & registered trademark of U.S. Games Systems, Inc., first published in 1910 by researcher Arthur Edward Waite and artist Pamela Colman Smith.

Other Tarot Decks that Ginny Showed in Class:

Beginner's Guide to Tarot, by (artist) Giovanni Caselli and (author) Juliet Sharman-Burke, published by St. Martin's Griffin, 2017. This is a very traditional format, although with updated interpretations.

The Chinese Tarot Deck, by (artist) Jui Guoliang and (writer) Stuart Kaplan, published by U.S. Games Systems, Inc., 1989. Text combines Chinese myths with Waite's grim interpretations.

The Gilded Tarot, by (artist) Ciro Marchetti, published by Llewellyn Publications, 2004. (Follows Waite's format closely, but text is much more upbeat and applicable to modern life. I have 2 different books for this deck.)

The Osho Zen Tarot, by Osho, published by St. Martins Press, 1995. (I have two different books for this deck as well.)

The Tarot of Transformation, by (artist) Willow Arlenea and (writer) Jasmin Lee Cori, published by Dancing Willow Tree, 2002. Psychological.

The Thoth Tarot, by (researcher) Aleister Crowley and (artist) (Lady) Frieda Harris, created around 1940, but not published until 1969, and redone a few times since. This 2006 version is published by U.S. Games Systems, Inc.

INTRO to & KEY WORDS for COURT (Face) CARDS

A.E. Waite considered the Court Cards as a transitional bridge between the Major and Minor Arcanas. Barbara Moore (*Gilded Tarot Companion*) sees the Court Cards as peopling the situational “stage” set up by the Major Arcana’s “milestones” and the Minor Arcana’s “everyday events.”

Traditionally, Court Cards were assumed to represent specific individuals who looked something like the images on the cards--matching age, gender, and coloring. Needless to say, THAT no longer works in modern multicultural society!

Today, the Court Cards are often hard to interpret because they are SO versatile! Daily life and our knowledge of psychology have changed drastically from medieval Europe. Nowadays, we focus on individuals’ personality traits OR stages of personal development. Those characteristics may reflect you, someone in your life, or even one aspect or role of you. The Court Cards might even symbolize a type of energy or influence on your current life at this time. Also, **PAGES** sometimes signify a message of news, while **KNIGHTS** may signify travel and/or taking big action.

In Jungian psychology, parts of our own personality that we learned to suppress are still in our subconscious and bubble up occasionally (shadows, complexes). We do not see those traits in ourselves; however, we really notice them in other people! We **PROJECT** what we **REjected** in ourselves, and it gets **reflected** back to us in the guise of aspects we especially do or do not like in other people. Therefore, interpret Court Card characteristics from BOTH the viewpoints of representing you OR a reflection of your shadow being revealed to you, to notice.

PAGES (aka Child, Princess, Servant/Server, Novice, Daughter, e.g.)

Initiate/apprentice, eager learner, wondering, hopeful, trusting; willing to follow mentor, take risks & try not-yet-understood things; path not clear.

KNIGHTs (aka Seeker, Prince, Warrior, Son, Teacher, e.g.)

Applying new skillset independently & continuing to learn/refine skills, Tend to be rash & brash, pushing boundaries, resisting traditions; intense; Settling onto emerging path and learning to handle (need for) power.

QUEENS (aka Woman, Mother, Matriarch, Guide, Priestess, Healer, e.g.)

Competent & confident, forté is interpersonal relations, caring, nurturing, looking for underlying meanings & therefore understanding; receptive to intuition; inspiring, motivating, teaching; social & inner wisdom.

KINGs (aka Man, Father, Chief, Patriarch, Guardian, Sage, Master, e.g.)

Mastery, action leader in material world, wise judgment & administration, Authoritative (not authoritarian); confident and secure—maybe too much; can become complacent & rigid. May be a completion point for cycle.

EXERCISES with the COURT (Face) CARDS

Lay out all 16 court cards, by suit and level.

Choose your personal favorite of each level & relate YOU to it.

PAGE: What new topic/skill are you most excited about learning?

KNIGHT: What Cause or skillset are you pursuing most avidly?

QUEEN: What's strongest intuitive/emotional skill you share with others?

KING: What is your strongest physical &/or intellectual skill/mastery?

List several main roles you (have) play(ed) in life. Then choose the best matching Court Card for each "hat you wear." Notice patterns/balance. Which suits and titles show up most or least often? (Strengths? Opportunities?)

List a few of the most important people in your life (past, now);
Which Court Card do YOU think best represents each of them?
Which Court Card would THEY choose to best represent themselves?
(You can shuffle court cards & deal one face-down to check Universe's view, too!)

INTRODUCTION to the MAJOR ARCANA

The MAJOR Arcana may have evolved separately from the Minor Arcana. The minor arcana may have been adapted from regular playing cards, with their four suits, numbered cards, and court/face cards. Pictures on the minor arcana only began with Arthur Waite's deck a century ago.

The MAJOR Arcana operates on a higher level, archetypally--referring to The BIG Picture of life, not the daily details. All the Major Arcana cards show complex art representing different mentors and situations common to a typical lifetime. The artistic symbols connect in multiple, layered ways with one's subconscious, bringing hidden insights to consciousness. The Major Arcana includes 22 consecutive cards, usually labeled with Roman Numerals to differentiate them from the minor arcana. Joseph Campbell called this stereotypical story of a lifetime the mythological Hero's Journey, which real humans live in endless variations.

Most decks of tarot cards express the same basic sense for each of the 22 cards, the same hero's journey, although the context may vary. *(For example, a few of my decks focus on psychology explicitly, and are very helpful in explaining various subconscious defense mechanisms and other socialization conditioning.)* However, the card names vary significantly, since the traditional deck came to us from medieval times, when society was organized so differently from modern times. Specifically-themed modern decks that attract you will probably resonate more clearly with you during readings, yielding more helpful insights.

(If your deck uses different **titles**, write those under handouts' on pages 12-14.)

EXERCISE: Let's compare all our **VII** cards, traditionally entitled **The Chariot**.

Archetypally, this is the first Major Arcana card that refers to progress through one's own efforts and actions. In a multi-card "spread," during a "reading" the reader would look at surrounding cards, probably minor arcana cards, to learn more details about what type of actions are involved, moving toward what directions.

What SYMBOLS represent motion/progress, (self-)control, empowerment?

What SYMBOLS represent possible challenges, obstacles?

What personal characteristics seem to be encouraged or discouraged?

Ginny's KEY WORDS in Tarot's MAJOR Arcana:

<u>Major Arcana #/Title</u>	<u>Key Words & Phrases</u>
0 The Fool	New beginnings, fresh start; energy, optimism; enthusiasm; faith in the unknown/ blind faith; unpredictable; pure, open; carefree/ careless; living in the moment; expect unexpected; adventure; limitless energy of spirit; discovering own self.
I The Magician	Awareness & actualization of inner guidance; makes it happen; flexibility, resourcefulness; consciousness; focused on goal; skilled, clever, in control; skill in communication, persuasive.
II High Priestess	Sacred feminine, receptive to intuition; inner wisdom; healer; connection with subconscious, hidden feelings, & secret motivations; independent & quiet; flexible, changeable.
III The Empress	Abundance & beauty in the material world; Earth Mother; mother figure; sensual pleasure, indulgence; artsy creativity; creates lovely, comfortable & harmonious ambiance; nurtures; combines ideas to create new ones, has more enthusiasm than discipline; hopes to create something extraordinary.
IV The Emperor	Essence of material-world's authority; benevolent dictator; father figure; traditional; stable, secure; rational; structured; initiates & accomplishes much; fulfillment through action; ambitious, visionary, confident; can be controlling, stubborn; represses emotion to focus on supporting others/society; may reflect issues with power & authority.
V The Hierophant	Respected teacher/mentor of traditional knowledge & higher wisdom; wise, trusted, conservative; socially appropriate; spiritual discipline & intuitive guidance; repress free thinking; represents the "system" & playing by the rules; conventional; communicate what has been learned, to enrich others.
VI The Lovers	Think of what "love" means & what is really wanted from a partnership; seeking harmony & wholeness in self or union; commitment or temptation; cooperation is called for; responsibility for choices; partner mirrors & reveals <u>oneself</u> ; spiritual path through developing loving relationship; recognize & choose between polarities; synthesize polarities; (integrate polarities of male/female or conscious/subconscious or physical/divine or mental/emotional); romance.
VII The Chariot	Drive to succeed, with balance; self-control or take control; Ruled by or triumph over emotions/instincts/Nature; mastery; pursuing path/goal with determination & perseverance; hubris; developing or testing personality/mask to the world; journey (physical or internal); pulled in different directions.

Major Arcana #/TitleKey Words & Phrases

- VIII** Strength (Fortitude) Need understanding, acceptance, compassion to tame fear or challenges; be aware of underlying motivations, reactions; tame rampant emotions; stay calm & be brave; full of energy; lust for life; integrate instincts into consciousness (learn to love the beast within); liberation from old self-limitations; learn to take risks; take responsibility for choices/actions.
- IX** The Hermit Withdraw to search for inner guidance & plan; soul-searching; feel the way; patience; detail oriented; time-management; serve as a light in the dark for others; take time to think well; mastery then mentorship; or the guru providing guidance; observe, think, process—keep quiet for now.
- X** Wheel of Fortune CHANGES happen—choose reactions wisely and MAKE own destiny; could be natural consequences of past choices; could be initiation; take responsibility for choices/actions; surprise, new cycle is starting--embrace it, opportunity knocks; surrender to the new unknown & trust it, flow—all is better!
- XI** Justice (more like Equilibrium) Weighing pros & cons before making decision; Beware judgmentalism--be strictly rational, objective; be honest, take responsibility for choices; make amends; get/got what is deserved; need true, deep communication; aim for harmony & balance; fair exchange (resources, energy); look at various viewpoints & motivations; respect polarities; serve as facilitator; may even involve actual legal situation.
- XII** The Hanged Man Time to stop, assess, & decide how to readjust; transition; let go of how things are SUPPOSED to be & controlling them; trust higher guidance; "Willing Sacrifice" or "Victim"/"Martyr"?; need new/bigger perspective; suspending judgment; initiation; consider problematical hang-ups; stuck—may need counsel; may need to WAIT, to allow "it" to happen, not force "it."
- XIII** Death (NOT fatality!); some **cycle** is over, making room for new one; Life is changing somehow, growing, transforming; rebirth; or not--STUCK because too much fear of change; loss/grief; shedding self-limitations from outgrown past beliefs/attitudes; perhaps precipitated by intense emotional experience/pain.
- XIV** Temperance Self-control with harmony and balance; happy medium; willing to cooperate & compromise while balancing needs of self with others'; healing energies, alchemical combinations; much optimism, enthusiasm, confidence for new expansion; organizing, planning, finding new resources & guidance; creativity, consolidation, self-expression; tempering self.

Major Arcana #/TitleKey Words & Phrases

- XV** The Devil Own inner negativity, self-imposed limitations, fears; false pretenses, illusions, addictions; manipulation; believing superficial appearances, so confused, afraid, defensive; need for improved self-awareness & taking self-responsibility; find shadows & projections and accept them to defuse them; mischievous; playing scapegoat or devil's advocate; innovative--assemble order out of chaos; shadow surfacing.
- XVI** The Tower Unexpected, external, drastic upheaval--blessing in disguise; This tower usually represents overbuilt self-defense system; After the shock & chaos come surprising relief & liberation --allowing for fresh perspective & personal growth spurt; could be spiritual awakening; or flight from disaster, chaos.
- XVII** The Star Essence of receiving guidance and feeling inspired, hopeful; learning to trust in self & life direction; develop own center; indicates success, fulfillment of goal coming; calm after storm; purification; true communication; raise others' consciousness; could refer to being a star performer, too.
- XVIII** The Moon Learning to listen for guidance; feel sense of purpose calling; need to work through past issues; miscommunications; connection with/to subconscious; changeable, confusion; feeling unsure, insecure about whatever "shadows" come up; fears & self-deceptions distorting truth—trust intuition for clarifying perspective; may be TOO emotional & need rational.
- XIX** The Sun Courage, ideas, & energy for manifesting & moving on; success & happiness; communicate your feelings & dreams; shining your light, sharing; brimming with life & confidence; new clarity; overcoming challenges; dreams come true; beware--might develop vanity & arrogance.
- XX** Judgment (more like Compassion) Connecting inner self with outer community; Searching for Truth, which we accept AS IS, without blaming; let go of outdated past beliefs/ expectations; new outlook; realize guilt/blame are counterproductive; make new choices; take responsibility for choices & actions; face the facts; awakening to a calling--feels like rebirth; want to merge into humanity, unity.
- XXI** The World Becoming self-aware & self-responsible; Fulfilled goal or cycle; found the "perfect" path, job, partner, whatever; CELEBRATE!; expanding horizons (travel, new venture, etc.); delight in life; feeling & expressing inner/spiritual self; do merge into unity.

Main References (see Ginny's OLLI class Bibliography): *The Tarot Bible*; *Spiritual Tarot*; *The Tarot of Transformation*; *Tarot for Your Self, Workbook for Personal Transformation*.

EXERCISES with Small TAROT “SPREADS”

INTRODUCTION:

The more precisely you **design your questions**, the more helpful will be the answers. You can gently shuffle* the cards as you talk about the situation and all related ramifications. Keep your mind focused gently, clearly, and NOT on the answer you hope for. Relax, be open to guidance. **WRITE your questions** down, maybe with a diagram of the spread you are using, so you can see the **interrelations between cards**. When you have done all that, THEN lay cards.

There are kazillions of spreads in every tarot book and online. Looking at them will give you great ideas that would be just perfect for you & your life. But if you have your own, well-defined issue in mind, just design your own spread. The magic is not in the arrangement itself, but in the meanings you assign.

The more you play (practice) with the cards, the more you will learn to see in them. Look for symbols that stand out to you, patterns & connections. Pay attention to emotions that pop up. You see deeper as you develop and are ready for more and also as you need to know. It takes time, though. ENJOY the process; it never ends. And remember that the books only give you ideas—YOU have to determine meaning from the clues. (If meaning is unclear, ASK further.)

*BTW, If a card jumps out of the deck as you shuffle, LISTEN to its message. Volunteer cards get extra attention!

ONE-CARD SPREADS

Used for quick, simple questions or for specific clarification. (I have used these for a “daily draw” each morning & for help clarifying dream symbols. These have taught me to value the “Universe” working through the cards! Wow--insights galore!)

TWO-CARD SPREADS

- A.** How do I/you see & what do I/you teach each other? (Do with friend.)
(Can be done alone, asking for yourself & another person.)
- B.** Either/Or Choices

THREE-CARD SPREADS

Body, Mind, Spirit	Past, Present, Future	Maiden, Mother, Crone
Choices 1, 2, or 3	Me, Him/Her, Us	Thesis, Antithesis, SYNthesis
Situation, Challenge, Solution		Situation, Action, Outcome
Day overall, Deal with this, Beware of that		Universe’s choices to tell you
What else do I need to know about Problem;	What is best to do;	Outcome

Jungian-Shadow-Work, based on The UNDERWORLD SPREAD

(modified from *Tarot 101*, by Kim Huggens, 2010, page 165-166)

When I first did this 6-card spread, I learned a lot about interpreting cards. Each card had to be interpreted in the context of its specific question, which led me to notice different parts of the published explanations than I had seen before. I'm still getting used to learning new aspects of cards from reading the same old text again!

1: How best to identify my Shadow?

2: Where in my life does this Shadow show most clearly?

3: How does my Shadow tend to manifest?

4: What approach should I take to learn how to understand my Shadow?

5: How can I bring the Shadow from my depths to the light of consciousness?

6: What is the likely outcome of this work?

Tarot's CELTIC CROSS SPREAD

INTRODUCTION:

Tarot card symbols connect with and express information from our subconscious, providing us with a tool for expanding our perspective and understanding of an issue. **IF** the issue has been well considered and defined, the cards of a spread are more likely to fit together. They may reorganize our perspective and/or reveal things we had not previously associated with the situation.

The Celtic Cross seems to be one of the oldest and still THE most popular of all spreads; it is well designed for general, broad, and typical questions or situations—which I will refer to as “issues.” It explicitly covers past, present, (near-) future, and also psychological influences on the issue in question. It provides a lot of information between ten cards. The spread can take a while to interpret, since we must make multiple cross-connections (mentioned later).

There may be multiple, intersecting themes. Sometimes, the cards see a connection between the question asked and a different, unmentioned issue. The second issue may need to be resolved before the first one can be addressed. Occasionally, the cards may want to address a whole different problem—the one that is actually uppermost on the mind! Some people lead extremely busy, complicated lives, and tarot spreads for them can be more confusing than usual. (Josie Ellershaw, in her *Easy Tarot Handbook*, says these overly busy people are usually “Queen of Wands” type people, hmm.)

That brings up the decision whether to use “significators” in a spread. A “**significator**” is the card chosen to best represent either the “**querent**” (person who is asking the question) or the issue at question. Like everything else in tarot, the choice is whichever makes best sense to you. Personally, I like the idea of choosing a significator and then leaving it in the deck, to see where it may pop up. But do whatever you like—try it both ways!

FIRST CONSIDERATIONS for INTERPRETING a CELTIC CROSS:

WARNING: Card order around center VARIES in POSITION from book to book.

Be very careful to always keep the CONTEXT of each card's POSITION in mind.

First, Quick, Immediate OVERVIEW, looking for special emphases:

4 or more MAJOR Arcana cards LACK of MAJORS	Forces beyond your control are at work. Good progress just from MINOR level.
4 or more COURT Cards	PEOPLE are more your focus than actions; Who do each of them represent? You may be starting an inner growth spurt.
3 or more of any one NUMBER	Emphasis on numerological pattern.
4 or more of any one SUIT	Strong emphasis on that element/plane; Your perspective on issue is from there.
LACK of any one SUIT REPEATING noticeably any particular symbol or even dominant color	Oops, imbalanced—NEED some of it!

CELTIC CROSS CARD POSITIONS: (“YOU” refers to “querent.”)

WARNING: Cards #3,4,5,6 VARY amazingly in POSITION around the center. The order presented here IS NOT what is on the poster for the Waite decks. I’m using what most books show: Conscious influences UP and UNconscious influences DOWN; with Past located to the LEFT and Future shown to the RIGHT.

- 1** **HERE & NOW:** You, your issue/situation, or your relationship with issue.
 This card should fit with your understanding of you &/or issue.
 If you don’t see the connection right off, #2,3, 4 should fit!
 If still unmatched—is the spread working on some other issue?
 - 2** **“CROSSES” YOU:** Challenges (goal to reach or dilemma), interference, resistance.
 Often gives clue to **WHY** you are asking this question now.
 Note: this could be well-intended **HELP** you are **mis**interpreting.
 If #1 refers to an **INNER** issue, #2 could show balancing force.
 - 3** **“CROWNS” YOU:** This card represents your **CONSCIOUS** and expectations.
 Your thoughts, attitudes, behaviors focused on & affecting issue;
 these are often mental habits from your **PAST** & may be outdated.
 Watch for self-fulfilling prophecies (also can show in #7 & #9).
 - 4** **“BELOW” YOU:** This card refers to the **BASIS** of the issue--usually in the **PAST**.
 UNCONSCIOUS--hidden, unknown; Past events/actions--still active.
 Might reveal unknown talent/potential/calling—but at a hard time.
 - 5** **“BEHIND” YOU:** (Recent?) **PAST**, possibly fading away but still influencing issue.
 You may be in process of discovering & working thru’ an old pain.
 - 6** **“AHEAD” OF YOU:** Near Future, how things are likely to develop next/soon,
 manifestations/lessons based on past & current thought patterns.
 (Or might show what will happen if you let the issue fester longer!)
- #7–10 Show path to resolve issue. All my books laid these out with other 6.**
- 7** **SELF-IMAGE** or current **STATE OF MIND** relating to issue. May advise what you
 need or have already, or caution you about a shadow aspect
 sabotaging you. Usually reveals your negativity contributing.
 - 8** **ENVIRONMENTAL:** Shows what (inner) resources you have to help/clarify issue
 AND/or how other people see you & issue. Or how you/issue affect
 others. Court card here may show you **WHO** is influencing you/issue.
 - 9** **EXPECTATIONS (HOPES & FEARS):** Emotional position! Again, (unconscious)
 fears, even of what you want; future emotions when issue is solved;
 maybe unrealistic fantasies, or even secret desires revealed.
 - 10** **OUTCOME:** (Based on most likely trajectory of past & current thoughts/events);
 New/next focus or key for further personal growth.

FURTHER HINTS for INTERPRETING SPREAD

First off—**SAVE OUTCOME FOR LAST--AFTER** studying ALL the other cards and their interrelationships! Do NOT jump to conclusions as soon as you turn card. Not ready!

At beginning, remember to **look for emphases** with Major Arcana cards, noticeably repeated suits or numbers, or even particular colors or symbols. (See page 17, bottom.)

COMBINATIONS of CARDS to consider:

#4 versus #5--PAST: I surmise that the Past in bottom-card(4) shows the main source of the issue, either from the Past OR the UNconscious. The Past in left-card(5) refers more to auxiliary contributions to the issue. Or, 2 chances to connect the Past.

#1,2,4 explain the situation together, with the challenge(2) connecting the person or current situation(1) to the past/unconscious(4).

#7, one's self-image, is affected by so much and affects how one (re)acts over time.

#3,7, 9 are all about our thoughts & attitudes. Focus on fears tends to become self-fulfilling prophecies and/or to precipitate the problem one hoped to prevent! Certainly, one has a hard time making progress if one is frozen with fear.

#3,7 are apparently often compatible with each other and out of alignment with the rest. This can show a second issue that seems unrelated to the official question but IS related; such as a business reading, but #3,7 are about personal relationships.

#2,7 also affect each other in that self-image(7) affects our approach to solving problems(2). If we believe in ourselves, we can confront our problems. However, low self-esteem often causes a person to give up without trying, wasting good potential.

#3,9 may reveal a disconnect between expectations and hopes. If one believes in the worst, there is no way hopes will be allowed to manifest.

#6,10 should be compatible. Near-future(6) should be on the path to the eventual outcome(10). However, EVENTUAL may be the operative word. It may take significant time to get from 6 to 10. (Also, it's possible that the "reader" was mentally exhausted by working the earlier cards. Try taking a break and coming back to it.)

Only one of my books (*Spiritual Tarot*) agreed with the Waite decks' poster-spread that the top card position (3, CROWN, CONSCIOUS on this cheat-sheet) refers instead to (how to obtain) the best potential possible from resolving the issue. Hmm, cool.

Use whatever version of the Celtic Cross you choose. They're all good. Probably the easiest one for you is in the tarot book you use most. Whatever version you learn first, though, is likely to be the one you use ever after. The cards reveal whatever you are looking for. I gather that if any of us uses it regularly, we will develop our own sense for what is revealed by each card position—and that will be whatever we wished to see. We're the boss! YOU are the boss!

STILL CONFUSED? USE FOLLOW-UP CARDS

Sometimes answers raise more questions! If one of the cards does not make sense to you in the context of its position, OR if it rings true as a bell, and you want more information on that paradigm-shifting answer, help is available.

You guessed it — **ask the tarot a follow-up question and pull cards as needed.**

Leave the Celtic Cross in place, shuffle the rest of the deck. Again, design your next question very carefully. What exactly do you need to know to clear up your confusion? (*For example, please specify (a) the main fear and (b) how should I deal with it—hmm, in TWO ways (cards), please.*) Ask only one level of clarification, don't keep trying until you get totally confused—or the cards get cross with you and find new ways to say the same thing! The cards tend to focus on what you need to know at this point in time. Work with what you get and (try to) be grateful for the guidance offered.

CELTIC CROSS TIME LINE (!?!)

(This page is based on Josie Ellershaw's (*Easy Tarot Handbook*) successful experience with Eileen Connolly's timing system described in *Tarot: A New Handbook for the Apprentice*, Classic Edition, 1979, published by New Page Books.)

Clues to the timing of issue resolution **might** be found by an **ACE** in positions **#3,6-9**. ACEs have an associated season:

ACE of CUPS	from early March through end of May,	Spring
ACE of WANDS	from early June through end of August,	Summer
ACE of SWORDS	from early September thru' late November,	Fall
ACE of PENTACLES	from early December thru' late February,	Winter

(If there is more than one ACE, use the first one.)

(If NO ACEs appear, don't force the issue. It could be too early in a long process or there may be too many variables at play. OR, the Universe may think you are better off NOT knowing the schedule. (*Me, I would ask in a follow-up question—once—for a hint, please. I mean, maybe the Universe/Subconscious just didn't have enough card positions to pass on the more important information!*)

The NUMBER of the card in position **10/Outcome** (reduced numerologically to 1 – 9) Reveals the approximate number of weeks AFTER THE BEGINNING OF THE SEASON indicated by the ACE when the issue is expected to be resolved.

Now remember that many things will happen between the reading and the resolution. The suggested timeframe is based on things progressing smoothly along the expected trajectory. That may work in an ideal world, but realistically, there are likely to be surprises to change things along the way. This prediction is not set in stone, but it may give you an idea of whether issue can be resolved quickly or over a long time. (Hmm, I'm thinking that if the suggested timeline is the longest allowed timeframe, which would be a full year, you can safely conclude that there is no quick fix!)

Tarot's ASTROLOGICAL-HOUSES SPREAD

& KEY WORDS for HOUSES

This spread reveals The State of the "Union"--YOUR LIFE--at this time. You are not asking about specific issues; the Universe is telling you what IT chooses. (Your astrological birth chart is NOT involved in this spread at all.) **Shuffle deck; lay out 12 cards face-down in a circle, counter-clockwise, starting at 9:00.** (This arrangement is the connection with astrology.) Quite likely, there will be a theme or two that stands out. Watch for MAJOR Arcana cards and dominance of particular suit or number.

References to body associations by House: Tarot as a Way of Life, p.238-244.

HOUSE/ FOCUS IN LIFE

- 1 Personality, immediate-reaction style, How others see you (*Body: the Head*)
- 2 Self-Worth, Values, Resources/Possessions, Talents (*Body: Throat, Neck*)
- 3 Communication, Thinking, Self-Expression, Studies, Close Environment
also Your Siblings, Neighbors, Co-workers (*Body: Lungs, Hands*)
- 4 Home & Family, Nurturing (Your Childhood, Emotional Security)
(*Body: Breast & Stomach*)
- 5 Creativity, Joy, Pleasures—Romance, Your Children, Arts & Sports, Risks
(*Body: Heart & Back*)
- 6 Daily Work/Tasks, Service, Health, Self-Improvement (*Body: Intestines*)
- 7 Partnerships, Marriage, Personal Enemies, Legal Matters
(*Body: Kidneys & Lower Back*)
- 8 OTHERS' Self-Worth, Shared Resources (Taxes, Inheritances), Past,
also Psychological Interest, Transitions/Transformation,
Psychic Experiences (*Body: Reproductive Organs*)
- 9 Expansion--Spirituality, Philosophy, Advanced Learning, Foreign Travel,
also Teaching, Publishing, Broadcasting (*Body: Liver & Hips*)
- 10 Public Reputation, Career, Ambition & Highest Potential/Calling
(*Body: Bones, Teeth, Nails, Hair, Knees & other Joints*)
- 11 Community Ties, Friends, Acquaintances, Associations, Ideals, Hopes, Goals
(*Body: Calves & Ankles*)
- 12 Unconscious, both Personal & Collective; Undoing of the Ego, so tied to large
institutions—hospitals/jails. Connecting w/ Humanity. (*Body: Feet*)

ASTROLOGICAL--HOUSES TAROT SPREAD

HOUSE	FOCUS IN LIFE	TAROT CARD	DECK: DATE:
1	Personality How others see you		
2	Self-Worth, Values		
3	Thinking & Communication		
4	Home & Family		
5	Creativity, Pleasures Romance, Sports		
6	Daily Work/Health Self-Improvement		
7	Partnerships		
8	OTHERS' Self-Worth & Shared Resources		
9	Expansion & Spirituality		
10	Public Reputation & Highest Potential		
11	Community Ties		
12	Unconscious & big Institutions (hospitals)		
Daily Life	Any special situation going on lately?		