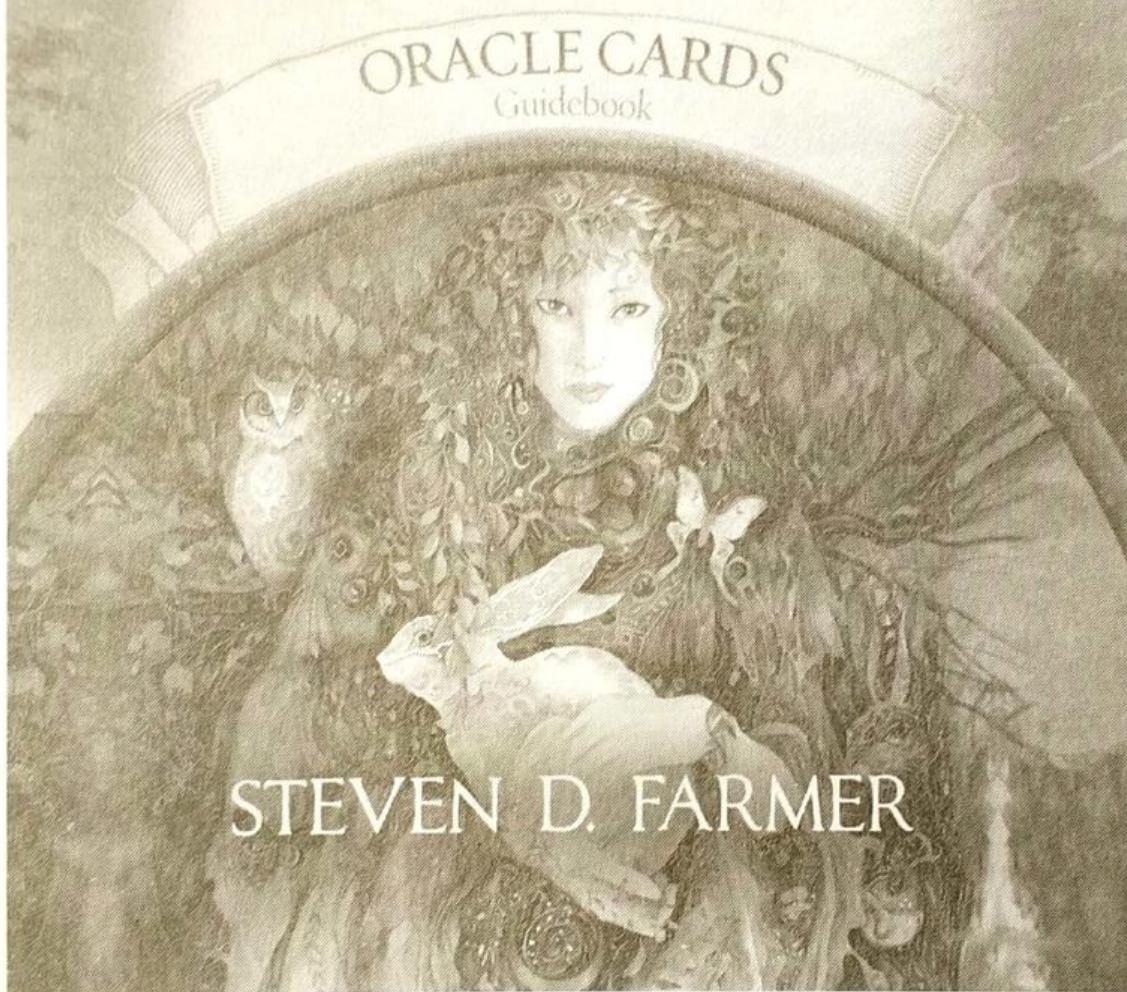


EARTH MAGIC

ORACLE CARDS
Guidebook



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HAY HOUSE, INC.

Carlsbad, California · New York City

London · Sydney · Johannesburg

Vancouver · New Delhi



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*For the love of Mother Earth
and all of her Children*




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INSTRUCTIONS FOR WORKING WITH THE EARTH MAGIC ORACLE CARDS



“The world speaks to us. We just need to learn how to become better listeners.”

We're intimately connected with every aspect of Life, yet it has become clear that our relationship with Earth has gotten seriously out of balance. By activating and awakening a deeper memory of our interconnectedness with all of the beings on this planet, we can renew and restore this balance and come to know our Earth Mother and all of her children as profoundly related, both physically and spiritually. As we integrate this knowingness into our being, the many realms of Spirit make themselves available to us in a variety of ways . . . and one way is through using these *Earth Magic Oracle Cards*.

Oracle cards in general are based on ancient methods of receiving guidance,



discerning the truth of a situation or relationship, and predicting the future. This deck, in particular, contains messages sourced from various Earth elements that will align with your pre-conscious inner voice to provide answers and counsel for your own questions and concerns. With regular use of these cards, you'll also become increasingly aware of how the world and spirit of the various Earth elements communicate with you so that you will become a better "listener."

Each card features an image of an element of the Earth and an associated theme that is an essence of that particular element. When working with the cards, you can first meditate on the illustration and the theme. Then refer to that specific card in the guidebook, where you'll find descriptive information inspired by the image followed by a communication or message (in italics) from the spirit of that element.

You'll find these cards easy to use regardless of whether you're a novice or an experienced reader. They'll assist you in giving accurate readings for yourself and others by bringing forth that inner knowing into



your awareness, often experienced as a felt resonance with the cards' messages. They'll provide insights into those thoughts, feelings, and beliefs just below the surface of your awareness that can offer a glimpse into the possible direction of relationships, careers, finances, health issues, and other areas. Moreover, these insights can help you alter your thoughts and beliefs so you can make choices that are more congruent and consistent with your soul's purpose.

Preparing a New Deck of Cards

The more you use your oracle cards, the more they will become charged with your own life force, so before you do any readings, it's helpful to clear the deck of any unintended psychic residue or impurities.

This enables the cards to operate more effectively. It's also important to clear them if your readings become indistinct or vague, or if you allow someone else to use your cards. In fact, whenever you feel it's necessary, clear your card deck by



consecrating it so that it once again becomes fortified with your life force, giving you the ability to conduct authentic, reliable readings.

To consecrate the cards, pick them up and examine each card one at a time. This infuses the deck with your personal energy, allowing you to get to know each of the cards (and for each of them to get to know you). Then hold the entire deck over your heart with the images facing you. Whether you're sitting or standing, make sure both feet are firmly on the ground. Then close your eyes and take three slow, deep breaths.

Say a prayer, asking Spirit to help you clearly interpret the meanings of every card reading so that they're accurate, specific, and healing, filled with blessings for everyone involved. Once you've said your prayer, take another deep breath, focus your intention, then gently and slowly blow the prayer into the deck.



Storing Your Cards

Your cards are sensitive tools, and they can easily absorb other energies. For that reason, it's best to store them appropriately. Keep the deck in a velvet or leather pouch, a carved wooden box, or some other special container. The cards can also be set on your altar in order to give and receive blessings and healing energy. If you wish, you can place a totem of a favored spirit animal on top of your cards and call upon that spirit animal to protect your deck from any unwanted energy.

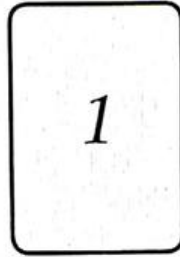
Oracle Card Readings

The *Earth Magic Oracle Cards* are meant to be used intuitively, so as you conduct a reading (for yourself or someone else), be aware of your thoughts, mental visions, physical sensations, and feelings as you look at the cards. Use this guidebook only *after* you've consulted your own intuition about the significance of the cards and



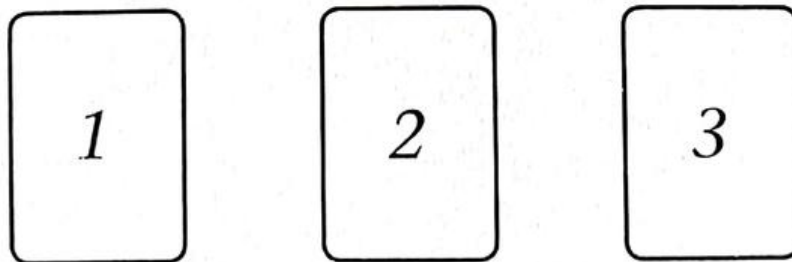
You may find that a particular one is your favorite, or you may intuitively know which spread to use for a specific reading.

Contemplation



This single-card spread is useful for either a quick reading about an issue or as a daily meditation.

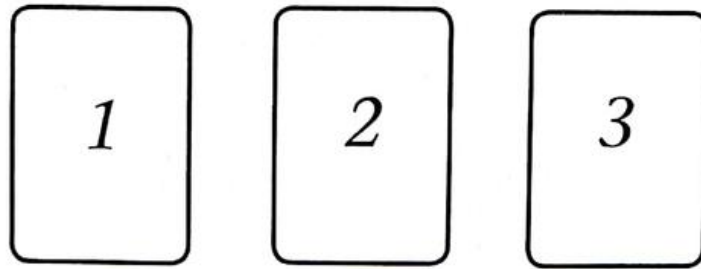
Landscape



The Landscape spread offers a broader picture of the most critical factors involved in response to your question or concern.



Timeline



The Timeline layout gives you an idea of what has influenced the current situation and its possible outcomes.

Card #1: The past

Card #2: The present

Card #3: The future



the card spread. Although every card has a specific theme, its meaning can shift somewhat with each situation.

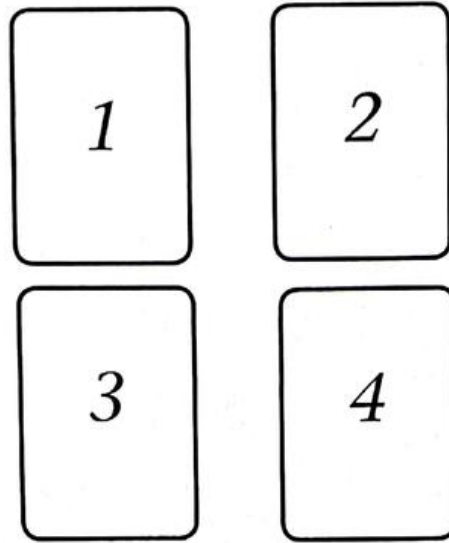
Listen closely to your body because it will serve as your best resource for understanding the energy of the cards. As you learn to tune in to your physical feelings and reactions to each spread, you'll discover that you have a wealth of information that goes way beyond anything written on the card or in this guidebook.

To begin, center yourself by making sure that your feet are on the ground and by taking a couple of slow, deep breaths. Think of a question while shuffling the cards. (If you're reading for another person, ask what his or her question is and then think of it as you're shuffling.) The query can be very specific or more open-ended, such as: "What do I need to know right now?" or "What message do you have for me?" Call upon Spirit to help you clearly receive the answer.

You have the choice of a few different spreads as follows. Experiment with these.



Relationship



This spread gives you a look at how you're relating to others, such as your boss, employee, friend, lover, or relative.

Card #1: Signifies your contribution to the relationship

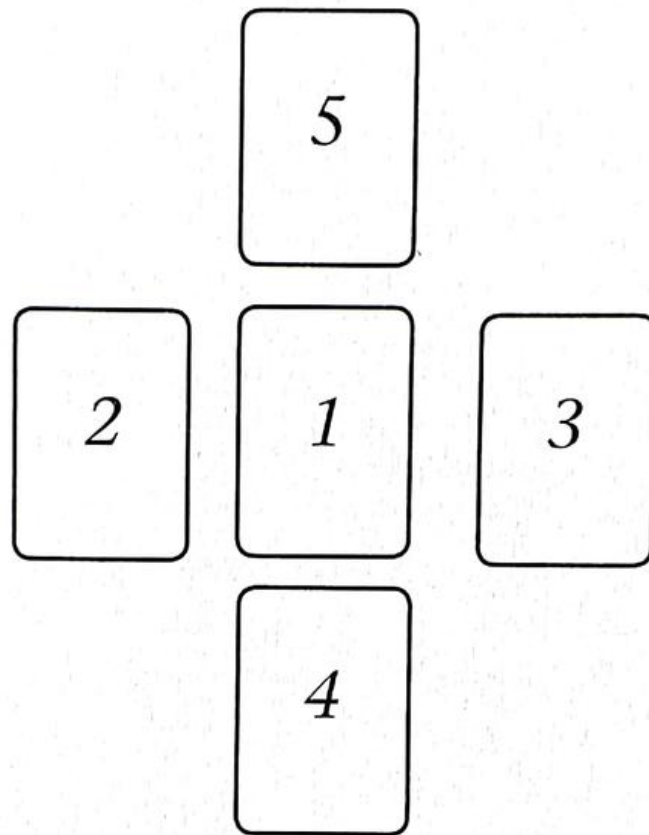
Card #2: Represents the other person and his or her contribution to the relationship

Card #3: The ways in which these energies come together

Card #4: Insight and understanding



The Cross



The Cross layout can be used for guidance on a specific issue.

Card #1: Represents the issue

Card #2: Subconscious influence of which you are unaware

Card #3: External influence of which you are aware



Card #4: What is required for resolution

Card #5: Resolution

Whichever spread you choose to work with, first look at each card and see what kind of intuitive impressions you get. Pay attention to the first thing that comes to your mind, while at the same time noticing your body's reactions to the card you draw. Your intuition may come as a sensation, a vision, an inner voice, or simply a knowing.

If during the reading one card (or more) "jumps" out of the deck, pay extra attention to it. Place the jumping card(s) face up next to your spread. These are like trump cards in that they contain additional information for your reading, so take their messages into consideration. Of course, if you drop a whole bunch of cards, it simply means you need to shuffle more carefully!

Be sure to relax and enjoy the reading, and trust what you get rather than wondering whether you're making it up or making mistakes. Again, you can't really make a



mistake or choose the wrong cards during a reading. The cards you pull will always accurately reflect current conditions.

If you don't understand a card's relevance, ask for more information. It's helpful to read the descriptive information and messages in this guidebook so that you become familiar with them the more you use the cards. Stay relaxed and grounded through breath, positive intention, prayer, meditation, and/or laughter. That makes it much easier for you to discern what your card spreads mean.

As you look at each card during a reading, the image itself and the theme can give you insight and answers to the question being posed. You may also find that you see other images in your mind's eye, which have been triggered by observing the cards. Any visions, thoughts, feelings, or words that come to you during the reading will contain more insight in response to the question.

If you're reading for someone else and the cards don't seem to directly answer a query, then ask whoever is receiving the



reading if there's another underlying question that he or she is wondering about. Oftentimes, the cards will respond to these latent concerns or issues rather than the question that's posed. For instance, people may ask about their love lives when their real focus is on financial security. The cards will zero in on abundance issues as the fundamental interest.

While reading for another person, you may wonder, *Is this reading really about me?* since the issues discussed may sound like your own. Many times, what's revealed is relevant for both you *and* the individual you're reading for. The information is still quite valid, even though it may reflect your own issues and situations.

To give remote readings, use the cards in the same way as described. In fact, you can conduct readings over the telephone, by e-mail, regular mail, or simply by tuning in to the other person. The individual doesn't need to be physically present to ensure the accuracy of the reading.





GENERAL MEANINGS OF THE CARDS



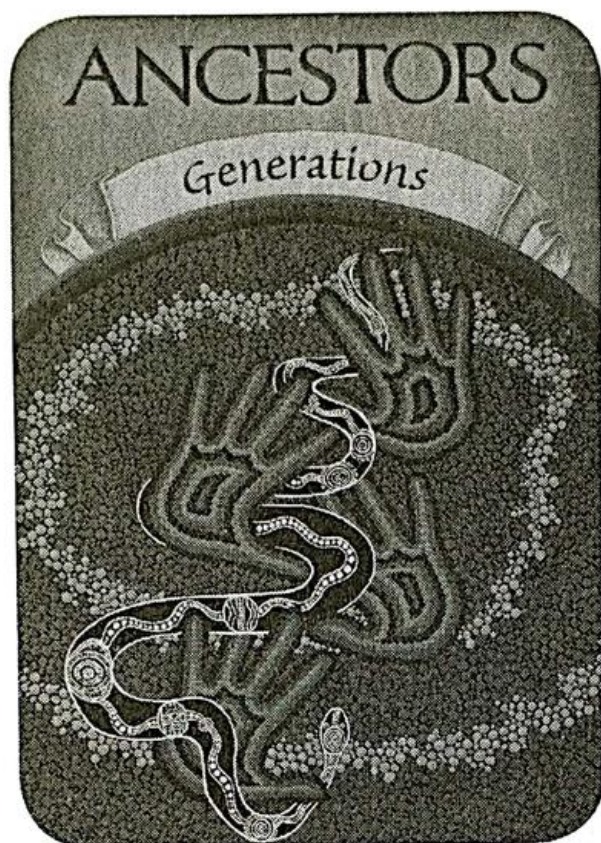
This guidebook provides you with additional information about the cards' general meanings. The term *general meaning* is used purposely, as each time you conduct a reading, the card meaning can shift depending on the context of the question that's being asked. Read this guidebook to gain further ideas and insights into the cards' significance. You can also refer to other resources, in particular my book *Earth Magic*, which gives you more detailed information on some of these various Earth elements. Always remember to regard your intuition as the ultimate authority concerning the true meaning of a card spread.

At the top of each card is the name of the particular Earth element with its theme directly below. The image and the theme will often provide you with some inspiration as to the message, particularly when aligned with your own intuitive guidance.



However, it's useful to consult this booklet for elaborations on the meaning of the cards, especially when you're first working with this deck. Doing so can augment your impressions and also give you more of a "feel" for the way these oracle cards work. Consult the following descriptive information and messages (as I've mentioned, the messages are in italics) after you've tuned in to your initial intuitive feelings in response to each card.





ANCESTORS



Generations

Ancestors are those from whom we are descended, with a lineage that starts with our parents and grandparents and stretches back hundreds and even thousands of years. We carry our ancestors' bloodline and are connected to them both genetically and



spiritually in an underlying continuity of which we may only barely be aware. Although environment and circumstance contribute to shaping us—particularly when we're young—an innate thread of kinship exists that has run the course of history for thousands of years and is contained in our bodies and in our being.

Since we're biologically and soulfully connected to these spirit beings, we can readily call upon them for guidance and assistance in matters concerning our family, community, and ourselves. In this card's image, the hands symbolize the constant connection with the past. The Australian Aborigines consider their ancestors the core of their spirituality and culture, and the Rainbow Serpent (the spirit being that created all of Life on Earth) intertwines herself through the hands' fingers, representing how the Aborigines honor all of creation. No matter our lineage, we have much to learn from our ancestors.



You have within you the blood of your ancestors. You are deeply connected to your lineage, the most immediate proof of that being the physical resemblance you have to your mother and father and perhaps even your grandparents. Yet beyond that, although unknown to your usual senses, you are connected to an ancestry that reaches back through the millennia. This is the time to call upon those ancestors, those who are of your bloodline as well as those ancient ones who have walked the land that you now walk.

In many indigenous cultures, it is believed that the essence of your ancestors inhabits many of the physical aspects of the land. In other words, they are in the trees, the water, the air, the animals, the stones—their blood being in the very dirt and sand you tread upon.

Next time you are outside, allow your senses to open to those ancestors who abide in the physical world. And anytime at all, allow your heart to open to those spirits to whom you are related through your heredity and those to whom you are connected by virtue of the land upon which you live.





AUTUMNAL EQUINOX



Release

In many areas of the world, deciduous trees prepare for the winter and conserve their energy by contracting their life force—that is, they release their leaves, which have required the rays of the sun and nourishment from the Earth in order to maintain robust growth and appearance. It's



not a decision the trees make (at least not in the usual sense); instead, it's a natural response to the decreasing cycle of light that sets up the gradual and steady release of the trees' leaves.

How remarkable it is that these trees—and for that matter, all of Earth Mother's children—simply know what to do with the changes in climate. Although this seasonal shift appears to be a death of sorts, it's only a preparation for the next cycle of life, one that will naturally follow the more extreme contraction of winter as an aspect of the life-death-rebirth cycle that we find represented in so many different ways.



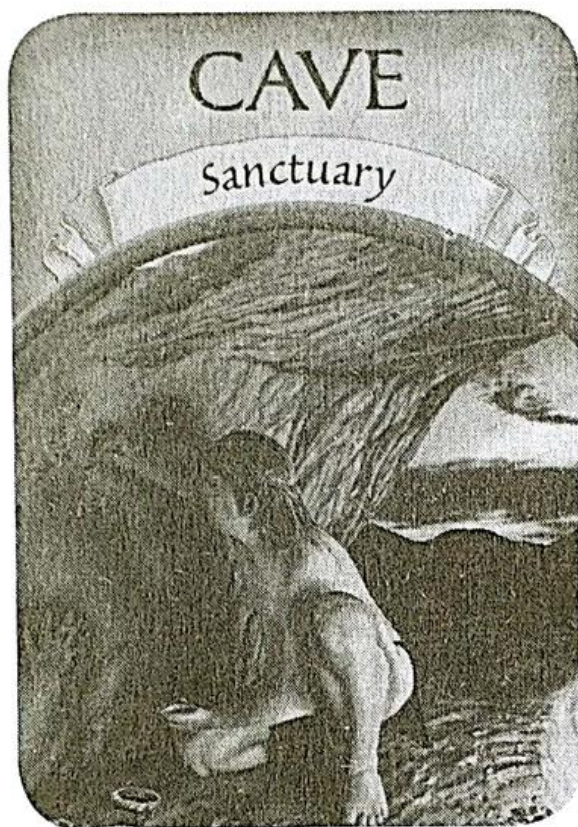
Now is the time to let anything in your life fall away that is no longer useful or needed for the emerging expression of who you are. Allow yourself to gradually shed what has become burdensome and no longer congruent with your soul's purpose. Conserve your energy by allowing yourself more rest while at the same time making preparations for the winter season. Look especially at your material possessions



and be brutally honest with yourself as you discern which of these can be given away or somehow released.

Consider shedding relationships that have served their purpose and are no longer viable, as well as work or a job that has become devoid of interest and passion. With release comes a sense of being much lighter, just like the trees that openly bear their nakedness once their leaves have departed and give room for whatever new Life is ready to birth following a period of quiet and gestation. So let go of whatever has outlived its purposefulness and trust that something else will take its place.





CAVE



Sanctuary

As the sun sets, the crescent of the new moon appears in the distance as this ancestral human creates his art, painting on the walls of the cave with colors drawn from Earth substances. The fire warms him; the cave shelters him and provides a refuge from the rest of the world. With



its womblike structure, it not only offers sanctuary but also serves as a temple that houses his creative spirit, which eventually gives “birth” in the physical form of his artwork.

Note how absorbed he is in the process. He no doubt has prepared for this creative ceremony by getting the fire going, mixing the colors, and gathering his sacred objects. He’s painting an image of a sacred spiral, one of the most ancient symbols ever discovered. It’s been depicted in artwork found in a variety of cultures, and occurs frequently in Nature in exquisite mathematical proportions (such as in the shape of a nautilus shell). It also shows up in burial sites around the world representing the endless spiral of life-death-rebirth, the grand and complex mystery so elegantly portrayed in a simple circular pattern.



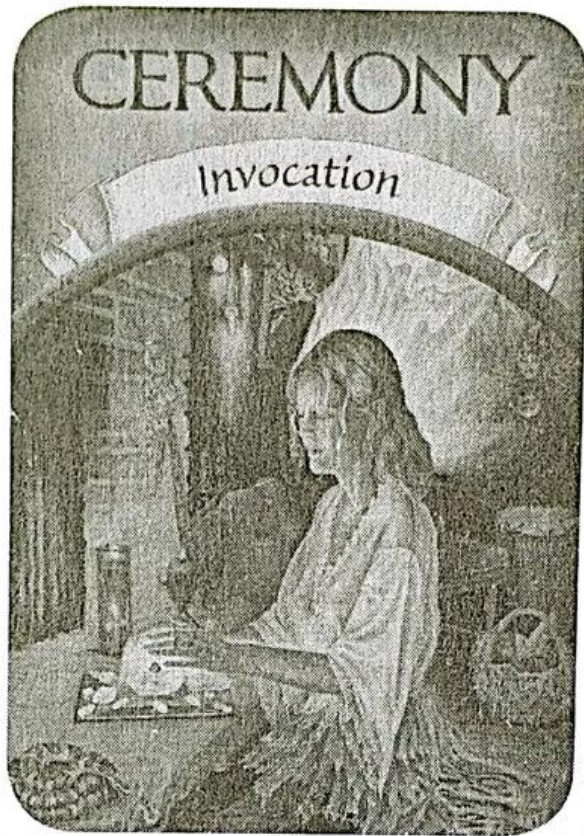
There is a quiet, still place inside of you that will always be available as a sanctuary, yet finding such a space in the natural world will enhance and complement this internal place



of peace. Whether it is a cave, meadow, forest, seashore, or any other setting in Nature, this is where you can see, hear, and feel the presence of the Creator in your surroundings. Let it become a temple for your heart and soul.

Rather than having your computer, television, or any other human-made device or activity be your sanctuary, allow yourself to discover the perfect place in Nature where you can simply be and breathe. Doing so bridges the connection between the internal and external, facilitating a spiritual communion that allows your being to be aligned in dramatic and quiet reverie with All That Is. In today's busy world, it becomes even more critical to set aside time for sanctuary—even if you have to schedule it!





CEREMONY



Invocation

It is in sacred ceremony that we have one of the greatest opportunities to experience communion with Source, one where the perceived dualities of both heaven and Earth merge into an experience of the Divine. Through the use of sacred pieces that have



become imbued with spiritual significance, we bring forth ceremony catalyzed by clear intention and preparation. Sacred ceremony is prayer in action.

In this image, a woman kneels before an altar where a number of crystals are placed, light emanating from her hands. We see incense burning, Snake spirit rests nearby, and various ethereal beings appear in a wispy shroud of light around her head.

All the while the tapestry upon which she sits appears to be on fire, symbolizing the fiery passion brought on by the intense focus of Spirit that has been invoked for this ceremony. Calling Spirit forth in this way facilitates a direct and heartfelt sense of relatedness to Source.



Whether through indifference, depression, life crisis, or any other manifestation of mental, emotional, or physical blockages, you have drifted from the intimacy with Spirit for which you yearn. It is important to do what you can to regain an experience of spiritual power that

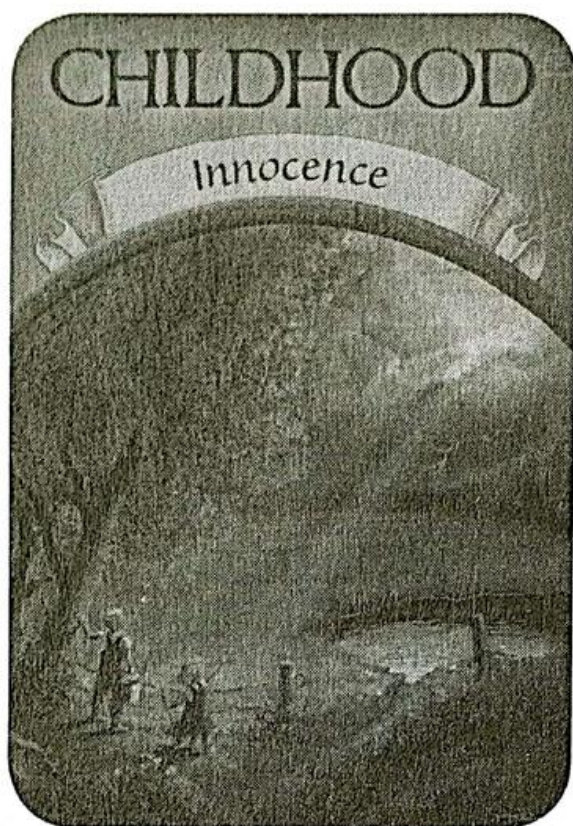


is contained within you and all around you. Do so by conducting a ceremony, one that involves not only Spirit but also material objects you consider sacred.

Set up an altar in a convenient area that is apart from your usual living space. Start with representations of the four major elements (Earth, Air, Fire, and Water), and then add just a few sacred objects. Set your intention for the ceremony, such as whether the purpose is for healing, celebration, or honoring a particular Earth season or cycle. Then do an invocation to call upon your spirit guides.

Breathe their presence, and ask these Divine beings to guide you throughout the process. Trust their guidance. Feel your heartbeat and keep breathing. Breath is the key to the actual experience of Spirit, and creating a ceremony is the vehicle that supports this.





CHILDHOOD



Innocence

The light from the heavens falls upon the children through the rays of the sun that illuminate their presence like a spotlight. The little girl reaches out to these bright beams, and these elements together portray an idyllic childhood activity for many of us who have had the privilege of exploring the



natural world. The blanket of lush meadow grass embraces a small pond, which leads to a more distant valley—one that is darker and shrouded by the very clouds that also produce this remarkable play of light.

In their exploration of the world, it's inevitable that these children will at some point lose their original innocence. It doesn't have to be a permanent loss, however. We don't need to live in constant fear in anticipation of such an event, nor do we have to reconcile the loss of that state of purity by constantly romanticizing the past and missing out on the present.

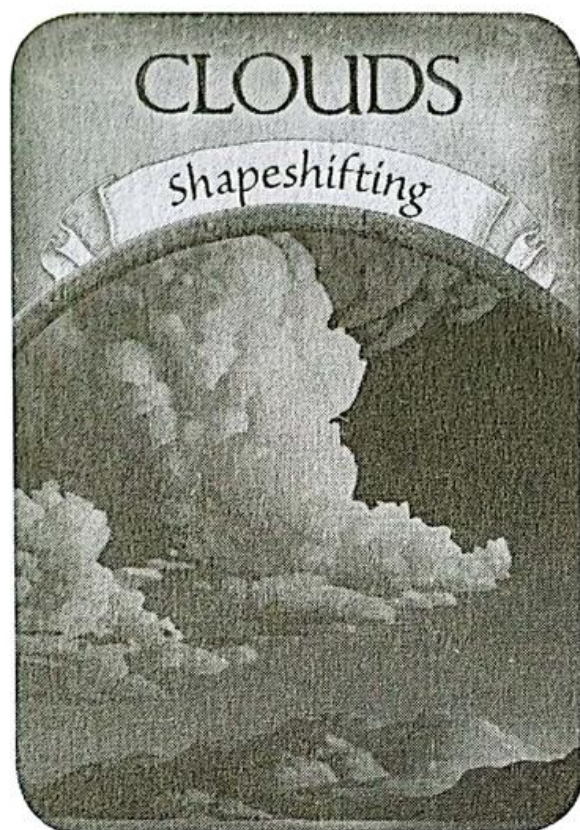
The wisdom and faith we've accrued from our life experiences are keys to recapturing that state of innocence. The light that will guide us through any dark passage is the light of Spirit from within that connects us with Source. Finding our innocence once again, we become aware that it was never lost—just forgotten.



Innocence is not simply the lack of guilt or shame but a quality in itself, one that you naturally possess when you first come into this existence. There are challenges you have faced throughout life that have further shaped your personality and character. You have also likely encountered moments following a disappointment or loss when you turned sour or cynical, and no doubt have had times when layers of anger or fear blocked the flow of your vitality, your life force.

Yet in spite of all this, there is a core of innocence that you can reawaken by releasing any shame that has covered over the truth of who you are. Take any opportunity to heal this shame and let it go so you can revisit that state of purity. Doing so helps you see every moment with fresh eyes and removes the filters that inhibit your light and love from coming forth. You truly are a child of God, so allow yourself to be that.





CLOUDS



Shapeshifting

When tiny droplets of water or frozen crystals are surrounded by billions of other droplets or crystals, a cloud is formed. Each of these tiny droplets diffuse and scatter light so that the tops of clouds are white, then fade to gray toward the base. The nature of cloud formations affects our mood



as well as the temperature on the ground and in the air. Their shape, movement, and coloration tell us what weather to expect in the near future, and they nourish our visual hunger during breathtaking sunrises and sunsets.

Most of us have had an opportunity at one time or another to notice the shapes and forms clouds take as they drift gently or boldly across the sky, constantly shifting and changing, adjusting themselves to the requirements of their nature. When we take time to simply observe, we can see the Cloud People—images that are an elegant collaboration between Nature and our imagination.



In both subtle and more dramatic ways, you can shapeshift by your choice of clothing, hairstyle, adornments, and even mannerisms (such as facial expression, gestures, and the way you walk). By adjusting these along with your internal attitude, you can actually display different personas. When you experiment with these variations of self-expression that are not

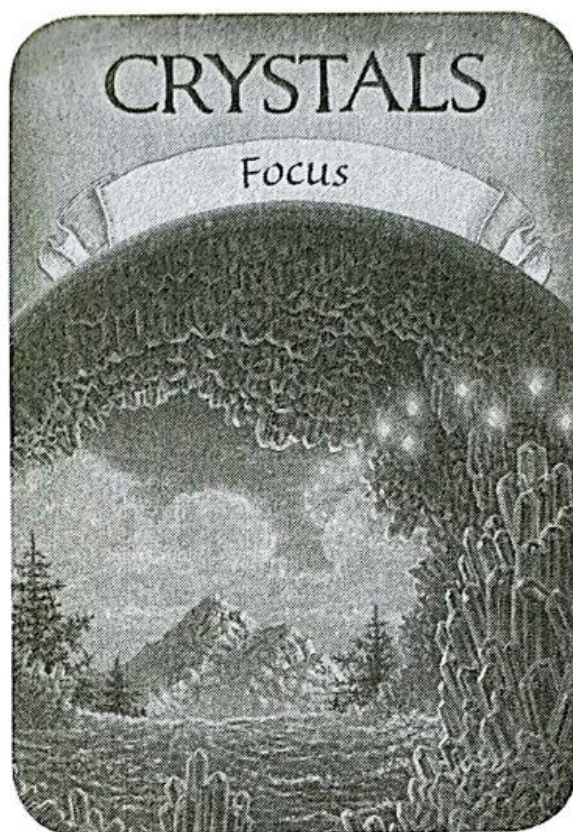


how you ordinarily present yourself, others will react to you, depending on the degree in which your persona contrasts with the one they are most familiar with. Be like the clouds as you try out different forms, stretching your limits at times, willing to move and adjust as necessary.

Lift your head up, square your shoulders, and stand tall such that your chest and heart open to the world, and note how this feels. You may feel vulnerable at first, but stay with it. Then let your shoulders fall forward slightly, pull your chest inward an inch or two, and let your head drop a little; observe how this feels.

Experiment with contracting your aura (your energy field), then expand it as far as you comfortably can. By this kind of shapeshifting you can consciously choose your expression into the world. Just remember who you are at the core.





CRYSTALS



Focus

Here we see an amethyst crystal cave bathed in the water from a river, the points of light representing the spiritual force that these crystal beings generate. Amethyst, as well as other types of quartz crystals, have been used for thousands of years in magic and healing, as well as for intensifying



psychic capabilities. Since its violet color is the same as the crown chakra, it has often been referred to as a *spiritual stone*.

The nature of quartz crystals, the second most common element in the Earth's crust, is that they help focus the power of our life force, or Spirit. Where attention goes, power flows—and crystals magnify this power tenfold. Our intention influences where our attention goes. When we're consciously aware of our intention, it facilitates the focus of that spiritual power and supports the manifestation in material reality of that intention.

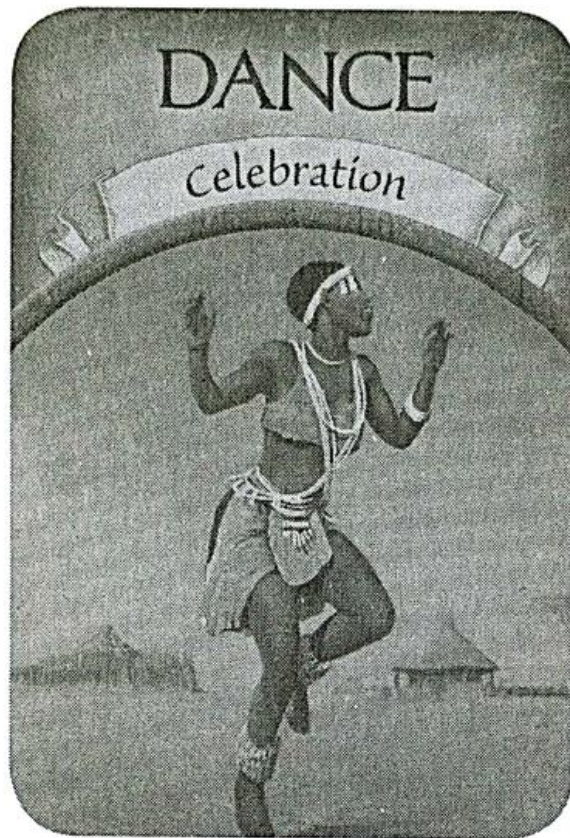


It is time to bring your complete focus to the subject of your inquiry. Eliminate all distractions, and give this your undivided attention. Whether this is a project, relationship, or simply a relaxing time spent walking in Nature, be fully present to the situation. This sharpening of focus will expand your awareness and allow your inner guidance to penetrate your consciousness, which can then be parlayed into appropriate action.



By being focused with crystal clarity, you are in the flow of your life force and, in fact, have become one with it. It is not a hypervigilant or tension-filled state, but one of relaxed attention. Keep your eyes, ears, and heart focused on that which you need to pay attention to, and miracles can be created. To paraphrase a fictional elder, "Use the Force," and use it in life-enhancing ways.





DANCE



Celebration

This woman is dancing an ancient story, one that has been handed down for centuries. She's acting out this story through her movement, choreographed by the collaboration of tradition, ritual, and her own spirit. The dance itself sometimes



becomes the story. Although unheard and unseen in this image, there are others who are singing and clapping to accompany this dancer. It's a communal celebration focused around a story that's been handed down from many, many generations.

For thousands of years our ancestors, no matter our lineage, celebrated with ritualized storytelling that included singing and dancing. As in this image, the dancer's movement brings the tale to kinesthetic life. The participation of the community in this heartfelt enactment helps secure the bonds of the people and connects them to their spiritual and ancestral roots. When we celebrate anything in this way, it always touches a deep sense of love, gratitude, and appreciation.



The sacredness of any celebration is dependent upon the quality of spirit that is present. The quality of spirit is greater to the degree that you are fully present, with minimal inhibitions about expressing your joy and



happiness through physical movement. Focus on what you want to celebrate. Put on some music and dance, whether slow or fast. Sing a song while you do so. Make one up about what you most have to celebrate.

God's wish is for everyone to enjoy their time on Earth, and part of that wish is to celebrate your capacity to be joyous and express it through your body. Whether in private, with a small group of friends, or a large communal gathering, let music, song, and dance be a part of your sacred ceremony regardless of what you are celebrating. For truly, any celebration is sacred.





DAWN



New Beginnings

The start of the day brings with it reassurance that the night has passed, making way for new opportunities, no matter what has come before. It reminds us of the predictability of the daily cycles. That first light that forecasts the sun's appearance awakens the winged ones, who sing and



chirp happily at the advent of another morning. It's a time of fresh beginnings from which we can create whatever kind of experience we desire.

In this image, we see the rays of the sun stretching into the valley while the sun itself peeks around the corner, as if it had set its course to proceed around the bend in the river, which appears relatively still from its rest during the night. This scene exemplifies renewal and new beginnings.



When you witness the initial stages of dawn without the benefit of a clock or other timepiece, for a while you may not be able to discern whether the sky is really lightening. The stars remain visible, and shadows of the night still shape the landscape. It is that way with any beginning: it is difficult to tell where the old ends and the new begins. Gradually, however, it becomes clear to your senses that the light is definitely increasing; and as you continue to observe, the world slowly wakes up, accompanied by all the sounds, smells,



and freshness associated with it. Soon the first glimmer of the sun shows. A new day has begun.

This is a time to say farewell to the old and honor the new by releasing any self-imposed constraints or resistance to the truth that you know. This is your chance to develop that project you have been thinking about, embark on that adventure you have dreamed of going on, and take risks in initiating what your intuitive self has been telling you to do.

As this prospect becomes increasingly visible and real, doubts and uncertainties may arise. But rest assured—just as dawn inevitably turns into day, by heeding your inner guidance, you will succeed.





DESERT



Vision Quest

In this arid climate zone that we call *desert*, images shift and change throughout the day, yet always maintain a sharp and defined presence. Those hardy species of flora and fauna that have found a home in the desert have adapted over eons to the relative harshness that's a strong



characteristic of these lands. Throughout history, we've passed down many stories of people wandering the desert. Often they're about religious figures and ascended masters who had journeyed there and returned to their people with remarkable visions.

The desert is an ideal place to seek a vision or, more accurately, to allow a vision to come to you. The quiet and peace of such an environment is conducive to the solitude required to have this type of profound experience. Spending time in this region without the usual accoutrements of the civilized world can present survival challenges or at least seem to. And this could rightfully be called a *spirit quest*, where through steadiness in this seemingly bleak environment, it becomes possible to receive direct guidance from Spirit internally and in the world around you.



A "vision quest" is a process whereby you spend a few days in the wilderness alone. Typically, you carry only water and some sacred items with you, and you spend most

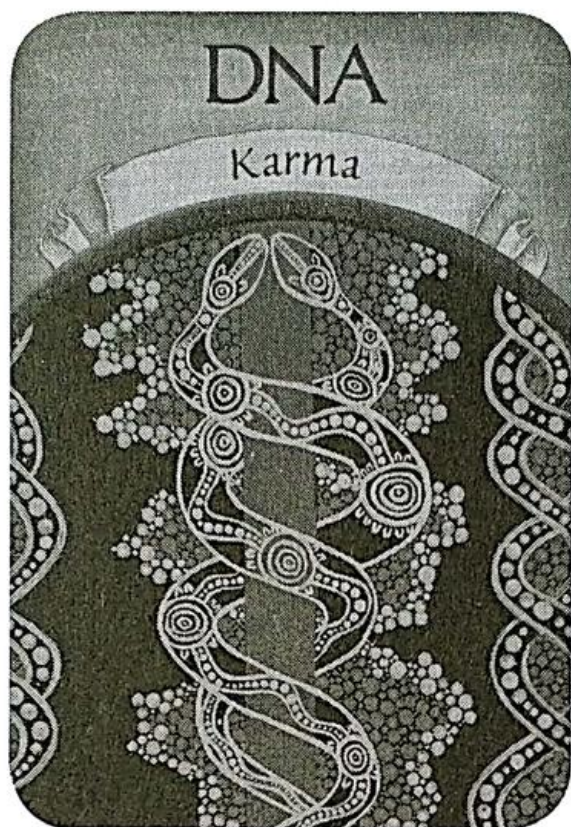


of the time praying or meditating. Many who have completed a vision quest assert that it is a powerful and even life-changing experience, and report vivid and profound revelations. It is said that "the desert does not lie," so partaking in this can help you discover the truth about your purpose, or at least give you some clues.

It is time for you to go on a vision quest. Designate a place in Nature in which to dwell, whether for a couple of hours or a few days. Spend the majority of your time while there praying and meditating. It is best to be in a location where you can truly find solitude, even if it is in a quiet corner of a park for an afternoon. Wherever you go, take your question, concern, or challenge with you into prayer or meditation. Allow it to float around in your consciousness, and watch what shows up.

This is one of the more powerful cards. By drawing it, whatever other messages you may have received are amplified threefold.





DNA



Karma

Karma, a concept in many Eastern religions, is a Sanskrit word implying the greater universal laws of cause and effect, providing an implied code of ethics within the structure of the seemingly endless cycles of birth, death, and rebirth (*samsara*), which we experience throughout our lives



in many different versions. The mistaken notion about karma is that it's some kind of punishment, but it's far from that. In fact, in its purest form, it simply asserts that our conduct in this lifetime will determine our next incarnation. It has also come to mean how our behavior and actions in this lifetime create consequences in a slightly different version of the Golden Rule.

We not only carry our soul's karma into this lifetime, but also embedded in the complex coding of our DNA is our genetic ancestral karma. The double-helix structure of DNA contains codes that have been passed down from our parents and grandparents as well as our ancestors; therefore, we have some of the same genetic information that comes from the DNA of very early humans.

In this card, we see two intertwined serpents with double helixes on either side. Variations of this archetypal image exist in many cultures, both traditional and contemporary. It's a graphic representation of the most ancient ancestry we can lay claim to: our DNA, the fundamental substance of life itself that provides substantial determination of our life path.

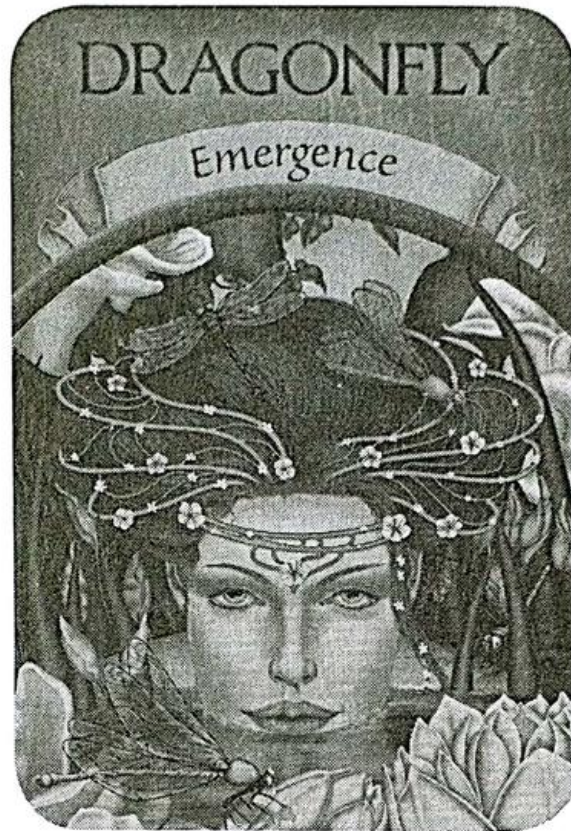




Aspects of your soul entered your primitive physical self long before you had begun to take form. While the DNA that you inherited from your biological parents has a physical component, it also has a soul pattern that came together in the creation of "you." You are predisposed to follow the karmic dictates of this patterning to some extent, yet as you evolve in your consciousness and expand the light of awareness, you can make choices that shift and modify this ancestral design.

This is one of those times. You can feel the tug of your soul that is both ancient and karmic, yet you also recognize the persistent and loving communication from your Higher Self that contradicts the more familiar solutions before you. The choice is up to you, but know that every time you heed the guidance of your Higher Self, no matter what etheric or physical form it takes, human consciousness is elevated. In a sense, it becomes a choice between destiny and fate.





DRAGONFLY



Emergence

In the stages of the life cycle of a dragonfly, once the egg is laid upon a floating plant or dropped into the water, it gestates, hatches, and may remain for up to four years in this larval form called a *nymph*. This is a precursor to the dragonfly. (Dragonflies skip the cocoon stage, moving



from egg directly to nymph.) At some point, the nymph climbs onto a rock or leaf and there emerges from its former body and takes on the shape and character of the adult dragonfly. This radiant being then proceeds to illuminate our eyes and hearts as we witness its dramatic colors and magical dance along the surface of the water.

In this card, we see a Nature goddess, like the dragonfly, emerging from the water, her hair braided with vines dotted with flowers. She is surrounded by dragonflies and is one with the vibrant plant life thriving in the pond. The goddess emerges from her gestation in the water transformed, with a renewed sense of power and purpose.



You are in an intense process of emergence into the next cycle of your life. Unlike more gradual shifts in awareness you have experienced, this one is happening quite rapidly and came on somewhat unexpectedly, without any pauses for contemplation or indecision. You may even think that you are unprepared for such dramatic changes in your life, yet you are prepared and

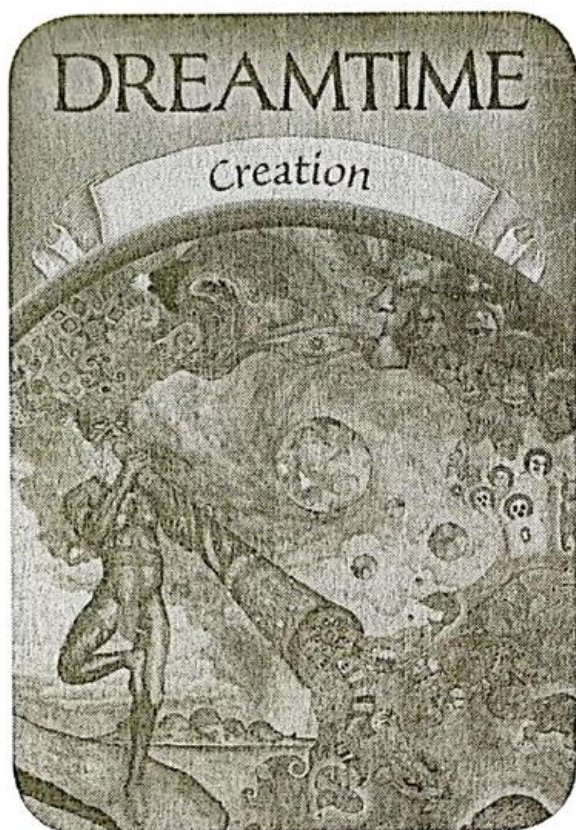


can put to use the experiences and wisdom you have accumulated up to now.

Life is demanding that you move into the next stage of maturity. This requires you to adjust your thinking about yourself, others, and your community. It calls for you to shed yet another layer of your ego-filled defenses and let go of any illusions of being less than who you are.

This period of emergence is one of broadened consciousness and heightened perceptual capacities; and since it is inevitable, it is best to surrender to the flow and allow yourself to gracefully move into the next cycle of your life.





DREAMTIME



Creation

For the Aborigines of Australia, the *dreamtime* is a place before time and outside of time in which ancestral spirit beings came to Earth and gave all of Life its form. Once the work was done, these spirits remained in the very forms they created—including the animals, hills, stars, and other features



of the land—and continue to be present today.

The dreamtime is an individual's or group's spiritual template, including songs and stories that have been handed down for at least 60,000 years—although Aborigines would say that they've existed since the beginning of time. In one such tradition, there's a creation story involving the didgeridoo, which is essentially a hollowed-out log that emits a droning sound when played.

In this card, we see that as Spirit Man plays the didgeridoo, the world is sung into existence. Note the various beings and colors and structures of the land that are being created, all carrying Spirit that has been breathed into them.



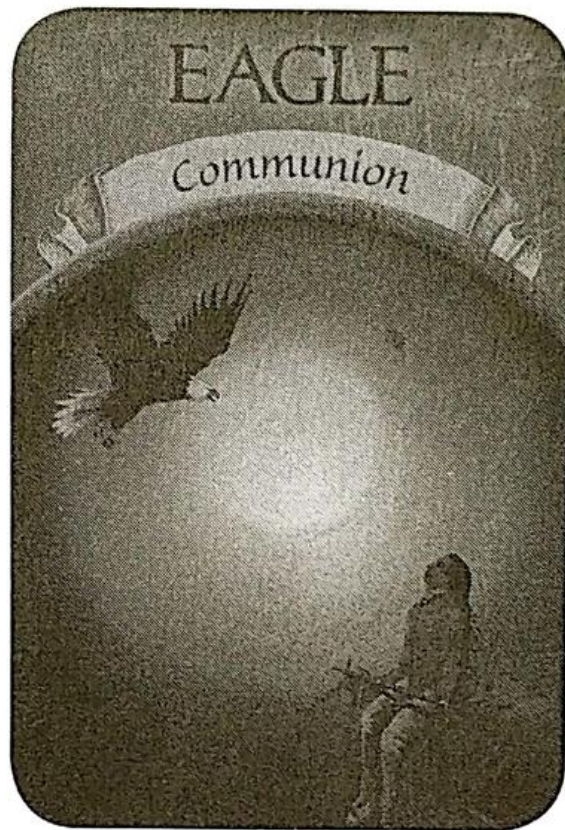
Close your eyes, tune in to your breathing, and allow yourself to sink deeply into the heart of the living creation that you are. As you notice your breath becoming steady and slightly deeper than usual, observe the urge within you that is



begging to come forth in some creative action. Pay attention to any images, sounds, or feelings that beckon your awareness; and there you will find the key as to the manner in which to express this magnificent pulse.

Your breath is the crossover between Spirit and physical reality. Breathing comfortably and steadily helps you align yourself with Spirit, which then brings a clearer focus on what creative expression is preparing to be birthed through and from you. Discard any habitual thought patterns that would prevent the manifestation of what you are being prompted to bring forth. Allow yourself to take risks with this self-expression, and all of Creation will smile upon you.





EAGLE



Communion

Here the man and the eagle make contact through their eyes and spirits. The man has performed a ceremonial calling to Eagle brother, who now comes to him as a familiar friend. It's an intimate relationship between human being and feathered being, one of both spirit and flesh. Yet it's ultimately



this deep spiritual kinship that connects them, formed from their recognition of the sacredness of this bond.

Eagle Spirit is often associated with the highest and noblest, encouraging us to let our spirits soar. Through this communion, we know that we can touch the sky. We know that we can be more than just two-legged creatures clinging to the ground. We're intimately related to all of Life on the planet, and it's through communing with any expression of Life that we realize how vitally connected we all are.



Whenever you experience a heartfelt communion with some physical expression of Life—plant, animal, human, or anything else—it is only then that you can truly feel how your life force is similar to the life force that is all around you. It is only a matter of the differences in form. An essence is articulated into the physical world in a multitude of ways that is the same in everything and everyone, although it manifests in various shapes and characteristics. This essence is Spirit emanating



from the core of all things.

Communion with Nature is essential for you now. Take some time to do an open-eyed meditation with any nearby animal or plant.

Relax your body as much as possible, breathe consciously, and keep your attention on the life-form you are communing with. After a few moments, you will notice a sense of the boundaries dissolving, a melding of the "I" and "Thou." You may even receive messages or impressions as you find yourself in the flow of unspoken communication.





FAIRIES



Earth Magic

Fairies are Nature spirits thought to be descended from the early tribes—particularly the Tuatha de Danann, those associated with the goddess Dana, who once ruled Ireland—that inhabited the British Isles. Over time these ancient people were



conquered and displaced; and they fled to areas where humans didn't venture, ultimately becoming increasingly smaller and less visible in order to better hide themselves.

Fairies have assumed responsibility for the plants and trees (or Standing Ones). They work with Earth Magic to take care of these beings, and if you ask, they'll help you with your garden or yard. They also have the power of enchantment and shapeshifting.

Fairies appreciate it when we show them through our actions that we love the Earth as much as they do; and consequently, they bestow a little of their Earth Magic upon us.

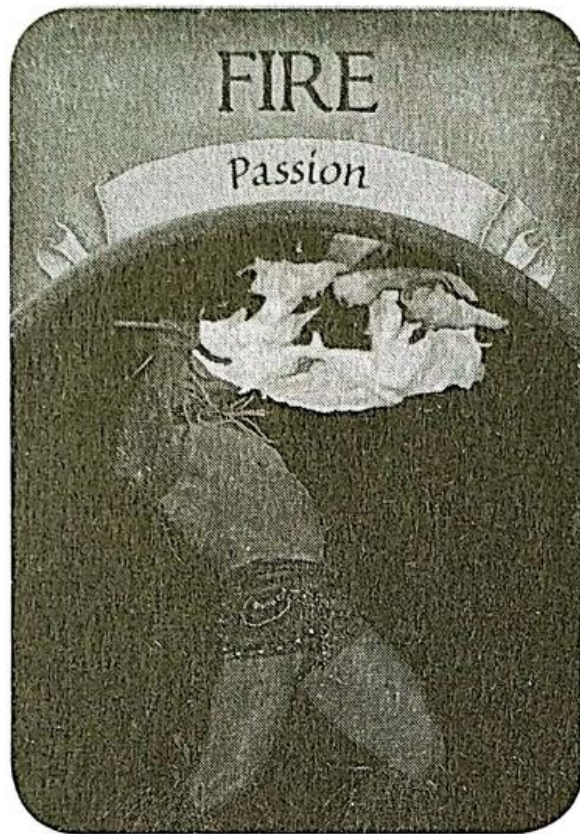


You have the same power available to you as the fairies do. It starts with loving the Earth through your heartfelt gratitude and appreciation, but more important, through your actions. The fairies can help you reconnect in a more intimate way with the Earth, and all they require is your willingness to pay attention to the trees and plant life around you and demonstrate your care.



Whether you live in a small space or have an expanse of land, make it a point to be especially attentive to your surrounding vegetation. Plant something. Get your hands in the dirt and do so with love and enthusiasm. Every flower, tree, or shrub you are tending is a living being, so treat each like you would a dear friend. Ask the fairies to help you take care of these friends, and you will be rewarded many times over.





FIRE



Passion

Since the dawn of humankind, we've been fascinated by fire. As soon as early humans were able to make fire, it changed our lifestyle dramatically. Through its capacity to generate heat and light, fire made it possible to cook food, stay warm in



cooler climates, and keep predators away at night. And of course, that huge furnace called the sun is the spark of Life here on Earth, bringing not only the necessary warmth of this incredibly huge ball of fire, but also the life-giving rays of light emitted by that fire.

In this card, a man is enacting an ancient ceremonial fire dance originating from Samoa, at one time performed to ignite the passion of warriors before battle. Fire can inspire other passions as well. We speak of being “on fire” or “catching fire,” phrases signifying that we possess an intense desire or enthusiasm for something. No wonder that passion has come to be associated with fire.



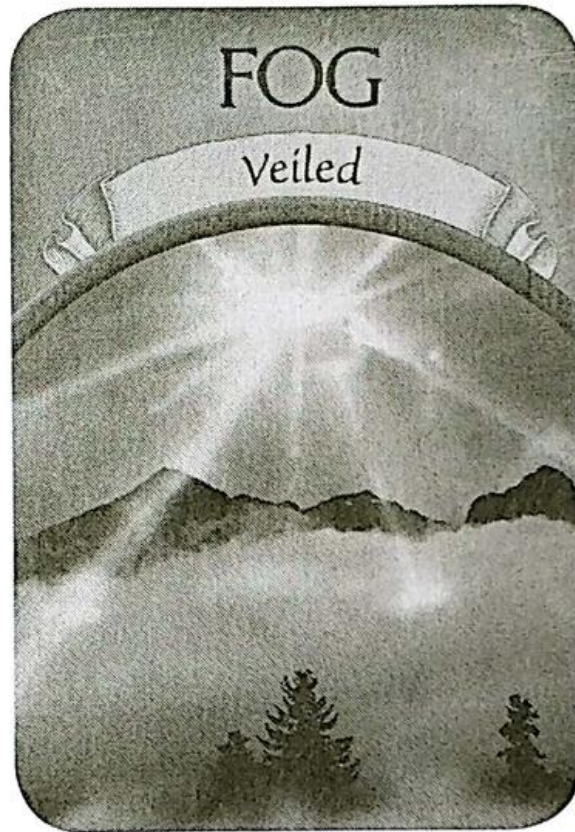
What are your passions? What turns you on? What ignites that inner flame, that creative spark? When you feel devoid of passion, consider what is missing in your life. It is most likely an absence of “fire in your belly,” something that makes your heart beat faster and quickens



your breathing. Passion is not something that comes from outside of you, although some events and circumstances can trigger it. It is an intensity of feeling, whether quietly experienced or enthusiastically expressed.

Passion can simply be a strong feeling, or the sensation itself can be so powerful that it motivates you to act. This is too often associated exclusively with sexuality, which is certainly one way of experiencing it, yet it limits its meaning and demeans the broader possibilities. Open yourself to the truth of what you are passionate about, and find a means to express it.





FOG



Veiled

Fog is simply a low cloud, a blanket of water crystals that hasn't gained the density of raindrops. The thicker it is, the more it shrouds us in its damp and billowy arms. It can be so thick that it makes it nearly impossible to see directly in front of us. During those times, silence makes its own



sound as we pause and allow ourselves to be enveloped in this shroud of impenetrable density. We may even feel as if we can do nothing but be still and await what is to be revealed.

Yet even within the thickest fog, we can be assured that it will eventually burn off as the sun's rays infiltrate the veil. Once they do so, we can anticipate how the light and warmth will bring us welcome relief from the cold. As the sun continues to disperse the fog, our surroundings become illuminated, and we have the opportunity to continue onward.

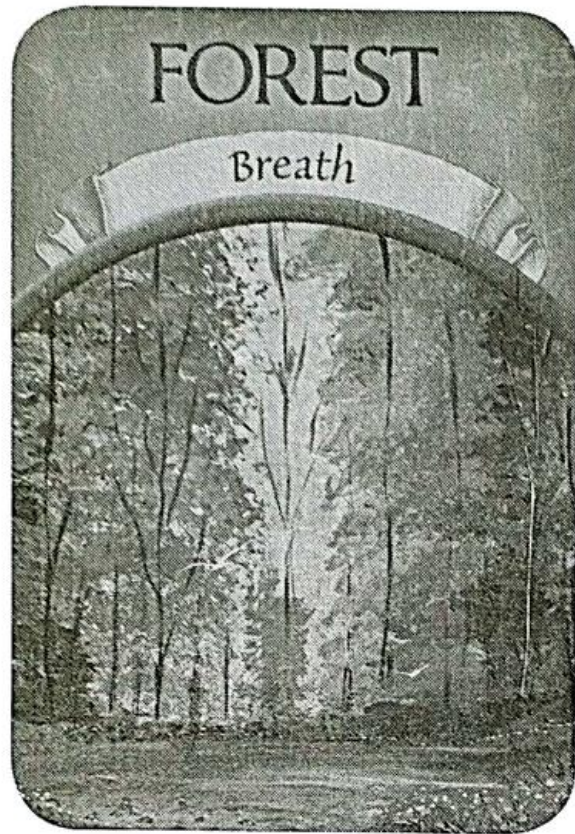


You are enmeshed in confusion and uncertainty, and are unsure if it will ever clear up. This is not the best time to make decisions, particularly any major ones. Know that this foggy veil will eventually dissolve. Although there may be ways you are unconsciously contributing to this state, the greater truth is that this is simply a cycle you are moving through, and like all things, this too shall pass.



Allow yourself to feel confused—in fact, decide to be confused. No matter what attempts you make right now to make things happen or move in any specific direction out of impatience or frustration, you risk only creating more confusion and uncertainty. So be still and patient. Wait for that first glimmer of awareness to lift the veil so that you can see the choices before you more clearly and can then choose to align yourself with the will of Spirit.





FOREST



Breath

As we make our way across the meadow to the thicker parts of the forest, there's a subtle shift in the sensations in the body, one that might initially be barely perceptible but soon becomes undeniable. It's nearly impossible not to take deeper breaths. The richness of the forest's oxygen, given freely



and generously from the trees (the Standing Ones) to us, is a natural exchange for the carbon dioxide we release every time we exhale. Further, the animals of the forest participate in this exchange as well in what is one of the most miraculous and remarkable collaborations between plants and animals that serve to help each other live and thrive.

The ratio of this oxygen–carbon dioxide exchange has been in balance for millennia but has been changing quite dramatically in the last several years as carbon dioxide levels have been rising. Yet there are many parts of the world where we can still enjoy the refreshing and revitalizing effects of an afternoon enjoying the sights, sounds, and smells of a walk in the forest.

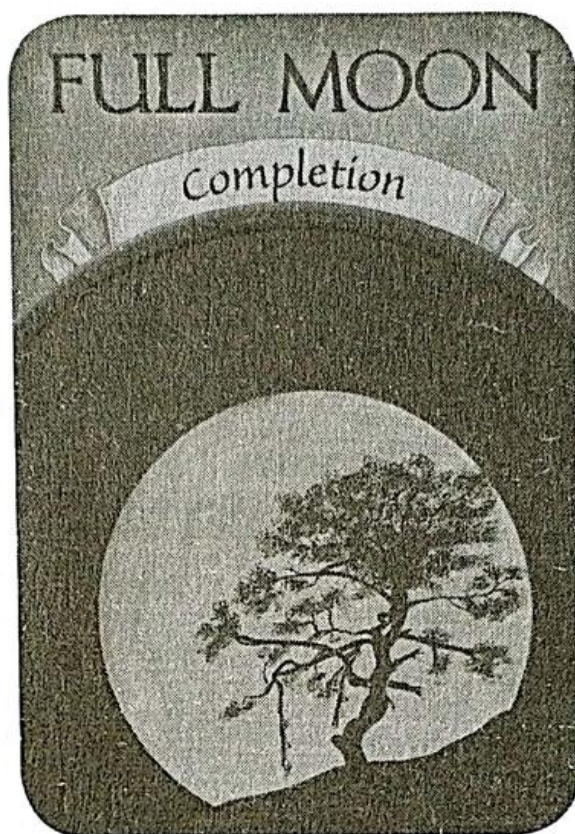
Through prayer and action, we can express our gratitude to these tree beings for the many gifts they provide, not the least of which is contributing to the very air we breathe. Things are different after a walk in the forest.



Your breathing is too shallow. Although it may feel natural, it is an unhealthy habit that causes this shortness of breath. When you subconsciously shorten your breath, no matter if this is habitual or triggered by some event or circumstance, it activates certain physiological signals that prepare your system for “fight or flight.” Another conditioned response to perceived danger is to hold your breath. This is your survival response, although it does not serve you to do so.

So . . . breathe! Inhale deeply, regardless of your concerns, worries, or problems; then let it go. Next, allow yourself to breathe a little deeper and slower a few times. Remember that every breath you inhale is a gift, and every breath you exhale is a gift. The forest is a clear reminder of how this works.





FULL MOON



Completion

Every 29.5 days Grandmother Moon shines bright and full in the sky, illuminating the landscape with her muted brilliance, casting a delicate canopy over the sky and the physical features of Earth. Having gradually etched her way over the last two weeks to fullness, she now stands



like a guiding beacon in the night. She has completed this round of her perpetual and periodic monthly journey, and will now start her slow but steady retreat into shadow.

In this card, we see the grandeur of the moon at its peak, blazing brightly and creating a silhouette of a tree. This beautiful orb reminds us that all cycles have their time of completion and fulfillment, one that will inevitably be followed by a decrease until yet another cycle is initiated.



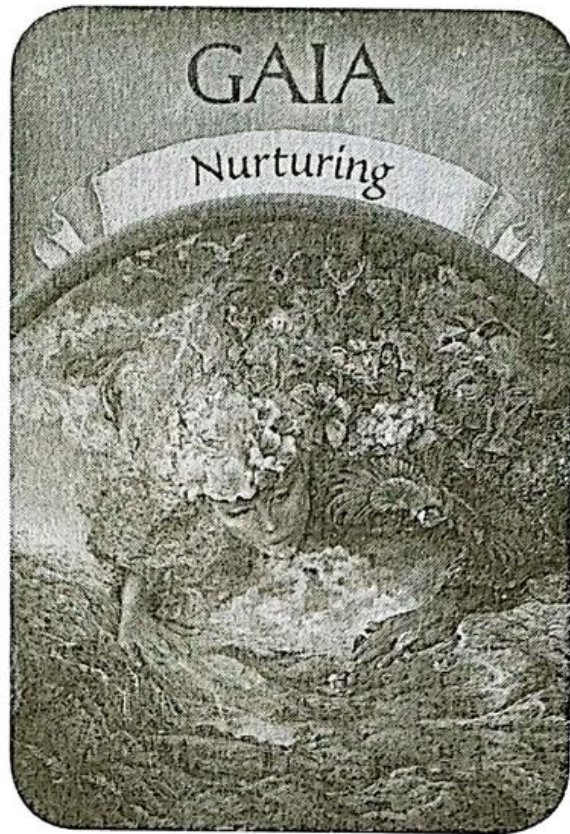
You can now take pleasure in knowing that whatever you have been working toward has now reached its culmination. It may have been a relatively brief cycle or a much more extensive one, yet regardless of the length of time, you have arrived at the stage of completion.

Let yourself feel the contentment and satisfaction of this accomplishment. It is like when you take a deep breath and reach the point where your lungs are pleasantly full and your body is ready to release that breath.



It is important to not only enjoy this completion but also to let go and allow yourself to relax afterward, just like exhaling slowly and consciously. People are much too eager to rush to the next item on the agenda without giving proper time and space to appreciating and honoring the natural cycle of release that follows a point of resolution. Give yourself that time to relax and rest before tackling Spirit's next assignment.





GAIA



Nurturing

Earth Mother, Mother Goddess, Great Goddess, Terra Mater . . . and Gaia. In the Greek pantheon, this magnificent being was Earth personified as a goddess. Daughter of Chaos, she was the mother and wife of Uranus (heaven). It is her body that we walk upon every day, and the substance of



our own bodies is the substance of hers. It's from Gaia that we receive everything we need for survival, which she provides for us abundantly, nurturing our body, mind, and soul.

She nurtures our bodies by offering the fruit of the trees, the greens from the Earth, and the air that we breathe. She nurtures our minds through her awesome physical and dynamic beauty and, as depicted in this card, by the amazing colorfulness and diversity of the world she's constantly creating and re-creating. She nurtures our souls by caressing us with her blessings each day and challenging us to be better humans through her response to our attentions and intentions.



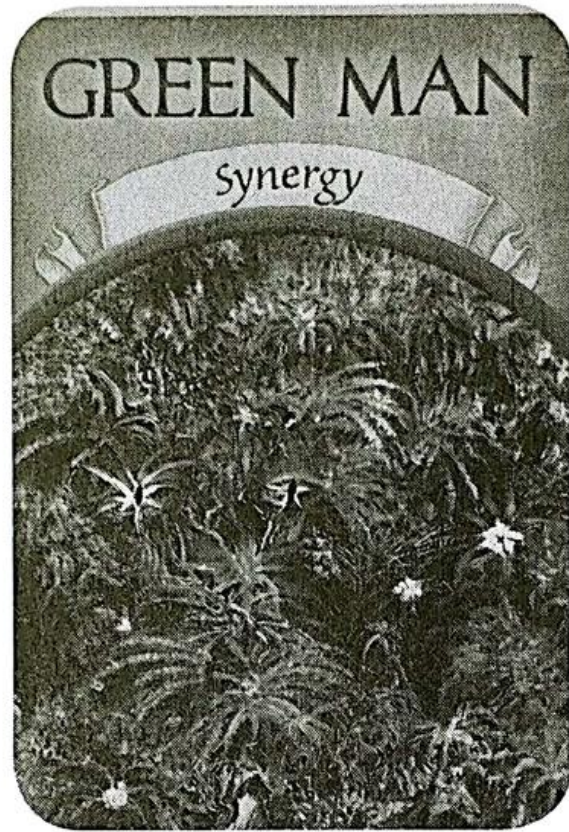
Receiving can be a sacred act if your intention is to honor Spirit. It is as holy as giving when performed with a humble and open heart. This is even truer when receiving much needed nurturing, so let others give to you. It may be a stretch to do so at times because of childhood conditioning, but that habit can be overcome.



Your wounds can be healed. One way to achieve this is to nurture yourself, and allow others to nurture you.

Consider the actions you take that are self-nurturing. What comes to your mind when you really think about doing beneficial things for yourself? Set aside your ritualized habits and beliefs that restrict the pure act of allowing your body, heart, and soul to be nurtured. Lie on the Earth and ask Gaia to rock you in her bosom as you breathe with her and relax into her loving care.





GREEN MAN



Synergy

Green Man is Earth's vegetation personified. Although he has many variations, this card depicts a more subtle and embedded representation. In other portrayals, he resembles the face of a man covered in green foliage as branches and vines sprout from every direction. There exists some form of



Green Man throughout history and in a myriad of cultures throughout the world. Often a symbol for the rebirth of life in springtime, he's also been associated with the Lord of the Wildwood.

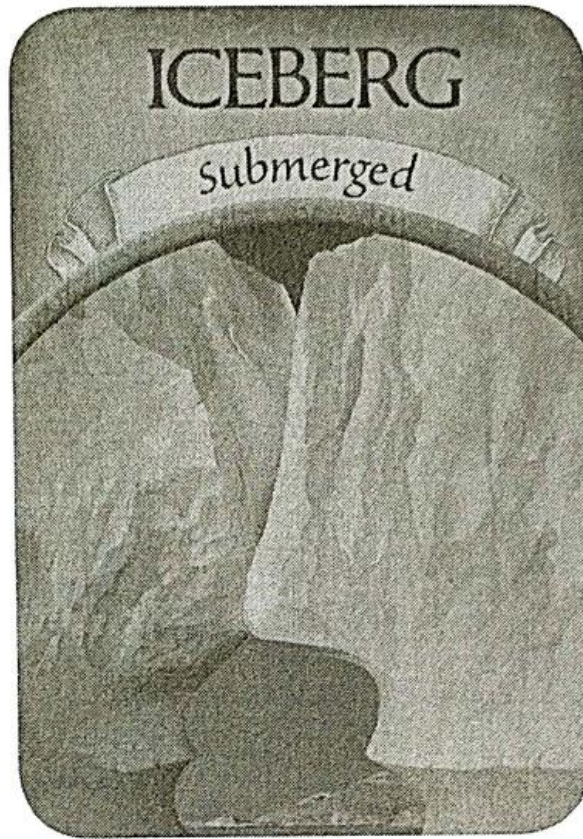
As a representative of the plant kingdom, Green Man reminds us of the incredible synergy required for Gaia to maintain her delicate and dynamic balance among the various beings on the planet. *Synergy* is the interaction and cooperation of two or more elements that produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate efforts. We witness this in the complex and cooperative interaction between plants, humans, and animals. For instance, fruit trees propagate by being eaten by an animal that then deposits it back into the Earth after digestion. As a new plant grows, bees pollinate the flowers, and the cycle begins once again in Nature's simple yet remarkable synergy.



You have the advantage of an incredible synergy at this time. A flow of Life is guiding you, where things just seem to fall into place as you move about your business. You are in a mutually cooperative interaction with Spirit, as your will is aligned with the will of Spirit, and your mission is congruent with your sense of purpose. When this is happening, there is a synergy, a way that your life force is continually coming into balance with the forces of Nature.

There is also a synergy between your spiritual awareness and your personal self, or ego. Be aware of the various idiosyncrasies of your ego, and do not take any of them too seriously. Know that your Higher Self is always looking out for your best interests. In this cycle, tune in to that guidance, however it shows up, and you will find that you move through Life with greater ease due to a synergistic balance of forces expressing themselves as you.





ICEBERG



Submerged

Up to 90 percent of an iceberg's body is below the surface, deeply submerged in the bosom of Grandmother Ocean. Yet Grandmother allows considerable freedom for her enormous children, permitting them to move about as dictated by the currents



and their own momentum. Having broken off from a glacier or ice shelf, they float along the sea, much to the detriment of vessels that attempt to traverse their passageways.

Most of us have heard stories of ill-fated ships that have had tragic encounters with these ice mountains. Although the topmost portion of an iceberg can easily be seen, there's still a massive amount of its body below the water that may be difficult to detect. And that which remains unseen can fool us and perhaps even be dangerous and damaging.

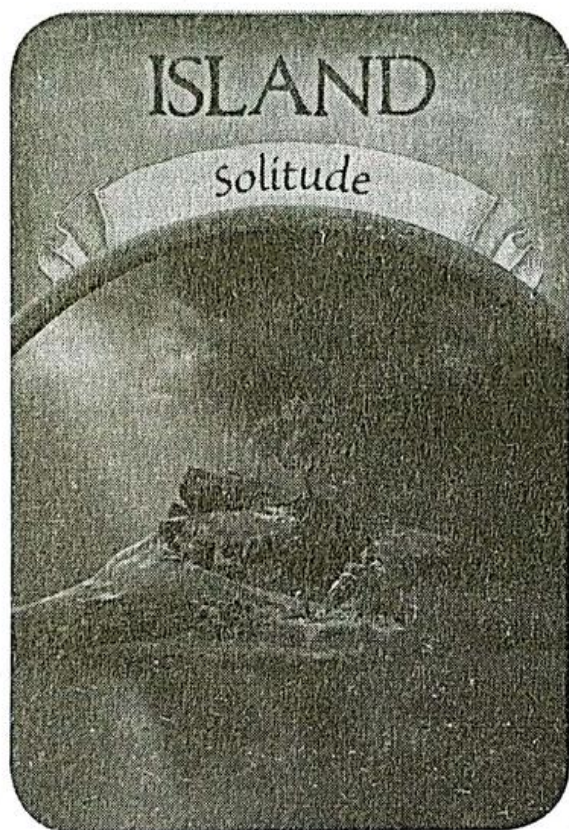


Whatever you suppress or deny and attempt to keep out of conscious awareness will show up somewhere and somehow. These are your shadow aspects. At one time, you put them out of your consciousness for good reason, yet they remain contained by shame and guilt. Sometimes these submerged aspects of yourself are projected onto others so that they mirror those denied or suppressed parts of you, and you may even harshly judge these characteristics when they are exhibited.



Now is the time to allow these elements to surface and embrace them. These may make up some sort of self-expression, a secret dream you wish to accomplish, or even uglier aspects that are difficult to acknowledge or accept. Whatever you have submerged deep inside of you, this is your opportunity to pay attention to those things and welcome them to the family called "you."





ISLAND



Solitude

The solitary tree on this island surrounded by the glassy sea can evoke different feelings depending on one's perception and beliefs. The tree, which is in full blossom, stands out amid the relative starkness, and is illuminated by a beam of light emerging



from the otherwise dark sky. It's an elegant reminder of how even in what might appear to be relatively barren circumstances, there is still beauty and growth.

Although an island like this can be a metaphor for isolation and desolation, the thriving tree proves that even in the harshest of environments, there is Life. We can see the tree's spiderlike roots spreading out along the rocks, seeking nourishment from the moist soil. The sense of peace and solitude depicted in this image provides nourishment for the soul.

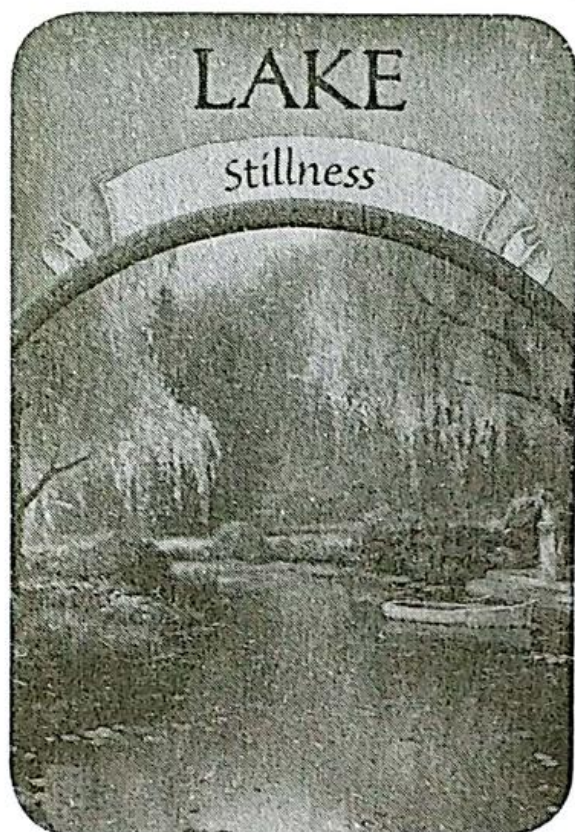


You need to take some time for solitude, preferably in silence. Spend the morning, afternoon, or even the entire day by yourself, completely unplanned and unstructured. The bombardment of your senses by the noise and intensity of society leaves you on alert far more than is necessary. The vibration of millions of people's worry and fear throughout the world can impinge upon you and greatly affect you if you do not honor your need to pull back from time to time.



When you have passed through any self-constructed barriers to enjoying the quiet peace of solitude, it will serve you best if you simply observe the thoughts and emotions that pass through you, especially those that cause shortness of breath or a quickening heartbeat. Remember that isolation is experienced not by choice, but out of fear. When you decide to spend time with yourself in solitude, however, you are choosing to once again find and connect with who you really are.





LAKE



Stillness

The subdued pastels of the early morning light quietly announce that the night is over and the sun is rising. The lake itself hasn't awakened from its rest and remains still and undisturbed. It welcomes the coming day, ready to respond with grace and fluidity to



whatever currents and movements appear in its belly or upon its skin. The surrounding vegetation thrives from the abundant water near the shoreline, and the unoccupied boat lies in wait for its next passenger. All is at rest in this scene.

It's in the deep, internal stillness that we find our Being and come to know that we are intimately united with all of Creation. To achieve this mind-set, we must slow down once in a while and get away from the surroundings that interfere and distract our inner tranquility. When we do so, this profound stillness is available at all times, regardless of the environment. We can experience this sensation with steady, conscious breathing; or we can simply pause for a few moments and be still.



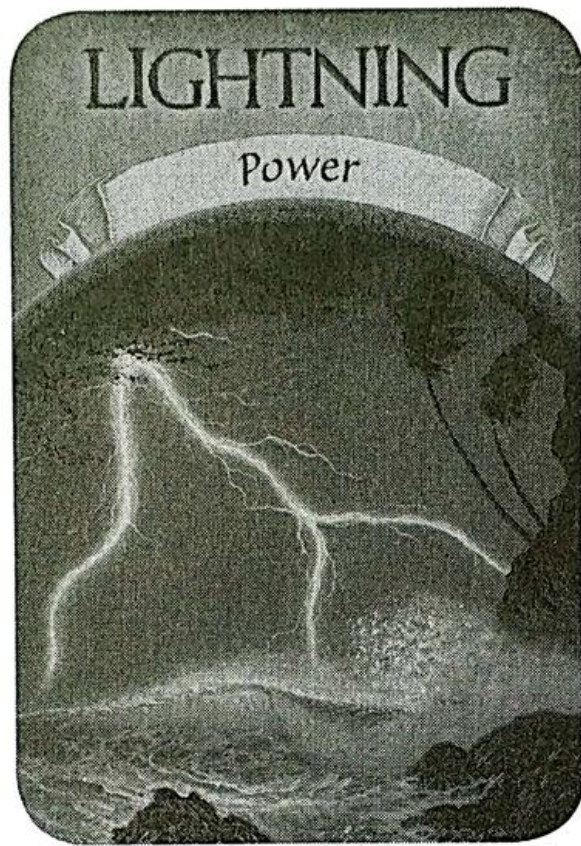
The tempo of life these days has sped up considerably, and there seems to be no end to this quickening pace. Immersed as we are in the technological whirlpool, there seems no escape. However, there is no need to be a prisoner to



the “hurry up” syndrome, nor is there a need to feel trapped by the awareness of the collective intensities that massive numbers of humans are experiencing these days.

No matter if the noise is from your environment or your seemingly nonstop thinking, it is critical for you to seek stillness. Find it in your world, whether it is a special place in your home or a place in Nature that is far from human-made noise. Of particular importance is finding it inside yourself, which can be made easier by being in a quiet place in a natural setting. Doing so not only relaxes your mind, but also heightens your awareness and senses.





LIGHTNING



Power

We see power all around us. It's in the mountains, meadows, and clouds—in fact, in every expression of Nature—yet there isn't a more dramatic display of Nature's power than lightning. It electrifies and splits the atmosphere such that when the heated air comes rushing together, we hear



thunder—the applause of the gods.

Lightning sharpens our senses and triggers fear and awe. We see these forked beams of brilliant light jump from the sky, and our instinctual vigilance is triggered in anticipation of the roar that follows.

We naturally seek shelter from the storm or are grateful that we are already being sheltered. This demonstration of the power of Creation is yet another way to remind us that we are not in control of the natural world. When we witness Nature's power with open hearts and minds, we see that it is neither destructive nor constructive . . . it simply is.

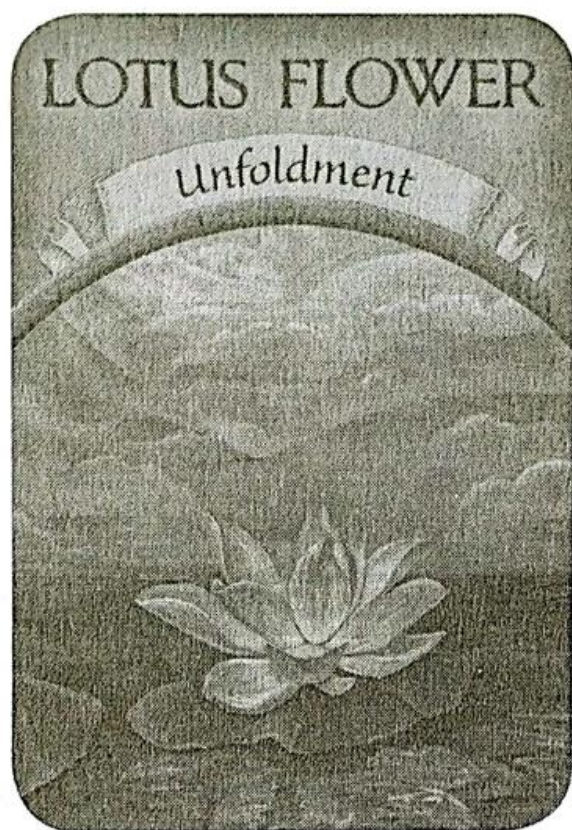


The power available to you, the force of Life itself, is neutral. It is neither inherently good nor bad. It is how you utilize it that will determine whether it is ultimately harmful or life giving and congruent with the will of Spirit that pulses through you. What is required is awareness of your intention, your values, and your willingness to act on them under the particular circumstances of your inquiry.



Although you may see yourself as using this power for good, do not allow yourself to get caught up in the duality of good or bad in determining your decision or actions. Through prayer or ceremony, you can tap into this spiritual force; and by paying close attention to Spirit's prompting, your choice will ultimately be revealed to you, one that is beyond your typical perspective. From there, you can continue to access this Divine power that is the very force driving the universe.





LOTUS FLOWER



Unfoldment

The lotus flower sits upon one of its leaves, having risen to the surface as the sun—held in the hand of God—invites it upward to the light. This unique plant is rooted in the mud and muck at the bottom of a body of water, its stem reaching up to the surface, where the leaves rest quietly. At



night the flower closes and sinks below the surface, only to rise with the daylight and once again gradually unfold its petals, its stem extending above the waterline three feet or more.

What we learn from this amazing plant is how our own spiritual path unfolds and opens to the light, then at times gently folds in on itself for a proper rest when the daylight fades. This period is just as necessary as the growth, for it allows the plant to integrate what it has gained in nourishment during the day. It's also just as important that it is rooted, and it is yet another miracle of Nature that something so exquisitely beautiful is formed from the mud and silt at the water's bottom.



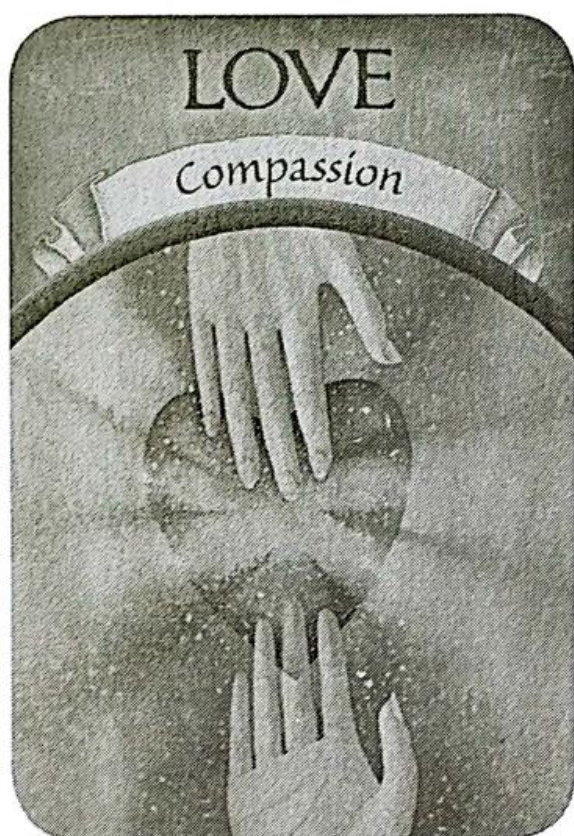
Your spiritual unfoldment is occurring at all times whether or not you are aware of it. It is inevitable as long as you put your trust in the hands of the Creator, the One who holds the Light. Like the lotus, your soul is always reaching for the light to fulfill its karmic destiny, but even in that process there are periods of



darkness and times to rest. It is a natural cycle, one that cannot truly be coerced or halted. It has an innate rhythm of its own, one that is unique to the Being that is you.

You do not need to strive or be driven by spiritual ambition. It does no good to try to force growth upon yourself—or others, for that matter. Allowing is the key here. Allow the place in you that naturally wants to follow the light to do so while recognizing that even when you have complete faith, you will face challenges and, occasionally, suffering. Your steady faith and love will guide you on your journey of returning to the light.





LOVE



Compassion

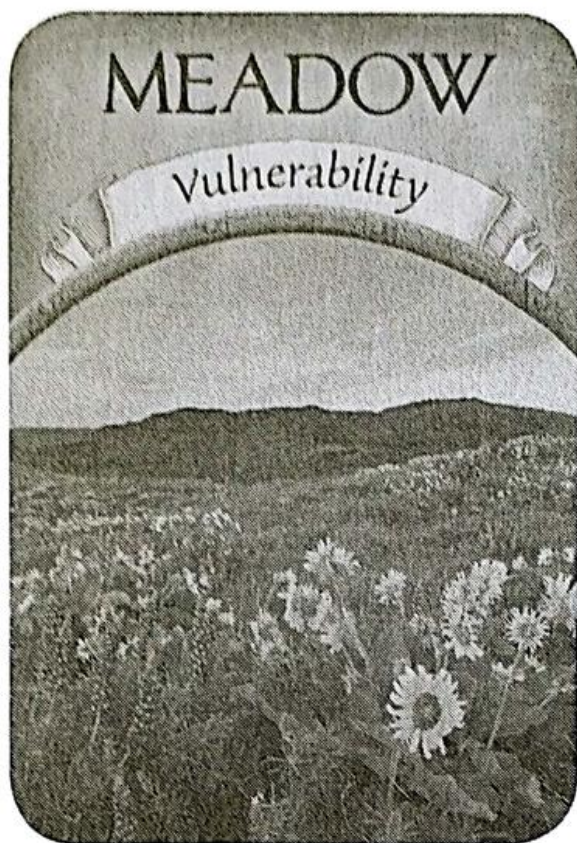
In this beautiful image, we see hands reaching toward each other through a heart. The green field surrounding them is the color of the fourth, or heart, chakra. It's when we feel love in our heart center that we not only naturally emit the healing energy of compassion, but we also attract love



warmth that emanates when you are in touch with your heart center, but in acts of kindness, even if this simply means being a fully attentive listener.

Respect the fact that your heart is a giver (putting out electrical energy) and a receiver (drawing in magnetic energy). These energies are best sensed by attending to the steady flow of your breathing while also noticing your heart area. Righteousness, fear, anger, and judgment are some common ways to block your natural desire to love. Forgiveness is not only letting go of judgment, but also seeing through the illusion that you and All-That-Is are separate. Look about you and inside of you, and do your best to love whatever you see.





MEADOW



Vulnerability

The meadow in this card invites us in with its beauty and openness. The flowers have arranged themselves in a poetic design orchestrated by Nature, and the lush rolling fields urge us to relax and stay for a while. Yet for some, the idea of being in such an



and compassion. Studies by the HeartMath institute reveal that the electrical signals from the heart are up to 60 times stronger than the brain's, and the magnetic field is as much as 5,000 times more powerful.

It's a given that our thinking patterns affect our feelings and, in turn, our reality. What we put out—whether it's love, fear, empathy, sadness, and so forth—contains an incredible amount of power to shape and influence our reality. When the focus of our attention and intention is love and compassion, we recognize no separation between self and other.



All wounds stem from the illusion of separation from Source and all of Creation. The route to healing this wound is through cultivating love and compassion for every being on this planet, including yourself. Not a bland standard of unquestioned acceptance, but a heartfelt sense of profound relatedness to whatever you perceive as apart from yourself. True compassion requires not only the feeling of



open space is terrifying; and in an expansive meadow like this, we may feel exposed and defenseless, lacking the perceived safety of an enclosed area.

For others, walking through a meadow can be an exquisitely satisfying experience. We can feel comfortable in the openness and visibility, enjoying the 360-degree view with nothing but the sky above. Yes, we may still feel vulnerable, but with a twist. This is vulnerability built on the foundation of trust rather than fear—the capacity to trust our own instincts to tell us if there are any potential threats we must respond to. By relying on this instinctual knowing, we can relax and enjoy the beauty that surrounds us.

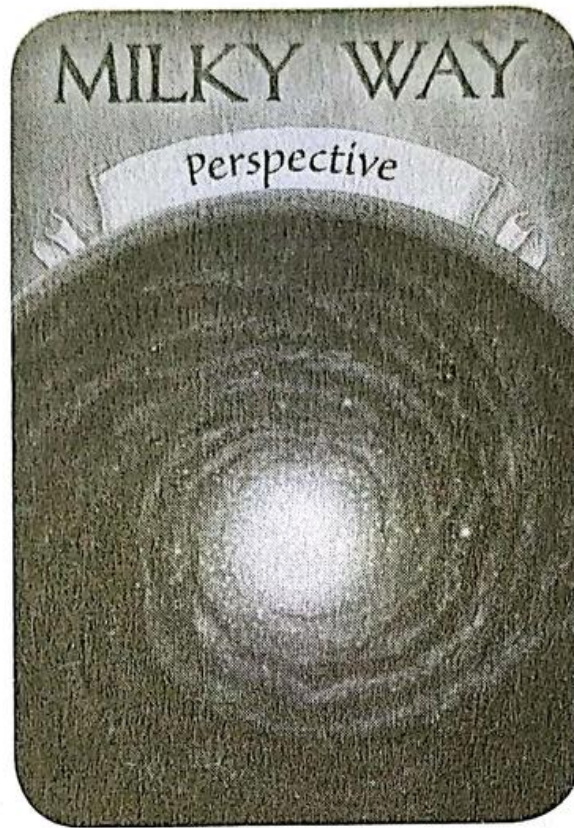


You are in a place now where you can take risks with your feelings, and even more important, take risks with the truth of who you are—the truth you know in your heart and soul. You no longer need to be subjected to your conditioned fears of letting others know who you really are.



Yes, others may judge, evaluate, criticize, and perhaps even put you down. These are very real possibilities. Yet by trusting that you have the strength to deal with these reactions—rather than responding adaptively and always playing it safe—you can more confidently allow yourself to be vulnerable. Always holding back from expressing your truth can create an illusion of safety, but armed with your trust and your faith, you can choose to be vulnerable and share your authentic self with the world.





MILKY WAY



Perspective

The Milky Way is said to be one of billions of galaxies in the observable universe. It contains between 200 to 400 *billion* stars, the one most familiar to us being the sun. The oldest star in our galaxy is 13.2 billion years old—said to be nearly as old as the universe itself—and the Earth is about 4.5



billion years old. Distances are measured in light-years, and the Milky Way galaxy is believed to be 100,000 light-years in diameter. The enormity and vastness stagger the mind and challenge the imagination, yet it also gives us some notion of where we fit in all this.

Considered from this perspective, our usual frame of reference is put to the task. We're faced with a choice of abandoning our myopic vision in favor of seeing and accepting the bigger picture, or we can just allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by a sense of smallness and helplessness. Yet know that we're composed of material from those very stars that inhabit the Milky Way. Thus, we're connected to Earth and the entire universe at all times, in life and in death.



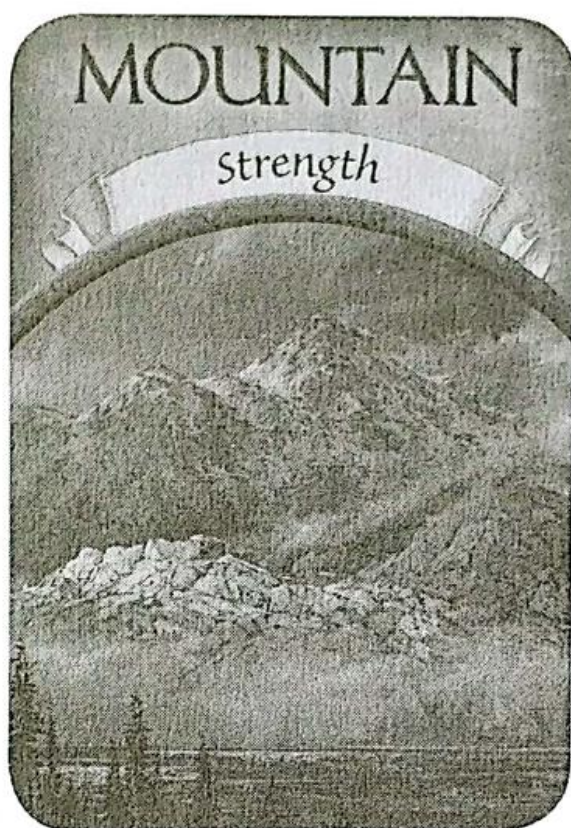
You have lost your perspective, so it is time to step back, breathe, and allow yourself to detach in order to gather information from your senses and regain your perspective about the situation. Detachment does not mean that you



no longer care—it simply indicates that you are looking at things from a different point of view. It is an outlook that is not clouded by emotions, judgment, or attachment to outcome, but instead maintains a nonreactive awareness of these things.

The Witness, that internal aspect of yourself that simply observes everything in your life, offers his or her eyes here. Through these lenses of pure awareness, you can examine all aspects of your experiences—physical, emotional, and mental—without denying anything. By doing so, you will come to understand a greater perspective than is typically justified by the ego, which allows you to see what is before you with clear vision and an open mind.





MOUNTAIN



Strength

The massiveness of the mountain in this image—bearing the blankets of snow as spectacular hues from the sun reflect from its body—evokes a sense of impenetrable and immovable strength and stature. A mountain's quiet, resolute immensity leaves



us in awe and inspires us to reach for greater heights. Yet, it can also pose challenges.

The firm base of the mountain evolves to the narrower crest in its attempt to reach the sky. More daring individuals become enamored by the peak and see it as something to conquer, although it can never be truly conquered. When the mountain feels threatened in some way or simply shrugs its shoulders, the strength exhibited can wreak havoc for all beings caught on its skin.



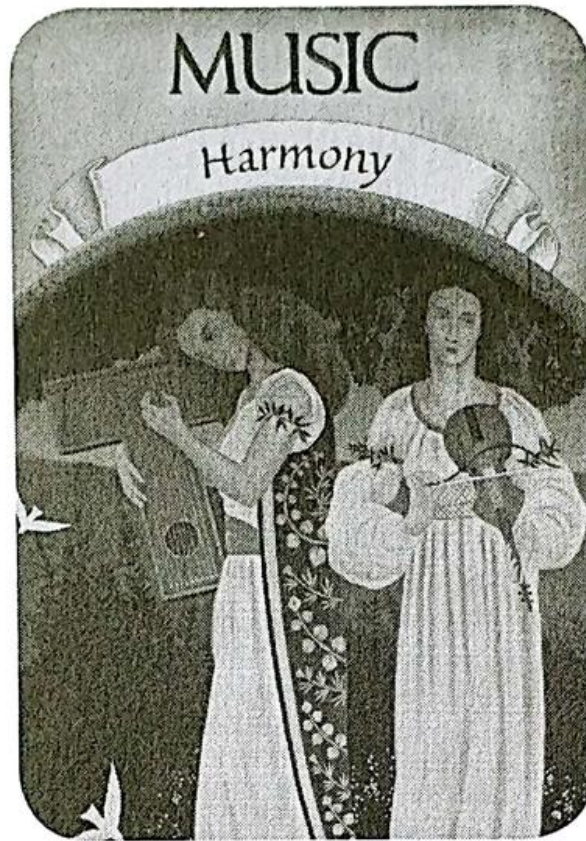
It makes no sense to deny the strength you have at the cost of allowing yourself to be reactive and subject to external influences far beyond what is healthy for you. Imagine yourself as a mountain of strength, solidly grounded in the Earth, your head held high as if you were touching the sky. Do so without straining, just as the mountain itself does not strain.

The current situation calls for you to be vigilant, but not to the point of fear or paranoia.



Be that rock of strength that you are capable of becoming. The solidness of your resolve will be clearly communicated when you model yourself after the towering immensity of a mountain, impenetrable and inscrutable. Standing steady like a rock is what is called for at this time.





MUSIC



Harmony

Ah, music! What would life be like without it? It's not something that we humans invented; rather, music has been around since time began. Subtle and dramatic textures of sound have existed as long as there have been beings that could



hear them. For our ancient ancestors, paying close attention to sounds, rhythms, and vibrations from the environment helped them survive. Of course, it has also been compelling for humanity to create music through our own voice and musical instruments.

As we have evolved, so have the instruments we've created, some of which when played mimic the music of the natural world. Where there's more than one instrument played or two or more people singing, the resulting harmonies blend into one unified sound that is pleasing to the ear. If the notes are out of sync, there's a notable dissonance that can be disturbing.

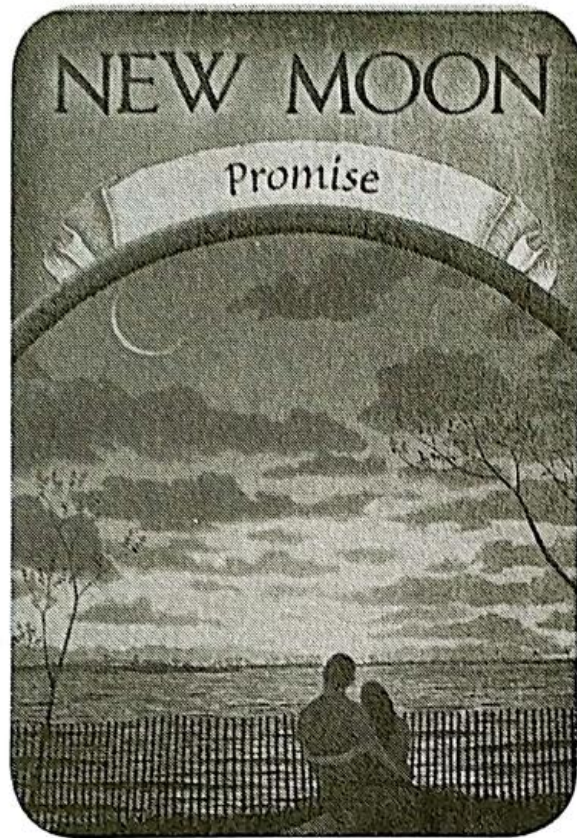
Here, we see two women with stringed instruments creating a harmonious blend. They're so absorbed in their playing that they appear to be in a trance, as if they're simply allowing the music to flow through them.



This is a time of considerable harmony for you, one where the various elements in your life are flowing together smoothly. Just as in musical harmony, it is the interface of these elements that merge into a cycle of symmetry and balance that evokes feelings of harmony. The challenge is to sustain this inner accord even when there is considerable dissonance outside of your own mind, heart, and body.

Note the sensations, emotions, and thoughts you experience when everything seems to be moving along well. Take three deep breaths, and let your breathing be the anchor that reminds you of this state of consciousness. Whenever you perceive chaos around you, know that it is a mirror for your inner turmoil. When you recognize this, take three or more breaths to bring forth the memory of those moments when your life was like a symphony. Then every time you exhale, you are releasing the energy of your internal state of harmony into the world, and it will have amazing effects.





NEW MOON



Promise

Gazing at the sliver of the new moon smiling down upon them, the couple embraces each other, welcoming the promise of their love. The fading sun drapes the clouds and waters with its tinge of luminescence, as the crescent opens its



arms to the nearby planet Venus, named after the Roman goddess of love. This is a time for manifestation, beginnings, and renewal, with the promise that our desires will come to fruition.

Here Grandmother Moon initiates another lunar cycle, moving from darkness to fullness and back again over approximately one month. Her promise of what is to come is embedded in the first glimmer of her light as she emerges from behind the curtain of darkness that had recently encompassed her. It is a promise that has been kept for as long as she has existed.

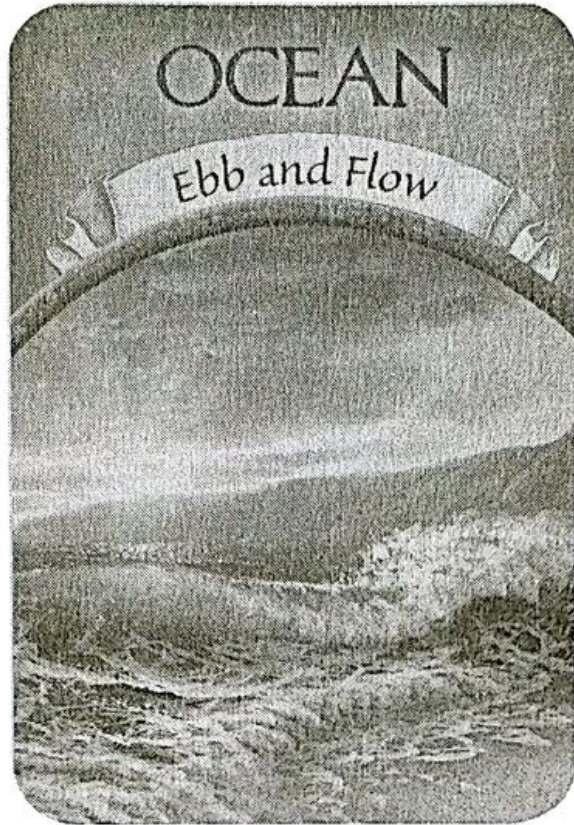


This is the time to launch a project, a new relationship, or renew something that has been put aside for a later date. With your intention and willingness to allow a full cycle to complete itself, that which you desire will manifest. The seed of that idea is ready to emerge from the darkness of your subconscious into your full awareness. The next step is to put into action what is required to fully realize this idea.



A promise has two meanings: it can be a commitment and guarantee to yourself (or someone else) that a particular thing will happen, or it can imply that something specific is expected to happen. When your will is aligned with the will of Spirit and your intention is focused upon what you wish to have happen, there will be fulfillment, and the promise is kept.





OCEAN



Ebb and Flow

The ebb and flow of Life is never more clearly represented than in the oceans' movements. The tides of these great bodies of water rise and fall in regular rhythms, and the waves continue to roll to the shores in endless and varied patterns, just as they



have been doing for millions of years and will continue to do so for millions more.

These tides and waves maintain a relative predictability unless other unforeseeable forces of Nature intervene, which have been known to happen. Hurricanes and earthquakes, for instance, can have a dramatic effect on the characteristics of both the tides and the waves.

The oceans cover 70 percent of the Earth, and the human body averages a composition of 70 percent water. The dynamic gravitational interaction of the sun and moon that moves these massive bodies of water and creates the shifting tides also affects our human bodies in ways that we respond to instinctually, often having a great deal more influence over our moods and emotional states than we're aware of.



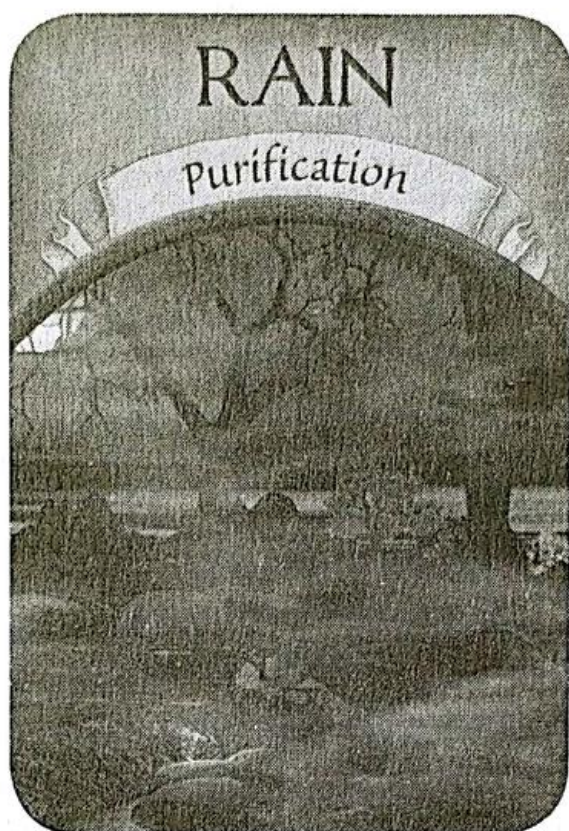
An important aspect in the art of living is to move with the ebb and flow of your emotions, joining their fluidity but not being captured by it. It is also not necessary to become obsessed with any particular fluctuation in mood or feeling.



They are simply emotions, often activated in ways that are completely beyond your understanding. When you neither minimize nor exaggerate the intensity and importance of your emotions, you then have a greater sense of when and how to express them.

You have been fighting the ebb and flow of your own feelings—denying your hurt, anger, or sorrow—by either attaching yourself to one or the other and nurturing it as if it were a nursing child, or else smoothing over your feelings with more practiced responses that deny and hide what is going on beneath the surface of your expression. When you attempt to constrict yourself from experiencing your emotions, it is much like trying to stem the tides that grow even more forceful with every attempt humans make to control them. Allow yourself to swim with these variations rather than resisting them.





RAIN



Purification

No matter whether it's a light shower or a deluge, rain cleanses and purifies. The moisture that has evaporated from the various bodies of water on the planet and was drawn into the atmosphere now returns to Earth as liquid precipitation in Nature's



vast and comprehensive water-recycling program. Depending on when and where the rain falls, it can come as a welcome relief or a nuisance.

Even the air smells fresh after a good rain. It also brings in clean water, which provides needed sustenance for plants, animals, and humans. At its most intense, rainstorms arrive as an avalanche of water, often accompanied by great and powerful winds, with considerable flooding and destruction as an unfortunate consequence of Nature's impersonal balancing act. What is purged makes way for new life to appear.



Purifying your mind, body, and spirit is the task that is put before you. Purify your mind by identifying a prominent belief you carry about yourself that inhibits you from being fully engaged in life, from showing up 100 percent of the time. Purify your heart by allowing yourself to breathe in and out blessings and forgiveness so that you can love even more deeply.

Let yourself feel your grief—truly feel it—so that the rivers of your tears become miniature

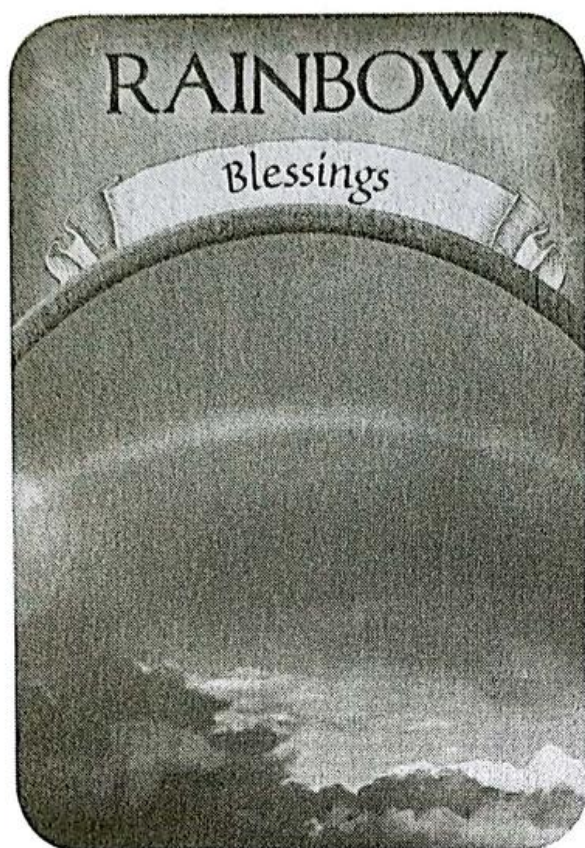


baptisms that help heal the wounds in your soul.

If necessary, detoxify your body (the temple and seat of the soul) by changing your diet, doing a cleanse for a few days, or simply drinking more water. Increasing the daily amount of water you drink with deep appreciation for its purpose will revitalize your spirit.

It is no wonder that in some indigenous languages, water is called "lifeblood," as it is so essential to every form of Life on Earth. Take time to purify yourself.





RAINBOW



Blessings

A rainbow is created by the collaboration of sunlight and water in the atmosphere. The water droplets become tiny prisms that collectively diffuse and disperse light into a ribbon of colors that is the essence of every hue we're capable of perceiving on this planet. Rainbows symbolize many things,



including good luck, a bridge to heaven, and abundance.

It's difficult for any of us to ignore the majesty of a rainbow and the gentle power inherent in its display. It's such a simple blending of the elements coming together in perfect visual harmony to create one of the most beautiful sights in all of Creation. Although there are diverse meanings attributed to the sight of a rainbow, a common thread is that it offers blessings.

The artist of this image created this rainbow to commemorate a friend who had just died. She worked on it whenever she felt her love and appreciation for her friend—the blessings he brought to the world and to her life—often after a spell of tearful grief.



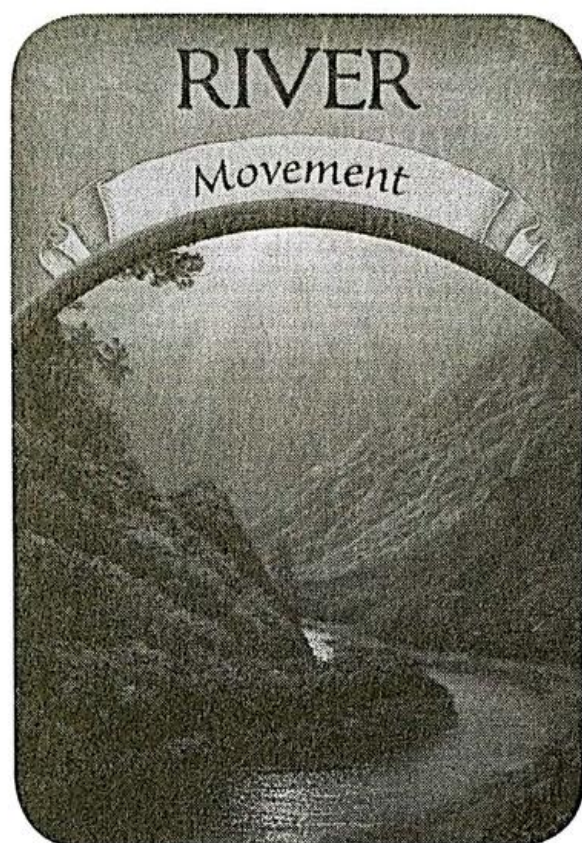
The storm has passed, and it is time to enjoy the refreshing beauty of this cycle, even though it has been difficult to appreciate any sense of purposefulness in what you have endured lately. You can now, as they say, count your blessings. Do not just look at the "brighter side"



adhering to some academic mantra that has no heart or depth, but do so slowly and with genuine gratitude that is expressed up close and personal.

This ever-evolving process of Life itself is a blessing—an opportunity to exist as a human being on Earth. The planet is a beautiful garden, even if it does not always appear to be so. Sometimes it is only when you look back at a memory of an experience that you can truly see the blessings that have come from them. Bless your difficult or painful experiences, and let them go.





RIVER



Movement

The softened light from the sun falls upon this meandering river, the sparkles reflecting the gentle movement taking place in the river's body. She moves easily around the curves and rocks, sometimes gently, as portrayed in this card, and sometimes



quite rapidly and intensely. Still, the river's movement will always eventually land her in the bosom of great Grandmother Ocean.

Some of her water will evaporate along the way to feed the waters of the sky—just as it takes place in any other bodies of water—and bless the land and the seas with replenishment in a perfectly natural cycle that helps the planet sustain itself. Water is our lifeblood, a nutrient more essential than food. The flow of water throughout our own bodies serves as a metaphor for how Life itself flows through us and expresses as us.

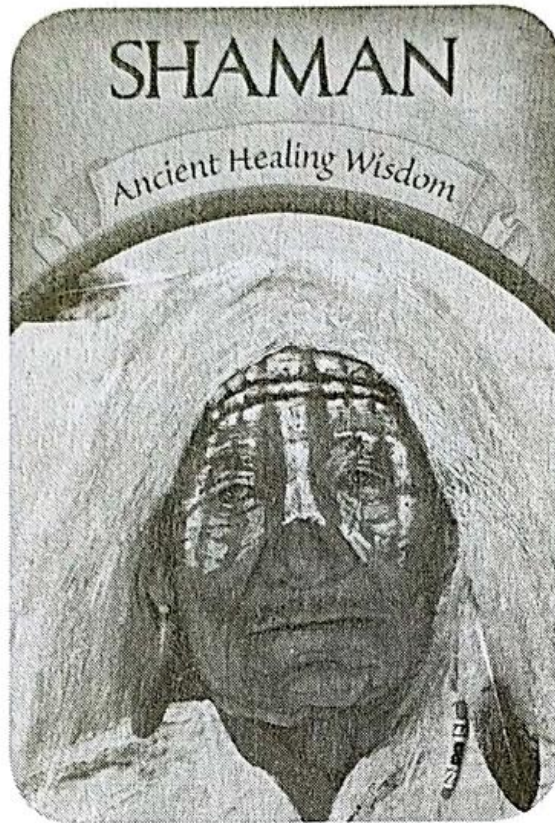


Fighting or blocking the flow of your Life Force can lead you to feeling spiritually void and disconnected from Source. Just like the metaphor of the river, it does not work to force or fight this compelling movement. When you simply pay attention and observe the flow, it becomes easier to navigate your experiences and see what lies ahead, or at least get a sense of what is to come by the ever-changing geography that unfolds as you cruise along.



Your resistance is hampering your ability to make a choice in this matter. Surrender to the movement of Life, be grateful, and you will see the signs along the shore and in the river itself that offer you clues about what direction your egoless Self is to be making. "Go with the flow" is more than a trite aphorism here. It is essential that you do so now. Breathe, relax, and you will know.





SHAMAN



Ancient Healing Wisdom

The deep, compassionate eyes of this Native American shaman portray the wisdom of one who has seen and who knows. He has witnessed visions, spirits, suffering, and joy, and knows that everything that exists has Spirit's intentionality behind it. Able to travel beyond the veil of ordinary reality, the



shaman's primary assignment is to discern and maintain the balance between what his human community takes from the natural world and what it gives back. When this relationship is out of balance, the shaman must do whatever is necessary to restore it. Balance equals healing.

The shaman lives his life in ceremony and treats everything with reverence, including the great mystery of death—and the even greater mystery of Life. He works with his spirit helpers, including his ancestral spirits, to help him in his service to his people and to Earth Mother, providing a liaison between the spiritual and physical worlds.

Charged with relieving suffering as one of his priorities, the shaman does so by first always tending to the spiritual wound—the source of all illness. These healing powers have been passed along over the millennia from the ancient ones, who knew the healing and curative powers of Spirit.



All illnesses, whether physical, emotional, or psychological, stem from an illness of Spirit.



It may be due to soul loss, psychic intrusions, ancestral karma, or any other spiritual causes that could be contributing to the manifest condition for which you seek help.

Whatever other methodologies or remedies you pursue, whether allopathic, alternative, or a combination, let the healing of your spirit be your priority. Know that the deepest spiritual wound is the illusion of being separate from Source, God, Great Spirit, or whatever name you give the Creator. It is the trick of the mind that creates this sense of separation.

This is a time for deep healing, starting with your relationship with Spirit. Call upon your spirit guides and ancestors to help you with any emotional, mental, or physical healing that you need. Call upon the Creator to assist you in mending any rift in your relationship with Spirit. Choose thoughts that support wholeness and well-being. Allow any darker thoughts or shadows to appear as well, but simply observe them as they arise in consciousness, then dissolve. See yourself as healed, whole, and complete, and it shall be.





SPRING EQUINOX



Rebirth

The spring equinox, also called the vernal equinox, occurs on March 20 or 21 in the Northern Hemisphere and September 20 or 21 in the Southern Hemisphere. This is the point when the sun crosses the plane of the equator, and day and night are the same



length across the planet. Earth Mother is pregnant and is birthing once again. Crops can once again be planted.

This card features a rendition of Ostara, sometimes spelled *Oestre* or *Eastre*, a Germanic goddess of spring. Ostara is also a northern European name for Astarte, which means “womb”; and is another name for Venus, the goddess of love, passion, and creativity. The Christian holiday of Easter stems from this goddess, and in this card we see some archetypal symbols of the spring equinox that represent the rebirth of the world, such as rabbits, eggs, and flowers. It is indeed a time for renewal.



You thought this passage you have been through would never end. Just as certain that the light of the world fades every few months, it makes its return, and the Earth rejoices. The fresh breath of spring sweeps away the cobwebs acquired from the absence of the light. The light is now obviously increasing as Nature begins to emerge in all her many forms, shapes, and

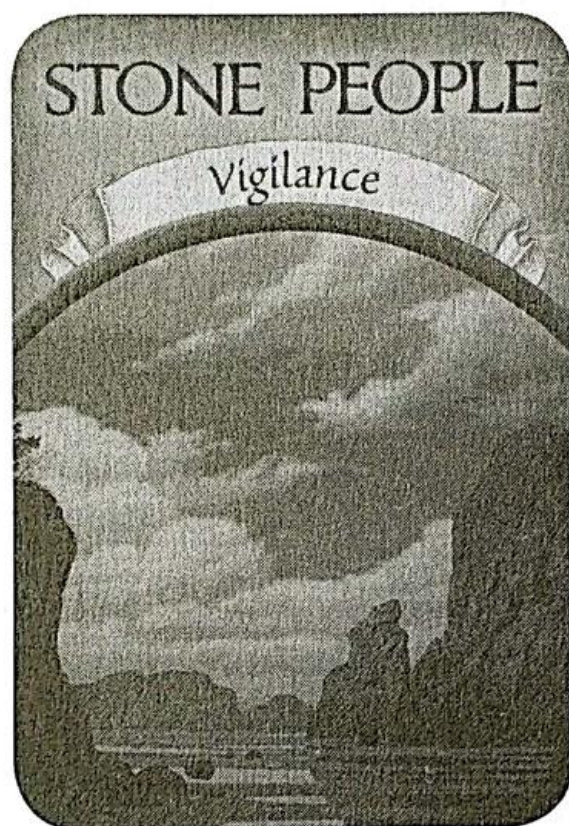


colors that remind us of the continual cycles of Earth Mother.

This cycle of rebirth you are experiencing follows a considerably challenging time. Any tears you may have shed have cleared the way for what has been gestating, which is now ripe and ready to emerge. That which no longer serves you needs to be put to rest so that a freshness and newness of spirit can make itself known to you.

Sometimes birth can be painful, particularly in that passage just before delivery, yet what emerges can be fresh and beautiful. Be with the emergence of this next cycle with faith and grace.





STONE PEOPLE



Vigilance

These Stone People stand in their ever-present vigil along the shores of an ocean whose tide has receded, leaving the remnants of water upon which we see them reflected. The sky, a soft and mobile backdrop for these solid beings, suggests peace and calm. They exude power, only moved and shaped



by other Earth elements such as the sea, wind, and Earth herself when she rumbles her belly.

With practice, we can not only emulate these Stone People, but also respect their ancientness and relative absoluteness of strength. They stand tall, bearing the ragged lines where these other Earth elements have carved their impression on these otherwise seemingly immobile fortresses. Long past when we've left the Earth for the world of Spirit, these ancient beings will remain witness to all that transpires before their bodies.



Remain vigilant at this time, but not out of fear. "Vigilant" simply means opening up your mind and senses to information as it is presented to you: through your eyes, ears, physical sensations, and detached thoughts.

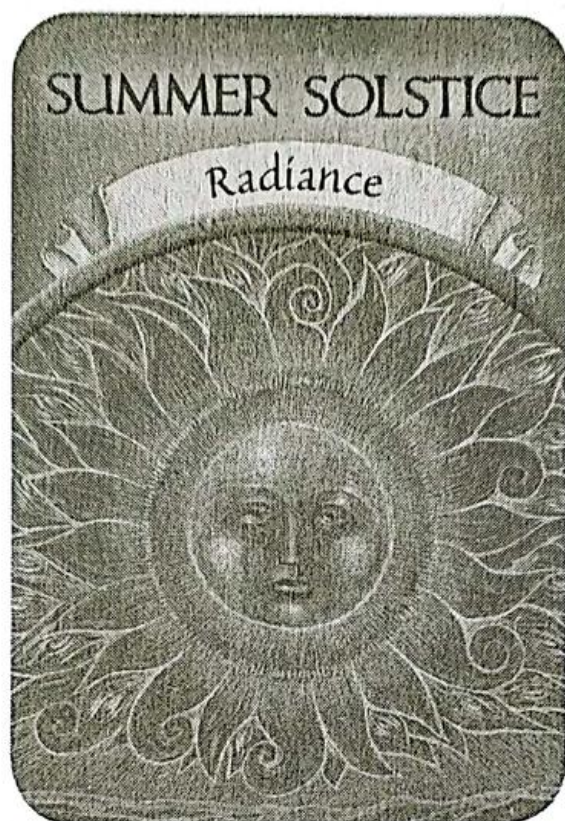
It is especially true in two main areas. First, follow any gut feelings that tell you to be wary about someone or something; second, pay close attention to an important opportunity that



presents itself, one that may enhance your life and the lives of others.

Maintain your vigilance of the clues around you and inside of you. Assess what is emanating from your body, and then sort out any conditioned responses from what is purely instinctual. Examine the situation with heart, intuition, and mind in harmony; for this is how vigilance serves you. Detach, take a breath, and stand tall in your stature.





SUMMER SOLSTICE



Radiance

The word *solstice* originates from the Latin word *solstitium*, which means “stationary or stopped (stiti-) sun (sol).” This is because twice during the solar year, the sun appears to rise and set in the same place for several days. It seems to be taking a much-needed rest before making the next



circuit across the sky from one solstice to the next—its ceaseless, predictable certainty having existed since before the time of our ancestors. There are stories in many cultures that personify the sun as a deity, either male or female, often riding the sun across the sky in a boat or chariot.

With the summer solstice comes the culmination of the sun's travels that have led to the longest days of the year. The light is now at its fullest and has provided its own brand of nourishment to the land and all of its inhabitants. Celebrations and ceremonies abound. Passion and playfulness are themes. We feel an innate desire to be outdoors in the natural world and reap the benefits of the longest days of the year. We instinctually seek the light, and during this cycle, there is an abundance of it.



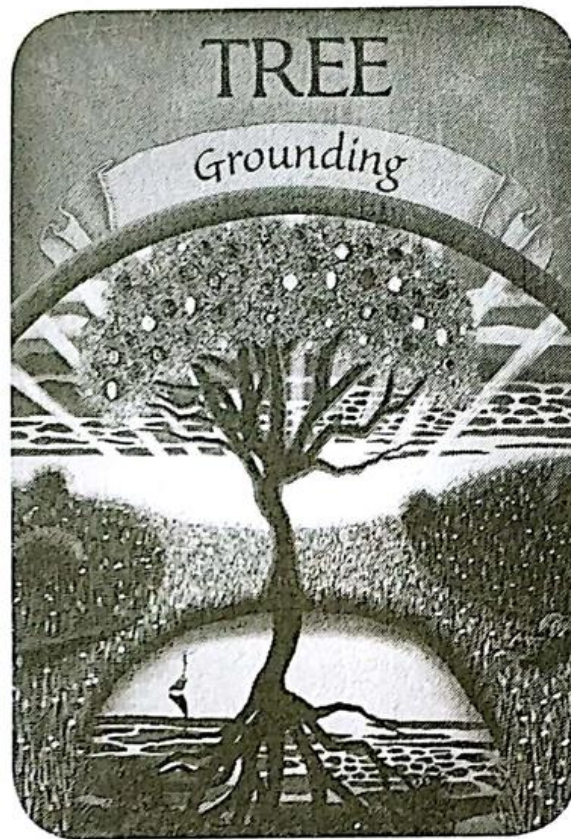
Let the radiance of the sun inspire your inner radiance to shine forth. Release your concerns about what may happen in the future, and focus on appreciating everything you have that is good and right. Allow Father



Sun to take away your worries and cares. Do something physically active to stimulate your inner light. Dance. Sing. But most important, get outdoors. Do not let any negative thoughts or habits stop you.

When you are in love with Life, you naturally radiate that love. During this part of your cycle, your capacity to love is greatly amplified. In one of those supreme ironies of Life, the more love you give, the more returns to you. It starts by allowing the radiant Being you truly are to be expressed into the world. Smile a little more. Notice the beauty of Nature. See the humor in the paradoxes of Life. Show your love, especially to those with whom you are closest. Then smile even more, and watch how the world around you lights up!





TREE



Grounding

Consider how trees, the Standing Ones, exemplify balance between heaven and Earth. Their branches reach out and up, as if in praise of the bounty that Sky Father has to offer. Their leaves breathe in carbon dioxide and breathe out oxygen—a vital



process for so many beings on the planet, including us humans. Their trunks and roots have planted themselves firmly in the soil, allowing them to receive the gifts of another kind of nourishment from Earth Mother. In turn, they freely and gratefully give back by accommodating the needs of so many beings with what they have to offer.

In this image, we see a magnificent tree, situated in a meadow at the edge of a pond, greeting the early rays of light from the dawn. We see its reflection in the still water but do not see its roots, as they are embedded in the depths of the moist, fertile body of Earth Mother. The strength of these roots supports the tree's innate desire to grow to the light, to reach not only upward, but outward as well.



You have been feeling scattered and spacey lately. You are not fully in your body and that is because you have not been able to get grounded. This is quite literal in that your body is made of the materials of the Earth. So when you feel disconnected from your body, you are inevitably

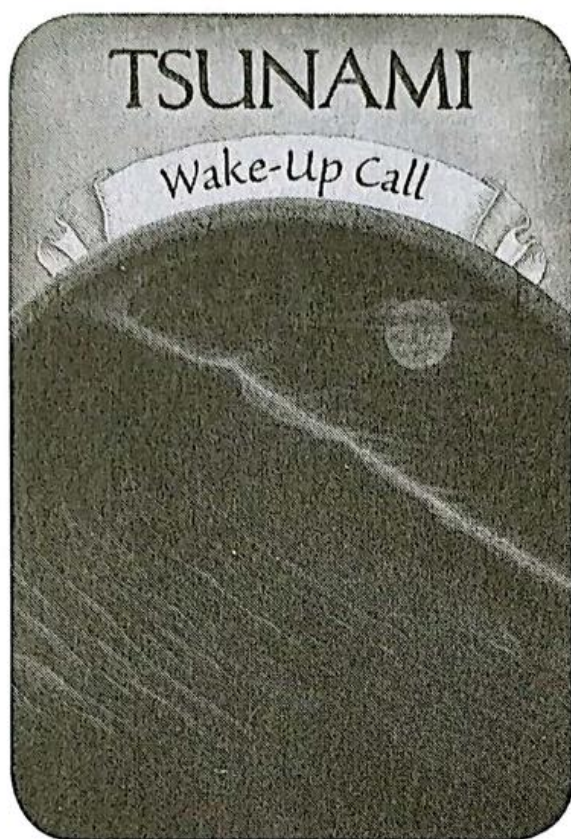


disconnected from Earth. So get yourself grounded. You can do so quite simply.

With your feet firmly planted on the ground wherever you are, feel the etheric roots that extend into the Earth. Follow your breath so that each time you exhale, you can imagine these roots going even deeper. Each time you inhale, draw up the loving, nurturing power of Earth Mother.

As soon as you have the chance, go outdoors and sit or stand with your back supported by a tree. Feel its solidness and integrity—it is simply being a tree. Breathe in the essence of Tree Spirit, and allow this to fill you up. Walk barefoot very slowly on the ground so you can maintain this connection.





TSUNAMI



Wake-Up Call

One of the scariest and more destructive of natural phenomena (along with volcanoes, earthquakes, hurricanes, and tornadoes), a tsunami occurs when a large volume of water is suddenly and rapidly displaced. It's triggered by an undersea disturbance, typically an earthquake or



volcanic eruption, that causes a series of powerful waves to travel across the ocean at speeds up to 500 miles per hour. Yet on the open ocean, the height of these waves seem so small that they generally pass unnoticed.

As these waves (collectively called a tsunami) get closer to the shoreline, their height increases enormously, even as their speed slows to 50 miles per hour. The distance between the waves, or the trough, can be considerable, taking 20 to 30 minutes from wave to wave. If the trough hits the land first, the water recedes rapidly and dramatically, followed within minutes by an enormous wave that initially comes as a surge. This receding is a clear sign of an impending tsunami. We can't outrun the wave that follows, but we can avoid being swept up in the destruction by moving to higher ground.



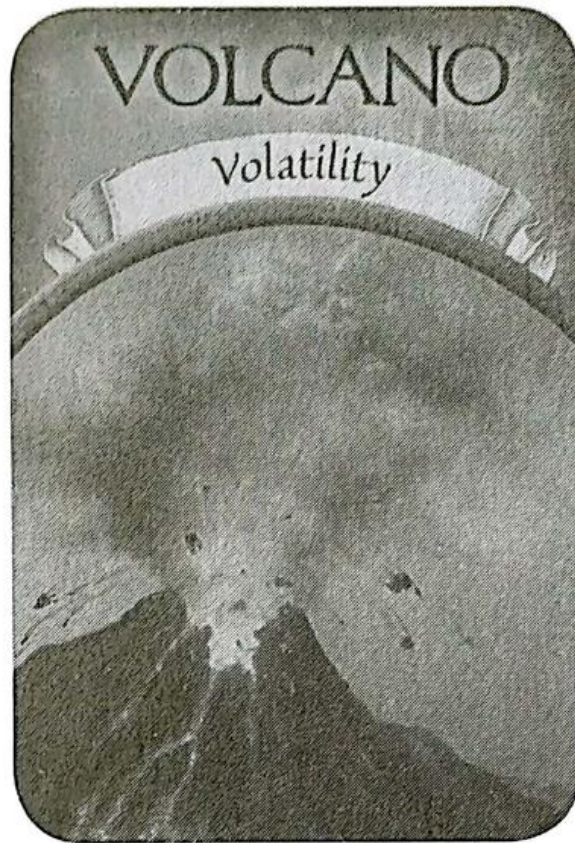
You are getting a wake-up call. It may be in the form of a significant loss or other dramatic event in your life, typically one that you were



not prepared for initially. You may feel stunned at first, surprised by the unexpected events that are occurring. Yet you also know that it is time to draw back the curtain of avoidance and denial, and confront the truth that exists in the subtext of this event. You are experiencing a real-life drama, so there is no need to amplify it more than it already is.

Often when you look back after something like this has passed, you can recall signs that foreshadowed it happening. There may have been obvious clues that you ignored or omens that were so subtle they were easy to dismiss as imaginings of the mind rather than the voice of your instinct. There are many anecdotes about animals, operating purely on instinct, picking up on clues and naturally seeking higher ground before an approaching tsunami reaches the land. To negotiate this wake-up call, listen closely to your instincts, while at the same time seeking the higher ground of spiritual truth.





VOLCANO



Volatility

Pele (PAY-lay) is the goddess who lives on the Big Island of Hawaii, dwelling there in the craters of the active volcano Kilauea. She's considered passionate, volatile, and capricious, and is perhaps the best known of the panoply of Hawaiian deities. Since 1983 she has been sending ribbons of lava down



the mountainside and into the sea, thereby creating new land.

In this image we see her subtle visage in the spewing fire of the volcano. In ancient Hawaiian chants, Pele is described as “She who shapes the sacred land,” and it’s from this magnificent and powerful goddess being and her periodic eruptions that new Earth is formed as the resulting lava merges with her sister, the goddess of the sea Na-maka-o-kaha’i (na-MA-ka-HO-ka-HI).

The volatile and unpredictable nature of volcanic eruptions is widely known and in spite of science’s efforts at forecasting these blowups, they sometimes happen without warning. Whether the eruptions are slow and steady or violent and explosive, it’s an unstoppable force and one very dramatic way Nature changes and shapes the land.



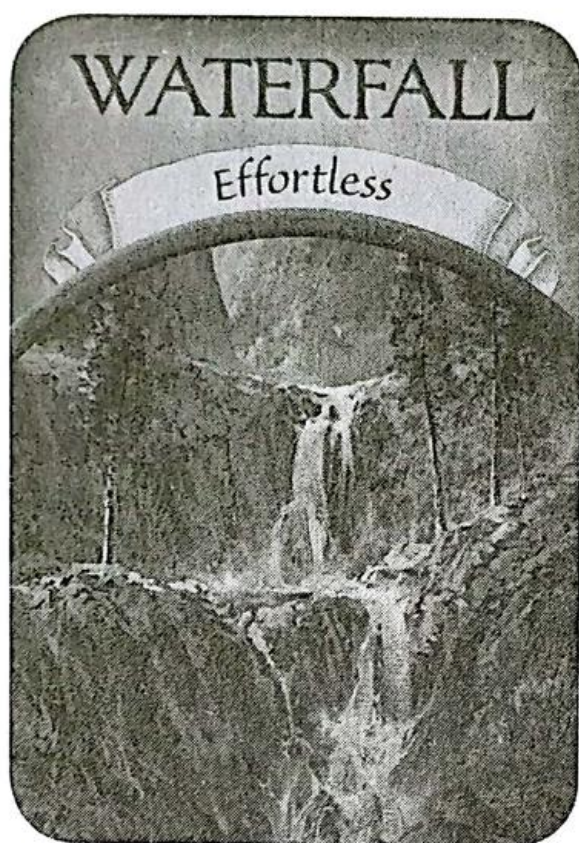
This is a particularly volatile time for you. Unexpected changes, sometimes quite sudden and dramatic, are occurring in ways that you have absolutely no control over. These occurrences may be so powerful as to



shake up what you formerly thought of as the foundations of your security. They may even cause you to reassess the direction your life is taking, to question some of your relationships, or to reevaluate the work you have chosen.

Although these events may rock your world, know that Spirit is the guiding force behind them. It is a matter of finding your trust that Life knows what it is doing in the midst of these storms of change. It also requires you to make adjustments quickly and to not cling to what was, but instead move forward and welcome with your arms wide open what is yet to come, all from a place of being present in this moment. You truly have nothing to fear.





WATERFALL



Effortless

Water naturally flows from higher to lower ground, eventually finding its way to the ocean. One of Nature's most exquisite and dynamic demonstrations of this fact is the waterfall. Graceful, powerful, and effortless, she can take our breath away with her cascading beauty. She readily flows



around that which may otherwise impede. She's extremely patient, persistent, and skillful in the way she ever so gradually shapes and carves her passageways down the slope of the mountain.

Note how the waterfall forms ribbons that accord with the artistry of the stone faces she descends, joining the calmer pool for a rest before she continues her journey. There is no strain or stress in this movement. The water simply follows natural law in the interaction between the formations of the precipice that she traverses and the powerful fluidity and adaptability of her flow. Effortless!



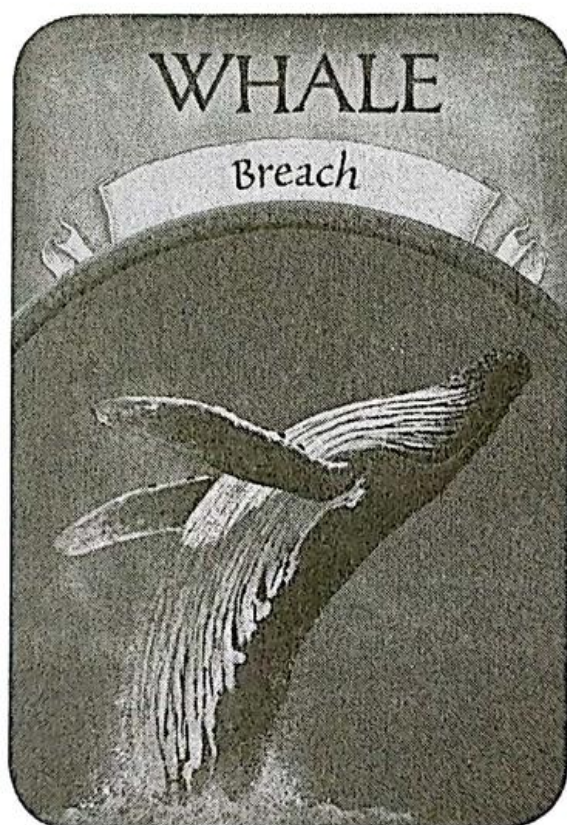
You have come to the edge of your comfort zone and find yourself fighting to resist moving past that perceived precipice of who you are, how you can be, or what you can do. Spirit is asking you to step beyond the edge and allow yourself to do so with ease rather than struggle. Yes, at times physical exertion is necessary, but when performed with fluidity and grace, even when the task seems daunting, you'll find that



the movement moves you effortlessly.

Approach the present situation or relationship with awareness and grace. Do not try to make it effortless—that just creates more strain. The key word here is to allow. This is not a time to fight, but to surrender to the will of Spirit, even if you are being asked to let go completely and tumble into the brink of Creation itself. You will find the waters there to be ultimately still and calm. Keep your focus on your solar plexus and your breath, breathing through any tension. Relaxing and yielding to the movement that is occurring at any given moment makes your life effortless.





WHALE



Breach

This powerful creature of the ocean takes a few great sweeps with his fins and propels himself briefly out of the waters where he spends the majority of his life. He's taking a break from the ordinary Earth element in which he lives to exist even for a few moments in the realm of blue skies and



sun, having broken through the skin of the ocean in a magnificent display of fullness and strength. All baleen whales breach, but none more spectacularly than the humpbacks, considered the acrobats of this family. They arch, stretch, and twist their bodies even as they approach the surface of the water, in what may be an ancient mating ritual, a form of communication, or even a way to remove parasites.

In this image, the humpback whale that has burst out of the ocean expresses an almost palpable feeling of release and joy. Often when we manage to change our environment—to break through illusory blockages—we experience an intense feeling of relief and can let go of any previously held fears and assumptions of what would happen once we did overcome that barrier, whether it's material, emotional, or mental. Simply getting away from the trance of technology for a few hours and spending that time in Nature is a breach from the trappings of civilization that can suffocate us and prevent us from connecting to Earth.

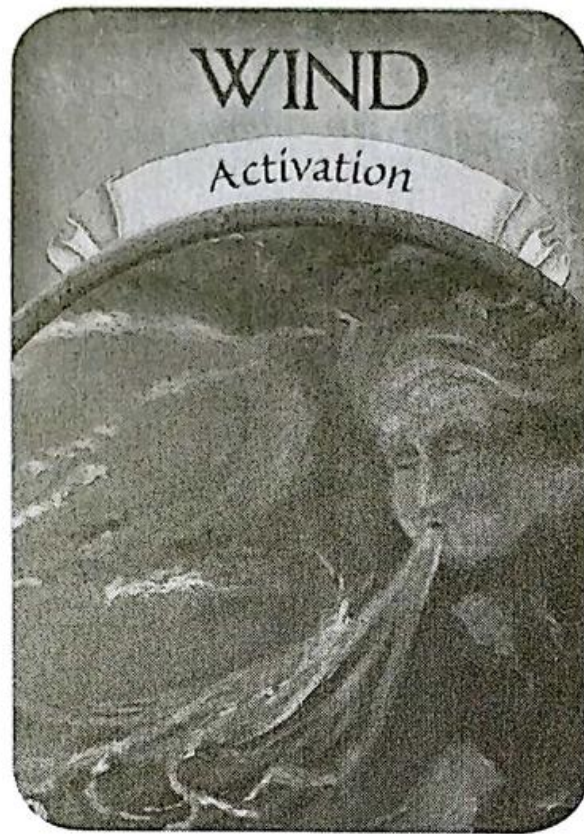




It is time to take a break! Not just a coffee break, but a respite from the usual environment you find yourself in. That trip you wanted to take? Go for it. Tired of being indoors? Make it a point to get outside. You have become so attached to your surroundings that you have created within them an illusion of safety, yet it is not these things that make you feel safe. Rather, the familiarity you have imbued in your surroundings have generated this false sense of security.

Taking time away from the familiar is literally about changing your external environment in a significant way, such as doing something unusual or perhaps something you have always wanted to experience. Another perspective is breaking through the barrier of beliefs that have constricted you in any way from being who you truly are. This is your opportunity to do some intentional breaching of these thought patterns, which will open you to different worlds and perspectives.





WIND



Activation

The various currents of air that circulate on our planet can be gentle enough to tickle the hairs on our arms or so fierce that they destroy man-made structures, as well as trees and other vegetation. Wind moves the air to circulate the atmosphere and keep



it from becoming stagnant. When there's no movement, the atmosphere feels somehow heavier. Gentle breezes help cool the land and pollinate flowers, whereas more tempestuous winds can snap tree branches off and stir something deeply within us. More violent winds can create temporary chaos with their ferocity.

No matter the degree of intensity, wind will activate us. In this image, the breath of the god of wind stirs the sea and rearranges the sky. As this occurs, the weather shifts. The effects, even in this small area, send ripples throughout, blending and dancing with the water and the sky. It activates the atmosphere and the world feels more alive when there is wind.



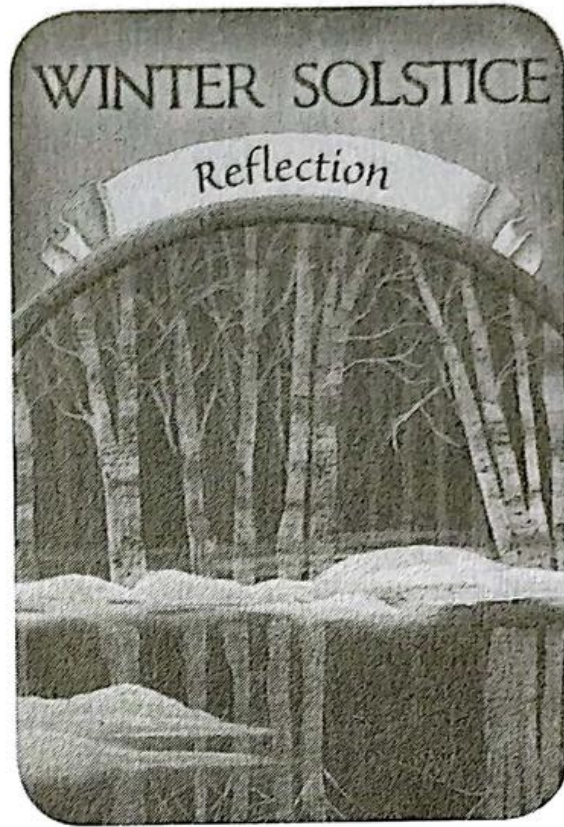
The lethargy you feel is the result of a lack of activation—in other words, something that stirs your senses. This could be anything from walking outdoors, feeling the breeze on your body, or inhaling the different aromas that Nature herself provides. Or it could be finding the pleasure in a warm bath that helps you



release the tension and stress from your mind and body. Music may activate your hearing, which sparks the pleasure centers in your brain. Art may activate your emotional responses. The touch of another human may activate a deep need to be physically held in some manner once again.

Now is the time for action. Engage in some activity and be fully present so that you forget about your surroundings and enter into that timeless and multidimensional experience of union with the focus of your creative attention. Let your physical body be active. Movement alone—whether quietly dancing by yourself or hiking up that hill over yonder—will require you to be as present as possible in your body. Enjoy!





WINTER SOLSTICE



Reflection

This midpoint of winter is not only the shortest day of the year, but also the longest night. The world is very still and the land dormant. Various “festivals of light” are celebrated, and have been for thousands of years, serving as a reminder that the light will indeed return. Throughout many



cultures there are tales describing this time as the birth of the archetypal Sun King—including the Christian story of Jesus's birth—representing the hope of renewal from the darkest period of the solar cycle.

This image portrays a simple yet powerful representation of the winter solstice. We see a clear reflection of the snowy woods on the still, frozen waters of the lake. The blue tint drapes the scene with an even greater sense of quiet and solace, inviting us to walk very softly lest we disturb the intense yet gentle grace of this scene. The reflection of the trees on the frozen lake reminds us that this is a time for us to go inside—to both our physical shelter as well as our internal world—and there contemplate the season that has passed, the season that is, and the seasons yet to come.



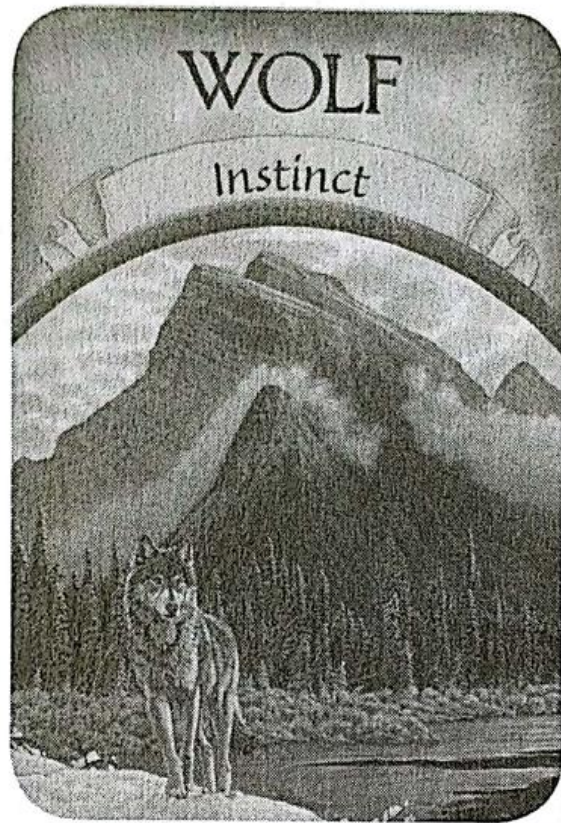
Review the past year and ask yourself what the most important lessons you have had to learn are, what you have accomplished, and what dreams and visions you want to manifest in the upcoming year. Whether it has been a



relatively smooth ride or a challenging series of events, acknowledge your experience as being the work of Source, no matter what your judgments, fears, or joys are. Honor whatever has happened over the previous several months with gratitude and forgiveness. Then let it go. Allow yourself some solitude so you can spend some quiet, slow time in reflection.

Once you feel complete, reflect on your present life, especially focusing on what you are grateful for. When you are finished, consider what is to come—all the different possibilities and potential that exist before you. Allow your imagination to roam without limitation or ambition, and see what shows up. Notice how you feel in your body with whatever scenario plays out in your mind. These are previews of that which is gestating, and can manifest and grow when cared for properly. Patience and stillness is called for here, for just as the Earth cycles have their own pace, so does this cycle.





WOLF



Instinct

Some of the strongest characteristics of our brother and sister wolves are loyalty, companionship, playfulness, and affection. They are exceptional parents and take great care of their young. We see similarities to wolves in domesticated dogs, particularly in



certain breeds, yet these tamed and distant relatives have long ago transferred their loyalty and pack behavior to humans.

Yet wolves are still carnivorous wild animals, surviving by seeking out whatever food is available that meets their dietary needs. This is instinctually driven and is the most basic and natural drive that all living things possess. Over the centuries, the encroachment of civilization into the wolves' natural territories and the periodic scarcity of game have prompted these beings to hunt wherever they could, which at times include a rancher's or farmer's cattle or sheep. This, in turn, has triggered a desire for revenge by these people so that they hunt and kill wolves, which has decimated their ranks. It's the so-called civilized world clashing with the world of the wild and instinctual.



You have lost touch with your instinctual sensitivities. It is the result of cultural and/or religious proscriptions dictating that anything



wild and instinctual is threatening and, therefore, has to be controlled or eliminated. Now is the time to overcome this limited mindset and tune in to these instinctual cues. Let the Spirit of Wolf be your teacher, and call upon this benevolent being for help identifying what those specific cues are saying.

Shed some of your inhibitions with the only guideline being to “do no harm.” Experiment by getting out of the straitjacket of familiar societal norms and listening to those sensations in your gut that are trying to give you a message. It may be a warning or an urging to take action of some sort. Take some deep breaths, and simply notice what your bodily sensations are telling you. Your mind will be the receiver of that information, and your body and mind can learn to work more closely with each other once again.





A special thanks to my wife and partner, Jesseca, for her help in preparing this deck, choosing the images, and editing the initial manuscript. I'm grateful for her love, support, encouragement, and belief in me and this project.

And thank you all for your love of the Earth.



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Steven D. Farmer is a Soul Healer, shamanic practitioner, ordained minister, hypnotherapist, former college professor, and former psychotherapist. He is the author of several best-selling books and oracle card decks including *Earth Magic*, *Animal Spirit Guides*, *Power Animal Oracle Cards*, *Messages from Your Animal Spirit Guides Oracle Cards*, *Power Animals*, *Sacred Ceremony*, and the guided-meditation CD *Messages from Your Animal Spirit Guide*.

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