

THE WILD UNKNOWN
**ANIMAL
SPIRIT
GUIDEBOOK**

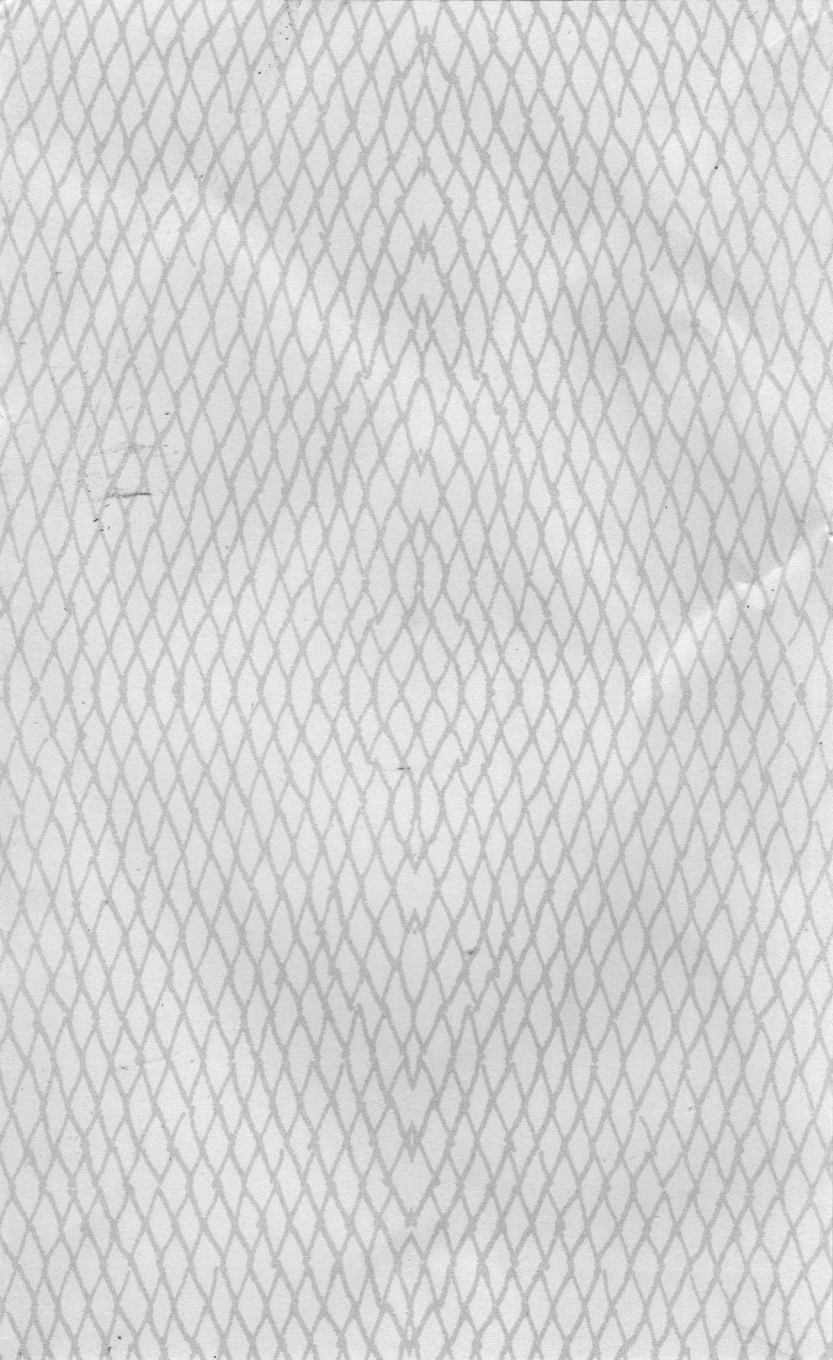


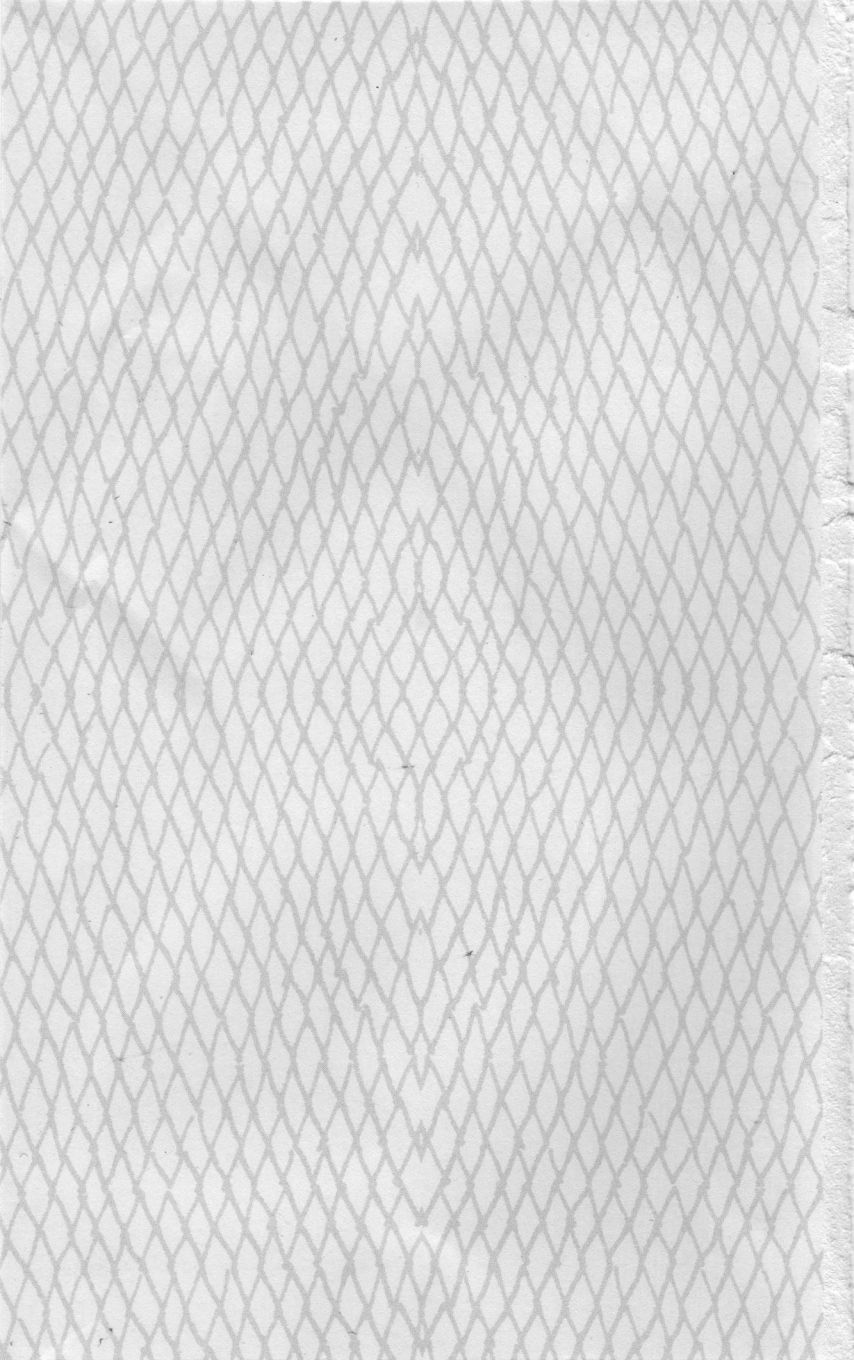
KIM KRANS

KIM KRANS

ANIMAL SPIRIT GUIDEBOOK







THE WILD UNKNOWN

THE WILD UNKNOWN
**ANIMAL
SPIRIT
GUIDEBOOK**

KIM KRANS



HarperOne

An Imprint of HarperCollins Publishers



HarperOne

THE WILD UNKNOWN. Copyright © 2018 by Kim Krans. All rights reserved. Printed in China. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. For information address HarperCollins Publishers, 195 Broadway, New York, NY 10007.

HarperCollins books may be purchased for educational, business, or sales promotional use. For information please email the special markets department at SPsales@harpercollins.com.

HarperCollins website: <http://www.harpercollins.com>

FIRST EDITION

Designed by Kim Krans & SU Barber

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data has been applied for and is available upon request.

Names: Krans, Kim, Author.

Title: The Wild Unknown Animal Spirit Guidebook / Kim Krans.

Description: San Francisco, CA : HarperOne, [2018]

ISBN 978-0-06-274286-5

19 20 21 22 Imago 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3

FOR YALMER ROAD
THANK YOU FOR RAISING ME WILD

CONTENTS

The Eagle Meets the Rabbit	9
UNDERSTANDING THE DECK	
Long Long Ago	17
Natural Selection	21
Earth	24
Water	25
Fire	26
Air	27
Spirit	28
USING THE DECK	
What's My Spirit Animal?	33
What to Ask	35
When to Ask It	36
Caring for Your Deck	37
Shuffling & Cutting	38
Spreads	40
DEEPER INSIGHTS	
The Card Order	49
The Food Web	51
Apex Predators	53
The Nature Connection	54
THE WILD UNKNOWN ANIMAL SPIRIT	
Earth Cards	59
Water Cards	89
Fire Cards	119
Air Cards	149
Spirit Cards	179

THE EAGLE MEETS THE RABBIT

When I was eleven years old I began playing basketball. I was serious about it and practiced hard, somehow landing myself as the co-captain of the team even though my limbs were thin and lanky. What I did have going for me was a natural knack for leadership and razor sharp eyes. Rather than calling me by my last name, the coach gave me the nickname "Eagle."

It gave me a rush. I was both afraid of the name and enamored of it. I envisioned the great bird, ancient and wise, soaring over the Earth. Was it possible that was me? Was it true? When I led the team onto the court for pre-game warm-ups I did feel like an Eagle. Our team went undefeated through both 7th and 8th grades. We were unstoppable...and then came high school.

Along with a handful of my teammates, I was taken up to varsity as a freshman. This meant we got, among other social boons, the coveted "varsity jacket" we'd been dreaming of all through middle school. I filled out the order form for a custom jacket with my name on it.

In gold embroidery on black fabric it read: Eagle.

Over the next few weeks the questions poured in. "Why does your jacket say that?" "What does 'Eagle' mean?" "Why doesn't it say 'Kim'?" The problem was, I didn't give them the answer. Instead, something else happened that's most easily synopsised by saying my inner Rabbit emerged. I went into my mom's sewing room and found a seam ripper and razor blade. Slowly but surely I cut the embroidered cursive letters out. My jacket no longer said Eagle in golden thread. Now it said Eagle in tiny, leftover puncture marks and scratches. No matter how I tried to smooth out the fabric, the threadbare silhouette remained. I hid the jacket in the closet.

I am interested in moments like this. Not just in my past, but in yours too. What had the concept of the Eagle awakened in me? How can we believe so fully in something, and yet a few weeks later a voice can creep in and pull the rug from under us? The Rabbit asks endless annoying questions, like "Are you really good enough?," "What do they think of you?," "Are you sure?," "What if it's not okay?" The Rabbit is relentless. Even though the Eagle could swoop down and devour the Rabbit at any moment, it doesn't. It's as if the Rabbit

makes the Eagle forget its job description.

And so goes the push and pull of our lives. We feel strong and then weak, sure and then confused. This power play between my inner Eagle and my inner Rabbit has been of interest to me for years. It was actually the subject of the very first calendar I drew under the moniker "The Wild Unknown." That was seven years ago, and the puzzle is still not solved.

In an attempt to delve into the mystery, please welcome The Wild Unknown Animal Spirit deck. It is an exploration of our inner contradictions, our complex natures, and the endless mystery of who we are. We start this exploration by looking outside ourselves and asking Mother Nature for guidance. What can we learn from the great creatures who have inhabited our planet since the dawn of time? What can we learn from the slow, stealth nature of the Crocodile? What does the Hummingbird tell us about savoring the sweetness of life?

While drawing and writing the Animal Spirit deck, there was not a single card that depicted a feeling or experience I have not been through. The essence of all sixty-three creatures is within us, just as we are in them. The human

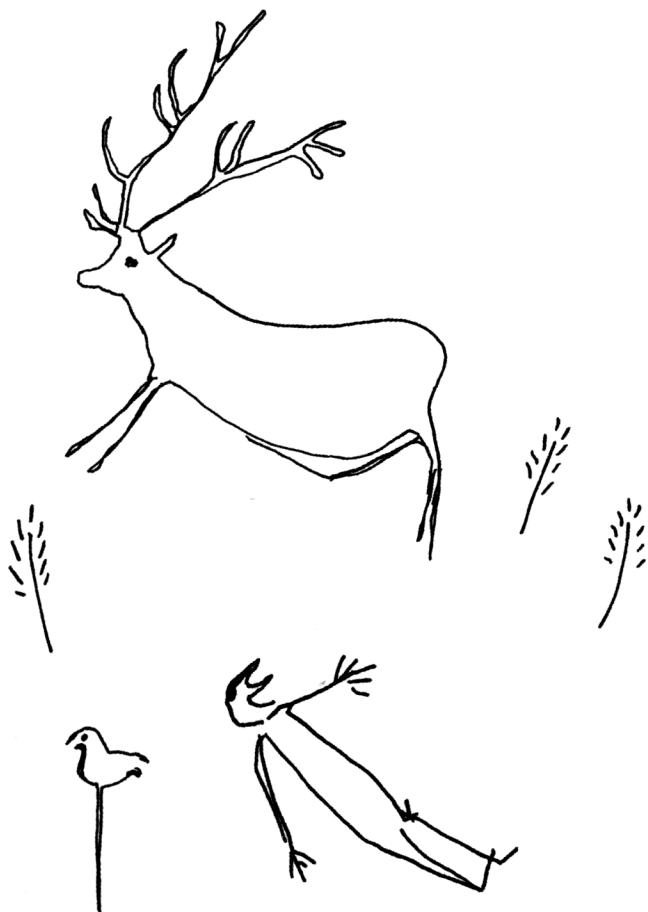
experience is infinitely vast, as is the wisdom buried in every crevice of the natural world. I hope these cards steer you toward your innate intelligence and toward expansion, and I hope that many wild creatures grace your path along the way. May you always be on the inner quest.

With love,

Ⓜ Kink



UNDERSTANDING THE DECK



LONG LONG AGO

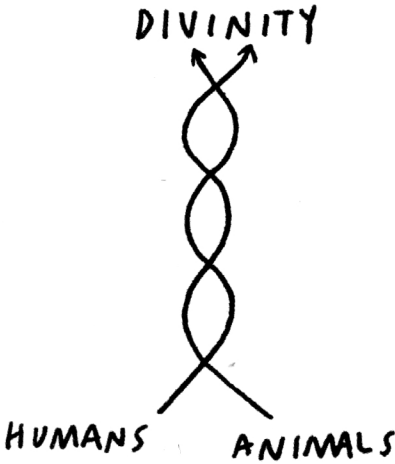
Since the beginning of time, animals have played an integral role in the story of humanity. In creation myths far and wide you will find complex and transformative relationships between creatures and humans. Let your mind go way, way back to simpler times and ancient civilizations where half-man half-beasts roamed the earth, serpents in trees tempted humans with fruit, sirens sang along the water's edge, ravens delivered messages, and fish whispered prophecies. Then let the countless paintings covering cave walls in Lascaux, France and throughout Europe take you back over seventeen thousand years. And what are our civilization's very first paintings of? Creatures and humans! Some believe the images tell the stories of great hunting excursions, others believe they are records of our earliest shamanic rituals depicting our ability to commune with nature.

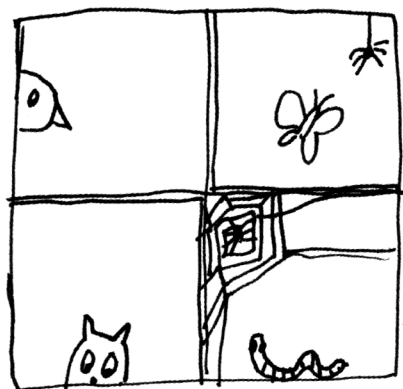
Either way, these early cave paintings, along with myths from every culture across the globe, remind us of our eternal fascination with creatures of the wild. We see a soaring bird

and have to wonder...how? The sheer strength of horses changed the progress of our nations. Many times in myths the interfacing with a creature becomes the defining moment in the story, from the snake in the Garden of Eden to Manu and the Fish. Animals are woven deeply into our human story and we continue to be woven into theirs. It's no surprise we are so intimately tied to them, as creatures big and small lead us humbly toward the divine. I say this because animals naturally inspire reverence and wonder. We are transfixed by a peacock's tail, curious about a cheetah's spots, speechless when we see a whale surface. Anytime we approach a state of awe, we are in relationship with divinity. We are awake.

While you work with the Animal Spirit cards I encourage you to resist the idea that there is a "right" or "fixed" interpretation out there, to resist the notion that our relationship to animals belongs to any one system, nation, era, or culture. Instead, contemplate the possibility that these sacred creatures reside within all of us, as they always have. Relating to the mysterious creatures of our Earth is as intrinsic as breathing. We long for the sacred and therefore we long for our connection to the wild. Animals take us out of our

human ego mindsets and into the realm of magic and possibility. Take part in this tradition—this deeply human tradition—and let the creatures guide you toward the divine within. There could be no greater gift to Mother Nature.





NATURAL SELECTION

As you can imagine, the most difficult step in creating this deck was selecting the animals. Who's in and who's out? With an estimated ten thousand species of birds alone, it was not an easy task. I looked to other animal decks for guidance, without finding much apparent reasoning behind their selections. Some included a Crow but no Vulture; some had many cards, some few. With the vision of a million dewy-eyed creatures peering at me while I worked, I needed some structure and I needed it badly.

Soon the ancient wisdom of yoga and my familiarity with the Tarot came to the rescue. I structured the deck by separating the animals into the elements according to their habitats. Yoga philosophy deems Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Ether to be the building blocks of all existence. We are a living and breathing blend of these five elements, as is everything in our universe. Like the Tarot, I selected fourteen cards to make up each of the first four elemental "suits." The Earth creatures roam the field and forest, the Water

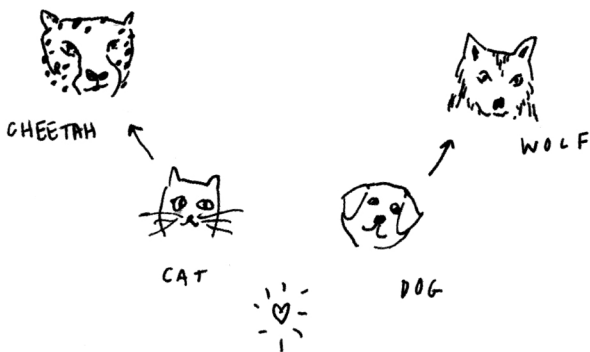
creatures inhabit the rivers and oceans, the Fire creatures live in the deserts and grasslands, the Air creatures belong to the sky, and...then come the seven cosmic spirit cards.

According to yoga philosophy, the fifth and final element is space, or Ether. For our purposes, I've given these ethereal creatures the more suitable title of spirit. These are the trump cards of the deck. They play a role similar to the Major Arcana in the Tarot. There are seven spirit cards, one to represent each of the chakras within the subtle body.

Sounds somewhat logical, right? Easy peasy? Almost. As the drawings began to take shape, I noticed the cat card didn't seem to fit in. I wondered why. It was one of my favorite drawings, yet the deck was slowly beginning to have a mind of its own, a story to tell that didn't include the cat. I realized the deck was wild. No domestic animals. No loyal dogs, no curious cats, no gerbils, chickens, or goldfish. A whole slew of fabulous animals were outed. It had to be done. After all, I call myself The Wild Unknown.

This being said, I hope that you will use these cards with liberty. If you desperately need a cat card, look to the big cats for consolation

(Cheetah, Panther, Lion, and Tiger). Likewise the Wolf doesn't stray too far from the Dog. There are bound to be animals you'll miss; the odds aren't in my favor on this one. My hope is that you'll let go of what isn't included and delve into what is.



▽ EARTH ▽

CREATURES OF THE FIELD & FOREST

The suit of survival and instinct, the Earth creatures represent our relationships with fears and habits. In general, the creatures of this suit are grounded, dependable, and supportive. However, since they are so drawn to routine, they often become stuck in their ways. Several Earth cards indicate that consciousness remains rooted in the material plane, or as referred to in yoga, the "gross" realm. This means practical concerns (money, home, work, and family) are at the forefront of the mind, not leaving room for much else. Movement and exercise are especially helpful to counter the stagnation or "stuck-ness" that can accompany excess Earth element.

▽ WATER ▽

CREATURES OF THE OCEANS, RIVERS, & LAKES

The creatures of the Water element represent our emotional world and our ability to express. These cards point to relationships, love, boundaries, and creativity...our "flow," if you will. Water creatures are often drawn to the arts, as they have a natural inclination toward beauty and depth. Several Water cards indicate an outpouring of creativity and/or emotion. This can be wonderful, joyful, even romantic. However, when Water spills and makes a mess, disappointment and sometimes tears (they are Water after all) are sure to follow. Ideally, a healthy stream of communication flows through our lives... not too much Water, not too little.

△ FIRE △

CREATURES OF THE DESERT & GRASSLANDS

The creatures of the Fire element lead us toward change. They represent the ego, and challenge us to become our best selves. Although these cards appear more frequently when conflict or discomfort is present, the heat they emit is the elixir of our transformation. Several Fire cards indicate the "heat" is on. It's a time of action and change. Deadlines and demands are around every turn, but it's all in the name of growth. You'll look back on it in awe of all that was accomplished. When all else fails, remember Fire is the only thing that transforms darkness into light.

△ AIR △

CREATURES OF THE SKY

The creatures of the Air element move quickly and decisively. They are known to "see" more than others, and this can lead to powerful and discerning qualities. Air creatures love movement and mobility, but the speed at which they move often leaves them ungrounded. Several Air cards indicate too much movement and not enough Earth. Some people describe this as living in the head rather than the body. It's difficult to make big decisions or remember our greater purpose when we lose our groundedness, so do whatever you must to reconnect to the physical realm. Slow walks in nature will help get your feet back on the ground.

O SPIRIT O

CREATURES OF THE ETHER

The creatures of the spirit element do not live on Earth as we know it. They are inhabitants of a dimension beyond...the cosmic ether. These seven trump cards represent significant challenges or awakenings on the "subtle" level...the level of the inner spirit or soul. Like guardians from another realm, they are watchful and protective when we are at a crossroads in our lives. Several spirit cards indicate the force of life is moving us in new directions. Trust is key with the spirit cards, as life shifts in big ways. Questions might seem unanswerable, the future unknown...but you're in the perfect place. Even if you have the perception that you're in control, you're not. Grace surrounds the situation and steers the wheel.

○ - SPIRIT

△ - AIR

△ - FIRE

▽ - WATER

▽ - EARTH

ALCHEMICAL SYMBOLS FOR THE FIVE ELEMENTS

USING THE DECK

WHAT'S MY SPIRIT ANIMAL?

It's an ever-intriguing question. When we ask it, our mind moves into the jungle, the tundra, the forest, the desert, the ocean...in search of creatures big and small that have somehow felt like our mascots, guardians, or allies. Maybe we did an online quiz and the answer came up just as we thought it would. "That's right," we say, "I am a Butterfly!" Maybe an intuitive told us we have unresolved Wolf energy, and that didn't sit so well with us. Maybe we encountered an animal in nature at the perfect moment and have felt a strong kinship ever since. I, for example, escaped to the forests of the Pacific Northwest to finish the first draft of this book. "I'm going to see so many epic creatures," I thought. "I am, after all, writing an Animal Spirit guidebook!" So far I've encountered a few birds and a giant slug. I looked at that slug moving so slowly on its journey across the mossy path, and I didn't have to think too hard about its message. It's the underdog of the Animal Spirit world, reminding me to stay humble and to keep on writing, no matter

the resistance. I thanked the slug for its message and apologized for not including it in the deck. I walked away grateful but held back from naming the slug my Spirit Animal. Come on, friends, you understand why.

Giant spirit slugs aside, I want to encourage everyone who uses this deck not to get too hung up on the infamous question "What's my Spirit Animal?" As soon as we claim to be a Lion and a Lion only, life will show us ways in which we are also a Nightingale. These cards are about receiving guidance from the natural world that helps us navigate the complexity of life. We are multi-faceted, multi-dimensional, contradictory, creative, and amazing beings. Delve in deep with me. Welcome to The Wild Unknown.

WHAT TO ASK

Before you start a reading, acknowledge what you're looking for. Do you want guidance with an unresolved issue? Inspiration? Perhaps you need clarity about a relationship, or help in making a big decision. Sometimes a reading just piques our interest and seems fun, and sometimes readings happen serendipitously. Whatever the case may be, take a moment before handling the cards and let a question formulate within you. Don't try to think up something complicated or "right." Although our mind has a thousand questions, our heart only has a few...and those are the questions we really need to answer. Let the heart have its moment to speak.

A FEW QUESTIONS TO GET YOU STARTED:

- What energy would help resolve this conflict?
- What will I encounter today?
- What part of myself have I forgotten?

WHEN TO ASK IT

There are many benefits to making a reading a ritual. You might clean your space, light a candle or incense, set out your favorite stone or crystal, or perhaps you simply close your eyes and take a few long, slow, deep breaths before you begin. The idea is to collect your attention and intention and direct them toward the reading. This is a moment for you to take a break from the world and to self-reflect. It's best not to demand answers from the cards when you're feeling impatient, agitated, or angry. Cool off first, collect yourself, and come back to the cards when you feel receptive. I have found sitting in stillness for just a few moments before handling the cards does wonders for the process.

CARING FOR YOUR DECK

As with anything you care for, treat your Animal Spirit cards kindly. Think of them as creatures and friends, and give them a nice place to lay their heads when not in use. Take them out only to read, study, or enjoy the artwork...otherwise keep them in their box or a pouch. If you want to pull one card to display for inspiration, make sure to keep an eye on it. Once you stop noticing it, it's time to put it back in the deck and pull another card. Try out simple gestures like washing your hands before you handle the cards. I have also heard that the creatures of this deck respond well to a quiet "thank you" before tucking the cards away.

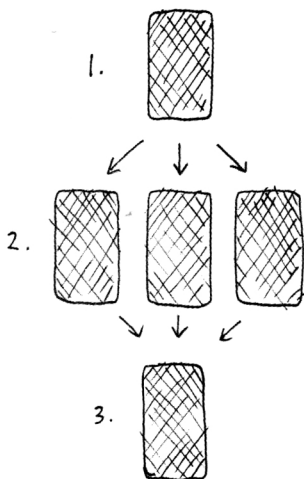
SHUFFLING & CUTTING

Eventually, we all develop our favorite way to shuffle and cut the deck. This takes time and experimentation, so for beginners I suggest a simple overhand shuffling method. When working with a new set of cards make sure to mix the cards well. A great trick for breaking in a deck is to spread out every card and familiarize yourself with the artwork, mixing them up as you go. Don't be afraid to get lost in this step—make small piles of cards that you like, and piles of cards you don't understand yet. Mix and match and free associate. Before you know it you'll have an intimate relationship with the cards and a well integrated deck.

No matter how broken in your deck is, it's important to shuffle before every reading. Slowly repeat your question in your mind (or aloud) while you shuffle, and stop when it feels right. Take as much time as you need. When possible, use your non-dominant hand to cut the deck (usually that means the left hand). This is said to be the more receptive and intuitive side. Again, you will develop

a method of cutting that feels natural for you. I like to use this simple three step process:

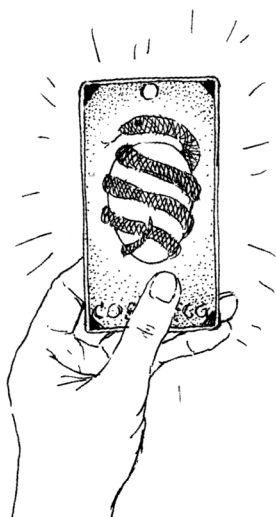
1. After shuffling, place cards in one stack.
2. Using your non-dominant hand, separate the cards into three smaller piles, letting the cards "break" naturally.
3. In any order that feels right to you, place the three piles back into one. Now you're ready to start a reading, pulling the top card from the stack.



A CARD A DAY

ONE CARD READING

The Animal Spirit deck lends itself well to a simple daily reading. The single card indicates a side of yourself you'll encounter today, or perhaps a situation on the horizon. This practice is especially powerful if you do it at the same time for several days in a row. Mornings are a potent time for readings. Keep a journal or take photos for reference.

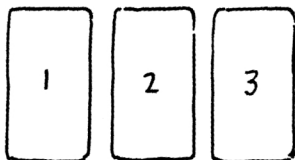


PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

THREE CARD READING

When using Animal Spirit, the emphasis of this classic spread shifts from looking at situations in our past, present, and future, to looking at the self. Use more of a "who I was," "who I am," "who I will be" framework. Don't be too hard on yourself if negative cards come up. Think of the cards as preventative medicine and shift your actions accordingly.

1. past dynamic
2. present situation
3. future potential

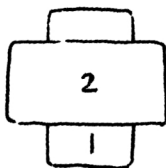


THE PATH, THE OBSTACLE

TWO CARD READING

This spread is a favorite, often used, and on-point old friend. It reveals the problem and the solution with no messing around. Use it when something has been bothering you for a while, or you're at a standstill with a creative project. It's also great when you feel down and out but don't know why. It's likely the card in position two will be in its "out of balance" state for this reading. Reference the individual card descriptions for guidance.

1. the path
2. the obstacle

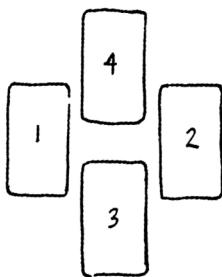


RELATIONSHIP SPREAD

FOUR CARD READING

The Animal Spirit cards are like arrows piercing into the heart of our relationships. They reveal hidden dynamics and words left unspoken. They remind us of our best and worst selves. Use this spread to see what's going on between you and another person. Don't be fooled by the simplicity of the relationship spread. It holds a mirror up to your heart.

1. you
2. the other person
3. the shadow dynamic
4. the illuminated dynamic

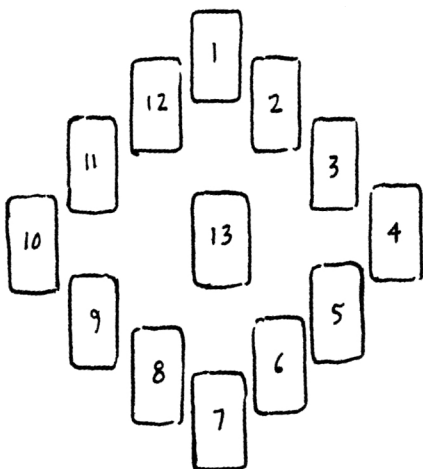


YEAR AHEAD SPREAD

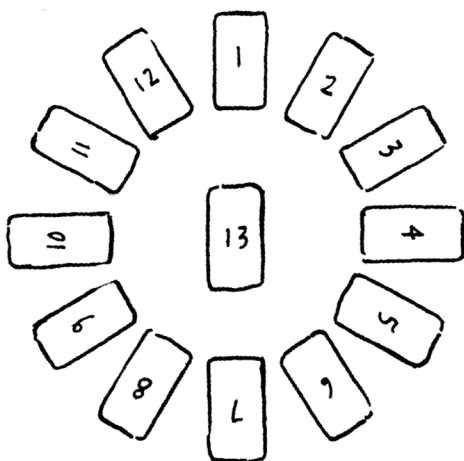
THIRTEEN CARD SPREAD

The perfect reading to celebrate a birthday or new year. Each card represents the essence of the month, and the card in the center represents the overall theme of the year. You can either shuffle the deck once and pick all the cards from the stack consecutively, or shuffle between each pull. If you're doing this reading for a birthday, start with the current month's card in position one. There are lots of beautiful variations to this spread...make it your own.

1. January
 2. February
 3. March
 4. etc....
-
13. the overall "theme" of the year



OR...



DEEPER INSIGHTS

THE CARD ORDER

You may have already noticed there are no numbers on the Animal Spirit cards. Once you start to shuffle, it's hard to discern an order within the suits. However, for more advanced readers there is a thread of logic that runs through each of the elements, or suits. You can refer back to the guidebook at any time to study the order in which the cards are listed. Again, this is not crucial for grasping the meaning of the cards, nor is it a necessary step for delving deep into a reading. It is simply there as an additional layer.

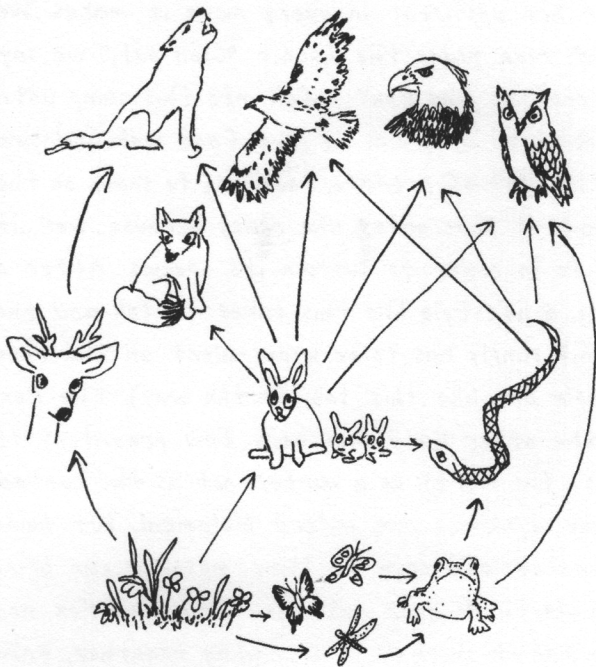
The order of the animals is not based on numerology, but rather a study of consciousness developing and expressing itself. The level of awakened elemental energy increases through the progression of each suit. For example, in the Air element the first card is the Moth and the final card is the Eagle. Though the Moth is endearing in many ways, it struggles to "see" and it lives a very short life. The Eagle lives a long life, and stirs in us a sense of wonder and greatness. Likewise, ponder the progression

of consciousness and intelligence between the Crocodile and the Whale, or the Fire Ant and the Lion. When the time is right, try adding this subtle layer to the wisdom of your readings.



THE FOOD WEB

Consider the Rabbit for a moment. Worry and fear are apparent in every move it makes. We might even judge the Rabbit. "Chill out," we say. "Be cool like the Fox!" I fell into this camp until I looked at diagrams of the food web and saw the long list of predators waiting to snack on the Rabbit. It procreates like crazy because...well...it has to in order to sustain its species. After a while, a lifestyle like this takes its toll and the Rabbit simply has to be hyper-alert all the time (people are like this too, by the way). The Fox, on the other hand, has very few predators. It roams the Earth as a hunter, not as the hunted. These dynamics are indeed biological, but being aware of and open to their message can bring new depth to your readings. When the Fox and the Rabbit show up in a reading together, know that there is a certain power dynamic at play. Same goes for the Frog and the Dragonfly, or the Owl and the Mouse.



THE RABBIT'S FOOD WEB

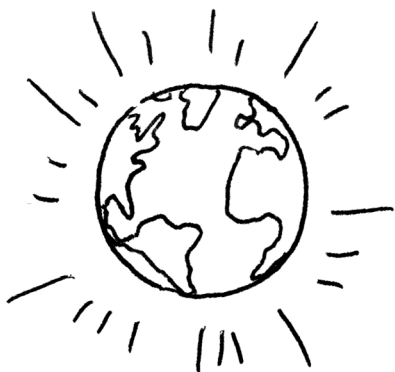
APEX PREDATORS

For readers interested in adding an even deeper layer to their understanding of the cards, familiarize yourself with the apex predators within the deck. They are the "heavyweights" of the Earth, Water, Fire, and Air suits. Apex predators are animals that do not have any predators within their ecosystem. Therefore they do not live in fear like many other creatures do, as they are at the top of the food chain. When any of these cards appear, know that you are dealing with a powerhouse. Not only that, but two apex predators from different elements (like the Lion and the Eagle) usually "lock horns," so to speak, since they are both used to being in command.

THE NATURE CONNECTION

At some point along your journey with the Animal Spirit cards, I hope you will put the guidebook down and forget all the esoteric animal interpretations you may have read online or been told by someone in the past. Remember for a moment that these creatures exist in the wild. They surround us. Other than the spirit cards (which belong to the unseeable and subtle realm) these creatures are out there as we speak, being fully and completely themselves. Studying them through a biological lens will deepen your relationship to these cards. Research their behavior, their habitats. Look at their shape, what they eat, how they communicate. How do they live? Fast or slow, with others or in solitude? What are their tendencies? To fight, flee, or make friends? Take some time with these questions and observe the animal for what it is. Set all of your previous assumptions aside and watch a video of a Cheetah chasing its prey. Watch a Moth dancing around the candlelight. Get in touch with the essence and feeling it

conjures up in you. This is perhaps the most advanced and powerful way to use your Animal Spirit Cards.



**THE WILD UNKNOWN
ANIMAL SPIRIT**

EARTH





BEAR



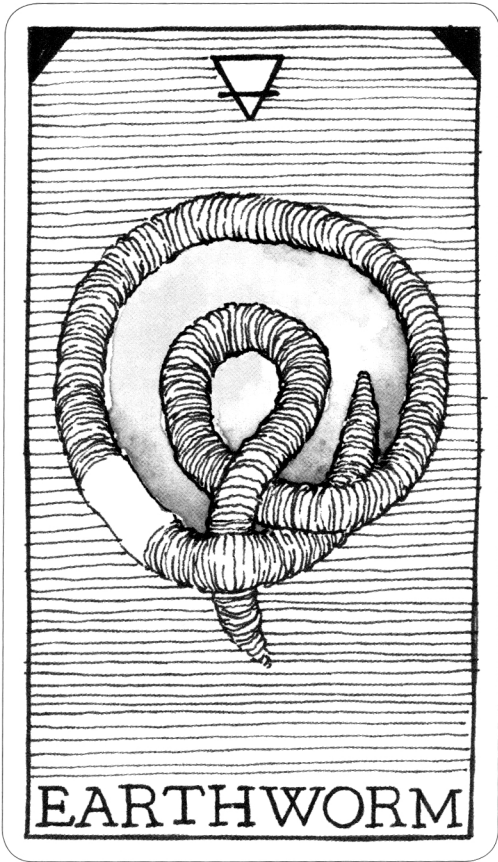
WAKING FROM SPIRITUAL SLUMBER,
BEGINNING ANEW

After a long winter, the Bear arises from deep slumber. At first the movement and effort are difficult, but the Bear knows it's time to awaken and move toward the dawning light. The Bear card represents an individual on the cusp of new directions and personal transformation. The initial weeks and months of this spiritual quest may feel tricky, cumbersome, and full of obstacles. But you have no choice, Bear. Winter wanes, the warmth of spring emerges, and your transformation begins.

WHEN IN BALANCE: inner strength, yearning to grow

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: withdrawal, lethargy, heaviness

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: movement, exercise



EARTHWORM



SHY, HESITANT, RELUCTANT
TO SHARE INNER VISION

We have all felt the woes of the Earthworm at some point along the way. The Earthworm indicates a newbie or novice working to establish confidence in a new field. Others around you may seem wise and experienced, but it's important to remember they once felt Earthworm energy too. This card is a reminder not to be intimidated or lose hope. Mastery takes time, and you're on the right track. Besides, rumor has it a beginner's mind offers the most valuable insights.

WHEN IN BALANCE: earnest, intelligent, valuable

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: self conscious, apprehensive

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: speak up, risk embarrassment



MOUSE



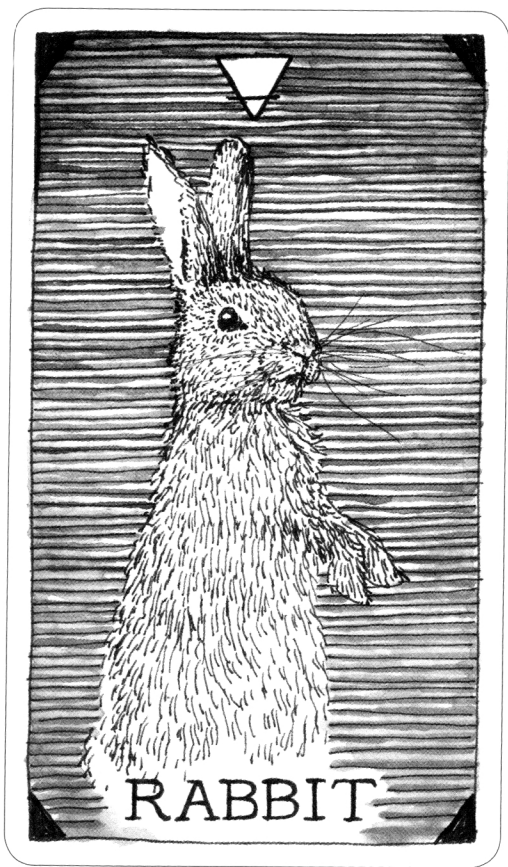
DETAIL-ORIENTED, SMALL-MINDED,
NIT-PICKY, NERVOUS

The Mouse has an innate desire to tend to the details. It often spends its days fixing, preparing, organizing, and scrutinizing. Unfortunately, a Mouse personality doesn't notice when they've gone too far. Soon they begin to have a limited and fearful vision of life, and try to control every detail. This can be quite a painful experience for both the Mouse and those around them. When Mouse energy is at play, step back for a moment. It may be time to find a more purposeful project to delve into, one that's worthy of your exacting eye.

WHEN IN BALANCE: organized, resourceful, prepared

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: busy with no purpose

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: a meaningful project



RABBIT



AFRAID OF EVERYTHING,
OVERWHELMED, FROZEN

The Rabbit loves to remind his friends that someday the Eagle will swoop down and eat him. He talks and talks and talks about it, so loudly in fact...that one day the Eagle hears and thanks him for the great idea. Rabbit energy is alive when we are scared (most often about the future) and we become our own worst enemy. We spin up a dust cloud of fear and then complain to others that we are lost. Notice your thoughts and words, oh Rabbit...they shape your destiny.

WHEN IN BALANCE: sensitive, problem solver, good listener

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: over-explains, talks fast

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: a day of silence



RACCOON



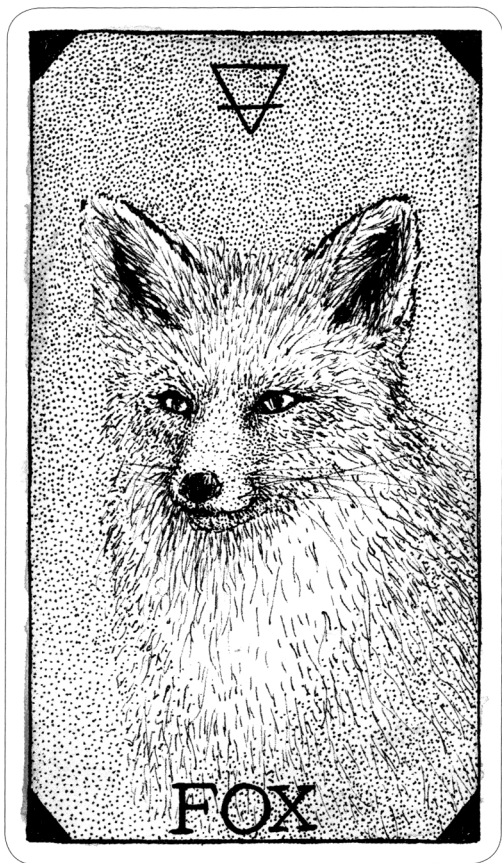
TALENTED, SHADOWY, IN HIDING

Raccoon energy is at play within all artists, to greater or lesser degrees. At best, it indicates talent, tenacity, and skillfulness with a particular musical instrument or creative tool. Its shadow side points to an unresolved issue around self-image and success. Sometimes using a stage name or wearing a "mask" works in an artist's favor. Other times, it limits creativity. Am I who my audience thinks I am? What if I am ready to grow into something more? Raccoon energy won't let us off the hook until this creative ego fear is resolved.

WHEN IN BALANCE: generous friend, exceptional artist

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: competitive, starving artist

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: make new work



FOX



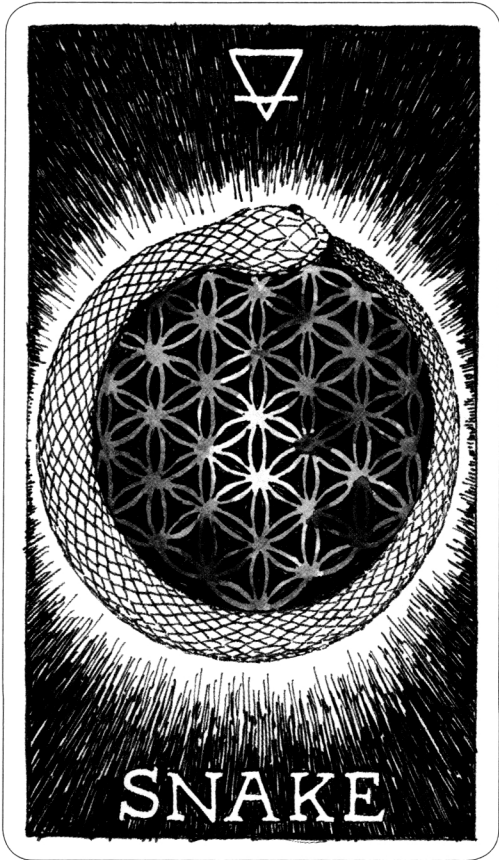
SMART, STRONG PARTNER OR MATE,
WISE TEACHER

The Fox is an enchanting creature with plenty of mystique to go around. Fox personalities are skillful in business and also make great teachers. They are quick to learn and adapt well to new situations. Foxes are ideal life partners, as they commit to relationships for the long term and their natural charisma keeps things exciting. Fox energy helps us stay true to those most dear to us. When this card appears, reconnect to those you love. Foxes don't do well when they slip away.

WHEN IN BALANCE: magical, ingenious teacher, monogamous

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: sneaky, unsure of their identity

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: partnership, connection



SNAKE



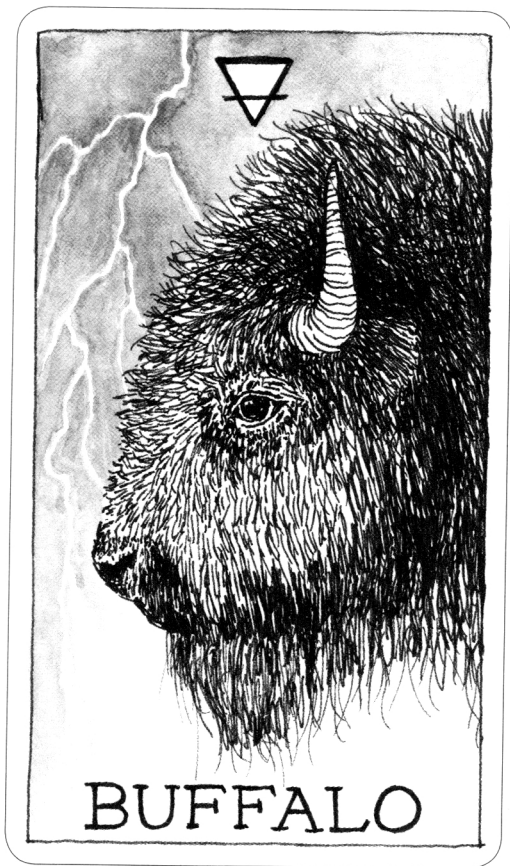
GUARDIAN OF UNAWAKENED MAGIC &
CREATIVE POTENTIAL

The Snake is a symbol of our highest potential. It is said that shakti (our creative life force) lies dormant at the base of our spine, in the form of a coiled snake. Regardless of whether this image rings true for you, it's well worth considering the amount of "unawakened" or "untapped" potential within. What would life look like if you woke it up? How can you stir it from slumber? An experienced yoga or meditation teacher can lead the way. Make haste...the Snake card appears when there is no more time to waste.

WHEN IN BALANCE: prosperous, creative, charismatic

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: starts and stops many things

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: Kundalini yoga, meditation



BUFFALO



*GROUNDED YET HEAVENLY,
PRACTICAL YET SPIRITUAL*

The hooves of the mighty Buffalo are grounded in the Earth, yet its heart and mind rise toward heaven. The Buffalo sees challenge, hardship, or a bump in the road as an opportunity for upliftment. Therefore the Buffalo does not fear death, illness, or misfortune...its gentle eyes look to the road ahead, trusting every turn. May we all experience this elusive yet life-changing bliss from time to time, and may we allow this card to remind us that life is a precious gift.

WHEN IN BALANCE: trusting, pure presence

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: restless, lacks gratitude

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: prayer, bhakti



LAMB



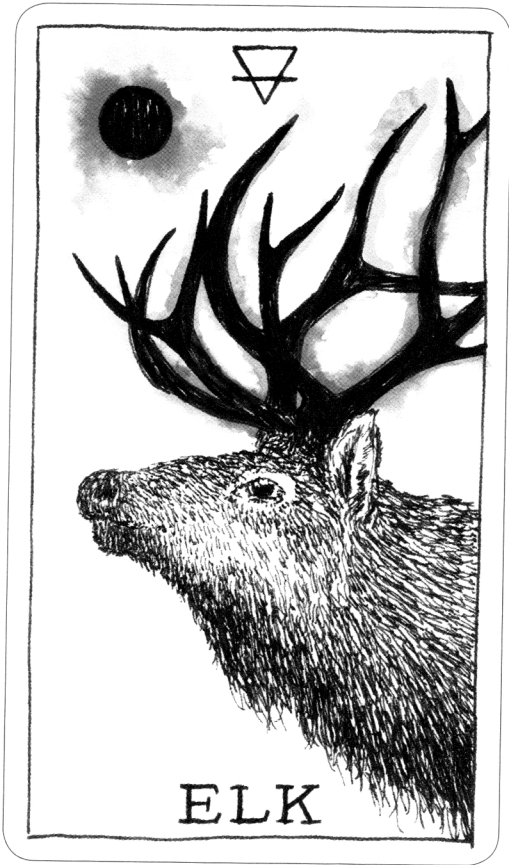
PEACEFUL, PROPHETIC, PATIENT

The Lamb is the bearer of an important message. Its contents can only be heard when a deep level of quiet has been established. Lamb energy is the honest guidance you hear from an old friend, a young child, or sometimes a surprising stranger. Though the Lamb's message may channel through another person, the wisdom resonates within you. It will repeat and reverberate until you listen. Approach this gentle creature with utmost patience and reverence. Truth is a gift. Sit still, listen, receive.

WHEN IN BALANCE: knowingness, inner peace

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: quiet, timid, concerned

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: meditation, listening



ELK



STABLE, RESILIENT, HEADSTRONG,
THE FATHER

The great Elk represents the Earth element in its masculine form. This means it provides underlying support and stability amidst life's many changes. An Elk personality (whether male or female) is fully established in themselves and knows their core values. They become known and respected for acting in ways that uphold those values. Sometimes the Elk's ego can become inflated, but for the most part they make damn good fathers, mothers, lovers, and friends. The world needs more Elk energy.

WHEN IN BALANCE: supportive, kind, consistent

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: pretentious, high and mighty

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: eat and drink more consciously



DEER



LOVING, INTUITIVE, GRACEFUL,
THE MOTHER

The Deer represents the feminine aspects of Earth energy. This energy is available to all creatures (regardless of gender) but is especially potent in new parents. During the first few days they are fully present, nurturing, and calm. Their inner beauty radiates and a sense of grace calms the room. A Deer personality affects others in this way, drawing them toward a quiet tenderness. The Deer card may appear when a birth or celebration of new life draws near...or when a situation calls for absolute gentleness and compassion.

WHEN IN BALANCE: receptive, compassionate, nurturing

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: concerned, protective

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: nature, children



WOLF

WOLF



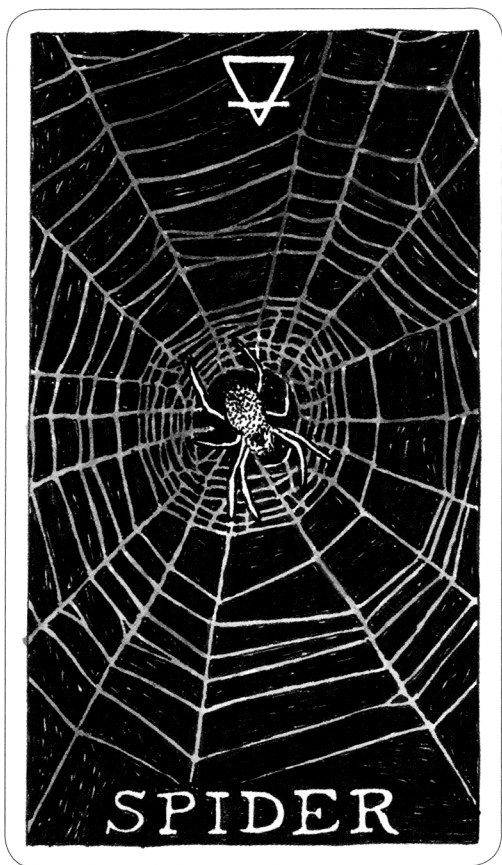
GUARDIAN OF FAMILY & TRIBE,
ACTIVISM, RITUAL

The Wolf's mission is to uphold the well being and longevity of the pack. Healthy Wolf energy expresses itself through activism, mentorship, humanitarian efforts, or teaching (religious or political studies). The Wolf gets into trouble when it assumes every member of the tribe must follow suit—this includes children walking in their parent's footsteps. Although it will surely be uncomfortable at first, practicing tolerance helps balance out agitated Wolf energy. Contemplate the following: embrace all, exclude none.

WHEN IN BALANCE: reliable, democratic, fearless

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: judgmental, dominating

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: practice letting go



SPIDER



CREATOR OF PROSPERITY
THROUGH LIFE'S WORK, DHARMA

The spider is an ingenious creator. Its greatest gift is weaving the thread of dharma into a vast intricate web that supports the spider (and those around it) both financially and spiritually. It is hard work, but the spider neither tires nor becomes impatient. This card reminds us creativity is everywhere. Be process-oriented rather than results-oriented, and soon your "work" becomes like the weaving of a magical, priceless tapestry. Abundance follows.

WHEN IN BALANCE: appreciative, enthusiastic, prosperous

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: discouraged, tired, forlorn

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: playful creativity



HORSE



MOMENTUM, FREEDOM,
EXPANSIVE ENERGY & FORCE

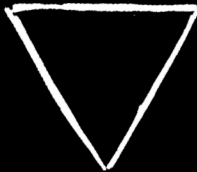
The Horse represents the most masterful form of Earth energy within the deck. It provides us with momentum so reliable, so supportive, that you can ride on its back toward any goal, no matter how difficult the terrain. A Horse personality is fully awakened, fully alive, and cannot be defeated. The Horse's freedom becomes available to us when we hone and collect our energy through daily practice. Physical stamina (exercise) and mental focus (meditation) are the secret weapons behind the Horse's legacy.

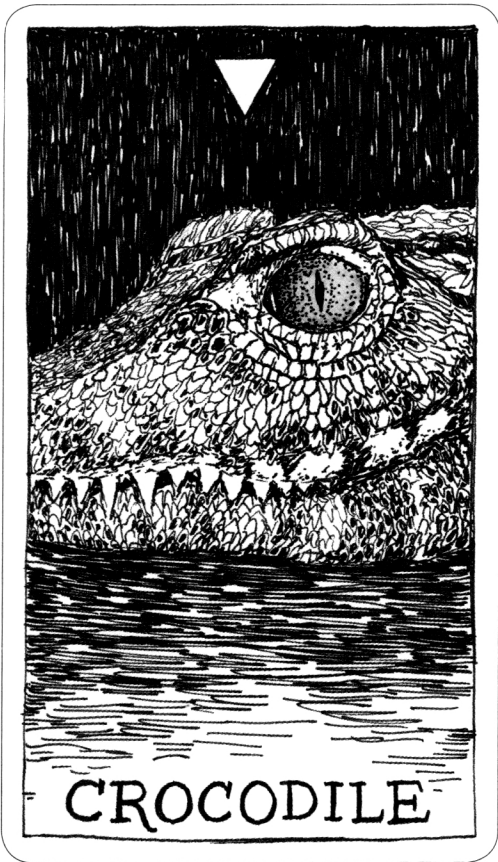
WHEN IN BALANCE: achieves anything, never gives up

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: runs away, feels weak

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: strength training

WATER





CROCODILE



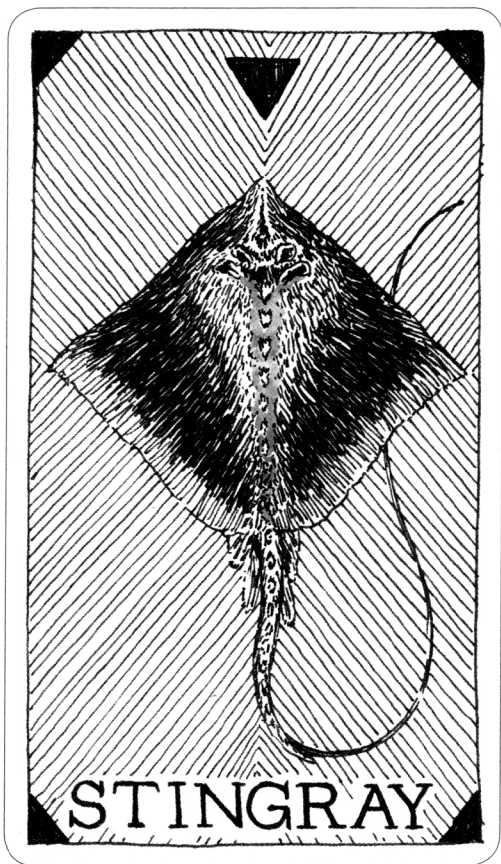
RESTING, SUBMERGING,
COLLECTING ENERGY, COOLING OFF

The Crocodile reminds us to step back from the external world and turn inward. Now is not the time for decisions, action, or discussion. The Crocodile's mantra is "wait." This doesn't mean lying around hoping life's challenges will disappear... the Crocodile is much smarter than that. It means intentionally withdrawing, gathering our awareness, observing and building energy. Fill up the vital reserves so your next move comes from a place of wisdom and power.

WHEN IN BALANCE: wise, patient, a silent powerhouse

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: Feels "stuck," lashes out

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: rest, Makarasana pose



STINGRAY



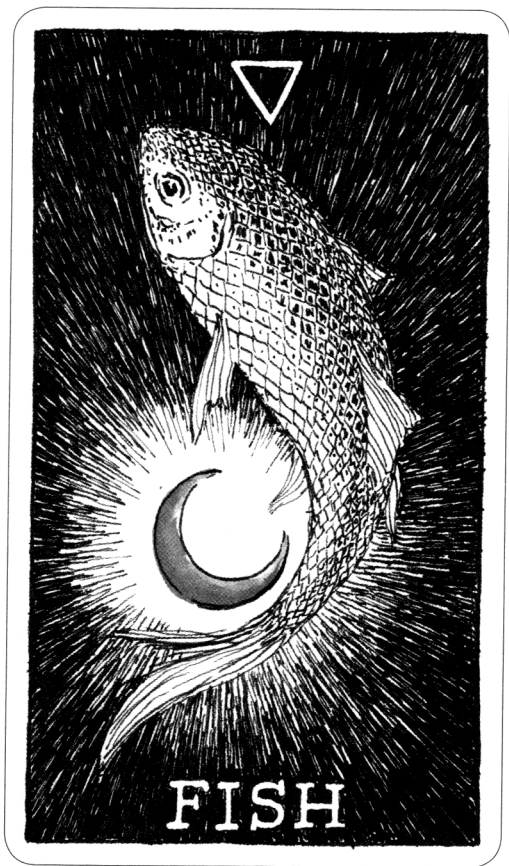
DEVELOPING CONFIDENCE,
SENSE OF SELF, OR "SPINE"

The stingray card represents a pivotal point in personal growth. The moment has come when the stingray must decide between the old (easy, comfortable, and familiar) and the new (challenging, uncomfortable, and unfamiliar). Pressure from family and friends makes the decision even more complicated. No matter what choice is made now, it's inevitable that this dilemma will surface again and again, as the force of dharma growing within the stingray is too strong to ignore.

WHEN IN BALANCE: eager, wants to grow

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: blames others, quits

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: move through the discomfort



FISH



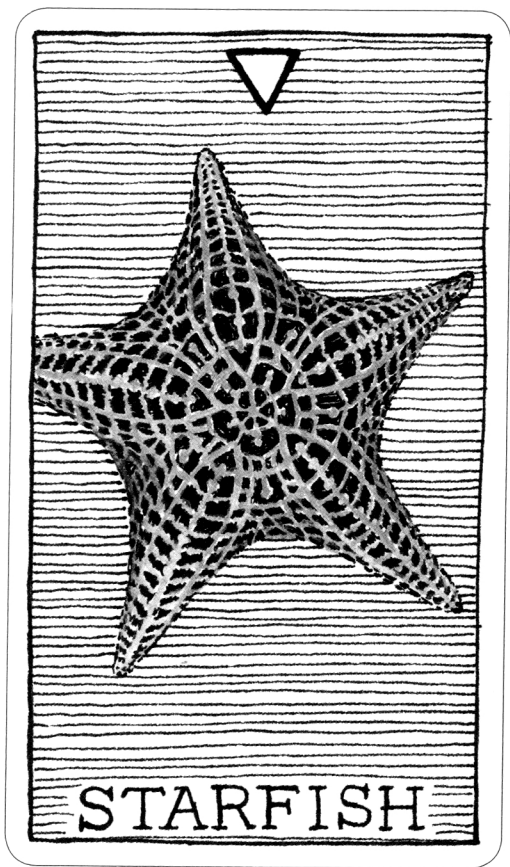
RESTLESSNESS, CHANGE OF FOCUS,
LOST IN THE CURRENT

The Fish loves to be subsumed in life's current. Nothing pleases it more than movement, movement, and more movement. The roaming lifestyle of the Fish may be exhilarating for a while, but usually leads to weariness and slippery relationships. With all the possibilities out there in the vast waters, the Fish becomes lost without clear goals and intentions. Spend some time with the lunar forces, dear Fish, as the peace and calm of the moon will soothe your soul.

WHEN IN BALANCE: adaptable, travels well

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: distracted, changes mind often

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: set a small goal and accomplish it



STARFISH



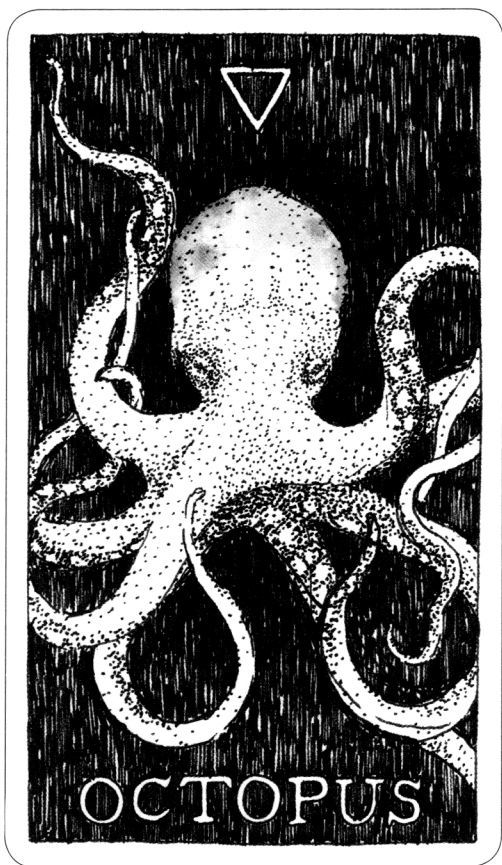
BEAUTIFUL, ALLURING,
SUPERFICIAL OR SHALLOW

The starfish is a natural and exquisite beauty, mesmerizing to all. Being around someone with starfish energy is a thrill, like you've been put under a spell of divinity itself. The problem is, these creatures have been reliant on how they look (and what other people think of them) for so long that they may have forgotten their deeper callings. When this card appears it's important to ask: Am I being swayed by outward appearances? What dreams have I put aside to please others?

WHEN IN BALANCE: uplifting, artistic, expressive

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: gossips, feels empty

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: positive friends



OCTOPUS



REACHING, YEARNING,
LACKING BOUNDARIES & DIRECTION

The Octopus signifies a wonderfully perceptive mind, paired with a lack of healthy boundaries. Unfortunately this results in well-intended but messy relationships. The Octopus entwines itself into other people's business, and shares their own without restraint. They believe that's what it means to be "close." If you notice after spending time with someone that you feel drained or uneasy, the essence of Octopus is at play. Begin to establish healthy boundaries. Be patient and firm, it may be a very old habit to change.

WHEN IN BALANCE: interested, engaged, intelligent

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: needy, clingy, lacks courage

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: space to oneself, talk therapy



BEAVER



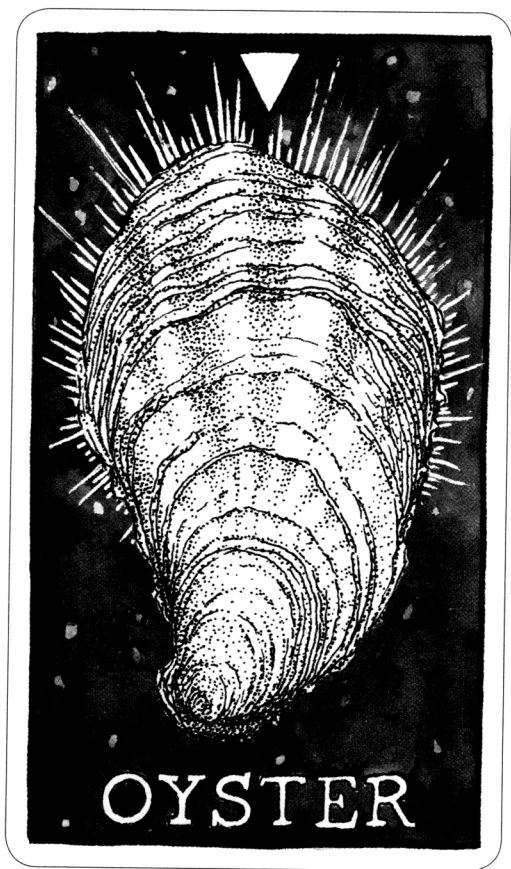
HARD WORKER, LOYAL, TIRELESS,
FAMILY FIRST

The Beaver personality is a welcomed sight. These good-natured and dependable creatures have infinite love and enthusiasm for family, and express it by way of the Earth element (providing a home, financial stability). Although a Beaver doesn't usually initiate a project, once started they'll work steadily for weeks, months, or years to see it through. The Beaver card appears when the task at hand requires your long-term, steady effort. It can also signify that it's time for some karma yoga (selfless service).

WHEN IN BALANCE: happy, meaningful work

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: feels useless, worn out

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: physical labor, selfless service



OYSTER



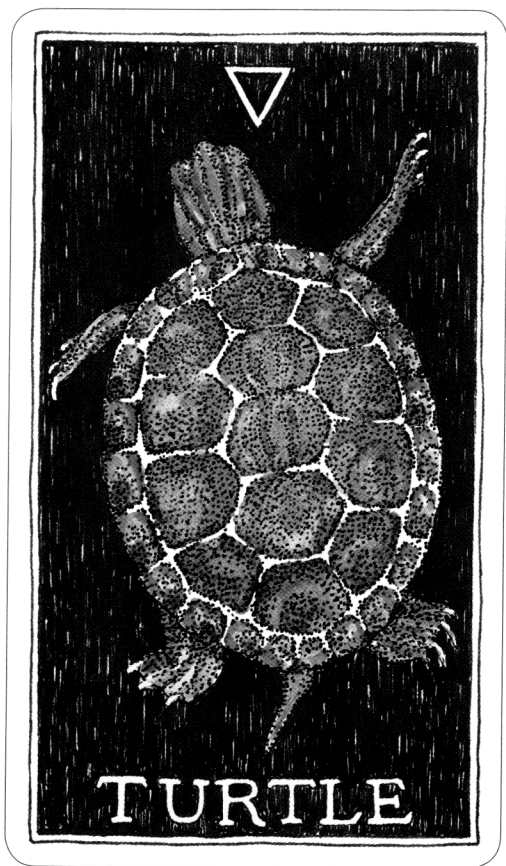
PATIENT, SECRET-KEEPER,
HIDING INNER TREASURES

The focus and determination of the Oyster is unmatched. Anything an Oyster personality puts their mind to, they achieve with grace and charm. The only problem is, Oyster types often take their inner gifts for granted. They become shy or doubtful, and this can lead to withdrawing or protecting their deepest desires and life's work. When the Oyster card appears it's important to reveal your inner treasures. What is it you've been hesitant to share? The world is waiting to see.

WHEN IN BALANCE: feels blessed, generous, masterful

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: reluctant, gripping, "clams up"

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: share something



TURTLE



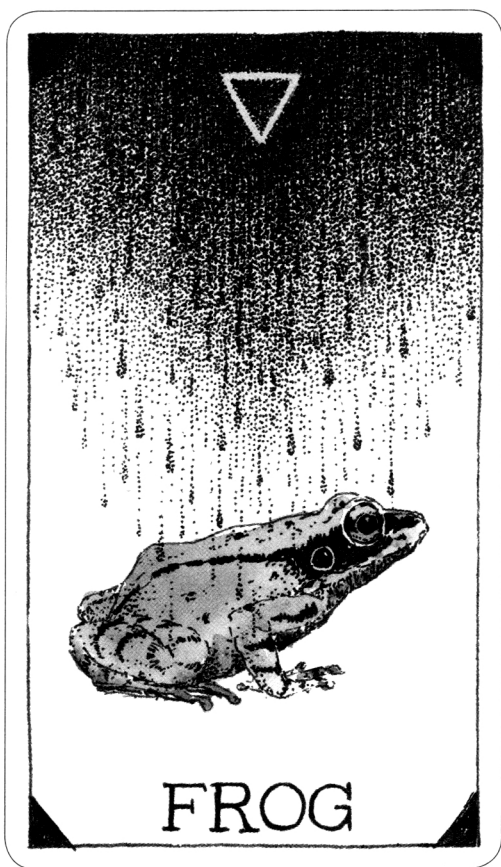
ANCIENT SOUL, GROUNDED, TRUSTING,
AT HOME IN THE SELF

It is wonderful to be in the presence of a Turtle personality. Like the Beaver, the Turtle has a strong relationship with the Earth and Water elements simultaneously. This helps to ground and connect them to the deeper truths of life, no matter where their travels lead them. Turtle energy is behind all great writers and storytellers as they collect life experiences under their shells for later use. The most potent Turtle energy helps us close all the other books and begin to tell our own true tale.

WHEN IN BALANCE: peaceful, adventurous, and productive

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: slows down to a halt

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: an adventure



FROG



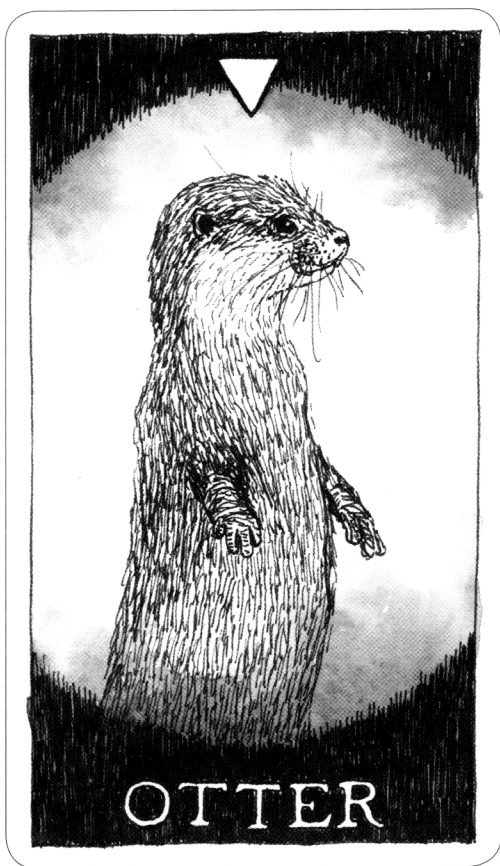
CLEARING, CLEANSING, HEALING

The Frog and the Water element are almost inseparable. The Frog spends its first months of life entirely within this healing element, and then emerges to rest on land. But no matter how "Earthly" the Frog becomes, its need for cleansing and rejuvenation is regular. Frogs tend to become overworked and undernourished, so it's vital that such sensitive creatures practice self-care. This card serves as a reminder that Water helps us cleanse, forgive, and release. Time to dive in, Frogs aren't meant to carry a heavy load.

WHEN IN BALANCE: clear energy and enthusiasm for life

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: depleted, running on empty

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: lake, river, ocean, or bathhouse



OTTER



UNOBSTRUCTED JOY, PLAYFULNESS,
CONTENTMENT

Perhaps the most joyful creature within the Animal Spirit deck, the Otter represents absolute bliss. Otter energy is the playfulness of a child, available to us at any age. They have a giddiness and reverence for life itself, without the presence of doubt, worry, or skepticism. Imagine yourself with a little more Otter energy. What would life look like? What would it take to bring you there? The Otter card begs these questions, and wants to transport us to that precious place as soon as possible. The celebration awaits.

WHEN IN BALANCE: full of love, needs nothing

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: gloomy, sighs, makes silly excuses

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: dance party or celebration



SHARK



DIRECTNESS, EXPOSURE,
REVEALING TRUE NATURE AND DESIRE

The Shark is only dangerous when we don't acknowledge it. This card indicates that something big needs to be exposed. It's lurking in the depths and creating tension. Shark energy takes over us when we are hesitant to be honest, to be totally "ourselves," or to say what we really want. It may be tempting to continue pretending nothing is wrong, but when Shark energy is at play we feel its presence encircling us.

WHEN IN BALANCE: intriguing, captivating, mysterious

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: sneaky, destructive

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: honesty



SWAN



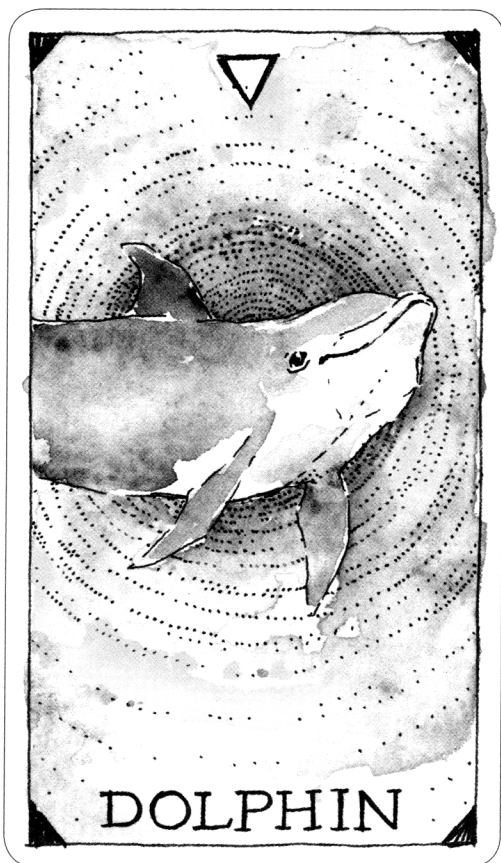
EFFORTLESS CREATIVITY, SENSITIVE MYSTIC,
ELEGANT POWER

The Swan represents heightened creativity. In Hindu mythology, the goddess Saraswati (the embodiment of language, creativity, and artistry) rides on the back of this graceful creature. The Swan is ready to take us there—to the fluid realm of writing, creating, and reflecting. This potent and healing energy is not to be taken for granted or taken lightly. When the Swan card appears your soul is calling for attention...for solo time. An inner voice is waiting to be heard, an inner vision likely to be revealed.

WHEN IN BALANCE: infinite creative power

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: agitated, snippy, lacking vision

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: solo time, writing



DOLPHIN



*INNATELY INTELLIGENT,
HEALER, LIGHT, BLESSINGS*

The gifts of the Dolphin are beyond what our human minds can grasp. Dolphin personalities are often drawn to the healing arts, as they are sensitive to the subtle and enjoy working on the level of spirit. It's easy for Dolphin types to underestimate the impact they make in the world. These creatures play such an important role in the wheel of karma that coming in contact with a Dolphin type will change the entire course of your day...and thus your life. This card can also indicate a profound blessing is on the way.

WHEN IN BALANCE: active healer, strong spiritual practice

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: underestimates own power

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: like-minded spirits



WHALE

WHALE



DESIRE TO DELVE DEEPER,
PROFOUND PEACE, ANCIENT WISDOM

The Whale represents profound emotional health and stability. Whale personalities are not afraid of emotional expression or traversing difficult terrain, as they have overcome many challenges in their lives. These experiences have enriched them, given them stability, strength, and a depth that is rare. Whale energy is usually linked to the feminine forces of compassion and communication. We can depend on Whale personalities when all else seems lost, and trust them to be a beacon in our darkest hour.

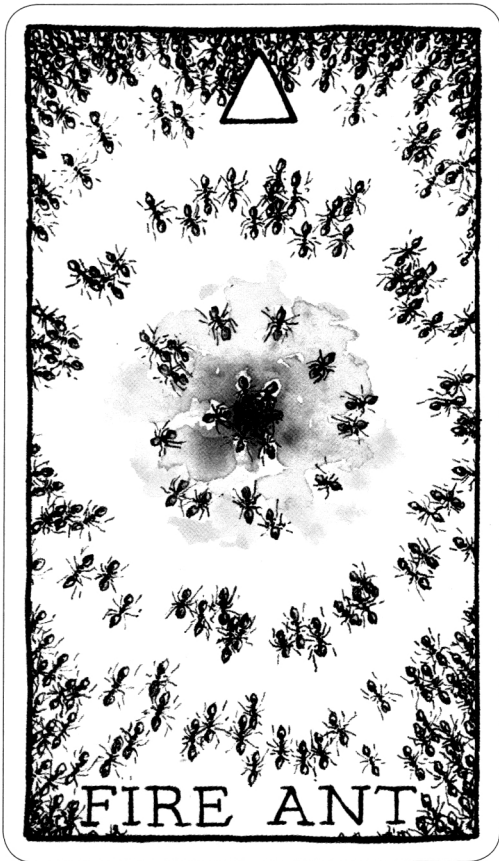
WHEN IN BALANCE: calm, steady, deeply compassionate

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: heavy, slips into old "story"

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: regular self care



FIRE



FIRE ANT



AGGRESSION, RIGID THINKING,
FOLLOWING ORDERS

Fire Ant energy flares up without us noticing. It's the force that attracts us to people and situations that feed our imbalances rather than those that counter them. Gossiping and blaming are a few indicators that misaligned Fire Ant energy is at play. You may also find yourself "stewing" on a person or situation, only making things worse. How can you break free from the drama and cool down? Fire Ants are surprisingly sensitive...don't pretend the heat isn't getting to you. -

WHEN IN BALANCE: thoughtful, disciplined

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: argues, excess heat, gossips

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: solo time, walks at night



HYENA



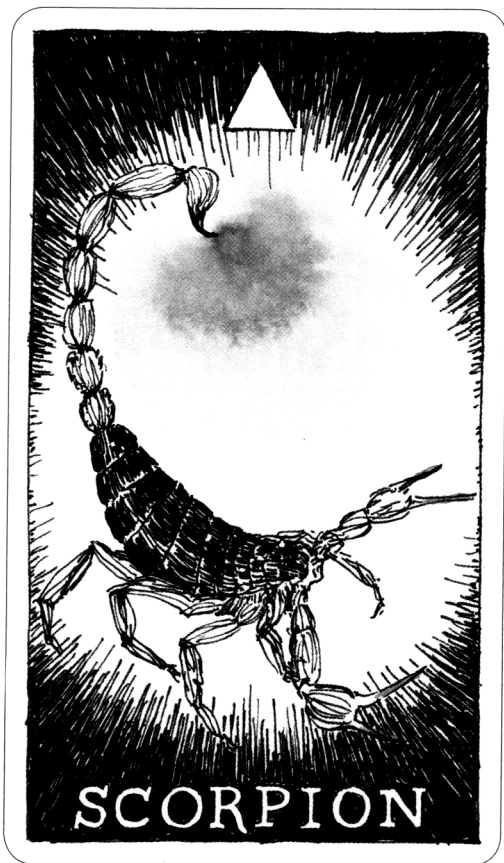
HUMOR, WIT, SARCASM

The Hyena personality is a jokester and crowd pleaser, but below the surface there are unfulfilled dreams to be realized. When the Hyena card appears it's time to reflect on your reliance on sarcasm and humor to express your truth. Are you using jokes to hide old resentments in relationships, or to mask things that you feel uncomfortable discussing? What would happen if you took your goals seriously?

WHEN IN BALANCE: charming, witty, fun to be around

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: scrappy, petty, suspicious

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: sobriety



SCORPION



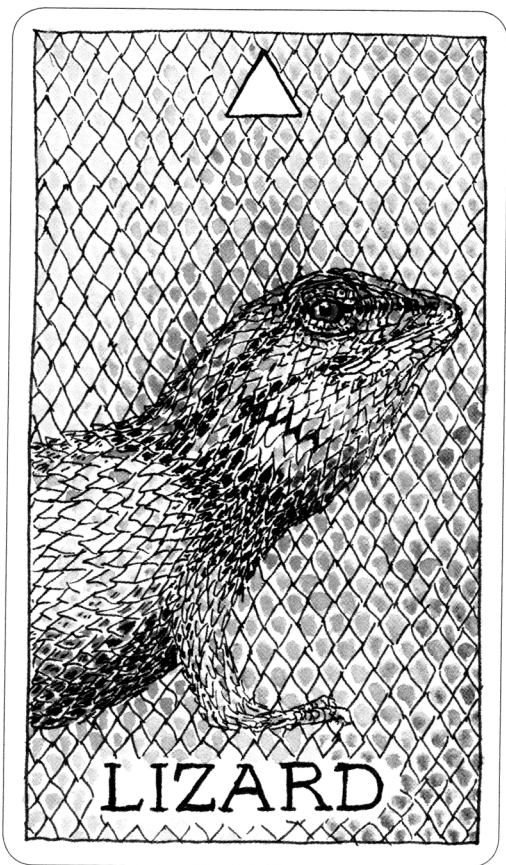
PASSIONATE, COMPETITIVE,
TENDS TOWARD ISOLATION

The Scorpion is a passionate and determined creature. Their career is very important to them, as are a few select friends. Sometimes the Scorpion's heat festers, and they focus on an unresolved event from the past, usually a situation where they were left feeling "burned." The Scorpion card says it's time to come clean about your feelings so everyone can heal and you can get back to your usual (fiery but fun) self.

WHEN IN BALANCE: wild and free, fierce

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: jealous, resentful, unresolved

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: honesty, forgiveness



LIZARD



INSTINCTUAL, SENSITIVE TO
THE SUBTLE, DREAMER

The Lizard is an expert in the realm of sensory perception. As if it has a sixth sense, the Lizard hears what is yet to be spoken, and sees what is yet to manifest. Although this is an amazing gift, it can easily wear the Lizard down. Big crowds, lots of travel, or overstimulation will drain a Lizard of their magical essence. This card is an indication to pull back from the bright lights and big city...and return to the inner artist, who's been whispering your name.

WHEN IN BALANCE: artistic, telepathic, spiritual

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: elusive, non-committal, flaky

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: a creative project



PANTHER



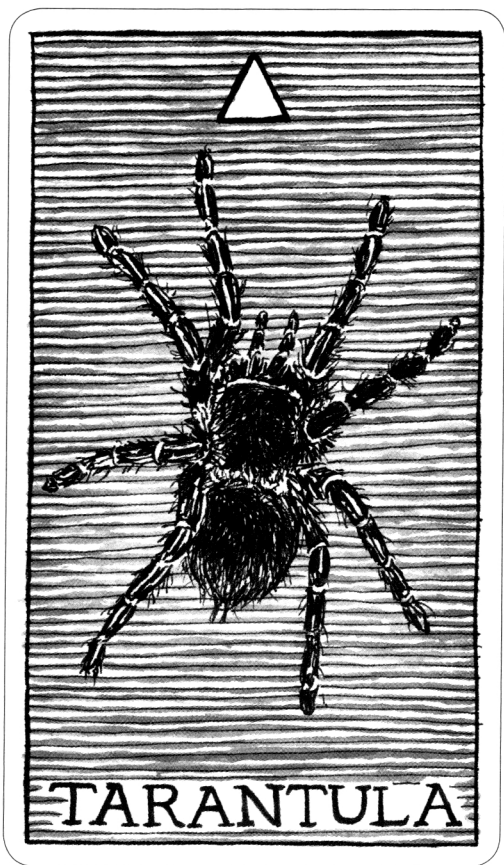
ANNIHILATION OF THE
UNNECESSARY, PURGING

The Panther won't stand to see our growth or energy stagnate. Instead, it pounces into our lives and causes all kinds of havoc...with the ultimate intention of bringing us toward more fulfilling lives. It's unexpected, uncomfortable, and sometimes feels devastating, but after all the dust clears it's easy to see the Panther's wisdom at work. We've all been through these experiences, and they've made us better people. Trust that the Panther's journey always leads to a brighter place.

WHEN IN BALANCE: brave, productive

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: self-destructive

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: get rid of the unnecessary



TARANTULA



AT A CROSSROAD,
CLAIMING LIFE'S PURPOSE

The Tarantula represents a moment when a great decision must be made. It involves prioritizing your life's deeper purpose, or dharma. A habit or routine from the past is sidetracking you from your dream, yet a voice inside keeps begging you to refocus your attention. In order to find true happiness, you must choose dharma. Until you do, satisfaction will be fleeting. The tarantula hovers, patient and calm, like an old friend that knows your inner soul. It already knows you'll choose wisely.

WHEN IN BALANCE: follows intuition

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: hesitates, over-intellectualizes

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: daily journaling



CAMEL



RESOURCEFUL, INDEPENDENT,
KNOWS ONE'S SELF

The Camel can handle absolutely anything, as it carries a wealth of nourishment within. This wondrous creature is self-reliant and handles challenge with ease. Even in the face of excess heat (judgment or anger) the Camel searches inside for the cool elixir of Water to calm the situation. The Camel represents the ultimate form of bringing opposites into balance (Fire and Water), and being responsible for one's own reactions. The Camel is a wonderful traveler, and is especially fond of trips to faraway lands.

WHEN IN BALANCE: calm, content, sparkle in eye

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: dehydrated, lacks vitality

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: a pilgrimage



GAZELLE



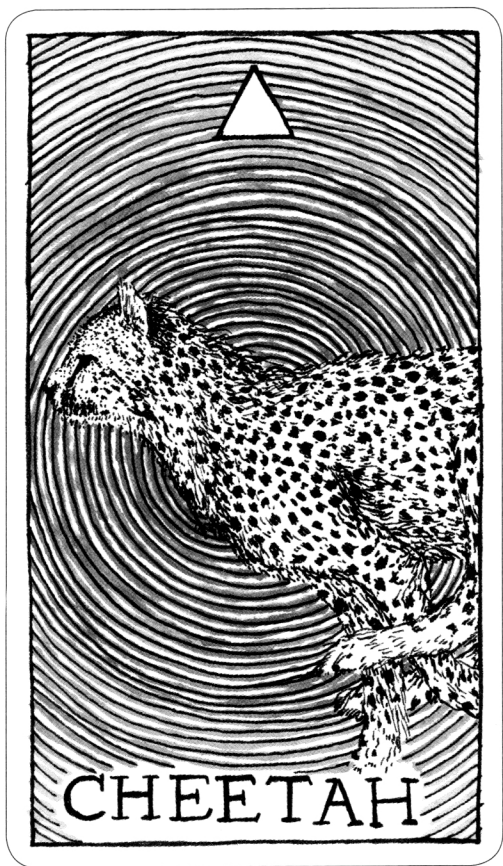
HEIGHTENED AWARENESS & ABILITY,
VULNERABLE

The Gazelle represents supreme grace. With every move, this awe-inspiring beauty emits sophistication and elegance. Gazelle personalities are often hyper-aware of their surroundings (bordering on hyper-vigilant), and this can inhibit them from enjoying the beauty they've spent so much effort cultivating. No more worrying about all those predators out there in the wild—when this card appears it's time to get back to the present moment. Sit down, find your breath, and acknowledge the bounty that surrounds you. Let it nourish your gentle spirit.

WHEN IN BALANCE: graceful, perceptive, artistic

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: food allergies, insomnia, racing mind

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: yin yoga, a cozy home, good food



CHEETAH



SOLAR FORCE, ACTION, ACHIEVEMENT,
MASCULINE ENERGY

The cheetah is the epitome of the solar forces at work. The sun doesn't shine onto the cheetah, it shines from inside this great creature and expands outward to brighten the universe. The energy within a cheetah personality is palpable to others, and they naturally attract an audience to bear witness to their remarkable achievements. Purpose and passion are the best fuel for a cheetah's forward momentum, so if you're lacking in those areas, reconnect to the why before you start running.

WHEN IN BALANCE: achieves anything, boundless energy

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: impatient, competitive

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: reconnect to purpose



TIGER



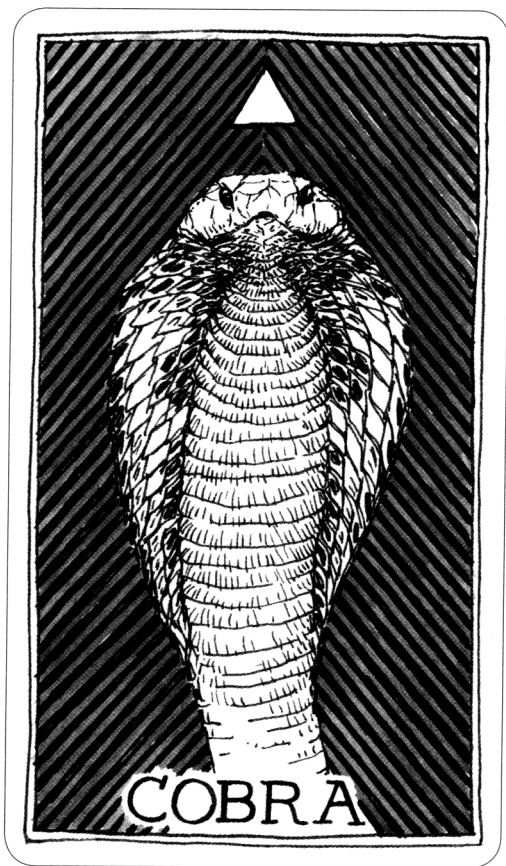
LUNAR FORCE, EASE IN DARKNESS,
FEMININE ENERGY

The Tiger hunts at night... at one with the silence... fearing nothing. This card reminds us to take in the wild darkness, to allow the lunar forces to soothe and heal our spirits. Sensuality, receptivity, and devotion are all heightened in the midnight hour, and the Tiger takes advantage of these boons. Spend some time in silence this evening, drinking in the potent calm. There is nothing to fear in the stillness except the awakening of your own power.

WHEN IN BALANCE: passionate, strong, sensual

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: over stimulated

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: trataka (candle gazing)



COBRA



PAUSING, WAITING, THE INNER TEACHER

The Cobra represents a teacher or spiritual guardian. The Cobra hovers and watches, ever-present, ever-protecting, ever-loving. The essence of the Cobra is found deep within us in the form of the inner-teacher, and manifests externally in those special guides who've led us along our path. What would it feel like to be a student again? What are you ready to learn? Remember the old saying "When the student is ready, the teacher appears."

WHEN IN BALANCE: a student of life, humble, wise

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: know-it-all, egocentric

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: taking a class, study



ZEBRA



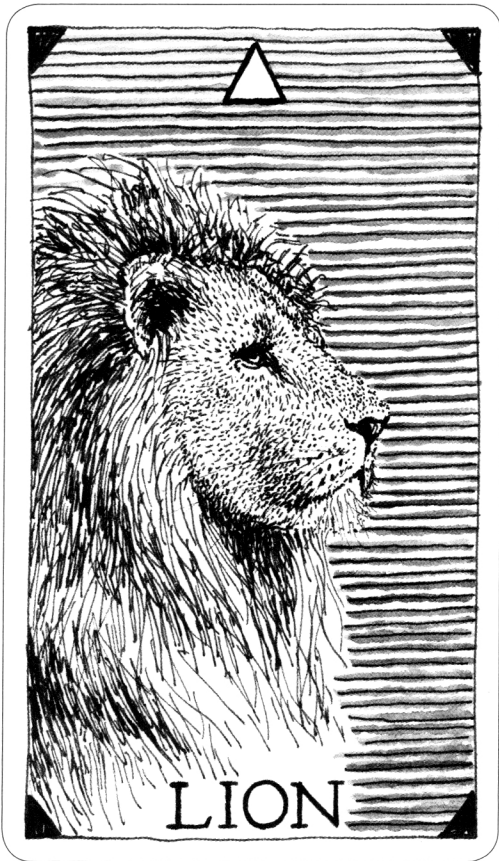
ECCENTRIC, CREATIVE, VISIONARY

Zebbras are the most precious of gems. They are young at heart, well cultured, and have an undying curiosity about life. Being in the company of a Zebra personality not only is a delight, but also opens our minds. Be prepared...their potent magic is contagious and you may soon find yourself in a faraway land, expanding your worldview while having a blast. Zebbras also like to contribute to the global health through environmental or volunteer work. This card may be a hint to pack your bags.

WHEN IN BALANCE: worldly, enthusiastic, fashion-forward

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: jaded, pouty, vain

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: an epic adventure, art



LION



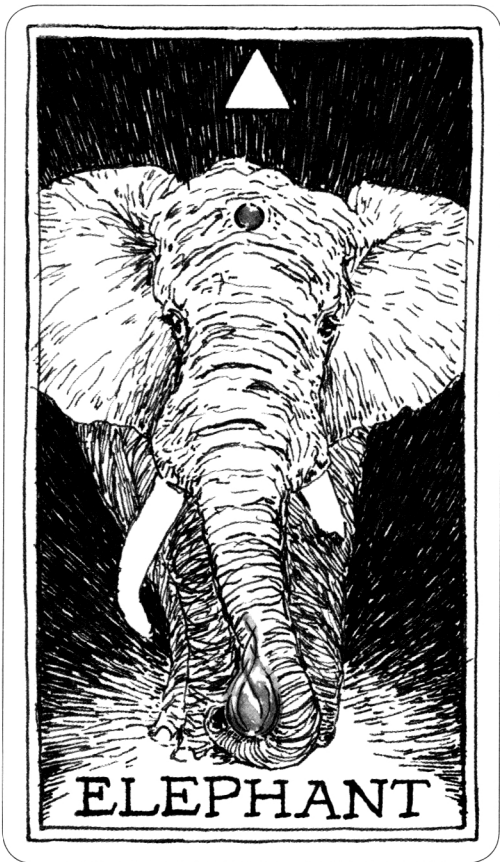
PATIENT, REGAL, A COMPLETE MASTER

The Lion is a master of the Fire element and the living mascot of self-transformation. A Lion personality dedicates their life to personal and spiritual growth. This dedication inspires some and intimidates others, therefore the Lion is respected by all but known intimately by few. Some mistake the Lion as hard to access or aloof, yet those with a keener eye know better. Lions are observant, stealth, and precise in their words and actions. They do not waste energy or resources. This card reminds us that self-mastery is available to all, no matter where our quest begins.

WHEN IN BALANCE: the epitome of peace and strength

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: withdrawn, too serious

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: daily meditation, friendship



ELEPHANT



UNSTOPPABLE, AUSPICIOUS, WISE

The Elephant is arguably the most auspicious figure in the deck. Like Ganesh, the Elephant represents immense wisdom, as well as good fortune. It is said that the great Elephant is the destroyer of obstacles, so if this card appears when you feel "stuck," rest assured the path will soon become clear. To add to the mystery, the Elephant is also known to create obstacles in order to steer us in the right direction. Trust this gentle, noble creature...it illuminates the way with the light of self-knowledge.

WHEN IN BALANCE: one-pointed focus, generous, loving

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: misunderstands fate

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: trust



AIR



MOTH



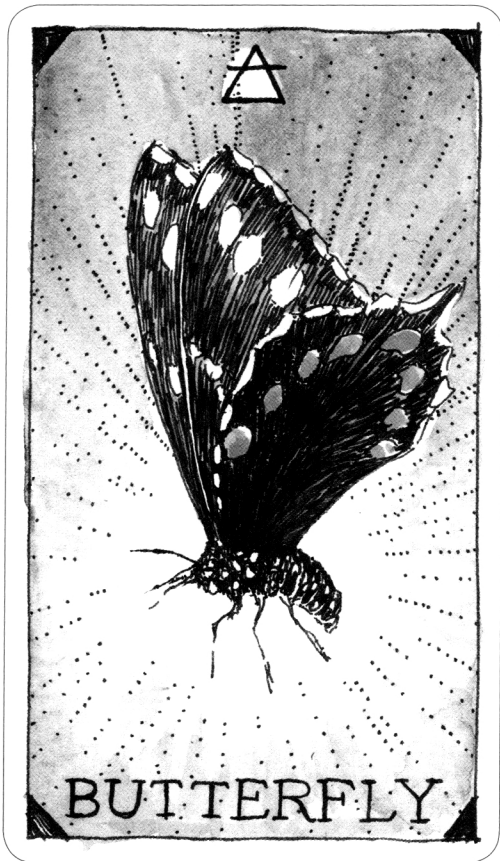
IMPULSIVE, HASTY, WISHFUL

The Moth is sure the grass is greener on the other side. Moth energy is at play when we're attracted to easy solutions or anything "shiny and new." This can lead to unfinished projects, disappointment, or burnout. It's helpful to remind Moth personalities that life is complex. No matter the illusion, no one is exempt from the trials and tribulations of this great journey. Practice seeing life as an infinite mystery rather than wishing it was easier or different.

WHEN IN BALANCE: enthusiastic, whimsical

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: idealizes others, jittery

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: finish a project



BUTTERFLY



UNDERGOING GREAT CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION

The energy of the Butterfly is with us during periods of transition. Since Air is the element of the heart, this change usually involves relationships (or if you love your job, perhaps your career). Since transition is accompanied by some amount of discomfort, be extra patient and kind during this time, especially if the Butterfly is you. Let solid friends and activities support you like a "cocoon." Committing to one daily routine (a meal, practice, or prayer) done at the same place and time will do wonders for lifting a Butterfly's spirit.

WHEN IN BALANCE: cheerful, graceful

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: fragile, frustrated

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: daily routine



BAT



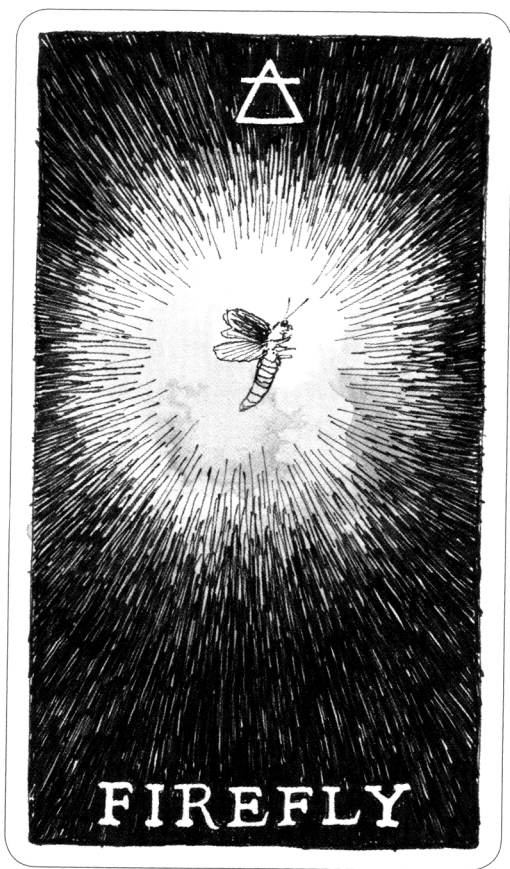
DARKNESS, LETTING GO,
DEATH LEADING TO REBIRTH

Before emerging, the Bat waits for the sun to set and the moon to rise. In the darkness, it can see all that was invisible in the daylight hours. The Bat is a master of the subtle senses, of the underlying forces that cause some things to prosper and others to fade. The Bat card shows up to signify the ending of a chapter, the closing of a door. The Bat comes swiftly, encouraging us to move on. In just a few hours a new day dawns. No more lingering in the past.

WHEN IN BALANCE: accepts, adapts, adjusts

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: refuses to let go, reminisces

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: watch the sunrise



FIREFLY



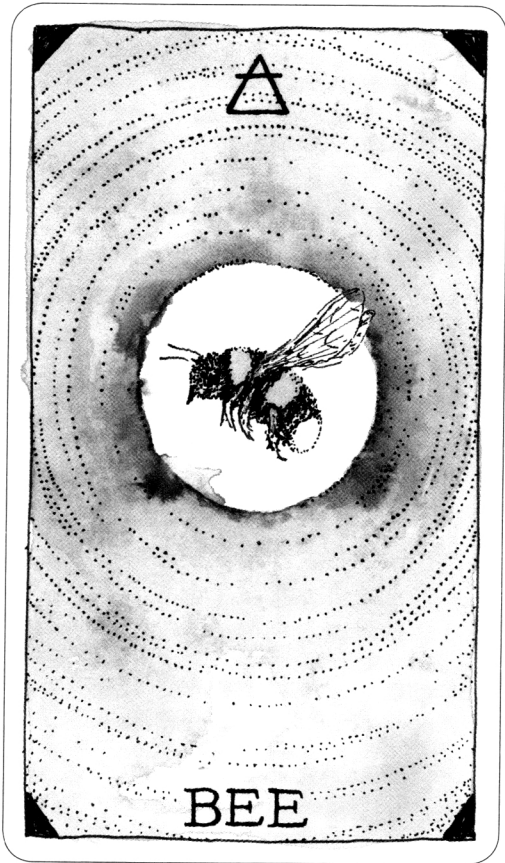
INSPIRED AND FANTASTIC,
YET FLEETING

The Firefly contains the light of a thousand stars. It's pure, radiant, and illuminating. This high-frequency charge cannot be sustained for long, therefore the Firefly card indicates a moment of inspiration or awakening that quickly fades if we do not catch it. There is Firefly energy behind every poem, song, and invention...our job is to be ready to harness this creative spirit when it graces our path. What can you do to support this precious and elusive light?

WHEN IN BALANCE: writes, creates, brainstorm

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: burnt out, feels dull

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: write a poem, draw



BEE



EARNEST, HARDWORKING, DEMOCRATIC

The Bee personality is a delight to be around, especially when there's a team project on the horizon. Bees love to work steadily and thoughtfully until the final task is complete. They are sensitive creatures, aware of many subtleties at once. Since they're artists at heart, they usually add creative details to the overall vision. For the most part they have bustling, joyous personalities...until they're too tired from all the work...then they gripe. And then sting.

WHEN IN BALANCE: content, active, vibrant

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: overworked, annoyed

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: mini-vacation



HUMMINGBIRD



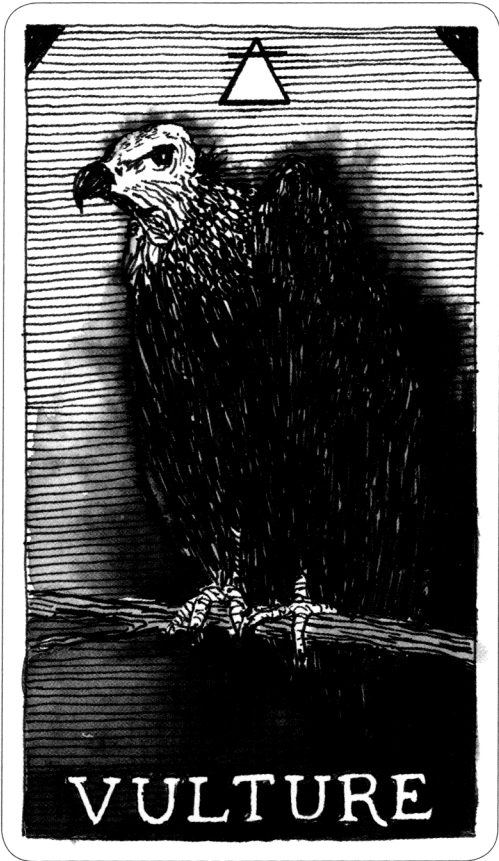
POSITIVE, ENTHUSIASTIC,
SPIRITUALLY RESOURCEFUL

Inside the tiny Hummingbird resides an endless well of energy and positivity. The Hummingbird's secret is that it has learned where to gather nectar, and it returns to these sources daily for nourishment and rejuvenation. This sacred elixir springs from many sources, but usually involves nature, creativity, and exploring spirituality. Follow the way of the Hummingbird and you cannot go wrong. Every droplet of life becomes sweet, every moment worth savoring.

WHEN IN BALANCE: smart, curious, loves to learn

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: pushy, insistent, sharp

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: take a class



VULTURE



GUARDIAN AND PURIFIER,
ESSENTIAL FOR REBALANCE

The vulture is perhaps the most misunderstood creature of all. This intriguing bird balances our ecosystem and prevents the spread of disease. It does the dirty work that no one else wants to do and cleans up our messes. The vulture appears when there's a situation that needs to be purified or brought back into balance. Remember, the vulture is greatly undervalued...what you thought was a mistake or tragedy is a blessing in disguise.

WHEN IN BALANCE: clarifies, reveals wisdom

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: dramatic, aggressive

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: clean your space, sage



CROW



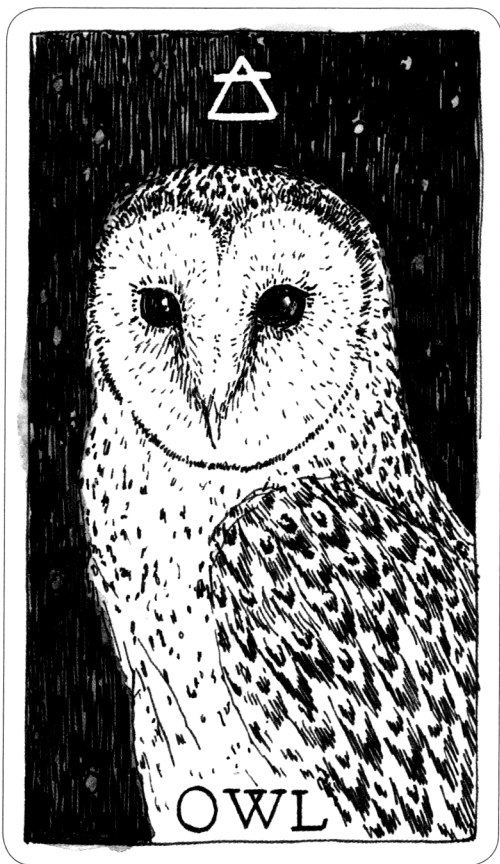
SPIRITUALLY STRONG,
CREATIVE, WATCHFUL

The Crow has long been a symbol of magic. A Crow personality is drawn to the supernatural and has a gift for seeing the unseen, knowing the unknown. It is said that the Crow holds within its mind's eye the three realities: past, present, and future. Crow energy is potent and should only be tapped into when the mind is clear. Those with Crow tendencies must balance their lives with a healthy diet, joyful friends, and regular self-study.

WHEN IN BALANCE: psychic, strong, clear

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: ungrounded, hypersensitive

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: daily meditation practice



OWL



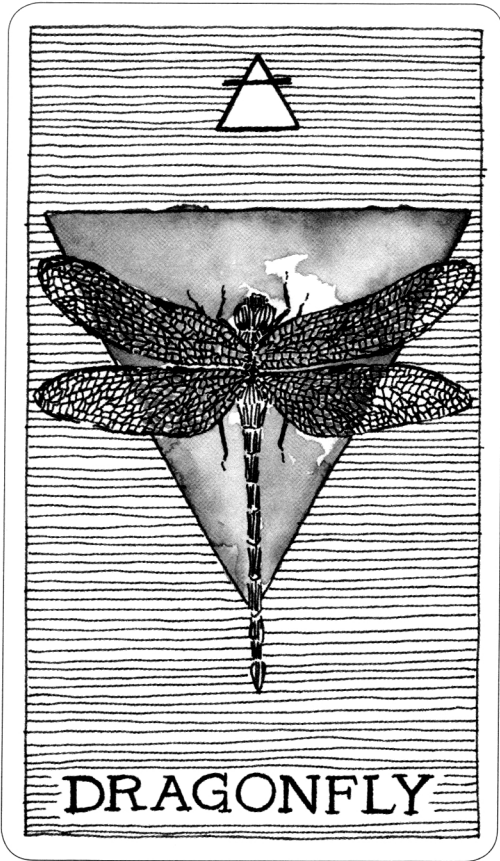
ABUNDANCE, CLAIRVOYANT, TREASURES

The Owl is a mysterious and otherworldly creature found in folklore from East to West. The white Owl in this particular deck is the companion of the goddess Lakshmi and represents wealth, beauty, and good fortune. When the Owl card appears it's an omen that a boon or treasure is on the way, either in spiritual or material form. With Owl wisdom on your side, you'll "see" and "know" exactly what to do with this boon...how it can further serve your dharma and bring abundance to the world. Trust that the wellspring of treasures is infinite.

WHEN IN BALANCE: generous, trusting, secure

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: money quarrels, scarcity

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: an offering



DRAGONFLY



MASTER OF LIGHT, ILLUSION,
AND THE MIND

The Dragonfly is an ancient and ethereal creature that awakens a sense of wonder in all. The Dragonfly is a symbol of the mind—as it is always moving, shifting, shimmering, and changing. When the Dragonfly card appears it's worth considering the quality of your mind and perception. Are they restless or still? Dream-like or crystal clear? The situation at hand may be different than it appears at first glance...the Dragonfly reminds us to calm the mind so the light of wisdom can shine through.

WHEN IN BALANCE: sees clearly, joyful, magical

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: can't concentrate, busy mind

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: focus on the breath



NIGHTINGALE

NIGHTINGALE



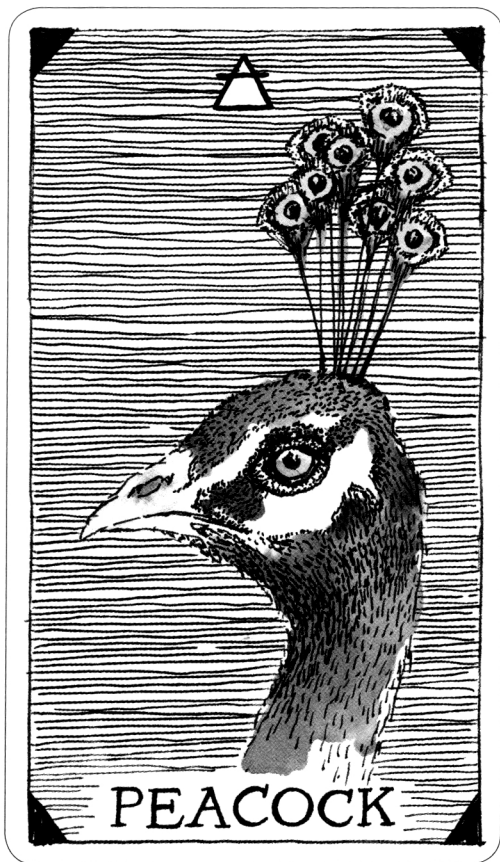
FEARLESS VOICE, SPEECH,
COMMUNICATION, OR SONG

The song of the Nightingale is otherworldly. This simple brown bird, almost unnoticeable among the flashy plumage of other birds, transports its listener to the realm of poetry. Nightingale energy is with us when we write, compose, and especially when we sing. It reminds us that music heals the deepest wounds. This card indicates a need to open the bridge between the heart and the voice. Is there something you need to say? How long has it been since you sang? Turn it up, write it down, and let it out.

WHEN IN BALANCE: sings, speaks freely with kindness

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: shy, lump in the throat

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: music



PEACOCK



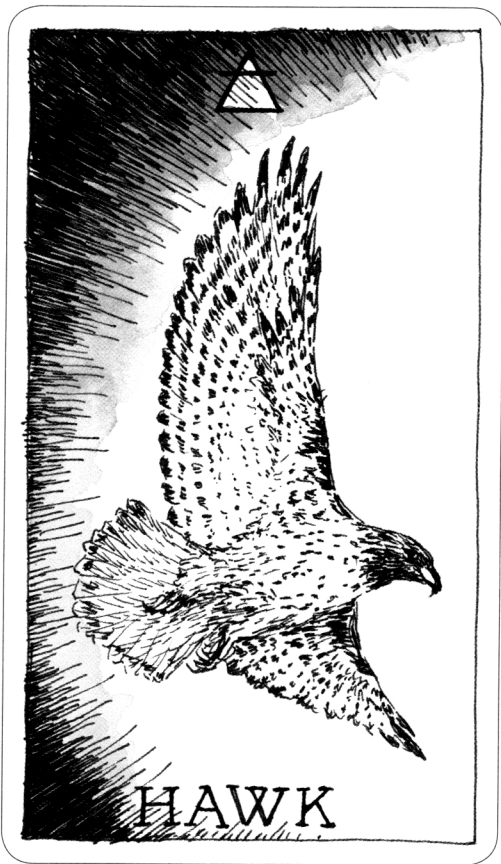
INNER-BEAUTY, COMPASSION,
ASSIMILATOR OF ANYTHING

The beauty of the Peacock is unrivaled. It's easy to think it comes from the plumage...but the secret of the Peacock is that the beauty resides within and extends outward indefinitely. This adept creature can assimilate or "digest" all experiences in life, so it does not harbor resentment, conflict, or past pain within its psyche. The Peacock type is extremely rare—not many of us have reached this advanced level of acceptance of the self and others.

WHEN IN BALANCE: confident, kind

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: can't "digest" situations

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: meditation on navel



HAWK



WATCHFUL, ALL-SEEING,
MESSENGER OF DIVINITY

The sharp eyes of the Hawk watch our every move. This keen-eyed bird has the ability to see every little detail as well as the bigger picture. When this card appears, fate has its eyes on you, and the winds are shifting. It is said that the Hawk carries news upon its wings and is sent from divinity itself to deliver it. The message should not be taken lightly...though it may seem small or insignificant, it will eventually redirect your course.

WHEN IN BALANCE: "sees" clearly, intuitive

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: sees too much, suspicious

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: perspective shift



EAGLE



ALL-PERVADING POWER, TRUTH SEEKER,
TRANSFORMS KARMA

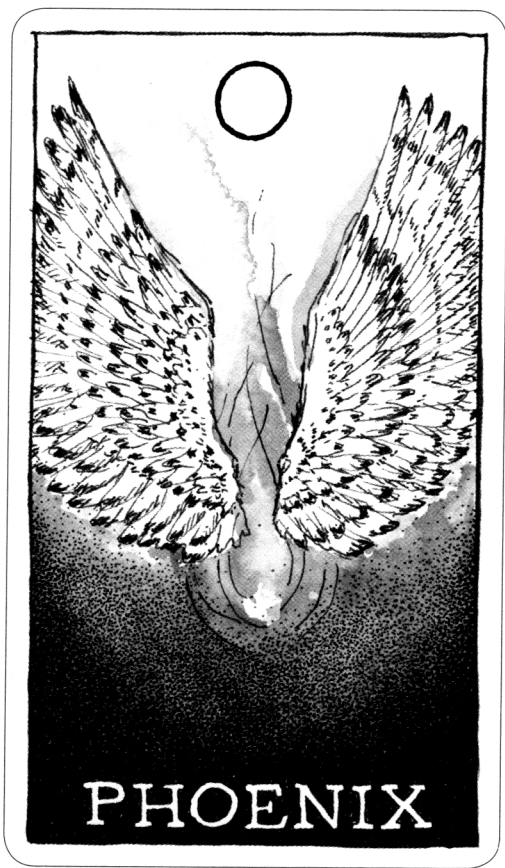
The noble Eagle emanates the light of the sun. This great bird is both physically and spiritually strong, and represents mastery over the elements of Fire and Air. When the Eagle appears, you'll soon be thrown into the karmic fire for the sake of your transformation. The Eagle pushes us to be our best and brightest selves and stops at nothing to see us shine. Grasp the sun in your talons and hold on for the ride. You are stronger than you think, Eagle child.

WHEN IN BALANCE: bright, radiant, challenges

WHEN OUT OF BALANCE: controlling

TO BRING INTO BALANCE: step into the unknown



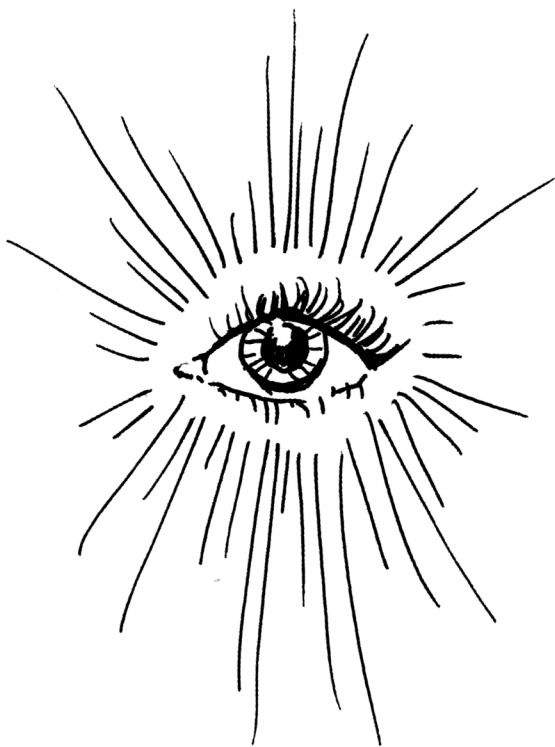


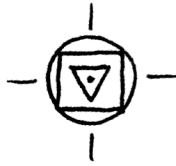
PHOENIX O

FREEDOM FROM SUFFERING
& PAST KARMA, REINCARNATION

The Phoenix represents the transformation of our past. It doesn't mean running from it, denying it, or "burning bridges" with rage. The Phoenix employs an advanced technique described in yoga as the burning of impurities through practice and dedication (tapas). The essence of the Phoenix is with us when we realize we have been suffering too long and something must change. We take a stand and decide to live consciously instead of being driven by the unconscious mind and its long list of fears and aversions. At that very moment, the spark of the Phoenix is lit, and the great bird helps us burn through our baggage. We no longer run from who we are, what has happened to us, or what we have done. The "stuck-ness" and "dead weight" fall into the ashes and a lightness and clarity emerge. As the stagnancy continues to smolder, the Phoenix lifts our spirits up and up, and we begin to recognize ourselves

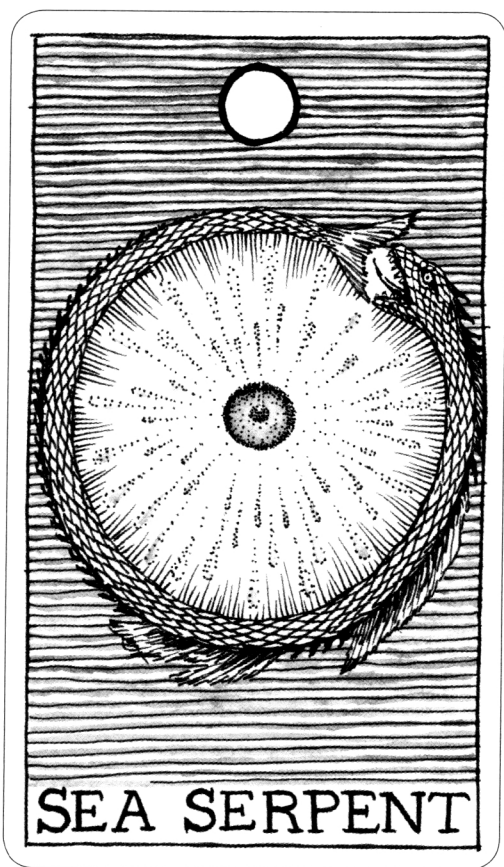
again. We may catch a glimmer in our eye that wasn't there before. Look closely...it's a sign the fire of transformation is upon your wings.





THE PHOENIX AND THE FIRST CHAKRA

The ancient yogis believed that our heaviest karmas reside in the first chakra. This earthen center is also called Muladhara, or our root. The ascent of the Phoenix begins here, and as the entanglement of karmas is slowly burned, it rises from the ash toward the navel center. Again and again it makes this journey from first to third chakra, purifying our essence, freeing us from the past.



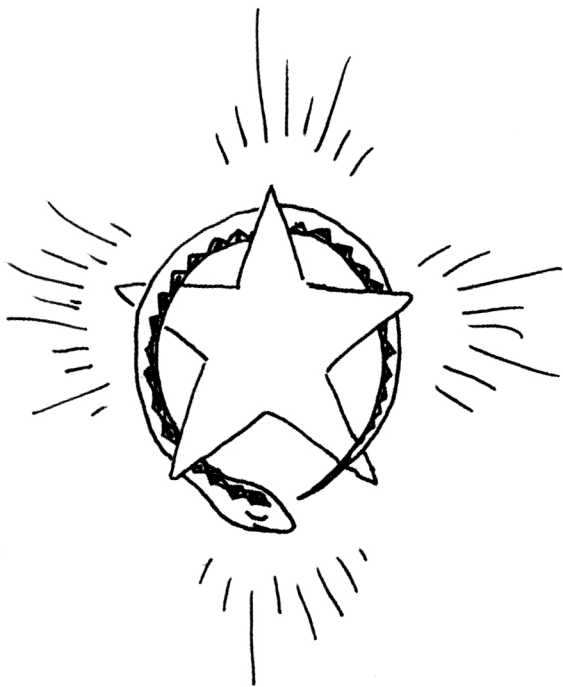
SEA SERPENT

O

HEALING EMOTIONAL WOUNDS,
EXPRESSING DESIRES

The Sea Serpent represents the energy of expression. Whether it's emotions, creativity, sensuality, or desire—the Sea Serpent helps us move and direct our energy into a healthy current. When the essence of this card is in balance, we express ourselves creatively and sexually without fear or shame. We know what we desire most. Our hearts are at ease and our relationships are meaningful and enduring. We loosen the grip of self-judgment, and we let the cool waters of forgiveness in to heal our wounds. When the energy of the Sea Serpent is not yet activated, our emotions and creativity are left in the muddy waters. The current of expression stagnates in some areas of our lives and in other places it floods. It's important to remember, no matter what the waters of our emotional lives look like, the Sea Serpent loves us just the same. Like a mother, she wraps herself around us in

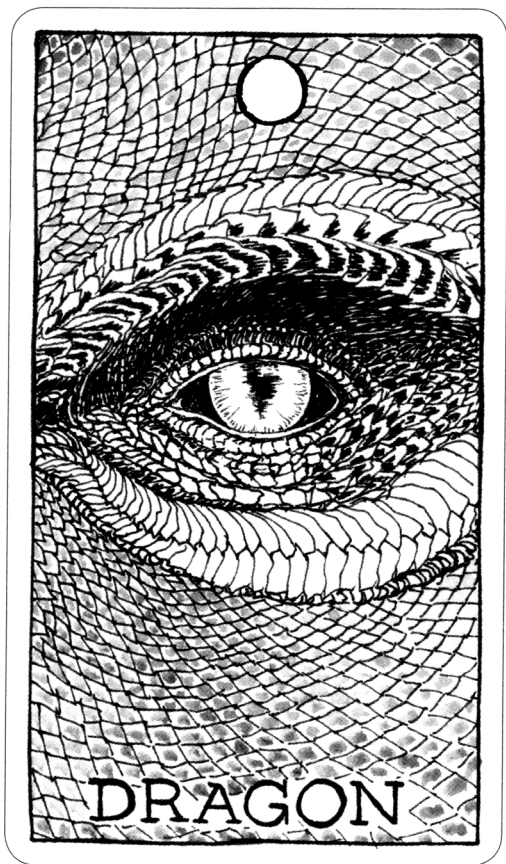
a gesture of protection. She supports us as we learn to express our true natures.





THE SEA SERPENT
AND THE SECOND CHAKRA

The subtle energy of the Sea Serpent occupies the area of the Svadhsthana chakra. Located deep within the pelvic bowl, this chakra is known as our center of creativity and desire and is associated with the Water element. Svadhsthana translates as "in her own abode," indicating this chakra is the home of the divine mother, or Kundalini herself.

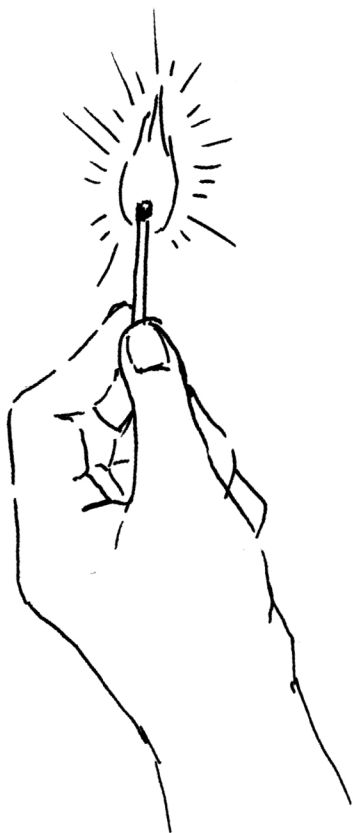


DRAGON O

SEEING ONE'S MOST TRUE SELF,
BALANCING THE EGO

The Dragon sees everything. Its essence has been with us since before our first breath and will be there at our last. It watches us navigate the external world as well as our inner world. When Dragon energy is awakened, we are courageous, visionary, and can easily drop into witness consciousness. It is almost as if we are traveling with a great friend inside of ourselves. When we look in the mirror, deep into our eyes, we may even glimpse the "self" behind the "self," the one who is watching us. This is the power of the Dragon breathing transformative fire into every cell of our bodies. Witnessing this omnipotent energy, even for a brief moment, helps us surrender and let go. We let the Dragon guide us. We hop on its back for a ride, and as we traverse even the most difficult terrain, the Dragon's eyes see beauty everywhere. It is said that if a yogi does not see beauty in the world, their Agni is dim. Agni is

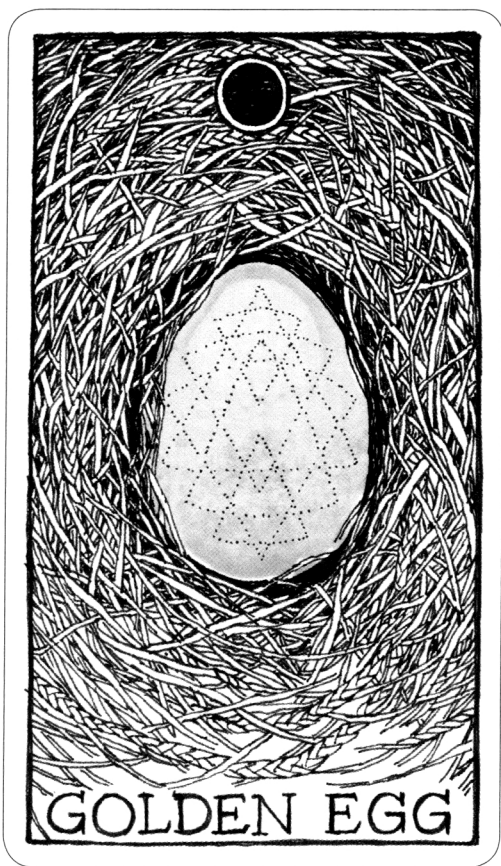
described as "inner fire" or "sacred intelligence."
May even just the mention of the Dragon stir
the embers of intelligence within you.





THE DRAGON AND THE THIRD CHAKRA

The subtle energy of the Dragon lives at the navel center, in the Manipura chakra. Manipura translates to "the city of hidden gems" and behind its gates burns the fire of our transformation and digestion. The sages believe health of the fire at the navel center is what governs our ability to clearly "see" both the inner and outer dimensions.



GOLDEN EGG

O

MESSAGE AT THE CENTER OF
THE HEART, THE UNSTRUCK SOUND

Within the Golden Egg lives a precious sound. Deep within that sound resides a message. The sound cannot be heard, nor the message discerned until we retreat from the noise of modern day life. The magical essence of the Golden Egg needs warmth, quiet, and time to unfold. No rushing, pushing, or grasping. Find a place of deep and restful ease, perhaps through yoga nidra or meditation. If you do not yet have a meditation practice, take some time for introspection or contemplation. When the mind begins to settle and the breath is calm, ask the question that weighs heaviest on your heart...staying open to any response you hear. Engaging with the energy of the Golden Egg is an advanced practice. It requires becoming intimate with our very essence and comfortable with vulnerability. When a feeling of tenderness or gratitude arises from deep within you, know that you are well on your way. Your chest may

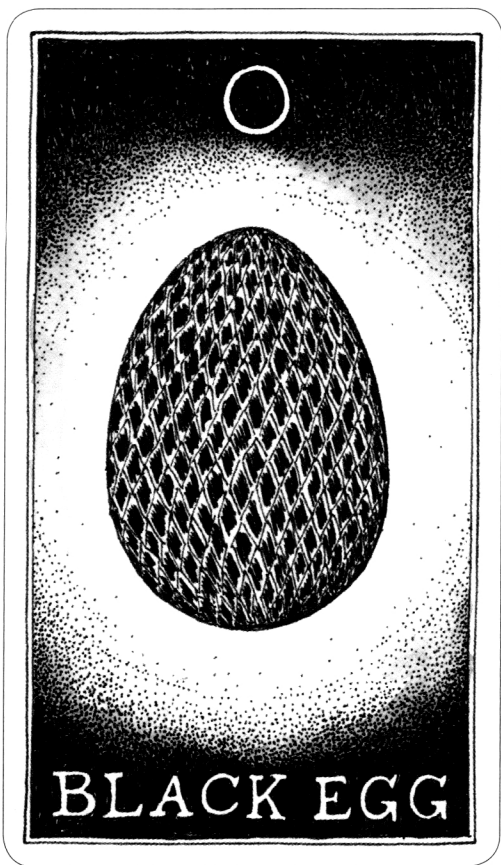
swell, like you are seeing an old friend that's been away for a long, long time. Listen to the message they've been waiting to tell you.





THE GOLDEN EGG
AND THE FOURTH CHAKRA

The subtle essence of the Golden Egg is nestled deep within the heart center at the fourth chakra. This chakra, called Anahata, is the home of the self or soul. By bringing the mind into this center we discover a portal to the most intimate and luminous space. It is said our inner guide sits there in deep meditation, waiting for us. Anahata translates as "the unstruck sound."

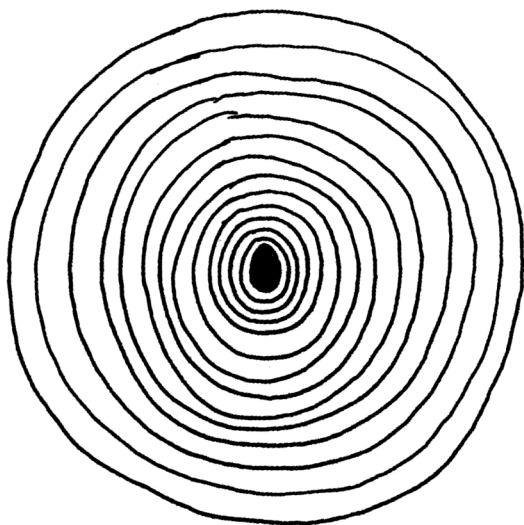


BLACK EGG O

SPEAKING FROM
AN AUTHENTIC VOICE, THE TRUTH

The Black Egg contains one of life's essential treasures—the truth. Inside of it resides no confusion, excuses, small talk, noise, or lies (not even white ones). This living and breathing vessel harbors only that which rings true. When this essence is in balance we speak slowly and clearly. We are drawn to activities like writing, reading, teaching, singing, or perhaps public speaking. Sounds draw us in, books draw us in, the concept of truth itself draws us in. We start asking questions like "What do I know to be true about myself?" and "What is true about the world?" When the energy of the Black Egg is not yet accessed we speak from an unsure place. We say things others want to hear, gossip, or repeat stories to justify our subpar behavior. We might even try to convince ourselves that we have no inner truth at all. The energy of the Black Egg hovers and waits for us to reconnect. It is

available at every moment, in every situation.
It's the epicenter of truth, the birthplace of
our voice.





THE BLACK EGG
AND THE FIFTH CHAKRA

The subtle essence of this card resides at the base of the throat, at the Vishuddha chakra. The ancient sages saw this center as the hub that governs our speech and expression. Vishuddha translates as "especially pure." The balance of this center is important for all of us, but is especially essential for writers, editors, musicians, and teachers.



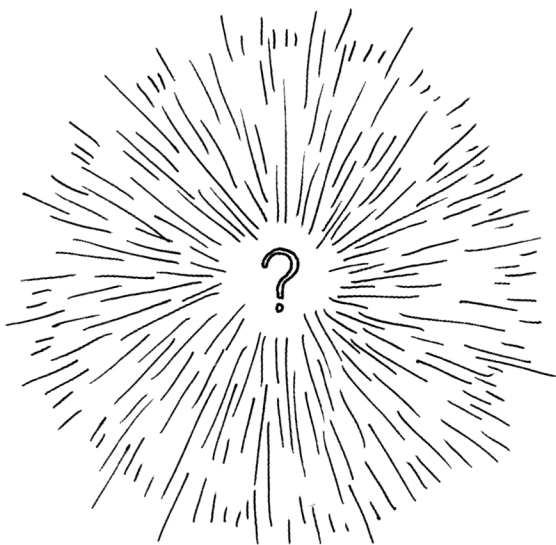
UNICORN

○

RECONNECTING TO HIGHER WISDOM OR DIVINITY

It's difficult to see, hear, or think of a Unicorn without immediately questioning if it's real. Did they ever exist? Perhaps long, long ago? The mind answers, "maybe..." or "it could be..." or "no way." This very contemplation explains our relationship with divinity, and encapsulates our wavering belief in the Unicorn. We wonder what divinity is. We wonder where our intuition comes from and if we can really trust it. We think about a higher power and our mind hesitates between yes, no, and maybe. Is it male or female? Does it have a name? Is it just a feeling? The Unicorn card appears and "wakes us up" to curiosity about the higher self and the divine. It is a card of questioning, exploring, and contemplating the inexplicable. The mind's eye knows there is something beyond our day-to-day lives, a deeper dimension to our experiences. The mind's eye reaches and reaches and reaches out to grasp

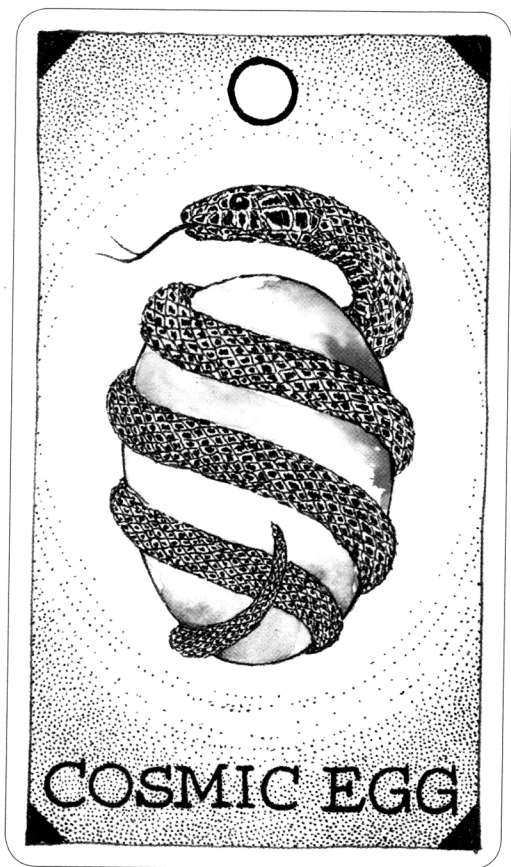
something more. You are the Unicorn, and you have begun your quest for the answers.





THE UNICORN
AND THE SIXTH CHAKRA

It's no surprise the subtle essence of the Unicorn card resides at the third eye, the exact place from which the Unicorn's horn extends. This center is called the Ajna chakra, or "command center." The ancient yogis believed it to be responsible for our intellect, intuition, and deepest wisdom. Some say our two eyes see the past and present, while this third eye peers into the future.



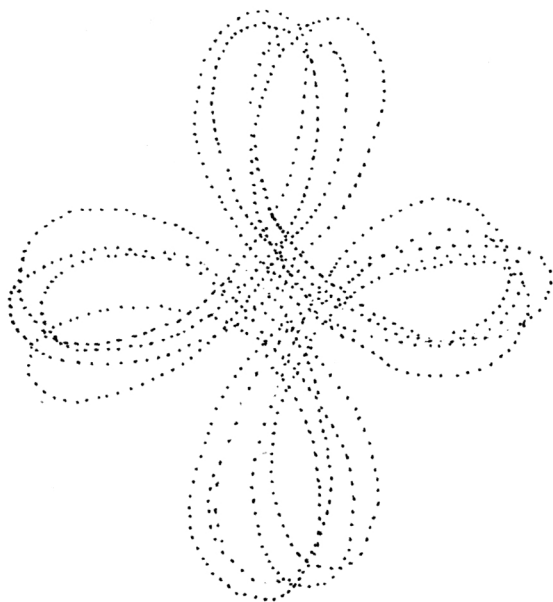
COSMIC EGG



COMPLETION, HARMONY,
THE INFINITE WITHIN THE FINITE

The Cosmic Egg is the final card in the journey of the Animal Spirit deck, and it represents the unfolding of cosmic consciousness. This state emerges after we have tread the path for quite some time, and through self-effort and grace we experience self realization. A sense of contentment and oneness spontaneously arises within us, and the veils of our self-limiting beliefs are lifted. When the essence of the Cosmic Egg has not been activated, we may feel as if we will never "get there," or that we travel alone, disconnected from others. Even if our encounter with this card is brief, appearing as a momentary glimmer or flash of interconnectedness, its potent energy stays with us. The Cosmic Egg is a remedy for the fragmentation of modern life. It's through the power of this card that we are reminded of the cosmic contract written at the beginning—

we hold on to life, and life holds on to us. The journey is complete, but it does not end.





THE COSMIC EGG AND THE SEVENTH CHAKRA

The subtle essence of the Cosmic Egg resides at the crown chakra at the top of the head called Sahasrara. One of the aims of yoga and meditation practice is to channel energy from the base of the spine upward toward Sahasrara. Each of the six lower chakras plays an important role along this journey, and once the final epicenter of consciousness is activated it is said to radiate the light of a million suns.

