

Art of Life

TAROT DECK BY CHARLENE LIVINGSTONE



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INTRODUCTION

"It is the mark of a good action that, in retrospect, it appears inevitable."

—Robert Louis Stevenson

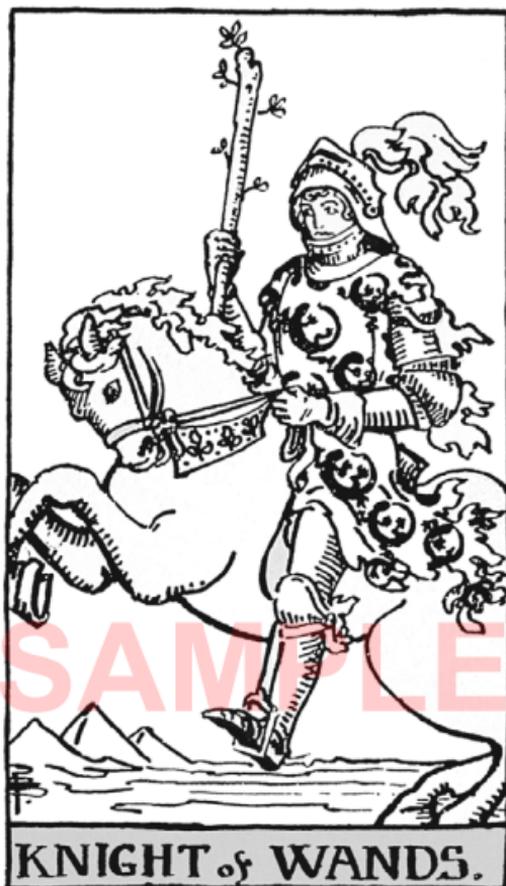
Such it was for me in creating *The Art of Life* Tarot Deck.

For many years I was a casual tarot card reader, intrigued with periodically laying them out, not really knowing or caring about their history, nor memorizing their individual meanings. It was an occasional, entertaining hobby.

Then, in 2005, my husband was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. I found myself turning to the cards more often, searching for some external source of meaning and seeking comfort. It

was a time in my life when I felt lost and, often times, helpless. I looked to the tarot to gain insight and perspective. I was less focused on what was happening to him, which I knew I couldn't change, as to what was happening to me. I was seeking answers to deep, psychological issues; attempting to make sense of the senseless. In times of stress, some people look to religion for reassurance, some rely on therapists for clarity, while others may resort to substance abuse for an escape. I sought empowerment through tarot.

One night something curiously wonderful happened. I awoke from a vivid dream of a particular tarot card, something that had never occurred to me before. The card was the Knight of Wands. My initial reaction was to ask myself, "Why? What did it mean?" I had this overwhelming intuition that it was a message. I remember



getting out of bed and checking the meanings for that particular card. In the Rider-Waite deck the image of the Knight is a horse rearing up, rather like the Lone Ranger's horse Silver. This was

especially significant to me because my father had directed this program when I was a child. Now, even more intrigued, I read further to find that the suit of Wands related to my astrological sign, Leo, and that the Knight represented 'looking to inner convictions to take action'.

After much contemplation, I felt certain that my unconscious was presenting me with not just an idea, but that it was guiding me to take action. There was something I needed, and felt compelled, to do; it was a feeling, a certainty of purpose, unlike any other I had experienced in my life. I knew I would design my own tarot deck.

Being convinced of the "Why", I then turned to the "How". Admittedly, I was not a tarot expert. But I knew that I wanted the format to be different from the others I had worked with in the past—more personal and direct, without

the interruption of looking elsewhere for card interpretations. I wanted the meanings to be displayed on each individual card and for them to be presented in such a way as to engage the reader in an internal dialogue.

I realized that by drawing inspiration from my background in art history and my lifelong passion for quotations, I could capture the essence of the meanings behind each card while simultaneously encouraging the reader to interpret its personal meaning.

My goal was to provide others with a means to help them help themselves. I wanted to create an interactive tool for people to access when they were feeling uncertain or lost and searching for direction or answers. It is my belief that the individual only grows by gaining greater self-awareness. Each of us holds the answers we are

seeking; we merely need to ask ourselves the right questions and trust ourselves enough to listen to our inner voice when it responds.

Most importantly, I created *The Art of Life* because I wanted to empower the reader. I wanted each card, no matter what the implied context or meaning, to give the reader a sense of strength, possibility and optimism. I wanted the journey of the tarot to take the reader back to him or herself; to encourage contemplation, and for the reader to discover that the answers to life questions lie within.



Tarot Card Meanings

In the same way that art can be experienced differently by each individual and with each viewing, so too are the tarot cards open to personal interpretation. Though there are traditional meanings associated with each tarot card, this guide is intended to help you bring your own emotional perspectives into focus.

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