

TAROT OF THE SPIRIT



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"Life as an art and art as a game—an action for its own sake, without thought of gain or loss, praise or blame—is the key, then, to the turning of living itself into a yoga, and art into the means to such a life."

~Joseph Campbell (1972, p. 124)

Welcome to tarot, the game of life! Welcome to this incredible game in which the object is to understand all that has been, is and ever shall be! Welcome, dear one, to the *Tarot of the Spirit*!

To play this intriguing game is to learn about life, to learn about all existence—origins and structures—past, present and future. This is done through the contemplation of images, pictures that when attended to with the mindfulness given to great art, contain the power to propel the player on a profound path of spiritual realization.

What is spiritual realization? To become spiritually realized is to arrive at an understanding of your own being: body, mind and spirit. It is to come to terms with your own destiny. It is to begin to comprehend that which exists beyond the boundaries of yourself.

As we come to spiritual awareness, we begin, as Joseph Campbell says, to turn life into yoga. What does this mean? The word *yoga* is Sanskrit for "to yoke." As you play the game of tarot you begin to yoke—to pull toward yourself—an erudite knowledge that transcends ordinary ways

of thinking. With this new knowledge, your life begins to change. Your potential expands.

Can spiritual realization really be attained through playing with a pack of cards? For centuries, mystics have answered with a resounding YES. You must draw your own conclusions. But while you are thinking it over, consider these questions: Are you ready to play your own game of life? Are you ready to play it all the way? Are you up to meeting your own destiny? If so, the *Tarot of the Spirit* is at your command.

THE TAROT OF THE SPIRIT AS THE GAME OF LIFE

The use of tarot cards as the "game of life" is centuries old, and is therefore accompanied by a great body of literature. This small booklet can only touch lightly the fascinating subject. For broader understanding, please refer to the full-length book *Tarot of the Spirit*, published by Samuel Weiser, Inc.

In brief, there are three ways to step into the "game of life." The *Tarot of the Spirit* can be used as: a set of images for meditation, a step-wise path to spiritual realization, and a sacred oracle for divining mysteries of the past, present, and future.

THE PACK OF CARDS

The *Tarot of the Spirit*, like every true tarot deck, has seventy-eight basic cards. Of these,

fifty-six belong to the Minor Arcana, and twenty-two belong to the Major Arcana or Keys. The word *arcana* means mysteries.

The Minor Arcana consist of four suits: wind, fire, water and earth. The suit of wind represents the mind and mental processes or powers. Fire represents energy or action and spiritual processes. Water pertains to emotions and intuitive powers. Earth represents the body and all that is involved in living—or making a living—in the world of matter.

Each suit contains cards numbered one through ten. The numbered cards represent life situations and provide methods for dealing with these situations. Each suit also contains four face cards entitled father, mother, brother, and sister. The face cards may refer to the player or someone the player knows. Each face card represents a style of behaving, what could be called a "personality type."

The Major Arcana, or Keys, have been called the "superpowers" or "superheroes" of the tarot. Each Key is numbered with a Roman numeral. The figures represent the player's subpersonalities, or entities the player encounters.

An additional card, unlabeled but recognizable by its inverted yellow triangular shape, is the Mystery Card. It can be viewed as the master card of the deck, the over-arching card of spiritual realization, which contains the concepts of birth, death, and karmic transition. Over time, this card's meaning becomes clear.

THE TREE OF LIFE CARD

The *Tarot of the Spirit* cards were painted on Tree of Life diagrams. This 20th Anniversary Edition of *Tarot of the Spirit* comes with a plastic transparent Tree of Life overlay card. The Tree of Life is a map of consciousness that describes the flow of thought and action. Each tarot card represents an aspect of consciousness, which occupies a particular position on the Tree of Life. The Tree of Life has ten circles or spheres and twenty-two paths connecting those spheres. All the ones of the tarot—the 1 of Wind, Fire, Water and Earth—occupy sphere 1. The twos occupy sphere 2, and so on. The Major Arcana/Keys—the cards numbered 0–XXI—are the paths that connect the ten spheres. Additionally, the fathers are positioned in sphere 2, the mothers in sphere 3, the brothers in sphere 6 and the sisters in sphere 10. The “mystery card” occupies the “secret eleventh sphere” positioned beneath the path of Key II, the High Priestess.

As you observe the position of any tarot card on the Tree of Life, a deeper understanding of the tarot reveals itself. For example, the fives of Wind, Fire, Water and Earth each present a difficulty (fear, spiritual struggle, broken heart, physical or financial challenge). The fives are positioned in sphere 5 on the Tree of Life. Several paths lead out of this sphere: Key VII—The Chariot; Key VIII—Strength; Key XI—Karma; and Key XII—The Hanged

Man. Each of these Major Arcana cards provides a potential way out, or through, the dilemma of each of the fives. By overlaying the Tree of Life on each card, you can also see critical aspects of the card that were emphasized in the original painting. This provides additional levels of understanding.

To learn more about the Tree of Life and the Mystery School from which it emerged, please log onto www.tarotofthespirit.com. Further, you will learn much more about the Tree of Life and its relationship to tarot, tarot reading, and the meaning of each card in the companion book to the *Tarot of the Spirit* (*Tarot of the Spirit* by Pamela Eakins, 425 pages, published by Samuel Weiser, Inc.).

SAMPLE MEDITATING WITH THE TAROT OF THE SPIRIT

If you wish to use the tarot as a meditational tool, mix the cards, place them face down and draw a card upon which to meditate. You may find your card by cutting the deck to the left and taking the top card from the right-hand pile, for example, or you may wish to fan out the cards and select one that attracts you. When you have drawn your card, read about its meaning. Then, meditate on how the concept in the card affects you in daily life. The object is to discover, within the meaning of the card, new ideas for thought and action. A common practice is to select one card each day for meditation.

Before meditation, you may wish to prepare yourself by clearing your mind. You can do this through practicing a method of meditation you have previously learned. You could sit in the still, quiet attitude of Zen Buddhism; you could perform the silent, internal chanting of Transcendental Meditation; you could chant aloud the syllable *om* or the rhythmic phrases of Siddha Yoga. In Judeo-Christian fashion, you could pray for clarity. The tarot works very well with all spiritual systems.

After clearing your mind, contemplate with a fresh outlook the card you have drawn.

THE TAROT AS A SPIRITUAL PATH

The *Tarot of the Spirit* provides a vehicle for the transformational journey of the soul. Each card contains a transformative image which, as it is worked with, becomes capable of guiding the player on an individualized spiritual path to higher consciousness.

The tarot is only one of many paths to enlightened understanding. Yet it is comprehensive and provides a marvelously magical and mystical journey that spirals through the innermost layers of the mind to the very heart of being. This is possible because the tarot has every key element for enlightenment which has become known to humankind in its age-old quest for wisdom. The tarot arranges these elements as stepping stones that carry the player forward.

Basically, the path consists of a series of meditations carried out in a specific order. For the first day of meditation, the one of fire card would be used, on the second day, the two of fire, and so on through father, mother, brother, and sister. The process is repeated for the suits of water, wind, and earth, in that order. When you have finished meditating on the Minor Arcana, begin meditation on the Major Arcana with Key 0—The Fool, then I—The Magus, and so on through Key XXI—The Universe.

Each card becomes a doorway through which you can attain deeper spiritual understanding. It is common to have mystical experiences while meditating on the cards. Keeping a journal of your experiences with each meditation is strongly recommended.

THE TAROT AS AN ORACLE: READING THE CARDS

Historically, the tarot has often been used as an oracle for "reading" the past, present, and future.

To begin a reading, place the cards face down and select one according to the methods described in the section *Meditating with the Tarot of the Spirit*. The first card is called the "significator." It identifies the player's problem or major area of concern. If you ask a specific question, the significator provides the focal point of your answer. In a more general reading, one without a particular question,

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