

*Spirit*  
*A of the*  
*Animals*  
O R A C L E



by Jody Bergsma

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SAMPLE

*“The power and ways are  
given to us to be passed onto  
others... We get more by giving  
them away, and if we do not  
give them away,  
we lose them.”*

*Fools Crow, Ceremonial Chief of the Teton Sioux*

1890 – 1989



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## *Acknowledgements*

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Thanks to Tara McKee for her understanding of animal totems and help with editing and graphics.

A special thanks goes to my daughter Lily Sky Rockenbach who also contributed greatly to the creation of this deck.

## *Introduction*

Animal Medicine, Animal Totems, and Animal Mascots have had cultural significance throughout our history. Europeans adopted animals as tribal symbols that were later incorporated into crests for nations. China has an animal associated with every birthday. The Romans celebrated the eagle as the symbol for an empire. Our ancestors observed the appearance of animals as omens and signs. Shamans and mystics rely on spirit animal helpers. Native Americans have vision quests to discover their personal animal totem. School sports teams choose animal mascots. It is no wonder that the interest in animals as emblems and how they relate to us still persists. Animals as symbols live in our deepest memory.

I have acquired many inspirations for this deck from my personal life. As a child, I was blessed with vivid dreams of animals. My mother asked me to draw them. It was my

first step toward life as a mystic artist. My curiosity about what it all meant was unquenchable. I looked to books on shamanism for animal insights and finally discovered animals as totems.

Come with me on a journey into the world of animals and their teachings. This is a path that will enliven your intuition, open the door to your personal power, and strengthen your relationship with the earth.

## *What is an Animal Totem?*

The word totem refers to a natural object or animal believed by a particular society or person to have spiritual significance and power. We are all connected to the “All That Is” and some of those connections are animal souls. Across the web of life animal guardians reach out to give us guidance in time of need. Pay attention to your creature encounters and ask the question, “What wisdom does this animal bring today?” For some of us the animal appears in dreams, for others there is a strong attraction to an image, while others experience a physical rendezvous. Whatever way an animal soul appears to you is valid and every encounter is an omen with a story to tell. The challenge is to figure out what that story is and what it means to you.

What is your animal totem? Do you know already? Would you like to figure it out? Do you have more than one totem? Working with your totem is a way of connecting with nature’s wisdom and your own intuition. By observing an animal’s environment, social patterns, skills and behaviors and relating those attributes to our own lives, we create

a bridge to our own inner teacher. Sayings like, “clever as a fox,” “strong as an ox” or “fierce as a tiger” are an introduction to animal wisdom. *Spirit of the Animals* seeks to expand this simple concept and facilitate a deeper understanding of the mystery that is animal medicine.

### *Preparing Your Cards For a Reading*

I always suggest that you approach animal wisdom with reverence. Before you begin to work with the deck, take a moment to quiet your mind and turn within. Ask for guidance. Light a candle and create a sacred space. Place the cards in your hands and ask the question, “What wisdom do the animals have for me today?”

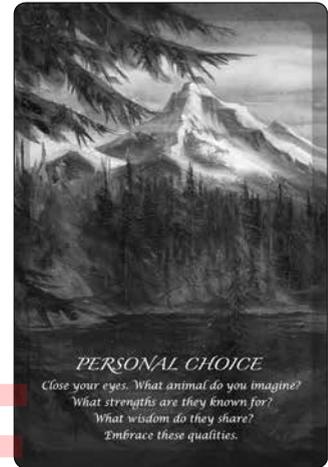
Start with all the cards upright in the deck and then shuffle them. Place the cards face down across the surface in front of you and spread them out. Pick the ones that speak to you and turn them over. Contemplate the affirmation the card brings to your personal situation and look within to see how it applies. For more details, look up the animal in this *Spirit of the Animals* guidebook. They are presented in alphabetical order. If a card is pulled upside down refer to the contrary comments to discover actions that can be taken to harmonize your situation. The single card reading is the simplest use of this deck and can be repeated daily.

### *Contrary Cards*

When the card chosen is upside down it is called contrary. It is sometimes a warning. You can look up the contrary statement in this guidebook under each animal’s name for action suggestions.

### *Personal Choice Card*

There is one “wild” card in the deck with no animal on the face. It is included so that you can have an alternate choice for a totem. If you pull this card, take a moment and close your eyes. Envision the animal and ask, “What message do you have for me?” Let the answers come to you through the animal’s traits and your intuition.



### *Multiple Card Readings*

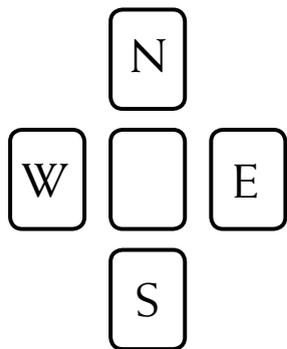
Another simple reading is the two-card “Yin Yang” spread. Prepare the cards. Ask the question. “Where do I need to create more balance in my life?” Pick two cards, one with your left hand and one with your right. Turn them over. The left hand is your female, receiving, feeling, relationship self. The right is male, mental, doing, warrior self. These two cards will work in tandem to shed light on attributes that will help center your energy. The feminine side receives and the masculine side acts and moves. Ask these two energies to speak to you and illuminate when to give more and when to receive. Both are needed.

This simple layout is enlivening your intuition and helping it grow. Whatever you feel, sense, hear or see is important. Let the answers flow up from your own inner sage.

Another two-card spread works with the question, “Who walks with me?” Pick two cards and let the spirit essence of both of these animals walk with you throughout your day. Affirm, “I am never alone for my helpers are by my side.” Keep their cards and affirmations on your altar until you draw again.

### *The Medicine Wheel Spread*

The Medicine Wheel Spread is a five-card layout honoring the four cardinal directions and the Spirit within.



Prepare yourself and ask the question, “What is my situation and who are my totem helpers?” The cards will be placed east, south, west, north and within. Turn them over and place the first card you pick in the east. All cards in your layout interact with and influence the others. Your intuition will be stretched even further. Let

images and answers rise initially and then for more clarification refer to the details in the book. Note, the upside down cards are read in context of their contrary meaning.

East is for new beginnings. What is the spiritual seed? How can you help it grow? Who is here to help you

create your dream? What energy is with you at this beginning and what does it ask you to do?

The south card is for the creator energy within. What action should be followed? What do you need to do now? Who helps you?

The west card is for your inner emotional life and intuition. What strength do you need for your soul? Who will give you courage in the face of emotional challenges?

The north card is for your wisdom teacher. What do you need to learn and to succeed? How are you evolving? Where will you go?

The last card is for the center. What inner power stands with you? What do you need more of? What do you need to avoid for a best outcome?

### *Power Animals Spread*

The last layout that I suggest is the nine-card Power Animals Spread, which reveals what animal totems you carry with you through life. These creatures will represent a field of gifts, tendencies, talents and attributes. The cards around you create an octahedron. You stand in the middle. The seven directions are to the right, left, before, behind, above, below and within. The last two cards are the animal guides who walk with you. You can use the pull-out spread sheet for this reading.

Prepare yourself within a sacred space and lay out the four directions. Sit in the middle and face the north. Shuffle the cards, sit with them and reverently ask your totem animals to reveal themselves to you. Spread the cards in a

wide circle around you. Ask your animal guides to direct your hands to their cards. The first card you will place to the east, which is on your right side. The next will be the south and it is behind you. The third card place is the west on the left, and the fourth card place is before you in the north. The fifth card is the energy above you, sixth is below and seventh is within. Place them in front of you. The last two are beside you, representing the animal for your right and left sides. Pull the eighth card for the right side and the ninth card for the left. If you pull a blank card within your nine animal totems ask your intuition what the blank card represents to you. It may be an animal that I have not included in the cards. In this reading acknowledge all cards as upright.

All of the animals in your spread are your nine totem animals. Write them down in your book. Let your judgments fall aside and look to the deeper beauty and significance of each of your helpers. Trust the wisdom of your reading and look at the traits and gifts each totem brings to you and how they relate to one another. Nature is a very wise teacher and asks that you participate in finding a wisdom way through observation and contemplation. Different animals from your totem lodge will come forward strongly during times of need. Invoke their strengths and know that they will come.

There are many other ways to use these cards for personal divination. Use your intuition and go where Spirit leads you.



*Great Mystery,  
teach me how to trust  
my heart,  
my mind,  
my intuition,  
my inner knowing,  
the senses of my body,  
the blessings of my spirit.  
Teach me to trust these things  
so that I may enter my  
Sacred Space  
and love beyond my fear,  
and thus Walk in Balance  
with the passing of each  
glorious Sun.*

*Lakota Prayer*



SAMPLE



## *Bee*

*Community, Cooperation, Hard Working, Diligent, Royal, Kingdom,  
Family Order, Love Charm, Success, Sexual, Stinger*



*BEE + COMMUNITY*

*You are a powerful creator.  
Your work blesses everything you touch.  
Be open to receiving sweetness.  
You are the queen of abundance.*

Bees are honored as a good omen for success and a powerful symbol for Royal Families throughout the world. Life in the hive represents the harmonious kingdom. Bees characterize meaningful communal activity, hard work and diligence. Bee can be a great friend but misfortune will come to those who harm the hive. Their stingers are always ready to protect. All bees are pollinators and they are considered to be the most useful insect in nature. They are productive, focused, and do not get sidetracked from their goals. Bee reminds us that joy, purpose and “the sweetness in life” can be found in cooperative work for bettering the world.

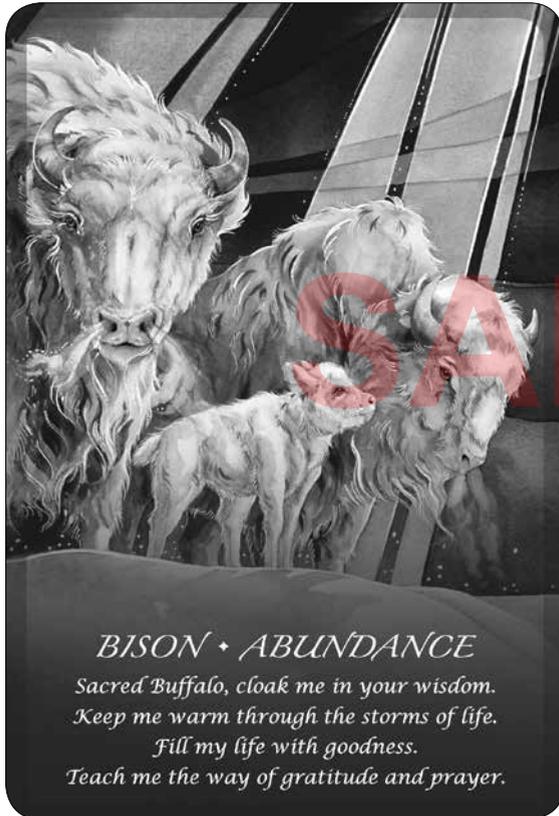
Because of Bee’s many industrious traits they represent good fortune in business matters. Adopt Bee as your personal symbol for a never-ending creation of abundance. If Bee is your totem you are on a “beeline” to success. Like the mysterious bee in flight, you will accomplish what others cannot. Your “Busy as a Bee” nature brings unflinching energy, robust health, and longevity. Embrace the bee’s life secret. Be productive while the sun shines, become fully engaged in your creative endeavors and enjoy the flowers. Do these and all good things will be yours.

### *Contrary*

- ◆ Do you need to focus your efforts to create more success?
- ◆ Do you have a “bee in your bonnet” and need fresh air for your mind?
- ◆ Beware of those bear people who would try and steal your sweetness!
- ◆ Be more industrious.

## *Bison “Buffalo”*

*Indomitable Spirit, Endurance, Survival, Strength, Abundance,  
Virility, Prosperity, Prayer*



The North American Bison, often called Buffalo, was the ruler of the American Plains. Bison represented the abundant life, the will to survive and the ability to adapt. Native Americans relied on them for the blessings of ample food, shelter and warmth. They considered all bison sacred. If Bison comes to you, it signifies that you are walking in harmony with Mother Earth. Call upon Buffalo for guidance and you will feel a great force rising within you. You can align with a surge from nature that will empower you.

The White Buffalo was most sacred of all. She brought the peace pipe and visible prayer to the people. If you are a Bison person you will feel called to connect to the Great Spirit in prayer. From this deeper place all blessings and gifts will flow. Bison invites you to discover your own sacred way, create your own ceremonies, and write your own prayers. The great mystery is right beside you, just open the door and walk through, White Buffalo is waiting.

### *Contrary*

- ◆ Have you forgotten to be thankful for all of your blessings?
- ◆ Have you lost connection to earth?
- ◆ Have you forgotten how to pray and connect to the Great Spirit?
- ◆ Be grateful. Return to prayer.

## About Jody Bergsma



Jody Bergsma has a diverse painting style that has developed over 50 years and literally thousands of paintings. Her earliest works were charming children's illustrations that she sold at Northwest art shows to pay for her Engineering education. Jody's watercolor technique is self-taught. Her artistic compositions reflect her love of mathematics, geometry and nature. She seamlessly blends these elements

with her imaginative inner visions to create her unique style. Jody lives in Bellingham, Washington on her horse ranch with her daughter and her pets.

Jody also created *Magical Times Empowerment Cards* and the artwork for *Spirit of the Wheel Meditation Deck*, both published by U.S. Games Systems, Inc.

*“Art is a tradition that helps define who we are and brings us a vision of who we can become. My painting is my expression and request for a more beautiful, peaceful and harmonious world.”*

