



Workbook

Original Tarot
Learning Edition



The Original Tarot Learning Edition Workbook

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◆ — INTRODUCTION — ◆

Welcome to the Learn the Tarot workbook. One of the most daunting obstacles to learning tarot is the amount of information you need to memorize and know in order to read the cards effectively, for yourself or for others. While some people have a natural gift for memorization, many do not.

This workbook has been written and designed to help you learn the tarot in a “knowing” way instead of through memorization. This workbook will take you through a process of getting to know your tarot deck, which can be applied to any deck of tarot cards.

◆ — THE MAGIC OF GETTING TO KNOW TAROT CARDS — ◆

The technique for getting to know tarot cards, or oracle cards, is rather simple. Tarot cards represent archetypes of human experience, which are the common themes of human life across all cultures, and present in every walk of life.

We are all the Fool, taking on life as a leap of faith, an act of foolishness, with unpredictable outcomes and seventy-seven experiences we will repeat throughout our lives. We are all the Magician, coming to crossroads and addressing problems in our lives that will require using all the tools we have available to us to solve our difficulties and overcome our challenges.

We will have many defeats (5 of Swords) and many victories (6 of Wands). We will fall in love (2 of Cups) and suffer financial setbacks (5 of Pentacles). Some cards we will hope to know deeply, like the Lovers, while others we will hope to encounter as few times as possible, like the Tower.

The tarot is the story of human existence; a magical way to learn the tarot is to connect your life experiences to each card in the deck. Once you attach your personal stories to a card, you will find learning to read tarot cards surprisingly easy!

To help you accomplish this task, we have included a deck that has keywords at the top and bottom of each card, to show the upright and reversed meaning of the card.

This workbook will be your tarot journal. It shows each card, provides a brief explanation of the card, a sample real life example from the author's journey, and a lined section for you to write in your personal example. Once you connect your life experiences to each card, you will find you know the card without having to spend time

trying to memorize the keywords.

◆ ——— LET'S GET STARTED! ——— ◆

There really is no need for a complicated introduction, when you turn the page, we will begin with the Fool and go through all twenty-two Major Arcana cards. Once you get through the Major Arcana, we will move onto the Minor Arcana and start with the Cups suit, then the Pentacles, then the Swords, and we'll end with the Wands. The Major Arcana cards represent the Spiritual (or Big) Karmas of life and the Minor Arcana cards represent the Mundane (or Little) Karmas of life.

◆ ——— TAROT READING ——— ◆

Reading Tarot cards can reveal insights into your past, present, or future. The premise is simple: the Querent asks a question, and then the Reader draws the cards and interprets the results.

Tarot reading has been used for divination since the 1700s, and every Reader develops his or her method for interpreting the cards. There are some fundamentals, but Readers are encouraged to explore and develop their own approach.

◆ ——— THE DECK ——— ◆

The Tarot deck contains seventy-eight cards: twenty-two Major Arcana cards and fifty-six Minor Arcana cards.

The Major Arcana cards represent the archetypal moments that everyone experiences on their journey through life. Everyone begins life as the Fool, and ends life as the Fool.

The Minor Arcana cards represent the actions, thoughts, feelings, and material struggles that we all encounter in our lives.

Four suits and fifty-six cards make up the Minor Arcana. Face cards consist of the Page, Knight, Queen, and King. Each of the four elements belongs to a suit, represented by a specific object:

- Fire to Wands
- Water to Cups
- Earth to Pentacles
- Air to Swords

And each element corresponds to an aspect of human life:

- Fire/Action
- Water/Emotions
- Earth/Work
- Air/Thought.

◆ SPREADING THE CARDS ◆

A spread is a layout for the Tarot cards which provides a framework for the reading. Spreads often follow a predefined theme where the position of the cards is relevant to how they are interpreted.

There are numerous different types of spreads. Certain spreads tend to work well for different types of questions. This guide will provide a starter spread, but you can research and find spreads for every type of question. As you become more experienced, consider developing your own unique spreads.

◆ THREE CARD SPREAD ◆

The past/present/future three-card spread is the best and most used starting spread. This simple spread is ideal for novice Readers. Cards are drawn and read in the following order: 1) Past, 2) Present, and 3) Future.



Past



Present



Future

- 1. The Past: This card symbolizes the Querent's past experiences that pertain to the Querent's question.*
- 2. The Present: This card represents the Querent's current situation.*
- 3. The Future: This card indicates a possible future goal the Querent should strive for regarding their question or issue. The Querent can shape the future based on their thoughts and actions.*

THE FOOL



Meaning: The Fool represents a leap of faith, which is the action our souls take when we are born and when we die. And, we make many leaps of faith throughout our lives. Therefore, as the Zero card, the Fool is the beginning and ending of the journey through the Major and Minor Arcana. We are the Fool. The Fool archetype is about curiosity and open-mindedness, going with the flow of life, and managing our way through the unknown.

Symbolism: A young man and his dog travel the land together and he is about to walk off the edge of a cliff. The flower in his hand represents innocence; the dog is likely to grab him and prevent him from coming to harm. The bag on his staff contains all his possessions and the food he needs for the day.

Upright: optimism, a journey without a destination, a new beginning, curiosity, and potential

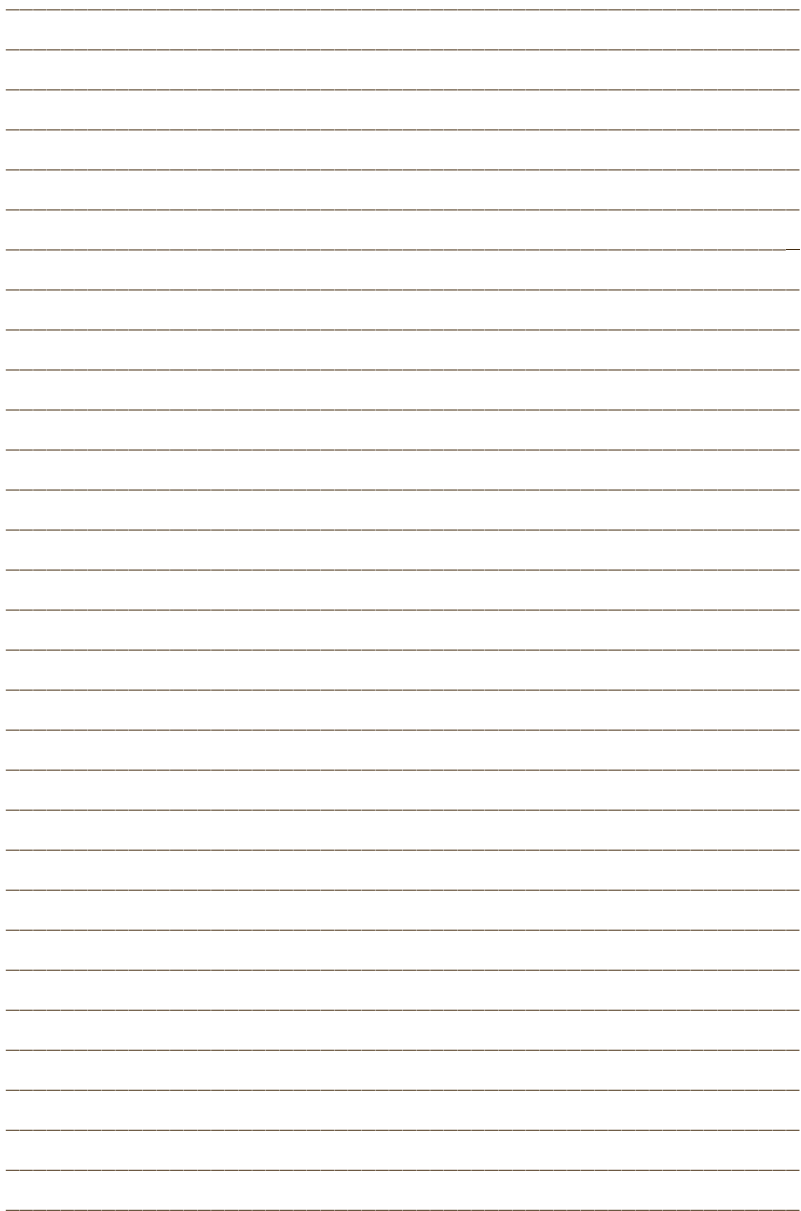
Reversed: foolishness, gullibility, and ignorance

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

There are so many different moments to choose from that illustrate this card perfectly. Each time it comes up in a reading, a list speed-scrolls through my mind. Today, I will stop on starting my spiritual advising business, which I did in 2013 when a dear friend recommended that I go for it, as a professional astrologer and tarot reader. I took the leap of faith and made a business of my skills when I incorporated (LLC) with the state of North Carolina.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What would you consider one of your most profound leaps of faith?



THE MAGICIAN



Meaning: The Magician represents choices and creative problem-solving, a connection between imagination and reality. The Magician archetype is the first encounter for the Fool, indicating that we must make crucial decisions on our life's journey.

Symbolism: A young magician is in the process of casting a spell. The infinity symbol above his head shows that he has attained elevated knowledge. By pointing at the sky and the ground, he acknowledges the connection between heaven and earth. The wand in his hand, along with the objects of the other suits (pentacle, cup, and sword), shows his command over fire, earth, water, and air.

Upright: choices, problem-solving, diverse knowledge, solutions, and cleverness

Reversed: deception, conning, mistakes, something broken beyond repair, and failure

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

I have purchased four homes over the course of my life. Each time I go through the home buying process, I feel like a Magician trying to complete a spell that will yield the outcome I desire. So many different factors go into the purchase of a home, involving emotions (the Cup), communication (the Sword), creative energy (the Wand), and of course, money (the Pentacle).

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Which of your biggest decisions required you to use all four elements to get to a solution?

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THE HIGH PRIESTESS



Meaning: The High Priestess represents the knowledge and enlightenment that we attain while overcoming difficulties. The High Priestess archetype is the second encounter for the Fool, indicating that we must learn about our intuition, how to trust it, and when to seek out guidance from others.

Symbolism: A young woman wizened by difficult experiences awaits acolytes who will come to her for guidance. A scroll rests in her lap showing her connection to learned knowledge. She sits between a black and white column, showing her connection to death and life. The pomegranates in the art behind her are the fruit of the underworld. The full moon in her headdress and the crescent moon at her feet represent her powerful intuition, developed by overcoming hardship.

in her headdress and the crescent moon at her feet represent her powerful intuition, developed by overcoming hardship.

Upright: divination, wisdom from experience, insight, and counseling

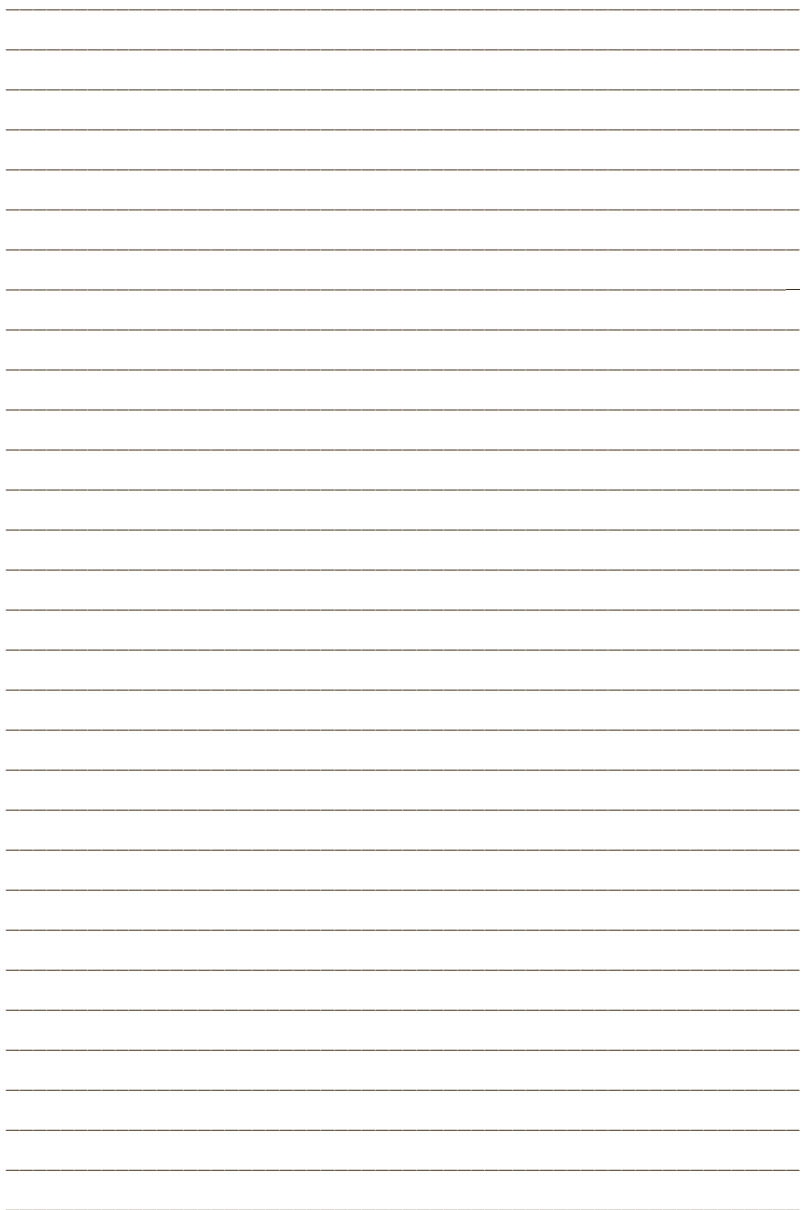
Reversed: gossip, bad advice, incomplete knowledge, and misrepresentation

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When I think of this card, I think about my adoption. I was adopted as an infant and found out about my adoption at a very young age, around 9. My parents lovingly helped me understand how I came to be adopted and why they wanted me in their lives. Knowing I was adopted shaped much of my youth and how I interacted with and was treated by others, which was not always positive. My adoption gave me a different way of seeing life that deepened my understanding of family.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What personal difficulty or difference makes you stand out to others and gives you special insight?



THE EMPRESS



Meaning: The Empress represents the feminine divine, the essence of beauty, abundance, and nourishment. The Empress archetype is the third encounter for the Fool, teaching you about the natural world, how to care for the world, how to nurture yourself, and how to care for others.

Symbolism: A regal woman sits on cushions atop a stone throne out in the wilderness. She wears a crown of stars and holds a scepter, they are symbols of her power and divine grace. A heart shield with the symbol of Venus, the planet that rules the astrological sign Taurus, rests beside her outdoor throne. Venus represents the body and Taurus represents the earth. A field of wheat is in front of her, and a healthy forest behind her. She symbolizes the abundance of both; the grain feeds the world and the forest provides the materials for shelter.

the abundance of both; the grain feeds the world and the forest provides the materials for shelter.

Upright: nurturing, abundance, the feminine divine, and sovereignty over the natural order

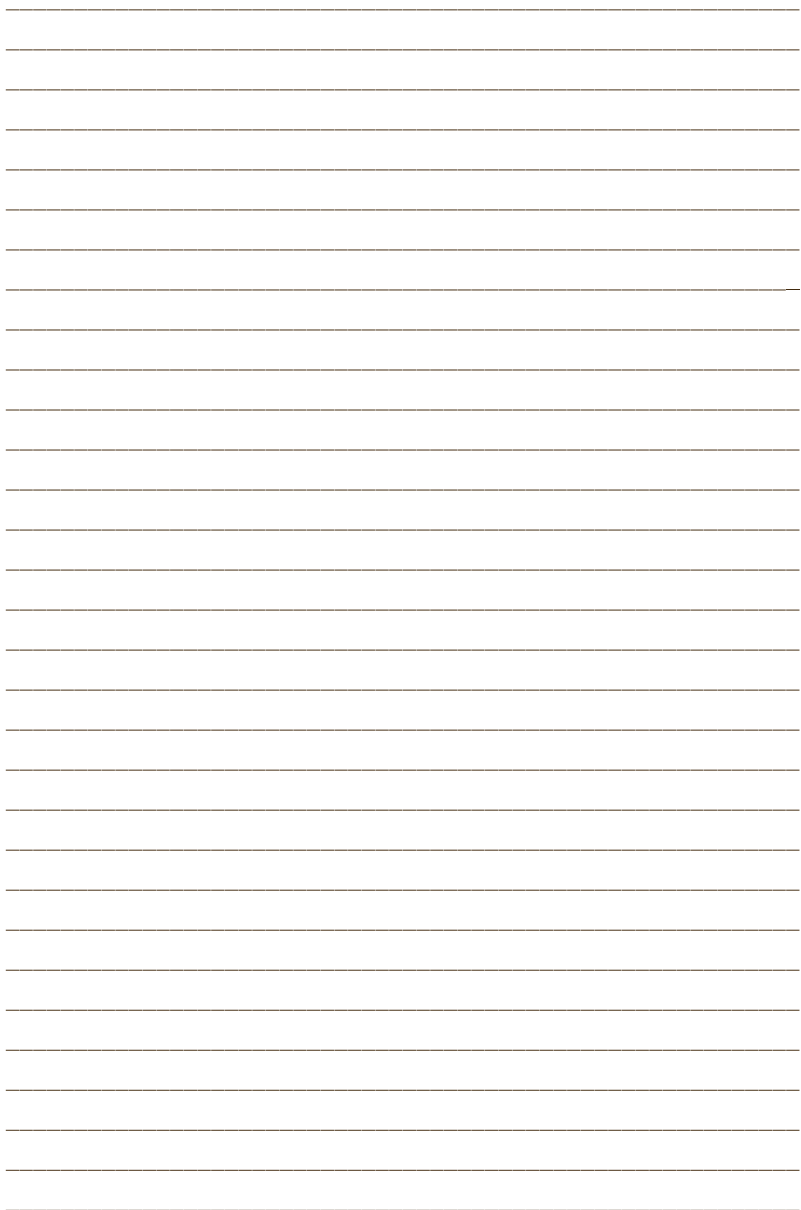
Reversed: hardships, scarcity, bareness, and neediness

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

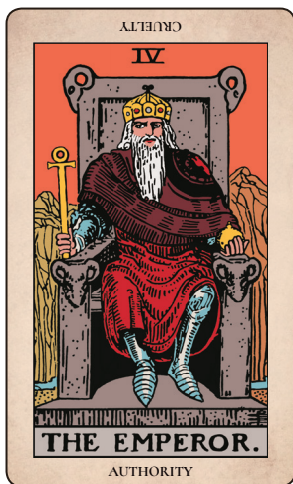
Feminine and masculine energy mix in all of us, regardless of gender. The Empress is the nurturing and caretaking energy we seek and provide. I fully realized this card when I became a stay-at-home father after the birth of my daughter. Additionally, I feel connected to this card any time I remember my maternal grandmother, who was a truly caring and nurturing soul to everyone who met her.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When have you found yourself in the role of the caretaker? Who cared for you best in your youth?



THE EMPEROR



Meaning: The Emperor represents the masculine divine, the essence of command, order, and power. The Emperor archetype is the fourth encounter for the Fool, teaching us how to establish order from chaos, how to shape the natural world to our needs, and how to build civilization.

Symbolism: A elder man sits on a throne with the heads of four rams, which symbolize his masculinity. He holds an Ankh scepter, representing life and power, and a gold ball, representing earthly wealth and his rulership of civilization. The burgundy cloth around his upper body, and red robe covering his lower body, indicate the energy he wields to maintain

his authority. He wears armor underneath his clothing, shown by the greaves and sabatons on his legs. He wears a crown on his head that he earned; it was not inherited.

Upright: authority, the rule maker, order, stability, and sovereignty over society and civilization

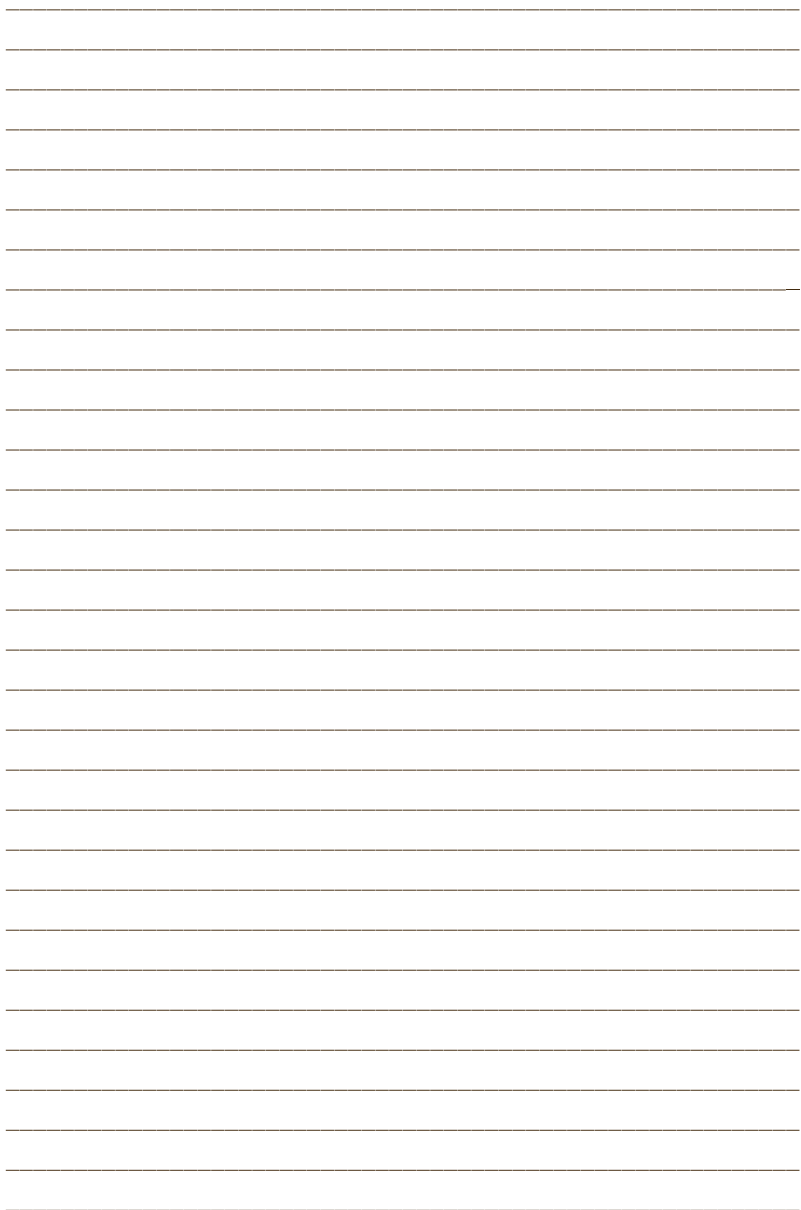
Reversed: abuse of power, cruelty, dictatorship, and narcissism

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

I connected with this card when I was teaching English to freshmen college students. In the classroom, all the power was mine and I was the central authority figure. I made the rules, established order, and had sovereignty over the students under my care each semester.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

In which situation or circumstance did you take complete control and lead others?



THE HIEROPHANT



Meaning: The Hierophant represents wisdom attained through scholarship and exploring the world, the learned knowledge we attain in our effort to make sense of life. The Hierophant archetype is the fifth encounter for the Fool, indicating that we need to go beyond intuition and emotion, and use intellect and experience to solve some problems. Or, we need to find someone with those qualities to help us.

Symbolism: A priest offers a blessing to two supplicants. He wears the clothing of his station as a learned man; his wand and crown are symbols of holy power. On the alter before him are two keys, indicating he has the keys to divine and mundane knowledge, which he uses

to unlock messages and information for those who seek his wisdom.

Upright: wisdom, authority, knowledge, doctrine, and advice

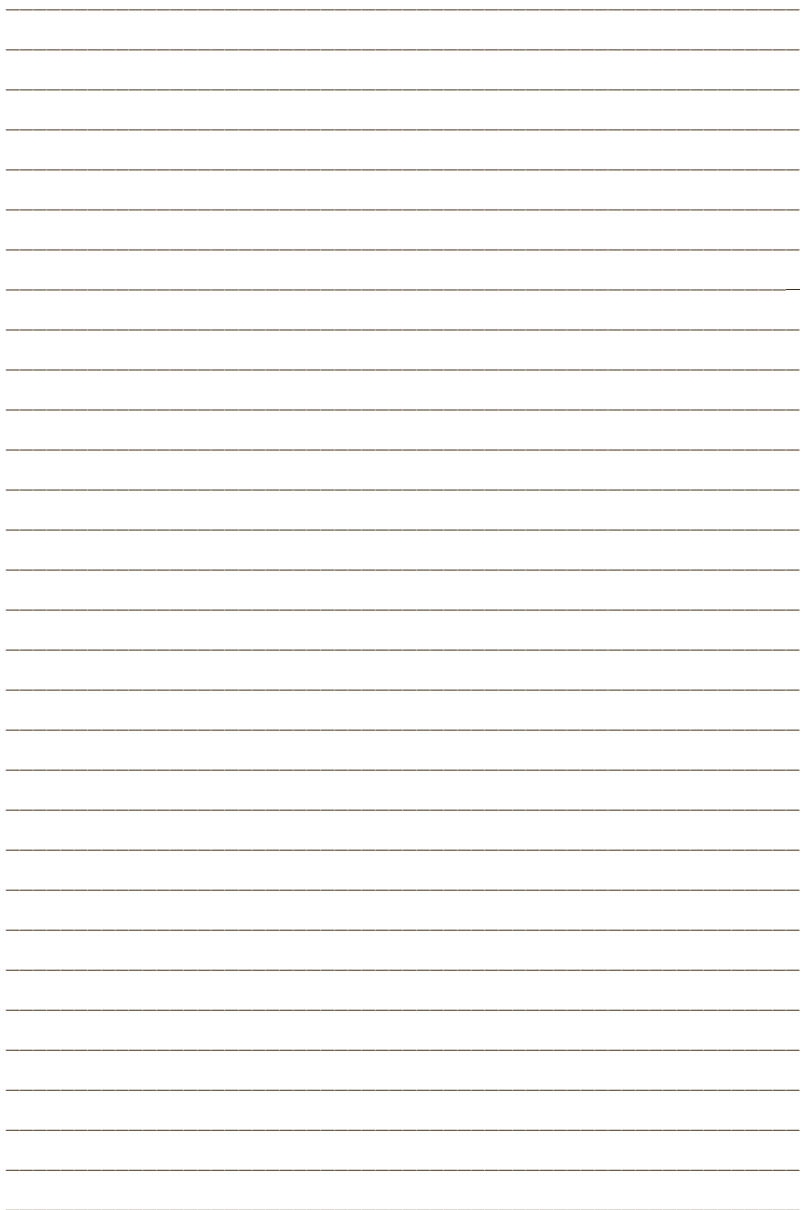
Reversed: arrogance, elitism, hypocrisy, and charlatanism

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

As it turns out, I am an ordained Priest, with the Order of Melchizedek, and have officiated at numerous weddings. And, I work as a spiritual advisor, so I am very familiar with this card. You do not need my level of involvement in spiritual matters to understand this card and connect with it. There was a time in my life when I collected comic books seriously enough to become an expert, who could answer most questions about collecting and the fictional worlds of Marvel and DC. For a time, I was a Hierophant for this subject matter.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What knowledge or skills have you mastered at one time or another in your life where people see you as the expert?



THE LOVERS



Meaning: The Lovers represents partnership, especially a profound connection with someone that is both intimate and romantic. The Lovers archetype is the sixth encounter for the Fool, indicating that we cannot fully experience life until we connect with someone intimately and deeply.

Symbolism: An angel oversees the union of Adam and Eve, acknowledging their relationship. On Adam's side, behind him, is a flaming tree, representing passion and creativity. On Eve's side, behind her, is the Tree of Knowledge with the serpent wrapped around the trunk and woven into the branches, representing awareness and free will. They each bring

something different to the relationship that holds the attention of the divine.

Upright: commitment, status through union, connection, and soul mate

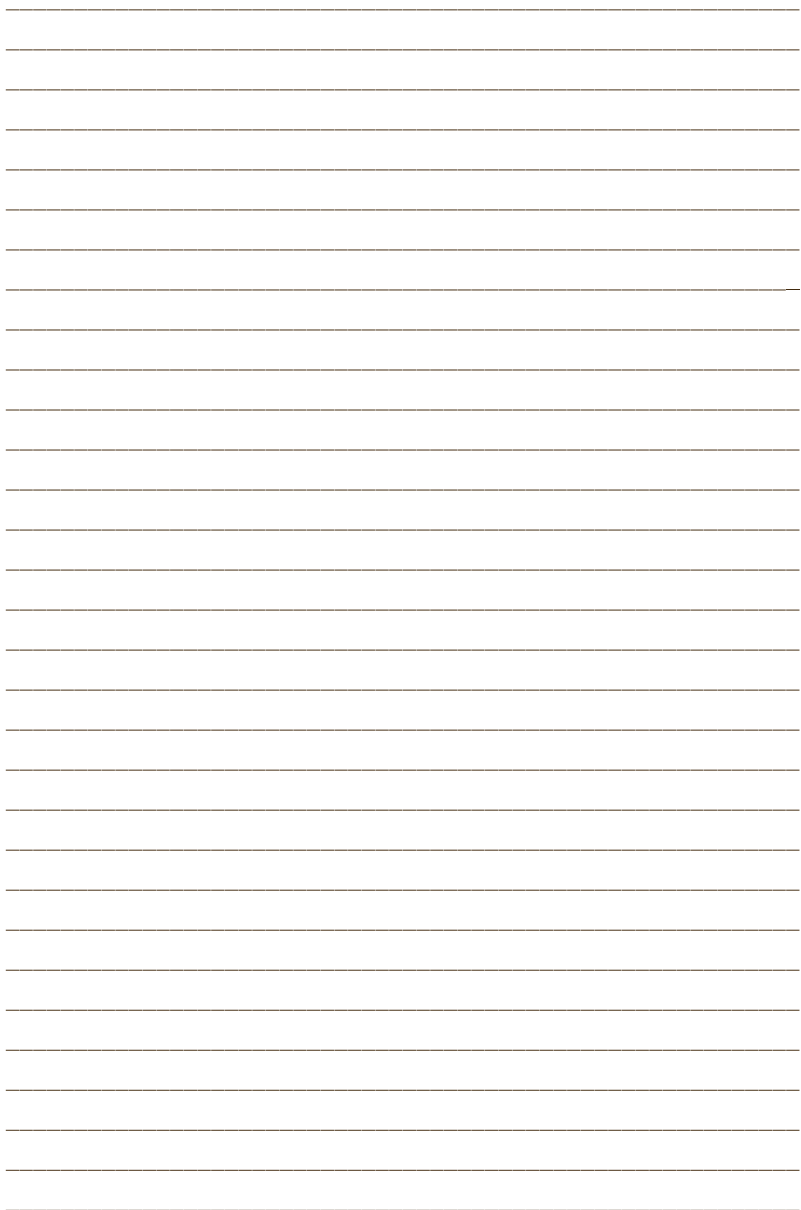
Reversed: jealousy, unfaithfulness, arguments, and separation or divorce

Author's Personal Connection with this Card

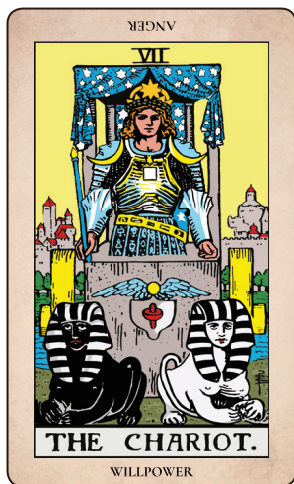
I have been very fortunate to have fallen in love several times over the course of my life. My first deep connection with someone occurred when I was in college working on my undergraduate degree. We met in a history class on ancient Greek culture. It took some time, and some courage, to ask her out after class, but she said yes. After a fairly short period of time going out, I fell deeply in love with her, in a way I would not fully understand until well after the relationship ended. While our commitment to each other did not last, it proved profound for me, as I knew then and know now, that she was truly my first love.

Your Personal Connection with this Card

Who, in your past, or your present is the lover you think of first when you look at this card?



THE CHARIOT



Meaning: The Chariot represents willpower and drive; the intense focus we need to establish our identities and stand out in important and useful ways. The Chariot archetype is the seventh encounter for the Fool, teaching us how important it is to have conviction and intensity in our lives.

Symbolism: A warrior sits in a chariot. Two sphinxes, one black and one white, are at rest, but ready to act when the charioteer commands them. There is a star in his crown and on the cloth at the top of his chariot, indicating his connection to divine will. He waits outside the city, as a protector. He will act when called upon. He may be considered a young prince

who one day could become the Emperor.

Upright: victory, willpower, intensity, drive, and control

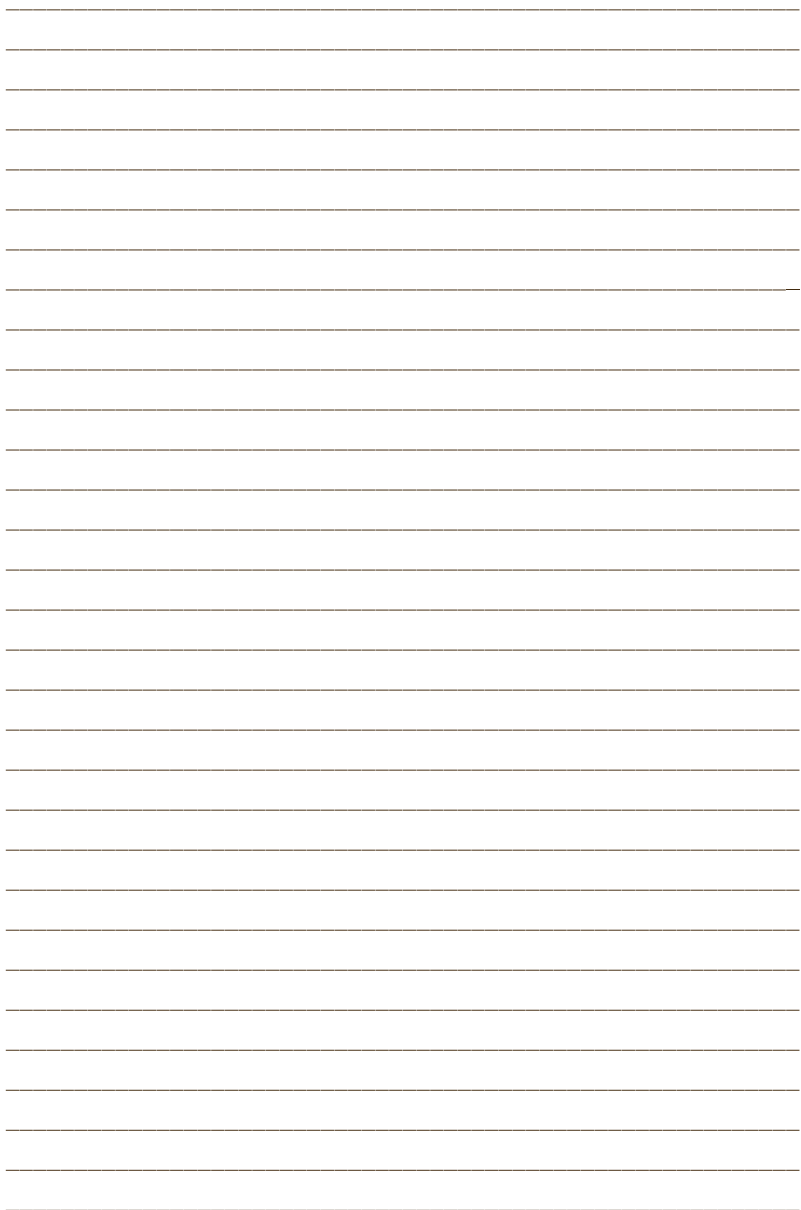
Reversed: anger, delay, indecision, and interference

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

A key Chariot moment took place when I decided to tell my father that I no longer wanted to play for the golf team when I was in high school. I had plenty of talent, but not the love of the sport that my father had. He invested a lot of time and money into my skill, but I lacked his passion. Telling him I would not play was a moment when I asserted my will and my desire. To his immense credit he understood that I needed to make my own choice and was proud of me for making my own decision about the sport.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When did you have to assert yourself, forging ahead against all obstacles?



STRENGTH



Meaning: Strength represents our fortitude to live life, overcome struggles, and persevere. The journey through life will require strength to live fully and completely. Strength, as an archetype, is the eighth lesson for the Fool, showing us that life is a marathon and not a sprint. We must find the strength within that will help us survive and thrive.

Symbolism: A young maiden strokes the head of a lion. They are symbols of civilization and instinct co-existing and supporting one another. The infinity symbol above them indicates that the relationship is eternal. Her white robe represents innocence, and her garland belt and robe are symbols of abundance. She greets the

lion with compassion and he will be her protector.

Upright: power, courage, compassion, and gentle strength

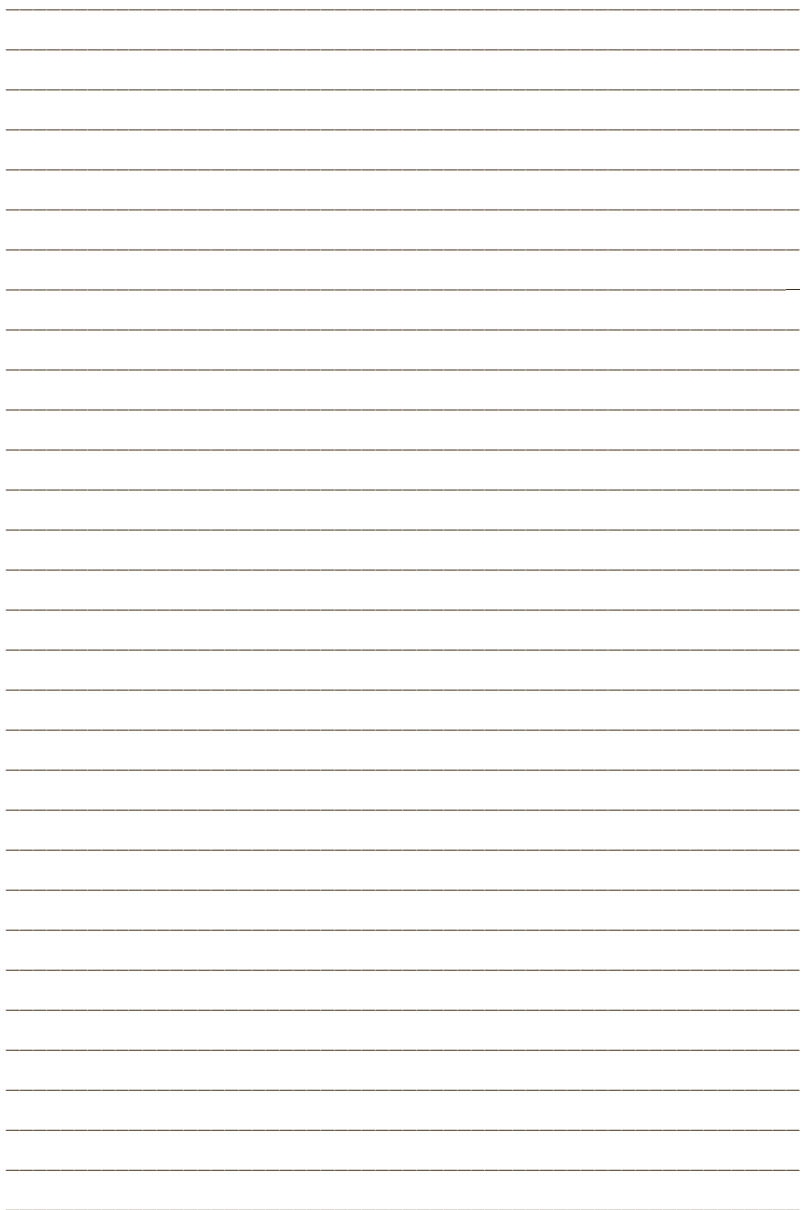
Reversed: weakness, anger, abuse of power, and threat

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

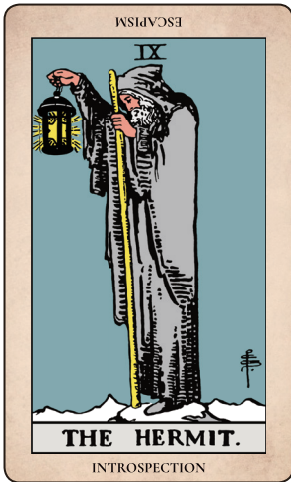
When I see this card, I think of my maternal grandmother. She was the eldest of nine children and functioned as a second mother to her siblings when she was growing up. When I was old enough to know her as Ruby, a woman with a full, rich life story, not just Nana, my grandmother, I understood the quiet strength she had regarding life and helping others who were struggling. She could “soothe the heart of a savage beast.”

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Who is a person in your life who taught you strength and showed you their strength in a positive way?



THE HERMIT



Meaning: The Hermit represents our individual pursuit for personal truth in a world of competing truths. The Hermit archetype is the ninth encounter for the Fool, teaching us that sometimes we must detach from the flow of life to discover ourselves, bringing what we learn in isolation back into the world of social connections.

Symbolism: A elderly man travels across a stark landscape with his lamp lighting the way. He travels forward in search of truth. His head is tilted downward, in prayer, to acknowledge the solemn pursuit of truth. His staff is both for his support on the long journey and defense against any threats. The gray robe symbolizes neutrality

and the absence of emotion; he will learn what he learns and accept the truth no matter what is revealed.

Upright: introspection, discovery, wisdom, truth-seeking, and taking time away from society

Reversed: loneliness, escapism, depression, and being cast out

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

In the summer of 1988, I was taking classes at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill and burned out after the first summer session. As a result, I had to drop the classes I planned to take during the second summer session. Fortunately, my family had a home in the mountains of Virginia and I went there and stayed by myself for two weeks. This was before cell phones, and there was only spotty TV reception, so I was pretty much by myself. I used the time to heal and rest, so I could return for my final year and complete it successfully.

◆———— Your Personal Connection with this Card ———◆

When did you have to, or choose to, retreat from life; and how did it help you to do so?

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THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE



Meaning: The Wheel of Fortune represents experiences and circumstances outside our control. The Wheel of Fortune archetype is the tenth encounter for the Fool, indicating that our existence is a dance between fate and free will. This card teaches the lessons of fate, the external world, and how others with more power than us force us to react.

Symbolism: The wheel itself contains numerous symbols of power. At the top is a sphinx with a sword, showing both the mystery and decisiveness of life experience. A serpent is to the left of the wheel, and a demonic looking spirit is to the right, under the wheel. One symbolizes the potential for sudden death and

the other the “wicked” power of free will. Four angelic beings at each corner symbolize the fixed signs of the Zodiac: a lion for Leo, the bull for Taurus, the woman for Aquarius, and the griffin for Scorpio.

Upright: what is inevitable, destiny, and the passage of time

Reversed: misfortune, powerlessness, and unpleasant circumstances

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

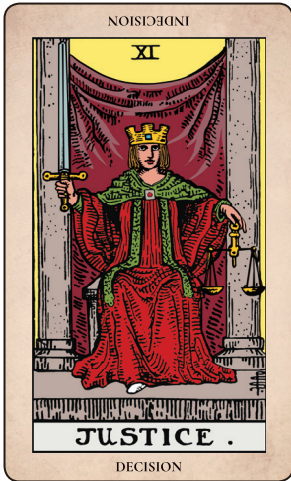
This card is common in our life experiences, so there should be plenty of examples to choose from. I moved many times when I was young because my father changed jobs as he moved up the corporate ladder. The one that stands out the most happened in 1975, when he took a position in Boston, Massachusetts. I was seven at the time and we were living in Greensboro, North Carolina. One day he and my mom informed me that we were moving up north and I had to start packing my room. The same Wheel of Fortune moment happened again in 1980, when they informed me that we were moving back to Greensboro.

◆———— Your Personal Connection with this Card ———◆

When has the Wheel of Fortune turned in your favor, or spun against you; and what did you learn?

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JUSTICE



Meaning: Justice represents detached decision-making, logic, and the power of knowledge outside of emotions. Justice, as an archetype, is the eleventh teacher for the Fool, showing us the importance of objectivity and analysis for determining outcomes and making important decisions. Life can be fair if we act with integrity.

Symbolism: A stern woman sits ready to receive complaints and solve disputes. She holds a scale in one hand, representing fairness and logical analysis, which she will use to make her determinations. The sword in the other hand indicates, that once a decision is made, she will offer a clear and final answer that will be

accepted and honored. Her crown is less ornate than that of the Empress, Emperor, Hierophant, and Chariot, showing that her role is among the people, not leading them.

Upright: detached decision-making, responsibility, consequences, logic, and cause and effect

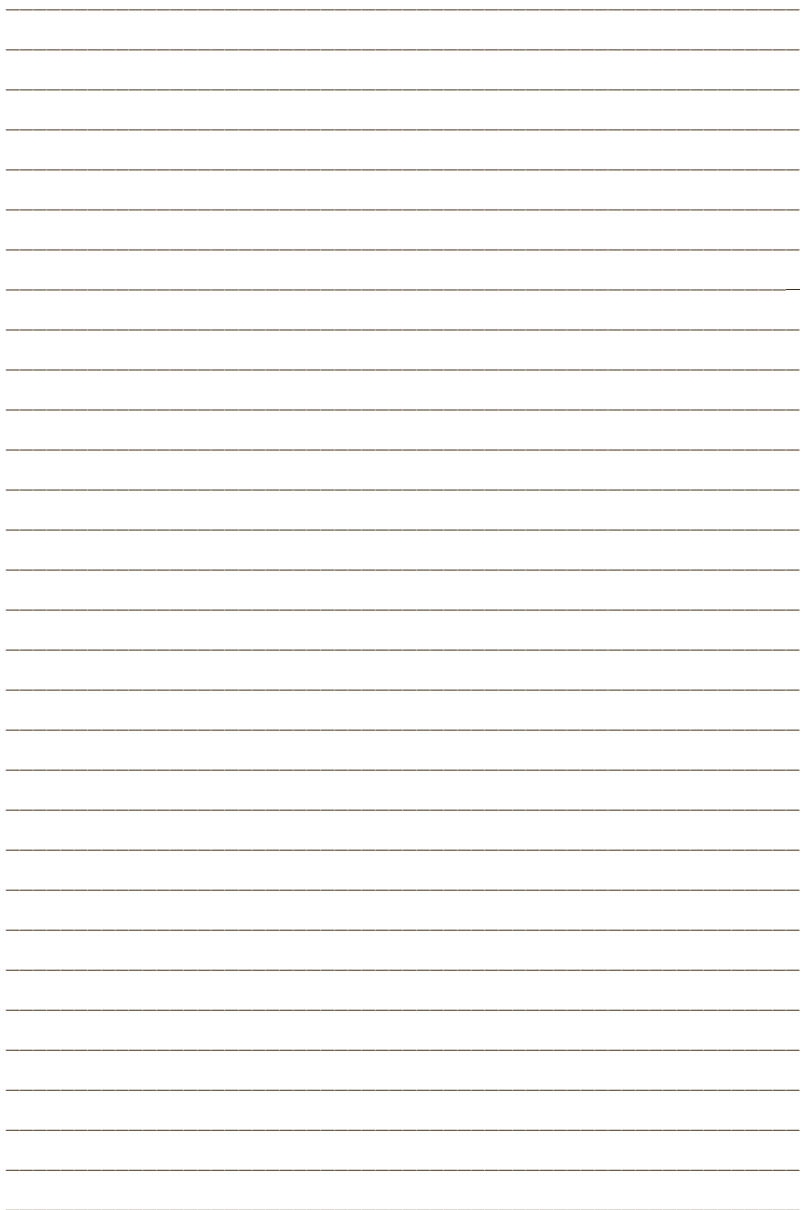
Reversed: injustice, missing information, indecision, and bureaucracy

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

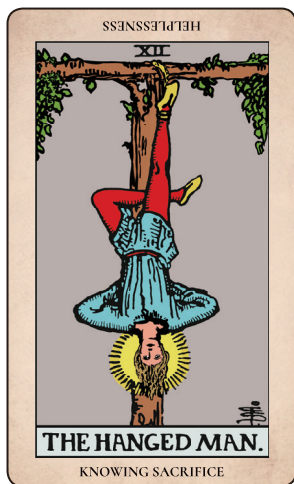
I have come to understand this card through my role as a parent. On numerous occasions my daughter and her friends come to me to help settle a dispute between them. I always did, and do, my best to be fair and objective, especially because I want my daughter to learn what a just and fair solution would and should look like.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When have you had to weigh all the facts and come to a decision, using logic, and not emotion?



THE HANGED MAN



Meaning: The Hanged Man represents knowing sacrifice, when we realize we must accept a short-term difficulty for a long-term gain. The Hanged Man archetype is the twelfth encounter for the Fool, showing us the importance of devotion, surrender, and sacrifice as ways forward that are just as powerful as the willfulness of the Chariot lesson.

Symbolism: A young man hangs upside down, but appears relaxed and calm. He knows he must wait and learn by being patient, as well as by changing his perspective, which is what happens when you view the world from a reversed position. The light around his head symbolizes the insight and wisdom he gains

from his changed viewpoint.

Upright: knowing sacrifice, change in perspective, and patience

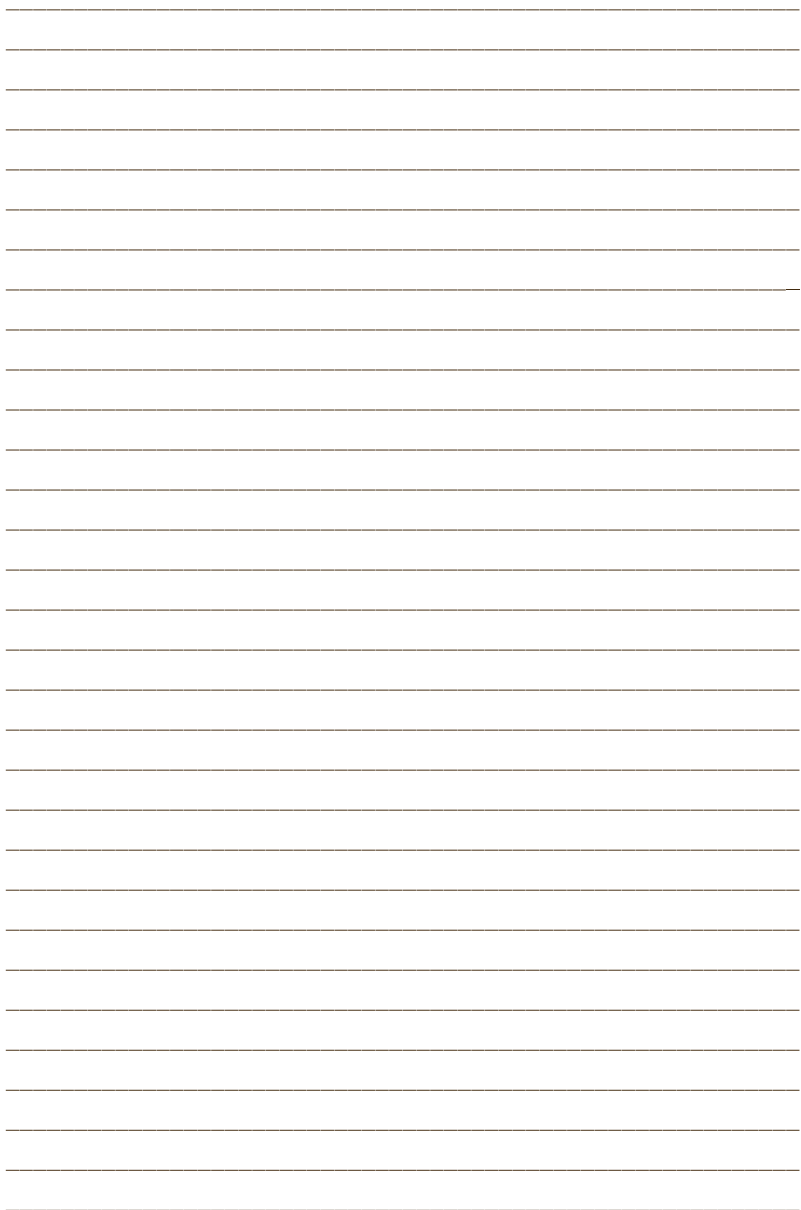
Reversed: helplessness, impatience, confusion, and selfishness

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

For me, when I see this card, I immediately think of parenting. I became a parent in 2005. There are many other ways to know this card, but parenting is one of the most direct. I certainly learned more about the sacrifices my parents made on my behalf once I started making the ones necessary to help my daughter have a good life. In 2007, I retired early from my career at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill to become a stay-at-home parent, literally sacrificing my career in order to take care of my child.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When have you made a knowing sacrifice and what did it teach you?



DEATH



Meaning: Death represents endings in the cycle of life, and the power of regeneration. Death, as an archetype, is the thirteenth encounter for the Fool. This card reminds us that life is finite, which helps us appreciate how well, or poorly, we are doing in our pursuit of life experience and soul growth.

Symbolism: The skeletal figure of death rides across the land collecting souls. No one escapes his visit, as exhibited by a royal man, a priest, a maiden, and a child in the image on the card. His flag has a symbol that is the shape of a rose, representing his role in the cycle of life, also depicted by the rising/setting sun in the background. Death's arrival is always assured,

and rarely welcomed.

Upright: death/rebirth, transformation, inevitability, and cycles

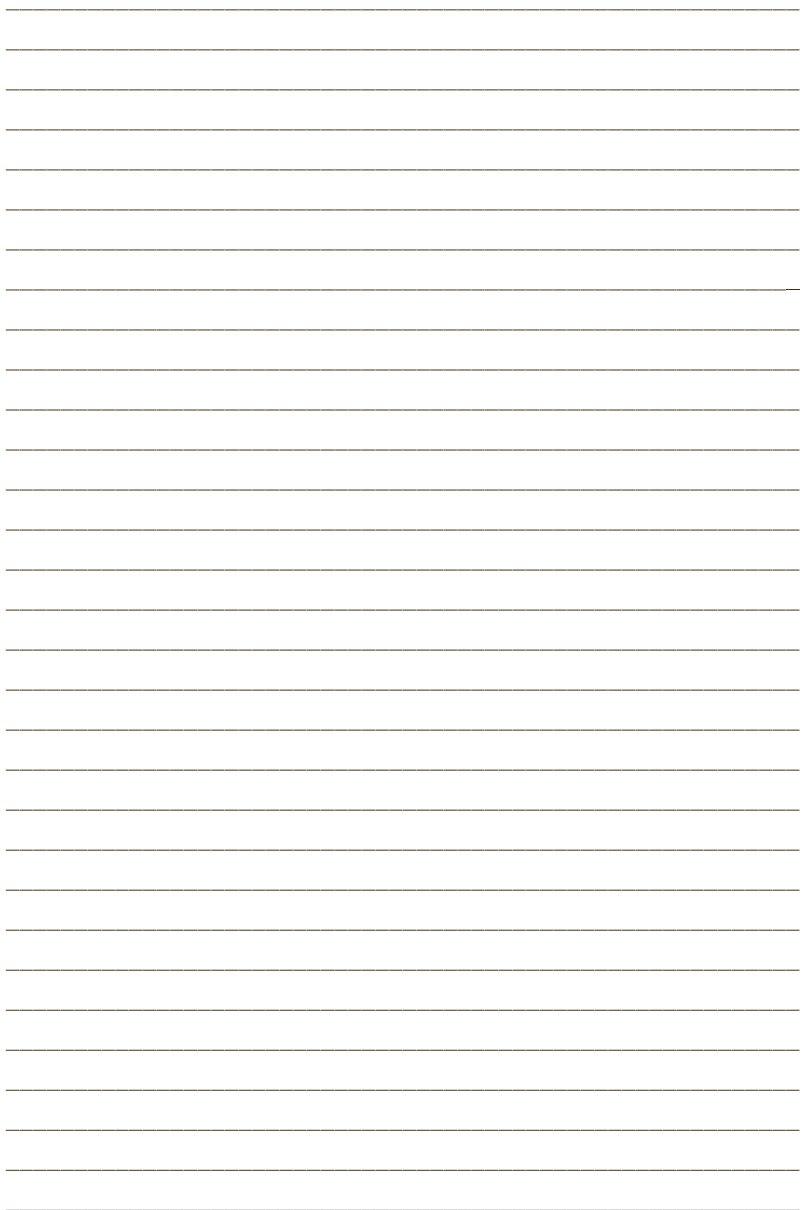
Reversed: arrogance, depression, hopelessness, and severe grief

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

I realize that the death card often represents the death of a situation, or death of a relationship. But it certainly can represent death itself. I was very fortunate to make it into adulthood without the death of my grandparents or my parents. My maternal grandmother was the first of my close family to die, which did not happen until I was almost 30. I can also recall the moment my first marriage died, which is another key event I associate with this card.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When have you faced a death in your life or the death of a situation?



TEMPERANCE



Meaning: Temperance represents balance and equilibrium that has the chance to develop with greater life experience. Temperance, as an archetype, is the fourteenth encounter for the Fool, indicating that we need to step back, from time to time, and assess where we are to determine if we are in or out of balance.

Symbolism: An angel pours water down from one cup into another, and up from the bottom cup to the top cup, which symbolizes the flow of life down to earth and up to heaven. One foot is in the water and one on the land, indicating the connection between emotions/imagination/spirit and the physical/practical/limited world. The sun rising in the background and star-like light behind his head both represent truth and wisdom.

Upright: calm, health, well-being, balance, common ground, and harmonious action

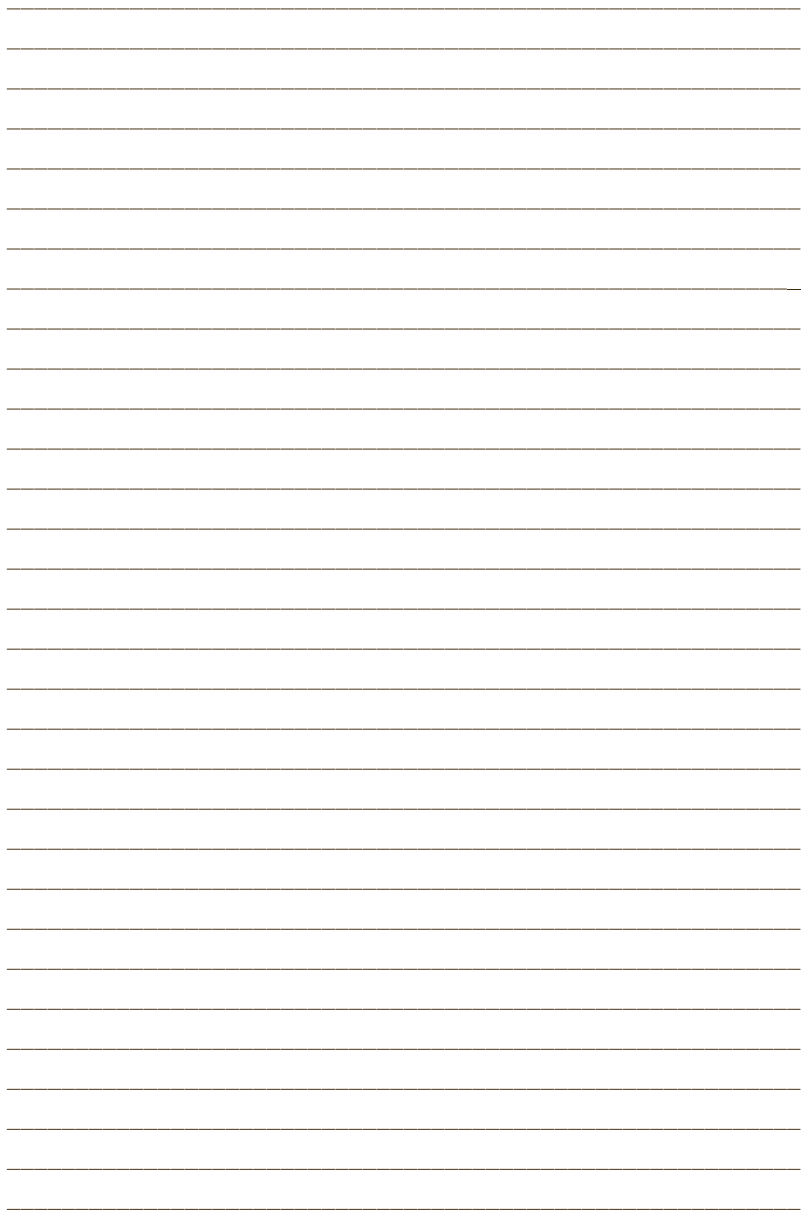
Reversed: imbalance, disruption, anxiety, frustration, and pettiness

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Near the time of my Uranus opposition (41), I had a breakdown, triggered by a severe panic attack that seemed to come out of nowhere. It took me three years to pull myself back out of the depths of that break. In that time, I saw a psychologist who took me through an exercise to help me find calm when I was particularly stressed. She asked me to think of the safest place and time in my life; I thought of my visits with my grandparents when I was a kid. When I was with them, in their mobile home in Clemmons, NC, I was always at peace and blissfully happy.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Where, when, and with whom have you experienced true peace and tranquility?



THE DEVIL



Meaning: The Devil represents consequences we face as our choices become more significant the farther into life we travel. The Devil archetype is the fifteenth encounter for the Fool, teaching us that we are responsible for our lives and our choices. If we make selfish choices that harm others, we will not enjoy the outcomes.

Symbolism: Lucifer Morningstar, the Fallen One, watches human souls make choices that slowly change them into demons. The chains around their necks are loose enough to slip over their heads, but they make no effort to escape. The reversed pentagram shows the victory of matter over spirit, which is the improper order of the soul's development.

Upright: self-interest, temptation, consequences, and choice

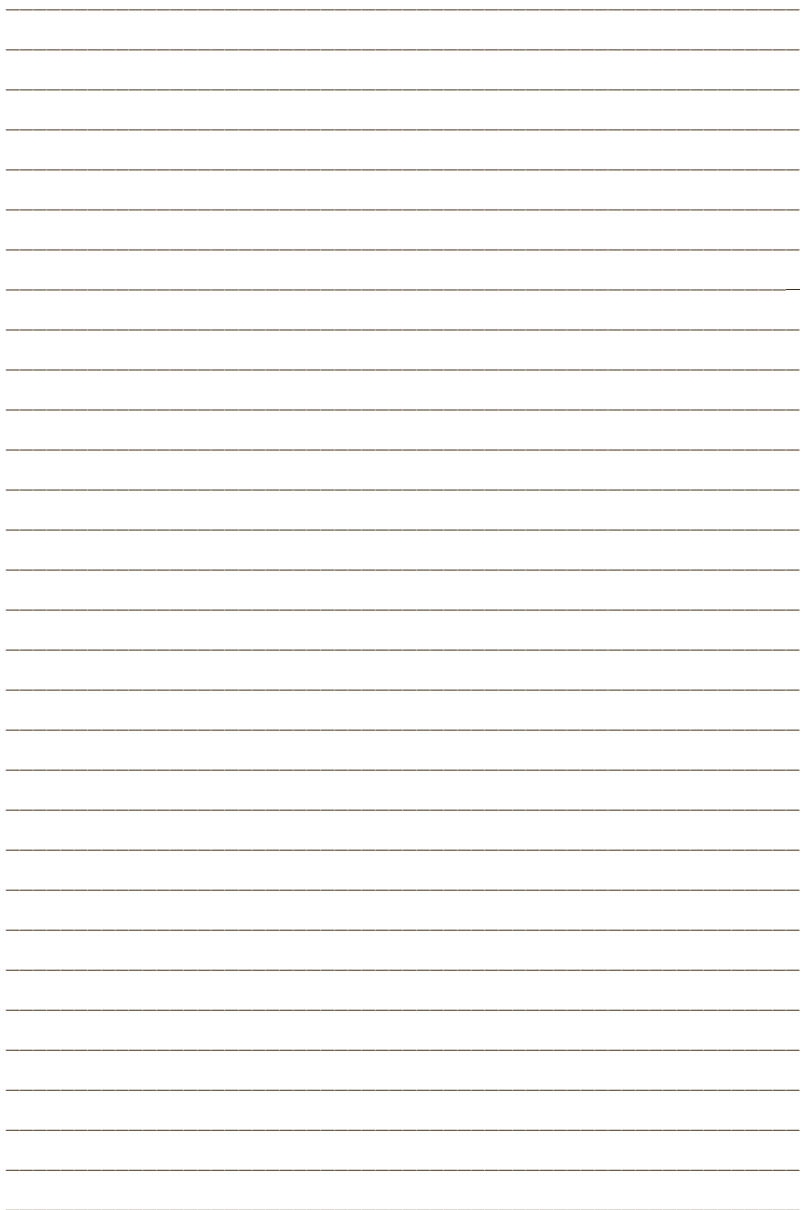
Reversed: unwise choices, lust, wanton abandon, and manipulation

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

My strongest memory of a Devil moment occurred when I was in high school and my grandparents were visiting. I was out with them and we were supposed to attend an event at the school, but I wanted to go to the used bookstore and look for comic books. I knew that my grandparents wouldn't say no, so I asked them to take me to the bookstore. When we did get to the event, my father was angrier than I'd ever seen him. He was specifically upset that I had taken advantage of my grandparents and disregarded my responsibility to be where I was supposed to be when I said I would.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When and how did you pay the price for being selfish?



THE TOWER



Meaning: The Tower represents sudden, unexpected change that takes something we have built over time and quickly forces us to start over or reset. The Tower, as an archetype, is the sixteenth encounter for the Fool, teaching the lesson that life is a construct; it can “blow up” at any time and force us to make unexpected adjustments.

Symbolism: A tower with a crown is struck by lightning and human figures fall from the tower. The dislodged crown symbolizes the inevitable end of any human-made structure. Nothing, and no one, is secure from nature’s wrath, which is a greater force than civilization.

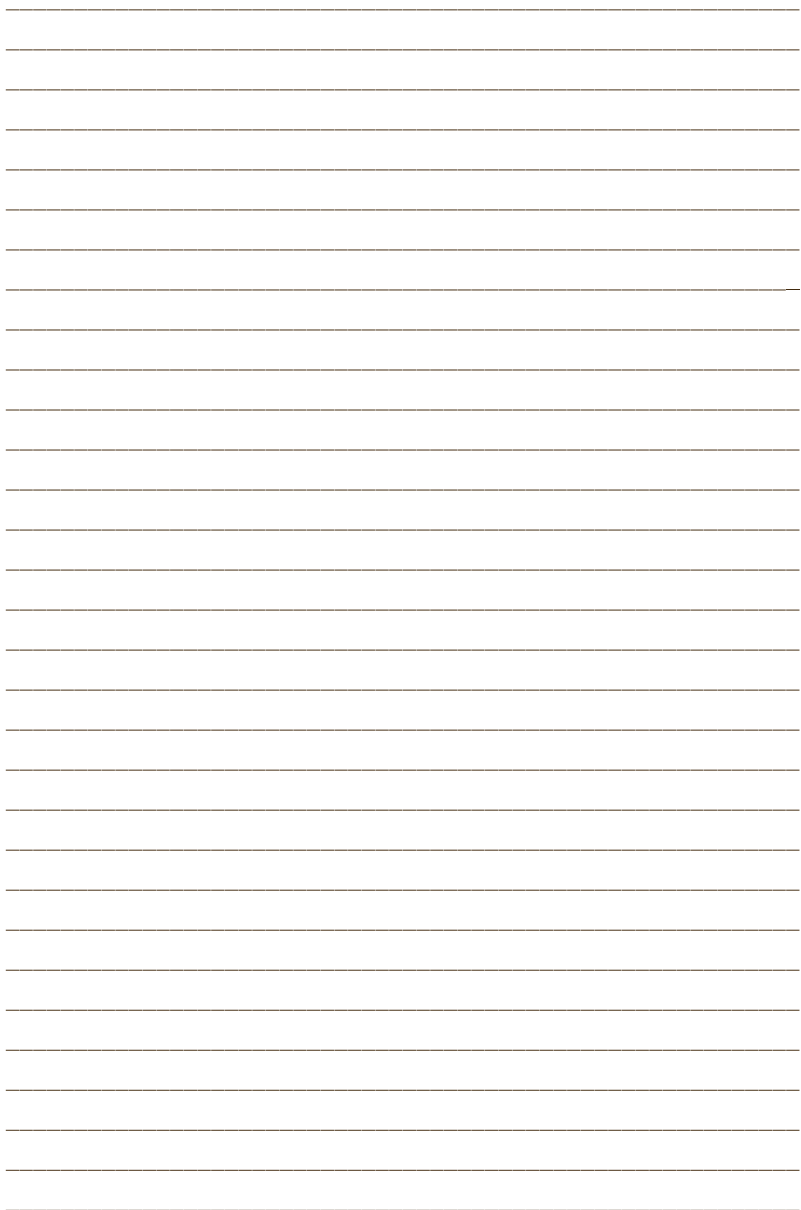
Upright and Reversed: unexpected change, sudden catastrophe, and traditions failing

◆ Author’s Personal Connection with this Card ◆

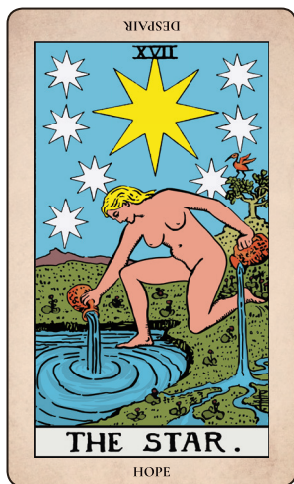
At the time that I hit a rock bottom period in my life I was unemployed and a stay-at-home father needing to get back to work. To try and shift gears in my career, I applied to a Master’s program in social work. I already possessed a PhD in English and was an employee of the university where I applied for the program. I did not get in! I remember the shock of reading the denial email and feeling this card immediately. As is so often the case with a Tower moment, being rejected turned out to be blessing in the long run, even though it “blew me up” that day.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When have you blown a situation up, or been “blown up” by a circumstance?



THE STAR



Meaning: The Star represents hope, and vision for the future. What do we see as our life's purpose and how do we get to it? The Star, as an archetype, is the seventeenth encounter for the Fool, indicating that we need hope and optimism for the future. We need to have dreams to enjoy this life.

Symbolism: A nude young woman pours water into a pool and onto the land while kneeling beneath a guiding star. The star is her hope, and pouring water into the pool and onto the land shows the connection between the physical and spiritual worlds. Her nudity symbolizes innocence. The fertile land, the healthy tree, and the bird represent life and renewal.

Upright: hope, inspiration, promise, purpose, and faith

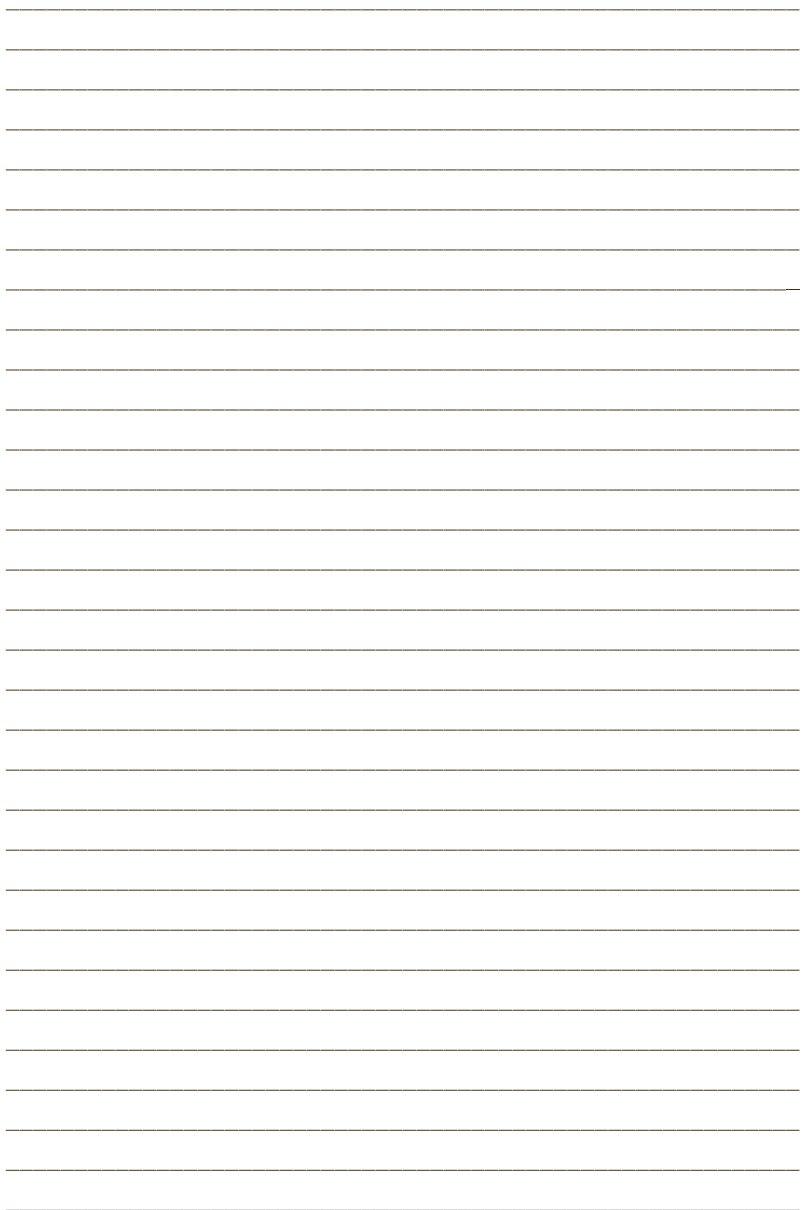
Reversed: doubts, confusion, delusion, and despair

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Of my many Star moments, one that I enjoy connecting to this card is the process of self-publishing my astrology book through Balboa Press. I had long dreamed of writing an astrology book, and my daughter's mother gifted me a publishing package, which I turned into the book *Astrology Unlocked*. Not all dreams manifest, but this one did, and is out in the world, and I am very happy to know I envisioned it and completed it.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What dream or vision have you manifested that is the best representation of this card?



THE MOON



Meaning: The Moon represents the feelings we need to explore and express. The Moon, as an archetype, is the eighteenth encounter for the Fool, illuminating our deepest feelings so we can understand the emotional framework that gets reinforced, suppressed, and shaped by our family and closest relationships.

Symbolism: A full moon with a woman's face inside rests in the top middle of the card, inside of the shining Sun, emphasizing that her light comes from the Sun. The moon sits between two pillars and a dog and a wolf over a waterway leading to the ocean. This position indicates our need to balance and navigate our emotions. The lobster is a shelled creature representing our need to keep our emotions protected with a hard outer casing.

Upright: dreams, positive emotions, intuition, and soul purpose

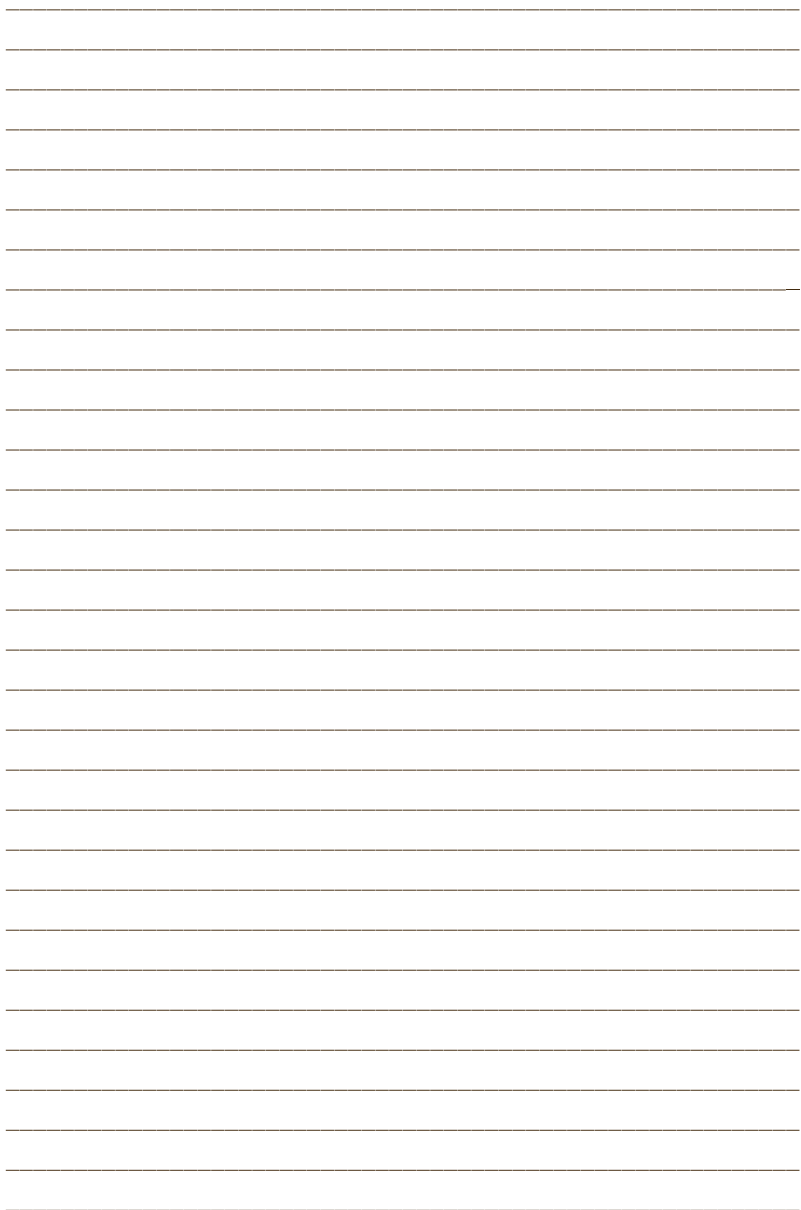
Reversed: delusion, nightmares, negative emotions, and despair

Author's Personal Connection with this Card

The Moon card represents our connection with our emotions and the experiences that most deeply affect us. When I think of the Lovers card, I connect it with the person I love. When I think about the feeling of love the person creates and shares with me, I think of this card, and the mysteries of the Moon. I was present at the birth of my daughter, which represented an intense moment of the Moon's energy that began when her mother told me she was pregnant, and continues to this day every time an important milestone comes and goes in our lives.

Your Personal Connection with this Card

What is one of your most profound emotional experiences?



THE SUN



Meaning: The Sun represents revelation and the light of truth. The Sun, as an archetype, is the nineteenth teacher for the Fool. It teaches us the lesson of honest revelation and how to deal with clear truths in our lives. What do you learn when you see a situation, or a person, for what they really are?

Symbolism: The stern-faced sun looks down upon a boy, riding a horse, in front of a wall with sunflowers growing in the background; his standard is a long red cloth, indicating the power of the life-giving star and promise of youth. His nudity symbolizes innocence, and his flower crown represents his potential power.

Upright: revelation, greatness, vitality, and truth

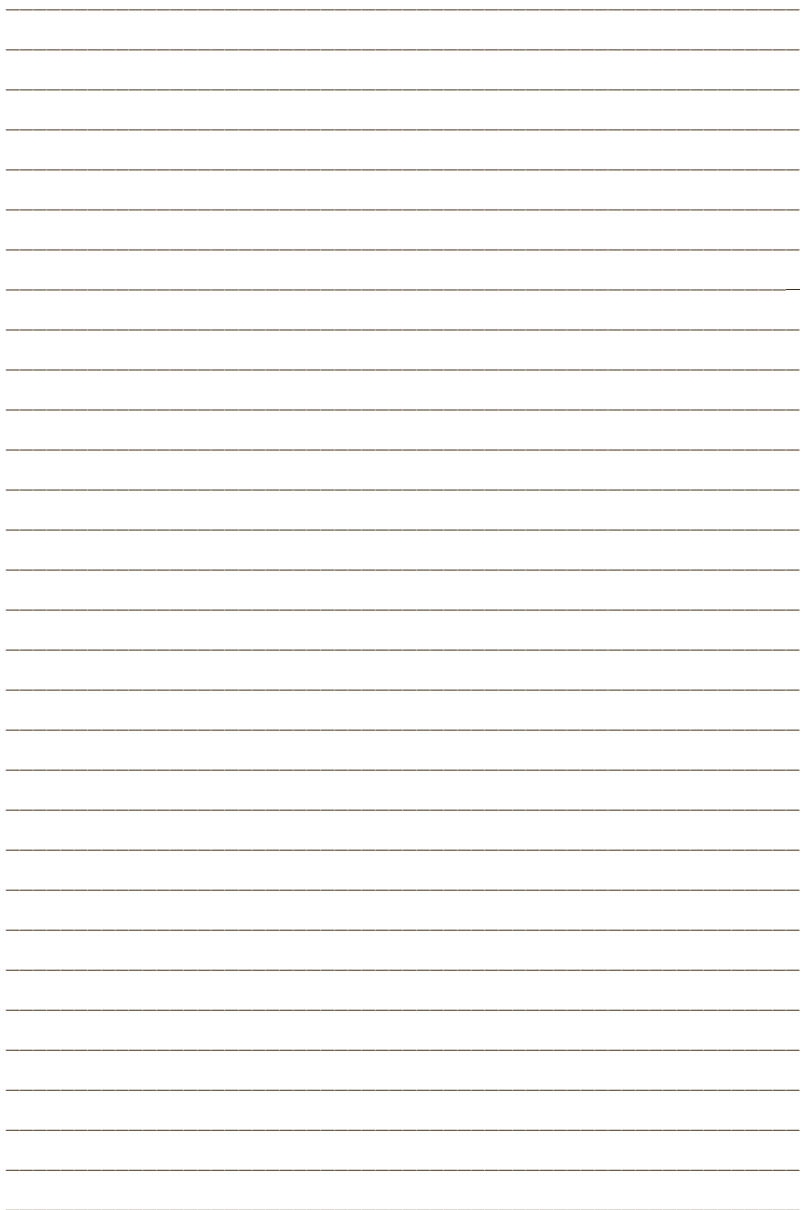
Reversed: excessive pride, arrogance, blocked action, and lies

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

The Sun is about revelation, and understanding the unvarnished truth. The revelation I will choose for this example has to do with the birth of my daughter and becoming a father. A good friend once asked me, “what do you wish you had known before you became a father?” And my answer was, “that I will never be ‘turned off.’” I was at her birth, and the moment she arrived and cried out, I knew I would never pass a day without a thought or concern for her well-being.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What event or moment or conversation brought a revelation to your understanding of your life?



JUDGEMENT



Meaning: Judgement represents significant and life-changing decisions, as well as the judgements from the world around us. Judgement, as an archetype, is the twentieth lesson for the Fool, teaching us the need to use all we have learned through encounters with others, and the lessons we need to make the most important choices in life.

Symbolism: An angel blows her trumpet to call the departed souls for judgment. They answer her call, as they must, and will be judged to determine if they are to be punished or rewarded.

Upright: deciding for others, being judged, consequences, and closure

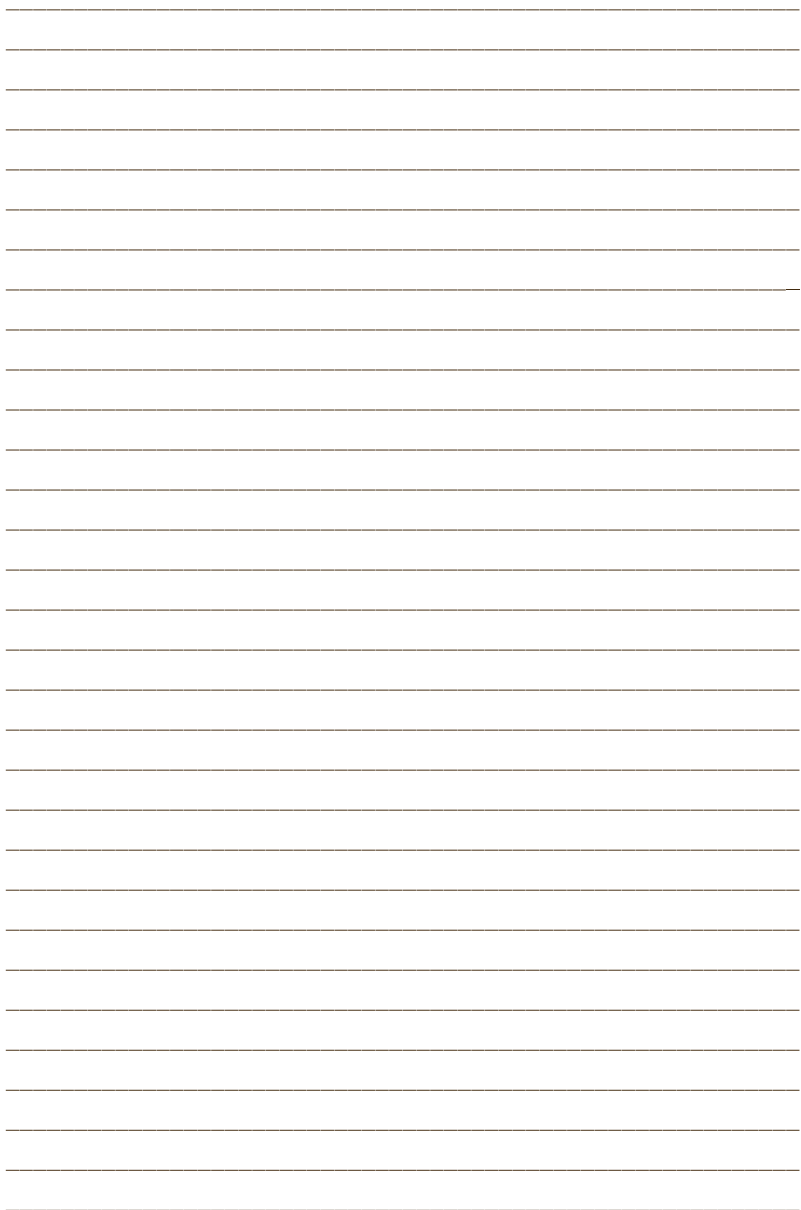
Reversed: prejudging, stereotyping, lazy thinking, and abuse of power

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Without a doubt, my dissertation defense and being awarded my doctorate in 1996 stands out as one the most profound moments of Judgment in my life. The culmination of twenty-two years of academic work reached a successful conclusion, which is not as guaranteed as you might think. I knew examples of candidates who did not successfully defend their dissertation, and were denied their degree. Thankfully, I was not one of them. On the day of my defense, a committee of four tenured professors judged me to be fit to hold the title of Doctor of Philosophy in English.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What event or moment or conversation brought a revelation to your understanding of your life?



THE WORLD



Meaning: The World represents the ending of a cycle to prepare for a new, repeating journey for the Fool (us.) The World, as an archetype, is the twenty-first encounter for the Fool, showing us that life is constantly changing, and we are meant to build on our experiences. In this ending is another beginning.

Symbolism: A semi-nude woman dances in the middle of a garland of vines, having reached the end of a process. The heads of the beasts and the face of the woman represent the four fixed signs of the Zodiac: the bull for Taurus, the lion for Leo, the eagle for Scorpio, and the woman for Aquarius. These fixed signs symbolize the stability needed for new disruptions to begin,

ushered in by the return of the Fool (the zero card).

Upright: fulfillment, completion, conclusion, the sum of your efforts, and success

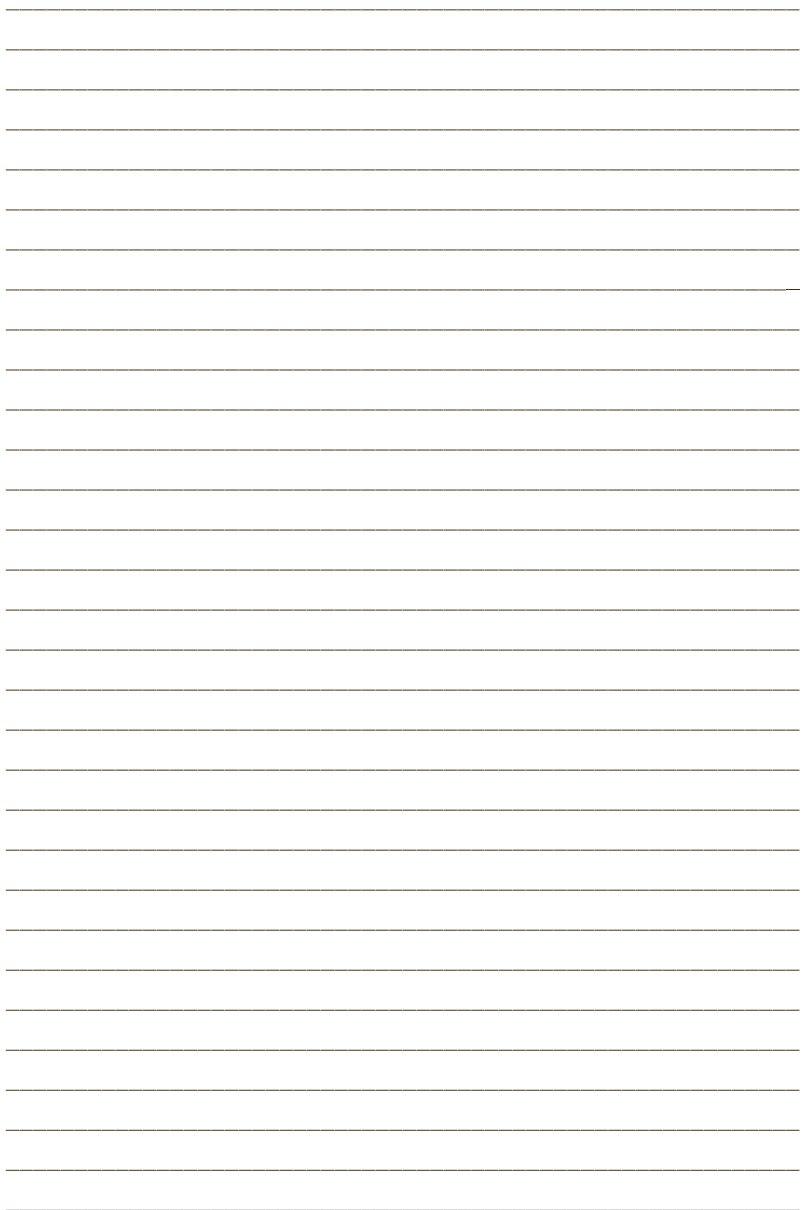
Reversed: stagnation, failure, and final obstacle

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

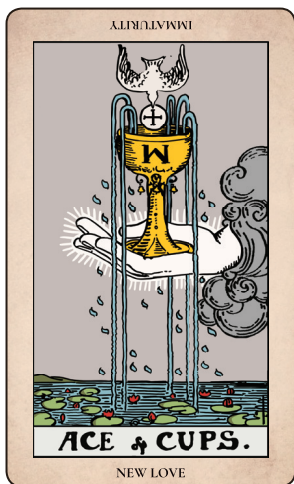
The world represents the ending of a large cycle and most of us will experience such a conclusion in our education, whether we pass from one grade to another or from one level of education to another, from middle school to high school or high school to the work world or college. The transition from high school to college is the one that stands out the most for me. I can recall my graduation and then my first day on campus at college as my movement through the world card; I left the world of high school to enter the world of college.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When did you graduate from one world (of understanding) and go into another world?



ACE OF CUPS



Meaning: Open your heart to a new relationship or reinvigorate an old one.

Symbolism: A divine hand holds a cup above the land; the water pouring out nourishes the land. A dove delivers a silver coin that will be dropped in the cup, indicating abundance.

Upright: new love, and new emotional connection

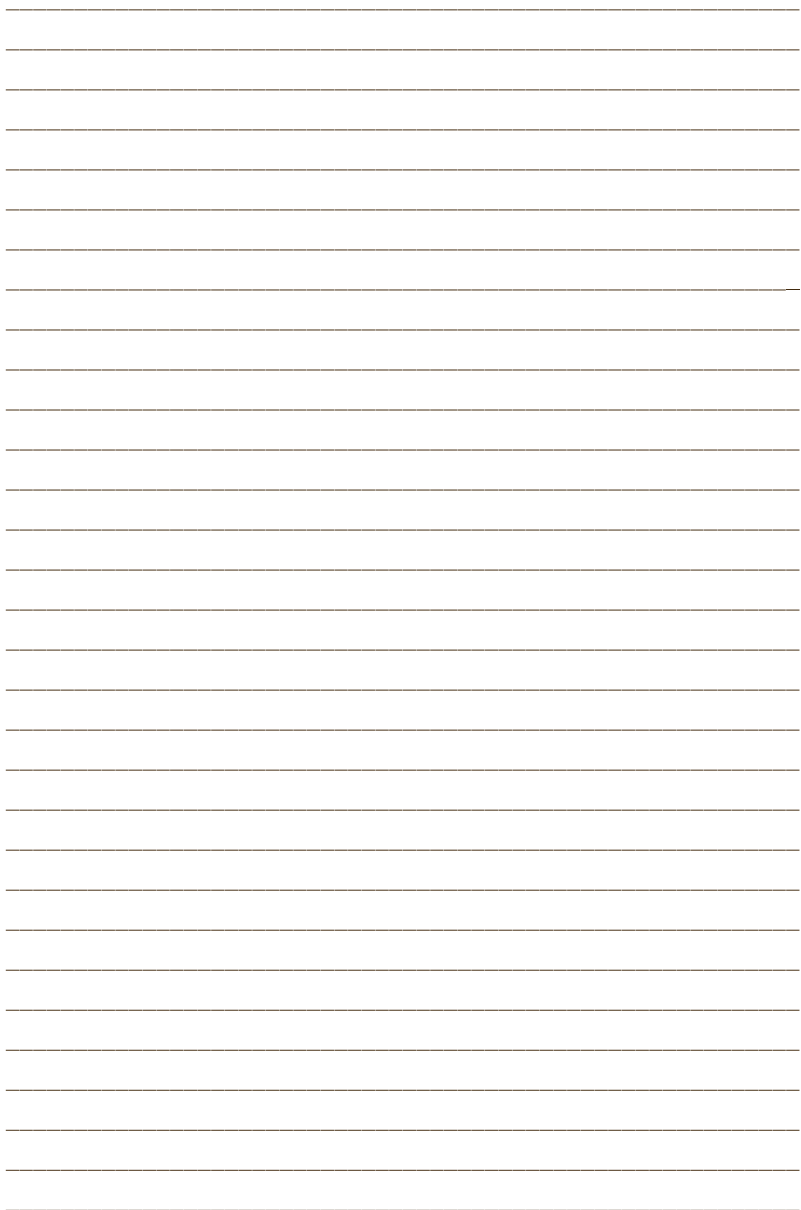
Reversed: misplaced feelings towards someone, and emotional immaturity

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

We have a lot of emotional firsts throughout our life, with many coming in rapid succession very early in life, and in adolescence. I associate this card with each time I met someone who triggered a strong emotional reaction in me, for good or ill. I can easily recall the moment I met my wife at an astrology conference in Athens, GA, that very first moment of connection that would one day lead to our marriage.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What is your best memory of a first connection with someone who made you feel a strong emotion?



TWO OF CUPS



Meaning: Enjoy a mutual attraction and shared positive feelings with someone.

Symbolism: Two lovers hold hands and exchange cups and vows, while a spirit animal watches over the ceremonial connection. The caduceus of Hermes is between the cups, symbolizing a contract or negotiation underway.

Upright: attraction, and connection

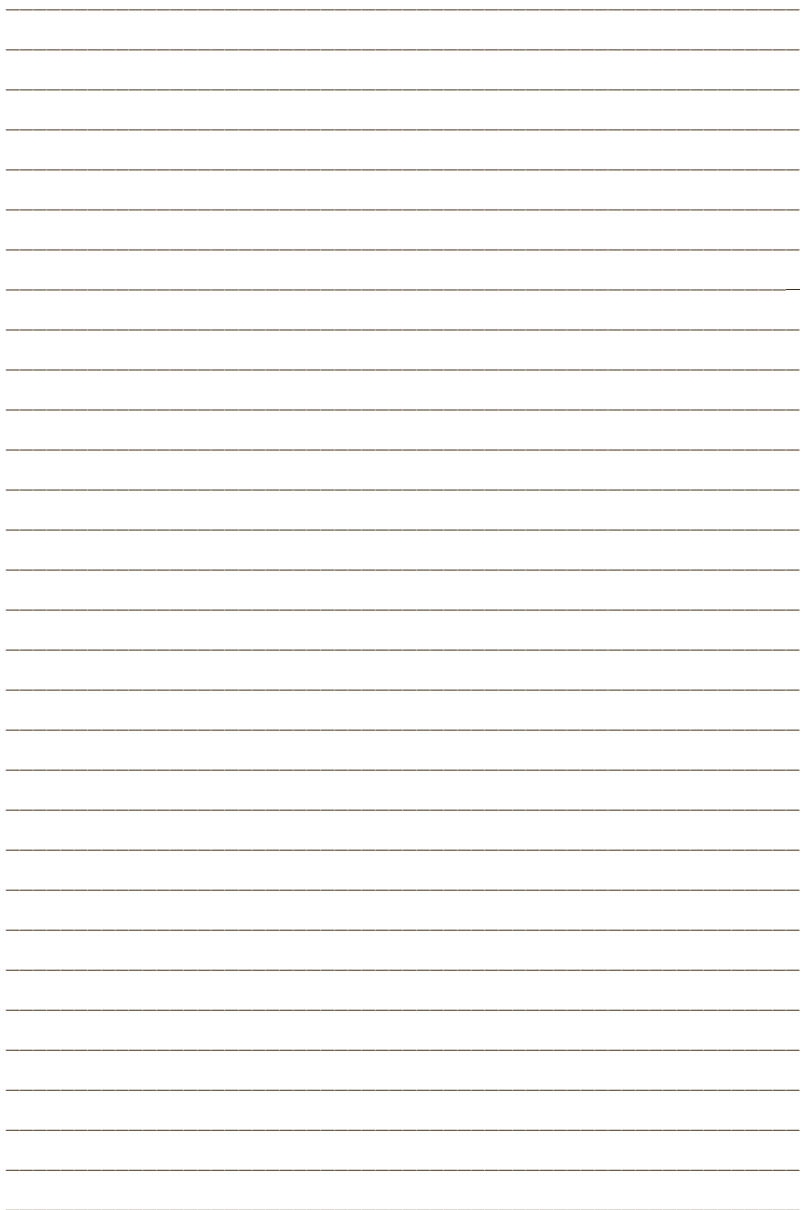
Reversed: unrequited love, and rejection

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Ah, the dance of courtship and flirting, that is the energy of this card. I have been fortunate to have numerous dating and flirting opportunities; hopefully, you have as well. I can remember the first months dating my daughter's mother and how much fun it was to connect and get to know each other. This card always reflects a budding relationship, a time when we share our emotional selves with someone in an intimate way.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Who did you court or who courted you?



THREE OF CUPS



Meaning: Gather your closest friends and celebrate something ... anything!

Symbolism: Three women dance in celebration, showing their appreciation for life. The grapes and pumpkins represent abundance.

Upright: celebration, and sharing

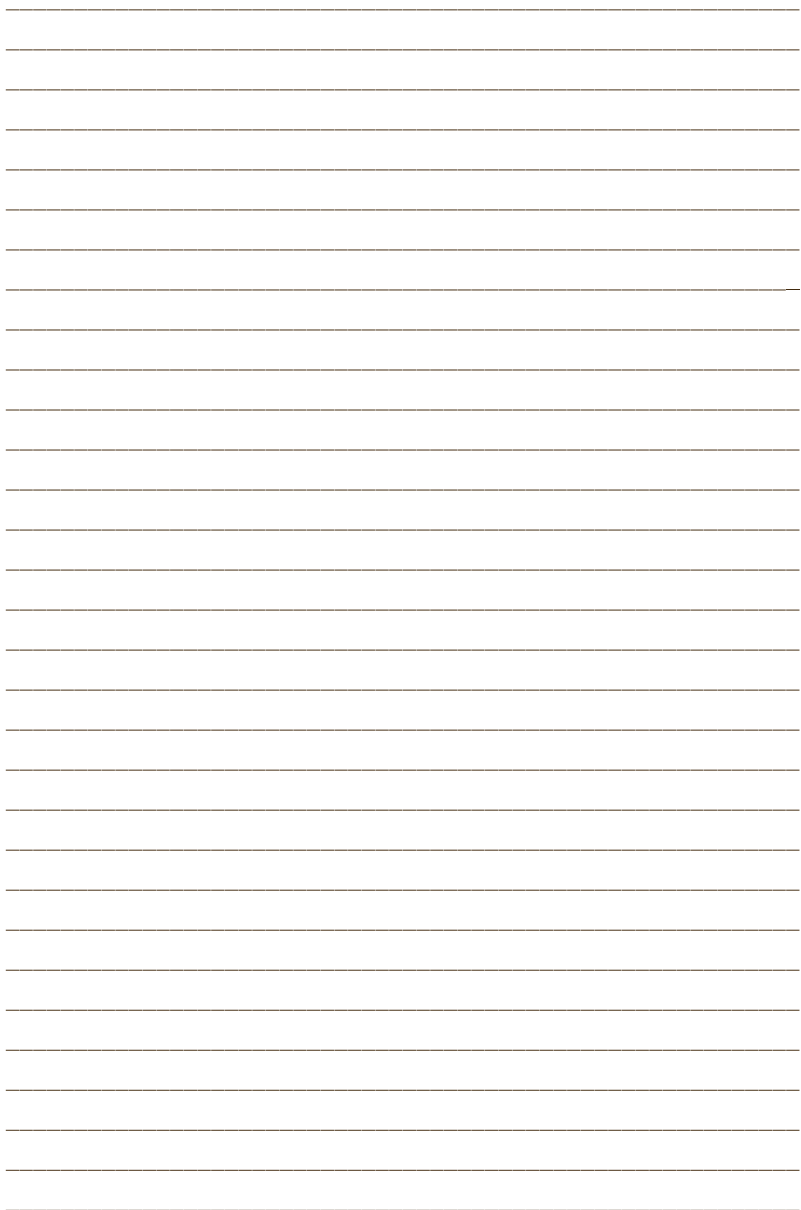
Reversed: overindulgence, and discord

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

There are several celebrations, large and small, that I can easily connect to this card. The one I will share here is the party celebrating my graduation with my Master's degree. I was working as a bar manager at the time; the gathering included my classmates, co-workers, family, and the patrons who knew me throughout the years I bartended while working on my degree. It was a wonderful event, and a perfect example of this card's energy.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What is one of your favorite celebrations, and who was there celebrating with you?



FOUR OF CUPS



Meaning: Find some time to meditate, or at least rest; your emotions need soothing.

Symbolism: A man contemplates three cups in front of him while a divine hand delivers a new need he will have to address but does not yet see, feel, or understand.

Upright: rest, and meditation

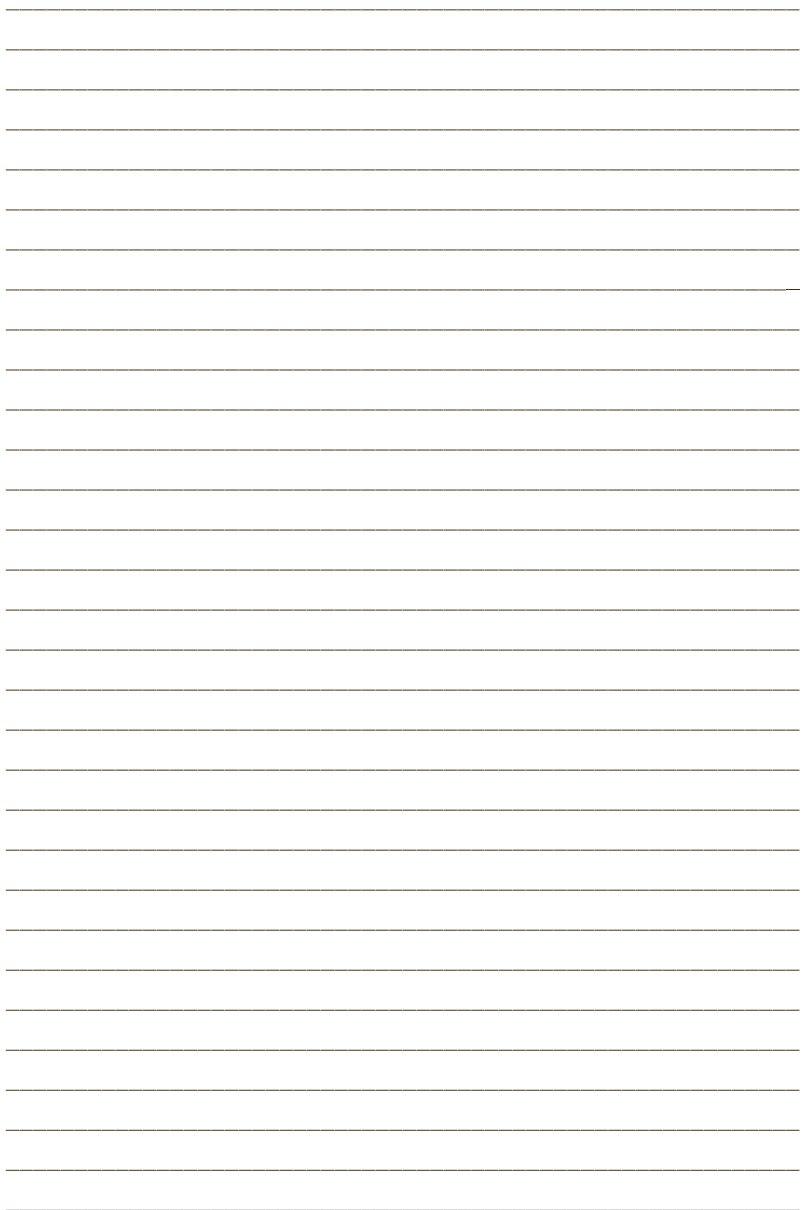
Reversed: boredom, and isolation

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Because of the nature of my work, spiritual advising, it is important for me to have periods of reflection, contemplation, and meditation. I do have a favorite park nearby that I like to go to and just be. I sit on a bench, and reflect on my current circumstances, where I usually come to a deeper understanding about my life or a situation. It was during such a moment, in my mid-thirties, that I realized I was ready to become a parent. It was a new emotional experience for me.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

In a moment of peace and contemplation, what new emotional insight did you discover or have revealed to you?



FIVE OF CUPS



Meaning: You have a disappointment you must accept; hidden possibilities have not revealed themselves yet.

Symbolism: A man in mourning stares down at three spilled cups; behind him are two cups that he is unaware of; they are still upright. He does not realize it yet, but all is not lost.

Upright: disappointment, and sadness from loss

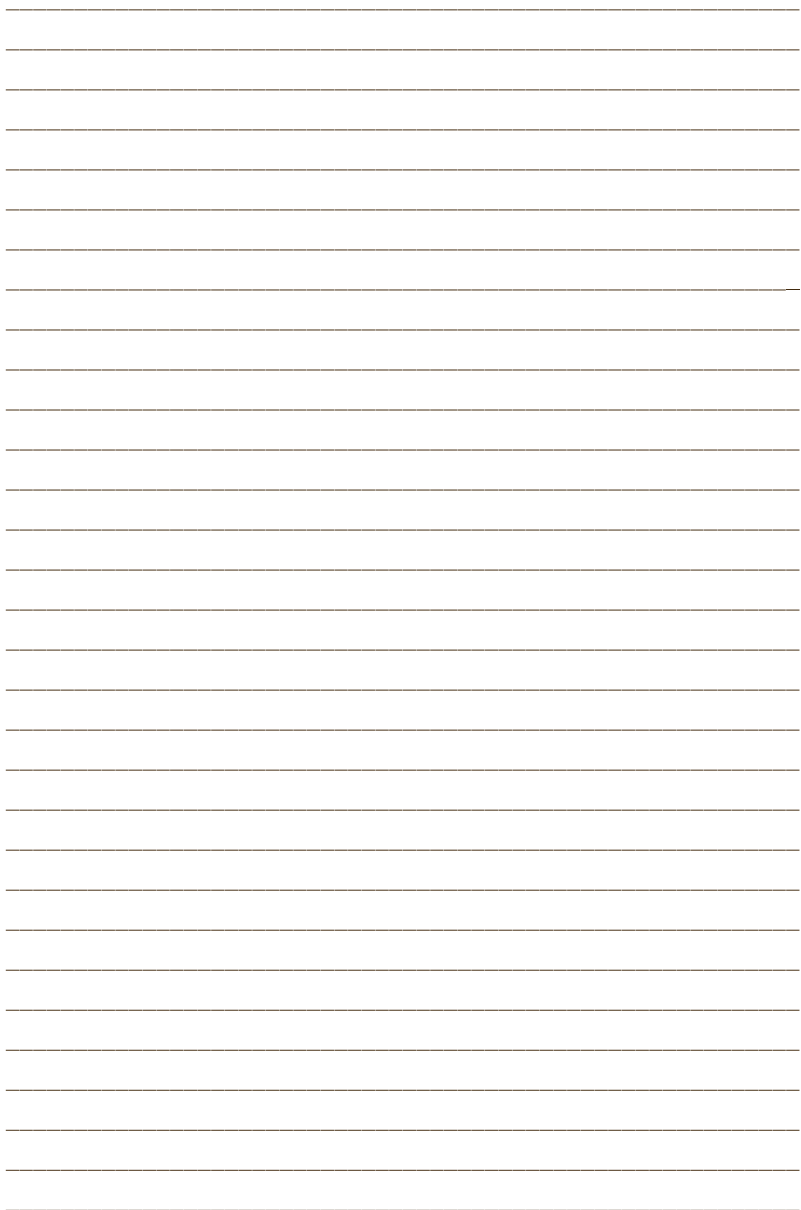
Reversed: depression, and despair

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

To me, this card represents every relationship that caused me heartache at the time, only for me to realize later that the universe had bailed me out. The moment I will share here involves my first love, a woman I met in college. We became very close very quickly, and just when the relationship was getting serious, she told me she had a boyfriend back home and did not want to lie to me anymore. I was an utter wreck for six months, to the point where it affected my grades. Eventually, I moved on and realized how lucky I was that she broke my heart when she did and not later when we would have been even more deeply entangled with each other.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What is a disappointment you experienced that you now see as a necessary gift?



SIX OF CUPS



Meaning: Reach out to someone you care about and share a memory or create a new one.

Symbolism: A young man gives a cup to a young girl so they can both feel the joy of sharing.

Upright: happy memories, sharing, and the positive legacy of childhood

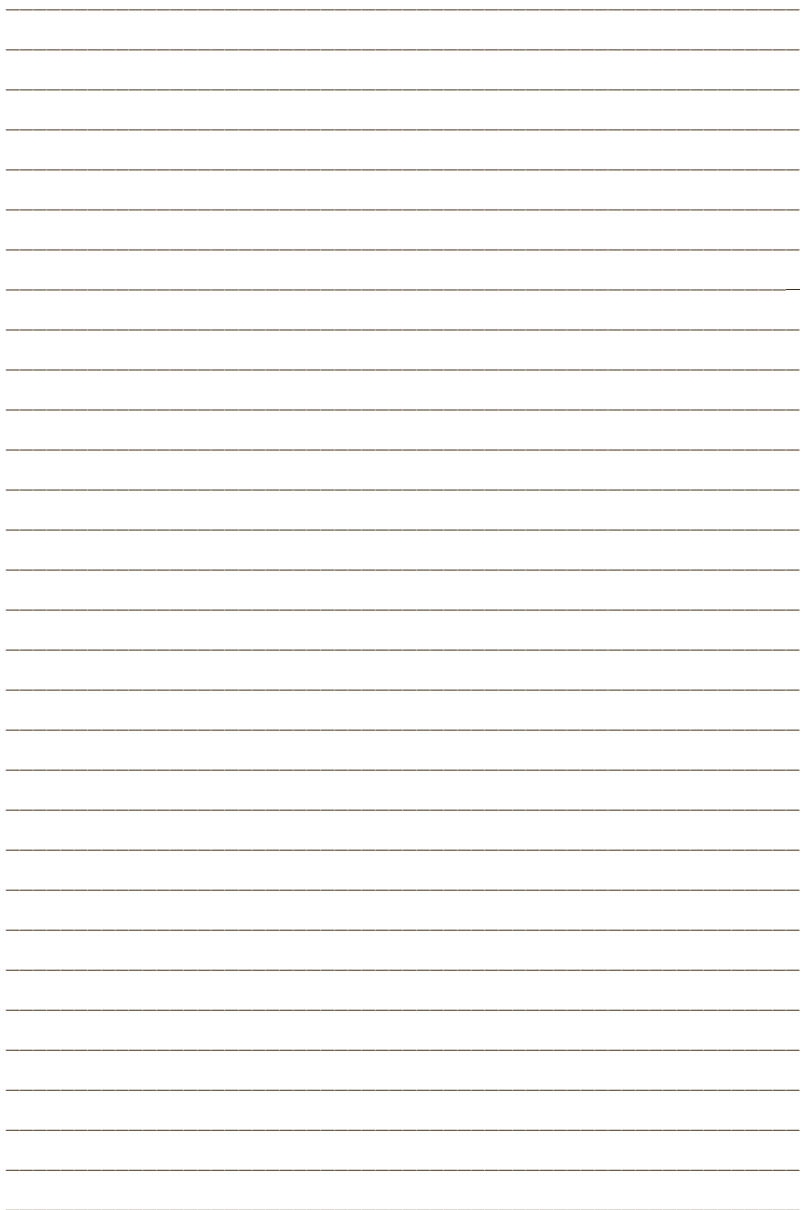
Reversed: unhappy memories, greediness, and the negative legacy of childhood

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

I moved many times when I was young, so I did not have many lasting friendships until I reached middle school and high school. Among the friends I met and made in those years, two of them were comic book collectors like me. Every weekend one of our mothers would take us to the comic book shop so we could buy our books and spend time hanging out with other collectors and store owners. Any time I visit a comic book store now, I recall those memories, and those happy days.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Write about one of your happiest childhood memories.



SEVEN OF CUPS



Meaning: You have an important decision, and you need to know what motivates you to make the choice you want or need to make.

Symbolism: A man has many choices before him, so he needs to select the cup containing what he desires most.

Upright: choices, and motivations

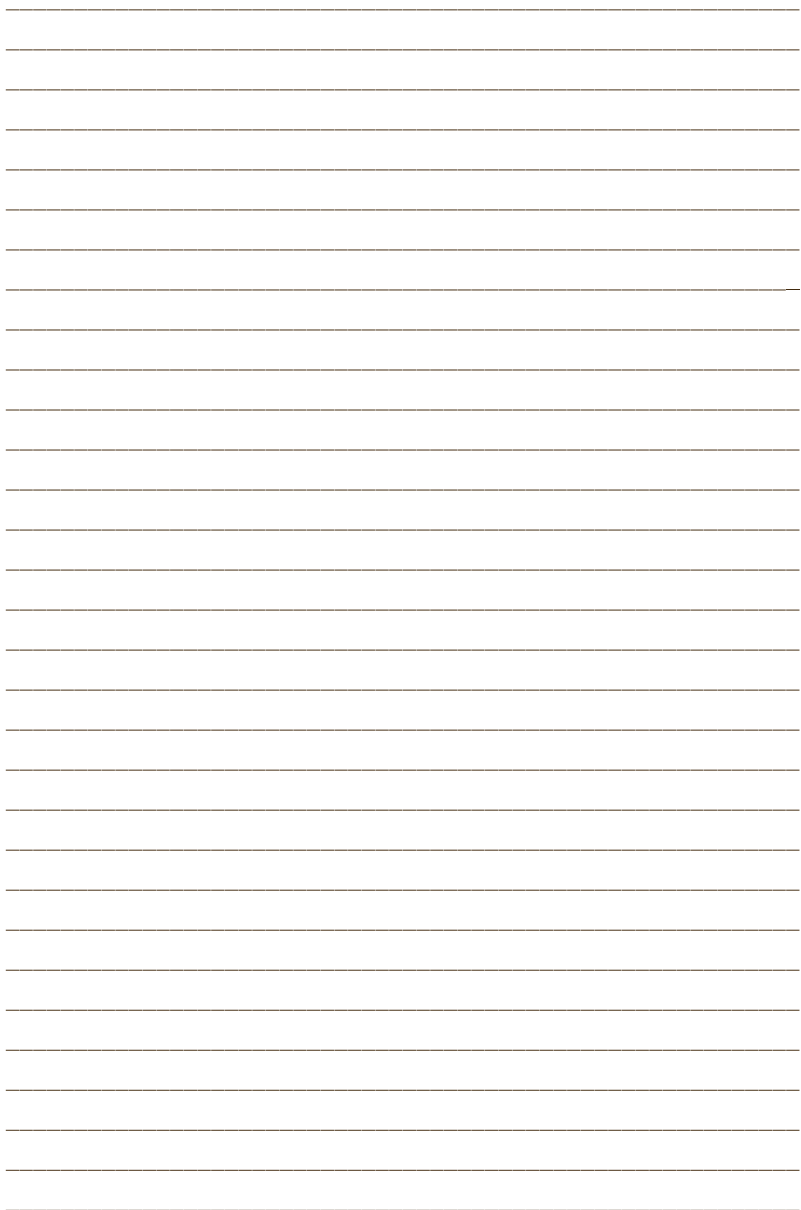
Reversed: wishful thinking, and inaction

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Because my academic career was quite long, I had numerous moments when I had to make significant emotional decisions based on my personal motivations. After graduating with my four-year degree in History, and working over the summer for my father in his residential construction business, I had to make a choice about working for him permanently, with the goal of running the family business, or going to graduate school and furthering my education. I chose the latter. It was certainly the right decision for me.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What motivates most of your choices?



EIGHT OF CUPS



Meaning: You must let go of something or someone that was once emotionally important to you, but no longer has any value; the relationship or situation is empty.

Symbolism: A man walks away from eight cups, leaving behind unwanted and empty relationships that filled his life with joy a long time ago.

Upright: letting go, and moving on

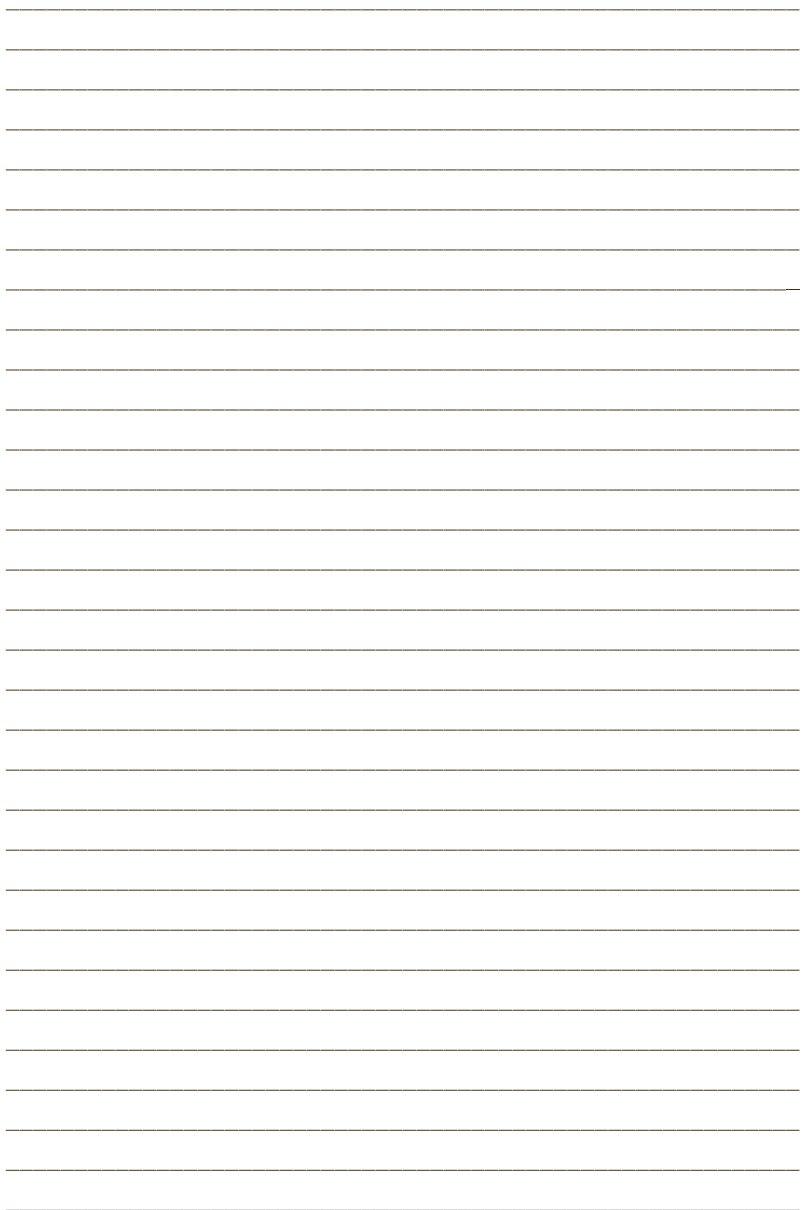
Reversed: denial, and attempts at bargaining for something now worthless

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

This card always makes me think of my first marriage and how it went on longer than it should have. I can remember the exact moment when I knew it needed to end, but I stayed in it for many years after that revelation, much to the detriment of myself and my wife. It was certainly the many years and life we built together (the eight cups getting filled up) that made it hard to leave when it became apparent that those cups were no longer filled with positive emotion. They eventually became empty and it was necessary to leave.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What was one of the hardest relationships or situations to let go of and leave behind?



NINE OF CUPS



Meaning: Embrace and accept what truly makes you happy. Your fulfillment is most important right now.

Symbolism: An accomplished man sits satisfied in front of nine cups, which symbolize the fulfillment that comes with successful work.

Upright: contentment, and self-satisfaction

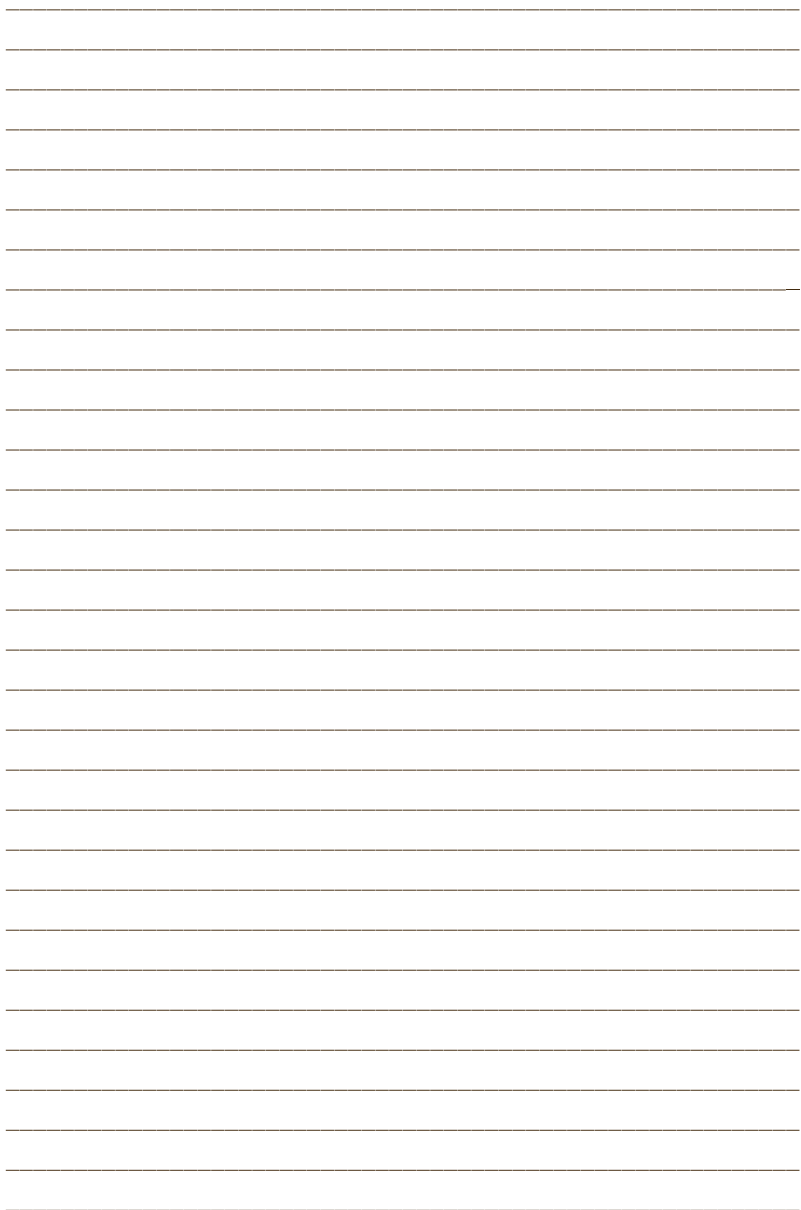
Reversed: arrogance, and selfishness

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

I do find that life is an ebb and flow of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, but there are also key moments of achievement that can reflect this card. Without a doubt, achieving my PhD is one of my personal best examples of this card. It was a twenty-two-year journey that began in 1975 and ended in 1996, and I am proud of what I accomplished.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Write about one of your greatest moments of personal satisfaction.



TEN OF CUPS



Meaning: Profound joy in relationship is what you need, or need to appreciate (if you have it). Happiness with a partner is key.

Symbolism: A man and woman embrace while their children play under a rainbow. Ten cups align along the rainbow; their life is full and joyous.

Upright: mature love, and blessed union

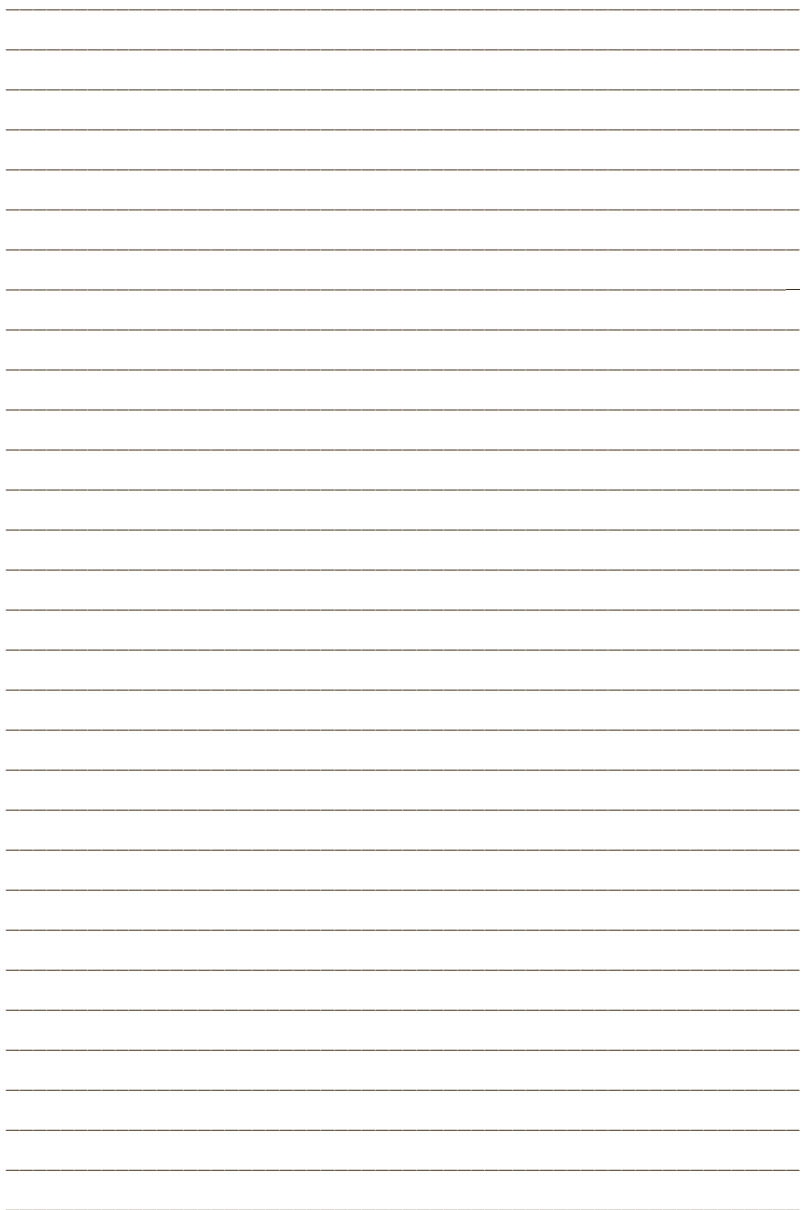
Reversed: disagreements, and unhappiness in relationship

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

This card is wonderful to experience, and it would be fantastic if we could remain in this kind of energy endlessly. But life weaves us in and out of happiness and unhappiness over the course of our journey. If you have children, then hopefully you will have moments in your family that mirror this card. When I see this card, I think of the first years of my relationship with my daughter's mother, when we were building a life together, choosing to have a family, and rejoicing in the birth of our daughter. Those were very happy times, indeed.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Describe one of your happiest moments with your family.



PAGE OF CUPS



Meaning: Emotions flow wildly; you need to learn proper boundaries.

Symbolism: A young man looks at a fish in his cup, which symbolizes imagination, and the need for him to understand and express his emotions.

Upright: imagination, curiosity, and charisma

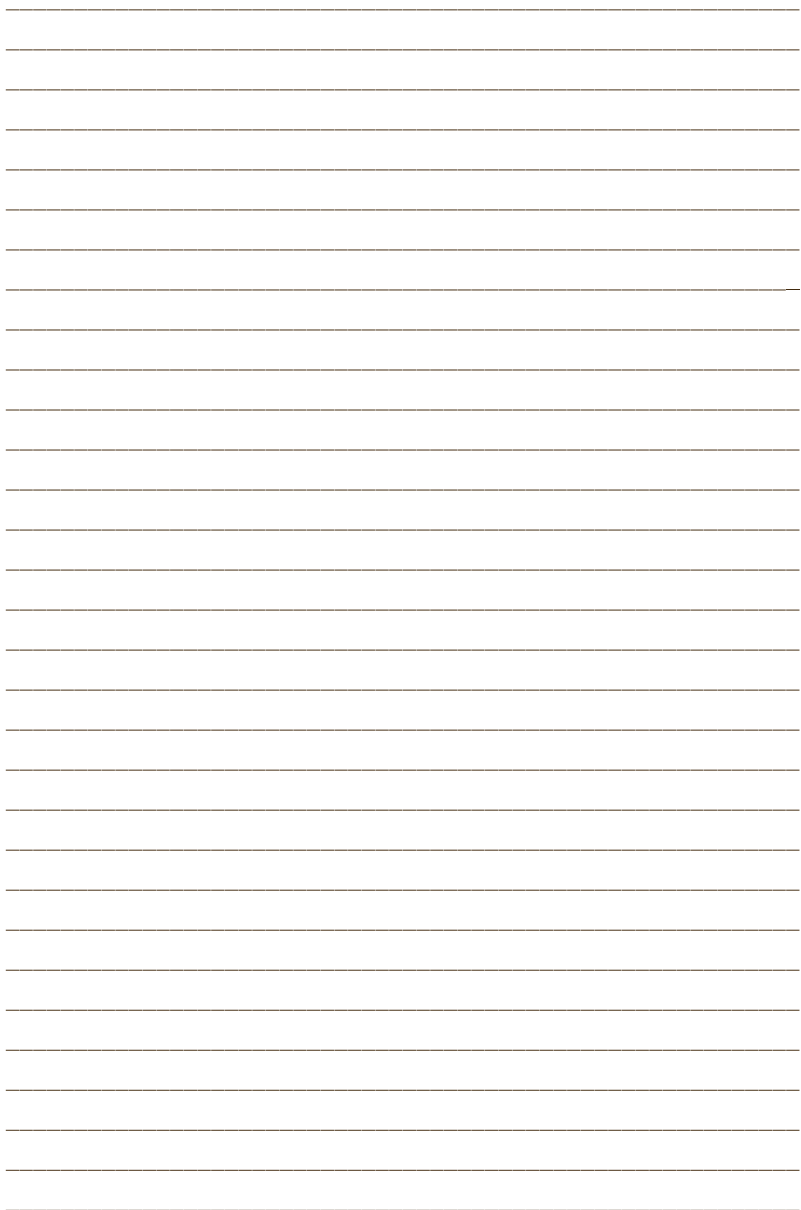
Reversed: emotionally stunted, and confused

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

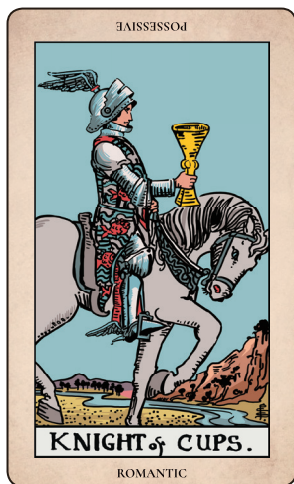
Pick pretty much any part of your adolescence and you probably have a memory that will go with this card, since it's a time when life can feel intense and a bit out of control. I can remember emotional excitement when a new movie was coming out, or the ups and downs of a day in high school. At that time in my life I was writing a lot of poetry. Writing poetry provided an outlet for me. It was a cup to hold my emotions, when I felt overwhelmed, and a way for me to process strong feelings about new situations in my life.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When have you felt overwhelmed by emotions and how did you handle the situation?



KNIGHT OF CUPS



Meaning: Follow your passion; pursue your dreams.

Symbolism: A warrior rides on a quest to find his passion and purpose.

Upright: romance, and seeking what you love

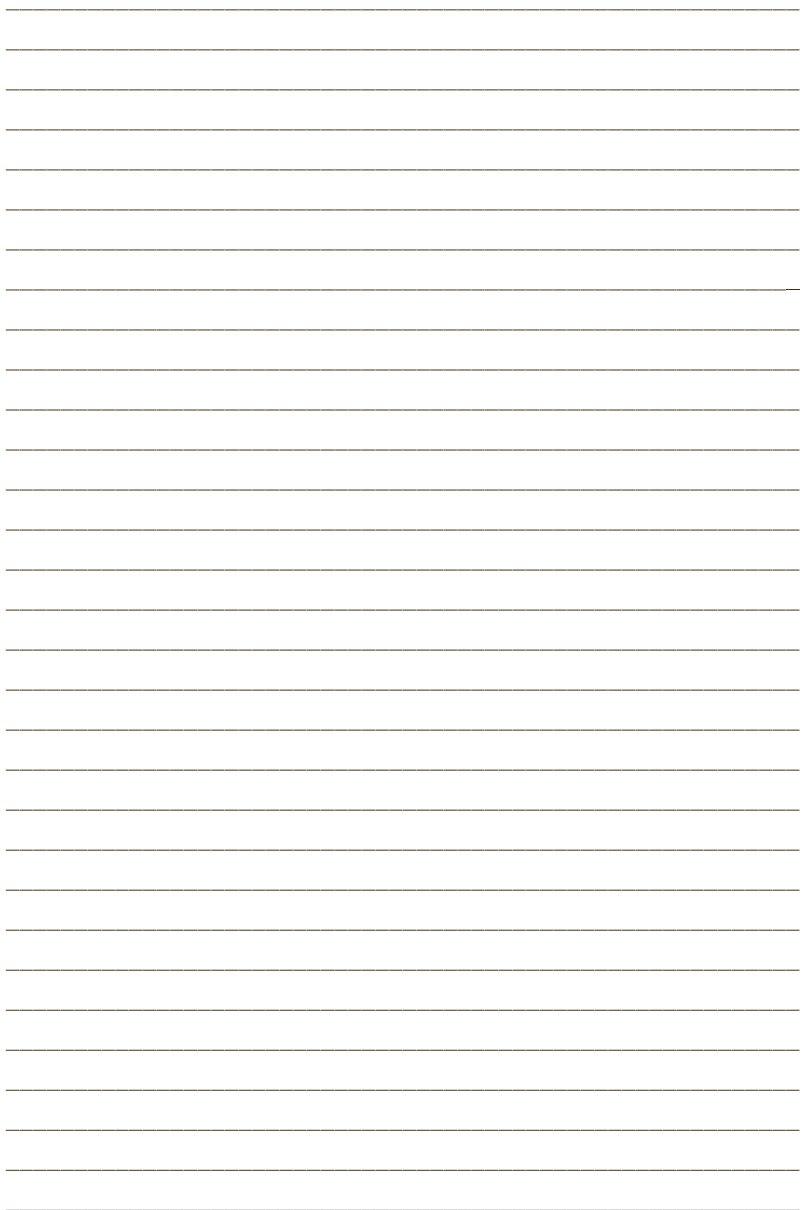
Reversed: possessive, and clingy

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

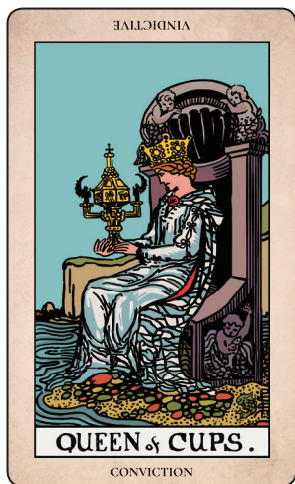
This card conjures thoughts about my career path. For quite some time I loved the idea of teaching and went deep into the pursuit of that role as a career. I still remember walking down the hall of the English department at the University of North Carolina in Greensboro to teach my first class, at 8:00 am on a Monday morning. It was the culmination of a quest to be a professional educator. I loved teaching, and it is still one of my passions.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What would you love to do if you could? Are you doing it?



QUEEN OF CUPS



Meaning: You need to act with conviction regarding a significant relationship.

Symbolism: A regal female sits upon a throne by the sea with an ornate chalice in her hand; she is relaxed, but focused. She is a symbol of emotional conviction.

Upright: nurturing, conviction, and emotionally supportive

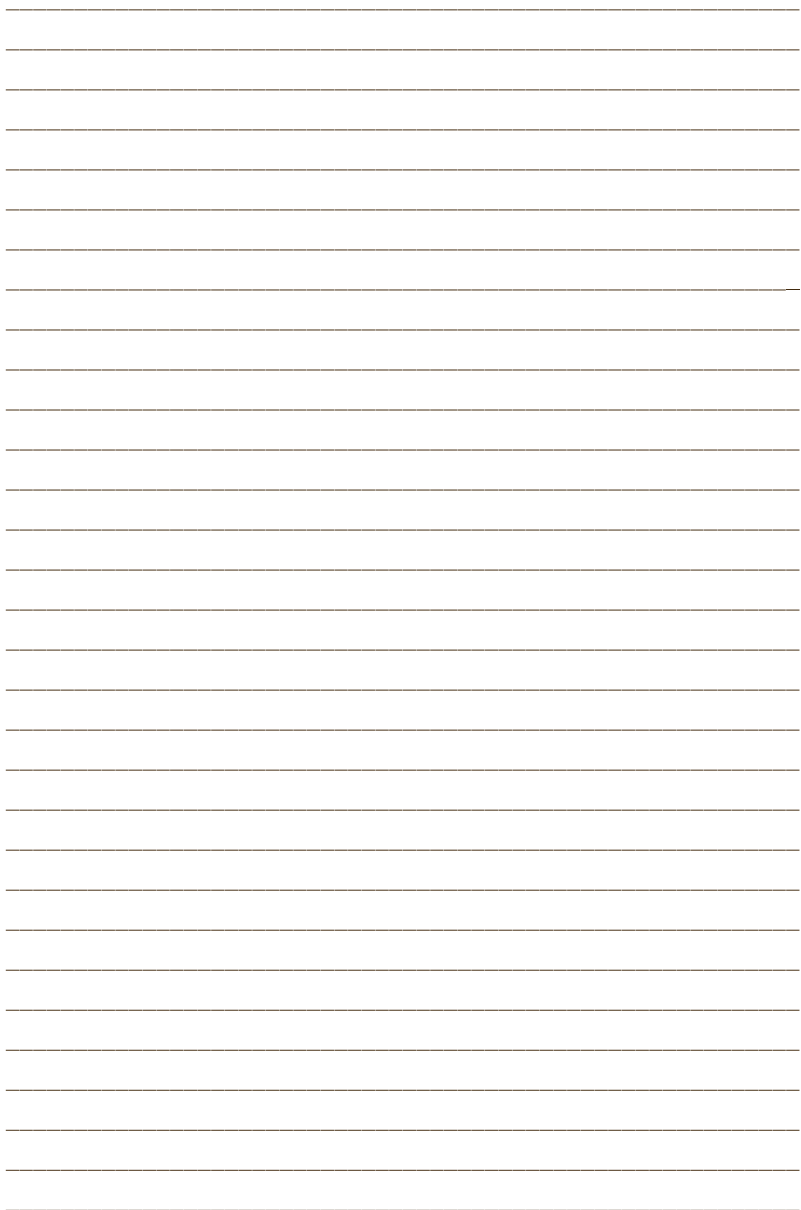
Reversed: passive aggressive, vindictive, and overly sensitive

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

This court card reflects a person who embodies emotional conviction. Astrologically, this card represents the sign of Scorpio. My mother was a Scorpio. She reflects this card in many ways, but most profoundly because she, and my father, adopted me. Only when I was older, and really an adult, did I fully understand the emotional commitment and conviction required to adopt a child. I learned many lessons about duty and sacrifice from her.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What is your strongest conviction and why? Or, who do you know with strong convictions, and what are those convictions?



KING OF CUPS



Meaning: Accept and embrace your responsibility for the care of others as your way to be empowered and lead.

Symbolism: A wise man sits upon a throne in the sea, holding a cup and scepter. He is a symbol of compassionate leadership.

Upright: influential, and responsible

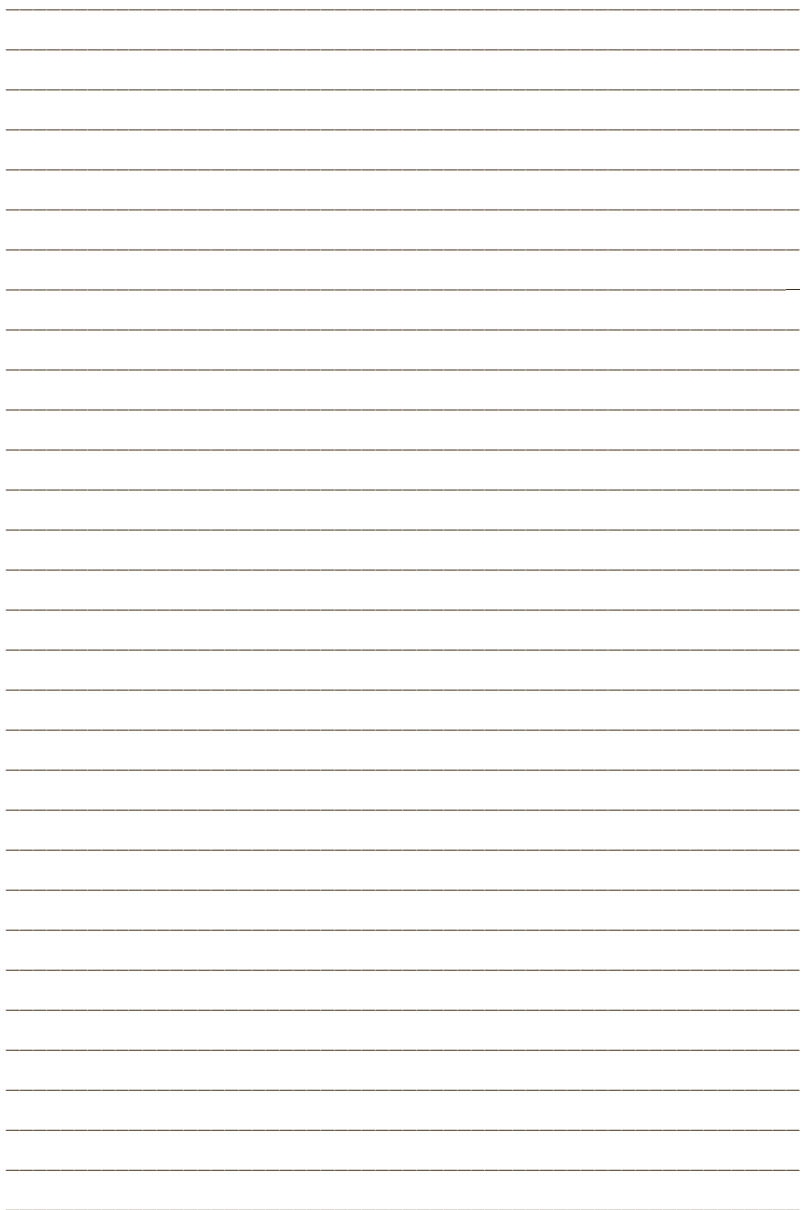
Reversed: narcissistic, and cruel

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Like all the court cards, this card can represent an idea or a person who best exemplifies compassionate and responsible leadership. My father exemplifies this card for me. I was very fortunate that he was engaged in my life for most of my life, especially during my late teenage years and early adulthood. One memory stands out regarding this card. He came to visit me in college and we went out for dinner. While having dinner, he told me that he was proud of me and gave me permission to call him by his first name, Frank, instead of dad. It was a moment in which he recognized my adulthood and conveyed how much he respected the man I was becoming.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Who do you feel responsible for or who looks to you for emotional leadership?



ACE OF PENTACLES



Meaning: Now is the time to start something that will be real in the world.

Symbolism: A single pentacle is offered to humanity by a divine hand, representing the potential to shape and manifest outcomes in the material world.

Upright: investment, and getting started

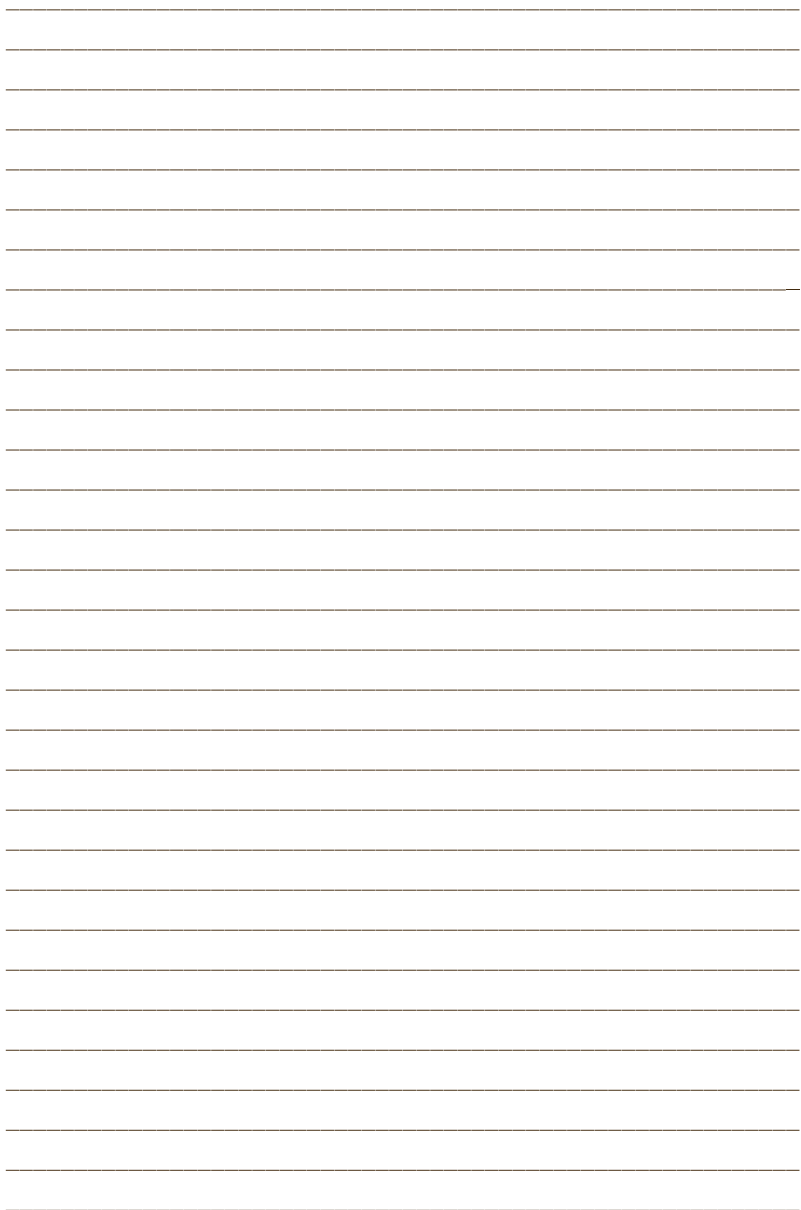
Reversed: delay, and difficulty getting started

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

This card has numerous examples in my life, but one of the easiest to share is the year I started my spiritual advising business by filing my company name with the state of North Carolina in 2013. I also set up my Employment Identification Number (EIN) with the federal government and launched my website. All these actions were Ace of Pentacle moments, where first step actions lead to real world and long-term consequences.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When did you start something and put it out in the world?



TWO OF PENTACLES



Meaning: Time to experiment and try different actions to get better results.

Symbolism: A man dances while juggling two pentacles, representing the constant change needed to keep the material world alive and flowing. Ships travel the undulations of the ocean to deliver goods and keep commerce flowing.

Upright: adaptability, routine, and activity

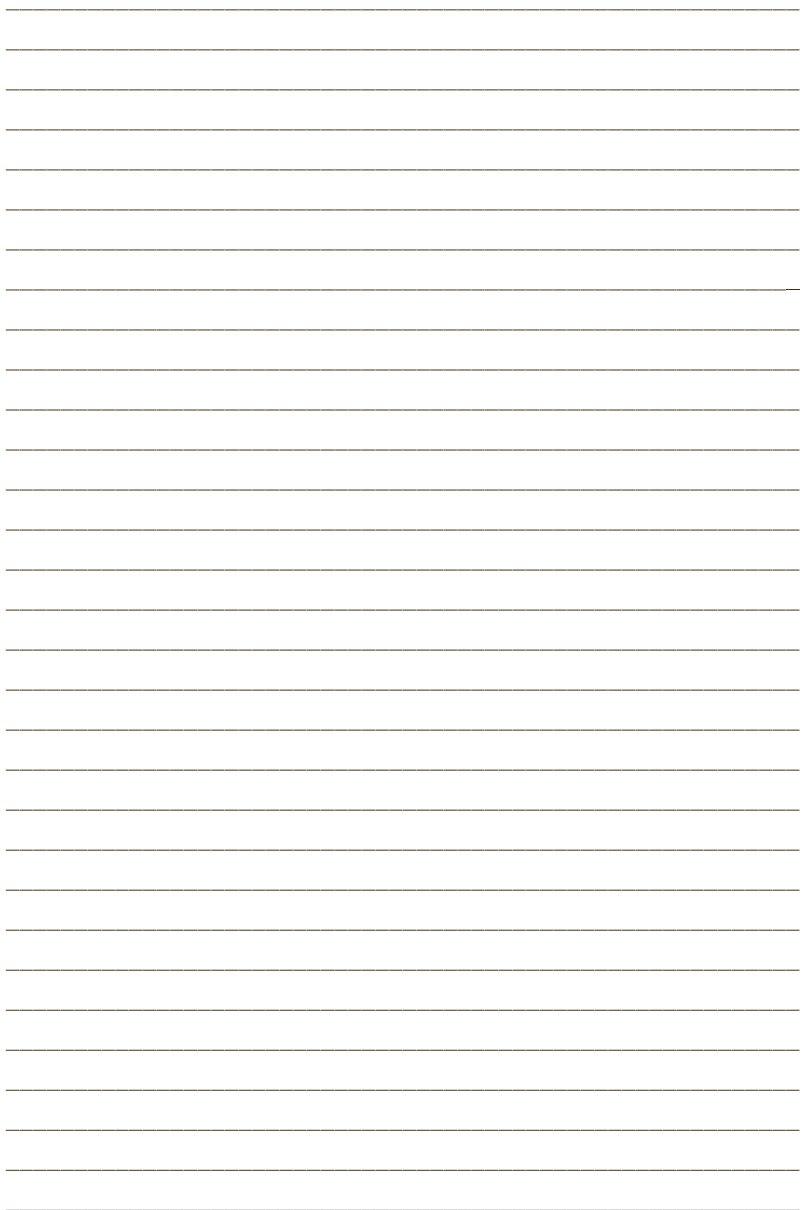
Reversed: interference, habit, and stagnation

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

I am quite familiar with the changing nature of life. I have moved from one residence to another over thirty times in my life. I moved every year I was in grade school. When my father started his home building business, as a general contractor, we lived in houses he built. However, the one we lived in and his newest spec house were often for sale at the same time. As it happened more than once, the one we were living in sold first. I started joking that I would buy items thinking about how easily I could pack them for our next move.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Write about a time in your life when you needed to make a practical change due to new circumstances.



THREE OF PENTACLES



Meaning: Hard and consistent work is what is needed to succeed and push forward.

Symbolism: A cleric and merchant approach a craftsman to enlist his services, knowing he has the skills to make what they want.

Upright: creativity, hard work, and teamwork

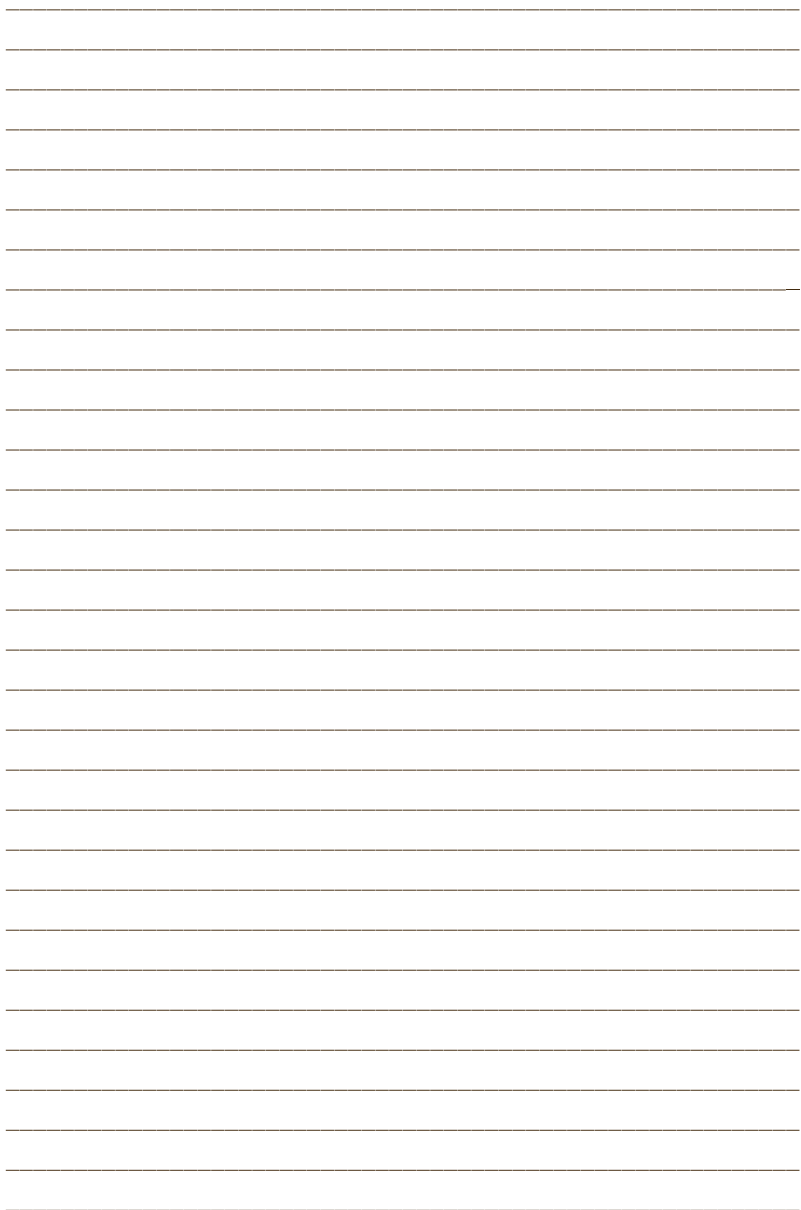
Reversed: missing skill, laziness, and incompetence

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

This card makes me think of my time working for my father when I was a teenager. He built houses for a living and I worked for him as a gopher. He would say, "Philip, go for a box of nails for the framing crew and deliver them to the job site." When I was not getting something from the hardware store, I was cleaning the houses between each subcontractor's work. The plumbers would come in, do their work, leave a mess, and I would clean the house after them. It was tedious work, but necessary; and I found it rather meditative once I got going. It usually took me two to three hours to clean one of my father's spec houses.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When did you have to put in hard work as an employee of someone else?



FOUR OF PENTACLES



Meaning: Be careful with your resources; it's a good time to save and be conservative with finances.

Symbolism: A man, with a stern look on his face, sits on a stone bench in front of a city background. The four pentacles represent the hard work and serious effort it takes to accumulate wealth and feel financially secure.

Upright: conservation, saving, and cautiousness

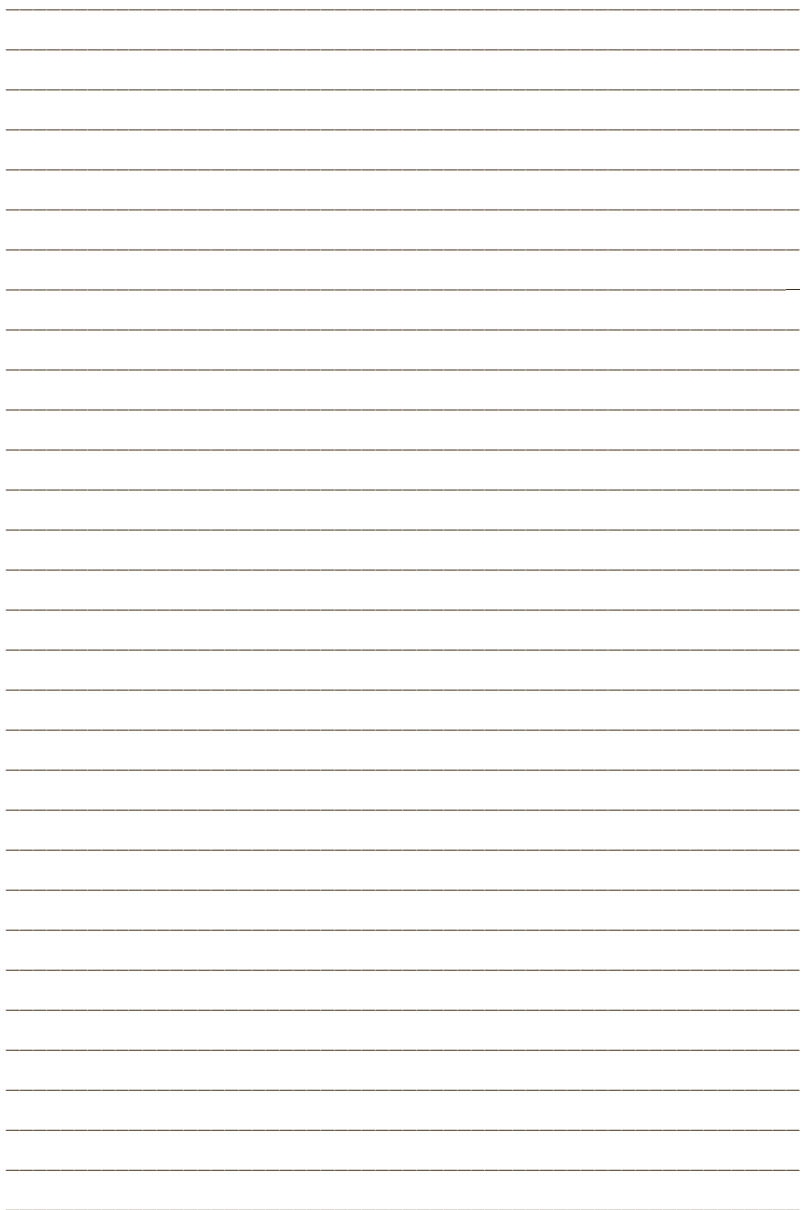
Reversed: miserliness, and hoarding

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Funny enough, I think about my early piggy banks, and saving my coins to buy comic books, back when they were thirty-five cents! Nowadays you need a credit card with a substantial limit to buy ten or twenty comic books. More generally, I think of this card as being solvent. I think all of us want to look at our bank accounts and know that we have more money coming in than going out, and no debt. This card also makes me think of my maternal grandmother, who always had a jar of coins hidden in her cabinet for rainy days.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

How do you take care of your finances and maintain your security?



FIVE OF PENTACLES



Meaning: Be prepared to face material difficulty; you may need to ask for help or borrow money to get through a difficult time.

Symbolism: A man and a woman seek shelter from the storm but cannot stop to rest because they are not allowed to enter the haven; they must keep going.

Upright: perseverance, and struggle

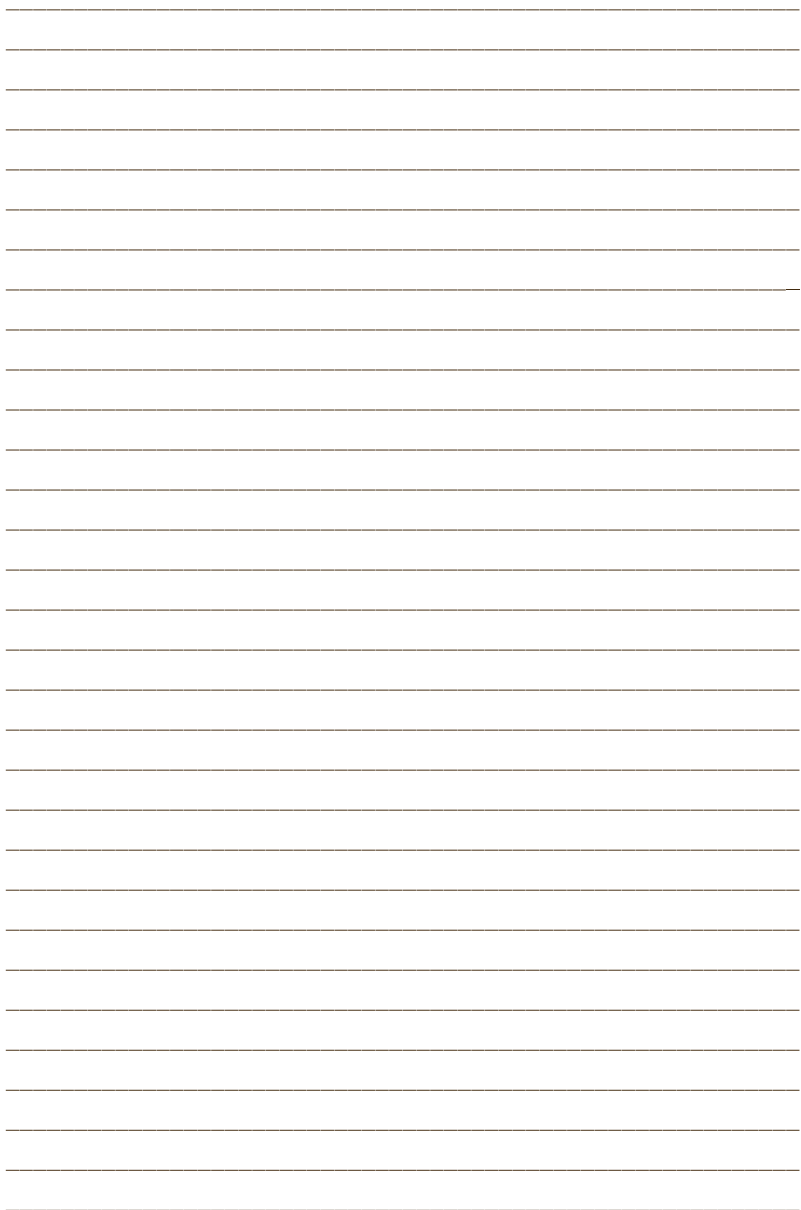
Reversed: hardship, debt, and illness

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

I have been fortunate not to be on the outside like this picture shows, in the literal sense. But I have had periods in my life when I faced a certain level of financial hardship and difficulty. I remember graduating from college and realizing my degree was fairly worthless (History) when it came to helping me secure work, which is why I went to work in the restaurant business before and during my graduate school journey. There were several times from the end of high school until I started my own business that I was more in the red than I was in the black. It was never a good feeling.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Describe a moment or time of financial struggle.



SIX OF PENTACLES



Meaning: Share your wealth and success; be grateful for what you have achieved.

Symbolism: A man of wealth and means decides to give money to the poor. The scales symbolize fairness in what is given and the judgement of worthiness for those asking for help.

Upright: shared wealth, charity, and valued role in community

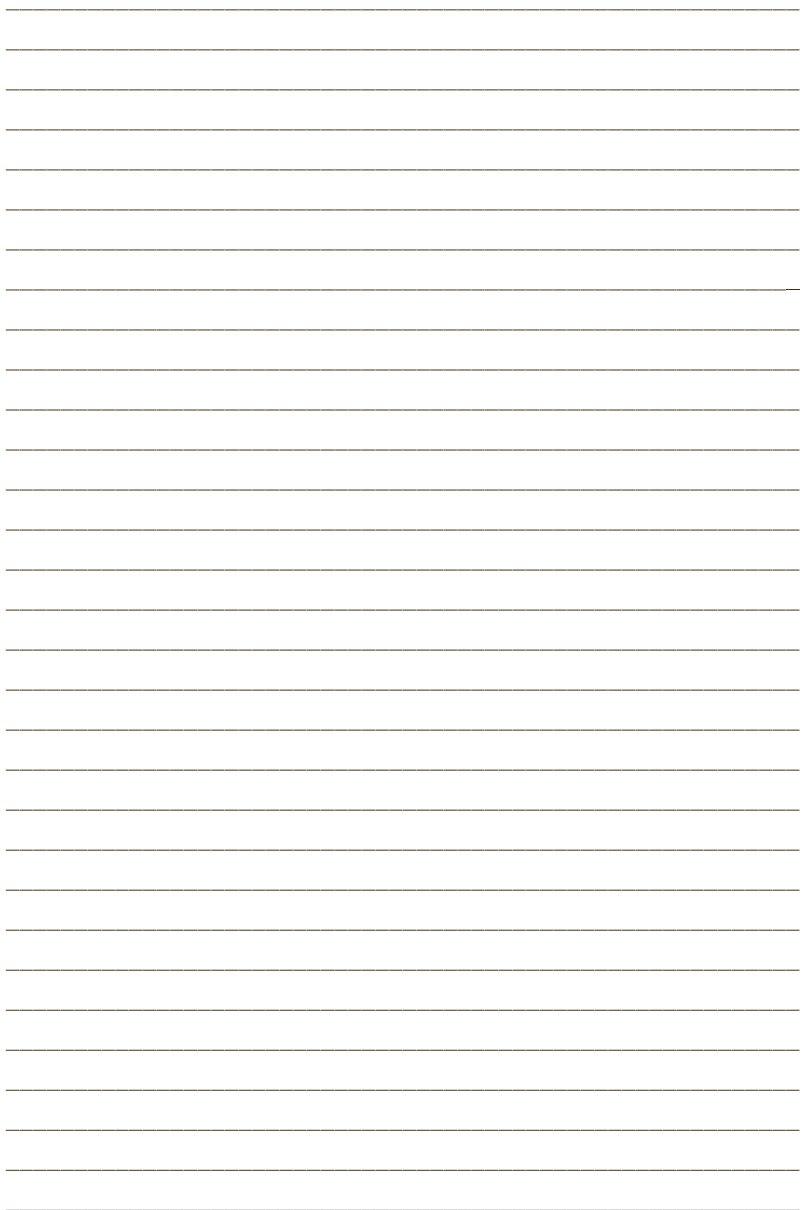
Reversed: greed, and stinginess

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

In this new digital age, I have found opportunities to support organizations that provide applications and services based on donations from users. I contribute annually to Wikipedia, a service and resource I use frequently as a writer and researcher. I also contribute to Wordpress plugin developers and Pixabay artists/photographers when I use their work in websites that I build and manage. I see this card as a perfect representation of those exchanges.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When have you been generous with others, and how did they receive your generosity?



SEVEN OF PENTACLES



Meaning: Time to consider how you will invest your success; put resources back into what you have that is successful, or start a new venture.

Symbolism: A man tends a bush of pentacles; his hard work has paid off and he will have plenty for himself and plenty to sell. The pentacle separated from the others symbolizes opportunity to pursue a new venture because he has excess resource.

Upright: long-term planning, gain, and dedicated persistence

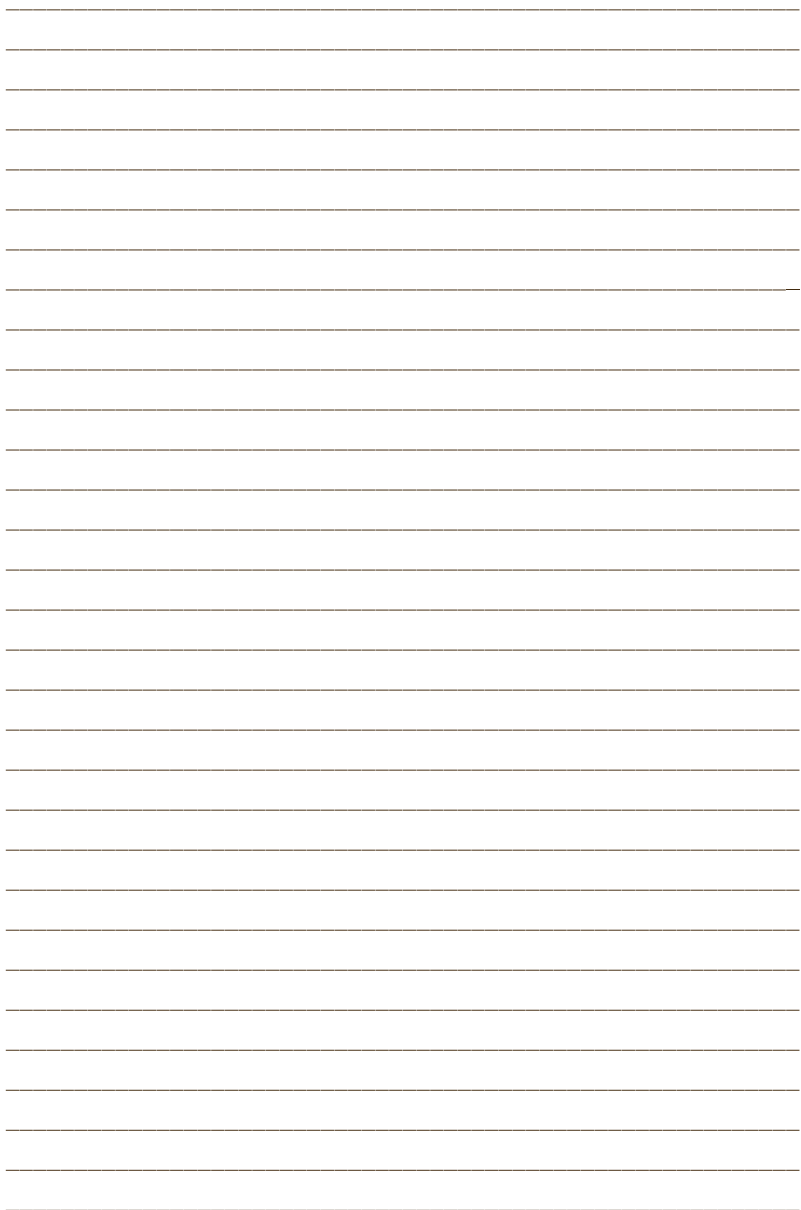
Reversed: lack of vision, and wastefulness

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

It is implied that you should go the way of the loose pentacle, but such a choice is not always the best way to move forward. More times than not, I prefer the conservative approach and like to re-invest in what has been working and continues to work. When I was working for a large university institution an opportunity arose for me to consider staying with my current position or look for a new opportunity, I selected to use my extra pentacle to expand my existing crop and stay with what was familiar and successful ... until it was not.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When you achieved a success, how did you spend the excess?



EIGHT OF PENTACLES



Meaning: Use your skill and experience to improve your financial status.

Symbolism: An artisan perfects his craft making new pentacles of the finest design.

Upright: craftsmanship, and expertise

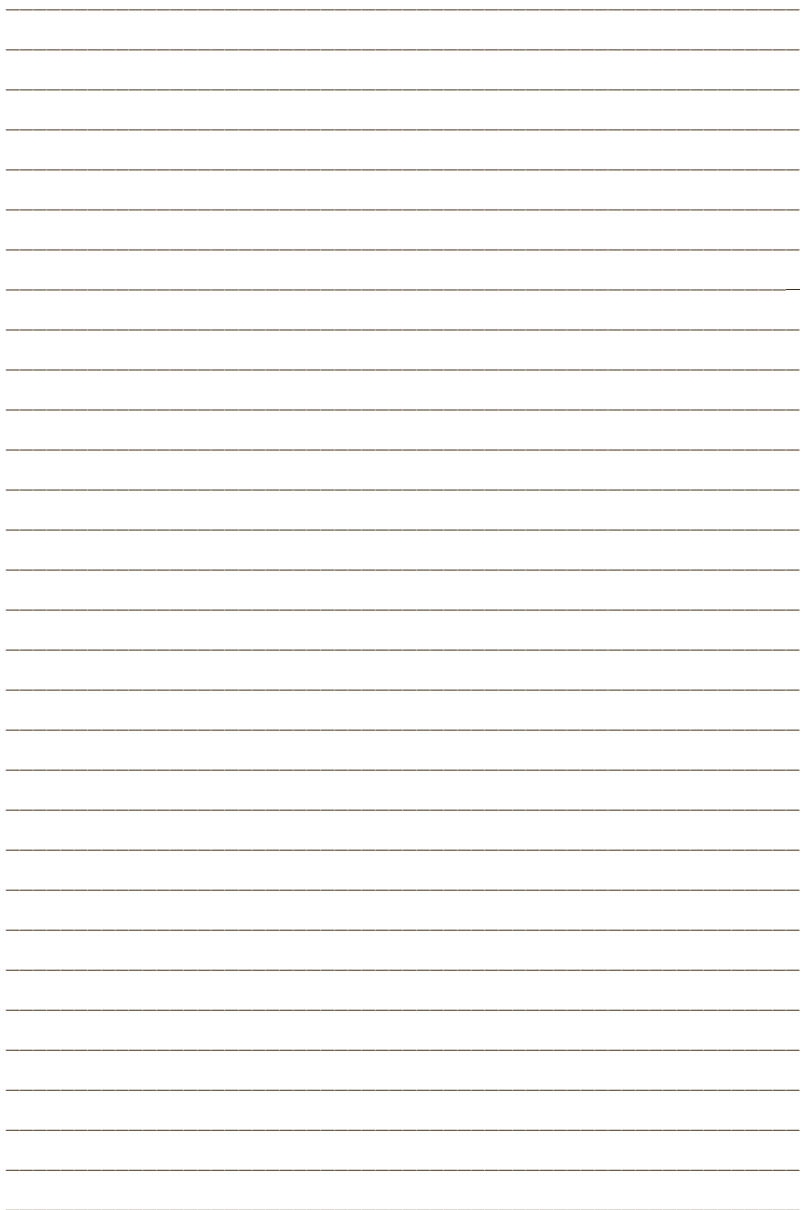
Reversed: deception regarding skill, obsolete, and laziness

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

I connect this card with my web design skills. I started learning how to build websites using html code before there were html editors. One of the first editing programs to be developed was Homesite, launched in 1996, and I used it to improve my website design expertise. I put in thousands of hours of work to hone my skills and eventually became a webmaster for a large university institution at the dawn of the website era. To this day, I still design websites and can produce them quickly and professionally thank to years of practice, repetition, and ongoing development to keep up with current design.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What skill have you mastered or do you hope to master?



NINE OF PENTACLES



Meaning: Focus on your purpose and use it to attain the wealth you desire; be your best to earn the most.

Symbolism: A mature woman shows the wealth of individual achievement and the positivity associated with a productive life.

Upright: financial independence, successful, and empowerment

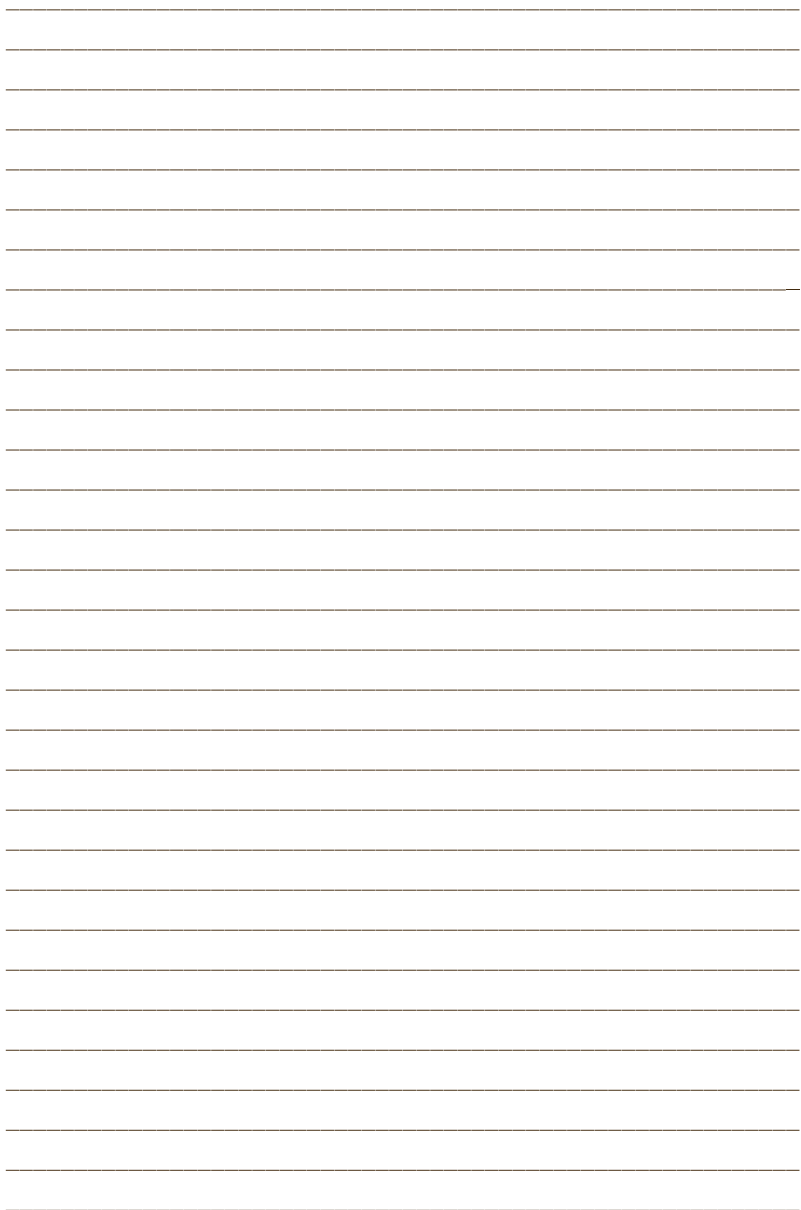
Reversed: workaholic, and overindulgent

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

A colleague of mine sent me an article which nicely sums up this card for me. The article states that success is not about hitting a mark, but performing excellently and expertly, always. If you do your best professionally, success will follow, which is a better approach than chasing success. I have spent a large part of my life making money on the fly, either as a bartender or a tarot card reader in public spaces. In each case, I would go to work not knowing who would come in or how many people would sit down for a reading. Whether it was slow night or extremely busy, I made sure to provide my best service with each customer and client. That approach has led to financial success most of my life.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What is one of your best examples of personal success?



TEN OF PENTACLES



Meaning: Embrace or seek the fulfillment that comes with a partnership that will help you attain a great and safe life.

Symbolism: A family of three generations explores the city together with their dogs; they are the picture of wealth and happiness.

Upright: long-term gains, and inheritance

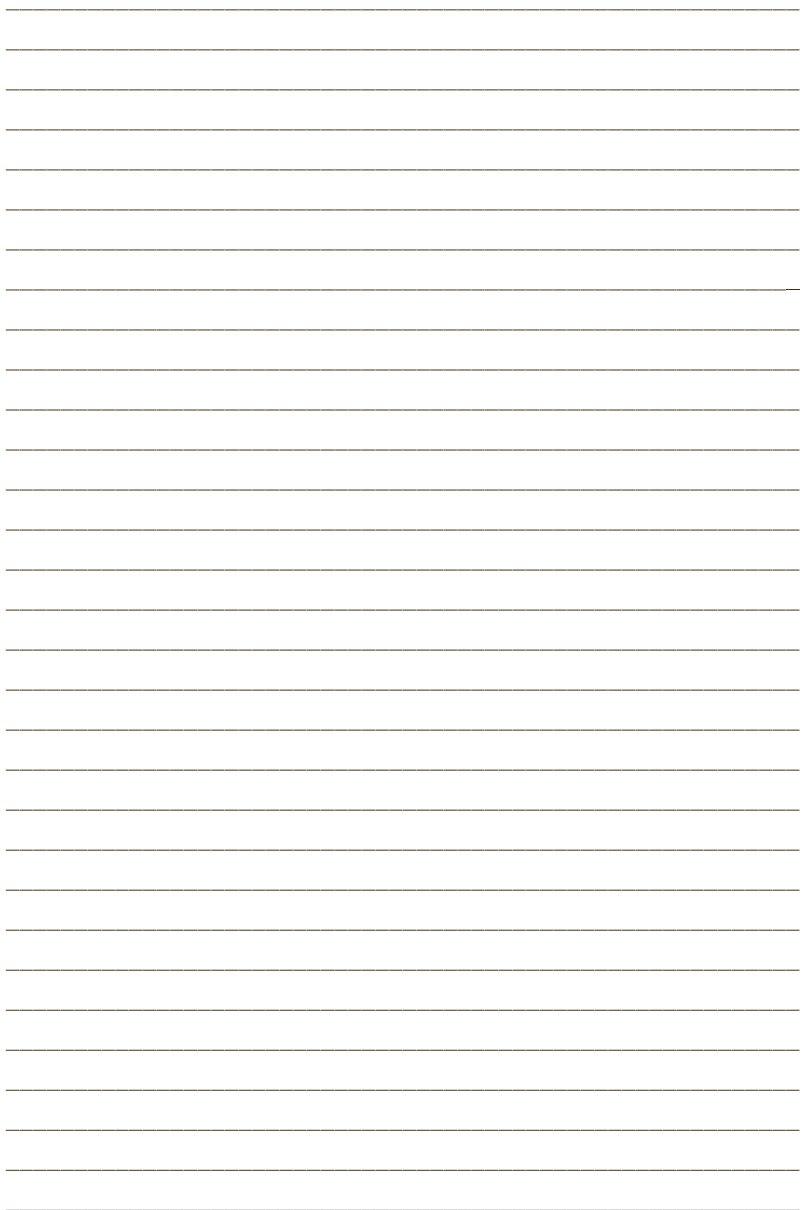
Reversed: missed opportunities, and burdens

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When I see this card, I recall the time when I was the child in this picture. I have not yet become a grandfather. But I do remember, fondly, visiting my grandparents when I was young. At the time, we lived in Massachusetts and they lived in North Carolina. My parents and I would travel the eighteen hours by car to spend a couple of weeks with them several times each year. While we were visiting, we would go out to dinner or shopping as a family and I can see our faces in each of the people on this card. We even had a dog, at that time, that could be added to the picture as well.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Describe a positive moment with your family, try to find one involving three generations.



PAGE OF PENTACLES



Meaning: Experiment; try not to get lost in starting but not finishing anything.

Symbolism: An able-bodied young man holds a pentacle in front of him; he contemplates where he will seek his fortune and find his direction in life.

Upright: apprenticeship, and practice

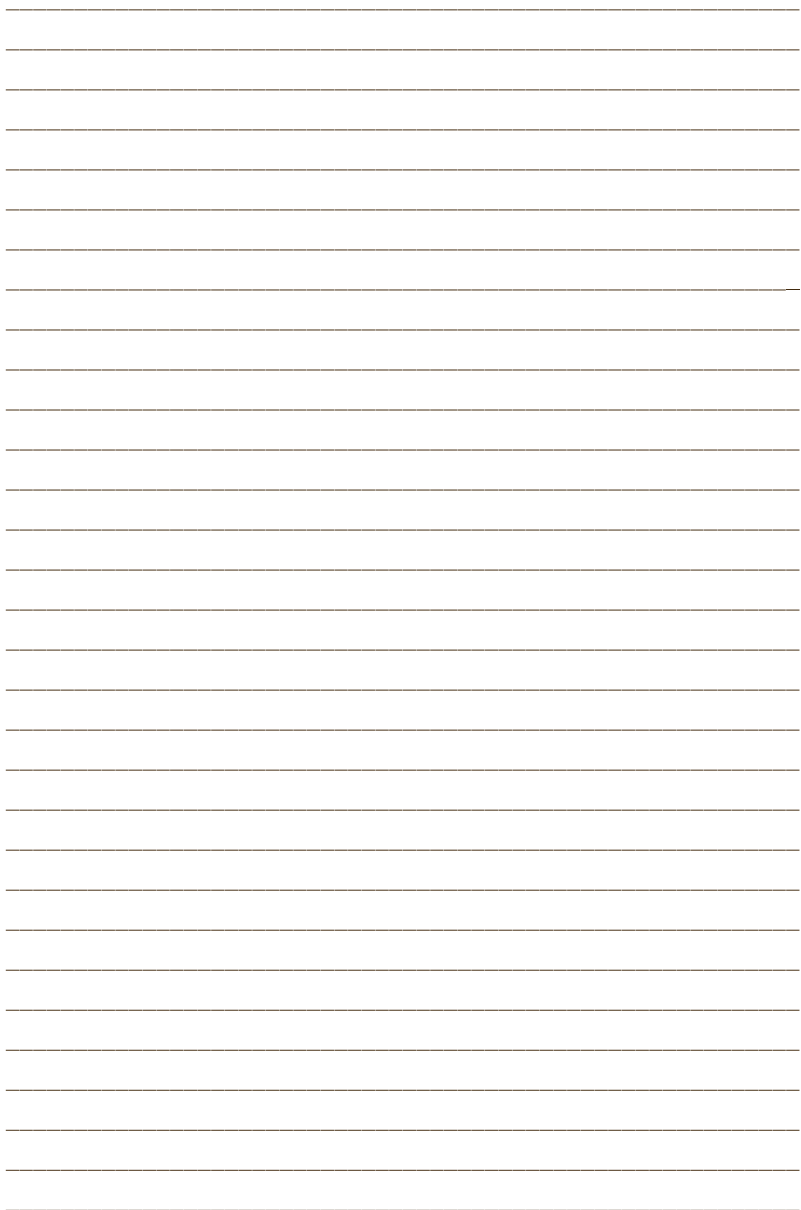
Reversed: lack of ability, procrastination, and lack of ambition

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

This card makes me think of hacking, as in “hacking at it until you figure it out”. I know how the term applies to the digital world, because I started “hacking” at web design in the early 1990s, learning the html code and building pages, looking at them through a web browser, making mistakes, fixing mistakes, testing, and retesting. This card eventually led to the Eight of Pentacles, over time, and now, I build web sites professionally. Sometimes hacking goes nowhere, like many of my attempts in the kitchen. But every so often this energy will coalesce into a useful skill.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Which life experiment failed, and which one succeeded?



KNIGHT OF PENTACLES



Meaning: Time to take decisive action that leads to concrete results; find the solution and act on it.

Symbolism: A warrior travels to deliver the pentacle, which is a symbol of commerce between two kingdoms and amongst people.

Upright: goal-driven, self-disciplined, and reliable

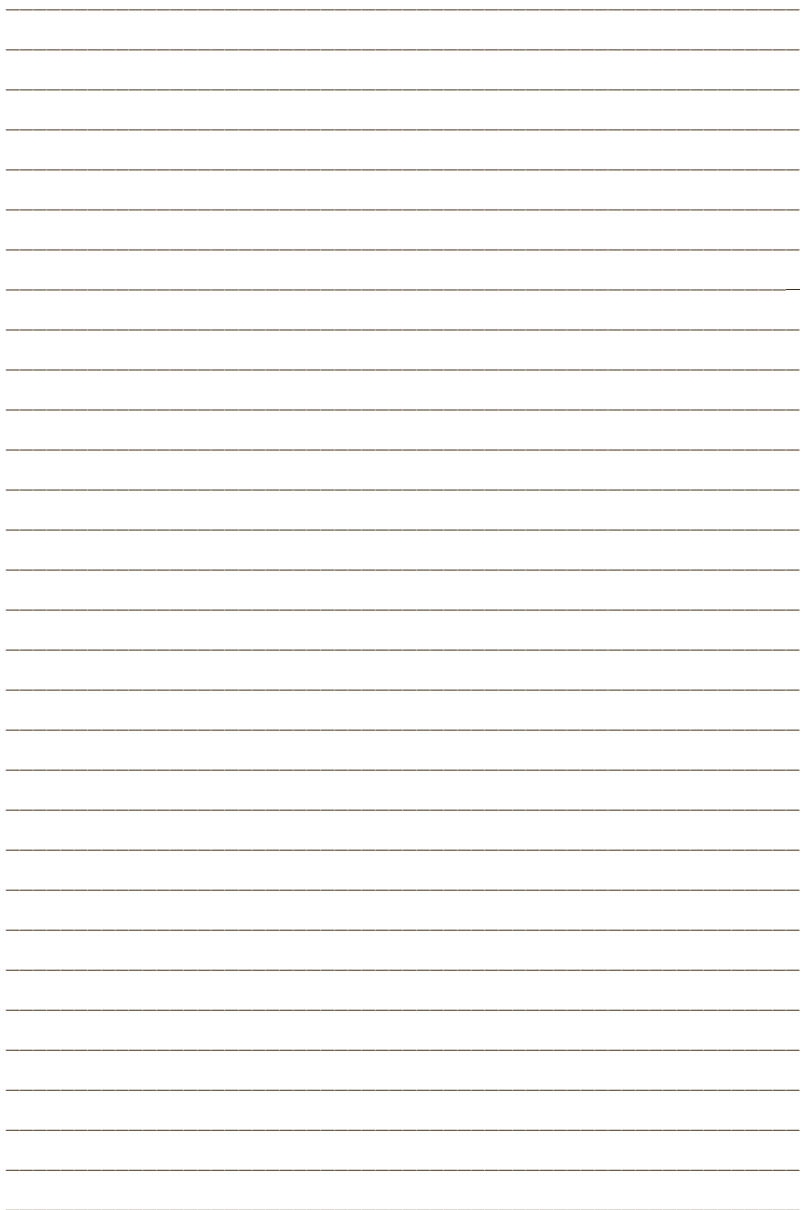
Reversed: stubborn, and misdirected

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

It is easy for me to stick with my web design skills in this suit. The Page of Pentacles represents my first hacking attempts to figure out just how to get output from code I wrote, on my computer, onto the world wide web. In time I started to develop my own style and way of coding to get the results that I wanted, and that other people appreciated. Eventually I did my first website for pay, which, to me, constitutes the Knight of Pentacles. Any time you go from figuring something out to making it a regular practice, you are moving from the Page of Pentacles to the Knight of Pentacles.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What skills do you get paid for or recognized for out in the world?



QUEEN OF PENTACLES



Meaning: Get your life in order; review your finances and make sure all important legal documents are in place. Assess your material life and fix anything that needs attention.

Symbolism: A regal female holds a pentacle in her hands, representing the wealth she can share with a worthy supplicant. The rabbit in the corner of her card is a symbol of fertility and abundance.

Upright: stability, and necessity

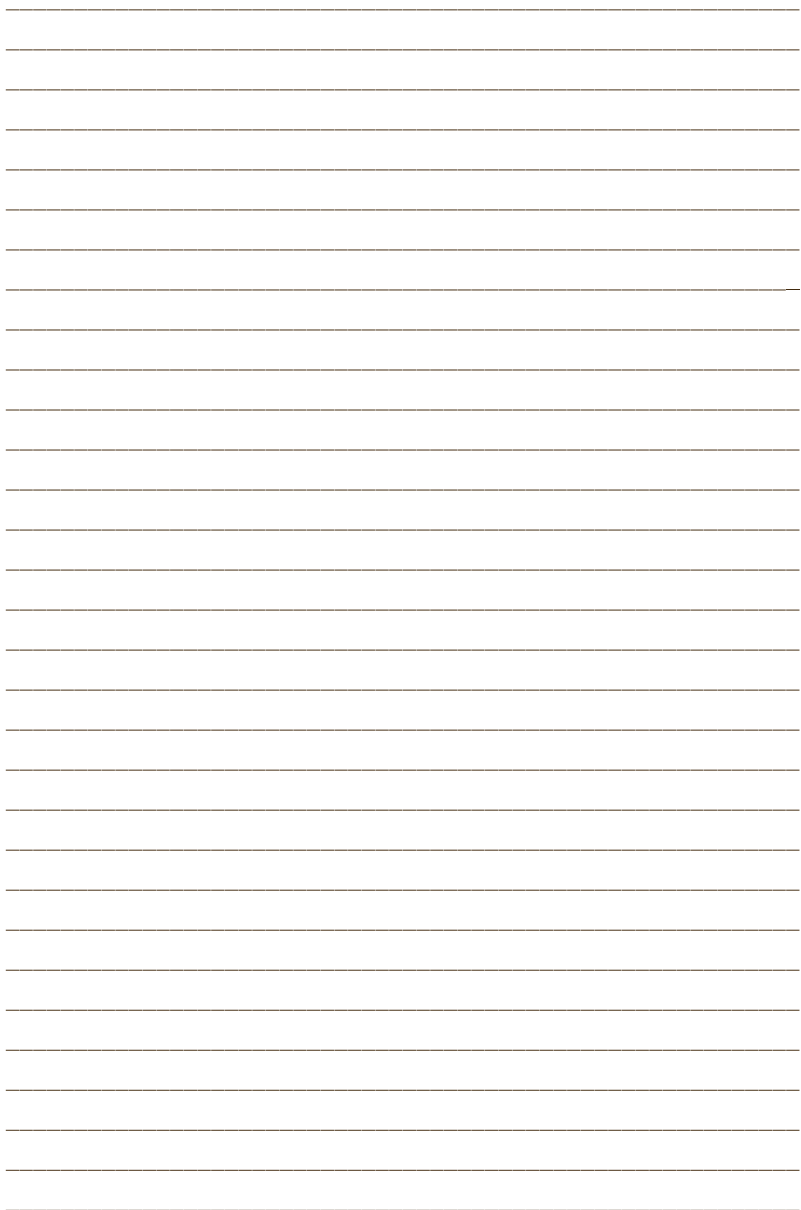
Reversed: instability, and desires leading to debt

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

I feel the Queen of Pentacles in my life every year when I start organizing my paperwork for my taxes. She represents the complete financial picture of your life, wherever you happen to be at the time. Doing your taxes is one sure fire way to understand the status of your financial profile. Hopefully you will see positive and stable results. If this card appears in a reading, I usually check in on all my accounts to see how I am situated financially.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What is your overall financial situation currently?



KING OF PENTACLES



Meaning: Use your wealth, status, and influence wisely; others look to you for leadership.

Symbolism: An accomplished man has attained enough wealth that others come to him to borrow money and receive guidance to succeed in their financial affairs.

Upright: power, and prosperity

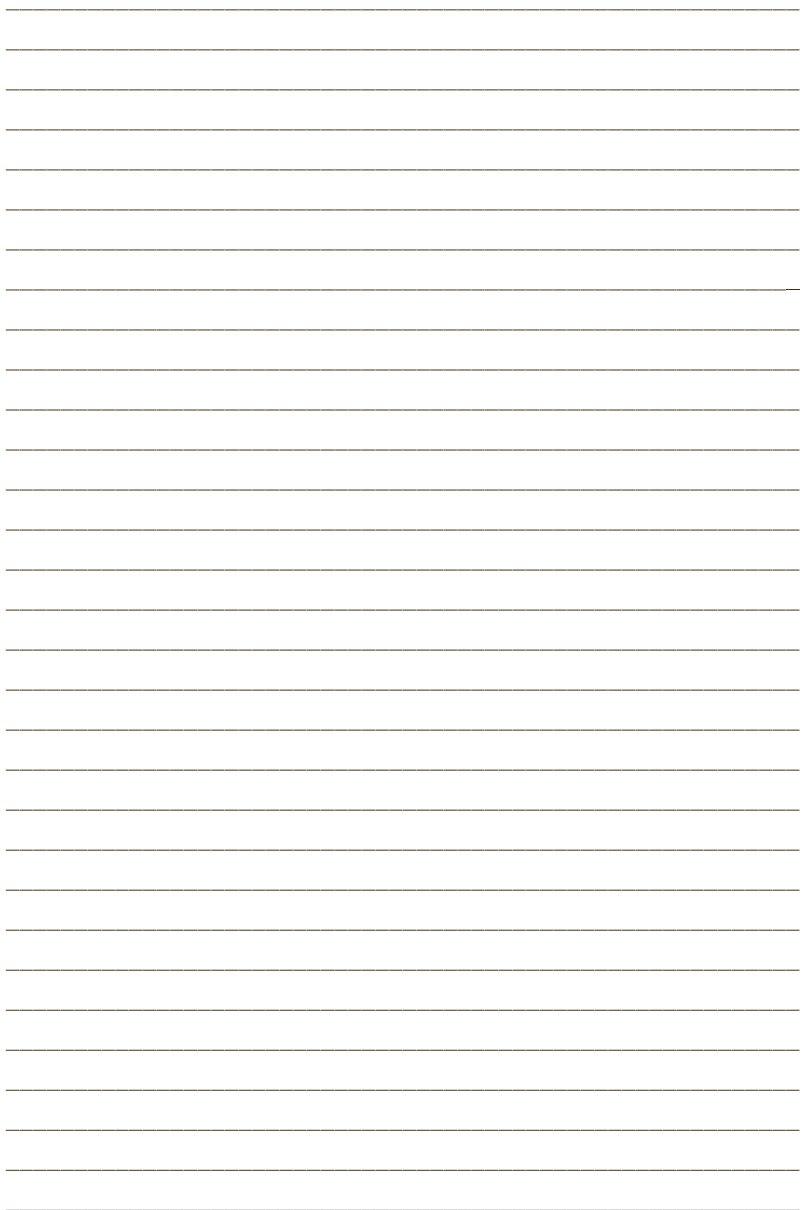
Reversed: corruption, and excess

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

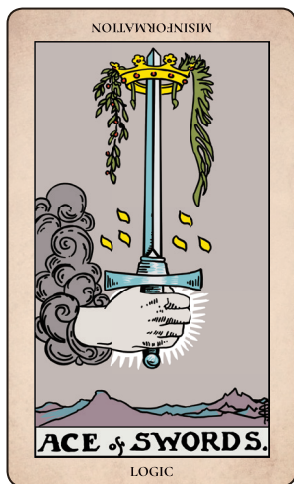
The King of Pentacles represents those times in your life when you were the person others came to for money, or you had to go to request help from someone, most likely by borrowing from them. There have been a few times when I have been in the role of the King of Pentacles, but like most people, I suspect, I have more clear examples for when I have needed to approach a King of Pentacles, usually in the form of a bank loan to help me purchase a home. I can still remember the first time I went to buy a home and how I had to prove myself worthy of the loan. Dealing with a King of Pentacles (the bank) or King of Pentacles representative (the loan officer) can be a daunting process.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When have you been the financial advisor to others, or had to petition someone with money for a loan?



ACE OF SWORDS



Meaning: Time to decide; consider a new way of thinking; use logic regarding the situation or relationship.

Symbolism: A divine hand holds a single sword upright over the land with a crown around it, indicating the decisions that will need to be made by its people and rulers.

Upright: new thoughts, and logic

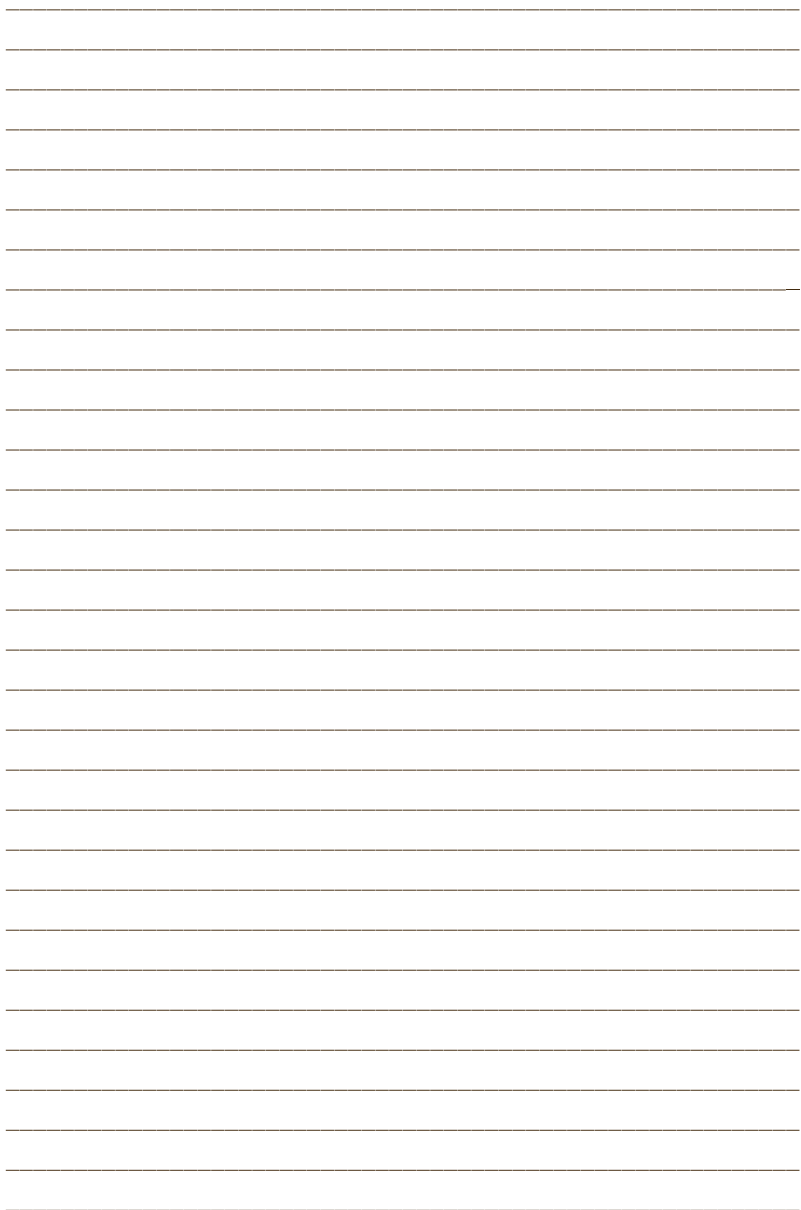
Reversed: ignorance, and misinformation

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

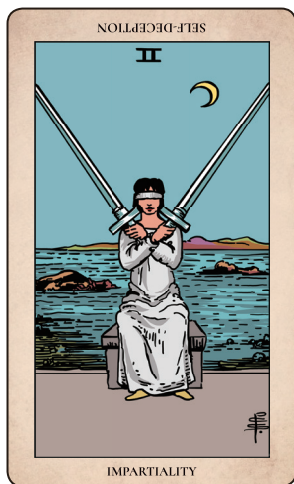
We have all had plenty of new ideas and new thoughts. For me, the repeating concrete example of this card would be each semester that I taught classes and had to come up with new material for my classes. There was always one section in my curriculum that dealt with current events, involving some new concept, or thought. I remember asking my students to write an essay about their email "handle", which was a new idea at the time. While some students were literal – first name.last name@; others were very creative – sassygirlsassess@. The assignment led to class discussion about how and why they came up with the name they chose, a clear act of the Ace of Swords.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When have you had to think of new ideas and what were they?



TWO OF SWORDS



Meaning: Be at peace with your decisions; do not look back or revisit decisions that brought you to this point.

Symbolism: A woman sits blindfolded, holding two swords; she awaits questions she will help decide and conflicts she will help negotiate. The blindfold symbolizes impartiality.

Upright: an important decision, impartiality, and need for logical resolution.

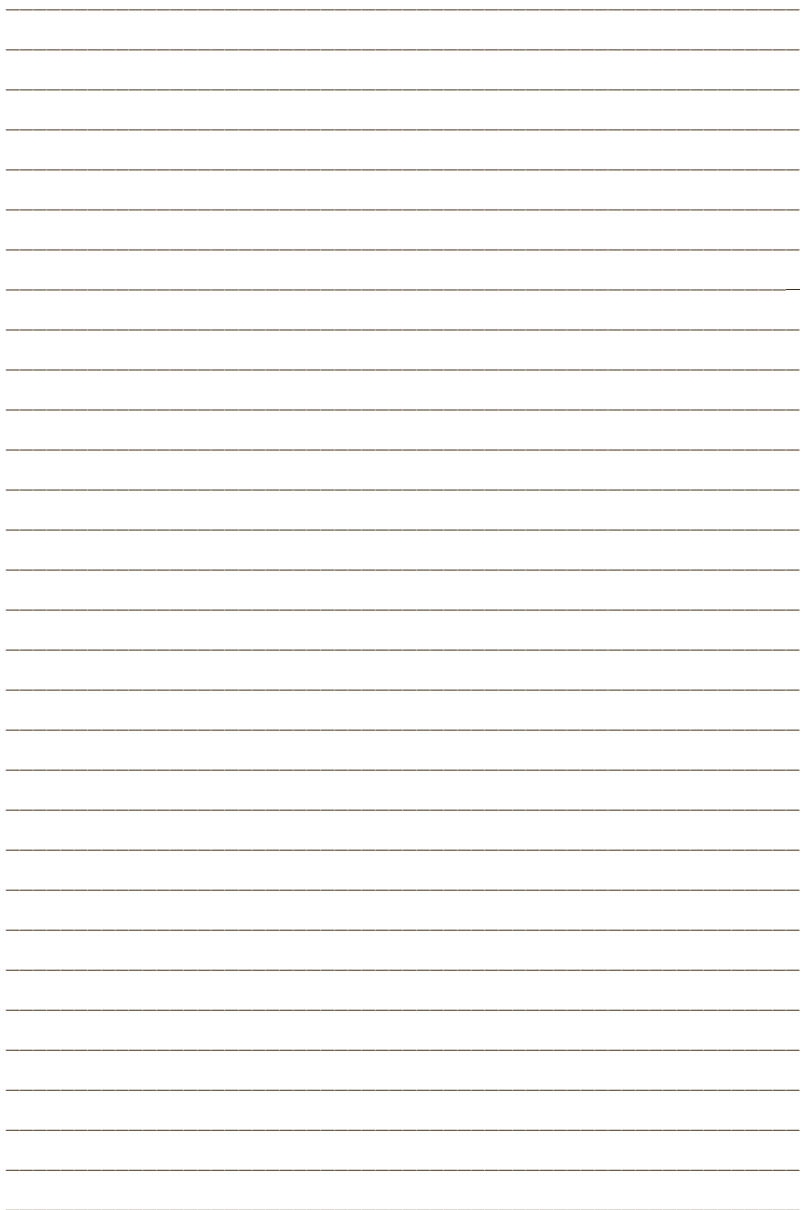
Reversed: self-deception, and obstinance

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

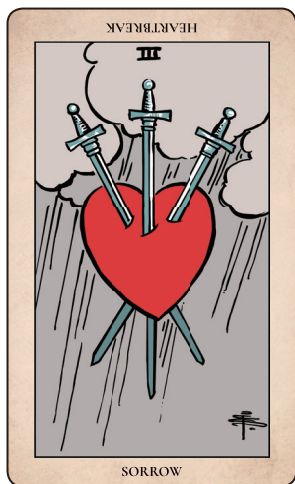
This card reminds me that decision-making is an ever-forward process. We make decisions and must keep moving forward. We all have decisive moments, when we know a choice will have lasting consequences that will make the day stand out above and beyond most other days. I can remember a conversation I had with one of my committee members about the intended topic of my dissertation. I had a passion for a certain topic, but he had advice for a more manageable topic. I knew, in that moment, that completing the PhD was of greater value than sticking with the topic I wanted, which would be a hard sell to the rest of the committee, so I made the choice to take his advice, which I am sure helped me tremendously.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Write about a key decision that changed the course of your life.



THREE OF SWORDS



Meaning: You are getting mixed results and must find a way to face the frustration and sorrow of the situation or relationship.

Symbolism: Three swords pierce a heart in a storm; the heart is whole but filled with pain from each sword piercing it.

Upright: sorrow, and cognitive dissonance

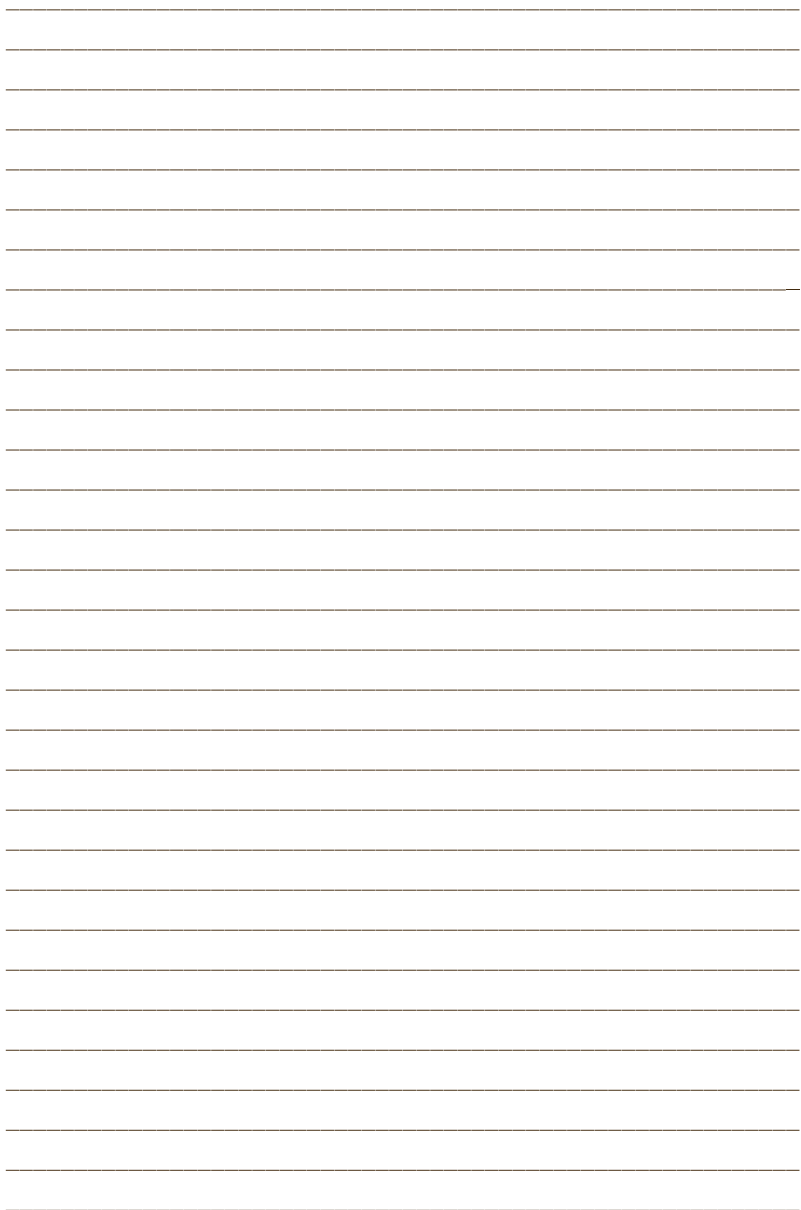
Reversed: self-pity, heartbreak, and anxiety

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

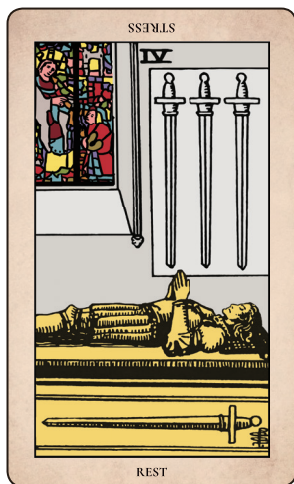
Once again, here is a card we all probably have more experience with than we'd like. I look at this card and think of my teaching career; I loved teaching. Unfortunately, the truth of teaching, pretty much at any level, is filled with a heavy dose of this card. I taught at the university level, I loved the actual teaching but was never able to embrace the research and publication expectations that go along with a professor position. In the end, those expectations outweighed my exemplary teaching reviews, packed classes, and students recommending my classes to other students. Hence, I am not in the academy anymore.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Describe a situation that mixes what you want with a disappointing revelation?



FOUR OF SWORDS



Meaning: You need a mental break; you need to disengage to save your sanity.

Symbolism: A warrior rests in a holy temple; there are three swords on the wall above him and one sword by his side. He used his strength and skill to help keep peace in the land.

Upright: rest, and contemplation

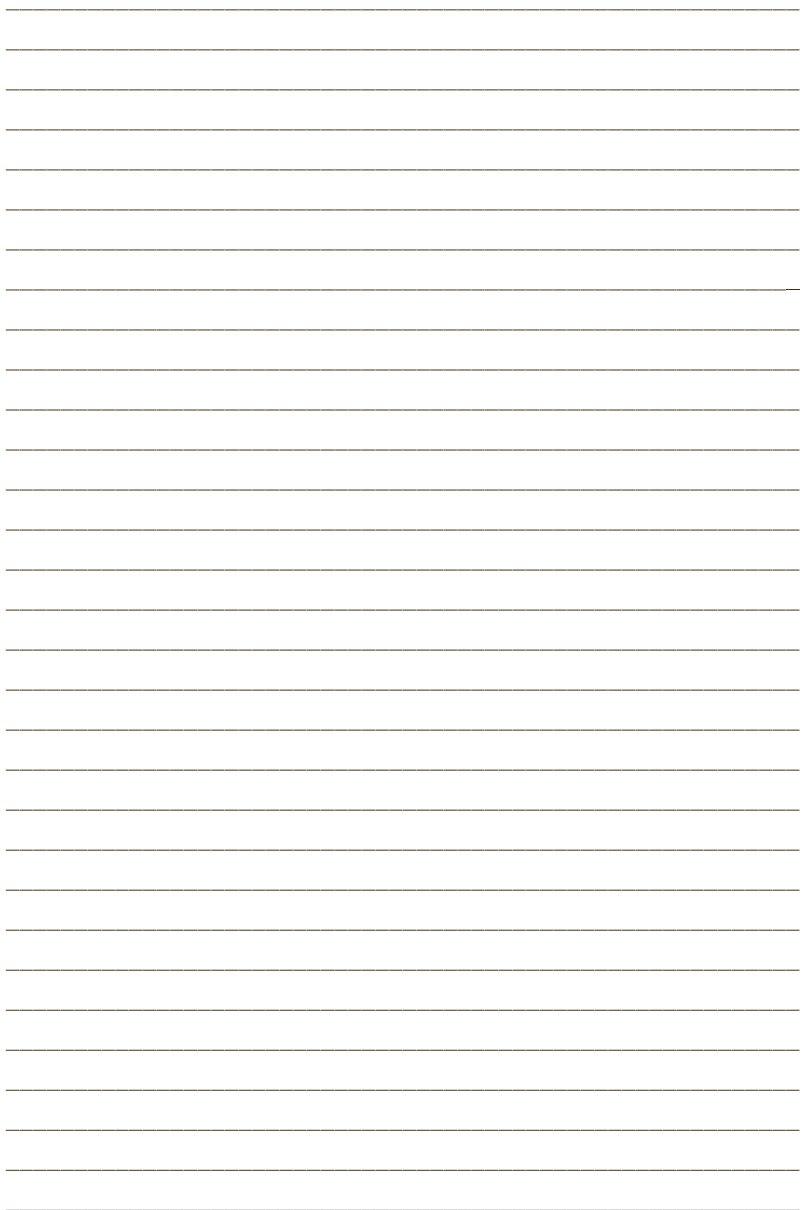
Reversed: burnout, and stress

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

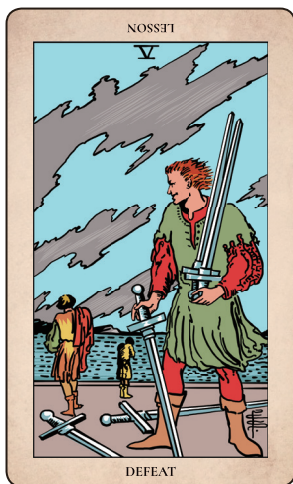
I relate to this card every time I take a break between clients and lay down on the floor to clear my mind and restore my energy. I work from home, and I schedule clients with an hour between sessions. If a session is intense, I will turn off my computer and cell phone, close the blinds to my office, and lay down on the floor, in pretty much the same pose as this card. I slip into a meditative state which allows me to release any negative energy I may have taken on and invite positive energy in for my next client.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

How and where do you find time to rest your mind?



FIVE OF SWORDS



Meaning: There is a loss or defeat you must accept and work to overcome.

Symbolism: A warrior collects swords of the defeated after they have left the battlefield, vanquished, and heading towards home.

Upright: defeat, and vanquished

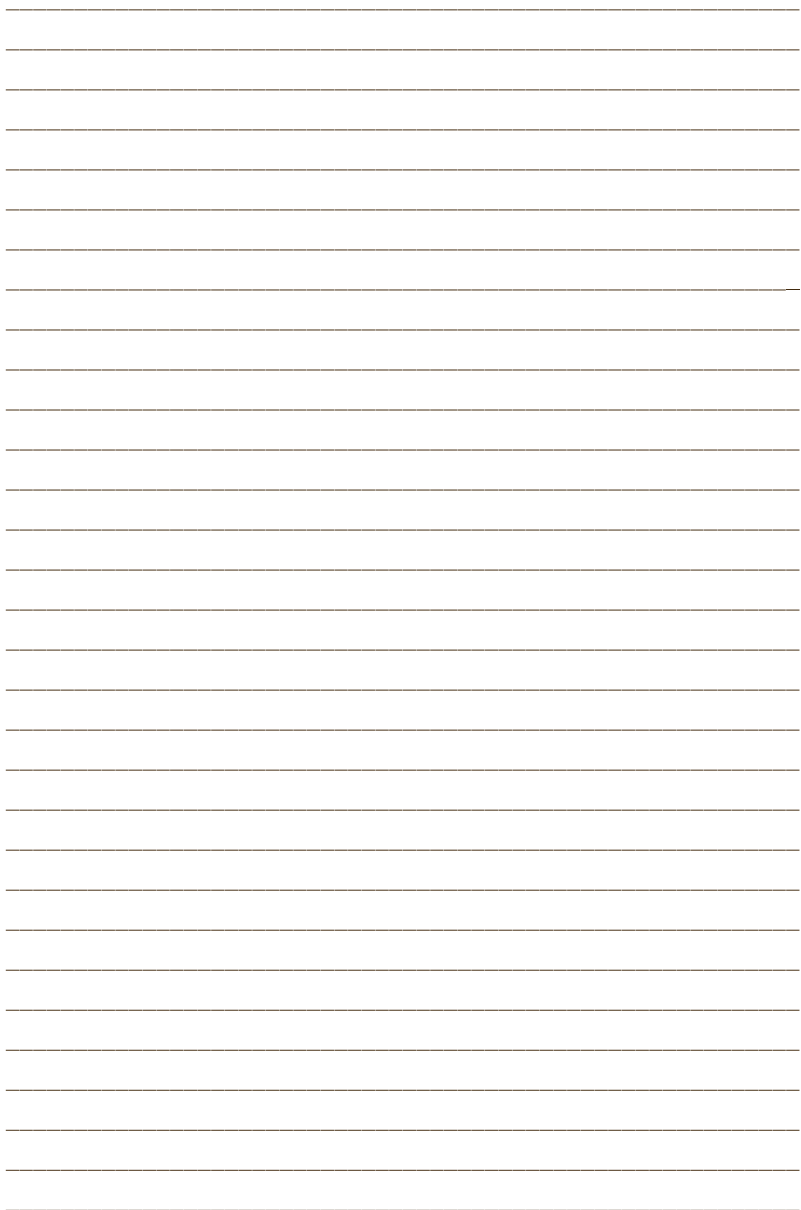
Reversed: lesson, and setback

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

I see this card from both perspectives, the men walking away and the man collecting the swords. I recall my time teaching freshman composition. Not everyone passed the class, and some students failed to stay in school. Each year there would be one or two students leaving the class, or the college, defeated. My most significant, personal defeat occurred when I applied to the graduate program for Social Work at UNC-Chapel Hill, and did not get in.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When you were knocked down by life, how did you get back up?



SIX OF SWORDS



Meaning: You need to move from one “shore of thinking” to another; you are currently in-between and need to complete the journey.

Symbolism: A ferryman takes a woman and her son to a new land; the six swords represent the transition from an old way of thinking to a new one.

Upright: transition, and old giving way to the new

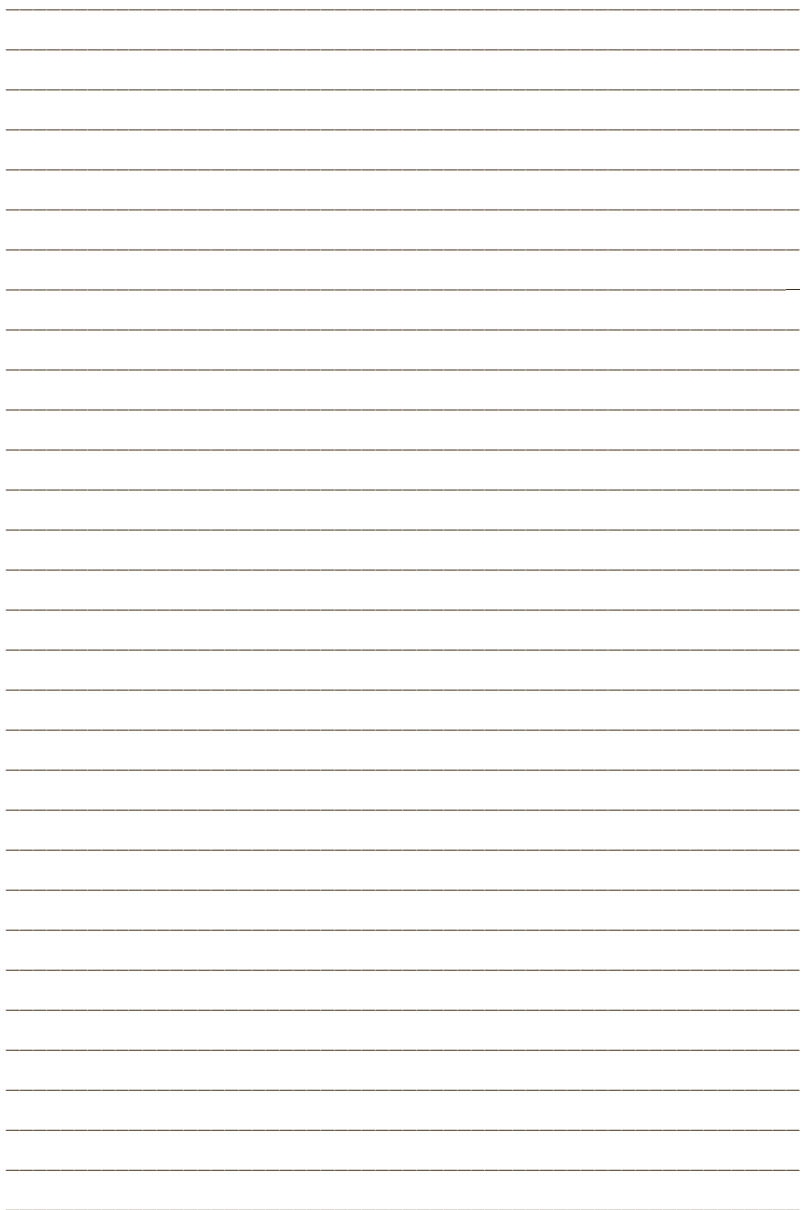
Reversed: fear of the unknown, resistance, and forced change in thinking

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

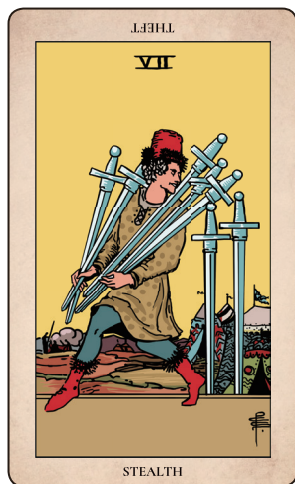
I tend to think of this card as transitions in life philosophy, in the hopes that a new understanding will offer a better life than the understanding I was leaving behind. I was raised in a Southern Baptist Christian home, and that belief system came up short for me, so I crossed the Rubicon to atheism, which eventually came up short as well. My last journey from one shore to the next brought me to a spiritual but not religious place, and I have found this shore much more suitable to my life path.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When have you experienced a significant shift in your thinking or understanding?



SEVEN OF SWORDS



Meaning: It's time to take your ideas and thoughts elsewhere. You may need to do so quietly and secretly.

Symbolism: A thief carries five swords away in the hopes of using them for his own profit. He leaves two behind in his haste to escape.

Upright: secrecy, and stealth

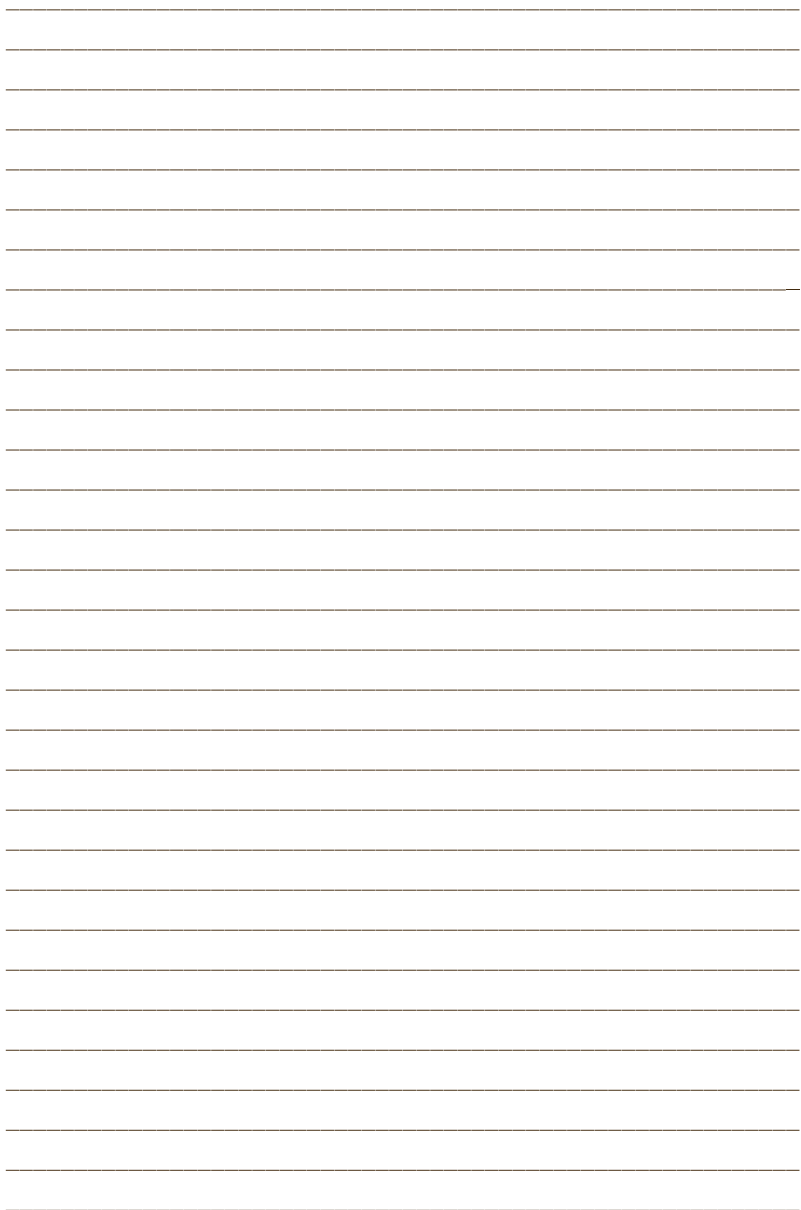
Reversed: theft, and deception

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

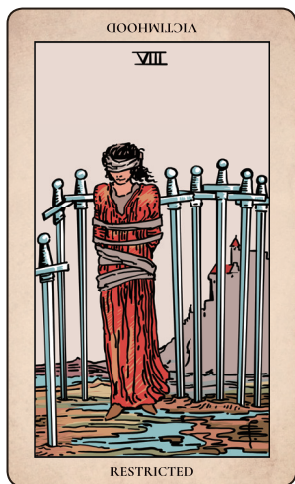
Most clearly for me, this card represents preparations for my divorce. I was unhappy in my first marriage for quite some time. And like many long-term relationships that combine finances, disengaging was not an easy process. I wish I could say everything could be done in an open discussion with my wife, but that was not realistic or wise. The final process proved amicable for the most part, but private and hidden conversations with family and friends were necessary to make leaving the marriage possible before the actual leaving took place.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When did you have to sneak out of a situation in order to get to a better place?



EIGHT OF SWORDS



Meaning: Restrictions to your thinking, often self-imposed. You need to address and break a pattern of negative thinking.

Symbolism: A woman is bound and blindfolded, surrounded by eight swords, showing us how completely trapped she is.

Upright: trapped, and restricted

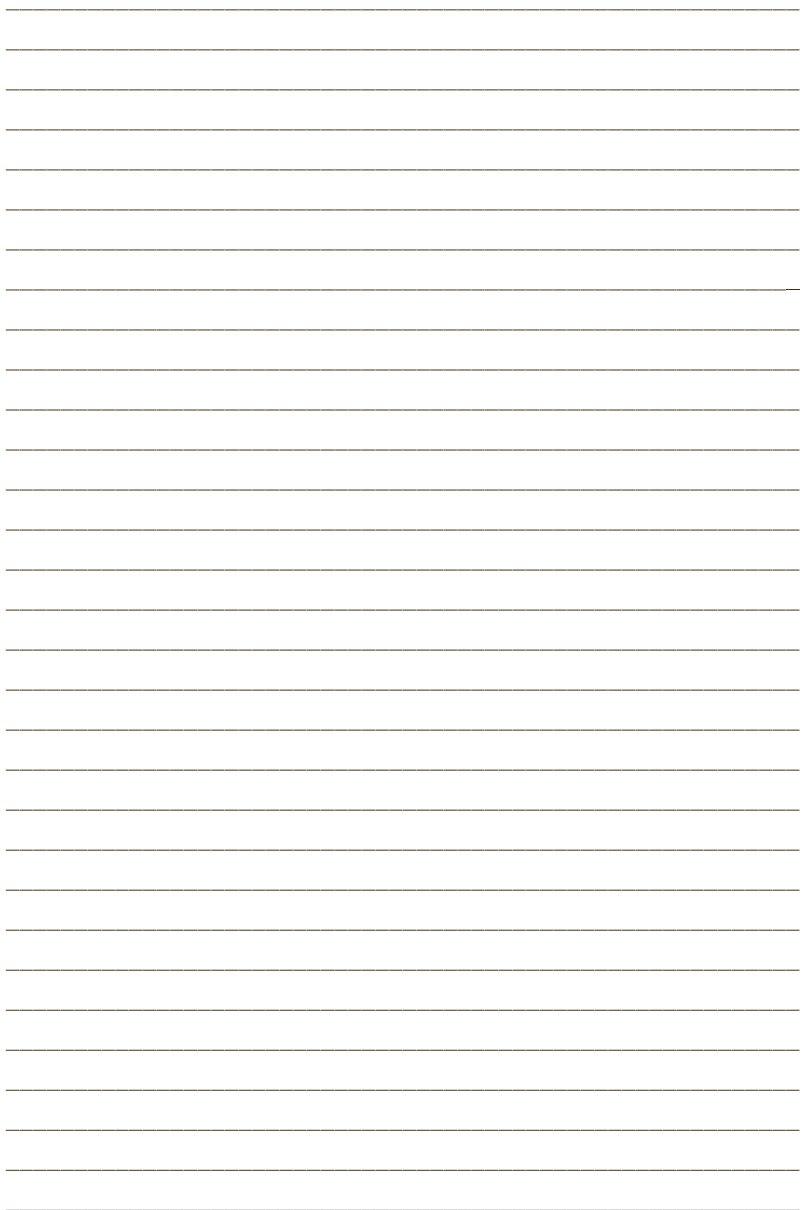
Reversed: victimhood, and hopelessness

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

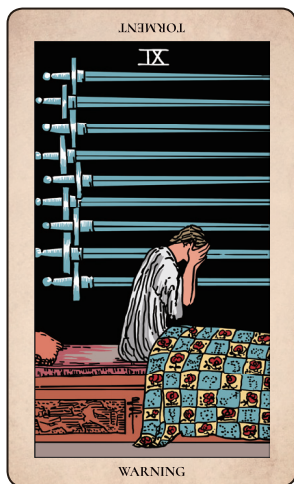
We all have moments where we sell ourselves short or face truly limiting doubts. We feel trapped. This card makes me think of a terrible job I had just out of high school and before college. I was working as a photographer for a mall store. It was soul stealing work because there was nothing creative or personal about the process or results and I ended up going through rote motions to get to the end of each day. I remember several days, trying to make cold calls, thinking, "how did I get here? ... and how do I get out?" The experience inspired me to take college seriously when I started my undergraduate studies.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When have you found yourself trapped in negative thinking and how did you get out of it?



NINE OF SWORDS



Meaning: There is a fear you need to face. This card also warns you to protect yourself from the cruelty of others.

Symbolism: A man wakes from a nightmare with nine swords above him, indicating that he must take care of himself and be on guard.

Upright: warning, and foreboding

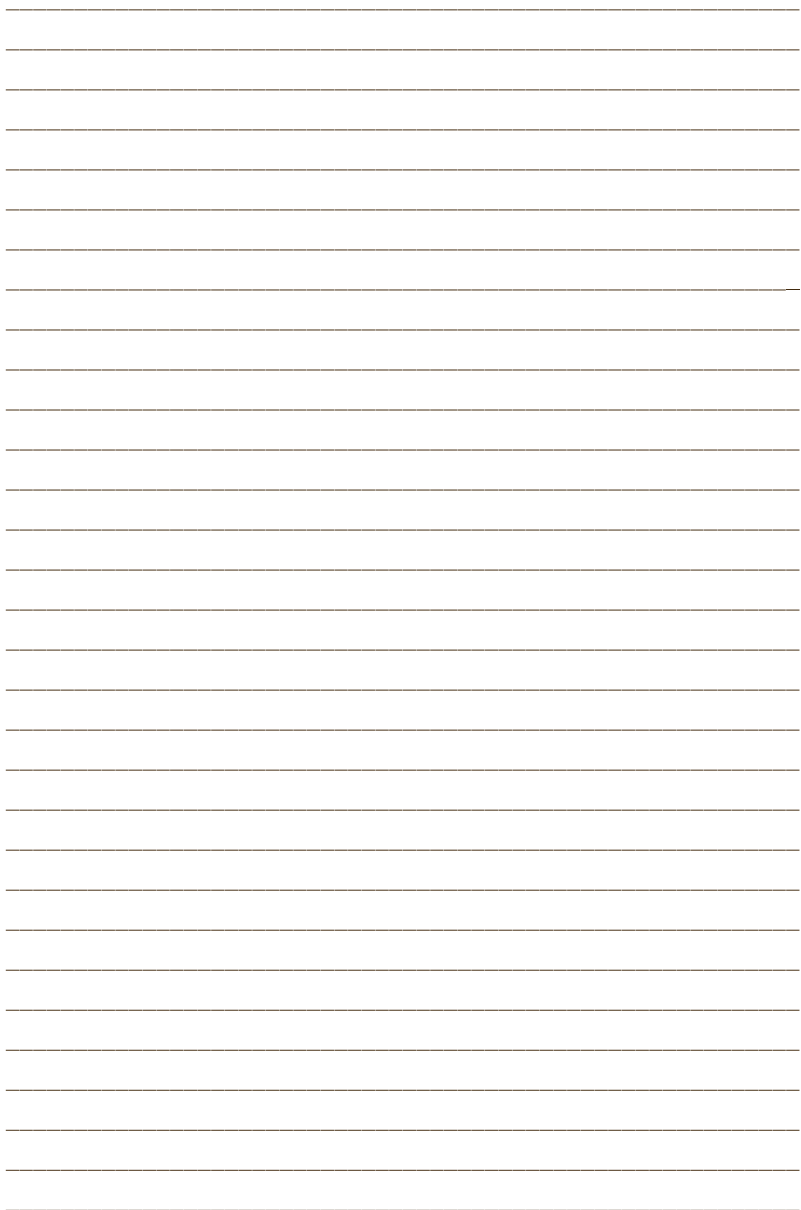
Reversed: torment, and cruelty

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

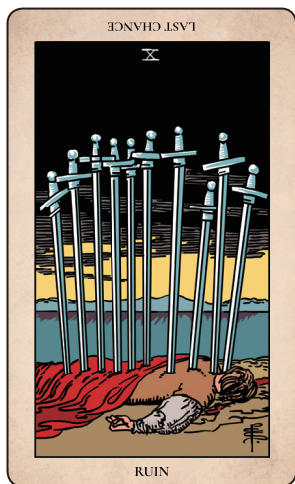
One of the common cruelties many of us experience at a young age is bullying, and I was no exception. I was bullied for three reasons, at different times and in different locations. I found out how cruel other kids could be when they found I was adopted, so I stopped sharing that information quickly. Next, I found out how cruel kids can be when you are the new kid who arrives in the middle of the school year. And, I found out how cruel kids can be when you move from the South to the North, and back to the South again.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When have you experienced cruelty and how did you handle it?



TEN OF SWORDS



Meaning: A warning card indicating that you need to accept that a situation or relationship is ruined and it is time to move on.

Symbolism: A man lies on the ground run through by ten swords; his choices ruined him and brought him to a dead end.

Upright: warning to change thinking, ruin, and “the writing is on the wall”

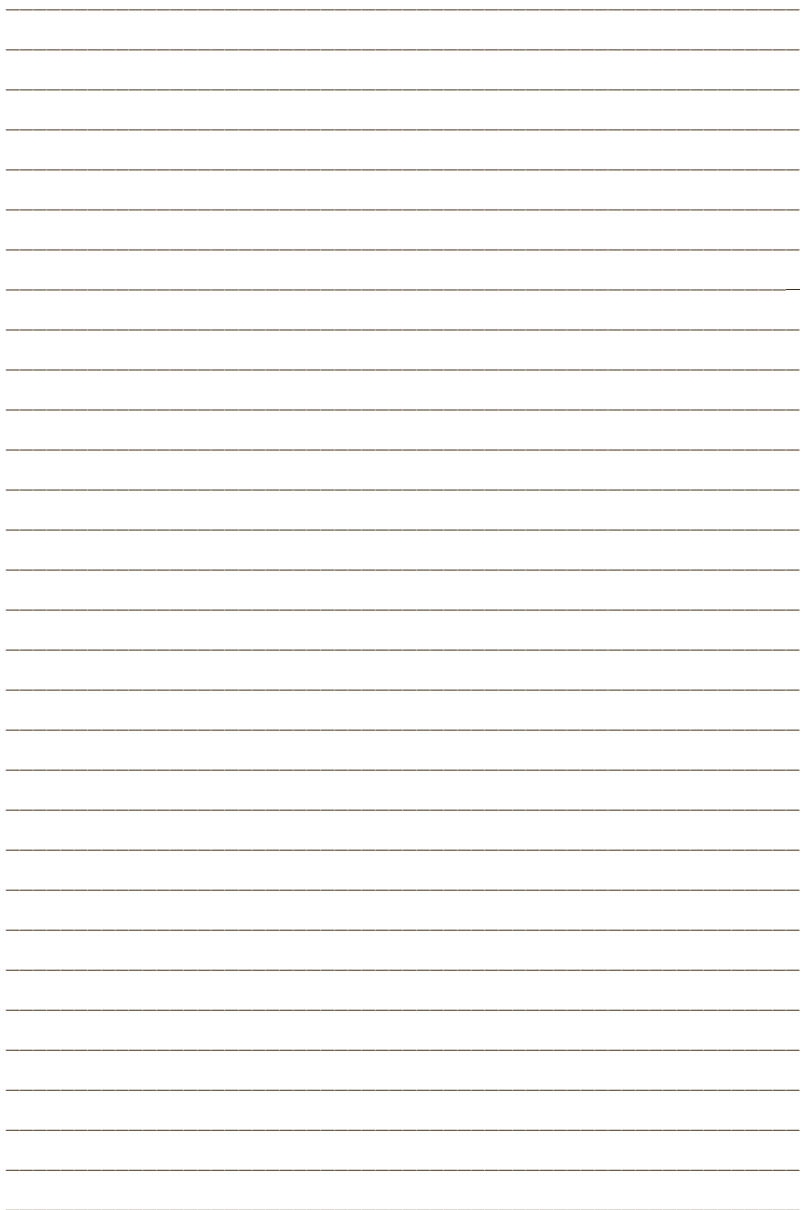
Reversed: destruction, and last chance

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

It is certainly terrible to experience this card; once is enough. In 2009 I had a severe panic attack, which lead to a diagnosis of generalized anxiety disorder. I can honestly say that I broke down, for nearly three years. The break was so severe that going to the store for groceries was a trial and making my bed was a heroic accomplishment. If you have been to rock bottom, then you have met this card.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When and what was a moment of “rock bottom” or ruin for you?



PAGE OF SWORDS



Meaning: Lots of ideas, but no focus. Great energy for generating new thoughts, but eventually choices must be made.

Symbolism: A young man wants to be a warrior, but he needs training and a purpose.

Upright: inquisitive, and excited

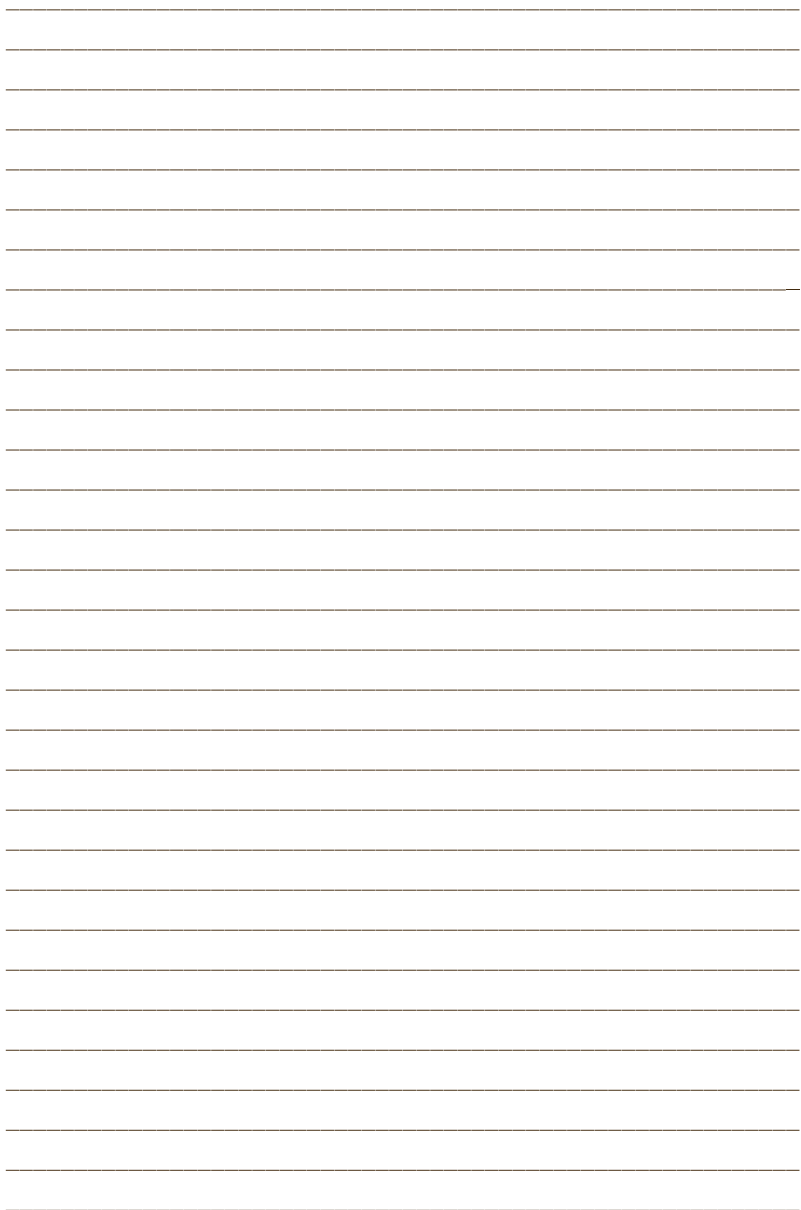
Reversed: easily distracted, and unfocused

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When I do web design jobs for new clients, this card is often our true starting point. We exchange ideas and engage in dialogue about the goals of the site, the design options, and functionality they want and need. In the beginning there's a swirl of ideas that eventually must coalesce into a theme, menu items, and content on pages.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When have you let your imagination run free; what random thoughts pop into your head?



KNIGHT OF SWORDS



Meaning: Use clear-headed and logical thinking to achieve your goals; be decisive.

Symbolism: A warrior rides his steed into battle with clear purpose.

Upright: clarity, and decisiveness

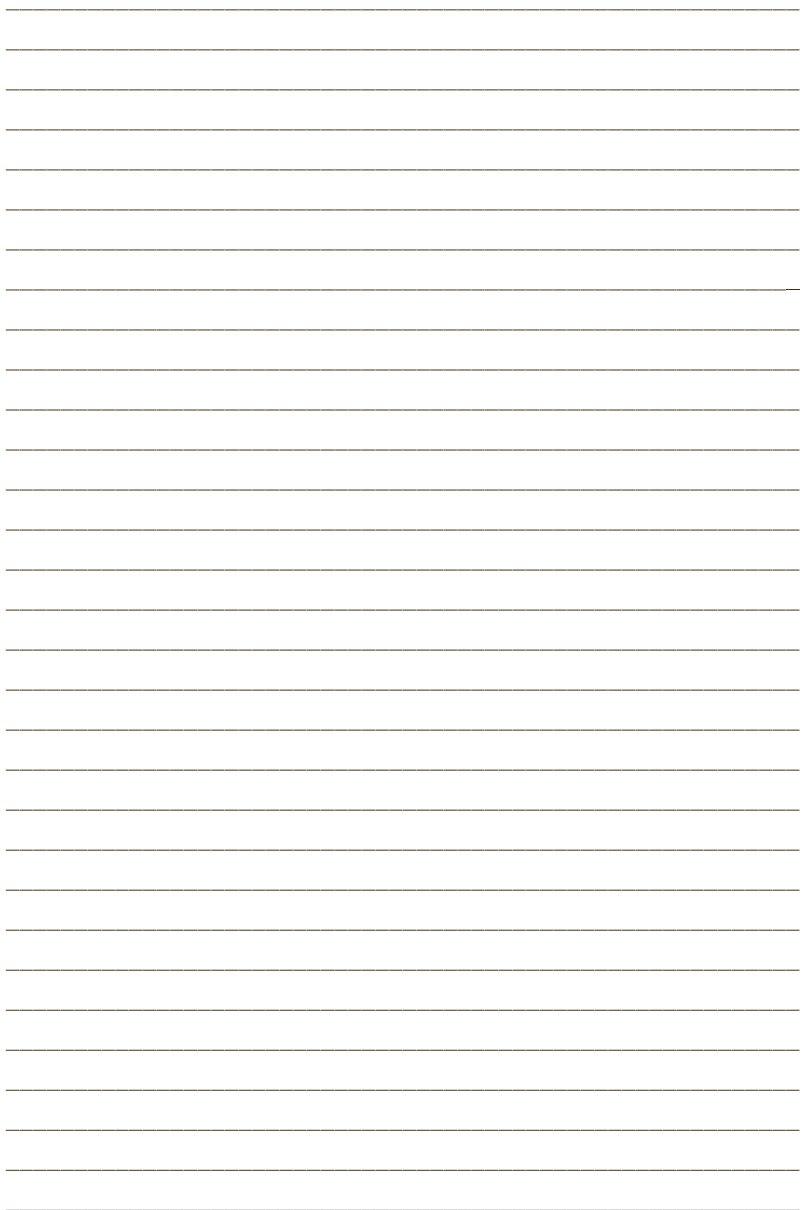
Reversed: brash decision-making, and fanaticism

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

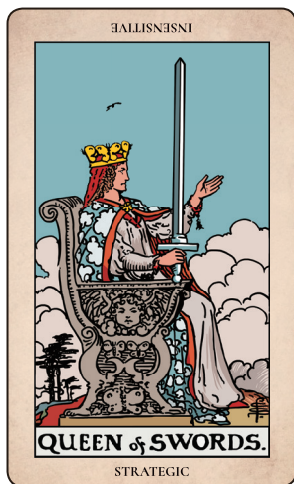
Following the work I described in the Page of Swords entry, much of building a website is not open to various ideas or suggestions. You need security, backup, and search engine optimization. You have to get a domain name, and website hosting. I have built many sites and can get the foundation in place quickly and efficiently. Once I am hired, there are various Knight of Swords actions that kick into gear and must get done before the creative work begins.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What are some of the decisions you knew you had to make, regardless of your feelings about a situation?



QUEEN OF SWORDS



Meaning: The situation or relationship calls for detached and logical thinking; be strategic.

Symbolism: A regal woman sits on her throne, ready to answer questions and offer guidance with her wisdom and strategies for life.

Upright: strategic, and just

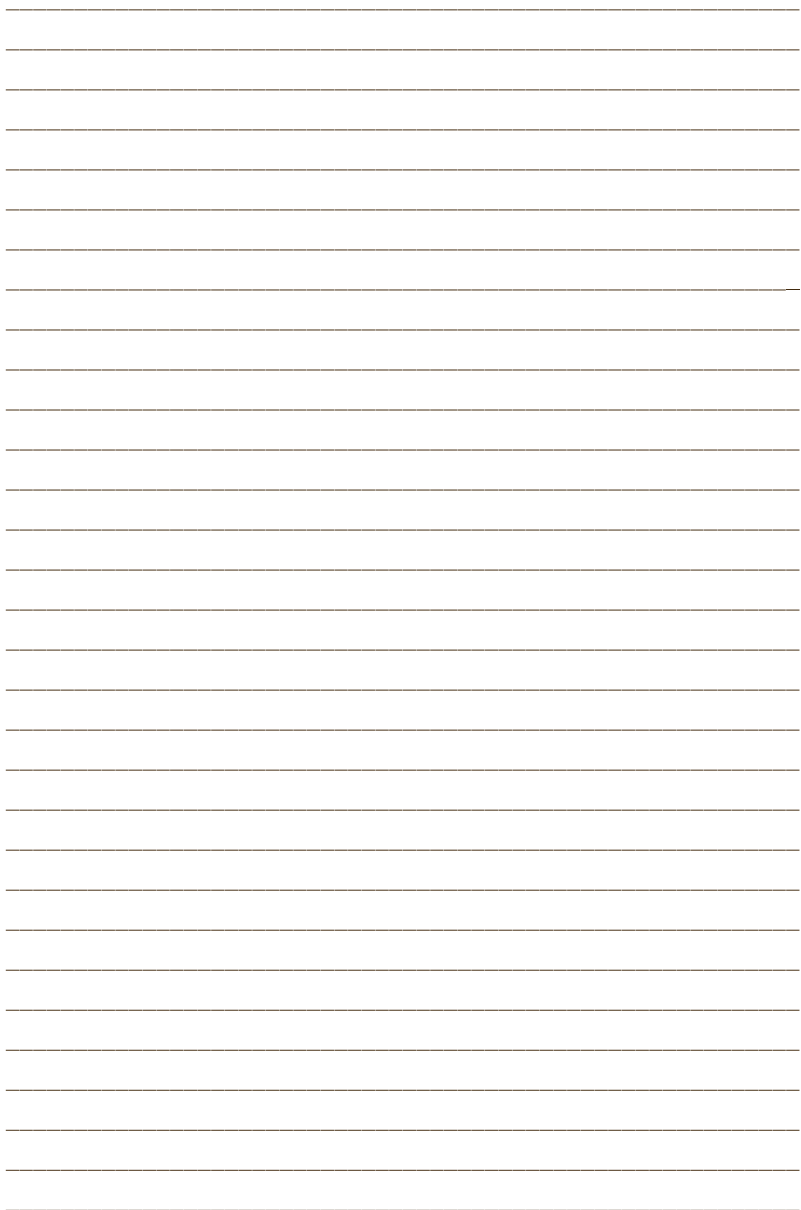
Reversed: cold hearted, and insensitive

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When I applied to college, I selected three of the top universities in North Carolina – Duke University, Wake Forest University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I was accepted to all three, but did not receive any scholarship or grant money. I had taken several advanced placement classes in high school, which earned college credits, as well as two evening courses at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro where I lived. All my credits would apply at UNC-CH, but not Duke and Wake Forest, the correct strategic decision was for me to go to UNC-CH, which I did.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What is the best strategy you have employed in a specific situation in your life?



KING OF SWORDS



Meaning: You oversee the decision and do not need input from others; make your choice and inform everyone else once you have decided. You may be called to negotiate a dispute.

Symbolism: A young king makes important decisions; his sword represents his clarity and decisiveness as a leader.

Upright: the final decision-maker, visionary, and judge

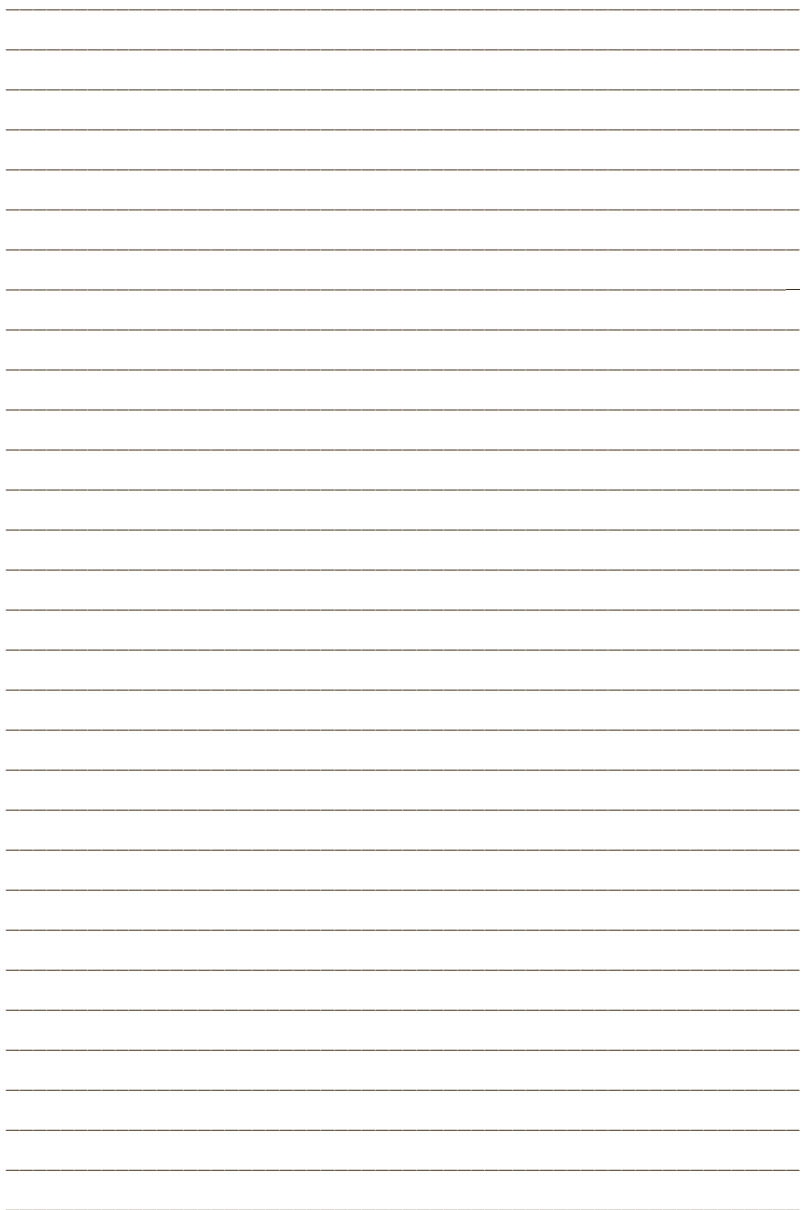
Reversed: intimidating, shortsighted, and argumentative

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

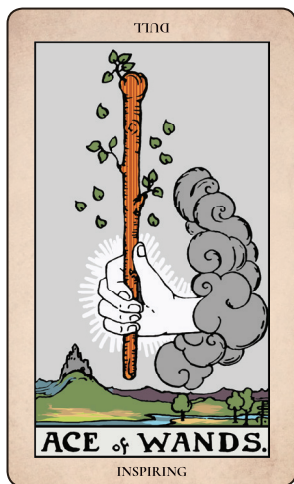
I really relate this card to my time teaching my classes at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. When I was in the classroom teaching, I was the final word, even if my final words, sometimes, were "I do not know, but I will find out." I determined the syllabus, enforced the assignment rules, and graded the papers. I was the intellectual leader, and took my responsibilities seriously.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What is one of your most significant decisions up to this point in your life that affected other people?



ACE OF WANDS



Meaning: You need to be inspired or excited; something or someone needs your spark.

Symbolism: A divine being holds a single staff over the valley as a symbol of new energy for the land.

Upright: inspiration, and spark

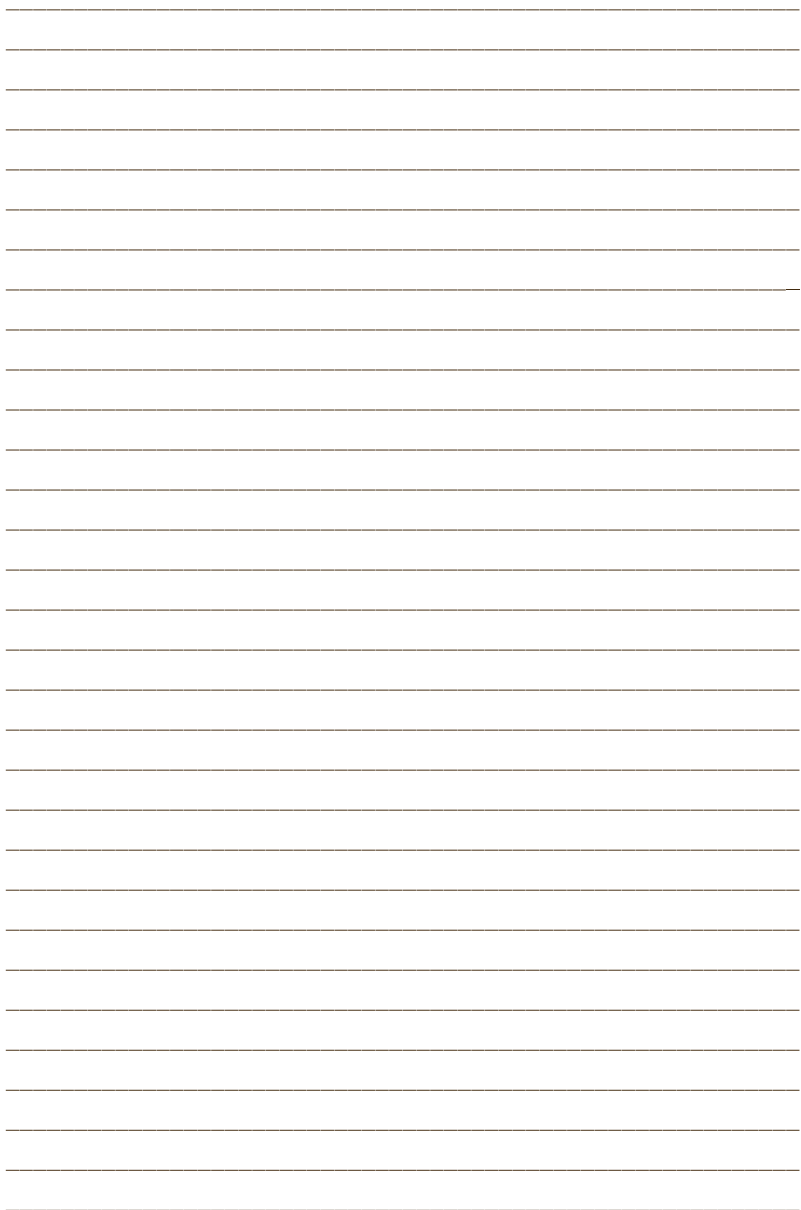
Reversed: lacking energy, dull, and hinderance

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When I see the Ace of Wands, I think of the inspiration I felt to develop my own tarot deck using black and white photography. This inspiration hit in the early 1990s and I even took a few photos and designed about ten cards before life just pushed the project aside. Twenty years later I completed the deck, with the help of a talented young photographer, using black and white photography, which was the original inspiration.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What is one of your best moments of inspiration and creativity?



TWO OF WANDS



Meaning: You need to choose a direction and take steps to move forward.

Symbolism: A man ready to set out on his journey holds a globe in one hand and staff in the other, representing new possibilities. The staff behind him represents his accomplishments, and the floral cross on the lower wall in front of him symbolizes his wealth and success.

Upright: possibilities, and choices

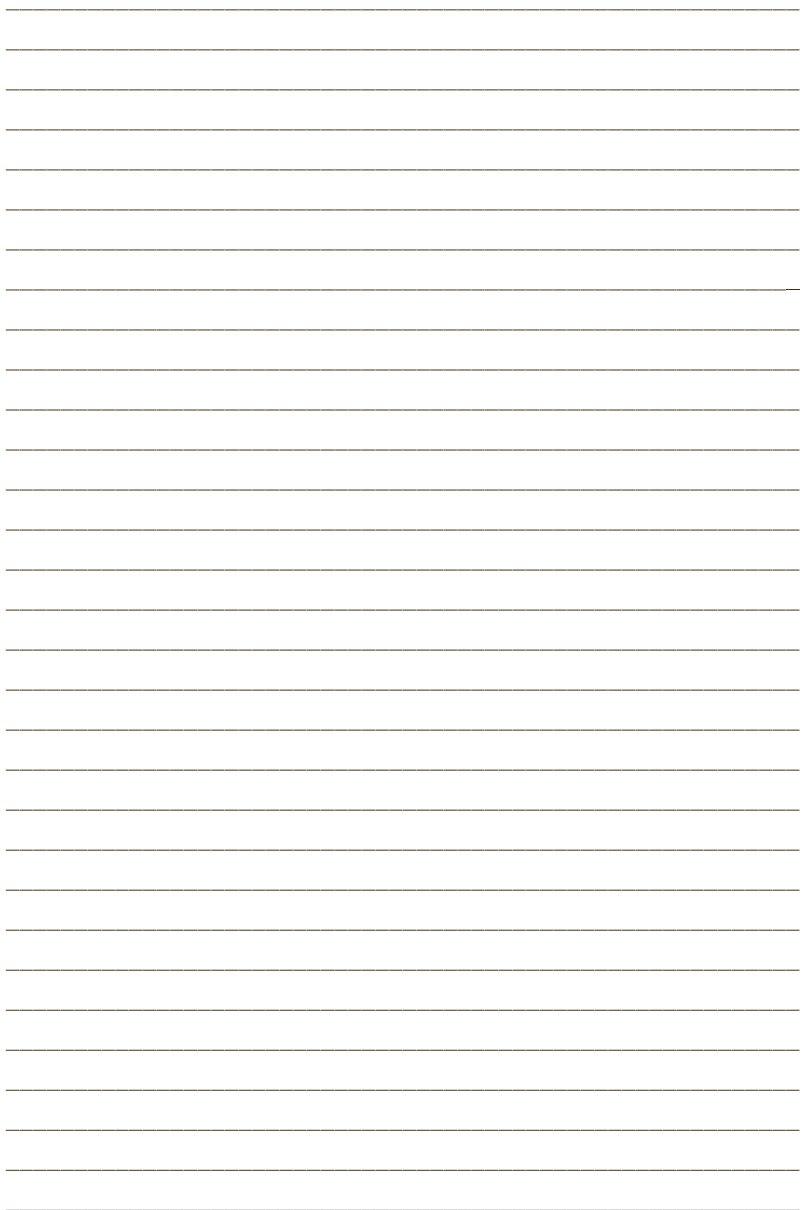
Reversed: fear, hesitating, and indecision

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When I see this card, I remember heading off to college in the summer of 1986. As it turned out, I did not end up in up in a dorm like most freshman. A snafu with my acceptance put me on campus after housing had been determined and I had to get an apartment with a high school friend who was also attending the same university. It really did feel like we had the world in our hands and we were on a brand-new adventure!

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When did you prepare to set out on an adventure, and what was it?



THREE OF WANDS



Meaning: The path is clear; you need to invest your time and energy to succeed.

Symbolism: The man holds one staff, while two staffs are behind him. He has a destination charted and is ready to embark on his adventure.

Upright: adventure, and optimism

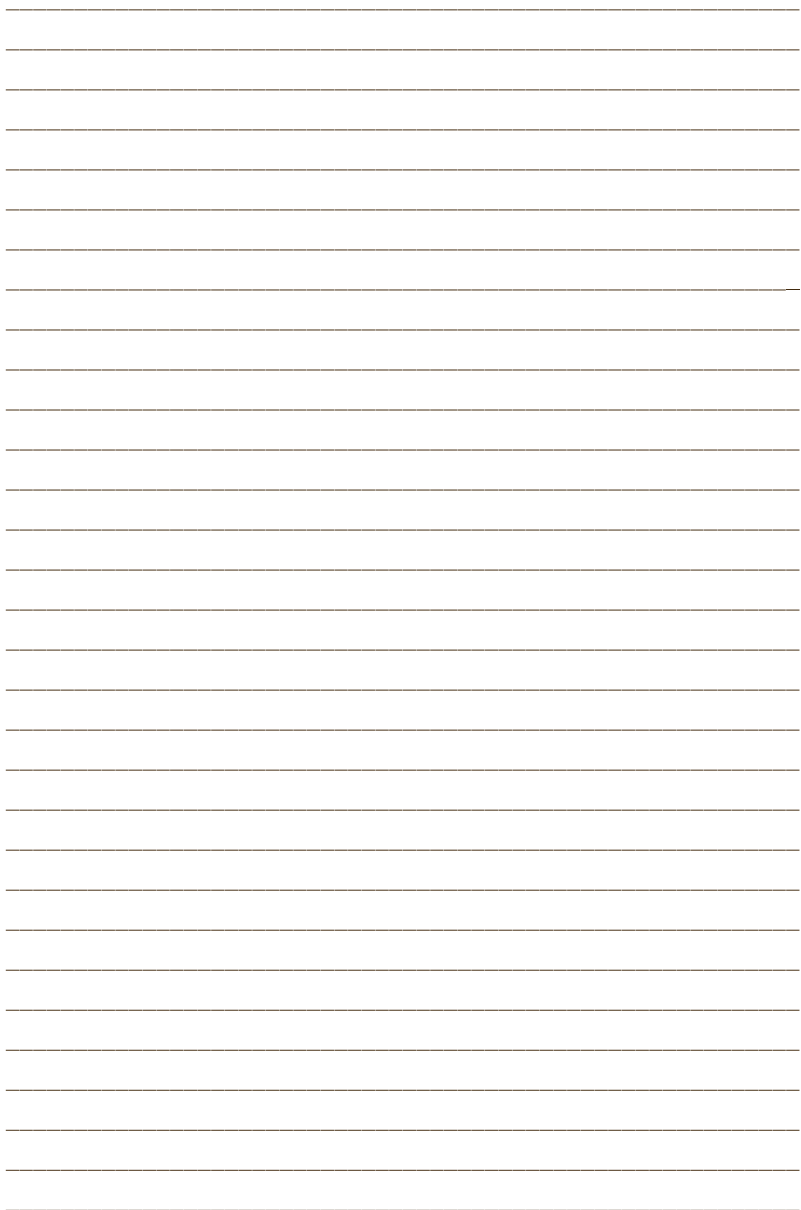
Reversed: caution, and broken promises

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

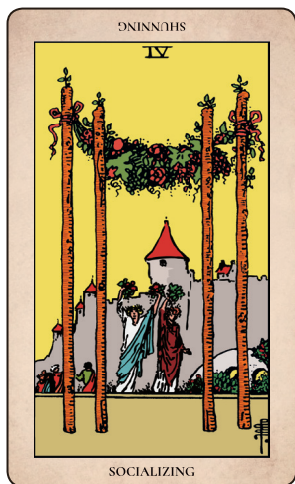
I connect this card to the middle of my college experience; with a couple of years under my belt, I often wondered what I would do after college and where I would go in the world. It was not the Two of Wands, which I associated with going to college, but rather this card represented the time building the skills I wanted to eventually take out into the world.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When did you realize you were between worlds; what were you contemplating as your next move?



FOUR OF WANDS



Meaning: Gather friends and family around you and celebrate together.

Symbolism: Two figures approach the four staffs to celebrate an important day or major accomplishment. The roses and grapes in the garland around the staffs show abundance, good health, and the richness of the land.

Upright: celebration, and socializing

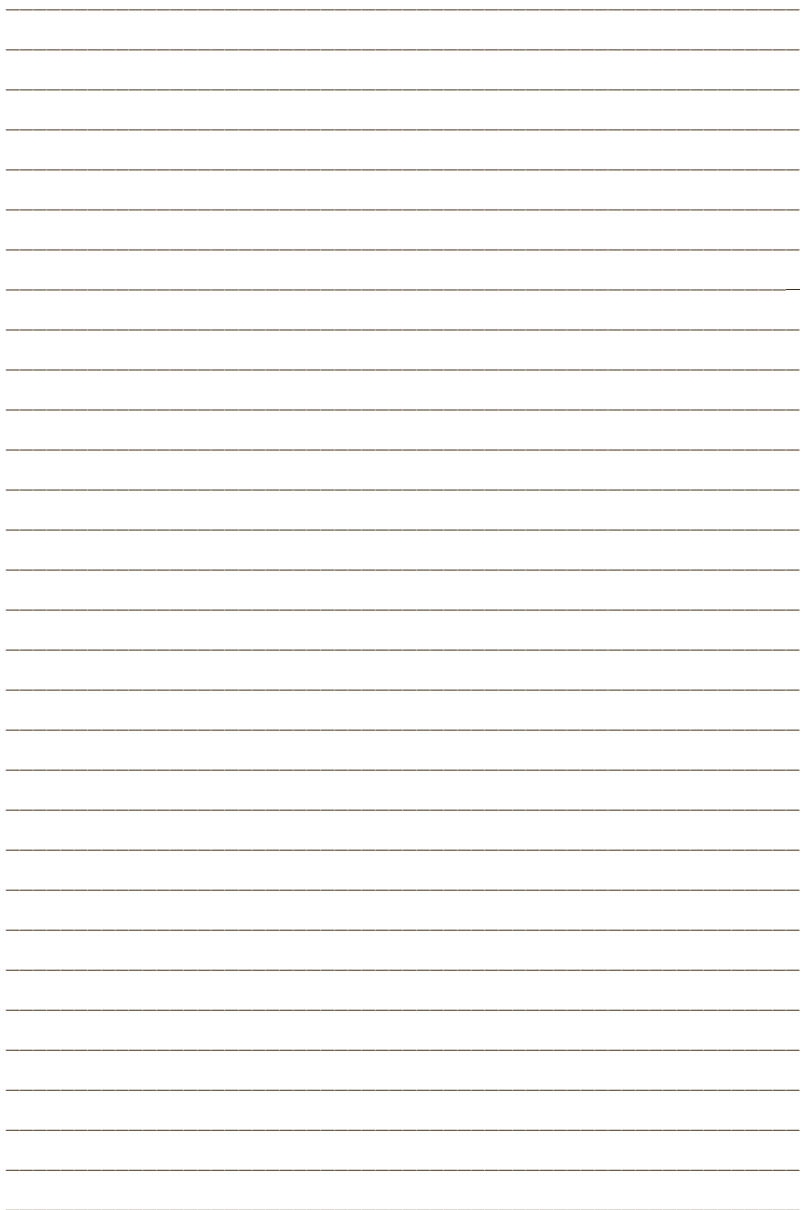
Reversed: unfinished work, shunning, ostracizing, and no time to celebrate

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Like the Three of Cups, this card represents celebration, but it's something more than just close friends gathering. In the modern era this card would represent going to a concert or attending a professional sporting event. I did not go to many concerts, but I did get a chance to see the musician Prince perform in Greensboro in 1997. The performance was amazing and brought diverse people together to celebrate the creative force of music.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

Write about one of your favorite public celebrations, in your honor, or one you were happy to attend.



FIVE OF WANDS



Meaning: Conflict and competition are necessary to keep moving forward.

Symbolism: Young men challenge one another, using competition and conflict as the way to determine their strength, as well as who their leader should be.

Upright: conflict, or competition

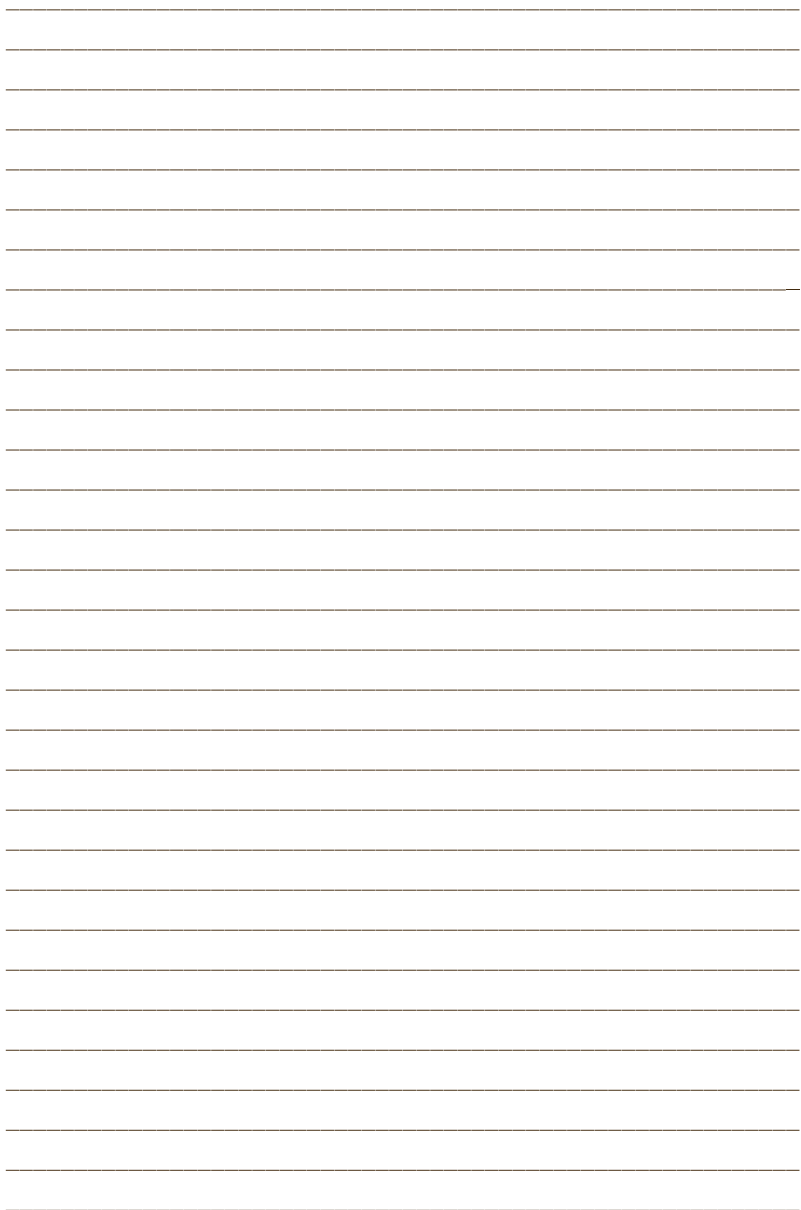
Reversed: poor leadership, and trouble-making

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

I understand this card through the many pick-up games of basketball I played throughout my young adult life where there were multiple layers of competition happening. There was competition against the player guarding me and the player I was guarding. There was also competition among my teammates as we vied to see who was the best player on the team, which in keeping with the Five of Wands, consisted of five players. Sometimes I was the best player on our team and sometimes I was the worst player.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What competition stands out most in your mind and how did you fair when the struggle was over?



SIX OF WANDS



Meaning: Victory and success are yours; be sure you act with dignity.

Symbolism: A successful leader makes his return from battle; his staff has a garland of victory at the top and he wears a garland crown.

Upright: victory, and desires fulfilled

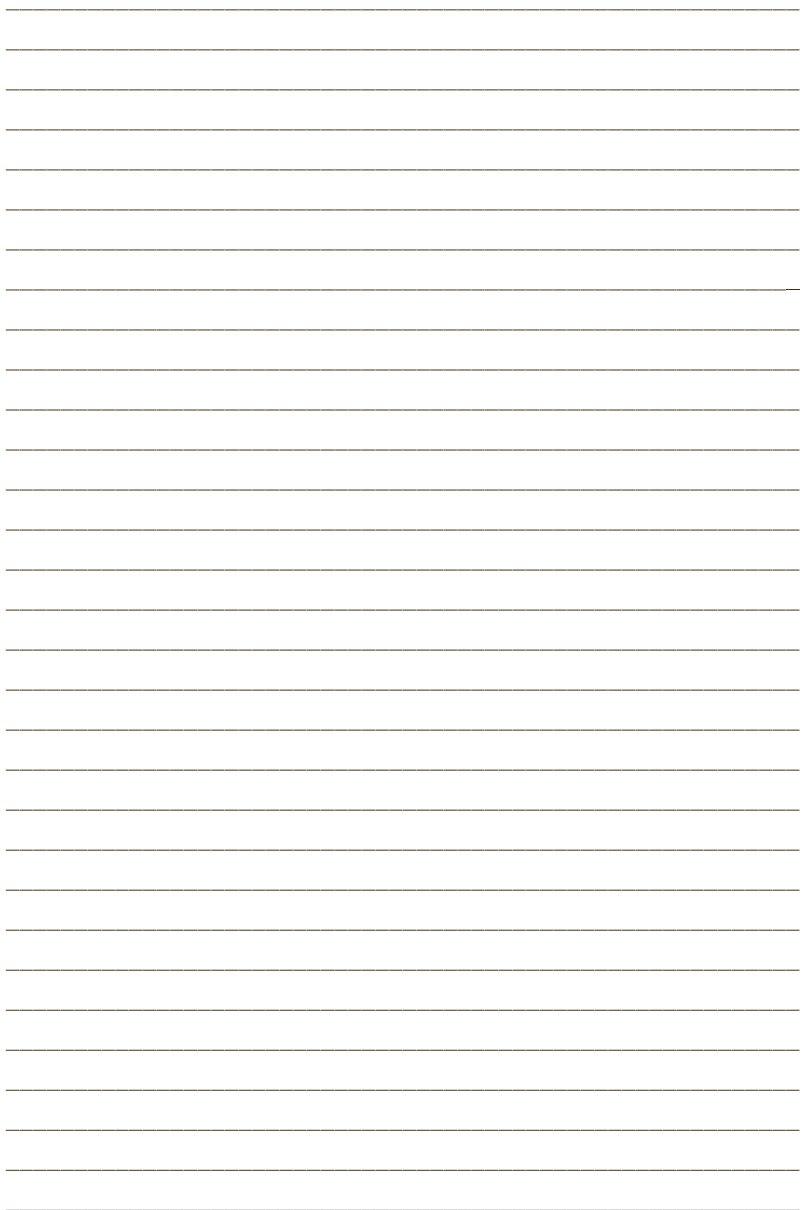
Reversed: public humiliation, and failure

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

I started working for my father when I was 15, and kept working for him until I went to college. However, he wanted me to learn what it was like to apply for a job, so when I was 16 and had earned my driver's license, he encouraged me to look for a job where someone else would evaluate me and decide if they wanted to hire me. As it turned out, a new bookstore opened in the downtown area and I applied for the job, and wrote a personal letter to the owners explaining why I wanted to work there. They decided to hire me and I remember feeling a sense of victory and accomplishment, which is why I connect this experience to this card.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What would you consider one of your greatest victories?



SEVEN OF WANDS



Meaning: You are right; hold your ground. Any lack of integrity will be your downfall.

Symbolism: A warrior defends the land, using valor to hold off those attacking him. He can succeed because he holds the higher ground.

Upright: courage, and valor

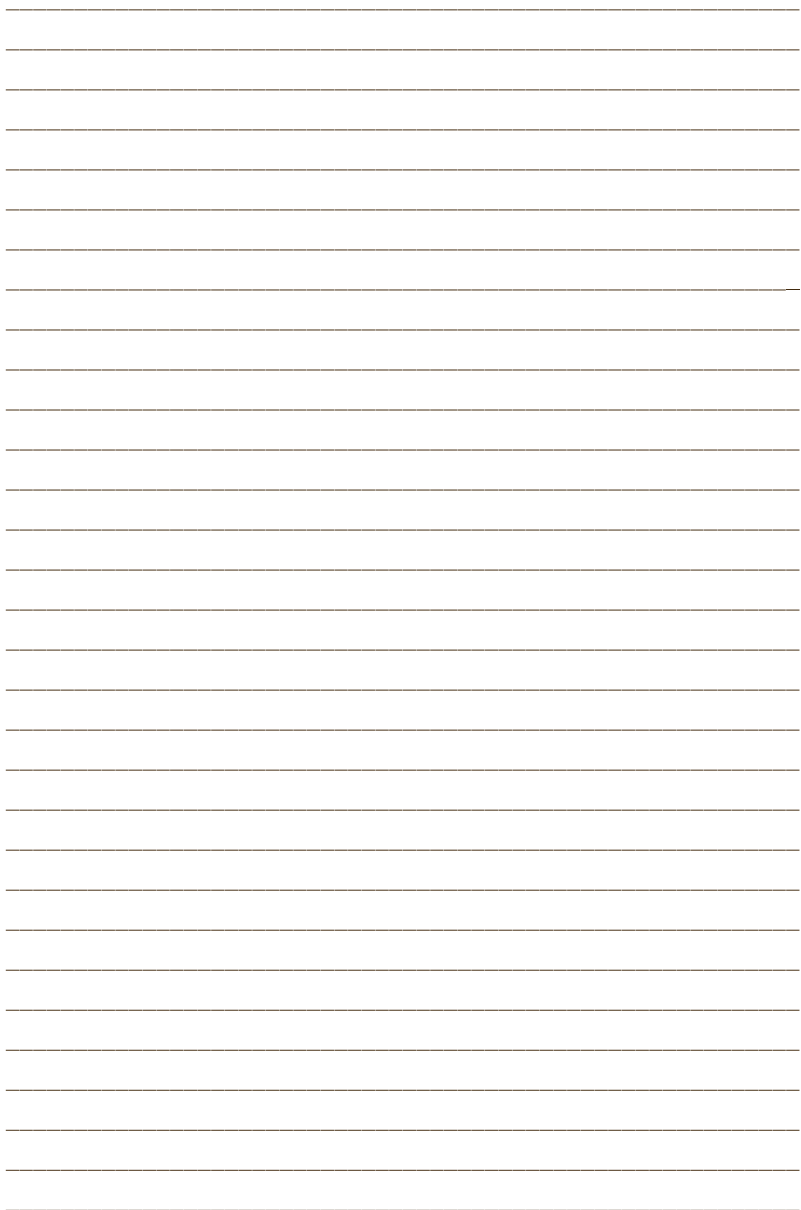
Reversed: treachery, and lack of conviction

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

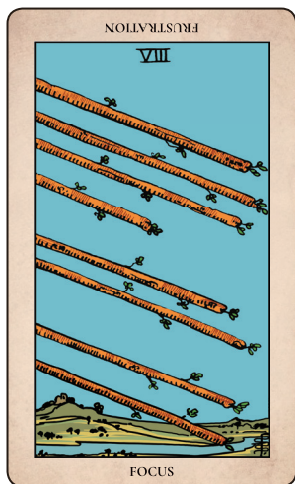
During my relationships journey, I have dated interracially, which was not always a popular decision with some of my peers, and ended some friendships. I have no problem standing my ground for what I believe in and know to be right. On many occasions I tend to go my own way, and each time I do, I see the meaning of this card clearly.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When have you had to defend your beliefs, and use the higher ground to ward off the ignorance of others?



EIGHT OF WANDS



Meaning: Be focused and intense; let nothing distract you from your goal.

Symbolism: Eight staffs point in the same direction, representing clarity of intent and the focus needed to bring creative ideas down to earth.

Upright: intensity, focus, and drive

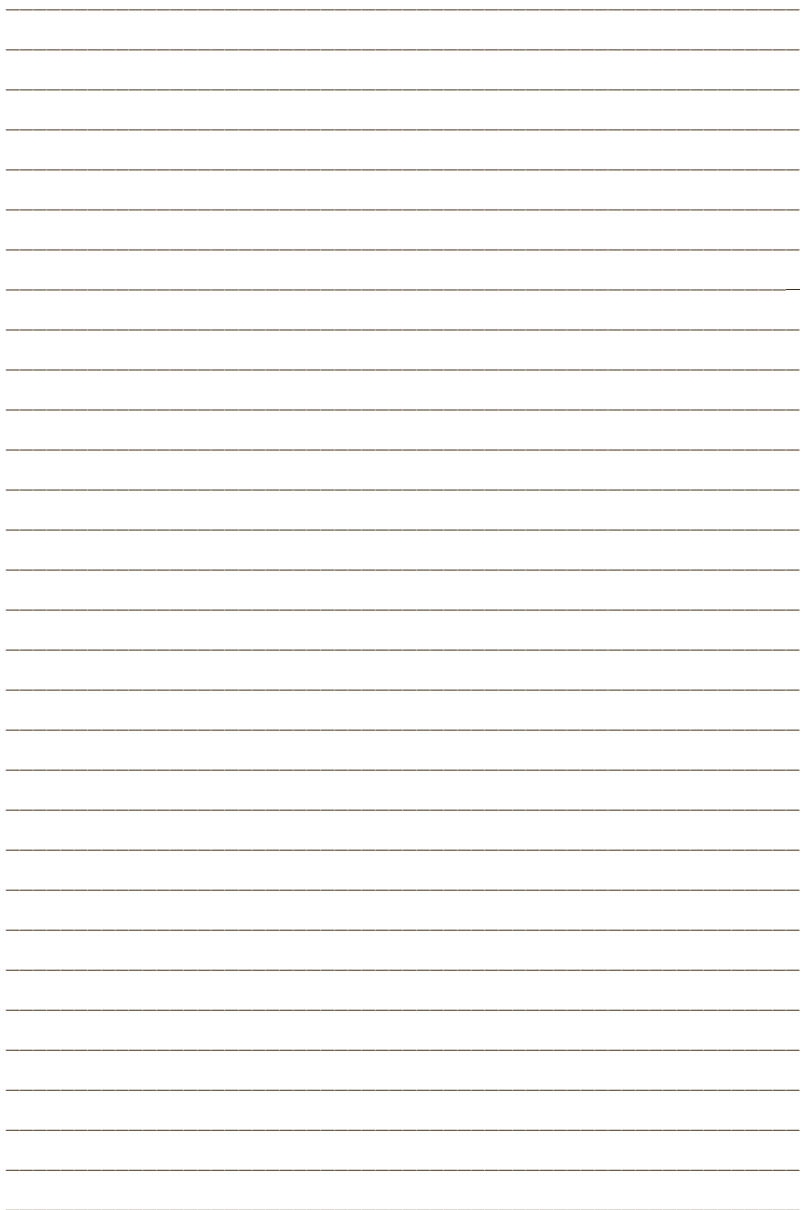
Reversed: frustration, and confusion

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When I see this card, I think about my years building my comic book collection when I was a teenager. My very first comic book was Justice League #60, given to me by my grandfather when I was nine. The cover price was 12 cents! By the time I sold my collection, nearly twenty years later, I had amassed a 10,000-book collection. The crown jewel of my collection was a nearly complete run of the first series of the Justice League title. I collected, with single-minded focus, 249 out of 261 issues, missing the first 6 and a few issues between 10 and 30 that were simply too expensive for me to purchase.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What knowledge, skill, or activity have you pursued with absolute and single-minded focus?



NINE OF WANDS



Meaning: You have a duty to uphold; others look to you as a role model.

Symbolism: An injured warrior remains loyal and ready in the face of adversity, resolved to set an example for others.

Upright: loyalty, and discipline

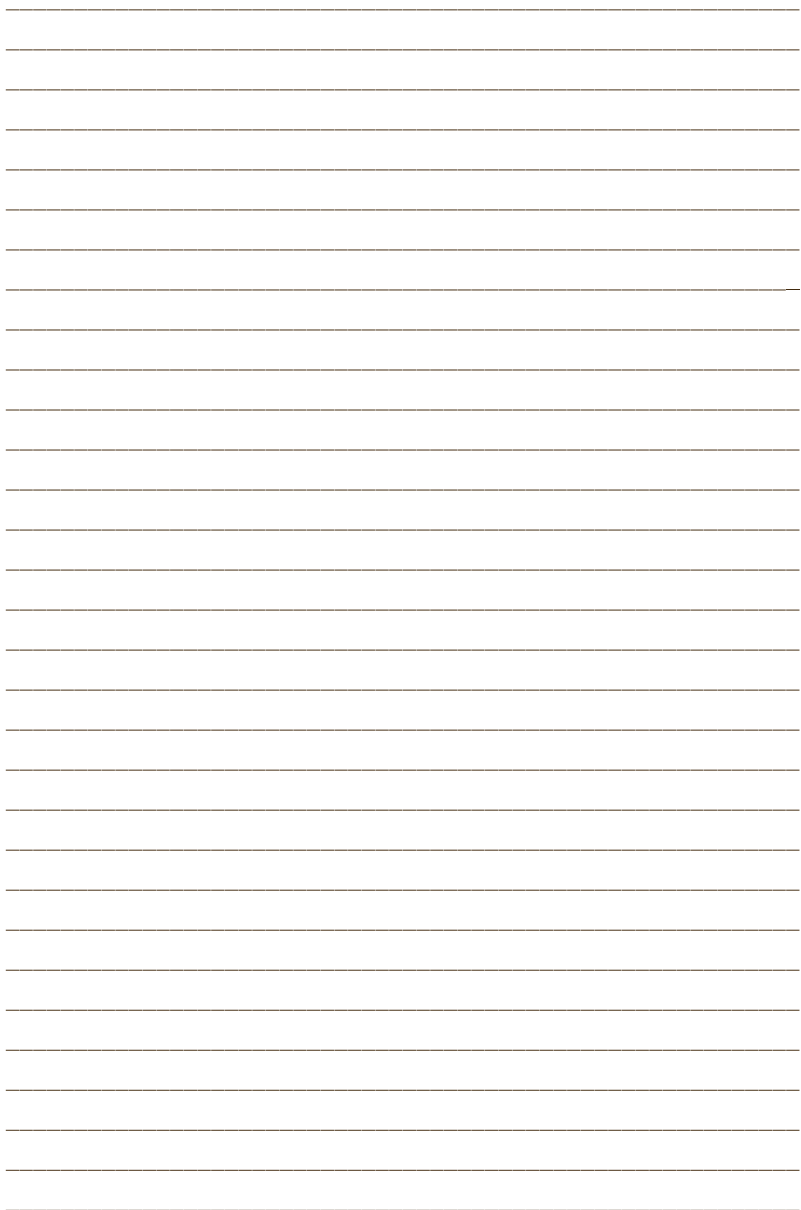
Reversed: disloyalty, and stubbornness

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

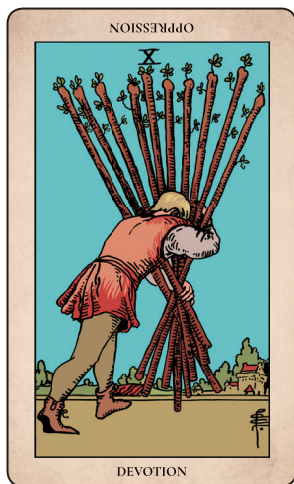
I had numerous examples to apply to this card before I was 37, but none compare to the responsibility I took on as a new parent when my daughter was born in 2005. I knew I would forever be a role model in her life and I would never get a break from the duty of parenting. This card conjures the idea of duty, which is a mix of loyalty and discipline.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What would you consider your greatest responsibility in life so far?



TEN OF WANDS



Meaning: It is time to say “no” and set limits; you do not have enough energy right now.

Symbolism: Ten wands weigh heavily on the figure carrying them, but the situation calls for persistence and sacrifice; the wands are a burden that must be carried.

Upright: obligations, and devotion

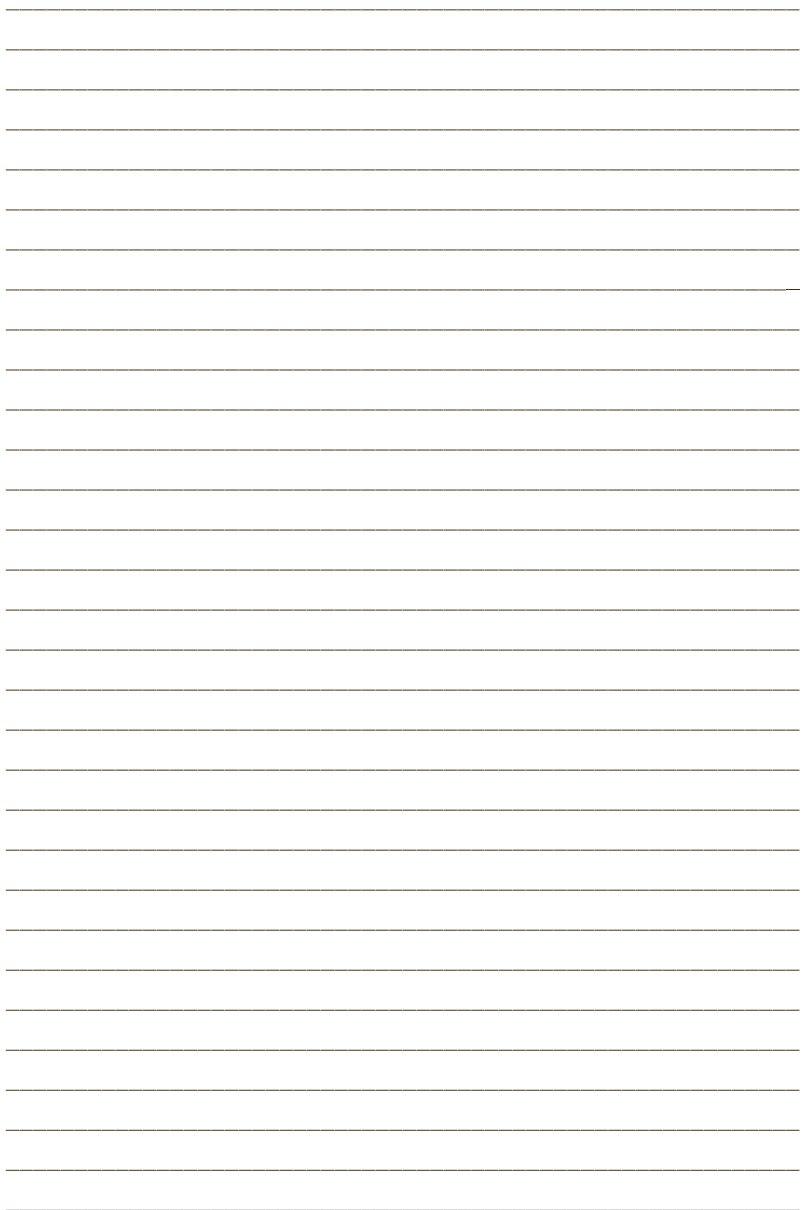
Reversed: exhaustion, and oppression

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

I resonate with this card because I want to be helpful to as many people as possible, which, on more than one occasion, has left me feeling overburdened. My cousin's wife shared this story and lesson with me when I was a teenager. She said, “we all start out with a bag, and as we go along in life, we find stones that belong to us and we need to pick them up and put them in our bag.” She looked at me with intense focus and said, “make sure you do not pick up other people's stones.” It took until much later in life for me to learn to do a better job of not picking up other people's stones (or in this case, their wands).

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When have you taken on too much and how did you relieve yourself of your burden?



PAGE OF WANDS



Meaning: You have a lot of excitement, but you need to find some focus.

Symbolism: A young man full of energy waits to be inspired and given direction.

Upright: enthusiasm, and creativity

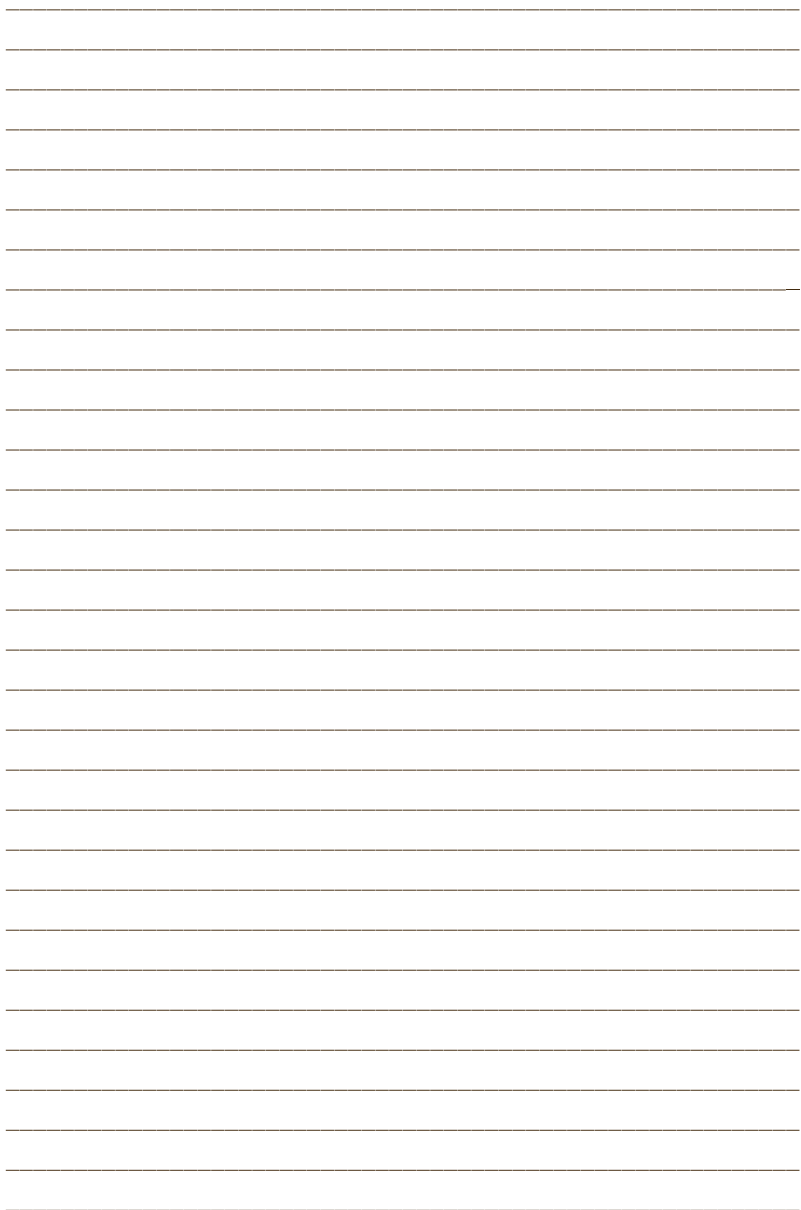
Reversed: unpredictability, and foolishness

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

This card makes me think back to my adolescence, which is a time when the Page of Wands is strongest and appears most frequently. I can remember so many days filled with inspiration, but not a lot of reality. It is a card of dreams, many of which are unrealistic, but very exciting. I was a big comic book collector in my youth and after reading some comics I would feel inspired to write my own stories, but the energy never found traction. Conversely, I was inspired as a young adult, to create my own tarot deck; that inspiration stuck and I eventually completed the deck.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What was an inspiration that never materialized and what was one that did?



KNIGHT OF WANDS



Meaning: You need to go on an adventurous quest; get out of your routine and explore.

Symbolism: A warrior rides a stallion, carrying his staff on a quest for adventure.

Upright: driven, and passionate

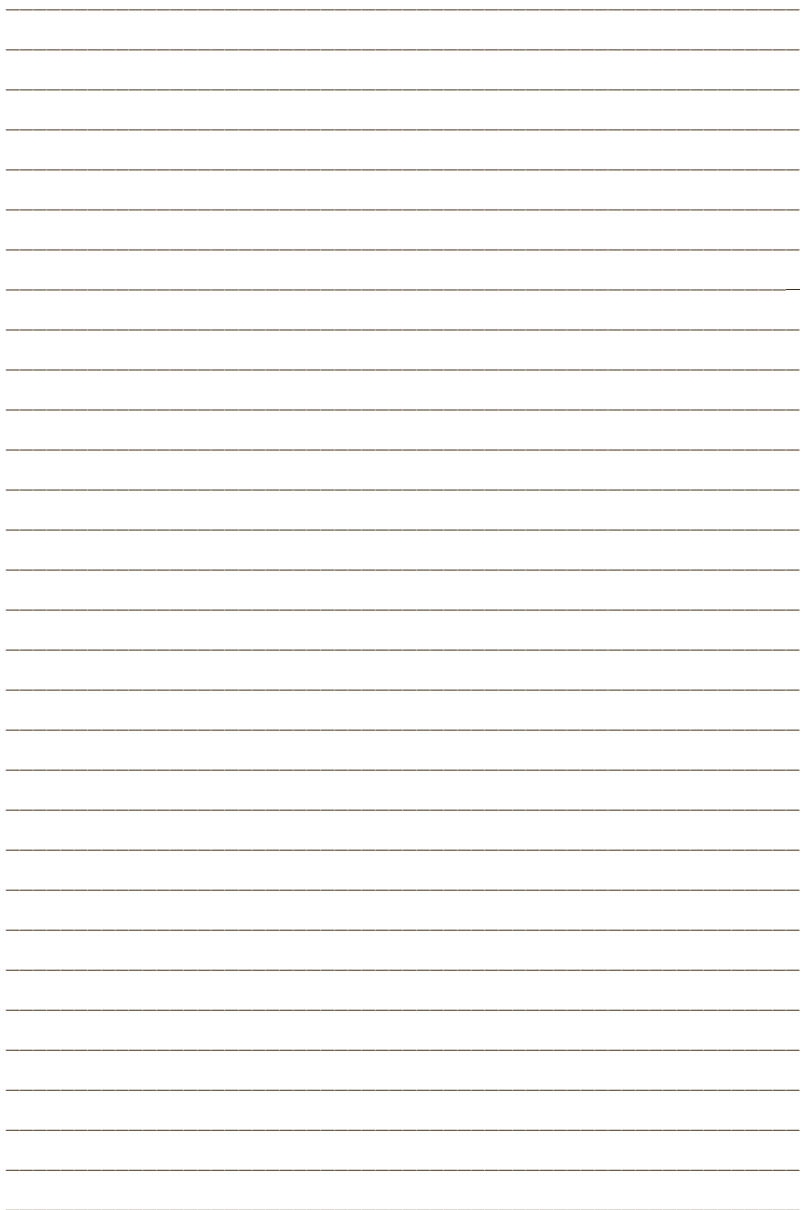
Reversed: headstrong, and reckless

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

While I understand this card quite well, I am not really close to it. When it appears in a reading and I'm working with a male client, I refer to it as the Indiana Jones card. If the client is female, I make the connection with Lara Croft, Tomb Raider. My best example is the trip I took with my wife to her home country, South Africa. It took a full day to get there, and was a wonderful chance for me to see where she grew up and get a glimpse of her lifestyle. No other adventure or travel even comes close to that experience.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What is your most significant adventure and how do you feel about it?



QUEEN OF WANDS



Meaning: You need to show confidence; if not, fake it until you feel it!

Symbolism: A powerful woman displays her energy confidently awaiting supplicants for her favor.

Upright: confident, and honorable

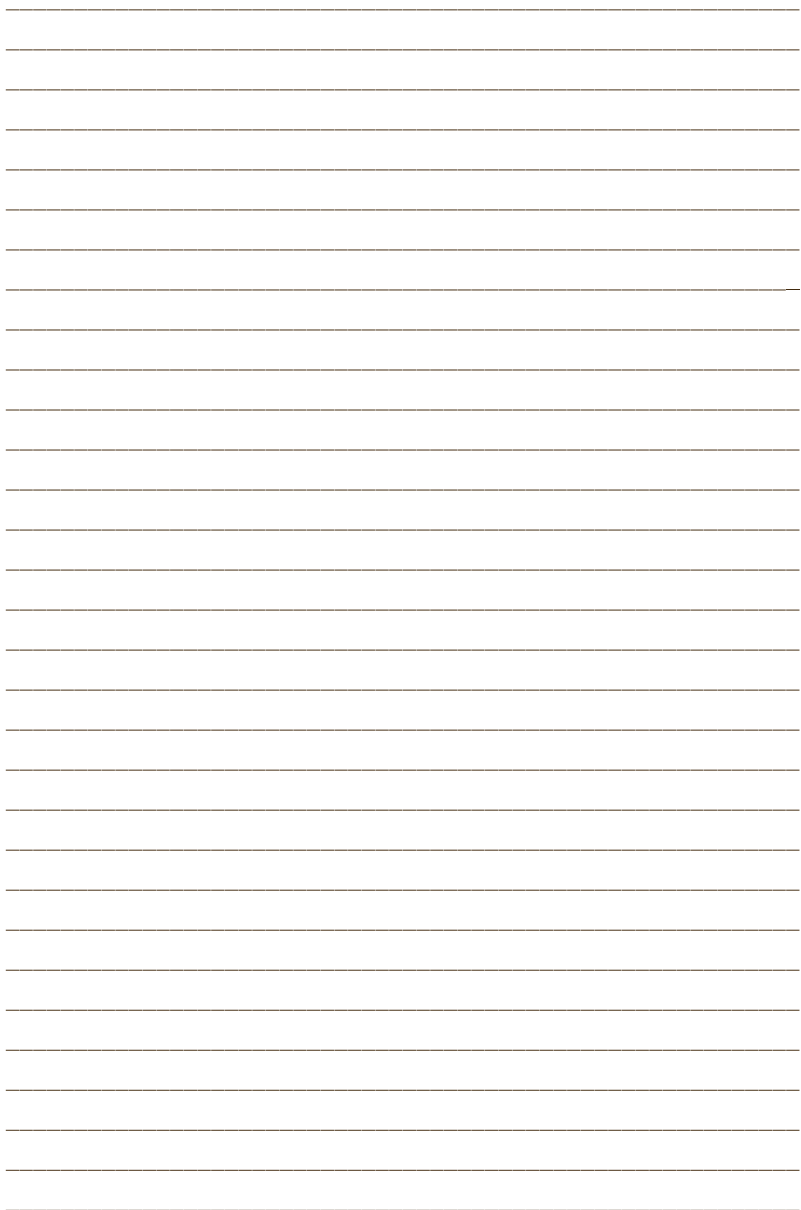
Reversed: insecure, and vindictive

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

I am what you would describe as a situational extrovert, meaning I am generally an introvert, but in certain situations I can be comfortably extroverted, which is the case when I teach or present to a group. My Queen of Wands personality rises to the occasion and I can perform with confidence. But once the moment has passed, and class or the presentation is over, I prefer to retreat into my private life.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

When have you felt or do you feel most confident?



KING OF WANDS



Meaning: Show others how it is done; you need to lead by doing.

Symbolism: A powerful man is seated on a throne waiting for the right moment to act; he contemplates battle strategies.

Upright: role model, maverick, and independence

Reversed: conformist, and impatient

◆ Author's Personal Connection with this Card ◆

I relate well and easily to the King of Wands, since the astrological sign for this card is Aries, and that is my Sun sign. Like a strong Aries, I tend to prefer to go my own way, which has ultimately led me to run my own business as a spiritual advisor, web site developer, sometimes handyman, and professional writer. Like the King of Wands, I prefer to act and do as my form of leadership, instead of the more managerial roles of the King of Cups, King of Swords, or King of Pentacles.

◆ Your Personal Connection with this Card ◆

What is a stellar example of doing something on your own or in your own way?

