



SPECIAL TOPICS IN TAROT



# PAST-LIFE & KARMIC TAROT



JUSTICE



EDAIN MCCOY



FOREWORD BY MARY K. GREER

PAST-LIFE & KARMIC  
**TAROT**

## *About the Author*

Edain McCoy received her first set of divination cards as a teenager. She began reading tarot for others in her midtwenties, and by her thirties was experimenting successfully with the challenges of creating her own spreads. An alumnus of the University of Texas with a bachelor of arts in history, she is affiliated with several professional writer's organizations and is listed in the reference guides *Contemporary Authors* and *Who's Who in America*. Articles by her have appeared in *FATE*, *Circle*, *Enlightenments*, and similar periodicals. Edain also worked for ten years as a stockbroker with several large investment firms. This former woodwind player for the Lynchburg Symphony claims both the infamous feuding McCoy family of Kentucky and Sir Roger Williams, the seventeenth-century religious dissenter, as branches on her diverse family tree. *Past-Life and Karmic Tarot* is her nineteenth book.

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**TAROT**

EDAIN McCOY

FOREWORD BY MARY K. GREER

Llewellyn Publications  
St. Paul, Minnesota

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First Edition

Second Printing, 2004

Cover art © 2003 by Lauren O'Leary

Cover design by Gavin Dayton Duffy

Editing by Jane Hilken

Illustrations on pages 16, 28, and 78 by Llewellyn art department

Layout and project management by Joanna Willis

Series design by Connie Hill

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

McCoy, Edain, 1957–

Past-life & karmic tarot / Edain McCoy; foreword by Mary K. Greer.—1st ed.

p. cm.—(Special topics in tarot)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-7387-0508-X

1. Tarot. 2. Karma. I. Title: Past-life and karmic tarot. II. Title. III. Series.

BF1879.T2M425 2004

133.3'2424—dc22

2004040879

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Llewellyn Publications

A Division of Llewellyn Worldwide, Ltd.

P.O. Box 64383, Dept. 0-7387-0508-X

St. Paul, MN 55164-0383, U.S.A.

[www.llewellyn.com](http://www.llewellyn.com)

Printed in the United States of America

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# Foreword

Edain McCoy, in writing about the use of tarot to examine past lives and karma, has opened up an exciting and rewarding area of exploration for both personal and professional consultants of the tarot. Even if you don't believe in past lives you can use this book to explore aspects of yourself, such as the effects of your actions in previous jobs, relationships, and in other locations or states of mind.

There couldn't possibly be thousands of people who were Cleopatra or Aleister Crowley. However, famous people can act as metaphors for personality characteristics and tendencies. They can also point to psychological complexes, such as bright or dark shadows (a bright shadow represents skills and gifts that you do not recognize in yourself). Past lives might depict desired but unmanifested fantasies or fears concerning individual needs and desires. They can depict relationship patterns that are difficult to see clearly in the midst of the myriad details of daily life.

Karma is about doing or action and is our response to desire, aversion, and attachment. Each action has a result or consequence. We experience these results as fate or destiny, which eventually forms character and focuses will. From a psychological point of view Carl Jung said it best, "That which we do not confront in ourselves, we will meet as fate." Fate qualifies and limits further action,

magnetizing certain experiences to it. Reexperiencing and understanding the patterns of desires and attachments helps us resolve them. The spreads in this book are designed to facilitate this.

McCoy gives us her working definitions of karma and past lives, and I thought we could explore these further by asking the tarot what Rachel Pollack has called Wisdom Questions (see *The Forest of Souls*, Llewellyn, 2002). So I asked the tarot four questions, drawing one card each from the *Rider-Waite-Smith* deck.

The first question is, “What is karma?” for which I drew the Magician, reversed. I laughed when I saw the lead card of the major arcana or Greater Mysteries, for it presents karma as the first step on the Fool’s journey. I call this the “Me, Myself, and I card,” as it depicts individual will and intention. It represents cause-and-effect, in that the Magician is directing his will to cause something to happen.

Reversals are a way of “red-tagging” a card to let us know that it is not operating automatically or as usual. This reversal suggests that karma might be about something other than just the personal ego. A person initiates a deed or action and is responsible thereafter for its consequences and effects. It is our ego-self that attaches us to the stage-magic world of bondage and illusion. The events we experience are often not even determined by our actions in this life. They are, rather, a working out of the consequences of our previous expressions of desire, will, and intention that we now experience as fate or destiny. The Magician stands in a garden, so karma could be the garden that we previously cultivated, complete with both blossoms (good actions) and thorns (bad actions), and within which we must make do in the current life. Nevertheless, it leads beyond the separate self and transcends the ego. You can’t resolve karma through will. The reversal also reminds us that karma works within and is subtle, not obvious.

The second question is, “How does knowledge of past lives benefit us in this life?” The card was the Seven of Swords, reversed. My book on tarot reversals says we may be “more prudent because of a fear of getting caught” or, more specifically, we can avoid the consequences of pre-

vious wrong actions and their effects. Karmically speaking, we don't ever get away with anything, really. When exploring past lives, previous dishonesty and deceptions are revealed, allowing us to "come clean" and experience remorse. *The Complete Book of Tarot Reversals* also says, "This could be about returning to the scene of some incident or going back to retrieve something. You might be examining past actions and old patterns to determine what went wrong . . . [so as to] ask forgiveness and make retribution for past wrongs." We can inwardly relive a past action and change our inner reaction so that it no longer has to manifest in this life. Thus, we rid ourselves of unnecessary baggage or, to use the metaphor of the former card, we weed the garden of the Magician.

The third question is, "What is the purpose of karma?" My well-shuffled deck dealt me the Magician, reversed. How incredible—karma's purpose and definition are, appropriately, one and the same. I felt the tarot was asking me to look more closely at this card. If the Magician is normally about focusing intentions, then perhaps we should reverse this; we should not intend. This suggests that we have to let go of all attachment—both to what we desire and to what we create. It also suggests that as individuals (known as the Microcosm), we serve, and ultimately unite with, something far greater than ourselves (the Macrocosm). The purpose of karma is not to cultivate our own gardens, but to cultivate the garden of the One. This ties in with the Seven of Swords in which we use the swords to weed the garden of what we have already sowed and to become aware of what we are reaping.

My final question is, "How can we best resolve past-life issues through tarot?" I drew the Empress, reversed. The unusual reversal of all four cards indicates that the whole topic is primarily inner, personal, and private, rather than outer, obvious, and public. It points out the anxiety we experience through not knowing the future consequences of our actions.

The Empress, as Venus, represents love, attraction, and attachment. The Empress reversed suggests we must act contrary to her attractive

and fertile character. The Hindus, who originated the concept of karma, say we shouldn't nurture or promote growth, fruition, or results but, instead, be unconcerned with them. These teachings state we must abandon the fruit of our actions and renounce our desires in order to attain freedom from the consequences of our actions. To leave the wheel of rebirth we have to release the seductive attraction to Gaia, Earth, Nature, and to all the creatures to whom she gives birth. This is the ultimate freedom, although not something with which all Pagans would agree. In the West, the process focuses more on doing good works (like random acts of kindness) and making reparation, which serve to increase harmonious existence on the planet. Since this is a card of love and emotions reversed, our task is to discern where there are unexpressed emotions and needs and then meet them with unconditional love. One way to know that karma has been successfully resolved is when emotion is no longer attached to an issue or person.

This book offers gentle, yet powerful ways to explore your past and future lives and tools to begin the healing process of resolving the issues you find.

MARY K. GREER

## INTRODUCTION

# TAROT AND YOUR PAST LIVES

The ancient archetypal symbols of the tarot cards can open many doors to the inner self, including all of our inner selves who live in the past or in the future. Thanks to our perception of time as a linear, though omnipresent force, we can look into the cards for answers to karmic questions that follow us from one lifetime to another. Armed with these insights, we can then work to change our lives for the better, no matter when or where they take place.

You don't have to have been previously regressed to a past life through hypnosis or even feel you've ever experienced a past-life scenario in a dream or through meditation for the cards to work for you. They have the power to help you discover where you've been and where you're going even when you don't know.

You also don't have to believe in karma as a balancing act of good and bad that runs between lifetimes for the cards to help you uncover your flaws and talents. We all have free will, and we can assert that will for better or worse at any time we choose. So can everyone else.

As a former past life "junkie," this is where I take exception to the common linear view of past-life karma,



which essentially teaches “everything that’s done to you is done because you did it first to someone else.” If everyone’s bad life experience was based on some wrong done in a past life, we would find ourselves in a circular argument that makes no sense. By logic, if everything bad that happens to us in one lifetime is the result of something bad we did in the past, then all of humanity would have only lived one life in peace and harmony before moving on to a higher spiritual plane of existence. That is a narrow and inaccurate view of karma. It is our free will that keeps us on the wheel of karmic debt. We must learn to make amends for wrongs done to others so that our wisdom, or our making of restitution, will erase negative karma whether it occurs in a past life, your current lifetime, or in one yet to come.

A narrow view of karma creates a “blame the victim” mentality that ignores free will. People always have and always will do bad things just because they can. Over the course of any lifetime we put many of our personal resources into protecting ourselves and those we love from the harm these people cause.

Karma is a choice, not a predestination. Could you look into the eyes of a father who cannot find his child and tell him this is the result of his own negative karma coming back to haunt him? Could you keep a straight face while telling a young woman her rape was caused by her own past actions, perhaps from a past lifetime when she was the rapist?

Another misconception about karma is that once it’s in place that it’s a doom, sealed in blood, that can’t be undone. If you understand your karma, you can make amends. You can take your past-life knowledge and turn it into positive action. Positive action creates wisdom, and wisdom can untie karmic bonds.

Unresolved karma seeks its own best time to strike. It may happen tomorrow, next year, in this lifetime, or in a future one. Karma can take many lifetimes to overcome or it can be of brief duration, depending on how well we put our knowledge into action.

Any harm you caused a few years ago, or even yesterday, can be examined via the tarot cards, and then you can make the corrections that free you from its bonds. You should do another tarot reading after

you feel you've balanced your karmic debt to be sure it's erased. The final outcome card in any spread should give you a clear answer if you are knowledgeable about your chosen tarot cards and their meanings.

## *Past Lives and Your Soul's Journey*

Forget that elitist blarney about the wisdom of old souls. All souls are "old souls," and it's through our soul or inner self that we are all connected on the web of existence. Our spirits intertwine with all others, and what moves one thread on the web vibrates throughout the entire web and affects all of us. We could even argue that without the strength of the web we'd all be swamped and destroyed by karma.

We are all connected on the soul level of our being. No matter how we perceive the inner workings of reincarnation, we are all linked. Like falling dominoes, one piece impacts another until everyone standing has fallen.

My view is that life works this way because we are not individuals deep down where it counts. We are each other. We are everyone, but in this life—the life of which we're conscious—we have a rapport with certain other lives whose karma and unfinished business or lessons directly impact our current life. When we seek karmic information or past-life knowledge, we tend to land on specific prior lifetimes.

Twentieth-century psychologist Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961) believed that we are all connected by an etheric bond he called the "collective unconscious." He conceptualized this as a large library where the records of all times, places, people, and events were stored. The energy of this collective is available to anyone through hypnosis, and many people have successfully worked with this etheric energy to help themselves and others.

Another term for this never-ending library of knowledge is the Akashic Records, a compilation of all of an individual's deeds, thoughts, words, and action. Past-life information that relates directly to your current life can be accessed in these records through an altered state of consciousness. *Akasha* is a Hindustani word for "soul" or "spirit."

The concept of spirit guides, or guardian angels, has been a prevalent belief in virtually all societies since prehistory. Today we still have indigenous shamans and spiritualist mediums contacting their personal spirit guides to help them connect with the energies and entities of the otherworld, or to help them find and interpret the answers they seek either within themselves or in that otherworld.

### *Coordinating Tarot Card Names*

There are hundreds of tarot decks now available, and the artwork of one or more will appeal to your psychic senses. I have several decks, but I almost always use the *Robin Wood Tarot* (Llewellyn Publications). Before that I used the *Rider-Waite Tarot* (U.S. Games). Depending on the focus of the cards, the names of the figures in the twenty-two cards of your major arcana may differ from another deck, even though their archetypal meaning remains almost the same. If your major arcana cards are not the same as mine, use the numeric value placed upon them to coordinate with my deck. This way we can all be on the “same page” about our major arcana cards without creating confusion.

- 0 The Fool
- 1 The Magician
- 2 The High Priestess
- 3 The Empress
- 4 The Emperor
- 5 The Hierophant
- 6 The Lovers
- 7 The Chariot
- 8 Strength
- 9 The Hermit

- 10 Wheel of Fortune
- 11 Justice
- 12 The Hanged Man
- 13 Death
- 14 Temperance
- 15 The Devil
- 16 The Tower
- 17 The Star
- 18 The Moon
- 19 The Sun
- 20 Judgement
- 21 The World

The minor arcana makes up the rest of the seventy-eight-card deck. Check your deck and any instruction booklets that came with it to determine the correspondence between suit and element. This will help you hone in on the element governing your issue based on its affinities and correspondences, information that will be familiar to advanced readers. In general, they fall into the following categories:

**Earth** (*Pentacles, Disks, Coins, Stones [feminine]*): Covers issues of money, employment, the home, family contentment, life.

**Water** (*Cups, Chalice, Cauldrons, Shells [feminine]*): Covers issues of romantic love, children, fertility, pregnancy, mysteries, psychic encounters, death, spiritual matters, dreams.

**Fire** (*Candles, Wands, Swords, Blades [masculine]*): Covers issues of passion, lust, courage, stamina, change, anger.

**Air** (*Swords, Blades, Feathers, Spears [masculine]*): Covers issues of communication, study, teachers, students, capriciousness, travel, astral travel.

The feminine suits of pentacles and cups denotes introspection, thought, or dreams, while the masculine suits of swords and wands indicate an action or a call to action.

## *How to Use This Book*

All cards in these spreads should be read as they fall, right-side-up or reversed, unless otherwise stated. Reading reversed cards can be tricky. They are not all meant to tell you that your answer is the polar opposite of the same card shown upright. In this series of books is a very good one called *The Complete Book of Tarot Reversals* by Mary K. Greer (Llewellyn, 2002). If you have trouble interpreting reversed cards, this book can be invaluable to your growing tarot skills.

Cards should be cut in the traditional manner: cut into three piles to the left, then picked up from right to left. Any exceptions will be noted. The only general exception to this method of shuffling and cutting is if you've been at this a long time and already use a nontraditional cut. Your own cutting method is deeply impressed on your mind and triggers your subconscious to prepare for a psychic exercise. Changing your method at this point would only hinder rather than help you.

No significator cards will be used in any of these card spreads unless otherwise noted.

Read all cross-cards or cards appearing in a sideways position as if they are in the upright position. This is a standard tarot-reading practice.

Keep to the tradition of not asking the same question, or variations of it, more than three times in one twenty-four-hour period. Past, present, and future are constantly changing as humans enact their free wills, for better or for worse. The present or past may be in a state of

too much flux for an accurate reading at this time, or your own subconscious mind may be afraid of knowing the answer and be blocking your efforts.

If the outcome cards are cloudy and seem to have no relation to the other cards, then you may either have died in a past life before your purpose was achieved or the outcome is not clear enough to see at this point in your current life. If your reading involves many other people, then one of them may be in a state of confusion that further clouds the reading.

If you have trouble placing the reading in a specific time period, the suits can help you obtain a general idea of where in time you landed. The oldest time periods are air cards and the youngest are earth cards. Take any abundance of air, fire, water, or earth cards to give you some idea of the period of time the lifetime you're examining took place; think in terms of the past forty thousand years of human history. This is not a reliable constant, but it can be helpful in some cases.

Use the card deck you are most comfortable with and whose symbols resonate within you. This connection will make the process of reading murky past life or future life information easier for you.

If you like using incense to help you focus, lilac is your best choice. For several centuries this plant and its incense and oils have been known to help open what we call our "far sight" centers. Sandalwood or mugwort are other good incense choices.

This book will work best for you if you're an advanced card reader, and it is aimed at advanced practitioners of the cards. Even so, if you want to use tarot to explore your past lives, then some insights should be available to you no matter what your level of expertise.

### *What the Advanced Reader Sees*

Anyone can read one card at a time. It takes experience with the cards to learn to look at the big picture, especially as it concerns a past-life or karmic issue that may thread through several of your previous lives.

Naturally, you always keep your issue or question firmly in your mind as you shuffle your deck. I mutter my request aloud over and over to myself until I've finished cutting the cards. This helps keep my mind focused on exactly what I want to know. For instance, if you know of a particular past life you wish to explore in more depth, add it to your question and use as much visual energy as you can while shuffling so that your psyche can hone in on the specific lifetime you want to explore.

An advanced reader does more than just interpret each individual card, but looks to see how the cards relate to one another. For example, a preponderance of major arcana cards means situations were or are not completely under the querent's control. A preponderance of any one suit targets a specific set of issues based on that suit's elemental correspondences.

Court or face cards can indicate other persons, but they can also represent elemental energies working either for or against you. Be sure to note which way the figures in these cards face. Are they looking away from the center of the spread or into its heart? Are they pointing toward another card that at first didn't seem important but takes on a ponderous meaning when paired with that court card? Do they appear to be offering their elemental symbols to a figure in another card?

The Page, Knight, Queen, and King can also represent influential people in your life, including yourself, or a very specific energy or event. These cards have a direct connection to the next one or two in the sequence. They also may be drawing attention to another card you may be dismissing as unimportant.

Note the direction the court card is facing. This will change when the card is reversed. The ritual tool the figure holds may also be directing your attention to another card or sequence of cards. Pay attention to these in relation to the primary issue of the reading. Lastly, note how the figure appears in your card. Is it charging recklessly? Is it reclining calmly? Is it standing firm in one spot? Use these

clues to assess how the person, energy, or event depicted manifested or will manifest itself in your life.

Some cards that come paired up or crossing one another can enhance the bottom card's positive properties, or they can be at cross-purposes, pulling you in two different directions. They can boost the positive or make the negative worse.

Remember that the card on the bottom is at the root of any problem or issue and may be out of your control. The cross-card is related to the energies you and others are putting onto the ever-turning wheel of existence. This could enhance the bottom card or it can make it seem disastrous. In this case you must choose an action to help correct your direction so that your future life cards show what you want to have or be rather than where you're heading if you stay your current course.

Cards in reverse are not always opposites of their upright meanings. Most tarot decks have instruction booklets that give you some guidance on these. The best way to read them is intuitively. For instance, what does a lamp mean when it's upside down? Or what happens if a reversed card changes the way it faces and interacts with the other cards surrounding it? What would be the result of the card's energy going in an unexpected direction?

### *Example Readings, Time, and Gender*

Where example readings are provided, I refer to the person for whom the reading is being done as the *seeker* or *subject*. To avoid the "he or she" and "his and her" clutter I randomly choose to use one or the other. Nothing in these gender designations is meant to imply that any spread or situation applies only to one sex or the other.

In the description section of how each card in a spread works with the others, I use "you" and "your" in case you are the subject for whom you're doing the reading. In the example readings I use the terms *subject* or *seeker* and randomly designate a "he" or "she," just to be fair.



The one thing the tarot cards do not easily tell us is the gender of the subject in a past life and the precise time period in which that person lived. This is information that must be gleaned through intuition and common sense. For example, if you intuitively feel your reading is set in the medieval period and it focuses on your occupation, chances are you were male. If you were female, your work role was limited to running a home, helping out in a family business, or working as a servant.

Once you have a general idea of the time period, you can hone it down further by selecting a significator card to represent yourself. Shuffle it into the deck while concentrating on getting to an exact time period by counting back by decades or centuries. Start with the current time period, or one which makes sense in relation to the reading, and count backward until your significator card appears. This should appear near the proper time period.

If your past life is obviously taking place more than a few centuries ago, start counting decades back from a point in time that makes sense, such as 1700 or 1200. Then pay close attention to dream imagery and auguries in nature that will come to verify and clarify your past life exploration.

### *Keeping Good Records*

It is essential to learn how to keep clear and accurate records of your experiences as you begin to explore past lives. Jot down not only the reading you did and which cards appeared, but also note the date, time, place, moon phase, weather conditions, and your general mood. These can all impact what you see, or think you see, at any given time. Be sure to add your psychic impressions or any intuitive thoughts that pop into your head during the reading. These may come from some symbol in the cards triggering your subconscious memories, and it is often the only way to be sure of your past-life gender and time period.

You also will want to jot down dream sequences that you suspect are glimpses into past lives. The rich symbolism of the tarot will trig-

ger these dream responses and help to give you a clearer picture of your past.

Go through your notes every month. A tarot reading that didn't quite make sense yesterday may be as clear as blue sky tomorrow.

### *For Further Study*

You can find the perfect tarot deck for yourself and instructions on using it without leaving home. Plug the word "tarot" into any search engine and you'll come up with no less than 100,000 sites that sell, teach, or discuss tarot. Some of the larger and more popular include:

American Tarot Association

<http://www.ata-tarot.com>

Astarte's TarotWeb

[http://handel.pacific.net.sg/~mun\\_hon/tarot/tarot.htm](http://handel.pacific.net.sg/~mun_hon/tarot/tarot.htm)

Learning Tarot

<http://learntarot.org>

Tarot Cards Online

<http://www.tarot-cards-online.com>

Tarot Certification Board

<http://www.tarotcertification.org>

Tarot Decks

<http://www.djmcadam.com/tarot.htm>

Tarot Masters Network

<http://www.tarotmasters.net>

Tarot Passages

<http://www.tarotpassages.com>

Tarot Readers Directory

<http://www.queenofpentacles.com/local/local.html>

The following information will be of particular interest to medical and mental health professionals:

International Association of Past Life Therapists (IAPLT)  
31500 Grape Street, #3-210  
Lake Elsinore, CA 92532  
909-471-2217  
<http://www.pastlives.net>

International Association for Regression Research and Therapies  
(IARRT)  
P.O. Box 20151  
Riverside, CA 92516  
909-784-1570  
<http://www.iarrt.org>

Many books, including the inexpensive *Mastering the Tarot: Basic Lessons in an Ancient Mystic Art* by Eden Gray (Signet, 1971), can teach you tarot basics, and Ted Andrews's *How to Uncover Your Past Lives* (Llewellyn, 1992) can show you how to do self-regressions and uncover other clues to your past lives.

Two other good books about the basics of self-discovery are Dick Sutphen's *Finding Your Answers Within* (Pocket Books, 1989) and Florence Wagner McClain's *A Practical Guide to Past Life Regression* (Llewellyn, 1987).

For more advanced students of tarot and past-life work who still feel they need some help to get up to speed, read Dr. Michael Newton's *Destiny of Souls: New Case Studies of Life Between Lives* (revised ed., Llewellyn, 2000), and Eileen Connolly's *Tarot: A New Handbook for the Apprentice* (New Castle, 1990) and her *Eileen Connolly's Tarot: The First Handbook for the Master* (New Castle, 1996).

Also look in bookstores and occult shops for audio tapes or CDs that can help with hypnotic regression. The upside of using these is

that it teaches you to go quickly into an altered state of consciousness; the downside is that the questions it asks you are generic and you won't get the full picture of a past life as you would from regressing yourself or from having a working partner regress you.

\* \* \*

Now that the basics are behind us and we're all on the same page, let us step into a time that is no time and yet is all times, and allow the tarot to show us the many sides of the many selves we have created.

ONE

## THE INVOKING PENTACLE SPREAD

The Invoking Pentacle spread is one of the simplest in this book. It is designed to give you a broad overview of the facets of your past, the inherited inner traits that combined to make you who you are today. This may not only encompass past lives, but incidents from your current life that have created issues or karma that remain unresolved.

This spread's name comes from the five points of the encircled star known as the pentacle. In the early twentieth century the pentacle became the adopted symbol for many of the Wiccan religious sects, but its history as a spiritual symbol far predates modern Wicca. The symbol has been found on two-thousand-year-old currency in western Europe. It represented the five wounds of Jesus on the banners of the twelfth-century Crusaders, and it can still be seen adorning the chancery of the elegant Essex Cathedral in England.

Contrary to prevailing opinion, an inverted pentacle is not a symbol of evil nor is it a portal for negative energy (see Figure 1). Evil people have taken the pentacle, perverted it, and used it for evil, but that does not detract



*Figure 1: The Inverted Pentacle*

from it as an archetype of positive forces any more than inverting a symbol from any other spiritual path would be automatically evil unless used for evil.

The inverted pentacle can be used for many magickal and mystical operations. In the case of this tarot reading, it represents that which has come down to us in this present life from various other lifetimes, the symbol of a sort of karmic stew that makes us what we are today.

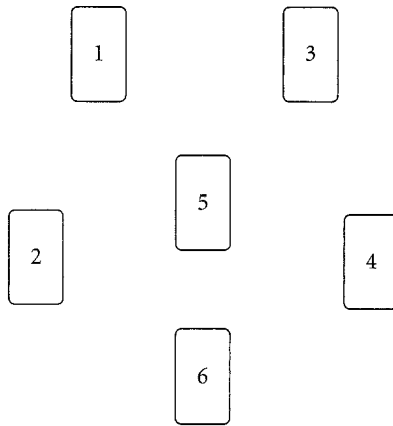
Shuffle your cards in your usual manner, cut the deck, and then lay the cards out according to the pattern shown in Figure 2. Read them in the same order in which you placed them, keeping in mind that the energies being revealed may come from several past lives, not just one.

### **Card 1**

The first card in the spread is related to the element of earth and speaks to us of our physical selves, our occupations, our animals, our finances, our homes, and our families.

### **Card 2**

This is the card of the water element and gives us insight into the spiritual, intuitive, and psychic forces that have combined to make us who we are.



*Figure 2: The Invoking Pentacle Spread*

### **Card 3**

Card 3 is governed by the element of fire. Fire’s energy is that of passion, courage, stamina, and transformation. A strong card in this position is indicative of positive change; a weak card is indicative of stagnant thinking or obstinacy.

### **Card 4**

This card is governed by the air element and is related to our thoughts, studies, intellect, and powers of communication. The thoughts and communication shown by this card are not necessarily truthful or correct, but they are a part of our past and helped make up the energies and events that shape our current self.

### **Card 5**

This is the card that represents your relationship to the “fifth element” of spirit. Spirit is your inner center, a place where all the other elements meet and blend within you. If one or more of these elemental energies are weak or excessive it can pull you away from your proper place—in your spiritual center seeking guidance from your higher consciousness or your spirit guides. This card should give you insights into how this

may best be accomplished. If your current you is not to your liking, take steps now to make positive changes. Use Cards 1 through 4 to help pinpoint the areas in which you may be most in need of rebalancing, then ask spirit to help you find your way back to your center.

### **Card 6**

Card 6 gives you an overall impression of the current you as shaped by the four elements and spirit. If you are out of balance with the elements, or have moved away from your center or spirit, this card may at first seem inconsistent with the others. Be open to what it is trying to show you. If you don't understand it today, you may tomorrow or next week.

## *Example Reading*

### **Card 1: Strength, reversed**

In our physical past our subject had the opportunity to display strength in both body and character and to know the limits of those strengths. In a reversed position this card can mean he allowed the powers of hatred or jealousy to consume and weaken him. In *The Complete Book of Tarot Reversals*, Mary K. Greer writes that, in its reversed position, Strength can indicate a time of being overwhelmed by life and by forces that seem beyond the seeker's control.

This position is related to the element earth, which grounds and stabilizes us. When connected to Card 2 we can see a pattern emerging of past lives when the seeker dreamed too much, didn't take positive actions, refused to accept self-responsibility, and allowed life's difficult day-to-day issues to swamp him with their pressures.

### **Card 2: Four of Swords**

In the position corresponding to the element water we find a card of repose. This card is usually an indication that more time was needed in creative contemplation rather than idle daydreaming. The catafalque, on which the feminine figure reclines, evokes death imagery which, in the tarot, indicates a need for or a time of profound change for the



seeker. Taking the time to look within and reassess his life and goals is essential to the future happiness of our subject.

### **Card 3: Ace of Cups, reversed**

This position corresponds to the element fire, which boasts transformation as its dominant power. In an upright position the ace of any suit represents a variety of new beginnings. In this case, the cup is shown overflowing with an abundance of love, peace, and luck. These would all be welcome transformations for anyone. But note that the card is reversed, allowing the energy of the transformation to come pouring out without control. Caution is indicated to correct this karma with self-responsibility.

### **Card 4: Seven of Cups**

This card is in the position governed by the air element, which relates to thought, study, and communication. The card in the deck I use depicts a young woman daydreaming about riches, love, fame, glory, and all the good things in life that the young see as possibilities for their lives.

Because it is in the air position, this is a card of thought, but it indicates those thoughts are scattered and personal energy is squandered on things that will not make the seeker happy in the end. This is an indication that a karmic thread has come down to our subject's present life because he did too much daydreaming and not enough communicating about his wants and needs, and he did not take action to get them. Creative visualization is a powerful tool for change, but it cannot work without some serious physical-world backup by the dreamer.

### **Card 5: Six of Swords**

The so-called "fifth element" is spirit. Its power is that it unifies and coalesces all the other elements into a single working unit. The Six of Swords in this position depicts a young man sailing in a swanlike vessel to a distant shore. In Celtic mythology—birds, cranes, and swans in particular—represent transition to the afterlife or the otherworld realm where one can attain the wisdom of the deities.

In many tarot decks the male figure is overseen by a transparent, shadowy figure in a hooded cape who is guiding the boat.

The common interpretation of this card is that it is time to look toward the gifts of the spirit rather than those of earthly things. In this transition to a higher state of consciousness we can find wisdom, but we first have to trust in the power of spirit to lead us in the right direction, even when we want to travel elsewhere.

### **Card 6: The Hanged Man**

This is the perfect card to end this example spread. The Hanged Man represents all things that are static within and around the life of the seeker. If you look closely at the card you'll see the hanging man does not appear to be suffering, nor are his legs and feet bound so that he cannot "unhang" himself if he chooses. Careful thought and looking to higher consciousness or deities for assistance is the way to break out of this cycle of inaction, which is the dominant karmic bond in this example spread.

### **Other Indications**

The overall interpretation of this spread is that many small karmic bonds are still with you, preventing you from gaining the forward momentum you need to continue growing in wisdom and in spirit. The message is to look within and to your Higher Self and spirit helpers to lead you on to a more positive pathway.

## *Alternative Spread*

If you wish to explore any of these karmic elements in more depth, use the card representing your karmic issue as a significator card and use it as the foundation card in any other simple past-life spread found in this book. Focus on your goal of understanding this specific aspect of your past. Your new spread should provide more insight into your specific issue with each element and its karmic bond.

## TWO

# THE DARK MOON SPREAD

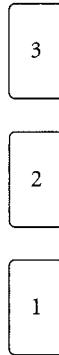
**T**his spread is named for the dark or new moon, the three nights when not even a sliver of moonglow shines in the inky black sky. The moon, especially in the dark phase, represents things that are hidden, and it cries a warning to those who care to turn their ears to its subtle murmurings.

The Dark Moon spread uses only four cards, but they are enough to show you what is hidden from you in terms of karma from a past life and how that karma will manifest if you stay your same course in your current life. The north and south nodes of the moon have been linked to past-life exploration by astrologers. The south node represents the past and the north node the future. In the middle is the current you and your hidden karma.

Shuffle and cut your cards in your usual manner and lay them out as shown in Figure 3, following the numbers on the illustration as you place the cards in front of you.

### **Card 1**

This card represents a major issue or event from a past life that remains unresolved in your present life.



*Figure 3: The Dark Moon Spread, part 1*

### **Card 2**

This card represents something hidden from you in your current life related to the incident in Card 1 in which a major karmic debt was incurred.

### **Card 3**

This card shows the outcome of this hidden karmic issue if you continue on in your current life without changing course. If this card shows a good outcome, then you may already be turning toward the path of wisdom that will erase the negative karma.

If the outcome card is not pleasing, you might want to focus more of your time and energy figuring out what that hidden karma is all about. If you see a bad outcome—and only if it's unacceptable—draw off the next card in your deck and place it on top of Card 2 as shown in Figure 4.

### **Card 4**

If you've drawn off a fourth card, your former outcome must have been undesirable to you. Card 4 can show you how to overcome your karmic debt in this lifetime by hinting at positive changes you can make starting right now.

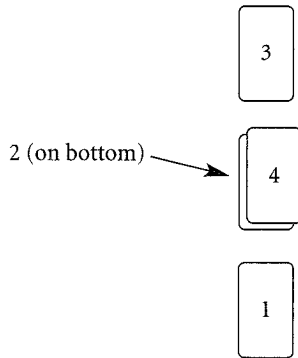


Figure 4: *The Dark Moon Spread, part 2*

Once you've had a chance to try to make those positive changes, you should do this spread again to see if the outcome is any better or if more changes in course are needed to give you the life you want.

## *Example Reading*

### **Card 1: Four of Pentacles**

This is the card of the miser. Notice his feet planted firmly in symbolic money, and the greedy, grasping way he cuddles a pentacle to his breast. Note, too, that he sits alone in an unadorned corner of an enclosure of his own making, while the rest of the world peeks out behind him. Our miser is so focused on gathering his riches that he cannot see or interact with others, accruing negative karma.

According to British author Elen Hawke in *Praise to the Moon* (Llewellyn, 2002, p. 31), the south node of the moon, represented by this card, is linked to the energy of Saturn, a planet astrologers sometimes call the “planet of self-undoing.” In other words, whatever the root karmic problem is, it is of the subject’s own making and only she can compensate for or correct it.

**Card 2: Judgement, reversed**

When Judgement is reversed it is not the lack of judgment we face, but the weaknesses within that we keep suppressed so that often we aren't aware of them. In this position the card, in relation to Card 1, would read that the hidden karma to be worked out might be related to selfishness or bigotry. This is a warning to the seeker that it's time to stop hiding in a corner. She needs to give of herself to the rest of the world, interacting with others, sharing herself as well as her worldly goods.

**Card 3: Nine of Swords**

This is the card of inner tortures, many of our own making. These occur because our seeker has become too self-absorbed and has forgotten there is a whole world of people who need her and the gifts she can share with them. She may not yet be aware of it, but she needs other people and their gifts, both the tangible and the intangible, as much as they need hers.

This is not a good outcome scenario; the subject will want to cover Card 2 with the next one in the deck (Card 4 as seen in Figure 4) to show her how to help herself overcome this karmic problem.

**Card 4: Five of Pentacles**

At first this card might look worse than anything in the original spread. Keep in mind that its purpose is to help your subject illuminate what's hidden from her. Look into the card to decide how to overcome karma that isn't clear.

In this example she might be urged to help the homeless, hungry, or destitute. Perhaps she could consider giving time or money to a homeless shelter or a local food bank project. She might also clean out her bulging closet and donate unused items in good condition to a local charity.

**Other Indications**

Note that pentacles predominate this reading. Pentacles are feminine or introspective in nature, governed by the element earth, and related to basic needs. In general, pentacles and cups, the other feminine suit, often require that we take a deep look inward before making a decision. By contrast, if this reading had been dominated by the two masculine suits of swords and wands, it would have been a call to take action, to go outward and not inward to solve the problem. Naturally, any action taken will require some forethought, but when masculine suits dominate a reading action is key.

In most decks the card of Judgement depicts a person, creature, or group of beings rising to life renewed. In this reading the Judgement card is shown in reverse, indicating that the will to do the tasks needed to change the outcome is lacking. Encourage the seeker to use introspective time to find out why she feels unwilling to give of herself at this time. Occasionally there is a justifiable reason, such as having been sick and needing to use all your personal energy to heal yourself. Or perhaps she is plagued by irrational fears. Other times there is no excuse, and to avoid the lonely fate of the miser, the subject will need to change her course in life.

### THREE

## THE IRISH CROSS SPREAD

The Irish Cross in this spread is not the equal-armed Celtic cross, but a variation on the cross known today as St. Bridget's Cross, which, in turn, was taken from the popular and powerful Irish goddess Brighid (pronounced "breed").

These crosses of woven straw resemble the spokes on the ever-turning wheel representing eternity, life cycles, change, and the wheel of the year. Woven straw crosses and those hammered into fine jewelry are popular souvenirs of many a trip to the Emerald Isle (see Figure 5).

The key points to remember in this spread are:

- 1) Read all cards in the upright position no matter how they fell when you turned them up. The only exception is Card 1, which should be read as it falls.
- 2) Read Card 2, the cross-card, as an upright card.
- 3) Remember that the future life arm of the cross is only applicable to you if you stay on your current life's course, learning nothing from your past. The future is what you make it.



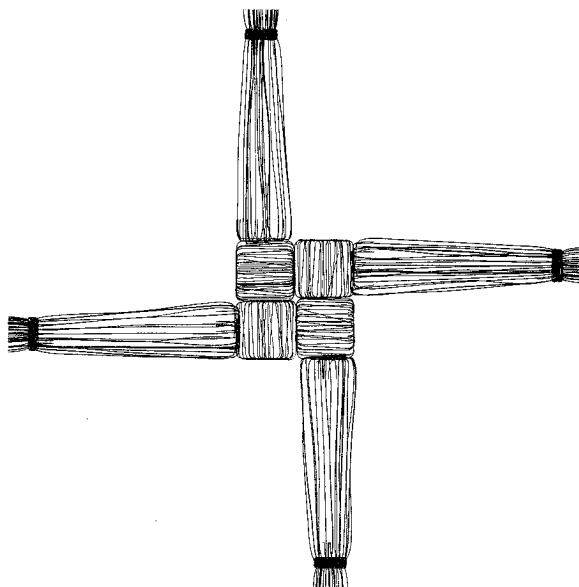


Figure 5: Woven Straw St. Bridget's Cross

After you have had some time to contemplate and implement positive changes, do this reading again to look for changes in the future. This will help you know if you're on the right course for your future or whether further change, or a different type of change, is indicated.

Shuffle your cards in your usual manner and lay them out as shown in Figure 6. If cards numbered from 3 through 10 fall in a reversed position, turn them upright before starting to interpret them.

### Card 1

This card indicates the major past-life issue that is affecting your present life, an issue you must overcome to have the rest of your current life, and your future lives, be transformed into what you want them to be.

Remember, this is the only card in this spread that should be read in a reversed position *if* the card falls naturally into a reversed position.

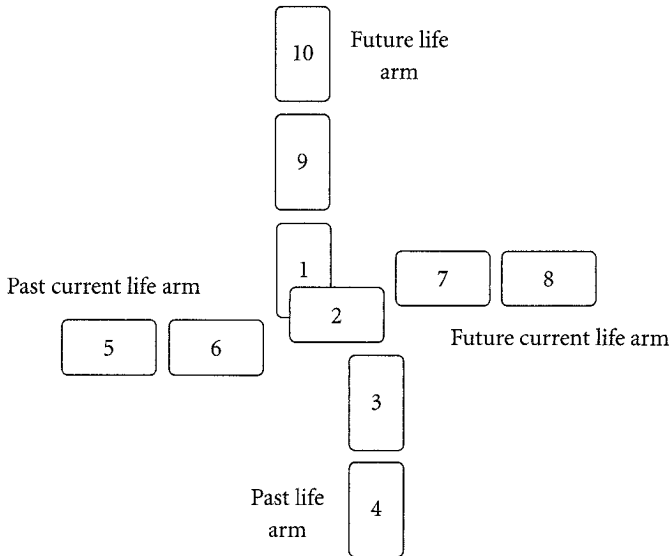


Figure 6: The Irish Cross Spread

### Card 2

Card 2 is the infamous cross-card representing an energy, issue, or person who either counters or encourages the karmic traits of the first card. Cross-cards are always read as if they were upright.

### Card 3

This is the first card that indicates what sort of karma must be dealt with in your current life to ensure a happy life in both your current incarnation and in future ones.

### Card 4

This card shows what you did or did not do correctly in the past that caused your current internal imbalances.

### Card 5

This card shows an issue or a time in your past current life that either began, or set you up to begin, the karmic repercussions shown in all

the previous cards. They do not have to be negative in nature, but could be showing you the positive karma you created that is returning to you.

### **Card 6**

Card 6 continues the story that began in Card 5. This is the issue or event that is now passing or has recently passed from your current life, leaving you on the verge of working out the karmic issues shown in Cards 1 through 4.

### **Card 7**

This card shows the near future of your current life. You may already be feeling the impact of the karma right now as this energy moves to the forefront of your life.

### **Card 8**

Card 8 extends a little further in the future, predicting how you will respond to the foreknowledge given to you in Card 7. Again, this doesn't have to be a negative issue, but one that shows positive karma coming back to you in the form of a reward. It can also be indicative of a blind spot in your thinking. Take it as a warning to open your mind and expand it to embrace all possible creative solutions.

If you are not happy with the energies depicted in Cards 7 and 8, you must remember you are in control of your future. You have the divine gift of free will, and you can make any changes you really want to make. If you couldn't make changes, there would be no point in reading the tarot cards or doing any other type of divination. This foreknowledge is intended to help you make positive changes, not to show predestination.

### **Card 9**

This card represents the early years of a future lifetime in which the karmic issue shown in Card 1 will manifest if the debt is not resolved in your current lifetime.

**Card 10**

This card represents the latter part of your future life and shows how the karma begun in a past life will continue to pursue you if you stay on your current path. If Cards 9 and 10 are positive, and you see nothing negative in Cards 7 and 8, you may have already set a course to correct that original karmic blunder. If not, you have now been warned that you must overcome the bad trait, habit, personality aspect, or attitude that will steer your future life cards in your desired direction.

### *Example Reading*

**Card 1: Justice, reversed**

Remember that Card 1 is the only card in this spread that should be read in a reversed position, but only if that's the way it fell naturally from your deck. Turn all the other cards upright as you glance over the spread trying to get an overall feeling for this reading.

Justice reversed usually does not relate to court battles or legal entanglements, but expresses a personality out of balance. Have you heard the term "swords of justice"? In my deck Justice's right hand holds a sword that points upright. This is a sign of positive attitudes and a well-balanced life. If Justice was right side up it would indicate a life of balance, unselfishness, and honesty in our subject's dealings with himself and others.

Reversed, Justice indicates mean-spiritedness, narrow-mindedness, prejudice, pettiness, dishonesty, and cheating.

**Card 2: The Hierophant**

All cross-cards from any deck are meant to be read right side up. The first is the Hierophant. He is a sycophant, a crowd pleaser, one who relies on projecting a false front so that the inner schemer in him will not be seen. Naturally, whether it is another sign of life out of balance or not, it's clear that the inner and outer selves are not compatible

with one another at this time. Such imbalances cause tremendous strain on the body and soul and, if the seeker lived his outer life as a lie, this debt can be hard to overcome because it has become a habit.

### **Card 3: Two of Swords**

This is the card of the earlier part of a past life that continues to create and fuel the negative karma shown in Cards 1 and 2. The Two of Swords presents us with another picture of justice, one that is blind to prejudice. The moon shines over the central figure's head, indicating an inner self that is involved with a karmic problem and continues to feed it negative energy. It also indicates a need to take a look at the seeker's sense of right and wrong and how this is or is not manifesting in his current life.

The blindfolded figure on the card sits in the center of rocks that form a small throne at the edge of an ocean. To the Celtic people, places that were located between other places, not clearly belonging to one or the other, act just like times in between. They are potent places for magick or transformation. This card indicates there was a time in the past when the subject was in balance with himself, lacked prejudice, and lived in harmony with his outer self.

### **Card 4: Five of Swords**

This card represents the latter portion of the life in which the karma of this spread became attached to the subject. This is the card of someone who enjoys belittling others to make himself feel superior. It can also indicate theft or victory over others by means of deceit or dishonesty, events that for some reason never bothered the seeker's conscience before.

### **Card 5: Knight of Swords**

This card represents an earlier time in the subject's current life, a point at which the negative karma referred to in this spread began to unmask itself. This is the card of someone who charges into situations with lit-

tle or no forethought, often to his detriment. It can also represent an outside energy or person who is leading him back to the path of negative karma, or it can indicate that the seeker never learned the lessons of Cards 3 and 4 in his past life.

### **Card 6: Four of Cups**

The Four of Cups is the card of the seeker who is not wise enough to look at the big picture. All he can see are pieces. He appears to be trying to pick the lesser of three evils from the bronze cups sitting before him. If he would stop scowling and drenching himself in self-pity, he would see the golden cup manifesting just behind him, offering itself as the perfect solution to his problem.

The only good thing about Cards 5 and 6 is that they are behind our subject or are passing from his life right now.

### **Card 7: Seven of Pentacles**

Where does this passing energy go? It leads the seeker to the immediate future of his current life as it relates to his karmic issues. It indicates that he will briefly find contentment in his work and family life.

### **Card 8: Eight of Swords**

Unfortunately, the calm and peace of Card 7 will soon pass. As our subject moves into the future of his current life he finds his negative karma literally binding him, holding him in a trap of his own making from which there seems no reasonable escape.

Now look closer into this card. Notice the lone figure standing at the edge of an ocean. She is blindfolded and her arms are bound. She at first appears trapped where she is. Now look at her feet. They are not bound. They are free. With courage, she could take the first steps away from her negative karma by being brave enough to trust herself and step forward. In front of her is a clear path back to solid ground.

In this spread this card indicates a need within the seeker to act, to make a decision, and then take a leap of faith for the sake of his soul.

**Card 9: The Tower**

The Tower shows that all the plans of grandeur that have plagued the seeker over many lifetimes are going to crumble if positive change is not enacted immediately. The Tower represents plans and schemes that are doomed to failure before they even begin because the heart still harbors a joy in selfishness, and a mean, competitive spirit followed him from his past life.

**Card 10: Five of Cups**

This is a card of unnecessary sorrow, or “crying over spilled milk.” All this mourning figure can see is the three overturned cups in front of him. It doesn’t occur to him to raise his head and look around where he could see the two full cups within arm’s reach. Selfishness and shortsightedness will keep the karma growing and returning over and over again until the seeker can make himself see the full picture. It warns him not to see what he has lost but what he can find if he has the will and courage to make that leap of faith.

**Other Indications**

To avoid a future life of unnecessary sorrow, caution the seeker to heed the warnings shown in Cards 7 and 8. These are coming in the future of his current life. This is his map for making positive change that will not only affect his current life, but future ones as well.

In this case it appears the seeker needs to learn humility and sharing. Thinking about it won’t change anything for him; he has to actually do something. Thinking may bring knowledge, but alone it cannot overcome karma. Only the experiential approach will bring the wisdom that can balance karma.

If Cards 7 and 8 do not make the seeker happy, encourage him to make some decisions now about how he wishes to change. Begin to implement the changes as soon as possible. This is not a short-term solution to karmic problems, but a true commitment to change forever for the better.

After your subject has had some time to work on changes—attitudes, fears, jealousies, possessiveness, anger, or chronic illnesses—do the reading again using only Cards 6 through 10. Card 6 will give you a fresh look at what is passing or has recently passed from his life, and Cards 7 and 8 will show you his probable future if he remains upon this new path. The future life cards should also show a positive outcome in relation to this karmic issue.



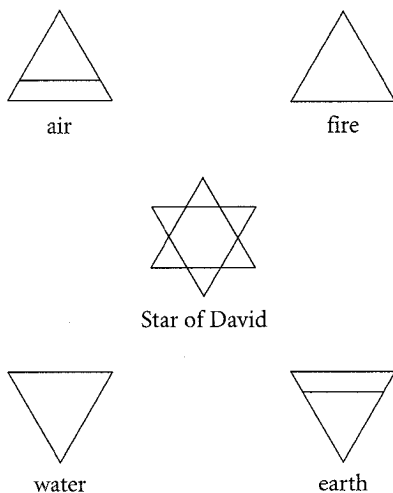
FOUR

## THE SOLOMON'S SEAL SPREAD

The Solomon's Seal spread looks simple, but it is one of the hardest to learn to read. If you are not yet skilled at looking at groupings of cards and understanding the overall message behind them, you will have trouble gathering the fullest meaning of this reading. Fortunately, this is a skill that can be learned. The example reading presented here can help you get started. I also recommend Dorothy Kelly's *Tarot Card Combinations* (Weiser, 1995) as a self-teaching tool.

This spread shows the elemental influences on your past-life issues. The formation of the Solomon's Seal contains within it the four alchemical symbols for the elements (see Figure 7), which together make up our wholeness of being. Through this spread you will be able to see a unified theme running through your current lifetime that comes directly from a closely related past life.

Shuffle and cut the cards, then lay them out according to the pattern in Figure 8. Although the spread is placed according to the triangles within the figure, the cards are not read in the same order, and many of them have to be



*Figure 7: The Intricacies of Solomon's Seal*

read more than once. These different groupings can change the meaning of any single card.

### **Card 7**

This is the first card to examine. It will also be the last card you will dissect in this spread. These are the only times this card will be read. Card 7 represents the central theme of the two lifetimes—your current one and a closely related one in the past from which you are seeking information. The theme does not have to be karmic; it can be spiritual, related to romance and family, or related to your career.

If the theme doesn't become clear to you right away, you may want to take some time out to meditate on this card to get a better idea of what it is trying to tell you. Be sure to have a clear impression of the card in your mind, including the colors the artist chose, and all the symbols and background images.

### **Cards 1, 2, 3, and 8**

The upright triangle with the horizontal line bisecting it is the alchemical symbol for earth. This is why you read the cards of the upright tri-

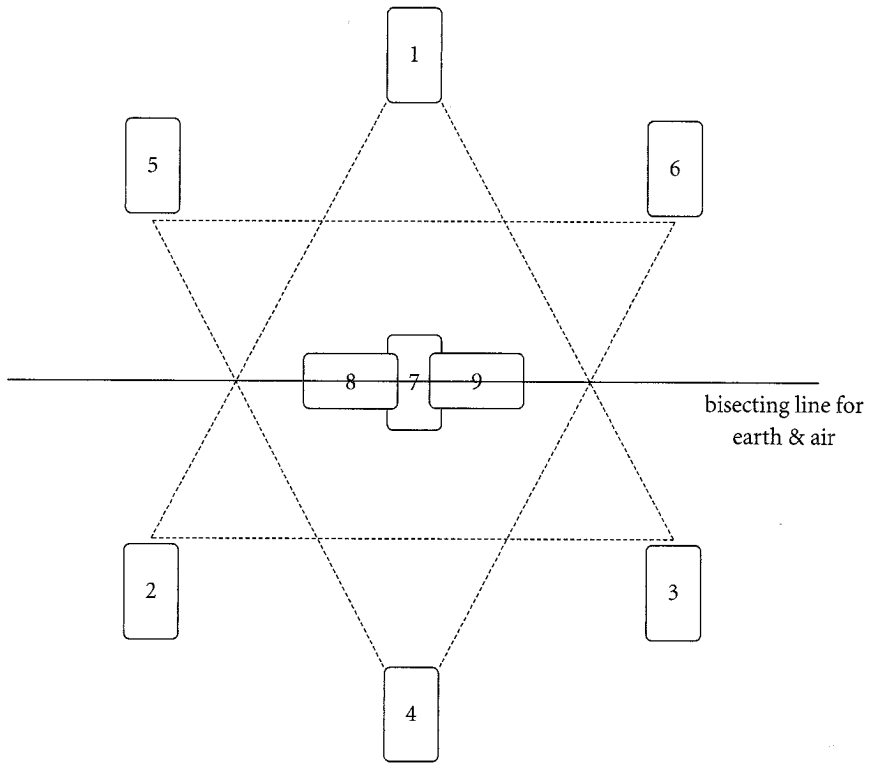


Figure 8: The Solomon's Seal Spread

angle and one of the bisecting cards. Earth is a feminine element, therefore we read the bisecting card on the left; the left is considered a feminine direction as compared to the right, which is classified as masculine in nature. Cards 8 and 9 will have a more direct bearing on the central issue because they belong to earth and air, the densest and the lightest elements, respectively. These are the two elements symbolically connecting the two lifetimes you are examining.

The earth element corresponds to your home life, family, pets, finances, employment, and general health.

### **Cards 1, 2, and 3**

The upright triangle without the bisecting line is the alchemical symbol for water, the other feminine element. Water corresponds to your emotional life, love and romance, peace, psychicism, partnerships, dreams, friendship, and the inner you.

Since the emotional self of water contrasts with the external self exhibited by earth, you will have to read the water triangle *as if each card were the reverse of the original position in which it fell*. For instance, if Card 2 was reversed in the original reading, you will now read it as if it was upright. If it was upright in the original reading, you will now read it as if it was reversed.

### **Cards 4, 5, and 6**

These cards make up the triangle of fire, the element of transformation, passion, lust, courage, war, tenacity, strength, and stamina. Read them as they fall, interpreting them not only as individual cards that relate to Card 1, but also as a group. For example, are all the cards from one suit? Do they all relate to a similar energy? Are they all from the major arcana? These are all clues as to how the cards connect your present life to a closely related past life.

### **Cards 4, 5, 6, and 9**

The upright bisected triangle is the emblem of the air element. Air governs your intellect, studies, communications, travels, and your connection to the Higher Self, which links you to your deities.

### **Card 7**

When the elemental readings are done you will need to try to relate all the information, from both the individual cards and the groups of cards, back to Card 7, which represents the central concern of the past life you are searching.

## Example Reading

### Card 7 (Thematic Card): Four of Wands

The Four of Wands represents partnership, more specifically romantic partnerships. It is a good guess that this reading is going to focus on a significant person from a past life of the seeker. In my deck the couple is shown dancing together under a *chuppa*, or Jewish marriage canopy, which represents the home and peace of mind that should come from this partnering.

### Cards 1, 2, 3, and 8 (Earth): The Lovers (reversed), Eight of Wands, the Fool (reversed), the Chariot

The earth group of cards is not dominated by any single suit, but clearly continues the theme of a primary relationship. The Lovers in the reversed position indicates an unstable relationship—not necessarily one that failed, but one that faltered from time to time and in which all the hopes one had for it were not fulfilled.

The Eight of Wands indicates strong forward momentum, and the Fool reversed shows a long-term venture that did not begin favorably.

The Chariot is a card whose energy is almost opposite that of the Lovers. While the Lovers can indicate being torn between two prospects, the Chariot in the upright position shows that the seeker has the skills necessary to take two warring factions and pull them together, just like the horses of opposite color can draw the singing charioteer along.

It is reasonable to assume from this group that a past long-term relationship, most likely a romantic one, was rushed into and got off to a bumpy start. It did not fail, but there were many difficulties that the subject was eventually able to harmonize.

### Cards 1, 2, and 3 (Water): The Lovers, Eight of Wands (reversed), the Fool

The water group eliminates bisecting Card 8 and assumes the other three cards fell in positions that are opposite of those original to the reading.

Again, we see the Lovers pulling us in two directions. In the earth group this indicates that the subject kept the home and family intact because of the influence of the Chariot, which is absent in the water triangle. Since this triangle is one of emotions and intuition, it may indicate that even though the seeker kept home and family together, he was not emotionally satisfied with his home life.

The Eight of Wands reversed tells of a slowing of momentum, a tiredness of spirit that impacts the emotional life of the seeker, perhaps making his task seem more daunting.

The Fool is read upright and speaks of a new long-term venture, one that began on the right path. Put together with the rest of the cards we've read, it's clear the relationship did not stay on the smooth and easy path.

### **Cards 4, 5, and 6 (Fire): Queen of Pentacles, Two of Cups, Nine of Pentacles**

The fire group in this spread is unique in that all the cards drawn came up in upright positions. All three cards relate to a happy and peaceful home life and a successful partnership. When compared to the earth and water group, these cards relate best to the earth cards, which show the seeker working hard and using his innate abilities to bring difficult choices onto one smooth course.

No doubt we are looking at the transformation brought about by the efforts of the subject. Whether they were permanent changes or not remains to be seen.

### **Cards 4, 5, 6, and 9 (Air): Queen of Pentacles (reversed), Two of Cups (reversed), Nine of Pentacles (reversed), Nine of Swords**

The same cards that appeared in the fire triangle now appear in the air triangle in the reversed position. This does not mean that the cards now read the opposite of their original positions, but that their energy is channeled in other directions. For example, the Queen of Pentacles upright can symbolize contentment, frugality, wealth, and family. When

she is reversed it does not mean she is now a poor woman but one who isn't frugal. She spends freely, without thought for the future or for her family.

No matter how dedicated one is to one's spouse and family, it is not logical to assume that one can channel positive energy into them 24/7. At some point these reversals show that too much energy was or is being deflected away from home life, which suffers as a result.

To the air triangle we add the bisecting Card 9, the Nine of Swords, which is read in an upright position. The card indicates desolation, isolation, loneliness, and fear of failures that keep occurring.

### **Card 7 (Thematic Card): Four of Wands**

Lastly we look again at the theme of the spread. There is no doubt we are looking at a marriage from a past lifetime. How it was handled in the past gives an indication of how well the seeker can handle marriage or other romantic partnerships in the current life.

### **Other Indications**

Remember that all cross-cards are read as if they were upright, and this rule of tradition applies to Cards 8 and 9. They help connect your subject's past life to the present one and should drop hints to provide a better understanding of the particular area or issue of a past life this reading addresses. They may also illuminate the path that will make the seeker happiest even if it means more work in the short term.

As we look at this past marriage, we see that the subject worked hard at keeping the marriage and family together, and was outwardly successful in his efforts, but he remained emotionally unhappy with his situation.

To get a closer look at the issues in this marriage you can select one more card at random from the deck and place it on top of Card 1. This should give a closer look at the people, events, or problems that kept the seeker from finding happiness in his home life in the past and the present.

### *Alternative Spread*

To understand how your current life blends or clashes with someone else's current life, ignore the bisecting lines. Shuffle and cut the cards for yourself and lay them out as a triangle with the apex up. Then shuffle and cut the rest of the deck and lay them out in between your cards to make a triangle with the apex down.

Read the cards as two groupings to reveal the hidden aspects of your current-life connection to the other person.



## FIVE

# THE KARMIC CHOICE SPREAD

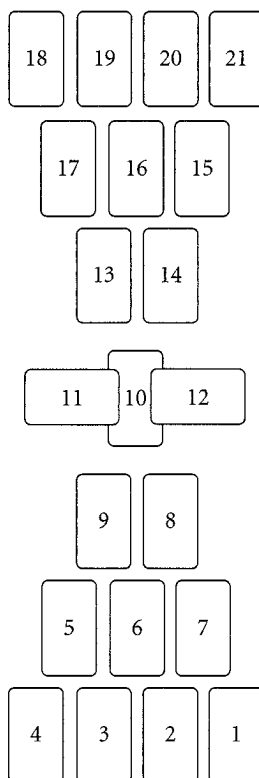
This spread shows how specific karma, formed over several past lives, manifests now as your major karmic issue in this present life. It offers two choices for paths to take to correct the karmic imbalance, then shows you the probable future life outcomes of each.

After shuffling and cutting the deck, lay the cards out as shown in Figure 9 but *only lay out Cards 1 through 12* for right now.

Study Cards 1 through 9 to get a sense of the karma generated in your past. Look at them individually, at their row groupings, and their overall theme.

Now look at Card 10. This shows the current you as you have been shaped by the past. On either side of the you shown in Card 10 are two more cards, Cards 11 and 12. These represent choices you have, two paths that will allow you to work with your karma to improve this and all future lives. Choose one card as the path you wish to take and remove the other from the spread.

Shuffle and cut the deck again with your chosen path in mind and complete the layout shown in Figure 9 with



*Figure 9: The Karmic Choice Spread*

Cards 13 through 21. These show you the probable future outcome of your karmic choice. The consequences of your action or inaction may come back to you in this lifetime or over the course of several future lifetimes.

If you are unhappy with the reading, remove Cards 13 through 21 from the spread and replace the card you removed with the other karmic choice. Shuffle and cut the cards again and lay them out as Cards 13 through 21 to see how taking a different path might affect your future.

### ***Example Reading***

#### **Cards 1, 2, 3, and 4: Queen of Swords (reversed), Seven of Swords, Seven of Cups, Six of Pentacles (reversed)**

The first four cards of this reading indicate someone whose life is in spiritual crisis. The Queen of Swords reversed represents someone with cruel intentions, someone who can appear to be a friend but has a blade that can cut deep and without warning. This person may not even realize she wants to sabotage someone else's life. Even those who love us the most can feel jealous of our success and send out counter-energy whether they believe in magickal energy or not.

The two Sevens both indicate that the subject dreams of riches and power and is not above subterfuge or theft to obtain what she wants. Again, she may not realize she's doing harm.

The reversed Six of Pentacles indicates someone who gives only what she has to give, whether out of greed or fear of not having enough for her and her own remains unclear, but when compared to the other cards in this spread, she is a woman who only wants to appear generous.

#### **Cards 5, 6, and 7: Ace of Pentacles (reversed), Five of Swords, The Emperor (reversed)**

Aces point to new ventures and fresh starts, but when reversed they tell us some of this energy went awry. Perhaps the seeker tried to make a change in her karmic path but was unsuccessful, or perhaps she had a saboteur in her life. The Five of Swords cannot be interpreted on its own. It is a card in a state of constant flux. It can indicate energy either coming together or falling apart. This is another clue that perhaps the subject of the reading made an effort to change her course but was unable to do so.

The Emperor represents stability, leadership, a divine figure, and is shown here in his reverse position. This means the energy of the card took a wrong turn. Note the scepter in the figure's arms, meant to draw

energy from the divine realms above, is pointed downward, further channeling the desired energy away from the seeker. It is safe to say this lifetime was full of efforts made, but failed.

### **Cards 8 and 9: Ten of Wands, Temperance (reversed)**

By this lifetime the burden of the karma is apparent, causing the weighing down of the spirit of the seeker who still stumbles along under her load, just as the figure in the Ten of Wands. Note that the figure's goal is visible far down the road. This indicates the seeker is finally on the right path, but the road to the goal is rough.

The failing in this lifetime was probably the result of frustration. The steadying influence of Temperance is reversed; the balance shown on the upside-down card is causing our seeker to teeter along her road.

### **Card 10: The Hierophant**

This is the card of the person who prefers form over function, appearances over substance, and propriety over honesty. In a reading that seems spiritually oriented, it signals the seeker to reassess her spiritual values and goals. Does she follow them because her parents did? Did she study other paths to find the one she's chosen? Is she rigid and unwavering in her spiritual opinions even to the point of believing other people's choices to be wrong or evil? Does she make appearances at spiritual functions just to be seen, or is her heart and spirit involved? Does she accept offices within this organized spiritual system because she wants to be in control of the proceedings and administration, or because she wants to help the system grow and help others as well?

### **Cards 11 and 12: The Hermit, Six of Swords**

These are the cards representing the two choices the seeker has in this lifetime. They are similar in nature, but will take the subject down two separate roads.

The Hermit is an indication to draw into one's self to seek answers, to withdraw from society and organizations to look for answers within.

The Six of Swords also advises looking within for answers, but it advocates reaching outward to the unknown, trusting one's God and good intuition to lead the way to other people and other organizations that will help the seeker grow spiritually. Note again that although the goal is far away, it is visible on the distant shore of the card.

The sword suit also suggests study, communication, and commitment to study, whereas the Hermit indicates a reliance on the self and what one's own mind can achieve in solitude. Although both are valid ways of handling spiritual karma, our seeker has not done well so far in achieving spiritual growth on her own.

### **Card 12: Six of Swords**

The subject chooses the Six of Swords as her new path, and makes a commitment to expand her current spiritual life, to reach out to others for learning and growth.

She removes the Hermit from the spread, then shuffles and cuts the deck while concentrating upon this new path she has chosen.

### **Cards 13 and 14: Five of Wands (reversed), Six of Cups**

The karmic choice made in this life appears to be a good one when immediate future lives are examined. In the Five of Wands, the joy taken in unfair victories is overturned, and the energy leads the seeker to want to bond with those she once shunned or thought beneath her. The Six of Cups is the card of friendship offered, but it does not indicate whether or not it is accepted. The subject will have to search her heart in the future and make the free-will decision to reach out when true friendship is offered.

### **Cards 15, 16, and 17: The Hanged Man (reversed), Four of Swords (reversed), Page of Cups**

The reversed Hanged Man shows time has been spent in contemplation, but now spiritual energy is taking on a slow but forward movement. A similar energy is indicated by the reversed Four of Swords, which speaks to us of taking a new direction after a time of repose.

The Page of Cups in my deck faces outward from the other cards in this row as if saying the subject is ready to move onward. Behind him is a vast sea, a symbol of spiritual change and growth and never-ending power of the divine creator(s). In his hand he holds a sea star, the star being a symbol of hope, a gift from the intuitive world of water.

According to the deck's artist, Robin Wood, this card's key phrase is "developing talent" (*Robin Wood Tarot: The Book*, Livingtree Books, 1998), indicating that the seeker's spiritual gifts are growing within her.

### **Cards 18, 19, 20, and 21: Seven of Pentacles, Ace of Cups, Judgement, Four of Pentacles (reversed)**

The last of the future lives we examine shows the subject in a better spiritual balance than in her past lives.

The Seven of Pentacles indicates pride in a job done well and an appreciation of the little joys in life. The Ace of Cups indicates the beginning of a new phase, in this case probably a spiritual one.

We also see Judgement. In my deck it depicts a woman rising with the fiery phoenix from the cauldron of rebirth and renewal. This deeply spiritual symbol is the same as the Holy Grail of Arthurian legends and represents the attainment of spiritual treasures.

The last card is the Four of Pentacles reversed. This is the card of the miser whose energy has been sent in a different direction. In a spiritual sense, the selfishness of the past has been overcome by a new spiritual awareness that there is enough bounty in the universe for everyone to have their fill.

### **Other Indications**

Although swords and pentacles figure heavily in the beginning of this spread, it soon becomes clear in the current life cards that this is a spread focused on the spiritual life of the seeker. The purpose of our lifetimes and the religions and ideologies we choose to follow have one purpose: to reunite us with the divine creator from which all things were born.

Had the seeker chosen the Hermit as her path, she may have also reached her spiritual goals, but the road may have been harder.

Once a choice is made and a course committed to, it is hard to go back and reread the spread with the other karmic choice card. Foreknowledge and choices made during the course of this reading have already illuminated and changed the future.

### *Alternative Spread*

To see where your current karma is leading you, deal the spread up to Card 10. Then deal the next one in the deck and place it over Card 10. Continue laying out the other nine cards. This is indicative of your path if no new choices or changes are made to your current karmic course.

## SIX

# THE RAINBOW BRIDGE SPREAD

**T**he Rainbow Bridge is the journey that links one lifetime to another. Students of astral projection sometimes use rainbow imagery to help them travel from one world into another. In Norse mythology the bridge is known as Bifrost, the afterlife corridor to the palace of Valhalla where honored fallen warriors go to their eternal feast.

One vexing question that adherents of the tenet of reincarnation are always seeking an answer to is “What happens to us between lives?” In light of time not being linear, we would have to give the enigmatic answer *nothing* and *everything*. It’s important to keep in mind that time is not linear, but we are human beings living in a world of matter in which time is perceived as linear, and we must use our tarot cards with that conundrum in mind. In our perspective of linear time we have to assume that we go somewhere and do something worthwhile in the interim between lives.

Several books written by respected psychic researchers have attempted to answer the question of life in between



lives. The only thing they have in common is the theme of assessment of the previous life and planning for the future. As we compare perceptions and writings, it appears this nonlife life is a time of rest and restoration through which we slowly move into the next phase of our existence.

In Ted Andrews's *How to Uncover Your Past Lives* (Llewellyn, 1992, p. 5), he writes, "The cosmic or spiritual interim begins at the moment of transition called death. . . . This period enables the soul to recuperate, reassess and assimilate the experience of the previous life, along with preparing for the next."

This spread will show your progress between a past life that closely parallels your current one, and how you came to the between-life decisions that are shaping your current life or forcing you to make uncomfortable, but hopefully right, choices.

Shuffle, cut, and lay out the cards as shown in Figure 10. The cards provide a bridge on which you can walk into your past from right to left; then they are read and interpreted from past to future or from left to right.

### **Card 1**

Shows the major issue of this spread as it affects you in your current life.

### **Card 2**

Reflects your feelings about your decisions just prior to rebirth into this life.

### **Card 3**

Shows your contentment or discontent with the pact you've made with yourself and your spirit helpers and considers what your future life will hold for you. It also illuminates how your new body and personality is likely to deal with the issue.

### **Card 4**

Illuminates the primary issue you will deal with in your life to come. It may be a karmic issue you've carried over for one or many lifetimes, or it may be a new adventure or test.

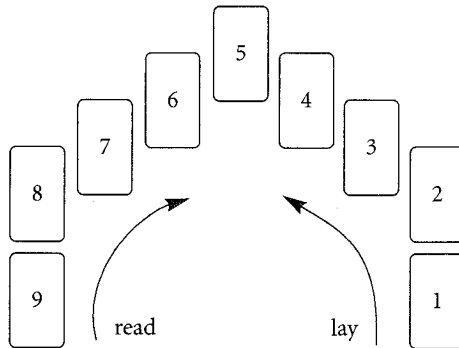


Figure 10: The Rainbow Bridge Spread

**Card 5**

Shows your own will and that of those in the spirit realm who are helping to shape you into the soul you want to become. This is the transition point where you settle many of the details of your future path.

**Card 6**

Shows the influence of spirit guides and other spirit helpers as you continue to shape the superstructure of your next life.

**Card 7**

Shows the choices and decisions you want to make in your next life without input from others.

**Card 8**

Indicates your initial feelings about the life you just left.

**Card 9**

Shows where your mind and heart were in relation to this spread's issue in the months prior to your death in a past life most closely paralleling your current life.

## *Example Reading*

### **Card 9: The Devil, reversed**

This is the card of the last few months of a past life most closely paralleling the current one of the subject. It shows that he was bound to the material comforts of that past life. This in itself is not a bad thing unless it caused the subject to become selfish and greedy, refusing to help others even though he had the means to do so. Because the card is reversed we see the chest of treasures (to which the figures in the card are bound) spilling out, no longer able to weigh down the seeker. This indicates that at some point he was able to let go of his love of the material at the expense of more important things in his life.

### **Card 8: Five of Cups**

As the soul transfers from the realm of physical being to that of spirit, the seeker's initial reaction to his past life is one of sorrow. He mourns the loss of his soul's growth, his inability to help others even though there would still have been enough left over to take care of him and his loved ones.

### **Card 7: Four of Cups**

The seeker's initial idea for the future is to get through his lifetime on his own, without the help of others. This type of self-punishment is the kind that can be overcome by wisdom that, with luck, will be shown to your subject by spirit helpers.

### **Card 6: Ten of Wands, reversed**

Spirit helpers try to convince the subject that he's putting a heavy load upon himself, one that he doesn't need to bear all alone. His guilt and sorrow over not being the kind and giving person he knows he can be should not result in a life of penance, but one in which he can continue on this path of growth. This card is reversed, meaning there is still a load to bear, but that its gravitational pull is lessened and burdens shared are easier to bear.

### **Card 5: The Lovers**

The joint decision the seeker and his spirit helpers come to is to launch upon a life of constant change, but one in which the subject will continue to make his own decisions. Opportunities for change will be present at all times, but only the seeker can make the choice of how to interact with them.

### **Card 4: Ace of Pentacles**

The suit of pentacles represents home, security, and money. Aces indicate new beginnings. The subject is initially content with the direction mapped out for his next lifetime.

### **Card 3: Eight of Cups**

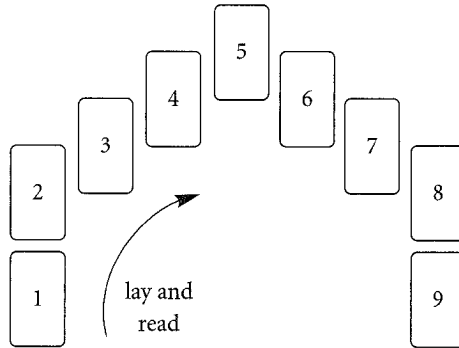
As he gets closer to reincarnating, he has second thoughts about his choices. The image on the card shows someone zealously guarding his eight cups of fulfillment. He's high in the mountains and his eagle feather staff, reaching toward a waning moon, shows his fear of letting go of the physical items of which he has more than he needs, and the staff shows him softening and moving toward becoming a more giving spirit.

### **Card 2: Seven of Pentacles, reversed**

With the initial fear of being too generous out of his way, the subject's thoughts turn to giving more to others, but still there is something inside that causes him to hesitate opening himself fully to the spirit of generosity. Greed or fear? Only the new lifetime will tell us which emotion rules our subject.

### **Card 1: Strength, reversed**

This card shows that the seeker initially comes into his new life wanting to be more generous, but still feeling ambivalent and falling back on his past-life's emotion of wanting to hold back and wait to see what happens.



*Figure 11: Rainbow Bridge Spread Variation*

As this life progresses, the subject will have to fall back on his wisdom and spiritual teachings to overcome the fear of giving. Remind the seeker that anything we give or place onto the wheel of existence comes back to us three times over. This includes positive energy as well as negative. There should never be any issue about giving. Even if the subject is not wealthy, he still has a strong back, arms, and legs. He can always give someone his time and energy.

### **Other Indications**

Nothing in this reading points to the subject being a bad person, greedy just for the sake of collecting all he can. A theme of hesitancy because of fear runs through this reading. It's possible that the seeker lived a stingy past life because a life previous to that one was one of struggle for food and other basic essentials. This sends his soul into a frantic need to hoard resources just in case of a crisis.

### *Alternative Spread*

You can use this same spread to watch your spiritual progress from your current life into a future life closely paralleling your current one. Read and lay out the spread from left to right as shown in Figure 11.

## SEVEN

# THE TREE OF LIFE SPREAD

The concept of the Tree of Life or the World Tree is an archetypal theme with threads running through many of the world's mythological literatures. The concept of the Tree of Life used for this spread is the one used by Kabbalists and Jewish and Christian mystics (see Figure 12).

Studying this tree and its paths and symbols can be a lifelong pursuit, with new facets and imagery being constantly revealed as you grow in knowledge, experience, and wisdom. Gershom Scholem's *On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism* (Schocken Books, revised, 1996) provides a detailed exploration of each sephirah (the spheres) and each path (the roads linking one sephirah to another) on the tree.

Each of the *sephiroth* (plural of sephirah) and each of the paths connecting them come under the influence of a planetary energy, or an aspect of divinity. This is the energy we will tap into to interpret a past life (see Figure 13).

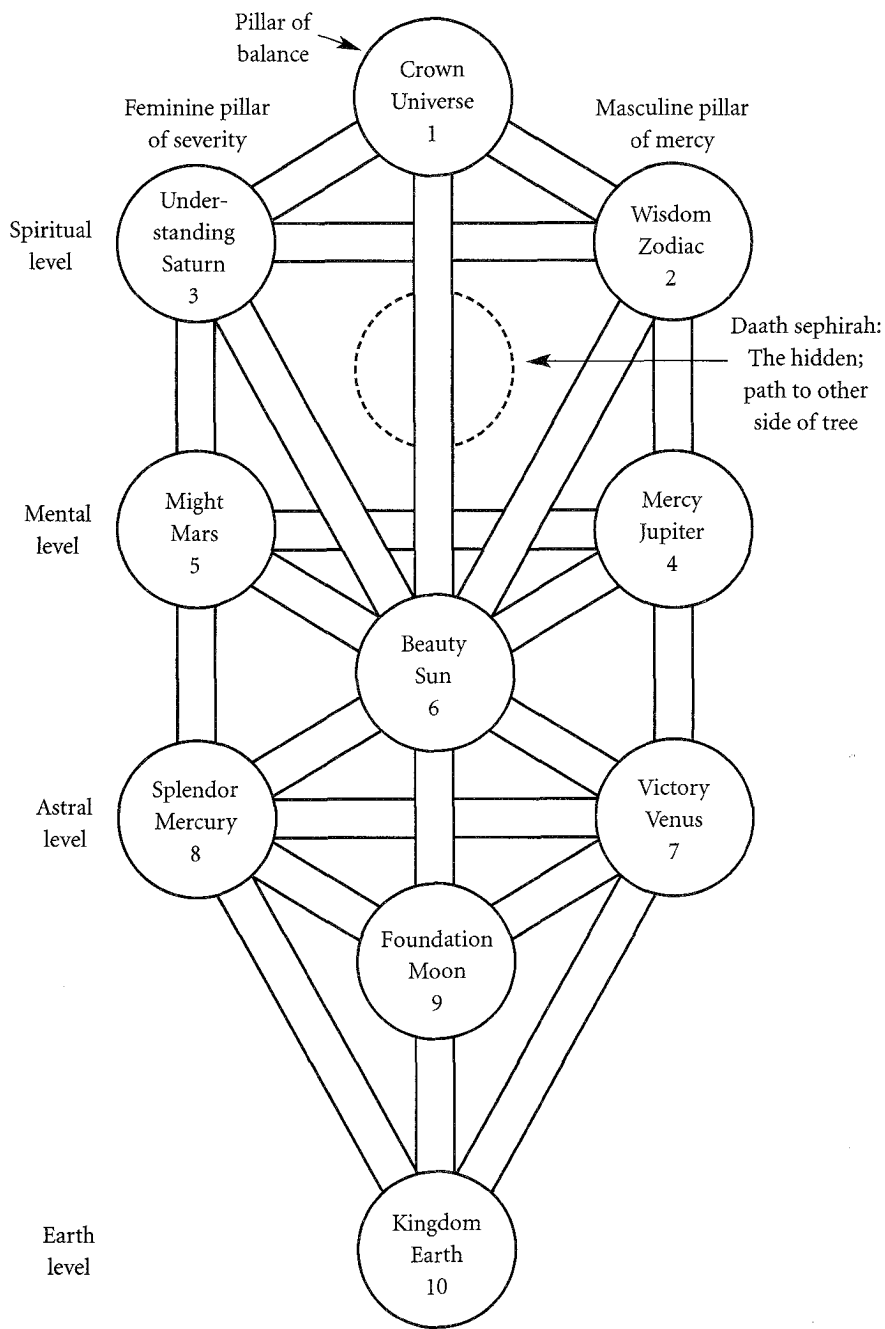
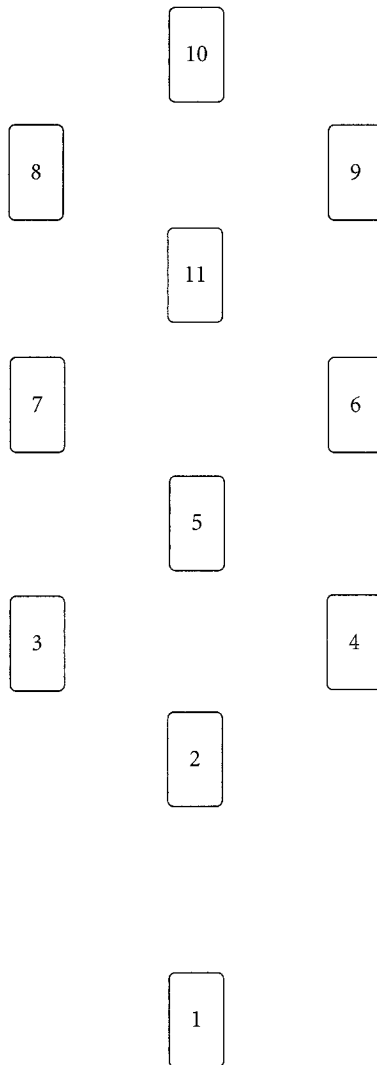


Figure 12: Model of the Tree of Life



*Figure 13: The Tree of Life Spread*

**Card 1**

This card represents you in the here and now. It may give you a clue to your true personality or unlock the key to a karmic mystery.



**Card 2**

This is the realm of the moon, the foundation of your inner self and a starting point in your journey toward reunion with the creator(s). It may also tell you of the side of yourself you kept hidden, or of your emotional state.

**Card 3**

Card 3 is the realm of the planet Mercury, illuminating your splendor in the realm of communication, travel, and study.

**Card 4**

Venus is the realm of personal success and your self-esteem.

**Card 5**

This card is ruled by the sun and reflects your outer qualities the way the moon reflects your inner ones. It's this outer facade that others see and by which they judge you.

**Card 6**

Jupiter relates to your ability to have compassion for others, and may also indicate your financial status and your capacity for giving to others.

**Card 7**

The card of Mars represents your strength and willpower. It may also tell about tests you will face in the lifetime being explored.

**Card 8**

Saturn is the planet that tells us of our capacity for empathy and understanding. It often reflects a past life link to the life being examined.

In *The Only Astrology Book You'll Ever Need* (Stein and Day, 1982), author Joanna Martine Woolfolk calls Saturn the planet "of discipline and limitation." Other astrologers refer to it as the planet of karma or

of self-undoing. In any case, Saturn is positioned in a place of prominence in our chain of lifetimes; its influence radiates a powerful hold on our inner self and the behavior it produces.

### **Card 9**

This is the card of wisdom. Wisdom is no more than knowledge experienced. It is governed by the entire scope of the zodiac and shows the true person you are in all aspects of yourself.

### **Card 10**

This card is the realm of the deities, and it relates how close or far you are to reuniting with your creator(s). Many people believe that when reunion with the divine is achieved, you are taken off the wheel of reincarnation and become a spirit helper to other seekers.

### **Card 11**

Order and chaos are not opposites, they are merely two different places on the Tree of Life. The front of the Tree of Life represents order, but the hidden sephirah, called Daath or the Invisible Sephirah, shows you the gateway into the world of chaos, which has as much to teach as the world of order. This card shows how easily you're able to move between the front and back of the tree.

## *Example Reading*

### **Card 1: The Hanged Man**

The current life of the seeker is one of stasis. He waits, taking no action to move him either forward or backward, and he cannot be pinned down to one opinion or perspective until he is sure he has all his facts and feelings pulled together. The seeker knows he needs to get some forward momentum and move on but may not know the best way to go, or he may be afraid of choosing the wrong option.

**Card 2: Eight of Swords**

In the realm of the inner self we see another card of fear. Although the path to what the subject wants lies straight before him, he hesitates to commit to that first step. This indicates that the fear remains bottled up inside him, while the rest of the world views him as being too cautious and indecisive.

**Card 3: Three of Cups, reversed**

When reversed the Three of Cups speaks of opportunities lost and potential unfulfilled. The seeker may have let various possibilities pass him by. No matter how minor each one seemed, we must assume his fear of moving forward kept him bound where he was in relation to communication, education, business dealings, or apprenticeships.

**Card 4: Ten of Cups**

Venus shows personal success; in this case it centers around family or friends. Cups rules over love and peace, so we must assume the seeker found some solace with those he loved. However, to show success in both financial matters and family issues, this card would need to be the Ten of Pentacles.

**Card 5: Two of Wands**

This card shows a solitary figure holding the globe in his hands, but watching a horizon whose end cannot be seen on the card. It speaks of someone who hesitates until the chance of success is past. Fear of moving forward is carried to extremes until all the good opportunities presented to him have closed and locked their doors.

Because this is a card ruled by the sun, it reflects the outer self. In this case others see a capable man who lets his talents lie around unused, perhaps because he fears success.

**Card 6: Wheel of Fortune, reversed**

Jupiter has the energy of compassion and financial success. The Wheel of Fortune is not just an element of luck, but of the seeker's taking charge of the Jovian energy to spin the wheel in the direction he wants it to go.

In this reading it appears that the cycles of the wheel are working against him. His fears affect not only his earning potential, but possibly cause him to feel envious of the success of others, which sours his disposition and creates rifts in his family life.

**Card 7: Three of Swords**

The card of willpower and strength is weak in the subject, just as we would expect of someone so fearful of making a move that he makes no moves at all. In some decks this is a card of self-undoing, representing a passion that can only be bypassed by one's own determination.

**Card 8: The Hierophant, reversed**

The Saturn card shows things hidden in past lives and the amount of compassion and empathy the seeker is able to give in the lifetime being examined.

The Hierophant is the card of the person who prefers outer trappings to inner substance, but being reversed shows the subject is aware of his false front and wants to correct it.

**Card 9: Ace of Pentacles**

The card of wisdom shows us the card of new beginnings at home and at work. Perhaps before this subject's past life ended he tried, perhaps in vain, to make up for past lost opportunities.

**Card 10: The Hermit, reversed**

This is the card of the divine creator in which we view the Hermit in a reversed position. The subject's heart was in the right place, but he

just couldn't go deep enough into his soul to seek out the knowledge he needed to become brave and whole in his physical life.

### **Card 11: The Tower**

The key to unlocking the secrets and power on the other side of the Tree of Life comes from disaster. Rather than fearing it, hiding from it, or flowing with it, the subject can find his balance only by acknowledging his responsibility for himself and his own successes or failures.

### **Other Indications**

This is a lifetime in which the subject was at heart a good person who was fearful of making mistakes, therefore he simply took no chances. The road to enlightenment and to reunion with the creator requires that we take calculated chances. If they fail, we must simply try again.

This man was lucky in that he went through the majority of his life with the loving support of his family. As he continues to vacillate later in life, we see signs in the cards—such as the Wheel of Fortune—to indicate that his loved ones became frustrated with his lack of backbone and they may have withdrawn some of their support and respect.

## EIGHT

# THE BIG PICTURE SPREAD

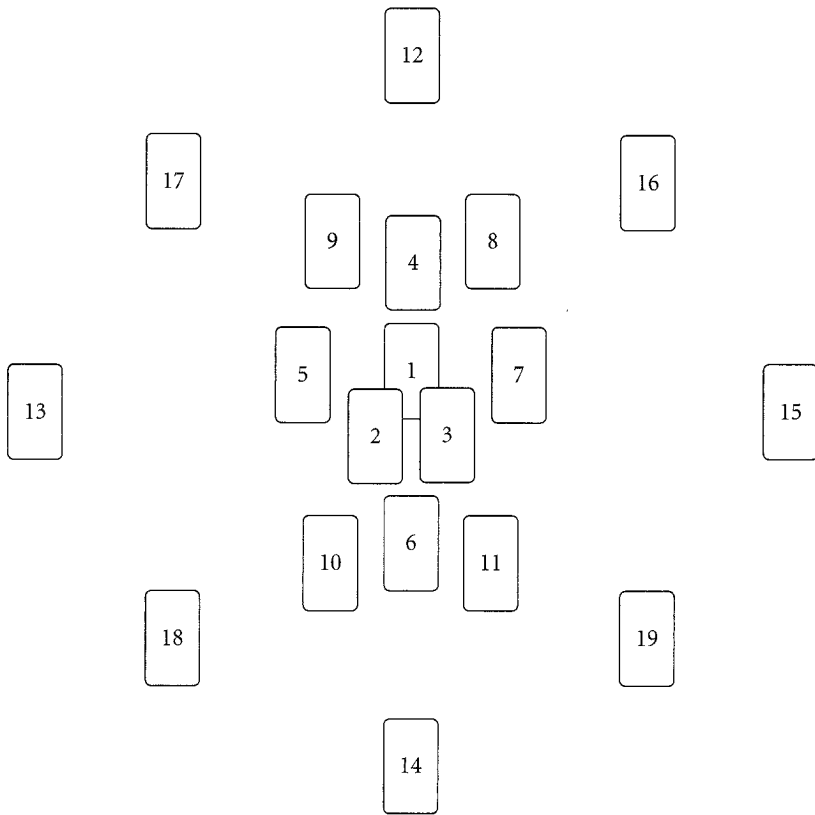
**T**his spread will give you the big picture of someone you were in a past life. You may focus the reading on one particular lifetime you already know about, from past-life regression or from dreams, by keeping that life in firm mental focus while you shuffle, cut, and place the cards.

You can also hone in on a lifetime in a specific time period or with a specific set of circumstances, such as being poor, rich, male, female, highborn, lowborn, dying young, living long, and so forth, by keeping these parameters in mind as you lay out the cards. If you get a reading where the cards do not relate to one another, or where their energies seem scattered, then you may not have lived a past life that fits your criteria.

Get your goal in mind and shuffle and cut your cards in your usual manner. Lay them out based on the numbers shown in the spread chart in Figure 14.

### **Card 1**

This is the essence of the you that was. It may contain traits that you were unaware you possessed at the time, or characteristics that meant you understood yourself very



*Figure 14: The Big Picture Spread*

well. You can get a better idea of which is which by examining the next two cards.

### **Cards 2 and 3**

These cards represent the you of which you were aware. If they seem to complement Card 1 you probably had good self-awareness. If they seem in contrast to Card 1 you probably did not really understand yourself. Together these first three cards give you an idea of how you saw yourself and what you really were in this past life.

Cards 2 and 3 can also show you the major forces flowing through this life that may have been pulling you in two different directions. Imbalances in our psyches occur when we allow one desire to overshadow all others. This often creates a karmic debt that has to be overcome at some future time.

Most of all, these cards show the character traits of which you were aware of possessing, or those you believed you possessed and, therefore, tried to project. It's not unusual for these cards to be in conflict, showing a pull in two different directions. Most of us have major life-path decisions to make that we know may affect the rest of our lives. Most of the time we can only choose one and hope it's the best. As the reading continues you will get a better sense of how accurately you gauged your self-image and made your personal choices in this past lifetime and how they impact your life today.

#### **Card 4**

This is the card that represents the physical you in this past life. It may also give an indication of social and economic status, or tell you something of your health in that life.

#### **Card 5**

The fifth card gives a glimpse into your spiritual and emotional impulses from this past life.

#### **Card 6**

Card 6 provides insight into the passionate you. It may show you what you valued most and were willing to fight to have or keep. It may also show if you were or were not moved by your passions, or whether you just allowed life to come to you as it willed.

#### **Card 7**

This card gives an indication of your intellect and, perhaps, your level of education. Keep in mind that education was a privilege of the wealthy



classes in most past societies and, in most cases, was also reserved for male children.

On the other hand, we all know of famous men and women who learned to read and became self-educated. Compare this card to Card 6 to see if learning might have been one of your passions.

### **Card 8**

This card shows you at your work or labor. It may also give you an indication of your social status.

### **Card 9**

This card shows you at home with your family and should provide insight into how you spent some of your free time.

### **Card 10**

Card 10 is the card of your hopes and dreams.

### **Card 11**

Card 11 is the card of your fears and disappointments.

### **Card 12**

This card shows you how your superiors, in social or work environments, perceived you. We all know we present different selves to different people in specific social situations. This is something that has not changed over time. Card 12 is the first card in the outer circle of cards that tells you how others in your community saw you. It may conform or conflict with your self-image.

### **Card 13**

This card shows how your immediate family saw you.

### **Card 14**

This card shows how your subordinates or social inferiors saw you.

**Card 15**

This card shows how those you worked with or those who were your peers or social equals saw you.

**Card 16**

This card shows how strangers perceived you in a casual meeting.

**Card 17**

This card shows how your friends saw you. Remember that people we think are our friends do not always have our best interests at heart, and this card might reveal the painful knowledge that someone you trusted with your life stabbed you in the back. This person may or may not know how his actions sabotaged or enhanced your life.

**Card 18**

This card shows how far you traveled toward your personal and spiritual goals during this past lifetime.

**Card 19**

The last card in this spread tells you how much reality there was in your fears, and can show where in this life you were most disappointed. Such letdowns are difficult to overcome in only one lifetime. You may find the loose threads of this issue continue to plague your current life.

## *Example Reading*

**Card 1: The Magician**

This is an excellent start to almost any reading in which your subject is seeking the true essence of the subject. The Magician card represents someone who has the ability and skills to take many varying elements and bring them together to work as one. Note that the key figure has the ritual tools to represent and direct all four of the elements, plus

the unifying element of spirit in the symbol of infinity shown as a sideways eight above the Magician's head.

### **Cards 2 and 3: Ten of Pentacles, Eight of Swords**

These are the major cross-cards indicating the two overriding influences that vied for attention or forced your subject to make an important life choice. In this case the subject shows an inner conflict in self-perception. There was the positive side she wanted to project, but which she might have feared would make her appear weak or vulnerable. The other side shows both what she hopes she might be and what she fears she could be, especially when her fear aspects are what she believes others might see in her.

The Ten of Pentacles shows a happy life filled with creature comforts and a supportive family, but the Eight of Swords shows someone who thinks she is stuck and cannot move on to achieve true happiness. Notice on the card how her eyes and hands are bound, but her legs are free. All she has to do is take one step forward to follow the path out of the incoming tide and the cage of swords that surrounds her.

### **Card 4: Six of Wands, reversed**

This is the card of leadership that was fairly won and judiciously administered. However, in the reversed position the card indicates that the victory was not total. Friends and trusted colleagues may have even worked against the subject. This would imply she attained the majority of her goals, but it wasn't a joyous victory.

### **Card 5: The Sun, reversed**

The keyword of the Sun card is "success." However, in the reversed position it implies that success wasn't achieved as the seeker wanted it to be. Possibly because of the conflicts in Cards 2 and 3, the subject felt pulled in two directions, unable to give her all to the outward goal.

The card also might imply that success was attained in the eyes of others, but fell short of her individual ideals.

### **Card 6: The Lovers**

Here again is a card implying being torn between two paths or ways of life. Perhaps it's a conflict of giving time to family or to work, or of a choice to deal honestly in business or to be less than honest.

Whatever the conflict, the Lovers tell us there is a choice to be made. It also implies that goals are more easily achieved by having a trusted friend or family member in your corner as a partner in your ventures. Hope that your seeker chose her companions with care.

### **Card 7: Seven of Wands**

This card indicates the successful overcoming of great obstacles to your subject's overall life goals. Since Card 7 relates to intellect and study it might be safe to assume that our subject was motivated to be self-educated in this past life and worked hard to achieve knowledge and put it into practice. It may also indicate a successful apprenticeship was given as a reward for her tenacity, even though there may have been other worthy candidates in terms of background and social status.

### **Card 8: Three of Pentacles, reversed**

While the Three of Pentacles is recognized as the card of the master of her craft, in the reversed position it indicates a lack of pride in one's work, and perhaps jealousy of the work of others who are willing to put the time and energy into their work that the subject is not. It might also indicate that the subject was less talented in her chosen field than many others.

If this shoddiness of work is noticed by superiors or customers, it is likely the position was lost. If not, it may manifest as guilt weighing on your subject's current workplace karma.

### **Card 9: Ten of Cups**

Ten of Cups is the card of family and others close to us. It shows us joyous unity and delight that a close family can take in one another's

presence. Clearly, in this lifetime the seeker's family was her greatest source of happiness and support. This probably made work seem more tolerable, and it gave her an incentive to return home each night to renew herself.

### **Card 10: Nine of Cups**

Card 10 shows some of the seeker's hopes and dreams. The Nine of Cups indicates satisfaction in all areas of life, including one's working life, which, so far, this reading shows as a source of angst and unhappiness in this past life. The subject hopes for wealth and recognition of her craft, neither of which may have been forthcoming.

### **Card 11: Seven of Swords, reversed**

This is the card of disappointments and dashed dreams. With the Seven of Swords reversed in this position, we can assume the subject was able to hide much of her hatred of her work situation, and refused the wise counsel of those who sought to help her find her way to true vocational happiness.

### **Card 12: The Devil**

The Devil is the card that shows us chained to the material things in life, sometimes at the cost of the intangibles that make life worth living. In this position the card indicates how superiors or social peers viewed your subject. In this case they saw someone determined to make a success of her craft, supporting Card 11's implication that dislike for and shoddiness in her work was kept well hidden.

### **Card 13: Seven of Pentacles**

The Seven of Pentacles is the card of someone pleased with what their work has yielded. It is also in the position indicating how the subject's family saw her. Again, we see the support and love of the family who sees a person whose hard work is both satisfying and rewarding.

**Card 14: Knight of Pentacles, reversed**

In its reversed position the Knight offers his pentacle to Card 6. This indicates that the offer is made with hesitation, showing again a desire for riches that are not fairly won. In the position of Card 6 we have the Lovers, indicating a pull in two directions, perhaps illuminating the inner struggle of someone who cannot be or attain all she so deeply wants. It also indicates that those who were her peers could see through the carefully polished veneer of deception.

**Card 15: King of Swords, reversed**

This card shows how peers saw the subject. Had this card been upright the view would have been one of fairness and sovereignty. In its reversed position the sword points downward to nothing, indicating that, for all this subject's posturing and efforts, those around her knew that she was not all she pretended to be.

**Card 16: Three of Swords**

Strangers could sense the subject's inner turmoil, perhaps because she had less cause to try and hide the truth from them. The Three of Swords shows the destruction of something valued by the seeker, but that all is not hopeless; something positive—perhaps the love of her family—still remains strong.

**Card 17: Nine of Wands**

The subject's friends saw her as reserved, on guard, as if awaiting cataclysmic retribution, which is far too severe to balance any negative karma that accrued in this past life.

**Cards 18: Nine of Pentacles**

The obvious conflict between the subject's feelings for her work and her home impacted both her personal and spiritual goals. Clearly, the personal goal of rewards for a job well done were not met, but the

Nine of Pentacles also indicates that the subject focused on seeking luxury and a life of ease for herself as her highest goal.

Since this is also a card of inner peace, we might surmise that the love and support of this woman's good family life may have felt like a substitute for true spiritual growth.

### **Card 19: The Emperor, reversed**

The last card in this spread brings together the reality and the self-perception of the seeker's fears and dreams. The Emperor is a card of a father figure, one of quiet power and contentment, but reversed it indicates an overall ineffectiveness of all paths taken to reach the dreams and hopes of this lifetime. Aside from the blessing of a good family life, this person lived with her discontent and in fear of being discovered to be less than she wished to be.

### **Other Indications**

As you can see from the example reading, the cards nearest the center represent the events and relationships closest to the subject. The outer circle represents those more distant but which are still close enough to have had a major impact on the past life.

The overall appearance of the cards shows a conflict between what the subject wanted to be and what she was. Clearly the two overriding interests in her life were a family she loved and a work life that offered the promise of great riches but remained unfulfilled during her lifetime. Yet her life was made bearable because her family was supportive and caring.

If the subject has been unaware of this past life before doing this reading, counsel the seeker to scrutinize the spread nightly before she goes to sleep. This will help or induce dreams that can give her a deeper insight into this past life. It can also be further explored by self-regression, or by regression done for her by a working partner.

## NINE

# THE FENG SHUI SPREAD

**F**eng shui is the Chinese art of causing positive energy, or *chi*, to flow unhampered throughout your living place or work space and, therefore, into your life. Figure 15 shows a standard feng shui map. It is always read from the vantage point of the entrance to your home or office, therefore the career eighth is always directly in front, and the reputation eighth directly at the back, of your room or rooms.

As you do this reading to discover who you were in the past, compare it to your present and see if any areas that were blocked or unsatisfactory in the past still plague you. If so, learning a little feng shui to open up the energy of that area of your home or office would be advised. A good book to start with is Richard Webster's *Feng Shui for Beginners* (Llewellyn, 1997).

When the cards are shuffled and cut, lay them out according to the pattern in Figure 16. All cards will be read as they fall, upright or reversed.

### **Card 1**

This is the card of your career and should give you insight into your past life vocation.



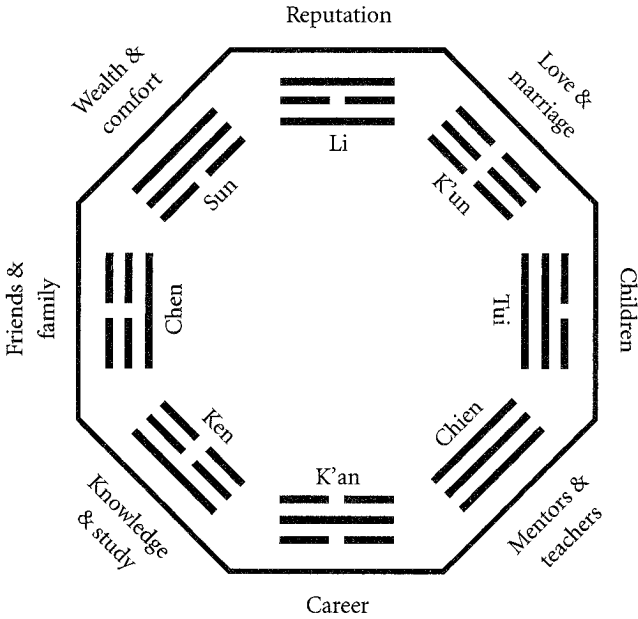


Figure 15: Feng Shui Model

### Card 2

This is your area of knowledge and study and can show you where your education was lacking and where it was strongest. It may also hint at things you still need to learn.

### Card 3

This card represents any mentors or teachers from this past life. Rather than telling you who or what they were, this card shows the influence they had on your life for better or worse.

### Card 4

The family and friends area should give you an idea of the type of family and friends you had in the past and how they influenced your life.

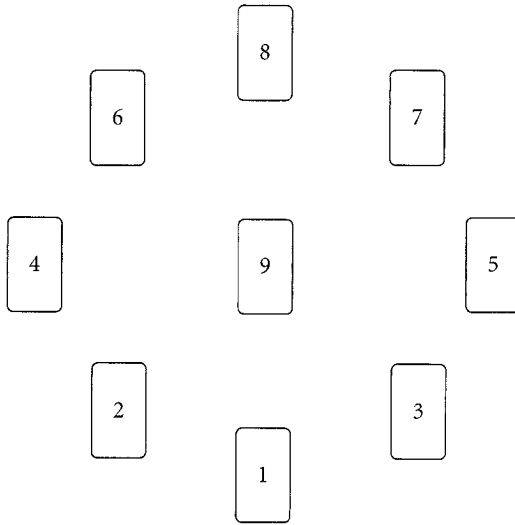


Figure 16: The Feng Shui Spread

### Card 5

This card represents your children. Keep in mind that your children can be anything to which you “gave birth,” and does not have to refer to genetic offspring. Your baby may be a pet project, a job, a hobby or sport, or personal goals.

### Card 6

This is the card that shows how financially sound you were and what level of comfort you lived in during this past life. It also indicates a generosity of spirit or lack thereof.

### Card 7

This is the card of love and marriage showing the details of your relationship to your past significant other.

**Card 8**

This last area represents your personal honor, the reputation you earned in your past life. You may find parallels between this card and your reputation in your current lifetime.

**Card 9**

This last card sums up what you were in your past, and in what frame of mind you exited that past life.

### *Example Reading*

**Card 1: Death**

In the area of career we find the card of profound and lasting change. This might indicate a change in economic circumstances, an unexpected apprenticeship, an inheritance, or an advantageous marriage.

**Card 2: Three of Wands**

The area governing knowledge and study shows the Three of Wands, a card indicative of someone who is open to new ideas. Notice the three ships sailing into the harbor in the background. These contain a wealth of knowledge that is available should the student be moved to take it.

**Card 3: King of Cups**

Don't fall into the trap of thinking this card shows the personality of a mentor or teacher just because it is a court or face card. This position shows only the influence of any or all of the seeker's mentors and teachers in a specific past life. In this case it depicts deep emotion and intuition. In my deck the figure of the King faces toward Card 5, the card of children. It's reasonable to assume that mentors and teachers caused an emotional blooming for some specific art or avocation, or anything else to which the seeker "gave birth."

And, yes, it can also indicate that one had excellent role models that enabled the seeker to love and care for any children that came under his guardianship.

#### **Card 4: The Star**

The keyword of the Star is “hope.” The indication is that friends and family were supportive of one another. Note the figure with one foot on land and the other in water. This symbolizes that success—in this case in family and friendships—encompasses all worlds and transcends one lifetime to carry over into others. Another indication is that the seeker is learning spiritual lessons and is growing in spirit.

#### **Card 5: Seven of Wands, reversed**

The area of children is a reversal of protective energies. This does not mean the seeker was not protective of his creations or children, but that he felt no need to be in a constant state of watchfulness. Security might be a better keyword for this arena of his life.

#### **Card 6: Six of Pentacles, reversed**

In the card of wealth and comfort we are presented with the modest journeyman who, although not wealthy in his own right, is still generous to others. However, in this reading that generous energy is reversed. This can be an indication that the seeker didn't give as much as he could have to others, whether from greed or from fear of not having enough left for himself is not clear.

#### **Card 7: The Empress**

The love and marriage area shows us the Empress, the quintessential earth mother who brings with her fertility, comfort, abundance, and joy.

#### **Card 8: Two of Pentacles, reversed**

The card of one's reputation encompasses a great many areas of the seeker's life. The Two of Pentacles often comes up in readings for people

who work hard and balance several loads without dropping anything. In this case, the energy is reversed, indicating that the seeker had a reputation for hard work and tried his best, but did not always finish all the tasks he started.

### **Card 9: Wheel of Fortune**

As an overall statement about this past life the Wheel of Fortune is a card of mystery. Although it is shown in its upright position, indicating that the majority of the life lived was one of general happiness and good luck, we know the Wheel is always in motion and can spin upside down at any moment.

### **Other Indications**

Overall this was a happy lifetime. It was not one of great wealth, but of comfort taken in modest work and loving family. Sometimes the seeker worked too hard and often this caused others to believe he tried to do too much. Sometimes this is seen by others as a positive trait, and at other times it is viewed as negative.

## *Alternative Spreads*

If you wish to make this reading more insightful you can first lay out the cards as they are shown in Figure 16, then lay over them another Figure 16 spread. The first cards placed will show what occurred and the second will show the seeker's reaction to or the final impact of those occurrences.

Another alternative reading is to lay yet a third spread over the second. The bottom is indicative of the physical in relation to each of the eight areas, the second spread is emotional and mental, and the top spread is spiritual.

If you're into the art of feng shui you can use this same spread, minus the center card, to find out where the weakness and energy blocks are in your home. Take steps to unblock that energy and see how much easier that arena of your life becomes.

TEN

## THE LIFETIME CONVERGENCE SPREAD

**T**his spread is designed to show the chain of events that brought you into your current life with someone you were close to in one or more of your past lives. Through formal past-life regression sessions, repetitive dreams, or meditations, this may be someone you already know has been a part of both lifetimes or it may be someone you won't recognize as having been part of your past until you do the reading. Naturally, the way you mentally form your question in your mind as you shuffle and cut the cards will determine which trail the reading takes.

Many people, including medical professionals, who research past lives write that we reincarnate with groups of people from our past. This is not just because of a karmic tie, but represents a bond similar to that of primitive humans or wild animals who rely on one another to survive. It's a promise we make to one another to help and support each other through life's trials and triumphs. Through this reading you may discover a past link with someone of which you were unaware, or you may confirm

your suspicion of an existing link. Conversely, you may find that someone you suspected to have been part of your past is having his or her first incarnation with you.

Be aware as you do this reading that not all continuing relationships are happy or healthy, and you may discover indications of a negative link that you need to break. Read the cross-cards carefully to discover what you need to do in this lifetime to sever the bonds that are binding you to this other person from a past lifetime.

If you are in a relationship that poses danger to you or to any child or elderly person in your care, get out of your present situation immediately. Your safety and the safety of your loved ones must come first. Once you have everyone who depends on you in a place of safety, then you can reflect on the relationship and further explore the past ties that brought the two of you together.

When you have shuffled and cut the cards, lay them out according to the spread shown in Figure 17.

### **Cards 1, 2, 3, and 4**

Cards 1 through 4 show the beginning of the path that first brought you together with this other person in a past life.

### **Cards 5 and 6**

These cards represent your first incarnation with this other person. Card 5 shows you in that past life, and Card 6 shows the other person.

### **Card 7**

This shows the karmic bond or the primary reason you and this other person became important enough to each other to come together again in another lifetime.

### **Cards 8, 9, 10, and 11**

These cards represent either another lifetime you've lived without this other person or the interim between your lives together. Cards 8 and 9 are you, and Cards 10 and 11 are the other person.

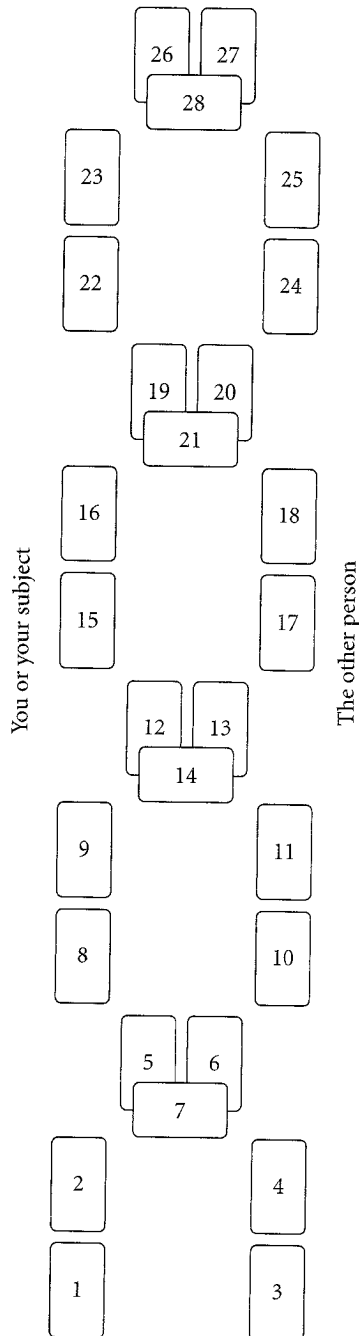


Figure 17: The Lifetime Convergence Spread



**Cards 12 and 13**

Card 12 represents you in another lifetime and the way that life was shared and impacted by this other person. Card 13 represents that other person's lifetime and the way it was shared and impacted by you.

**Card 14**

Card 7 and Card 14 show the karmic bond or primary reason you and this other person became important enough to each other to come together again to share another lifetime.

**Cards 15, 16, 17, and 18**

Like Cards 8 through 11, this grouping represents either another lifetime you lived without interacting with this person or the interim between your lifetimes together. Cards 8 and 9 represent you, and Cards 10 and 11 represent the other person.

**Cards 19 and 20**

These cards show you and the other person sharing another lifetime together.

**Card 21**

This card shows the karmic bond or the nature of the relationship that binds the two of you from one lifetime to another.

**Cards 22, 23, 24, and 25**

These cards represents either another lifetime you've lived without that other person, or the interim between your lives together. Cards 22 and 23 represent you, and Cards 24 and 25 represent the other person.

**Cards 26 and 27**

These cards represent you and the other person in your current lifetimes.

### **Card 28**

This last card in the spread not only shows the karmic link or nature of your current relationship, but it can tell you what to do to break the bond of mutual reincarnation or how to strengthen your connection so you can come back together again in another lifetime.

### ***Example Reading***

Please note that below I use the pronoun *she* for the subject and *he* for the person with whom she has karmic ties. This was done only for the sake of clarity. Our subject may have been female in one life and male in the others. Likewise, the person to whom she has a karmic link may change genders throughout the lifetimes they are together. They may even reincarnate together in the same gender, giving a new twist or a depth to an ongoing relationship.

### **Cards 1 and 2: Eight of Swords, Five of Wands**

These cards show your subject in a state of fear, unable to choose a direction and move forward. Energies are scattered, and it's unclear if she is bringing things together or pulling them apart.

### **Cards 3 and 4: Six of Wands, The Magician**

The other person's history is one of success, of being able to take scattered energies and bring them together in harmony. This disparity between talents may be one of the reasons these two people first came together.

### **Card 5: The Chariot, reversed**

When paired with the other person, the subject is better able to bring her scattered energies together. She does not feel confident in her own abilities, so many of her past efforts did not succeed.

**Card 6: Page of Swords**

In this first lifetime together, the other person is wild and reckless, which may have been part of his appeal for a subject afraid to step out on her own. The Page in my deck faces away from the subject's card, showing a lack of commitment to help her overcome past fears that have followed her into this lifetime.

**Card 7: Nine of Swords**

This card shows the link forged in the past lifetime was one of doubt, fear, and loneliness. All the subject's struggles are still held deep inside her, creating a karmic bond of dependence that will bring the two people together again in another lifetime.

**Cards 8 and 9: Queen of Cups (reversed), Two of Swords**

The subject's emotions are out of balance; feelings of love and commitment may be confused or unrequited, further enhancing her low self-perception.

**Cards 10 and 11: King of Pentacles, Two of Pentacles**

These two cards of the same suit indicate someone who is stable in home or business, able to be strong for others and to juggle many responsibilities.

**Card 12: Queen of Pentacles, reversed**

We see some growth in the subject's lifetime in the stable earth-center pentacle, but the card is reversed. This shows us her energies are not going where she wants them to go. She feels out of control. In my deck, the Queen of Pentacles reversed causes her to face the life card of her other person as if she's still looking to him for strength.

**Card 13: Eight of Wands**

This card represents energy in action, moving forward with all the lust and courage of the element of fire. No doubt he provided emotional

support to the subject in this lifetime and she grew to depend on his support.

### **Card 14: Strength**

The card that bridges the two people in this lifetime is Strength. This probably means he's busy fulfilling his role of helping the subject with problems left unresolved by her in their last lifetime together. Whether it helps the subject to learn to love herself and to stand on her own remains to be seen.

### **Cards 15 and 16: The High Priestess, Two of Wands**

In this interim we finally see growth in the subject. As High Priestess she learns to control some of the aspects of her life that had been out of control before. Like the Magician, the High Priestess has the confidence and ability to bring together various elements that are scattered and make them work together as one smooth whole.

The Two of Wands shows that she is waiting and watching for something or someone to come to her. Perhaps she seeks again the partner who helped her in past lives. But notice that she remains alone and now has the gifts of the High Priestess. All the pieces are in place for her to take charge and start directing her own life. Whether she realizes that or not is not shown in this duet of cards.

### **Cards 17 and 18: Death, Ace of Wands (reversed)**

The other person's life shows profound changes taking place in the interim, as shown by the Death card. Following Death we see an Ace, a card of new beginnings and ventures. Because it is reversed, we can assume this one got off to a rough start. The energies of fire—the passion and courage this man has displayed in past lives—start to fail him in this one.

We see here that the roles this man and woman have played for one another over several lifetimes are starting to turn. Can she support him in the way he has supported her? Can she make her High Priestess self step in when things go wrong and carry both of them to safety?

**Card 19: Two of Cups**

The subject is offering partnership, love, and perhaps marriage to the other person. In my deck this offering shows a winged lion above the union, connecting them back to the Strength card that crossed their joint past lives.

**Card 20: Four of Wands**

The other person shows us another partnership, one in which a couple bonds to form their own home and family.

**Card 21: The Star**

The Star is always the card of hope and of wishes fulfilled. This cross-card shows growth and contentment for both subjects as they prepare to exit this joint lifetime.

**Cards 22 and 23: Ten of Wands, Nine of Pentacles**

In the subject's journey to another life we see her carrying an oppressive burden leftover from the past relationship. This is not necessarily a bad card. It shows us the subject has grown and now is able to carry her own burdens without help.

The Nine of Pentacles shows a woman content with her life, confident of her ability to do what she needs to do. On her arm she carries a peregrine falcon, a formidable hunter and ally.

**Cards 24 and 25: Four of Cups, Three of Wands (reversed)**

In this lifetime the subject is being given the means to help the other person as he helped her in the past. We see an offering he cannot see because of being fixated on other issues.

In the Three of Wands we see him looking for a "ship to come in" that, being reversed, either never arrives or does not bring with it all he expected.

**Card 26: Six of Cups**

In her current lifetime the subject made an offer of friendship and partnership with the other person, yet we cannot see by this card if that offer is accepted or not.

**Card 27: Ten of Pentacles**

This card shows success in home life and business. These successes may be tied to the partnership or friendship the subject offered him. The cross card will tell us more about the karma and bonds these two people continue to garner.

**Card 28: Ace of Pentacles**

This is a card of new beginnings, in particular how they relate to home or business. The two subjects are tied by this bond and will spend their current lifetimes together working through the issue of the Ace, as it has been carried over from a long past together.

**Other Indications**

As the two subjects' lives progress from one to another, they may develop new personalities for Cards 26 and 27, and the card that crosses them may change as well. This is because we all exercise free will, and nothing about any of our lives is fixed in stone.

You may have turned up cards that are hard to read, or bear no meaningful links. Cards that make no sense in relation to each other, or what we sometimes refer to as "garbage readings," may mean there is no past-life connection upon which to comment. Most people doing readings for themselves get this kind of mess when asking questions for which they do not really want the answer, or if they fear the answer.

In the position of Card 28, it's not unusual to find the Wheel of Fortune, indicating that much is still to come and change will occur in the lives of these two people.

### *Alternative Spread*

You may wish to eliminate the cross-cards altogether. Shuffle and cut once to lay out your subject's side of the reincarnation tower. Then shuffle and cut again to lay out the cards for the other person to see how individual karmas or spiritual needs brought them together. This puts more of an emphasis on each individual and less on the karmic ties that have bound them.

## OMNISCIENT TIME SPREAD

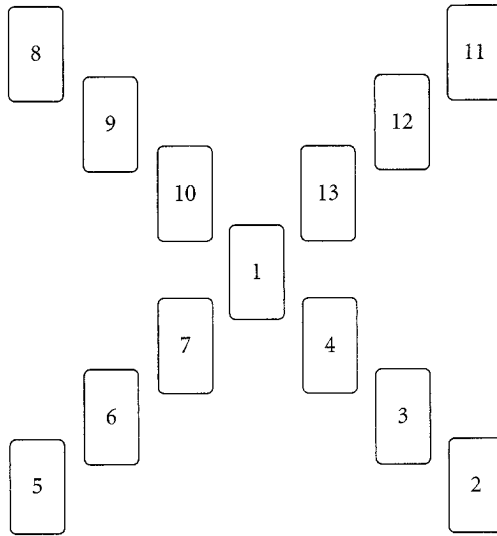
Sometimes we find the linear perception of reincarnation and the tarot cards stumbling blocks to our progress when we begin messing with time/space issues. We know all time is here and now, yet it is omniscient. We're not able to see this without lots of practice, and even then this 360-degree range of sight only lasts a brief while until you've had extensive experience working and learning in the other worlds.

This spread brings together four of your other lives that are having the strongest impact on your current lifetime. As you can see from Figure 18, this spread is shaped like a large X. Your current self is shown at the center in Card 1. The four incoming rows of cards represent those other lifetimes that are producing the greatest impact on this one. These influential lives don't have to be all past lives; they can be future lives as well. The "Alternative Spread" section at the end of this chapter will show you a technique for learning more about any one of the lines.

### Card 1

This card represents you in the here and now. It may speak of only one aspect of you, or it may provide an overview.





*Figure 18: The Omniscient Time Spread*

Try to focus on a specific aspect of your life if you can. Doing so will help you decide what part of your life is being influenced by your other lifetimes.

### **Cards 2 through 13**

Each row of three heading into the middle of the spread represents you in a different past or future lifetime. We will use these cards to try to understand what these other lives are trying to teach you about your current one, and how you can use this knowledge to help shape your current life the way you want it to be.

## *Example Reading*

### **Card 1: Ace of Wands**

The center of the reading shows your subject's main issue at this precise time in his current life. It may be a broad outline of his life in general or it could illuminate something very specific that needs attention.

Try to free your mind from all linear thinking as you interpret this first card. It sheds light on what influences his concurrent lifetimes are having on his present personality. Your change in perception from linear or cyclic to omnipresent will help you interpret the meaning of the center card—easier done at the end of the reading than now at the beginning—but you need to be aware of what you're looking for.

**Cards 2, 3, and 4: Five of Cups, Page of Cups, Queen of Pentacles**

This lifetime's influences appear to come from a romantic partner, one the subject may have made his home with for a time in the specific life shown. The Five of Cups shows us a time in a life when the subject mourns a loss. In this case he is shortsighted because he refuses to see the two full cups he still has nearby. This refusal may be an innate part of the seeker or an idea impressed upon him by someone else.

The Page of Cups holds up a humble sea star rather than a cup. The star is an emblem of hope and transcendence, so we may assume that whatever the loss was in the Five of Cups, the subject was able to overcome it and move on.

The Queen of Pentacles is the last card in this lifetime. She represents the earth mother, generosity, and abundance. Whether this is a trait that developed in the seeker, or someone who influenced his life for the better, is not yet clear.

**Cards 5, 6, and 7: Nine of Swords, The Devil (reversed), Ten of Swords**

This lifeline shows disaster, followed by change, followed by more disaster. The hardships may or may not have been within the subject's control. Perhaps they were the result of a karmic chain of events that had to be experienced to be overcome.

The Nine of Swords shows the subject's awareness that his life is spinning out of control.

The Devil represents profound change, but its reversed position indicates that the change was incomplete or inappropriate to the issue or

lesson to be learned. Keep this in mind because it may be a karmic issue that will come up again.

This life ends with the Ten of Swords, the card of defeat, of giving up.

It's hard to tell what area of a lifetime these cards refer to, but swords usually involve communication, travel, aggression, ambition, and study.

### **Cards 8, 9, and 10: Ace of Cups, Four of Wands, Three of Cups**

The next lifeline seems to be pointing to a romantic involvement. The Ace of Cups can represent any new venture governed by water, so we need to look at the other two cards to try to narrow down the issue.

The Four of Wands represents a happy relationship in balance and harmony. Note that the two figures dance side by side, their nimble feet matching one another step for step. They are not facing one another like adversaries, but are looking off into the same direction together.

The Three of Cups is indicative of good luck, good friendships, the blessings of the power of the number three, a number sacred in many spiritual traditions.

### **Cards 11, 12, and 13: Seven of Wands, Death, The Star (reversed)**

A glance at this lifeline makes it appear as if our subject made a valiant effort to make this lifetime better, but things didn't turn out as well as he'd hoped.

The Seven of Wands depicts a man in a kilt, wielding a wand over six other wands coming from a trench below him. If we study his face we notice he is not caught up in the heat of battle, but is watchful, protective, and willing to fight only if necessary, perhaps only for what he believes is right and honorable.

Whatever caused our subject to take the moral high road produced a profound change in his life. The Death card is rarely referring to physical death in any reading, but points toward a profound change and symbolic rebirth.

The Star is a card of hope, one that attempts to show balance between the world of spirit and that of matter. In its reversed position, the card

indicates that the goals of the seeker did not pan out as expected. This doesn't translate as a bad ending, just one that didn't live up to all his expectations.

### **Other Indications**

There is no single theme running throughout this reading. All indications are that the four other lifetimes have prepared the subject for a new start under the auspices of wands and the element fire. The suit of wands relates to personal energy and growth, transformations, passions, and success.

Cups are also prominent in this spread, and it would appear that a past romantic relationship and the friends the couple had were fulfilling and improved the subject's quality of life, perhaps preparing him to do even better in this lifetime.

Cards 8 through 10 and Cards 11 through 13 show the most unified energy patterns—the former being the subject's romantic life and the latter indicating some great passion that sent the seeker on a quest to fulfill a cause, which did not work out as he'd expected.

In fact, all four of the lives leading up to the current life contain the theme of goals that remained just out of reach or were unfulfilling. The four incoming lifetimes all seem to relate to different aspects of life rather than only one, which further solidifies our assessment that a variety of lifetimes has prepared the seeker for a fresh start. The seeker's job is now to take this knowledge of mistakes and triumphs in the past, and weave it together into a future he wants.

The Ace of Wands as the current life card is perfect. Like all Aces it represents new beginnings. In the suit of wands it has a connection with knowledge.

Remember:

With knowledge comes experience,  
With experience comes wisdom,  
With wisdom comes spiritual growth,  
With spiritual growth comes the fulfillment of our spiritual purpose.

Also keep in mind that these four impacting lives can be from the future. Everything the subject does, thinks, and acts upon affects the direction that all his other lifetimes take. Time is ever present, never linear, no matter how we perceive it on the earth plane.

### *Alternative Spreads*

If, after doing the full reading, you still don't understand how these other lifetimes relate to your current self, you may draw two more cards off the top of the deck. Place the first one to the left side of Card 1 and the second to the right side. Think of these cards as your co-walker, your shadow self that often remains hidden through many lifetimes.

If you're interested in understanding what helped shape all or part of the other lifetimes in this spread, pick up all the cards in that line and place them over the center card. Concentrate on the life about which you wish to know more. Shuffle, cut, and follow the pattern for Cards 2 through 13 while focusing on obtaining more information about a specific lifetime.

If you wonder what other lifetimes may be influencing you right now, feel free to add another row of three cards. You can add up to four more rows in any reading. You will know by glancing at the cards if these are lifetimes impacting your current life, or if they are linked to other concerns of your soul.

## TWELVE

# GROWTH OVER THREE LIFETIMES SPREAD

**F**or this spread you will need to have some paper and a pen or pencil to keep track of each lifetime as they appear. This is necessary because the spread is done in three or more separate groupings, and it's not unusual to find the same card or cards appearing over the course of several lifetimes. This allows you to trace the evolution of your energy or growth pattern. To obtain your clearest reading, you must have all your cards available to lay out for each lifetime.

The example reading in this chapter will assume we are only reading three lifetimes: a past, the present, and a future. (See the "Alternative Spreads" section at the end of this chapter for other ways to read these growth cards that can expand the scope of your examination.)

Shuffle the cards, cut the deck, and lay out the cards as shown on the bottom row of Figure 19. This shows a past lifetime whose energies and influences are still with you. Each row has eight cards. The bottom row represents the oldest lifetime. Cards 1 through 8 show the state of your physical, astral, mental, and spiritual selves in a past life.

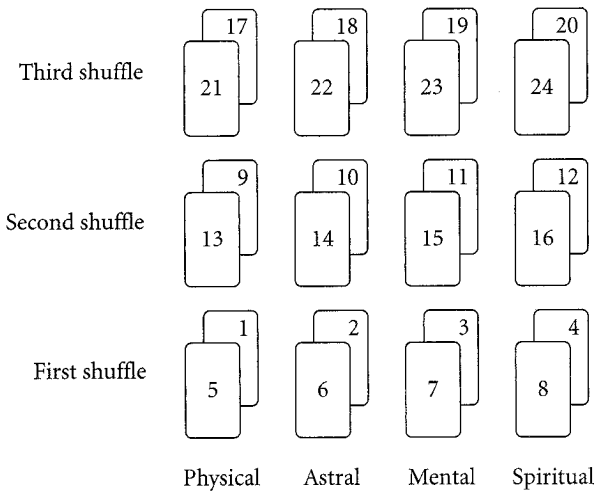


Figure 19: Growth Over Three Lifetimes Spread

The first card you place shows you as you came into that lifetime, and the second card—the one partially covering the bottom one—shows the influence of that lifetime on one particular aspect of your current life. The impact may be neutral, positive, or negative. Even if it's negative, you may have been able to rise above or change that karmic bond. This type of growth is easily traced in this spread.

The physical aspects of your past life are revealed in the first pair on the left. On the bottom row this means Cards 1 and 5. The astral aspects are in the second pair, Cards 2 and 6. They represent the inner you, the part of yourself that is free to travel to all times and places to learn and to grow. The mental aspect is shown in the third pair, Cards 3 and 7. They focus on your thought processes as they affect and link your spiritual and physical selves. The spiritual aspect of your life is shown in the last pair on the right, or the end of the bottom row, Cards 4 and 8.

When you have read and copied the eight cards on the bottom row, place *all* the cards back in the deck and shuffle and cut them again. Follow the same procedure for laying out the cards in the middle row.

Make sure you copy it down, noting any reversed cards that capture your attention, then follow this same procedure for the top row of cards as well.

Any time you try to compare one lifetime with another you must remember that there are pairs of major arcana cards that should be noted as rising in importance if they appear in any part of the same spread, even more so if they appear in the same life-row or if they come up paired together. These cards are Justice and Judgement, the Hierophant and the Moon, and the Wheel of Fortune and Death.

### **Justice and Judgement**

These two cards indicate that a karmic balance has been reached and you or your subject is ready to be reborn into the full experience of another lifetime.

### **The Hierophant and the Moon**

These are both cards that speak to us of secrets and things hidden. The Hierophant seeks to project an outward appearance that the seeker's prevailing society would not find objectionable.

The Moon warns of false friends and hidden dangers. Its job is to remind us to stay on our true path, to be ourselves, if we hope to get through that lifetime unscathed.

### **The Wheel of Fortune and Death**

The Wheel indicates the fluctuations of highs and lows over our many lifetimes. These are often points of epiphany for the seeker, or they warn us that everything is in a process of change. Only the subject can balance the Wheel so it remains upright.

Death foretells profound change, change initiated by the epiphany revealed in the spinning of the Wheel.

The simple act of looking into these cards can cause your subconscious to start to work on problem areas. These thoughts alone can begin the process of positive change.



## *Example Reading*

### **Cards 1 and 5: Temperance (reversed), Six of Wands**

Temperance reversed expresses a life out of balance. Fortunately, in this reading we are set up to hone in on that part of life that is out of balance. We are looking at the first pair on the left, which represents the physical self.

In terms of the physical aspects in a past life of our seeker, this card may refer to sickness, incapacitation, or self-abuse. Any tendency toward excess has a negative impact on the body, aging it at a rapid pace.

The other influence in this first pair is the Six of Wands, representing triumph, success, and the support of others.

### **Cards 2 and 6: Seven of Cups (reversed), Six of Swords (reversed)**

The astral self of this past life starts by showing our seeker as a dreamer, but because the energy of the card is overturned, we can assume his dreams are not practical. This card also indicates someone who is stubborn in the face of change or a reality he does not wish to acknowledge.

The cups energy is countered by the Six of Swords, the card that can guide our subject to look to his Higher Self for answers. Seeking assistance with learning and spiritual issues on a higher plane of being is an important need for this past lifetime's spirit self.

### **Cards 3 and 7: Four of Cups, the Star**

Our seeker is at first unable to see the most precious gift or ability available to him in the Four of Cups. His past life countered that energy with the Star, the card of hope and the energy that bridges the worlds. In this case it bridges the mental self to the physical and spiritual self.

### **Cards 4 and 8: Judgement (reversed), the Tower**

Little spiritual progress was made in the past life we are examining. The reversed energy of Judgement doesn't mean that our subject is judged negatively but that he is a harsh judge of others. It can also

indicate bigotry, arrogance, and intolerance—all negative emotions that we all must overcome to make spiritual progress.

Judgement's energy is countered by the Tower, showing that the world the seeker has built for himself is not standing on a solid foundation. In fact, it may even be harmful to others. When the walls come tumbling down, the first victim is the spiritual progress of the seeker.

Don't forget to record this first row of cards. After they are on paper, replace all the cards in the deck, then reshuffle and cut so you can lay them out again in row two.

### **Cards 9 and 13: Four of Swords, Eight of Pentacles**

The current life of the seeker began with a time of repose and reassessment, a gathering in of physical energy before moving forward. When the momentum of the early part of his life picks up speed, we see it being channeled into his work or his craft.

This does not mean that the subject does not face physical obstacles or limitations, but that he finds a way to use the skills he has to his advantage.

### **Cards 10 and 14: Eight of Swords (reversed), Nine of Pentacles**

The Eight of Swords reversed indicates that our subject made a decision about the direction his astral self should go in order to gain the most knowledge possible. Fear is banished as he steps onto the path ahead of him.

This choice to begin to move forward reaps positive results. The Nine of Pentacles shows a quiet contentment with one's life. In terms of the astral body, we see roses within his reach that represent attainment, and the peregrine falcon, which is a symbol of the hunter or sun gods who can lead the subject in his quest for knowledge.

### **Cards 11 and 15: The Fool, Strength**

As opposed to the astral body that seeks knowledge, the mental body seeks to take that knowledge and put it into play in both our subject's

spiritual and physical lives. When knowledge is experienced it becomes wisdom and can assist our eternal search for spiritual union with our creator(s).

The seeker's life starts out like the Fool, heedless of the pitfalls one can face while seeking spiritual advancement. As life progresses, the card of Strength takes over our subject's life, giving him the courage and will to seek what he's looking for regardless of the counsel and opinion of others.

### **Cards 12 and 16: The Hanged Man, Death**

In our seeker's spiritual life we see him starting out in stasis, immobile, reassessing his past experiences and current options while slowly contemplating his next move.

Countering this card of the status quo is the Death card, an indication of profound change. Death's red robes are the color of blood, symbolic of life. The white rose blossoming behind Death represents the cycles of death and rebirth, or endings and new beginnings. This can be interpreted as the subject finding a sense of spiritual direction, then having the courage to follow it through. The result will be a complete reversal in spiritual priorities.

Record these cards as you did for the other row. Make sure you are noting that this row is above the former one. Replace all the cards in the deck, then reshuffle and cut so you can lay them out again one row above (the top row in this example).

### **Cards 17 and 21: The Devil (reversed), the Magician**

Although physical limitations seem to have been overcome in the current life, they manifest as resistance to change in a future life. Stagnation can sometimes feel comfortable even when it puts a seeker in an uncomfortable place. This is simply because it is what he knows best. Change moves many people out of their comfort zones and exposes them to new ways of behaving or thinking, which, deep down, we all know will have an impact on all levels of our being.

The Magician counters this resistance to change. The Magician, with all his elemental tools spread before him, shows that our seeker has the power to make a change to any area of his life that he chooses. The catch is that he has to want that change. If we do a fourth future life reading, we might see if our subject managed to make this leap.

### **Cards 18 and 22: The Hermit, Two of Wands**

The astral body travels alone through all worlds and times, and the Hermit shows the subject's willingness to step into the unknown to seek knowledge. The Hermit is countered by the Two of Wands, which shows a partnership that proves helpful. Since we are applying this card to the astral body of a future self, the partnership will probably be with a spirit guide or helper who can lead the seeker to where he can find and experience the events that will allow his spiritual growth.

### **Cards 19 and 23: The Hanged Man, Three of Pentacles**

The mental body of this future lifetime starts out static, just as the spiritual body was in the current life. However, the Three of Pentacles shows our subject looking to distant horizons to see his answers and growth. This will give him the chance to turn knowledge into wisdom through experience.

### **Cards 20 and 24: Justice, Judgement**

In the future life, the spiritual body of our seeker shows profound change. We see the card of Justice coming into this future life, indicating that wisdom in this arena was attained by the end of a previous life.

We also see the card of Judgement reappearing. This card was reversed in a past life and turned against the seeker. In the future life it is shown upright, indicating the subject has taken knowledge, integrated it into his spiritual experiences, and emerged wiser because of the journey.

### **Other Indications**

Our seeker shows growth over three lifetimes in the physical, astral, and spiritual bodies. He overcomes his tendency to judge others and looks to his Higher Self or guardian spirits for assistance on his journey. In fact, we see a complete reversal over the three lifetimes in the subject's spiritual progress in terms of shedding his prejudices, and we see him gain a more balanced and just attitude toward others.

The physical self also overcomes obstacles created by both body and mind so that, if the seeker remains on his present course, in a future life he will be free of any physical limitations.

Because all lives impact one another and occur in omnipresent time, we can change anything we don't like about this reading by making changes now.

### *Alternative Spreads*

Although I chose to make this example reading one of past, present, and future, you can make them all past lives or all future lives. You can also make them two past lives with your present life at the top row. Please remember to write down your cards so you can reshuffle and cut the whole deck before laying out another lifetime.

If you have the skill and the patience to trace this pattern further, you can add as many past lives to the reading as you choose. Just remember to write them down in the order in which they appeared and to use the entire deck for each set of eight lifetime cards you place in the spread.

## THIRTEEN

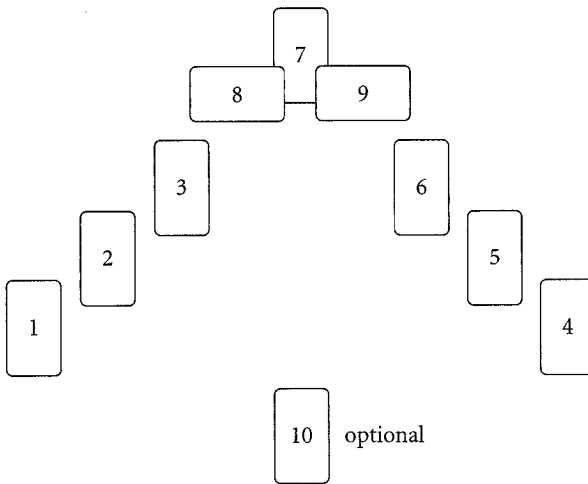
# THE NEXT CHALLENGE SPREAD

**T**his reading gives us a chance to find out what our next major hurdle will be in our current lifetime. The sum of this challenge is decided not only by the choices we make in our other lifetimes, but also on how we've managed our current life so far.

Focus on the near future as you shuffle and cut the cards. Try not to think about any specific karmic issue as you do this unless you're seeking an answer to a specific karmic issue. Allow the cards to choose what they think you need to know at this time. Arrange the cards as shown in Figure 20. Please note that Card 10 is an optional card. You may wish to wait until you've done the rest of the reading before you decide if you need the tenth card or not in order to make the reading clear.

### **Cards 1, 2, and 3**

These cards on the left side of this pyramid-shaped spread represent one leg of the journey that has brought you to this upcoming challenge. Usually, but not always, you'll find this is an internal issue. Yet nothing is inevitable. At



*Figure 20: The Next Challenge Spread*

some point in time, this leg of the pyramid must meet with the other leg that is coming to fruition simultaneously.

Since the cards don't give us any insight as to just how far into the future our next major challenge will be, any changes you want to make to turn one of those legs in another direction can and should be done immediately. If you have studied time theories and are familiar with Stephen Hawking's "event cones," this will make even more sense to you. If not, and you really want to shake up your brain with some hyperdrive thinking, pick up any of Dr. Hawking's books.

If you like what you see taking place on both the left and right legs, and the upcoming challenge seems like one you want to tackle, then you should make no changes and allow the event cone you're already in to carry you on toward the happy end result.

### **Cards 4, 5, and 6**

The right side of the pyramid represents another leg of actions and events that are bringing you to your next challenge. This is usually, but not always, an external issue.

### **Card 7**

This card represents you in the time immediately after the right and left legs meet and initiate the challenge.

### **Cards 8 and 9**

Cards 8 and 9 show the pull each leg has on you in the days immediately after they meet. If you do not like what's waiting for you, or don't want to deal with life yanking you in the two different directions shown, you must take steps to stop the chain of events now in place.

### **Card 10**

After you have read the rest of the cards and find yourself unsure if your outcome is positive or negative, draw the next card off the top of the deck and place it at the base of the pyramid. This card represents the energy of this challenging issue or event that you will carry with you from this time into your next lifetime.

## *Example Reading*

### **Cards 1, 2, and 3: Ten of Pentacles, Four of Wands, Eight of Wands (reversed)**

The Ten of Pentacles forms the base of the left leg of the triangle. It's a card of material and family success, an indication that contentment may be found at home and satisfaction may be found in the workplace.

The Four of Wands is a card of marriage or domestic partnership. It depicts a smiling couple dancing in step underneath a chuppa, or Jewish marriage canopy, that represents the home a couple shares. This is another card of contentment, especially in the area of home life.

At the top of the leg is the Eight of Wands in a reversed position. The card represents a slowing of the momentum and contentment shown at the bottom of the left leg. In other words, something is coming that will either be disturbed by or will disturb the energy of happiness and unity that your family currently experiences.



**Cards 4, 5, and 6: Ace of Pentacles (reversed), Three of Wands, Knight of Pentacles (reversed)**

Like the left leg of the pyramid, this one is also dominated by a single suit: pentacles. At first glance we must assume that some threat is approaching from the seeker's income source, or even from her own family. We know this because this earth-centered suit relates to family, home, money, and employment issues.

The reversed Ace indicates a new beginning that does not go as planned. The path to planned success is blocked, but this card does not mean that the seeker won't end up in a good place, perhaps just not the one she expected.

The Three of Wands is a card often said to be "waiting for your ship to come in," a metaphor often used for monetary success. These two cards seem to point to money and employment as being the issue of the right leg that is going to collide with the left leg, home and family, and produce an unpleasant stress.

The Knight of Pentacles reversed is an indication that the right job is out there but our seeker cannot find it. The knight holds his pentacle up so it can be taken, but it will not be handed over to her without effort on her part. The Knight can also forewarn us about upsets in the work environment, which could be anything from cutbacks to a company's complete failure.

**Card 7: Two of Pentacles**

When the two legs come together, the seeker finds herself struggling to balance the two pentacles of work and family. So far she is managing, but note the look of concern on her face. She's so busy keeping all her "have to" demands going that she has no time to enjoy her family or her environment. All she can see is the tasks at hand that constantly require attention.

**Cards 8 and 9: The Chariot, Ten of Wands**

As always, these cross-cards are read as if they fell in the upright position. The one on the left is the Chariot, showing us that our subject has

the power to bring together all these elements that are flying off in different directions. However, ability is not the same as success. We need to look at the other cards to glean hints of how she might succeed.

The Ten of Wands shows the seeker carrying an oppressive load. Her goal can be seen in the background of the card, but the pathway leading to it will be difficult and will leave no time to stop to play along the way. This reinforces the idea that there will eventually be a clash between responsibilities to family and those at work.

### **Card 10: The Tower**

This is the *optional card* that shows how the seeker's life will end in relation to these two conflicting legs of the pyramid. The Tower shows the destruction of all of the things our subject has worked hard to build. Either it was not built on a firm foundation or an outside energy will come crashing into it. In either case, the Tower is not an energy anyone wants to carry into another lifetime. The caution here is to find ways to make the two legs work in harmony (the Chariot) so that every day does not feel like one long juggling routine (Two of Pentacles) to the seeker.

### **Other Indications**

This example reading would seem to put family and work life in conflict. This is a common problem in the modern world. Families are apart ten or more hours each day to face the demands of work, school, medical appointments, grocery shopping, bill paying, homework, and other "must do" activities. Add the "want to" activities and it's easy to see where the issues of time and money cannot be stretched any further.

If you don't like what you see, you have the power to make changes now to one or both legs of the pyramid. This may involve finding a job that pays better, rearranging homework schedules, clipping coupons for groceries, or limiting extracurricular and social activities in favor of family time.

Keep in mind that the two legs of the pyramid do not have to be in conflict. They may be in perfect harmony, indicating that our seeker is

managing her life very well. In that case, interpret Cards 7 and 10 only to see if any tweaking can be done that improves the karmic energy our subject will carry into her next challenge and her next lifetime.

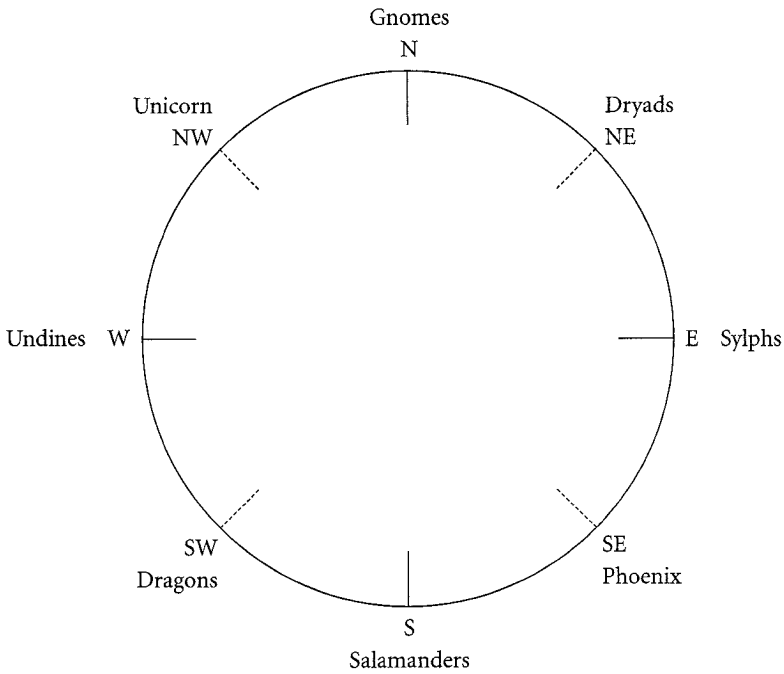
## FOURTEEN

# THE FUTURE-LIFE SPREAD

This spread uses the circle to symbolize the wheel of time and the elemental rulers of each quarter as taught in Western magick traditions to allow us a peek into our next lifetime (see Figure 21). Always remember your divine gift of free will. Nothing is inevitable. If you see something you don't like looming in your future, take steps now to change course. When you've been forewarned by the tarot, the choice of where you end up is your own.

The elemental circle is not only useful for mapping out tarot spreads or helping us conceptualize the elements. For many centuries and for many people the creation of this circle constitutes the creation of sacred space. Within this circle they can pray, dance, do divinations, make magick, gather energy, and be protected from unwanted psychic interference.

Concentrate on your next lifetime—as we sequentially perceive it—while you shuffle and cut the cards. Try not to think of any preconceived ideas about the future as you lay the cards out according to the pattern in Figure 22. You don't want your expectations to cloud or influence your reading. You may even want to do several of



*Figure 21: The Cross-Quarter Sacred Circle*

these over the next few months just to make sure you're moving in the direction you desire.

### **Card 1: The Main Issue of Your Life**

This card represents the major issue that will be a part of your next lifetime. This card has a lot to do with how you exit this life and what you and your spirit helpers decide in your time between lives.

### **Card 2: Your Greatest Ally or Worst Stumbling Block**

We are all surrounded with people and issues and time consumers that can either help or hinder us. This card indicates which of these factors will be the strongest in your life to come. This card may also suggest what your major future karmic challenge will be.

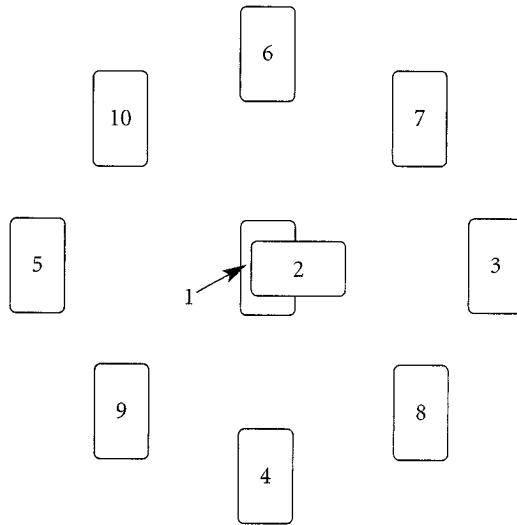


Figure 22: *The Elemental Future-Life Spread*

### **Card 3: Air Element, Governed by Sylphs**

Card 3 shows your future life in the air-governed areas of communication, study, intellect, knowledge, scattered energies, and your connection to the fifth element of spirit. The sylphs who rule this element may sometimes seem capricious, but they can be successfully petitioned to assist you in all these areas related to air.

### **Card 4: Fire Element, Governed by Salamanders**

The fourth card concerns the fire-governed aspects of your life: war, courage, passion, lust, stamina, strength, and willpower. Fire is ruled by the salamanders who can be seen dancing inside flames and implored to assist you in all matters related to this element.

### **Card 5: Water Element, Governed by Undines**

The water-governed aspects shown by this card might include fertility and children, psychicism, dreams, intuition, transformation, spirituality, and purification. The undines of the water world are beautiful and helpful in all matters connected with the element they govern.

**Card 6: Earth Element, Governed by Gnomes**

Card 6 focuses on the earth-governed aspects of life such as home, family, animals, wealth, employment, grounding, healing, cohesive energies, and cleansing. Gnomes are known throughout the world as house, forest, and barn helpers and healers. Ask the gnomes for their assistance in all issues related to the earth element.

**Card 7: Earth and Air, Governed by Dryads**

Earth and air are compatible elements. When they collide there is little change unless we are dealing with gale force winds or earthquakes. The dryads are the playful and capricious tree spirits that live in and protect trees. This card can show you where your compatible energies lie and how they might disguise themselves.

**Card 8: Air and Fire, Governed by the Phoenix**

Air and fire are also compatible elements. Fire warms air and air feeds fire. As a pair they are governed by the phoenix, the mythical bird who is able to rise from the flames of destruction, stronger and better. This card can show you where your strengths and personal determination lie.

**Card 9: Fire and Water, Governed by Dragons**

Fire and water are not compatible elements. Water quenches fire and fire boils water. Together they are governed by the erratic energy of the dragon. This card can show you where you might fall off track in your life to come and may hint at how best to return to your chosen path.

**Card 10: Water and Earth, Governed by the Unicorn**

Water and earth are not compatible, but their conflict is not severe. Water can either nourish earth or inundate her, and earth can direct or dam the movement of water. Governed by the unicorn, a magickal being owned by the deities, this card can show you how to keep or find your spiritual direction in a life to come.

## *Example Reading*

### **Card 1: Temperance**

The concept of temperance can apply to many areas of life. The area referred to by this card does not have to be something negative, but remember that even too much of a good thing can be bad for our seeker. The area or areas in which temperance should be exercised should become clearer as we read through the rest of the cards.

### **Card 2: Seven of Cups**

This cross-card can be read in both a negative and a positive light. It is the card of the dreamer. We humans need our dreams to make our lives full, to mentally plan our futures, and to spark ideas that lead to new inventions and discoveries. The dark side of this card is that too much dreaming at the expense of action, or dreams of selfish glory, contribute nothing to the greater good of humanity and nothing to the spiritual growth of the seeker.

### **Card 3: Five of Wands, reversed**

The Five of Wands in a reversed position implies energies that are decaying. This too has both its positive and negative qualities. We need old energies to move out and make room for new ones, but we don't want to lose the things we've worked hard to build. In this position the card relates to the air-governed areas of the subject's life, and he should be especially careful of how he handles matters of education and communication.

### **Card 4: Three of Cups**

In the realm of fire we find the card of peace and balance among varying factions. Whether this is brought about by the seeker or will impact his life's choices remains to be seen. Since fire is the element of our greatest passions, the seeker should be cautioned to use judicious restraint in matters that could lead to battles of any kind.



**Card 5: The Moon, reversed**

Water is the natural element of the moon. In its reversed position it tells us that the seeker has managed to navigate a treacherous path and reached his goals without harm.

**Card 6: Three of Wands**

This card shows a man standing with his wands, watching ships at sea. Whether they are sailing out or coming in is not made clear, but the card is usually interpreted as being a sign that one is waiting for his “ship to come in.”

In this earth-governed position, our subject may be watching for the blossoming of the success he achieved in Card 5 to manifest itself.

**Card 7: Four of Cups**

The elements of earth and air show our seeker back in a quandary, contemplating a course of action, but not seeing all his possibilities. The seeker should be warned that in a future life he should make sure he has all his facts and has weighed all his options before taking any action.

**Card 8: Ten of Wands**

The world of air and fire shows our subject carrying an oppressive load. He can see in the distance where he wants to end up, but he will struggle to get there. The quandary of this card is to compare it to others in the spread to see if the seeker is able to lighten his load or carry his burden through until he reaches his goal.

**Card 9: The Star**

Under the erratic energy of the dragon, water and fire upset the hope symbolized by the Star. Just as water and fire are native to worlds that cannot coexist, the water bearer on the face of the card has a single foot in two worlds—one in water and one on land.

The subject seems to have navigated his life well to this point and has reason to hope that his labors will be rewarded.

### **Card 10: Six of Wands**

This is a card of success, of hailing the returning hero. Whatever role is given to the seeker in a future life, he works hard for his cause, and like the hero's journey in mythic literature, he has returned to his people with the elixir of hope and happiness.

One of the tragic aspects of mythological literature is that often-times the hero is not able to enjoy his success for long. Either another challenge emerges or a newer, younger hero takes his place. How our seeker handles himself after his fifteen minutes of fame will influence his future life.

### **Other Indications**

The first part of this reading almost implies that our subject could be in a position of political power in his future life, perhaps as an arbitrator or ambassador. Even the last three cards imply that he has a role to play in a matter that impacts more than just his own life.

Although we don't remember our past lives without making an effort, we do carry our soul memory with us. Warnings to the seeker about the pitfalls and successes he will face will stay in his subconscious so that his spirit can access this reading in his future life.

Card 10 is especially telling in this reading. Knowing when to retire the torch and pass it along to another is one of life's tougher lessons. It's uncomfortable because it reminds us that our physical selves are not immortal. We live in bodies that may not work as well as they did forty years ago, and if we dwell on what we've lost we may miss the gifts that the latter part of life gives us. Remember, the challenges of your lifetime continue until you draw your last breath, and maybe beyond.

## *Alternative Spread*

I've used this spread successfully to gain insights into the course my current life is taking. Use the same elemental attributes, but apply them to your current lifetime.

## FIFTEEN

# THE CONSTELLATION PAST-LIFE WHEEL

**T**his spread is a look at a past life through the cycle of some of the heavens' major constellations. Each constellation represents a different type of energy, and we can compare these energies to the cards we draw into the spread to find out who we were in a past life.

Unlike the other spreads in which we start laying cards at one specific place and end at another, this spread begins by placing the first card over the constellation under which the subject was born. For example, I am a Leo, so I begin placing cards at the far right of Figure 23 on the constellation Leo, and I keep laying the cards counterclockwise until the entire circle of sixteen cards has been placed. Someone born under Pisces would start in the west-southwest area of Figure 23, moving counterclockwise, until all sixteen cards are placed in the circle.

The three center cards are optional. You may wish to wait until you've done the rest of the reading before drawing off the last three cards from the deck.

Keep in mind as you glance through the constellations that all signs have both positive and negative traits. In this

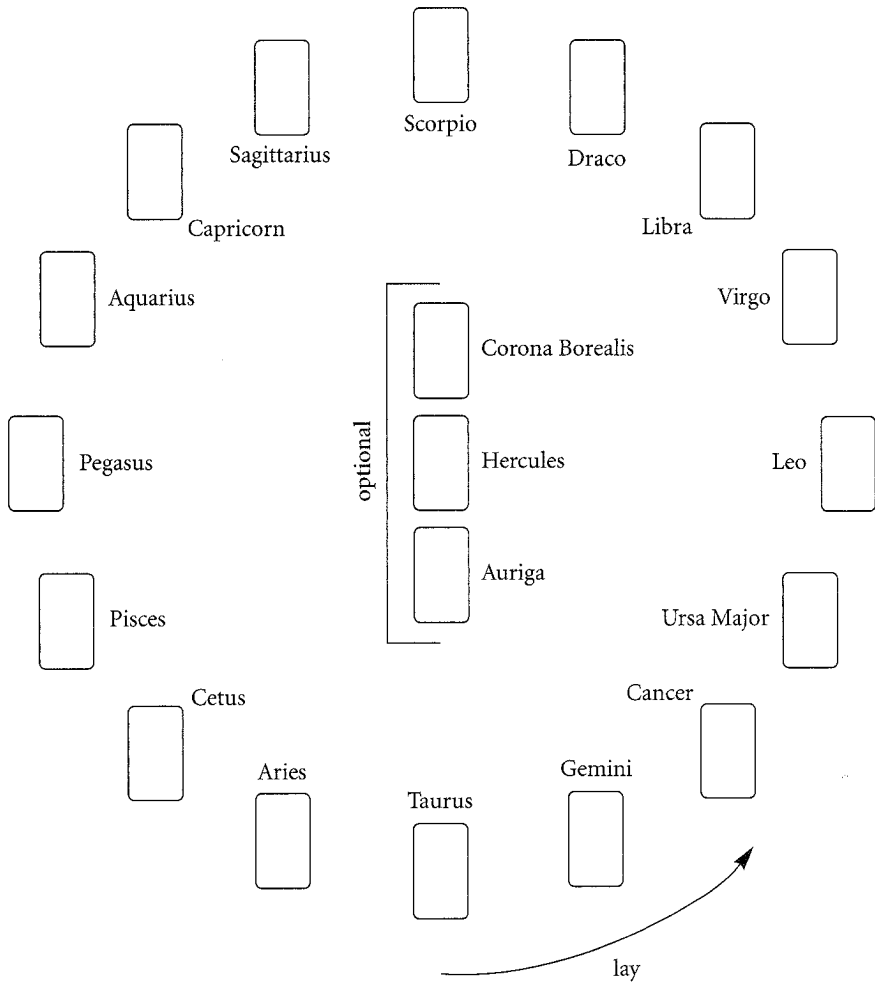


Figure 23: The Constellation Past-Life Wheel

reading we will try to focus on the positive and, if in a past life your subject was negative in a specific area, this will be borne out in the reading as a whole.

Because I was born under the sign of Leo, that's where I'll start the card descriptions and the example reading. Please keep in mind that it is your birth sign or your subject's birth sign where you will begin placing cards and from where you will start the reading.

## **Leo**

The royal Lion speaks of your loyalty and your passion for any project you take on, and for life in general. Cards that are in harmony with Leo indicate that loyalties and passions were well placed and generally projected in a temperate manner.

Negative aspects of Leo include childishness, a need to be in the limelight, arrogance, and a fondness for living beyond one's means.

## **Virgo**

The Virgin shows your willingness to serve and help others. It also can indicate someone with excellent powers of concentration who can give great attention to detail.

A negative Virgo can see that attention to detail is working to its own detriment. It can also indicate nit-picking and someone who can not give up or delegate tasks to others. If a card that is not in harmony with Virgo's energies is shown in this position, your subject must always guard against taking on too much.

## **Libra**

The balanced scales indicate how well developed your sense of fairness and balance was in the past life you're exploring. Libra looks at everything from all sides and can indicate someone with a well-rounded personality, someone steady and trustworthy.

The most prominent of Libra's negative traits are the inability to make a decision, vacillation, and laziness.

## **Draco**

The Dragon speaks of how you managed your temper and hints at how much personal determination you willingly put into pet projects. Dragons are ruled by a combination of earth and air.

Cards in harmony with Draco's energy can indicate that temper and determination was handled with temperance and fairness. Cards not in harmony may represent someone who had few scruples and would do whatever necessary to attain a goal, regardless of its impact on others.

## **Scorpio**

The Scorpion may sting, but no one keeps a secret as well as this silent watcher of the zodiac. Your idealism is measured by the sign of the Scorpion. Sexual secrets are one of the favorite unspoken topics of this sign. Scorpio's principal negative trait comes from this same need to keep secrets, even when it doesn't matter.

## **Sagittarius**

The Satyr is full of self-directed energy, unable to be penned in or controlled. The card showing under this sign indicates how well you directed your energy and how well you kept your word to others. Negative Sagittarius traits are unfaithfulness or refusal to commit to a project, person, or ideal.

## **Capricorn**

The Goat is an earth sign, steadfast, a good employee, and ambitious in a quiet way. Capricorn plods along like the goat, working his way slowly toward his goal. This sturdy earth sign sometimes needs a little boost to keep it focused on the positive since a negative card can show that you dwell too much on negative thoughts and feelings.

## **Aquarius**

The Water Bearer is the wide-eyed optimist of the zodiac who tries to see the good in all people and all ideologies. Aquarians are thinkers rather than doers, and no one can whip up enthusiasm for a project like someone with a harmonious card in this position.

The downside of this sign is that it can cause someone to talk endlessly of lofty goals, but who rarely takes any action to achieve them. As Libra looks at outer balance, Aquarius addresses a sense of inner balance, which can make endless vacillation one of its negative traits.

## **Pegasus**

The Winged Horse tells us how we managed our dreams and hopes and how well we did or did not connect with the spirit of divinity in the

otherworld. The horse plays a prominent role in many mythologies. They bring dreams and nightmares and can travel with you between this world and the next, opening doors that would otherwise be closed. Pegasus is ruled by a combination of air and earth.

Cards in harmony with this sign's energy show someone willing to work toward goals of self-improvement. Cards not in harmony can indicate a spiritual deficit that will have a major impact on this past life's karmic carryover.

### **Pisces**

The Twin Fish rule our psyches. Harmonious cards in this position show someone who is likable and compassionate, a dreamer who cares about community. It also indicates someone who is able to intuitively move through life, turning inner goals into manifest reality.

The negative side of this sign is that the Piscean can get lost in thought or take too much time dreaming great dreams, but is unable to put them into action.

### **Cetus**

This is the sign of the Whale, an anomaly, a mammal that lives in water. Cetus gives an indication of your adaptability. This sign is ruled by water and air.

Harmonious cards show loyalty, love of family, and indicate someone who could flow with events and adapt to change. Negative traits are resistance to change and a depressed nature.

### **Aries**

The Ram is ruled by Mars and speaks to us of first impressions, courage and stamina, tenacity, and a willingness to stand one's ground at all costs. Its negative traits are verbal and physical abusiveness, pomposity, and arrogance.

As you would guess, the positive and negative poles of this sign are extreme. The card that appears in this position should be carefully weighed against the others that fall near it.

## **Taurus**

The Bull can be stubborn, but it is also a patron of the arts and a lover of all things of the earth. If you want someone you can depend on in a crisis, find a Taurus.

Cards in harmony with this sign indicate a lover of nature and the fine arts, someone who is willing to compromise for the goal of the “whole production.” The negative aspects that may be shown by the card that falls in this position are argumentativeness, inability to “work and play well with others,” and a love of luxury.

## **Gemini**

The Heavenly Twins can pull those they govern in different directions. Most Geminis make the best of this by becoming eclectic in their tastes. They are very conversant and at first those they meet are charmed by their sparkling charisma. Cards not in harmony with the energies of Gemini may indicate that this was a past life personality that was two-faced, self-aggrandizing, and could be cruel to others just to watch their embarrassment.

## **Cancer**

The Crab along the seashore is the sign of the moon, home, family, and nurturing. Harmonious cards in this position show a contentment with home, family, and growing things. Nonharmonious cards may be an indicator of someone suffering from agoraphobia, codependency, and fear of being alone and ungrounded.

## **Ursa Major**

The Big Bear of the sky is tenacious, strong, and loyal. The Bear stays close to home, but keeps a watchful eye to look after those she loves. For those who've lost their direction in the Northern Hemisphere, she points the way to the North Star so you can get your bearings. Ursa Major is jointly ruled by the elements of water and fire.

Cards in harmony with the Bear's energy indicate someone loyal, loving, giving, and who works well with others. This person would



rather walk away from an argument than fight, but when pressed, this Bear protects her cubs with unparalleled ferocity.

## *Example Reading*

### **Leo: Three of Pentacles**

This is the card of the proud craftsman. It suggests the subject enjoyed her work, took pride in it, and was loyal to her employer.

Leo likes play more than work, and this card is somewhat out of harmony with its position. At some time in this past life our subject probably grew resentful of supervision or became overly prideful of her work.

### **Virgo: King of Wands, reversed**

The reversed King of Wands is out of harmony with Virgo energy. This King is a sign that our seeker was not of a mind to be of service to others in her past life. More than that, this particular reversal shows a tendency toward bigotry and prejudice, probably against those who need her help most. In this case, she views them as responsible for their own situation, and is perhaps a vocal critic of their lot in life.

### **Libra: The World, reversed**

The balanced scales of Libra combined with the World card indicate a life lived with restraint and practicality. Things almost always turned out well for the subject, they just didn't always turn out as she imagined they would. Whether she saw these new positives as successes or failures remains to be seen. Some people feel a great sense of loss even in these positive situations. They cannot accept outcomes other than those they've fantasized about in detail.

A fact of physical science is that any energy will take the path of least resistance. Once energy is placed on the wheel of life it must be fed with consistent, positive energy for it to collect and return with the desired outcome, yet this must be done without dictating to the universe how it chooses to manifest the goal. To try to control this aspect

of goal attainment is a waste of energy. The result is that going against the flow of the universe will slow, or even derail, your progression toward your desired outcome.

### **Draco: Knight of Pentacles**

The Knight of Pentacles offers us a picture of a very tame Dragon. This Knight is steadfast, kind, enjoys nature, and honors responsibilities. This card is indicative of someone who is so meticulous that her work might be called plodding, and she finds it hard to finish work or pet projects in the time allotted her.

In my deck the Knight sits on a standing horse, holding before him the pentacle, representative of all things governed by the earth element. It's hard to tell if he's offering it to another card or waiting for the subject to get her willpower fired up enough to come and get it.

### **Scorpio: The Fool**

The Scorpion keeps her own counsel, which occasionally gets her into trouble when she goes off on her own, shunning assistance from others with more knowledge and experience. She can appear cool and composed on the outside while a storm rages within her.

In this case we are measuring our subject's idealism and her ability to keep secrets. The Fool represents the first step that begins any venture. Note that in almost all drawings of the Fool, he blithely skips along the grass, oblivious to the precipice he's about to step over. This subject is likely to have shunned the help of others, guarded her personal secrets—in particular of how little she knew about some topics—and had the same idealistic view of the future as the Fool. Only the other cards will tell us if she sees the error in her direction in time to avoid catastrophe.

### **Sagittarius: Seven of Pentacles**

This card is in complete harmony with its position. It shows the ability to self-direct one's own energies to where they are needed or wanted.

Like the sprightly Satyr, our subject's energy runs wild at times, but the satisfied features of the figure in the Seven of Pentacles shows us she manages to rein herself in before she can self-destruct. This position and card indicate a life in which the subject knew how to manipulate positive energy to attain her desired goals.

### **Capricorn: Queen of Swords, reversed**

Under the sign of a steady and loyal employee, we find the Queen of Swords in a reversed position. This Queen is sneaky, even deceitful, and she doesn't put energy into anything that does not conform to the long-term plans she has for herself. It's likely that, no matter how successful she appears to others and no matter how many of her goals she achieves, she is plagued with a negative self-image. This imbalance causes the Queen to play games simply for the rush of feeling her personal power. Her low self-esteem prevents her from caring whether or not she plays fair.

### **Aquarius: The Star**

The coincidence of a card depicting a water bearer coming up under the sign of Aquarius, the Water Bearer, is unique, and puts this card in a strong position. The reader should be warned to examine it carefully, both on its own and in comparison to the cards surrounding it.

The water bearer is a symbol of spiritual uplifting, which is perhaps fitting if she learned her lessons under Sagittarius. The Star signifies hope, a bridge between two worlds, and unity and peace. If we apply this to the subject's past-life scenario, we see the same strain of idealism that we saw under Scorpio.

### **Pegasus: Knight of Wands, reversed**

Pegasus unmask our dreams and hopes, and sometimes our deepest fears. The Winged Horse can work against us, exposing those things we hide in the night, or he can carry us into the light of knowledge and wisdom. The reversed Knight in this position is not harmonious

with the sign, indicating a quarrel strong enough to break the bonds of loyalty and cause the seeker to go her own way.

The last several cards seem to be telling us that the subject was confused about what she wanted and how she should go about attaining it. It seems she wanted to be a good employee and a loyal companion, but she seems to backslide whenever her self-confidence is the least bit disturbed.

### **Pisces: The High Priestess**

The Twin Fish of Pisces rule our psyches. Under this sign we find the stable, earthy magick of the High Priestess. The High Priestess should reassure our subject that she has no reason to feel self-doubt or to back down from a position she feels is correct. Both this sign and this card are indicative of people who seek to do the right thing, even when it is not in their best interest. They are highly intuitive, perhaps even psychic.

### **Cetus: Two of Cups**

The Whale is an air-breathing mammal that lives in the water. Under its sign we learn about our subject's adaptability. The Two of Cups shows a partnership or friendship being offered, but does not tell us if this gift was accepted or rejected by the subject.

### **Aries: Nine of Pentacles**

The negative traits of Aries seem to be dashed by the Nine of Pentacles, which shows us a woman content with her life. We also sense that she is a person of some prestige, perhaps a patron of the arts.

As we look closer, we see that the woman has a gateway behind her that is blocked by hedges of her own creation. This tells us the subject managed to overcome some of the negative traits of this sign, but still harbored enough distrust of people or her situation that she would not lower her self-imposed barriers. She likely kept her private life guarded and may even have feared exposure and examination of her life by others.

### **Taurus: Five of Swords**

The Five of Swords shows us hollow victories. Our subject may have won her goals and persevered over her enemies, but in her heart she was not happy with the means by which she won.

In my deck, I can see others walking away, leaving a lone figure with all the swords. That should tell us that the only person she was fooling in this conflict was herself.

### **Gemini: The Chariot, reversed**

Gemini can pull a seeker in two different directions, and an upright Chariot would tell us she had the ability to bring these two areas together and make them work. The reversal of the Chariot energy is that it is no longer in her control.

As the subject's past life draws to a close, she can no longer cope with bringing and keeping different energies together. The Twins begin to pull our subject in different directions and all the careful control she had over her past begins to fall apart.

### **Cancer: Two of Swords**

The Two of Swords is a card of intuition, a card very much at home under the lunar influence of Cancer. The card can also show us that striving too long and hard against one's own conscience brings misfortune.

The seated figure is balanced by the two swords she holds, but is blindfolded so she cannot discern how to use them. In light of the Gemini card showing our subject unable to continue to control the energies at work in her life, this card can be interpreted as our subject falling further into self-doubt and immobility.

### **Ursa Major: The Moon**

The Big Bear or Big Dipper points the way north for those in the Northern Hemisphere. Ironically, the Moon card warns the seeker to be careful to stay on her chosen path and to be alert to dangers if she

should stray. Near her life's end, it appears our subject lost her way and exited life feeling out of control.

### **Other Indications**

It seems from this reading that the longer the subject lived, the lower her self-esteem and the more underhanded she became, losing all gains she made in the first two-thirds of her life. Eventually, she didn't know which direction was the correct one and which was not. Under Cancer, at the end of her life, we see the blindfolded figure. She could remove the blindfold if she wanted to; nothing is stopping her except her own lack of confidence.

If you are an advanced card reader you may wish to group constellations by their element to see if other intriguing patterns emerge. This may even help you discover your past life personality.

#### *Earth Signs*

Taurus  
Capricorn  
Virgo  
Ursa Major

#### *Water Signs*

Pisces  
Cancer  
Scorpio  
Cetus

#### *Fire Signs*

Aries  
Leo  
Sagittarius  
Draco

#### *Air Signs*

Aquarius  
Gemini  
Libra  
Pegasus

For example, if we apply this strategy and look at only the fire signs, we note that they are all from the suit of pentacles. This indicates that, in this lifetime, the subject was passionate about something governed by pentacles or the element earth. In this case, it seems as if the passion of her lifetime was her employment or her craft.

Also look for clusters of one suit or of major arcana cards in one area. This can be compared to your birth chart or horoscope, and com-

pared with the house in which it appears to fall. Each house of the zodiac covers a different area of your life.

**House 1 (House of the Self):** Pegasus and Pisces

**House 2 (House of Material Possessions):** Cetus and Aries

**House 3 (House of Communication):** Taurus and Gemini

**House 4 (House of the Home):** Cancer

**House 5 (House of Creativity):** Ursa Major

**House 6 (House of Health and Giving):** Leo and Virgo

**House 7 (House of Partnerships):** Virgo and Libra

**House 8 (House of Death and Renewal):** Draco and Scorpio

**House 9 (House of Spirituality):** Sagittarius

**House 10 (House of Career and Craft):** Capricorn and Aquarius

**House 11 (House of Hopes and Dreams):** Aquarius

**House 12 (House of Self-Undoing):** Auriga, Hercules, and Corona Borealis

### *Alternative Spreads*

If you still do not have a clear picture of the past life, you may draw out three more cards and lay them in the center from bottom to top.

The bottom card is for the constellation Auriga, the charioteer. This is the card that shows how well the subject was able to take all the many energies impacting her life and make them all work for her. Auriga is an archetype linked to Apollo, giving insight into how one expresses their outer self or outer life to others.

The middle card is for the constellation Hercules, the strong man, and represents the seeker's personal strength and willpower.

The top of the three cards represents the constellation Corona Borealis or the crown of stars or light. This shows the spiritual state in which

the subject left this past life and gives us hints about how close she came to fulfilling her spiritual purpose of reuniting with the creator.

You may wish to expand your circle. From a simple star chart you can identify the constellations that lie close to earth and are fixed in between the twelve signs that make up the zodiac signs used in Western astrology to seek information on more aspects of your past-life queries. Or you can do an inner circle of cards to represent closer constellations, and an outer circle for those farther away. Read mythology and find out what energy the constellation represents to be able to read between the stars.

You can also use constellations you can't see. If you live in the Northern Hemisphere, only half of the heavens are visible to you. Feel free to seek out the hidden energies of the other half of the heavens.



## SIXTEEN

# UNMASKING THE PAST

**T**here may be several people in your current life that you feel you may have shared a past life connection with. This spread will give you a chance to take a closer look at one of these relationships and the influence it holds over your past, present, and future.

The first thing to do with this reading is to separate out all the court or face cards and the Empress, the Emperor, the High Priestess, and the Magician. These cards will represent a single person you know in this lifetime. Shuffle and cut only these twenty cards, then draw off the top card and place it in the center of the reading area. This is Card 1.

Read this card as it falls. If it is reversed, read it reversed. If it is upright, read it upright. As you contemplate all the people in your life, one may stand out as being the only one who could be represented by the symbolism of the center card. In cases where the card could indicate more than one person, note that in your tarot journal. Clarification may come later either through dreams and meditation, past-life regressions, or by your present-life events.

Remember that people are not always what they seem. I did this reading with a friend many years ago when we

were both embroiled in a political issue on our college campus. My friend saw right away who the reversed Queen of Cups had to be. I didn't. I didn't want to believe it, and I just couldn't see the Queen doing all the underhanded things to us that were exposed by the other cards. I copied the reading into my journal anyway, along with our impressions of who the center card represented. As events panned out in the months to come it became clear that my friend was right about the identity of the Queen of Cups, and as soon as I saw it too, we were able to take steps to avert a major disaster.

After you have placed your first card and have had a chance to contemplate who it might be, put all the unused cards back in the full deck to shuffle and cut once again. Lay out the rest of the spread as shown in Figure 24.

### **Card 1**

This is the card of a person with whom you shared a past life connection who is part of your current life. It does not have to be someone you're close to. It can be an enemy, a friend, a casual acquaintance, or someone who has power over or who is able to gain power over some aspect of your life.

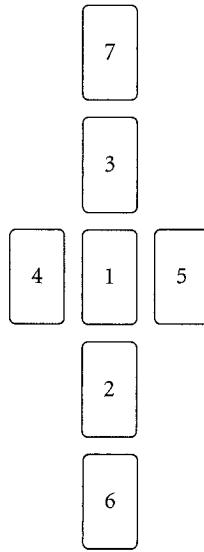
Don't fall into the trap of believing that just because the center card shows a picture of a man or a woman that it can only refer to someone of the same gender. The court cards and the four major arcana cards used for Card 1 represent archetypes, energies, and inner qualities that may belong to someone of either sex.

### **Card 2**

This card represents the influence this person had over you in the most significant past life you shared.

### **Card 3**

Card 3 shows the influence this person has over you now, or in the months to come, in your current lifetime.



*Figure 24: Unmasking the Past*

**Card 4**

The fourth card shows how you perceived this person’s influence over you in that significant past life.

**Card 5**

The fifth card shows how you perceive this person’s influence over you in your current lifetime.

**Card 6**

This card shows the hidden agenda this person had concerning you in your joint past life.

**Card 7**

This card shows the hidden agenda this person has concerning you in your current lifetime. The agenda may already be in play, or it may

rest on the horizon. Take the card as a warning or a comfort, depending on whether its negative or positive aspects seem most prominent.

If you are unsure who is represented by Card 1, Card 7 can help you unmask this person. The influence of this person may already be present in your life, working out your past karmic bonds, or it may begin in the near future.

### *Example Reading*

#### **Card 1: The Empress, reversed**

The Empress is the earth mother who nurtures us all. When betrayed by her, it is as if the entire world has turned against our seeker. In her reversed position the nurturing, loving, encouraging energies of the mother archetype are sent in negative directions.

In this example we will assume this card has been identified by the seeker as a woman in his life but, even in subsequent readings, the Empress may represent another woman or even a man.

#### **Card 2: Five of Cups**

The hooded figure in the Five of Cups mourns the spilled wine of the three chalices in front of him; this may at first appear negative or unpleasant until we look at the two full cups just beside and behind him.

In the past, the subject's woman of influence caused him to believe all was lost, when a simple reassessment of his life would have shown him he still had plenty. Whether this was done for the purpose of bringing the subject under a negative influence or under her control, or whether the Empress reversed believes she is doing the right thing, is not yet clear.

#### **Card 3: Eight of Cups**

The reversed Empress has caused our seeker to believe he must be on guard, ever vigilant, watching over his eight full cups. The moon riding in the night sky warns him to watch for things hidden, which can

include a negative influence that does not really exist, but has been planted in the mind of the seeker by the Empress. This supports the idea that our reversed Empress is deliberately manipulating our subject.

**Card 4: Three of Cups**

This card from the suit of cups shows three young women celebrating their association with a carefree dance. In the past, our seeker perceived this other person as a friend, an ally, someone he felt secure bringing into his circle of intimates in that significant past life they shared. In other words, he was being fooled by someone intent on manipulating his actions or thoughts.

**Card 5: The Hierophant, reversed**

Card 5 indicates that, at some point in the past, the seeker saw this other person as an adversary, or at least as someone who was not what she seemed. This card shows a softening of this position. As the past life continues the seeker senses, perhaps wrongly, that his energies have changed or that he was reading them wrong in the first place.

**Card 6: Five of Wands**

In the past the Empress had a hidden agenda of either theft or of trying to make the subject look foolish or inept.

**Card 7: The Moon**

This card shows the hidden agenda our Empress has concerning our seeker in his current lifetime. The Moon is a warning to the subject to keep an eye out for hidden threats and to stay on this course he has set for himself. It cautions him to stay on the path that takes him toward what he knows he wants and is right for him. This card in this position indicates that the revered Empress has plans to cause the seeker to deviate from his goals.

**Other Indications**

Clearly the Empress reversed is continuing her campaign of imposing her hidden agenda on our subject that began in a past life they shared. The cards don't show us her ultimate intent, but they do tell us her basic character is the same whether she is manipulating our seeker for self-gain or for the rush of power she gets from being in control of someone else's decisions and actions.

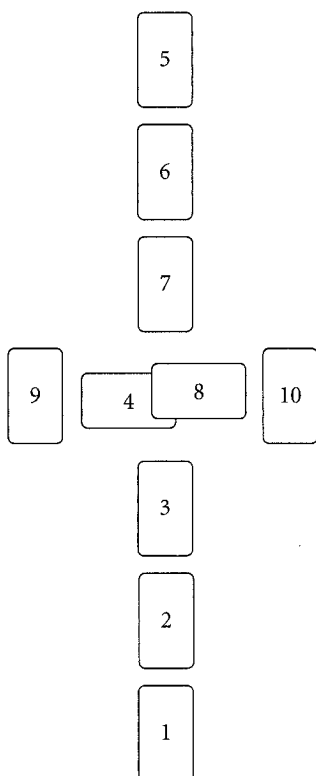
## SEVENTEEN

# PAST-LIFE EPIPHANY SPREAD

**G**rowth in spirit is the direct result of a conscious epiphany, a self-realization born of knowledge and experience that suddenly becomes an innate wisdom that balances karma and sets a new course for the seeker. This spread (Figure 25) will show an important lesson learned—or one that should have been learned—in a past life, how you realized where, when, why, and how you needed to change course, and the results of that change.

Knowing that a lesson has already been internalized can help you pinpoint those issues still needing attention in your present life. Being reminded of lessons learned is also a good way to help you not avoid repeating past mistakes. Conversely, knowing that a lesson was not learned can help you take steps now to head off the karmic backlash that is still to come, either in this lifetime or a future one.

Shuffle and cut the cards in your normal manner. While you're shuffling, you may choose to let the cards determine the particular lifetime you'll be looking back on, or you may focus on one lifetime you already know something about to gain more clarity in analyzing its impact on your cycles of reincarnation. You may also



*Figure 25: Past-Life Epiphany Spread*

choose to concentrate on a specific karmic issue that you feel has roots in a previous lifetime. Be aware that the cards may override your attempt to specify a past life or issue if they realize there is something more important that you need to know right now. Experienced tarot card readers know this phenomenon as “psychic override,” and if your cards address an issue other than the one you asked for, you will know. The override is always very clear.

### **Cards 1, 2, and 3**

These first three cards represent events surrounding and leading up to the conscious epiphany in your past life. When we read the cards from



the bottom upward they should make some chronological sense. They should also relate to one another in some way that makes clear the issue, blind spot, or karmic debt that you were unable to see or change before the epiphany. Look for a theme that unites the energies of these three cards.

#### **Card 4**

This card represents the moment of epiphany, the self-realization that you must make changes to some area of your life and the knowledge of the direction it must take you.

#### **Cards 5, 6, and 7**

These three cards represent your life after the epiphany. They tell you whether or not you acted upon your epiphany, ignored it, made an effort, or went in another direction.

#### **Card 8**

This card shows what was added to or subtracted from your life after you were given some time to work on the epiphany issue. If the card complements Card 4, or has positive overtones in relation to the rest of the reading, you can assume that you took the right direction. If the card appears in conflict, it indicates a different path was taken or that the seeker ignored her epiphany and chose to make no changes.

#### **Card 9**

Card 9 shows the end result to your past lifetime if no changes were made or if you took a different direction than your epiphany dictated. The path you took should be shown in Cards 5 through 7.

#### **Card 10**

This last card shows the end result to your past lifetime if you attempted to make changes. They may or may not have been successful, but if an effort was made you can assume that your past lesson was learned and that it is no longer an issue in your current life.

## *Example Reading*

### **Cards 1, 2, and 3: The Hierophant, the Devil, Seven of Cups (reversed)**

Before the subject's moment of epiphany we see a pattern of conformity and a need for material possessions. The theme of "putting on airs" is present. We see dreams of riches with energies turning against her as she is led toward her epiphany. The seeker cannot see the right path for her life, the route that leads to true happiness and the growth of spirit.

### **Card 4: Six of Swords**

The epiphany appears in a card that demands the subject seek a higher power or go on a spiritual quest in order to begin her change for the positive. The seeker will have to let go of the illusion of comfort she derives from her false facade and material possessions and embark on a search within if she really wants change.

No change is easy, especially if it flies in the face of our self-concept. Psychologists have repeatedly found that people will scale huge hurdles in order to make their lives conform to their self-image rather than making changes, even when those changes come in the form of an easier pathway.

### **Cards 5, 6, and 7: The High Priestess, Ten of Cups, Wheel of Fortune**

The post-epiphany cards show that the subject had the tools at hand to make positive changes in her life: a supportive family, the ability to change within if she really wanted to, and the fickle Wheel of Fortune spinning in her favor.

What these three cards don't reveal is if the subject took advantage of the tools at her disposal or not. When a reading lacks this key information we can guess that the subject was in a good position to make changes, but she probably did not take advantage of the opportunities. Perhaps she couldn't let go of the false self she had been playing

for so long, or perhaps she misjudged the amount of time she had remaining in her lifetime in which to make changes.

### **Card 8: Three of Cups**

Friendships were added to the seeker's post-epiphany life. This card indicates they were a force for positive change, but again we don't see how much she took advantage of what these friends offered.

### **Card 9: The Hermit, reversed**

This card shows that the seeker failed to make enough changes to overcome her past issues. The light of the Hermit, the solitary seeker of wisdom, is turned downward, looking toward the material and not the spiritual.

### **Card 10: Strength, reversed**

The subject ends her life with a legacy of lost opportunities. Rejecting spiritual gifts when the epiphany has already come to her is one of the best ways to ensure bad karma. Not only will the lesson have to be repeated, but next time there's no guarantee she'll have the family, friends, resources, and other support systems in place that would have made the process of change easier.

### **Other Indications**

Most readings of this spread aren't this negative. Usually when we realize something in our lives must be changed, we make an attempt at changing even when we know it's difficult. We may fall short of our goals, but at least we make a sincere effort.

Occasionally you will get a reading that shows the seeker defied change or just didn't put the necessary effort into making it happen. In these cases it's important to encourage the subject to work on issues left undone, whether or not they seem to be an issue at this precise point in her current lifetime.

Some changes are harder to make than others. In this example, we're asking a woman of position and pride to let go of some her status and

wealth to embark on a spiritual journey. Love of the material and love of the spiritual are almost at opposite ends of a continuum, making change very difficult. This may be a theme we see repeated in several past life readings for this subject.

If you or your subject find you seem to be struggling with the same karmic or spiritual issue in your current life that is shown in this past life, you can safely assume that you ignored the call to change and that you still must learn the lesson or pay the karmic debt left undone in the past.

## EIGHTEEN

# ENTERING THE TAROT CARDS

The cards are a world unto themselves, an archetypal realm that comes to life as you meander around its “Through the Looking Glass” landscapes. They are more than pretty pictures, more than symbolic keys to the subconscious. They are also portals into other worlds and times. Inside their frames are keys to knowledge not usually available to us here on the earth plane. Using the cards as a portal to otherworldly knowledge can not only make the symbolic meanings of the cards clearer to you, but they can be a valuable divination tool all by themselves.

To make this type of tarot card divination work for you requires an intimate knowledge of your selected tarot deck. You need to be as familiar with the landscape of your major arcana as you are with the landscape of your face. You will have to hold the total image of a single card with all its detail firmly in mind in order to enter this living astral world. Such a transition is accomplished through guided meditation or, better still, via the art of astral projection.

Guided meditation is a meditation that follows a pre-planned script, and some good ones for the tarot cards

are available. The disadvantage of this method is that you follow the writer's path through the cards and not your own.

Astral projection is the art of sending your consciousness out from your physical body and into other worlds. Here it can travel freely, interacting with other beings, asking the help of spirit guides, and acting and interacting—instead of reacting—with the beings who populate the world of the tarot cards.

If you are not accomplished in either of these skills, there are books to help you. A book on imagery in the major arcana has been written by Yasmine Galenorn. *Tarot Journeys: Adventures in Self-Transformation* (Llewellyn, 1996) is rich in the archetypal imagery of the cards and make excellent guided meditations for the beginning explorer. These meditations have their limits when used to assist in past-life explorations. Instead of working through your own agenda, you will view your past life through the major symbols that a guided meditation explores. These tend to be universal archetypes, broad in scope, and they will not yield all the information you need. If you're a good "symbol detective," this might work for you until you're able to tackle these travels on your own through astral projection.

Learning to astral project, or taking the conscious part of your mind into another time and/or place, will yield the best results from the cards. This can be as simple as mentally transferring your conscious mind into the cards, or as complex as allowing part of your etheric body to leave your physical self and enter into the cards.

There are all kinds of books to teach you how to astral project; different methods work for different people. I wrote *Astral Projection for Beginners* (Llewellyn Publications, 1999), it contains six different methods, allowing readers to determine which one works the best for them.

### *The Astral Tarot Card Divination Process*

This advanced method of "reading" the tarot cards does not require you to enchant or empower them in any way. If you've taken care of

your deck and protected it from outside energies, then they are already well attuned your own energy patterns. They are your working partner in all divination endeavors and can show you past lives in all the bright living color of a modern movie. As we scry, or gaze, into their depths and meditate on them, the symbols literally open themselves to us, and we can astral travel directly into their world.

This entering process is great for divination questions of all kinds, not just for exploring past-life issues. Until you are used to the process of entering the cards, it is best to work with only the twenty-two arch-cards known as the major arcana.

Begin by separating out your major arcana cards from the rest of the deck. It doesn't matter which way the cards are facing in your hands; they will all be entered in the *upright position only*. Every aspect of the card is open to you once you're inside it, even the reversed aspects. The landscapes cut off from your physical vision by the border of the cards will fade away, and you will have access to that card's entire scope of symbols, beings, elemental activity, and other imagery and helpers to show you what you want to know.

If you feel you want to have a spirit guide help you through the cards before you strike out on your own, take out one of the major arcana guide cards: the Magician, the High Priestess, the Empress, or the Emperor. The last two cards tend to have a more protective, parental attitude toward your explorations. The Magician and the High Priestess tend to act as partners who accompany you, but who expect you to take care of yourself. All four of them can ask questions or show you things that can help you figure out your past and present and protect you while you're in their world.

If you are not using a spirit guide for entering the cards, you should shuffle and cut the major arcana as usual, then spread the twenty-two cards facedown before you. While focusing on your past-life question or issue, allow yourself to pull one single card from the major arcana. Turn it over and place it in its upright position.

Whether you are using a guide card or not, you will need to spend some time gazing into the card you've chosen, a process known as scrying. The card might at times seem to move or flicker under your scrutiny. Take note of the symbols and background as well as the major figures, all the while focusing on how this relates to your past-life issue.

As you do this, you may see a halo develop around the cards or see a double image. You may also notice a color separation and be able to see the card in its standard coloring and in its reverse colors at the same time. The reverse colors are those opposite the standard colors on a simple color wheel. Ignore these reversed-color images until you feel you've impressed upon your mind all the images of your selected card.

When you feel you know the card as intimately as you know the palm of your hand, close your eyes and visualize every detail of the card. Allow it to fully form before your mind's eye. Take your time; try not to leave out any detail. You may close your eyes and enter the card via your own method of astral projection, or you can use specific mental imagery to open the cards to you.

As you gaze or scry into the card, there are five different ways, other than traditional astral projection, to visualize the card opening up, allowing you to enter:

- 1) See the card thinning as if it were a small thin piece of fluid film that you can push through. I liken this to a walk through a thin waterfall. Once you're on the other side, you're in the world of the card.
- 2) See the card thinning before you, like a curtain you can part and step through or slip underneath. I liken this sensation to a "Through the Looking Glass" fantasy in which you step through a gossamer veil into a different world.
- 3) Visualize the paint on the card becoming damp and runny. Allow this melting imagery to melt open the card to your conscious mind so that you can slip through its borders.



As soon as you are in the card the picture should return to normal. Allow it to melt again when you're ready to leave.

- 4) Take the card in your hand and gaze at it for several minutes until its afterimage is imprinted on your eyes. Transfer your gaze to a clear light surface, such as an off-white wall. The colors will be off, like the negative of a color photograph, but don't let that throw you off. As soon as you lock on to the image on the clear surface, close your eyes and mentally transfer your consciousness into the image of the card.
- 5) See the card as having a door open for you to walk through when you're ready to enter. Doors symbolize thresholds to other worlds. The imagery works well, but some card readers find this sudden change of atmosphere jolting.

You'll know immediately if you've done this right. The scene from the tarot card should come to life as soon as you enter. You should hear, feel, sense, see, and experience all the actions or symbols depicted on the face of the card. Inside the card you'll hear the rush of waves, feel the heat of fire, touch sharp blades, bask in warm sunshine, go from day to night, and you will interact with the characters or archetypes of the card.

Once inside you will not see an end to the card's landscape as you do when looking at the card from the outside. You will be aware of being in a different realm of existence. Treat the beings you meet there with respect; they are as real as you, and they are there to help you explore and grow.

If you've gone into a guide card first, repeat your question or issue to the guide figure and ask for his or her assistance. He or she might point the way for you to go, open a passageway to another card, or go with you to some place in his or her card or in another card. If you wish your guide to accompany you, just ask. Either the guide card figure will come with you or will provide a trusted substitute—a human-like being or perhaps an animal—to guide you on your journey.

You're not required to go off with any being that makes you uncomfortable. If you are not comfortable with the guide you are given, ask for another guide or for the current guide to appear in a more pleasing form. Come out of the card and try again later if your request is not granted.

If you've gone into the card alone, feel free to wander, explore, talk to beings you meet, or join them on their travels. Ask what they're thinking, what they know, how they learn, and what they can teach you. Keep in mind that these beings are ready and willing to assist you in your quest, but they are not your servants. All beings in the cards are alive and well on the astral plane, and are as real as you are on your plane of existence. Treat them with respect, don't forget to thank them for their assistance, and you will continue to engage their willing help as you explore your past lives.

If you've gone into a guide card, the guide may talk with you or take you into another card. This is especially true in cases when the past-life information you seek is emotionally charged and could be upsetting. I entered the Empress card seeking information about a specific karmic tie I felt to another person, but I couldn't understand what I was supposed to feel for him or do for him.

As I asked her help, the Empress turned into a pale, husky woman in a white gown. She took me high into a white realm and into an all-white room that seemed to have no corners, no beginning, and no end. Before me on a white "wall," she opened a scene from my past as if it were being projected on a movie screen. She allowed me to watch the origins of this karmic debt without my having to relive its emotional trauma. I saw myself from a distance rather than experiencing the past life in the body of my former self.

As the scene opened to me, I saw myself as a young Polynesian woman. I couldn't have been more than fourteen years old, but I was already mated and had a baby about six months old. We lived in a small tribe on a Pacific island that was mostly overgrown rain forest and tropical jungle. My hair was long and dark, but unkempt. I also

sensed that I wasn't the brightest light that ever shined on the planet. I felt I was somewhere in the fourteenth or fifteenth century. We were a tribe steeped in superstitions and primitive fears, unaware of any other culture in the world but our own.

The highest point on our island was a small but active volcano that had been producing tremulous waves of earthquakes across our small world for months. I was aware that the unsettling movements of the land caused panic among our people. We didn't understand what or who was angry with us, but we knew from our oral traditions that all these rumblings signaled an impending volcanic eruption.

While I was at "home" in a communal lean-to, I had my baby on a mat near a wall. I was tending what looked like a cone of incense while I shaved the skin off of some kind of tropical fruit. I knew the incense—the smoke—was there to propitiate the fire deities who controlled the volcano.

As I worked in my lean-to, the volcano began making noise and belching out ashes and flames. In a panic, I abandoned the hut with my baby in it, and ran with the rest of my hysterical tribe to the far side of the island where we hoped higher ground could protect us from the wrath of the volcano.

In other words, I'd abandoned that helpless baby, not from malice, but from pure stupidity and fear. I didn't think I was the only one who ran to save herself and leaving everything else behind. But in this case it had produced a karmic debt, one which I still owed to the soul inhabiting that small baby's body. Knowing where the problem originated, I was able to forgive myself for leaving my child behind, and I understood how to make restitution for my selfish act and how to sever my karmic bonds with this person once and for all.

### *The Pros and Cons of Using the Entire Deck*

You can use this same card-entering process with the entire tarot deck, major and minor arcana together. Until you're accustomed to entering minor arcana cards, I recommend going in with a guide every time.

The minor arcana cards are very elemental in nature, and they can be chaotic and frightening to the novice explorer. Emotions are raw and the elements are harsh in many of these cards.

To go into a minor arcana card you should first enter the guide card and tell the guide which card you selected from the deck when you asked about your karma or past-life issue. The guide will be able to take you there and protect you from some of the more unpleasant elemental and emotional aspects of the card. The guide can also make sure that when you leave the minor arcana card, that you successfully close the door that separates your worlds. To leave it even partially open is to invite into your own world all sorts of random energies and entities that can make you feel haunted, jittery, unsettled, and uncomfortable. You can end up feeling you lost more than you gained from your venture to seek knowledge.

When a guide takes you back to his or her own card at the end of your exploration, that guide can act as a sounding board for helping you figure out what you're seeing, how it applies to you, and how to overcome it. Feel free to question the guide. You'll know when you've asked all that will be answered for the time being because the guide will return to his or her activities as pictured on the card, and you will know this specific session is at an end.

### *Exiting the Cards*

You may remain inside the card for as long as it takes to gather the information you want, however, be aware that the card itself may dictate to you when it has told you all it intends to tell. The dynamics of the card will slow down, the beings depicted there will stop speaking or gesturing, or you may be led by someone back to the place where you entered the card. In some cases the card will "freeze frame" itself and you will sense the veil separating its world from yours thinning so that you may step back through to your own world again.

If you feel the need to leave the card before it has imparted all you ask of it, simply use whatever trigger you normally use to come out of

a meditative trance. For some this involves counting. For others it's a key word or phrase, and for others its a visualization. Use whatever makes the transition easiest for you and seals the world of card behind you so there is no bleeding over between the two worlds. I use the phrase "I am home." When repeated three times in succession I find myself back in my own body and my normal waking consciousness.

If you leave a card before you expected to, you owe it to yourself to take some time and explore why you wanted to leave the card before it was finished imparting knowledge to you. Perhaps it wasn't showing you what you wanted to see, or maybe the vision was violent or disturbing in some way. You can always ask a guide to distance you from the scene as was done for me when exploring the Polynesian lifetime. This broad overview helps break the emotional ties that being "in" the picture gives you, and it can make an upsetting past life incident easier to relive.

It also helps to remind yourself that what you're seeing is over with, done, in the past. No one will argue that there are unpleasant scenes to be viewed in anyone's life, but these scenes are meant to give you information you asked to be given to assist your spiritual growth. They are images of another you, but they are not you. Call on your guides if you find yourself becoming frightened, and keep in mind that these are scenes from long-gone past. They cannot harm you, and they may help you.

### *Knowledge Is Wisdom, Wisdom Is Power*

Remember that the cards tell us the future based on potentials currently set in motion by the energy we are placing each day onto the wheel of existence. When we change that potential, we change the outcome. There is no karma that cannot be overcome and there is no past life that can affect your future lives without your consent. Your knowledge is your power over your karma. Put knowledge into action and it becomes wisdom, and wisdom can break the bonds of karmic ties.

The tarot cards offer us endless views of our inner selves and can work to help us overcome or understand any aspect of any person or situation touching our lives. Yet we remain the architects of our own fate. The cards can show us what we have to do to make those positive changes, but only we can take that action and make our lives, and all future lives, what we want them to be.

Take a look into a potential future life using this same card-entering method. Be prepared to view a world in constant flux, changing as fast as we change in our own current life and our world. Always take a guide with you to help you interpret what you see and to help you distance yourself from disturbing visions. Trust the four guides of the major arcana and they can open the entire universe to you.

## NINETEEN

# UNCOVERING YOUR PAST LIVES

The ability to hypnotically regress yourself, or to allow yourself to be regressed by others, is an enlightening and awesome experience. Being able to regress yourself to a specific past life will enhance your use of the tarot cards to glean past-life information. These two tools will support and redefine one another, allowing you to make the most of your past life explorations.

This final chapter will give you the tools you need to attempt self-regression and provide you with a valuable resource for assistance when needed.

### *Working with a Partner or Seeking Outside Help*

Self-regression is trickier and, in some ways, more difficult than working with a partner who can sit by your side and guide you through the regression process. A trusted partner can verbally direct you from one period of a prior lifetime to another and force you to answer tough questions you'd rather ignore. A partner can direct your

attention to incidents or people you might overlook on your own, and he or she can make you comfortable with difficult situations.

The most important role of a partner is that he or she can remove you from an emotionally devastating situation by directing you to distance yourself from it. This is harder to do on one's own. If you become distressed, the partner can remind you that you are viewing events that have passed and direct you to mentally distance yourself, watching the past life events unfold from a safe distance rather than the "in the body" experience a regression usually involves.

Programming yourself with key words or triggers as you go into the meditative state that leads to your past life exploration can help you distance yourself from the event, or take you out of the experience altogether. Instructions for doing this will be provided to you further on in this chapter.

Without a partner to hold your hands or bounce ideas off of, you may find that your past-life regression feels unresolved. The people we trust in this lifetime often know us better than we know ourselves and can point out significant aspects of a regression that we may overlook. This is because these traits or issues are so much a part of us that we fail to think of them as being unique to us. These partners, whether friends, family, or teachers, may also have been with you through many lifetimes and, whether either party realizes it or not, your support partner may be speaking to you from experiences your regression stirred up in his or her own subconscious mind. He or she may not be assessing just the you he or she knows from your current life.

Another good reason to have a partner you trust with whom to talk over the regression experience is the real possibility that you may find disturbing events from the past can persist in haunting your mind until you can find a way to assimilate them into the self you know now. Having the input of someone you trust is especially important if you're not experienced in hypnotic trance or past-life regression work. Many events in our pasts are not pretty, and in many cases watching one's own death can lead to symptoms of post-traumatic stress. The



only way to avoid this is to learn how to emotionally distance yourself from what you see in the past. Having a working partner with you as a support or a guide at the time of your regression is recommended for beginners until you learn how to emotionally distance yourself from tragic or traumatic events. A partner can gently remind you to step back from yourself and watch from a distance as if you were watching a movie. This is no longer the you of the here and now. A partner will gently remind you that the life you are watching is over. Nothing in it can hurt you now, it can only teach you. This is usually all it takes to learn to watch everything that takes place with an objective eye.

If you are unable to distance yourself from a particularly disturbing past-life event on your own, there is professional help available, professionals who won't think you're deluded or crazy. The International Association for Regression Research and Therapies (IARRT) is an organization that adheres to a rigid code of professional standards. Many of its members are psychologists or medical professionals who have discovered the value of past-life regression as a therapy for current life problems. IARRT members are not required to believe in the validity of the past-life experience, only in its therapeutic value. The organization welcomes anyone interested in regression therapy and research. They publish a quarterly journal and offer referrals to past-life therapists throughout the world. Their website contains an online directory of member therapists you can contact if you need their assistance. You can find them at:

IARRT  
P.O. Box 20151  
Riverside, CA 92516  
909-784-1570  
<http://www.iarrt.org>

The only drawback to working with a partner in your past-life regressions is that sometimes your past self does not understand who

it is that is asking questions. This can upset your past self who is demanding to know who this voice is and where it is coming from. Once this happens it can be hard for the partner to direct the regression because the subject is fixated on the disembodied voice rather than the details of her former life.

The only cure for this is to try and take the subject forward in time within that same life and hope that he or she will forget about the voice and simply allow you to watch while he or she lives her life. If this does not happen, you just have to end the session and try again later.

### *The Art of Self-Regression*

Anyone can regress themselves into a past life, but it helps if you already have a good grasp of the art of meditation or are skilled at astral projection. If you don't already have this background it may take you longer to achieve your goals, but eventually you will be able to do self-regressions by practicing the art step by step. The more often you make the attempt, the easier it will become and the clearer your impressions will be.

To regress yourself to one of your past lifetimes, please follow these twenty steps:

- 1) Find a place where you can relax undisturbed for at least a half hour. Longer is better, but thirty minutes is the minimum amount of time you need. This means the kids are out of the house, pets are where they're not going to pounce on you, and you're not expecting visitors. Unplug the phone and tell yourself to ignore the doorbell or other attention grabbers that might take your concentration away from your task.

It helps if your work area is relatively dark and warm. Our bodies cool rapidly during meditation, and physical sensations such as coldness can bring you out of your meditative

state. Toss a cover over yourself before you start just to be safe. It's better to be too warm than too cold in meditation.

- 2) The world is crowded and loud. Sometimes it's hard to shut out all possible distractions. Because of this many people find that rhythmically vague New Age music and a little incense can help filter out unwanted sounds and scents.
- 3) You may sit or lie down, whatever you find most comfortable. Make sure you can hold your position without stress or pain for at least thirty minutes.

Try not to cross your arms and legs. This can cause stresses that become painful as your regression progresses. Crossing your arms and legs can also inhibit the clarity of your experience. The subconscious mind interprets this body language as hostile or protective, and senses the past-life impressions are not welcome.

- 4) If you want to explore a specific past life, you should start to focus your mind on it right from the start. If you have just done a tarot reading for a particular past life, the mental connection to that life will be especially strong.

If you've done a tarot reading in the past and want to go back now and explore the past life through regression, take your tarot deck and spread the cards out in front of you as they were at that first reading. Take some time to reacquaint yourself with the reading and try to discover what it is that compels you to return to it. This is another reason why you want to keep good records.

- 5) You may wish to do a regression first and then work on tarot readings to clarify karmic issues and other points of value from a specific lifetime. Keep a pen and notebook handy to record your past-life impressions as soon as you awaken. Later on you can compare the regression to the tarot reading.

- 6) Close your eyes and begin to take deep, slow breaths. This is where your meditation process begins.
- 7) Allow your mind to slow and your thoughts to focus on your goal. Some people get into their meditative state of mind by counting backwards, others count each breath they take, and others concentrate on a single word or image. Do what you're used to doing or what you feel will work best for you. Everyone is different.

If you're not used to meditating, you will need to allow lots of time to get into the right frame of mind for regression to take place. Those of you who are practiced in meditation can probably take yourself into the desired mental state almost immediately. Do the best you can with where you are right now. You can develop your skills over time as you work more and more with tarot and past-life issues.

- 8) After several minutes of meditation, you should program two triggers into your mind.

The first trigger should be a quick return key word or phrase to bring you immediately out of a disturbing situation. A phrase like "I am home" or "Come back" is useful. Tell yourself that saying these words three times in a row will automatically separate you from your past self and will awaken you.

The second trigger will be one that will distance you from a traumatic situation if need be. I use the word "Distance," repeated three times. You may want to count, say from one to five or seven, or rely on a spirit helper to pull you away from your former self. Again, everyone is different, but you need to have something in place in case you find yourself facing a situation you're not ready to handle.

Everyone has a different tolerance level for emotional trauma too. No matter what lifetime you're focused on, you are still the sum of all your former and future selves.

You are a unique being, and what someone else might dismiss as nothing more than a bump in the road, to you may be as horrendous as falling off a cliff.

Don't beat yourself up over situations you can't bear to watch. If distancing yourself isn't enough, then come out of the regression, make notes on what you experienced, then come back to this lifetime at a later date when you feel better able to cope. If you feel you cannot go back and reexperience that particular lifetime, allow your tarot cards to guide you instead.

- 9) Continue to allow yourself to go into the deepest meditative state possible for you at this time. Don't go so far inward that you won't be able to conduct the regression for yourself, but go deep enough that environmental noises and memories of your current life don't obscure your past-life experience. This is a delicate balance that places the inner self between two worlds. As you practice you will find it easier to achieve this delicate state.
- 10) Use the mental imagery that works best for you to take you backwards in time. Some people visualize a calendar flipping backwards, others count backwards by years or by numbers, some see themselves in a vehicle that is moving backwards, and others travel through a long, dark tunnel to the past. I visualize myself falling through a void in space that takes me back in time.
- 11) When you feel ready to stop moving backwards, feel yourself step out of your travel imagery and into another place and time. Don't open your mental eyes right away. Allow yourself to stop reeling from the time travel and give yourself a moment to feel firmly anchored in this past lifetime.
- 12) Slowly open your mental eyes. Look down at your feet or clothing first. If you cannot see them, try to focus on your

hands and see what they're doing. You want to establish a sense of yourself before you try to establish yourself within a specific time and place.

- 13) After you get a look at yourself, lift your head and check out your environment. Are you indoors or outdoors? What season is it? Are you with other people or are you alone? Are you male or female? Adult or child? Are you married or single? Slave or free? Rich or poor? Can you get a sense of the language being spoken or the country you're in? What year is it? What is your social status? What gives you clues about your social caste? Is there a reflective surface nearby so you can look into it and see what your face and hair looks like?

These are the first questions you'll want to answer. When you've collected as many of these facts as you can, allow yourself to discover why this past lifetime is of importance to your current life. Look for karmic bonds being created or for wrongs and rights done by you, for you, and to you. Use your past-life tarot readings to help you hone in on what you want to know.

- 14) If you feel you are not gaining enough information from the place where you landed in your past life, mentally will yourself to move forward within the boundaries of this same past lifetime to an event of importance. Often this will be a life cycle event such as a wedding or a coming-of-age celebration.

Be aware that in many regressions this important event can be a death, perhaps even your own. The passing-over process can cause emotional distress even if it's not violent, and you may want to distance yourself from it. Use the trigger word or phrase you established when you went into this meditation to pull your astral or soul self out of your past life body. In this way you can float above yourself and watch, rather than experience, the death process.

- 15) In some cases you may be able to follow your soul past the moment of physical death and into the life between lives. Many past-life explorers are able to get a glimpse of how they and their spirit helpers assessed the life just lived and how they planned for their next incarnation.
- 16) You may now go ahead and explore another past lifetime, but I recommend you come back to your current lifetime and normal waking consciousness first. There will be many things about your regression you'll want to remember in order to get the most out of the experience. Like dreams, past-life regression images can quickly evaporate upon waking, and you'll need to make notes while the experience is fresh in your mind. The longer you wait to record them, the scantier they will be.

You can always go right back into meditation after you record your experiences. However, you may find that your exploration has drained you more than you expected. You may seem to be at rest during the regression process, but in reality a tremendous amount of personal energy is being expended on your experience. The more emotional the lifetime, the more draining it can be.
- 17) Reverse whatever mental imagery you used to get into your past-life regression in order to get out of it. For instance, visualize the calendar moving forward, count back up, take deep breaths, and feel your consciousness returning to your physical body. I allow myself to come falling back through the void until I'm back "in my body."
- 18) Record all you can remember about your regression experience as soon as possible. Find a method of shorthand that works for you so you can capture every detail before it slips away. You want to have a record of clothing worn, conversations, relationships, and any other information you were shown.

Be cautious about using a mechanical recording device with the intention of transcribing from it later. In most cases it either never gets done or the recording is of poor quality and you lose the experience. I know because this has happened to me more than once. Now I rely on pen and paper alone.

- 19) After you've had a few days to think about your past-life experience and a few nights to allow dreams of this lifetime to come to you, you may wish to try some tarot readings from this book to clear up any unanswered questions or to provide further insights into the purpose and meaning of your past life.

If none of the tarot readings in this book seem to fit what you want to know, go back to chapter 18. Try selecting one card from your deck and use it as a starting point for entering the world of the cards.

- 20) Note if there are any facts from your regression that you might be able to verify through extant records. Many past-life explorers have validated their past lives by traveling to the locale where they occurred and searching through courthouse and library records to confirm names, birth dates, death dates, and the appearance of the area as it was seen in the past.

Even though this last step has no bearing on your karmic ties and does little to aid in your spiritual growth, having a past life validated provides a sense of accomplishment and direction and helps you feel you're on the right track to growth and knowledge.

### *Assessing the Regression Experience*

Each regression experience feels different. In the beginning you may even feel as if you're making up the entire scenario. This is normal.



You are entering a world you previously have accessed only through dreams. Being awake and allowing your mind to travel to other times and places is something your body and soul are not used to, but they will quickly adapt.

How do you know if what you're seeing is real? First you have to define "real," something metaphysicians have been struggling with for centuries. All you can do is keep records and periodically reassess the importance of your past-life experience to the whole of your current life. In time you'll learn to differentiate between true past-life experiences and psychodramas generated by your subconscious in order to please you.

What I've found in my own regressions, and in my regressions of others, is that people often find themselves in places and situations they didn't expect. Subjects end up in places and times of which they had no previous knowledge or interest, pursuing occupations they never would have considered for themselves.

I once regressed a clergyman who found himself working as a printer in the American Midwest in the late nineteenth century. A musician who studied ancient civilizations in college found herself performing on a trapeze in a French circus during the mid-Victorian period. A classics fanatic found herself as an old Jewish man in Israel about the time of the Roman conquest. An ardent pacifist was horrified to see himself as part of the Roman legions that terrorized and eventually conquered Gaul. A law student found himself living the life of a female slave in what he presumed was ancient Mexico. An accountant found himself working as an attorney in eighteenth-century Austria, admitted by his profession to the world of the upper classes, but painfully aware that he worked for them and that he was below them on the social scale of the time. That same accountant saw himself in another lifetime at his daughter's wedding reception in a San Francisco hotel in the years before the 1906 earthquake. That experience was so clear to him that he could recall the color and style of the wallpaper in the hotel ballroom years after the regression.

I have a history degree from the University of Texas and tend to be overzealous in grasping at details I can verify, but in truth this can be difficult. Remember you're the sum of all your parts and, occasionally, other lives and images will bleed into your past-life recollections. The best subjects for regression are those who have little detailed knowledge of history and who are open to the possibility of having lived before.

The musician who found herself starring in the French circus refused to do any research into the circus world or Victorian France until she could further explore that past life. Only then did she allow herself to do some research and make comparisons to try to verify that past life.

Of course, your tarot cards can be your guidebook when no other is available. Readings that make sense and that you are able to follow indicate that you were probably truly living that past life and you were not experiencing a dream or psychodrama. Experienced card readers know that when there is no discernible theme or cohesive cards, the life they are examining either did not exist or their inner self is blocking the information for the time being, perhaps to protect them from details they really don't want in their consciousness.

\* \* \*

Past-life exploration is one way to know yourself; the tarot cards are another. Using these valuable tools for self-knowledge in tandem can enhance the experience for you. The deep impressions of the subconscious and the rich symbolism of the tarot cards speak to those hidden places within that want to make themselves known to us. All they need is a path to our conscious minds. The tarot cards, used for past-life and karmic exploration, provide that pathway.

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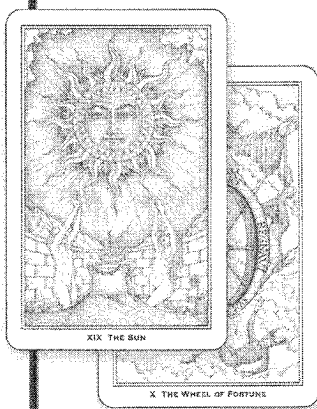


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\$12.95 US  
\$17.50 CAN  
Llewellyn Worldwide  
St. Paul, MN 55164-0383  
[www.llewellyn.com](http://www.llewellyn.com)  
PRINTED IN THE USA

