



The Tarot of Sister Who

by *Sister Who*

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May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be!

— S.W. / D.N. December 20, 2018



Introduction

The history and nature of tarot cards is long, diverse, and controversial. I will not even pretend to be any sort of expert on the subject, because all I have to offer is my own experience, perception, and understanding. May you--the one directly using the cards--be blessed with spiritual and personal growth that is individually appropriate to you.

The Tarot of Sister Who was an idea initially conceived in the mid-1990's, which evolved in various ways and was delayed mostly by the challenge inherent within the enormous scope of the work. In its final form, the deck evolves beyond the traditional Tarot by moving in the direction of androgyny, mystical representations, and inter-relational dynamics. The individual components were nonetheless directly inspired by the structure and content of the traditional Tarot, without which they would not be what they are.

My intention was to create a symbolic language which could be empowering to persons of any spiritual path whatsoever. Virtually every spiritual journey begins with a choice to engage in whatever ways are individually appropriate, in deeper contemplation of the self, of relational interactions, and of the persistence of paranormal, transcendent, or mysterious elements within human history and daily life. It is improbable at best that the answers, understandings, or experiences of any other person, will ever be a perfect fit for one's self without any modification--any more than one's physical growth can be done by any sort of proxy.

The creation of The Tarot of Sister Who included a belief in internally hidden transcendence and it is my hope that this will be at least a significant part of the path any seeker will encounter through the use of these cards. Whatever you understand the Divine to be (to which I refer using the word "Godde" and envision as the embodiment of highest wisdom and greatest love), it is my belief that Godde created each spirit to live and to grow and that everything needed for that life and growth is encoded into the subconscious mind of the body through which the incarnated spirit expresses itself.

What is to be found within the images of The Tarot of Sister Who are thus windows into the deepest parts of the individual. Regardless of where the responsibility for circumstances and experiences of life may truthfully and legitimately lie, here is an opportunity to respond within the self and thereby not only create growth and better solutions, but also transform pain into blessing, adversity into empowerment, and brokenness into healing. Additionally, by achieving internal wholeness, each individual can be more equipped to respond to all that is external.

Through these windows, possible future consequences of present thought or behavior may also become apparent. It is not, I believe, that the cards actually predict the future. They simply show which lines may intersect the one an individual is currently following. Regardless of one's basic understanding or belief choices, however, the individual's response will

dramatically affect what the actual future will be.

The Tarot of Sister Who uses four minor suits named as Candles, Chalices, Thuribles, and Paraments. Each suit contains cards numbered one through ten, followed by four more: confessor, celebrant, angel, and saint. Virtually every spiritual and religious system humanity has ever created, has utilized some form of these four ritual roles. A sense of connection with ancestors and forebearers of all descriptions can thus be legitimately interpreted--dispelling notions of being truly or completely isolated from others around us throughout seasons of time and space.

The suit of Candles draws upon symbolisms of fire, of spirit, of wands, and of summer. A candle is a rod that bears a flame, which is also a transformative agent or bridge between the physical and the non-physical; between that which is seen and that which is unseen.

The suit of Chalices draws upon symbolisms of water, of emotion, of cups, and of autumn. A chalice is a vessel like ourselves that provides containment and expression for what might otherwise be overwhelming or confusing, yet its contents cannot remain as they are (being subject to evaporation), but rather both invite and require meaningful interaction. Like feelings which are forever swirling and evolving from one expression to another, calmness may be empowering, but stagnation is to be avoided. One can never stop within a present moment and go no further; humanity is a species defined in a myriad of ways by time.

The suit of Thuribles draws upon symbolisms of air, of intellect, of swords, and of spring. A Thurible embraces paradoxes, utilizing smoke for spiritual cleansing and also formlessness to alter the invisible nature of forms; making precise shifts and distinctions according to the specific understandings of its bearer, whose energy charges the smoke with purpose and meaning. As winter and spring do their spiral dance, one slowly giving way to the other, this tool moves around and among individuals, granting possibilities of rebirth.

The suit of Paraments draws upon the symbolism of earth, of physical forms, of pentacles, and of winter. In and of itself a mere piece of cloth, the signature quality of this ritual tool is the immediate transformation of physical space from mundane to sacred; from mere pragmatism to realms of higher meaning. As the mountains are the fingers of earth, touching the sky, so does the cloth form a stage upon which the spirit can dance its individual voice and expression.

The Confessor is that voice that listens and cares without making demands; the one who bears with absolute confidentiality and trustworthiness the deepest joys, pains, and truth of the individual's heart and mind. Embodying sensitivity, awareness, thoughtful consideration, and wise decision-making, yet in ways that abhor any dictatorial imposition, the interaction is deeply internal. Indeed, if movement and growth do not arise from deep within the individual, then no

true movement or growth has occurred.

The Celebrant is that voice that leads actions of deep experience of life, binding spiritual significance to physical action. Embodying recognition of the spiritual within the physical, of participation in the greater harmonies of the universe, and of dutiful maintenance of a high quality of life, it matters not whether any associated quantity is great or small.

The Angel is that voice which directs protecting love and willing involvement toward every spirit in need--sometimes to the individual and sometimes through the individual. Within the interconnectedness of all things and the symbiotic nature of all healthy relationships, whatever good is possible is extended to all that is ultimately also an extension of the self. Yet the starting point is not selfishness, but rather dedication to service, so that love may encourage all good things to follow.

The Saint is that voice which lives in harmony with spiritual beings of both more and less evolved states. Embodying the ability to hold on or to let go, as greatest wisdom directs, there is also the ability to move in harmony with the larger sea of spirituality from which all good is truthfully drawn. Having traveled a path to the present moment that warrants deep contemplation of both what may have been overlooked along the way, as well as what possibilities creative imagination has suggested, a sense of inclusive timelessness is a signature quality.

The Major suit within this deck is composed of twenty-two archetypes of life's states or progressions. It is unlikely at best that these can be avoided while living one's life, but one can nonetheless respond to their specific yet endlessly fluctuating meanings in a wide variety of ways. Approaching with love and openness instead of fear and dogmatism, brings an infinite spectrum of positive possibilities within reach.

In summary, it is my earnest prayer that these symbols will be empowering to you. The implication is thus that while I have built the first half of a bridge to greater understanding, you will find all that you need to build the other half--allowing for exploration and discovery of greater realities than any thus far imagined.

May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be!

Chapter 1

The Suit of Paraments

The magic of paraments is that with the placement of a piece of ritually defined cloth, a space is transformed from mundane to sacred. What drives the transformation, however, is not the cloth itself, but rather the intention, the meaning, and the energy which is infused from the practitioner. As a tool which collaborates in the creation of ritual space, paraments also become conduits of earth energy that meet with the fingertips of the practitioner and form a bridge between worlds of understanding; between the finite and the infinite; and between the tiny piece and the vast wholeness.

Within the first card of this suit, fingers interlace in a gesture of communication with all that lies beyond one's self and eyes are directed upward. The unlimited sky meets the horizon where the mountain (in this case, Pikes Peak, near Colorado Springs, Colorado) reaches for what is greater even than itself, while lesser stones echo such aspirations. Although surrounded by the cold of winter, as a symbol of faith the parament reminds and beckons to growing times yet to come. Beyond where plants and trees can reach, lies a stage upon which the human spirit can dance—but doing so will require a constructive, peaceful, and harmonious integration of all that one is. Whatever the terrain, the first task is the self-discipline of being fully present, yet in a state of magnificently potent stillness.

Within the second card of this suit, one recognizes polarities arising from a sort of spiritual mitosis which must be integrated and brought into symbiotic relationship. As inseparable as individuation is from growth, equally imperative is that each move beyond early stages of manifestation in which it may not know anything but itself. It is for the practitioner to intervene, first recognizing the distinctness and orientation of each and then gently making comprehensible the harmony which may already be present but inadequately utilized. In constructively accentuating the relationships between components which stand apart from each other, the wholeness of a landscape and the shared formative forces foster deeper understanding of the forms of symbiosis that are still genuinely and truly possible. Surrendering to truth—in all of the potential its precise details include—is thus not a step of loss, but rather of empowerment.

Within the third card of this suit, that which bridges gaps may manifest in striking contrast rather than monochromatic relativity. As the mountain's base is broad, one must likewise reach for inclusion to support a rise of manifestation and energy. It is when past, present, and future combine that life takes on greater meaning and one can become an echo of any mountain which inspires awe and reverence. It is not the surrounding winter which is one's definition, but rather the transcendence that one embodies within an otherwise unsupportive world. That seasons will pass is certain; how they will be remembered, requires proactive and

sometimes anomalous choice within the times of their unfolding. To feel the moment completely can be instructive, but no moment will allow itself to be persistently held. By emptying one's hands, one can prepare to receive whatever awareness and empowerment are yet to come and thus become the conduit and the bridge by which multi-dimensional realities make their ways into the world.

Within the fourth card of this suit, one's focus digs deeply through stability, to create opportunity for still more new beginnings. All forms of life must continually renew themselves, producing ongoing growth rather than stagnation—and there is an abundant stage with contrasting possibilities upon which to work. Engaging in such work nonetheless requires integration, unification, and directionality within all that one brings to the work. As one reaches downward, making space for roots, a posture of upwardness simultaneously creates vertical balance to match all horizontal expansion—and one is thus empowered to truly see and be seen in relationship to others.

Within the fifth card of this suit, fingertips are the circles with which relational connections are made. Where environments overlap is often a narrow passage of mystery and darkness, but nonetheless sacred in its own unique way. By reaching from within one's experience of darkness, however, one aligns with the abiding flow of awareness from mountain to altar and holds on the palm of one's hand the pulsing potential of spiritual truth and personal integrity. Plants are only green on the outside and only during certain seasons; within their inner darkness, the underlying life-sustaining wood fibers have a far more constant nature. If one begins to understand the interconnection of all things, the lines of separation become not so much enduring realities as differences confined to one's current place and time—but one must plumb the depths of what that place and time is.

Within the sixth card of this suit, the lines of energy that flow zig-zag through one's self, illuminate how the polarities between which one oscillates are not nearly so different as they may seem, but are actually a sort of mirror image of each other. Which is backward and which is forward may be a determination that has no objective answer. The divide that is nonetheless created may be thin and narrow, but is not for that reason less real and requires a wise response. Wisdom is still available (if also somewhat hidden) within perceiving each reflection honestly, accurately, and completely and considering its relationship and orientation to the surrounding terrain and season. Far too often, what is most needed is hidden within plain sight, in ways that leave one wondering where (and how) to look.

Within the seventh card of this suit, awareness is called to the specific succession and pattern of peaks and valleys that each life inescapably is. Inevitably, one's life experience is subtly embodied and made obvious to others in ways that disclose more truth than most would prefer. Having found one's self within a specific seasonal and temporal context, it is imperative

to use all of the resources available, arranging them as harmoniously as possible, to serve something greater than one's self. The alternative would be to allow for diminishing presence, capabilities, and contribution—essentially fading to obscurity through nothing more than neglect. Ultimately the true road of life extends through every heart and mind and is unavoidably shaped thereby. Where everything becomes magical, is in realizing how much formative influence one has over the peaks, valleys, and memories that are formed—one moment at a time.

Within the eighth card of this suit, one hand supports the other, as challenging divisions persist, suggesting that the divisions may be simply circumstantial and not actually adversarial in nature. Standing apart does not necessarily denote being at odds—especially if one is willing to reach across the divide, either offering or receiving support, as necessary. Even the altar itself still rests upon the toes of the mountain, receiving support and contributing spiritual service to the diversity which is present. By being together in peace and mutual commitment, a communal strength and response to environmental conditions is demonstrated which is greater than any part could accomplish on its own.

Within the ninth card of this suit, one becomes the funnel by which the energy of the above is channeled to a table of sacredness where empowering rituals and transformations may unfold. Separations are gone, all colors and dimensions have come together in harmony, and the surrounding winter is merely a backdrop to unfolding of spiritual empowerment—unable to prevent that empowerment's confident manifestation. Whatever is given to sacred space, will be returned in full; nothing will truly be lost. The essential action of service, however, is to be that funnel and conduit of highest wisdom and greatest love to earth-bound situations and circumstances. No cowering behind the altar is acceptable.

Within the tenth card of this suit, a defensive posture invites continued vigilance—especially when intuition senses what the conscious mind has yet to recognize or define. A sacred space defined by the interweaving of diverse and contrasting pieces has been collectively created, which also by its very nature stands in striking contrast to the surrounding world. Clearly there is important work to be done, which could not otherwise be accomplished and the actions which follow are not to be taken lightly or treated with casual disregard. One has spiritually entered a place of fullness that invites interactions beyond any individual human control and one must therefore trust that all will unfold as it should, if one's own contribution is similarly focused, complete, and enacted with sincere dedication. The fists are clenched not in defiance, but as weapons of defense against seasonal and environmental adversity. The struggle is not infused with fear, however, but rather with understanding of how the work can be confidently done.

Within the Confessor card of this suit is a standing invitation to engage in honest dialogue, without fear of any vulnerability arising from a complete revelation of truth. The structures of the earth frame all life unfolding thereupon. Without choice and without voice, however, neither dialogue nor relationship nor growth will follow. Professionally charged with a perfection of trust and a complete and total absence of betrayal, this humble servant of life is ever ready and willing to support one's journey. Who and what one is and what one has done are metaphysically already known to the earth upon which one lives, which merely waits for the individual self to embrace such knowledge as well—when the time is right. In such ways, by gazing into the faces of true sacredness throughout the earth, one begins to more fully know, to understand, and to peacefully live with the self and its miraculous possibilities.

Within the Celebrant card of this suit, life within even its most delicate and fragile forms is held within the hands and displayed as the reason that winter is routinely endured. The focus, however, is not the life itself, but rather one's relationship to it; that one embrace each moment with joy or respectful grief, with active engagement or with patient stillness, and with literal measurement or imaginative vision, as highest wisdom and greatest love may direct. The common thread through all of these is honest and complete engagement. For creatures of time, present opportunities must be embraced, because future ones may not come. One holds life within one's hands and must decide what action or inaction will follow.

Within the Angel card of this suit, the sacredness which surrounds is the sacredness which flows through and outward in all directions in relation to one's self, ultimately giving one's spirit wings and a freedom of spirit of which others may not even dream. This freedom is not, however, oriented to narcissistic indulgence, but rather to service. The goal is not to impress, but rather to fully be; to fully shine, not to increase one's own glory, but rather to dispel darkness. The focus is upon giving from one's self, because no other purpose truly exists, but such ability arises from the greatest accomplishment of wholeness and integration in body, mind, and spirit. Such spirit may nonetheless be camouflaged by mundane clothing, but perhaps only to those who fail to understand.

Within the Saint card of this suit, a hard-won relationship has been established which is defined by presence and participation rather than control. In witnessing the existence of that which is beyond and the limitlessness of future life, mere language is no longer adequate to describe that which only the spirit can feel. With understandings beyond words and truth beyond what symbols can convey, Divine Mystery beckons to embrace the unfolding, regardless of the nature or content of any previous experience. Enduring the painfully dark night is essential to being present when the dawn finally comes. This is the testimony that the dawn absolutely will come; that in some future place and way, its existence is already real.

Chapter 2

The Suit of Thuribles

The magic of thuribles is that every breath of life is a fusion of both body and spirit, with an essence that is not quite physical and yet not quite invisible, that also moves between these two fundamental realms. For literally thousands of years, humanity has been fascinated by this liminal way of being. Its presence is often interpreted as having a cleansing effect and it frequently appeals to the nose more than to the eyes. In moving from body toward spirit, it can also be an effective conveyance for our prayers.

Within the first card of this suit is a reminder that especially during seasons of transition and rebirth, one must always begin a metaphysical journey by looking within one's self and the tools with which one works, contemplating deeply the broader implications of being holistically as one is, where one is, when one is, and what one is—that is, having the resources and components that one does, some of which may have been undiscovered until now. From the deepest available understanding, all subsequent blessings will flow. For those with eyes that truly see, there is always a hunger when life springs back into view around us, that encourages its reemergence equally within us.

Within the second card of this suit, a combination of body and spirit shaped by reaching as high and as far as one is able—into a season of newness and rebirth--makes of the substance of ourselves the bridge upon which the spirit will walk, will dance, and will grow. That which we truly are within each moment is thus more than our physical senses will ever be able to measure. Neglecting any part of this will shorten both our reach and our stature in a corresponding way.

Within the third card of this suit, one is caught at the intersection and convergence of past, present, and future; of body, mind, and spirit; and of distinctions between what was received, what has been created and added, and what will be given to others to utilize as foundational reality. The surrounding reality has granted an opportunity for renewal, but only by converging within a context of love can the divergent paths find mutually supportive harmony and beauty. Accompanied by openness and humility, symbiotic relationship can find new opportunities.

Within the fourth card of this suit, moving away from each other only increases the strength and force with which one ultimately turns toward each other again, in ongoing oscillation. Within superficial independence, one may even rediscover harmony, if one is willing to look beyond one's own movement. In making harmony into the dominant pattern of one's life, truthful movements can take on the empowering pattern of wings in flight—moving rapidly between what is beyond one's self and what is within one's self, such that through the smoke of the thurible, the spirit flies beyond that which the eyes can see.

Within the fifth card of this suit, times of transition that blur the lines between body and spirit now ask for balance between stewardship and growth; between the branches which withstood the winter and the new leaves that are emerging into view. Part of the expressions of one's abilities is one's gift to the world, while another part must patiently wait until the world is truly ready, but this ongoing symbiotic exchange also requires one to be a gracious receiver. Ultimately one is the embodiment of a bridge between heaven and earth that must be renewed throughout life, with miraculous possibilities passing back and forth through manifestations of one's self.

Within the sixth card of this suit, one is invited to recognize the blessings one sometimes serves quite unaware of the effect one is having. A distant distraction can prevent us from appreciating what is unfolding completely within our reach. One level may seem to be the foundation of another, while in truth each is quite distinct while collectively illustrating a pattern greater than any individual part. The arrival of spring is often such a gradual evolution that it is difficult to say for certain on which particular day the arrival occurred, even though the meaning of that arrival is completely dependent upon one's self.

Within the seventh card of this suit, the pyramidal power of renewal is ultimately to be found within one's self, transforming both one's self and the surrounding world into better forms which the barrenness of winter has encouraged one to forget. For any power to be good, however, its apex must be synonymous with centered and grounded love within one's self. Adversarial forces most often wish us to forget just how powerful and how available love is, especially because there is no contrary force able to overcome that which love has decreed will be.

Within the eighth card of this suit, a path from mundane ability to spiritual ascension flows through the very center of one's being. Neither is to be regarded hierarchically, however, since the mundane is where one must most often begin without doubting that the final outcome can encompass more than the mere sum of its parts and the transcendent is that to which all must aspire to even begin to uncover the potential each one inherently carries. Like an ethereal stairway, it is not that the last step upward is any more significant than the first, but rather that every step must be present and do its work exceptionally, in order to serve the journey as a whole.

Within the ninth card of this suit, one's current involvements may at times be the curtain hindering true perception of what lies beyond one's current ritualistic constructions, but there are faces to greet and people to meet who have been likewise waiting for the music of another's voice and the light within another's eyes. That which we have created or collected may have served us as well as it could, but just as there was a time for saying "*hello*," there will also be a time for saying, "*good-bye*." Difficult experiences like chains may hang between all that one has

been and all that the world needs one to ultimately be.

Within the tenth card of this suit, when no way through can be seen, but the contrasting world beyond one's chains is just as real as ever, it may figuratively become a prison. The greatest rebuttal to such oppression, however, may be the transformation of the experience into empowerment and personal growth. Conversely, one may be the primary support of that which conveys the illusion of being imprisoned, such that changing one's posture may offer a very different frame for one's face, that is much more in harmony with any and all renewal that is creeping into view everywhere within the surrounding environment.

Within the Confessor card of this suit, opening one's self to another creates a portal through which hearts can connect and mutually empowering service can be rendered. By extending empty hands, rather than fists full of expectations, the renewal of springtime flows through one's self to every other life one touches. Specifically because the hands are empty, they are simultaneously available both to offer strength as well as to receive from others whatever wisdom and love recommend—displaying a posture that is positively nurturing and negatively neither grasping nor controlling.

Within the Celebrant card of this suit, by directing our spiritually cleansing energy toward each future step of the path one will tread, a renewed way and sacred space is created that expands the horizons of where one's spirit can go next. It is not that rituals create rigid forms which must limit all future expressions, but rather that such actions create a stage upon which one's invisible spirit may dance in whatever ways intuition recommends. Making room for others' spirits to similarly dance, invites a sharing and an expansion of all that each has known and seen, to include more than all that any individual has learned or experienced.

Within the Angel card of this suit, interrelationship with all that is above and beyond one's self creates a larger sense of one's self than the smallness of any individual moment is able to describe, but is equally--by nature--often inseparable from a relational dynamic which can only be indirectly rather than directly accessed. To embody the largeness of one's spirit, therefore, one must also serve what is greater than one's self and beneficial to the ongoing unfolding of life, inclusive of one's self. This relational posture is thus a recognition of the persistence and inclusiveness of symbiotic and mutually supportive relationships, which might otherwise seem to have been trivialized and allowed to fade into the background.

Within the Saint card of this suit, a larger sense of openness and interrelationship brings together all that one has, has experienced, and has become, creating divine connection and a spiritual sense of being family that invites actual expression and embrace of others' challenges and realities within and throughout the surrounding allegedly mundane world. It is not that the smallness of our tools trivializes them, but rather that our limited expressions echo and point to their larger counterparts, inviting ever-expanding awareness and opportunity. The smallness that

is equally prepared for both collective and individual expression genuinely contributes to the surrounding world growing and becoming an ever better place characterized by empowerment and beauty.

Chapter 3

The Suit of Candles

The magic of candles is that of transformation; of moving from physical through metaphysical to spiritual. The flame that is perpetually giving but never thereby diminished, yet nonetheless requires its own persevering supply of fuel, does so without any discrimination or judgment about who or what is most qualified or deserving. The light and warmth will most definitely affect whatever they touch, which can then either dim or magnify that gift beyond its initial intensity.

Within the first card of this suit, attention is drawn to moments of initiation; when the flame is passed, sometimes accompanied by innocence and sometimes by intention. It can be daunting and humbling--filling one with awe—or conversely inspirational and pivotal, to embrace the opportunity to strike a match and dispel varying degrees of gloom. As much as being one is not being many, being one is also not being nothing; this is a matter of embodying a beginning that stands in the middle--between complete fulfillment and complete absence. As long as there is at least one, darkness can legitimately claim no all-encompassing victory, because any such claim would be a lie. By lighting the first candle, truth which can be clearly observed is infused into the surrounding circumstances.

Within the second card of this suit is the beginning of balance, of diversity, of contrast, and of collaboration—each illuminating something different than what the other makes visible, yet without both of which neither would be complete. The two halves of the brain, the two halves of the body, and even the two sides of love all recommend embracing moments of polarity rather than running from them. Each has a certain unique light and insight to bring to every situation. One must stand with hands open, not only ready to receive such contrasting light, but also willing to hold and support it—specifically to empower that light to make its best contribution to the transformation of both perception and ultimately also the state of current circumstances.

Within the third card of this suit, flows of energy that contrast and cross each other, actively support a balanced constellation of pervasive life trios: past, present, and future; trinitarian conceptions of the Divine; and the experiential levels of hell, earth, and heaven. One's conceptions of each predispose transformation to manifest in particular ways. This posture is not concerned with comfort or convenience, but rather with serving something greater than one's self and making that contribution as balanced and stable as one is able. Transforming light arises from every corner, but must be loved, accepted, and firmly yet respectfully held, if that illumination is to have an ultimately healing effect. This is not a recommendation of routine, homogeneity, or sameness, but rather of dynamic integration—fusing intention, posture, and all

available resources toward serving a transforming moment, that will forever distinguish the future from the past.

Within the fourth card of this suit, the four directional corners launch a crescent reaching heavenward, insisting that there is a much higher goal worthy of great personal commitment, which is beckoning within the present moment toward radical transformation of the very essence of the journey of life itself. From a solid foundation with a global orientation, as a creature of time and physical being, a sort of dance unfolds which simultaneously requires both support of the foundation and carefully choreographed posture and movement. Warmth and light have already traveled-- invisibly marking the path--to where one is now invited to follow. By seeing what the eye cannot see and hearing what the ear cannot hear, yet nonetheless feeling what the fingers cannot physically touch, empowering alignment is discerned. Two dimensions of being are defined by the directional candles, a third is demonstrated by an outstretched arm, but a fourth resides within the mind and heart of the one who makes both ends of the crescent real and manifest within this world. All of the dimensions wisely interwoven, carry the path of life in directions it could not otherwise go.

Within the fifth card of this suit, a functional hierarchy begins to take shape, within which that which is lower is—perhaps paradoxically--always greater and more numerous than that which is higher. The transforming flame of each is nonetheless essential to wholeness and respectful collaboration, thus insisting upon inclusivity and community--specifically because of the challenges which must be consequently embraced, which will drive the transformation of whatever expressions of life follow. To simply allow any of the flames to go out and thereafter to return to living with less, would constitute a tragic loss in both perception and being; so the warmth and light must be held closely and perhaps even protected from adversarial winds, as necessary. Nonetheless, the dynamic is not one of self-obsession or self-absorption, but rather extending one's gaze where the flame's warmth has quickly traveled, in gratitude for each moment of participation in life's ever-expanding brilliance.

Within the sixth card of this suit, the contrasting polarities are converging, resulting in a greater work than would be individually possible. Innumerable processes throughout one's life can be described as beginning, middle, and end, touching and sometimes even overlapping with other similar sequences. Even within a single life, the story does not have a single plot line and it is the multiplicity of integrated plot lines that ultimately weave the fabric of any moment's reality. Consciously or unconsciously, one holds all of them to varying degrees. Some are securely at the junction represented by the elbow while others linger the very ends of our fingertips, yet by calm attentiveness they create a collaborative unity capable of much greater light than that of which any categorical faction would be capable. It is not merely a matter of the contrasts of identities, but additionally of how these identities group themselves, choosing to

place walls or bridges of various descriptions between their places and ways of being.

Within the seventh card of this suit, there is a sense of viewing life from the back row, yet in ways that everything in front of one's self somehow validates the deepest essence of what one has become, while simultaneously serving as a sort of prelude to making a greater entrance within which others will finally see one's truth worth. The timing and action of making that entrance, however, is both dependent upon and controlled by one's own choices—when to take a step, what to bring along, and so forth. All is transformative light; nothing can be held back without compromising the vitality of life that is about to be shared.

Within the eighth card of this suit, the reflection extending downward radiates the brilliance of life in the opposite direction. It is not the reflection in this case, however, which deserves primary attention, but rather the larger world which is thereby illuminated. The light, as well as one's self, is merely a servant of a much larger work—sometimes calling for action and sometimes calling for stillness and support.

Within the ninth card of this suit, one is moving with successive spirals, climbing a stairs to a place where efforts are finally rewarded. When the seed sown has finally grown, every branch and leaf along the ascending trunk testifies to the journey which has unfolded within even the quietest and most unassuming moments. Transitions are often not recognized as such during the times of their unfolding. To return to being the lesser person one previously was, however, is unthinkable.

Within the tenth card of this suit, five have given all that they could and melted away, while five more continue to burn. Whether or to what extent that outcome is good or bad, is dependent upon the response that follows. Nonetheless, whenever certain lights have faded, others can arise and one may in fact be able to choose within which group of five one will be.

Within the Confessor card of this suit, the smallest of solitary lights can be magnified by its response to a higher calling. The extent to which one will be truly listening, however, is not available to any sort of coercion, but must arise from within one's self. The effect one accomplishes will likewise be a reflection of one's self which may magnify the light even further—so much so that distinguishing between the light and one's self, may seem academic and perhaps even irrelevant. All that being noted, the reflection can never replace the source without thereafter producing only emptiness.

Within the Celebrant card of this suit, an arc of light above a face invites that every ritual is a portal through which spiritual realities can be more clearly seen—if one is willing to take hold of the structure and discipline upon which the particular light depends. The climb may weave forward and backward while ascending, but each step is essential to all subsequent wholeness. It is thus not merely a view that is transformed by the journey, but rather a multi-

dimensional self.

Within the Angel card of this suit, a view is magnified and yet also accompanied. Spiritual guidance and protection are inseparable from relationship and interaction. The small flame in darkness, like the thistle's flower, brings beauty where some might suppose it shouldn't be. Yet just as the thistle depends upon sun and rain, so also is the candle unable to light itself and the flame unable to be magnified in isolation.

Within the Saint card of this suit, the small flame one holds is the echo of the lighthouse, a nighttime sun. Extending guidance and hope through dark nights and passing storms, the light stands firm, neither wavering nor wandering from its often isolated hilltop perch. In service to friend and foe alike, the light reminds that all such distinctions are illusions created by events within time, while patiently waiting for all to return home.

Chapter 4

The Suit of Chalices

The magic of chalices is that it is a vessel holding the dominant element of every human being that--in and of itself--has no form, but which can thereby be held and serve as an object of ritual interaction and especially of a seasonal transition toward density and stillness. What is central in the use of a chalice, therefore, is interactive relationship, as defined by the intentions, meanings, and energy infused by the practitioner. As a tool oriented to active spiritual relationship, a chalice also becomes a conduit of water-energy flowing through the fingertips of the practitioner, to carry perceptions of life's wisdom and love between worlds of contrasting understanding; between the finite and the infinite; and between each individual drop and the global ocean.

Within the first card of this suit, is a sense of cautious contemplation within a diminishing yet transitional time. Active and passive, masculine and feminine, and forms and spaces—all of these have found a temporary balance within a subtle but inevitable environmental change. Within the moment of remembrance is equally a moment of insight and the invisible beginning of a distant renewal. Rushing past too quickly, will leave the spirit parched and ill-equipped for a season of waiting.

Within the second card of this suit, one hand holds onto peace while the other hand's passion quenches a thirst. Yet both are essential to bring balance to the choice just been made. Sight and taste may lead, but touch must follow or loss will also.

Within the third card of this suit, over-abundance may be a blessing or a curse. One's own ingenuity and willingness to grow will largely determine which it is that the over-abundance turns out to be. Each contrasting opportunity or possibility must take a turn and then yield its place to whatever follows. Ready or not, the encounter is nonetheless unavoidable and face-to-face. So one must be careful when making requests, because one just might receive exactly as requested. Be that as it may, sufficient strength to pass the test is equally possessed.

Within the fourth card of this suit, the measure between particular present mysteries will likewise define the relationships of each to one's self. Love, light, integrated balance, and earthly worth are all important considerations, but the first two are able to go where the latter two cannot, providing spiritual protection throughout seasonal transition. Yet even they must be regarded individually while working as an effective team, according to investments of personal service.

Within the fifth card of this suit, whether from abundance or emptiness, the presence of ritual tools is meaningless if no response is thereby produced. It is not, however, that the tools are forgotten, but rather that they are spiritually embodied and kinesthetically expressed. Having

danced beyond the primary hues, all tertiary effects must now also be integrated.

Within the sixth card of this suit, intention carries one forward, but engagement will require collaboration and trust. Holding to more than one can use, invites a danger of paralysis rather than ritual or communal participation. Failing to convey all that one has to offer, conversely, impoverishes all future relationships. The balance between warm and cool nonetheless flows directly through one's self, one's choices, and whatever steps one takes.

Within the seventh card of this suit, warmth and coolness flowing from the identical yet opposite configurations of one's hands, integrate and converge in value and timeless ritual. The genesis is a broad spectrum, the alignment precise, and the outcome transformative, yet without embrace, engagement, and intention remains empty. As colors and shapes are seasonally transformed, so also must one's spirit be transformed while making this traverse.

Within the eighth card of this suit, a perception of poverty and powerlessness more often reveals a need for discovery of nearby resources that are more than capable of satisfying all needs. Seasonal changes may be so abrupt as to momentarily stun one's senses, diminishing awareness, yet it is perception and not reality that has thereby been altered. A pause for contemplation, observation, and discovery may have thus become most essential indeed.

Within the ninth card of this suit, the way may be winding and one's best efforts askew, but even what seems a mistake may hold the most relevant divine message. Reaching horizontally throughout one's world while life flows between heaven and earth through one's very self, is the posture by which all diverse elements can ultimately find unity and engagement. Competition and collaboration vie for dominance, but rely upon intention, engagement, and direction within one's self to decide any outcome.

Within the tenth card of this suit, prayerful intervention determines whether alignment will mean peaceful connection or dogmatic rigidity. Progressing from meager resources toward a higher light and wisdom, requires both humility and confidence, as each experience finds its contextual place. Yet the focus is not upon the objects, but rather upon what they mean and what responses those meanings will inspire, while crossing the occasionally rough landscape of life.

Within the Confessor card of this suit, one is a mere cup of water, contemplating the ocean. One is fully open to truth, to service, to learning, and to growth. One brings to a world that is changing, a presence that is humble yet also confident, learning yet also wise, and growing yet also complete. One is in fact the minister who has been sent to the moment, unknowingly possessing precisely what the moment needs, listening intently so that one will know when and how to speak.

Within the Celebrant card of this suit, one rejoices in being the water that one is, by offering to others all that one is. Water is, after all, one of the very few things that connects

absolutely every living creature to every other—thus warranting in various ways a daily celebration of life. That which is offered may not be accepted, but such rejection casts no judgment upon the offer, which remains life-affirming as well as both an expression and a validation of living spirits.

Within the Angel card of this suit, with an intention of transcendent healing, the water within the heavens invisibly touches the water within the vessel, the water within one's self, and the water within the depressed places of the earth. Without words that can be spoken or meanings that can be comprehended, the non-physical nature of each is altered by the unseen interconnection. Without an investment of reaching as high and far and intently as one is able, however, any and all opportunity for such connection might slip by unnoticed.

Within the Saint card of this suit, a relationship of gratitude expresses itself in generosity and respectfulness. An autumnal transition unfolds as it should and one reaches for harmony rather than resistance or cursing. With an open hand to accept all that the moment has to teach and yet also standing at the very edge of one's abilities without allowing them to atrophy, the water that one gives is the water which may someday return.

Chapter 5

The Major Suit

The following are some of the possible meanings of the images of the Major suit. In exploring the dimensions, meanings, and movement of one's life experience, every conversation is an ongoing one--requiring the honest humility and confidence which can only arise from the deepest core of one's being. In and of itself, no image has any inherent polarity, but all have messages and meanings to convey. These descriptions are thus to be regarded as places to begin, but never as the final word.

0 - Birth

This is the state of greatest potentiality temporally concentrated and transferred from a forerunner to an emerging embodiment. To grant opportunity to a birth, however, is equally to relinquish one's grasp of contextual realities now fading into the mists of time and remembrance. As an intersection of past and future, of endings and beginnings, and sometimes even of striking contrasts, this is also the event by which unverified speculations and undiscovered terrain will shift from subconscious to conscious. The self that is emerging may incorporate all previous incarnations, but will equally demand it's own self-agency and voice. The oval that approaches is thus also the larger end of the megaphone by which the accompanying voice is magnified.

1 - The Prodigy

A teddy bear, a gyroscope, crayons, and a cup with a ball on a string—these are only some of the ways that youthful innocence, disciplined skills, hidden wisdom, and restless curiosity combine to bring surprises to each day's unfolding. The spirit within is a bird yearning to take flight, that is sometimes only visible within the “*shadows*” it casts upon the surrounding world. Merging body, mind, and spirit toward manifestation, the Prodigy equally bridges the gaps between heaven and earth, matter and spirit, teacher and student, and master and servant—transforming both the participants and the circumstances within each moment of interaction. From the quietness of a loving hug to the stability of whirling science, every available thing is an opportunity to begin again using whatever colors one chooses, to draw the inner landscape that only the heart can see.

2 - Home

Love and light are both merged and fused, to create a spiritual place encompassing both protection and proactive relationship. Within this deeply personal space, awareness includes understanding both the reality of adversity within one's surrounding environment and that it can be overcome by engaging in ongoing symbiotic exchange. In recognizing that life is a collaborative effort within which all take turns being the one in need; by being each others' guardian angels within each moment one is empowered to assist; and in maintaining basic

functionality within communal systems and circumstances, both literal and figurative expressions of thirst, hunger, cold, and darkness are never insurmountable.

3 - Family

As a context for both communication and provision, belief and demonstration, and remembrance and expression, a common thread is woven by investments of time and energy into the lives of others. From infancy to advanced age, as abilities and perceptions continuously shift, an inner circle of companionship documents challenges faced and resolved as well as work that endlessly evolves. Including yet extending beyond one's choices, the shaping of response is also a realm of endless discovery.

4 - Severance

In moving from mixing bowl to baking sheet, past, present, and future identify each current state as both transitional and distinct from every other. The blessings which have grown and been harvested, must likewise now be utilized or spoilage will steal related benefits--rendering them fit for nothing except the waste basket (and perhaps ultimately the compost bin). This moment is active and not static, specifically because all elements require a future state and cannot remain within their current one. Letting go is nonetheless not inherently an experience of loss, but sometimes of reconnecting with life that is larger than one's current self.

5 - The Outcast

Rejection reinterpreted as vocation transforms perception, yet without documentation risks obliteration. Without possibilities of later remembrance, the treasure extracted from any experiential darkness, could be lost. Each moment is always a mirror and potentially even a compass, offering a visionary way of being that is relevant to current conventions, yet unrestrained by them. Embracing any such ongoing metamorphosis nonetheless requires basic equipment, preparedness, and foresight.

6 - Immersion

Unconcerned for safety and needing complete engagement--whether through water, air, ash, or elemental combinations such as those defining the life cycle of cranberries—a precisely timed release of potential, can renew relationships and invisibly transform all subsequent experience. Performed with intention and even preparatory contemplation, a soul's rite of passage becomes a communally shared experience--even for those who fail to understand. Whether walking the road of burning stones or probing the depths of unbreathable space, nothing is held back and surrender is complete, as the soul is reborn into ever-greater love, wisdom, and unity.

7 - The Traveler

The motive force comes from within one's self, yet is nonetheless supported by some tools and burdened by others—all with the intention of making the journey successful. No map contains the entirety of the terrain one will cross nor the adversity one will encounter. Peaks and valleys are literally and figuratively inherent within every step, but always there are even more such challenges beyond the boundaries which one's map depicts. What is invisible but inescapably present is that every journey unfolds within time and significant differences arise from encountering future moments better prepared and equipped to deal with the challenges discovered there. What is conspicuously absent, however, is any indication of how any particular journey will end—so perhaps an end should not even be anticipated.

8 - The Mountain

The ability to connect with a reversal of itself is what allows a Moebius strip to encompass infinity. Within such fusions of simplicity and complexity, innumerable subtle energies and vibrations shape the unfolding of life within each day. As much as falling against them can cause injury and pain, they can equally serve as secure places to stand and from which to draw strength—thereby orienting the individual to that which is larger, older (perhaps even timeless), and of amazing density. Connecting with the love that is both hidden and inherent within all things, a higher vision of the moment of experience reveals its potential for pivotal transitions and empowering but unconventional configurations. Ultimately this is the archetypal sacred place most often visited throughout human history, by those seeking true metaphysical connection during auspicious transitions within their lives.

9 - The Cave (the Hermit)

One cannot “un-see” any twist or turn of life's winding way through which one has traveled, by which one's perception has forever been altered. In applying greater scrutiny rather than trying to forget preceding changes, greater light blesses all subsequent steps. Subtly veiled warnings grant possibilities for avoiding at least some of the potential trouble and pain along the way, yet even enhanced perception must be carefully focused and interpreted. That there is a point of departure and a point of completion, one can be sure, but knowing one's current location is what allows for movement that is verifiably forward.

10 - The Sacred Clown

This tribal archetype has manifested in a wide variety of forms, everywhere around the world, since perhaps the very first moment that the members of the very first tribe of humans smiled at each others' faces. More than anything else, this clown knows how intricately and completely all of life is interconnected and that there is no final word to any conversation, as the unfolding of everything endlessly continues. Like the oscillation of day and night, of summer

and winter, of youth and age, and of flesh and spirit, life reveals itself in mystery and opportunity—beckoning to each to “*stir the pot*” as only each one can. Stagnation equates to non-existence; partially being equates to woundedness; wholeness—or holiness—equates to dynamic and ever-expanding life. The eternal invitation is to carry one’s song, one’s dance, and one’s spirit ever deeper into each moment and ever further into the cosmos, while held in one’s hands are both the wonders and the tools by which literally everything can be done. Just as the flat square paper has been transformed into an origami crane, the spirit has been given a voice, a vision, and a touch by which all that follows can be enlivened and transformed.

11 - Rituals

The kinesthetic tools for balancing duality, bridging diversity, fusing dimensionality, and effecting empowerment, call the willing body, mind, and spirit to service, the effects of which are virtually always communal. For this reason, no ritual is ever truly an isolated reality, but rather a prism by which invisible attributes of divine light can be seen. As a language of actions, managing relationships of fundamental significance, intention and openness engage with body and form, to dance a meaning into being, into power, and into influential causation—equally receiving whatever deep understanding is able therefrom to arise.

12 - The Bridge

For humanity, all things bend and connect around time, but in a virtually infinite spectrum of colors. Always there is a part one must individually hold, while remaining steadfast in commitment and support of others—specifically because all accomplishments stand on the shoulders of contributions and sacrifices others have made. Resolute in service while openly receiving, a fusion of body, mind, and spirit forms a bridge between heaven and the manifestations of lovingly integrated masculine, feminine, and divine spirit which quietly cover our earth.

13 - Passage

In releasing the marble to its unknown path through the maze of possibilities, one knows only that this journey will eventually have an end. The experiences will be neither without sequence nor without meaning, but they will also be stubbornly resistant to any sort of control. In allowing the path—like any other creative work—to take on a life all its own, the route may be revealed as wiser than one’s self and fully capable of communicating unimagined wonders to ears that truly listen, eyes that truly look, and a heart and mind that are truly ready, willing, and able to understand.

14 - Merging

Investing the necessary transformative energy into a union of contrasting but complimentary commitments, one creates opportunity for manifestations neither could produce

in isolation. The moment is one of profoundly pivotal decision, merging the seen and the unseen in support of hopes and dreams that may or may not succeed, but which feel compelled to try. Were it not for the presence of invisible yet genuine love, the action might seem rash and foolish. Yet by this joining of one light with another, life's possibilities are multiplied and the future is vastly enriched. Wisely touching the truth of the contrasts at their moment of transition, is the power which the open hand longs to grasp, in order to carry this light even further.

15 - Time

Unable to see a future that is undeniably real, the available tools may seem grossly inadequate to the task. Measuring hours and days by momentary investments, one may be standing too close for the obvious to even be seen. Indeed, only afterward can the harvest testify against any doubt, that from mere seeds such flowers and fruits would spring. Knowing only the tools' limitations, would grant to the unfolding of life no more than a basket too small to hold all that will ultimately come. Ancient voices call instead for both discipline and patience, to craft and cultivate what no individual lifetime is able to encompass.

16 - Language

Each moment of life begins with a thought that is often a question, that is empowered by multiple systems of expression—even some that are simultaneously both ancient and timeless. Yet such thoughts are faced with a myriad of sequential choices that can be stacked in specific ways—like the bricks of a wall, a house, or a tower. In the same ways that they can be stacked, however, these choices can also be unstacked and rearranged in order to accommodate changing needs and perceptions. Additionally, each choice—in and of itself—is multi-dimensional; each of these dimensions brings its own unique spectrum of possibilities into view; and each possibility is as multi-dimensional as the preceding choices.

17 - Seasons

A sequence that guides--untouchable yet routinely fixed, while also inspirational and instructive--as each form gives way to its successor. Within the ebb and flow of forms, however, is equally the possibility of endless renewal and rebirth. The current form is thus no more than a mask for an ever-growing, ever-evolving spirit. Yet each transitional form testifies to the character and nature of its underlying spirit, which may likewise animate and open one's own spirit, as one blooms from one unique form into the next.

18 - Remembering

Each life is a spiral through time, touched by other lives in ways that inspire both joy and sorrow—each with insights to bestow. The cord that is sometimes strong and sometimes frayed, brings to visionary minds and hearts the music of the spheres. What that music will mean and the ways in which one will sway to its melodies and rhythms, however, will be extemporaneous

creations of constellations, sending pulsing vibrations distantly in all directions—the effects of which may never be fully known but must nonetheless be trusted to do the healing work that only they can do.

19 - Reunion

There are circles that are gestured, circles that are bound, circles that are woven, and circles that grow. Finding one's own unique and individually appropriate circles may prove to be a lifelong task, specifically because of the ways in which circles can be both concentric and overlapping. The invisible light that emanates therefrom, however, inspires no regret, but rather completion, wholeness, relationship, and ongoing life—if one has the courage to embrace it. Yet it is not the discovery of something new, so much as reconnecting with a part of one's self mystically hidden within others, long ages ago.

20 - Facets

In finally seeing what has been there all along and in finally noticing how many ways there are to see, the conclusion is not characterized by punitive measures as much as by moving all components into a greater harmony which respects their individual natures. There is no more argument about what any particular nature is, nor a coerced resignation to limitation or oppression, but rather an acceptance that grants vision and empowerment to dreams waiting to take flight. The light one holds—augmented and magnified by innumerable reflections—becomes the light which heals.

21 - Interconnection (The World)

In joining hands with all that is, engaging mystically with the circle of life, and weaving all elements toward harmony and wholeness, the oneness of an individual and the oneness of a community are symbiotically at peace. A rainbow of possibilities is open and available to all manifestations which follow, as an integrated fusion of dark and light offers empowerment to everything one thereafter encounters. What matters is not so much the activity of a disconnected self, as that which one does as an extension of the greater wholeness, which can ultimately transform each subsequent moment of life—regardless of whether such activity unfolds within quiet isolation or within noisy and populated chaos.

Chapter 6

Some Basic Spreads

It will probably always be debated, whether, to what degree, or under what circumstances one can “*read one’s own cards*”—that is, spreading and interpreting an arrangement of cards without anyone’s assistance. Considering how widely any word or statement whatsoever can be interpreted, I maintain that any interpretation has equal ability to be erroneous or correct—even when utilized by readers with extensive experience and maturity. The basic rule I therefore employ is to advise absolutely everyone to hold onto whatever is helpful and let the rest go. Even the best intentions, practitioners, and ritual preparations cannot guarantee any particular outcome, specifically because of the myriad of variables each and every moment of life includes. What is most important—in every case—is to be patient and to truly listen; to take whatever time is necessary for the experience to be as empowering as it can be.

All that being said, it is highly advisable whether interpreting cards alone or with the assistance of another person, to engage in whatever centering and grounding practices one finds to be effective. In reading cards for others, I invite the recipient to focus or meditate for a moment with closed eyes, upon whatever the most pressing concern or question happens to be. I then close my eyes as well, reaching deep within myself for a calm, clear, and emotionally and mentally centered state, that is open and listening as well as free from any desire or preference that might dishonestly push an interpretation in a particular direction. I also invite fingertips to touch during this time, so that our personal energies can move toward genuinely hearing and trusting each other, as well as allowing for the possibility of subconscious spiritual communication. Throughout this ministerial activity, I see myself as the servant of the work and not its master.

If, conversely, I am doing a reading for myself with no one else present, I take a little extra time to engage in both meditative practices (i.e. discerning the most pressing concern as well as moving myself to an internal state of being neutral). A significant consideration, however, is the degree to which I have pursued self-awareness and self-understanding. If my efforts in such directions have been effective, I may already have a common language with my subconscious that will allow it to tell me things I was previously too distracted to hear. In both cases, nonetheless, it may be helpful to have a journal or audio recording device handy, to capture insights as they leap into view and before they have a chance to fade.

Having thus prepared one’s self for an intuitive rather than purely cognitive conversation, place each card while contemplating the role of the particular position within the spread, to shift its energy in that specific relational direction. Sometimes specific insights will jump forward, demanding to be immediately spoken or transcribed. At other times, the first few cards may seem

mysterious, but will make sense once the entire spread is displayed. Once again, there is no absolute definition of right or wrong while one is having an intuitive conversation. The following are therefore just a tiny sample of the configurations or spreads of cards which can be employed.

A single card contemplation invites deeper scrutiny of the particular kaleidoscope of colors and variables currently present within one's life. An area of concern may be identified which the reader had not previously considered to be significant, as if the card is pleading, "*Look over here! There's something you've overlooked!*" Alternatively, the card may be indicating a specific possibility that warrants deeper consideration. Even more challenging, however, are those times when the card metaphorically holds up a mirror, insisting upon contemplation of a reality (of one's self or another) that one may wish to deny.

A three-card horizontal spread invites insights relevant to pertinent aspects of past, present, and future. Viewing the past, however, is not a preoccupation with blame, but rather with cause and effect. Metaphorically speaking, what seed was able to produce this tree? In a similar way, viewing the future is not a judgmental presumption that the present is inadequate, but rather a consideration of directionality. Viewing the present as most important rather than equal to the rest, is what I describe as a form of spiritual glaucoma—a sort of tunnel vision that censors otherwise helpful awareness of one's context.

A five-elements spread (the four points of a compass plus one in the center) invites holistic understanding of the strongest current concern. Traditionally, the five elements have been identified as earth, air, water, fire, and spirit. I have a very strong suspicion that there is literally nothing within the entire universe that is truly one-dimensional. There are always more possibilities to consider if one ponders the ways that any particular focus embodies characteristics of each of the five elements, sometimes in unique hierarchical configurations (i.e. which element seems dominant, most obvious, or most in flux). After striving for more accurate and complete perception, what still remains is deciding what response would be most appropriate to this new understanding.

A circular spread of seven cards (one card at the top, three curving down one side and three curving up the other side), interpreted as moving from past through present to future, invites the protection, insights, and guidance of guardian angels, in service to highest wisdom and greatest love. The instruction I received long ago was that the seven-pointed star was widely regarded as that of elves and faeries, so it was not a big leap to translate a faerie into an angel—even more so if one visualizes the top point as the head, the lowest four points as hands and feet, and the remaining two points as the tops of wings, visible above the shoulders (why angels are typically perceived as having wings is a longer discussion for another time and place). The additional instruction I received was that adding a circle around any star, adds the symbolism of

protection. In consideration of all of this, the focus of this reading is raising awareness of service and service-oriented relationship, from past through present and into the future. As much as the reading may speak of the guiding and guarding angels watching over one's self, insights may also be conveyed that identify one's self as guiding and guarding others.

Beyond these configurations, it is entirely possible that one's own intuition and creativity may suggest an entirely new spread. Once again, the fundamental principle is to hold onto whatever is helpful and let the rest go—understanding that what is helpful now may be a temporary method that will be released at a later time. At the core of every legitimate spiritual practice are pursuits of love and wisdom, so beware of what seems unnecessarily sensationalized, egotistical, or pretentious. The time-honored South African principle of Ubuntu—*I am because we are and we are because I am*—echoes the symbiotic nature of balanced and healthy relationships throughout the universe, which are the natural result of integrated love and wisdom.

May you be abundantly blessed within the ongoing personal and spiritual growth that is uniquely appropriate to you and may one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be!

Chapter 7

Responding

These cards were not created to be a lighthearted distraction or a source of entertainment, but rather as a tool of empowerment, of inner healing, and of growth. As I have often said within recorded and live presentations, “*Hold onto whatever is helpful and let the rest go.*” If you have read this far within this book, however, I’m guessing that you are among those specifically interested in personal and spiritual growth—regardless of where any label you embrace is located within the spiritual/religious spectrum, ranging from atheism to agnosticism to any time-worn religion one can name. Nonetheless, the synchronicities and intuitions which frequently arise within card readings, are sometimes quite disturbing—which is not necessarily a bad thing, depending upon how one responds.

In virtually every case one can name, there is neither distance nor dishonesty within the spiritual realm of being. What is thousands of miles or many years of time away, is only so within the physical realm. Topics, memories, and personal challenges that have likewise been pushed aside and labeled, “*too difficult,*” are often the first ones to float to the surface when engaging in any sort of spiritual interaction. My personal and ministerial contention is that one must find ways to face, dialog, and come to terms with all that is most deeply disturbing, but to do so in ways that are wisely managed, supported, and perhaps even guided.

Some understandings are so complex that significant amounts of time may be required for one’s mind and a heart to absorb them at all. One might, therefore, choose not to embrace a particular interpretation for a few days or more, in order for the initial reaction to fade and the deeper meaning to float to the surface (so to speak). Some express this as the need to “sit with it for a while.”

Alternatively, a reading may offer “*a wake up call*” related to something important that is being ignored, overlooked, or neglected. In other cases, a reading may relate to a mental or emotional wound that is too fresh, too raw, or too deep to recklessly rush back into its remembered experience. It is entirely possible, therefore, that a reading of the cards may prompt one to pursue a deeper conversation with a mental health professional. Although this does not seem to be a particularly common experience, it is an indication of strength and maturity rather than weakness to do so.

Ultimately, of course, it is entirely the prerogative of the individual how to respond to a reading or even whether to respond at all. At the very least, I would hope that the reading offers good food for thought. At the most, a reading might make certain things clear which previously were not, owing to contextual chaos or confusion. The fundamental goal is nonetheless that whatever effect there is, is basically positive and empowering in one way or another.

May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be.



For nearly thirty years of unconventional ministry using symbolism, metaphor, and theatrical devices, the creativity and mystical spirituality of *Sister Who* a/k/a Rev. Denver NeVaar, MTS, has touched the lives of literally thousands of people all over the world. After twenty years of newsletters, four albums of original songs, over four hundred television shows, and three modern “*morality plays*” the diverse resources and contributions necessary to *The Tarot of Sister Who* finally came together.

In keeping with the interfaith, mystical, and inclusive nature of this ministerial work, this new version of the Tarot offers personal empowerment to individuals of any belief system or none. All that is necessary, is an openness to deep and significant personal growth and a willingness to invest the time and effort necessary. As much as we all live

within an amazing universe, there is another one within each of us, waiting to be explored.

May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be.