

TAROT FUNDAMENTALS

Lesson Nine

CREATIVE IMAGINATION



This week look at Key 3, the Empress, for five minutes before reading the lesson. Remember that every Tarot Key is a symbolic picture of some aspect of your consciousness. All these Keys are portraits of yourself. As Eliphas Levi tells us, Tarot speaks by evoking thought—not merely intellectual activity, but all the various expressions of mind-power which externalize themselves in man's life and consciousness.

Looking at the Keys is the fundamental method for bringing closer to the surface the deeper potencies of your inner life. Whenever you study one of these lessons, have always at hand the Key to which the text relates and glance at the picture as you read.

Multiplication is a key-word attributed to the number 3. To multiply is to cause to increase in number, to make **more** by natural generation. Multiplication is the act or operation of

increasing by multiplying.

Creative Imagination is the way the principle of multiplication manifests itself in your mental life. The secret of the process is given in that part of the definition of the number 3 which speaks of “the response of subconsciousness to self-consciousness in the generation of mental images”.

Just as 3 is produced by the combination of 1 and 2, so is the Empress a symbolic combination of ideas pictured by the Magician and the High Priestess. The activity resulting from the harmonious union of the forces symbolized by these two is shown by Key 3.

As the sum of 1 and 2, the number 3 is the union of the ideas of individuality (1) and repetition (2). The repetition of the unit through the agency of the duad is reproduction, and reproduction is manifested as renewal, generation, growth, fertility, development and fecundity. Hence 3 is the number of production, formation, organization, propagation, elaboration.

Representing organization, it suggests arrangement and the right adaptation of parts to a whole. This implies anticipation, expectation, purpose, plan, contrivance, invention. All these meanings of 3 are shown in the symbolism of the Empress because this Key typifies the working of your subconsciousness in the activities indicated by the words corresponding to the number.

The Hebrew letter printed on the picture is **ד**, Daleth, meaning “door”. Originally, it was a crude drawing of the flap of a tent. Later, it came to mean any sort of door—the leaf, not the opening. Hence it suggests power to admit or bar, to retain or to let out. Yet in some of the developments of Qabalism, Daleth is also connected with the meaning of a door as a means of entrance and exit, a passageway from within to without.

The door has been always a feminine symbol representing birth, reproduction, and the entry of life into manifestation. Some authorities, indeed, say Daleth represents the womb, the door of personal life, opening to receive the seed, closing to retain the germ of life during the period of gestation, and opening again to send the newborn creature into the world. Similar activities, on planes above the physical, are represented by the same symbol.

Subconsciousness receives the seed impulse of observations made during periods of concentrated attention. Then follows a cycle of development within the field of subconsciousness. When this cycle is completed, a new idea, or invention, or some new plan comes forth through the door of subconsciousness into the field of self-conscious awareness. The form of this completed result of creative imagination may be altogether different from the form taken by the original seed-thought; but the life in that form is continuous with the life in the seed-thought just as the life in a human body is continuous with the life in the spermatozoon and ovum from which that body was developed.

In this operation of subconsciousness there is an apparent accretion of materials round a vital center. This is as true in mental as in physical creation. In this connection, remember that the Greek noun **delta**, derived from the Hebrew **Daleth**, represents both the feminine organ of generation and the accretion of alluvial soil at the mouth of a river, as when we speak of the Delta of the Nile or the Delta of the Mississippi. And Delta is the name of the fourth letter of the Greek alphabet corresponding to Daleth.

Some think the original hieroglyphic for Daleth represented the radiance of sunrise, the entrance of light into the world through the gateway of the East. This may account for the attribution of the direction East to Daleth, and for this letter being the sign of the aspect of consciousness Qabalists name the Luminous Intelligence.

Radiance is vibration produced by solar force. The sunshine is not the sun. The brightness and splendor are effects caused by the action of the luminary. His rays make the sun visible. They are his power. Hence, because the sun is one of the principal emblems of the Supreme Spirit, sunshine represents the “Mysterious power” of the cosmic Life-Breath—the

manifesting agency Hindus call Prakriti of which the **GITA** says: “My great Prakriti is the womb into which I cast the seed; from thence is the birth of all creatures.”

Radiation of solar energy, being the basis of all vegetable and animal life, is what brings about the gradual unfoldment of consciousness. It is also the cause of those physiological changes whereby a human personality manifests higher orders of consciousness. This radiant energy is also the actual physical force which assumes definite forms in your acts of creative imagination.

Keep this in mind in order to intensify your feelings that you are using **real powers** in your occult work. In their essence, to be sure, these are purely spiritual powers. They who say there is really no such thing as a separate entity called “matter” are perfectly correct.

On the other hand, these relative states and conditions of the manifestation of spiritual energy which constitute the field of investigation for physical science are also perfectly **real**. Whatever of illusion there may be about them is in the erroneous human opinion that the physical manifestations of the Life-power are separate from the finer and subtler manifestations which are termed psychic, astral, and so on.

According to the Ageless Wisdom summarized in Tarot, all forms of manifestation are expressions of a single energy which enjoys an unbroken and unbreakable continuity. This energy is real and its reality extends “downward” into the physical plane just as it extends “upward” into realms of finer and more intense vibration. “That which is above is as that which is below, and that which is below is as that which is above.”

Mental images are patterns or matrices for physical conditions. Mental objects, in their plane, have just as definite reality as physical objects. Creative imagination, represented by the Empress, is the process of internal development and arrangement which produces the external manifestation of physical conditions corresponding to mental patterns.

Under ordinary conditions, the mental images are gradually precipitated into physical expression through a series of subtle transformations so slight that we cannot trace the links in the series. Those extraordinary personalities, the adepts and Masters of the Inner School, are able to speed up this series of transformations so that their mental images are manifested almost instantaneously as physical actualities. This is the secret of instantaneous healing, of such works of power as the change of water into wine, or the miracle of the loaves and fishes.

Yet it must be remembered that these extraordinary manifestations are no exceptions to the general rule. For the merest tyro, as well as for the adept, mental imagery is the basis of bodily and environmental conditions. The states of body and environment which you are now experiencing are the fruition of your mental images. If you want different external conditions, you must change the images. This is one secret of dominion.

Thus it is valuable to utilize every legitimate device to make us realize that our mental imagery is a manifestation of real power, of power having definite physical potency as well as metaphysical reality. The chaotic conditions of political and economic systems, so often observed down through the ages, are direct results of chaotic, disorderly images held in the minds of millions of human beings. To change the external state of affairs, the mental images must be changed, and to attain this desirable result (which requires that each person shall undertake the cultivation of his own mental garden) it is first of all necessary to help people to understand that outer circumstances are really the physical embodiments of pre-existent mental patterns.

Among the Tarot Keys, the Empress is the symbolic statement of the harmonious and constructive direction of mental imagery. This will be more apparent next week after you have considered the meaning of the various details of the symbolism.

This week, as usual, we are concerned with impressing these details on your mind as you color the Key. As heretofore, plan your work so as to complete the coloring on the last day of your week's study. Thus, all week long, you will be educating yourself by means of pictorial symbolism, the natural language of subconsciousness, and what you will be drawing forth from within will be what the Inner School has learned concerning the operation of creative imagination.

Such visual education is more valuable than any verbal interpretation because it calls into operation the very powers which the symbols represent. It also calls into play the wider associative power of subconsciousness whereby your mental image of the Key attunes you to wise men who are fully conversant with every detail of the meaning.

Regular use of the Empress will enrich your power of creative imagination and stimulate your inventiveness. It will increase your ability to make new combinations of ideas.

We live in an age when cheap printing, motion pictures, television, combined with the cut-and-dried life of our cities, endanger our power of creative imagination. We take too much of our mental imagery at second-hand, from the screen and from the printed page.

In consequence of this, consulting psychologists and other advisers are continually asked for help in the solution of personal problems which have arisen simply because many persons do not realize, let alone utilize, the tremendous power of imagination.

Key 3 will help you use imagination positively and constructively. Through your eyes it tells your subconsciousness what powers it has and how they should be exercised. You may not grasp the inner meaning of the symbolism at first, but **your subconsciousness will** because this picture like the other Tarot Keys, is written in your subconscious mind's own language.

Pictorial symbolism is the language of dream, of reverie, of fantasy and imagination. **It is not an intellectual affair, though intellect may analyze it.** It goes far deeper. Use Key 3 whenever you find yourself apparently sterile of ideas and it will help to stir an abundant flow of mental imagery. Use it also to remind yourself that the type of mental imagery you are now being trained to utilize is re-shaping your world closer to the heart's desire.

COLORING INSTRUCTIONS

KEY 3. THE EMPRESS

Yellow:	Background, shoes, staff of scepter.
Green:	Foliage, grass, wreath. Robe (except cuffs, girdle, collar edging and panel). Ball on scepter.
Blue:	Stream and waterfall.
Brown:	Tree trunks beside waterfall.
Gray:	Stone bench.
Silver:	Crescent.
Gold:	Stars, collar edging, girdle, cross and bar on scepter.
Copper:	Shield (except dove). Mix red and brown to secure copper color.
Blonde:	Hair, wheat ears.
White:	Pearls, panel in dress, cuffs of dress, dove, highlights in waterfall.
Red:	Roses, triangle on breast.