

ESOTERIC EXTENSION OF TAROT TO DEVELOP SUPERSENSORY POWERS  
LESSON 10

Transcriptions from Ann Davies' Class Lectures

With this, the tenth lesson in our class transcripts and those that follow, you will receive teachings which have never before been given out exoterically or esoterically. The importance of the information we are about to give lies in the fact that for the first time we will show how and why the Tarot keys stimulate the various psychic faculties. We shall show why it is that Tarot is perhaps one of the few ways by which one can safely awaken the psychic faculties, our supersensory perceptions. And we shall make it clear why it is that we have been so silent about this particular aspect of our work.

The psychic faculties pose one of the greatest problems in occult work. Indeed, in schools of the Eastern tradition, the aspirant is taught that psychism is one of the greatest hindrances to be met on the Path. Why should this be in light of the fact that there are so many schools of thought that concentrate on that aspect of consciousness and purport to use it as the foundation and framework for what they term "spiritual" teaching? Why, in view of this, is it that psychism is considered such a detriment on the Path of Return?

The reasons are numerous, and as we proceed to investigate the functions of the different Tarot keys in this area, we shall be able to show clearly how this seeming confusion has arisen.

Psychic faculties are not spiritual powers, although many aspirants have mistaken them for such. As a matter of fact, all animals are psychic, and practically all primitive people are psychic. We might say that the psychic faculties represent one of the most primitive levels of human consciousness rather than one of its highest powers.

This must not be misunderstood. The work allotted us as human beings is to gain dominion over ourselves. By gaining dominion, we mean to acquire control of our thinking and feeling processes, our attitudes, our reactions to life, our reactions to people; in short, to learn how to develop the proper relationships to ourselves, to each other, and to that which we consider to be the Universal Creator.

The psychic faculties are at a primitive level of our being. They are a part of our consciousness which belongs to the subconscious realm. And, as you have learned in studying these lessons, the patterns we hold in subconsciousness are the source of all that troubles us. Thus, we can see that inasmuch as the psychic faculties are really powers of subconsciousness, not until and unless we develop the proper self-conscious understanding of these faculties, an ability to recognize them for what they are, to direct and control them, and to distinguish actual powers from the illusion of power, shall we be in a position to handle psychic faculties as instruments of the One Will. Thus it is that in so many tragic cases, those who deliberately awaken their psychic faculties end by being dominated by this primitive level to the point of derangement.

It is true that such practices as Yoga are used in the Eastern tradition as an aid in awakening the psychic faculties. Within its own framework, Yoga is an excellent technique, but we must bear in mind that Yoga was designed for the Eastern body and culture, and in the practice in the East great stress is placed on the disciple's withdrawing from the world. He must be under the eye and direction of a spiritual teacher or Guru, who takes careful

precautions to assure the safety of each disciple. At the same time, the aspirant is isolated from other human beings. He is not immersed in the mass mind as we are, as in fact we must be.

To build the Temple Within in a crowded city of jostling humanity, not on a lonely mountain side, is part of the karma and growth pattern of the West. (We shall explain the implications of this in these lessons.) For this reason, spiritual evolution must be pursued in a quite different manner in the culture of the West.

Those people who have attempted forcing open the chakras, as they are called in the East, or the Seven Holy Planets, as they are termed in Qabalah, where they play a vital role in esoteric astrology, have in alarming numbers opened themselves to obsessions, been committed to mental institutions, or become mentally and emotionally demoralized in many ways.

This is not said in an attempt to frighten you. We are merely showing that there is a relatively safe way to expand the consciousness, to develop the subtle faculties, and there are dangerous ways. Perhaps the most dangerous method is that used by those who concentrate on the merely psychic aspects of aspiration and think they are achieving spiritual growth.

We have seen those people who sit together in circles passively and open themselves up to let anything in, and any Thing does come in. Then they wonder why they have problems.

What happens in these cases is this: If one has the type of vehicle that makes him subject to ready development of psychic faculties, the negative or passive attitude of opening oneself to the demonical level of consciousness subjects him to a deterioration of the personality in time, rather than an exaltation. Those are very fortunate who have not a ready psychic vehicle to begin with.

The most dangerous thing one can do is sit in circles of this kind for psychic development, because such a procedure is a negative opening up of consciousness. Anything can flow in; we become subject to all kinds of emotional reactions which are native to our own personality. The sitter becomes obsessed with the thought forms, the astral forms that are about us at all times or by disincarnate entities or elementals.

The reason for this will be explained to you as you learn the techniques for using the various Tarot keys. Bear continually in mind that while our understanding of psychic faculties and the development of supersensory perception brings about an expanded awareness and an ability to control both ourselves and our conditions, this understanding and development must be attained in a very special way in order to be both safe and effective. This is the way that will be opened to you in this course of lessons.

As you have progressed through the work of Builders of the Adytum, you have studied and put into practice in your life lessons that range through the different techniques applicable to Tarot for transmutation of the personality and the attainment of cosmic consciousness, the use of Qabalah and the pattern of the Tree of life, the use of color and

sound for healing and spiritual alchemy. You have, inevitably, realized that an aspirant does not have to be technically educated on the material plane, but he must have enough intelligence and enough drive to be ready to work toward the attaining of his objective. In this class of lessons, the objective is controlled supersensory perception and psychic power, and the main objective within that framework is the attainment of cosmic awareness or cosmic consciousness.

We have deliberately avoided discussion of the psychic aspects of Tarot in the original lesson series of our Order. This does not mean that work with the Tarot will not materially heighten your psychic awareness! The use of Tarot produces an astonishing type of force. It embodies the principles of consciousness in itself, that has been confirmed by modern psychologists, and embraces the way, the means, and the methods by which the personality is transmuted and occult power developed on all levels of being. The reason we have not heretofore indicated to our members the tremendous impact that it has on supersensory perceptions and on a development of psychic faculties is because we have felt that calling attention to this aspect of work with the Tarot would only focus the attention on something that might well become an enchantment and keep the aspirant away from his main task.

Very recently it has been decided by the Master of the Inner School that inasmuch as so much public interest has been developed in the parapsychological field, and because many more aspirants are ready for traveling the Path of Return, we should begin to teach our more advanced members the practical techniques for using Tarot in this way, so that they may see how such attractive powers and faculties can be employed in the Work rather than to distract them from it. So to safeguard our aspirants from self-delusion and fraud that go about today disguised in spiritual garments, we have begun not only to explain the reasons by which Tarot awakens the psychic powers and perceptions, but to communicate these extra techniques which never before have been given out.

It is a modern tragedy that so many people become spellbound by truisms and banalities, simply because they are uttered "under trance," which is one of the more psychic faculties. We find it difficult to understand why communications from the primitive level of trance should strike people as so very exciting. What could be more exciting than consciousness, plain awareness? What is more miraculous than to be able to say, "I think; I am aware?"

This is what everyone of us will, sooner or later, have to do; to recognize that the important thing is to expand the self-conscious awareness, rather than to seek to enter into trance or to look into the beyond. Seeing or hearing that which is beyond the physical senses will come from time to time, but it should not beglamour you, but rather act as a sign post to show that things are progressing. For as you will become aware through the work of these lessons of the different subtle powers that you have - have always had - you will become aware of them from a higher level. You will become aware as the initiate becomes aware of them, not by way of entering into a process of deterioration, of walking backward into the primitive levels of subconsciousness, but by rising up to the superconscious levels of your being and from that level controlling these subconscious powers and experiencing them.

Each Tarot key holds within it the secret of several principles of consciousness, and the use of the key with special techniques brings about the development of an extension of awareness and an extension of control over your awareness and environment. In the following lessons, each key will be explained in terms of its particular faculty. We shall give you very detailed explanations of the powers of clairvoyance, clairaudience, karma, telepathy, and clairsentience, the psychic and spiritual supersensory power of touch which many people have without realizing it. The conscious exploration of these hidden faculties of yourself will prove the greatest of spiritual adventures.

The first Tarot key which we shall work with is the Fool, the Tarot key that represents the superconscious power within you. Its number is 0, and we recommend that you reread the earlier lessons to refresh your memory of the concept associated with this number. Both the number of each key and the Hebrew letter of each key express the basic meanings necessary for full understanding of the esoteric purpose implicit in its construction.

The word "fool" can be given many meanings. Shakespeare's words were, ". . . life is a tale told by an idiot." In other words, he who looks upon the world, upon life, as being a wholly physical or material thing must needs view the spiritual aspirant as being a fool or a madman, which is the meaning of the French word "Fou," given this key in medieval Tarot packs. Is it not true that friends often think that you are mildly unbalanced when they hear that you are interested in occultism? We all share this tendency, of course, but those whose minds are fixed in this kind of thinking always readily assume that another person is stupid, simply because he does not share the same fixation of thought. So it is that those who consider themselves practical, full of common sense, or worldly prestige, these will naturally look upon people like us as fools. All that can be said is, "Then let's try to become as foolish as possible."

The great problem that confronts the aspirant is that he lies under an hypnosis in terms of the physical plane. We tend to think that because we feel something solid, it is solid, or that because we hear a sound, it is real. We think that because we see a picture or a person or an object, we are looking upon something that is real in the way that we see it. We concentrate our attention on the physical universe, and when we talk about being practical, it is always in terms of obsessions with things that one can't take with one.

The one thing you can take with you is consciousness. If it is true that you are an immortal soul, if it is true that you are an eternal being, the only important thing in life for you is to grasp this consciously and as fast as possible. Everything that lures your attention away from this realization will bring you more sorrow in the future. One should avoid the mistake of thinking that in one incarnation or in the next, one will travel the Path with determination, but that there is not enough time in this incarnation.

All esoteric schools of thought tell us consistently that the only time you can experience illumination, the only time you can gain freedom from the dream, is now. The only time you ever have is now. Yesterday seemed real to you yesterday, but now it is as a dream in your mind. The future is but a hope and a fear in your heart. The only time you really ever have is now, and therefore it is only in expanding this spot ofnowness that we

call self-consciousness into what is called the Eternal Now that we attain to the higher superconscious state of knowing.

Working with this Tarot key you dwell upon what, in a sense, is the final experience in spiritual growth, but remember that beginning and end are one, and we must know what our goal is before we start on a journey. That is another reason why the adventurer, the traveler, is pictured on this Tarot key. We hope we have shown why it is a good idea to be working at becoming as foolish as possible in the manner this key suggests.

In order to comprehend the superconsciousness represented by this key, you must experience it. We shall guide you toward that experience. We shall give you the map and show you the sign posts, but we can no more give you the experience than we can describe the taste of an apple and satisfy your hunger. The picture of an apple does not nourish you.

We can help you to gain a little more understanding of the different levels of consciousness, but you will have to take the trip yourself. To do this, you will have to do spiritual and psychological exercises which are the real subject matter of this course, and we hope and pray that our working with you in this way will stimulate you to recognize the feeling you want and make it the primary goal of your life.