

The Well and the Dance: Intuition and Feeling Tarot

A Welcome from the Fool's Guild

Welcome to the second courtyard lesson in the Fool's Guild of Tarot Professionals. As a honorary student of the Guild, you will be receiving each of the five lessons on a weekly basis to ensure that you have a good grounding in the art and science of the tarot.

Whether a newcomer to tarot or an experienced practitioner, we hope these lessons cover a complete overview of the best in academic and practical approaches to tarot, and we look forward to your questions in our lively courtyard forum. All our courses are subject to regular review and updating, so please do check regularly for the latest versions.

This second lesson looks at reading tarot as a general skill, and considers how we learn tarot and practice the art. We give exercises for developing intuition and deepen our appreciation of a card to see what our feelings teach us. This is also to demonstrate the variety of ways in which we can approach tarot – we do not favour any particular method, and encourage you to explore whichever route takes your imagination and enthusiasm.

It is hoped that by learning the tarot with us, you will be able to deepen your appreciation of the subject, apply this knowledge to enhance your practice, and widen your experience of learning about life through tarot to positive effect. Our aim is that after this course of five lessons you will be thoroughly informed, extremely enthused, and looking to develop your tarot with innovation and creativity. We look to truly inspire as well as inform!

Over the remaining four weeks ahead, you can ask any general questions in our forum, or if you'd like to speak to an Outer Courtyard Supervisor about these lessons, please contact enquiries@tarotprofessionals.com.

It is recommended that you spend one week studying this lesson and reviewing it prior to receiving your next lesson which will automatically be sent to you next week. For the best experience with these lessons, although they are intended for self-study, you should join the forum discussions for the courtyard classes and share your experience whilst benefitting from the experience of others.

The Second Week Begins at the Well

So, you have come to see that the tarot cards can be considered to correspond in part to the four elements (five, including *aether*, or spirit), each with their own attributes. Although we will come to look at the structure of the deck in more detail later this week, you find yourself now at the Well in the Courtyard.

At this Well, like a kitchen at all good parties, you find the best conversation and lively discussions, away from the frantic dancing and gesticulating elsewhere.

Today, the topic of chat is on the role that **intuition** plays in tarot. Some people are opining that intuition is essential, to the extent that only mediums, channelers and the naturally gifted may say they really read tarot, whereas others are arguing for a more structured approach, where only a truly scientific and mechanistic reading, fully explainable, which may be repeated with equal effect each time, shows the true tarot reader. Others argue for a middle ground, whilst some voices are trying to say that the divisions themselves are meaningless!

You may already have an opinion, or be content to let the arguments wash over you as you look down into the well and wonder if you can draw up a bucket of clear water. However, you are reminded that part of tarot is social interaction – the cards themselves show all the variations of social activity – and a question forms in your mind:

Is there any part of your life that you cannot find a picture for within the tarot deck?

Consider this question before continuing. Make out a list of **seven** items, combining regular activities, social interactions, discussions that you have, or events out of TV programs that you enjoy. Then go find them in your tarot deck. Are they all there? Are some sort-of-there-at-a-push? Do you have an event that you feel is definitely being shown by a card but you don't know why?

For example, "Arguing with my brother" I can see in the Five of Wands or perhaps also in the Five of Swords – that's what it feels like afterwards, anyway! But actually, there's a lot of cards that show such debate, discussion and argument. If you find them all and arrange them, is there a pattern or theme?

We should consider that even the debates about how to approach tarot cards is pictured within the cards themselves – all life is truly here, and art is our mirror!

Drawing from the Well

You might already know what intuition is – that feeling you get when you know something without knowing how you know it? Think back to a time when you had that feeling (this lesson is more about feelings than thoughts, as we work in the Court of Water) where you just deep-down knew something before being told.

Now, where did you **feel** that feeling? In your head, in the pit of your stomach, or did the hairs raise on the back of your hand or neck? Did you get a slight buzz?

Strong emotions have a physical correspondence in our body – it's where we get the phrases like "he made me sick", a "gut feeling", or "that feels dodgy" or even "it just doesn't sit right with me". It's important as a tarot reader to find the location or sensory representation of "intuition" for yourself. Then you can work towards it whilst reading – a sort of internal "hot or cold" system!

Intuition can be thought of as a "rapid knowing without reason" and sometimes it is seen as being independent of all "previous knowledge and experience". That's to say, "there's no way you could possibly know that!" Has that ever happened to you? And if so, how do we know that we have exhausted all possible explanations?! It seems to many that science is still discovering new things every day! In the tarot, incidentally, "intuition" was seen by the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn as being pictured by the "Lovers" tarot card, showing Perseus rescuing Andromeda from the Kraken. Go figure!

The Cards Go Walking

Someone comes to you at the well and grinningly asks whether you knew the cards were *walking* as well as *talking* tools? She tells you that there's a physical way of training your intuition as well as teaching you to recognise the relationships between the cards without having to learn anything! You're suspicious, of course, but you have a week here, so allow her to sit down.

She asks you to get out your tarot deck, and place three cards drawn at random next to each other, like so:



Take your left hand and put your first finger on the left-hand card, and your right hand and put your first finger on the right-hand card. Fix your gaze on the card in the centre of the three cards.

Now allow your fingers to re-position the two cards on the table. You may find they want to remain absolutely fixed. That's fine. You may find only one wants to move – or both. Up or down, further away or closer to the central card. Let your arms remain loose and only concentrate on the central card. Notice also the type of movement – is it sudden and rapid, like a magnet, or does it vibrate? You may find a card wants to move in a circle, like an orbit!

Don't yet question or interpret this – other than for those who might see here a more intuitive demonstration of the dignities – just practice with several different draws of cards, maybe one a day for the week you spend at the Well. See how many variations of movement you can find – this is a dynamic and intuitive way of learning more about the cards and makes a change from the conscious learning you will also be experiencing in the Courtyard.

Deeper Down the Well

Let's take a card from the Golden Deck by Kat Black. This is a deck that is based on the Rider-Waite-Smith images, which are the most popular and Kat has created montages from various works of art to recreate those images.



What is happening in this picture? Firstly, what do your feelings tell you? Do you get a friendly or antagonistic feeling; positive, neutral or negative? Do you feel close or alien to those in the picture?

Now involve your other senses. What music, soundtrack or background noise would fit this card? How does that reflect the atmosphere, tone and theme of the card in your feelings?

Now go through your own deck and without long consideration, quickly and instinctively place each card into one of four piles in front of you. One for POSITIVE FEELINGS, one for NEGATIVE FEELINGS, one for NEUTRAL and one for NOT SURE. Then go back through NOT SURE and place them into one of the other three piles if you can.

You know the type who ...?

The role and relationship of intuition and knowledge in tarot is obviously one of preference. If you would like to find out which of these two approaches (intuitive or rationalist) you are more likely to adopt, you can consider taking a **Myers-Brigg** test. This is a psychometric test which groups people – based on Jung (who we'll meet again later) into four distinct categories:

Type	Categories
Rational (judging):	Thinking / Feeling
Irrational (sensing):	Sensing / Intuition

A typical quick and rough test of your Myers-Brigg type can be found here:

<http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes2.asp>

You might like to let us know on the Courtyard Forum what *category* you are, as we can build up an average and see if there are any particular categories that make tarot readers!

These four personality types can be seen reflected in the four court suits. There are variations, as ever, but we can start with a standard correspondence:

Thinking	Swords	logical, rational, cutting, educated
Feeling	Cups	deep, emotional, dreamy
Sensing	Pentacles	practical, down-to-earth, stable
Intuition	Wands	spiritual, insightful, dreamy

The rank of the court card (Page, Knight, Queen, King) can then split these personality types further – introverted, extroverted, and so forth. But that's not for the Courtyard Lessons! We can also consider the energies of these cards as being levels of energy in each element, as we will see shortly.

We can simply go for age-ranges at present; the Pages are children, the Knights are the "Club 18-30" range, and the Queens and Kings adults of the respective sex. You'll notice that Pages and Knights are neither necessarily male or female. Similarly, a man can have more 'feminine' qualities and a woman more 'masculine' qualities than gender alone would stereotype.

Anyway, in terms of the Jungian types, you should now be able to **correspond your family and friends** into Court Cards – is your Mother a 'Sensing' sort of person, making her a Queen of Pentacles, or is she a 'Feeling' person, a Queen of Cups? There's no single answer, of course, we are each a mixture of all types – there is no single Court Card that doesn't have a voice inside you. In our intermediate courses, we also look at organisations as Court Cards.

Facing the Court

Whilst idling at the Well, you are called during the week to attend a formal lecture, which is on the Court Cards. You are surprised that you are being introduced to the Court so early in your lessons, as you've heard that they can be very complex and difficult to read.

More surprising is that the lecture is quite straight-forward, and you find yourself with a deeper understanding of the nature of these sixteen cards, able to read them in the context of any question, without confusion. Here's what you see in your notes about the lecture:

The Court cards are 4 x 4 = 16 cards

4 elements (see last week)

4 "levels" of operation (lecturer said something about 4 worlds in Kabbalah?)

But for ease –

Swords	≈ Air	≈ Thoughts, Learning, Ideas, Education
Wands	≈ Fire	≈ Ambition, Lifestyle, Spiritual/Religious Path
Cups	≈ Water	≈ Emotions, Love, Relationships
Pentacles	≈ Earth	≈ Material, Wealth, House, Health

So that's four aspects of life, then seen through four types of energy –

Page	≈	Child	≈ Sudden, burst, Initiating Energy
Knight	≈	Young Adult	≈ Focused, Intensifying Energy
Queen	≈	Adult Female	≈ Patient, Nurturing, Enduring Energy
King	≈	Adult Male	≈ Powerful, Fixed, Stabilising Energy

≈ symbol here is "corresponds to" **not** "equals" (lecturer very insistent on this!)

Lecturer also noted that Court Cards are stereotypes not archetypes (?) i.e. certain view of male and female energy, also the hierarchy of the court, Pages being 'lesser' than Knights, but having the potential to become Knights. All energy transforming.

Just knowing these types of people and their energy can give way of reading cards, either as:

- 1) Real People in Querent's Life
- 2) Part of the Querent's Personality
- 3) A necessary energy *manifesting* in the Querent's Life

Difficulty comes in knowing which to interpret – always go for (3) as it can then be seen to manifest as either (1) or (2).

So, looking at your notes, you sit by the Well and see in a spread where the King of Wands appears as “Past”:

Past: King (Stabilising) Wands (Ambitions)

Hmmm. What do you think? The situation is fixed, the person has had ambition that has become solid in the past, not allowing any new energy in the future. It could also represent the ‘father’ inside the person, being too fixed in the past, or a trusted advisor giving constraining advice that is no longer appropriate – or all three interpretations!

You would think it likely to find a few Aces in the future in that reading, then!

Reaching the Point of Water

Well done! You have spent a second week in the outer courtyard and mastered the basic element of water; the teaching of intuition and variety of approaches to tarot.



You can now progress – come forth to the flag of water and take a bow! You are presented with the Ace of Cups; a card signifying the seed of deeper understanding, and the love of learning, promising a mystical unity with that which is studied.

In this Ace from the Thoth deck, we see the energy of the Ace, and recall that Crowley said that the Aces are not the elements themselves, but the **seeds** of the elements. You may wish to find out about the Lotus flower, which features heavily in Crowley’s design for this Ace.

Onwards! Your next lesson awaits!