

TRIGGERING CREATIVITY

Using Tarot for Creative & Artistic Projects

By: Benebell Wen

February 21, 2016 | 10 am PT / 12 pm CT / 1 pm ET

A Free North Atlantic Books Webinar



Webinar Presentation Outline

- I. Intuitive-Creativity & the Transcendent Experience
 - A. **What is Intuitive-Creativity?** (*Definition.* The non-inferential genesis of an original or imaginative idea that goes beyond traditional forms, patterns, methods, interpretations, or perspectives, which then cultivates progress.)
 - B. **What is a Transcendent Experience?** (*Definition.* The encounter, observation, or process needed to trigger intuitive-creativity; an unconscious burst of inspiration that sets accomplishment into motion.)
- II. Tarot: The Transcendent Experience
 - A. What is Tarot?
 - B. Synchronicity as the Transcendent Experience
 - C. Artists & Writers Who Use Tarot
- III. Exercising the Intuitive-Creativity Muscle with Attunement
 - A. Traditional Attunement
 - B. Personal Attunement (or “Intuitive Reading”)
- IV. Working with Tarot Spreads
 - A. Triggering Creativity with a One-Card Draw
 - B. Identifying Your Creative Focus
 - C. Triggering Creativity with a Simple Cross Spread
- V. Formulating the Inquiry: Using Tarot to Trigger Intuitive-Creativity
 - A. Reading About Your Work-In-Progress
 - B. Character Analysis
 - C. Using Tarot to Plot a Narrative
 - D. Exploring Your Themes
- VI. Notes and Final Comments
- VII. Q&A Session

A Basic Introduction to the Anatomy of Tarot

The Major Arcana (Rider-Waite-Smith)

	Key #	Card #	Card Name	Key #	Card #	Card Name
THE MAJOR ARCANA	0	0	The Fool	11	XI	Justice
	1	I	The Magician	12	XII	The Hanged Man
	2	II	The High Priestess	13	XIII	Death
	3	III	The Empress	14	XIV	Temperance
	4	IV	The Emperor	15	XV	The Devil
	5	V	The Hierophant	16	XVI	The Tower
	6	VI	The Lovers	17	XVII	The Star
	7	VII	The Chariot	18	XVIII	The Moon
	8	VIII	Strength	19	XIX	The Sun
	9	IX	The Hermit	20	XX	Judgement
	10	X	Wheel of Fortune	21	XXI	The World

Reference Chart from Chapter 5, page 32 of *Holistic Tarot* (North Atlantic Books)

Spirit	
0	Start of Quest

The Self, Ego Exposition Character Introduction		The Collective Rising Action Inciting Incidences		Divine Union Self-Actualization Climax & Denouement	
1	Inner Yang, Right-Hand	8	Test of Inner Strength	15	Facing Demons
2	Inner Yin, Left-Hand	9	Seeking Counsel	16	Demolishing Ego
3	Mother, Matrilineal	10	Trials & Tribulations	17	Renewal of Hope
4	Father, Patrilineal	11	Choosing Sides	18	Inner Reflection
5	Social Authority	12	Impasse; The Dilemma	19	The Journey is a Success
6	Primordial Errors	13	Painful Changes	20	Spiritual Awakening
7	Active Journey Begins	14	Reconciliation	21	Self-Actualization

Note: "Inner Yang, Right-Hand" and "Inner Yin, Left-Hand" refer to left-right symbolism, which is discussed in *Holistic Tarot*, p. 276.

The Minor Arcana (Waite Tradition)

THE MINOR ARCANA	SUIT OF WANDS				SUIT OF SWORDS AIR / Ideas, Logos, Ambitions		SUIT OF SWORDS									
	FIRE / Creative Development, Career						PIP CARDS		PIP CARDS							
							COURT CARDS				COURT CARDS					
							Ace				of Wands		Ace		of Swords	
							2				of Wands		2		of Swords	
							3				of Wands		3		of Swords	
							4				of Wands		4		of Swords	
							5				of Wands		5		of Swords	
							6				of Wands		6		of Swords	
							7				of Wands		7		of Swords	
							8				of Wands		8		of Swords	
							9				of Wands		9		of Swords	
	10		of Wands		10		of Swords									
	Page		of Wands		Page		of Swords									
	Knight		of Wands		Knight		of Swords									
	Queen		of Wands		Queen		of Swords									
	King		of Wands		King		of Swords									
	SUIT OF CUPS				SUIT OF PENTACLES EARTH / Material Wealth, Finance		SUIT OF PENTACLES									
	WATER / Emotions, Relationships						PIP CARDS		PIP CARDS							
							COURT CARDS				COURT CARDS					
							Ace				of Cups		Ace		of Pentacles	
							2				of Cups		2		of Pentacles	
							3				of Cups		3		of Pentacles	
							4				of Cups		4		of Pentacles	
5							of Cups				5		of Pentacles			
6							of Cups				6		of Pentacles			
7							of Cups				7		of Pentacles			
8							of Cups				8		of Pentacles			
9							of Cups				9		of Pentacles			
10		of Cups		10		of Pentacles										
Page		of Cups		Page		of Pentacles										
Knight		of Cups		Knight		of Pentacles										
Queen		of Cups		Queen		of Pentacles										
King		of Cups		King		of Pentacles										

Reference Chart from Chapter 5, page 33 of *Holistic Tarot* (North Atlantic Books)

Suit of Wands (Author's Correspondences)

Classical Element	Fire
Fundamental Energy	Active (Yang)
Astrological Signs	Aries, Leo, Sagittarius
Animal Symbolism	Lion, Salamander
Success Factor	Willpower, Innovation
Prevailing Character Traits	Passion, Motivation
Personal Issue Attribution	Creativity, Work, Growth; Health and Wellness
Quality	Synergy
Season	Spring
Cardinal Direction	South
Moon Phase	New Moon
Social Hierarchy	Proletariat
Armament	Cavalry
Hebrew Letter	Yod (corresponds with I)
Angel Representative	Raphael
Gospel	Mark (Thaumaturgy; Inspiration)
Activating Minerals	Carnelian, Fire Agate, Red Jasper, Ruby, Amber Sunstone, Pyrite, Red Spinel, Bloodstone
Activating Colors	Red, Orange, Yellow
Olfactory Correspondences	Bergamot, Ginger, Citrus, Basil, Angelica Root

Reference Chart from Chapter 9, page 126 of *Holistic Tarot* (North Atlantic Books)

Suit of Cups (Author's Correspondences)

Classical Element	Water
Fundamental Energy	Receptive (Yin)
Astrological Signs	Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces
Animal Symbolism	Fish, Dolphin
Success Factor	Perception, Intuition
Prevailing Character Traits	Empathy, Concord, Compassion
Personal Issue Attribution	Love, Emotions, Relationships, Family
Quality	Fluidity
Season	Summer
Cardinal Direction	West
Moon Phase	Waxing Crescent
Social Hierarchy	Clergy
Armament	Naval
Hebrew Letter	Heh (corresponds with H ₁)
Angel Representative	Gabriel
Gospel	John (Edification, Testimony, Fellowship)
Activating Minerals	Moonstone, Blue Calcite, Coral, Pearl, Rose Quartz, Lapis Lazuli, Blue Lace Agate
Activating Colors	Med. or Dk. Blue, Pink, Indigo, Purple
Olfactory Correspondences	Chamomile, Jasmine, Lavender, Rose, Ylang Ylang

Reference Chart from Chapter 9, page 153 of *Holistic Tarot* (North Atlantic Books)

Suit of Swords (Author's Correspondences)

Classical Element	Air
Fundamental Energy	Active (Yang)
Astrological Signs	Gemini, Libra, Aquarius
Animal Symbolism	Eagle, Owl
Success Factor	Force, Knowledge
Prevailing Character Traits	Intellectualism, Sophistication
Personal Issue Attribution	Ideas, Intellect, Communication; A Conflict
Quality	Enforcement
Season	Fall
Cardinal Direction	East
Moon Phase	Full Moon
Social Hierarchy	Nobility
Armament	Artillery
Hebrew Letter	Vau (corresponds with V)
Angel Representative	Michael
Gospel	Matthew (Wisdom, Ascension)
Activating Minerals	Amethyst, Kyanite, Yellow Jasper, Opal, Chrysoprase, Chrysocolla, Ametrine
Activating Colors	Light Blue, Gray, Black, White
Olfactory Correspondences	Frankincense, Lemongrass, Mint, Myrrh

Reference Chart from Chapter 9, page 180 of *Holistic Tarot* (North Atlantic Books)

Suit of Pentacles (Author's Correspondences)

Classical Element	Earth
Fundamental Energy	Receptive (Yin)
Astrological Signs	Taurus, Virgo, Capricorn
Animal Symbolism	Bull, Snake, Dog
Success Factor	Material Resources, Physical Strength
Prevailing Character Traits	Pragmatism, Diligence
Personal Issue Attribution	Property, Finances, Material; The Physical Body
Quality	Fruition
Season	Winter
Cardinal Direction	North
Moon Phase	Waning Crescent
Social Hierarchy	Artisans and Merchants
Armament	Infantry
Hebrew Letter	Heh (corresponds with H ₂)
Angel Representative	Uriel
Gospel	Luke (Ministry, Practice of Faith)
Activating Minerals	Moss Agate, Aventurine, Smoky Quartz, Black Tourmaline, Lodestone, Brown or Green Jasper
Activating Colors	Green, Gold, Brown
Olfactory Correspondences	Cedarwood, Cinnamon, Cypress, Patchouli, Vetivert

Reference Chart from Chapter 9, page 210 of *Holistic Tarot* (North Atlantic Books)

Triggering Creativity with a One-Card Draw

Shuffle the deck and draw a single card for any of the following exercises:

Card of the Day. What should you aspire to accomplish that day for your project?

Story Divination. What will happen next in the story arc of your project?

Progress Update. What do you most need to know about the current progress of your project?

Reading About Your Work-in-Progress. What is the narrative, theme, or archetype that best expresses your project in its current manifestation?

Character Analysis. What is the most important aspect of a particular character's disposition or how that character is being perceived by others?

Understanding Theme. What is the theme or underlying engine of the narrative?

The Body as Inspiration. In most of the card images, there is a human figure whose posture, movements, or facial expression is telling a story. How can that body inspire your work?

Symbology Ruminaton. Focus on one symbol on the card.

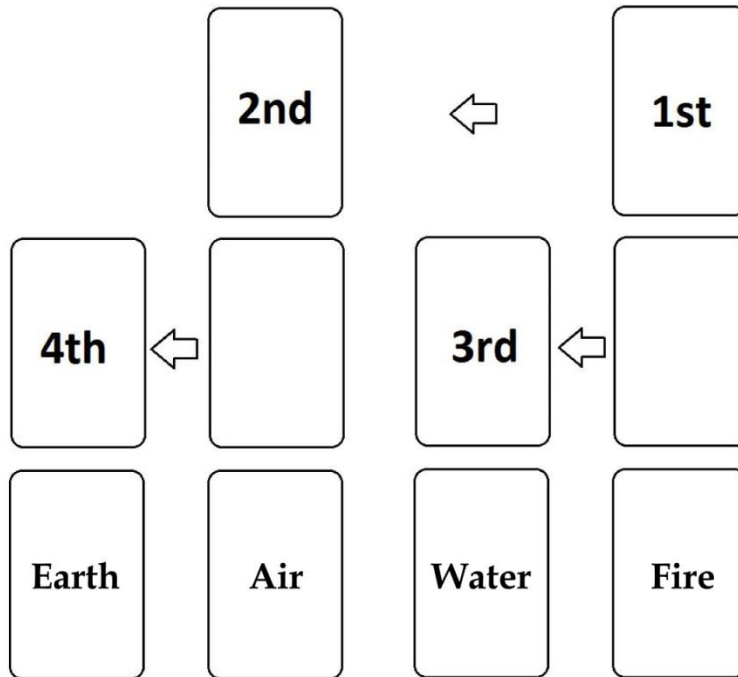
- What does that symbol mean to you?
- What comes immediately to mind when you see the symbol?
- How does the symbol relate to the themes or narrative of your project?
- How does the card overall relate to how you view your own project?

Explore your own intuitive-creativity with either **Traditional Attunement** or **Personal Attunement** as covered during the webinar.

Identifying Your Creative Focus

Technique Review:

Shuffle the deck while thinking about your creative project and draw a single card. That single card is your Signifier. Remember this card. Return the Signifier to the deck, shuffle, and cut the cards as follows, and as explained during the webinar:

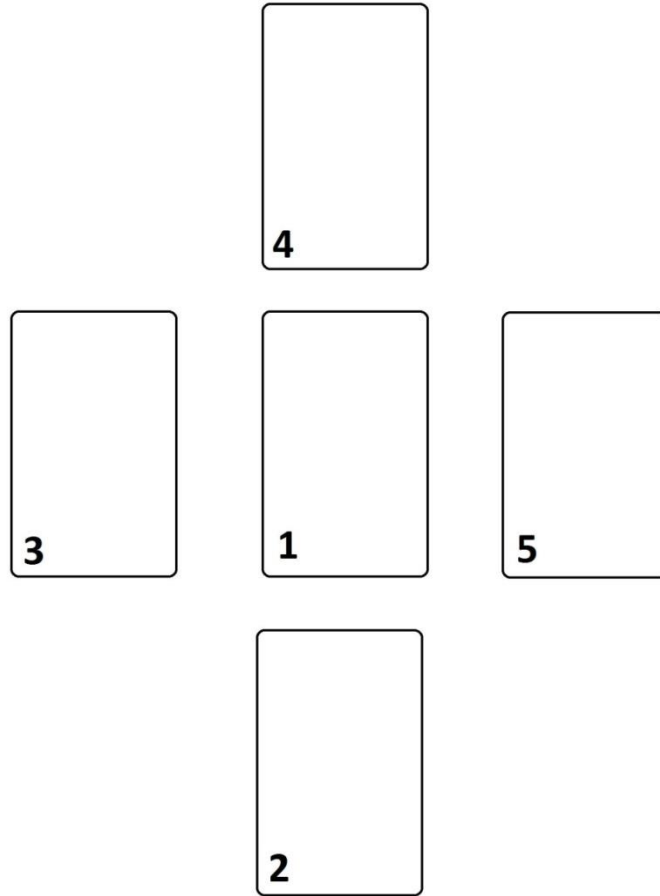


Reference Chart from Chapter 11, pages 245-246 of *Holistic Tarot* (North Atlantic Books)

Fire	<i>Physical Plane</i>	Structural issues; the means of validation; innovation; perseverance; creative ambitions; the physical form
Water	<i>Emotional Plane</i>	Relationships; characters; exploring emotions; home and family; empathy and sensitivity; the artistry
Air	<i>Mental Plane</i>	Addressing the conflicts; need for objectivity; dialogue; thoughts; the means of communication; critique & analysis
Earth	<i>Material Plane</i>	Practical or financial considerations; business, commerce; stylistic issues; overcoming dogmatism; considering orthodoxy versus heterodoxy

The pile (i.e., Fire, Water, Air, or Earth) that the Signifier appears in will identify the area or nature of your creative focus. By focusing here at the present stage of your progress, you will accomplish more and can better facilitate your own success.

Triggering Creativity with a Simple Cross Spread



Reference Chart from Chapter 14, page 308 of *Holistic Tarot* (North Atlantic Books)

From Chapter 14, The Simple Cross. See also Quick Reference in Appendix A, p. 697.

Card 1	<i>Current State</i>	Where you are right now; present status. Present state of mind. Critical choice faced right now.
Card 2	<i>Roots, Foundation</i>	Underlying motivation or critical issues coming from the subconscious.
Card 3	<i>Past Influences</i>	Past events or experiences that affect the present, and also may affect the trajectory taken.
Card 4	<i>Aspirations, Speculations</i>	Thoughts. The speculative outcome. This is the alternative that could become the future.
Card 5	<i>Probable Outcome</i>	Based on the current trajectory, this is what will most likely happen.

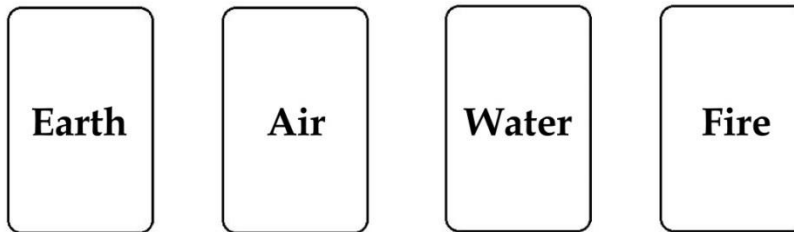
Reading About Your Work-In-Progress

- What do I need to know about my project right now?
- How do I overcome my current creative block and advance on the project?
- What do I most need to work on to advance my project right now?
- What am I not seeing about the challenges facing my project at the moment?

One-Card Draw

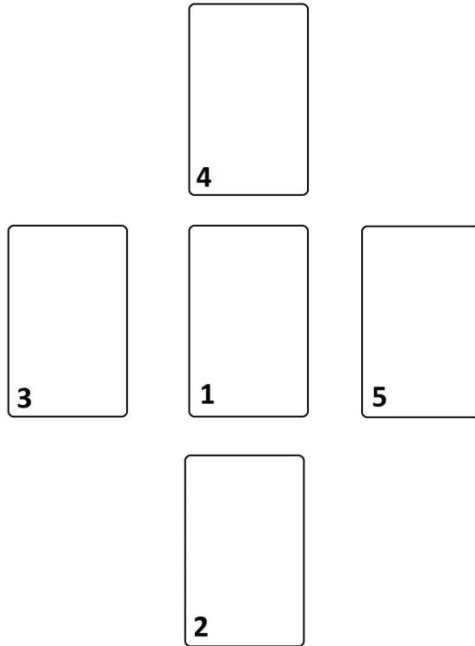
Draw a single card to identify what narrative, theme, or archetype best expresses your project in its current manifestation.

Identifying the Creative Focus



Fire	<i>Physical Plane</i>	Take time to brainstorm, free-write, or ruminate on what exactly are the sources of inspiration behind the project. Focus on structural issues and explore motivation. Initiation is key.
Water	<i>Emotional Plane</i>	It is important to understand the spiritual or emotional dimension of your project. Think about feelings. What is the greater spiritual purpose? In fact, what is at stake here? Focus on people, characters, and relationships. Take everything personally.
Air	<i>Mental Plane</i>	Focus on how your project is being communicated or expressed to its audience. Revision work may be in order. Study the conflicts in the project (man vs. environment, man vs. man, man vs. himself) and assess how you might be able to better communicate or express those conflicts.
Earth	<i>Material Plane</i>	Practical considerations are key. Think about the material or published form your project will take on. What is the best platform or venue to showcase your project? What are the business and commercial components of your project that you need to think on? No matter what stage you are at, think now on your ending or your end game. Where are you headed? What is your destination?

Applying the Simple Cross Spread



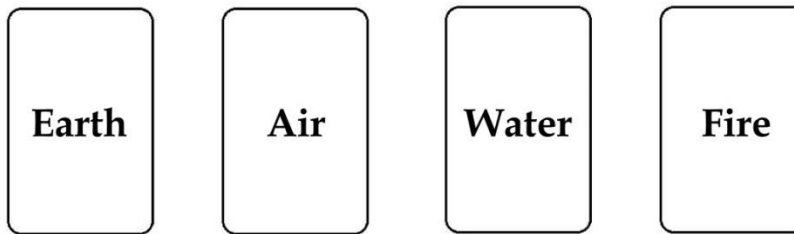
Card 1	<i>The Signifier</i>	Expresses the project in its current manifestation
Card 2	<i>Critical Foundation</i>	The most important part of the project's foundation or roots
Card 3	<i>Progress Summary</i>	Summation of past events, experiences, and the current status of the project
Card 4	<i>Notes of Caution</i>	The most critical issues to focus and improve upon. Challenges to overcome.
Card 5	<i>Progress Projection</i>	Where the project is headed based on the current trajectory that it is on.

Character Analysis

One-Card Draw

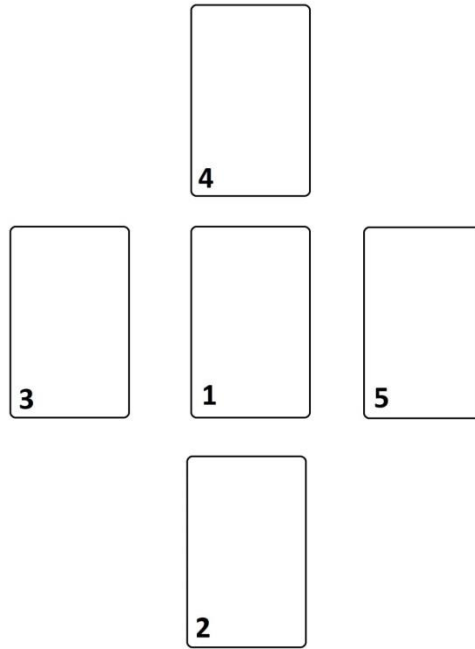
Draw a single card to identify the most important aspect of a particular character's disposition or how that character is being perceived by others.

Identifying the Creative Focus



Fire	<i>Physical Plane</i>	Character to focus on personal aspirations, ambitions, creation, passions, and need for validation. What motivates your character? What story lines does this character initiate or drive forward? Think on the character's body, physical appearance, and also what it is this character seeks to accomplish.
Water	<i>Emotional Plane</i>	Character to focus on home, the domestic sphere, love, romance, relationships, or coming to terms with his or her emotions. What emotions is this character feeling? How does this character approach interpersonal relationships? How does this character's relationships with family and friends affect thoughts and actions?
Air	<i>Mental Plane</i>	Think about the character's dialogue. How does the character communicate (or not communicate) to others? How much of the character's thoughts is kept silent, how much is actually expressed to others, and what thoughts or communications does the character distort, intentionally or unintentionally?
Earth	<i>Material Plane</i>	Character to focus on material success or how this character utilizes his or her available resources. Character seeks security and stability. Perhaps this is a more pragmatic or practical character. What are the character's resources? What is the character's social status? How do these aspects of the character affect his or her choices?

Applying the Simple Cross Spread



Card 1	<i>The Signifier</i>	Most important aspect of the character's disposition and/or how that character is being perceived by others.
Card 2	<i>Motivation</i>	The underlying motivation behind the character's thoughts and actions.
Card 3	<i>Past Influences</i>	The past influences and experiences of the character that has the most impact on the character's motivations and forward drive.
Card 4	<i>Thoughts</i>	The character's thoughts, speculations, hopes or fears that have yet to manifest in the character's life, but that the character wishes would manifest (or in the alternative, fears might manifest).
Card 5	<i>Progress Projection</i>	Where the character is headed; most likely next step or future outcome for the character.

Using Tarot to Plot a Narrative

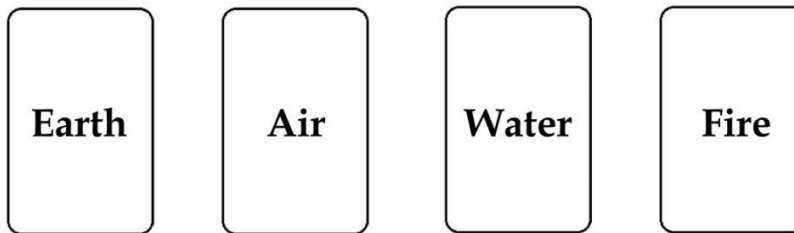
One-Card Draw

Story Divination. What will happen next in the story arc of your project? What should my next poem, verse, or work of art be about?

Divining for Inspiration.

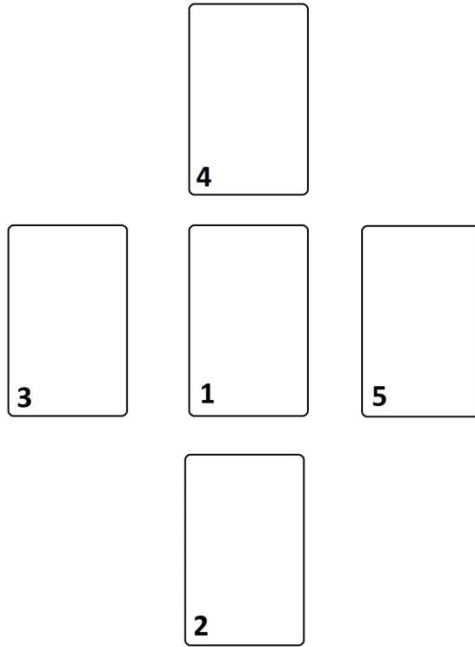
- What should I focus on next?
- What should my next poem be about?
- What do I write about in the next chapter?
- Sequentially, what should happen next?

Identifying the Creative Focus



Fire	<i>Physical Plane</i>	Next scene, verse, step, phase, or vignette to be centered around the body, the creation of something, letting an inner passion manifest on the physical plane. The next scene should express motivations, ambitions, aspirations, or resolve an issue related to personal validation.
Water	<i>Emotional Plane</i>	Next scene, verse, step, phase, or vignette to be centered around character relationships or emotions, the internal sphere, or desires. The next scene should be about relationships, love, family, friendships, or home. What are the personal vulnerabilities?
Air	<i>Mental Plane</i>	Next scene, verse, step, phase, or vignette to be centered around rational thought, intellectualism, knowledge, or wisdom. Think also on conflicts and conflict resolution. The next scene should introduce or further develop a conflict.
Earth	<i>Material Plane</i>	Next scene, verse, step, phase, or vignette to be centered around attainment, use of resources or how resources are used, abundance or poverty, striving for material success, or striving to materialize our dreams. What is it that conveys security or insecurity?

Applying the Simple Cross Spread



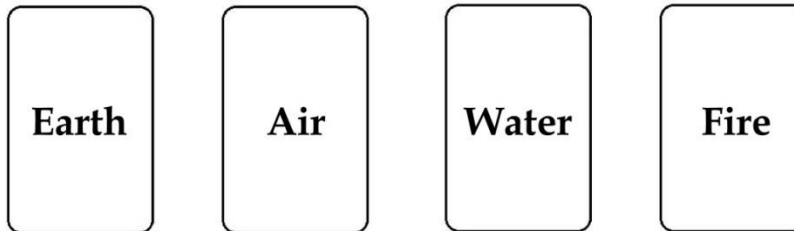
Card 1	<i>Starting Point</i>	This card expresses where the narrative is going to begin. This card inspires and triggers the starting point of the plot segment in question.
Card 2	<i>Underlying Theme</i>	This card expresses the underlying theme, driving forces, or motivation that pushes the plot forward.
Card 3	<i>Past Influences</i>	This card expresses any past events that are going to be influential on this particular plot segment. Issues raised by certain past events are going to come to a head here.
Card 4	<i>Thoughts, Exposition</i>	This card expresses thoughts that take place within the characters' or narrator's minds. This card can also inspire the exposition. Use this card to think on descriptions, and also how hopes or fears are going to be expressed.
Card 5	<i>Future, End Point</i>	This card is "what's next." This is where the plot segment in question is headed. This card inspires what you write about as you journey from Card 1, the starting point.

Exploring Your Themes

One-Card Draw

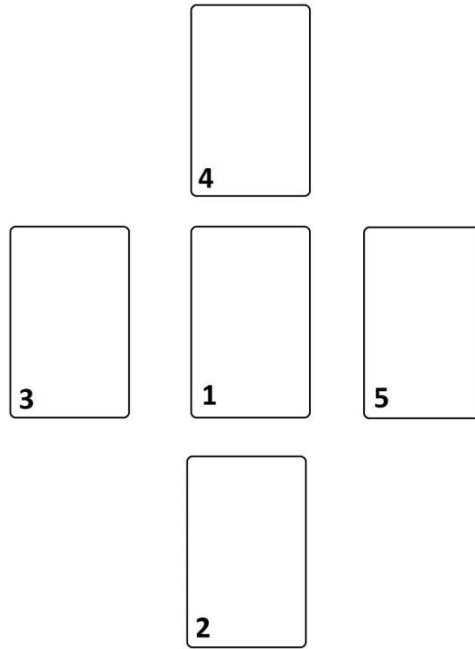
Understanding Theme. What is the theme or underlying engine of the narrative?

Identifying the Creative Focus



Fire	<i>Physical Plane</i>	To drive the theme forward, consider issues related to body image, physical wellness, passions, ambitions, what motivates us to act, or what ignites us.
Water	<i>Emotional Plane</i>	To drive the theme forward, consider emotions, interpersonal relationships, home, family, love, romance, and feelings.
Air	<i>Mental Plane</i>	To drive the theme forward, consider how we rationalize the events in our lives, the pursuit of knowledge or wisdom, the legacies we wish to leave behind and have our loved ones inherit, or how we communicate to the world.
Earth	<i>Material Plane</i>	To drive the theme forward, consider issues related to security, insecurity, social class, attainment of wealth, how we use our resources or what happens when we lack resources.

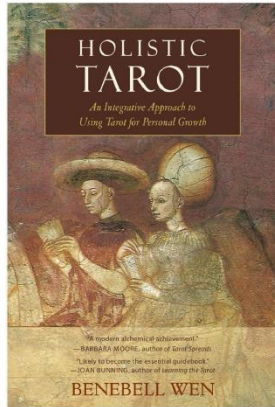
Applying the Simple Cross Spread



Card 1	<i>Thematic Concept</i>	What your creative work is about; the underlying engine of the narrative.
Card 2	<i>Recurring Motif</i>	What is a recurring motif in the creative work that drives the theme forward?
Card 3	<i>Your Past Experience</i>	What aspects of your own personal past experience, as the creator, affect the theme that is being explored in your creative work?
Card 4	<i>Highest Aspiration</i>	What is being sought? What is at stake? What needs to be accomplished? What are the hopes and fears that drive the narrative forward?
Card 5	<i>Forward Movement</i>	How the theme will be advanced; the creator's next course of action to drive the theme forward.

Notes and Final Comments

Learning Tarot for Yourself



Holistic Tarot: An Integrative Approach to Using Tarot for Personal Growth

Paperback: 896 pages

Publisher: North Atlantic Books

Publication Date: January 6, 2015

Distributor: Random House

Language: English

ISBN-10: 158394835X

ISBN-13: 978-1583948354

Product Dimensions: 6 x 2.1 x 9 inches

Note: *Holistic Tarot* is a reference book based on the Rider-Waite-Smith tradition.

For Creative Professionals: Tarot Decks to Consider

Rider-Waite-Smith

Cf. Tarot de Marseille or Thoth

- The Rider Tarot (U.S. Games)
- Universal Waite (U.S. Games)
- Albano-Waite (U.S. Games)
- The Original Rider Waite (U.S. Games)
- Waite-Smith Centennial (U.S. Games)
- Universal Tarot (Llewellyn)

Other Tarot or Oracle Decks for Triggering Creativity

- The Wild Unknown by Kim Krans (Self-Published)
- Voyager Tarot by James Wanless (Fair Winds Press)
- *Synthesis of Several Traditional Decks, with Keywords: Deck of the Bastard* by Seven Stars (Self-Published)
- *Poets and Writers: The Poet Tarot* by Kelli Russell Agodon & Annette Spaulding-Convy (Two Sylvias Press)
- *Visual Artists: Mary-el Tarot* by Marie White (Schiffer Publishing)
- *Fantasy Fiction Writers: Oracle of the Hidden Realms* by Colette Baron-Reid (Hay House); *Witches Tarot* by Ellen Dugan (Llewellyn)
- *Romance Novelists: Psychic Tarot for the Heart* by John Holland (Hay House)

Getting a Professional Tarot Reading

List of Professional Readers for Creative Professionals

The following is a referral list of tarot professionals who are experienced with reading for artists, writers, and musicians about their creative projects and helping them trigger creative-intuition. When contacting, please include in the subject line, "Tarot Reading Request."

<p>Erica Walker Adams Denver, Colorado ericawalkeradams@gmail.com www.ericawalkeradams.com</p>	<p>Sheilaa Hite The Berkshires, W. Massachusetts In2itivone@aol.com www.SheilaaHite.com</p>	<p>Langston Ponce Blonde Wizard Tarot Niagara Falls, Ontario blondewizard30@gmail.com <i>Etsy Shop: BlondeWizardTarot</i></p>
<p>Melissa Ceynowa Little Fox Tarot St. Louis, Missouri mcynova@gmail.com www.littlefoxtarot.com</p>	<p>Kate Daily Tarot Girl Vancouver, Canada tarotreadingsbykate@hotmail.com www.daily-tarot-girl.com</p>	<p>James Ricklef Studio City, California jwricklef@hotmail.com jamesricklef.wordpress.com</p>
<p>Lisa De St. Croix Santa Fe, New Mexico lisadestcroix@hotmail.com lisadestcroix.blogspot.com</p>	<p>Jenna Matlin Queen of Wands Tarot Philadelphia, Pennsylvania jenna@queenofwandstarot.net www.queenofwandstarot.net</p>	<p>Nadine Bernadette Roberts Merseyside, England nadinebroberts@hotmail.co.uk www.nadine-roberts.co.uk</p>
<p>Kooch Daniels Cyber Mystic Sonoma, California mysticarts4u@yahoo.com www.cybermystic.com</p>	<p>Teresa Michelsen Tarot Moon Olympia, WA thrysse@tarotmoon.com www.tarotmoon.com</p>	<p>Anita Perez Luminaria Star Norway, Maine LuminariaStar@gmail.com spiritualnetworks.com/Luminaria_Star</p>
<p>Christiana Gaudet Lutz, Florida christiana@tarotbychristiana.com www.christianagaudet.com</p>	<p>Ashley Oppon Dreadlock Tarot East Windsor, New Jersey DreadlockTarot@gmail.com www.dreadlocktarot.com</p>	<p>Prudence J M Theriault Valatie, New York TarotbyPrudence@aol.com www.prudencetheriault.com</p>
<p>Kristine Gorman Visionary Woman Tarot Sonoma, California www.tarottattoo.com</p>	<p>Hilary Parry Tarot by Hilary Tarrytown, New York tarrytowntarot@gmail.com www.tarotbyhilary.com</p>	<p>Diane Brandt Wilkes Philadelphia, Pennsylvania dianewilkes@comcast.net www.tarotpassages.com</p>
<p>Sasha Graham Tarot Diva New York, New York sashatarotdiva@gmail.com www.sashagraham.com</p>	<p>Arwen Lynch Poe Tarot by Arwen Austin, Texas readings@tarotbyarwen.com www.tarotbyarwen.com</p>	<p>Summer T. Wind The Redwood Wizard Little Rock, Arkansas summer@redwoodwizard.com www.redwoodwizard.com</p>