

3.2 First Reading with the I Ching

In Carl Jung's Foreword to Wilhelm's translations of the I Ching, he characterizes one school of thought on what's powering the divinatory accuracy of the Oracle—spiritual agencies. "These powers form, as it were, the living soul of the book."¹ Despite his skepticism toward that school of thought, he ventures to ask a question of the Oracle, as if they were a friend of his—"Why not venture a dialogue with an ancient book that purports to be animated?"² Jung then shares his interpretation of the I Ching's guidance. He had inquired about how to proceed with writing that Foreword for Wilhelm, and what value the Wilhelm text would contribute to I Ching studies.³

The aspiration of knowledge and conversation with your Holy Guardian Angel found in Western ceremonial magic is not too different a psychic exercise from Jung's venture to hold a conversation with the I Ching as if they were a personal friend. Divination, at its most secular expression, is a conversation between you and a randomized set of symbols—you commence a dialectical discourse with yourself in an effort to interpret those symbols.

For this exercise, and in the interest of keeping it simple, we'll be working with a non-traditional divinatory method, though one inspired by 12th century ritual techniques. Place a coin on the Figure 3.16 sigil, then speak aloud, addressing the Book as if they were a friend. "I have a question for you," you'll say. Meanwhile your coin is on the square sigil below. Then ask your question.

The side of the coin designated "Heads" shall be Yang.



The side of the coin designated "Tails" shall be Yin.



Toss the coin once. In the table cell below designated Line 1, draw the corresponding Yang or Yin line based on whether your coin turned up Heads or Tails.









































































Toss the coin a second time. Draw the corresponding Yang or Yin coding in Line 2. Toss the coin a third time. Draw the corresponding Yang or Yin coding in Line 3. Continue for a total of six tosses until all lines are filled with your results.

Line 6	
Line 5	
Line 4	
Line 3	
Line 2	
Line 1	

¹ Jung, foreword to *I Ching or Book of Changes: The Richard Wilhelm Translation*, xxv – xxvi.

² Ibid, xxvi.

³ "I have questioned the I Ching as one questions a person whom one is about to introduce to friends: one asks whether or not it will be agreeable to him. In answer the I Ching tells me of its religious significance, of the fact that at present it is unknown and misjudged, of its hope of being restored to a place of honor." Ibid, xxviii.

	Qian Heaven		Dui Lake		Li Fire		Zhen Thunder		Xun Wind		Kan Water		Gen Mountain		Kun Earth
	1 Qian Creative Power		43 Guai Decisive Action		14 Da You Accolades		34 Da Zhuang Great Power		9 Xiao Chu Cultivate Gently		5 Xu Patience		26 Da Chu Cultivate Supremely		11 Tai Harmony
	10 Lu Treading		58 Dui Joyous Exchange		38 Kui Opposition		54 Gui Mei Marrying Maiden		61 Zhong Fu Faith Within		60 Jie Boundaries		41 Sun Debilitation		19 Lin Spring is Coming
	13 Tong Ren Fellowship		49 Ge Revolution		30 Li The Spark		55 Feng Opulence		37 Jia Ren The Family		63 Ji After the Ending		22 Bi Luminosity		36 Ming Yi Darkening the Light
	25 Wu Wang Without Folly		17 Sui Inspiring Followers		21 Shih He Bite Through		51 Zhen Jolt		42 Yi Burgeoning		3 Tun Initial Challenge		27 Yi Nourishment		24 Fu Repose
	44 Gou Improper Meeting		28 Da Gua Undertake the Great		50 Ding The Cauldron		32 Heng Endurance		57 Xun Use Gentle Force		48 Jing Fountainhead		18 Gu Decay		46 Sheng Hoist
	6 Song The Trial		47 Kun Blockade		64 Wei Ji Toward the End		40 Jie Release of Tension		59 Huan Making Waves		29 Kan The Abyss		4 Meng Naivete		7 Shi The Army
	33 Dun Withdraw		31 Xian Mutual Accord		56 Lu The Wanderer		62 Xiao Guo Attention to Detail		53 Jian Steadfast		39 Jian An Impasse		52 Gen Listen to the Wind		15 Qian Modesty
	12 Fou Stalemate		45 Cui Assembly		35 Jin Advancement		16 Yu Enthusiasm		20 Guan Observation		8 Bi Alliance		23 Bo Partition		2 Kun Supportive Power

If your closest and dearest of friends had, in full candor, given you that same or similar response to what you had said, how would you react toward your friend? Lean in to those emotions and direct that back to the Oracle, responding emotionally just as you would to your friend.

Free-write your emotional reaction to the Oracle's message:

Conclude your reading, closing this workbook, and seek out a different activity for now. Return when you've had sufficient time to reflect on the Oracle's answer.

Endeavoring to be as objective and impartial as you can be, emotionally detached from the matter, free-write an analytical, well-reasoned response to the Oracle message:

When ready, proceed on to study of the next chapter. There will be several more chapters of study before we get to instructions on traditional long-form divination methods.