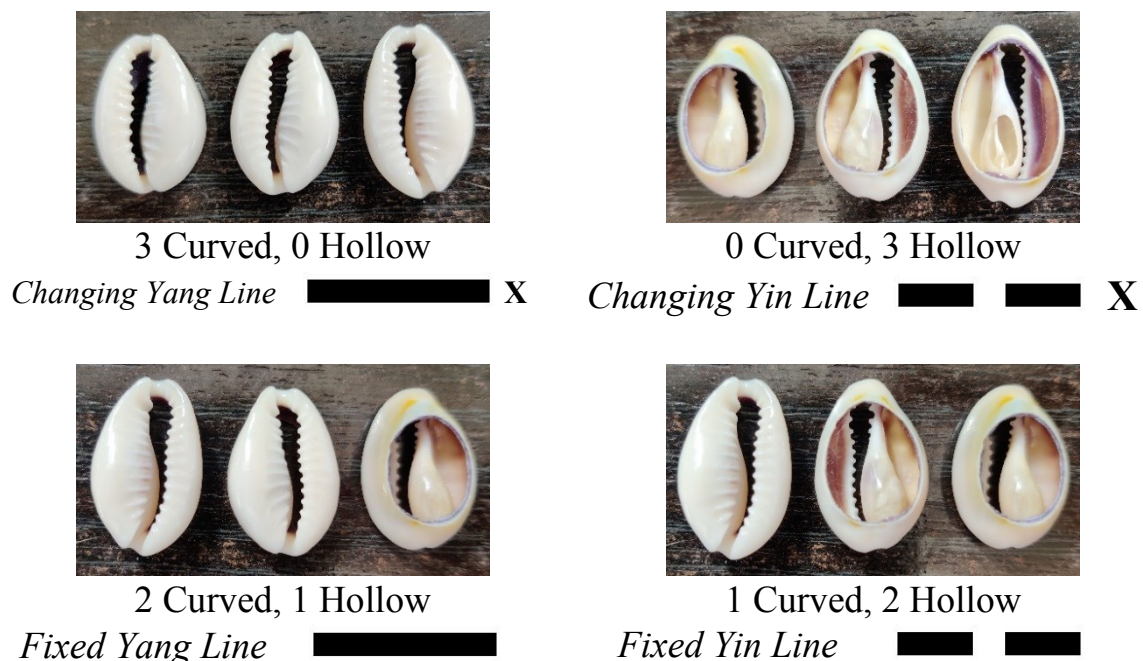


7.6 An I Ching Reading by the Cowrie Shell Toss Method

Figure 7.9 Reference for the Cowrie Shell Toss Method



Wash your hands and three cowrie shells and as you do so, envision a white light beaming down from above the crown of your head, creating a current that runs down your arms, out your hands to illuminate the shells and consecrate the waters that are cleansing them. Thoroughly dry your hands and the three shells.

Light incense and sit comfortably in stillness for a moment. Take a few slow, deep breaths, and set your text, *I Ching, The Oracle* to the right side of your work space.

Hold the three cowrie shells in your dominant hand, the hand you tend to rely on the most for the occupational work that you do. If you are ambidextrous are the nature of your work calls for equal reliance on both hands, cup the cowrie shells with both.

Recite:

I call upon the Eternal Tao to open the door of Mysteries to me. Show me my path to greatest prosperity. I seek abundance so that neither I nor those who rely on me will ever be without. Reveal what it is I most need to know right now.

Exchange and pass the cowries from one hand to the next, back and forth and repeat the recitation two more times. You will now have recited the invocation prayer three times.

Toss the three cowries together as you would with the coins. I observe the I follow the Meaning and Principle tradition of heads and tails assignment.

Proceed with the six tosses. Between each toss, pass and exchange the cowries between your hands, back and forth before tossing. Note the results in the following format:

			Primary Hexagram	X	Transformed Hexagram
6	Curved	Hollow			
5	Curved	Hollow			
4	Curved	Hollow			
3	Curved	Hollow			
2	Curved	Hollow			
1	Curved	Hollow			
			HEXAGRAM #:		HEXAGRAM #:

PRIMARY HEXAGRAM

THE ORACLE | **Hexagram Theme Summary.** The initial box of text in the hexagram entry summarizes the divinatory message. This will give you a brief recapitulation of your reading. Copy down what resonates from “The Oracle” boxed section of your Primary Hexagram.



Lower Trigram Result:

Lower Trigram. Review the metaphysical correspondences for the lower trigram from Chapter 5 of the text. The lower trigram can often indicate people or personalities involved, the human factor, physical environmental factors and influences, or what’s at the foundation. Take note of this trigram’s correspondences and list them out in the space below:

Free-write your first impressions on what this lower trigram is telling you, per the above-noted correspondences, about root causation, foundations, and origination points as it relates to your question.

What is the Wu Xing correspondence to the Lower Trigram? Note it below in the box to the left, then turn to its entry in Chapter 6 of the text and take note of its associations.

Upper Trigram Result:

Upper Trigram. Review the metaphysical correspondences for the upper trigram. Upper trigram indicates karmic, spiritual, or predestined influences. This is Spirit. The Upper Trigram reveals Heaven's Will and direct counsel coming to you from Spirit.

What is the Wu Xing correspondence to the Upper Trigram? Note it below in the box to the left, then turn to its entry in Chapter 6 of the text and take note of its associations.

Does the Wu Xing correspondence of the Lower Trigram nourish, yield to, or weaken the Wu Xing correspondence of the Upper Trigram? You can find these alchemical references in Chapter 6. Note the alchemical reaction between these two Phases, or Movements.

IF YOUR RESULT IS A SINGLE LOCKED HEXAGRAM

IF YOU RECEIVED CHANGING LINES, THEN SKIP THIS SECTION ENTIRELY AND GO TO THE SECTION “TRANSFORMED HEXAGRAM.”

Follow the interpretive process as noted for the primary hexagram. A locked hexagram means all forces at play have matured and now we’re just waiting for the aftermath. The forces at play have already been simmering for far too long a time. Free-write what you think the implications of your locked hexagram result might be.

Read all six of the line statements of your single locked hexagram. Start with Line 1 and progress to Line 6. They will shed light on the matter at hand chronologically. Line 1 represents the past and earlier in time, the early movements of the forces at play. Line 6 represents the forecast of what’s to come. Free-write a summary synthesizing these six lines and what they, collectively, seemed to be saying to you about your situation. *(Additional space provided on subsequent page.)*

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Hexagram Ruler. Focus on Line 5 of your locked hexagram. The fifth line is the crux of the Oracle's message for you. Read the statement for Line 5 as the answer to the inquiry. In the space below, copy down any text that resonates strongly and free-write your interpretation of Line 5.

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Spiritual Guidance. As a supplement to the answer, I'll read Line 6 as spiritual guidance for navigating the situation at hand. Note your impressions of Line 6.

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Review the lower and upper trigrams as noted for the primary hexagram. Look to the upper trigram as the key to how you might want to spell-craft, pray, or petition for the best possible outcome for the situation. Take notes on what corrective metaphysical action you might take, as guided by the upper trigram of your locked hexagram.

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IF YOU RECEIVED A LOCKED SINGLE HEXAGRAM FOR YOUR RESULT WITH NO CHANGING LINES, END HERE.

CHANGING LINE(S)

Bold Text Line Statements. The bold text line statements corresponding with each of the six lines or *yao* are translations of the statements attributed to the Duke of Zhou in the Zhouyi. Conceptualize these line statements as riddles that you need to work on solving. How you interpret these riddles will reveal the answer. Changing lines are the Oracle's concrete advice to you, revealing what's going to happen and what actions to take going forward to ensure the best possible outcome for yourself.

Annotations and Commentaries. The text underneath the statements in bold are my annotations and commentaries to give some context to the line statements. These serve a supplementary purpose only.

Read the Line Text. Copy down into the space below what resonates and free-write your interpretation of this Oracle message.

Assess the Number of Changing Lines. If there is only one changing line, the solution to the matter and action required for the best possible outcome is going to be straightforward. If, however, you have three or more changing lines, the situation right now is quite volatile. There is still a lot of uncertainty, due in large part to your own indecisiveness. Note what the number of changing lines in your reading result conveys to you.

Refer to Table 7.19, Changing Lines Position Correspondences reprinted on the subsequent page. The corresponding Changing Lines in your reading imply specific areas of life to focus on and what the Line Text of these Changing Lines are trying to tell you.

Corresponding Meaning of the Line Positions. Summarizing the various traditions of interpretation covered earlier in this chapter, which of the six lines are changing may have certain implications:

Table 7.19 Changing Lines Position Correspondences

Line 6	Greater spiritual forces at play; karma or destiny. Hand of God, or Acts of God. Extenuating circumstances beyond your control caused this situation, and your own actions are not to blame. Now, what matters is how you respond to what has happened. A changing sixth line can also indicate that one chapter is coming to an end and a new one is beginning. Transition phase. Heading into a figurative afterlife.
Line 5	<i>HEXAGRAM RULER.</i> A changing fifth line can be a sign that executive leadership or decision-making is needed from you. In the situation at hand, your action will have a significant impact on others. A sign that what's to come will have long-term implications.
Line 4	Interpersonal relationships, matters of the heart, emotional responses, or family matters are key factors. Could also be a sign that decisive action must be taken now. Time is of the essence. If you do not act quickly or implement change immediately, you might lose your window of opportunity.
Line 3	Legal matters, civil, or social affairs are key factors at play. This could also indicate the moment in the narrative arc that the plot thickens. Complications. Conflicts. Oppositional forces have the most impact on the situation at hand.
Line 2	Physical health, medical, or technological factors at play. Could also indicate the moment that a situation is beginning to gain momentum. Blooming and developmental phase.
Line 1	Short-term financial or economic factors at play. Situation is still at the onset or beginnings of the narrative arc. This is still the initial setup for what's to come. Decisions made will only have short-term implications.

TRANSFORMED HEXAGRAM

THE ORACLE | Hexagram Theme Summary. The initial box of text in the transformed hexagram entry gives a brief summary of the “what if.” This is all prophecy and future or forward-looking projections, but based on the current trajectory, and therefore fairly accurate projections of what's to come.

Upper Trigram. This trigram is your key when spell-crafting, praying, or petitioning for a positive outcome to your situation. The nature of actions corresponding with the Wu Xing phase of your transformed hexagram's upper trigram is the final message of what action to take in direct response to what's going on.

Upper Trigram of the Transformed Hexagram:

Look to the upper trigram of the transformed hexagram as the key to how you might want to spell-craft, pray, or petition for the best possible outcome for the situation. Take notes on what corrective metaphysical action you might take, as guided by the upper trigram of your locked hexagram.

What is the Wu Xing correspondence to the Upper Trigram of your Transformed Hexagram? Note it below in the box to the left, then turn to its entry in Chapter 6 of the text and take note of its associations.

Does the Wu Xing correspondence of the Lower Trigram of your Primary Hexagram nourish, yield to, or weaken the Wu Xing correspondence of the Upper Trigram of your Transformed Hexagram? Note the alchemical reaction between these two Phases, or Movements.

If-Then Statements from the Primary Hexagram’s Changing Lines. The corresponding changing lines in the transformed hexagram relate directly with the same changing line number from the primary hexagram. The primary hexagram’s changing line is the “if” and the transformed hexagram’s same changing line is the “then.” It helps to write out the bold riddle-like line statements from the primary side by side with the bold riddle-like line statements from the transformed.

IF... (take notes on the Line Text from the Primary Hexagram)

THEN... (take notes on the Text from the same Line of the Transformed Hexagram)

A blank sheet of white paper featuring a light gray grid. The grid consists of horizontal and vertical lines forming small squares across the entire page. There are no margins or additional markings.