

Who are You in the Tarot?

By Geraldine Amaral

Man's main task in life is to give birth to himself.

~ Erich Fromm

Tarot Cards operate through symbolic, non-rational and subconscious aspects of awareness. This is the same state from which dreams communicate to the conscious mind. The Tarot deck is a visual map of our psyche and a symbolic system that offers insight and new perspectives in every aspect of our lives: matters of the heart, career and financial matters, personal motives and spiritual development. This Tarot "map" shows the spiritual growth and evolution of each one of us. These symbols emanate from the unconscious and show us a template for our lives. We see examples of both our day-to-day living experiences (as displayed in the Minor Arcana) as well as the themes in our spiritual journey (as portrayed in the Major Arcana) in these universal images.

Furthermore, each one of us has a variety of personal "identity" cards in the 78 cards of the Tarot Deck. These identity cards, which are based on a person's birth date, reveal information about our inner and outer selves and help us to understand the various stages in our development and functioning. Most of these Tarot identity cards are referred to as the Life Time Tarot Cards. They are easy to calculate.



Birth Card

To determine your Birth Card (also the same as your Birth Number), you would add the month, day and year of your birth in a column (see example). If your birth date is March 12, 1955, you would add the numbers:

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \\ 12 \\ \hline 1955 \\ 1970 \end{array}$$

Then add the integers across, like this: $1 + 9 + 7 + 0 = 17$. In this case the birth number is 17 and therefore, the Birth Card is the Star Card. You can further reduce this number as follows: $add\ 1 + 7 = 8$. This reduced number, related to your birth number and card, is part of your

birth energy. In this case, the reduced number is the Strength card, Key #8 of the Major Arcana. Some authors consider this second card to portray the lessons and challenges in your life path. Generally speaking, these Birth Cards are the primary symbols of our karma for this lifetime. Karma is the accumulated pattern of life experiences prior to birth. It shows your path in this lifetime, with suggestions as to both strengths and weaknesses. The Birth Card is your essence. It may also show the gifts you brought into this lifetime. Also, some authors see the Birth Card as representing our soul's purpose.

Current Year Card

To determine your Current Year card, add the month and day of your birth to the current year. Example: For a birth date of March 12:

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \\ 12 \\ \hline 2008 \\ 2023 \end{array}$$

Then add the individual integers again: $2 + 0 + 2 + 3 = 7$. In this case, the Current Year card corresponds to Key #7 of the Major Arcana, the Chariot card. The current year card shows you the overall theme of the year. Its influence is felt from birthday to birthday. In the example above, the Chariot card is the year card from March 2 of 2008 to March 2 of 2009.

Astrological Correspondence Cards

There are also cards that correspond to your astrological sign. These are as follows:

Aries would correspond to the Emperor - Headstrong, decisive, showing initiative, independent, self aware, logical and rational

Taurus would be The Hierophant - Protective, stubborn, loyal, resourceful, productive, stable, traditional

Gemini would be The Lovers - Loquacious, two-sided, outgoing, rational, intelligent, skillful, communicative

Cancer: The Chariot - Domestic, nurturing, private, protective, sensitive, secure, proactive

Leo: Strength - Dramatic, optimistic, fun-loving, proud, creative, demonstrative, warm, compassionate

Virgo: The Hermit - Organized, practical, industrious, discriminating, critical, analytical, efficient, spiritually minded

Libra: Justice - Harmony-seeking, flirtations, balancing, diplomatic, fair-minded, karma

Scorpio: Death - Intense, secretive, muddy, transformative, regenerating, renewal, symbolic change

Sagittarius: Temperance - Adventurous, inquisitive, philosophical, expansive, searching for meaning, good mixing of ingredients

Capricorn is The Devil -

Competent, status-conscious, acquisitive, accomplished, structured, organized, aware of inner issues

Aquarius is the The Star - Philanthropic, idealistic, creative, original, rebellious, agent of change, positive energy, hopeful

Pisces: The Moon - Dreamy, sensitive, intuitive, compassionate, sacrificing, idealistic

Court Cards

And the last Tarot identity cards we will include in our explorations are the Court Cards. There are lots of ways to ascertain the Court Card that represents oneself, but my favorite way to find this correspondence is to choose it, by a process of elimination. Begin by removing all 16 of the Court Cards from your Tarot deck. That would be Page, Knight, Queen and King of each suit (Cups, Wands, Pentacles and Swords). The goal is to select the Court Card that you most identify with. Begin by flipping through these 16 cards, one at a time. You may want to start by eliminating those cards that are least like you. Don't worry about what the Court Cards mean or what you may already know about the meaning of a card, just look at the image and respond from your intuition. Keep eliminating cards that are NOT like you. Place these in a separate pile for now. What characteristics did you use in the elimination process? Answers may include hair color, gender, age, facial expressions, personality traits conveyed in the image, and the like.

Once you have whittled down the selection process to a few

cards, proceed to choose one card that is most like you and one card that is least like you. This second card may represent some aspect of your shadow (personality traits you would rather not acknowledge to yourself or to the world). Once you have selected both these cards, jot down some initial thoughts you might have about how the first card is like you and how the second card is not like you. The first Court Card that you selected, that most resembles you, is often called the Significator. It is the Court Card that embodies you physically.

Determining Your DNA Tarot Card

If there is such a thing as a DNA Tarot card, how would you determine it? And of what value would it be to you? It is believed that we carry our DNA (Deoxyribonucleic acid) in every cell of our body. DNA is passed from parents to child, and it is often compared to a set of blueprints, or even a recipe. It contains the instructions needed to build other components of our cells as well as instructions for how the entire being develops and functions. It is the container of our genetic makeup. If you watch any of the CSI TV programs, you know that DNA identifies an individual's unique genetic makeup. It is sometimes referred to as the "molecule of heredity."

Tarot cards are also a "blueprint," providing a "recipe" for how we experience our lives -- the images contain the ingredients that capture our human condition from childhood experiences, adolescent education, marriage, finance, issues around confronting death and so on. For example, the Empress card portrays the template, or

archetype for mother while the Emperor shows us the template for father. On some level, each Tarot card contains the DNA possibilities, or blueprint, depicted in the card.

To determine which Tarot card is your DNA card, place all five of identity the cards that you have just calculated or chosen in a row, as follows:



Now slowly and carefully look at each of these five cards. With which card do you *most* resonate? Which card points to your identity at a deep level? Which card best shows you what is in your protoplasm? Choose the card that best captures who you are at this cellular level of your being. Take that one card now and set the others aside. I call this your DNA card – it captures what you came into lifetime carrying with you. It shows you your path, your work, your mission, so to speak – your soul purpose. It shows you the energies you brought into this life time when you were born. It helps you to understand both your strengths and your weakness, and your purpose here on earth. You may want to begin by simply journaling with this card, writing down any preliminary ideas you have about what it means to you and how it might be manifesting in your life right now.

I don't really believe in these identity cards from a *predictive point of view*. I don't think they lock us into any particular destiny or path in life, but I do find them to be helpful, useful and even inspirational. They enable us to expand our self-awareness, our consciousness of who we are. We are interested in using the cards for self-understanding because it leads to self-empowerment. In other

words, by learning more about my own personality, I can come to a better understanding of my strengths and weaknesses. I may also learn what inner beliefs and patterns are operating in some life difficulty. From what my DNA card shows me about myself, I can also improve my relationships by understanding the ways in which parts of myself are projected onto others.

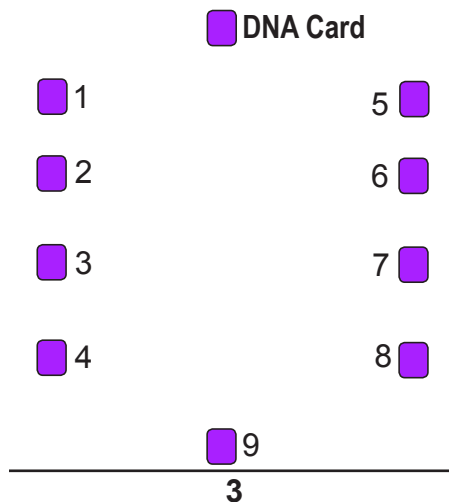
Carl Jung said that the path to healing and wholeness is achieved by integrating all the parts of the self. A fully integrated personality seeks to understand

and accept all parts of himself or herself. That is our goal in working with the DNA card – learning to integrate *all* parts of the self. The Tarot figures correspond to Jung's theory of archetypes, and it is these archetypal images in our unconscious that we need to recognize and understand if we are to achieve self-realization. Don't worry about what your DNA cards "means" – just let the images, the symbolism and the metaphors on the cards communicate to you. Exploring your DNA card is an attempt to have awareness, a consciousness about ourselves. We can never change anything about ourselves until we make it conscious. Once made conscious, we can then observe ourselves ... and only then begin to make changes.

You can explore the energies of your DNA Tarot Card even more, with the *Who are You* Tarot spread below:

Who are You Tarot Spread

Begin this reading, like any other casting of the cards, with shuffling and deep breathing. You may want to light a candle and be sure to bless the deck, invoking the highest and best spiritual energies for the reading. Place your DNA card as the first card. The remaining cards will be selected randomly. Lay the cards out one-by-one, study them carefully. I recommend that you keep this spread out for a while. Let it cook ... see what happens.



1. Current Strengths: Positive attributes that need to be emphasized or focused upon

2. Current Weaknesses: Negative characteristics that need to be embraced or released

3. My Birth Right and Personal Power: That which is within my reach that I can seize and reclaim

4. My Cleansing: That which I can slough off to allow me to

step forward into new opportunities; baggage that is bringing me down and hindering my development that I can release

5. My Gifts and Creative Potentials

6. What I Have That Can Help Others

7. What Makes Me Unique

8. What I need to do to Empower Myself

9. What Helps Me Achieve #8 (This is an action step)

At the entrance to the temple of Delphi in ancient Greece, it says, "Man, know thyself and thou will know the universe and the Gods." Perhaps as you investigate your identity cards you will know more about yourself as well as have a glimpse of the wisdom of the cosmos. Erich Fromm said "Man's main task in life is to give birth to himself." With your Tarot DNA card you can continue the journey of birthing your Self, of having a new perspective and consciousness about who you are and why you are. May you know the unconditional love that Spirit has for you on your journey!

NOTE: Once you have calculated your Birth and Current Year Cards, see below for an abridged meaning for each Major Arcana card and how it may impact you.

Major Arcana Definitions

The Fool - 0:

Fresh energy, new possibilities, unlimited possibilities; naiveté, immaturity; point of choice or decision

The Magician - I:

Concentration; focused attention; manifestation; originality, creativity; invention; self-confidence

High Priestess - II:

Intuition; hidden information; inner knowledge; sound judgment; unconscious wisdom; guardian of the truth; intuitive wisdom, psychic ability

Empress - III:

Fertility, abundance; creativity; motherhood, feminine influence; the Great Mother; the creative spark

Emperor - IV:

Authority; reason; organization; worldly power; stability; masculine influence; leadership, logic

Hierophant - V: Belief system; spiritual gateway
s; higher laws; inspiration; religious or spiritual leader; dogma, convention, formal rituals

The Lovers - VI:

Point of decision or choice; love, harmony, trust; sex, but with a spiritual implication; inner resolution of conflicts, "marriage" within oneself

The Chariot - VII:

Success and victory but only through diligence; overcoming adversity through personal responsibility and the will; determination, perseverance

Strength - VIII:

The gentle path towards power; forgiveness and compassion; strength, courage, conviction; spiritual courage; "taming" one's wild side, accepting one's shadow

The Hermit - IX:

Wisdom and counsel, especially spiritual in nature; meditation; vigilance; spiritual growth in solitude or quiet; search for inner light; spiritual healing; finding one's own inner spiritual guidance

Wheel of Fortune - X:

The cycles of life; the course of events; the end of one cycle, start of another; good or bad luck, depending on nearby cards; allows you to see the "big picture"; may help in "reframing" life experiences; finding center of serenity no matter what is occurring externally

Justice - XI:

Absolute fairness, total impartiality; reasonableness; proper balance; just reward; exact numerical center of Major Arcana cards; personifies the "law of reciprocity"

The Hanged Man - XII:

Seeing from a new angle; transitional period; reversal of the mind in a particular matter or way of life; a new and different perspective

Death - XIII:

Change; transformation; release of old, making way for new; end of a familiar or comfortable mode; purification; paradox

Temperance - XIV:

Successful combinations; harmonious blending of forces; moderation, self-control

The Devil - XV:

Enslavement or bondage by false ideas and illusions; spiritual lack or depravity; personification of the "shadow"; negative or destructive life patterns

The Tower - XVI: Awakening; revolution; shattered misconceptions; complete, sudden change; unexpected events; might be “bolt of lightning” because of pride, arrogance or egocentricity; painful progress; a breakthrough of some kind

The Star - XVII: Guiding intelligence; change for the better; hope, promise, optimism, faith; being open and vulnerable; unconditional self acceptance

The Moon - XVIII: Things that are hidden; illusions; obscurity; deceit, false beliefs; misperceptions and misunderstandings; breakdown in communications

or perceptions; subterfuge, hidden agenda

The Sun - XIX: Source of life; liberation; attainment; truth; happiness; warmth, healing, joy; contentment; devotion; pleasure derived from simple things

Judgment - XX: Breaking out of limited thinking or restrictions; limited by past, but not bound by past; ability to tune in to appropriate course of action; implementing your action plan; need to forgive or atone for past mistakes; rejuvenation, rebirth, renewal; immortality or resurrection

The World - XXI: Crystallization; the fullness or the apex; the perfect niche; harmonious

synchronicity; completion; success; fulfillment; synthesis

Geraldine Amaral is the co-author of Tarot Celebrations: Honoring the Inner Voice, publisher of Celebrating the Tarot Journal and creator of Tarot 1-2-3, an instructional video. She conducts a series of unique and creative Tarot classes in the Washington DC area, utilizing Jungian and archetypal psychology. You can contact her at 703-671-7421 or Tarotcelebrations@erols.com or visit her website at www.Tarotcelebrations.com.

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