This 78-card tarot deck, featuring beautifully reimagined archetypes and modern, diverse characters, will guide you as you explore the infinite paths your life can take. With unique interpretations of traditional Rider-Waite-Smith imagery, The Unfolding Path Tarot introduces a dazzling community of animals, plants, and people. This deck's vibrant artwork, insightful guidebook, and extra sprinkle of magic create the perfect compass for self-discovery.

ATHENE NOCTUA is the artist and creator behind several oracle and tarot card decks. Her creative process is deeply meditative and forms a key pillar of her

tative process is deeply meditative and forms a key pillar of her spiritual practice. Placing herself at the service of Spirit, she works to create divination tools that open a channel of communication between us and the Divine. Living deep in the English countryside on a renovated canal barge, her art is inspired by the energies and cycles of life in the natural environment around her.

Cover design: Julie Davison Cover illustration: Athene Noctua







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INTRODUCTION

Merry meet, fellow traveler!

All my life I have been on a creative journey of one sort or another, whether it be drawing, painting, or designing. Over the years, I never imagined my pixelated and paint-smeared path would lead me here. I am so honored and grateful to be able to combine two of the key pillars of my life: my spiritual journey and my journey as an artist. The path to the material manifestation of this tarot deck took many years. I initially began working with card decks over 10 years ago, and this blossomed into the creation of my first two oracle decks. These decks were a form of apprenticeship for me, and something to prepare me, both spiritually and physically, for a work as large in scale as a 78-card tarot deck.

Creating The Unfolding Path Tarot was a fantastic way to connect further with the practice of tarot, and to understand more deeply what the cards represented. I personally struggle to connect with traditional tarot images, so I've tried to instill a real sense of the emotions that lie behind the meanings of each card into the people I'm depicting. These characters have a strong, tangible personality and feel contemporary and relatable.

I spent hours sitting with the original Rider-Waite-Smith tarot artworks to deepen my understanding of the underlying intention of the illustrations, as well as all the ways our vibrant, modern tarot community speaks about and

interprets the individual cards. I thought about the distinct personalities and characteristics of each unique soul pictured, and it became extremely important to me that, in the version of the deck I created, they would be a true reflection of the wonderfully diverse world that we live in. I was very clear when I conceived and planned the deck that age, race, gender, sexuality, and ability would all be beautifully represented in my deck. I wanted to create a modern tarot deck for the world we all live in, with a lovely extra dollop of magic.

Experiencing the creative journey of illustrating each card and learning from the tarot as it guided has been an incredible gift. I hope you will recognize a kindred spirit and an honest friend in *The Unfolding Path Tarot* and come

to feel just as much delight and connection to your deck as I do to mine.

I wish you many happy, curious, and enlightening journeys along your own ever-unfolding path.

> Brightest blessings, Athene

TAROT BASICS

Tarot decks can be wonderful friends and guides. Approach your cards with the knowledge that the Divine and your Angels are eager to communicate with you and will use the cards you draw to guide your spiritual journey.

I have come to expect loving honesty from the cards. Sometimes, darker cards will appear, revealing personal challenges and struggles. Real truth contains both shadow and light, and the cards will communicate this effectively. If, during a reading, you receive a card you perceive as "darker," please understand that it is still loving guidance. There is a beautiful balance in tarot, and for every challenging card you will find cards that are overwhelmingly positive, with messages of

happiness and success, and filled with light, hope, and optimism.

Tarot readings are a snapshot of that moment in time. If your outlook and actions change, everything can change. Ultimately, you are the master of your fate.

The tarot deck consists of 78 cards, divided into the 22 Major Arcana cards and the 56 Minor Arcana cards. The Major Arcana, numbered 0-21, represent larger, more universal archetypes. These archetypes are part of our collective unconscious, appearing in stories and as characters we all recognize, from fairy tales to the many gods and goddesses throughout history and across human cultures. They represent the many aspects of the self, both the parts that restrict us and those that set us free. These cards have a strong energy and influence and tend to set the tone for a reading.

The cards of the Minor Arcana are divided into four suits— Wands, Cups, Swords, and Pentacles. These cards tend to deal with everyday matters on a smaller scale than the Major Arcana. They also indicate short-term predicaments. Below is a breakdown of the suits:

WANDS

This suit is associated with the element of fire. Wands speak of willpower, passion, and determination. These cards are high energy and creative. Like fire, they can also be destructive if not handled responsibly.

CUPS

Cups are associated with the element of water and our emotions. You will find that cups speak to intuition and feelings. These cards touch on our relationships, love, and can indicate healing. Like

water, they can be gentle, refreshing and flowing, or deep and dark, crashing and overpowering.

SWORDS

This suit is associated with the element of air. Swords deal with our thoughts, ideas, and communication. This suit can have the sharpness of a sword, symbolizing either clarity or pain and conflict. Like the constantly moving air, this suit is also energetic and mobile, bringing change.

PENTACLES

Pentacles are associated with the element of earth. These cards deal with the material world and tangible resources, such as property, money, and worldly possessions. This suit also speaks to physical health. Like the earth, the energy around pentacles is stable, solid, and supportive.

Some people like to include reverse card interpretations in their readings. While I don't personally use reverse card meanings in my practice, many people find them helpful. If, as you develop in your practice, you feel called to work with reversals, here are three suggestions on how to approach an upside-down card:

- You can read the reversed card as "what energy is stuck." This means that the card's normal energy is not flowing and moving in a healthy fashion in the situation you are inquiring about.
- You can read the reversed card as the opposite energy or meaning of its normal interpretation.
- You can read the reversed card as representing the shadow aspect, or negative

connotations, of the card. Just like people, even mainly positive cards can have shadow aspects. Positive energy in excess can turn less desirable. For example, the impulsive and innocent Fool can become reckless and immature.

USING THE UNFOLDING PATH TAROT

There are a multitude of ways to interpret tarot readings. Reading the cards for yourself is a deeply personal experience, and you should develop a practice that nourishes you. Approach the cards in a way that feels comfortable to you. There is no "right" or "wrong" way to do it. Below is some guidance to get you started.

Seek a quiet spot for your reading, allowing your mood and intuition to guide you. You may find yourself drawn to the outdoors and nature, or perhaps to the intimacy of your bedroom. Take a few moments to breathe deeply and center yourself, especially when you are feeling emotionally charged. The cards in the tarot

deck respond to strong emotions, and it is best to collect yourself first for a more accurate reading. When you are ready, hold the cards up to your heart, taking your time to feel the connection you share with them. Then, addressing the Divine, ask to be given a clear and helpful reading. You might request that your Angels tell you what you need to know in this particular moment to help you understand their message.

As you begin to shuffle, hold a question in your mind and repeat it softly. Avoid asking yes-or-no questions; ask about your own thoughts, feelings, and intentions rather than someone else's. A useful question structure is, "What do I need to know about (insert topic) right now?"

Listen to your intuition to know when you have shuffled the deck sufficiently, then split the cards into three piles and recombine them instinctively. Select the appropriate number of cards for your tarot spread from the top of the deck. If you are instead called to draw them from a different part of the deck, say the bottom or middle, follow that impulse.

As you select the cards, lay them out in your chosen spread.

There are an infinite number of spreads you can use, many of which are time-honored classics, as well as newer spreads developed by other experienced readers. You can also create a spread specific to the situation you are inquiring about. The next section will offer several spread examples to get you started.

CARD SPREADS

When you pull the cards, take note of your initial inner response to each card. Also pay attention to any meaning you apply to it in that moment, even if it later turns out to be different from the meaning in this guide. If there is something in the card imagery that has personal significance for you, honor your intuition.

Here is a selection of simple, common spreads:

SINGLE-CARD SPREAD

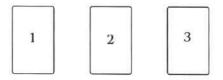
1

This spread is great for a daily morning reading and gives you a card to guide your day. You may be surprised by how the message of the card will manifest over the course of your day! You can also use a single-card spread when seeking clarity on a simple question or problem that doesn't require a very detailed spread.

Two-Card Spread 1 2

Use this to help get a bit more guidance on your options when choosing between two things, especially when you are feeling stuck. This spread can also offer great insight into how you really feel about a particular situation, so pay attention to your emotional response to the cards as well. The two cards can be read as: Option 1/Option 2

THREE-CARD SPREAD

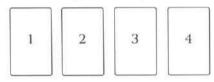


This is a very popular spread as it has so many applications and variations. Perfect for beginners, it's a great way to check in with yourself and your Guides. Here are some ways to interpret these three cards:

- Past/present/future
- 2. Physical/emotional/spiritual
- My role/their role/core issue
- The situation/where does the power lie/how am I supported

These next spreads were created especially for use with this deck:

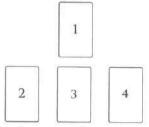
Path to Self-Love (4 Cards)



This spread is great for self-reflection. If you are on a journey of self-discovery and want to find your most fulfilling way of being in this world, make this a regular check-in spread.

- 1. What fulfills me?
- 2. What grounds me?
- 3. What heals me?
- 4. What helps me blossom?

WHERE THE PATH WILL LEAD TODAY (4 CARDS)



For those significant days, when you have big plans, it can be helpful to circle off a little extra time in the morning, and spend it with a spread like this, to prepare for what lies ahead.

- 1. What will today bring?
- 2. What blessings will today hold?
- 3. What test or obstacle might there be?
- 4. How can I best meet this challenge?

My Soul's True Path (6 Cards) 1 2 3 4

5

6

We all have those times in our lives when we aren't really sure what our next step should be. We are unsure of which direction to take to begin the path toward the next thing that is meant for us. This spread serves as a trail marker for this particular moment in time as you move forward on your life's journey.

19

- What is my soul's true path?
- 2. What must be accepted?
- 3. What must be released?
- 4. What is the challenge?
- 5. What is hidden?
- 6. What is my source of wisdom?



O Fool

Potential, beginnings, innocence, blank slate, optimism, naivete, spontaneity, free spirit

Excitement fills the air as something new is about to begin! The Fool calls you to look at the world with fresh, hope-filled eyes, free of cynicism and doubt. This card speaks of new beginnings, new opportunities, and the start of new journeys. Be aware that this fresh path is not without risk, but if you approach it enthusiastically with a sense of curiosity and a willingness to learn, there is the potential for great rewards.

Throw caution to the wind and let your inner child have some fun. After all, children learn through play.

I Magician

Self-empowerment, action, power, manifestation, creation, will, intention, expansive energy

Everything you could possibly need to achieve your goals you already have within you right now. The Magician is here to remind you that you are the magic of the Universe brought to life. Your focused will, used as a driver for your actions, has the power to manifest your dreams. The creative energy of all four elements flows through your veins and the possibilities they offer are infinite. How will you use this energy today?

With such great power at your fingertips also comes the awareness that you carry complete responsibility for determining your own fate.

The power is yours, now use it.

II High Priestess

Mystery, psychic wisdom, sacred knowledge, subconscious, intuition, dreams, inward-facing Divine feminine, that which is hidden

In stillness, look within. The High Priestess rests between the worlds of the conscious and the unconscious, and her arcane wisdom uncovers that which is hidden. She whispers to you to pay attention to the subtle signs and messages from Spirit. Listen more closely to the soft voice of your intuition; your inner sense of knowing is always there to guide you. Turn the light of your attention inward. Is there a subtle comfort or discomfort on this current path?

At this time, the answers lie within.

III Empress

The Mother, outward-facing Divine feminine, warmth, fertility, creativity, sensuality, abundance, nurturing

The Divine feminine, as lusciously embodied by the Empress, radiates her sensuality, fertility, and creativity into the world. She has a fiercely protective maternal energy that shelters those parts of you that are feeling weak or vulnerable. This is encouragement to take care of yourself, and to make time and space to give yourself the things you need to feel loved and nurtured. When the Empress appears, it is often a sign of abundance and blessings.

Standing barefoot on the soft grass of our Mother Earth, look around and acknowledge with gratitude the blessings both big and small.

IV Emperor

The Father, protection, stability, authority, structure, leadership, logic, discipline

The Emperor brings stability, security, and order. He is the authoritative yet loving father figure of the tarot. When receiving this card, ask yourself, is there a need to bring structure and clarity to your world? Is it time to set some boundaries, and then enforce them? You may be entering a time when you will be called on to take up the mantle of leadership. Discipline and efficiency pave the way for success.

Stand up for yourself, your beliefs, and your values.

V Hierophant

Mentor, tradition, spiritual wisdom, teacher, institutions, hierarchy, knowledge-seeking, conformity

A beloved mentor or spiritual guide, the Hierophant is a reliable source of wisdom. There are many paths to the Divine, and you are free to choose the path and traditions that speak to your soul. Have you reached a point in your life where the guidance of established social structures could bring a feeling of harmony and order; or is it time to step away from a doctrine that you were raised in and explore a new path? Consider taking a class or joining a group for further spiritual exploration.

Teachers appear in the most unlikely places; open your heart to learn.

VI Lovers

Love, relationships, choices, duality, union, commitment, desire, aligned values

Two hearts beat a little faster, as there is something new and exciting on the horizon! The Lovers card represents a true and loving relationship and a deep connection. This card can speak of both a romantic relationship or a lasting friendship. The most beautiful relationships succeed because both parties make the commitment, every day, to choose the path of loving with an open heart, and resisting harshness and easy irritation.

The most beautiful love affair is the one you have with yourself. Nurture self-love with as much care as you do romantic love.

VII Chariot

Confidence, willpower, determination, focus, success, action, forward motion, perseverance

Oh, the exhilaration of being fully in your power! Driving your life forward, rising to the challenge. The Chariot calls on you to tap into your willpower and determination. Your goals are achievable when you bring your full focus, perseverance, and pure grit to bare. This is an incredibly high-energy card that brings encouragement and speaks of success. Now is not the time for passivity or "going with the flow." This is a trumpet call to action.

Grab on to the reins of your life and surge forward.

VIII Strongth

Courage, fortitude, resilience, inner strength, self-control, compassion, diplomacy, persuasion

Within you is a deep well of calm, resolute strength. This card speaks of true strength, not the simple and passing strength of flexing muscles, but the powerful enduring strength of your beating heart. With your gentle and powerful spirit, you can overcome whatever obstacles lie in your path. There is no need for aggression or physical force to deal with a situation. Instead, use your compassion to gracefully handle stressful circumstances with confidence and composure.

Your love is your most powerful tool, and the ultimate manifestation of your strength.

IX Hermit

Solitude, withdrawal, introspection, contemplation, meditation, stillness, inner guidance, alone time

Pause for a moment, take some time for yourself, and reconnect with the gentle light of your spirit. This card might have arrived to softly nudge you, if you have begun to be swallowed by the frenetic pace of the world around you, to make space for some alone time and self-care. It can also be a call to deeper spiritual seeking, and a pilgrimage or retreat would be well timed right now. Take the time and space to rekindle your inner pilot light.

Meditation, solitude, and stillness are precious gifts you are worthy of.

X Wheel of Fortune

Fate, Destiny, cycles, luck, unpredictability, transience, karma, turning point

The only constant is change, and the wheel of life is always turning. Fortunes constantly shift. Remember that "bad luck" doesn't last forever, and cherish the good times in their turn. Life is full of so many cycles and seasons, whether they be natural, personal, social, or economic. This can leave you feeling like your life is out of your control, but have faith and know that the wheel continues to turn and soon your circumstances will change. This card can foretell an imminent positive change of fortune.

Even in the depth of your winter, spring is just around the corner.

XI Justice

Fairness, truth, cause and effect, law, honesty, accountability, impartiality, consequences

Our actions have consequences. We are all called to account for our actions and will be judged fairly and without bias. This card's arrival offers the opportunity to take responsibility for yourself and any mistakes you may have made. It speaks of the power and freedom of personal accountability. Is there something you need to own up to, or something that needs correcting? This is an opportunity to learn from your mistakes and grow as a person.

Honest self-reflection can be painful, but it is essential to your ultimate happiness.

XII Hanged

New perspective, surrender, inactivity, stasis, delay, letting go, release control, sacrifice

If you are feeling stuck whether emotionally, spiritually, or in some area of your life-stop for a moment and give yourself time to process your current situation. Is there something you are struggling against or overly attached to? Could now be the time to let go and practice nonattachment? This card suggests that you might be required to make a sacrifice. This sacrifice is needed and will ultimately move you in the right direction when the time is right. In this time of delay or inactivity, take the opportunity to consciously consider your current position from different viewpoints.

A shift in your perspective could shift your world.

XIII Death

Transformation, endings, rebirth, transition, moving on, change, closure, metamorphosis

The Death card is not the harbinger of doom, but rather a foretelling of change or transformation to come. It can also speak of endings and closure. This can be a very good thing, as something that is no longer serving you comes to an end, making space for new possibilities and fresh growth. While not necessarily the end or closure of a major phase of your life, it is a distinct possibility that this is the card's message. If you resist this essential change, it could bring increasing discomfort.

Let go of the old and be ready to embrace the new.

XIV Temperance

Moderation, balance, tranquility, blending, peace, alchemy, patience, thoughtfulness

It's time to return to the middle. Where is there an imbalance in your life? Have you been overdoing it in one area and neglecting another? Being overly focused on one thing can have negative consequences. Now is the time to apply the magic of alchemy. Merge and blend your contrasting aspects, ideas, goals, and roles to bring harmony and peace. By mixing different talents, opinions, or desires, you can create something new and beautiful. Moderate yourself and, with thoughtfulness and patience, walk the center path.

Can you find a way to cooperate and compromise?

XV Devil

Addiction, shadow self, temptation, discontent, helplessness, negativity, attachment, restriction

This card challenges you to look honestly at the darker, hidden areas of your life and bring them up and into the light. Are you entangled in something that holds you back from being the best version of yourself? Are there patterns of behavior or addiction that keep you trapped? Acknowledging what holds you down is the necessary first step to breaking free. Don't be fooled into thinking it will be easy. It will require perseverance and willpower, and you may stumble along the way, but freedom is possible.

You have the power to free yourself, if you choose to make the change.

XVI Tower

Upheaval, destruction, chaos, sudden dramatic change, collapse, crisis, revelation, awakening

Massive change and upheaval are on the horizon. Expect potential destruction and chaos. Social, familial, or possibly economic structures you have relied on could be torn down. Self-perception could shift dramatically. While painful, and even emotionally and spiritually shattering, this destruction has a purifying effect. Purging the old and stagnant clears the ground for you to build something new. Clinging to these structures as they are torn down in an attempt to feel safe will have the opposite result. A time will come when you will be able to look back and be grateful that these changes came.

Tear down the veil from your eyes and embrace the upheaval.

XVII Star

Hope, healing, regeneration, spirituality, optimism, serenity, expansiveness, inspiration

Life has brought you many challenges, but the Star now brings you a message of hope. You are blessed and loved by the Divine. As you let go of the things that no longer serve you, you begin to grow more fully into the truest version of yourself. All of your hopes and dreams are becoming possible. To tap into the beautiful energy of the Star, reconnect with things that bring your life purpose, meaning, and inspiration. Return to the essence within you that is loving and serene.

Raise your eyes to the heavens, breathe deeply, and know that anything and everything is possible.

XVIII Moon

Dreams, imagination, fantasy, the unconscious, mystery, anxiety, uncertainty, illusion

The line between reality and illusion begins to blur. Wherever you look, nothing is what it seems. Don't rush into important decisions, and take the time to evaluate if the anxiety you are feeling is well founded or if you are projecting your own subconscious fears onto the present and future. The Moon represents the unconscious realm, both the light where dreams and creativity are born, as well as the places where many of our shadows linger. Allowing these darker, more hidden aspects of ourselves to rise to the surface, where your light can begin to disperse them, will help

distinguish between truth and false perception.

The light and shadow of your inner landscape holds the secrets of your true divinity.

XIX Sun

Happiness, vitality, optimism, success, life force, joy, energy, confidence

A card of vibrant joy! The life-giving Sun brings strength, success, and abundance! All good things radiate to you. With your own personal sun at the center of your being, your solar plexus, life force energy glows and flows, lighting you up from within. The Sun is all about positivity and optimism. It fills your battery to its maximum. This is a time when your personal charisma is turned all the way up. Now is the perfect time to share your unique personal gifts and talents with the world.

Happiness is contagious, spread it to everyone you meet.

XX Judgement

Reckoning, forgiveness, awakening, revelation, evaluation, self-awareness, rebirth, inner calling

It is time for a renewal and a spiritual awakening. Let go of all harsh judgments, of both yourself and others. There is nothing to be gained from assigning blame, and forgiveness sets you free. This is a call from your own spirit, your higher consciousness, to begin to live your life with more awareness and authenticity. When you receive this card, it may be a sign that you have been feeling a calling toward a new direction, a new chapter, or a new opportunity. Follow both your intuition and your intellect as you now shift into deeper alignment.

It's time to forgive yourself and find the path forward.

XXI World

Completion, wholeness, fulfillment, integration, attainment, harmony, cycle ending, contentment

The arrival of the World card is a message of satisfaction, achievement, wholeness, and completion. A long-held goal may be attained, or there could be a recent marriage, graduation, or new birth. An important aspect of your life has now, or will soon, come full circle. There will be closure and the ending of a cycle. This brings its own contentment while still being bittersweet. As one cycle ends, a new one begins. You may need to take active steps to ensure the successful completion indicated by this card.

Take time to celebrate your success.

The Minor Arcana

Wands (FIRE)



Ace

Inspiration, creativity, new opportunities, growth

The fierce, fiery energy of the Ace of Wands is here to light you up and fill you with inspiration. With this high-energy card, new ideas have the potent potential of becoming real. Just as tiny sparks can become raging fires, new opportunities are springing to life all around you. It is a call to action; and while there is a great possibility for success, it is not guaranteed without dynamic action.

Your passion will guide your path.

Planning, preparation, decisions, direction

A new journey is about to begin. If you want to be successful, you will need a clear, well-thought-out plan of action. This is the optimistic prelaunch stage of a new endeavor. Your dream is possible but will require careful consideration of potential challenges. You may be thinking about an extended trip to a foreign land, or maybe you have longer-term career goals. Preparation, planning, and a carefully mapped route are essential.

Your path leads to the horizon, and beyond.

Momentum, expansion, progress, exploration

The journey has started, and things are going well. Look out at the wide landscape of possibilities— are you prepared to stretch yourself and reach out beyond your comfort zone? Your greatest opportunities are outside this current space. You have done well so far, and as your carefully considered plans take you closer to your dreams, it is clear that even more is possible. Seize this momentum to build on previous victories.

You are in the flow; dream big, anything is possible right now.

4

Celebration, joyful event, fruition, harmony

Congratulations! Now is a time of celebration. An important milestone has been reached, possibly a wedding, a birthday, or some other reunion. As such, this card speaks of a homecoming. Surround yourself with loving friends and family, people who rejoice in your successes and provide a supportive, secure environment. You have worked hard for the success you have achieved, and now is the time to pause and allow yourself to enjoy the fruits of these achievements.

It's time to celebrate with those who celebrate you.

Competition, disputes, tension, discord

This is a card of potential conflict and discord. There is rivalry and competition in your current situation, with egos bumping and jostling against each other. When confronted with diverse options, ideas, backgrounds, or cultures, it can be hard to accept these new perspectives. Every person has something unique to offer you. Be open to the gifts and insights different worldviews bring, and turn this friction into a tool for growth. This card could also be a sign of inner conflict. Keep your core values in mind as you work through your competing thoughts and feelings.

Take the heat out of the situation. Is there space to compromise, or do you need to walk away?

Triumph, success, acclaim, achievement

Don't be too shy to cheer for yourself. You have done extremely well; you brought all your strengths and talents to bare, for a fantastic outcome. This success might be recognized by a prestigious award or by simple heartfelt appreciation from your colleagues and peers. This card can at times speak of renown, recognition, and possibly even fame. If you are experiencing a challenging time, the Six of Wands is here to offer you encouragement-believe in yourself! Don't let fear or selfdoubt block your path to success.

Your light is so bright, let it shine.

Courage, conviction, defense, protection

It is time to take a stand. The hard-earned successes may attract the attention of others who desire them for themselves. You must protect your position, back up your arguments, and defend your beliefs. This card is a sign that you might encounter increased pushback on opinions you express (either online or in real life). You will need to be strong in your conviction and stand firm on your principles.

Hold your ground and fight for what you believe in.

Swift progress, energy, dynamism, alignment

All obstacles have cleared. and the path ahead is wide open. There is plenty of energy as you are propelled forward toward your goals once again. It is a busy and productive time for you. As this high-vibration energy flows swiftly in the direction of your ambitions and dreams, be sure you have them clearly in your focus. The alignment of your actions and intentions is critical right now. This is a very action-oriented card and can point to new opportunities that should be seized without hesitation.

The air is electric, the time is now, don't hesitate.

Determination, stamina, test of faith, standing your ground

You are battered and bruised, but still standing. Whatever challenges you are now facing, you have the tools and inner resources to overcome them. This card is here to let you know that regardless of how exhausted and beaten down you feel, the end is in sight and if you can find the determination and stamina to keep pushing, you will reach your goal. It is essential during this time to have strong, clear boundaries, and to defend them.

Keep your faith, don't give up, you can do this.

10

Burden, strain, difficulty, journey's end

Despite all your hard work, there is still much more that needs to be done. You are carrying heavy responsibilities and they are beginning to wear you down. If you are feeling exhausted and burned out, it might be time to delegate some of the load or have an honest conversation regarding what work you can and can't continue to do. This heavy burden may be short term or you may be considering taking on additional duties to help someone out.

Don't carry this alone; be willing to ask for help.

Page

Inspiration, energy, discovery, possibilities

For the Page of Wands, life is a brilliant adventure full of new things to see, learn, and do. She is full of curiosity and wonder, and she is ready to launch herself into new projects and journeys. Every opportunity holds magical potential for her. In her delight at the world around her, she doesn't spend much time planning, but catapults herself wholeheartedly in the direction of her dreams. With her absolute optimism, nothing can hold her back as she prepares to dive into the unknown.

Dream fully and freely; there are no limits.

Knight

Bravery, eagerness, adventure, impulsivity

The Knight of Wands sets her sights on a prize and launches herself after it with, at times, reckless enthusiasm. She is confident, passionate, and courageous as she meets every challenge with inspired action. Bursting with kinetic life force, this Knight is charismatic and magnetically attractive to others. She enjoys this attention. The unknown holds no fear for her, but rather it delights her and brings personal growth and expansion.

Feel the fire in your belly; it's time to conquer your fears and take on that challenge.

Queen

Vibrance, sensuality, independence, confidence

The Queen of Wands burns brilliantly. She is a sensual, social butterfly. Extremely confident, she knows she can't be liked by everyone, and remains unfazed and charming nevertheless. Fierce and focused on her goals, she is a natural leader who inspires others with her passion, courage, and determination. She understands the value of social connections and community building. As a result, she ensures that she builds up the team surrounding her, filling them with self-assurance and confidence in their own abilities.

Don't underestimate the effect you have on others.

King

Vision, leadership, honor, inspiration

The fiery King of Wands is an inspirational leader. People are drawn to the flame of his charisma and unwavering determination. The King is a team leader, excellent at delegating. He commands and guides those who enthusiastically work to bring his grand, ambitious vision to life. He sees the truly great possibilities ahead and, as a result, does not waste time on frivolous and banal activities.

Now is the time to develop the key leadership skill of delegation.

Cups (WATER)



Ace

Emotional awakening, compassion, new relationships, release

As with all aces, the Ace of Cups speaks of beginnings, specifically in the realm of love and emotions. This card is an encouragement to open your heart and allow your feelings to flow. This could also be a time of emotional renaissance, where previously suppressed or denied feelings rise up and overflow, bringing a long-needed release, renewal, and rejuvenation. This card can also represent a new and meaningful relationship, whether romantic or a deep friendship. Ultimately, this signifies the start of a journey toward emotional fulfillment, contentedness, and awakening.

Infinite love flows to and through you.

Partnership, connection, mutual attraction, shared bond

The Two of Cups is a beautiful card, signifying that your heart will find another to beat in time with, to share the pulse of life and feel a deep connection with. True partnership is the key message here, and it's not limited to romantic relationships. This type of connection is built on mutual respect, shared values, and a genuine appreciation for each other. Together you can work toward a shared vision for the future

Be open to exploring where the chemistry of connection will take you.

Friendship, celebration, collaboration, joy

Surround yourself with your dearest friends. You are encouraged to get out and socialize to expand your circle. We are social animals by nature, and our community connections are so essential to our overall well-being. They bring love, friendship, camaraderie, and mutual support during difficult times. So delight in your nearest and dearest, and celebrate with a fabulous party or other festive gathering. Set aside the worries of the day; let your hair down and have some fun.

Our lives are blessed with friendships, so nourish them and watch them grow.

Discontent, apathy, disinterest, reevaluation

This card might appear if you are shutting down or withdrawing from the world. There is a heaviness, a disinterest in life. It's not that the opportunities aren't there, it's simply that you are unable or unwilling to see them. This could also be because the particular options in front of you don't appeal to you or interest you, or because you already have too much on your plate. Your gaze is turned internally, and you are in a phase of contemplation rather than action

Are you shutting yourself off from opportunities the Universe is offering you?

Despair, disappointment, failure, regret

All is gray and there are dark clouds in the sky. Disappointment and loss leave heavy feelings of sadness and regret. There is a tendency to ruminate on the past, always looking backward, and a reluctance to let go of past failure and move on. Recognize that these moods and emotions that cloud your thoughts aren't permanent. It is normal for your emotional state to ebb and flow like the rising and falling of the tides. There are so many blessings still to come.

Release your pain, forgive yourself and others, and give yourself permission to move forward.

Innocence, nostalgia, delight, soothing comfort

The Six of Cups brings messages of golden memories and happy reunions. Rejoice in your fondest recollections of past times, of feeling safe and cared for by family, lovers, and friends. Allow these feelings to seep into your bones and invoke a sense of refuge and comfort. This card also calls to your inner child, inviting you to reconnect with them by indulging in activities that bring you a sense of fun and openhearted innocence. Find that part of you that is still playful and spontaneous.

Who are you underneath the layers of maturity and responsibility that society has lain upon you?

Choices, hopes and dreams, illusions, wishful thinking

There are so many new opportunities and directions being offered to you. Some are paths to material abundance, others to love, joy, and emotional fulfillment . . . which path will you choose? Some options are a true path to your highest good, while others are merely sparkling veils of illusion. Even when a possibility might seem to be a direct route to all your hopes and dreams, be careful you are not indulging in wishful thinking. Don't be swept away by the daydreams you have conjured in your head. A solid grounding in reality will help you make the right decision.

Don't get lost in beautiful fantasies when real world action is needed to achieve your dreams.

Walking away, disappointment, loss, letting go

It is time to move on and turn your back on the past. What once brought you happiness no longer does. If it's not to be, then steel yourself for the future and face the new world. While this may at first come with the sadness of what could have been, once the decision is made and the first steps have been taken, you will discover it is filled with new opportunities and adventures. Let the message of this card empower you to wave goodbye to people, places, or things that no longer serve you.

This phase has ended, and a new one is about to begin.

Contentment, satisfaction, gratitude, pleasure

This is the card of dreams come true and wishes fulfilled. This card represents deep contentment and appreciation for all that you have created and been blessed with. It could be a sign that what you have been hoping for is on its way, whether it be health, love, or abundance of every kind. In our ever-changing world, truly immerse yourself in these precious moments of happiness and cherish them. Live fully and gratefully in the moment, and through that gratitude, invite many more beautiful moments into your life.

A deep appreciation of today's joy is manifesting your joy-filled tomorrows.

10

Family, emotional fulfillment, harmony, happiness

Love surrounds you and there is the warm glow of joy and contentment, felt when your most important, intimate relationships are harmonious. This card indicates happy familial relationships and the coming together of loved ones to enjoy each other's company. A meaningful and memory-creating reunion is on the horizon. It can also indicate a potential new romantic relationship, the deepening of commitment in a current one, or marriage, or the birth of a baby.

Who in your life gives you the feeling and experience of "family"?

Page

Messenger, inner child, dreams, curiosity

Creative energy flows through the gentle and eternally curious Page of Cups. He views the world through the delighted, wonder-filled eyes of his inner child, and he embraces it all with an open heart. There is always something new to discover and explore, and his imagination whisks him away on magical fantasy rides to yet unseen futures. Led by his intuition, this Page follows the winding path laid out for him by life's little guides and synchronicities.

Unexpected and delightful new possibilities lie around the next corner.

Knight

Charm, chivalry, romance, mediation

Oh, the heart-fluttering Knight of Cups! He is the most romantic Knight in the deck, and he delights in making those around him happy and comfortable. His healthy connection to his own emotions and feelings enables him to be understanding and compassionate toward everyone he interacts with. Openhearted and expressive, he charms and attracts those he engages with. He dislikes any sort of conflict and often steps naturally into the peacekeeping role of mediator.

Give yourself permission to authentically express your feelings.

Queen

Intuition, emotion, compassion, nurturing

The intuitive and empathetic Queen of Cups has natural psychic abilities, which help her easily sense the needs of others. This ability to truly understand others and to engage with them in a nurturing and compassionate way means many are drawn to her and her wisdom. Her guidance and advice deals with sensitive topics, and her insights and wise counsel provide the right solutions. She is mindful not to take on the energetic burdens of those she cares so deeply for.

Listen to your heart and be gentle with yourself and others.

King

Wisdom, diplomacy, balance, openness

The King of Cups is the master of his emotions. This does not mean that he suppresses them, but rather that he has learned to balance them and remain centered, even during the most trying times. Mature and emotionally stable, others feel safe around him. This King has a gentle strength and does not need to flex his muscles or assert power over others to dominate them. He achieves his goals through mutual understanding and diplomacy.

You will have the greatest impact if you are able to maintain composure.

Swords (AIR)



Ace

Clarity, ideas, breakthrough, success

The Ace of Swords brings clarity of vision and understanding. This marks the start of a breakthrough or the arrival of a new idea. The fog that is swirling around an issue that has been troubling you will begin to lift, and the way forward will become clear. Now is the perfect time to begin something new that will rely on your ingenuity and original thinking, especially a project that might draw on your written or spoken communication skills.

Now is a good time to deal with any decisions you have been putting off.

Indecision, uncertainty, impasse, avoidance

You face a difficult choice. Neither path is obviously better or worse than the other, leaving you confused and conflicted. This card might also indicate that you are making a decision "blindly," and you need to gain more clarity before choosing. Are you missing an important piece of information? This might also be a sign that you are avoiding the truth. Pretending the issue at hand does not exist will not make it go away, and it may become worse if you ignore it.

Remember, not choosing is in itself a choice.

Heartbreak, suffering, betrayal, emotional release

The arrival of this card indicates heartbreak and possibly betrayal. A sudden, unexpected wound from another's cruel words or actions leaves you distressed and suffering. This state also makes vou more vulnerable to further pain from those around you with opinions or judgments. Instead of protectively curling in on yourself, find a way to release these painful emotions. Speak to someone you trust and give yourself permission to cry or even shout.

Flush out all the pain so you can begin to build yourself back up again.

Rest, recuperation, healing, self-care

It's time for a little, or maybe a lot, of self-care. Before you try to take on anything else and hope to be successful, you need to recharge your batteries. You have been pushing yourself very hard and though it may feel essential that you keep going, the constant effort and stress threatens to break you. You are due for a little "me" time, where you can find silence, solitude, and sanctuary. Focus on stillness, spend time in meditation, catch up on your sleep, and commune with nature.

Choose to create the time and space you need to replenish yourself.

Defeat, conflict, cost, hollow victory

There can be no winners in this situation. Even if you "win" in this disagreement or conflict, you stand to lose far more than you may be willing to bear. You may walk away with nothing gained, and with an aching sense of sadness and loss; it could also cost you the trust and respect of othersleaving your dignity in tatters and yourself isolated. This card is a warning to temper your aggression. Don't let yourself be lured in to combative situations and learn to pick your battles wisely.

Pursuing this path may well lead to ruin and self-destruction.

Transition, moving toward "better," moving away from "negative," starting again

This is a time of significant change, and you are leaving behind one life to begin a new one. You may have very little to salvage from the wreckage of the past to carry with you into the future. This may cause you to feel sad about leaving all that was familiar behind, but rest assured, this move is essential to your growth and long-term happiness. Consider what baggage you might be carrying that could slow down your journey or make this transition more difficult.

Leave the past in the past and move unencumbered into your future.

Cunning, secrecy, deception, dishonesty

There are whispers of deception, trickery, and betrayal afoot! Who is at work in secret, sneaking around behind people's backs and behind closed doors? Is it you, or are you the victim? Be careful, as those that think they will get away with a cunning plan may be found out, and there will be nothing left for them but shame and guilt. Beware, as dishonesty and distrust poison the air. Listen to your intuition if something feels off. It might be in your best interest not to overshare right now.

One's reputation, once destroyed, can seldom be returned. Self-imprisonment, restrictions, negativity, feeling powerless

Trapped in a prison of your own perceptions, you may feel like there are no other options available as your circumstances become increasingly restrictive. It seems as though the material world of your life offers no solutions or relief from your burdens. The Eight of Swords indicates that your current thoughts and beliefs are ensnaring you. The bars that you are trapped behind are just an illusion. Getting out of your predicament may be challenging, but a route to freedom awaits when you shift your mindset

You have surrendered your power, and now it is time to claim it back.

Anxiety, fear, worry, nightmares

Worry and stress swirl through your mind, and negative thoughts keep you awake at night or fill your sleep with nightmares. The constant "what-ifs" and worst-case scenarios grate on your nerves and lead to an ever-tightening negativity spiral. Take care, as obsessively focusing on hypothetical negative outcomes can lead you to make poorer choices than you otherwise would. If left unresolved, these disturbing thoughts and emotions can darken into despair and depression.

Bring your thoughts and mental projections back to a more realistic balance. Seek help from those close to you, if needed.

10

Defeat, ruin, betrayal, loss

There is despair, loss, and utter ruin. The end has come, and even though it was ultimately inevitable, the pain of the severing courses through you. If there was betrayal, the shock has left you reeling, as it was completely unforeseen and the relationship changed forever. Be warned that a problem you have been avoiding may finally catch up with you, and you will be forced to deal with the potentially catastrophic fallout.

This is rock bottom, but you now have the opportunity to build something far more beautiful for yourself.

Page

Cleverness, curiosity, communication, sharp wit

The bright, quick-witted Page of Swords is full of new ideas. She is always keen to discuss a promising new project she has been exploring, whether it's writing a book or starting a podcast. Her thirst for knowledge means she is always looking for new techniques to learn or a new perspective to delve into. As she jumps straight in whenever an idea pops into her head, she sometimes makes mistakes, but is then sure to rapidly learn from them.

Share the things that light you up and share your passion with the world.

Knight

Ambition, rebellion, determination, focus

This Knight knows what he wants, and nothing is going to stop him from getting it. He sweeps others up in an energetic blur of urgent and determined action. He pushes forward, so laser-focused on his goal that he is inclined to sweep all in his path aside, which some view as ruthless. His sharp intellect and rebellious streak make him a groundbreaker and innovator. He is always looking for new and exciting ways to challenge and stimulate his mind.

The time for thinking is over; now is the time for action.

Queen

Perception, principles, clear judgment, honesty

With her no-nonsense attitude and ability to get straight to the heart of an issue, some find the Queen of Swords an intimidating character. Her blunt approach belies a genuinely caring person who values truth and honesty above all else. She believes, "better a painful truth than a soothing dishonesty." Her insistence on remaining unbiased and flexible in her thinking allows her to be surprisingly perceptive. For this reason, many people come to her for clear guidance and wise advice.

Now is the time to lead with your mind rather than your heart.

King

Clear-mindedness, logic, analysis, authority

The formidable King of Swords is exceptionally intelligent, which has granted him both power and authority. When he speaks, all those around him pay close attention, as he is trusted to always be objective and impartial. He enters every new situation with a cool detachment, priding himself on his unflappable restraint. His calm, clear, analytical approach can seem cold and uncaring at times, but he remains unflinching in his strongly held principles and morals.

Where in your life could you benefit from a clearer, more ordered approach?

Pentacles (EARTH)



Ace

Abundance, prosperity, manifestation, new opportunity

A new opportunity, with great potential prospects, is coming your way. This Ace is a sign of brilliant new beginnings in the material arenas of health, wealth, career, and dream manifestation. The air is filled with the energy of abundance and prosperity. If you have been considering a new project or thinking about beginning the search for a new job, this card is great encouragement. Just beware of cutting corners and manage expectations that the journey will be easy, as hard work will be required to ensure success.

Around every bend is the opportunity to start something new and change the trajectory of your life.

Resource management, balance, cycles, adaptability

Life is about flow and change. Cycles repeat, and constant movement is essential to maintaining balance. Are you finding yourself stretched too thin? Do you have too many balls in the air? The Two of Pentacles reminds you that you can't be everything to everyone. When you focus too long on one aspect of life, other parts suffer. It is possible that right now you need to manage your priorities and commitments. You should not lose sight of how you are allocating your finite resources. Financial management is key.

Come back to your quiet center, where you are better able to manage the flow of daily life as it swirls around you.

Teamwork, collaboration, growth, knowledge sharing

When the Three of Pentacles appears, it is your sign to find value in teamwork. There is a special alchemy in synergistic collaboration, and what is created as a team is often far greater than what could ever be imagined by individuals. Learning to work harmoniously within a team can often require significant personal growth and is a skill worth cultivating. Find partners who complement your strengths and fill in the gaps where you might have weaknesses

Don't be scared to acknowledge where you lack expertise and ask someone who excels in that area for help.

Caution, saving, conserving, control

Habits and mindsets that are beneficial during one phase of life can cause struggles in another. The cautious and frugal money management behavior that enables you to accumulate wealth can also prevent you from enjoying it later on, once financially stable. The Four of Pentacles asks you to explore your relationships with money and other material possessions. Conversely, if money is tight, treat it as precious and manage it carefully, not spending what you don't have.

True security lies outside of material things, and inside of you.

Scarcity, struggle, deprivation, loss

There is constriction, contraction, and loss. Finances tighten and there is the possibility of difficulty in income generation, career troubles, and even potential job loss. There might be the loss of a major or cherished material possession. Don't become so absorbed in your unhappy circumstances that you don't see the help that is available to you. And there *is* help; it is just waiting for you to reach out for it.

Don't let bruised pride prevent you from taking the steps necessary to lift you out of your difficult position.

Generosity, sharing, charity, aid

Who is the giver, who is the receiver? There are blessings on both ends of this interaction. When you give joyfully from your heart without expectation of reward, you open a channel with the Divine, and blessings flow to you in turn. When you receive another's generosity with an open heart, your honest gratitude will pave the way for the manifestation of further blessings for you.

Sharing your time, talents, or energy with another enriches both your lives.

Investment, long-term returns, perseverance, delayed gratification

In a world filled with the impulse for immediate satisfaction, those that can look to the future and persevere for longerterm rewards are encouraged to do so by this card. Even when progress seems slow at times, persist, and don't give up. The seeds you plant now will flourish if you tend them well. Over the course of this long arc toward a bountiful harvest, even small miscalculations can leave you significantly off course. Step back every now and then to check your trajectory.

Take a moment to celebrate the small milestones you have achieved so far.

Craftsmanship, mastery, dedication, purpose

Attaining true mastery takes time and dedication. The Eight of Pentacles calls on you to put aside impatience and commit yourself to a mindset of apprenticeship. When you find your purpose, the journey to excellence is filled with contentment if you can find joy in the small, repetitive labors that hone your skills. You will need to apply yourself fully to your craft, and you will need to be diligent and hardworking. If you are still searching for your purpose, this card calls you to go out and try something new, take a class or start a hobby, so that you might finally find your passion.

Stay curious. No matter how proficient you are, there is always something new to learn.

Prosperity, success, rewards, comfort

All the hours, days, and years of hard work are finally starting to pay off. This is a card of abundance and luxury. Go ahead and enjoy some of the bountiful fruits of your labor. You are entering a time where daily stresses will finally seem insignificant, and you can comfortably meet your financial obligations. Where previously you sacrificed and held back, now feel free to spoil yourself—you've earned it. If necessary, take the steps needed to create financial independence for yourself.

Give yourself the experience of luxury today.

10

Legacy, family, inheritance, ancestry

There is a solid, lasting affluence and true abundance. This card speaks not just of generational wealth, but also of the treasure found in the aptitudes and traits passed down through family bloodlines. A solid foundation now lies beneath your feet, and you are able to support those you love going forward into the future. Have you thought about what your legacy will be? What mark do you want to leave on this world and those closest to you?

The talents and gifts of your ancestors are alive in you today.

Page

Practicality, loyalty, hard work, warmth

The Page of Pentacles is at the beginning stages of great, new possibilities. He has the prospects of new jobs, new businesses, and new skills to learn. Full of ambition, he is willing to put in the hard work that will be needed to achieve his dreams. He is a realist in his approach and is always taking the most practical and achievable path forward. Solid and studious, he is not generally the life of the party, but his warm heart and loyalty make him a true friend.

Take the next practical and achievable step forward.

Knight

Productivity, skill, patience, honesty

Responsible and hardworking, this diligent Knight stays the course and gets the work that needs to be done, done. She has a solid vision of her future, and while not glitzy or glamorous, it's warm, grounded, and full of honest, earthly joys. Patient and steadfast, she is methodical and detail-oriented, always with a plan. She knows that growing a solid and successful future requires time and consistent tending, and she has built up the skills required to do this.

Find a routine that works for you, and then stick to it.

Queen

Generosity, nourishing, comfort, luxury

Luxury surrounds the Queen of Pentacles, and from this incredible abundance she gives generously to all those she loves. Family is at the center of this warmhearted Queen's world. She has built a home where all conceivable material desires are taken care of. Despite the luscious surroundings, she is a practical, down-to-earth woman still connected with the realities of life.

What little touches can you add to your world to create a deeper sense of luxury and comfort?

King

Leadership, protection, provision, discipline

The King of Pentacles is the symbol of great worldly success. He is ambitious, confident, and has built a financially lucrative empire. This industrious man achieved his success through honest, hard work. With self-discipline and careful control, he managed his growing wealth, investing wisely and building a strong, stable life for his family. With his fair and ethical business practices, his staff and colleagues view him as a great leader, and approach him for his reliable wisdom and guidance.

Now is the time for the wellplanned, tried-and-true path, not the experimental unknown.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Athene Noctua is the artist and creator behind several oracle and tarot card decks. Her creative process is deeply meditative and forms a key pillar of her spiritual practice. Placing herself at the service of Spirit, she works to create divination tools that open a channel of communication between us and the Divine. Living deep in the English countryside on a renovated canal barge, her art is inspired by the energies and cycles of life in the natural environment around her.

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