

I originally laid out the cards with the intention that each position would signify one month, but the Oracle had other plans for this reading. ;) I got the strong intuition that these cards represented steps in a journey, and the time from one to the next will depend entirely on how you relate to the challenges and opportunities presented to you along the way.

KING OF WANDS REVERSED

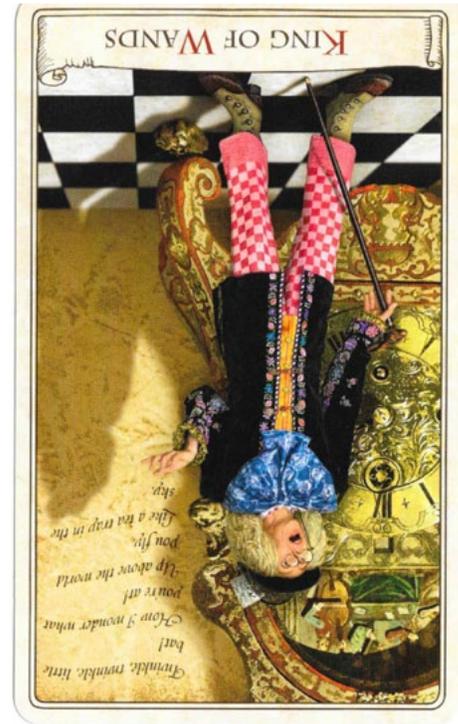
You are beginning this journey with the nagging sensation that time is passing you by and you're not achieving the things that are most important to you. You have ideas, passions, and business aspirations that you want to fulfill, yet it feels like you're spinning your wheels on a certain level, and you're having trouble fully manifesting the things that you want.

This anxiety appears as mental chatter and general busyness that is used as a means of distraction from the uncomfortable silence beneath the chatter. You sometimes fear sitting with your thoughts and feelings, because it seems like if you open the door to acknowledging even a little bit of disappointment it will end up crashing through the floodgates and overwhelming you, and thus it feels safer to focus on the positive for fear of glimpsing the potential depths of the not-so-positive.

You also struggle with feeling like you always have to be cheerful, happy, and encouraging, even though you don't always feel that way inside. You sometimes feel like you're faking it, worrying that you don't have the skills to do the things that you want to do, and then you judge yourself for feeling this way, but facing these feelings is very painful (which is understandable), and so instead you keep yourself busy and encourage other people, when really you are seeking encouragement for yourself.

You often feel like you're performing in the play of your own life. You desperately want deeper authenticity in your relationships, in your career, and in your inner experience, but you're not entirely sure how to go about tapping into that. If you can learn to silence the chatter, to give yourself permission to not always know what to say, or to not always have something nice to say, then you will begin to hear the wisdom of the silence that lies beneath.

Without connection to that stillness, you sense a vacantness in your life. You sometimes feel a bit absent, disconnected, and not in touch with what you really want or how you really feel. Much of this comes from your fear that your feelings are invalid or "wrong." As a child you were subtly taught that your feelings were unacceptable, and you have carried that into your adult life, taking over from



where the adults left off and invalidating any of your own feelings that aren't happy or positive.

Where this is most frustrating for you is in the area of your intuition. You very much want to be able to trust and rely on your intuition, especially as you pursue a career in tarot, but it becomes very hard for you to do so when you're not able to fully own, experience, and validate your feelings, which is one of the bridges to your intuitive side.

There is another aspect to this card within this reading: it serves as a glimpse into your primary relationship. Here we are seeing that your partner is embodying some of the more stereotypical negative aspects of masculinity in the form of control and anger and difficulty expressing vulnerable emotions at times.

You sometimes feel like the happy, cheerful foil to your partner's more serious, sometimes pessimistic outlook, and your partner, in turn, sometimes rebels against your happy-go-lucky attitude, leaving you feeling hurt and rejected in the process, as if your attempts at helping are going unappreciated.

In truth, both of you are yearning for a way to more authentically express the full range of your emotional experience, which can feel hard because many of us are taught that only socially acceptable emotions are "allowed." Your partner's go-to is often anger and frustration, which is sometimes a cover for deeper feelings of sadness and fears of inadequacy, while your go-to is happy and light, which is often a defense against depression and anxiety that feels overwhelming and threatening to even think about, much less experience.

Again, the lesson of this card is to begin to recognize when you are forcing yourself to look on the bright side of things as a protective or defensive measure. This is not to say that this approach doesn't have its merits, because wallowing in dark emotions all of the time isn't healthy either, but by not allowing yourself to fully experience both sides of the emotional coin, you are preventing yourself from experiencing more authentic wholeness, a wholeness that will heal that erroneous worry that you're a fraud or a fake.

You can assist this process by slowly and gently resting in still moments, both internal and external. Begin to get acquainted with your thoughts and emotions as they arise, and instead of rejecting the "negative" ones and trying to find the silver lining in everything, begin to open yourself up to their messages. In this process, you will begin to feel more deeply connected to your intuition.

QUEEN OF WANDS

As the journey continues and you explore the practices outlined above, you will start to get in touch with some of your deeper passions, and this will be a very empowering experience for you.

Right now you struggle with connecting to those passions fully, because there is a part of you that fears if you acknowledge what you really, truly want you are opening yourself up to greater hurt and disappointment if these things don't materialize. There is some truth to this, but also recognize that when you fully own your deepest passions, you will also be tapping into a vast power source within yourself that you have been largely cut off from.



By owning your desires, the ones that feel a bit scary to even admit that you want, you will also begin to uncover the power to go after them. By playing it small and going after safer goals that you feel only somewhat connected to, you are not stepping fully into your power, and you are creating a bit of a self-fulfilling prophecy, because when it is hard for you to achieve these “safe” goals, since they're not connected with your inner power and will, your subconscious is then able to say, “See? If I can't even make these happen, I'd never be able to go after the things I really want.”

Begin to open up to the possibility that by aligning your actions with what your heart truly desires, you will be able to accomplish much more, and you will experience more acts of synchronicity to assist you on your path.

The other aspect of this card returns us to the topic of relationships. As you begin to get in touch with what you really want in life, this will start to shift things in your relationships, especially your primary relationship.

People have become very accustomed to you being the person who is cheerful and agreeable, but this might start to change, and not everyone will respond in a favorable manner to this. Remember that other people's reactions are not a reliable metric on which to assess the wisdom of your own path. Even if people resist your attempts at stepping into your power and truth, this does not discount the valid-

ity of this journey.

This stage will be characterized by allowing yourself to feel what you feel, both the uplifting and the melancholy, and to express those feelings more authentically to others. And in this process you will also grow in your ability to discern when it is wise to divulge your true feelings to others and when it is more productive to process them internally.

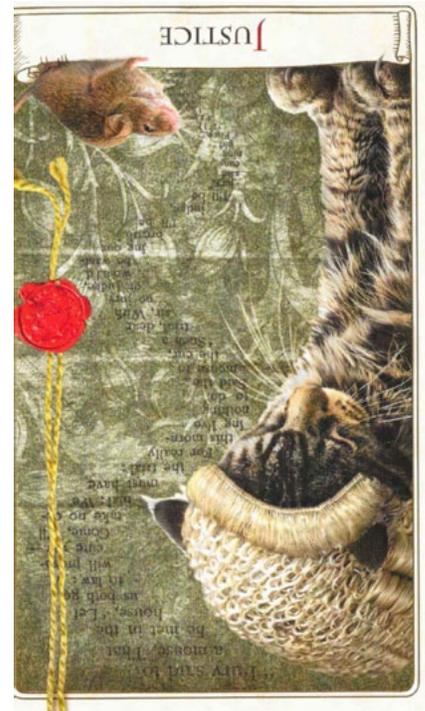
Regardless, though, you will begin to release yourself from the self-imposed pressure to always be nice and cheerful, and you will begin to crave more authentic expression and the safe spaces in which to do so.

JUSTICE REVERSED

At this leg of the journey, as you get more and more in touch with your inner, authentic experience, you will feel the strong desire to confront the people in your primary relationships, calling for change. Resist this urge for the time being as head-on confrontation will not bring about the results you are looking for at this point. (There is a time for that, to be sure, but that time is not now.)

Instead, focus on your own changes and as you do so your relationships will begin to shift of their own accord. You may begin to see imbalances in some of your relationships in which your good nature and agreeability is somewhat taken for granted, and at times taken advantage of, and you may begin to feel that your needs are sometimes overlooked. This is when you will be ready to learn how to express what you want and need more openly, rather than wishing that other people would simply do what you want in return for your being so nice and encouraging all the time.

You will begin to see that this approach has its limitations and that you need to learn how to verbalize your wants and needs in a more proactive way. Don't be deterred by push back from people who are used to you setting aside your needs in favor of theirs. Some of them will be able to adjust and change in response,



while others simply won't be able to handle you as someone who does not exist merely to meet their needs. As painful as this might be, know that releasing those connections will be very healing for you.

Your intuitive abilities will continue to increase throughout this process, and you will begin to get the sensation that things are about to be turned on their head. Use this foreshadowing to prepare by being diligent in your self-care practices, particularly being mindful of where you overextend yourself in order to help others and be more realistic about what you can and cannot do.

Also, know that this advance warning helps to alleviate some of the shock. You will now have the choice to see these changes as the next step in your journey, rather than resisting them from a place of fearing change.

NINE OF SWORDS

At this point in the journey, you will feel disoriented at times, because it will seem as if the rug is being ripped out from under your feet, and in many ways it is, but know that this rug is musty and moldy, and it is high time to give it a good cleaning.

Your resistance is rooted in fear of destroying the stability and structure you have spent a great deal of time and effort creating, and this is understandable. Be gentle with yourself in this process, and remind yourself that on the other side of the tumult is a feeling of great freedom and power and a deeper sense of peace than you have ever known. A peace that comes from simply existing as you are, without feeling as if you have to please in order to earn people's love and acceptance.

To reach that, however, you have to be willing to release the things that are keeping you stuck, and your primary focus will be on relationship and communication patterns that are not in the service of authenticity.

The practices that you have been exploring throughout the journey thus far--getting in touch with your inner silence, releasing pressure to always be happy and cheerful, allowing yourself to express the full range of your emotions--will be



creating conflict. People are not used to you acting in this way, and not everyone will be willing to adjust.

Your main challenge right now will be learning how to remain centered in yourself, rather than stepping into other people's experience in the form of people pleasing, and to continue expressing your own truth, rather than pressuring yourself to hide anything that falls outside of the happy, cheerful range when other people react in a difficult way.

If you can weather this storm and remain true to your purpose, you will be opening the door to greater intimacy and emotional honesty, not only within yourself but in your relationships. You will find that others have been craving greater relational depth, some without being able to recognize what this craving is, and some without knowing how to go about making that change, and your inner work will allow everyone who is ready to step through this door with you.

Remember that it is not your job to change people or drag them through the door if they're not ready. Everyone is on their own journey, and not everyone will be walking on a path concurrent with yours and that's okay.

Bring your focus back to your own experience, which is the only part of this process over which you have any measure of control, and continue to expand in your abilities to express yourself honestly, to ask for what you need, and to dedicate part of every day to sitting in stillness.

ACE OF CUPS

As the journey continues, you are now in a place where you feel ready to open the door to greater emotional authenticity in your relationships. This is still a new experience for you, so approach it with openness and curiosity. Don't be afraid to seek knowledge and skills, and resist the urge to judge yourself for not knowing how to do everything. Two book covers flashed in my mind, and they might be very useful at any point in this journey:

- *Codependent No More* (<http://www.amazon.com/Codependent-No-More-Controlling-Yourself/dp/0894864025/>)
- *Nonviolent Communication* (<http://www.amazon.com/Nonviolent-Communication-Language-Marshall-Rosenberg/dp/1892005034/>)

This is a process, not perfection. You will learn and grow as you practice, so look

on every interaction with yourself and others as another opportunity to be more emotionally open and gain new skills in this area. And with continued practice, this will become easier so trust in the process.

This will be an exciting time for you. You will feel more alive and more genuinely enthusiastic about your connections to others and your purpose. You will continue to gain confidence in your intuition, and this will be of great assistance as you learn how to navigate life from a more emotionally authentic stance.

This card speaks more fully to things we touched on with the nine of swords. At this stage of the journey, you will be ready to embark on a new way of relating to people based on the new way in which you are relating to yourself.

Some people will be ready to join you, and those relationships will enjoy greater intimacy and depth. Other people are at another stage in their own personal journey and are not ready to accompany you. For some, this will be temporary and your paths will cross again.

For others, it is time to let those connections go so that both of you will be free to continue on your respective paths. Resist the urge to cling and grasp to ways of relating that no longer serve in order to maintain these connections, as difficult as it may be to release them. There is potential for great healing and growth when you release the things that aren't working and create space in your life for what you truly want on a soul level.

EIGHT OF CUPS

The ace segues quite appropriately into the eight, because as you continue on your journey you will be leaving some of your relationships and connections behind, bringing with this understandable feelings of loss and sadness. Be gentle with yourself, practice self-care, and remember that you are doing this in the service of the Highest Good, not just for yourself but everyone involved. When relationships are no longer healthy, everyone benefits by changing the dynamic, whether the ego selves of those involved are able to recognize this or not.



This card also speaks to the new way in which you will begin to view yourself and your relationships. As you become more able to express your emotions and your wants and needs in an open, healthy manner, the ways in which you have not been able to do this in the past and the ways in which others are not able to do this in your current relationships will become more apparent.

As you see these connections in a new light, some aspects of these relationships will begin to feel stifling, and at times even manipulative, as you begin to see how, when people are unable to express themselves openly, they resort to less honest methods of communicating.



Use the journey that you have experienced thus far to generate compassion for yourself and others, recognizing that it can be hard to express these things out of fear of being rejected. And at the same time, you are now ready for more. You are now ready to be in relationships in which both parties are taking responsibility for themselves and are openly communicating what they want and need, rather than resorting to more passive-aggressive tactics or other less functional behaviors.

You will experience moments when you feel almost shocked at this new view of people and situations. You might even feel betrayed when what you originally thought about someone now seems to be entirely different. Honor those feelings, and at the same time, resist the urge to take everything personally.

Yes, people may be acting in emotionally constricted, sometimes manipulative ways, and yes, this affects you. At the same time, recognize that their own pain and current limitations are creating an internal environment in which this feels like the only way they know how to behave, so in that sense, it's not a personal affront to you; it's simply the best they know how to do in this moment.

At the same time, this does not mean that you need to continue relating to them in this manner. At this stage, you will be better able to trust your intuition and discernment in knowing when you need to change how you act in a relationship, when you need to limit your time in a relationship, or when you need to walk away from it altogether, and indeed, different relationships will call for different

approaches so allow yourself the ability to be flexible.

And finally, know that this increased flexibility in how you allow yourself to communicate (expressing a full range of emotions rather than limiting yourself to “positive” ones) and how you respond to your relationships (working to change yourself within one while recognizing that you might need to leave another one entirely) will create in you a deep sense of resilience. You will grow in your knowledge that, no matter what, you will be okay. Whether you’re happy or sad or anything in between, you will be okay. Whether you are in a relationship or letting one go, you will be okay.

From this place, combined with the intuition that you have developed throughout this entire journey, you will move through your life with a feeling of empowered authenticity, and you will find yourself better able to attract the things that you most desire.