



Introduction to the Tarot

In the previous days, whenever there were answers required for day to day questions then many methods were used by people. One of the very popular method was throwing a coin. A coin was tossed and it was said that if Head comes then the native shall do something and if Tail comes then the native will do something other or opposite. In India many people used spiritual books like Ramayana, Geeta, etc. for the same. They used to chant God's name and open the book. Then the page that comes is read thoroughly and based on the meaning of that page decisions were taken. Also, one more very popular method in India is asking infants to touch any of the fingers that elders show. People used to think in advance that which finger will bring for what result. The finger that infant touches is the answer. Similarly there may be many such methods of which we are unaware.

These methods however are no doubt result oriented but they are not organised in a proper way. Also, they can give answers only to the extent of Yes or No or selection from some choices. However, there are many methods that are much more advanced, powerful and accurate than the above methods. Like question horoscope in Vedic Astrology, I-Ching in Chinese Feng Shui, Kabala system of numbers, African divination methods, Ramal system of Vedic origin, etc. One of these techniques include Tarot Reading also.



The origin of the Tarot is a mystery. However, it is believed to be a very ancient and effective technique. The origins of Tarot are mysterious as much as the cards themselves. One theory suggests that they originated in China and some attribute it to the esoteric Schools of Philosophy of ancient Egypt. The Gypsies used to tell fortune based on cards. India is a possible birth place and it is feasible that the 4 suits of the Minor Arcana could refer to the 4 castes of Hinduism i.e. Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra.

Many derivations have been suggested for the name Tarot. It may come from the Latin word rota (wheel) which is an anagram of Tarot. The Egyptian word Ta-rosh means 'the royal way'. Its Hebrew origin sees it as a corruption of the torah, the book of the law. Tar is the Gypsy word for a deck of cards.

The tarot is most commonly used as a tool for divination. A traditional Tarot reading involves a querent and a reader. A querent is the native who is looking for answers to personal questions while a reader is the person who knows how to interpret the cards. After the querent has shuffled and cut the deck, the reader lays out the chosen cards in a pattern called a spread. Each position in the spread has a meaning, and each card has a meaning as well. The reader combines these two meanings to shed light on the querent's question.

The Tarot works as a bridge between our conscious and unconscious



knowledge. Answers arise out of the unconscious through dreams, fantasy and intuition. Tarot cards stimulate this intuition when read sensitively. The answer lies with the unconscious memory and awareness that resides within each individual. Even though many people ignore the action of the unconscious most of the time still it profoundly affects everything what one does.

Projection is one reason why the tarot cards are valuable. Their intriguing pictures and patterns are effective in tapping the unconscious. This is the personal aspect of the tarot, but the cards also have a collective component. As humans, we all have certain common needs and experiences. The images on the tarot cards capture these universal moments and draw them out consistently. People tend to react to the cards in similar ways because they represent archetypes.

The Tarot Cards

The set of Tarot Cards is called as Deck. The standard tarot deck consists of 78 cards. These cards divided into two sections which are as follows:-

1. The Major Arcana
2. The Minor Arcana.



The word arcana is the plural of arcanum which means profound secret. The tarot cards are therefore a collection of the secrets that underlie and explain our universe. The details about each set is as under.

1. The Major Arcana Cards

The Major Arcana means major secret. Major Arcana contains 22 cards. Each card in the major arcana has a name and number. The names of this cards convey directly the meaning of that card. The major arcana cards are special because they draw out deep and complex reactions. Each of these cards symbolizes some aspect of human experience. They represent the archetypes - consistent, directing patterns of influence that are an inherent part of human nature. A major arcana card is always given extra weight in a reading. They represent a native's most basic concerns, major feelings and motivations.

The major arcana contains many levels and models of experience. These cards hold all the patterns of growth, whether they occur within one segment of a life or a whole life span. The Major Arcana shows wholeness and fulfillment of one's destiny.

The 22 cards of the Major Arcana with their numbers are as follows.

0. The Fool



1. The Magician
2. The High Priestess
3. The Empress
4. The Emperor
5. The Hierophant
6. The Lovers
7. The Chariot
8. Strength
9. The Hermit
10. The Wheel of Fortune
11. Justice
12. The Hanged Man
13. Death
14. Temperance

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15. The Devil
 16. The Tower
 17. The Star
 18. The Moon
 19. The Sun
 20. The Judgement
 21. The World

The Minor Arcana

While the Major Arcana cards express universal themes, the Minor Arcana brings those themes down into the practical arena to show how they operate in daily events. The Minor Arcana cards represent concerns, activities and emotions of everyday lives.

The Minor Arcana contains 56 cards. These 56 cards are further divided into four suits. These suit cards are as under.

1. **Wands**
2. **Cups**