

The Hidden Force

You have now completed your preliminary study of Tarot. From now on you will learn how to use the Tarot Keys for the purpose of realizing your heart's desire.

When I say this, I assume that your heart's desire involves no conflict with the rights or happiness of others. Surely you have the good sense to know that nothing in true occultism will enable you to gain any tricky advantage over another human being. Your previous studies have taught you the folly of expecting something for nothing. Always remember that it is impossible to employ the higher forces for any but right ends.

All that a black magician ever accomplishes is his own downfall, his own mental and physical deterioration. Selfish personal motives are themselves enough to debar him who harbors them from making any use of the subtle spiritual energy you will learn about from this course. Selfishness clouds the mind so that it cannot receive the true import of the instruction. However clear the teaching, he who would misuse it is sure to misunderstand it. Ignorance cannot employ powers which are reserved for the expression of wisdom. Study and practice as much as he may, he who intends to use Ageless Wisdom to further his own interests at the expense of another will meet nothing but disappointment.

Consider well your motives, therefore, and then make up your mind what you want to be, and what you want to do, more than anything else. See yourself engaged in the kinds of action appropriate to the expression of your heart's desire. Make your mental images clear and definite. You cannot be too specific.

Vivid imagery like this will naturally include all necessary details as to the possession of whatever means or instrumentalities you may need to carry out your action. Set your stage with scenery appropriate for the best possible realization of your desire. But remember that to see yourself having what now you suppose you need is far less important than to see yourself doing what you want to do.

Pay no attention however to any who would persuade you that you need only hold fast to the essential idea of your main purpose. This may sound well, but it won't work. Certainly you must have a definite idea, a central motive. This is indispensable; but if you are to experience anything like full realization, the idea must be clothed with specific mental imagery.

I shall assume, then, that you know what you want, and that you are ready to devote yourself whole-heartedly to the realization of your aim. This being understood, fix firmly in your mind the fundamental principle of this whole course of instruction:

REALIZATION IS A STATE OF CONSCIOUSNESS: IT IS THE ILLUMINED PERCEPTION OF THINGS AS THEY ARE, SUPPLANTING THE DELUDED ACCEPTANCE OF THINGS AS THEY LOOK.

The twenty-two Tarot Keys were designed to bring about this change of consciousness. They were invented by adepts in realization. They represent the fundamental states of human consciousness as expressed in the thought of illuminated men and women. He who impresses their symbols deeply upon his brain-cells plants within himself the seeds of illumined realization. For him are confirmed the words of Eliphas Levi, who wrote: "The Tarot is a book which is the sum of all the sciences, which can resolve all problems by its infinite combinations, which speaks by evoking thought, and is the inspirer and regulator of all possible conceptions."

The first page of this magical book pictures the hidden force which is at work in the process of realization. Your earlier studies have given you some idea of the meaning of Key 0. The degree of your success in doing what you want to do will be strictly measured by your understanding of its deeper significance. It sums up what the wisest of men have learned about the One Energy behind all appearances. It tells you what they know. It also tells you what they do not know. This last is important, because it enables you to learn what kinds of speculation wise men find unprofitable.

The force that makes possible the realization of your heart's desire is occult because it is hidden from the ignorant. Yet it is by no means unknown. Among the oldest books in the world are those written by men who understood and used it. In this dawn of a New Age, a greater number of

persons are ready to assimilate and apply this ancient knowledge; but even today, prepared minds are in the minority. Yet from that minority will be chosen the real, though hidden, masters of the world.

No wise man pretends to know the innermost nature of this hidden force. None pretends to define it. Lao-Tze says of it: “The TAO which is the subject of discussion is not the true TAO; the quality which can be named is not its true attribute.” Occult names for it are merely convenient designations, identifying labels. We do not know just what it is, any more than we know just what electricity is, and nobody needs to know. The wise, therefore, avoid all useless quests in this direction. They all recognize, however, that since the hidden force is the One Thing which is the source of all else, it cannot possibly be identified with any of the things which proceed from it. Thus they often designate it by terms for which the English equivalent is No-Thing.

Of this No-Thing the zero-sign is a symbol. Zero also signifies freedom from limitation, particularly freedom from the limitations called “time” and “space.” Thus the Fool shows that the hidden force is always in the position suggested by the picture. It is always at the height of its power, yet there is always something higher beyond. It has limitless possibilities for finer and better types of manifestation. Let this realization sink deep into your mind: NEITHER TIME NOR SPACE CAN BIND THE HIDDEN FORCE: IT IS ALWAYS PERFECTLY FREE.

Being boundless, it is necessarily present. “All the power that ever was or will be is here now.” Its energy, manifest as the light of stars, maintains itself without the slightest loss through millions of light-years, and propagates itself without deviation through reaches of space that stagger our imagination. Where everything is, it is; and where nothing seems to be, it is there also.

You yourself are completely filled, at all times, with the real presence of the hidden force. All that you are is an assemblage of manifold veils that hide it, and by hiding it make it “occult.” Your body is made of it. It is the substance of your food and drink, of the air you breathe, of the earth beneath your feet, of all your possessions. This is the One Reality, manifest in all the things you know, and present in everything existing outside the range of your knowledge, too.

The universe is a great ocean of vibrating electro-magnetic energy. Psychologists assure us that this energy appears as “objects” when its vibrations are within relatively narrow fields perceptible to our senses. If our sense-organs should change a very little, we should find ourselves in a new world, full of things unknown to us now. Therefore these things actually exist, even now, though we can form no clear idea of what they are like.

Matter, as a separate entity, does not exist. Sir William Ostwald calls the noun “matter” a mere generalization invented by man to account for his various experiences of an energy which presents itself in physical forms. Everything in the physical plane emerges from a wholly invisible and immaterial source which is usually termed “electro-magnetic energy.” The primary physical form of this energy is light, and everything else is made of light. This is the substance of what is now taught by such leaders of modern science as Milliken, Eddington, and Jeans.

What they advance in their latest books has a familiar ring to students versed in the lore of Ageless Wisdom. “Light is the veil of the Boundless, and all things are from that light,” says the Inner School of Western occultism that invented Tarot. “That which hath been made was life in the Creative Thought, and the life was the light,” is the declaration at the beginning of St. John’s Gospel.

This living light is often given a name which means “Life-Breath.” This term is no figure of speech. Our atmosphere, often symbolized by occultists a Δ is really made of light. The atoms of its gases are built up of electrons, themselves points of radiant energy. Every electron is a point at which lines of magnetic force converge. Their convergence sets up whirling motion at the electron point. This whirling motion is represented by the ten yellow wheels on the Fool’s dress.

In proportion to their size, electrons are as far apart as are the stars in the sky. Thus the active units of energy in the universe – the electrons – are separated by relatively vast expanses of apparently empty space. Dwell on this idea for awhile. It will help you overcome one great obstacle to realization – the notion that because the things of the physical plane seem hard and solid to our senses they offer resistance to the passage of the hidden force. Think of radio waves, bringing the music from distant

stations through the walls of your house. Think of cosmic waves, penetrating three feet of “solid” lead. There are finer vibrations than these, to the action of which nothing physical can interpose a barrier. As we read in the *Emerald Tablet of Hermes*: ‘This is the strong force of all forces, overcoming every subtle, and penetrating every solid thing.’

Electrons, I have said, are separated from each other by vast expanses of apparently empty space. It is not really empty. Space is filled with the Life-Breath. It is everywhere, between things as well as in them. Whether they be small as electrons or big as Betelgeuze, “things” are limited areas or fields wherein the occult force takes physical form. Things are waves in an ocean of light.

The earth is a wheel in the machine driven by solar force. The movements of matter on its surface, including your personal actions, are transformations of the sun’s radiance. Everything pictured in Key 0 is an image of some form of solar activity. Even the earth itself is made of electrons which were once part of the sun itself.

The measured beat of waves upon the shore, the slow, majestic progress of the Amazon sweeping down to the sea, the song of a mountain rill running to meet its mates and join its waters with theirs, the bubbling of hillside springs, the fall of every raindrop – these are watery vestitures of solar light and heat.

The gale driving storm-clouds across the sky, the breeze stirring the curtain, the wild tornado cutting a path of death, the steady trade winds carrying proud ships on peaceful errands of commerce – these are phases of the influence of sunlight upon our atmosphere. Every breath drawn by a living creature, every transformation of that breath into sound, expresses the same power. Every prayer and every curse, every word of wisdom and every utterance of folly, is made possible by sunshine. The shrill call of bugles sounding an attack, the solemn music echoing beneath cathedral arches – these are the sunlight’s garments of air.

Every fire that burns is a flame lit by the sun. The history of human culture is a story of a man’s mastery of fire. Almost everything we own has passed through fire, or has been fashioned by machines driven by fire. The energy of fuel is but imprisoned sunlight. And what more wonderful than the slow

fire in our bodies, lit before our birth, which while it burns is life itself? The mastery of this vital flame is among the greatest of the occult secrets to be learned from the studies in which you are now engaged.

That fire takes form as thought through the functions of your brain. Your brain itself is made of light, like everything else. It changes sunlight into mental imagery. Thought at your end, the expressing end, of the cosmic play of light – vibrations implies a mental quality within the source of these waves of living light. The hidden force is life-force and mind-force, as well as the root of all physical energies. Thus the Wisdom of Israel ascribes FIERY INTELLIGENCE to the letter corresponding to Key 0.

During this week, review what is written concerning the Fool in Section FIRST, and commit to memory all the attributions given in the section corresponding to this Key as shown in the accompanying Tableau.

Whenever you are beset by appearances of limitation, call up Key 0 before your mind's eye. Absorb its message of absolute freedom. Remember, this is a pictorial suggestion, formulated by adepts. Your sub-consciousness will accept and act upon it. It is a treatment for realization, carefully worked out by THOSE WHO KNOW. It is also a means of mental and spiritual contact with living members of the Inner School, virtuosi in the art of living, who have completed the work you are now beginning. Make it, then, an integral part of your flesh and blood by looking at it every day until every detail of the design is indelibly printed on your brain.