

HOLISTIC TAROT SUPPLEMENT

This text is offered as a supplement to *Holistic Tarot: An Integrative Approach to Using Tarot for Personal Growth* (North Atlantic Books, 2015) by Benebell Wen.



Sample Written Reading Template: Three-Card Readings (with Signifier and First Operation)

NOTES TO THE PRACTITIONER:

1. While you are free to use any of the content below, you are strongly encouraged to edit the template so that it reflects your personality and your personal style.
2. Create your own professional letterhead and prepare your written readings on that letterhead to send out to clients.
3. *Recommended:* Write out the reading using your prepared template in a program such as Microsoft Word, and then convert it into a PDF and send the PDF file to the client rather than the Word file.

(Use custom-designed professional letterhead.)

Date of Reading :
Your Date of Birth :
Signifier Card :
Tarot Deck Used :

Dear [*Seeker name*]:

It is my pleasure to connect with you through the tarot. *Or*
Thank you for your reading request on [*date request was submitted to you*].

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(Part 1: Introduction & Signifier Card)

For all first time readings, include opening paragraphs that briefly explain your reading approach and reading philosophy:

Since you are a new client, I would like to direct your attention to the Important Disclosures that appear at the end of this reading. Please read those disclosures first before we begin.

[*Seeker name*], per your date of birth, [*insert date of birth given*], a/an [*insert element corresponding with sign, e.g., Fire, Water, Air, or Earth—see p. 237-238 as reference, and for corresponding birthdates to the sun signs, the chart at the bottom of p. 240 or the Zodiac reference chart in Appendix B, p. 742*] sign, I am selecting the [*signifier card you've selected*] as your signifier card.

The signifier (traditionally referred to as a significator) represents you in the reading and will anchor the reading around your personal energies. The [*signifier card*] is a [*provide a concise overview of the physical and personality attributes of this signifier card to tell the Seeker a little about him or herself*].

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Repeat clients:

It is great to be reading for you again. Since this is not your first time getting a tarot reading from me, I'll take the liberty of skipping the usual introductory words about what I do, my approach, and what tarot is and isn't. The signifier card we use for you to anchor your reading is the [*signifier card*].

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(Be sure to restate the seeker's question and, if applicable, address issues of rephrasing.)

[*Seeker name*], you had asked, [*restate the seeker's inquiry into the sentence*].

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(If the seeker's question needs to be rephrased, then note the below paragraph template.)

Per my reading approach, tarot should empower, should illuminate the path for us, but never tell us which path to walk or how to walk it. When we look down our road, we can only see so far with our consciousness. The tarot is like a lighted lantern. It helps us see just a little farther, just enough to give us what we need to make an informed decision about our own futures. It is important that questions are phrased in a way that best empowers us, and is not merely predictive, which can often negate empowerment.

Thus, in our prior conversations, we have discussed rephrasing your question, and agreed to the following: [*write out the agreed-upon rephrased question*]

Practitioner's Note: For paid professional tarot readings, never rephrase a question without first obtaining the client's consent. It is unprofessional to assume that a client will be agreeable to a rephrasing of his or her original question. You must discuss the rephrasing and ethical issues with the client prior to commencement of the written reading.

However, for free readings, the foregoing is less of an issue, and so it is permissible to take the liberty to rephrase the question and write in your response as follows: "To best ensure that my reading empowers and does not simply purport to predict a fixed future outcome, I've taken the liberty to rephrase your question. The rephrased question for your reading is as follows: [*state the rephrased question*]."

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(Part 2: The First Operation)

It is my customary divination practice to open a reading with a method adapted from certain traditions of tarot, which I will refer to here as the first operation.

After shuffling, the deck is subdivided into four piles. Once the four piles are laid out, right to left they represent the four quadrants of life, the four elements, and the tetragrammaton of God, IHVH (or YHVH). Right to left, the piles are as follows: **I** (*the physical plane*: health, wellness, work, career), **H₁** (*the emotional plane*: love, relationships, family), **V** (*the thought plane*: ambitions, projects, education, social situations, legal matters), and **H₂** (*the material plane*: finances, assets, property, wealth management, resources).

Your signifier appeared in the **I** (*the physical plane*: health, wellness, work, career) pile.

Or, as applicable,

Your signifier appeared in the **H₁** (*the emotional plane*: love, relationships, family) pile.

Or, as applicable,

Your signifier appeared in the **V** (*the thought plane*: ambitions, projects, education, social situations, legal matters) pile.

Or, as applicable,

Your signifier appeared in the **H₂** (*the material plane*: finances, assets, property, wealth management, resources) pile.

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[Note significance of First Operation to inquiry]

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(Part 3: The Three Card Reading)

[*Optional: Insert photograph of the Seeker's reading spread*]

Using the pile of cards that your signifier appeared in, I proceed with a three-card reading, which will tap into the present energies surrounding your situation. Understanding the present energies brought into the present by past influences and how those energies are most likely to manifest in your future will provide the information you need to make the most empowering decisions for yourself going forward.

The three cards drawn were as follows:

1. The Heart of Your Present Situation | [INSERT CARD]

[Insert brief card image description and keywords or key phrases about the card.]

2. Past Influences that Still Affect Your Present | [INSERT CARD]

[Insert brief card image description and keywords or key phrases about the card.]

3. Most Probable Future Outcome | [INSERT CARD]

[Insert brief card image description and keywords or key phrases about the card.]

[*Seeker name*], [summarize overall reading in a sentence or two].

Checklist of Consideration Points:

- Any Major Arcana cards that dominate the reading and the significance of the Majors to the Seeker's situation
- Elemental dignities, any ill-dignified energies, and the significance of the elements
- Any particular details in the card imagery that stood out intuitively and the symbolic significance of those image details to the Seeker's situation
- Of the three cards, which card demands the most attention from the practitioner, what the significance of that might be, and greater details about that card as applied to the Seeker's situation
- End on an affirmative note, such as the corresponding affirmation for the final card drawn (see *Holistic Tarot* text, p. 609-614).

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(Part 4: Closing)

[*Seeker name*], I hope I have been able to offer you some insight or different perspectives on your present situation. While I believe the cards are always right, as a human, I am prone to errors in translation or interpretation. Thus, I encourage you to connect with the cards and your reading directly, and if any questions arise from your reading, look inward and ask the light within you, your inner intuitive voice, what it is you still need to see from these cards and as you study this reading and review it time and time again, I know you will find every answer you seek. [*Seeker name*], I enjoyed this reading for you and hope to hear from you in the future.

Sincerely,

[*Your signature line*]

[*Be sure to include your professional contact information*]

Important Disclosures

Tarot readings by [*your professional name*] are spiritual in nature and do not purport to tell the future or your fortune with certainty, cure misfortune, commune supernaturally, or perform any service that would be in conflict with the laws of the land. No representations can be made whatsoever about the accuracy of the reading and should not be construed as predictive or psychic. Your reading is an objective process where cards are drawn, a subjective meaning is placed on those cards per certain reading traditions, and it is believed that such subjective meanings can be a spiritual experience.

All readings are confidential. However, if there is reason to believe that you may be at imminent risk of harm to yourself or to others, then the contents of your reading may be disclosed to professional third parties on a need-to-know basis for the sole purpose of preventing risk of harm. A court order issued by a judge could also override any confidentiality terms herein. Any readings and communications transmitted electronically will also be subject to the proprietor's Privacy Policy and Terms of Use, found at [*insert the page URL for your privacy terms*].

A tarot reading should never be used in place of professional counseling. Your reading cannot offer legal, medical, business, or financial advice nor does any portion of your reading herein purport to. You should not rely on a tarot reading to make any decision that would affect your legal, financial, or medical condition. If your inquiry involves the law, finance, or medicine, then you should seek the advice of a licensed or qualified legal, financial, or medical professional. Also, tarot reading cannot replace qualified mental health care. A tarot reading can only facilitate how you cope spiritually with a given situation.

In certain jurisdictions, a tarot professional is required to disclose to you that tarot readings should be for entertainment purposes only, and if such a law applies to your reading, then you are hereby on notice thereof.



Sample Written Reading: Bart Hypothetical

Hypothetical Reading Request (from the Advanced Study Guide):

Bart has requested a three-card e-mail reading from you. He asks you: "Will I find love in the next six months?" He provides you with his date of birth, 04/13/1983.

Sample Written Reading Response (to demonstrate use of the reading template):



benebell wen



TAROT PRACTITIONER AND AUTHOR OF *HOLISTIC TAROT*

Date of Reading : January 31, 2015
Your Date of Birth : April 13, 1983
Signifier Card : Knight of Wands
Tarot Deck Used : Rider-Waite-Smith

Dear Bart:

Thank you for your reading request on January 29, 2015. It is my pleasure to connect with you through the tarot.

Since you are a new client, I would like to direct your attention to the Important Disclosures that appear at the end of this reading. Please read those disclosures first before we begin.

Bart, per your date of birth, April 13, 1983, you are a sun sign Aries, a Fire sign, so I am selecting the Knight of Wands as your signifier card. In tarot, the suit of Wands is the suit that is governed by Fire.

The signifier (traditionally referred to as a significator) represents you in the reading and will anchor the reading around your personal energies. The Knight of Wands is a

motivated, often career-driven, with a fiery temper, a lot of personal energy, and can be quite creative or artistic. There's a tendency to be impetuous, competitive, a bit hot-headed, and also secretly insecure. Those of the suit of Wands, or Fire temperaments, tend to have striking, dynamic facial features and a light and lively disposition about them.

Since your inquiry is about love, I'd like to note that Fire signs tend to have the most romantic chemistry with Air signs. Earth signs often bring the much-needed stability and a sense of security to Fire. Water signs, however, may find it difficult to understand you, Fire, and likewise, you often have a difficult time understanding the moodiness and sensitivity of Water.

Bart, you had asked, "Will I find love in the next six months?"

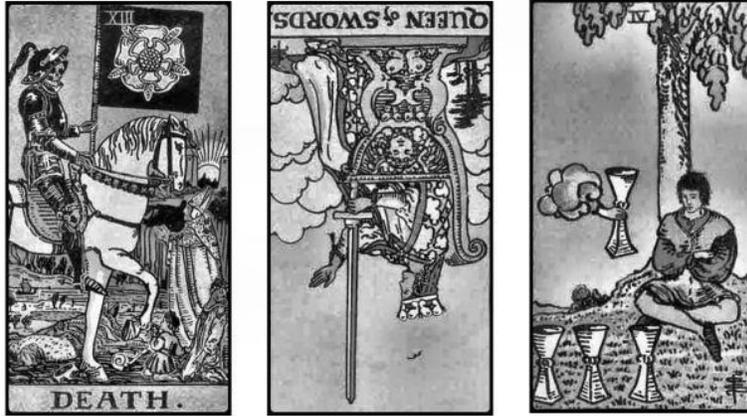
Per my reading approach, tarot should empower, should illuminate the path for us, but never tell us which path to walk or how to walk it. When we look down our road, we can only see so far with our consciousness. The tarot is like a lighted lantern. It helps us see just a little farther, just enough to give us what we need to make an informed decision about our own futures. It is important that questions are phrased in a way that best empowers us, and is not merely predictive, which can often negate empowerment.

Thus, in our prior conversations, we have discussed rephrasing your question, and agreed to the following: "What must I do to position myself for finding love this coming year?"

It is my customary divination practice to open a reading with a method adapted from certain traditions of tarot, which I will refer to here as the first operation.

After shuffling, the deck is subdivided into four piles. Once the four piles are laid out, right to left they represent the four quadrants of life, the four elements, and the tetragrammaton of God, IHVH (or YHVH). Right to left, the piles are as follows: **I** (*the physical plane*: health, wellness, work, career), **H₁** (*the emotional plane*: love, relationships, family), **V** (*the thought plane*: ambitions, projects, education, social situations, legal matters), and **H₂** (*the material plane*: finances, assets, property, wealth management, resources).

Your signifier appeared in the **V** (*the thought plane*: ambitions, projects, education, social situations, legal matters) pile. Applied specifically to your inquiry, the signifier's appearance in the V pile reveals that how your external self is being perceived is directly related to your experiences in the romantic realm. Before you can find the love that you are looking for, you must first resolve certain issues resting in the formative plane. That can be indicative of how you communicate with people and the effect your way of communication has on potential relationships or it can be indicative of how you are being perceived by prospective romantic partners. The tarot reading will now offer us greater insights into how this condition manifests.



Using the pile of cards that your signifier appeared in, I proceed with a three-card reading, which will tap into the present energies surrounding your situation. Understanding the present energies brought into the present by past influences and how those energies are most likely to manifest in your future will provide the information you need to make the most empowering decisions for yourself going forward.

The three cards drawn were as follows:

1. The Heart of Your Present Situation | **Queen of Swords, Reversed**

The queen wears a golden crown of butterflies. Her cloak is made of clouds. Low in the skies behind her are the same dense, cumulonimbus clouds. Trees in the distance suggest a strong wind blowing through them. A winged cherub and more butterflies are carved into her throne. We see her from her side profile only. She wields a sword confidently. A single black bird soars in the distance.

Note that the card appears in reverse, so the ill-dignified meaning of the Queen of Swords will be applied.

The first card drawn is from the suit of Swords, which is governed by Air, the same element that governs the V pile that your signifier was found in during the preliminary operation. In a reading specifically about love, the Queen of Swords in reverse can suggest quarreling or a personal sense of elitism that gets in the way of open and loving communication. The Queen here tells me that you are a highly intelligent and perhaps even overly analytical individual, and while in any other area of life these qualities are positive, when it comes to love and relationships, your ego needs to take a backseat. The Queen's message immediately begins to echo the results from the preliminary operation—issues related to communication and perhaps even ideological conflicts are the primary points of hindrance in your ability to nurture a healthy romantic relationship. Also, in your present state of mind, there may be issues of forgiveness with regard to past relationships or past emotional baggage that needs to be dealt with before you can progress forward in a new relationship.

2. Past Influences that Still Affect Your Present | **Key 13: Death**

An armored skeleton waves a black flag bearing the Rosicrucian Rose. He rides a white steed, whose eyes glow red. The reigns depict the skull and crossbones. Beneath the horse's hooves is the dead king, his crown and scepter trampled on. A woman and child are on their knees, ill, dying. A bishop in glowing yellow cloak prays before the horse. A single ship sails on the river. Is it the river Styx? Along the horizon line are the two pillars from Key 18, The Moon, and a yellow radiant sun rising in between

In a past position, the Death card suggests a dramatic, transformative love that was intense, but one that has ended, though its emotional impact continues to take hold of your present. Note that the Death card in tarot does not indicate literal or physical death, but rather, it symbolizes change and transformation. However, it is a positive change, one that goes from dark to light, lower to higher. The card suggests oppressive or suppressive forces in your love life in the past, but you have moved away from those forces and are now trying to forge healthy relationships, ones unaffected by past hurt. At your current state of mind, you are not yet ready for new relationships and a bit of further internal reflection is needed before the energies around you will be open and welcoming for new relationships.

3. Most Probable Future Outcome | **Four of Cups**

A man sits on a grassy knob, legs crossed and arms crossed, under a tree, deep in contemplation. A single cloud appears in front of him offering a goblet. Three more goblets are presented before him. He pays no heed to them. His vision is turned inward.

The Four of Cups here confirms what was mentioned about the Death card. The Four of Cups answers your question, though I'm not sure you will be satisfied with my answer. You asked, "What must I do to position myself for finding love this coming year?" The answer is introspection and to forebear from trying so hard to get into a relationship for now and instead, take the time for personal reevaluation. You are in a state of discontent that has nothing to do with you being single or the need to find love. This discontent goes deeper into your sense of ego, your sense of who you are, and that needs to be dealt with before you can advance forward. The Four of Cups asks you to reevaluate your personal choices and try to understand your present state of inertia.

Note how the imagery on the Four of Cups calls to mind the Buddha meditating under a Bodhi tree. Likewise, go inward and allow yourself some solitude for now.

Bart, to position yourself well for finding love, you must first reject the conscious attempt to seek out love and instead, look inward. The Four of Cups is telling you what to do: introspection is needed. Reflect on what the Queen of Swords in reverse and the Death card have had to say about your past and present. Resolving these internal issues and letting old wounds heal in full are needed before you can progress forward.

The element Water dominated in your reading, and Water relates to our emotional plane, to the fluid movement toward finding love and relationships, and so the omen is positive for your quest to find love. Let the message of the Four of Cups guide your next steps and you will find the love you seek. Of the three cards here, the Death card seems to lead the course of the other two cards, though it is leading from behind. During your reading, I was very much drawn to the sun rising above the two pillars in the back right corner of the Death card. I see that sunrise as boding positively for your desires.

Bart, I hope I have been able to offer you some insight or different perspectives on your present situation. While I believe the cards are always right, as a human, I am prone to errors in translation or interpretation. Thus, I encourage you to connect with the cards and your reading directly, and if any questions arise from your reading, look inward and ask the light within you, your inner intuitive voice, what it is you still need to see from these cards and as you study this reading and review it time and time again, I know you will find every answer you seek. Bart, I enjoyed this reading for you and hope to hear from you in the future.

Sincerely,
Benebell Wen
www.benebellwen.com

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