



THE ELEMENTAL ORACLE

STACEY DEMARCO

◆ THE ◆  
ELEMENTAL  
ORACLE

*alchemy | science | magic*

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*Artwork by Kinga Britschgi*

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# THE ELEMENTAL ORACLE

*alchemy | science | magic*

STACEY DEMARCO

*Illustrated by Kinga Britschgi*



ROCKPOOL

*'When we try and pick out anything by itself, we find it  
hitched to everything else in the universe.'*

*— John Muir*

*This oracle is dedicated to every single atom vibrating and  
dancing into and out of existence.*



A Rockpool book

PO Box 252

Summer Hill NSW 2130

Australia

rockpoolpublishing.co

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ISBN 978-1-925924-68-8

First published in 2020 by Rockpool Publishing

Copyright text © Stacey Demarco 2020

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Edited by Lisa Macken

Cover designed by Sara Lindberg, Rockpool Publishing

Internal design and typesetting by Jessica Le, Rockpool Publishing

Printed and bound in China

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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# Introduction



This oracle is a love letter to what *is*: what *is* in our world, what it *is* made up of, and what the visible and invisible forces are that make it up, hold it together and flow through it. There is great magic in all these elemental aspects of the universe, including our world, yet it seems a spiritual fashion to ignore the impressive power of what we actually have for the ideas and energies that take us off our physical planet.

Our ancestors made no such mistake.

We see the reverence and deep understanding of the elements within the worlds of ancient cultures, often initially through their creation myths. The big four building blocks are, of course, earth, air, fire and water, and the mythos of the beginning of the world almost always recognised the alchemy between them.

We see a complex and advanced view of the creation of the planet and life upon it deeply imbibed with the building blocks that are the elements. The ancient Greeks, for example, believed the earth started in a state of everything and nothing, swirling in an unformed and uncontained way. They called this state *kaos*. Then, there was an explosion of an organising force, Eros (love), that brought order to the matter.

This massive creative force brought Gaia (earth) into existence and then Ouranos (the sky) became evident. Sounds a hell of a lot like a slightly more poetic description of the Big Bang theory to me.

Then there is the beautiful and dramatic way the ancient Norse believed their world had been created. They saw that in the beginning there was nothing but the gaping void of Ginnungagap (a primordial abyss). Nothing lived there; it was a dark place with no sky or green things growing. Within the great tree of life that held all worlds, Yggdrasil, this place was a grey place that lay between the two home worlds of Muspell and Niflheim. Muspell was a land of pure fire in which molten rock and flame glowed white hot and blood red and flowed everywhere. Niflheim was a white place of ice and snow and wind; all there was frozen and dry, and frost rose everywhere.

When the unwavering heat from Muspell and the icy frost from Niflheim met and wove together above Ginnungagap, the frost melted. Dripping and sizzling, it fell into the great void and formed Ymir (Chaos), the first frost giant. Life began.

Remembering that Norse lands such as Greenland and Iceland are even now places of ice and snow, volcanoes and lava and are shaped by huge elemental forces such as pressure, cold, heat and wind, we can appreciate how the Norse naturally took what is – in

this case quite accurately – to see how their world would have begun.

We see the power of the elements through the stories of some of the first nations people of Australia too, particularly with the Rainbow Serpent. Her story, whether oral or drawn, differs slightly from place to place yet always centres on the pivotal power of water. Water breathes life into the land and is central to growth, fertility and regeneration.

Many believe that the Rainbow Serpent brought water when the world was created. Others believe that in the beginning, when there was nothing on earth, the Rainbow Serpent cracked through the crust of the earth and began her journey of waking up all life. As she moved and travelled, stopped and slept, with her body she created gullies and gorges, mountains and valleys and of course the water lines that joined them all. Once water appeared life on earth began to flourish: all the animals, reptiles and birds awoke and began their life cycles too.

But it isn't just about the big four elements. The cardinal directions came in quick succession, and were especially important to the great navigating cultures such as the Norse and Polynesians. Still today words connected with direction finding and boats such as south (*sudr*) and ship (*skiff*) remain the root of the same words in English and sound almost the same



even if they don't mean the same thing. The directions connected and corresponded with the four elements.

While our ancestors may not have had words for 'gravity' or 'dark matter', they did understand the ideas of weight and the void. They understood there were forces they could see and those they could not. The ancient cultures that loved and delved into what we now term 'science', such as the Greeks or Egyptians, tried to describe how the alchemy of life worked and came to be. Energetic forces such as magnetism, electricity, gravity and time – all of these were being observed and thought about by our ancestors. The idea that everything was made up of some kind of small matter was an idea being considered in antiquity.

Everything is connected to everything else. Energies, forces, electricity and living matter all build upon each other, step by step, ingredient by ingredient, swirling and weaving in powerful alchemy, creating a synergistic whole that is so much more powerful than the sum of its individual parts. Our earth, our world is heaving and dancing with elemental aliveness, with deep connectivity, with an electric creativity. If that isn't magic, I don't know what is.

And so here, powerfully, you have a chance to plug into the magic.

*Enjoy.*

# How to use the cards



## The structure of the cards

Each card has the following structural elements:

- the name of the element
- the message of the card in summary
- a word of power: often, (but not always) an ancient word from various cultures or languages, both ancient and modern. The essence of the element, this word is said with intention and power and invokes the energy of the card and the element itself; it can be used in spells, workings and ceremony or simply to assist you when you need to invoke the energy promptly
- a description
- the element family: earth, air, fire or water

## Using different spreads

### *The pantheon technique*

If this deck is to be used for divination, I suggest you first dedicate or bless your cards; I have included a small ritual on page 10 if you do not already have your own in mind. This will enliven the cards and

connect you with the energy of the earth and the elements and the intention of the deck itself.

After you have dedicated or blessed your cards, spread the whole deck out on a table or the floor or, better still, the earth! Breathe deeply and relax. Allow your gaze to soften and see which cards seem more attractive to you: which ones jump out at you or call to you in some way? These may well be the aspects of the deck you need to integrate into your life right now, or the themes that can most assist your growth at this time. You will be attracted to them and the card may almost jump into your hand.

Pay attention to those cards and take action if it is indicated.

### *One-card divination*

This is inspiration and divination in its simplest form: take a breath, ask for guidance as you shuffle the cards and simply choose a card. You may choose to do this daily, as some of the ancients did. Meditate upon this image; let it speak to you. Use this card as a guide for the day, as both its light and shadow aspects may well be useful to you at this time.

### *Full moon three-card draw*

Full moons have always been linked with divination; it's a great time to do this three-card spread.

Card 1: the heart of the issue or question.

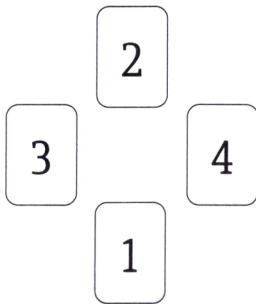
Card 2: the challenge.

Card 3: the solution.



### *Four elements spread*

I like to link this four-card spread to the four elements.



Card 1 (earth): what is the true issue?

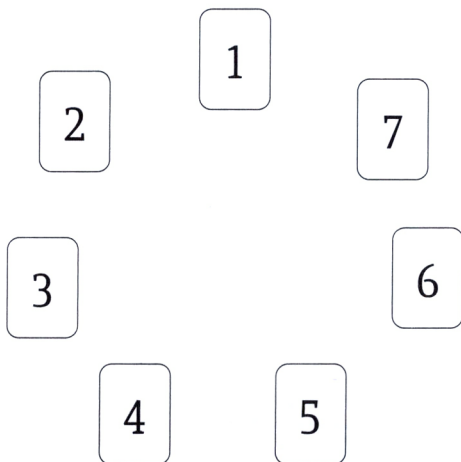
Card 2 (air): how can you solve it via intellect/communication?

Card 3 (fire): what emotions can you bring to this or release?



Card 4 (water): how do you move on flowfully from this issue?

*Traditional seven-card spread*



Shuffle the cards and place seven in a circular shape.

Card 1: the situation as it is.

Card 2: what caused the situation.

Card 3: what obstacles are in the way of resolution.

Card 4: what will happen upon resolution.

Card 5: action to resolve.

Card 6: action to resolve.

Card 7: action to resolve.

Change does not happen merely by chance. Taking even a small action towards your resolution or intended outcome signals to the divine that you have agreed to this co-creative process and, as such, that you are serious about this desire.

### *Timing spread*

This is a great spread to use when you want to know the timing of something, for example, answers to questions such as 'When will I find a new partner?', 'When is the right time to move?' or 'Will it take a long time for me to complete this project?'

Take a breath and hold your question in your mind; try not to be anxious or concerned. Shuffle the cards and ask your question.

Pull a card from the deck: this card represents the positive aspect of your issue.

Pull a second card from the deck: this card represents the difficulty or barrier inherent in the request.

Pull a third card: this card gives you an indication of timing.

## Dedication for your cards

If you can, get outdoors. This can be by the sea, upon the earth or up in the sky! Invite your animal friend if you have one to be with you.

Burn some bay leaves, sage or frankincense and allow it to burn and smoke fragrantly.

Throw some salt (sea salt is best) upon the pack and say:

*'I cleanse, I renew, I protect.'*

Light a golden candle and say:

*'I ask that the universal power of the elements, the gods and goddesses, the sun, the moon, the earth and the seasons to bless me and these cards. These honour you, I honour you. I ask for guidance and truth, awakening and clarity, and the strength and courage to make changes should I need to.'*

Pass the pack through the smoke of the herbs, saying:

*'I dedicate these cards to my and the greater good. May only good enter here. And so it is!'*

You can make your first divination knowing the higher energies have heard your dedication and will respond in kind.

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## 1. North

### *Expansion*

Be guided but do your research. Focus and honesty is needed to overcome obstacles. You know you know; you know your true north, so be brave about the next steps. We may have a number of purposes in life, not just a single one: it is time for true adventure.

**Word of power:** *boreas* (Greek: 'god of the north wind').

North is one of the cardinal directions and, in witchcraft, one of the guardian directions. Traditionally north has been associated with ice and snow, and the north wind is considered to be the coldest. The Arctic Circle is large and passes through Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia, Canada, Denmark (Greenland), Iceland and the Arctic Ocean.

There has always been a certain romanticism about going north on adventures. During the peak years of the age of exploration, the exploration of the North Pole became almost a public mania. Perhaps

the greatest adventurers of the ancient world and the most northerly were the Viking peoples; to 'viking means to 'go exploring'.

The north has connotations around finding our true essence or pathway. It can even be a referral to finding a person who gives our life meaning. Finding our true north indicates we have found a profoundly right path and a direction that is authentic for us. So strongly is north seen as a guiding direction it is the one used to indicate direction on maps, usually with a single arrow.

North is one of the 'quarters' called in certain traditions of witchcraft to purify or protect a space. People may call upon the guardians of the north or the northern as a way of unlocking the protective energies of the portals of that element.

**Element:** air.



## 2. South

### *Adventure*

Take a risk, but an educated one. Do or see something you haven't before, as experiencing something new will help to clear your mind and give wonder to your heart. Look carefully at your

plan: something may be amiss. The situation may have a happy medium, it is not all or nothing.

**Words of power:** *nótia, notos* (Ancient Greek: 'southerly').

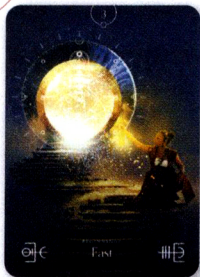
The south in some ways has a slightly bad rap. The term 'it could go south' means something could go wrong, and plans going awry are often referred to in this way. As it is the opposite of north and north was often seen as the right or sure direction, it's easy to see why.

The global south used to be a place of unknown territories, a kind of *terra nullius*. To travel south from the northern hemisphere as an explorer was to be courageous and to break boundaries. In the 1800s much of South America had still been unexplored,

and Darwin's voyage on HMAS *Beagle* in 1831 caused a sensation back in England when his flora and fauna samples were scientifically examined. Australia was named from *terra australis*, the hypothetical south land described on maps from the 15th century onward.

South is one of the quarters called in certain traditions of witchcraft to purify or protect a space. People may call upon the guardians of the south or the southern direction as a way to unlock the protective energies of portals of that element.

**Element:** fire.



### 3. East

#### *Beginnings*

Worry not: a new dawn is breaking. Let go of the old and embrace the new. Flow forward without heaviness or anxiety. New ways of being are calling to you; speak up with a clear voice. Do not resist change.

**Word of power:** *austr* (ancient Norse: 'east').

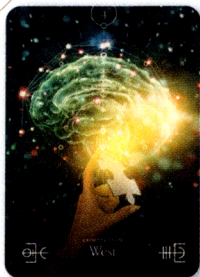
In the ancient world, to go east meant to go somewhere new and exotic. The sun rose in the east, so the direction heralded new beginnings and fresh starts.

As the east was associated with the air element, it has come to mean a much more cerebral destination or way of processing. The east was a place to find your fortune, a different way to be and innovation. Eastern religions – Buddhism, Zen and Hinduism, for example – were a completely different paradigm from those of the West, with different emphasis and processes.

East is one of the quarters called in certain

traditions of witchcraft to purify or protect a space. People may call upon the guardians of the east or the eastern direction as a way of unlocking the protective energies of portals of that element.

**Element:** air.



## 4. West

### Completion

Every cycle comes to a close. Do not resist the end of something, because the end heralds a new beginning. Complete the project; be a finisher. Be not afraid of death; it is a part of life.

**Word of power:** *vestr* (ancient Norse: 'west').

West is one of the cardinal directions. It is the direction in which the sun sets and so, traditionally, in many cultures it was linked to death or the underworld. For example, the Egyptians felt that west was the direction of the underworld and the afterlife, which was not considered to be a negative place, and in certain cultures interred bodies faced west or their feet faced west. Other sacred places such as Mecca are westerly. In Buddhism, the west leads to enlightenment.

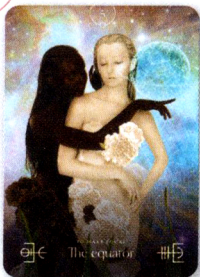
The idea that a westerly trajectory leads to wisdom or higher enlightenment is one shared by the Norse and many other pagan pathways. It is a

powerful direction in which, because of the earth's rotation, most winds blow.

West is one of the quarters called in certain traditions of witchcraft to purify or protect a space. People may call upon the guardians of the west or the western direction as a way of unlocking the protective energies of portals of that element.

**Element:** earth.





## 5. The equator

### *To make equal*

Find the balance in your life. Equality among people is a worthy goal. You are worth it. Do not compare yourself to others as this is a useless task that only leads to unhappiness; there can be a

happy medium. There doesn't have to be an extreme reaction all the time.

**Word of power:** *aequare* (Latin: 'make equal').

The equator is the centre and equal point of any spherical planet or body, including the earth; it is the midway point between the geographical poles. On earth the equator is about 40,075 km long, of which 78.8 per cent lies across water and 21.2 per cent over land.

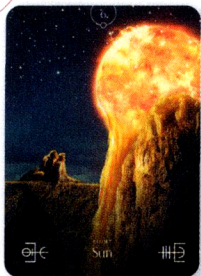
Importantly, the equator assists with navigation and mapping, as it is the major latitudinal line. Our planet earth bulges a little at the equator: the average diameter of earth is 12,750 km, but the diameter at the equator is about 43 km greater than at the poles. Because of the lack of tilt, the temperature at

the equator does not change much according to the seasons and remains at a very close balance.

The equator passes through countries such as Indonesia, Uganda, Gabon, Kenya, Somalia, Ecuador and Brazil, and the oceans of the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian.

When we seek equality the energy of the equator is a powerful addition to our workings.

**Element:** fire.



## 6. Sun

### *Light*

Be grateful for what you have right now. Every day brings new possibilities and opportunities. Concentrate on building your vitality and health. Shine a strong light upon the dark corners;

honesty and transparency are vital at this time.

**Word of power:** *sol* (ancient Norse: 'sun').

It is not an exaggeration to say that without the sun most of life would perish. This fiery star at the centre of our solar system is also central to our survival. We orbit around the sun, and it is by far the most definitive and important source of elemental energy for our planet.

The sun brings us light, and is 85 per cent brighter than most other objects in the Milky Way. A big ball of hydrogen and helium, the heat is radiated outwards from its core. We can see the sun's atmosphere (the coolest part of the sun) when we see an eclipse. Fascinatingly, the sun has magnetic fields flowing across it that vary in time and location. An

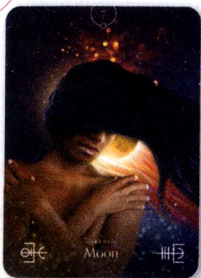
11-year solar cycle is the most prominent variation in which the number and size of sunspots waxes and wanes.

Such has been its influence and vital importance that the sun was recognised by ancient peoples as one of the first deities just as itself. Later on, solar deities were recognised and many polytheistic cultures had powerful sun gods. The sun was regarded as a masculine energy (the moon is regarded as feminine), most likely due to the sun's fiery and extroverted and extreme nature.

The seasons on earth are directly influenced by the amount of sunlight a place receives and at what angle. Winter days are short and winter nights longer as the angle of the sun is lower and more acute, which gives less heat and light.

Being deeply aware of and connecting to seasonal energies such as the introversion of winter or the explosion of attraction energy in spring can help us find greater flow and ease in everything, from creation of projects to the conception of a baby.

**Element:** fire.



## 7. Moon

### *Darkness*

There are cycles to everything  
and a season for everything;  
do not push yourself when  
the tides are against you.  
Do not be afraid of the  
darkness as the darkness  
is as necessary as the light.

Rest and repair. The divine feminine in all her forms  
is rising. The time for introversion, stability and  
planning is here.

**Word of power:** *lysa* (ancient Norse: 'illuminate in  
darkness').

The moon has had an unshakeable pull on human  
imagination since we were able to stand up on our  
hind legs and look at it. Some of the earliest cave  
artworks feature it, and it has been particularly linked  
with feminine energies and the feminine divine.

The typical human menstrual cycle length is  
the same length as a lunar cycle. We know the  
luteinising hormone (*lute* means 'light') that triggers  
ovulation is highly triggered by all light but especially  
by moonlight. Goddesses of the moon are featured in

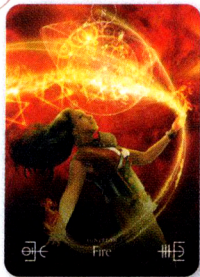
almost all polytheistic religions, and many such as Diana, Artemis, Selene, Chang Xi, Arianrhod and Rati are all still worshipped today.

Moon energy is flowful and changeable, just as the moon's gravitational pull influences the great ocean tides. It is also stabilising. After the Big Bang and the formation of planets such as the earth, our planet had no moon. It spun wildly, which meant very short days and nights, and it was quite unstable, resulting in extremes of temperature. It is believed that a Mars-sized planet collided with the earth, the impact of which sent chunks of the planet off into orbit and gradually formed our moon.

The moon began to have an effect on the earth, with its gravitational pull slowing the rapid rotation of the young earth and giving it greater stability: there were less speed wobbles! Among the many consequences of this, days and nights became longer and more consistent and distinct seasons were born. These seasons tempered the extremes of the planet, and it became one that eventually harboured life.

These facts illustrate how we can be personally affected by the moon and seasons. By following the moon's cycles and working with them we can discover a new layer of stability within body, mind and spirit.

**Element:** air.



## 8. Fire

### *Ignition*

Live your passion. Allow your spirit to drive you forward. Don't overthink the situation. Now is the time to innovate and take action. Be a lighthouse for others or find yourself a mentor.

**Word of power:** *loga* (ancient Norse: 'blaze').

It is said that Prometheus was asked by Zeus to create man. Humans were formed with clay made of water and earth and were fashioned in the gods' image, unlike other animals; however, these new beings seemed quite helpless: no fur, no big teeth, few skills. Prometheus felt sorry for mankind and asked Zeus if fire could be given to them.

Prometheus knew that fire would allow men to grow and thrive and would be totally transformational to their life and survival. Stealing it meant that all art and skills would only blossom with fire and mankind would grow stronger with fire when used for cooking and warmth. Prometheus crept into Zeus's own hearth and, lighting a small

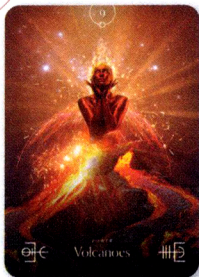
flame within a stalk of giant fennel, took the fire and escaped. He gave mankind the small fiery spark that all others have been lit from. While man prospered, Prometheus did not. So precious was fire to Zeus that Prometheus was given the grisly perpetual punishment of Zeus' own eagle eating out his liver daily, having it grow back overnight and then the whole thing starting again the next day.

Fire is an element of profound significance. We cook with it, transforming things from inedible to edible, it provides light and protection and it was the difference between freezing or not freezing. We burn incenses and plant medicines for pleasure, healing and spiritual significance. We hold fire so sacred that perpetual flames were part of the honouring of many deities throughout time the world over.

The fire element is the one that motivates and inspires us. It is action oriented and light, so those who like to utilise the fire element are innovative and quick thinkers and they get things done. Fire is linked with love and passion and is often used as an element of magic in spells to attract such a partner.

**Element:** it traditionally corresponds with the element of east, although in the southern hemisphere it is aligned with north.





## 9. Volcanoes

### *Power*

Old grudges should be released and let go. Heavy energy hurts us should we hold it for too long. Allow your anger to flow through you rather than saving it all up for an explosive release. Reformation may be necessary.

Sometimes, the greatest powers are hidden from view; you have the power to create or destroy.

**Word of power:** *dynamis* (Ancient Greek: 'force, power').

A volcano forms by a rupture in the earth's crust, releasing lava, ash, gases and more from the hot magma chamber underneath. The crust protects us from the heat and magma within the earth. Volcanoes are more likely to form where two of the earth's tectonic plates rub together. The famous Ring of Fire, the horseshoe-shaped basin in the Pacific Ocean where 90 per cent of the world's earthquakes occur, is also the home to over 450 volcanoes.

Volcanoes are incredibly powerful and their explosiveness is hard to predict even with modern methods. It is estimated that if the giant super volcano

Caldera under Yellowstone National Park in the US ever decided to erupt explosively there would be so much ash and debris and power released that it could well trigger an extinction event on earth.

Ash is a danger to aircraft and to breathing. Poisonous gasses are often released. The projectiles thrown from the active eruption cause death and the super-heated lava itself both destroys and reshapes the environment.

During the 2018 eruption of Hawaii's Kīlauea, one of the most active volcanoes on the planet, huge tracts of land were reshaped by lava flows and land was extended further into the sea. The newest land on earth is created by volcanoes, and volcanic soils are considered to be one of the most fertile of all for growing food. While volcanoes signal destruction on one hand, they create anew with the other.

**Element:** fire.



## 10. Bushfires

### *Fury*

Extreme emotions once engaged are hard to put back in the container. Anger is a healthy emotion, yet fury is less necessary. Warlike emotions should be tempered unless survival requires it. Emotional intelligence is required at this time.

**Word of power:** *mania* (Ancient Greek: 'fury, rage').

Bushfires are a regular occurrence within some ecosystems in places such as Australia, my home country. Bushfires are often started naturally by lightning strikes and unnaturally by arson or uncontrolled back burning. Bushfires have a high heat output and are greatly affected by wind, fuel load, ambient temperature, humidity and slope.

The First Nations people in Australia used fire to successfully control and manage the fertility and appearance of the environment for much of the 60,000 years prior to European settlement. Particular care was taken over time to create a patchwork series of burns, allowing animals to escape and have food sources as

well as creating cold burns that did not reach the crown of the trees.

While fires have always been a part of some ecosystems, in fact integral to them because of things such as fire-triggered germination, we are now entering a time when fires burn so hot and furiously due to climate change factors that the destruction is catastrophic. Sadly, uncontrolled bushfires are becoming the norm in this time of climate change in many countries. These fires are furious, destroying everything: habitat, native wildlife, human life and property. Some areas have been so intensively burnt there is a chance they will not recover and easily regenerate. The last decade has seen huge forest and bushfires burn with a never before seen intensity that have destroyed huge areas of biome. The bushfires of the Australian summer of 2019/2020 burnt over 12 million hectares and killed around a *billion* animals, with half of all Australians affected. These intense bushfires have a huge economic cost, not to mention an emotional and spiritual one.

Fury is a difficult emotion both to feel and have directed at you. Fury feels extreme and uncontrollable. It is important to explore and work through such emotions and be able to understand what they are and what they mean. Unpicking why we feel such intensity helps us to balance the fury.

**Element:** fire.



## 11. Hearth

### *Comfort*

Take some time out to rest and regenerate. Know what makes you comfortable. Keep the home fires burning. Create a peaceful and beautiful home life. Nourishing the mind, body and spirit is important

at this time. Focus on the inner life.

**Word of power:** *ánesi* (Ancient Greek: 'comfort, solace').

For our ancestors the hearth or home fire was the heart of the home a fire always burned there ready for warmth or cooking. The hearth fire was stoked carefully and rarely allowed to go out, as it was a source of comfort for all and often a place where family and friends would meet.

The city temple of the goddess Vesta in Rome was considered the sacred heart of the city, and was where the *foculus*, or 'hearth', was contained. This was a fire that burned as the sacred heart of the city and its territories. A second fire, one of protection, was also within the temple. Vesta's temple was one of the only

places of worship to be circular in design and was completely covered to protect the holy flame from being snuffed out by the weather.

The saying 'Keep the home fires burning' was inspired by this practice. In Rome, husbands were often sent away on military duty for years on end, however, their wives were expected to not just keep the home and often the business running but to faithfully wait for their husbands until their return. Vesta was the goddess to whom to pray to ensure the family member's safe return and keep the fires of love stoked.

In these busy times it is important to focus on a place where you can feel safe and comfortable. While many of us don't have a literal hearth, the home (whatever that is) should be a place created to inspire peace and nourishment.

**Element:** fire.



## 12. Outer core

### *Fluidity*

Be fluid in your thinking. Holding on to old ideas in a rigid way is not beneficial for you. A nimble mind is a healthy mind. It is never too late to admit you were wrong or to change your mind

according to new information.

**Word of power:** *levitas* (Latin: 'volatility').

The earth has four layers: crust, mantle, outer core and inner core. The earth's outer core is a fluid layer about 2,400 km thick that lies above earth's solid inner core. It is composed of mostly nickel and iron.

The outer core is extremely hot, ranging from 4,000-5,000°C. It is a low-viscosity fluid and is extremely magnetic. It is thought the solid inner core is at least 50 times more magnetic than the earth's surface. This magnetism is vital to the protection of the earth from solar radiation. The radiation is pushed to the poles, where it can be disseminated safely.

The fluidity of the outer core is necessary to life, and being flexible and fluid in your thinking and ideas

makes life flowful. Resisting change by holding old rigid ideas and beliefs benefits no one and stunts your growth. Being open to new ideas and feeling confident to transform old ones, especially if you are given more information, is the way to navigate change.

**Element:** fire.





## 13. Desert

### *Solitariness*

There is a difference between being alone or solitary and being lonely. Feeling confident to spend time alone is powerful. You do not need so much; work on developing simplicity. There is more to life than

accumulating objects. You can be resilient and adapt to difficult circumstances.

**Word of power:** *sectus* (Latin: 'separate').

A desert is a seemingly lifeless biome attracting low precipitation. The plants and animals of desert regions are living in a very harsh and hostile environment and must be highly adapted to do so. About a third of all biomes on earth are categorised as being arid or semi-arid, and this is growing.

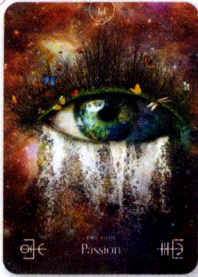
Temperature, evaporation rates and humidity levels help to classify a desert. The Antarctic and Arctic environments are classified as 'cold deserts' because of the extremely low temperatures that freeze all moisture as ice or snow. The top four deserts in area are the Antarctic, the Arctic, the Sahara and the Arabian.

The thing you most notice in a desert is the simplicity of the landscape: the sparseness of plant life, the lack of ground cover and the exposure of the topsoil, leading to sand. The dust or sand can be whipped up into epic sandstorms that can be so fierce the wind-blown sand particles become electrically charged and create enormous electrical fields that can produce sparks and interfere with telecommunications. These electrical fields can have a negative effect on humans, causing nausea, vision disturbances and headaches.

Many desert animals live underground or in highly protected places. Plants normally have smaller leaves or very few leaves and have shallow root systems to capture any precipitation that may fall.

People who live in deserts have traditionally been nomadic, moving with their prey or where food may be. These people take only what they need and carry only what is necessary but often have rich cultural and spiritual lives.

**Element:** fire.



## 14. Passion

### *The soul*

What is the spark that lights you up? The divine lives within you. Consider your motivations carefully; know where your resistance lies. We all have more than one purpose in life, and having a passion makes us feel more alive.

**Word of power:** *psykhe* (Ancient Greek: 'soul, mind, spirit').

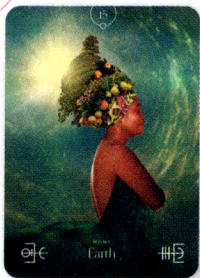
The idea that passion lives within your heart or soul is both an ancient and common one. To 'put your heart into' an activity means to dedicate yourself completely or to make a great effort. To 'live your passion' means your soul is expressing itself through someone or something. The Greek word *khárisma* means 'gift of grace'; in Ancient Greek it meant literally 'a gift shining through'.

Passionate people are easy to identify: they are focused, action oriented and propelled by their intensity. The friend that cannot stop talking about their new love interest, the teacher who lights up

when they are teaching their subject, the scientist who stays up night after night happily working on the research: all are examples of passion in action.

Whether or not you believe in the concept of the soul, it is hard to not believe in purposeful passion. We do not need a spiritual framework to see the good being engaged when we try to attain something we want or believe we can do.

**Element:** fire.



## 15. Earth

### *Home*

Take time to ground yourself. The earth is our home and we are a part of nature, not apart from it. Do all you can to take positive custodianship of the world around you.

Pay attention to your body

and your home. Turn your eyes towards home. Avoid disconnection with devises and extreme busyness.

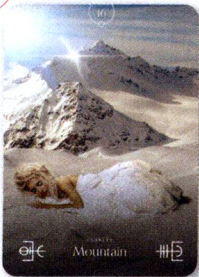
**Word of power:** *γαια* (Greek: 'earth').

The earth is our home and of course is the beautiful blue life-filled planet orbiting our sun within our solar system. When astronauts were able to see the earth from a distance that made it visible as a whole, all were awed by the experience. Michael Collins, part of the Apollo 11 team that first landed on the moon, said: 'I really believe that if the political leaders of the world could see their planet from a distance of, let's say 100,000 miles, their outlook would be fundamentally changed. The all-important border would be invisible, that noisy argument suddenly silenced.'

We are creatures of the earth and are all connected on the planet. The earth, although made up of different biomes, is all one planet. Earth energy is stabilising, growth inducing, generous, cyclic and deeply reciprocal.

There is an awareness of a wise mother or father of earth energy that is profoundly comforting. Someone cooking you a nourishing meal when you are down, doing the gardening, spending time outdoors, building your own shelter: all give you a big dose of earth energy.

**Element:** earth.



## 16. Mountain

### *Clarity*

There is an advantage to looking at things from a higher perspective: you are too close to something to see it properly and clearly. Take the high road. Look at the big picture. Are you making too big a deal of something?

**Words of power:** *fjall*, *gløgg* (ancient Norse: 'mountain').

The high places have always been places of sacredness and clarity. While mountains are often inaccessible they are places of profound beauty where the gods themselves reside and heavenly realms began. For the Greek gods it was Mount Olympus, for the Vulcans Mount Etna, Mount Ida in Turkey for Cybele, Mauna Kea for Pele, Blanca Peak as the home of the Dawn Man of the Navajo, Mount Kilimanjaro for the Chaga god Ruwa, while Mount Meru is a direct reflection of and the centre of all creation.

Sacred mountains exist as energies that provide all that people might need. For example, both Mount

Taranaki in New Zealand or Mount Kailash in Tibet are considered to be the source of four rivers that bless every person, plant and animal. Mt Kalaish is sacred to the Jain, Buddhist, Hindu and Bon and has never been climbed because it is a site of devout pilgrimage.

Temples and other religious places including hermitages have often being built among mountain ranges. The contemplative quality and purity of the environments have been contributors to this. Escaping from the mainstream of people to seek silence and going high where few go are aspects of gaining a higher perspective.

Mountains remind us that we can look at the minutiae of the world more purely and from a higher vantage point. In mountains our troubles seem tiny and insignificant. Taking time away from too many opinions or pressures and trying to gain some simplicity and clarity should be done on a regular basis.

**Element:** earth.





## 17. Cave

### *Protection*

You are loved and protected in your endeavours. Know yourself. Taking silent time is good for your mental health. Retreating after periods of extreme hard work is a positive. Be embraced by nature.

**Word of power:** *clypeus* (Latin: 'shield').

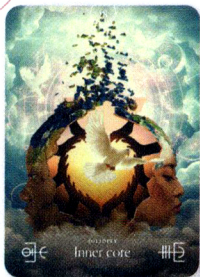
Caves can be considered to be the first human shelter and temples. These natural spaces in the ground or by the sea, and including rock walls or rocks, provided shelter and temperature control in extreme environments. For example, fire for warmth and cooking would be safe from wind and precipitation. Caves are normally formed by erosion, most commonly of limestone by water or wind.

Caves are the natural habitat for specific bacteria, plant species and animals such as bats and salamanders. They became a natural haven for art and communication with the gods and ancestors. The oldest cave art found at the time of writing is

in South Africa at Pinnacle Point; it is estimated to be about 170,000 years old. Sacred caves used for ritual such as those in Crete, India and China often contain sacred paintings and statues and were further hollowed out to expand them.

The fact that many caves have incredible sound qualities such as magnification of sound or echoing allows for more otherworldly aspects to come to the fore. Caves were also seen by some cultures as portals to the other or underworlds and were utilised burial sites.

**Element:** earth.



## 18. Inner core

### *Solidity*

Stay constant in your endeavours. Do not stop your progress. Seek those who are reliable and solid. Keep your promises. The greatest power is from the inside out.

**Word of power:** *constantiam* (Latin: 'constant').

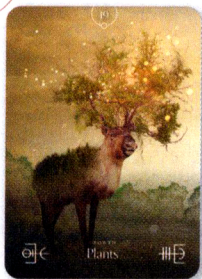
The centre of the earth, the inner core is a spherical ball of approximately 1,220 km, making it about 20 per cent of the earth's radius. It is surrounded by the outer core, the mantle and the crust. The inner core is supposedly made up of an iron-nickel alloy but there are no samples of the inner core to test it. Almost all direct measurements we have about the physical properties of the inner core are deduced through the seismic waves that pass through it.

The core is super heated and is about the same temperature as the surface of the sun. Unlike the outer core, the centre of the earth is solid rather than fluid. Interestingly, the core isn't perfectly spherical and the gravity at the centre is about half what it is on the surface of the earth.

There is still scientific debate about how the core was formed, but it is believed to have originally been liquid that cooled to form the solid mass. The solidity gives stability to the earth, and while not magnetic itself because of the heat it throws out it does affect the magnetism of the outer core.

We live in a fast-paced world with many distractions. Developing a sense of solidness and reliability is important. We often do not honour the promises we make to ourselves and yet we honour our promises and commitments to others. We need to be able to rely on our own word to ourselves.

**Element:** earth.



## 19. Plants

### *Growth*

Magic is in everyday things. You can make something from nothing. Blossom: it's time! From small things big things might grow; begin it.

**Word of power:** *vaxa*  
(ancient Norse: 'grow').

There are currently over 320,000 species of plants. The Plantae kingdom of life includes the tiniest mosses, algae, fungi, the most fragrant flower producers, grains, carnivores and huge trees such as the giant sequoia. Plants provide wood, medicine and food and have cultural roles in perfume, ritual and symbology.

Plants gain their energy through photosynthesis, the conversion of sunlight and carbon dioxide into oxygen and carbohydrates. Plants are found in almost every biome on earth. Quite magically, the majority of plant species have various kinds of symbiotic fungi associated with their root systems. The fungi assist the plant to gain more water and nutrients from the soil than they would otherwise, while in return

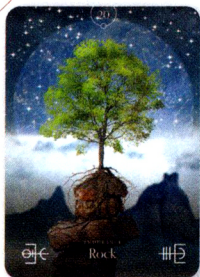
the plant 'feeds' the fungi carbohydrates that are the byproduct of photosynthesis. This association is called 'mycorrhiza'.

The largest living organism on the planet is a honey fungus that measures 3.8 km across 965 ha in the Malheur National Forest in Oregon. Its mycelia, or network of roots, produces mushrooms once a year if the conditions are right.

Plants provide key nutrition to a wide variety of fish and animals including humans. Many large mammals are exclusively plant eating, including whales, gorillas, bison, giraffes and elephants. Plants are also the source of powerful medicine through the compounds they produce. Modern medicines such as aspirin, morphine, quinine, taxol and digitalis are all from plant compounds.

Certain special psychoactive plants are used in spiritual and religious frameworks and are important in many cultures as pathfinders and in divination and in healing. These include opium, psilocybin, ibogaine, mescaline, thujone and mandragora. Some of these plants are being tested and trialled as treatments for depression and other psychological disorders as well as to boost creativity and problem solving.

**Element:** earth.



## 20. Rock

### *Endurance*

Look for the groundedness in a chaotic situation. Be patient. Slow and steady is the way to success. The obstacle is sometimes the way through. Do not be discouraged by slow progression, as long as

progression is being made.

**Word of power:** *patientia* (Latin: 'endure').

Everyone knows a rock when they see it although most of us do not notice much about them. There are three kinds of rocks: igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary. Rocks are a key component of the earth's outer solid layer, the crust.

The mining of rocks for human use has existed since prehistoric times. Rocks for building, metal ore and gemstone content are but a few reasons they are mined at the scales they are.

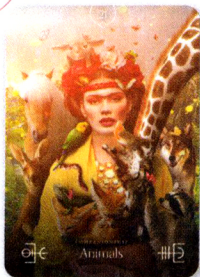
Rocks can be shaped over time by elements such as water and wind. River rocks, for example, because of the erosion effects of the water become smoothly shaped with no corners. On a huge scale, canyons

such as the Grand Canyon were worn down by water and wind, yet they endure.

In cultures that have a deep spiritual belief in the connectedness of everything and a close association with the land itself, rocks are as alive as any animal or human. The rocks in these frameworks have stories to tell and lessons to teach. Some are used in painting, some to hold sacred tracts of water, and in ochre painting of the body to reinforce the dances and spiritual rituals of the culture.

**Element:** earth.





## 21. Animals

### *Companionship*

We all have a super power;  
find yours and exercise it.  
Take time out to share your  
gifts. The natural world  
calls you: it is part of you.  
Experience having an animal  
companion, but if you cannot

then donate, make your property animal friendly or  
help animal causes.

**Word of power:** *animalis* (Latin: 'having a soul').

I have very fortunately been surrounded by animals  
since I was born: not just domestic animals, but wild  
creatures such as birds, insects and small mammals.  
My parents lived on a suburban block but were  
open to sharing their world with any animal that  
sauntered by, and this openness taught and benefited  
me. As a child I learnt that animals had a precious  
otherness from humans, with each having a super  
power of sorts. Possums have incredible tree-climbing  
skills and can see at night. Big goannas can shimmy  
up large trees, defying gravity; blue tongue lizards  
have that tongue; kookaburras have a special laugh;

cockatoos are smart enough to know how to open the seed bin on their own; and ravens tell their friends about us and send their friends for food. All have their intelligence, personalities and focus and all are a joy to me.

We owe animals a debt we cannot ever repay. Dogs are our companions, healers, and protectors and can detect everything from drugs to cancer. Horses were key to human travel and expansion. Cats were not only our comforting companions but killed disease-carrying rats. Domestic animals of all kinds feed meat-consuming humans. Even animal dung has contributed to the fertility of farm soils. I cannot express the spiritual succour we gain simply by observing wild animals going about their business.

Over 1.5 million species of animals have been described under the kingdom Animalia. Most breathe oxygen, reproduce sexually and consume organic material. Animals are a key contributor to the synergistic habit or biome.

Sadly, according to the World Wildlife Fund's latest *Living Planet Report* (2019) the number of wild mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish has dropped by 60 per cent since 1970, mostly due to habitat loss from human encroachment or through climate change that makes existing habitats uninhabitable. The idea that we are apart from

animals and the ecosystem is one of the reasons why this disconnection is so profound. We have no greater rights than any other animal to be here, and we can work with rather than against the animals.

**Element:** earth.



## 22. Air

### *Motion*

Be flexible yet grounded.  
Allow yourself free thought.  
Move and choose. Find  
your freedom. Use your  
voice resourcefully. Stand  
up for what you believe in.  
Be mindful of the way you  
communicate.

**Word of power:** *aer* (Latin: 'air, ether').

The element of air has always been associated with movement and with the higher spirit. It is a cleansing element that enables us to fly free and allow our minds to travel.

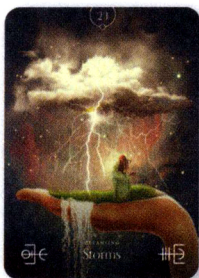
Air is associated with all breath: breathing, the lungs, the voice, music, winds and storms. It is the element of communication.

At its most destructive air is disconnected, chaotic, undisciplined and untethered. While we consider a storm after a long drought to be cleansing and nourishing, an intensive storm such as a hurricane can be wildly destructive. The word 'airhead' normally refers to someone who doesn't

consider things much and who just flits around from one thing to another willy-nilly.

Finding your own space and healthy motion is important, and finding your own breath of fresh air will enable you to see things differently and to start anew.

**Element:** air.



## 23. Storms

### *Cleansing*

Sometimes you need to raise a lot of energy to blow away what you no longer need. An issue will come to a dramatic head. Cleanse your body. Let go of what you feel you no longer need. Be specific in your release; harm as little as you can.

**Word of power:** *tempestas* (Latin: 'storm').

Storms are created when a centre of low pressure develops with the system of high pressure surrounding it. Thunderstorms frequently form within areas where a warm moist air front collides with and borders cool air fronts. Spectacular, beautiful and somewhat dangerous, these storms can also hurl out hail.

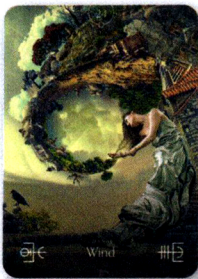
Watching a storm come in over the ocean or watching storm clouds form is often an awe-inspiring sight. Watching big steely grey clouds come in from the horizon at the end of a steaming hot day was a common occurrence where I grew up. We would watch the clouds form and drop their heavy watery

burden, big fat drops hitting the bitumen and causing steam to rise from the road. We always experienced a feeling of all that intensity coming to a head and a comfortable coolness replacing it.

Storms raise a lot of energy through movement and kinetic power, and many witches and shamans love to channel that energy into workings and spells. Standing in a safe place plugging into storm energy is a fantastic way to charge your own body's batteries as well as to practise holding and directing energy.

As climatic conditions warm on our planet, storms will become more severe in some places and non-existent in others, both extremes causing imbalance. Controlling climate change will assist in controlling this destructive intensity.

**Element:** air.



## 24. Wind

### *Change*

Resisting change is useless.  
Be prepared for a change in  
direction. You have been  
warned of change, so believe it.

**Word of power:** *vedhr* (ancient  
Norse: 'wind').

Wind is responsible for the majority of the movement of gasses on the earth's surface. It is measured by direction, speed, velocity and energy and moisture content. Winds are caused by changes in atmospheric pressure: when air moves from a higher pressure to a lower or vice versa it creates movement in the air. Winds are influenced by geography such as mountains and seas.

Wind speeds are measured by the Beaufort wind force scale and range from level 0 for calm to level 17 for a super-cyclonic storm or typhoon with winds in excess of 222 km. Level 17 winds cause total destruction of even well-made structures with solid foundations.

Ancient peoples took a great deal of notice of wind direction, as it could herald a change in season, a message from the gods or guardians, a particular



kind of weather event or the beginning of trade winds. Knowing when trade winds were starting was important to transportation by sailing ship: without favourable winds, ships would be delayed, becalmed or sunk.

Some winds have been given special names and are a part of human history and culture. The Greeks called their four winds of cardinal direction Boreas, Notus, Eurus and Zephyrus. The Khamsin is the infamous hot wind that affects Egypt and Israel that caused invading armies huge problems via dust storms. 'Kamikaze' is the Japanese name for the wind that turned back Mongol invaders. The Mistral is the powerful, cold, north-westerly wind that carries fierce storms across the Mediterranean coast of France but is beloved by winemakers further inland. The Chinook is a warm, dry wind that melts the snow on the east side of the Canadian Rockies. It is considered a strange wind because even though it brings warmth to the freezing area it also causes migraines.

Winds have been signifiers of change for millennia. Depending where you stand, you can face them, use them or resist them.

**Element:** air.



## 25. Voice

### *Speaking your word*

Use your voice, speak up.  
Sing your song out to the  
universe. It's often not what  
you say but how you say it:  
speak plainly and tell your  
story.

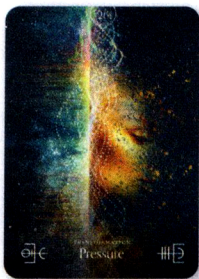
**Word of power:** *vox* (Latin: 'voice').

The voice is an air-powered instrument, the sound of which is made by the movement of pressurised air over the vocal cords. The vocal cords vibrate, making audible pulses that are adjusted by the muscles of the larynx to give a unique variety in pitch and tone. The sound is further filtered by the lips, cheeks and facial muscles, as well as the position of the neck and chest. Every person's voice is quite unique because of the combinations of their physiology, although we do like to mimic others for fun!

The human voice is capable of a huge variety of sounds from harmonic tonality to grunts, squeals and screams. The voice is one way humans express and create emotion in themselves and others and of course, communicate through complex language.

Listening to amazing voices raised up in song is something humanity has been doing since prehistory. Yet perhaps more importantly, being able to speak out about what is important to us is even more vital. You must use your voice both kindly and for the greater good. Not being afraid to speak out about injustice or to change a bad law or system has always changed the world for the better.

**Element:** air.



## 26. Pressure

### *Transformation*

You can view pressure as being negative or you can see it as being a shaper, director or positive influence. Find a happy medium where you can benefit and not be disadvantaged.

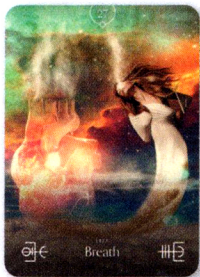
**Word of power:** *sæmiligr* (ancient Norse: 'becoming').

Pressure is simply defined as how much something is pushing on something else, and is measured scientifically by the analysis of an applied force by a liquid or gas. Atmospheric or barometric pressure is the pressure within the earth's atmosphere. Blood pressure is how much pressure the force of the circulating blood is applying to the veins and arteries of the body.

Pressure can be a shaping influence, especially when applied to the earth's crust and plates. We also find the liquid pressure of water important, especially when going deep into the ocean when diving. The pressure of air exerts change on boiling points, thus at higher altitudes the air pressure is different.

Modern people often refer to the pressure their jobs, bosses or life in general poses on them. Many people perform best under pressure, viewing it as a focusing force, while studies show a small amount of pressure can assist performance in a wide variety of fields. Emergency physicians, the military and pilots train under higher than average pressure situations. However, there can be a point when too much pressure harms cognitive performance, when the pressure becomes overwhelming and it is impossible to focus clearly.

**Element:** air.



## 27. Breath

### *Life*

Focus on your breath. Allow it to guide your actions and flow. Fear often means breath holding; let that all go. There is a place for slowing down your breath and being mindful of it. Take

a deep breath and rethink your strategy. Take a deep breath and pause a few seconds before exhaling, which will train you to give yourself that little bit more time and space.

**Word of power:** *zoi* (Ancient Greek: 'life').

Simply, breath can be seen as an inhalation or exhalation from the lungs. It is the process of passing air into our lungs for respiration. However, the pace of the breath and the quality can demonstrably change state, mood and even peak physical functionality. If you are not breathing deeply enough it affects the function of your muscles, including your heart, your capacity to take in enough oxygen to feed your organs and brain and of course your sleep patterns (snoring interferes with breathing).

Certain physical and spiritual pathways such as yoga and meditation have always had a potent effect on the power of the breath. Breathing through the nose, using the diaphragm and allowing your body's muscles to relax enough to get a full breath are just a few ways you can receive the power of having more oxygen in your body. Keeping your chest open and an upright posture allows your lungs to better do their work.

The emotion of fear or feeling stress often sends hormones rushing into the body that speed up breathing, or shock will cause you to hold your breath in the form of rapid inhalation. If you realise this is a behaviour you regularly do, try to be mindful and relax. Stop and take a deeper and slower mindful breath, which will give you more action and flow.

**Element:** air.



## 28. Music

### *Joy*

Use music to change your mood. Music raises your vibration; create ways you can express yourself more fully. Move your body through dance. Allow your body to heal through movement. Surround yourself with music to heal: it can be the music of nature, natural soundscapes or human-generated music.

**Word of power:** *mousikos* (Ancient Greek: 'pertaining to the Muses').

Music is an air element activity. Not only are voices powered by air and many instruments powered by breath, but music is carried by the air element to the ear.

Cultural expression is often through music and not just language, and we are able to recognise different cultures through their music. We know flamenco guitar is Spanish and that certain drum rhythms are African or Japanese, and we know what jazz, pop or opera sound like.

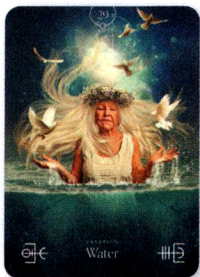


Elements within music such as timbre, texture, dynamics and expression, form, structure, rhythm and pitch make it complex and unique. Music is either notated, or written down in a musical language, or is learnt by ear.

Music has the ability to change mood and state, so spiritual, ritualised and religious music are of huge cultural importance. Music was an integral part of the ancient religions of India, Egypt, Cambodia, Greece and Rome. Achieving trance or euphoric states can be assisted by certain kinds of music, and this is part of the study of the cognitive neuroscience of music.

The development of music therapy has advanced quickly as a mode of healing, although we know that ancient Greek centres of healing almost always had a theatre and music section. It can be used to help people of all ages with conditions such as depression, sensory impairments, Alzheimer's, developmental disabilities and substance abuse issues.

**Element:** air.



## 29. Water

### Creation

Flow forward with grace and confidence. Be true to your emotions. Do not allow yourself to become stagnant in your ways. Creation is your birthright. Consider what is vital to your happiness and

ensure that you seek it.

**Word of power:** *creato* (ancient Latin: 'he shall create').

It is true that water is life: without it we perish, along with most other life on this planet. We are watery creatures ourselves, with up to 60 per cent of our body's composition being water. Our lungs are over 80 per cent water, and even our dry old bones are 31 per cent water.

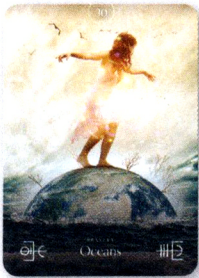
Water is tasteless, colourless, transparent, flowful and has no calories, but is perhaps the most vital element on earth. Water is used for drinking, in agriculture, manufacture and energy production and in joyful recreation. It is a biome in itself. Water is found in rivers, lakes and in salted form in the

oceans. It is mist, fog and condensation and is frozen into ice, sleet, hail and snow.

As an element spiritually, water is related to flow, prosperity and the direction of water movement. The tidal cycle is used in spellcraft, with workings done on the incoming tide for the bringing of prosperity, love and blessings and on the outgoing tide to remove and release what we no longer desire. Water magic is both powerful and gentle, and almost all ancient cultures had water deities including genius loci or spirits of lakes, rivers, springs, even man-made wells.

As the climate warms, the pressure on water supply will become acute. Also, places that flooded only occasionally may do so with greater volume and frequency, causing destruction and imbalance.

**Element:** water.



## 30. Oceans

### *Bravery*

Go forth and explore; you won't see much if you keep the shore always in sight. Be brave in your choices, this is not the time to be fearful. Someone who is close to you has a hidden side, and it is best to be mindful of this in your decision making.

**Words of power:** *mare* (Latin: 'sea'); *tharros* (Ancient Greek: 'courage').

We know a lot about life on land but we know very little about life in the world's oceans, which comprise 71 per cent of the planet. We are still discovering new species, for instance, a flesh-eating sponge and a strange hairy crab, and we have only begun to explore the deep ocean. We possibly know more about space than we do our own blue seas.

The oceans are a source of great richness in the form of marine life, and their very existence influences everything from the weather to where humans settled and lived. Ancient sea-going cultures such as the Vikings and the Polynesians had an

intimate relationship with the oceans, tides, trade winds and stars, which enabled them to navigate the huge blue expanses. The bravery of such cultures – leaving the sight of land, venturing and navigating outwards towards often unknown destinations – is considerable and a testament to the human spirit of adventure and curiosity.

The sea has been integral to our very humanness: sustaining us and allowing us to travel, trade and learn. It is a part of our DNA, yet in our busy lives we often overlook its importance. Because of this disconnection the birthplace of life on this planet has become a garbage dump through acidification, pollution, overfishing and habitat destruction. We do know that without the oceans life cannot exist on this planet and that the oceans are in trouble.

Ocean-based magic, like all water magic, concerns itself with the cycles of movement in the forms of stagnancy and flow, prosperity and emotional balance.

**Element:** water.



## 31. Lake

### *Depth*

Do not take the shallow alternative. Deep dive; do the research; do not cut corners. You may not be seeing the whole picture, so take your time with a decision.

**Word of power:** *profunde* (Latin: 'deep').

Lakes are natural, self-contained bodies of water not connected with an ocean. They have their own ecosystems and often contain their own endemic species. Most have at least one stream or river directing the flow outwards. The different classifications of lakes include glacial, tectonic, fluvial and shoreline and those formed by meteorites hitting the earth. As they are often fresh water, historically lakes have attracted human occupancy as they are a water source. On earth, most lakes were formed in the higher northern latitudes, although there are notable exceptions in Africa.

Spiritually lakes have been places of magic and power. Lake Wanaka in New Zealand is said to breathe in and out with the giant that lies underneath

it. Lake Baikal in Siberia, sometimes referred to as the 'sacred sea', is the largest source of fresh water in the world, containing over 20 per cent of the world's unfrozen fresh water. Over 630 km long, Baikal is very deep and its waters are very clear and it contains over 3,000 unique species. One common shamanic practice is the offering of a small amount of vodka in certain sacred spots; it is also believed that something should be thrown into any fire you light as an offering to the spirits. It is said that if you bathe here or in other lakes such as Lagarfljót in Iceland you will receive healing energies from the pure and ancient waters.

**Element:** water.



## 32. Marine life

### *Richness*

Fertility is yours. Your wishes will be granted. There is more than one way to find a solution to a problem. Adapt to the new.

**Word of power:** *opulentiam*

(Latin: 'richness').

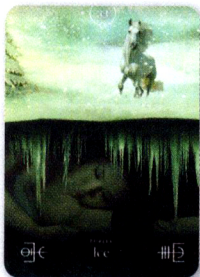
As a biome, the oceans are unmatched in richness and variety of life. It is estimated the oceans contain a total of 230,000 marine species, but this just scratches the surface. There are perhaps more than two million marine species yet to be classified.

Marine life is vital to the health of the planet because the majority produce oxygen and sequester carbon, something we so desperately need in this time of man-made climate change. The oceans do indeed demand our respect, but I believe its creatures demand it even more so. Even if they approach you out of curiosity, sea animals are wild and should not be pursued; they should be given all the space they need. It is worth remembering it is we who are visiting them, not the other way around.



Should you ever go with an organised adventure or tour company, choose only those that strictly follow a code of practice that protects the animals and the sea itself and the local laws and permissions of the area that you are diving or snorkelling in or interacting within.

**Element:** water.



## 33. Ice

### *Purity*

The way forward is clear. See nature in its purity – let it comfort you and strip away what is unnecessary. Freeze out what is not of benefit to you at this time. When you look at things clearly there will be a purity to the solution.

**Word of power:** *svella* (ancient Norse: 'swell').

When water gets chilled to 0°C it freezes into a solid state; that is, ice is formed. Ice has different appearances and forms that often depend on the rapidity of the freezing. Ice is less dense in its frozen form than in its liquid form, a kind of magic, really! It does, however, increase in volume, having a larger volume than water.

The biome where ice forms naturally is called a cryosphere. Glaciers are very important forms of fresh water storage, while icebergs are usually large pieces of ice that have broken off from a land ice sheet.

One of the most tiny but beautiful kinds of ice is that referred to as diamond dust. These are

ice needles that form at temperatures approaching  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$  due to air with a slightly higher moisture content mixing with colder, surface-based air. I have witnessed this phenomena; it was so exquisitely beautiful in the way it shimmered that I forgot how cold I was.

Ice introduces an almost outer-worldly beauty, a kind of purity that very few other elements can offer. Ice festivals in places such as as Japan (Sapporo), Russia (Krasnoyarsk), China (Harbin) and Norway (Geilo) make any ice aficionado happy.

**Element:** water.



## 34. Snow

### *Silence*

Allow yourself to soften.  
Don't speak just for the sake  
of it: you do not need to issue  
an opinion on everything.  
Choose your words carefully.  
Sometimes observing is the  
best way to gain information  
and trust.

**Word of power:** *silentium* (Latin: 'Be quiet!').

To me, snow always equals silence; when it snows, the environmental sound is dulled and muffled. There is a sense of quiet and contemplation if you allow yourself the time to be out in the snow with few people around. There are few environments in modern life that offer such quiet.

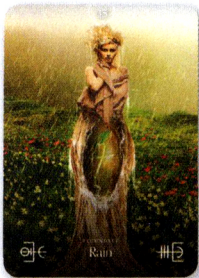
Once snow crystals form in the atmosphere they grow by absorbing surrounding water droplets. When a snowflake hits the ground it melts slightly and assimilates depending on temperature, structure and snow forms on the ground. Mountainous areas at altitude are likely to produce snow that is called relief snowfall. It is caused when masses of air pushed

by wind are forced up the side of elevated formations. The lifting of air up the side of a mountain or range results in adiabatic cooling and the resulting precipitation needed for snow.

Snow forecasts are an important aspect of living in snowy areas as large dumps affect everything from transport to agriculture. Skiing, snow shoeing and snowboarding are all extremely popular activities to do in the snow. It was believed the Norse god Ullr invented skiing so man could get around more easily to hunt and travel, and Ullr is still honoured for his invention. One Norwegian ski team had an Ullr symbol on their uniforms during the winter Olympics.

It is true that each snow crystal is unique, although scientists have found through microphotography they tend to correspond to around 80 specific shapes and sizes.

**Element:** water.



## 35. Rain

### *Fecundity*

The conditions of greater prosperity are being met. Know that all will be well. Cleanse yourself of old outdated views. You have everything you need to grow. Let yourself be cleansed.

**Word of power:** *fecundatio* (Latin: 'fruitfulness').

The sound of rain on leaves or a tin roof; the sweet smell of rain as it hits the thirsty earth after a hot day: the simple pleasures of life.

You soon know how much rain contributes to the balance and health of a land when you haven't had any for a long time. You also understand how much it contributes to the positive mental health of communities that have been locked in drought states for a considerable length of time.

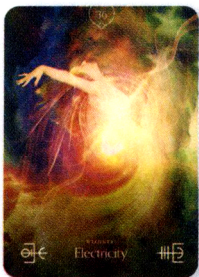
Rain is liquid water from the atmosphere that has become heavy enough to fall under gravitational pull. It is a part of the life-giving water cycle and is the main supplier of fresh water to the land. Raindrops can vary in size due to temperature and the rate of

coalescence. The amount of rain helps form biomes and ecosystems.

Without rain we have less fecundity. Plant life, particularly plants that supply food, do not thrive without rain or irrigation. Drought affects animals and pollinators such as fruit bats and bees, which are integral to the production of food.

Some biomes are wetter than others and have almost constant rainfall, such as rainforests. Human intervention has influenced rain patterns: particles of solid or liquid matter suspended in the air can increase cloud condensation and trigger a rain event. Man-made global warming is also affecting rain patterns, with some areas becoming drier and some having more intense rainfall.

**Element:** water.



## 36. Electricity

### Wildness

Embrace your wildness. Break free of your self-imposed constraints. Take immediate action; there is no need for further consideration of your problem. You contain the spark of the divine, so there is no reason to feel lesser. Confront the issue head on.

**Word of power:** *energéia* (Ancient Greek: 'power in action').

Have you ever stood out in a storm and felt the power of the lightning? Have you ever felt the hairs go up on your neck and arms and smelt the ozone after the crack? While I'm not encouraging you to get into harm's way, feeling the power of lightning is one amazing way to get connected to the element of electricity.

Electricity isn't just generated during storms: it is pretty much everywhere! Our bodies generate and conduct electricity and we 'run' on electricity. Each of our cells is designed to conduct energy through electrical currents, and the chemical elements in



our bodies such as calcium, potassium and sodium elicit a particular electrical change. These electrified elements, which flow across cells, are called ions. Our bodies use certain combinations of electrical impulses to form thoughts, movements and instructive behaviours. Some fish generate enough electrical impulses to shock prey.

Certain organs such as the muscular heart need specific electrical currents to work. The electrical impulses that cause the heart to pump is possibly the best example we can see of how the spark of electricity is vital to our balance and health. The spark of the divine is within you, and it is electric in its inspiration.

**Element:** fire.



## 37. Magnetism

### *Attraction*

Know your values and needs so you are more aware of what your true attractions are. Do not run with the herd. Notice what or who you attract: is this your intent?

There is always nemesis

(opposite) energy to any endeavour you might take; this should not bother you as it is a natural law.

**Word of power:** *magnētis* (Greek).

Magnetism, one of the most obvious elemental physical phenomena, is a highly active force. A magnetic field is a vector field that describes the magnetic influence of electric charges in relative motion and magnetised materials. Magnetism is used in a huge array of technology and extensively in electrical engineering.

The word 'magnet' comes from the Greek term *magnētis lithos*, meaning 'lodestone'; the Greeks noticed certain stones would attract iron. Magnetism was studied the world over, and it was possibly Petrus Peregrinus de Maricourt in France in 1269 who

most clearly demonstrated the idea of magnetic poles and fields crossing in two points by using fine iron needles on a magnet. He described magnets as having north and south poles, which was revolutionary. Models of magnetism were created and studied all throughout the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. In 1905 in his paper that described relativity, Einstein demonstrated that both the electric and magnetic fields are part of the same phenomena viewed from different reference frames.

The earth itself produces its own magnetic field that shields its ozone layer from destructive elements such as solar winds. The earth's magnetic field is used in navigation and is measured using a compass. Magnetism as a field in medicine is growing, with MRIs in common usage and transcranial magnetic stimulation in the testing stages for treatment for problems such as depression.

We walk through and are part of the fields of magnetism every day of our lives. The idea of being magnetically repelled or attracted to something or someone is an old but enduring one. It is important that you know your needs and values so you can make wise decisions upon what you can be attracted to and why.

**Element:** earth.



## 38. Dark matter

### *Mystery*

The world still has mystery, and this is a fine thing. Just because you cannot see it doesn't mean it is not there. You do not have to know the details of everything; some things are better not revealed at this time. Have faith.

**Word of power:** *mustérion* (Ancient Greek: 'mysteries').

Imagine an elemental force that makes up possibly 85 per cent of the universe that you can't see and remains elusive but you know it is there. Imagine this elemental matter is called dark because it's hard to perceive and it doesn't interact with electromagnetic radiation such as light, so it's virtually undetectable. Yes, mysterious!

How do we know such a thing exists if it remains invisible? The math says it's highly probable due to the way the universe behaves. In practice, the term 'dark matter' is often used to mean only the non-baryonic component of dark matter.

We still don't know what dark matter is made up of, although there are many theories; scientists have managed to categorise dark matter by cold, warm and hot, terms that refer to velocity rather than temperature.

Dark matter is the subject of a huge amount of study. For now, we know we have a mysterious force that holds the universe together, which is a fantastic concept and one that invites the idea of the unknowable into the frame. Science doesn't know everything yet!

**Element:** air.



## 39. Gravity

### *Groundedness*

Seek a grounded perspective.

**Word of power:** *gravitas*  
(Latin: 'seriousness').

Gravity is the natural force that causes all things with mass and energy to be attracted to each other. This includes planets, galaxies, light and, yes, even apples.

The famous story about Isaac Newton and the apple actually did happen but not in the way most people think. While there is no evidence of young Issac being bumped on the head by a falling apple, he was sitting in the orchard and observed an apple falling from a tree. He noticed every apple fell the same way – straight down – not sideways or somehow else impeded, and he wondered why. This inspired him to formulate the law of universal gravitation, which states that every body in the universe is attracted to every other body with a force that is directly proportional to the product of their masses and inversely proportional to the square of the distance between them. His famous apple tree continues to grow at Woolsthorpe Manor.

Newton wasn't the first scientist or great thinker to consider there was such a thing as gravity. The ancient Greek philosopher Archimedes proposed there was a centre of gravity within a triangle. The ancient Indian mathematician Aryabhata proposed in the 5th century there was a force that stopped objects being thrown into the air as the earth rotated. Later, Galileo showed that gravitational acceleration is the same for all objects by throwing balls off the Tower of Pisa.

Gravity still remains one of the most studied forces in physics. Gravity is a fantastic element to include in your workings for groundedness and when you feel untethered because of trauma or things going too fast. Breathing, putting your awareness in your feet and asking gravity to do its thing is good solid magic.

**Element:** earth.



## 40. Atoms

### *Building*

Everything is connected by the same building blocks of matter. You are electric and vibrating in motion; being stagnant in your beliefs and growth is unnatural. Building and changing is natural.

There is room for infinite variety.

**Word of power:** *atomos* (Greek: 'undivided').

Many ancient cultures suspected the world was made up of building blocks that couldn't be seen. While the elements of earth, air, fire and water were part of their thinking, many also thought that even these formidable elements were constructed from something. The ancient Greek philosophers Leucippus and his pupil Democritus suggested around 450 AD that atoms existed, they were infinite and that there must be different kinds to reflect the object that was the end result. Indian and Islamic scholars also reported on the ideas of atoms, but it wasn't until the 16th-17th centuries the notion became a serious field of study with Bernier, Boyle and Newton.



The last 200 years have given us a clearer idea of what atoms are made up of. Each atom is composed of a nucleus and one or more electrons bound to the nucleus. The nucleus is made up of protons (sub-atomic particles with a positive charge) and neutrons (sub-atomic particles with no net charge that are slightly bigger than protons).

The boundaries of an atom are not well defined, so they are able to connect and vibrate. We can use a scanning tunnelling microscope to view surfaces at an atomic level.

The idea that we are all connected or that everything is part of a whole is somehow born out in quantum physics. It is not just some romantic ideal, but is something solid.

**Elements:** all elements.



## 41. Time

### *Discipline*

Find out the causes of your procrastination or resistance. Do not miss your opportunities. Someone is wasting your time; be aware of this. You have finite time on this planet, so use it well.

**Word of power:** *disciplinatus* (Latin: 'disciplined').

As you grew up time seemed to pass very slowly and you couldn't wait to grow up. Then, conversely, as you aged time went quickly as you knew it was running out. We have an innate idea of time, but what is it actually?

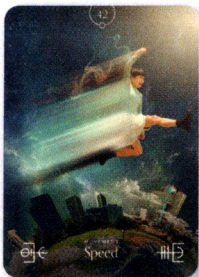
Physics says time is what a clock reads: simple! Time has also been defined as the continued indefinite progress of existence, but it is hard to put a definition to the word without actually using the concept of time.

We normally refer to time in what it can do for us and what it means. Humans initially broke time down in measurements: of light and dark, day and night, when the sun rose, when it began to

circle across the sky, when it set, when the moon rose and continued its arc. As humans became more sophisticated and began to break down these phenomena into hours, minutes and seconds, we learnt how to accurately measure time although many different cultures had just as many ways to express time through their calendars. The study of measuring time is called horology.

Time is an important element in the way it combines with other elements: the speed of light, the velocity of an object, space time and gravity.

**Element:** air.



## 42. Speed

### *Movement*

Savour the experiences of your life. Be mindful and aware of the speed in which you do activities such as eating and working. Do not waste time, but understand the discernment of taking quality time.

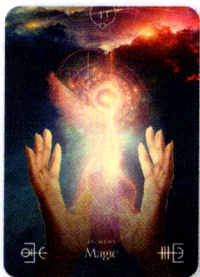
**Word of power:** *celeritatem* (ancient Latin: 'swiftness, velocity').

Scientifically, the speed of an object is the magnitude of its velocity. It is an element we don't think about much unless we think of it in terms of our cars when obeying the speed limit or in fast transport such as aeroplanes and how long it takes to get somewhere. Speed then has the dimensions of distance divided by time, although it is a key element that fits into many physical laws. For example, 'velocity' describes both how fast and in which direction an object is moving, and the steady speed of light is key to many calculations in astrophysics.

We first begin to understand the concept of speed as children when we begin to observe the concept of overtaking or one thing travelling faster than another. It's possibly also when we first get our competitive urges!

It is often said that as you are growing up time seems to pass very slowly and we cannot wait to grow up. And then conversely, as we age time goes quickly as we know it is running out. We live in a speedy society, and knowing when to slow down can be the difference between balance and imbalance. Slow cooking, slow travel, taking time to think and process and exercise self-care require a willingness to slow down enough to savour them.

**Element:** air.



## 43. Magic

### *Alchemy*

There is magic to be found everywhere if you look for it. You are the magic. Magic is not a miracle, although it can sometimes feel like that. Doubt kills more dreams than failure. Have faith in your ability. Weave together all the disparate pieces.

**Word of power:** *magus* (Latin: 'magic').

As a witch I am often asked what magic is. It is a hard question to answer, and almost every practitioner who claims to work with magic would have a unique definition. For what it is worth, I see magic as a weaving of energy towards a particular purpose and an alchemic, synergistic process. Magic has at its heart participation and purpose. Magic is deliberate change.

Real magic isn't some trick with a magician in a magic show, although I do believe casting it involves an element of faith and expertise: faith because we extend our own confidence and energy into a

working, and expertise as the ancient and modern recipes of incantation and ritual dictate.

Spellcasting does have rules, a skeleton if you will. You need a clear purpose and intention, and you need to be able to raise power, to release it in a focused way and then take a physical step to start the transformation. Magic is commonly extended to heal, attract, repel, protect, lighten and clear the way, and all workings with intentions such as these have a layered set of instructions and combinations of elements to make them effective. These might include specialised timing that includes the seasons or moon cycles, words of power and certain thought forms, elements that are all organised into a set that will influence time, space, atoms, thoughts and electricity.

Magic is a doing word, a working, a process. Magic to me doesn't exclude science; in fact, it is part of science, probably influencing it at an atomic level. That we don't exactly know how this all works doesn't make it incorrect or fantasy. After all, scientists are still trying to work out dark matter.

**Elements:** fire and air.



## 44. The biome

### Connection

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. You are asked for synergy at present. Be aware of the needs of others. You are a part of the same whole. Consider working more closely with your community.

**Word of power:** *conligo* (Latin: 'deduce, infer').

Biomes are not ecosystems: they contain ecosystems. They are large areas of the earth based on temperature by altitude and latitude, climate, relief, geology, soils and vegetation.

A biome contains animals, plants, bacteria and people – in fact, everything that is within and connected within that space. Biomes can take up both small and large geographical areas.

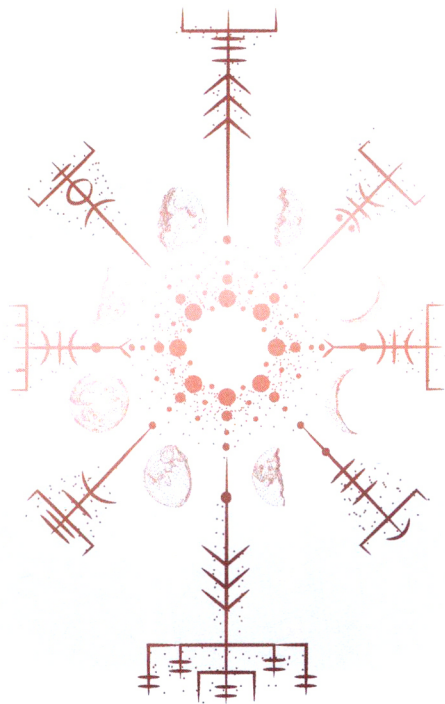
Some ancient cultures such as the Greeks thought that the earth was alive as a being that had awareness, and therefore all parts of it were important to the whole. The definition is morphing yet again, as a human microbiome could be an



individual person's skin. Everyone has a skin full of bacteria, fungi, skin cells, water and other debris that form a unique skin biome. We are, in fact, made of biomes.

Biomes on earth fit together like a giant jigsaw puzzle or patchwork quilt; the health of one can affect the health of another.

**Element:** earth.





## About the author

Stacey Demarco, the Modern Witch, is passionate about bringing practical magic to everyone and inspiring people to have a deeper connection with nature. She has been teaching for more than 20 years and is the author of the best sellers *Witch in the Boardroom*, *Witch in the Bedroom* and *The Coffee Oracle*, all of which have been translated into multiple languages. She is also the co-writer of *The No Excuses Guide to Soul Mates*, *The No Excuses Guide to Uncovering Your Purpose* and *Plants of Power*. Her oracle card decks include the best-selling *Queen of the Moon Oracle* and *Divine Animals Oracle*, both illustrated by Kinga Britschgi. Stacey has been the creator of the beautiful annual *Lunar & Seasonal Diary* since 2011.

Stacey is the founder of Natureluster, which educates and works to reconnect people to the health-giving power of nature. She is also an animal activist, ethical beekeeper and dedicated adventure traveller, and lives by the beach on a cliff in Sydney with her husband and furry companions.

Stacey provides private consults, teaches workshops and leads the popular Wild Souls naturelusting retreats nationally and internationally. Learn more at [www.themodernwitch.com](http://www.themodernwitch.com).



## About the illustrator

Kinga Britschgi is a Hungarian artist who has lived with her American husband and son in the United States since August 1995. Apart from her wonderful family she has two big passions in life: art and linguistics (and teaching both). Although possessing a degree in fine art, she began her career as a language teacher and went on to gain a Masters in Bilingual Education.

Kinga has been involved with digital art for many years, working with Photoshop and other Adobe products since 2002. She creates commercial graphics for many clients, which she enjoys immensely. Her works are regularly published in industry standard and other magazines such as *Advanced Photoshop*, *Photoshop Creative*, *Practical Photoshop* and *Digital Studio*. One of her images, 'Midsummer Night – Titania', was chosen as part of Adobe's official marketing campaign for their Creative Cloud project. She has also worked on Stacey's *Queen of the Moon Oracle* and *Divine Animals Oracle*.

Kinga loves surrealism, magical realism and dark whimsy, creating 'story pictures': figurative pictures with seemingly realistic elements that often result in surrealist, mysterious images with lots of layers of meanings. For more of her works, please visit [kingabrit.wixsite.com/kinga](http://kingabrit.wixsite.com/kinga).

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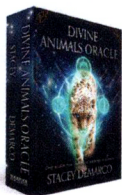
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