

QVAREIA - THE APPRENTICE

Module 2 - Patterns and Maps in Magic

Lesson 2: The Tree of Life Tarot

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QVAREIA

WELCOME

Welcome to this lesson of the Quareia curriculum.

The Quareia takes a magical apprentice from the beginning of magic to the level of adeptship and beyond. The course has no superfluous text; there is no dressing, no padding – everything is in its place and everything within the course has a good reason to be there.

*For more information and all course modules please visit
www.quareia.com*

So remember - in order for this course to work, it is wise to work with the lessons in sequence. If you don't, it won't work.

Yours,

Josephine McCarthy

STUDY GUIDE FOR MODULE TWO

A lot of the lessons in this module are about learning to execute certain ritual patterns (and you have two easy lessons with not much action). It is important that you learn each ritual in turn, learning the recitations by heart, and learning the coordinated movements.

Once you have learned a ritual and are able to do it properly, and have absorbed the lesson, you will have been instructed to repeat that ritual for a certain period of time. As you practice, you are also ready to continue on to the next lesson.

So your rhythm of study should be: read the lesson – practice the ritual movements and learn the recitations – do the ritual ‘proper’- set up a timetable to repeat it –start the next lesson.

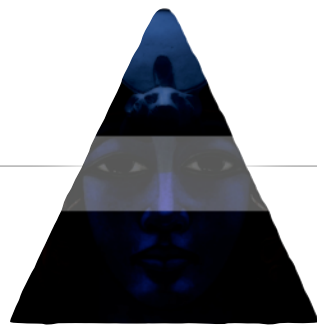


So by now your magical training schedule should look something like the inverted pyramid on the previous page.

Each week you should be doing meditations, tarot reading practice, practicing rituals from previous lessons, learning new ritual/lessons, doing research or writing.

If you have a heavy work schedule and cannot commit to that type of a time frame, work at your own pace: the main thing is that there are things you do regularly, and that you are practicing the previous lesson while learning the new one, so that they overlap a little.

Above all, make sure that you stay in the sequence of lessons and do not hop forward a few lessons.



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Module 2 - Patterns and Maps in Magic

Lesson 2: The Tree of Life Tarot

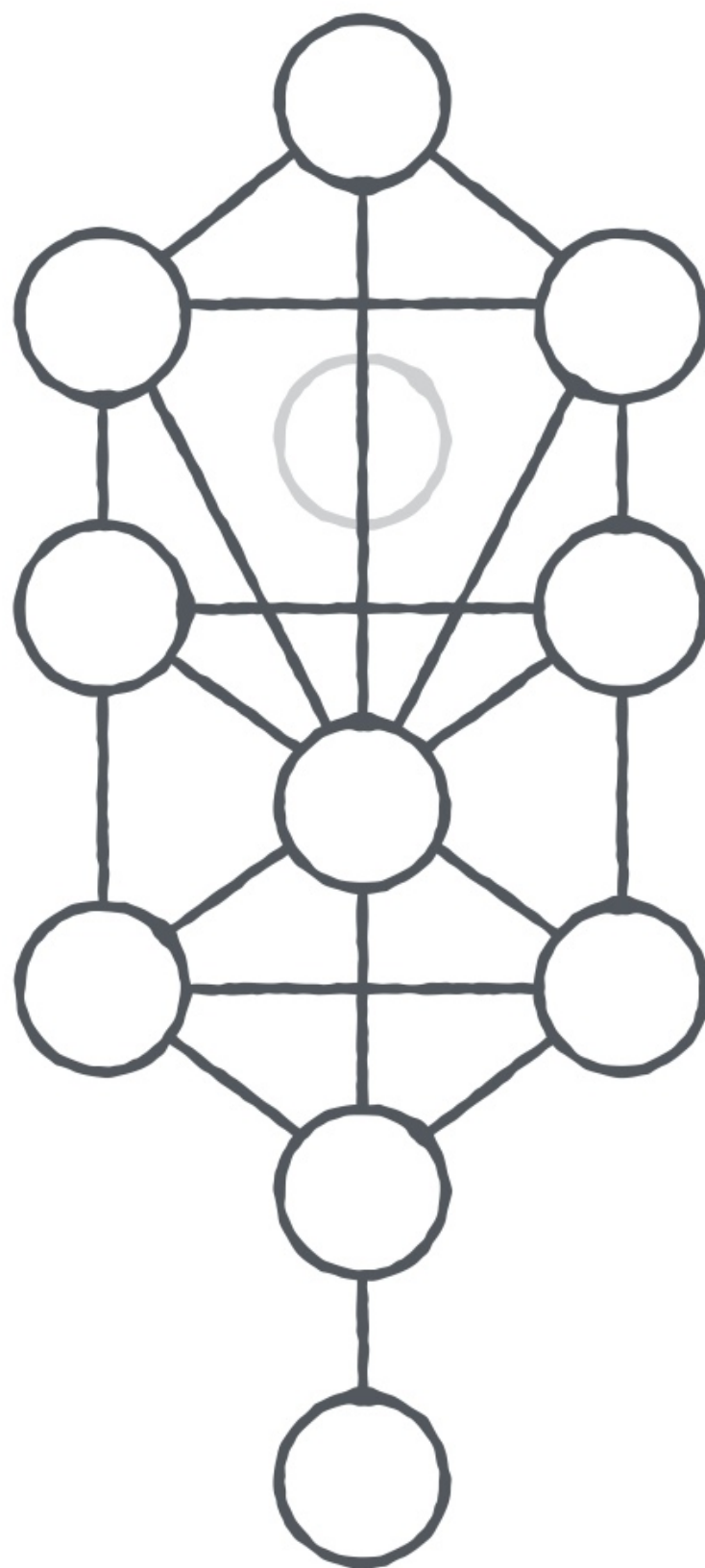
Note: For this lesson, you will need your tarot pack.

The Tree of Life is a foundational pattern found in various forms throughout western magic, not just in Kabbalah. It is a map of how power flows and it is useful for all magicians to learn this pattern. This lesson is about the Tree of Life pattern in terms of divination and as you progress through the course, you will begin to recognise the patterns in many different aspects of magic, cultures and mystical expressions.

So let's have a look at the Tree of Life shape. It is essentially a map of creation. Note the use of the word 'map': many make the mistake of thinking that the shape or pattern is the magical 'truth'—it is not. The Tree of Life is simply a map for an inner dynamic that you can interact with. Learning the shape, pattern and flow of the map before you come to actually learn about its expression in magical dynamics will help you enormously. On the following page is an image of the Tree without any words, shapes, symbols or attributes.

Note that there are ten spheres with a 'hidden' sphere marked in shadow. That is not actually a sphere, but it is a point on the map of great importance, something you will learn about later. The top sphere is the beginning and the bottom sphere is the outcome.

Note the line running down the middle: the middle pillar. This is the highway of creation and is the map for the column of light in the centre of your directional ritual work. It flows from above, from the beginning, down into the earth. Everything revolves around that middle pillar. Now let's look at this map in terms of tarot.



The Tree of Life Tarot Layout



The tarot tree map

The meanings of the positions on the tarot map are simplistic in order to gain a clear meaning from the cards that land in that position. If you study the tarot map, you will notice that one side of the Tree is about power coming into something: it is a giving side. The other side of the Tree unravels and takes away. The centre is about how the story begins, what it revolves around, how it affects our family/home, and finally the outcome.

Just as an aside, when people work magically with the Tree, they often equate the right side of the Tree (looking at it on paper) with the right side of their body. This is an incorrect assumption that has snowballed into a ‘truth.’ You do not look at the Tree as a reflection; you are in the Tree. So see it as if you are backed into it: what appears on paper as the right hand side is in fact your left hand side—you and tree on paper are looking at each other face to face.

WORKING WITH THE TREE LAYOUT

So let’s get straight to work. Get your cards, and remember your lesson about shuffling and laying them out. To start with, we are going to concentrate on learning how to work with the layout, so do not be concerned at this stage about the accuracy of the reading.

Pick a public figure, think about that person, and then think of a specific question relating to them: this layout is good for specific questions, but weaker at overall pictures. The reason for picking a public figure is that you can track their life’s progress through the media if you wish to keep an eye on the reading’s outcome. It is also better, when first learning to work with layouts, to do readings for things that are not too close to home. If you see something destructive in a reading, and are not yet feeling fully confident in your reading ability, you can end up terrifying yourself unnecessarily.

As you shuffle, keep thinking of the name of the person, and when you feel the shuffle is done, lay out the cards using the layout above. Before you get into interpreting each individual card, just take a moment to look at the general feel of the reading. Are there any predominant elements, like a lot of

swords (air) or a lot of pentacles (earth)? Is it mainly minor cards with no—or just one or two—major cards? Or are there a lot of major cards?

Now look at the middle pillar. What is the general ‘flavour’ of the cards running down the middle? Have your card interpretation book or notes nearby (and your journal) but also just look at the pictures and see what they tell you. Once you have a feel of the general energy running down the centre of the reading, write down a key word that for that general feeling.

Look to the right hand side of the reading. Remember this is an ‘in-flow’ into the person’s life. What is flowing into their picture? Look at the images on the right hand side of the reading: what powers are they? Are they minor cards, people cards or major cards? Write down your overall impression of what is flowing into the person’s life.

Look to the left hand side of the reading. This is the ‘outflow’ current. What is flowing away from the person’s life? Again, look at the types of cards, their strength, and think of an overall term or feeling-word for that outflow.

By doing this, you gain a vague idea of what is going on at a deeper level in this person’s life before you start interpreting individual cards. By looking at these power currents flowing through the reading, you tap into the deeper patterns that are operating through a person’s life; the individual cards in their positions tell you how that power manifests for them.

Let’s get to the individual card interpretation. I do not use reversals, as I use the positions of the cards to tell me whether a card has a negative or positive meaning.

Interpreting the reading

Position one, two and three are read together. This tells you what the story is about. The first card is the root of the question, the second card is what is coming into the situation, and the third card is what has gone from the situation. Neutral, positive, negative.

Position four is what is been given that will ultimately help, even if it is a bad card. Position four is the expansion of the card that falls in position two: what is coming into the situation is now taking a form where it can express itself.

Position five is what is being currently withheld so that it can be taken permanently out of a situation: the card in this position tells of the power, person or event that is being prepared for composting/full removal.

Position six is the fulcrum of the situation, it is the position that balances the positive/giving/position four, and the negative/withholding/position five. It is also the full potential, should that full potential be realised.

Now we are getting to the part of the pattern that tells a more complex story. In the Tree pattern, positions seven, eight and nine are the spheres that directly pass into our minds, actions, bodies and situations. Up to this point, the positions are about dynamics, potentials and powers. Now we start to see how those dynamics play out in our lives.

Position seven is the part of us that is being ‘worked’: it is a position of a grindstone and it is also a position of emotion. Our emotions trigger us to act and react. Through our emotions, we carry burdens, process through restrictions, and we either learn to self restrict through the adversity of our emotions or we are consumed by them. The card that appears in position seven tells us how we cope with a situation, what our emotions are, and what boundaries can help or hinder us depending on how we view and approach them. As we get closer to the outcome (position ten), you can see how the possibilities of interpretation become more complex, just as life becomes more complex as it matures. Interpret these lower positions in relation to the question and the subject matter.

Position eight is the part of us that part of us that can free things up or can unravel us. It is also the position of the mind and magic: the creativity of the mind and magic comes into full flow when we step away from conformity. But without a balance with restrictions and boundaries we easily unravel: hence position seven and eight work together to create a balance through polarity and tension. Each of these positions have cause and effect, problem and solution within them.

Here is a simple key to help you interpret the cards that fall in these positions: Position seven: emotions, look for what needs limiting, or look at what is being limited and see that the key to that is emotions. Position eight: look for what needs loosening up, and see the mind or magic as the key, or see what in the mind or magic is being unravelled. Sometimes these positions can be read really simply as seven = emotions, eight = mind.

Position nine is the position of the moon: this is dreams, imagination, family, ancestors or the home. Read it in relation to the question.

Position ten is the outcome or full manifestation of the picture.

Write down in your journal the reading you did for the public figure. Go through the individual positions and think of a key word for each card and write it down. Alongside that key word, write down a second key word for the position: you read them together. Now look back over the reading and see if you can get an inkling of what it is telling you. Bear in mind that this is a very simple pattern that does not give you much detail; it simply highlights the key dynamics of an event.

Later on you will learn much more complex patterns that give you far more detail, but first you need to learn to walk before you begin flying and jumping off of buildings!

Example

Let's have a look at an example reading for a public figure

I have chosen General Sisi, the new president of Egypt. My question is, 'Does President Sisi have the interests of the Egyptian people at heart, or is he grabbing power for himself?' Get your deck, find the following cards, and lay them out in the Tree of Life layout so that you can look at the reading with me.

The cards came out as:

- Position 1: Magician
- Position 2: Three of swords
- Position 3: Knight of swords
- Position 4: Knight of pentacles
- Position 5: Tower
- Position 6: Seven of swords
- Position 7: Five of cups
- Position 8: Four wands
- Position 9: Nine of wands
- Position 10: Hermit

This is an interesting reading in that it shows an evolution of intention and understanding as the reading progresses. We start with the magician: this is the man Sisi, using his power to manoeuvre, control and make something happen to his own agenda. He makes that happen by bringing in a power of separation (three of swords) which got rid of the Muslim Brotherhood, and what is withheld is the knight of swords, which is the dissent/aggression that attempted to stop that separation.

In the fourth position is the knight of pentacles. In the context of this question, this earth card refers to the people whom he sees as being young and needing to be protected. Earth/pentacles is interpreted in the magical earth context of ancestors tribe, etc. In the fifth position we see the tower. The tower is withheld and shows that by doing what he did, he averted a major disaster for the people. In the centre in position six is the seven of swords. My key word for the seven of swords is 'sneaking'. This suggests he used underhand methods in order to avert the disaster.

Now we are getting to the last four positions that show how the dynamics of the first six cards play out.

In position seven we have the five of cups. My key words for the five of cups are disappointment and guilt. The man cries over the three spilt cups but does not see the two full cups still standing. In an emotive position like

position seven, this tells me that Sisi has feelings of regret and guilt, and is in danger of being overwhelmed by negative emotion when there is still positive hope just out of sight. Remember the dualistic nature of this position. It is about necessary restriction/boundaries and emotion. Through his sense of disappointment and guilt, he has the potential to self restrict in order to fully partake of the two remaining cups.

In position eight we have the four of wands—celebration. Again remember the dualistic nature of this position and although intellectually he is celebrating his victory, that celebration, if not checked by more sober emotions, can unravel him. In that position, the four of wands has the potential to manifest as arrogance in victory, but because of the emotive quality we see in his position seven, the guilt and disappointment balances and limits the sense of relief and celebration in position eight.

In position nine we see the nine of wands. My key word for this card is survival. He has survived the change in government and his election. It also shows, being the position of the tribe/ancestors, that it was/still is, a difficult battle for him on all fronts, and like the survival of all major battles, it leaves you changed. It takes your innocence and shapes how you view the world. He has survived, but at great cost.

His outcome is the Hermit. This is a very interesting outcome and shows the true evolution of a person who is going through massive change. At the beginning of the reading, President Sisi presented as the magician: the man who manipulated and juggled power for control. Now we see President Sisi as man changed by a bitter struggle, a struggle in which he had to behave in an underhand way in order to avert a disaster. We see through the reading his emotional introspection and the battered survival. What it has transformed him into is a man who feels very alone and burdened with the knowledge that only he can light his own way forward.

The hermit tells us about wisdom from bitter experience, the shedding of dogma, innocence, the loss of safety from structure: he stands alone at the top of high mountain with only his experiences to light his way ahead. The hermit is also a very spiritual card: it is the person who has moved beyond religion to find an individual path to the Divine, a path that has no easy answers.

My original question was, ‘Does he have the interests of the Egyptian people at heart?’. My answer is yes, but it has come at a bitter price, and his

understanding of his role, the people and the path ahead have changed dramatically since he set out of this path to power. At that start of this process, he wanted to be ‘Pharaoh’. Now he is in that position, he finally realises what a tremendous burden it truly is. At the start of this process he felt in control, and probably felt very sure about his own ‘honour’ and righteous intention.

Through this journey he has learned the limitations of his honour, and that the world is not so black and white as it appeared. He has also learned that righteous intention is often a fallacy enjoyed by those who have not been pushed to their limits. This process has made him grow up.

We can only hope, with the terrible trials that the Egyptian people have suffered over the last few years, that President Sisi continues to keep himself in check, and that the wisdom of the Hermit truly blossoms within him so that he can effectively guide that large unruly nation towards a better future, rather than attempting to hang on to power at all costs.

If the Hermit turns sour, which can happen if the self-imposed limits are tossed to one side, and the unravelling power takes over, then we will see Sisi descend into a self-serving tyrant who will be difficult to get rid of.

When you do your own public figure reading, don’t be influenced by what you know about them; let the reading speak. Often what we see in public is only a fraction of the reality: learn not to judge but to look for yourself.

Tasks

Do several of these public figure readings, so that you get used not only to the layout, but also to working without predefined ideas of a person or a situation. Interpret the reading in direct connection to the question: remember, if you ask about a person’s actions, you will get the information about how that person interacts with the situation. Don’t assume the cards only tell you about the person; they can also tell you about the burdens or gifts that affect them. How the person reacts to those burdens and gifts will tell you a great deal about their deeper qualities..

Once you have used this layout for a few public figure readings and you feel confident about your base line ability to read and interpret it, then widen out your field of reading. Look at situations as opposed to people (for example: what will be the energy flowing through an area this month, or show me the health of my car, or what is my month going to look like in general).

When you come to doing your own personal readings, or readings for those close to you, try not to frighten yourself. Bad things happen in life as well as good things: look at the year you have just lived through and think of the bad things you experienced as well as the good things. Think about where those experiences took you, what they taught you, how they changed you: sometimes good comes out of difficulties, just as difficulties can come from good things.

If you see things you do not understand, simply note them down and revisit them once the situation has passed so that you can get a better understanding of how the cards were expressing that situation. If in a personal reading you see a lot of bad things, don't panic. Your next question should be, 'can I change this through my intentions, direction or action?' If the answer is a good card, then you need to sit quietly and think about what options for change are available to you, even if you don't particularly like them. Narrow the options down to two or three, and then look again at the situation outcome if you made those changes.

If the answer comes back that you cannot change what is coming, then you need to think carefully about the best way to navigate through the difficult situation, how to transform it into something that can bring positive change, and then do a reading to look at 'what will be the long term outcome for me of this difficult situation?' Often what is currently a bad situation is ultimately a catalyst for positive change: if we step up to the challenge, we transform ourselves, our lives, and the lives of those around us.

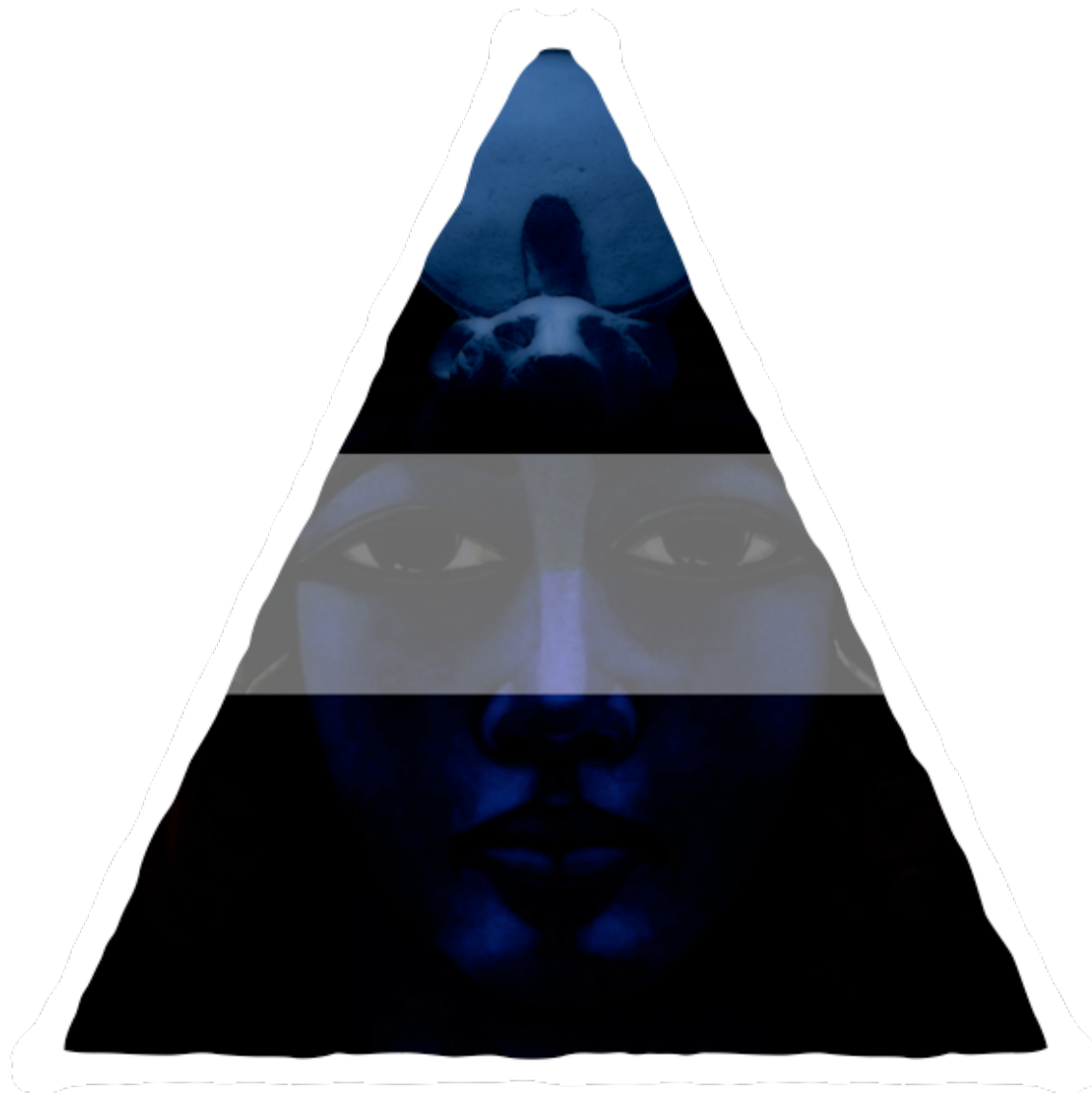
I speak as someone who has had 'the readings from hell' in the past, and who subsequently went through that hell. But looking back I would change nothing, as each challenge and disaster gave me strength, understanding, and matured me. That is not to say that we should passively accept every disaster that comes our way. Sometimes it is very necessary to dodge bullets, and the first step of dodging a bullet is knowing that it is coming.

From there, you can do readings to look at different options for avoiding or modifying an upcoming situation.

Work with this reading layout often, as it will become a major tool in your future work as a magician. It will also teach you about the profound power of creation and destruction that flows constantly through the mundane in our lives. It is also a very useful divination tool, and divination is as useful on a daily basis to a magician as a knife and fork.

QVAREIA

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