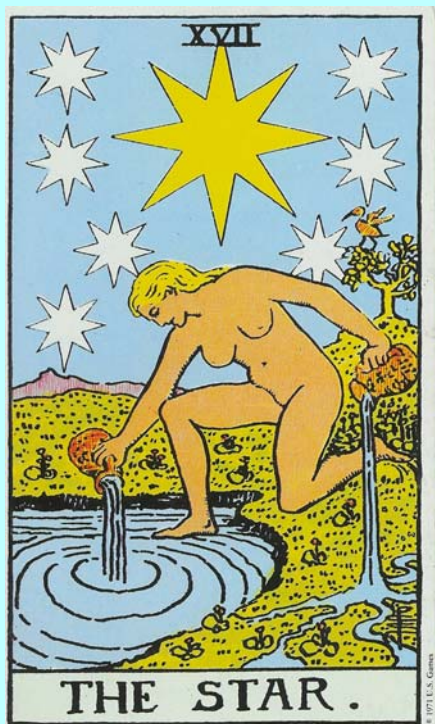


## THE STAR:

Anne Shotter



*"You are a child of the Universe, no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should."*

.....from Desiderata.

These beautiful words connect to the Tarot card of The Star whose imagery itself gives a feeling of connectedness, peace and safety. It reminds us of the words attributed to Hermes "As Above, so below" – what is true in the macrocosm (solar system) is reflected in the microcosm (the human being.)

The card can be seen as symbolizing our ability to experience a glimpse of the goodness of the essential Self. When we are able to see the essential self in ourselves, a healing takes place at a very deep level. This healing of the self then enables us to see goodness in others and to trust the world around us. This represents a universal connectedness to all living things which is understood; not intellectually, but as a deeply understood fundamental of life itself. This aspect of The Star is seen through its connection to the great mother, or earth goddess. The Star represents the same feminine principle present in the cards of The High Priestess, The Empress, Strength and The World – the Divine Feminine. This energy can be accessed through meditation, through which the personal consciousness (the five streams of water) can be merged with the collective consciousness (the pool of water).

When we look at the symbols pictured on the card of The Star, we can see the naked feminine, symbolizing our feeling self revealed. Also the symbol of nakedness indicates not hiding any part of ourselves from ourselves. The self is seen as being a container for the Divine. The beauty of the stars is reflected through the woman and seen by her in the mirror of the water. She is gazing into the water where, like Narcissus in mythology, she sees a reflection of her true self and falls in love. However, not in the self-absorbing way of Narcissus, as the water symbolizes the pool of the collective unconscious, where we all share human similarities.

The bird, an Ibis, is often described as being symbolic of the Egyptian god Thoth, who was said to be patron of the arts. It can indicate a natural talent coming forth into consciousness. In tarot readings about career, this card can often symbolize artists and entertainers, but more importantly, it suggests that each of us is a unique work of art created in the image of the Divine. So rare and unique, that no two human beings are exactly the same. Each of us can take our place in the universe and shine our light brightly onto the world knowing that we do have a special place in the universe.

We often describe ourselves according to our astrological star sign, by categorizing ourselves as an Aries, a Scorpio, or Taurus etc. Indeed, we ascribe the sign of Aquarius to the card of The Star, to symbolize the humanitarian aspect of the energy it holds. However, students of astrology are able to see that each birth chart is unique as each human being is unique.

As we progress along the path of the hero's journey, as reflected in the major arcana cards, the healing and hopeful energy of The Star follows the two powerful cards of The Devil and The Tower. Visually, the darkness of these cards is in great contrast to the natural setting of The Star. With The Star, we have arrived at a place on our journey where we are once more in touch with the gentle healing energy of the feminine. The power of regeneration and renewal is essentially feminine. As children, we look to our parents to affirm our sense of self. The love for us in their eyes affirms us. We are able to see love mirrored back to us. When we "fall in love" the need to find this affirmation in the eyes of our lover is a repetition of this need. When we have integrated the energy of The Star, we no longer seek this mirroring from others for self-affirmation. We know who we are and we have healthy self love and self esteem.

The Devil symbolizes loss of connection to spirit. Perhaps it is so named to illustrate the difference we see collectively between god and the devil. When we are chained to this energy we are chained to negativity and fear. We have created a false self that will not allow us to create new life or to become whole. The unconscious compulsion to become whole creates a breaking down of the false self and the realization of the limitations this energy of denial of self expression has created. The card of The Tower symbolizes this breakthrough.

Throughout history, during times of chaos and upheaval, wars and revolutions, it is this hope of renewal that has kept humanity alive. The card of The Star symbolizes our deep connection to hope for the future.

Continuing on our life journey through the Major Arcana, when we draw the card of The Star, the card of The Sun is only two cards away. We are well on

our way to a personal rebirth. A new aspect of the self is about to be born. Like the wise men who followed the star to the birth of Christ, when we have the card of The Star, its healing light is available for us to follow to the card of The Sun where we can celebrate the birth of a new aspect of our true self. The Star's connection to nature could lead us to the thought that nature is a natural process, of seasons, of cycles, all achieved in perfect timing. Why should humanity be any different? The Star indicates that over a period of time (the sixteen previous cards) our nature has been growing and developing and is about to blossom. It symbolizes that you are in the "process of becoming"

Since ancient times, man has looked to the heavens for guidance, sailors are able to navigate by the stars, and astronomers and astrologers look to the movement of the stars. When you connect to the card of the Star it is directing you to watch for signs that your life is moving towards a more positive future.

"When you have found the beginning of the way, the star of your soul will show its light."

In his work with dreams, Carl Jung has commented on the symbolism of stars.

*"From ancient times the stars have symbolized eternity. The soul comes from the stars and returns to the stellar regions. In the relentless work of individuation, moments of reprieve are necessary if we are not to get lost in the dark night of the soul. It is in such moments that powerful archetypal images can appear, symbols of hope that can mobilize psychic energies and activate inner fortitude. Some of these symbols of an inner gathering take the form of an eight-spoked wheel or an eight-pointed star".*

(Jung CW1190, "Tarot and Individuation", Eileen Gad.)