



# A Book Of Seeds

*Seed for thought is food for the soul.*

by Dana Kester-McCabe

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*Dedicated to my family and friends  
~ life's best teachers...*

## Introduction

The dictionary defines "seeding" as a process of providing something which stimulates growth or development. That is the goal of this book. It is intended to provoke thought and inspire enlightenment - to help people grow.

It was written with the hope that it would be accessible to people across religious and cultural lines. Our world today needs as many materials as possible that can potentially help us forge a common language and dialog. So my hope was that no matter what religion, culture, political persuasion, economic status, gender, or age, anyone who reads these questions will see a reflection of their experiences.

### *Background*

The material for this book was first presented in the form of a deck of cards. Seed Cards were invented to help people to take an objective look at the way they live, and how they see the world. The idea first came from those ancient fortune telling cards: the Tarot. Now that might be an immediate turn off for some. However, after reading the rest of the background of this work I hope any objections will be addressed.

There are fortune tellers in just about every town in every country in the world. Why have their services continued to be in demand from antiquity through modern times? There are lots of theories. Most of them are accusing or dismissive. Con artists and

thieves selling wealth and salvation have certainly made fortunetelling suspect. Still countless people in every generation believe in its guidance. My aim is not to convince the reader to believe in fortune telling or to debunk it. I actually resist the temptation to decide whether fortunetelling is hoax or help. Countless people can tell you it was one or the other for them, and they would be right.

But the theory that inspired the creation of this material was not one meant to guarantee someone spiritual or material riches. It was put forth by the pioneer of the scientific field of psychology Carl Jung. He suggested that all fortunetelling or divination systems: astrology, numerology, palm and card reading, resonate with people because they are systems of archetypes.

Archetypes are symbols for common aspects of every life. Since people began sharing their stories around campfires these archetypal symbols have been recognized by shamans and priests. Interpretation of these is called divination. The root of that word is "divine." The art of divination is meant to be the art of communicating with the Divine - with God.

Before playing cards were used for games, gambling and fortunetelling, they were used by priests as a way to teach their flock the lessons of their religion. You might say they were spiritual flash cards. It is likely that gambling and divination came next. In what order, is probably debatable.

Fortunetellers combined the priests' universal symbolism with the element chance. Their layouts

and interpretations have been passed down for centuries with minor adaptations to reflect the time of the reader.

Practitioners of the divination arts look to the symbols suggested by such things as the positions of the cards, stars on a birth chart, or the lines on our hands. From these they ask questions. Many fortunetellers sincerely believe they are communicating with God or some form of the supernatural. Naturally competing belief systems, religious and secular, will contend that that anyone who claims they communicate with God is either a prophet, a heretic, a charlatan, or even mentally ill, depending on their point of view.

In fact a good fortune teller is really like a good therapist. They combine a well trained intuition with knowledge of universal archetypes. Then they get us to talk about ourselves.

The questions they ask seem amazingly insightful. "I see a journey. Are you about to take a trip of some sort?" How could they know I am going to see my parents next week? Whether it is a trip across town or around the world we are all going somewhere soon. Archetypes fit into a universal template that we are all living.

The reason people continue to turn to occult practices is not merely that their archetypal questions and suggestions easily fit into our perception of our lives. They actually don't provide us with definitive answers. They do, however, suggest the questions that will help us understand and address our

situation. Those questions magically seem to help us to look with fresh eyes at information we had all along. Someone is listening to us. That is a comfort. And there is a sense of relief in feeling like what we are going through is happening for a reason that will eventually be revealed to us. Depending on the ethics of the occult practitioner this can be an important and very valuable relationship.

But what they provide is something we can actually do for ourselves or in community with people we know and trust not to have ulterior motives. So the idea came to me: Wouldn't it be helpful if we could ask ourselves these questions? What if we had those archetypes written down for our own personal consultation to inspire our prayers, our meditation, or even just our best hopes?

Certainly a believer could use the cards this book was based on in the traditional divination layouts. But, I make no claim about their ability to predict the future nor guide the reader toward good fortune. As I mentioned before, when I first talked about this project, a number of people were taken aback. There is a lot of fear associated with anything that hints at occultism. My hope is that taken in its totality people will find this material to be benign at worst and insightful at best.

### *Queries & Koans*

I was raised in the tradition of the Religious Society of Friends - the Quakers. One of our central tenets is that there is that of God in everyone. Another is that God continues to be in an active relationship with us and to reveal Truth in ways that can help us live with

integrity. So, naturally I believe that anything which helps us to be in closer touch with God can be worthwhile. If it leads us to a healthy self awareness, which makes us more accountable, it might just help us make positive decisions about our lives. But unless it leads us to live more realistically in the world, it is useless and sometimes destructive.

One practice of the Quakers which continues to be a helpful part of my life is the use of queries. These are questions written for both the community and the individual to assess how they are doing in their efforts to live up to their ideals. They are intended to help us integrate our faith with personal and community-wide accountability. Like Buddhist koans these questions are meant to have relevant but different meanings for each person. At the same time, they reflect the universal human condition and are intended to inspire "right action."

The questions contained here are meant to augment one's own faith and ethical tradition rather than propose a new one. In the tradition of Quaker queries, I wrote the text for these questions in a way that I hope will make them acceptable to a broad spectrum of people. An atheist, a secular humanist, a Christian, a Muslim, or a Jew, a Hindu, Buddhist, or any of the followers of the many earth religions, should all be able to read this material and be in good standing with their beliefs. Reading these may prove personally challenging. That is because it is not easy to look deeply at ourselves or to live our beliefs authentically.

## *Organization Of The Archetypes*

The respective illustrations for each "seed card" were carefully designed as archetypes, for creative visualization. They are included here. As you might imagine since this began as a deck of cards, the questions are in chapters which are organized into suits. The various suits of the Tarot symbolized society's classes as they were in Europe for many centuries: the clergy, royalty, merchants, and peasants. Here they have been modernized into different aspects of modern life. Each suit now combines ancient symbolism with contemporary issues and concerns.

The suit of GRAINS has questions about how people deal with each other in the context of their community. The queries in the suit of COINS relate to issues about material needs and pleasures. The CUPS suit delves into the subjects of love and deep personal relationships. The suit of PENS examines the issues of communication and learning. In the suit of PATHS the topics address concern the cycles of life, philosophy and individual callings. More information about each of these suits is provided at the beginning of each chapter.

Each chapter has the same number of "seeds" or sets of questions as the original Tarot did. The royal cards have been replaced by more populist representations and a few cards were added. Life at all ages is sacred and so it is systematically represented with these cards. The order of the cards represents the way we age chronologically.



The *Child* is a new card. At various times in our lives we either feel newly young or we relive aspects of childhood. So the subject matter of the suit is seen through that filter. The *Youth* card was once the Jack. The numbered cards are geared toward any adult. The *One* card which many know as the ace, generally describes the most personal individual aspects of the suit's subject matter. It also gets us to look at our relationship with our own self. The *Two* cards generally suggest questions framed by our most important primary relationship, a spouse, or partner.

Cards *Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven, Eight* and *Nine* deal with the various other different ways the subject impacts our lives. The *Zero* card usually deals with a loss or absence in regards to the topic in the life of the reader. *Mother* and *Father* cards were once the Queen and King. The *Elder* and *Earth* cards are also new. The *Elder* card covers the subject matter in terms of the aged. And finally, the *Earth* card addresses our relationship with the non human world all around us.

In traditional fortunetelling decks there was an upright and reverse meaning for each card, depending on how the person pulled them out for a reading or how the deck was handed to the reader. When this work was a deck of cards, in order to cover a wider variety of topics, there were two sets of questions for each card. The second set of questions usually covered similar territory but perhaps took an opposite or contrasting side of the topic. Both sets can be considered together or separately and all are reproduced in this book.

## How To Use This Book

The queries in this book can be used to inspire prayer, or meditation. People could also use them for journaling or blogging subject matter. Each person reading it will likely digest the material in their own way. Some people will read it from front to back once and move on. Others will randomly "dip" into it from time to time.

Blank pages are provided at the back of the book for notes – or additional questions you think should have been in the book or that you think would have been relevant to you.

This could be used as a daily reader taking up one page or one set of questions at a time as part of a routine of spiritual discipline. Or it could be consulted like a reference book, checking the relevant chapter for a set of queries addressing a particular topic. An index is provided with some keywords that might be helpful in this approach.

Response to the questions could be used to help members of a community get to know each other better. The questions could be read and discussed or used in group worship sharing. One set of questions would be read and each person who wanted to respond out of prayerful silence could do so. Again, the group could go through the book systematically or open it to a random selection.

*However you use this book, may it help in your quest to intentionally live your life with integrity.*

# Grains

The suit of GRAINS was originally the wands (or batons) in the Tarot and the suit of clubs in a regular playing deck. This suit represented the peasantry. Here it poses questions about how people deal with each other in the context of community.

Historically grain has been the most common source of food across all classes. So, grain is often used to symbolize the masses, particularly in the labor movement. The way groups distribute food and dining customs can say a lot about them. So it was chosen here to represent relationships particularly with groups: family, friends, co-workers and so forth. Our cultural heritage is also dealt with here because it is an extension of our upbringing and family life.

By understanding the groups we interact with, we can better understand our roles in them. Recognizing the true nature of these relationships helps us to see more clearly how we are living our values.



## CHILD

What kind of group or community do you rely on the most for support? How does this group protect, nurture and foster inner strength in its members? How often do you personally need this type of care?

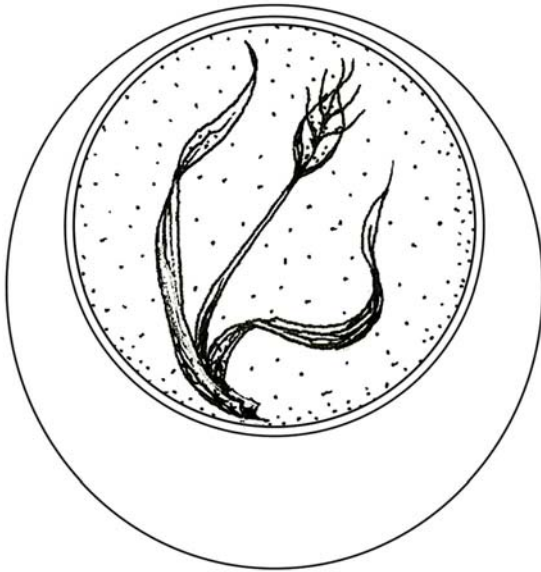
Can you tell when the needs of the group should supersede your own? How does pride affect your ability to turn to the group for help? What can you do to be less reliant on the group, and contribute to it more?



## YOUTH

How have you developed your cultural preferences and sense of style? Do you keep an open and tolerant mind about other cultures? Are you willing to be exposed to and experiment with these? What culture do you identify with the most?

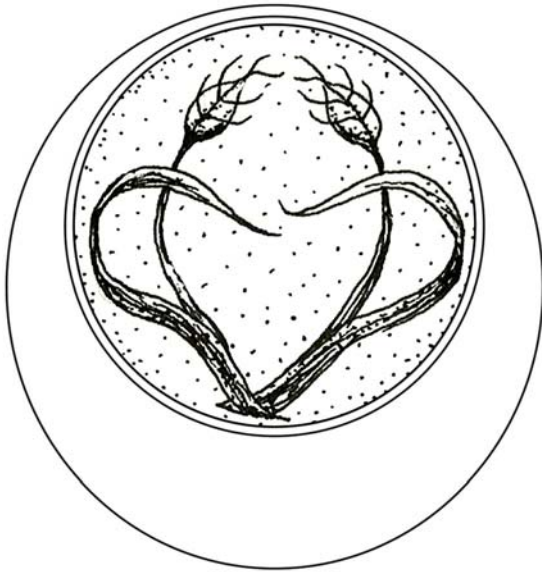
Do you follow fads or the cultural activities of whatever group you happen to be with? Do you ever return to your cultural roots? What effect do your choices have on those around you? When are cultural activities a priority in your life?



### ONE

Are you able to make your voice heard in community affairs? Do you look out for your personal needs in the face of changes in the community? How do you maintain your sense of individuality as part of a community?

Do you have friendly and respectful relations with your neighbors? Do the rules and values of your community' reflect your own? Do you ever feel that you are exempt from or above these?



## TWO

Do you see marriage as an equal partnership? Do you recognize the effects of a partnership on other relationships? Does your community or other relationships have an effect on the way you may get along with a partner?

In the event of a disagreement, how do you keep from holding a grudge? How do you keep from involving others in a potential feud? What do you do to maintain civil relationships with those you have problems with?



### THREE

Are you aware of the number of different communities that you may belong to (family, work, church...)? Does one group tend to monopolize your time? How do you decide which group takes priority?

Are you able to create ties between different groups that you may belong to? How do you make "outsiders" feel comfortable in your community? Can you be at ease in settings where you are the minority?





#### FOUR

Are you aware of the ways you can help your community? Do you feel that you do your fair share there? Do you give help to others in a caring and humble way? How does pride affect your contributions?

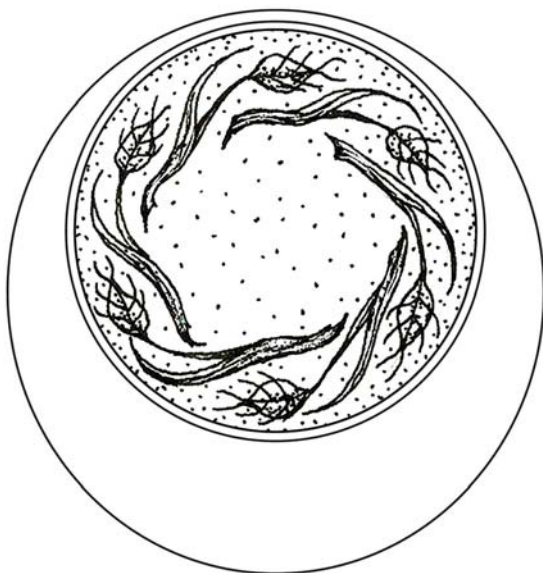
Are your close friends and family a part of your community? How do these groups support each other? How do loved ones support your community activities? Are you equally supportive of theirs?



## FIVE

What do you do to promote and maintain the ideas and practices of your culture? Do you openly express your opinion about your culture? In what ways do you follow your own cultural practices or traditions?

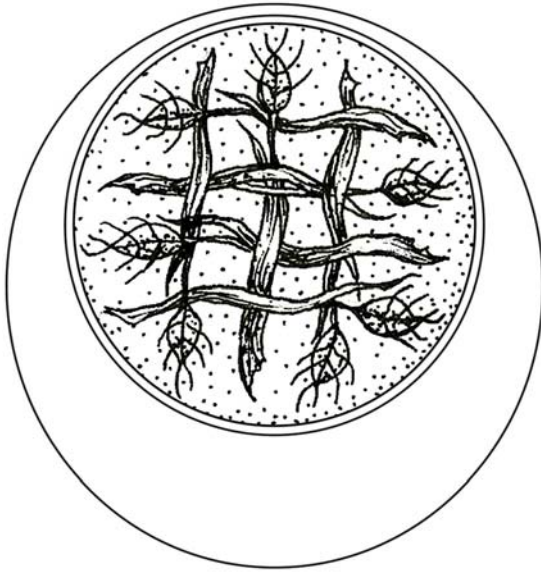
Do you ever try to disrupt the usual order of your community? Do you take a stand against the group when it is appropriate? Do you recognize when your ideas are out of place or divisive?



## SIX

How could your community benefit from a fresh approach? How can you be an effective agent of positive changes in your community? How do you know when to give in to change and when to stand in the way of possible progress?

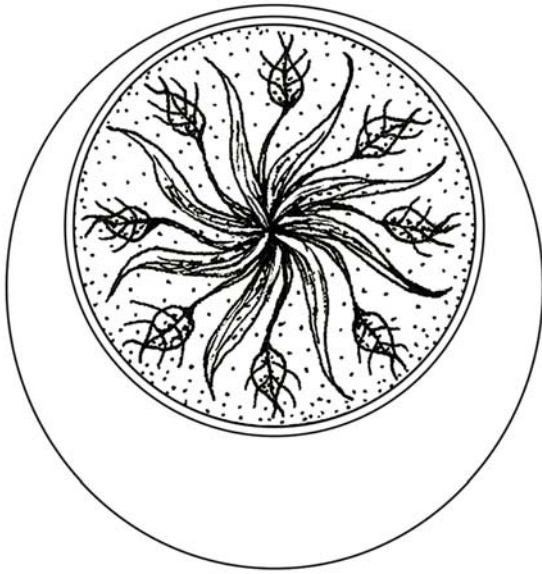
How does your community deal with conflict within itself? How might your community improve its ability to address wider conflicts? What are you personally doing to address conflict in your community and the world?



## SEVEN

What does "working for the greater good" mean to you? Does your community have a purpose other than self preservation? How can you bring higher goals and values into your community's activities?

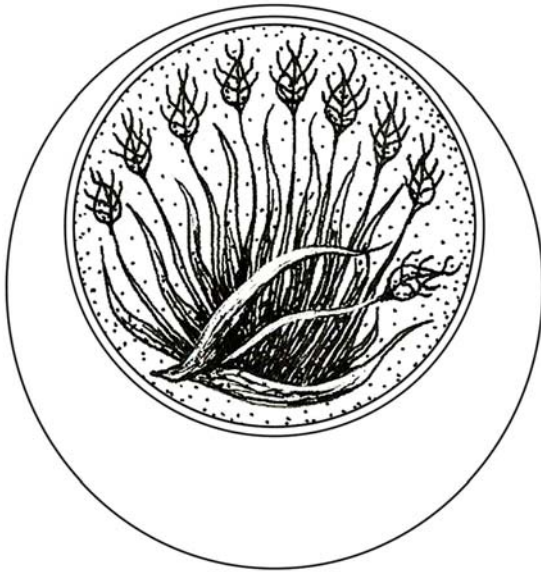
Does your community ever neglect the feelings or needs of one person? How could your community be more supportive of individual concerns? How could you help this process? What would make you to take action?



## EIGHT

What is the value of symbolism and ritual in your community? How do community rituals like weddings, funerals and graduations enrich your life? How do you keep the symbolism of these rituals alive and meaningful?

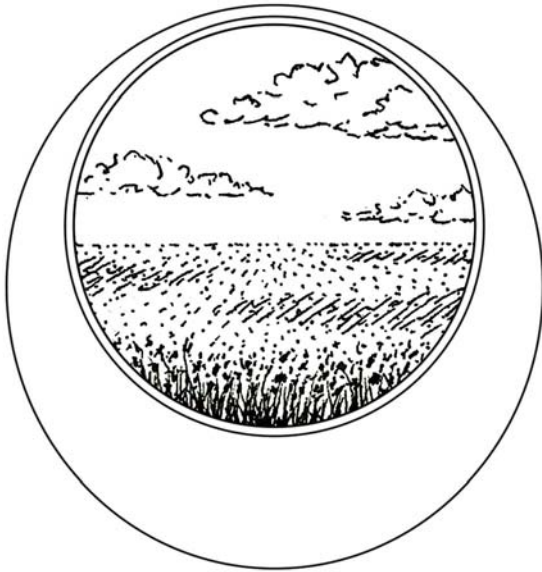
How often do you participate in rituals that seem meaningless? Do you ever continue a ritual out of respect for someone else? How do you find the courage to not take part in long-held yet painful traditions?



## NINE

Can you tell when you or someone else has become a scapegoat? How do you react to such abuse? What kind of support do you need to stand up for fair treatment? Do you seek to prevent such abuse?

Do you ever allow a group to take advantage of you? How often do you say NO to unreasonable or too frequent requests? Do you allow yourself time to rest and evaluate your community commitments?



## ZERO

What are the spiritual needs of your community? What can you do to help answer those needs? Are the groups' spiritual needs part of your own? What is a good source for guidance about this?

Is there a spiritual connection between members of your community? How can you nurture such a connection? How does a higher power affect these ties? Could these ties help you to have a spiritual connection to other communities?



## MOTHER

Do you consider your heritage and family traditions to be assets? Do you believe these entitle you to special status? Is your sense of your own past fair and honest? How can you make family or cultural pride a unifying element in the community?

What will you do to maintain your position in society? Is societal approval ever likely to override your moral senses? Is community opinion ever a reason to manipulate family or friends?  
Or anyone else?





## FATHER

What do you do to foster a sense of allegiance to your community in others? What do you do to promote the good order in your group? What do you do when fear or destructive tendencies rule the actions of the group?

When is it a good idea for your community to accept outside influence? Do you actively recruit and promote new members to your group? Do you help your group to deal honestly and fairly with outside groups and individuals?



### ELDER

Does your community meet the needs and ideas of all ages with love and respect? How do you bridge the generational differences in your family and community? How can you help the group assure that all its members feel valuable?

Do you share the fruits of your experience freely, yet with humility? How do you know when your opinion will be helpful to the community? Once you have earned the group's respect, how do you live up to it?



## EARTH

What does your community do to share and care for its natural resources? What could your group do to share its resources with other groups? What can or do you help to achieve these goals?

Are you aware of your position in the world's classes, cultures and consumers? How is loving all the earth's inhabitants encouraged in your community? Does your community place human and spiritual assets above material ones?

# Coins

COINS universally symbolize wealth and probably will for a long time until we have one full generation who no longer uses money to transact business. In the Tarot this was the suit of the merchant class. Some things change very little over time.

COINS therefore are one of only two suits which retain their original archetype from the Tarot. (The other is the suit of CUPS.) In modern playing decks this is the suit of Diamonds.

The queries in the suit of COINs relate to issues about material needs and pleasures; including physical health, beauty, and success. The way we gather and spend our resources reflects our moral character. The questions here help the reader discern the difference between worldly desires, and those things necessary to survive and flourish.

The approach here is toward realistic assessments and recognition of the effects our physical or material choices have on other aspects of our life.



### CHILD

How do you avoid frivolous spending habits? Are you generous without really considering all the costs involved? How do you view those who are more frugal than you?

Do you take good care of your possessions? How do you avoid passing your responsibilities onto someone else? When is it a pleasure to own many things, and when is it a burden?

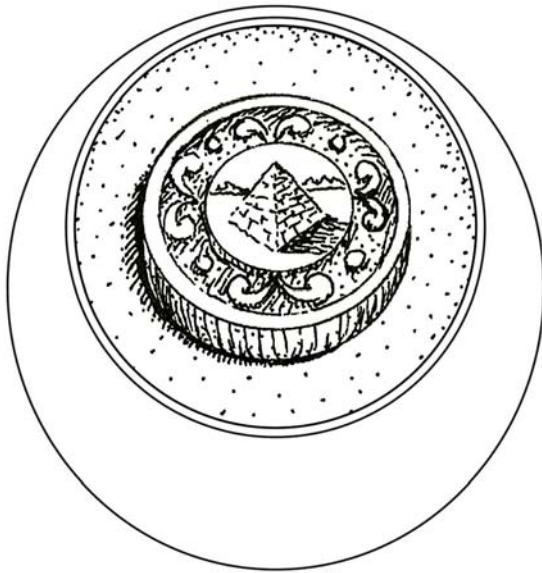


## YOUTH

Do you enjoy work for its own sake? What do you do to remain enthusiastic? Who or what inspires you?

Do you ever try to bring a new or innovative approach to your work?

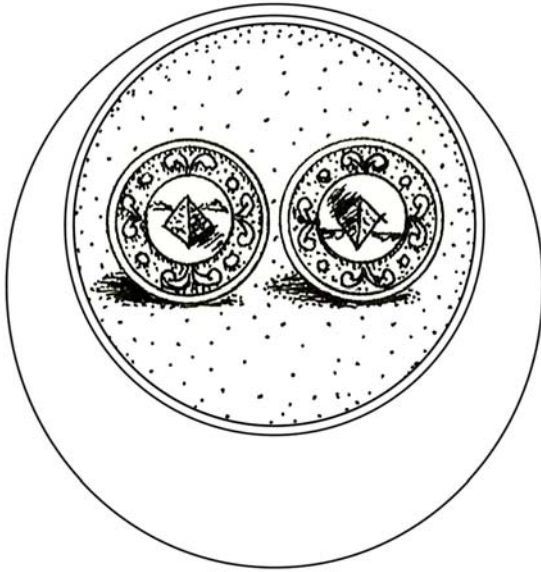
Is winning more important than the actual rewards of success? Do you enjoy trying to beat the odds or taking unnecessary risks? Are you more likely to rely on your hunches than facts?



## ONE

Are you self reliant? Do you plan ahead to meet your needs? How do you reward yourself when you have accomplished a goal? What is your greatest physical need?

Is pleasure ever your top priority? How do you know when you are over indulging? Are you able to control your urges and appetites without outside support? Are you willing to seek support if it is needed?

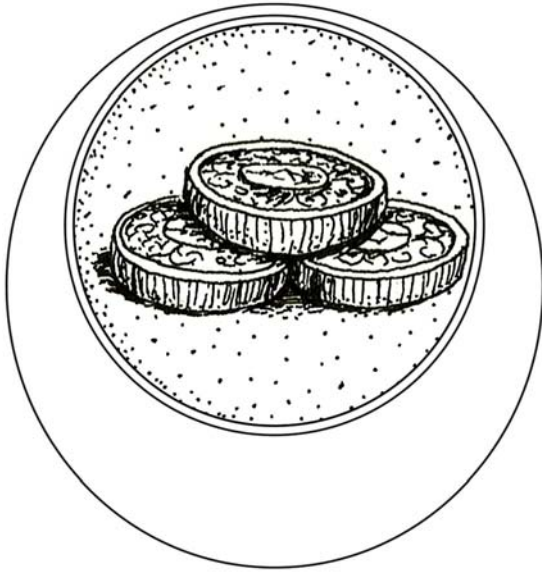


## TWO

Are you fair and honest in your business dealings? Do you avoid taking advantage of someone with less knowledge or power? What causes you to favor one business associate over another?

Do you seek timely and equitable solutions to business problems? How do you deal with both the financial and emotional issues that arise when you have been financially mistreated? How do you protect yourself from such abuse?

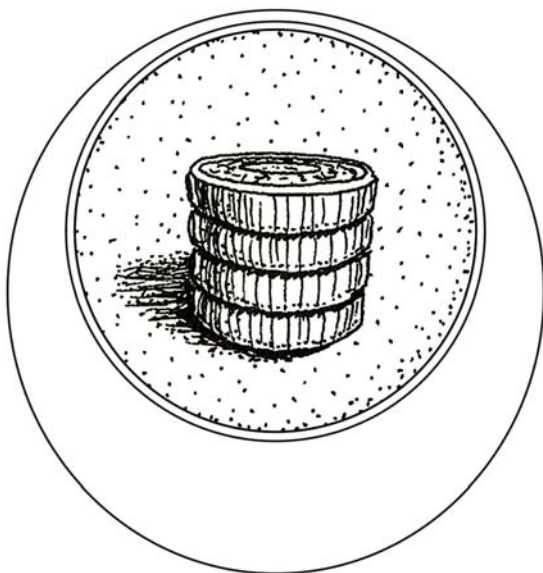




### THREE

What is the relationship between your work and your personal life? How often do they overlap? When is it appropriate to hire someone you care about? Do you care about your co-workers? Do you separate business decisions from personal ones?

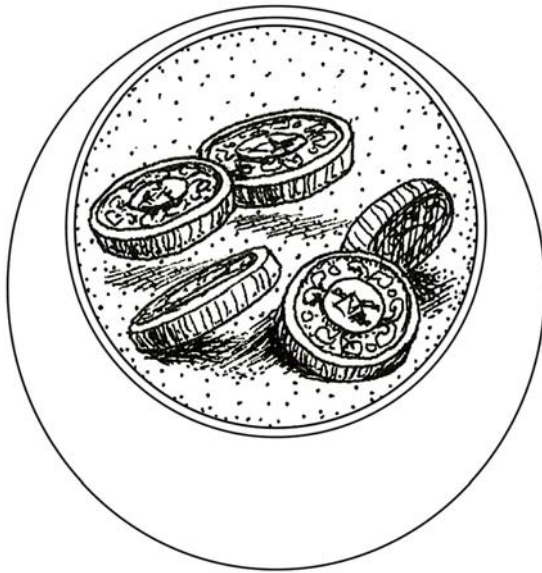
Is work related success your top priority? Where do you feel the most successful: on the job, at home or elsewhere? Who else contributes to your success?



#### FOUR

Do you make yourself aware of your financial condition on a regular and careful basis? Do you pay your debts on time? Are you careful not to overextend or live beyond your means?

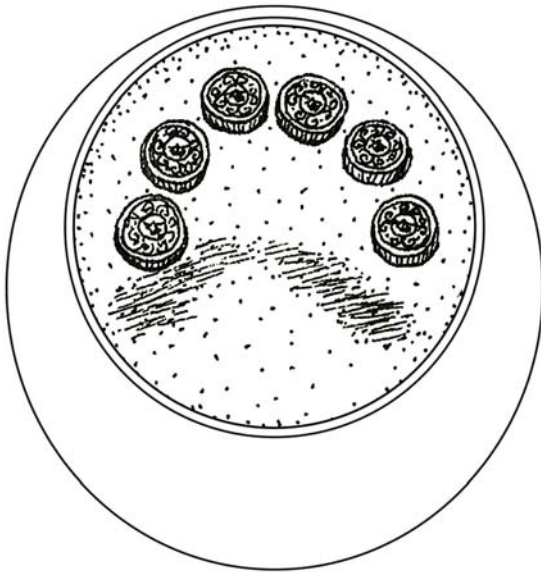
How could you simplify your living expenses? How do you resolve bad debts? Are you honest with your creditors about your ability to pay in a timely fashion? Do you know when and where to seek financial help?



## FIVE

How do you deal with sudden financial or physical losses? Do you seek spiritual support along with practical support on these issues? How can you learn and grow from such losses?

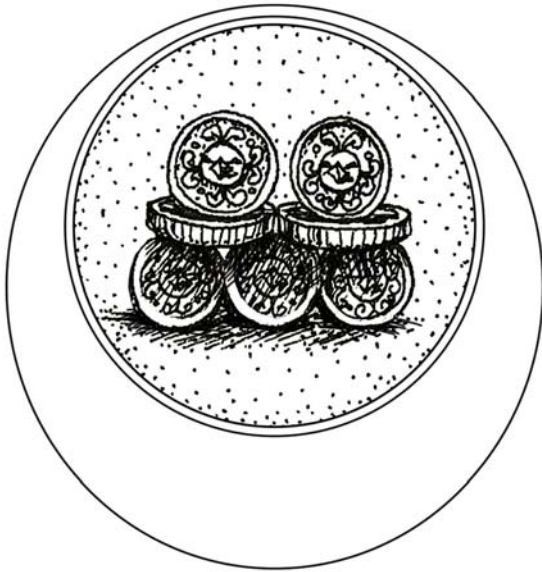
How does the fear of financial setbacks influence your decisions? When are your fears based on realistic facts or impressions? How do you keep fiscal pressures from either paralyzing you or making you act rashly?



## SIX

How do you bring beauty into your life? Do you view beauty in the world around you as a spiritual gift? How do your ideas about beauty affect your creativity in matters of appearance, work and homemaking?

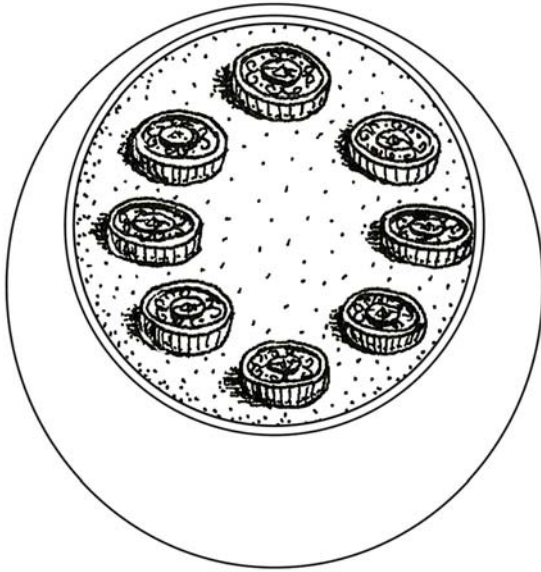
Do you collect things for pleasure or to enhance your image? Has attention to your personal or material appearance ever affected your judgment? Should either of these ever be a priority over relationships?



## SEVEN

Do you treat your body as a treasured vessel of your spirit? What activities do you pursue in order to maintain or heal the connections between the mind, body and spirit? How does attending to one of these benefit the others?

What steps do you take to avoid compulsive indulgence in food, drugs, sex, gambling, or interactive technology? How does your lifestyle affect your body? Do you get enough rest? Are you aware of your body's cycles and limitations?

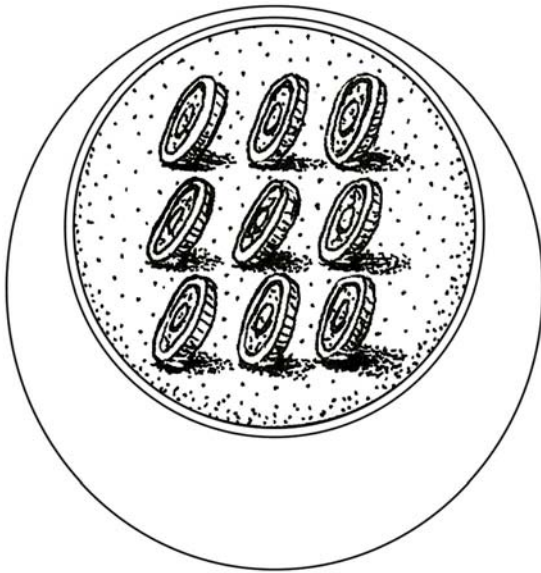


## EIGHT

What do you value most in your life? How do you determine the value of your material, physical, emotional, creative and spiritual assets? How do you invest these and nurture them? Do you value your relationships in the same way?

Which of your investments or assets bring you the greatest rewards? How can you improve the quality of your rewards? Do you need to?

How could you turn your limitations into assets? How should you deal with investments that go unrewarded?

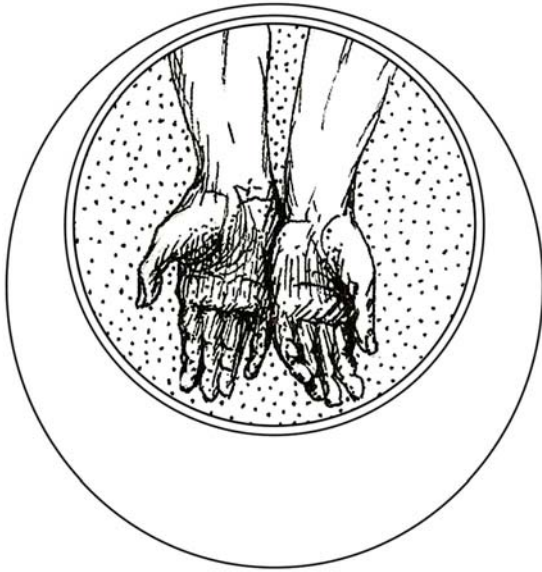


## NINE

How do you measure your success? Does success inspire you to reach for higher goals? Do you take time to enjoy your smaller achievements as well as your larger ones? Who is the best judge of these?

How do you approach living up to past successes? Do you take time to learn from your failures? How do you meet the expectations of those around you?

What is the value of a lesson learned?



## ZERO

Do you receive gifts graciously? How often do you recognize the gifts of a higher power? How do you express gratitude? What is the greatest gift you have or could receive?

Why do you give gifts? Do you expect some kind of reward for giving? Do you ever give more than you can spare? Have you experienced simple joy in giving?





### MOTHER

Do you find creative ways to make the best use of what you have? Do you take care of places or things mainly to please or sustain others? Do you ask for help in these pursuits?

Do you measure your success by the material wealth you may display? Do you measure the success of others only in your own terms? What affect do your needs and goals have on others? How far will you go to meet those goals?



## FATHER

What do you do to insure the well being of your loved ones? Are you willing to make significant sacrifices to do so? Are you able to accept their help in the spirit of teamwork?

Do you view wealth as the key to power over others? How do you avoid placing dollar values over human values in all your dealings? Do you avoid coveting the possessions or position of others? Do you equate power with a sense of security?



### ELDER

How do you address your fears about financial security? Do you freely lend or share your property in a trusting way? How do you insure the safety of your assets? How do you avoid going to extremes to do so?

Do you use your assets to influence loved ones? What plans do you have for your property should something happen to you? How can you make at least part of your assets, living assets: actively beneficial to someone while being protected investments?



## EARTH

How do you maintain the beauty or quality of your surroundings? Does simplicity influence how you care for your surroundings and your buying habits? How do you try to simplify your resource needs?

What is the difference between being the owner of a place and being its caretaker? Do you feel a spiritual connection with the place(s) you inhabit? How can this connection help you to preserve the world's resources for future generations?

# Cups

The CUPS suit examines our emotional life: love and deep personal relationships. Originally the suit of Cups represented the clergy. They were considered God's vessels here on earth. Here the view is that we are all God's children and therefore a vessel of God. Our core relationships are an expression of our higher self. They can also be an expression of how we love God.

The questions in Cups take a look at who we regard as our primary relationships. Some address how we treat them and what we treatment we accept from them. Love in its many forms is explored. At different times in our lives love means different things. Romantic and sexual passion are what most think of when using the word love.

But we can have equally strong feelings of love for our work or for ideas. We can also experience an intense love which is platonic. In this context hate is seen as love reversed, absent, or sometimes a misplaced act of love.



### CHILD

Do you trust and accept people easily? Are you easy to manipulate? Do you express your feelings enthusiastically, without reservation? Do you fall in love easily? Do you look for the good in people, ignoring their faults?

Do you need to be the center of attention? Are you demanding of the expressed love of others? Do you need to receive more love than you are able to give? Do you hate people who disappoint you, or their actions?



## YOUTH

How have your parents or your upbringing affected the way you make decisions? Do you rely on the approval of your parents? Are you able to nurture yourself without their support?

Do you ever find yourself repeating their patterns of behavior?

Do you value independence above all else? What are you willing to sacrifice to maintain your sense of independence? Do you prefer casual relationships rather than close ones? Could you have a balance between independence and dependence in your life?



### ONE

Do you have self respect and recognize your own self worth? Do you forgive yourself your faults? Do you recognize your emotional needs? Do you love and protect yourself?

How do you recognize and overcome your fears about relationships? Do you avoid isolation? How do you avoid excessive self blame and feelings of unworthiness? How do you heal your emotional and spiritual scars?





## TWO

How do you express deep passion for another person? Do you treat intimacy as a treasured gift to be shared unconditionally? How do you respond to the ardent attentions of another? Is your romantic love coupled with respectful friendship?

What do you do to foster sustaining relationships as opposed to destructive ones? Do you make your romantic interest the all consuming center of your life? Do you place sexual relations above all else in a relationship? Are you honest and gentle?



### THREE

Do you accept new relationships into your life easily? Can you feel strongly about more than one person at a time? Does love for one person help you to grow and love others? How do you keep past relationships from hurting new ones?

Do you begin new relationships at the expense of old ones? Do you know when you are in an esteem battering relationship? How do you keep from clinging to old relationships? How do you begin the healing process in a broken relationship?



#### FOUR

Do you have a strong bond with a group of friends?  
Do you share your inner feelings with these people?  
Are you aware of the inner feelings of others in the  
group? How do you benefit from their support? How  
do you support them?

How much do you base your identity on your circle  
of friends? Can you be objective about the problems  
and activities of your friends? How heavily and in  
what ways do you rely on your friends?



## FIVE

Are you a source of love and support to all the members of your family? Do you accept these gifts from all of them? Do you feel like a needed and valuable member of a family? Do you enjoy serving your family? How do you define your family?

How do you keep open the lines of communication with your family? Do you need the respect of your family and do they need yours? How are family relationships different than others you may have? Where is family on your list of priorities?



## SIX

Has your principle relationship reached an emotional plateau? Are you comfortable with uneventful familiarity? What are the benefits of a stable yet placid relationship? Is boredom in a relationship ever a good reason to seek changes?

How does the exercise of sharing and respect help a relationship to grow? Do you see commitment as an asset or an obligation? How can you avoid feeling threatened by potential changes in a relationship?



## SEVEN

How do you express joy? Anger? Who are you most likely to share these feelings with? Do you accept the feelings of others with equal joy or compassion? Is good natured humor a part of these exchanges? What about respect?

Are you concerned about ridicule or apathetic responses to your feelings from loved ones? How does the way you express your feelings affect you and those around you? Do you ever feel that revenge or competition promotes emotional strength?



## EIGHT

How are your individual friendships different?  
Is friendship part of all your relationships? Is  
there a balance between family, friends and  
acquaintances in your life? Where does a lover  
or mate belong in that balance?

How do you avoid fickle or disloyal behavior?  
When is it appropriate to value the feelings or  
opinions of anyone before those of loved ones?  
How do you avoid your own feelings of jealousy?

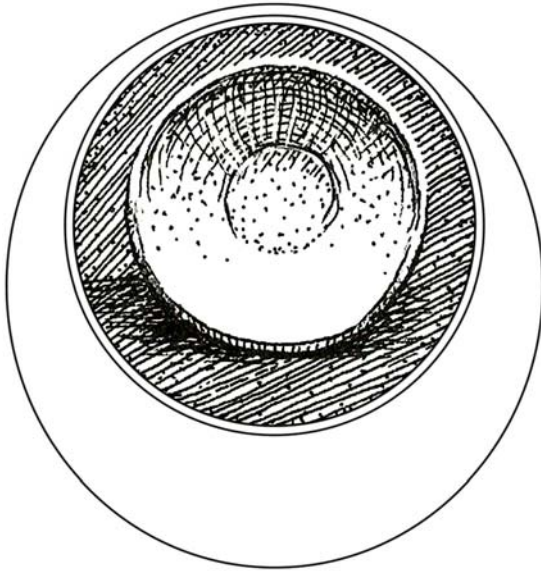


## NINE

Do you feel the same amount of passion for principles and causes that you do for people? How do you maintain a sense of balance concerning these? Are you able to channel your emotional energy in these issues constructively?

Do you prefer solitary endeavors to the company of others? Do your feelings for places or things ever overwhelm those for people? Does an abiding love for something that cannot return it have a place in your life?





## ZERO

Can you commit to a deep spiritual love that is unconditional and goes beyond most relationships?

Do you recognize the love of a higher power?

Have you experienced it? How does this type of love affect someone?

Does fear affect your feelings for or opinions of a relationship with a higher power? Do you feel overwhelmed by the possibility of such a relationship? How does the love of a higher power enhance and support all relationships?



### MOTHER

How do you try to nurture others? Do you try to be aware of the needs of others? Do you make yourself available to listen and be comforting? How do you encourage others to seek emotional or spiritual healing?

Do you try to decide what is best for others? Do you manipulate situations to support your opinions? Do you use a sense of guilt in others as a motivator? How does your own sense of guilt affect your behavior and attitudes?



## FATHER

How important is the respect and loyalty of loved ones? Are your commitments to honor and fidelity a source of pride to you? How does controlling your emotions allow you to be a source of strength to others?

Do emotional displays make you uncomfortable? Do you try to keep yourself at an emotional distance from others? Do you prefer acts of respect as opposed to a show of love? Do you use criticism as a form of emotional power?



### ELDER

Do you recognize that emotional and physical age are not always the same? How has each stage of your life, so far, helped you to grow? How do you relate to someone who has more (or less) life experience than you?

How do you deal with people who are ill or dying? What are their emotional needs and what are yours? How can you keep an objective perspective when dealing with issues of grief or loss for yourself and others?



## EARTH

Do you experience emotional or spiritual attachments to places such as a home or unspoiled setting? Do you experience a spiritual joy when nurturing plants or pets? How do they enhance other aspects of your life?

How does the power of hating a place affect you? Does the fear of wild things or places inhibit your enjoyment of the earth in its natural state? How have you been affected by the experience of an uncivilized way of life in a civilized environment?

# Pens

The suit of PENS examines issues of power, communication, and learning. In the original Tarot this suit represented the royals and their warrior class. Royalty asserted that they were in charge because they had been chosen by God in battle or by birth. They maintained their claim to their thrones through violent force. So previously these were symbolized by swords or spades. The spade was not the garden variety, but a variation on a spear.

Today those who come to power could not do so without the aid of technology and communication. Traditionally people have looked to their leaders to organize them and make decisions in times of crisis. Now it is the scientist and the scholar who has the greatest capacity to provide answers. No government can do without them when it comes to weather and innovations in weaponry.

Knowledge is not just the route to power over others. Self awareness can lead to empowerment for anyone. We may not be able to completely control our fate but we can have a strong hand in it, particularly when we develop our communication skills. In the future pens may not be used very much, but for now they are a symbol of tools every bit as powerful as swords once were.



### CHILD

Are you spontaneous in expressing your opinion? Are you able to express clearly what you are thinking? Are your opinions genuine and unaffected by those around you? How do you make sure that you have been understood?

Do you take time to think before you speak? Do you wait to know as much as you can before speaking? Do you avoid silly or irrelevant statements? How can you avoid making unnecessary or uncalled for remarks in the heat of anger?

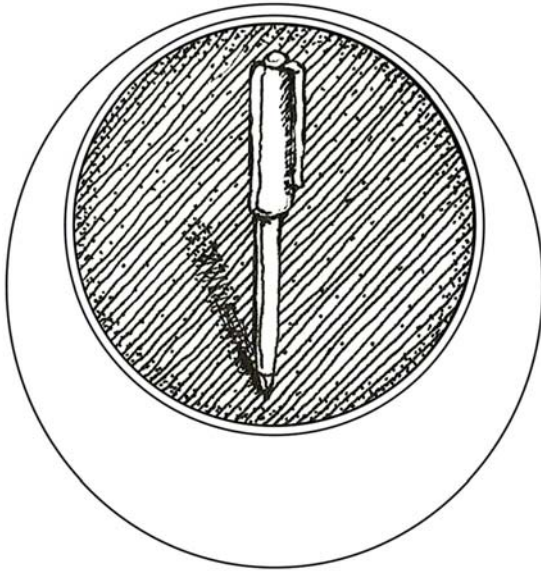


## YOUTH

Do you seek out new skills and forms of knowledge? Do you view practice or repetition, in learning a new skill, with good humor and enthusiasm? Do you take pride in setting and achieving new goals?

Do you believe that you have reached the peak of your knowledge? Has an assumption like this ever made you act hastily or brashly? What do you think of the idea that learning never stops and this keeps the spirit alive and feeling young?

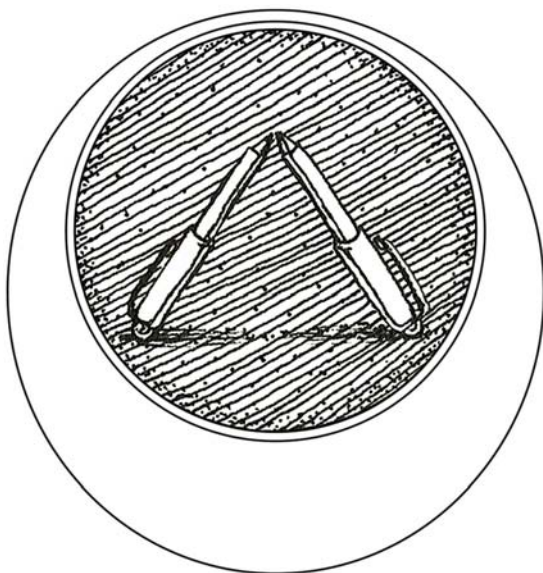




### ONE

Do you engage in self analysis? Do you try to understand your strengths and limitations? Are you aware of your potential? Do you see self knowledge as a powerful asset?

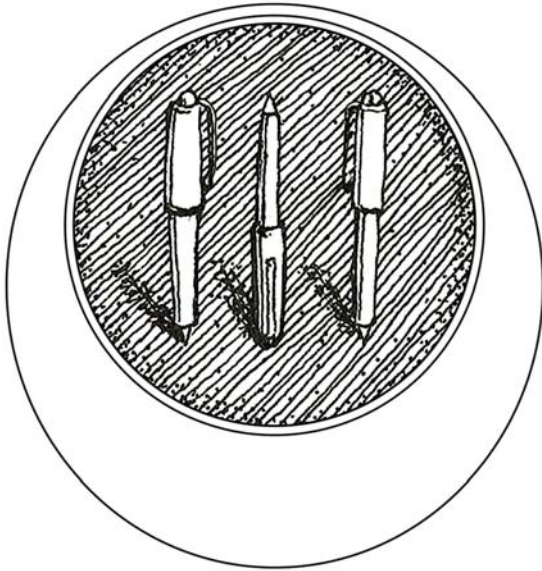
Do you ignore your shortcomings? How can rationalizing be deceiving and damaging? How can a sense of complacency limit you?  
What motivates you?



## TWO

Do you communicate well on a one to one basis? Do you listen carefully? Do you speak in a patient and considerate way? Are you aware of ways you could improve your conversation skills?

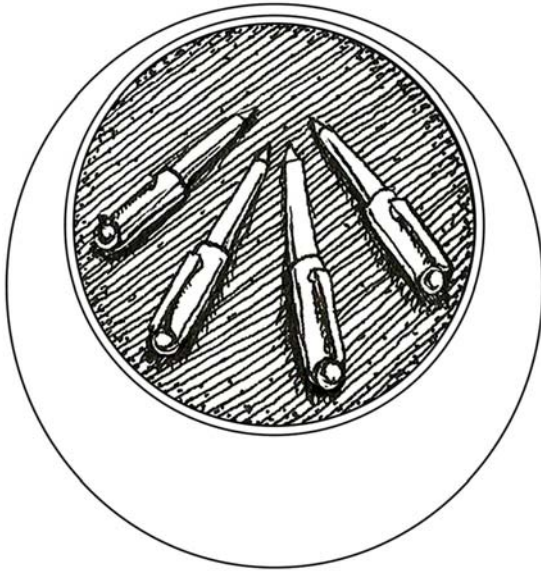
Do you ever assume your perspective is more valid or important than someone else's? Do you avoid dominating a conversation through interruptions or being long winded? How do you politely join or re-join a conversation?



### THREE

Do you accept information from a balanced number of sources? Are you able to recognize at least two sides to every story? In what other ways do you maintain a sense of objectivity?

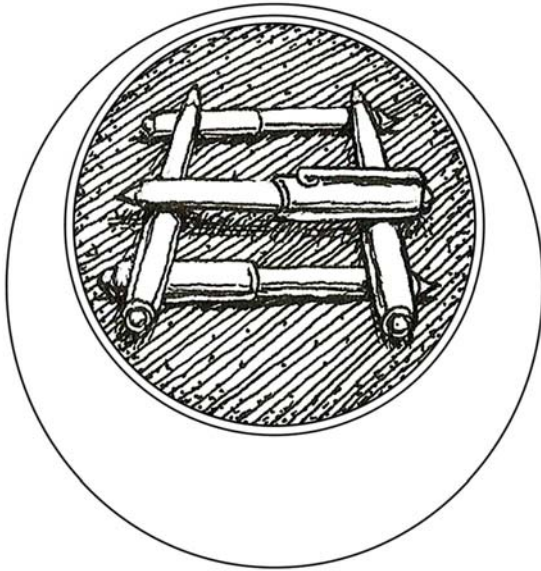
How do you verify most information? Does acceptance of information as true stop you from asking questions or limit you in any way? What or who are your most reliable sources?



#### FOUR

Do you see knowledge as a gift to be shared? Are you comfortable sharing what you know with a group? Do you speak plainly? Do you seek to raise the consciousness of your audience or simply present your information?

Do you feel that everyone is equally entitled to knowledge and truth? How do you avoid being possessive of your knowledge? Do you ever time the disclosure of information to suit your own goals? Do you recite trivia in order to appear more intelligent?



## FIVE

How do you approach learning something new?  
Do you take instruction and constructive criticism  
well? Are you enthusiastic about new challenges?  
Who is your best teacher?

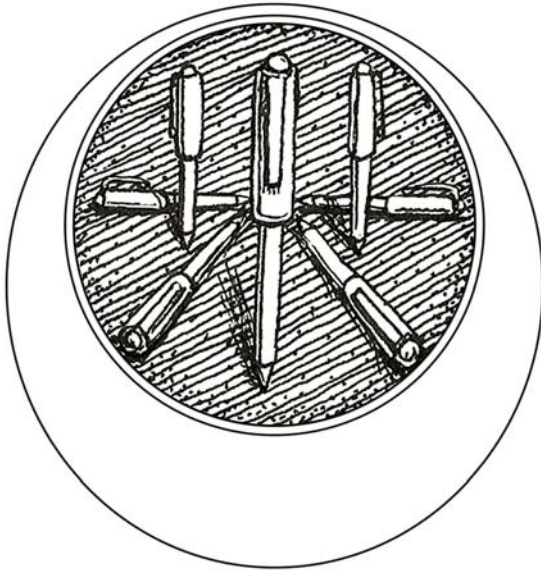
Are you able to work and learn in cooperation  
with others? Are you supportive of your  
teachers, treating them with respect and  
empathy? What helps you to stay focused in a  
difficult learning situation?



## SIX

How do you try to retain and organize complicated information? What helps or hinders you from reaching conclusions about such information? How do you get help to know what is important and what is not?

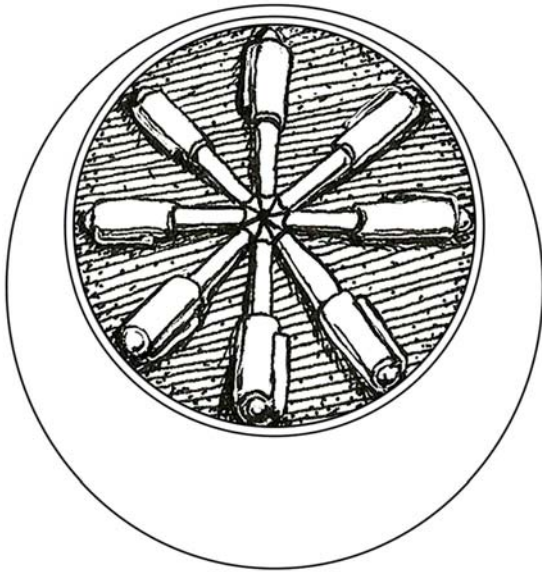
Does fear of confusion keep you from tackling new projects thoroughly or at all? How do you know when you have studied a subject enough? Are you ever afraid to admit that you are unable to keep up with all that is necessary to understand some subject?



### SEVEN

Are you able to speak up and participate in a group discussion? Do you encourage others to make themselves heard? Do you withhold information out of fear of the group's reaction?

Do you play "devil's advocate", arguing a position that you do not believe in? Do you pit one side against another, keeping an argument alive? Do you avoid repeating your position, allowing opposing ones to arise?



## EIGHT

Do you try to be creative rather than merely reactive to new information and situations? Do you try to look at old information in new ways? Have you ever tried to imagine something completely new and different?

How has night or daydreaming helped you?

Do you lack confidence in your own creativity? Do you think the imagination can be dangerous or untrustworthy? Do you think only certain people have the gift of visualization? Are mysticism, intuition, or fantasy ever valuable sources?



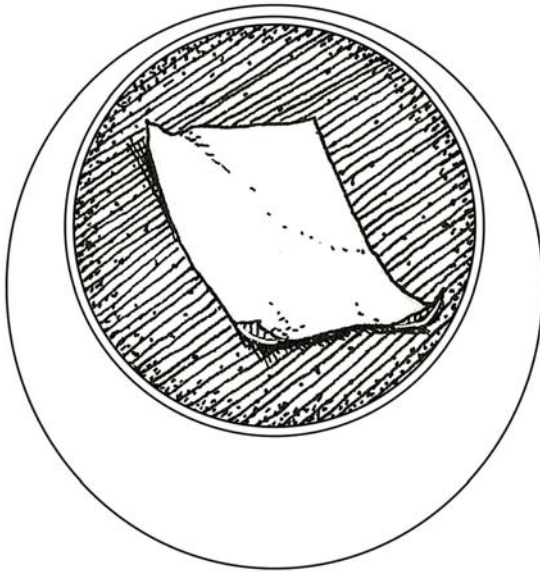


## NINE

Do you enjoy a good joke? Are you able to find humor in a serious situation? Can you tell when humor is or is not appropriate? Are you able to relate to someone who has a different or unusual sense of humor?

Do you enjoy a joke at the expense of someone else?

Do you use humor to distract, or for deceptive purposes? How do you deal with a person whose humor has gone awry? Do you know when you have gone too far with a joke?



## ZERO

Do you actively seek the truth? Do you allow yourself a spiritual perspective on worldly facts? How do you react to obvious dishonesty? Are you ever unable to accept the truth?

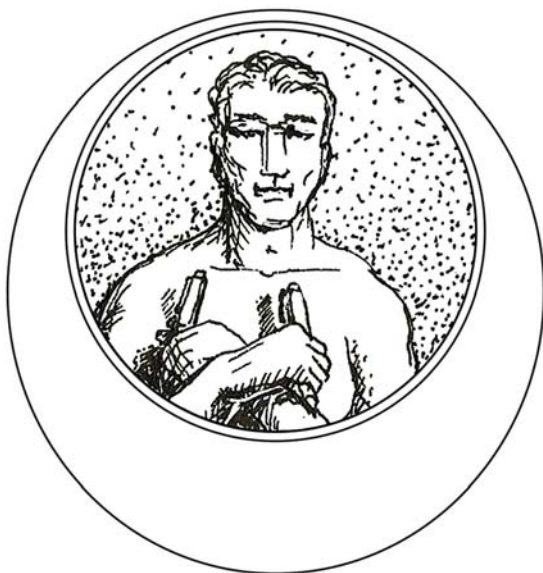
Do you try to say what you mean and mean what you say? Do you avoid twisting or coloring the truth for any reason? Do you recognize any truth greater than your own? Where would you go to find such truth?



### MOTHER

Do you believe that sharing your knowledge is a gift as well as a responsibility? Do you try to teach others in a nurturing and positive way? How do you encourage others to continue the learning process on their own?

Do you mix emotional information and factual information in a negative or manipulative way? Are you overly critical of the intelligence, or lack of it, in others? Do you base your self image on your ability to get others to conform to your thinking?



## FATHER

Are you aware of your own opportunities to teach?  
Do you set an example by practicing balanced self  
discipline? Can you learn while you instruct? Do you  
consider teaching a form of power?

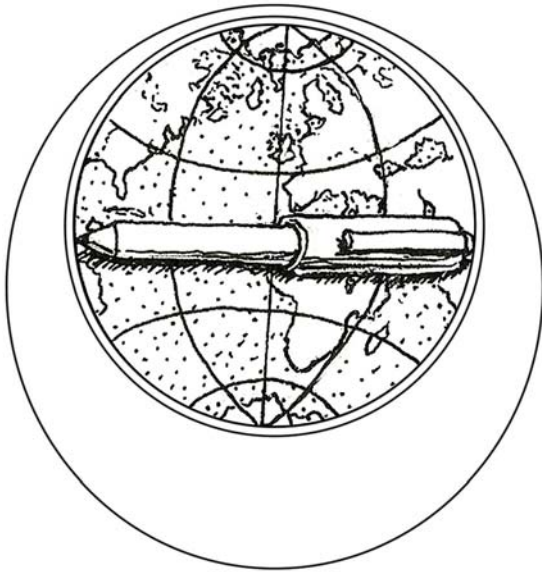
Do you expect people to accept your authority  
without question? Do you adhere to the adage: "Do as  
I say, not as I do"? When is it important to take  
charge? When is it important to relinquish it?



## ELDER

Do you respect and make use of knowledge and experience regardless of the age of the person sharing it? Do you value the knowledge of primitive or ancient cultures as well as more modern or civilized ones? Who are your heroes and role models?

Should new trends and ideas always invalidate those that precede them? When does your own thinking become outdated? When is it important to recognize that an idea has stood the test of time? How do you know that an idea is truly revolutionary?



## EARTH

How has modern communication technology affected the way you view and feel about the world? How do you try to broaden your knowledge of the world at large? Do you see its many facets and changes as gifts as well as challenges?

How does a higher power affect your world view and your ability to learn? How does your knowledge affect the way you live? Is knowledge of your immediate surroundings of equal value to that of the world at large?

# Paths

In the suit of PATHS the topics addressed concern the cycles of life, philosophy and individual callings. The questions here are more philosophical. Some may even be considered esoteric. This is the universal suit based on the Major Arcana of the Tarot.

Those cards were filled with priests, priestesses, mythological beings, and so forth. I hoped to broaden the symbolism by choosing the symbol of the path. When read in order these queries symbolically represent our path through life: from birth till the end. Carl Jung called this suit “*the journey of the soul*.” Each card represents a different obstacle, rite of passage, or essential lesson that each person eventually encounters.

It should be noted here that fortune tellers rarely interpret what was called the death card as a prophecy of an imminent death. The prospect of being told you are going to die can become a self fulfilling prophesy. Usually it was seen to show the possibility of some sort of transformation. We are all on the verge of a transformation of one kind or another: a change in our job, a move etc.

However, since these questions are not intended for prophesy the subject of death is addressed here. It is something we all face in ourselves and our loved ones. For example, the mid life crisis is a classic reaction to fear that our life is half over. Our attitudes about death can affect us at many different times in our lives. But that is not the only event in our lives that might be called a rite of passage.



### CHILD

Do you approach life with a sense of joy? Do you appreciate the good in your life? How can you keep fun in your life? Are you actively trying to live out your hopes and dreams?

Are you easily influenced by charismatic people? Is the pursuit of your goals grounded in a realistic outlook? How do you balance what you see immediately in front of you, with the bigger picture?

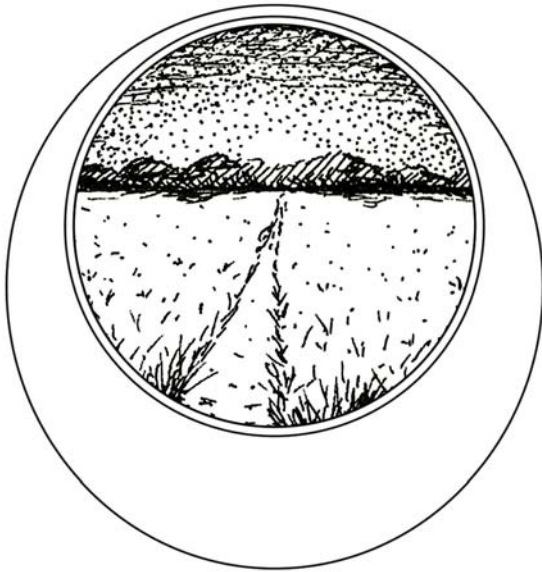




## YOUTH

How often do you question accepted facts, ideas or practices? Do you look beyond the surface of things? Does the mysterious hold an interest for you? How do you avoid being complacent?

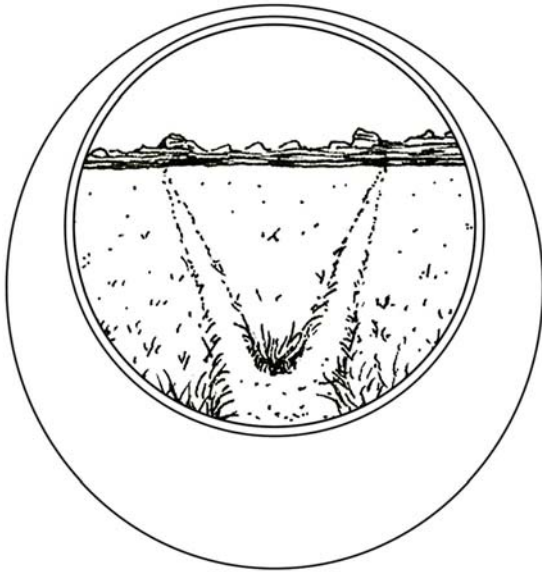
Are you a skeptic? How can you resolve your feelings of dissatisfaction, when forced to accept things as they are? When should you make a situation more complicated by rejecting easy answers? When should you leave well enough alone?



## ONE

How do you define and seek your inner strength? Do you have a sense of self discipline? How has prayer or other religious or spiritual practices helped you to address these issues?

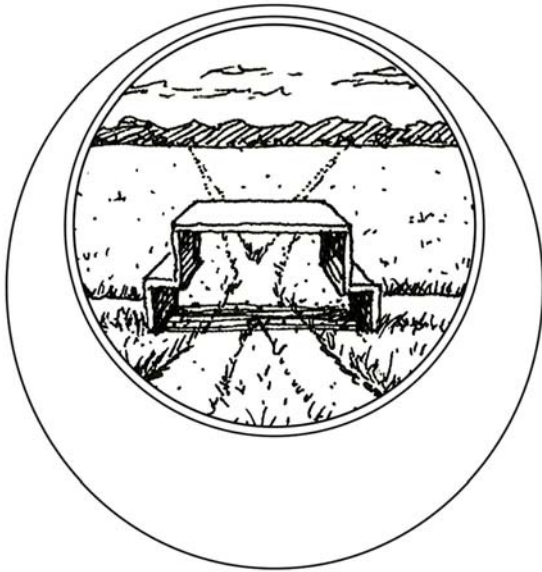
How did you come to your sense of morality and values? Do you recognize a pattern in the way you make priorities? Do you have a conscience or still, small voice that you listen to? What do you consciously do to atone for your mistakes?



## TWO

Are you able to make decisions for yourself? How do you maintain a sense of independence from the influence of others? What would give you the courage to make a new commitment to someone or something, or to strike out on your own?

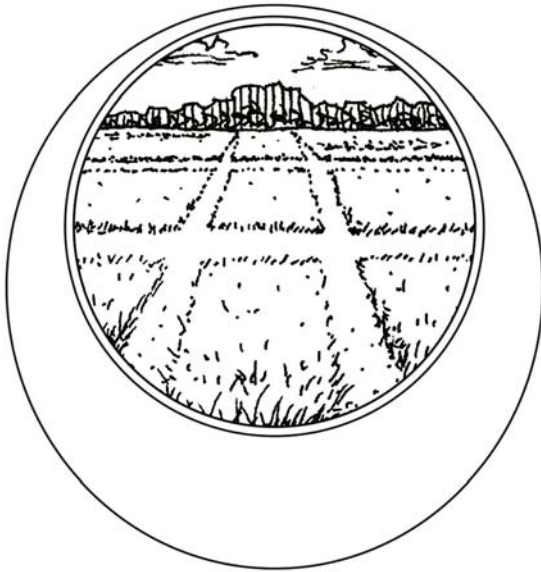
What sacrifices do you make to pursue your own calling? How can you deal with the loneliness that might result from following such a leading? Is there a continuous spiritual presence in your life that could sustain you?



### THREE

Can you consciously recognize something in others that helps you to relate to them? Are you tolerant in thought and deed of those who are different? How far will you go to be fair? Can you always be unbiased? Do you face your own prejudices?

How do you deal with the prejudice of others? Have you ever been a victim of bias? Where can you go to get help to fight the problem of discrimination? How do you contribute to this problem even though you may not personally feel biased?



#### FOUR

How do you maintain a sense of order in your life?  
How can you make time work for you? Do you use  
your time wisely and avoid procrastinating? Can  
being a slave to the clock hurt you?

Do you recognize cycles and patterns in your life?  
Do you ever find yourself living more in the past or  
the future than the present? Are your concerns  
about the aging process balanced and reasonable?  
What is the value of actively living in the present?



## FIVE

Can you always tell the difference between good and evil? How do you recognize the difference? What kind of guidance do you seek in such matters? How do you express your opinions about good and evil?

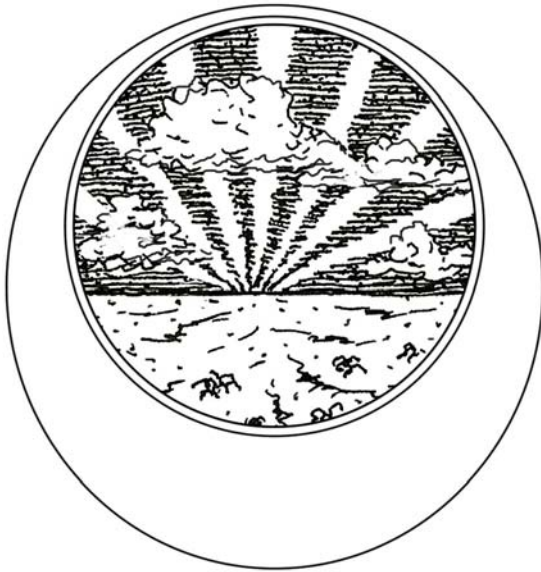
How do you avoid giving in to temptation? Can you recognize your own destructive patterns of behavior? Do you periodically examine your behavior to see if it contributes to a greater good?



## SIX

Do you actively seek to control the events in your life so they will not control you? What do you do to cope in situations that are out of your control? Have you ever considered that your actions may be the uncontrollable force in the life of someone else?

Do you have a clear sense of yourself? Are you satisfied with your own sense of identity? How do you address conflicts that arise from your identity not being in harmony with the way others think of you?



## SEVEN

How do you deal with a deeply personal loss or devastating situation? How do such circumstances cause you to reassess your life and attitudes? How can you seek help combating negative feelings and reactions?

Is your suffering, or that of someone else, ever for a good reason? Do you ever take pleasure in your own suffering? Do you ever enjoy inflicting, or watching someone with pain? What can you do to avoid being desensitized about pain, yours and others'?

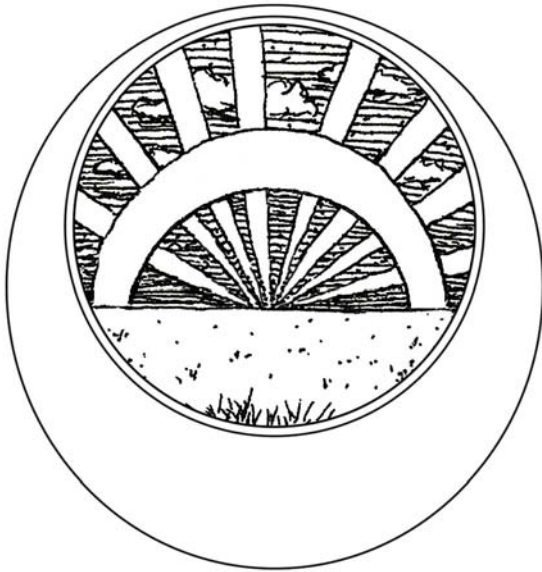




## EIGHT

What gives you hope? Have you ever experienced a feeling of spiritual rebirth? How has overcoming adversity strengthened your spirit? How does sharing your experiences help you and others?

How do you avoid repeating past mistakes? Where do you go for help to break destructive cycles in your life? Do you make a spiritual connection between you and your successes or failures?



## NINE

Is justice always best served through punishment? How far will you go to bring about reconciliation? Are you able to be forgiving? DO you have the courage to ask forgiveness?

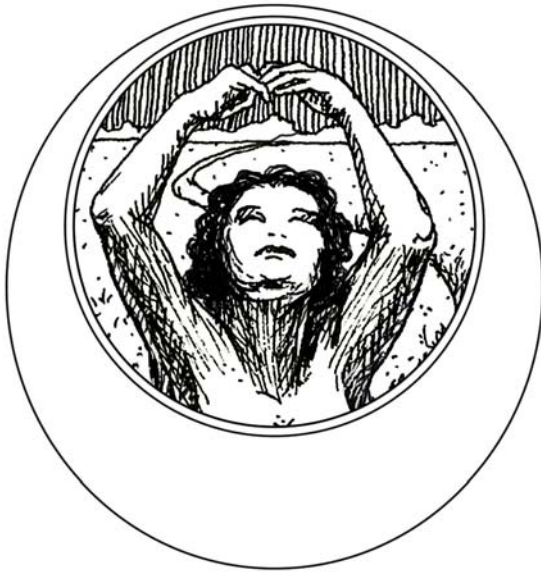
How are grieving and learning part of healing? Have you ever experienced the transforming power of being healed? How can you help others to be healed?



## ZERO

What does peace mean to you? Have you experienced it personally? Are you aware of an inner light of peace and love in another person? Have you asked them to share their "secret"?

Do you neglect the daily business of living to seek enlightenment? How much of your life needs to be resolved in order to begin seeking spiritual rewards? When will you be ready, and what would you sacrifice in order to attain true inner peace?



## MOTHER

In what ways do you make yourself available as a guide, mentor or teacher? How do you try to be a good influence? How are your experiences valuable to others? Do you seek guidance, spiritual or otherwise, before trying to influence someone?

Are you able to let someone else reap the benefits of your advice? How does pride influence the way you teach or lead others? The way you are led? Whom do you allow to guide you?



### FATHER

Do you accept an authority higher than your own?  
Do you ever give up your free will? Have you ever  
felt you were called to something that did not serve  
your own personal needs? Could you ever be the  
agent or servant of a higher power?

How do you distinguish between a true leading  
and misguided or wishful thinking? How do  
you stay true to your inner leadings? What are  
you willing to do or sacrifice to make the world  
a better place??



### ELDER

Are you able to prepare for the loss of someone dear to you or the loss of your own life? Do you believe death is final? Have you considered the possibility of death being another beginning?

Can death seem like an easier alternative to a painful situation? Does the fear of pain or loss keep you from living fully? Do such fears bring you closer to a higher power or make you feel alone and powerless?



## EARTH

Do you actively seek a joyful connection to the earth? How do you react to or show respect for the earth's functions, cycles, and creatures? Do you recognize a special connection between the Earth and all its inhabitants?

Do you believe there is a higher purpose or plan to life? Can you see yourself as part of it? What is the place of our earth in the universe? How does your sense of the universe affect the way you live?

## Appendix ~ Sources

*These books were used in the research for this project or had an influence on it.*

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## About The Author

Dana Kester-McCabe is an artist, graphic designer, and writer. Dana and her family live in the seaside region of Eastern Maryland. Her graphic design business, Moonshell Productions, specializes in websites and logos for small nonprofits and local companies.

Dana is a lifelong member of the Religious Society of Friends (the Quakers). She serves on a variety of local and regional Quaker committees. She has served as the clerk of her home Meeting, regional coordinator for her Quarter (Southern Quarter), and as an alternate clerk of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

Dana is also the publisher and founder of Faithful Witness, the online journal of the Friends Media Project; which supports Quakers working in mass media. She is available as a Quaker workshop facilitator and retreat leader on topics such as: Introduction To Quakerism, Nurturing Quaker Community, Quakers In The Media, and A Book of Seeds.

