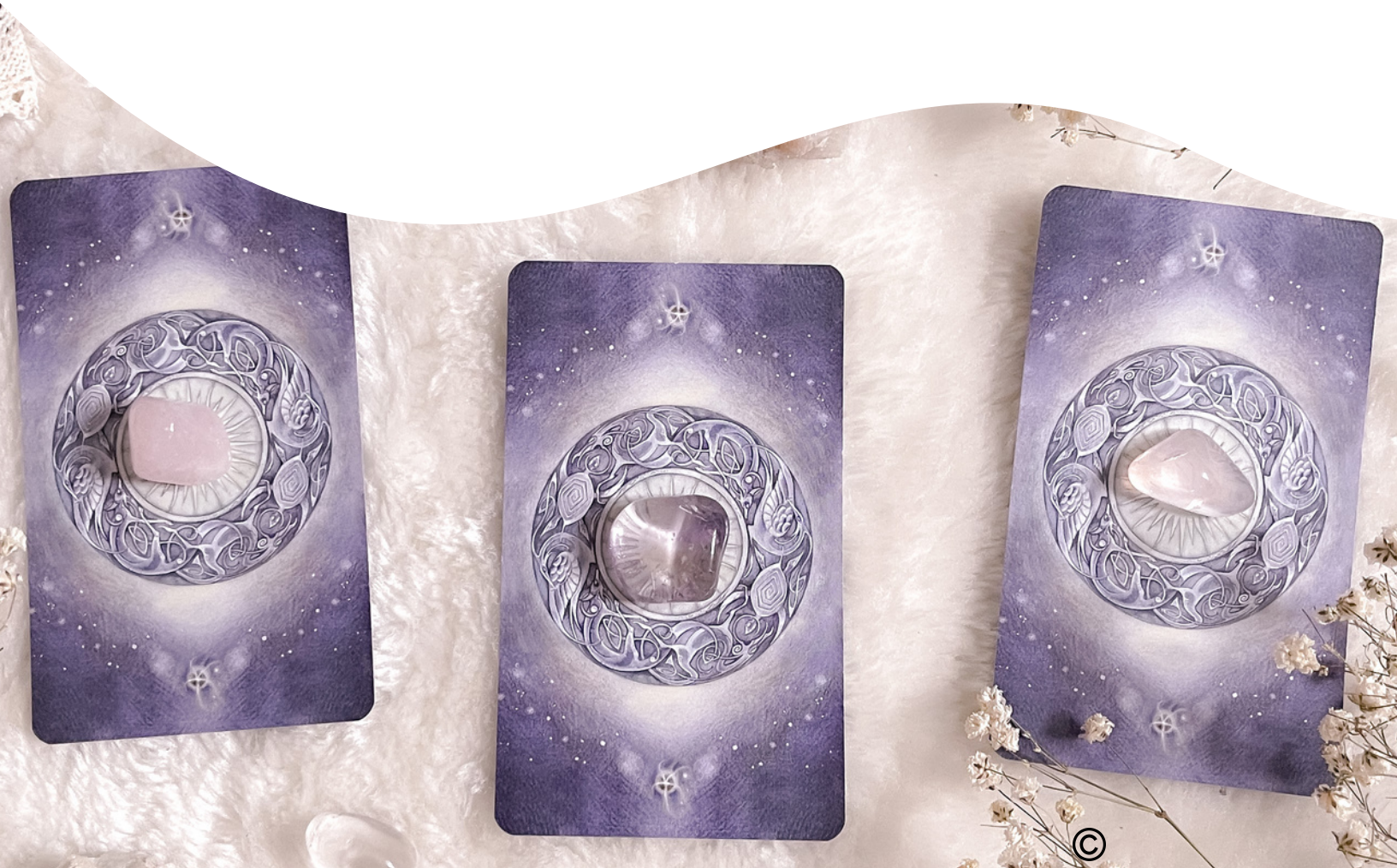




by Lulu Fletcher

BODY LANGUAGE IN TAROT



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Body language is fun to look at in the tarot, and if you are very visually oriented, can become an important part of your tarot readings. Sometimes the people on the cards can tend to be a bit stiff, so you really have to look to find the body language. Also, body language is something that varies a lot from deck to deck, so it is important not to become overly attached to meanings associated with certain postures, but rather interpret body language as it appears to you in each reading.

One thing to look for is where the people in the card are looking. If you place the Empress and the Emperor side by side, you will notice that the Empress is sitting facing the Emperor and the Emperor is looking toward the Empress, even though he is facing forward. This is an indication that on the earthly plane, these two work hand in hand, and one cannot rule without the other. In contrast, the Magician and High Priestess, which represent the more heavenly archetypal forces of masculine and feminine, look straight out from their cards and don't seem to acknowledge the other. Most of the trumps look right out of the card at you, making their point in a very direct way. However, a few are looking downward, such as Strength, the Hermit, and the Star. These are cards where the energy is directed more inward in a passive, meditative way.

In the minor arcana, it is interesting to see what the people in the cards are looking at. The Pages, for example, are typically looking at the symbols of their suit, as if studying them or trying to understand them. Knights usually hold the symbol of their suit, but are looking off into the distance at a particular goal. The Kings and Queens of Wands and Swords tend to be looking directly out at something, as if surveying their realm, while the Queens of the more passive suits are still studying their Cups and Pentacles. In any reading of more than a few cards, it is very helpful to look at what is going on between cards – who is looking at whom and why.

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Other forms of body language are interesting too. If you take out all the Knights, it is easy to place them in order of how fast their horses are moving – the Knight of Swords is galloping, the Knight of Wands is cantering, the Knight of Cups is trotting or walking, and the Knight of Pentacles is standing still. This clearly shows which suits have the most energy. Maybe this is a way for you to think about “timing??”

The Hanged Man has an interesting posture, with his legs crossed in an upside-down or reversed 4. This could mean that part of what he is reversing or undoing is the rigid thinking of the Fours and the aggressive, more outward and active lifestyle of the Emperor. Other things to notice are the open and upward-facing posture of the Fool, showing that he is still connected to the Universe and the subconscious, and the similar posture of the little child in the Sun, who has reached reintegration. Contrast this with the bent back of the Ten of Wands or the Seven of Pentacles, and you can see where their attention is focused. All in all, it is always very helpful to place yourself in the card and see what the body language is telling you – and it may vary greatly from deck to deck, even in the same card. This is part of what gives us deck-specific nuances, so allow yourself to go with the flow and the suggestions of the specific visual image on the card.

What if there are no people on your chosen card??? This is a warning that you or the person you read for is in danger of losing themselves!!

Exercise: Design a three-card reading to answer the question "How can I get along better with my family/friends/colleagues?". Pay attention to the clothing, eye contact, and body language of all the figures in the cards and work these observations into your reading.

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