

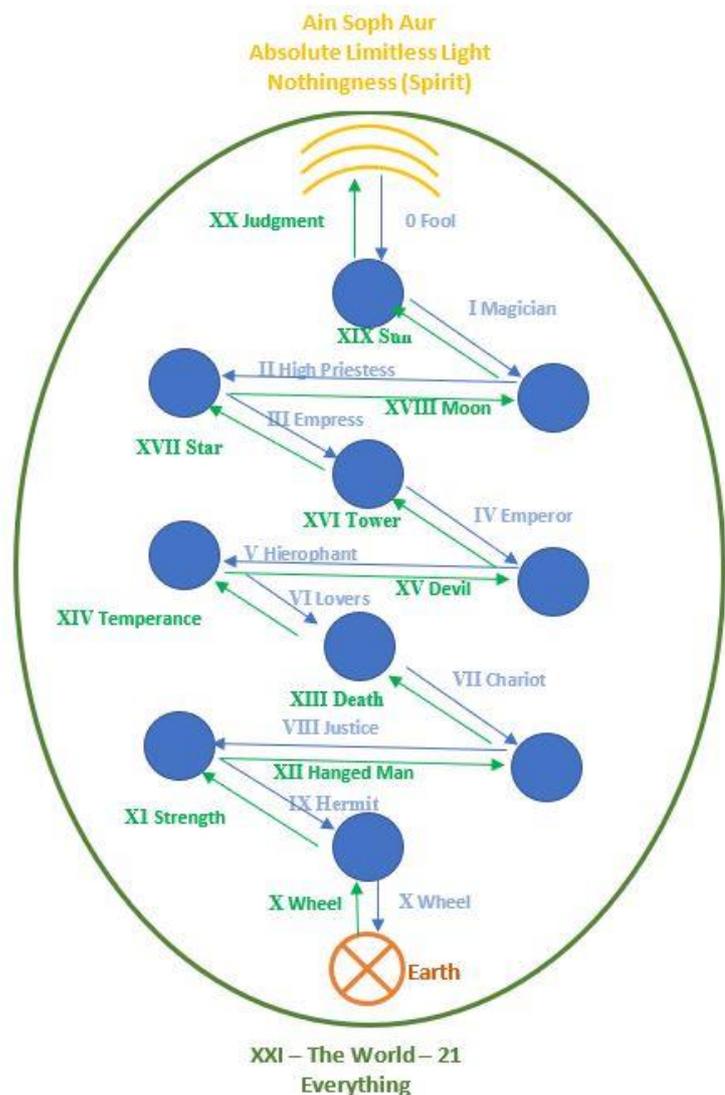
Walking the Tree of Life

The Tree of Life is the most significant model used in the Kabbalah, a Jewish belief system about the formation of life in the universe. The particular form of the Tree of Life used for the Tree of Life Spiritual Walk is my own design based upon over 40 years of study and research. I believe the tree of Life and the Tarot emanated from the same ancient belief systems derived from civilisations such as the Atlanteans, the Sumerians, the Chaldeans and eventually the Egyptians. In their many years in captivity in Egypt, the Hebrews assimilated and modified this belief system into their Kabbalah. The Tarot came out of the same melting pot, travelling to Marseilles in France with Mary Magdalene, her children, her entourage and followers.

There are only 3 systems that I am aware of that are based upon the enigmatic number of 22. The Tree of Life has 22 paths; the Tarot Major Arcana has 22 cards; and Numerology holds the number 22 as a Master number.

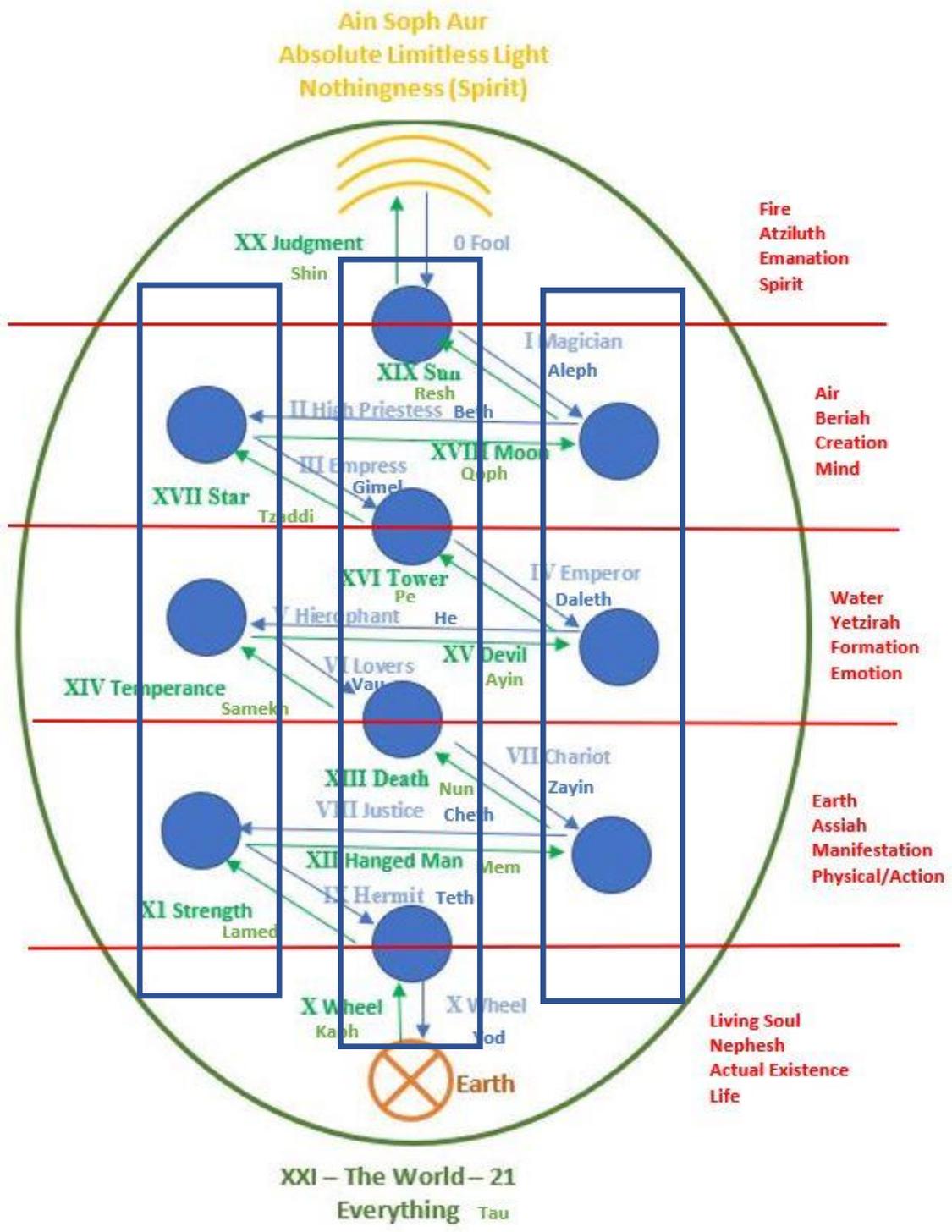
The Chartres Rose Labyrinth consists of 11 concentric circles which, when walked in and out, add up to 22, is also derived from the same origins through the Knights Templar who defended the temple in Jerusalem and then designed and built many cathedrals, including the Chartres Cathedral, home of their labyrinth.

The Tree of Life Spiritual Walk is structured as shown in the following diagram:



In this diagram, the outward paths from the spiritual source are coloured blue. They represent the descent of spirit into dense form and the development of the human ego. The return, inward paths, are coloured green. They represent the return of spirit from the dense physical form to the spiritual source and the search for spiritual enlightenment. Energy, the journey of the soul, life and death all follow this same pattern and rhythm of life.

The diagram below shows the same structure with the addition of the Kabbalistic Worlds, the 3 Pillars and the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet.



The 4 Kabbalistic Worlds are Atziluth, Beriah, Yetzirah and Assiyah. I have added a 5th world below Assiyah that I call Nephesh meaning the Living Soul. This is where our Earth exists and the 4 aspects of the soul mesh together as one entity.

The 3 Pillars are identified from left to right in the following table:

Pillar of Form	Middle Pillar	Pillar of Force
Passive	Neutral	Active
Contraction	Balance	Expansion
Severity	Equilibrium	Mercy
Feminine		Masculine

Notice that the Kabbalistic Worlds transition on the **Sephiroth** (circles representing states of being) on the Middle Pillar. At each of these Sephiroth there is a Gateway of Consciousness. On the Tree of Life Spiritual Walk these points are identified with an archway.



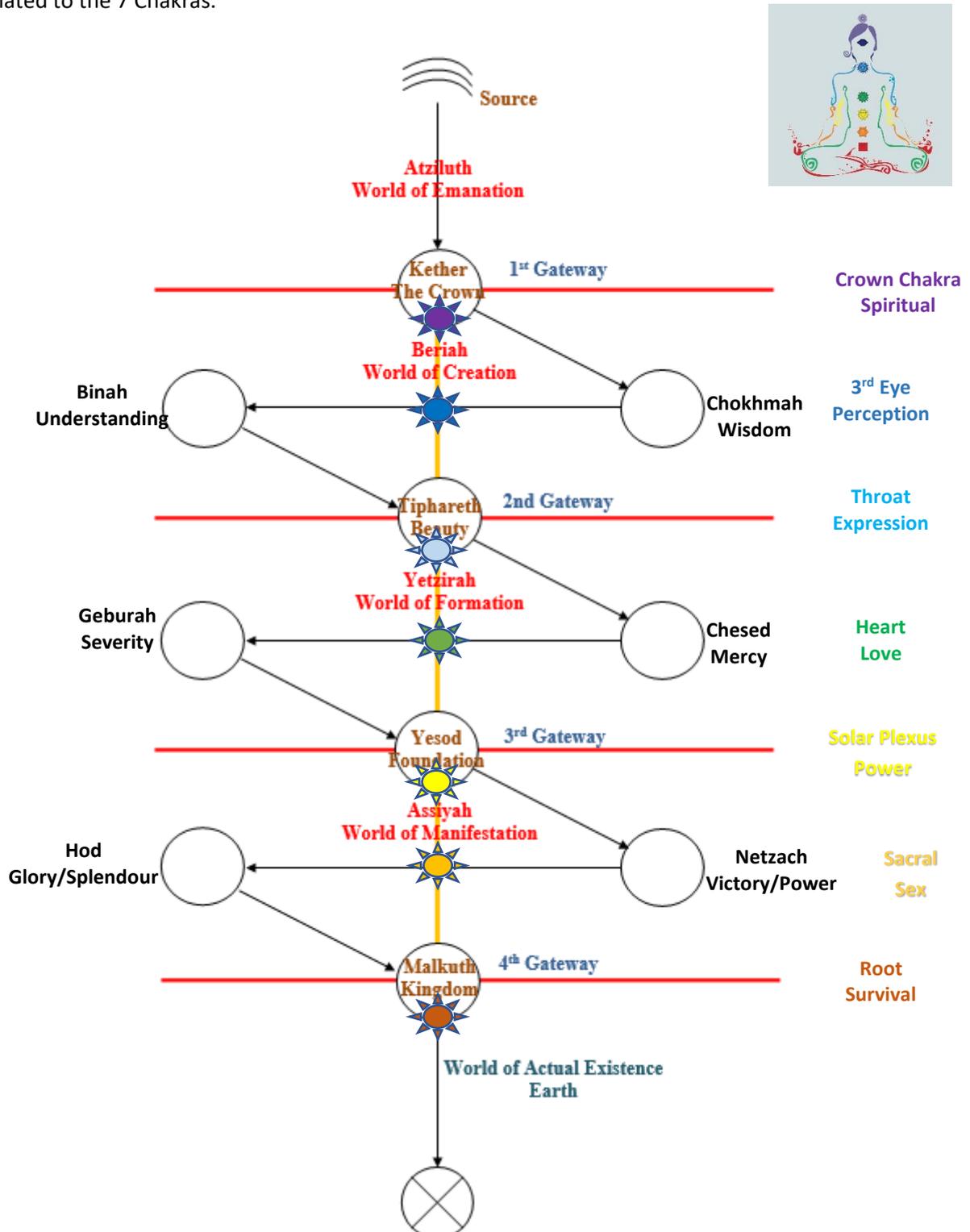
These gateways identify shifts in consciousness:

- Kether – transition between spiritual consciousness and higher consciousness.
- Tiphareth – transition between higher consciousness and emotional awareness.
- Yesod – transition between emotional consciousness and lower consciousness (ego).
- Malkuth – transition between lower consciousness and life.

In between each of these gateways on the Middle Pillar, there are points where the energies of the dual opposites in each world meet in harmony. These points are:

- The balance between Chokhmah (Wisdom) and Binah (Understanding).
- The balance between Chesed (Mercy) and Geburah (Severity).
- The balance between Netzach (Power/Victory) and Hod (Glory/Splendour).

On the Tree of Life these gateways and points of intersection are as shown below and may be related to the 7 Chakras.



When you walk the Tree of Life Spiritual Walk, contemplate the meaning of each path with respect to:

- The Tarot archetypes
- The Hebrew letters
- The 4 Kabbalistic Worlds
- The 3 Pillars
- The Sephiroth you are travelling from and the Sephiroth that you are travelling to. What is the lesson to be learned?
- The outward (ego) and the inward (conscious self) journey.

You start at the Spiritual Source and follow the paths of the Lightning Flash until grounding in Earth. Spend some time in the world of Nephesh, the world of the Living Soul. When you are ready return along the paths of the Lightning Flash to the Spiritual Source.

In addition to all of this, one of the paths will particularly relate to you and your path in life. Calculate your path using the numbers of your birth date.

Write your birth date in the form dd/mm/yyyy. For instance, my birth date, 14th March 1956, is written as 14/03/1956. Include the leading zero with any single digit day and month.

Add the numbers together like you are doing a long addition sum.

$$\begin{array}{r}
 14 \\
 03 \\
 \hline
 1956 \\
 \hline
 1973
 \end{array}
 +$$

Divide the Sum of your numbers by 9 to obtain a Quotient and a remainder.

$$\frac{1973}{9} = \text{quotient } 219 \text{ remainder } 2$$

The Quotient tells you how many half-cycles of 9 you have lived through. One full cycle consists of an outward journey (numbers 1 to 9) and an inward journey (numbers 11 to 19).

If your quotient is an odd number then it means you have travelled all the way down to the bottom of the outward half-cycle and a remainder of 0 will be a 9 path and any remainder greater than 0 will be the double digit of the remainder (between 11 and 19) on the next inward half-cycle.

If your quotient is an even number then it means you have travelled all the way down and back up to the top of the inward half-cycle and a remainder of 0 will be a 19 path and any remainder greater than 0 will be the single digit of the remainder (between 1 and 9) on the next outward half-cycle.

This is why my Life Path number is the 12 of the Hanged man.

There are no Master numbers in my system of Numerology. You will be on a path numbered from 1 to 9 or 11 to 19.

0 The Fool

The life force travels from the wonder of the Absolute Limitless Light - the Nothingness - and carries the potential of the egg - all of life. The Fool represents the traveller on the journey and everything that follows makes the Fool develop into the wholeness of the World. This is the essential duality of everything and nothing. The Fool 0 is the original instance of 0. The first repetition of 0 is found in the 10 of the Wheel of Fortune and the second repetition of 0 is found in the 20 of Judgement. Both of these repetitions review the development of the potential that was in the original Fool as he has travelled the outer and inner journeys.



As stated, the Fool is the traveller on the journey. This is you; this is me; this is individually all of us. The Fool is one of the administrative paths of the soul. Administrative paths are there to facilitate the soul's process. They are not a path on which anyone experiences life. The other administrative paths are the Wheel of Life, Judgment and the World.

1 The Magician

The Magician connects from the Pure Potential of Kether to the Wisdom, Initiation and Power of Chokhmah - to create an image very similar to the imagery in the card. His right hand raised above receiving the power of the Lightning Flash from Kether and the Ain Soph Aur. His left hand directs the energy below to the tools of the Kingdom. The Magician is the unbalanced male, active power of the ego. In a flash - like magic - he can make things happen. He can also deal in trickery and illusions.



The Magician is the independent, aggressive, first cause deriving energy from above through his raised right arm and his wand. His challenge is to wisely use the divine energy in the manipulation of his tools upon the table in front of him. His tools are the four symbols of the suits of the minor arcana - wands, swords, cups.

2 The High Priestess

The High Priestess sits between two pillars - she has an intuitive knowing of the wonders of the Higher Consciousness. Behind her is a veiled Gateway. When the Moon returns, she has to come back through that same gateway but under the dim light of the moon it appears very different. The card of the High Priestess is designed with the crescent moon in the imagery. Placid and at peace, she is the calmness that hides the raging forces within and on the other side of the gateway.



The High Priestess travels from wisdom, knowing, and inspiration to achieve understanding and reason. She is the passive balance of the Magician. A feminine energy in a masculine world. She is extremely deep. She just knows things. Can she communicate an understanding and demonstrate an ability to reason and apply her mind to the issues that present? She sits at the entrance to the higher wisdom

like a gate keeper but she herself struggles to understand. She knows about the cosmos and heavenly things but struggles with the understanding of earthly things.

3 The Empress

The Empress is the nature child. She also represents fertility and creativity, particularly creative expression. Following the path of the High Priestess, she emanates from Binah (Understanding) and travels towards Tiphareth (Beauty). She understands the peacefulness and gentleness of the feminine aspect embodied in the left-hand Pillar of Form (Passive, Contracting, Feminine) and moves towards the Middle Pillar of Balance, neutrality and equilibrium. Fertility and creativity are part of her process of achieving beauty.



The Empress has understanding and the abundance of nature. She travels towards Tiphareth and her challenge is to be creative, live her life in the most natural way and demonstrate love, mercy, tolerance and generosity. She must be the nurturing, enduring earth mother despite what the journey places in her path. A free spirit of nature bound up in a human body wishing to live life freely without rules and structure.

4 The Emperor

The Emperor takes us on a journey that builds upon foundation creating structure. The Emperor is the ruler of the built environment (as opposed to the Empress who is the world of nature). He is our father figure, authority figure and represents rules and boundaries and structure. Of course, he can go too far and be too rigid and become too severe.



The Emperor represents rules and structure - the built environment of man. He comes from a base of love, mercy, tolerance and kindness but his challenge is to impose rules and structure in a loving, kindly way - the benevolent king. Rules and rigour without love is persecution and suffering and this is what the Emperor must not be but he must achieve his outcome. How appropriate that the Emperor builds up and the Tower breaks down.

5 The Hierophant

What a dilemma - caught somewhere between severity and mercy - discipline and freedom - finding the middle path is like walking a tight rope. The Hierophant versus the Devil - how appropriate is this? The Hierophant is preaching discipline with compassion - the Devil is tempting freedom with unspoken consequences.



The Hierophant is depicted as a priest and is God's teacher on earth imparting values, principles, standards of behaviour, traditions. He instructs that rules are important but if we have good values etc then we can easily meet the requirements of the rules without having to know

them word for word. We can allow some mercy in our hearts and show compassion.

The Hierophant in most Tarot decks is shown as a priest - God's representative on earth. The priests of the early times were the teachers and their churches and monasteries were places of learning. The Hierophant is about learning values and principles, traditions and beliefs. There are rules and structure but the outcome is intended to be beautiful. A self that embodies all of the lessons so far - wisdom, understanding, love and discipline and now the values and principles that show as fairness, discrimination and beauty. The Hierophant struggles with finding a fine line between freedom and discipline.

6 The Lovers

The quality of mercy develops a compassionate, caring and even loving side to our being that is conducive to and encourages relationships. Through relationships we learn about ourselves - what we like - what we don't like. The Lovers card shows the archangel embracing the two persons and signifies that it is important to engage in relationships with others. The Higher Consciousness also acknowledges the importance of bringing the two aspects of our self together in the individuation process. This is part of the learning.



The Lovers represents relationships - all kinds of relationships. The challenge of this path is to remain instinctive and impulsive whilst maintaining those relationships. To be victorious in a win - win outcome and not to destroy the other party. This path is about family as well as other groups. It is about love, romance and marriage and also father and son, mother and daughter, friends. This is not about sexual relationships. It is about having strong workable relationships that allow you to be instinctive and impulsive and achieve victory without breaking down. It is also about emotional choices.

7 The Chariot

The Chariot shows a handsome prince resplendent with stars - a beautiful being - who manages to control the opposing forces of the sphinxes that draw the chariot purely by the use of his mind - will power. Out of control will is not beautiful. There is an art to imposing your will in a way that is for the good of others and the world. The Chariot prince not only controls emotions and minds but also physical things but he must learn to do it with mercy.



The Chariot travels from Foundation towards power & victory. He is seeking to control physical things through the power of the mind and the emotions. He controls the opposing forces of life solely through the use of will. The Chariot is an aggressive, forceful character. He has an understanding of instinct and trusts his impulses. Unlike the Star (17) he is not trying to control or manipulate the Cosmos, only the earthly physical things but he can only use his mind. Netzach, to where he is travelling, is on the Pillar of Mercy. Is he a fair ruler and master?

8 Justice

The figure of Justice is not blindfolded or blind, the scales of Justice are not uneven and out of balance. The number 8 consists of 2 x 4 or 4 x 2 and therefore represents balance, harmony & evenness. The keywords I associate with Justice are fairness, fair-mindedness, fair application of the law and justice. The person on the path of Justice may be a strong advocate for social issues and defender of the people's rights.



The lessons of Justice follow on after the lessons of willpower and the next path after Justice is the Hermit, the physical manifestation of the developed ego. Travelling the path from Netzach (Power & Victory) to Hod (Glory & Splendour) it is very important that the lessons of Justice are well appreciated or the ego could get very out of hand. Remember that Justice is the balance and dual opposite of willpower and maintain a balanced viewpoint. Treat others fairly.

9 The Hermit

What is referred to as Potential is the Sephiroth of Kether - the Crown. Everything that is potentially part of this scheme is in Kether and the fulfilment of this potential is found at the other end of the Tree of Life in Malkuth (The Kingdom). The Hermit is the outcome at the end of the outer journey - the masculine energy and development of the ego. Being the manifest soul in the ego state, the Hermit is caught up in the seeming endlessness of day to day life. It is difficult to find time to engage in spiritual pursuits and connection with spirit does not come easy, if at all.



Sometimes, in frustration, feeling cut off and isolated, the Hermit retreats into his cave. The Hermit is grounded on a strong foundation. He is ego - lower consciousness. He seeks to achieve the ego driven life, the material existence and realises that there is more to life. He knows himself but he also desires completion and completeness. He is prepared to retreat from the ego to be more grounded and earthed. The Hermit shines a light internally, searching inside himself for the other half. The light of the absolute limitless light (spirituality) is reduced to a dim, flickering flame encased in a lantern resembling a far-forgotten memory of past life.

The Hermit is at the end of the outer journey - the masculine energy and development of the ego is brought to completion in this character. This is the fulfilment of the ego. He seeks to achieve the ego driven life - the material existence. The Hermit lives an isolated life in the hardened physical shell resembling a cave. He travels from Hod (Glory & Reverberation) to Malkuth (Kingdom). Malkuth (Kingdom) is the seat of physical existence and also the 4th gateway between Manifest Action and actual physical life on earth. Being the third path in the world of manifestation then he is about applying the skills of balanced action learned from the previous two Manifestation paths - the Chariot (Willpower) and Justice (Fairness).

10 The Wheel of Life

The never-ending cycle of life - wheeling, rotating, weighing. Like the Fool, the Wheel of Life is an administrative path and not an experiential path. Nobody incarnates into life on this path.

There are two sets of paths, one outward and the other inward. The outward path develops the ego. The inward path develops the conscious self. The Wheel of Life sits at the end of the outward journey and reviews the progress of the soul as it has developed from the potential of the Fool. Note the numbers of these two paths - 0 and 10. The 10 is the 1st review of the 0. Later we will see the process of Judgment which is numbered 20 - the 2nd review of the 0. The Wheel of Life is representative of the experience of life that takes place in this World (21). Earth, the densest form of life, has 4 quadrants representing the 4 human functions - intuition, thinking, feeling and action. Everything in life can be analysed and explained using these 4 functions. The Wheel rotates, spins back and forth, and weighs each of the 4 functions to determine how you have developed the soul's purpose. At the right time you step off the wheel and commence the return journey to enlightenment.



11 Strength

Strength carries with her the potential of the fulfilment of life. She must wisely tame the raging ego. The ego is not to be damaged - merely tamed. Once she has harnessed this energy and gained the cooperation to work together, then the real journey starts.

Strength is the feminine aspect of gentleness and acceptance that rules and controls the demanding ego. This is the other half of the ego that the Hermit was searching for. Strength is also the other half of the aggressive, masculine Magician. Strength comes from the earth, from the kingdom of man, and rules the ego. She builds on the foundation and commences the journey of the self and the ego striving for harmony and individuation which culminates in the Sun. The return journey requires strength and this path at the very beginning is aptly named.



12 The Hanged Man

The Hanged Man sees the world differently - from a different perspective. His head is hung below the level of the earth's surface. He sees and analyses and understands the earthly, human consciousness. He hangs from the place of the Higher Consciousness down into the Lower Consciousness. This is the wisdom that he brings to the challenge of understanding that which is below. On the other hand, Justice is appealing to or relying upon some wisdom coming from above to help her in her deliberations on the earthly plane.



The Hanged Man has an ego and a foundation that has been tipped upside down. He sees

things from a different perspective. He views the workings of the world. In one sense he has no control over his situation - he is stuck hanging upside down. In another sense he must develop self-control and develop his cognitive skills through observation and analysis. He must overcome all the drives of ego and accept his situation and revel in the splendour as things are. A lot about the Hanged Man is about appreciation.

13 Death

Death gives us a world that is free from physical boundaries, free of the control and imposition of the human ego. What a challenge this is to live and achieve without the ego overriding - floating - freely shifting like the breeze. To be totally natural without being physically part of this world. Taking natural to an all new high - this is living breathing Higher Consciousness. The understanding held by this entity is amazing - can we make it beautiful? That is the challenge. Death understands the cognition and control acquired by the Hanged Man and is seeking eternal victory and release from physical boundaries. Death signifies change in such a way that life will not be the same ever again. If the Chariot is about the will to control then Death is about the will to let go. Death is about living life with unrestricted freedom of instinct and impulse.



14 Temperance

The Temperance card also shows an archangel - one foot in the water of emotions and the other firmly on the physical earth - blending the liquid from two jars - somehow finding a middle path - moderation in all things. There is a challenge in being Temperance that is about accepting things with equanimity - not getting ruffled.



The Lovers card is about identifying, respecting and even celebrating difference and Temperance is about mixing and combining so that difference is somehow not apparent - but watch out for co-dependence. Temperance - moderation in all things. Finding a balance and the right mix. The challenge is to show love, mercy, tolerance and generosity whilst maintaining a balance and reserve. The Golden Rule of Living is to find the middle path in everything. The next path after this is the temptation of the Devil which will test the will of temperance in other matters. He has experienced the victory of Death and now needs to love again but can he keep everything in the right balance particularly when everything is going out of balance.

15 The Devil

Mercy and compassion are the gateway of the Devil. The devil comes from a point of mercy and sneaks in when too much leniency is applied - leading - tempting - and unless we are aware eventually has us caught up and the consequences can be severe. He introduces us to the negative values and principles, negative behaviours and traditions. He represents



slavery to the material ways of the physical consciousness. Caught up in addictions and obsessive behaviour we realise all too late that the road downhill is an easy road. How fitting that the opposing path of the priest is the Devil. The Devil represents the material world, addictions and temptations. He comes from a place of beauty and then entraps you. The discipline, rigour and discrimination that he provides is enticing, alluring and eventually destructive. Can you withstand the clutches of the Devil and demonstrate sustainable discipline, rigour and discrimination or will you fall short? This is the challenge of the Devil- to be in the world but not of this world.

16 The Lightning Struck Tower

The Lightning Struck Tower shows the effects of too much rigidity. It is being razed to the ground - back to its foundations. It is removing structure. False beliefs, false patterns, inappropriate ways of being are cleared away - back to basics. People become caught up and stuck in ruts and ruled by beliefs and patterns of behaviour - obsessions and addictions - this path clears away these obstacles to living your true path.



The Tower comes from a place of rules, rigour and structure but they are the rules of the devil. The Tower represents old ways of living and believing that are no longer suitable. They are rigid and when struck by lightning they shatter. The lightning strike breaks down these old, outmoded patterns and leaves the building site razed and burnt. Despite how it seems though this has all been done out of love and mercy. The intention is to prepare the site for the rebuilding phase of the Star.

17 The Star

On the return journey to the Source, travelling from Tiphareth (Beauty) to Binah (Understanding), is the Star. Following the upheaval of the Lightning Struck Tower, the Star is in the process of rebuilding, and actively orchestrates the energies of cosmic nature and appeals to Higher Consciousness. She is able to control emotions and can please the earth while she interacts with the Higher Consciousness. The Empress, the opposing reciprocal path, brings earthiness - the Star connects that earthiness to the Higher Consciousness through her natural way of being.



The Star rises from the ashes after the blitzing of the lightning struck tower. Despite everything, she has achieved love, mercy, tolerance and generosity. Now she raises her gaze to the heavens and the cosmos and shows the will to succeed and reach the highest heights. She demonstrates hope for the rest of humanity. She performs like a star, healing the pain of humanity and bringing fresh hope of a well lived life demonstrating the ability to understand although the reasons may be complicated. She struggles with understanding and she must understand the entire workings of the Cosmos.

The Moon

The Moon shows a creature coming from the depths of the abyss. This creature is part of ourselves that we have accepted and learned to live with as we continue our journey on the narrow path between the opposing forces of the ego and the self. The moon shows that part of our self that is hidden behind the facade of the High Priestess. In the moon phase we are prepared to show ourselves as we are and deal with the issues as a necessary condition to continuing our journey.



In moonlight it is not easy to clearly see and understand and even though we are a gnarled creature in adversity we aspire to achieve and victory will be achieved against the odds. But you will be tested to show the equanimity and acceptance of self that is displayed in the High Priestess despite the madness and cycles of the moon.

The Moon comes from Binah and has deep understanding. She climbs out of the depths of a pond, not a pretty sight. Her journey is difficult and narrow. She must wind her way narrowly between opposing forces of life. She knows and understands herself and despite her faults she must persist. Her challenge in life is to act wisely and be open to inspiration although she may be tortured in life by misfortune. She must rise above the cruelty of life. The Moon can be romantic but she can also suffer mentally.

19 The Sun

The Sun connects from Chokmah (Wisdom) returning to Kether (the Crown). Unlike the sudden flash of brilliance from the Magician, the sun shines brilliantly and consistently. The child, representing the individuated being - the balanced halves of ego and conscious self in harmony - masculine and feminine - anima and animus - is not making things happen. The child is accepting and happy and flows with the movement of life. there is no trickery and the child has nothing to hide.



The white horse represents the flow and movement of life. The wall behind shows that he has returned from across the abyss - restored the veils and is ready to return to the wonder of the white light of the Higher Consciousness.

The Sun is the final path and represents the individuated soul depicted as a small child with nothing to hide. The Sun has wisdom and is divinely inspired. The challenge is to achieve the fulfilment of potential. To be all that is, was and will be rolled into one whilst effortlessly riding the journey of life. The Sun, like the magician, is a living conduit of divine energy. Can you receive and channel that energy without interference from your personal needs and desires? It's not your will but the will of the source and you're just here for the ride.

Judgement

One of the administrative paths, Judgment is the path of the Soul's return to spirit at the end of the incarnation. As stated earlier the Judgment numbered 20 is the 2nd review of the 0. At the end of a life, at the end of an event, a project etc there is a complete review before commencing another process. Following Judgment, the Soul resides in the place of spirit for some time, using the benefit of hindsight to make plans for the next incarnation. This is the working of Karma.



Unlike the biblical slant that has an eye for an eye etc, Karma merely builds on what went before to arrange for an improved development in the next phase. There may be a balancing but there may not be. These things do not matter to spirit.

21 The World

This is the last administrative path. The purpose of the World is to present a snapshot at any given time of everything that is. Also, depending upon the focus at the time, the World could be any entity or aspect that is under review. When the Wheel of Life and Judgment are reviewing and judging what are they looking at - the World as it is. The World is the embodiment of every individual element as a single entity. Subsequently the World is the dual opposite of the Source which is referred to as Nothingness. So, we have Nothing and Everything.



In the relationships of the paths the Magician and Strength have a special union - they are both number 1's. The Magician (1) is the 1st path on the Outward journey and the development of the Ego. Strength (11) is the 1st path on the Inward journey and the development of the Conscious Self. The Magician is masculine and Strength is feminine. The World is numbered 21 and so is also a 1 - the union of the two aspects of human - masculine and feminine - as one individuated entity.