

NOTE I asked Great Spirit to guide my hand on behalf of the group. I asked for **GENERAL GUIDANCE for 2009-2010 ...**

~ **The Tao Oracle Deck** ~ [The Tao Oracle Deck](#)

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49 - REVOLUTION

~ **Transformation ~ A Radical Change ~ A Quantum Leap** ~
~ **Give Up the Old to Make Way for the New** ~

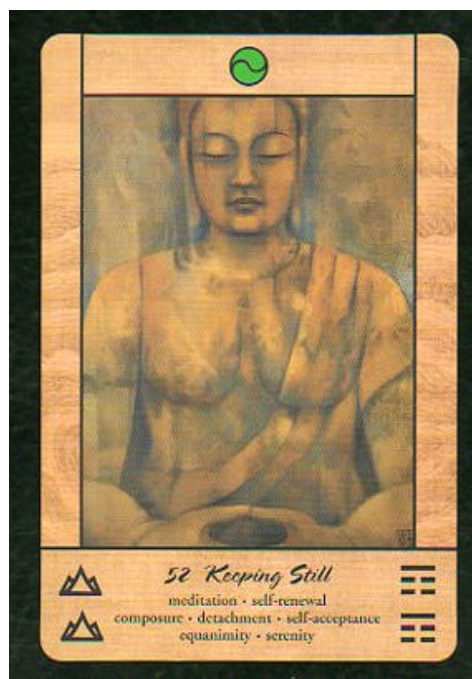
The time of revolution is a time of breakthrough, when - often in spite of our own desires - the old drops away and is replaced by the new. No snake ever resists shedding its skin, however uncomfortable the experience may be. But we humans have a tendency to resist transformative change by failing to appreciate it as a renewing and essential quality of life.

If wherever you turn the outlook appears shrunken, dry, and limiting, it's probably because life is urgently trying to tell you something. It's obvious that you wouldn't consider walking in the shoes you wore as a child, because the pain would be excruciating and drastically limit your movement. But on the more subtle, psychological level, we all tend to overlook the warning signs when a change is overdue. Remembering the discomfort of those tight little shoes will enable you to gain some insight into the real choices you are facing now. The most important choice is whether you go willingly with the strong transforming current that is active now, or whether you expend energy resisting it and go down kicking and screaming. Either way there are going to be big changes. Revolution emphasizes taking a quantum leap, whether you think you are ready or not, and remaining bound to what you've outgrown will become increasingly difficult and restrictive until finally you are brought to a standstill because of it.

Growth is not an easy process: it's risky, and sometimes frightening, but with courage and fortitude we become stronger, more supple, and hopefully more aware. Releasing your grip on whatever you're clinging to, whether it's an identity, a relationship, a place, or a thing, may seem impossible at first. But once you feel the truth of it, all the way to your bones, letting go becomes easier, and can even be exhilarating. The taste of the freedom you will have when you disengage from habitual behavior patterns will stimulate new behavior and new attitudes. What you once perceived to be a breakdown will begin to look like a breakthrough.

In mythology the process of inner revolution is represented by the life, death, and rebirth of the Phoenix, a magnificent bird that cyclically rises from the ashes of its previous self. Becoming attuned to the qualities of the Phoenix means learning to live without guarantees and to appreciate the ebbing and flowing cycles of life. Although it might seem more like whitewater rafting than drifting lazily in your canoe right now, it is important not to get distracted and lose perspective. Drop worrying about how to “get it right”. What is needed is trust that the surging current of change will take you to where you really need to be. There’s no point in attempting to predict outcomes because the scope of this revolution is far greater than what can be seen at this time.

Create as much space as possible in your life now to make room for the new. Become a witness to the mind’s preoccupation with past and future and consistently return to the present. What is happening is nothing less than a 180-degree turn, a quantum leap. It is tremendously empowering, as it firmly roots you in the here and now. And your life will take on an altogether different quality once the dust settles.



52 - KEEPING STILL

***~ Meditation ~ Self-Renewal ~ Composure ~ Detachment ~
~ Self-Acceptance ~ Equanimity ~ Serenity ~***

In many traditions a mountain symbolizes the stillness of Buddha nature. Serene and detached, rising above the bustle of mundane affairs, it remains unaffected by the passage of time and the strife of the marketplace. A mountain setting offers the perfect environment for meditation. When we simply sit, relax the body, and keep the spine upright, closing our eyes and shifting our attention from the outer to the inner, we are in tune with the stillness of mountains. From this centered place it is possible to rise above the mind’s busyness and gain a detached overview. It’s like looking from the vantage point of a lofty peak into the valley of the mind, distant from its preoccupations and thereby able to observe it with objectivity.

Meditation is a point of rest and a process of renewal from the inside out. It means calling a halt to being driven by compulsion. For thousands of years people all over the world have practiced meditation and have been renewed by its benefits.

In the midst of the everyday activities of the marketplace, there are times when you need to withdraw from thinking and rest into being. Without this periodic withdrawal, it is easy to become overly identified with one's position and place in the hubbub of worldly affairs and begin to call it "me". Unfortunately, once you start to believe that life revolves only around serving the demands of this "me", the real treasures of your being are lost. "Me" believes that life's meaning lies in doing - and if you follow the dictates of that belief you are taken on a long and frustrating journey to achieve something that in the end only takes you away from your own truth.

The central point of meditation is to observe whatever is bubbling up in the mind and let it go. When thoughts are happy or fascinating in some way, the tendency of the mind is to grasp hold of them, or to adjust its vision of reality to reinforce them. On the other hand, when thoughts are disturbing or painful, the mind works to get rid of them forcefully by suppressing them, or busies itself trying to assign blame to some external force. So whether your thoughts are happy or sad, the mind wants to engage them in some way, to work out strategies to direct them according to its own preferences.

Meditation is a way of stepping out of the mind, putting aside preferential thinking that distracts you from living in accordance with the Tao. It is only from the inner mountaintop perspective that you can realize that the real treasure you seek has always been within your reach. Once you are back in touch with this essential treasure, then it is easy to withdraw from any difficulties that might have been overriding your attention.

Meditation should not be a serious, hard-to-manage affair; rather, it is as natural as breathing, and as awakening as fresh mountain air.



56 - THE WANDERER

***~ Traveling ~ Adventure ~ Movement ~ Coping With Unfamiliarity ~
~ A Pilgrimage ~ Aloneness ~ Broaden Your Horizons ~***

Traveling means changes, and changes mean vulnerability. When breaking new ground, no matter how prepared you may be, sometimes you won't have a clue where you are or what is happening. Life on the road brings up all kinds of challenges you would never have to face in the safety of familiar surroundings. And unfamiliarity is threatening to the personality that needs to know where it stands. When we feel lost or out of place, we sometimes overcompensate to create an impression of keeping it all together, often with the unfortunate result of appearing downright

foolish. Coping with unfamiliarity increases the need to be alert, assume nothing, and take care of yourself. Respect local customs. Remember “When in Rome do as the Romans?” Whatever may have worked at home does not necessarily hold up elsewhere. Be ready and willing to ask questions, listen attentively, be courteous, and stay flexible.

No one appreciates being judged as inferior, and once it happens it creates wounds. The unhappy result of this kind of insensitivity can be that support once given is quickly withdrawn. Be wary of any temptations to condemn anyone or anything because it is different from what you know. Whether judgments are spoken or formed only in thought, to indulge in them will create problems sooner or later. This childish habit is a by-product of insecurity, which puts the unfamiliar down in order to feel superior. It seldom has anything to do with anyone but ourselves. You never know when you may need help from the very person you’ve condemned. As a newcomer, it is wise to create a respectful and friendly atmosphere by being sincere and unpretentious.

Sometimes life simply defies the best-laid plans; under such circumstances, all you can do is be as sensitive and as conscious as possible in the choices you make. If you are the new person in town, you may become the object of curiosity and gossip, but even if that’s uncomfortable, don’t put on airs to be other than who you are. Sincerity, respect for yourself and others, and a straightforward demeanor go a long way toward paving the way for sound relations. A sense of humor helps, too, for nothing puts people on common ground better than a good laugh, especially when it’s shared in a comfortable, informal atmosphere.

Avoid challenging the established order, but if your space is transgressed, speak up about it. Being forthright about your own boundaries is an essential as respecting others’. No need to condemn, however, once you’ve expressed yourself, drop the issue.

Life is a journey, and in that sense, we are all wanderers. We grow as we go, and it makes little difference whether that going was far or near. Finally it is our attitude toward each step taken, not the number of miles racked up, that determines the quality of our existential reality. Seasoned travelers know how to adapt and keep their needs to a minimum. It is wise to remember when you find yourself a stranger in a strange land that less is more: keep your lifestyle uncomplicated - that goes for your state of mind as well as your luggage.