

Practice - Newsletter - December 2022

Topic of the month

Horned in the Garden of Eden - Capricorn and Devil



The Tarot only looks like a deck of cards. In fact, it is a system of 78 symbolic cards that convey complex messages to us in figurative language, much like our nightly dreams. The arrangement and numbering of the cards are not random, but systematic and gradual. We cannot derive direct therapeutic instructions from them, but we can get inspiration and stimulation. Similar to the individuation path outlined by C.G. Jung, the Tarot leads us through neuroses, complexes, illusions, attitudes, blockages, unconscious and archetypal towards greater inner freedom. In my current series of newsletters, I associate the quality of time of each month with the dominant astrological sign and a corresponding major card (the so-called "Major Arcana") of the Tarot. In January, the dominant astrological sign is Capricorn, which corresponds with the Tarot card "The Devil".

In the December newsletter I had dealt with the card of temperance. The Angel of Temperance is somewhat reminiscent of the Virgin Mary figure pictured above from the Weltenburg Monastery Shop, made by the South Tyrolean Herrgottschnitzers. But while the Angel of Temperance stands with one foot in water and the other on dry land, thus connecting the real world with the unconscious, the figure of Mary is already a step further in its symbolism. The right foot of Mary stands on the head of the snake, which still has the apple from the tree of knowledge of good and evil in its mouth. All in all, the figure stands on a hemisphere that symbolizes the universe. Here, then, is shown the feminine force, the Anima, which has become the ruler of its universe because it has worked through the dark side of the personal and collective unconscious, stripped away the dominance of the personal ego (i.e., achieved temperance), united with higher reason, and thus brought the sexual life energy under its control. After the birth of the light in December, which brought us to temperance, the work really begins in January. The gloomy appearance of the card of the devil should not scare

us, but make us awake. This fits into the time quality of Capricorn in January. The typical Capricorn-born are considered to be disciplined, diligent and striving. Down-to-earth, they set goals and structure their lives. The British princess Catherine, born as "Kate" Middleton, and the successful Hollywood actor Nicolas Cage are prominent representatives of the astrological sign. Typical representatives of the sign are not particularly capable of working in a team, but they are strong in leadership, calm, level-headed, but sometimes also stubborn. Strong-willed, meticulous, and reliable, they go their own way, often putting themselves under pressure. However, they are considered realistic and objective enough to drop plans that turn out to be impracticable and to realign themselves flexibly. It is said that they like to take responsibility and can concentrate well. Sometimes, according to astrology, they also miss opportunities because they first have to get all scepticism and doubts out of the way. But since they have no exaggerated expectations, their disappointment is limited, and realism and pragmatism prevail. This is how astrology describes Capricorn also in terms of love, relationship, and sexuality. Good and persistent in bed, with pleasure also dominant, but always realistic and not too temperamental. In general, the typical Capricorn probably needs a fair amount of trust and commitment before he gets closer to other people, even in love. Thus, it comes that many Capricorn-born seem cool at first.

To come to the realization that spiritual and sexual power are two sides of the same coin, we need precisely this unexcited time quality of Capricorn to work our way through all the devil's illusions, to free ourselves from the slavery of materialistic attitudes towards life, love and sexuality. As is often the case, to overcome the limitations of a zodiac sign we need its abilities and qualities. The Devil's card shows the materialistic attitudes and spiritual limitations of the constellation Capricorn, while at the same time the constellation is given the necessary qualities to master these limitations. With materialistic is not at all or not exclusively meant a focus on money. The Tarot understands it rather as the attitude that there is no reality outside the perception of the five senses, thus the denial of the spiritual side of life. Everything that can become a blessing with the inclusion of the spiritual side of life can easily become a curse without spirituality. Money, sexuality, possessions, relationships, work, etc. can then become chains that bind us. The materialist pursues only personal goals, be they financial, sexual or political. Selfless commitment to super-personal goals is not his thing. We notice that the two figures on the card, which have great similarity with the card "The Lovers", wear their chains only loosely around their necks, they could be removed effortlessly. Also, they do not seem unhappy or dissatisfied, they seem to be resigned to their fate. This is true of many people with a materialistic approach to life. As long as they do not question the treadmill, they do their daily grunt work without complaint. They often become unhappy only when illness or loss makes them realize that there is another reality, and that life has more to offer. This applies to a dysfunctional family system or a toxic relationship as well as to a system of political oppression.

The devil on the Tarot card points the torch of life downward, toward the ground, another symbol of the (mistaken) belief that there is nothing beyond the material. The astrological sign of Saturn on his right palm points to limitations, weaknesses, and restrictions. If we also consider the pentagram as a symbol of the human body, the upside-down pentagram on the devil's forehead on the card is a symbol of the fact that the genitals dominate the head, so the instincts are stronger than reason and the ability to distinguish good from evil. The serpent that our figure of Mary from the Weltenburg Monastery has under her right foot is the devil or Satan in the form of the serpent from the Garden of Eden. It offered Eve, the ancestor of Mary, the fruit, that is, the apple, of the knowledge of good and evil. For the Gnostics, Satan was the real hero of this story. The Gnostics believe(d) that the way to the spirit and to God was through the instincts, and perform(ed) rituals similar to those of the Hindu-Buddhist doctrine of Tantra. Thus, according to this belief, the serpent only wanted to help Adam and Eve realize their true selves. According to the Christian interpretation, however, paradise was lost as a result. Here lies an essential root of the sexual hostility of the Christian doctrine in its ecclesiastical form. The Tarot gives both sides a piece of justice. The sexual-spiritual energy is so powerful that it can become very destructive if it is simply unleashed and released haphazardly. In the extreme form, we see here the paedophile or the sexual predator. In less extreme form, there are many forms of sexual over-identification

and obsession that regularly lead to disorders that require treatment and, left untreated, destroy personalities and lives. Rachel Pollack writes, "Only the person who has prepared himself, who has achieved a deep inner peace, who has indeed developed the understanding which the Tarot calls temperance, can deal without harm with the forces represented by the devil." (Rachel Pollack: "TAROT - 78 Stufen der Weisheit", p. 135 f., 15th German edition 2019, IRIS at Neue Erde GmbH)

These powers do not only have to do with sexuality, even if it is omnipresent in today's society. As C.G. Jung pointed out in his critique of Sigmund Freud's fixation on sexuality, the messages from the dark and hidden realms of the personal and collective unconscious are far from being just about sexual needs. All kinds of urges jump out at us from this realm: hunger, greed, ambition, striving for power, megalomania, insatiability, envy, resentment, superstition, but also noble virtues and values such as courage, cleverness, creativity, compassion, faith, humility, humour, the urge for freedom and unbridled joy. We therefore approach the unconscious carefully and gradually; we do not want to provoke a psychosis, which C.G. Jung once described as a "dam bursting" of the unconscious into consciousness. The church fathers probably did not trust the masses of believers to make their way through the darkness to the light, so they closed this door and demonized sexuality and all other dark urges, calling them the "seven deadly sins" and the like. In the political steering of the masses even today prohibition and demonization dominate rather than the constructive but risky confrontation with the dark, the occult (= the hidden). Freud once warned Jung explicitly against the occupation with the occult realms and spoke in a sense of a flood of mud or something similar, I don't remember the literature passage exactly anymore. And indeed, in psychiatry there is the term "occult damage", when psychotic states arise due to brainwashing in sect-like structures or due to improperly performed meditation practices etc..

We should therefore not "play around" with the sexual-spiritual energy, which is also called "Kundalini energy" in yoga science, unprepared and without expert guidance. Overstimulation leading to uncontrolled release can be risky. All religious, spiritual and esoteric paths of initiation therefore offer systems of order, rituals and step-by-step procedures for channelling this energy and putting it to a controlled and constructive use. Different practices are applied, meditation, breathing, concentration, dance, and movement are usually the central elements, which can be applied also by those who do not consciously strive for enlightenment, but simply for more health and inner balance.

And so, the devil on the tarot card is also depicted with two gestures that encourage us. For his open hand is indeed, on the one hand, a symbol of the illusion that what we see is all that exists. On the other hand, it can also be an invitation to open our eyes and look at everything, not to hide anything. For this, however, we must free ourselves from our fears and the domination of our instinctive drives. For if we no longer close our eyes to anything, we must no longer be dominated by fear and judgment, otherwise we could become murderers and terrorists. If Jesus already lost his composure in the face of greed and haggling in the temple and overturned the tables of the moneychangers, how will it be for the unprepared person who suddenly recognizes not only the light and beauty of creation, but also the whole extent of wickedness, perversity and violence? One could suddenly get the impression that the whole universe is filled only with malice and bloodthirsty monsters. A look at many a "Telegram" channel shows us that quite a few contemporaries get stuck at exactly this point and do not develop further for the time being. They only see the darkness (whose existence I would never deny) and get caught up in their indignation, which increases the darkness and provides it with further energy. Thus they allow themselves to be distracted from the real goal, the light, and remain in the darkness instead of passing through it, without judgment, without fear, in humble self-knowledge and gratitude for the revelation. If this succeeds, the demons are conquered and serve the master instead of enslaving him. The devil's card then changes into that of the magician, who uses the liberated energy instead of falling victim to it.

The second gesture that the devil makes with his open hand is the spreading of the two pairs of fingers. Viewers of the television series "Star Trek" know this greeting from "Commander

Spock", a character in the television series. This hand position has a Jewish origin. This gesture was made by the high priest in Jerusalem to draw down the power of the spirit. The gesture is still part of the priestly blessing in the Jewish New Year. So, the devil of the Tarot gives us many hints and signs on how to transform the black magician in us and bring him into the light. When we recognize the dark side of the collective unconscious within us, integrate it without fear or judgment, and bring it to a constructive purpose in our lives, we bring out the highest power of the self.

Dates, important and current events:

➤ Elke's date preview:

Jan. 11, 2023: Meeting place: holistic self-help with cancer (at 4.30 p.m.)

Jan. 13, 2022: online meditation (at 8:00 p.m.)

Jan. 19, 2023: free introductory event (at 7:30 p.m.) to the "Love of Life" program

Jan. 09, 2023: Start of annual seminar "Love of Life"

For more information, please contact Elke: naturheilpraxis.tegel@gmail.com

- **From January 2023 on** we organize in irregular intervals on **Sundays from 3:00 - 6:00 pm** a spiritual devotion, so common prayer and singing, Bible text with metaphysical interpretation, common meditation, messages, work with Tarot cards. Afterwards, a cozy get-together with coffee and cake. („Voluntary energy compensation“ 😊). **Dates 2023:** **Attention date change! Jan. 15,** MAR 19, Jul. 16, Oct. 15

I wish you a "devilish" 😊 Happy New Year and an insightful, fulfilling year 2023!

Yours Joerg Schuber



Image credits:

1. Figure of the Virgin Mary: private
2. Rider Waite Tarot: The Devil
3. Joerg Schuber: private