



The Tarot Shaman V

We come now to the final *Gate* of this week-long *Gated Spreads* experience. I hope you have enjoyed learning about the Tarot through the animal symbolism of the cards and by engaging with your life in a Shamanistic approach. We have also looked at the concept of "drill-down" reading with one card spreads.

In this final *Gate* we pull together our experience by embodying and being empowered by the animal spirit we have been called by and which we have caught by honouring it.

The Invocation of the Animal Spirit

We now invoke and embody the *Animal Spirit*. This step uses a variation of a magical practice taught by urban shaman and modern chaos magician Jan Fries, whose books I recommend, particularly *Visual Magick*.

Living the Animal

On a largish sheet of paper, draw a rough sketch of your *Animal Spirit*. This can be heavily stylistic, symbolic or realistic.

Place a cross on 5 places on the diagram. These could be key features such as the eye, a wing, tail, etc. Write in each position, "This is the vision of my spirit", "This is the spiritual power of my spirit", "This is the balance of my spirit" or whatever may be appropriate to that part of the animal.

Now take your deck and shuffle whilst contemplating the journey that has brought you to this place, the fear you had to overcome, the calling and the catching, and the honouring of your animal spirit. All the *Gates* have led to this divine moment.

Take out a card when you are ready for each of the place on the animal. These cards represent the animals response to you. They are the divination for how you can invoke these powers and qualities of your animal spirit. They tell you how to live the animal.

So for example, if I had a bat, and I had placed one of my crosses on its ear(s), writing, "This is the secret sense of the Bat, my spirit", and then drawn the 7 of Disks (Thoth Tarot) in that position, I would read it as follows: "Failure and Sloth - the secret sense of my animal spirit is present and invoked when I give up trying and relax, surrender."

You will now have five points of invocation of your Animal Spirit. As a Tarot Shaman you can use these cards to draw upon the power of your animal guide, perhaps leaving them visible in your sight before sleep and communing with your animal in dreams.

You may also create a montage of the cards chosen to represent your animal, or otherwise use the cards to remind you of all that you have learnt during this week.

There are many other shamanistic methods of exploring the Tarot, and many aspects of animal symbolism which can be pursued. I trust this week has given you a new angle on your Tarot, and look forward to welcoming you on other Gated Spreads in the future.

Please do feel free to continue discussion in the forum for this experience!