

# THE ROLE OF TAROT AND THE TREE OF LIFE IN SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Father of Modern Psychology, Carl Jung claimed that our purpose in life was to **individuate**, according to Jung this meant:

- Pursue one's own vision of the truth
- Realize one's fullest potential as a human being



He suggested that beneath our repressed and individual level of consciousness there exists a deeper universal layer from which dreams, delusions and hallucinations emanate, and which contains symbols linked to stories and myth.

He called this layer the **COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS**

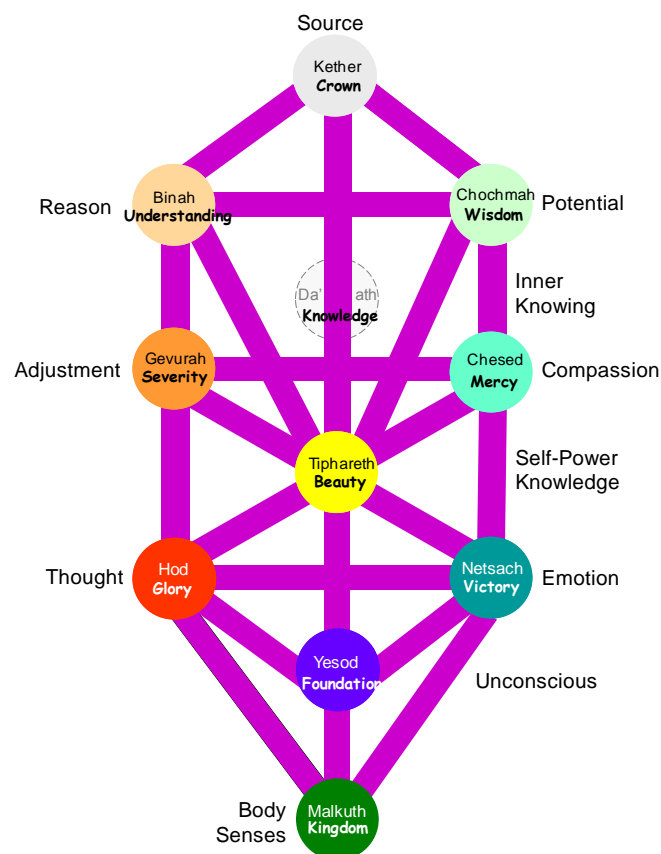
Jung suggested that psychological and spiritual development is naturally activated through a series of symbols that present themselves to us through dreams and synchronicity, enabling repressed emotions and knowing to bubble up from our repressed individual consciousness, to be understood and dealt with. Symbolic systems, in the manner of the Kabbalah Tree of Life and the Tarot, act as a more artificial or technical method to enable us to develop and move forward.

Kabbalah is the Hebrew mystical or occult wisdom system, handed down for more than 6000 years, it literally means “to receive”. Whilst it is the esoteric or hidden wisdom system behind Judaism, you do not have to follow any religion or culture to work with it.

It is a way of life, a map of existence that can be used to continually bring your life into balance. In order to embrace it you need to believe:

- In a higher source of energy we will call “God”
- All living things contain a spark, a piece of God
- God created the cosmos as a mirror to see God in action
- Our spark or soul re-incarnates many times to learn
- Each incarnation is part of its journey to enlightenment
- To have free will, it has no memory of previous lives
- Energy manifests through the vibration of words

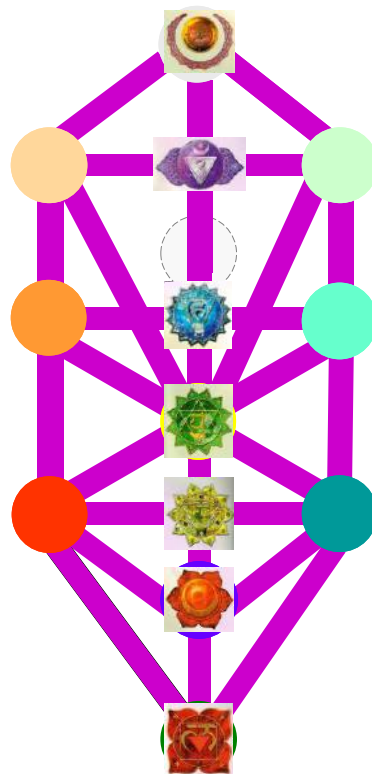
The model or symbolic system for Kabbalah is the “**Tree of Life**”, it contains 10 energy vibrations, or “**sephira**” held together in a pattern like DNA, where everything exists alongside its opposite or mirror image.



Kether, sephira at the top, represents enlightenment or being as God, whereas Malkuth or the sephira at the base, is our conscious state here in physical reality on Earth.

There is a central pillar “**Equilibrium**” representing the balance we seek to achieve. The right hand pillar contains yang or masculine energy states, it is called “**Mercy**”. The left hand pillar contains the opposite yin or feminine energy state, it is called “**Severity**”.

There are 4 sephiroth on the pillar of balance. The other 6 sephiroth form 3 polarities across the pillar with a balance point where they intersect. These 3 balance points and the 4 sephiroth on the Equilibrium pillar correspond with the 7 chakras in our body.



If we stand with our back to the Tree then it corresponds to the parts of our body, sephira on the right hand side Chokmah, Chesed and Netzach respectively, associated with our left ear, shoulder and hip, where sephira on the left hand side Binah, Gevurah and Hod, are respectively associated with our right ear, shoulder and hip.

The sephiroth, Malkuth up to Binah, are associated with the energy of the planets and luminaries the ancients could see in the sky, in the precise order of their distance from Earth.

So the Tree of Life, like astrology represents “As Above So Below”, the same energy vibrations exist in the sky as in our bodies, which is how the vibration and position of the stars in their cycles, at the time of our creation or birth, forms a blueprint for our life potential.

The Tree of Life exists across 4 separate Worlds which represent the Four Elements, Fire, Water, Air and Earth. These are the [Worlds of Archetypes, Creation, Formation and Action](#) and of course correspond to the suits of Wands, Cups, Swords and Earth in the Tarot. The numbers of the sephiroth integrate with the Minor Arcana cards to form each suit.

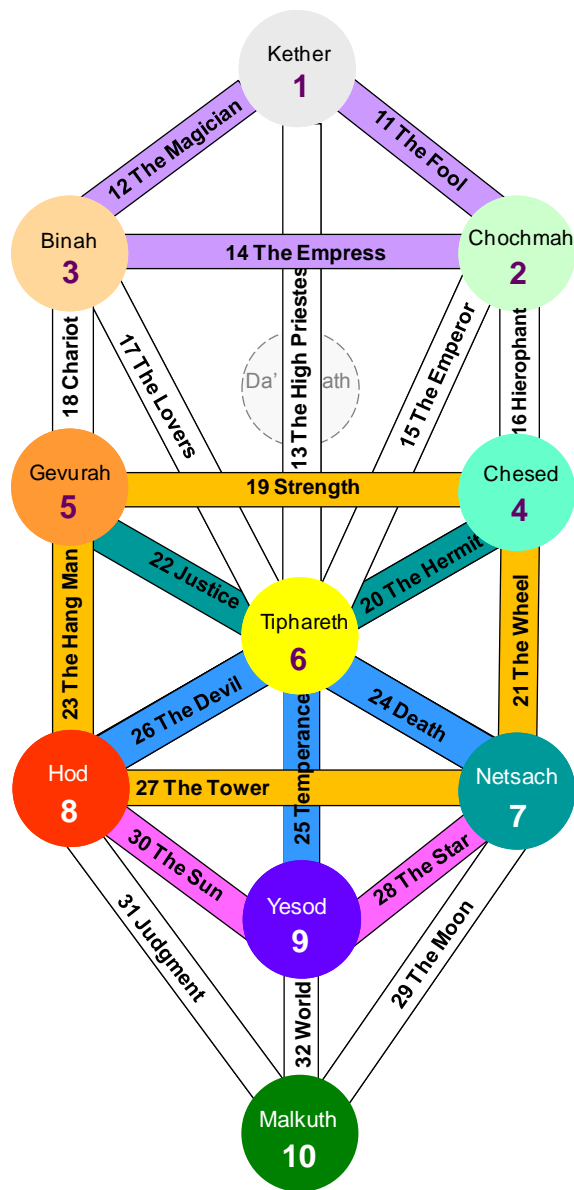


*Cards from the Robin Wood Tarot published by Llewellyn 1991*

Each sephira has a further series of associations beyond its name and number, which help us understand the nature of its vibration, including the planetary body, chakra and part of the human body, already mentioned. It has a Hebrew letter, meaning and name, a series of titles and symbols, a description of the kind of intelligence it portrays, a virtue and a vice, an arch-angel, a spiritual experience, a colour or light vibration, one or more zodiac signs and associated deities from myth.

A series of triangles and squares are created between various sephiroth within the Tree, such that we have a “[personality or astral triangle](#)” at the base from Malkuth to Netsach, followed by an “[ethical triangle](#)” from Tipareth to Chesed and a “[supernal triangle](#)” at the top of the Tree from Binah to Kether.

When working on spiritual development or individuation, the focus is always on working through the pathways up the Tree to Kether.



It can be seen that 22 paths are in place inter-connecting the 10 sephiroth. Each path is associated with one of the 22 letters used in the Hebrew alphabet, and also resonates with one of the 22 Major Arcana cards from the Tarot.

Through the Kabbalah each path brings an amplified meaning to the card it is associated with, which gives valuable insight about the spiritual journey on that path, being undertaken by the initiate.

The major life purpose for each individual is written into one of the 22 paths, determined by the sum of their birth date.



For example Angelina Jolie

She was born on 4<sup>th</sup> June 1975

4

6

1975

1985

If we sum up 1985  $1 + 9 + 8 + 5 = 23$

Angelina is working on path 23 the path of the Hanged Man

The special message for this path is “Thy will, not My will,” it is about following the path the Universe sets for us. When Angelina filmed “Lara Croft Tomb Raider” in Cambodia in 2000, she was exposed to the plight of children in a third world country, she discovered the destiny that changed her life!

If you would like to learn more about this subject, Sara Gilbert runs monthly two hour workshops, working with the Paths on the Tree of Life in Carrum Downs near Frankston. The path she is featuring in June is Path 20, the Hermit on Saturday June 15. She is running an introductory three hour workshop to the Kabbalah and the Tree of Life, “Tarot on the Tree of Life,” on Saturday June 29 and a one day workshop around various guidelines to Life Purpose, including the Tree of Life, on both Saturday June 16 & Sunday June 22. More details are available through Sara’s website [www.lifepiritconnections.com.au](http://www.lifepiritconnections.com.au)