

An archetype is a concept so fundamental to the human psyche that it is universally understood. The Major Arcana are visual emblems of archetypal ideas, and one of the benefits of working with these images, is their ability to help you organize your thoughts. As you work with an image, you will naturally associate your own ideas, memories and emotions; and this mental filing system will make it possible for you to tune in to that set of ideas at will. Ideas commonly associated with The Fool are:

- **The bold and fearless adventurer**—enthusiasm, optimism, independence originality, eccentricity, blazing a trail, facing the unknown.
- **Beginning a new cycle**—fresh start, new endeavor, or a new incarnation.
- **Departure**—leaving, taking a holiday, beginning a journey, running away, escape, abandoning responsibility.
- **Seeking/searching**—for work, a place to live, a mate, desired object, information or the solution to a problem.
- **An outsider**—a stranger in a new land, wanderer, beggar or outcast. A person viewed with mistrust.
- **One who is foolish**—stubborn, childish, reckless, mentally challenged, insane, or just not understood.
- **Entertainer**—joker, trickster, minstrel.

The Tarot is not a static thing; it is a dynamic construct that reflects the sensibilities of its readers in their time. Over the nearly 600 years of its known history, associations with the card images have continued to grow. A very fertile period of that growth began with the popularization of the Waite-Smith Tarot (formerly known as the Rider Pack). The teachings of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and also the advancement of the psychotherapeutic sciences, have added new coloration to the interpretation of this card in the 20th century. Added to themes already mentioned is the concept of **Super-consciousness**; which is the perception of guidance by the “Higher Self,” an agent of divinity, or by one’s own instincts, unencumbered by conventional thinking. The Tarot continues to grow in relation to the expansion of human consciousness for it reflects the mind of the viewer.

A more extensive review of the many associations to even just the theme of this image would be inappropriate here. The purpose of this work is to provide a succinct introduction to the traditional Tarot in the hope that it might be more widely valued and enjoyed.