



# Fox and Owl Tarot

a zine by Tiffany  
Soster

Hi! I'm Tiffany.

I'm bisexual, non-binary, polyamorous, invisibly disabled and feminist. I'm living with white settler privilege on Treaty 7 land in Calgary, Alberta.

I do not read tarot to tell the future. I think that what tarot offers us is a rich set of archetypes, symbols, and potential storylines within which we can see ourselves, and better understand the knowledge that we already have about who we are, what we want, what we need, what we fear, and where we want to take our lives.

Tarot can be a tool for self-care, self-knowledge, and collective liberation. This is true especially when tarot is intentionally and explicitly focused on justice, conscious of the effects of trauma on marginalized communities, and actively works to mitigate and counter the harms of ongoing colonialism, racism, ableism, transantagonism, heterosexism, classism, and other forms of systemic oppression.

Fox and Owl Tarot is all about narratives - how we tell our stories and how we find ourselves in our stories. How we heal our stories. And it's about tarot for the

margins, and for people who are marginalized.

Trauma-informed tarot.

Queer tarot.

Trans tarot.

Non-binary tarot.

Polyamorous tarot.

Tarot for grief.

This little zine includes four tarot spreads - two that I designed myself (one for **grief**, and one for **parenting** our kids, ourselves, and our projects), and two that are common spreads with my suggestions for how to use them (an **elements for self-care** spread, and a **narrative face-up tarot** spread).

I hope you enjoy this little book!

# A Spread for Grieving

We grieve many things.

We grieve our lost futures and selves when chronic illness, disability, or socioeconomic insecurity reduce our physical or social mobility.

We grieve lost relationships with friends, with lovers, with family members, and we grieve even when these relationships are lost because those people rejected or hurt us.

We grieve the deep loss of ecological destruction.

We grieve the violence of colonialism, grieving the harms done to generations of colonized peoples, or grieving, like I am, my complicity as a settler.

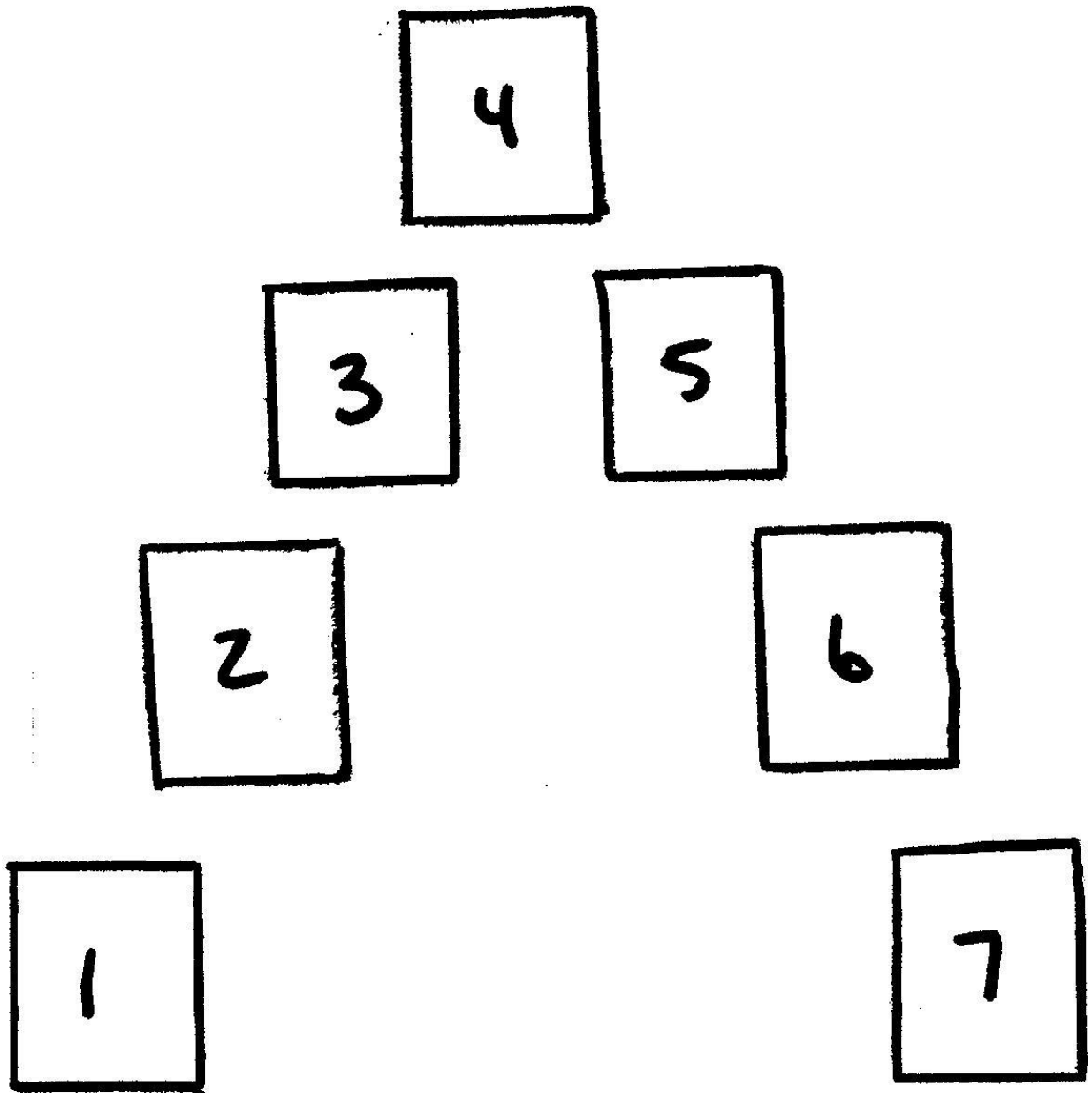
We grieve large and small losses and those griefs are valid. And we grieve the dead and the dying.

Tarot can help with this process.

Grief is often an act of storying - as we grieve, we tell ourselves (and ideally we are able to share with others) the story of the lost love, the lost self, the lost future, the lost friendship, the lost parent, the loss. Wrapped up in the story are all of our hopes - the ones we realized before the loss, the ones we couldn't - and our longings and our hurts and our fears. Grief stories are deep, complex, multilayered narratives.

This spread is shaped like a mountain, because we climb it and it is impossibly steep. And it's also shaped like roots coming down into the earth, because our grief runs deep and we are able to pull nourishment up from the deep, rich soil of our experience.

You can work with this spread in a few different ways - you can select cards intentionally, you can draw them all after shuffling, or you can do a combination of both.



A Spread for  
Grieving

1 - **Where I come from in this grief.** The roots of the lost relationship/self/hope. If this grief is a complex or conflicted grief, particularly if it's a grief related to losing someone who was harmful or hurtful to you, it might help to choose this card intentionally. The Three of Swords might help validate your experience of betrayal, heartbreak, or pain and also your resilience and ongoingness, for example. The Five of Wands might validate your experience of conflict. Or you can choose a card that validates the aspects of the relationship that were meaningful for you even if they weren't recognized or honoured by people outside of the relationship. This can be an opportunity to intentionally counter any gaslighting or self-doubt, any external invalidation or invisibility, by selecting an origin card that speaks to your experience.

2 - **How I can receive connection.** This card speaks to where you might be able to find community and social support, and it's important because grief is often so isolating - especially complex grief, disenfranchised grief (grief that is not socially acceptable or supported - this is particularly true for someone grieving the

loss of a polyamorous relationship, the loss of an affair partner, the loss of an abusive parent, an early miscarriage, or a grief that lasts "too long" and has become uncomfortable for the people around us).

3 - **How I can receive comfort.** Experiencing comfort within grief can feel selfish, wrong, bad, ungrateful, or otherwise not allowed. I included this card because I think that we suffer enough, and that comfort is allowed. I also think that comfort is complex, just like grief can be. This is another card that might be helpful to select for yourself, especially if you struggle with allowing yourself to feel comforted within grief (this can be particularly challenging if we feel guilt or shame within our grief). Maybe the Six of Cups could give you permission to return to childhood pleasures for a reprieve from the pain of grief. Maybe the Empress can offer you an invitation to engage in some art or creativity. Maybe the Hermit can open a door to some quiet time alone.

4 - **The loss.** This card represents the loss itself, and is another one that works well for choosing for yourself, or allowing the deck to offer up a card.

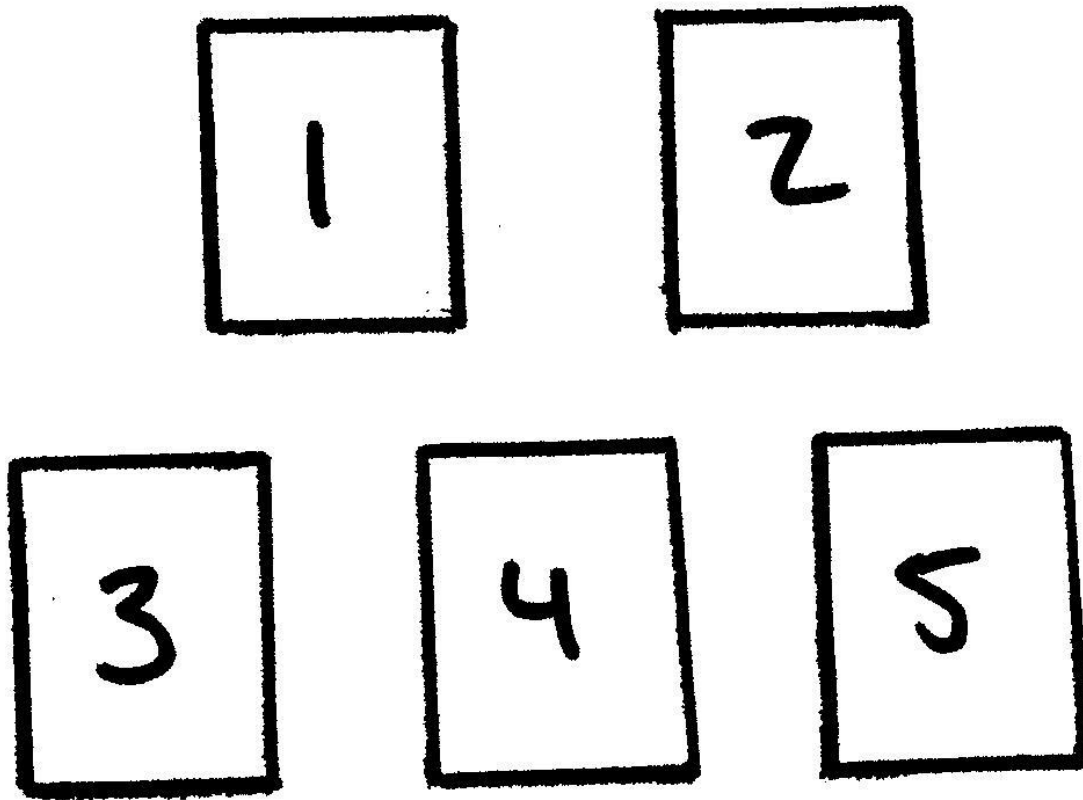


5 - **How I can offer comfort.** First, we take in what we need - find our roots, validate our experience, lean on community, allow ourselves comfort. Then, cups more filled, we pour out. Offering comfort to others who may be grieving (sharing our own specific grief or dealing with something else) can be part of the healing process. I also think that this card can show us how to offer comfort to ourselves if we are still in need of that.

6 - **How I can offer connection.** An invitation to build bridges to community, particularly after we're starting to heal.

7 - **What new roots will grow in this grief-soaked soil.** How will we grow as a result of this? What can we dig our toes down into so that we can once again feel grounded and solid? Grief is such a destabilizing experience and can leave us feeling like we will never be grounded, rooted, or solid again. This card is an invitation to imagine a future that doesn't erase, invalidate, or abandon the grief, but also continues to move with the grief rather than staying stuck. This is another position that welcomes an intentionally chosen card.

# A Spread for Parenting (our kids, ourselves, our projects)



1 - **Being a Parent.** This card represents you as a parent - either your interpretation of how parenting is part of your identity, or how other people perceive you because of your parenting role. If you want, you can draw two cards - one for your internal sense of identity, and one for others' external perception of you.

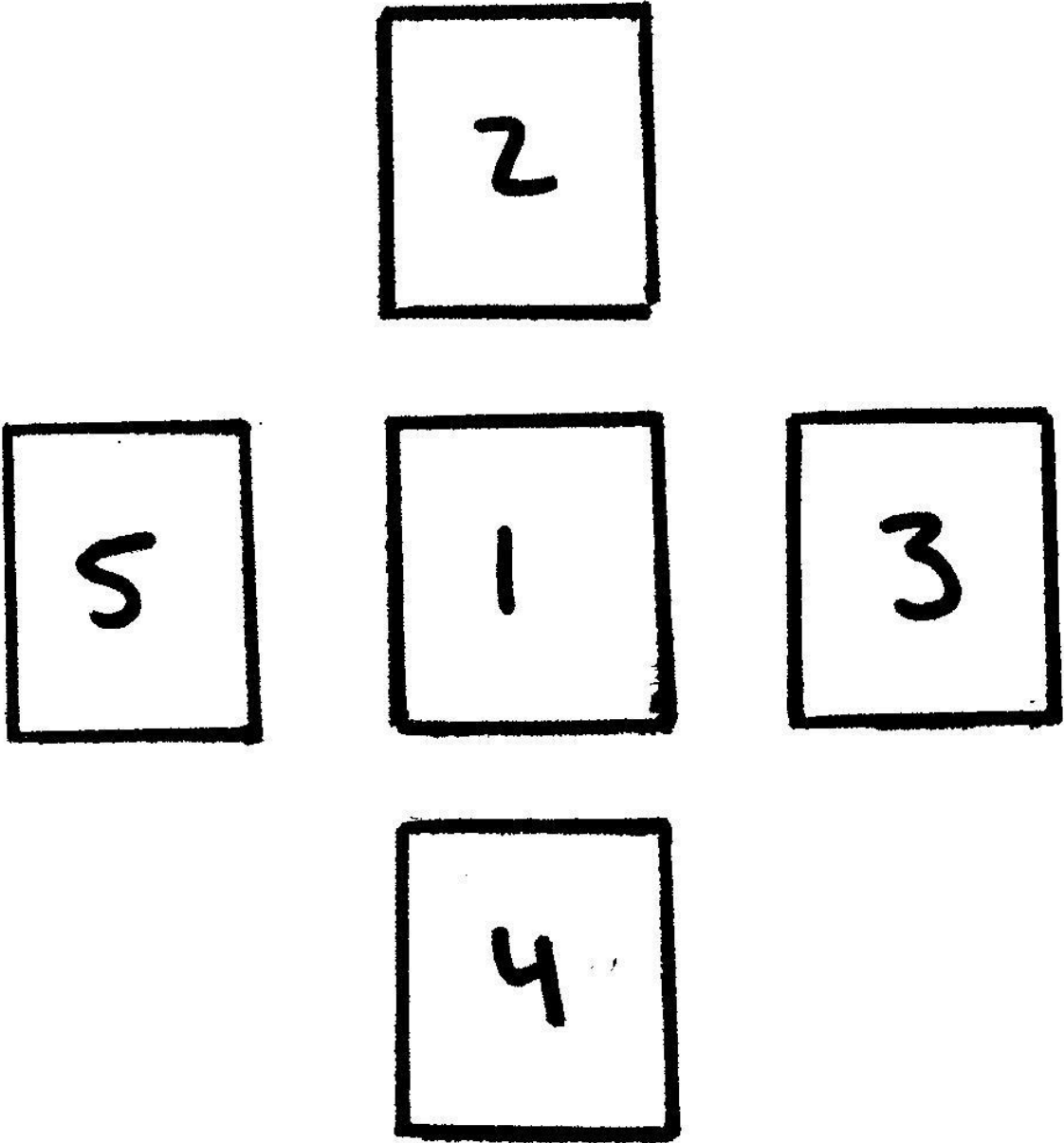
2 - **Doing Parenting.** This card represents how you are doing the actions of parenting, and offers an invitation to consider the impact of those actions. What are you doing as you parent? This is another position that invites a second card - one for what you are doing, and one for what you might consider doing.

3 - **Nurture.** What are you invited to nurture in the child in your life, in the child in yourself, in the project or idea you are bringing up?

4 - **Validate.** What are you invited to validate? This is so important for those of us parenting children or parenting ourselves. What is present in the experience of this person that may be hard to see or believe? What are they/we feeling, noticing, experiencing?

5 - **Witness.** Part of parenting involves witnessing the growth that results from our nurturing and validating actions. And even when we are parenting ourselves, releasing our own desire to control the outcome and witnessing how we move through the world can be so healing.

# An Element Spread for Self-Care



1 - **The center**. Sometimes this can represent yourself, the situation that you're asking about, the primary challenge facing you, or the skill, knowledge, or resource you're relying on to meet the challenge. You can draw after shuffling, or intentionally choose this card. Sometimes choosing intentionally can be a way to bring agency into a moment of sadness, discouragement, anger, fear, or other distress. Other times, allowing the card to select itself can give the reader an opportunity to respond dynamically to what presents itself. I also consider this card fluid. Sometimes what presents itself here, even when it's chosen, takes on a different meaning after reading it in relation to the other cards, and it can be a meaningful act of self-authoring to change this card.

2 - **Air / mental / conceptual**. What are you thinking about the situation? How is your mental or conceptual self engaged here, and what might help you feel more at ease in your mind? I think about this card in relation to intellect and thinking, but also to big concepts - it might be a card about the metaphors that are at work in the situation, or the plan you have made for yourself.

3 - **Fire / spiritual / creative.** What is fueling this situation, or your response to the situation? Where is your passion, your creativity, your spark in this situation? This position doesn't need to reflect any kind of metaphysical spirituality - it can also simply reflect spark / passion / creativity for secular readers.

4 - **Earth / physical / foundational.** What is grounding this situation, or your response to the situation? This can be about the physical self, but it can also be about the material context (finances, housing, food security, health), or about the foundations (history, social context, community).

5 - **Water / emotional / relational.** How are you feeling about the situation, or your response to the situation? What sorts of social connections do you have, or need? How is your heart in this situation?

Look for where the elements show up in the cards, and whether there are patterns, interesting interactions, alignments, or opportunities for the cards to inform each other.

## **Face-Up Narrative Tarot**

When I am feeling really lost, this is my favourite way to work with the cards.

I choose my deck, make some tea, and then sit down at a clear table.

I flip through the entire deck, and pull out any card that resonates for me. I don't think too hard about it as I'm going through, and I don't worry about understanding what I'm pulling while I'm going through. Anything that seems like I should take it out, I take it out.

At the end of the process, I have a whole bunch of cards on the table in front of me. I put the cards I didn't choose aside, and then start sorting.

I do my first sorting by whatever jumps out at me. Sometimes it's the numbers, if I notice that I've got a whole lot of repeating numbers. Sometimes it's the colours on the cards. Sometimes it's majors, court cards, and minors.

Put the cards into piles, rows, or fans.

Pay attention to how it feels while you sort them. Are there a lot of threes, and you have a feeling of stability (or the

need for stability)? Are there a whole bunch of sixes in there, and you're feeling the pull of a journey, or there are a bunch of majors and the energy feels huge.

As you sort, you might find that other connections present themselves, and you might find yourself getting curious. Did you pull a bunch of cards that have birds on them? What's up with that? When you arrange some of the cards in a certain way, can you see a story emerging? Does it resonate with your own story? Are any of the cards in conversation with each other, able to inform or assist each other?

What happens when the Hierophant offers a lesson to the Knight of Wands? What message does the Page of Cups have for the King of Swords?

Don't be afraid to let yourself be creative with your interpretations - this spread is all about allowing many stories to be present, to emerge one after another. Every new grouping of the cards will offer a new interpretation, and that can be a beautiful thing.

**Good luck on your tarot journey!**  
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