The Two of Swords

T. Antoni Grabiec

"The Two of Swords is the Worldly Principle and Universal Archetype of Peace of Mind, Decision Making and Clarity of Thought. This is the creative mind which has made a strong decision between two people, two situations which affects the path of the Beholder of Life. The Two of Swords is a dual aspect card, as the sword has two sides, representing the balance of decision making. The Two of Swords comes as a reminder to open the Heart and not be swayed by barriers and flows from the past which we ourselves put up to protect ourselves from harm, although in the long run, this can be damaging to our psyche."
THE UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE AND ARCHETYPE OF PEACE, DECISION MAKING AND CLARITY OF THOUGHT

“Open your eyes’, urges the swan, proffering a token, a flower, a poppy that is the sleeping death that existence becomes when stubborn barriers cannot be laid aside.”

- Stephanie Pui-Mun Law & Barbara Moore (Shadowscapes Companion)

The Two of Swords is a dual aspect card. In one sense, the card represents Peace of Mind. This is a picture of the mind which has made a strong choice between two issues, two situations, two people. In another sense, the card also represents the barriers we put up within ourselves, which manifest as barriers primarily against ourselves and hence the World.

Let us look upon the beautiful Thoth Tarot representation of the Two of Swords. Upon this magnificent symbol, we see two swords piercing the blue lotus blossom of wisdom. This is the choice made that generates the quality of peace, satisfaction and clarity. It is this flow of meditative thought, this balancing of differing levels of consciousness which allow the making of crystal clear decisions.

The four pinwheels behind the swords indicate that peace of mind encompasses all levels; spiritual, mental, emotional and physical. The sword handles have angels extending out from them, symbolizing blessed wisdom of Spirit eternal. The handles of the swords have a Scorpionic quality and hence they represent the house of Scorpio, which is peace that is found at a deep, profound level of consciousness. Scorpio is the House in the Zodiac that is most associated with transformation.
“The Two of Swords is a portraiture of the meditative mind that contains the quality of bringing peace, clarity and balance to the mental realms of consciousness. This symbol represents the integrative mind, or the mind that has been able to bring two or more issues together into a state of resolution, which is represented by the two swords piercing the blue lotus blossom of wisdom.”

- Angeles Arrien (The Tarot Handbook)

Astrologically the **Two of Swords** is the **Moon in Libra**, which is symbolized by the **two small swords**, one at the top of the card that holds a **crescent moon**, and the other at the bottom of the card which holds the sign of **Libra**. The **crescent moon** indicates that at a **deep subconscious place**, there is a **sense of balance and peace**, which is signified by the **Libra symbol**. This is **peace** that goes to a **very deep spiritual place** which is represented by the **yellow on the card**, and a **peace that is renewing and regenerating**, which is represented by the **green on this card**.

“The Moon is change, but Nature is peaceful; moreover, Libra represents balance; between them, they regulate the energy of the Swords.”

- The Book of Thoth (Aleister Crowley)
When you pull this card, it means that a strong and important decision has been made. Swords represent the mental level of consciousness, therefore the decision will manifest peace of mind and resolution within the next two weeks, two months.

In the classic Rider-Waite Tarot, we see a young woman who has put a barrier of swords across her heart. Her rigid posture tells us of her struggle to keep her feelings under control. She is fending off any approach from the outside. “Nothing comes in, and nothing goes out”, she seems to say.

The Two of Swords appears to remind us that there is a truth about yourself and a situation which you need to face. How are you really feeling? Are you afraid of being hurt? What are you refusing to look at?

The blindfold symbolizes the ignorance of seeing the Truth and can also indicate trusting one's own feelings and not being deceived by what one sees. Obi-Wan Kenobi in Star Wars tells Luke "Your eyes can deceive you, don’t trust them."

The most common barrier we put up is a closed heart. When we cut ourselves off from our emotions, this blocks the flow of Love which is never a good thing. At times it is necessary to keep us safe, however in the long run we must learn to open ourselves to Love again.

"Another barrier between people is a deadlocked situation. When two parties are set in their positions – cut off from each other – there is a stalemate. To break it, the ‘opponents’ must come out from behind their swords and listen to each other. The lesson of the Two of Swords is that barriers are not the answer. We must stay open if we are to find peace and wholeness."

- Learning The Tarot (Joan Bunning)
We block off emotions and refuse to look at them. We do everything to avoid looking at the truth and pretend that everything is okay. We divide ourselves into fragments rather than feeling with the whole of our Being.

“We must remember that the natural vocation of a sword is to fight, to cut, to pierce, to kill. It is an instrument of action. Just like the mind, just like the Ruach, the intellectual part of the soul, it is in constant movement.”

- Understanding Aleister Crowley’s Thoth Tarot (Lon Milo DuQuette)

The Two of Swords in the elegant Animals Divine Tarot shows the decision of the sparrow, to take courage and fly into the eternal realms of freedom and inspiration, shining with friendship, affection and intimacy.

“The sparrow looks up wistfully at the soaring birds overhead. They exhibit dynamic energy as they fly in proximity of two swords being supported by ice-covered branches. The little sparrow stands upon a snow-covered patch and is contemplating whether it should attempt to fly up to the branches to examine the swords more closely. But the little bird fears the tangle of icy branches. The cold ground represents mental stasis; the branches signify expansion and the possibility of higher levels of intellectual exploration. The soaring birds have successfully ascended to the realm of higher thought and are in the process of absorbing the mental energy emanating from the two swords.”

- Animals Divine (Lisa Hunt)
In the *marvellous Shadowscapes Companion Tarot*, the *reminder* to *open your Heart* takes precedence as this is what *enables you to connect with the tranquillity within your Centre*. This allows the opportunities for *prospering*. The capacity to accumulate strong personal victories is strong, however if not careful, advantages gained can be lost if *balance of Self* is missing. Do not waste your valuable resources!

“*He stands in the path, warding off those who venture near. His cloaked presence is obdurate and imposing. Steel flashes as he draws the two swords to bar the way. ‘Who wishes to pass?’ he demands, with eyes and teeth that gleam like the reflections from the twin blades. He stands there, as hard and unyielding as the metal of the forged swords. The spirits of the woods writhe and churn in the trees around him. They draw back from that cold steel, from that icy figure.*

*The Two of Swords is a stalemate, an impasse. Neither side will compromise, and so no progress can be made until one chooses to step aside. It is a lock-stepped balance, a strange dance that struggles to find some grace without yielding any ground. It is a denial of truth, an avoidance of what is clear before your eyes or hiding in your heart.*

‘*Open your heart’, urges the swan, tendering the beating gem, the heart that stills when there is only the desire to take and not give."

- *Shadowscapes Companion* (Stephanie Pui-Mun Law & Barbara Moore)
In the interpretation provided by **Aleister Crowley**, astrologically the **Two of Swords** is symbolized by **Jupiter in Capricorn**. This reflects *great optimism in Life, in knowing what works and what doesn’t*. Results are garnered with *great endurance* and *high standards* are the name of the game. One must still *be very aware of disruption* and *maintain to seek tranquillity within*. Beware the *falsehoods of duplicity and disloyalty*.

“*This card is ruled by Chokmah in the Element of Air. This suit, governing all intellectual manifestations, is always complicated and disordered. It is subject to change as is no other suit. It represents a general shaking-up, resulting from the conflict of Fire and Water in their marriage; and proceeds, when Earth appears, to crystallization. But the purity and exaltation of Chokmah are such that this card manifests the very best idea possible to the suit. The energy abides above the onslaught of disruption. This comparative calm is emphasized by the celestial attribution: the Moon in Libra.*”

- The Book of Thoth (Aleister Crowley)

The **Blue lotus** represents the *influence of the mother*, and hence *maternal protection*, with the rays indicating the *equilibrium of the symbol*. The title associated with the card is “*Lord of Peace Restored*.” One must work to restore the *natural balance of the mind*.
“Eastern mystics tell us that the mind is the great enemy. If we are to achieve profound levels of consciousness, the mind must be overcome. Fearful that its existence and control will end, the mind resists these efforts at all costs. This is why so many cards in the suit of Swords seem so frustrated, anxious, nervous, even tortured.”

- Understanding Aleister Crowley’s Thoth Tarot (Lon Milo DuQuette)

It is vital to allow yourself to open up to new ideas. It is important to meditate upon the choices you are to make as the more you expand your horizons, the more vulnerable you become. Do not make hasty decisions. Allow the flow of balance and Peace to permeate Your Divine Being. See through the Eyes of the Beholder, the eyes of Truth, become the Tranquillity in the Eternal voice.
Skills and Traits - facets of The Two of Swords

New Perspectives

being observant
study and reflection
discovering new facets
adapting communication
cooperating with others

Seeing Both Sides

being diplomatic
giving clear advice
being objective
examination of facts
biding your time

Making Choices

strong agreements
making new partnerships
clear decisions
finesse and brilliance
maintaining eloquence

Fair Investigations

making new bonds
finding camaraderie
mental brilliance
being certain about facts
flowing with patience
World and Occupation

Opening Good Judgement

Patience, Finesse, Honesty
Impartiality, Skill, Grace
Precision, Fair dealing, Fact
Profound intelligence, Tests
Mastery, Affiliation, Verdicts
Meeting, Reserve, Waiting
Arbitration, Detachment
Judgments, Conservation
Concentration, Speculation
Review, Debate, Analysis
Maintaining Your Cool
Avoiding an Unpleasantness

Negative Path

Refusing to Love

Complexity, Division, Falling out, Stalemate
Blocking Emotions, Denying true feelings
Stifling a natural response, Hiding distress
Dogmatism, Defiance, Elitism, Evil, Breach, Vanity
Keeping another at arm's length, Being defensive
Turning a deaf ear, Pretending everything is fine
Avoiding the Truth, Refusing to look at facts
Rigidity, Inflexibility, Arrogance, Polarity, Stagnation
Closing your eyes to what’s going on, Prejudice
Ignoring the warning signs, Choosing not to know
Being at a Stalemate, Feeling afraid to act, Acrimony
Reaching an impasse, Staying stuck, Disagreement
Refusing to decide, Being unwilling to rock the boat
Difficult decisions, Exaggeration, Coldness, Incompatibility
Staying on the fence, Neutrality, Indifference
Reversed

On the Crossroads of the Soul

Stalemate ends, Better feeling, Conflict avoided
Compromise reached, Subjectivity, Vacillation
Indecision passes, Confusing information, Deceit
Agreements overturned, Wrong conclusions, Fraud
Irreconcilable differences, Lies, Loss of equilibrium
Lack of perspective, Incompatibilities resolved
No detachment, Refusal to face facts, Argument
Irrational behaviour, Contradiction, Indecision
Inept communication, Good advice ignored, Apathy
Being swayed, Emotion dominates logic, Dullness
Loss of poise, Sabotage, Surface understanding
Partiality, Lack of curiosity, Conformity, Stupidity
Unfair decisions, Rigid allegiances, Lack of education
Adverse judgments, Indecision, Refusal to see truth
Delusion, Conflict, Superficiality, Lack of insight

(The reversal asks to strengthen the positive and release the negative.
Any path will always lead to both being fulfilled)

Opposing Cards

The Moon  self-deception, not seeing the Truth
Nine of Wands  being defensive, closing yourself off
Seven of Swords  running away from the Truth
Four of Pentacles  stalemate, blockage

Reinforcing Cards

The Fool  opening up, uninhibited
Wheel of Fortune  moving, getting things going
Justice  accepting the Truth, accepting responsibility
The Star  free flow of positive feelings
Three of Wands  moving forward, looking at the facts
Research sources

Taroscopes by Michael Tsarion
taroscopes.com

Röhrig Tarot by Carl-W. Röhrig
Arcus Arcanum Tarot by Hager Gunter
The Tarot Handbook by Angeles Arrien
The Book of Thoth by Aleister Crowley
Animals Divine Companion by Lisa Hunt
Fantastical Creatures by Lisa Hunt & D.J. Conway
Thoth Tarot by Aleister Crowley & Lady Frieda Harris
Radiant Rider-Waite Tarot by Pamela Colman Smith
Shadowscapes Companion by Stephanie Pui-Mun Law & Barbara Moore
Understanding Aleister Crowley’s Thoth Tarot by Lon Milo DuQuette
Robin Wood Tarot by Robin Wood & Michael Short
Kleopatra Tarot by Etta Stoico & Silvana Alasia
Connolly Tarot by Eileen & Peter Paul Connolly
Learning the Tarot by Joan Bunning
Haindl Tarot by Hermann Haindl

pyreaus.com
Two of Swords
SPARROW

TWO SWORDS
Frieden
Two of Swords
Peace
Two of Swords