

The White Light Tarot: deck and book by Jessica Fisher Willson (Review by Colleen Hartford)

The concept of using healing and intuition together through Reiki and tarot is intriguing. As I play Reiki, I have found that many illnesses are based in emotional unbalance. This deck and book are excellent tools for identifying these energy blocks, as the cards have an aptitude for honing in on a client's troubled areas.

In the introduction, the author describes the history of the development of Reiki, and Dr. Usui's spiritual studies and eventual understanding of the healing techniques and symbols of Reiki. I am grateful she did not display Reiki's sacred symbols as they must be taught by a master. She also includes an informative history of tarot, adding to its early roots a mode for passing down stories and morality lessons through illustrations in a time when few people were literate.

The White Light Tarot is not a RWS deck, but it does follow the common tarot deck format: twenty-two Major Arcana cards, and four suits (wands, cups, swords, and disks) of fifty-six cards. Some of the Major Arcana are renamed: Hanged Man is called "Sacrifice," Temperance is "Balance," and Judgment is "Awakening." All 78 cards are assigned to one of the seven chakras, and an overview of chakras is offered at the end of the book. By using the chakra spread given in the book, the reader can determine in what areas of life the client is thriving or struggling. A few extra cards accompany the deck, including a card with an at-a-glance summary of the seven chakras and keywords for each, as well as additional spreads not included in the book.

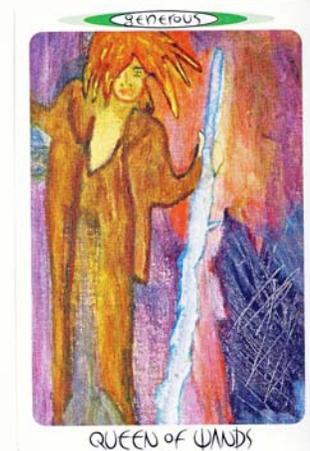
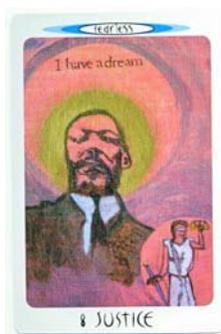
The painting style of Jessica Fisher Willson is reminiscent of early surrealism, and the renderings are simple, soft, and jopfully primitive. She uses a broad color palette to effectively convey the meaning of the cards, along with unusual images. The deck is not based on traditional tarot imagery, so the cards aren't always instantly familiar. A keyword is at the top of each card, encircled by the chakra color assigned to the card. For instance, the Queen of Wands features the word "generous" framed in a green oval (the 4th - heart chakra).

Some of the images are lovely and moving, as in The Lovers card: two cats curl around each other and form a yang-yin circle. Colors convey the feeling of the cards as much if not more than objects, making the deck unique. I found it somewhat difficult to read the cards at first; anyone wishing to use them will need to study them for a while.

Fisher-Willson makes some unusual chakra assignments to the cards. For example, she assigns the 2nd sacral chakra (of sexuality and generation) to the High Priestess, whereas in my understanding of chakras, the 6th brow chakra (third eye - intuition) would have been a better match. Her chakra assignments to each card aren't always well explained in the book. The divinatory meanings are geared to use in healing work, and sometimes diverge from more commonly-known meanings.

After working with the deck and becoming more familiar with the images, I found the deck to be lovely and the book to be informative. With study, Reiki practitioners will enjoy its usefulness as a tool for assisting our clients in identifying the emotional healing they need to do. It is also an excellent supplemental tool for self-evaluation.

The White Light Tarot (deck) and **White Light Tarot: Combining Tarot and Reiki** (book) by Jessica Fisher Willson © 2006. Sylphar Press. \$25 each. www.whitelighttarot.com



Colleen Hartford has read cards for over twenty years and has been playing Reiki for two years. She is a graduate from Lourdes College with a degree in psychology and women's studies.