Reading Heal the Witch Wound by Celeste Larsen

A TAROT BOOK CLUB

with Annie Aboulian
The Tarot Professor



http://thetarotprofessor.substack.com

Welcome to the tarot book club!

When I first picked up Celeste Larsen's book, **Heal the Witch Wound: Reclaim Your Magic & Step Into Your Power**, I thought I'd learn more about the experience of women who identify as witches and perhaps figure out if this was a path I wanted to go down in more than just an intellectual sort of way.

But I was shocked to learn that I carried so many of the witch wound symptoms myself, including being afraid to speak my mind or be seen for who I am, constantly doubting myself, and more. If you're reading this, you likely struggle with those or similar challenges as well, whether you call yourself a witch or not. You probably also feel like it's high time for reclaiming our magic and healing - both individually and as a collective. This book can help us on our journey.

If you still don't have your copy of **Heal the Witch Wound** yet, here's a quick link to the book on Amazon. Please also consider checking your local bookstore or library for copies.

This reading guide contains a calendar of virtual book club meetings, a suggested reading schedule, and various other resources, including my personal favorite - tarot spreads and exercises to do as you read!

Because Larsen's book is divided into two narrative sections (Parts 1 and 2) and a compendium of rituals to try (Part 3), you'll notice that the suggested reading schedule jumps around between chapters a bit. That's because I've paired ritual chapters from Part 3 into our readings of Parts 1 and 2 so we can practice and play as we read rather than waiting until the end of the book to try anything.

Please know that you never have to skip a Zoom or live text chat in this book club because you haven't finished your reading or anything like that. You are always welcome to join the discussion anyway!

Thanks so much for being part of the Tarot Professor Substack community. Let's begin, witches!

- Annie

Suggested Reading Schedule

Week 1: Jan. 19 - Jan. 25

— Introduction

— Chapters 1 and 2 (in Part One)

SAT. 1/25
AT 11:00 AM PST
LIVE TEXT CHAT
ON SUBSTACK!



Weeks 2 - 3: Jan. 26 - Feb. 8

— Chapters 3 and 4 (in Part One)

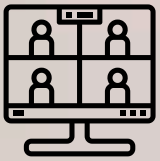
— Chapter 10 (in Part Three)

Weeks 4 - 5: Feb. 9 - Feb. 22

— Chapters 5 and 6 (in Part Two)

— Chapter 11 (in Part Three)

SAT. 2/22
AT 10:00 AM PST
LIVE MEET-UP
ON ZOOM!



Weeks 6 - 7: Feb. 23 - Mar. 8

— Chapters 7, 8, and 9 (in Part Two)

— Chapters 12 and 13 (in Part Three)

Week 8: Mar. 9 - Mar. 15

— Chapters 14, 15, and 16 (in Part Three)

SAT. 3/15
AT 11:00 AM PST
LIVE TEXT CHAT
ON SUBSTACK!



Meet-Ups at a Glance

January 2025

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

February 2025

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
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March 2025

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						



SUBSTACK CHAT & ZOOM MEETING LINKS WILL BE EMAILED IN ADVANCE!

Active Reading Strategies

I give a version of this diagram to all my college students, especially those who have been out of school for awhile or don't consider themselves avid or "good" readers. You probably already do at least one or two of these "ACTIVE" reading strategies, which are designed to help us read closely and critically and get the most out of our texts. Take it or leave it!

ASK QUESTIONS

What does ___ mean?

I wonder why ___.

CONNECT THE DOTS

This is similar to ___.

That reminds me of ___.

TAKE NOTES

Highlight, underline, and/or annotate away!

INFER

The author assumes ___.

It sounds like she's saying ___.

VISUALIZE

I'm picturing ___.

I'd lay it out like ___.

(Doodles welcome!)



EVALUATE

I love the part when ___.

I disagree that ___.

LIKE MUSIC AS YOU READ? CLICK HERE FOR MY HEAL THE WITCH WOUND AMBIENT PLAYLIST!




"YOU WERE BORN TO LIVE
A MAGICAL LIFE.
DEEP WITHIN YOUR SOUL,
YOU KNOW THIS."
~ CELESTE LARSEN

01

Week 1
(Jan. 19 - Jan. 25)

INTRODUCTION CHAPTERS 1 AND 2

Discussion Questions:

1. Larsen introduces her book with the following passage:

"You were born to live a magical life. Deep within your soul, you know this; it is why you picked up this book. But there is another reason why you now hold this book in your hands: because some part of you feels it is unsafe to fully embrace the magic that exists within and around you."

Does that resonate with you? What brought you to this book? Why are you reading it?

2. Larsen defines witch in the introduction as "someone who claims magic as their birthright and uses it to create change in their inner and outer worlds."

How do you define witch, and do you identify as one? Why or why not?

3. At the end of Ch. 2, Larsen states that the messaging of the violent execution of witches was clear: Seeking power while existing in a female body, defying societal norms around gender and sexuality, speaking out against injustice, questioning authority, offending the wrong person, trusting friends and neighbors, believing in pagan superstitions, and being different were all DANGEROUS.

Which of these seem particularly dangerous to you today, and how so?

Ask Your Tarot Cards!

In the intro, Larsen suggests that when we "come across a statement or story that awakens something within [us], pause. Sit with that feeling, breathe into it, expand it, study it."

I suggest pulling a tarot card in those moments as well! What emotions, symbols, memories, and other thoughts come up through the cards in connection with those notable moments in the book?



02

Week 2
(Jan. 26 - Feb. 1)
CHAPTERS 3 AND 4

Discussion Questions:

1. In Ch. 3, Larsen characterizes the witch wound as an "otherness wound" as well as a feminine wound. Nonetheless, she importantly notes that the witch hunts were steeped in misogyny and systematically targeted women, even though some men and other marginalized groups were also persecuted. Do you think the reasons women were targeted then are similar to or different from the reasons women are largely targeted now as well?

2. Besides identifying as a woman (if you do), how do you feel "othered" by society or your community? Where do you find or look for belonging, safety, and healing?

3. In Ch. 4, Larsen contends that history is repeating itself: "Is it a coincidence that we are currently being affected by the same global challenges that plagued Europe during the Burning Times, including wealth inequality, political hostility, climate change, and disease? I don't believe it is." What do you think? What do you see happening in your community, country, or around the world that makes you agree or disagree with Larsen here?

Ask Your Tarot Cards!

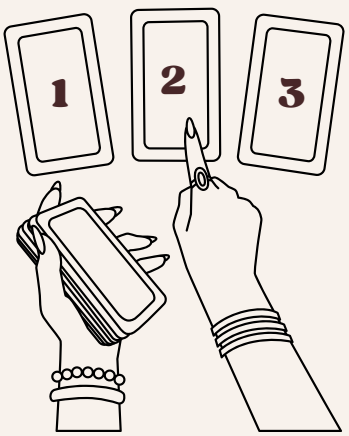
I love that Larsen looks beyond ourselves when it comes to what's at stake in this book. In Ch. 4, she argues that "by understanding the witch wound on both a personal, spiritual level and a global, cultural scale, we can facilitate deeper healing."

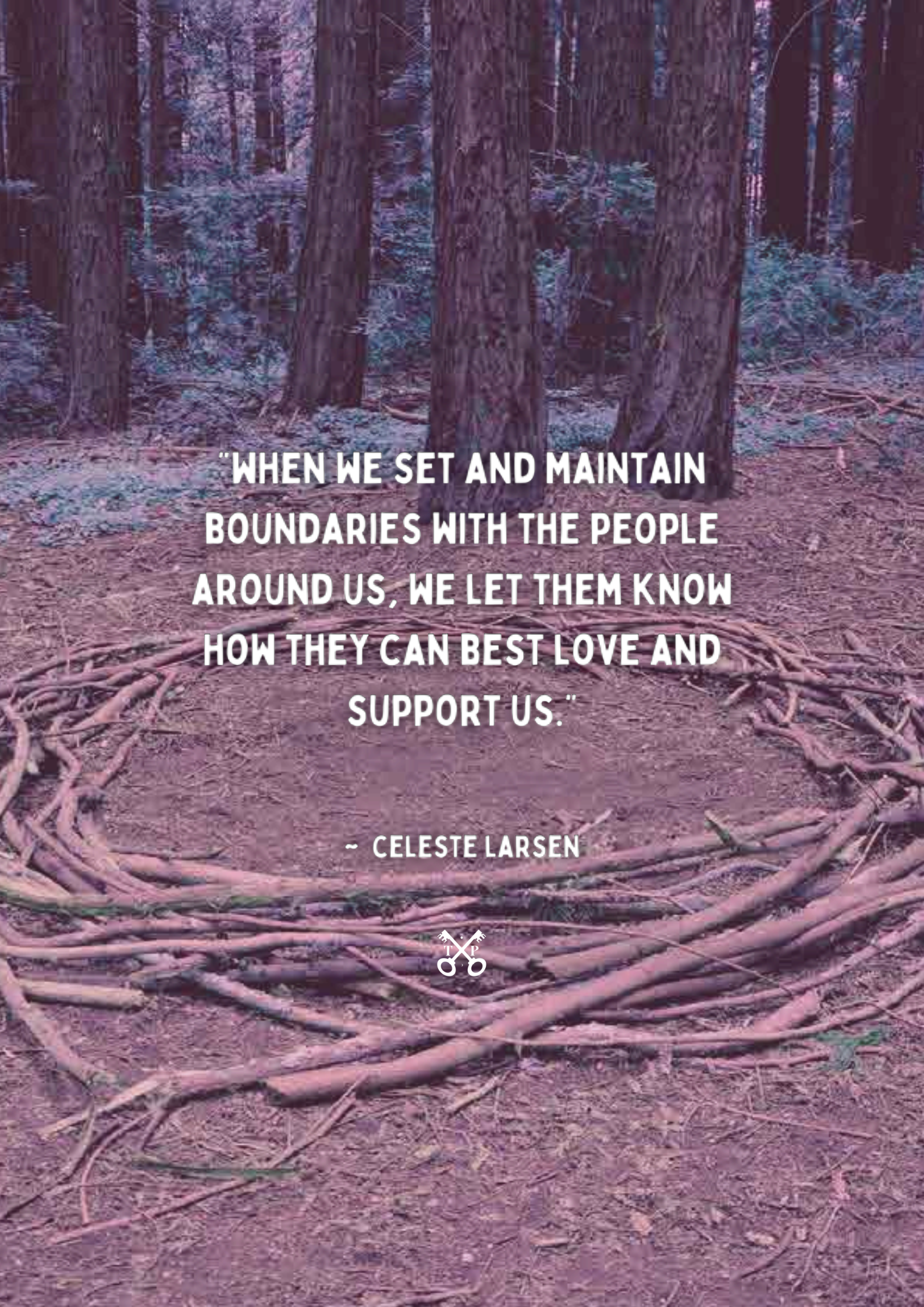
Turn to your tarot cards to get some deeper insight. Try pulling three cards as follows:

1. A card to represent how the witch wound manifests in me personally

2. A card to represent how the witch wound manifests in my life on a larger cultural scale

3. How understanding my witch wound can facilitate healing




"WHEN WE SET AND MAINTAIN BOUNDARIES WITH THE PEOPLE AROUND US, WE LET THEM KNOW HOW THEY CAN BEST LOVE AND SUPPORT US."
~ CELESTE LARSEN

03

Week 3
(Feb. 2- Feb. 8)

CHAPTER 10

Try a Ritual for Cleansing Energetic Space!

You may have noticed that each of the four energy cleansing rituals Larsen outlines in Ch. 10 is ruled primarily by one of the four elements: earth, air, fire, or water.

While any of us can conduct and even create rituals of any kind, it is often said that working with an element that is prevalent in our astrological birth chart can be particularly powerful. If you aren't familiar with your natal chart or even your "Big Three," you can at least look up your sun sign below and see which of Larsen's suggested cleansing rituals might be especially potent for you.

Try it (or any of the other rituals in Ch. 10) this week and let us know how it goes!



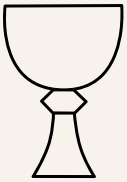
If you're a Taurus, Virgo, or Capricorn, you're an Earth sign. Try the earthing, or grounding, ritual in Chapter 10 to return unwanted energy to the earth.



If you're a Gemini, Libra, or Aquarius, you're an Air sign. Try speaking up about your boundaries by either communicating them to others or affirming them out loud to yourself, like the examples in Chapter 10.



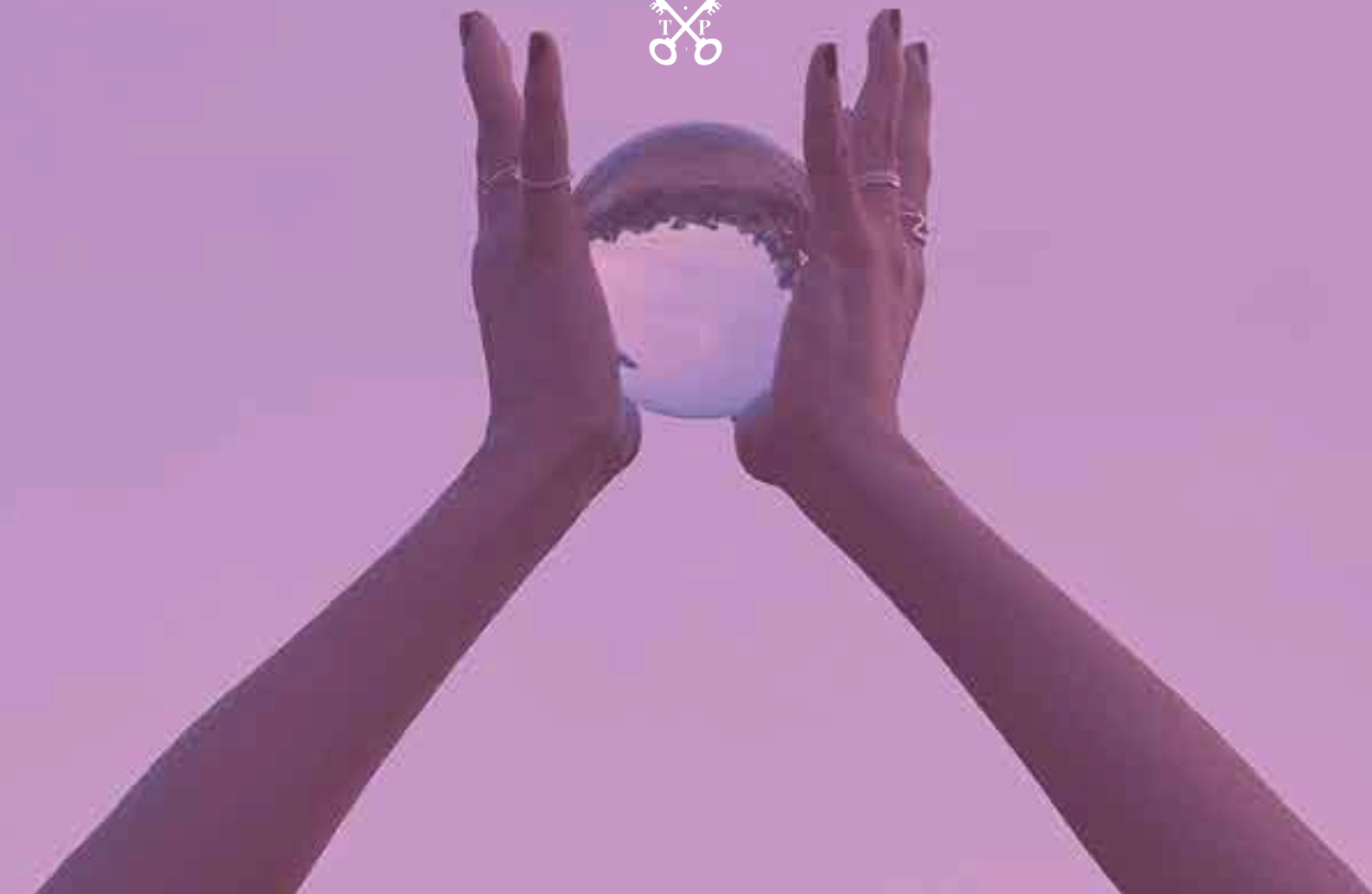
If you're an Aries, Leo, or Sagittarius, you're a Fire sign. Try using candles as the two objects in the cord-cutting ritual Larsen describes in Chapter 10.



If you're a Cancer, Scorpio, or Pisces, you're a Water sign. The cleansing ritual bath or shower Larsen describes in Chapter 10 will have you right in your element.

"THE WITCH WOUND
IS YOUR PSYCHE'S WAY
OF TRYING TO KEEP YOU SAFE."

~ CELESTE LARSEN



04

Week 4
(Feb. 9 - Feb. 15)

CHAPTERS 5 AND 6

Discussion Questions:

1. Are you still in the "broom closet"? How so, and why do you thank that is? What would need to happen for you to come out of the closet?

2. In Ch. 5, Larsen contends that the witch wound has "[scared off interested practitioners from the craft," including herself. Is there a spiritual, pagan, or witchy practice that interests you but that you are still too scared or anxious to try based on such social conditioning or past cultural teachings?

3. In Ch. 6, Larsen explains that the witch wound can manifest in two seemingly opposing limiting beliefs: staying silent out of fear of being too much and staying silent because we don't feel worthy enough to express our ideas. She argues, "Women, in particular, have been tasked with walking the fine line between too much and not enough since antiquity." Do you find yourself negotiating this fine line in your own life as well? How so?

4. Think of a time when you spoke your truth, even if it was uncomfortable or scary. How did it feel in your body to do so? Now, think of a time when you betrayed your truth and either remained silent or said things that contradicted what you genuinely thought or felt. How did that moment feel in your body?

Tarot Connections:

Did any tarot cards come to mind as you read this week? Here are mine:



"Speaking your truth is about sharing your belies and emotions, setting boundaries, and stating your needs and desires" (Ch. 6).



"Being seen is about simply existing in your truth and allowing others to witness that without attempting to hide, diminish, or justify yourself" (Ch. 6).


"THERE IS ABSOLUTELY
NOTHING YOU CAN DO TO BE
JUST RIGHT FOR EVERYONE
BUT YOU CAN BE JUST RIGHT
FOR YOURSELF."
~ CELESTE LARSEN

05

Week 5
(Feb. 16 - Feb. 22)

CHAPTER 11

Tarot Connections



1. In Ch. 11, Larsen suggests embracing the spirit of play and the art of pretending by spending an afternoon embodying the traits of a mythical character or archetype. Let's put a tarot spin on this! What tarot archetype feels exciting and empowering to you right now? Spend part of a day (or longer if you like) role-playing as that tarot figure. Let us know what you come up with and how it goes!

2. Another ritual Larsen suggests in Ch. 11 to conjure more self-empowerment is to create a sigil. Try coming up with a sigil using the name of the tarot card you embodied in the above exercise.

Discussion Questions

3. As a skeptic who is fascinated by witchcraft but hasn't quite come to any convictions yet, it really resonated with me when Larsen shared that in the early years of her practice, "she still felt like a child playing a game of pretend" as she chanted in her bedroom during a ritual. Do you ever feel that way? Why do you think that is (or isn't)?

4. Larsen ends Ch. 11 by stating that "if you want something you have never had, you must be willing to do something you have never done. What is something you have never done in the name of self-empowerment?" It's a new year - a perfect time to start working on the new and more empowered you. What is something you are willing to try this year in the name of reclaiming your magic and stepping into your power?


"LET YOUR WEIRDNESS
BECOME A SOURCE
OF MAGIC!"
~ CELESTE LARSEN

06

Week 6
(Feb. 23 - Mar. 1)
CHAPTERS 7, 8, AND 9

Discussion Questions

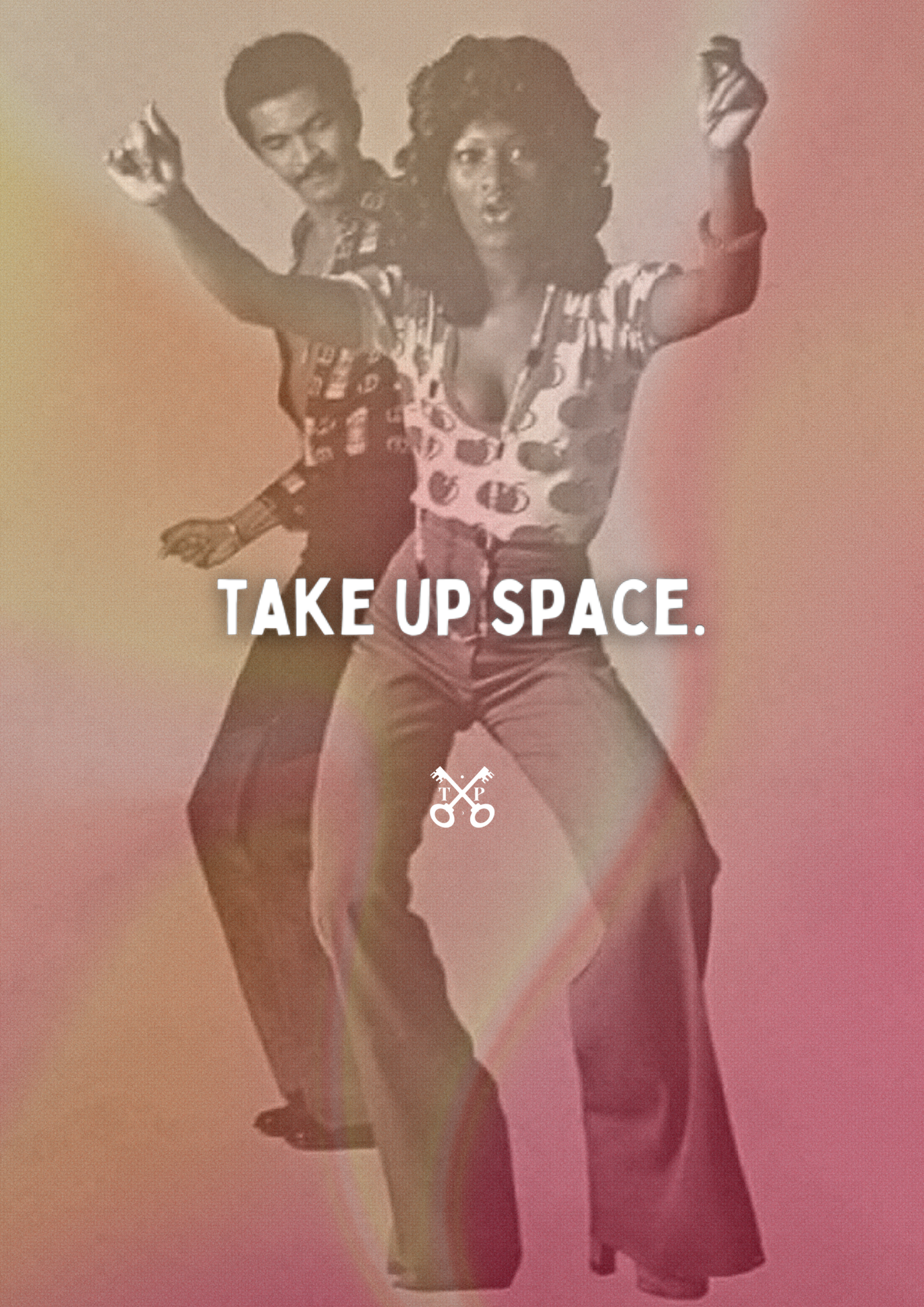
1. In Ch. 7, Larsen says that "an important question to ask at this point in the journey is: Who are you? Who are you, really? What are you outside the labels of partner, parent, child, sibling, friend, employee - all the roles that position you relative to another person? Who are you beyond the context of your age, income, job occupation, or the city you live in?...If everything external and circumstantial were stripped away, who then would you be? Who are you in the privacy of your own mind, your own heart, your own dreams?"

How would you answer this question, and how easy or difficult was it to do so?

2. Ch. 7 also explores limiting beliefs: "thoughts, ideas, and stories we tell ourselves that keep us from pursuing our dreams, fulfilling our goals, and doing the things we feel called to do." What are your top 3 limiting belief "greatest hits"? What deeper fears to you believe exist beneath the surface of those limiting stories?

3. Larsen contends that the witch wound is so insidious that "it often shows up in areas that are seemingly unrelated to magic and witchcraft." Where does it show up in your life?

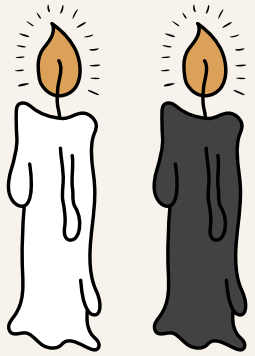
4. Feminism and women's empowerment has for a long time meant the right and opportunity for women to act like men and participate in male spheres and perform male roles if they want, which is simply another manifestation of our demonization and denigration of all things feminine, as Larsen discusses in Ch. 9. What has your experience of this been?


TAKE UP SPACE.

07

Week 7
(Mar. 2 - Mar. 8)
CHAPTERS 12 AND 13

Discussion Questions



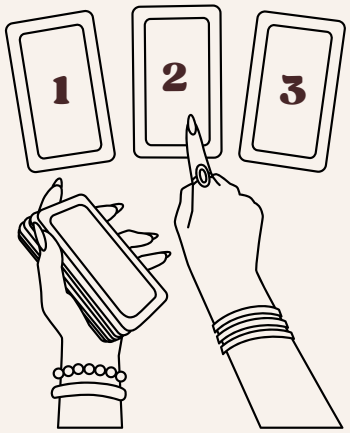
1. How much do you know about the spiritual beliefs and traditions of your ancestors? What do you know about their spiritual beliefs, stories, and customs, and what role - if any - do they play in your own current beliefs and traditions?

2. Did you try the ancestral healing ritual Larsen outlines in Ch. 12? If so, how did it go? How did you feel about trying it, and how did you feel afterward?

3. In Ch. 13, Larsen explains that traits like intuition, sensitivity, creativity, empathy, compassion, and sensuality are traditionally associated with the Divine Feminine and, consequently, not generally valued or praised in our patriarchal society. Which of these Divine Feminine qualities do you already embody? What other traditionally feminine qualities would you like to nurture and celebrate this year?

Tarot Connections

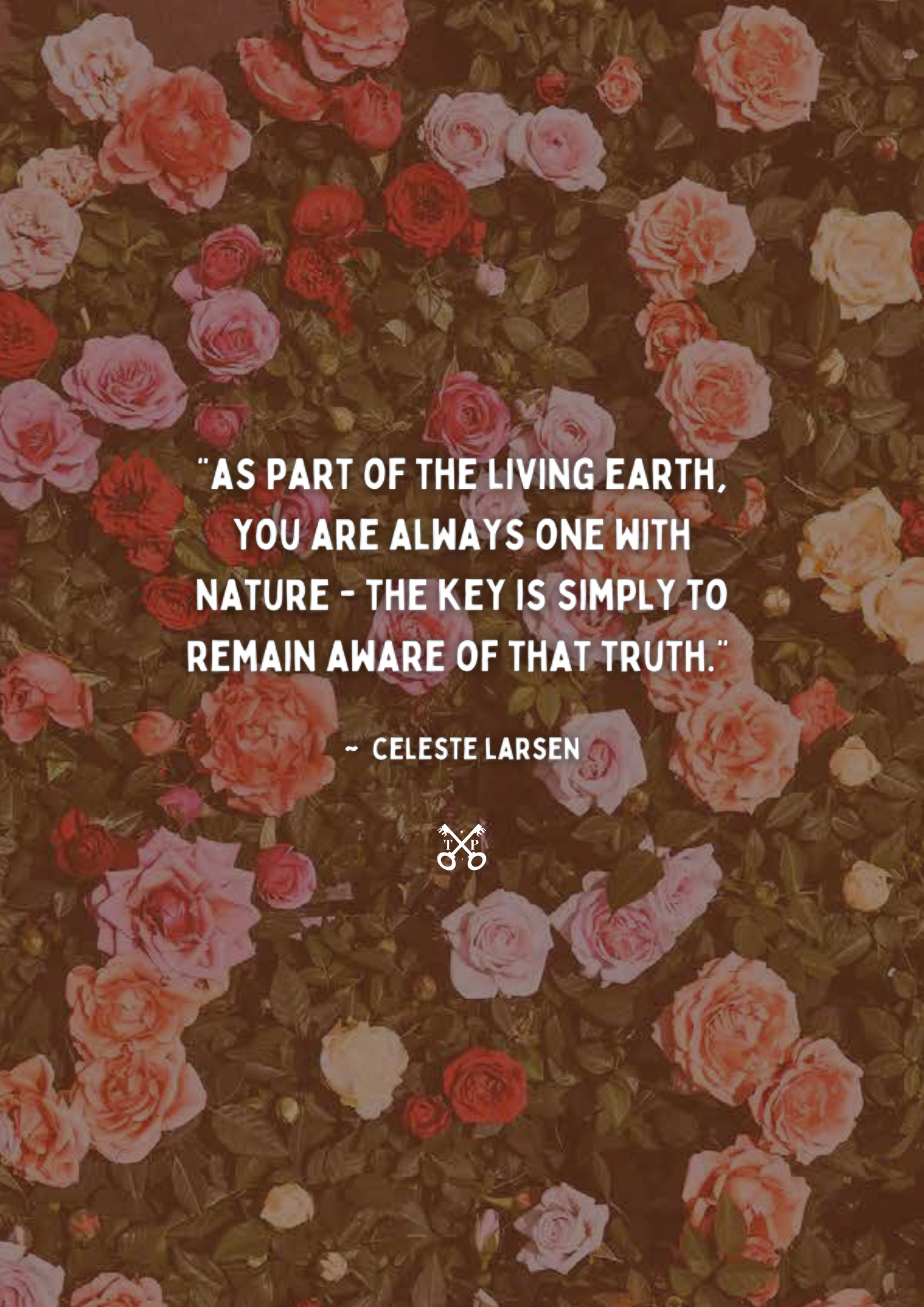
In Ch. 13, Larsen mentions the importance of self-love and suggests starting a self-love journal. Try this self-love tarot spread this week, and feel free to journal on the cards that come up for you in your self-love journal.



1. I am proud of myself for...

2. One unique thing I have to offer is...

3. I love myself because...


"AS PART OF THE LIVING EARTH,
YOU ARE ALWAYS ONE WITH
NATURE - THE KEY IS SIMPLY TO
REMAIN AWARE OF THAT TRUTH."
~ CELESTE LARSEN

08

Week 8
(Mar. 9 - Mar. 15)
CHAPTERS 14, 15, AND 16

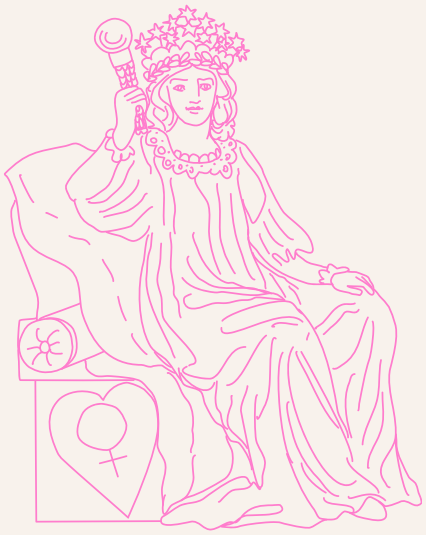
Discussion Questions

1. In Ch. 14, Larsen argues that "creating a foundation of safety and stability within your own body is one of the most important steps you can take to heal the witch wound." What is your current relationship with your body and movement, and what in this chapter have you tried or do you plan to try?

2. In Ch. 15, Larsen contends that the best way for us to reconnect with the earth and build a personal relationship with the land we live on is to get outside. How frequently do you spend time outdoors, and what natural habitats or environments do you enjoy or feel most connected to? Why do you think that is?

3. I really appreciate that Larsen recognizes that "coming out of the broom closet" looks different for everybody and is only potentially necessary when you feel like it will help align your inner and outer lives in such a way that makes you feel empowered and recognized for your authentic self. Which parts of your spiritual practice do you want to keep to yourself, and which parts do you long to show and talk about more at this point in your journey?

Tarot Connections



1. Which tarot card(s) represent connecting with the earth and nature for you, and why? The Empress comes to mind for me since (at least in the Rider Waite Smith deck) she is surrounded by and relaxing in a lush natural environment. Look through your favorite tarot deck this week and try to find at least two or three tarot cards that can represent getting outside and communing with the natural world in some way.

2. Who do you consider to be the witches of the tarot deck, and why do you think that is?

The Emotion Wheel

Invented by psychologist Robert Plutchik in 1980, the Emotion Wheel is designed to help us more accurately identify our emotions for ourselves and to more clearly express them to others.

In Ch. 14, Celeste Larsen suggests that one of the most important ways we can heal our throat energy center - or chakra - is by speaking our truth, which includes articulating how we're feeling and, in doing so, freeing buried emotions from the body.

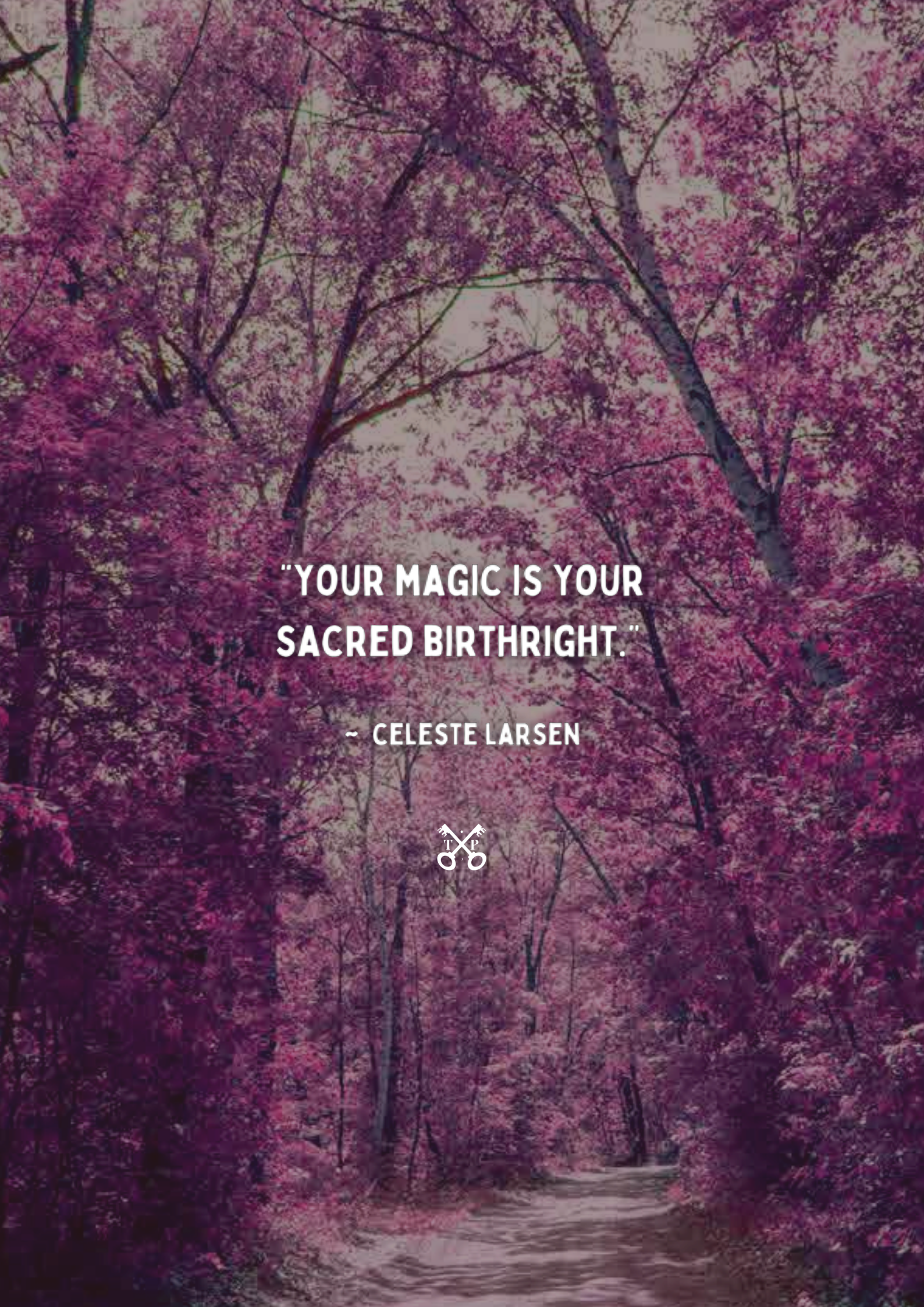
This emotion wheel was given to me by a therapist years ago, so I wanted to include it in case you find it helpful as well.



Heal the Witch Wound Tarot Spread



1. WHAT ENERGY BLOCKAGE NEEDS CLEARING?
2. WHAT CAN HELP SUPPORT AND EMPOWER ME?
3. HOW CAN I CALL ON MY ANCESTORS FOR GUIDANCE?
4. HOW CAN I CREATE SAFETY WITHIN MY BODY?
5. HOW CAN I RESTORE THE DIVINE FEMININE IN MY LIFE?
6. HOW CAN I RECONNECT WITH THE SACRED EARTH?
7. HOW CAN I RECLAIM MY POWER?
8. HOW CAN I HONOR MY MAGIC?
9. HOW CAN HEALING MY WITCH WOUND HELP HEAL MY COMMUNITY?


"YOUR MAGIC IS YOUR
SACRED BIRTHRIGHT."
~ CELESTE LARSEN

Thank you for reading with me!

Thank you for participating in this tarot book club! So much of the mystical path is a solitary one (at least it certainly feels that way to me), so I really appreciate the tarot community we've been able to forge together through Substack.

I'd love to hear how your experience of this book club went and if you have any specific book ideas for the future. I have a couple ideas for our next book, which I would love to start in April if all goes according to plan. So stay tuned and please tell a tarot-loving friend who you think would like to join us!

If you are still new to my tarot newsletter, Office Hours with The Tarot Professor, **below are a few links to previous posts that I think you'll enjoy** as a way to continue the magical discussions that came up with this book.

Again, thanks so much for being part of the Tarot Professor Substack community. Until next time!

- Annie

Have you read these posts yet?

Make the Mundane Magical: Or, How Not to Hate the Hierophant Card

Rewild Your Soul: Or, How the Moon Illuminates Our Dual Nature

Stop Mincing Words. Let Them Choke: Or, Reclaiming the Queen of Swords

Turns Out She's a Witch! Or, My Podcast Interview about Tarot

