

Why It's So Hard to Read Tarot for Ourselves

and How to do it



FHOVE AZEVEDO

MAR 30, 2026

This question has followed me since my very first attempts at reading the cards. Reading for others seems to flow so naturally, the images speak, the metaphors align, intuition feels clear and alive. But when I sit down to read for myself, something shifts: the cards go silent, or I overthink, distort, or dismiss what they're showing. Why is it so hard to read for ourselves?

The good news is, there *is* a reason, and understanding it can change everything. The bad news is, there isn't a neat "three-step" fix. But by becoming aware of what makes self-reading difficult, we can cultivate a gentler, more conscious practice, and it *does* get easier.

Thanks for reading Numinous Letters!
Subscribe for free to receive new posts and
support my work.

✓ **Subscribed**



Tarot as a Mirror of Chaos — and the Function That Sees in the Dark

Tarot isn't a binary code with clear yes/no answers. A single card can mean many things: material abundance, inheritance, a promotion, or simply a phase of fulfillment. The process of interpretation, therefore, is *chaotic* (not in a negative sense, but in the sense that it has no fixed direction). It demands something beyond logic or memorized meanings. It calls for *intuition*.

In Jungian psychology, we perceive life through four main functions: **thinking, feeling, sensing, and intuiting**. Thinking and feeling are functions of *judgment*; sensing and intuiting are functions of **perception**. Intuition perceives through the unconscious: it "knows" what isn't visible. This is the function we activate when we read tarot. When reading for others, our intuition often flows freely: we can sense hidden truths, contradictions, or potential outcomes without forcing them.



The Problem: The Ego Isn't a Good Witness of Itself

Perceiving ourselves is much harder than perceiving someone else. The ego, as the directing center of the psyche, is inherently limited. There will always be parts of us that remain in shadow, fears we can't see, projections we can't recognize. We can easily sense when a friend is self-sabotaging, but seeing the same pattern within ourselves is almost impossible.

What's missing is *objectivity*. Intuition, though deeply personal, is actually objective — it points to truth, not preference. When we read for someone else, we can hold that objectivity. But when we read for ourselves, the ego interferes: it distorts, defends, minimizes, or panics, depending on what it wants to hear.

If we pull a difficult card about an ex we secretly want back, the ego might say: "That can't be right" or "I'm just overthinking." And just like that, the message gets lost.

The Medicine: Go Slower — and Let Confusion Be the Path

The practical answer is deceptively simple: **slow down**. Learn to be *confused*, and even *comfortable* in that confusion. Instead of chasing instant clarity that confirms what the ego wants, let the symbol speak through questions. Confusion is fertile ground — it's where new insights emerge. Premature clarity often only reinforces old biases.

Here are a few practices that actually help:

Three simple steps to begin reading for yourself with more clarity

1. **Pull fewer cards.** Start with just 1–3. Less information forces your attention and reduces the temptation to rationalize.
2. **Journal without judgment.** Write your first impressions — images, sensations, phrases. Then step away for 15–30 minutes and reread. Distance brings new layers.
3. **Ask open questions.** Instead of “Will this work out?”, ask: “What am I not seeing in this situation?” or “What part of me resists this truth?” Open questions invite intuition in.

Tools for cultivating objectivity

- **Record your readings (audio)** and listen later — hearing your own voice offers distance and uncovers what you couldn't see in real time.
- **Write in third person:** describe your situation as if it were happening to a friend. It helps neutralize ego defenses.
- **Use grounding rituals:** light a candle, breathe, repeat a mantra — ritual quiets the ego and tunes your perception.
- **Exchange readings with another reader:** seeing your spread through another's eyes is profoundly revealing.

- **Embrace confusion as a sacred stage.** The not-knowing *is* the bridge to deeper knowing.

A Quick Example

Let's say you keep pulling the *Hierophant reversed* and it makes no sense — you see yourself as spiritually devoted, so why would this card show corruption or repression? Instead of dismissing it, ask: *"Where do I feel small or uncertain in my own spiritual authority?"* Often, the reversed Hierophant points not to external control, but to our own inner doubt — a reluctance to embody what we've learned. The initial confusion becomes revelation.

An Invitation to Practice

Tarot is, above all, a mirror of the psyche. Reading for ourselves requires a double practice: learning the language of the cards and learning to look at ourselves without defense. Be curious, patient, and kind. If a reading hurts or confuses you, it's not a failure — it's a sign that something essential is asking to be seen.

If you'd like, share in the comments what card you usually pull when you feel stuck — I'll respond with a question to help you explore it. And if you want to go deeper, book a session with me — sometimes another mirror helps us see what our own reflection cannot.



With love,**Fhove**

Thanks for reading Numinous Letters!
Subscribe for free to receive new posts and
support my work.

