

**A WEAPON OF LIGHT
FOR LOVE'S GREAT FIGHT.**



VECTORS OF VIRTUE

A POETIC PICTURE OF A HEALTHY HEART

POTTER



VECTORS of VIRTUE

A POETIC PICTURE OF A HEALTHY HEART

ZAC POTTER



VECTORS of VIRTUE

A POETIC PICTURE OF A HEALTHY HEART

VECTORS of VIRTUE

A POETIC PICTURE OF A HEALTHY HEART

ZAC POTTER

Author

SARAH POTTER

Design & Illustration



SHINE A LIGHT OF EXPLORATION

...into what a healthy human “heart” looks like.

Defining and modeling the prime elements of Virtue
and their function has always eluded strict science.

I believe this is because the science of Love and Virtue is a soft
science, and it is thus communicated most luminously through art
and story instead of dense philosophy or psychology journals.

In light of this, I have attempted to crystallize all I have come to
know and understand of Virtue, and using the tools of art, bound
its essence into short-form poetry and accompanying schematics.

The following poems are each meant to shed a light on an
individual facet of a foundational Virtue.

United, this collection models these Vectors of Virtue as though
they were the primary colors composing the full spectrum of light,
analogous to “the good”

**I am thankful to share this path to a greater understanding of
our heart. Open your mind and let’s start...**

Love can’t be defined; we all know that’s the rule
A cheap valentine, but never a subject in school

Shh... don’t describe this light, no matter the cost
Push purpose out of sight... another child lost

•
Break these norms - see a new frame
Engage new forms - ancient in aim

•
Vectors of Virtue
First dimensions of what’s True

Prime axioms modeled in light
Wisdom’s discerning in sight

Not rigid Science but the truest Art
Together, mapping the beauty of our Heart.





If I was going to put it all
in the simplest way...

What would I say?



The world has a sickness
only **Love** can heal

Our path to wellness
Wisdom alone can reveal



Understand the Art of Love
is what we must do

Revitalize our first skill—
Please see this new view

•

Mathematicians don't measure
the matrix of Love

It's our storytellers
who teach lessons above



IV

Wielding the tools
of art

Let's illuminate more
of our heart

•

Focus your mind
Discourse, please disagree

Still, True Love
The aim—strive to see

•

Inward reflection
The journey we need

End of destruction
This is the seed



Our guiding light
will be the rays not of sight

•

The first science
and true color theory

An ancient art
to see more clearly

•

View the spectrum of Good's light
for its primary parts

A palette of hues
intertwined with our hearts



A Lion's Mane displays character,
leading true kings

Eternal elements, burning core
of all living things

•

Moral map is the engine
Here—catch the keys—

Healthy hearts, the direction
Steer clear of disease

•

Follow this path to
show and sow

These soulful fruits we must
know and grow



Framework to teach through:
a Palette of Virtue

Now, let's see
our map and key

•

Love: Life's purpose and aim

Wisdom: Strategy in this game

Will: Fire to pursue and sustain

Grace: Cleanses error and stain

Gratitude: Love consciously received

Unity: Family harmony perceived

•

Bring clarity to your path
Follow these lessons like math





LOVE



LIFE'S PURPOSE
AND AIM



Love:

The aim of all lessons
and purpose of life

Learn and move in these dimensions
Uproot earthly strife

•

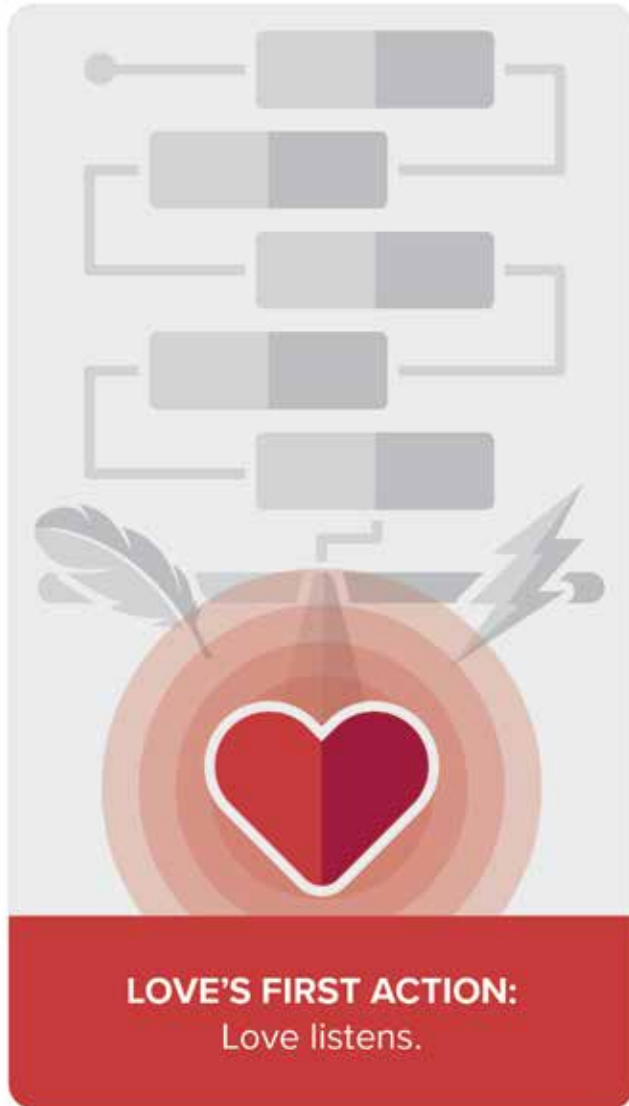
Thought then action
Love's end is a verb

To give and receive is satisfaction
Life's healing herb

•

Seeing want and need,
Love protects and provides

Through thought and deed,
Love nurtures and guides



Want to know Love's leading step?

Come near...

Before Love speaks,
it must hear

•

Unlocking Love's highest degree
Truly understanding is the key

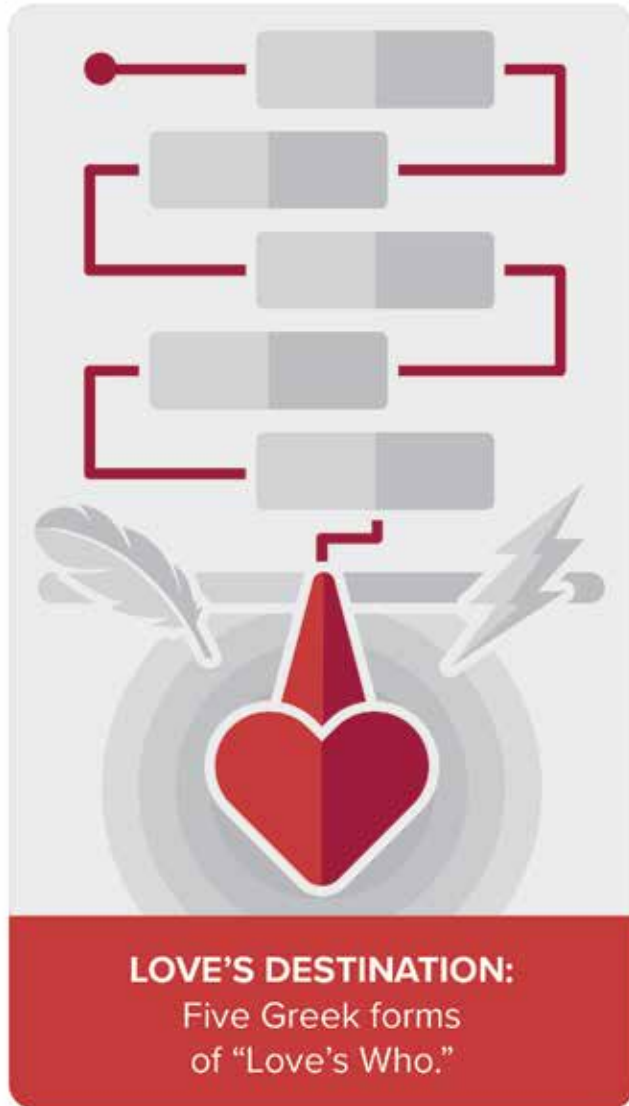
•

Open ear and really listen
Dialogue, confirm you surely know

Now form your mission
Wisdom will show which way to go

•

First act and prime priority—
from Hear we direct our authority.



Five Paths of ***Love's Who:***
Greeks taught this art too

Framework of Life's aim
Discover now, or review

•

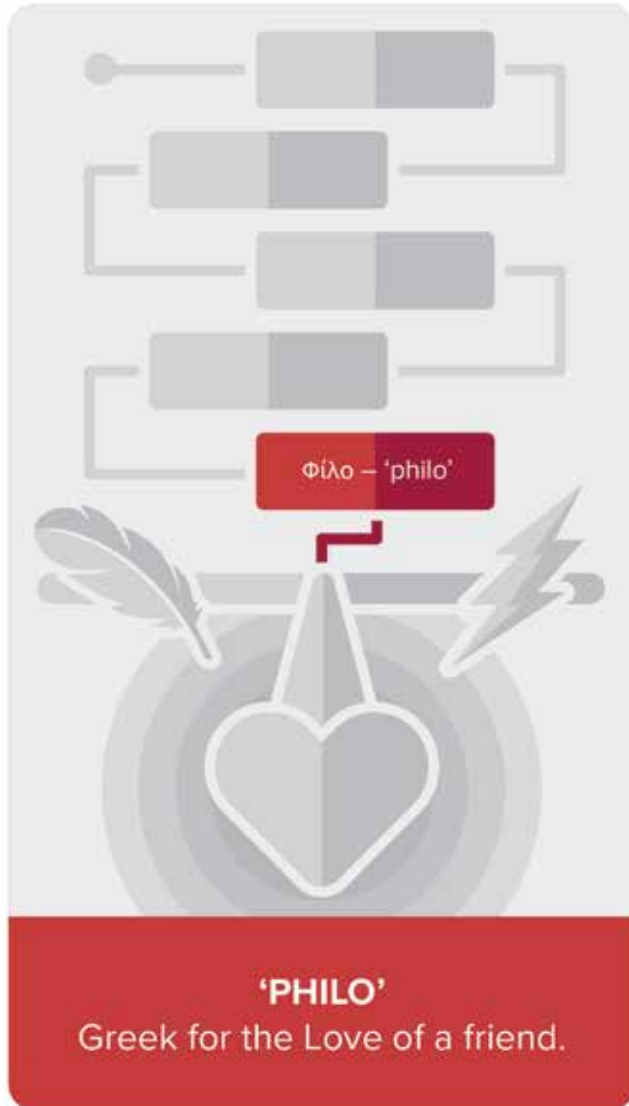
Inner look at each hall
and which wicks burn bright...

Explore what's been snuffed
Restore and reignite

•

Tour of this old view
Gain strength anew

Ancient halls we go through
Fresh Love to pursue



Philo:

is the Love shared with a friend

Those whose time we value and spend

•

Through introduction or collision,
these we choose

We share our lives, our plans,
and thoughts on the news

•

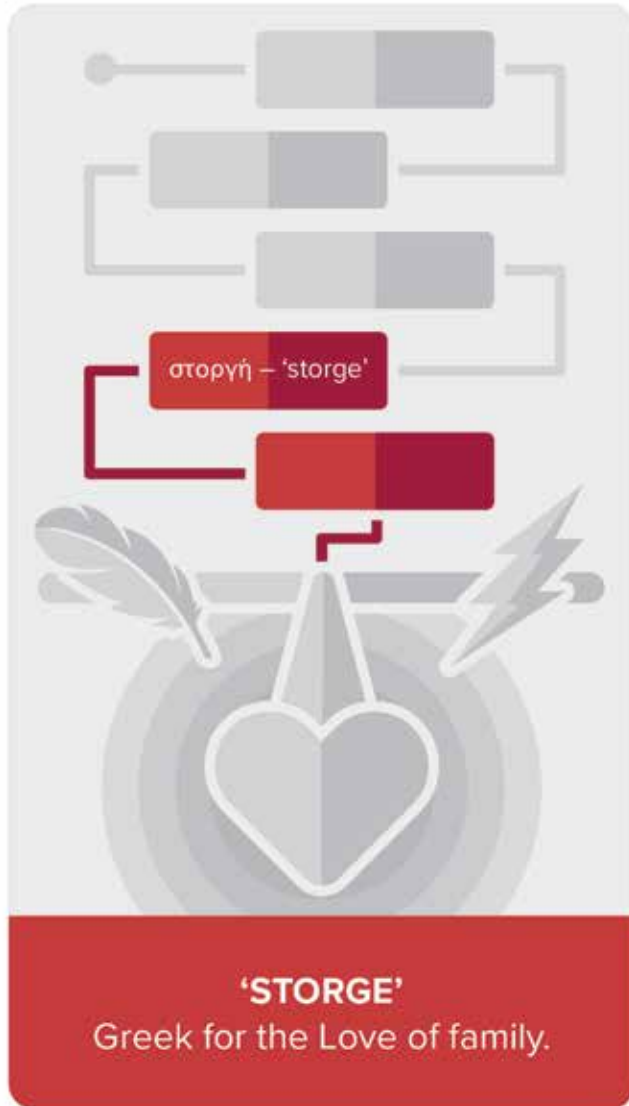
With some we laugh, drink, and be merry

Others console the burdens we carry

•

Celebration or struggle,
we'll always see them there

These are the ones we have chosen to care



Storge:

Love of our Family,
a tie forever bound

By blood or by spirit,
warmth felt all around

•

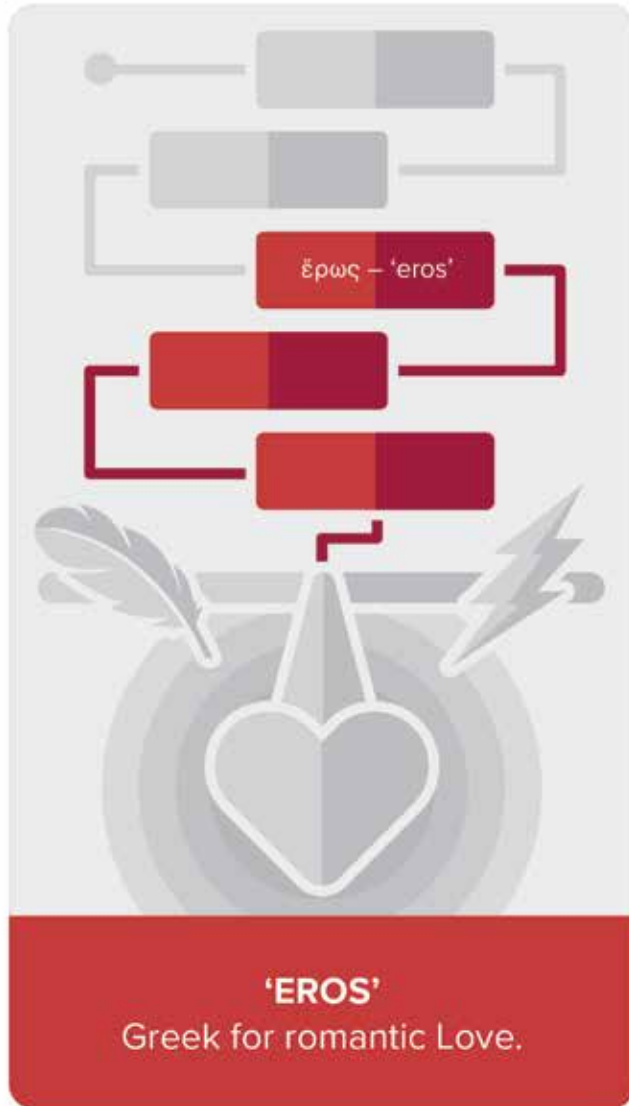
Fortune or failure,
no matter what they do

Love and loyalty can
only stay true

•

For the good of your house
is all you intend

First bond of trust
from which all extend



Eros:

Fire of passion
by you, Life will renew

Deepest longing
I do, protect and pursue

•

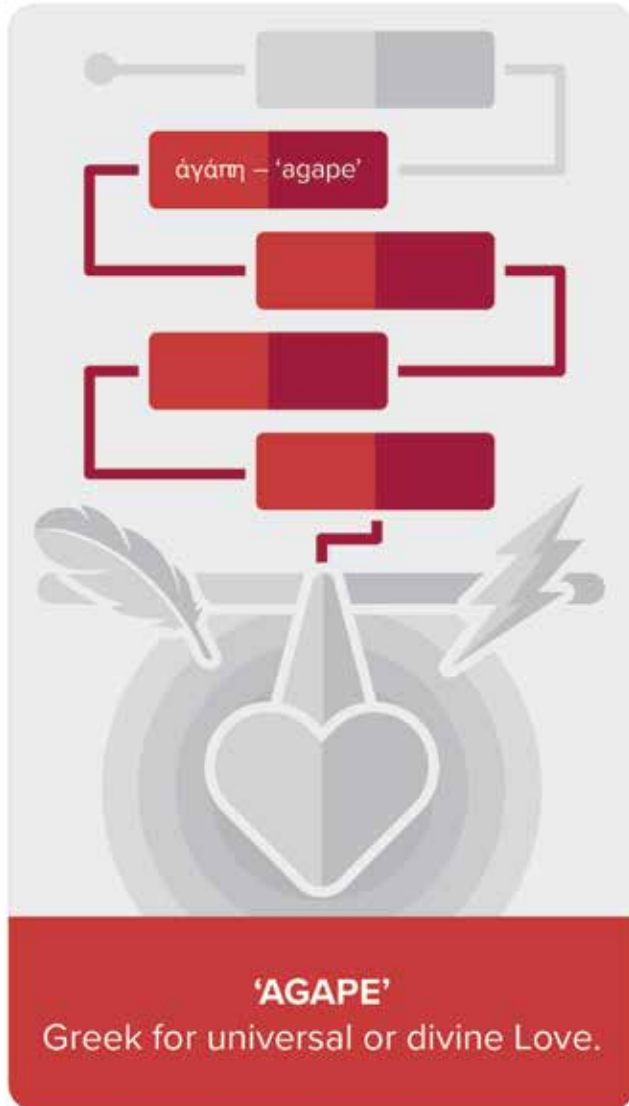
Intertwined bodies
Fulfill desires of our mate

Aligned hearts
Faithful love we create

•

Beware
it's not one-sided,
For this dance we need two

Aware
matching souls united,
Lovers forever true



Agape:

First I was and last I will be
Force that forged all you will see

•

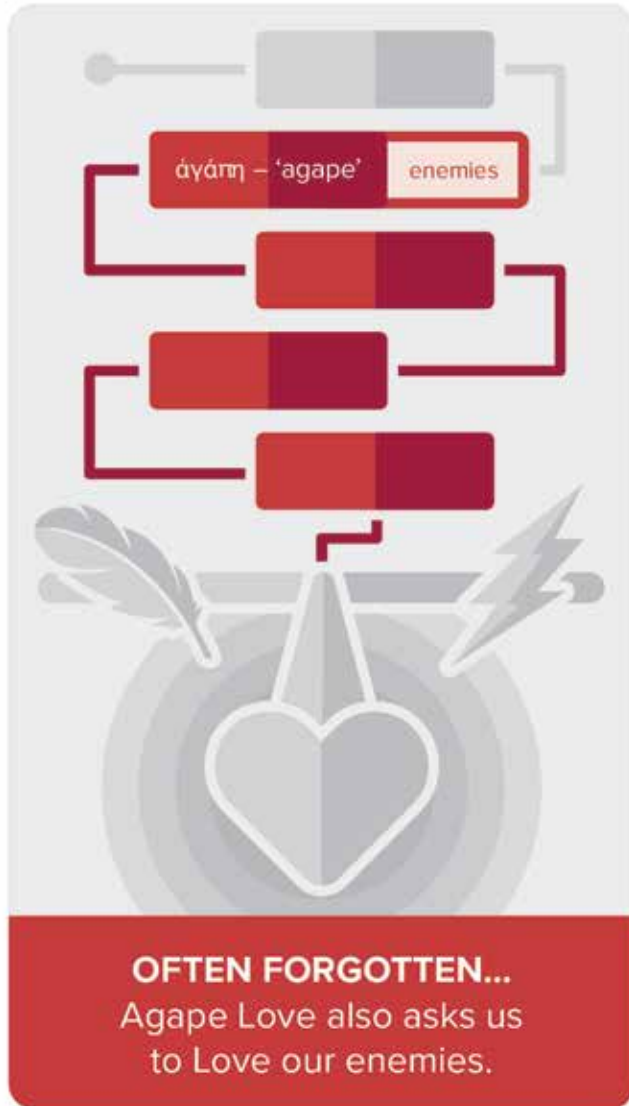
Love for Life and all that surrounds
Fill your vessel with Awe that abounds

•

Power your heart to extend your hand
Sow good seeds upon the land

•

Give and receive with all who need—
Unconditional Love in thought, and in deed



Eye for an eye
and the world goes blind

Instead, a kind reply
Peace you might find

•

The war is between hearts;
now raise up spiritual arms

Enduring Love imparts
your intent to not harm

•

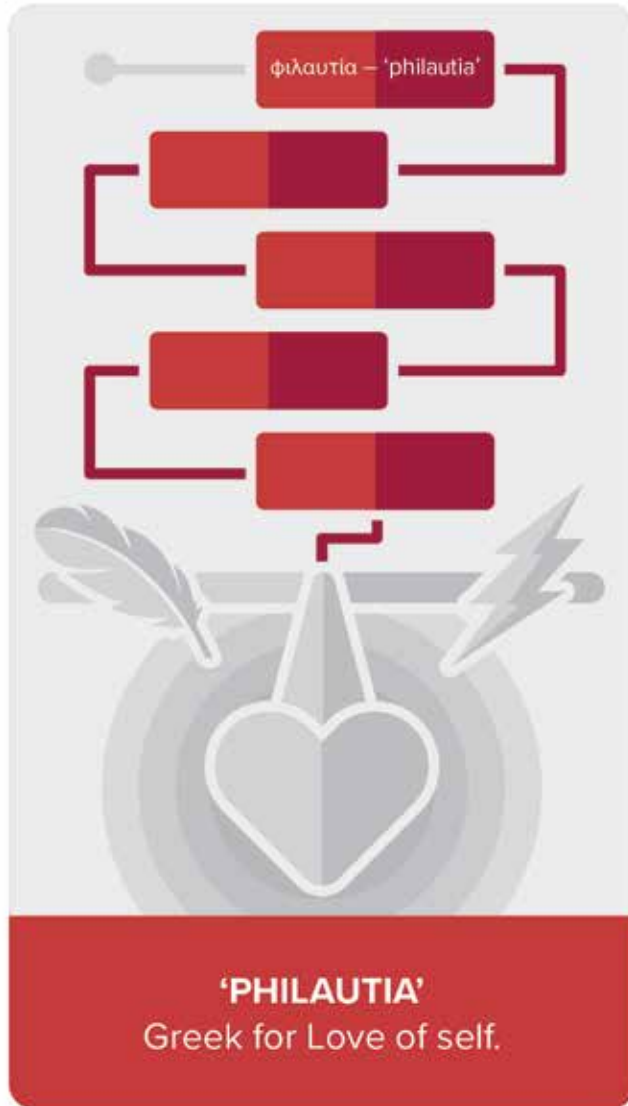
Your invitation rejected
Kindly give them time

Steadfast compassion directed
Respect their drawn line

•

Vengeance's remedy:
sincerely hope and extend

Defeat your enemy:
see them as a friend



Philautia:

The last one we remember,
the one in the mirror

Embrace self reflection,
see want and need clearer

•

Self Love has great diversity

Serving reward and adversity

•

A balance of energies

One of play: reward, release and rest

Finding synergies

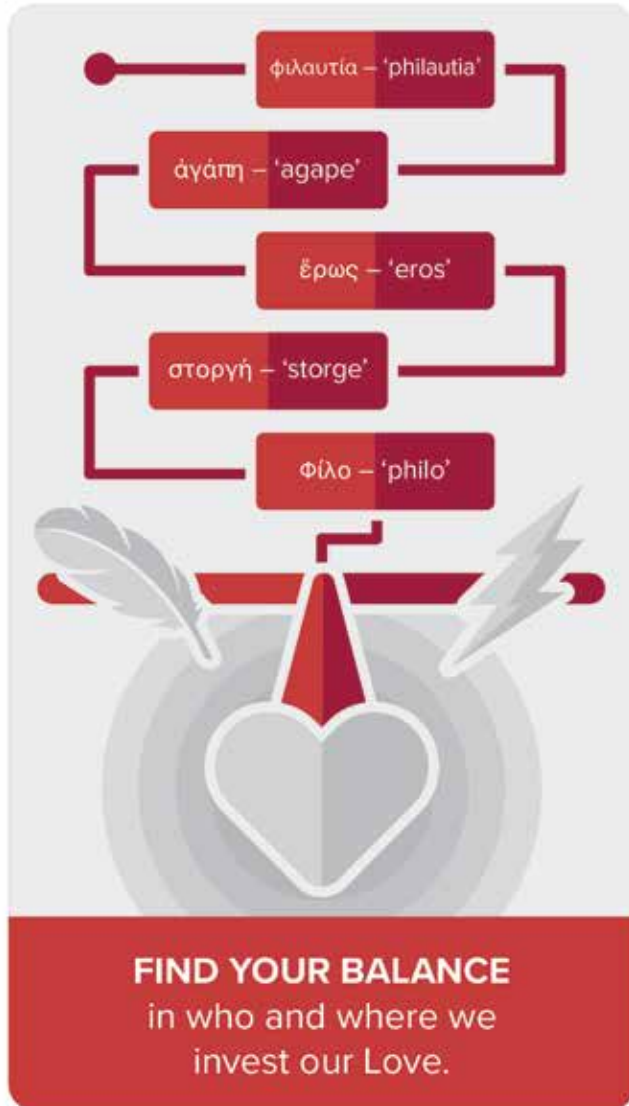
The other way: strive, sweat and invest

•

Your heart is the center

Your origin of light

Look now, find mentor
Let your flame burn bright



Those Five Loves are the Who
Spaces and faces we give our hearts to

•

A healthy balance, there is no other way
What that is changes each day

•

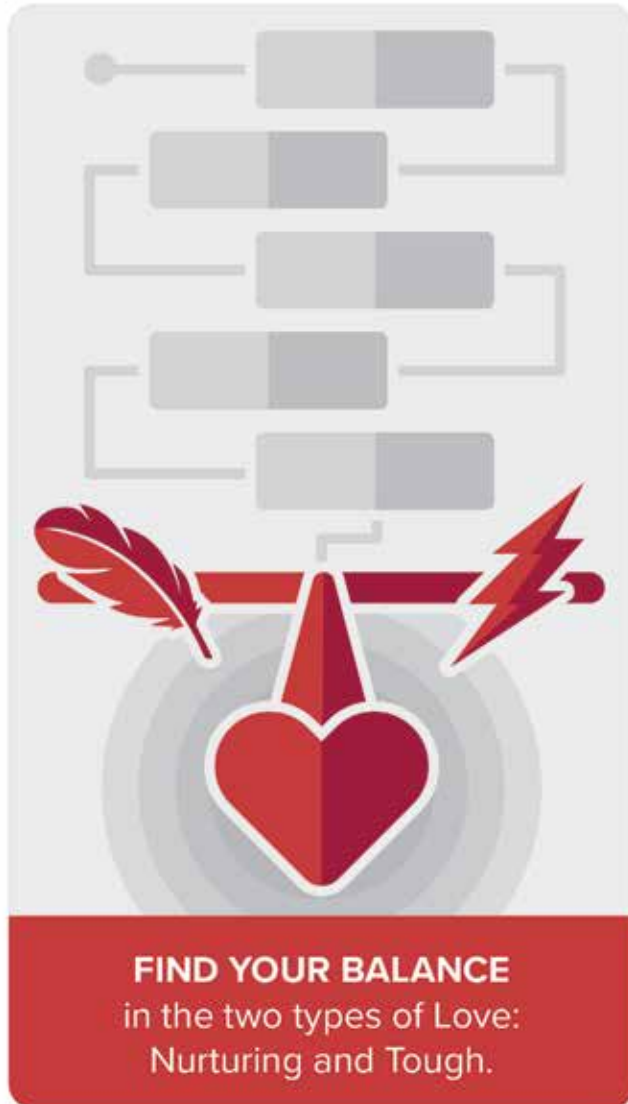
But start with yourself
Your engine and first flame

From here, drive out
Wisdom guides this great game

•

Imperfectly balanced is the norm
Don't worry, just commit

This, what we are all here for
Ensure you don't forget.



Different than Love's Who
Polar energies, there are just two

•

With great attention,
please invest...

How important it is to understand
when which is best

Love 1

Nurturing Love: protects and provides
Like food, sleep, stroke and play, its
nature is to nourish and grow

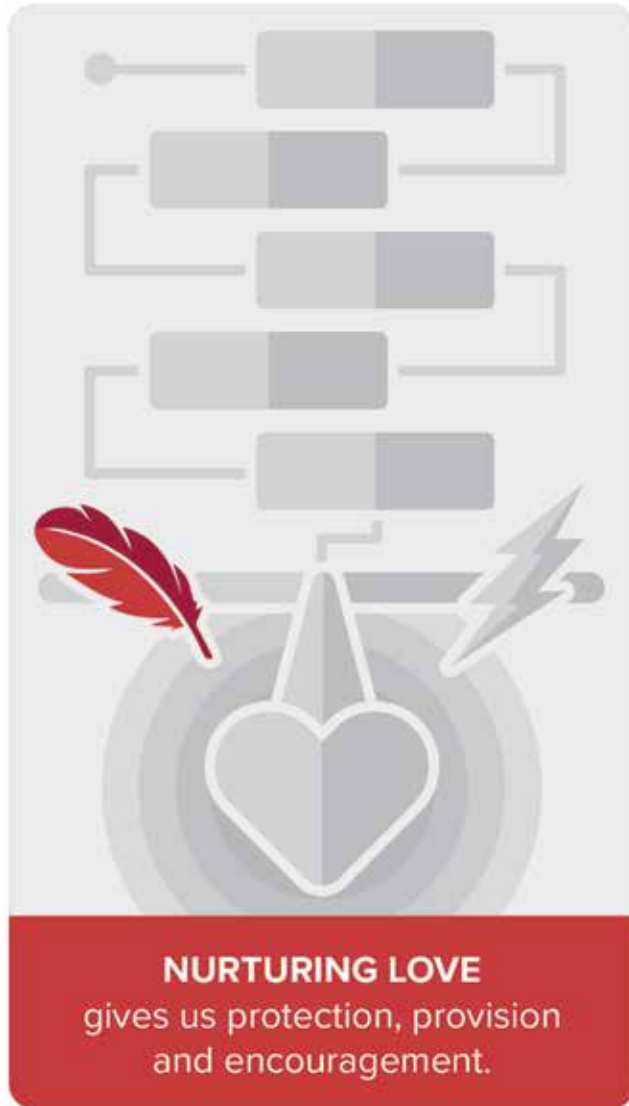
Love 2

Tough Love: challenges and refines
Like work, study, fire and grit,
character will sharpen and show

•

Each situation has a different ratio
Toxic, in excess or deficiency

Each season, different roles may show
Find yours and build proficiency



Love 1

Nurturing Love is first sight
Without it, eternal night

This strength of heart
provides want and need

Building, the first part
With this intent, please lead

•

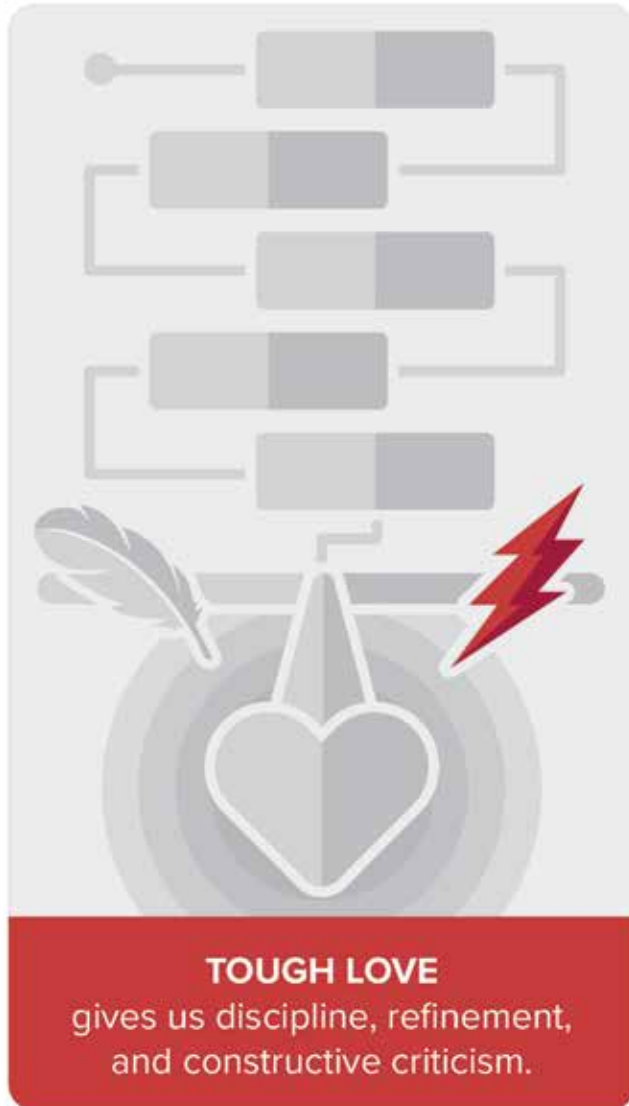
Companionship, food, rest and play...
all the things we want in our day

Encouraging words
A helping hand

Your time and touch
Gifts we can understand

•

Too little, we wither; too much, we spoil
To balance is how we prepare good soil



Love 2

Tough Love: let's begin
Fiery practice needed to win

This second Love, few ask for
To Success, this is the door

Too much and you'll burn
Not enough and we won't learn

•

A challenge to give and receive,
but a prize for those who can perceive

Learn to transcend its first sting
Wealth of life it will bring

Discipline as an acquired taste,
or regret opportunities waste

•

To acquire what you admire,
lean into the Fire



Answer for the Love of you and me.

Look at Love's Who...

Self: _____

Friends: _____

Family: _____

Romance: _____

Agape: _____

(enemy) _____

Love 1 or Love 2

Which one, or both, do you need to lean into?

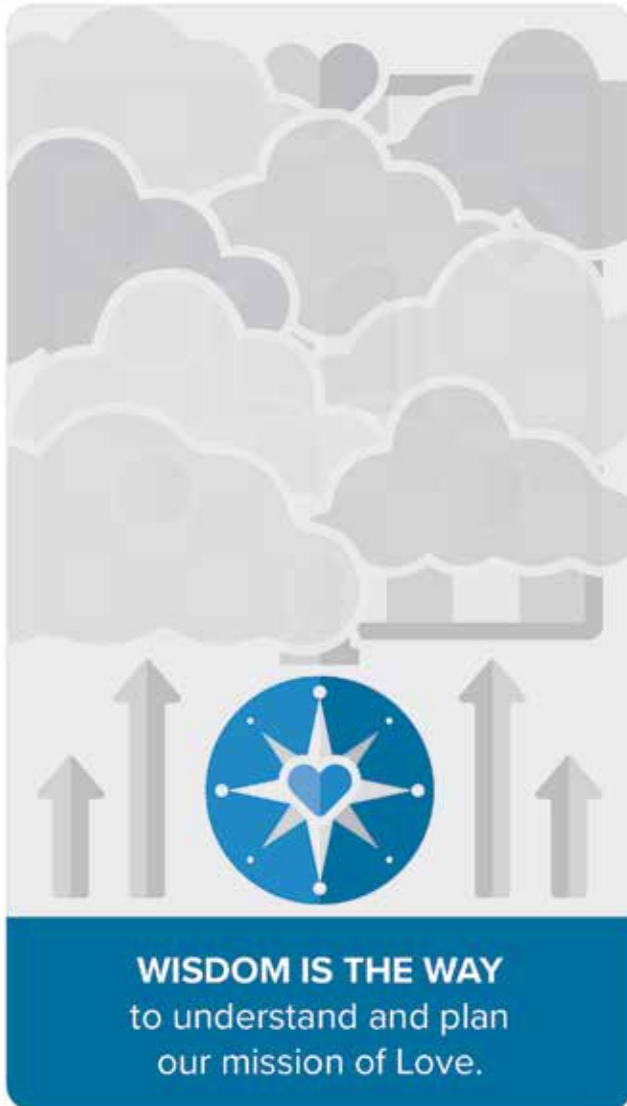




WISDOM



STRATEGY IN
THIS GAME



Love is the goal,
but Wisdom is the way

The path to understand
what to do and say

•

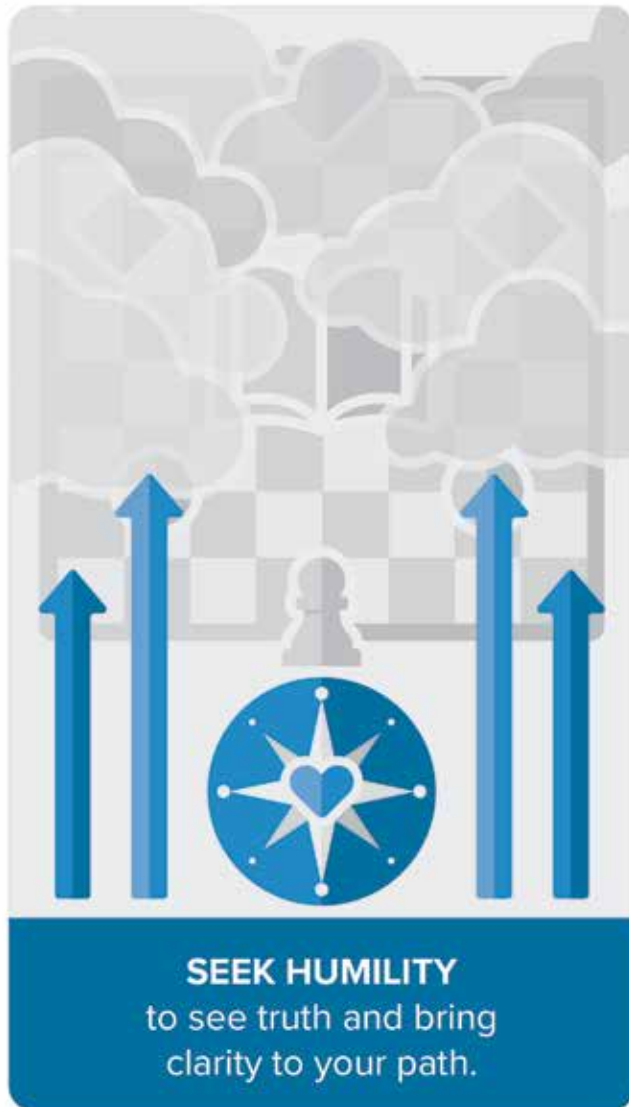
Greatest skill of life's game
Take note of its priority

Strategy of highest gain
Your choice is true authority

•

Wondering upon life's gears
Wise eyes will see

Balancing real and ideal
What's best for you,
and for me



2

First sight

Perceiving the truth
we can't perfectly see

First step

Wisdom in knowing this
is called *Humility*

•

The moment we comprehend:

The world is full of
foolishness and hypocrisy

The fact we must contend:

The chance this includes me
is of great probability

•

Follow this path

As our sphere of knowledge grows

It's only math

The surface of our ignorance shows

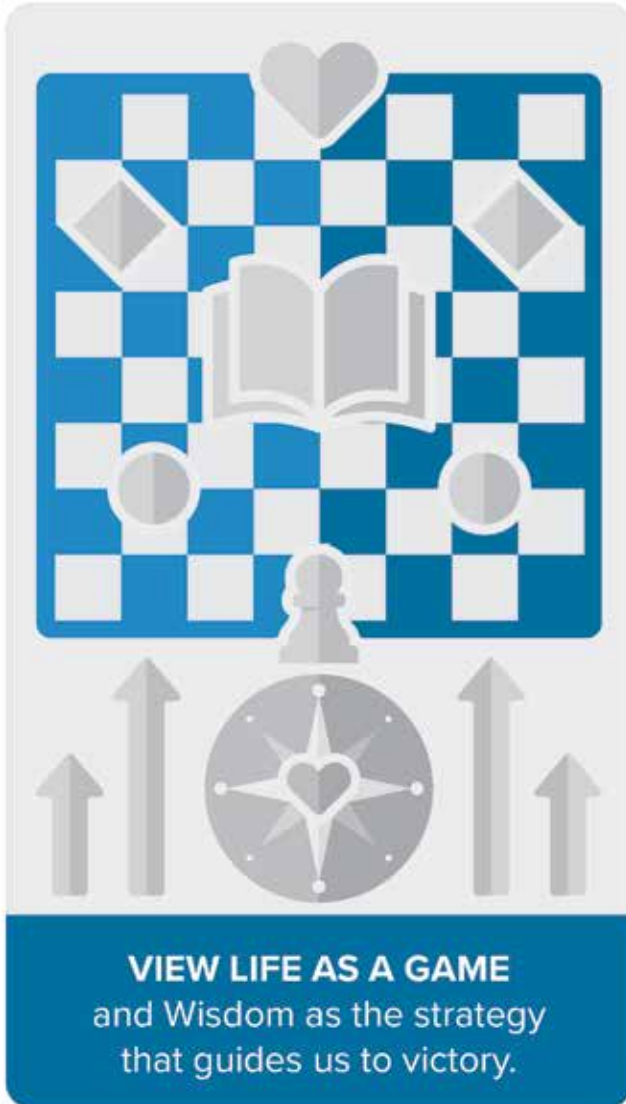
•

Pride will blind

Life's hidden treasures

Humble Wisdom will find

Eternity's true pleasures



Welcome to Life's game
Now let's set the board

Space and Time frame
all that could ever be explored

•

Rules are the Principles
First laws none can remove

You, a player and piece
Ability's choice is each move

•

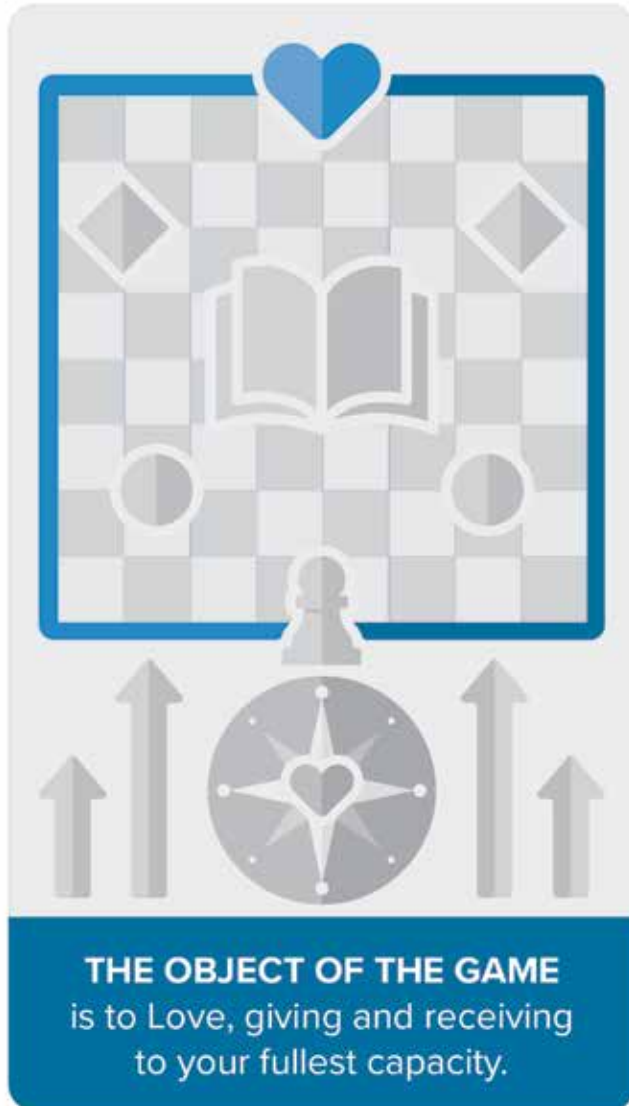
Balance possibility and probability
Which path will you choose?

Wisdom, the first priority
Find this compass to use

•

Onward to the highest goal
Please appraise this next phrase:

*Love, the greatest win
Always and in All Ways*



The goal of your Soul?
A question of complexity

Follow along on this stroll
The answer starts simplistically:

Love

Aim of true moves
Please see this first core

Reframe and view improves
as we seek to know more

Provide

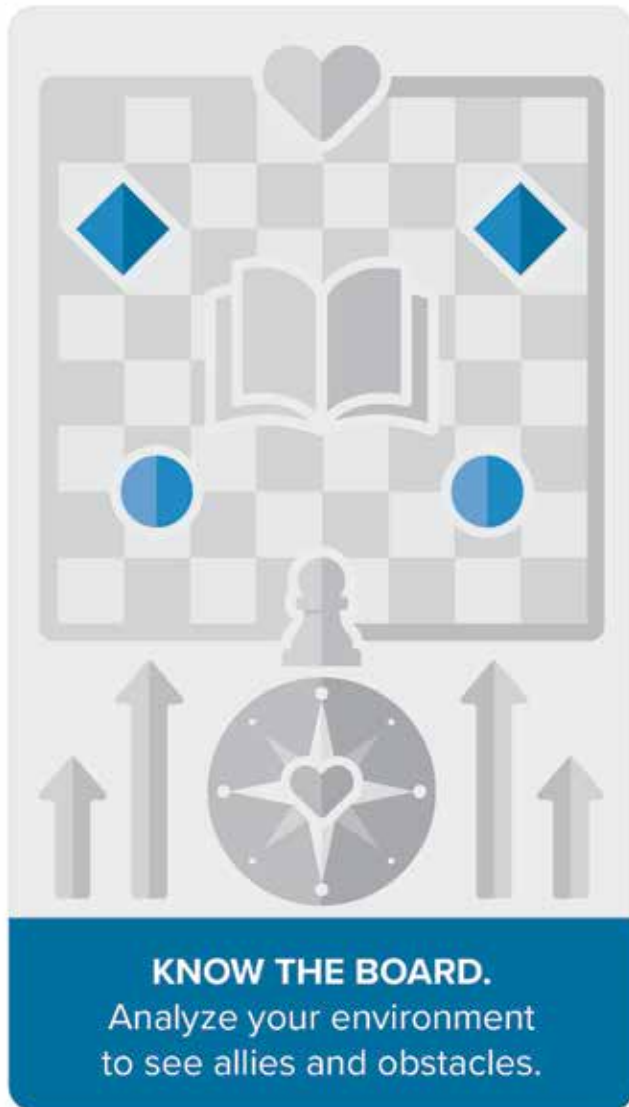
Highest Love in all layers
Always and in All Ways

Rippling in each dimension
In time and family line

Protect

From harm, intentional or neglect
Consequences of choices, please inspect

This simple truth provides direction
Finding destiny's selection



The board of life and pieces display
a dance in motion long underway

Matter and energy in space at play
People, places and actions every day

Examine our environment
Wisdom will shine light on it

•

Obstacles & Adversaries

Challenges to survey and engage

Barrier and threat vary,
but still present in every age

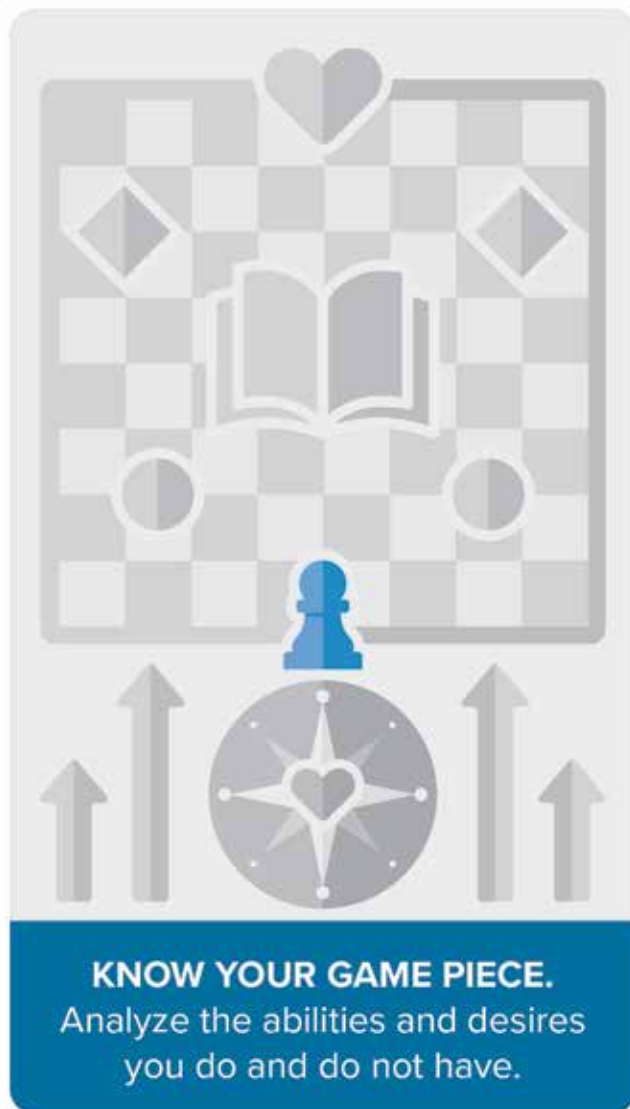
Allies & Assets

Hidden in plain sight

Legion and Arms—all rise
Empower Love's great plight

•

Terrain, friend and foe
Attain knowledge of each and grow.



If we could put it all in view,
and yes, it might be true,

but...

what does it have to do with you?

Smallest piece but the other half
Inner peace—find your true path

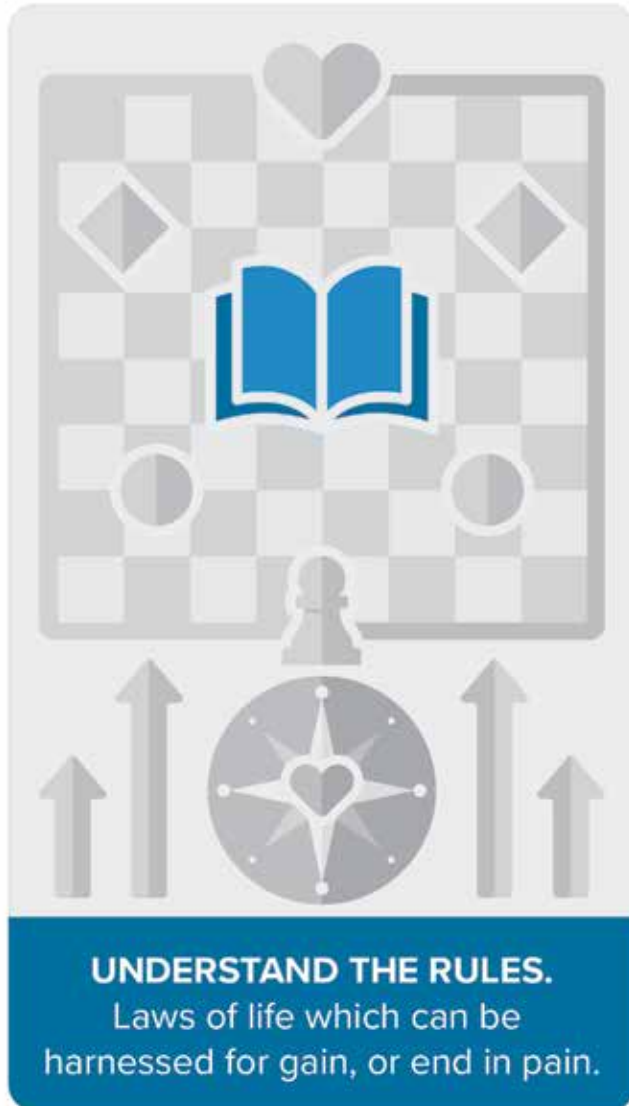
•

But who are you at heart?
With 3 axioms, let's start:

Dreams & Fears
Strengths & Weaknesses
Passion & Distaste

Presently begin... your Strategy
Past examined... your Story

Future's destiny...
Your Path



Beginning to end, as entropy
Principles were and always will be

Let us view just a few:

Opportunity Cost

With each choice, others are lost
Carefully weigh your authority
Set Priority

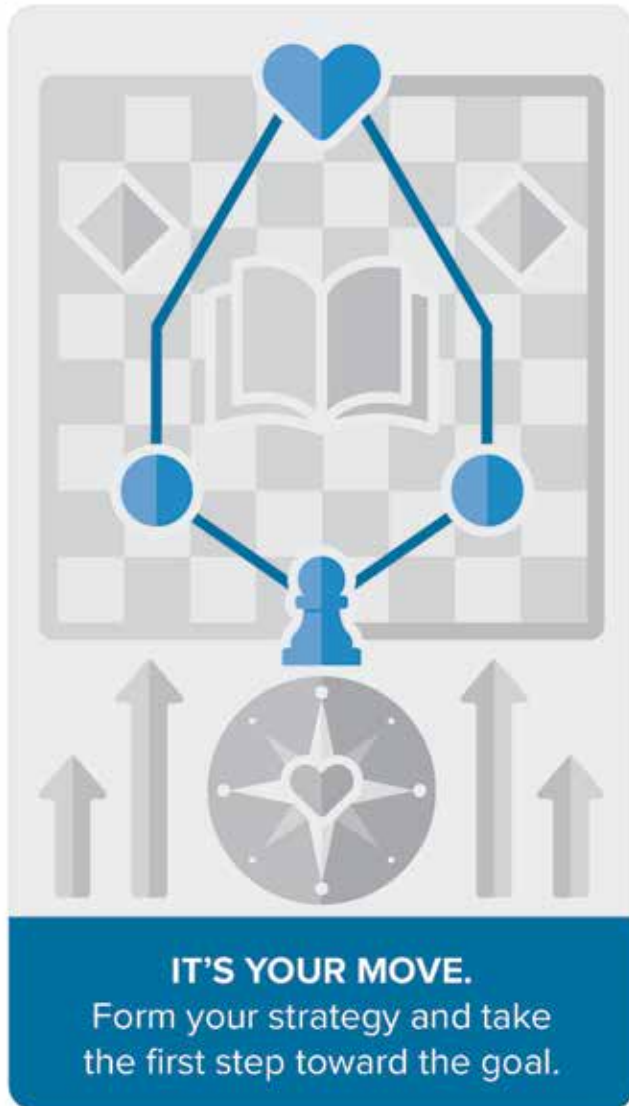
Parts of a Whole

Examine each piece and role
See the forest, not just the tree
Seek Synergy

Correspondence

Lessons past, already inside us
Concepts for future strategies
Find Analogies

Laws don't bend.
Seek Understanding to win.



Time moves forward
A choice must be made

It's on the board
Each move must be weighed

Survey piece and position—
How each relates to your mission

Ally & Obstacle
Sword & Shield
Love & Loss

Dwell on each well, or suffer the cost

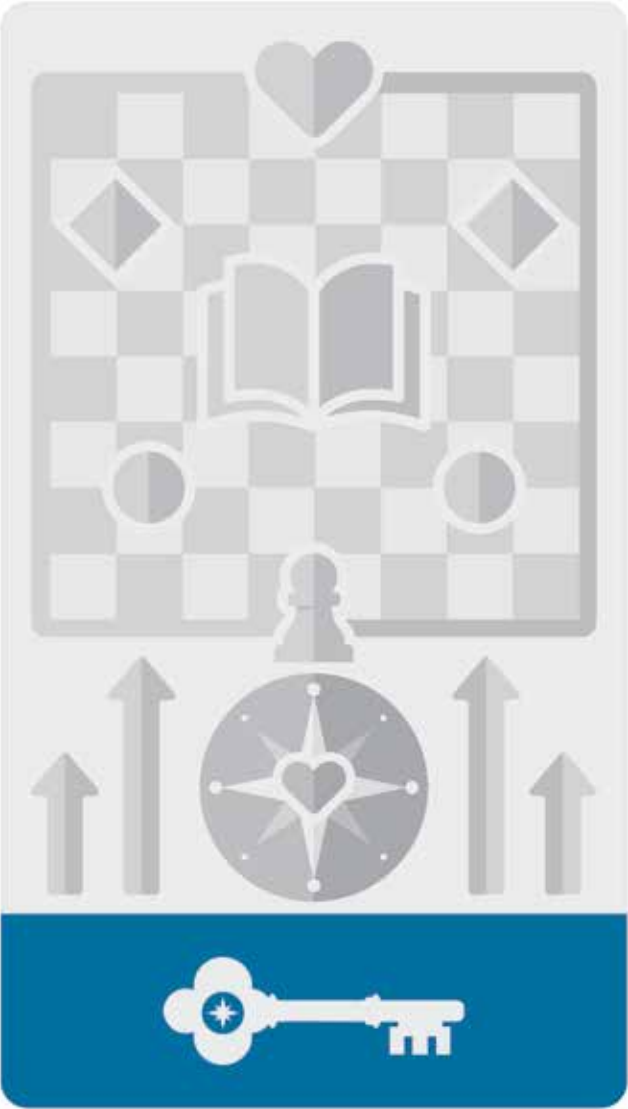
•

Possibilities in your path are wide,
but probabilities should coincide

To bet your life on deep passion,
or lose it for a fool's ration

Rearrange and ponder
Understand and plan

Magnify Wisdom's light
Strategy of Love's great fight



Questions are the Key

Answer for the Love of you and me.

1

Starting with our 3 axioms in view,

Dreams & Fears

Strengths & Weaknesses

Passion & Distaste

Stream of consciousness: Who are you?

2

Grand or small,
what's your mission—what's your call?
Clearest sight on your life's board,
what's your best strategy forward?





WILL



FIRE TO PURSUE
AND SUSTAIN



If Wisdom is the way,
Will is the walk

It's time to work
No more talk

This is the hour
to find the power

•

Rise Courage, Persevere
Brave past all fear

Focus sight, build might
for Love's great fight

•

Stop wondering how—
another excuse, don't allow—

The time to act...
is Now



Two planes of power:

One to do

One to stop

Terrains to empower

Pursue both, don't swap

•

One gets up and goes forward

Sword of Courage to fight

One puts down and turns away

Shield our promises tonight

•

Give thanks for your gift
but develop the other swift

Our weakest link contains
our dream's domains



To Pursue—To Protect
Both of these I will brave

Passion and purpose connect
Force surpassing the grave

•

Igniting Love's power
Growing strength of my flame

Climb the peak of any tower
Set sight and lay claim

•

The intensity of fire
Decides dreams acquired

Burning through all fear
Destiny comes near



Hold on—don't stop
Keep marching—don't drop

I know my true role
Eye on the greatest goal

Any distance I can go
Steady pace, I won't slow

•

Against all weather and terrain
My pursuit will persist

Single focus to maintain
Distraction to resist

•

Through each
test, trial and tear,

I will
Persevere



5

What's it all for?

Your Quest is the core

Climb the arc of your story
No other peak will you find glory

•

First quest: uncover your quest
Most times, it's right in front of you

Simply seek our individual best
You'll find the path to pursue

•

We each have journeys of heart:

Some for all to view
Others just you

Responsible to do our part:

Find what is true
and see it through



6

Fight for the Five
Moral line to thrive

•

Simplicity clears the fog of war

NO RAPE

NO MURDER

NO SLAVERY

NO BEATING

NO THEFT

Of these we will have no more

•

Foundation of Justice
for children to trust us

Rise and provide this shield
Peace will be revealed



The two of you were destined
to be together since birth

Only denial between you and mirth

Why turn your eyes?
Conquer this and grasp the prize

•

Life lived without anxiety
Peace with your earthly mortality

Reborn by making peace with death
Finally feeling the blessing of simple breath

•

Do not avoid this one, my friend
A new peace you will comprehend

Face your inevitable demise
Don't turn from this trial

Look straight into death's eyes
and smile



Questions are the Key

Answer for the Love of you and me.

1

Which power is stronger in you—
to stop or to do?

2

Which flame would you like to fan:
Bravery or Perseverance?
How can you grow? What is your plan?

3

Is there a fear you need to face?
What challenge must you embrace?





GRACE



CLEANSSES ERROR
AND STAIN



When we lose Love's fight
When we know it's not right

•

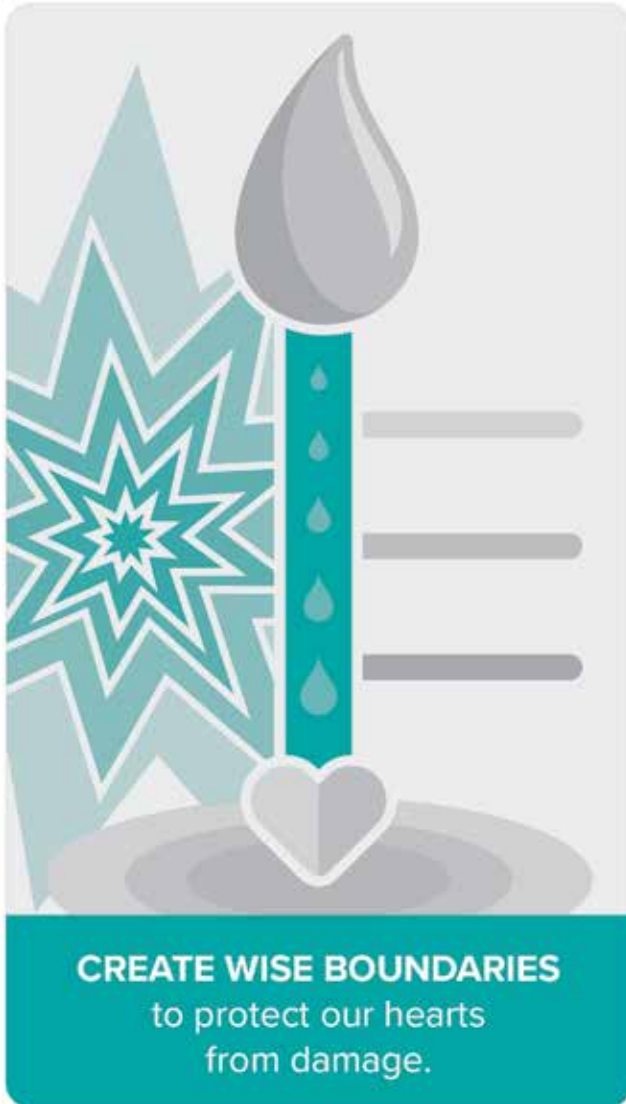
When we fall in a deep way
Repentance comes in to play

•

When betrayal's pain won't cease
We must forgive and release

•

It's time to start anew
Redeeming grace for me
and for you



Yes, their fault is true,
but what does trapped anger do?

Draw your Wise Line in the sand,
but release anger from hand

•

Don't Hold Hate
Let me say why

Like drinking poison
and wishing another to die

•

Be Wise: make your boundaries,
but let the rest go

Follow this advice
Peace and prosperity you will know



Take a big breath... and release
Let it go, it's time to find peace

The cut was real—pain we can feel
But now, it must heal

Will your Wise Line
Boundaries to define

•

But we must move on
Wash our wounds clean

Separate or restore bond
Find your lesson to glean

•

The way torn souls must stitch
We need to forgive to renew

Only time and roles will switch
Inevitably, the offender...
will be you



FORGIVE YOURSELF
to restore self love,
despite failures.

Mirror of mistakes
Failures I continue to make

One more, to sit in self hate
Break the cycle and change fate

•

Don't hide, don't deny
Face self, exhale and reply

I Love You

Each day this new view
Restore what is true



Forgiveness for you and for me,
but what about We?

Humanity's hellish past
We point and blame

If that were us,
would we do the same?

Holding resentment for this earth
will not help its rebirth

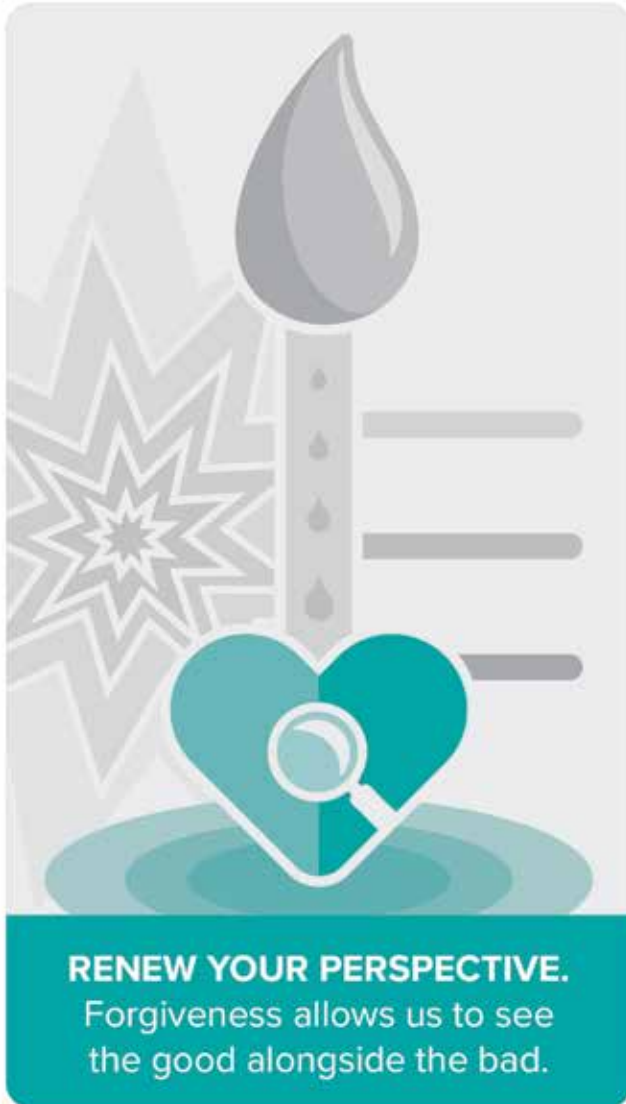
For the sake of this world,
forsake bitterness hurled

Lessons to learn, nations to aid
Release hate's burn, or hearts will jade

Humanity as a whole
All of one soul

Strengthen and awaken mature
See past, through Grace's eyes

Now wash your heart pure
Steward of One Garden,
Arise



As we learn to forgive and let go,
new horizons will show

Lay the bounds of your Wise Line
Empowered positions you'll find

From this new perspective,
we become Love's detective

•

Chew the fish but spit out the bone
Enjoying the fruit of truth alone

Throw out the bathwater
but keep the baby

Capture the best of
what your reality may be

•

Spiritual water to pour
that will cleanse and renew

It is Grace who will restore
the Wisdom of your view



Questions are the Key

Answer for the Love of you and me.

1

Do you need new boundaries in your life?
How could this prevent future strife?

2

Do you need to forgive and find peace?
Self, Others or This World—
Which area could your heart release?





GRATITUDE



LOVE CONSCIOUSLY
RECEIVED



Gratitude is to receive
all that Love could conceive

Life's first precepts:
Love provides, Gratitude accepts

Like partners in a dance
Love leads, Joy follows

Object of Strength's romance
Filling hearts' hollows

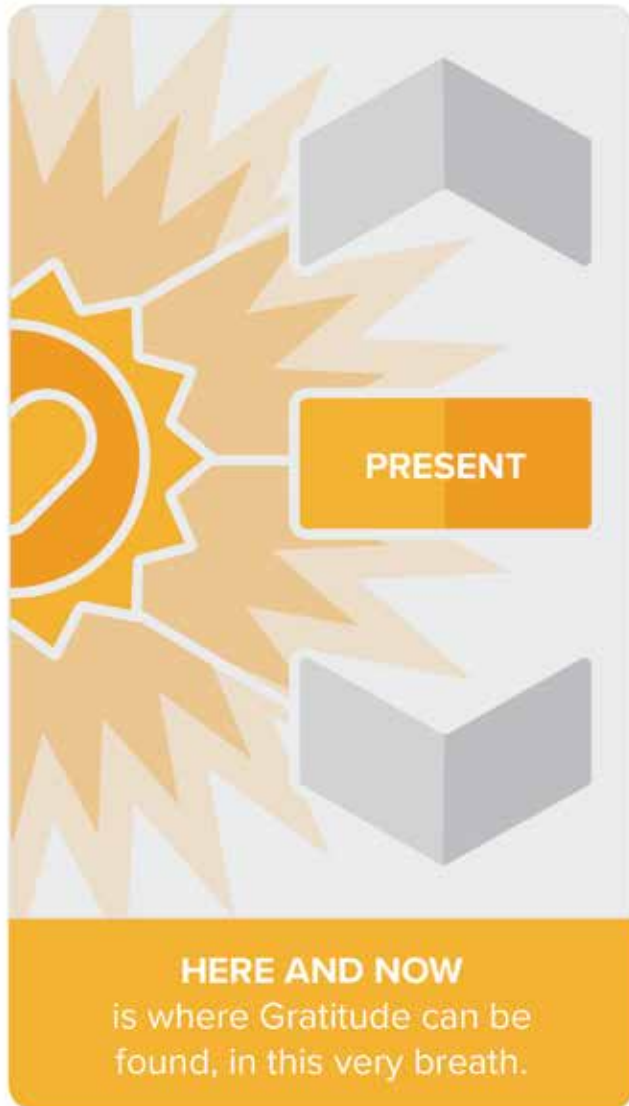
Two sides of a coin
Areas of heart to join

Enjoy your story, past all blocks
Peace—not looking at the clock

Warmth from many faces
Treasure in all places

Other half, but equal part
Don't forget this piece:

An open heart,
The path to peace



Welcome to the main stage
All of life happens right here

Receive and engage
Love and laughter, not fear

•

Take a deep breath, Love all around
Only now, where Joy can be found

•

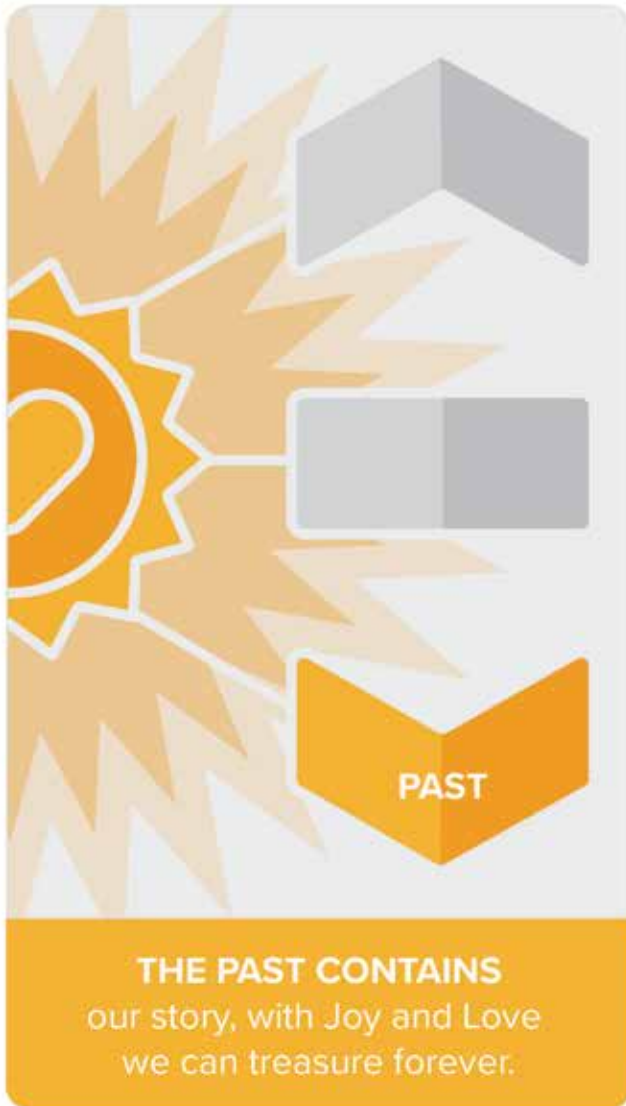
Let our founding gift bring
all others in proper scope

Only present breath can sing
of Past's blessings and Future's hope

•

Inspiration of our health
Foundation of all wealth

Trust it's most pleasant
Just to be in the Present



Upon this breath we look back
Youth's interpretations to unpack

A collage of laughter and tears
History of our dreams and fears

Memory's great gift, don't forget—
So much of the past is already won

Separate wins from regret
Relive the treasure of each one

•

Truly, we could have died long ago

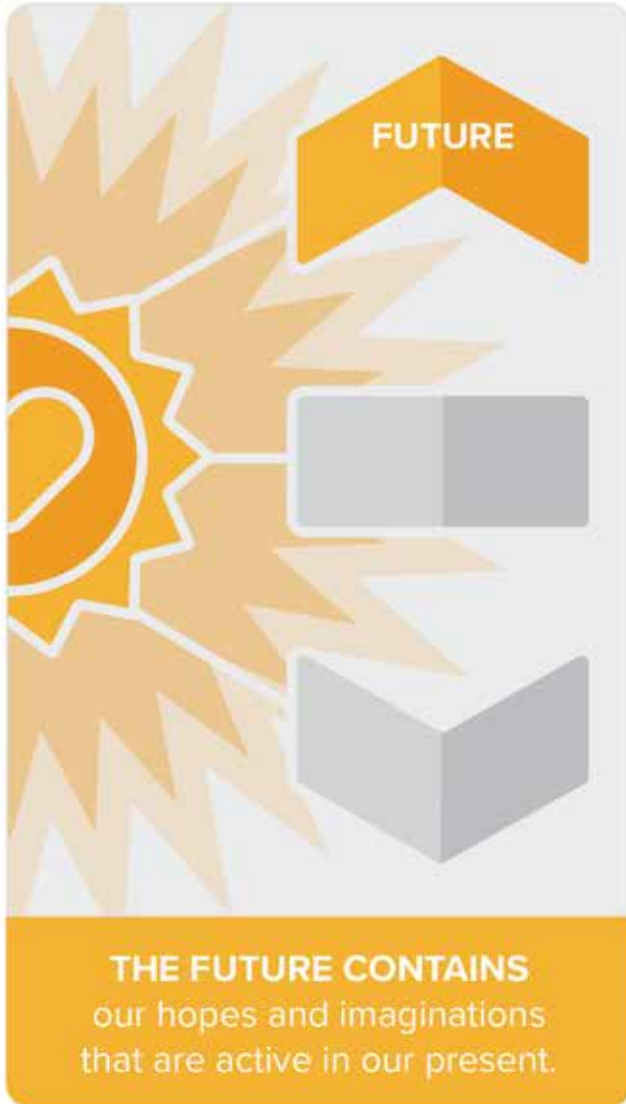
Yesterday's blessings
Timeless treasures to know

Precious gems to find and shine
Bring sentiment to surface

Grace to wash, Wisdom to align
All for Love's great purpose

Prize of our past, eternally present

Story of Love's glory
Time's greatest present



I Hope
Alongside Past's prizes display

We feel
Tomorrow's dreams dance today

•
Rehearsing possibilities of our path
Potentials of future's math

With great anticipation receive
Hope's present joy, please believe

Freedom of our imaginations
Origin of coming creations

•
Stay Anchored:
From lost fantasy and vanity
Root into Story's path to hold sanity

Find Freedom:
Faith that Love's future will be
Hope for you and for me

5



It only makes sense
The Love we are speaking of
gives and receives along each sense

Five paths of Love's Who to receive
All of Love for you to perceive

•

Family, origin of who you are;
True friends near and far;

A smile in the mirror you will find;
Passion's fire running down your spine;

Founding force suspending us all;
Five ways to recall and wonder in awe

•

In all these planes we can claim
true treasure of this great game

Self and others, thick and thin
Subjects in our book of wins

Story and dreams of Love today
Path of Joy
This is the way



Questions are the Key

Answer for the Love of you and me.

1

What are you grateful for?
Stream of consciousness—tell me more.

2

Five paths of Love from above,
Which do you receive, trust and know?
Where can your heart open and grow?





Thank You

It feels like the time right now
Always learning quite how

Those who I know and have made me grow
Without you, these verses would never show

Mother and Father
In fertile soil, you watered my soul
Freedom and Safety to find my role

My Sister
and trusted friend
For you, I laugh inside a giraffe
But to the end we will always Defend

Sarah
Soul by my side, my heart forever tied
Your intentions caring and true
Home is wherever I'm with you

And to the Author of Light
An honor, to serve in your sight.



UNITY



FAMILY HARMONY
PERCEIVED



Life's whole, a state of Unity
Always was and always will be

Science and Religion both affirm
we all came from the same mother

Let our actions confirm
we Love sister and brother

•

From earth, we entered this garden
Pieces of one grand system

Community skills to sharpen
Peace through trust and Wisdom

You and me in harmony
Honesty and empathy

•

Love builds bonds we feel
Grace allows wounds to heal

Conscious Unity will finally be
when I look around and only see
Family



First balance of community:
How much you? How much me?

Too much me, or individuality?

No life can live without another
Unity was and always will be

But what is life as slave to the other?
Two layers of life we must see:

•

Independent self and our quest
Freedom and passions we do best

Our connected role and ability
Collective action and responsibility

•

Life creates beauty and complexity
More of you and more of me

With these two,
find Synergy

Let Wisdom guide harmony
Consent leading community



Responsibility, let's peel it apart

Respond to your ability
Different jobs of one heart

We each have skills
Different roles that we play

A need this fulfills
Open eyes and survey

•

Response

is the action you return
Best for all, Wisdom must discern

Ability

Your growing potential
to provide your Family utility

•

Piece of our heart
Pillar of civility

Doing your part
Response Ability



Family from One
No other way to have begun

Breath and Dust
or Science's Trust

Children of one mother,
I am your brother

Abraham's blood or Darwin's ink
Loving each other is pure instinct

Fragments of one heart
Brother and sister, torn apart

Meant for sport, not war
Let Grace and Wisdom restore

Hidden bonds of our souls
enlighten our true roles

One Family



Core of currency
Framework of family
All founded on trust

Sustaining bonds of harmony
Securing all that is just

Our hopes for youth to be
Only from truth can we see

How to communicate clearly
Love one another sincerely

Mathematically as a whole
Honesty makes sense for each role

In these bounds, we can relax
Stretch out, lay on our backs

With chest and belly open,
we feel full emotion

Temporary gain through lies
Our greater identity's demise

Each person we meet, a part of ourself
The only one you can cheat is yourself



From one garden we came
and one garden we are

Nations and cultures we compose
Roles and collaboration each chose

Members of sociology
mirror our ecology

Queen Bee and Worker: vocations of labor
Souls of equal worth: Mason and Mayor

One garden, many groves
Life, solo and in droves

Different roots we see life grow
Factions of form and function we know

Soil, seed, water and light
Feeding creatures of day and night

Yes, a sickness has entered this garden
but don't let the heart harden

Guardians of the garden are true
Piece of the Lion
in you



Pieces from across the waters
Matching threads, destiny directs

Brother and sister of alma mater
Unite, empower and protect

Parts of one body align
Freedom for children to play

True King, manifest your design
Connect our strength today

Love, Wisdom and Will—this is our path
Only these will lead each step's math

Fight for the Five—our garden to thrive
United light—combine your might
Role to take—choices to make

Murder, rape and war abound
Sound from all around
Children's cries

Sleeping guardian awoken,
the time has come

Lion Arise



One body, several systems
Individual cells mirror ourselves

One Lion, form of a nation
Flesh and blood, united vocations

•

Each take your role
Which one written on your soul?

Mind with Wisdom to find?
Tooth and claw to protect the law?

Tongue teaching good news?
Eye on the missions we choose?

Others, like nerve and spine
Communications of Love we find

•

Collective strength, it's time to unite
Orphans cry; it's time to fight

Dual identity now clearer
Lion in the mirror



I am here with you
Now we are stronger

Formations to pursue
How we will go longer

Help is first—next, to lead
Together, living Love's deed

More together than apart
Pieces form a beating heart

Pack, pride and flock if you heard
Teamwork
Nature has always preferred

Lead and follow—find formation
Song and dance—patterns of creation

Great obstacle in view
Pass oar to each crew

Harmony's strength together
Victorious against all weather



Pieces of something more
Fear to fight, hope to restore

To take you there, a story to share:

Two farmers pray for rain,
One plants the seed

Both had hope in name,
One had faith in deed

Love's reign will come down
Wisdom by faith will lift the crown

•

Don't be paralyzed in doubt
Take foot to your route

Pieces of a bigger whole
Time is now—claim your role

Faith in action, plant the seed
Unity in thought and in deed

Bet your life, assuredly,
Love is, was
and always will be.



Questions are the Key

Answer for the Love of you and me.

1

Write a metaphor:

If you were a piece of something more,
What part are you? What do you do?

2

Move in faith, fulfill your role.
How can you increase your whole?





**THE
7TH KEY**

THE 7TH KEY



Six keys:

Pieces of the Lion's Mane

The seventh:

to put it all in frame

Look again

Each facet a piece of Love's Light

Ask now

Beseech your role in Love's Fight

•

With all your heart in view,

what is your first step?

What must you do?

AFTER THE POEMS

The poems end here.

If you would like to look beneath it, to see how the model was built, how its parts move together, and how it might be tested, **keep going.**

THE LION'S HEART

The Lion you have followed through these poems is the heart of a larger picture of human health.



HEART



BODY



MIND

THE LION'S HEART LOGO

The Lion's Heart logo is a model formed as a visual representation of the three components of human health. This compound shape, a collective of its individual parts, is meant to inspire and empower each time it is seen.

HEART

is the face of a lion with six segments that form the mane; each represents a core virtue that forms a healthy heart

BODY

is a multi-faceted triangle made of three smaller triangles; each represents a major component of physical health

MIND

is a two-faceted circle; represents both core life skills, as well as the specialized vocational skills

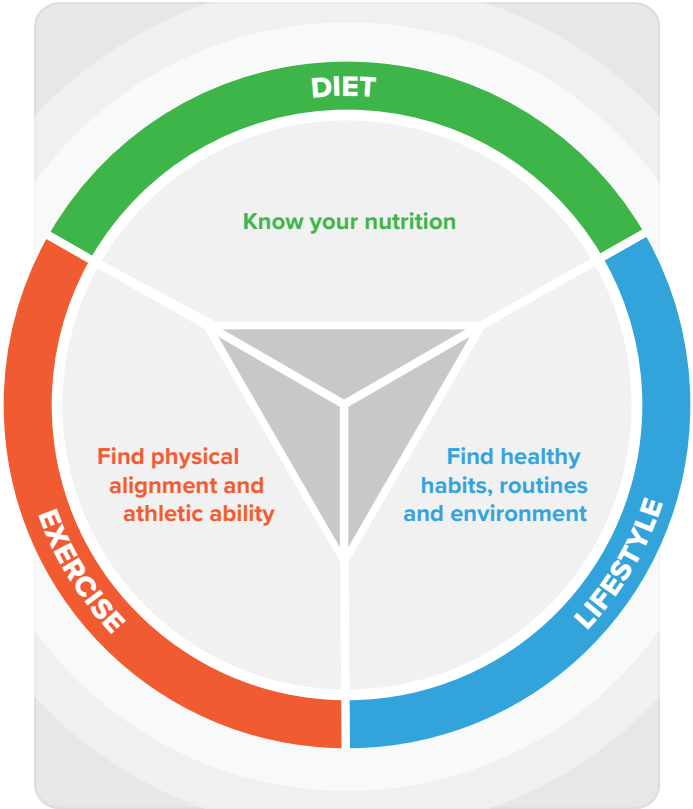
HEART

The face of a lion with six segments that form the mane; each represents a core virtue that forms a healthy heart. **The heart of all health begins with our journey to give and receive love.**



BODY

A multi-faceted triangle made of three smaller triangles; each represents a major component of physical health. **We must know how to take care of the physical vessel we give and receive all love through.**



MIND

CORE LIFE SKILLS

The first half of the two-faceted circle represents core life skills. **These are the core skills all must have in order to develop greater independence and grow healthy relationships.**



MIND

SPECIALIZED SKILLS

The second half of the two-faceted circle represents specialized vocations or career paths. **Though the individual roles change over time, the same spectrum of societal roles remain.**



ABOUT THESE MODELS

Everything in this book, including the maps on the pages before this one, is provisional.

These are working models: heuristics of virtue and health, drawn as part of a larger study of virtue, health, and the systems we live within. I revise them continuously, and further works in this study are on their way.

One thing to understand about the Virtue Vector model: it is engineered as a compact palette of working primaries, analogous to the primary colors used to create a much larger spectrum.

These are not necessarily the only possible primaries, or the smallest possible set. Rather than attempting to classify every virtue in a long catalog, this model keeps its core small while remaining able to display a much larger spectrum.

Like red, blue and green rendering all other colors of light, these primaries are meant to compose all other virtue through variation and combination.

True “Good” in this system would be analogous to White light:

Gratefully, Wisdom and **Will**, washed by **Grace**, serve **Love** in full **Unity**.

The working claim of this model is simple and falsifiable in practice: other virtues should be able to be rendered as variations within or combinations of these six virtue families.

I encourage you to press into this claim in good faith. I have provided quick-reference tables of prominent historical virtue models in the next section so that you can compare them and continue the search.

But before you begin your audit, let me demonstrate what I mean.

Upon reading the poems, you will see that each of the six primary virtues is a family, with many variations within it. See page ___ for the infographic. For example, Will is the home of both Bravery and Restraint.

The poems in this collection are intended to provide a foundation, but they are not exhaustive. I imagine many other poems related to the power of Will could be written, such as Integrity.

Another natural expansion within Grace would come from the other side of the wound: the amends we owe when the offender in the mirror is us.

Maybe you have a poem in your heart.

What about Justice?

Variations live inside a family, the way a family of blues holds many shades.

Compounds are different. They ask two or more virtues to work together. Wisdom and Will become strategic action, the way red and blue become magenta.

Justice would not be a primary virtue in this model, but a compound: **Wisdom** discerns what is right. **Will** acts on it. Both serve **Unity's** community. Justice may also require "tough" **Love** tempered by **Grace's** mercy.

That is different from Bravery and Restraint, which are variations within Will. A virtue may belong chiefly to one family, or it may emerge through several virtues acting together.

My heart desires these virtues not only to be examined in isolation, but to be made manifest together as Justice and all varieties of Strong, Wise Love.

Concepts like Justice are poems still to be written. Maybe by you.

The real test of this model is not whether every virtue is named, but whether an unnamed virtue can be painted with this palette.

Cybernetics: Another Dimension of This Model

There is one more layer to how these virtues work together.

They do not only vary within families or combine into compounds. They communicate, respond, correct, and return. They can be understood cybernetically.

In 1948, mathematician Norbert Wiener named the modern field in his book *Cybernetics: Or Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine*.

The word comes from the Greek *kybernētēs*, meaning "steersman."

Put simply, cybernetics studies how systems steer: how they hold an aim, act toward it, sense what returns, and correct course.

Cybernetics is not only about computers. Life is full of cybernetic systems. The organs of a body remain distinct, but they communicate and regulate one another as parts of one life. Whenever different parts work together toward an aim, register what is happening, and adjust in response, we can look at that system cybernetically.

That is the cybernetic dimension of these Vectors of Virtue. The poems do not only name virtues. Together, they picture a living system steering toward Love.

ABOUT THESE MODELS

Ideally, the white light of Strong, Wise Love would always manifest simultaneously by nature. But sometimes we have to work through its colors piece by piece, or follow a loop.

I want to share one way I literally walk out this cybernetic loop on most mornings. As I walk, I meditate upon each of these areas of my heart:

LOVE sets the aim: the purpose toward which the whole system steers.

On my walk, I dedicate myself to Loving today, focusing on whom: God, my wife, my friends, my family, my neighbor, community and yes, myself. Love will often begin the loop as intention, but it remains present connecting with every other virtue along the walk.

WISDOM charts the course: the discernment that reads what is before us and plans the move.

I pray for Wisdom to see what Love requires of me and what needs my attention. I pray for clarity and humility in my perspective, and for the discernment to carry out Love faithfully.

WILL walks the course: the courage to begin and the endurance to continue.

I pray for the Bravery to act on what Wisdom reveals, for Perseverance to see Love through, and for Restraint from my own gluttony, vengeance, and pride. All to bear Love's fruit.

GRATITUDE receives: the good consciously recognized.

Sometimes I begin here. I take time to be thankful and to receive the Love already sustaining me: the air I breathe, the ground beneath my feet, and my feet themselves. Sometimes Love leads me into Gratitude. Sometimes I realize I have forgotten to be grateful. Then I remember: Now is the best time to begin.

GRACE responds to what has gone wrong: error released, injury forgiven, and the course corrected.

I ask the Lord for forgiveness and receive it. I look honestly for anyone I need to forgive. I pray for Grace in my neighborhood: for forgiveness, peace, and an environment where people can release what has wounded them.

In cybernetic terms, Grace is not ornamental. It is the system's capacity for correction and repair. A system that cannot respond to its own failure cannot continue steering after it misses the course.

UNITY holds us within the larger whole: the relationships and communities in which our lives take shape.

I pray for harmony in my neighborhood, and for growing loyalty and trust among my friends, my family, and in my marriage. I pray to see myself in right perspective: as a piece of a greater garden.

And all for the purpose of what?

Love.

The loop returns to its aim.

ABOUT THESE MODELS

I do not always move through these virtues in the same order. Gratitude may begin the walk. Grace may interrupt Will. Wisdom may reveal something altogether different.

After I have made a pass through each of these virtue families, I may freestyle, returning wherever my heart needs more attention. The purpose is not to perform a perfect sequence. It is to remember that these virtues work together like organs, each with a distinct function within one life. Together, they aim toward the good, model a path, correct course, and steer toward Love.

I invite you to look at this model critically and compare it with the other models in the following pages.

The layering of this Virtue Vector model is my artistic style; you are welcome to prefer another. But if you think a virtue is missing, try to compose it first. If it cannot be made from these working primaries, that is a missing piece, and I want to hear it. Better still, write the poem. Tell me where it files: which chapter, which blend, and why. Send a comment, or better yet, offer the poem as a contribution.

This book is designed as a first core, not the final word.



CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

Share your poems, your filings, and your disagreements.

SCAN OR VISIT

zacpotterofficial.com

VIRTUE MODELS: A COMPARATIVE FIELD GUIDE

The Cardinal and Theological Virtues

The Seven Deadly Sins and Contrary Virtues

Aristotle: Character, Habit, and the Mean

Stoicism: Virtue and Control

The Yamas and Niyamas

The Eightfold Path

The Five Constants

The Dao De Jing

The VIA Classification of Character Strengths

Throughout the ages, there have been many systems created to name and organize the primary pieces of true goodness.

The following tables are a selection of notable systems I studied and tested while building this one. I encourage you to compare them, contrast them, and wrestle with them yourself as you refine the framework you use as your daily compass.

I have done my best to represent each system on its own terms, abbreviated to fit cleanly on these pages but not bent to favor this one.

I encourage you to use these tables as a starting point for your own research, looking beyond any biases or limitations within these summaries.

The claim I have invited you to test still stands: even if a virtue is not explicitly named in the Lion's Heart collection, it can be composed through variation within one family or through a combination of families.

I make this claim for two reasons:

First, if this construct is insufficient, I want to correct it.

Second, if testing it leads you into a deeper search in your own heart for truth about Love and goodness, then the challenge itself will bear fruit.

The Four Cardinal Virtues

Roots: Plato, Republic IV, c. 375 BCE
Latin Christian form: Ambrose, late fourth century CE

One of the most influential short lists in Western virtue ethics begins with four. Plato found Wisdom, Courage, Moderation, and Justice in both the well-ordered city and the well-ordered soul. The later Latin tradition carried them as Prudence, Fortitude, Temperance, and Justice. Ambrose called them cardinal, from *cardo*, the hinge upon which the moral life turns.

PRUDENCE

Discerns the true good in the actual case and chooses the right means to pursue it.

JUSTICE

Renders each what is owed, and orders the whole.

FORTITUDE

Holds the course under fear, pain, or cost.

TEMPERANCE

Governs appetite so pleasure serves the good.

These four describe human excellence formed through reason, practice, and habit. Christian tradition retains this classical core, then joins it to three virtues directed immediately toward God: Faith, Hope, and Charity.

In this book, Fortitude is the will to do; Temperance the will to stop. Will carries both heads on purpose.

The Seven
FOUR CARDINAL + THREE THEOLOGICAL

1 Corinthians 13:13 · developed in Christian tradition
Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, c. 1270

The Seven are not a second list competing with the four. They are the four cardinal virtues joined by Faith, Hope, and Charity. In this traditional distinction, the cardinal virtues describe human excellence cultivated through practice. The theological virtues are understood as gifts of grace that orient the person directly toward God.

The Four Cardinal

PRUDENCE, JUSTICE, FORTITUDE, TEMPERANCE

_____ + _____

The Three Theological

FAITH

Believes in God and what God has revealed, freely entrusting the whole self to God.

HOPE

Desires eternal life and relies on God’s grace to reach it.

CHARITY (LOVE)

Loves God above all things and one’s neighbor as oneself for the love of God.

The Seven Deadly Sins

Evagrius, c. 375 · Pope Gregory I, Moralia in Job, late 500s
Dante, Purgatorio, c. 1320

The familiar Seven began as eight recurring “thoughts” named by Evagrius, a Christian monk in the Egyptian desert. Two centuries later, Pope Gregory I reworked the scheme in his *Moralia in Job*, treating Pride as the root of seven principal vices. Across later teaching, Vainglory was absorbed into Pride, while Sadness and Acedia, a spiritual weariness, developed into Sloth. Envy entered the scheme. Gregory’s commentary became highly influential, but it was not a formal decree.

PRIDE Places the self above its proper measure, above others, and ultimately above God.

ENVY Resents the good in another as though it were a loss.

WRATH Desires vengeance beyond justice, answering injury with further injury.

SLOTH · ACEDIA Resists the spiritual good and the effort that Love requires.

GREED · AVARICE Clings to wealth beyond its proper use, mistaking possession for security.

GLUTTONY Lets appetite for food or drink outrun reason and right measure.

LUST Seeks sexual pleasure apart from fidelity and the good of the whole person.

The Seven Contrary Virtues

Prudentius, Psychomachia, c. 405 · Pope Pius X, Catechism, 1905

Prudentius was a Roman Christian poet. In the *Psychomachia*, or “Battle of the Soul,” he turned virtues and vices into characters fighting for the human soul. His poem made moral opposites memorable, but it did not contain the exact chart below.

Medieval teachers developed virtues as remedies for the seven capital vices. In 1905, Pope Pius X prescribed for Rome a catechism that stated the seven oppositions below. Each virtue directly counters and retrains the habit beside it.

HUMILITY

Accepts the self at its true measure before God and others.

BROTHERLY LOVE

Rejoices at another’s good as though it were its own.

PATIENCE

Absorbs injury without returning it, and waits to answer.

DILIGENCE

Applies steady effort, and finishes what it starts.

LIBERALITY

Uses possessions freely for good instead of clinging to them.

ABSTINENCE

Restrains appetite and refuses excess

CHASTITY

Orders sexual desire within faithful love.

Aristotelian Ethics

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, c. 340 BC

Aristotle begins with eudaimonia: flourishing through excellent activity over a complete life. It is neither a passing feeling nor a private achievement. Because human beings are rational and political, virtue is formed through practiced action and realized with others, through friendship, shared civic life, and participation in a community ordered toward the common good. Below are a collection of core Aristotelian ethical terms.

EUDAIMONIA

The highest human good: flourishing through excellent activity across a complete life in community.

PHILIA

Friendship: reciprocated goodwill and shared life, which flourishing requires.

PHRONESIS

Practical wisdom: sound reasoning about human goods and what to do.

ENERGEIA

Activity or being-at-work; flourishing consists in living excellence, not merely possessing it.

HEXIS

A stable disposition from which a person chooses and acts.

ARETE

Excellence: what enables a thing to perform its function well.

Virtue As A Mean

Aristotle did not offer one closed list of primary virtues. Unlike the previous spread, he did not place each virtue against one opposing vice. Moral virtue is a mean relative to us between excess and deficiency, chosen as practical wisdom directs. It is not an arithmetic midpoint or the same response for everyone.

DEFICIENCY	VIRTUE	EXCESS
Cowardice	COURAGE	Rashness
Insensibility	TEMPERANCE	Self-indulgence
Stinginess	GENEROSITY	Prodigality
Pettiness	MAGNIFICENCE	Vulgar display
Smallness of soul	MAGNANIMITY	Vanity
Spiritlessness	GENTLENESS	Irascibility
Self-deprecation	TRUTHFULNESS	Boasting
Boorishness	WIT	Buffoonery

Justice is treated separately in Book V. Its mean concerns fair proportion in distribution and correction, not a simple point between two dispositions.

Stoic Virtues

EARLY STOA, c. 300–150 BCE

Zeno of Citium · Cleanthes · Chrysippus

ROMAN STOICISM, first–second centuries CE

Seneca · Musonius Rufus · Epictetus · Marcus Aurelius

Stoicism was an actual philosophical school, not merely a later label. It began in Athens around 300 BCE when Zeno of Citium taught at the Painted Stoa. Cleanthes succeeded him, and Chrysippus built its doctrines into a system of logic, physics, and ethics. Its thinkers disagreed and adapted across five centuries, but they worked within a recognizable shared structure. Most early writings are lost, so the complete works that survive are weighted toward later Roman Stoicism.

SHARED CORE

Live in agreement with nature and right reason. Virtue is the only true good and is sufficient for flourishing. Vice is the only true bad. Everything else becomes material for virtue or vice to use.

THE FOUR PRIMARY VIRTUES

The virtues are not four independent strengths. The Stoics treated each as a form of knowledge and held that whoever possesses one fully possesses them together.

WISDOM Knows what is good, bad, or indifferent, and guides right judgment.

COURAGE Knows what should be endured, feared, or met without fear.

JUSTICE Knows what is due to each person and acts for the common good.

TEMPERANCE Knows what should be chosen, avoided, or treated as indifferent.

VIRTUE IS THE ONLY GOOD

Here Stoicism breaks sharply from Aristotle. Aristotle allows external goods to contribute to flourishing. The Stoics classify health, wealth, reputation, pain, and their opposites as indifferents: none can make a person morally good or bad.

Some indifferents are naturally preferred and others dispreferred. A Stoic can reasonably pursue health, security, friendship, and useful resources while avoiding their opposites. The claim is not that these things are worthless. It is that possessing or losing them cannot create or destroy virtue.

WHAT IS UP TO US

Epictetus, *Enchiridion* 1, c. 125 CE

Epictetus turns the larger Stoic system into a discipline of choice. Up to us does not mean everything we can influence. It means what belongs to our moral agency without depending on an outside result: how we judge an impression and direct impulse, desire, aversion, and action.

UP TO US	NOT UP TO US
Judgment	Body
Impulse	Property
Desire	Reputation
Aversion	Office or status
Our actions	Others’ actions

APATHEIA

Freedom from passions rooted in false judgments. It does not mean numbness, passivity, or the absence of appropriate feeling.

Yamas And Niyamas

Classical Yoga within the Hindu tradition
Patanjali, Yoga Sutras c 400 AD

Patanjali's Yoga Sutras organize one influential Classical Yoga path into eight limbs. Yama and niyama are the first two limbs and the moral foundation of the other limbs. Patanjali gives conduct in two fives—what to refrain from, then what to take up.

YAMAS -THE FIVE RESTRAINTS

Practiced without exception of class, place, time, or circumstance, the yamas become the universal great vow.

AHIMSA

Nonviolence: does not injure any living being.

SATYA

Truthfulness: brings thought and speech into accord with fact.

ASTEYA

Non-stealing: takes nothing belonging to another.

BRAHMACHARYA

Celibacy or sexual restraint: governs sexual desire and conduct.

APARIGRAHA

Non-possession: renounces unnecessary possessions and attachment.

THE EIGHT LIMBS

Yama (Restraint)

Niyama (Observances)

Asana (Posture)

Pranayama (Breath)

Pratyahara (Sense withdrawal)

Dharana (concentration)

Dhyana (unbroken meditation)

Samadhi (absorption into enlightenment)

The path moves from ethical restraint and observance through posture, breath, sensory withdrawal, concentration, meditation, and absorption.

NIYAMAS - THE FIVE OBSERVANCES

SAUCHA

Purity of body and mind: keeps the body clean and clears the mind of jealousy, pride, hatred, and attachment.

SANTOSHA

Contentment: receives present conditions without craving more than is needed.

TAPAS

Disciplined austerity: willingly bears restraint and difficulty to purify body, senses, and mind.

SVADHYAYA

Sacred study: studies teachings that lead toward liberation and repeats sacred words, especially Om.

ISHVARA PRANIDHANA

Devotion to Ishvara: offers action and practice to the Lord, the highest teacher, without grasping at the result.

The Noble Eightfold Path

A CENTRAL BUDDHIST FRAMEWORK

The Buddha, approximately fifth century BCE

Preserved throughout the early Buddhist discourses

The Noble Eightfold Path is the fourth of the Four Noble Truths: the path leading toward the cessation of suffering. It is also called the Middle Way because it avoids the extremes of sensual indulgence and severe self-denial.

“Right” does not merely mean socially approved or rule-abiding. It means aligned with the path toward awakening and freedom from suffering.

The eight factors are traditionally gathered into three forms of training: **wisdom**, **ethical conduct**, and **mental cultivation**.

WISDOM

RIGHT VIEW

Understands suffering, its origins, its cessation, and the path leading beyond it. It sees that actions have consequences and that experience is impermanent.

RIGHT INTENTION

Directs the mind toward letting go, goodwill, and harmlessness rather than craving, hostility, and cruelty.

ETHICAL CONDUCT

RIGHT SPEECH

Refrains from lying, divisive speech, harsh speech, and careless chatter. Cultivates speech that is truthful and beneficial.

RIGHT ACTION

Refrains from killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct. Cultivates conduct that protects life, trust, and the well-being of others.

RIGHT LIVELIHOOD

Earns a living without deceit, exploitation, or needless harm to living beings.

MENTAL CULTIVATION

RIGHT EFFORT

Prevents and releases unwholesome states while cultivating and sustaining wholesome ones.

RIGHT MINDFULNESS

Maintains clear awareness of the body, feelings, mind, and experience without becoming lost in attachment or aversion.

RIGHT CONCENTRATION

Develops a stable and unified mind through meditation, creating the stillness needed for deeper insight.

THE PATH WORKS TOGETHER

The eight factors are not isolated commandments or steps completed one at a time. Each strengthens the others.

Wisdom guides conduct. Ethical conduct steadies the mind. Mental cultivation deepens wisdom. Together, they weaken greed, hatred, and delusion and lead toward liberation from suffering.

The Five Constants

THE CONFUCIAN TRADITION

Confucius, 551 to 479 BCE

Mencius, approximately 372 to 289 BCE

Fivefold formulation: Han dynasty, beginning around the second century BCE

Ren • Yi • Li • Zhi • Xin

The Five Constants, or Wuchang, gather five enduring virtues of the Confucian tradition. Their roots appear throughout the classical texts. Mencius brought four of them together through his teaching of the moral sprouts: humaneness, rightness, propriety, and wisdom. During the Han dynasty, trustworthiness joined them in the established fivefold formulation.

Confucian virtue is cultivated through relationship. Character becomes visible in the ways a person responds to family, community, responsibility, and public life. The Five Constants are not isolated commandments. They work together as enduring qualities through which a person learns to live well with others.

REN • Humaneness

Cultivates concern for others through a heart that cannot bear their suffering. Ren may also be translated as benevolence or humanity.

YI • Rightness

Chooses what is fitting and morally right, rather than following personal advantage alone.

LI • Ritual propriety

Gives respect a visible form through ritual, courtesy, social roles, and conduct appropriate to the relationship and occasion.

ZHI • Wisdom

Discerns right from wrong, perceives what a situation calls for, and helps the other virtues take fitting action.

XIN • Trustworthiness

Makes words and actions dependable through sincerity, fidelity, and good faith.

READ TOGETHER

Ren supplies humane concern. Yi asks what is right. Li gives right relationship a practiced form. Zhi discerns how to act. Xin makes character dependable.

Mencius compared moral beginnings to sprouts: they are present as capacities, but they must be tended before they mature. The Five Constants are therefore not merely qualities to admire. They are qualities to cultivate until they become reliable in ordinary life.

The Confucian tradition also gives importance to filial devotion, reciprocity, loyalty, reverence, and other virtues. The Five Constants are an enduring framework within that larger tradition, not its complete inventory.

The Dao De Jing

THE WAY AND ITS VIRTUE

Traditionally attributed to Laozi

Composed approximately fourth to third centuries BCE

The Dao De Jing does not present a complete system or catalogue of virtues. Its title joins Dao, the Way, with De, the virtue or inner power that arises when a person lives in alignment with that Way.

Rather than asking how virtue should be displayed, the text asks how goodness can arise without striving, possession, or force.

DAO • The Way

The living course through which the world and its many beings arise, change, and return. The Dao cannot be fully contained by any single name or formula.

DE • Virtue or Inner Power

The character that becomes present when someone lives in accordance with the Way. The highest De does not need to announce itself as virtue.

U WEI • Non-Forcing

Action without unnecessary strain, coercion, or interference. Wu wei does not mean doing nothing. It means acting without fighting the nature of the situation.

THE THREE TREASURES

Chapter 67 names three treasures. They are not presented as the complete Daoist virtue system, but as three qualities the sage protects.

COMPASSION

Caring strength that allows courage without cruelty.

FRUGALITY

Economy and restraint. It refuses excess and does not exhaust what should be preserved.

NOT PRESUMING TO BE FIRST

Declining the urge to place oneself ahead of others. It allows leadership without rivalry or domination.

WHEN VIRTUE BECOMES FORCED

Chapter 38 describes a descent from Dao to De, then to humaneness, rightness, and finally ritual propriety.

The passage warns that as harmony with the Way is lost, virtue becomes increasingly named, deliberate, and enforced. Its concern is not simply whether goodness is spoken, but whether goodness still arises from a living source.

The Via Classification

SIX VIRTUES · TWENTY-FOUR CHARACTER STRENGTHS

Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman

Character Strengths and Virtues, 2004

Explore the classification and free survey: viacharacter.org

The VIA Classification emerged from positive psychology as a counterpart to diagnostic manuals of disorder. Instead of cataloging what can go wrong in a person, its creators asked what can go right.

They examined philosophical, religious, and cultural traditions for recurring accounts of good character. The resulting framework organizes twenty-four character strengths beneath six broad virtues.

Virtues are the larger families of character. Strengths are the more specific capacities through which those virtues can be expressed and studied.

WISDOM

Creativity · Curiosity · Judgment · Love of learning · Perspective

COURAGE

Bravery · Perseverance · Honesty · Zest

HUMANITY

Love · Kindness · Social intelligence

JUSTICE

Teamwork · Fairness · Leadership

TEMPERANCE

Forgiveness · Humility · Prudence · Self-regulation

TRANSCENDENCE

Appreciation of beauty and excellence · Gratitude · Hope · Humor · Spirituality

A LIVING RESEARCH MODEL

The VIA model proposes that people possess all twenty-four strengths in different degrees. The survey estimates their relative expression and can help identify a person's most characteristic strengths. It is not a diagnosis or a ranking of human worth.

Strengths can develop, and researchers continue to study how they relate and whether they always gather beneath these six virtues in precisely the same way.

Strong hands, shield and sword
Wise eyes discern path and word
Love's shape draws forward



Copyright © 2026 Lion's Heart Health.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form without written permission from the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

ISBN:

Published in the United States by Lion's Library Publishing

Design and Illustration by Sarah Potter