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Life Coaching for Creative Women: Mixing Magic with Mindfulness

Play Games: Join the Card Craze

‘Very well,’ said the King; ‘Let him be asked to come and play cards with me.’

This time the Kinglet was not late for his appointment.

The King sent for the cards and they sat down to play. They had six games, and John always lost. The stake was fifty crowns, and each time he emptied his purse, which was full the next instant.

The sixth time the King exclaimed, ‘It is amazing!’

The Queen cried, ‘It is astonishing!’

Charles Deulin: The Little Soldier, 18th century

In the Middle Ages, a new craze swept through the courts of Europe: playing cards. Though they may have had earlier origins, it was in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that cards became extremely popular amongst the nobility. Some rare and fragile medieval sets of playing cards still exist today. The four suits of cards, Hearts, Diamonds, Clubs and Spades, became established at that time, and contemporary packs still contain many of the same cards, such as the King, the Queen and the Knave (or Jack), who still wear Tudor costumes, while the Ace was added in the 19th century. In Scotland, according to Sir Walter Scott, helpful fairies will point out the best card to be played.



REDGOLD CREATIVITY Exercise: Mixing Mindfulness with Magic

When was the last time you played cards? Join the craze. Get out that old pack, buy a new one, or explore online. Playing cards can help with plotting, planning and prospering in your creative pursuits. Billionaire Warren Buffett plays online bridge regularly, in between making astute financial investments. Playing cards will remind you of the playful nature of creativity, and fill your purse of ingenuity once more.

Get together a group of friends or play alone – there are suggestions for both below:



Play *WHIST*

Whist is a card game that became popular in 18th century salons. It got its name from the sounds ‘whsst!’ when silence was sought at the start of the game. In the 19th century, ‘whist-drives’, progressive card parties, when people moved from table to table, were particularly popular.

Helpful if: you need a fun, sociable break from your creative project.

How to play:

Whist is played with four people who form two separate teams. Partners in a team sit opposite each other during the game. All cards (using a standard 52 pack) are dealt out to the players (13 cards each). Cards have a ranking from Ace (high) to Two. The last card dealt to the dealer remains face up, and becomes the trump suit for the game. The trump card is returned to the dealer's hand once the game begins. The object of Whist is to win as many hands as possible. Each hand is played in a clockwise direction from the dealer's left. An initial card is played (any from the player's 13), and the following players will play a card of the same suit, if they have one. If they do not, they can play a card of a different suit, or a card from the trump suit. A hand can be won by playing the highest card of the chosen suit, or by playing the highest trump card. The winner of the hand leads the next one. Once all 13 hands are played, any team that wins more than six hands earns one point for each hand above six (for example, if you win eight hands, you earn two points). The first team to score five points wins the game. More than one deal of cards can be played.



Play *BRIDGE*

Bridge, derived from whist, is a bidding card game in which one player's cards are revealed, and played out by her partner. There are two kinds: auction bridge, which was popular in the 19th century, and contract bridge, which began to be preferred in the 20th century. Bridge tournaments are still played around the world.

Helpful if: you need to sharpen your focus for your creative project.

How to play:

Bridge is played with a standard deck of cards. There are four players who form two separate teams. All the cards are dealt out so each player has 13 cards. Bidding takes place in order to decide who will be the declarer of the game. Each player can place a bid for the number of tricks that their team will win, in excess of six, using specified trumps. For example, a bid of '3 Clubs' specifies that the team will win 8 hands with Clubs as trumps. Ranking for trumps is as follows: no trumps (highest), spades, hearts, diamonds, clubs (eg. a bid of '1 diamond' is outranked by a bid of '1 heart'). Bids can also be doubled or re-doubled by following players. Players are also able to pass on bidding. Bidding will stop when three players in a row have passed. If nobody bids, the cards are re-dealt. The highest bidder becomes the declarer, and the declarer's partner becomes the dummy. The player to the declarer's left leads the first trick and can play any card from their hand. Following this, the dummy's cards are displayed on the table. The declarer plays the dummy's cards for all following tricks. Each trick is played in a clockwise direction. Players must play a card of the original suit displayed, or a trump card. Tricks can be won by playing the highest card of the chosen suit (no trumps played) or playing the highest trump card.

The winner of the previous trick leads the next one. The declarer's objective is to win as many tricks or more that were predicted in the bidding. Different scores apply for undertricks (not meeting the bid number) and overtricks (exceeding the bid number). The first team to score 100 points wins the rubber (which usually consists of up to three games). See a contract bridge scoring guide for point calculations.



Play *SOLITAIRE*

Solitaire is also known as the card game patience. It became highly popular in the 19th century. In 1870, a collection of solitary games called *Illustrated Card Games of Patience* by Lady Adelaide Cadogan was published.

Helpful if: you need to reflect and contemplate before returning to your creative project.

How to play:

Solitaire is a one-player game using a standard card deck, though you can play opposite in pairs. The cards are ranked from King (high) to Ace. Cards are arranged in a 'layout tableau', most commonly consisting of seven stacks, increasing in size from one to six cards. The card on top of each stack is turned over. Above the card stacks are four 'foundation' piles (one for each suit), which are built up from Ace to King during the game. The object of the game is to complete the foundation piles. Suits can be built up on the seven card stacks below, starting with any card and working down, although the suit colour must alternate (eg. a red ten card must be followed by a black nine card). Any spot in the card stacks that becomes vacant may be filled by a King. Cards can also be drawn from the unused part of the deck, called the 'stock'. Usually three cards are drawn but only the top one may be used.



Some ancient playing cards were in an exhibition I saw at The Cloisters, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. They featured European hand-painted cards made in the Middle Ages. #MetLuxuryCards



About the Author

Hello, my name is Eliza Redgold. It's based upon the Gaelic meaning of my full name, Dr Elizabeth Reid Boyd. English folklore has it that if you help a fairy, you will be rewarded with red gold. I'm an author and academic. I write fiction (as Eliza Redgold) and non-fiction (as Elizabeth Reid Boyd).

There are some exciting new releases in 2017. Out in March is *The Secrets of Mindful Beauty* to be published by Skyhorse Publishing, New York. These revolutionary techniques in anti-ageing and self-care will change how you look and how you feel - forever.

In 2017 the first in my Ladies of Legend fiction series will be released as an audio book. Listen out for NAKED: A Novel of Lady Godiva on Audible.

Also in progress is a non-fiction book about the spirit of fairy tales and how you can transform your life with a forgotten fairy tale philosophy.

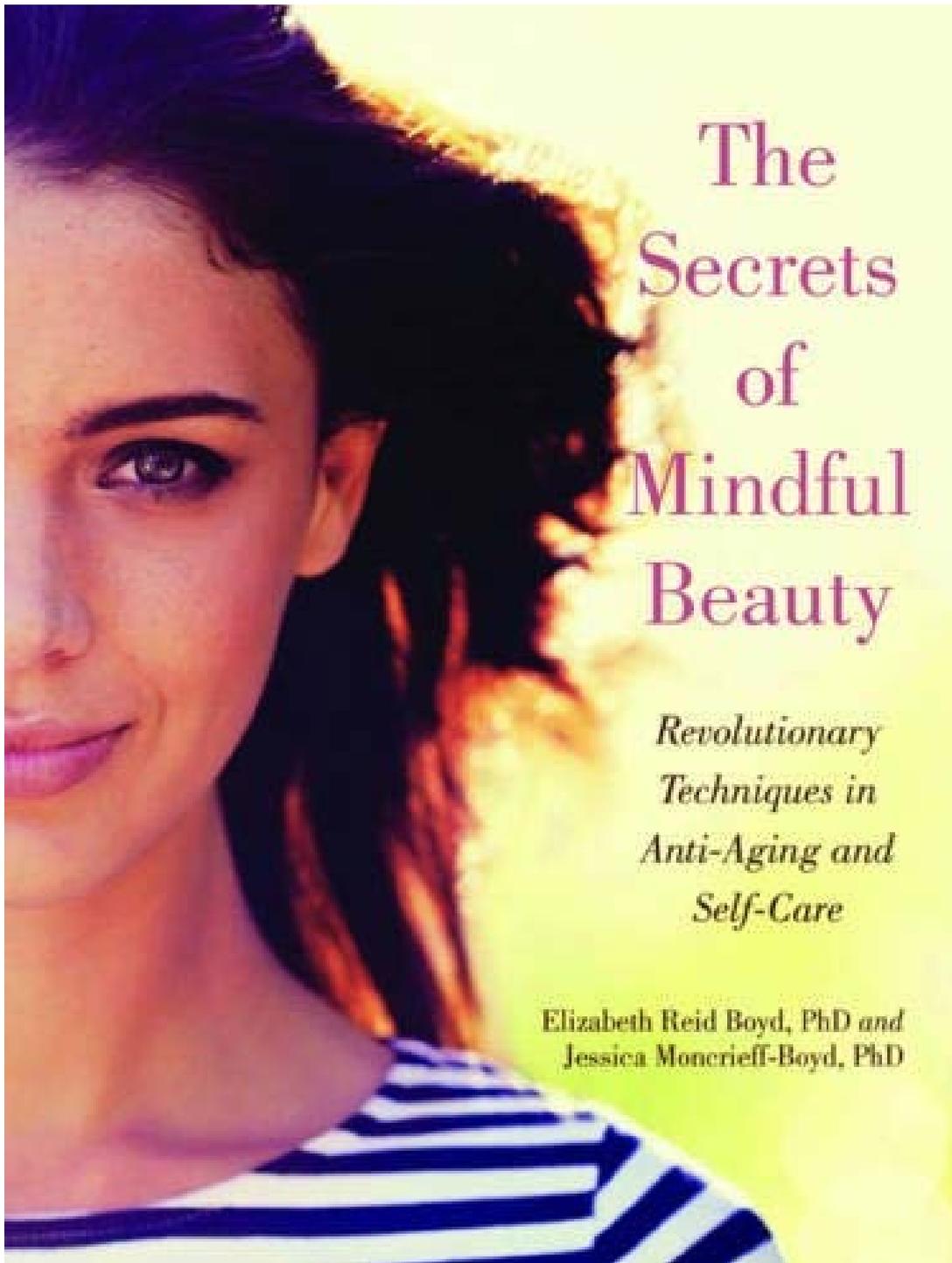
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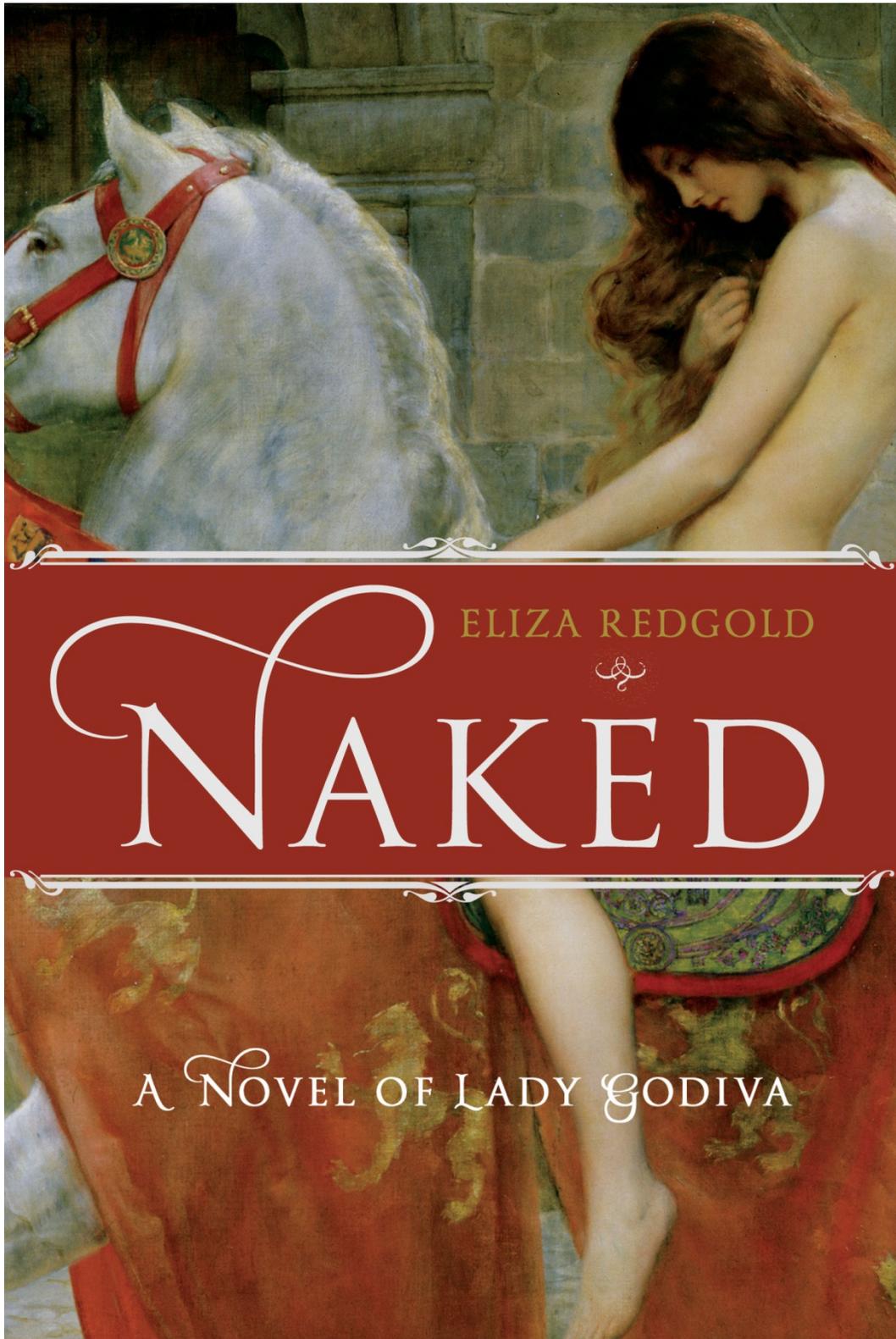
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