



## INDEPENDENT STUDY: Module1, Class 12

Please note: The pictures and comments in the transcript and recording below have been gathered over many years and where possible, I attribute them to their original source. If anyone connected with these photographs or comments would like them removed, please notify me and I will be happy to comply.

The recording for Class 12 is around 34 minutes and is in your attachments.

CLASS 12: Shell #'s: 89,93,26

Class 11 was a special class. If any of us doubt that the shells are eager to teach, please realize that Claudia's experience occurred the very week I was preparing to present the Cowrie class. By the time it was ready to present, Claudia began this on-going relationship with the Tiger Cowrie that ended just a few days before we shared it with her classmates.

Now, let's review some earlier information.

In the early stages of studying the Cowrie, you learned that the shiny exterior is created by the animal wrapping its mantle around the outside of its shell. You also discovered that the underside of the shell reminded ancient Romans of the genital area of their sows, and therefore earned the name of *porcellana*, meaning "little pig". When Marco Polo returned from China with glazed pottery, its smooth surface resembled the porcellana shells and the pottery was called porcelain.

Now that we have seen how the word porcelain is derived from the Cowrie Shell, I want to show you another vocabulary word that comes from seashells.

**pur·ple** (pûr'pəl) *n.* 1. Any of a group of colors with a hue between that of violet and red. See color. 2. Cloth of this color, formerly worn as a symbol of royalty or high office. 3. Imperial power; high rank. Used especially in the phrase *born to the purple*. 4. The rank or office of a cardinal. 5. The rank or office of a bishop. —*adj.* 1. Of the color purple. 2. Royal or imperial; regal. 3. Elaborate and ornate: *purple prose*. —*v.* *purpled*, *-pling*, *-ples*. —*tr.* To make purple. —*intr.* To become purple. [Middle English *purpel*, *purpyl*, Old English *purple*, altered by dissimilation from *purpuran*, of purple, from *purpura*, purple cloth, from Latin, purple, from Greek *porphura*, shellfish yielding a purple dye, purple dye, from Semitic.]

The word is purple. Just as I did with the word porcelain, I have copied the definition of the word purple from the American Heritage Dictionary. You can see the derivation refers to shellfish yielding a purple dye. Let's investigate that a bit.

The story of purple dates back to ancient Phoenicia when they didn't have many methods for dying cloth. Someone discovered that the purpura murex, scientific name *Bolinus brandaris*, secreted a clear fluid that when left out in the sun transitioned through various colors eventually arriving at what we now call purple. This fluid was capable of not only staining material, but more importantly, remaining permanently fixed in the cloth. (Note: Mummy wrappings that were stained with this dye still maintain their purple color after thousands of years.) The Phoenicians capitalized upon this discovery and introduced an entire industry of purple cloth production. The ancient Greeks called the territory near present-day Syria "Phoenicia," which means "land of the purple" in deference to the purple cloth they exported.

## Presenting purple cloth to royalty



Since each murex yielded only a few drops of punicin, the purple-producing chemical, it took thousands of murex to produce enough dye for one pound of cloth. This made the cloth prohibitively expensive. In fact, only royalty could afford it, and purple became a color only royalty wore.



## Preparing the dye

To hasten the dye production process, rather than waiting for the heat of the sun to perform the transformation, the mollusks were boiled. This achieved the color they desired, but the Phoenicians were not prepared for the stench. Amassing huge quantities of this material in enormous vats caused a foul smell that was a cross between bromine gas and garlic. The dye vats had to be located down-wind from towns, and anyone wearing this cloth now had to afford perfume to mask

the odor. Here again, perfume was a luxury only royalty could afford. The color purple became symbolic of royalty, leading to the expression "born to the purple" to indicate someone of royal lineage.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tyrian\\_purple](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tyrian_purple) Fascinating history of dye production from snails

<http://www.mmdtkw.org/VPurple.html> The history of purple

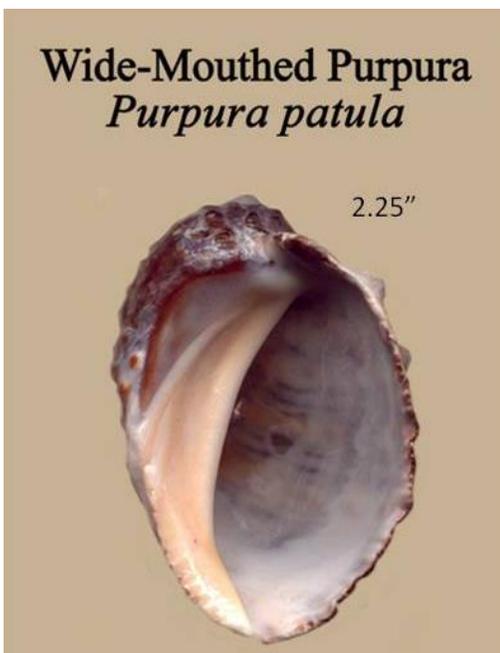


On the left is the shell from the mollusk that produced this purple dye. This is the **Purpura Murex**, and it is **shell #89** in *Ocean Oracle*.

Once again, I wanted you to be able to look the animal in the eye, and you can do that with the picture on the right.

Because the dyed material was only worn by royalty, the meaning for the Purpura Murex is “*Being treated as special or elite; favoritism.*”

In my work with clients, I find that the Purpura Murex (also called the Purple Dye Murex) often gains attention by bothering people. If disliked, it reflects a desire to avoid anything that smacks of special treatment. While at first I thought this might be a tendency toward healthy humility, it was revealed that these clients so abhorred anything perceived as special, that they were deliberately limiting their own growth. These people fear that their special gifts will separate them from others and doom them to a lonely life. In order to avoid this isolation, they resist cultivating anything special within themselves. By abandoning their gifts, they hope to remain accepted by society, but the sacrifice prevents them from becoming all they can be. We can only wonder how many gifts are squandered because of these hidden concerns.



As we leave ancient Phoenicia and progress in time, we find other mollusks that contain similar dye-yielding chemicals. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, natives in Central America used a similar method of dye production with the Wide-Mouthed Purpura. As they exported this dye to Spain, demand increased, and their supply of mollusks dwindled. Necessity dictated finding alternative approaches to dye production.

Today, in Latin America, the wide-mouthed purpura mollusks meet a kinder fate than those sacrificed in Phoenicia. The **Wide-Mouthed Purpura** is **shell #93** in *Ocean Oracle*. Man learned to milk their dye-producing glands by gently blowing or poking inside their shell. This procedure permits the fluid to be obtained from the live mollusk, and allows the animal to continue producing future dye material. Both man and animal benefit as this technique manages to increase dye production while sparing the lives of the mollusks. Because of the foresight involved in this humane treatment by man, attraction to this shell indicates “*Farsightedness; seeing the big picture; and working for the good of all.*”

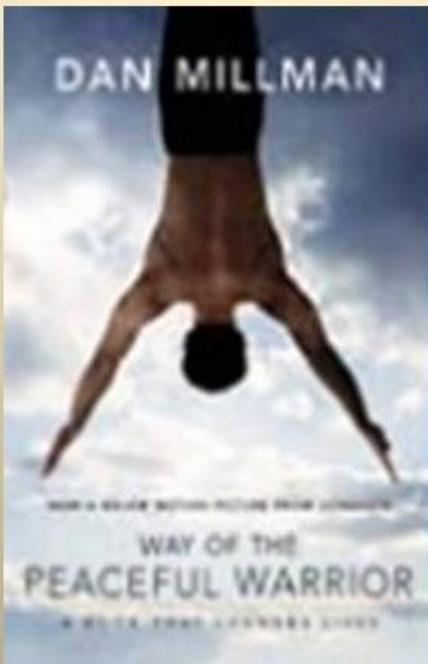
This site is no longer available, but it was the source for the information below...I underlined the appropriate text below. [starryskies.com/Artshtml/dln/8-00/shells.html](http://starryskies.com/Artshtml/dln/8-00/shells.html)

*The shells of some snails were also important to our ancestors. In the 16th Century, natives of Central America poured *Purpura Patula* (Class, this is the scientific name for the Wide-Mouthed *Purpura*) snails into cauldrons and crushed them. The mashed snails' shells would ooze a purple dye which was used to color cloth. By 1648, the natives had started exporting this dye to Spain. There was such a high demand for the dye, the natives were forced to find ways to maintain their supply while not endangering the population of snails. By imposing conservation measures, they instead learned to pluck a snail off the rocks, gently blow into its shell and collect the dye that trickled out. The snail was then returned to the rocks unharmed.*

From Wikipedia site: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tyrian\\_purple](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tyrian_purple) (underlined text is mine)

*In nature the snails use the secretion as part of their predatory behaviour and as an antimicrobial lining on egg masses. [7][8] The snail also secretes this substance when it is attacked by predators, or physically antagonized by humans (i.e., poked). Therefore the dye can be collected either by "milking" the snails, which is more labour intensive but is a renewable resource, or by collecting and then crushing the snails completely, which is destructive. David Jacoby remarks [9] that "twelve thousand snails of Murex brandaris yield no more than 1.4 g of pure dye, enough to colour only the trim of a single garment."*

Let's take this lesson from the shells about "being special" a step farther. The *Purpura Murex* addresses specialness as something to which only a few are entitled as when only royalty could wear the color purple. This makes them stand out, and they are looked upon as special. However, if being special requires being different, it may invite jealousy or other risks that cause us to avoid anything that hints at specialness. Enter the Wide-Mouthed *Purpura*. If we consider that everything is composed of energy, and that we are therefore all one, then anything that enhances one individual enhances the whole. This is the new perspective taught by the Wide-Mouthed *Purpura*.



I saw these two options explained beautifully in Dan Millman's book, *Way of the Peaceful Warrior*.

The mentor in this book is named Socrates. At one point, Socrates tells his student (Dan) "You've always tried to become SUPERIOR in an ORDINARY REALM. Now you're going to become ORDINARY in a SUPERIOR REALM." The capital letters are mine in order to emphasize a point. These words leaped off the page at me, and filled me with the insights I am sharing in this class. Ironically, when I looked back years later to credit this quote in his book, it refers to Dan's desire to become a superior athlete. Not the great epiphany I had recalled, but the wisdom gained regarding this concept enhanced by the teachings of the shells still has value to me.

This book was also made into a film. I was so excited to discover this...Here is a video of Dan Millman discussing Socrates. <http://www.danmillman.com/faq/who-is-socrates>

<http://www.peacefulwarrior.com/>

Living according to the Purple Dye Murex, someone might be concerned about trying to be special, or superior, in an ordinary realm. It is rare or risky to step into our gifts, and this could be viewed as a lonely path. Let's apply this to the life of Jesus. When his deeds were looked upon as miracles, and people placed him upon a pedestal—they made him special in their ordinary realm. However, he never encouraged that view. If anything, he insisted that anything he did they could do, and more. He was holding the vision of being ordinary in a special realm. The Wide-Mouthed Purpura echoes this approach, which encourages nurturing emotional and spiritual growth as a natural birthright for all. In such a society, the INDIVIDUALS would not be special, but the WHOLE REALM would be.

Do you see the difference?

If we require standing out from others to feel special, we are stuck in an ordinary realm. But, if we can allow everyone to step into their gifts, the entire realm would be special.

Quote from Dan Millman when asked: Your first book reminds me of the writings of Carlos Castañeda and his teacher, Don Juan. Did you draw upon his earlier work?

*Castañeda's early writings involve a brujo, or shaman, in the Sonoran desert who uses psychedelics to shake up his naïve student. In contrast, I found my teacher in the midst of daily life, in an old service station.*

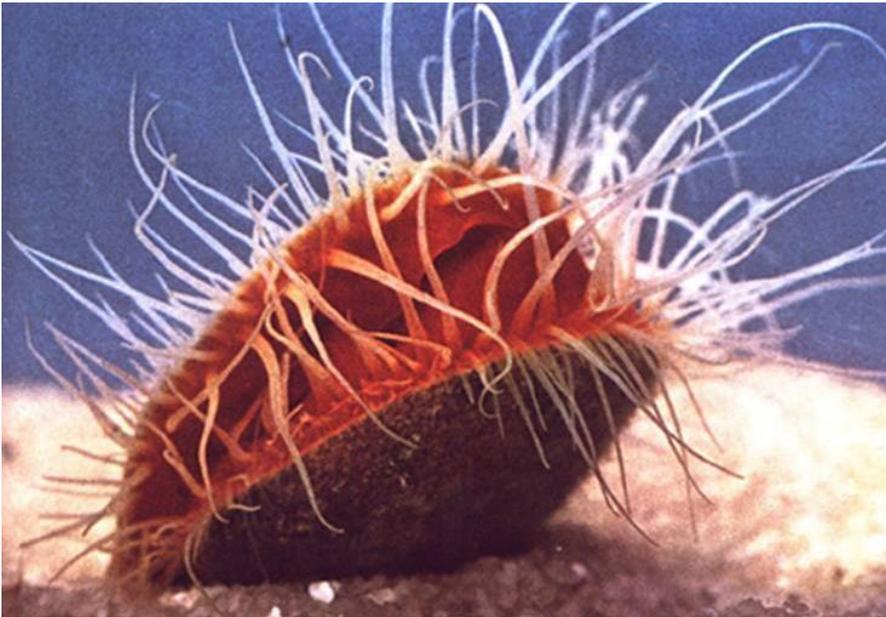
*Castañeda's early work and Peaceful Warrior are similar in the sense they involve a struggling student and mysterious mentor. But life, literature and film overflow with such pairings: Arthur had Merlin, Frodo had Gandalf; Mitch had Morrie; Luke Skywalker had Obi Wan Kenobi and Yoda. And I had my Socrates. (And we have the seashells.)*

**Giant Lima, or  
Delicate File Clam  
*Acesta phillipinensis***



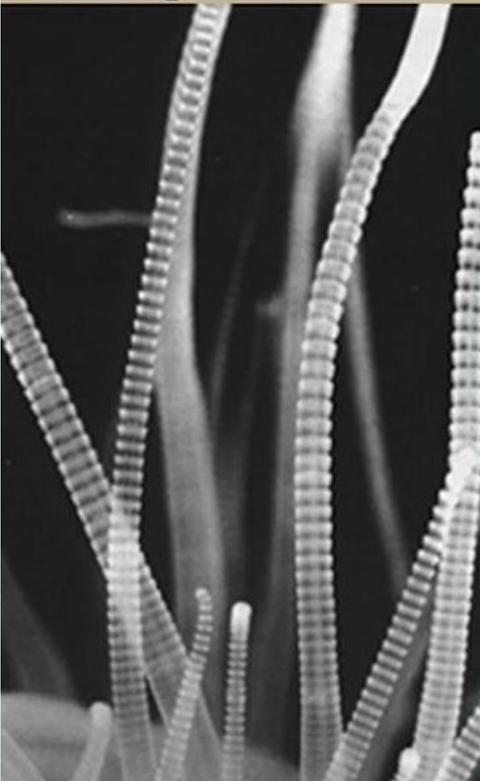
As long as we are discussing the seashell wisdom regarding being special, let's look at what they have to teach about being flawed. This wisdom comes from the Delicate File Clam. Another common name for this Delicate File Clam is Giant Lima Clam.

Here is another case of two common names, but just one scientific name.... *Acesta phillipinensis*.



For the lesson of the Delicate File Clam/ Giant Lima, we begin by examining the mollusk's anatomy and behavior. The file clam is unable to rely upon its swimming ability to evade predatory fish. Fortunately, its body is equipped with a compensatory fringe of delicate tentacles peeking out from the edge of its shell. These tentacles break off easily and are quite sticky.

### Enlarged tentacles



Here is an enlarged magnification of the tentacles. They are the first bit of clam that enters the fish's mouth, and by wrapping around each other and sticking together, they effectively seal the unsuspecting fish's mouth shut. This buys the clam time to employ one more marvelous adaptation. They are capable of producing more byssus threads, (filamentous strings) than any other mollusks—enough to construct a nest. While the fish struggles to unglue its mouth, the clam is able to burrow into this sanctuary to make its escape.

In shell divination, the combined name and behavior of this clam suggests discomfort caused by the revelation of personal information (your so-called "delicate file") so delicate that great effort would be made to keep someone's mouth shut rather than allow its disclosure. The clam's nesting behavior indicates that exposing this information would create such distress a person would have to hide away from the world in a "nest." The **Giant Lima Clam** is shell #26 in *Ocean Oracle*. Its meaning is "*Desiring privacy over personal matters; discomfort over exposure of personal information.*"

Let me pause here to explain something that can happen to readers at large events. I have noticed that at any given venue, one shell will be popular that day. It varies as to what shell will win the popularity contest, but often, there will be one shell that 80% of the clients select that day. What I don't want to overlook is that since I am sitting at every one of those readings too, I am the common denominator. Whatever the lesson attached to the popular shell, I am not immune. Please keep this in mind should any of you become interested in doing readings. I am using the shells to teach divination, but no matter what method of divination you choose, this still applies.

Only once has the Delicate File Clam been the popular shell. I was at a psychic fair a few hours from home, and almost everyone that day had this shell in their reading. After the fair, as I was driving home, I couldn't help but wonder what information could possibly be so damaging? I mentally reviewed the readings that day, and realized that it was anything deemed to be a personal flaw, anything that makes us different—the fear of a person who believes that in order to BE LIKED, he or she has to BE LIKE everyone else. Absorption in concerns about loss of acceptance can result in an inauthentic life lived in fear.

Thinking about our flaws, and the lesson from the File Clam, I recalled a story circulating on the Internet a few years earlier. It is called A Story from India, by an anonymous author, but I call it “The Cracked Pot.” To summarize the events, a water bearer has two pots hanging on each end of a pole balanced upon his shoulders. One pot is perfect while the other possesses a large crack. Every day, the water bearer walks to the stream and fills both pots with water. Upon his return, the perfect pot is full, but the cracked pot only has half its liquid contents. After a few years of this, the cracked pot says to the water bearer “I am so ashamed.” When asked why, the pot explains that every day the water bearer works hard taking the two pots to the stream, but without fail, when they return, the cracked pot has lost half its water. The water bearer responds by asking the cracked pot to observe the ground during their next journey to the stream. When they return home, the water bearer asks the pot how it feels. It comments that the flowers on the ground were beautiful, but laments that it is still only half full. The water bearer then asks if the pot noticed that the flowers were *only on one side of the path*—the cracked pot's side. The water bearer tells the cracked pot that he knew about the crack. He planted seeds along its side of the path, and every day on the walk back from the stream, the cracked pot watered the seeds he planted. The water bearer is grateful the cracked pot is built precisely as it is. Thanks to this, they have beautiful bouquets for the Master's table.

<http://www.inspirationpeak.com/cgi-bin/stories.cgi?record=20>

The above link is the source of this quote at the conclusion of the Cracked Pot.: *“Each of us has our own unique flaws. We're all cracked pots. But if we will allow it, God will use our flaws to grace his table. In God's great economy, nothing goes to waste. Don't be afraid of your flaws. Acknowledge them, and you too can be the cause of beauty. Know that in our weakness we find our strength.”*

[http://www.slideshare.net/rado\\_fun/cracked-pot-bg-presentation](http://www.slideshare.net/rado_fun/cracked-pot-bg-presentation) Another Cracked Pot arranged as a slide show, with this conclusion:

Each of us has our own unique flaw. But it's the cracks and flaws we each have that make our lives together so very interesting and rewarding. You've just got to take each person for what they are and look for the good in them. To all of my crackpot friends, and remember to smell the flowers.

That is the story. But working with the Delicate File Clam allowed me to project a little. What if the cracked pot had used all its resourcefulness and been able to prevent water from leaking out? The effort would take all its energy. In a state of exhaustion, it would return to the Master's House and have to rest. It had to replenish its energy in order to keep a single tell-tale drop from spilling again the next day. This pattern would be repeated every day becoming the entire life plan of the pot. Furthermore, if this effort succeeded, there would have been no flowers adding color to the world.

Like the pot, we often try to hide our cracks. Some people do it with drugs or alcohol; some fill their life with distractions to prevent others or themselves from noticing our self-described flaws, the things that make us different. However, our methods for hiding the crack are far healthier than the crack could ever be. Moreover, as the cracked pot discovered, how do we know that the cracks we possess and judge as flaws are not the very thing that allows us to make our contribution to the planet?

Every transformation or invention comes from someone willing to be outside the box. If the Wright Brothers had listened to conventional wisdom, “If man were meant to fly, God would have given us wings” where would aviation be today? They listened to their hearts and knew flight was possible. They may have wished they could ignore their gut feelings and be accepted by others, but they chose instead to expose their cracks to the public. It’s amazing to consider that following their hearts quite possibly required greater courage than confronting the actual danger of flying in the first airplane—it can be that challenging, but also, ultimately, that rewarding.

Instead of striving to be like everyone else by hiding the parts of you that feel different from others, cultivate those differences. Celebrate and appreciate your “cracks”. After all, if we are light beings, the crack may be what allows our light to shine out upon the world.

Now, let me tell you how this healed me. Do you remember the man who called the television station to tell me that I was an idiot?

After I learned this lesson from the Delicate File Clam, I was invited to be a guest speaker at my spiritualist church. When asked about the subject of my sermon, I said that I wanted to teach about our perceptions of being flawed, and I would be reading from the Cracked Pot. After the service, I asked to look at the outline for the day because I was curious about the name of one of the songs in the service. As I glanced at the outline, I burst out laughing. They had written that I would be reading from the Crackpot. In that moment I had an epiphany. A crackpot is someone who is thought to be crazy because he/she doesn’t fit into society’s norms. I realized they are outside the box. And then a lightbulb moment...if being a crackpot is being outside the box, that is a compliment. That is where the inventions and transformations can take place. So, if someone were to call me an idiot today, I would have to say, “thank you”.

The shells have a lot to say about feeling special and feeling flawed. This is a lot of information to process. I want to cover this material at a comfortable pace for you, so let me end this transcript here and we can add to this discussion next week.

On the next page, you will find a little gift to inspire you.

I received these pictures the very week I was teaching the lesson of the Cracked Pot, and cannot imagine a more beautiful garden. Think what the cracked pot could do with these seeds ☺



Front yard



Back yard

Meet the Master Gardener!



And now, here is your second homework assignment.

Since your last homework exercise we have covered a lot of new material, and you have reached the point where it would benefit you to participate in another homework assignment.

It is OK to refer to the class transcripts which I have listed for you. I am not interested in having you memorize the information so much as I am in your understanding it.

Your homework Exercise #2 covering Classes 10-12 is on the next page. You will find a few hints to spark some insights.

From Class 10:

Ocean Oracle contains several Cowrie shells that have meanings based upon a variety of categories:

- In Class 10, we learned why Cowrie shells look like they were polished by someone. The animal is responsible for creating the glistening surface. How does this **Appearance of the shell** apply to the meaning connected to the Eyed Cowrie # 16?

If we look at the underside of the shell, Cowries have a puckered slit running the length of the bottom of the shell: With this slit in mind....

- How does the **Interaction with man** contribute to the meaning of the Tiger Cowrie #85?
- Based upon the **Interaction with man**, what meaning do you associate with the Egg Cowrie #87?
- Based upon the **Name of the shell**, what meaning do you associate with the Warty Egg Cowrie also called the Umbilical Ovula #131?

From Class 12:

- What do the Purple Dye Murex, also called the Purpura Murex #89 and the Wide-Mouthed Purpura #93 teach about the lesson of feeling special?

Hint: How were these animals treated differently in the production of purple dye, and how do these two shells differ in their approach to the idea of being special?

- How do the story of the cracked pot and the fear of being flawed connect to the Delicate File Clam, also called the Giant Lima Clam #26?

Hint: If being flawed means a fear of not being like everyone else, what new wisdom about the concept of being flawed can be considered positive?

As always, to allow me to monitor your progress, please submit your replies to [michelle@oceanoracle.com](mailto:michelle@oceanoracle.com) and write your name and Homework #2 in the subject window.

Please remember, you need to send in all homework assignments in order to receive your graduation diploma from Ocean Speake.

Thank you,  
Shelley