



INDEPENDENT STUDY: Module1, Class 13

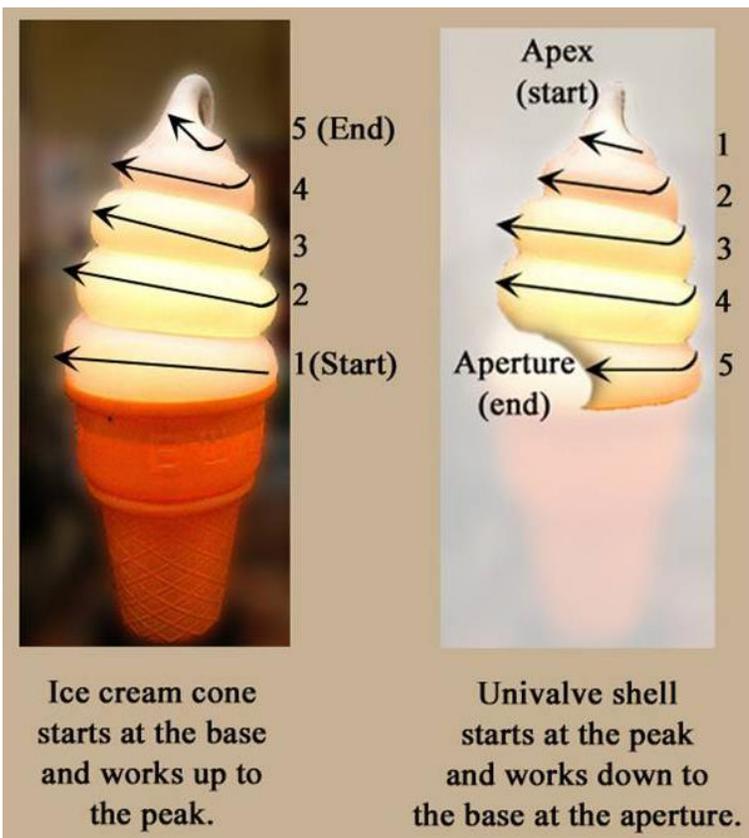
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The recording for Class 13 is around 26 minutes and is in your attachments.

CLASS 13: Shell #'s: 65,40,168

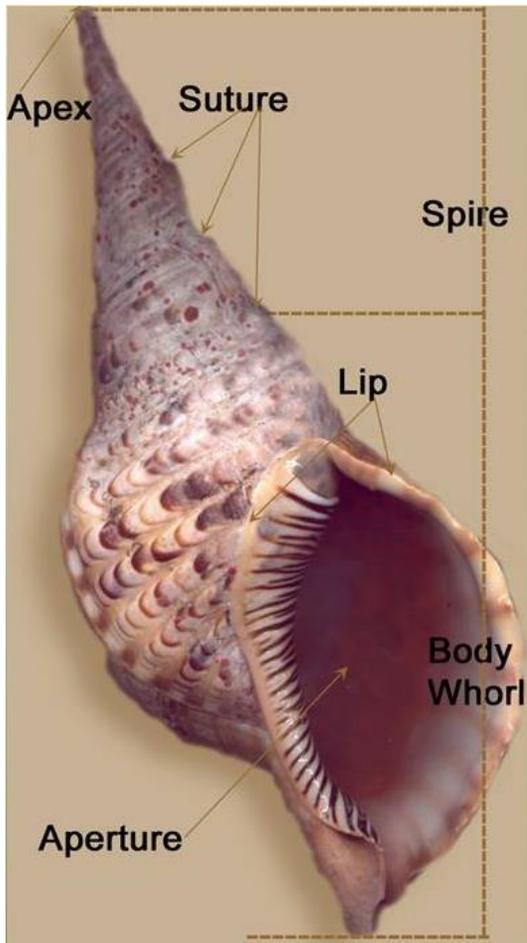
As you have heard many times, in order to find a particular shell's contribution to the language of seashells, I look for what might be unique in the animal's behavior, or anatomy, or its interaction with humans. In this class, I want to discuss some shells that make their contribution by defying typical shell growth. In keeping with the File Clam lesson from Class 12, you might say that these shells are "outside the box."

We will begin with two Univalves. In order to appreciate the significance of these exceptions, first we need to explore a typical Univalve shell.



I thought of a way to demonstrate this. If you have ever created a softy ice cream cone, when you lift the handle of the ice cream machine, the ice cream emerges as a flexible pipe. When the ice cream touches the cone, you form a wide swirl of ice cream following the circumference of the cone at the base. You continue working your way up by stacking steadily smaller coils upon each other until you lower the handle on the machine cutting off the flow of ice cream. This break in contact creates the peak at the top.

Think of Univalve shell growth as this principle in reverse. You start at the peak and moving in a clockwise direction, form steadily increasing coils until you reach the largest at the base. The picture on the right side shows the construction of an ice cream Univalve shell.

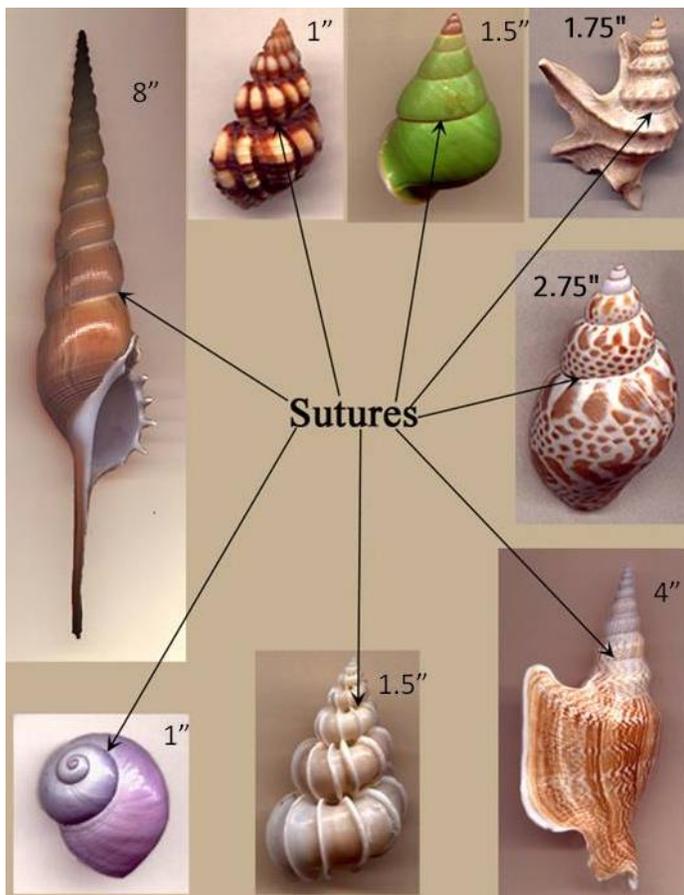


Now let's leave the world of ice cream and return to the world of seashells. In class 10, you were introduced to the Triton as a demonstration of a typical Univalve with its series of whorls or coils stacked upon each other. To refresh your memories, please refer to the picture to the left.

The animal begins its life at the top, or apex of the shell. As we work our way down the shell, these tiny whorls are followed by a sequence of steadily larger whorls increasing in size as the animal ages and grows. The animal inhabits the newest and largest whorl, containing the opening or aperture of the shell. All previous whorls comprise the spire.

At any given time, the largest whorl is at the base, and is called the body whorl. If the animal then continues to grow in size, new shell material is added to the lip of the aperture (the area of shell surrounding the opening). This additional shell material coils in a clockwise direction, and the former body whorl becomes part of the spire. A new, larger body whorl takes its place as the base, and this new whorl now ends with the aperture.

The seam between adjoining whorls is called a suture.



In addition to the Triton above, here is a sampling of other sutured Univalve shells. Almost all Univalves with whorls/coils suture them together.

I use the word "almost" because I have only found two notable exceptions to this rule: the Worm shell, and the Miller's Nutmeg.

West Indian Worm Shell



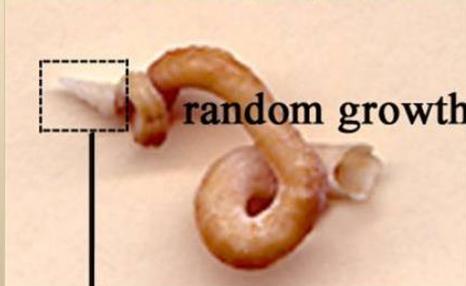
"Something completely out of one's control;
something spoiled"

First, let's look at the **West Indian Worm Shell**. By the way, this is not related to worms. Worm Shell is the common name given to this shell because someone thought they resembled worms in appearance. However, as you learned in an earlier class, the common name varies in different locations. I recently learned that in some locations these shells are called Old Maid's Curls. The scientific name used throughout the world is *Vermicularia spirata*.

It is **shell #65** in *Ocean Oracle*. The meaning is "Something completely out of one's control; something spoiled." If I could update *Ocean Oracle*, I would now eliminate the second part of this meaning, and focus on the loss of control.

To understand the meaning assigned to this shell, we have to explore the shell growth of this unusual Univalve.

West Indian Worm Shell



(note the sutures)

Enlargement of early stages of growth

If you look to the far left of the shell, close inspection reveals that the mollusk begins its life coiling its shell in the same tightly sutured fashion as other univalves. You can see the sutures in the enlargement below. At some point early in its growth, something in its DNA loses control of this process. The result is that the rest of the shell's structure appears to lack any guidance and grows in irregular random directions.

<http://www.jaxshells.org/worm.htm> close-up view of the worm shell's early sutured shell growth and the eventual meandering path it took as an adult.

The Worm Shell assists us in learning about the desire for imposing control. It attracts people who are experiencing situations that feel entirely out of their control. More about that in a minute.

Miller's Nutmeg



Note the separation between coils so there are no sutures

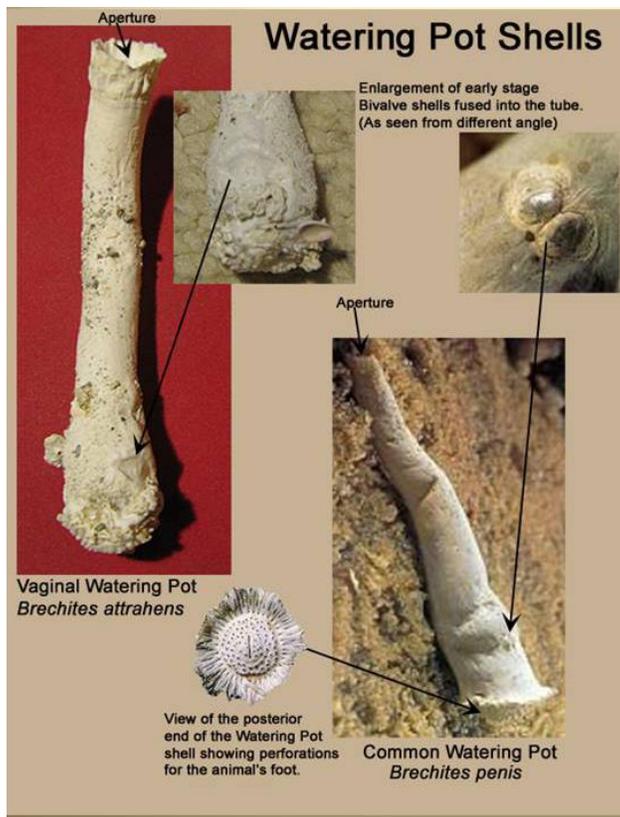
The second example of unsutured whorls is the **Miller's Nutmeg, shell #40** in *Ocean Oracle*. As you can see, the Miller's Nutmeg separates the coils of its shell, but in sharp contrast to the Worm Shell, the Nutmeg follows a deliberately controlled growth pattern. The shell's structure is symmetrical, yet each whorl is separate, not sutured together.

The neatly stacked, unattached coils of the Miller's Nutmeg are the embodiment of detaching from the past as well as the future. It is encouraging us to focus on the now, free from past experiences, and free from future expectations.

How does this apply to our lives? If you are creating from past experience, the expectation is for more of the same. Imagine you had a fight with your next-door neighbor. The next time you see that neighbor, your thoughts may drift back to the previous encounter that ended in a fight. If you create your next interaction with this memory of your history, you will revisit your anger and create with that foundation. This just results in more conflict. Before you realize it, you expect each encounter with your neighbor to deliver more discomfort.

Let's see how this would be different using the Miller's Nutmeg. If you can remain in the now, the next time you see this neighbor, in that moment, free of all past history, you become a blank slate. So does your neighbor. There is no reason not to believe that you can't have a civil and even friendly encounter. If you create from that foundation, your next meeting can be free of conflict. It may even be pleasant. The key is to remain in the now. Eventually we are into tomorrow, and next week, but we arrive there through a series of nows.

So, when Miller's Nutmeg is in a reading, the shells are suggesting that the client explore the possibility that he or she is creating from an expectation based on past experience. The thought is "This never worked before, so why should it now?" or "This always happens, (it is difficult, painful, a failure, etc.) so why should it be any different?" That is not letting you remain in the now, and won't allow for the possibility of a different outcome. Remember that in the now, free of any history, there is no reason not to believe that it can be easy, painless, or successful. To put it another way, we can choose fear or love. In the now, without past history, there is no reason not to choose love.



<http://clipart.m-y-d-s.com/gardening/watering/>

Next, let's look at a Bivalve that ventures off the beaten path of typical Bivalve shell growth.

You are looking at two Watering Pot Clams. Believe it or not, these are clams. If you look very closely at the tubes of both species, you might spot the two halves of the original Clam Shell.

To assist you, I included a close-up view of the vestigial clam shells fused into the tube. The shell on the left is a different view of the same **Watering Pot shell #168** in *Ocean Oracle*. This shell is a definite exception to

the typical growth pattern of Bivalves. Picture a Clam, Oyster, Scallop, or Cockle, each is comprised of two valves or shells, hence the name Bivalve. Scientists are not certain of the mechanism, but the watering pot clam opens its shell at the hinge, and starts to form this shell tube around its siphon, or breathing tube. The tube is made of the same calcium carbonate as the original Clam Shell. The clam is buried in mud. As the animal burrows deeper, the siphon grows toward the surface, and the tube lengthens at the upper end where the ruffles are located. The posterior end of the tube is the broadest region, and contains the majority of the clam's body. This is near the original Clam valves, and is capped with a convex perforated plate. The animal is able to extend

tiny segments of its foot through the minute holes. I noticed one day that if you pour water down the aperture of my shell in the center of the ruffles, it emerges through the perforations at the bottom, and resembles water exiting the spout of a watering pot...I can see where it got its name.

We use watering pots to dispense the life sustaining water that plants need for growth. Careful attention is required to be cautious neither to over-water nor under-water the seedlings. Depending upon our care, or lack thereof, we will reap what we sow. Based upon the name of Watering Pot, the shell's meaning in *Ocean Oracle* is "*Reaping what is sown, taking responsibility for one's own actions.*" We "plant seeds" in life, and we too will reap what we sow. Speaking of seeds, here we go again with names. There are several species of Watering Pots, the scientific name for the Common Watering Pot is *Brechites penis*. The *Brechites attrahens* goes by the common name of Vaginal Watering Pot. This adds new dimension to the concept of reaping from the seeds you sow.

When working with Watering Pot in a reading, if the shell is liked, it suggests the clients are willing to take responsibility for their actions. They recognize that they will reap what they sow.

Quite often this shell gets attention by bothering the client. If it is not liked, it suggests that this person does not want to take responsibility. In fact, he or she will often defer to others becoming a follower rather than a leader. It feels safer to follow orders and blame others when failure occurs. The thought is when something falls apart, it won't be the client's fault because he or she was only following orders. Note, I said WHEN something falls apart, not IF something falls apart. The client expects things to fail, and that is why the fallback position of blaming others appears to offer safety. However, what the client does not realize is that by allowing another to make decisions, a choice was made to give away personal power, and that still leaves the client responsible. I have seen this realization offer a light-bulb moment to clients. If it is ultimately still your responsibility, why not be the leader, make decisions, and give yourself the option to experience the possibility of the joy of success?

I have heard from some of you that you are enjoying the stories connected to the shells we cover. That is wonderful to know, and there is a purpose for these stories. I use them to help you see each shell as an individual, and to recognize its contribution to shell divination. As memorable as the stories may be, some of you may wonder how is that useful when doing a shell reading? Let me see if I can shed some light on this.

My goal is to introduce you to the unique qualities of the *Ocean Oracle* shells so that they can become individuals. Later in the course, when we get to readings, these individual shells will deliver messages by interacting with each other. Remember that the shells are bringing awareness to hidden thoughts and feelings. They work in partnership with other shells in a reading. For a look at how this can be accomplished, let's borrow a few of tonight's shells.

In the case of the Worm Shell, it is valuable to look at the other shells in the reading in order to see what issue is out of control. A student once asked if the Worm shell could ever be positive. I would answer that none of the shells are positive or negative; they just reflect the hidden thoughts impacting the behavior of the client. Once these thoughts are brought to awareness, it is up to the client to decide if they still serve or if they are limiting. For instance, with attraction to the Worm Shell, there is the possibility that achieving a loss of control subconsciously benefits the client.

Many years ago, a client had a reading consisting of many shells. I can't recall them all, but I do remember that she liked #65 Worm Shell "*Loss of control*" and placed it next to the #115 Chiton for "*Self abuse: addictions*".



Let me ask you, if we only had these two shells, what do you think her message might be? **In a sentence or two, please write your thoughts, before proceeding with the rest of the transcript below.**

These shells lead to a message along the lines of...

I lose control over my addiction. My addiction is out of control. My self abusive behavior is out of control.

Remember that she liked the worm shell. Most clients do not; they are uncomfortable when things are out of their control. This client admitted to being addicted to drugs, so that explained the addiction...but she liked the loss of control shell.

Now, let's look at one more shell in this reading. She did not like the Watering Pot.



We just learned that if the Watering Pot is not liked, it suggests that *this person does not want to take responsibility. It feels safer to follow orders and blame others when failure occurs.*

Factoring that into the message shows us something much deeper. Now we know the client wants to avoid responsibility for her actions.

Using her shells, what can she blame when her behavior is out of control? Again, write your thoughts before reading beyond this point.

OK. What can she blame when her behavior is out of control?

The drugs

This places her drug use in a new light. The client enjoys the drugs, not because they make her high, but because they offer an excuse that she can blame the drugs if her behaviors are out of her control. Whatever she does is therefore not her fault. For her, the Worm Shell was attractive because she thought she found a way to absolve herself from responsibility. Her message became: “I am addicted to drugs because they take over control, and then nothing is my fault.”

She liked the lack of control these chemicals induced because it gave her permission to behave in ways she felt were improper otherwise. The drugs made her less inhibited.... or so she thought. As the reading continued, she discovered that the drugs did not permit her to behave in any way that was against her will. She was doing what she wanted; she just did not want to take responsibility for her actions. In this case, using the drugs to achieve a feeling of lack of control benefited her due to her belief that she would be absolved from any responsibility for her actions. She could feel innocent because “the drugs made her do it.” However, once we discussed her dislike of the Watering Pot, she understood that if she decided to take drugs, that was her choice to hand over her power, and ultimately, that still made her responsible for the behavior that followed. Now that she was no longer blameless, she had an option. In this case, the shells wanted her to gain awareness to give her another option, but the choice is hers. Once she was conscious of the purpose the drugs had served, and she confronted the fact that they could not absolve her of the blame, she had the freedom to make a different choice.

I wanted you to see that each shell is like a vocabulary word in a sentence. The more we learn about the shell, the deeper we can go with the message. Depending on whether the shell is attractive, or if it bothers someone, we can gain even more information. Ultimately, the message is to gain awareness of what is making that person tick...the hidden thoughts and feelings impacting someone’s life. They are not judged as good or bad, just a window to the psychology that is operating behind the scenes. The shells will never tell a client what to do. They offer another option to the behavior that has been on automatic pilot, but the final choice is up to the client.

That was a lot to take in. Let me pause here for a moment to check in with you. We have covered 40 shells so far, and I wonder if anyone has any questions on anything we have discussed up until now? Please email me if you have any questions.

michelle@oceanoracle.com