



## INDEPENDENT STUDY: Module 2, Class 23

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 mp4 for Class 23 is about 40 minutes long.

As you reach the shell combinations, it may prove beneficial to pause the recording to note your own thoughts before you continue.

The same holds true for the written transcript. As you reach the shell combinations, I recommend that you pause at the questions to note your own thoughts before scrolling down for the answers in red.

Last but not least, there is another Homework exercise #7 at the end.

Many Seashell Blessings to all!

Love,  
Shell

### Class 23

Over the last two classes, we have been immersed in the wisdom of shells regarding the subject of love. You met the Moon Snail to teach us about love as attention, the Shuttlecock Volva to discuss love as quality time, the Mussel to teach about generosity as love, and the Venus Comb Murex took an entire class to share its wisdom regarding self-love. These shells are capable of probing deep into our psyche, and gave you much to digest.

Perhaps the most difficult concept the shells have to offer is the spoke of love as selfishness. In Class 22, we saw a very strong correlation between students who did not like the Venus Comb Murex shell, and the students who were not on their own list of who you are willing to focus your love and energy upon. I wanted you to have time to process all the information before reviewing this key concept. We stated that disliking the Venus Comb would mean the last thing you want anyone to call you is selfish. So, you put everyone else first. If you are not on your own list, it does not mean there is something else you would rather do, but you can't because that would be selfish. The result is that you take care of others while you harbor feelings of anger, or depression, or resentment because you are not able to do what you want to do. Obviously, that does not benefit you, but if you are delivering a suitcase full of negative energy to everyone else, that does not benefit them either.

In summary, if you come last in your life, and are not on your own list, nobody benefits.

Conversely, when you are on your own list of where you are willing to focus your energy, you are a happier camper, and you benefit. When you then choose to take care of others, they are now around a different you, no more suitcase full of negative energy, so they benefit. With this approach, everyone benefits.

Now, let me ask you... What would you prefer, a situation where nobody benefits, or where everyone benefits? If it is more selfish when nobody benefits, then you have a new reason to get on your own list.... so that everyone can benefit.

Just as I received the perfect email with Susie and the goldfish bowl guided by the love lessons, a senior student sent me an email she received the day after the Venus Comb Murex class. It was entitled "Forever Selfish". I have copied it below (with my yellow highlights.)

### **Hi Belle Friends!**

*How are ya?*

*Thanks so much for requesting my e-Guide outline to Bold Self-Expression - The 7 Steps to Discovering Freedom. I keep these steps close at heart and read them as often as possible. They are especially helpful when I forget the truth about who I am, and find myself stuck in the muck and mire of the mundane world. Do you ever have days like this? I'm guessing we all do. I'm guessing we all have days where we question who we are, what we are here to do and whether what we are doing is in alignment with our deepest hearts' desires.*

*When I have days like this, I know they won't last forever. I know that if I go to my Freedom Tool Box, one of these 7 steps will guide me back to joy, freedom and ease.*

*When I'm worn out from taking care of others or burnt out from trying to make things happen, **Step One reminds me to take care of me. It reminds me to be selfish...yes...selfish.***

***Taking care of myself and putting me first requires boldness and a strong sense of self. It requires asking my heart what I need to be nurtured, encouraged and inspired. And, it requires trusting the answer.***

*Are you taking care of you? Are you putting yourself 1<sup>st</sup>?  
If you are...Fabulous!! You rock!*

*If you aren't, I encourage you to take a walk on the wild side today. Do something for yourself that feels really selfish.*

*Go ahead...be bold about it. Experience the freedom of doing what YOU want to do.*

*Brighten your own day. **Nurture you, express you, celebrate you and love you. It's empowering!***

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

<http://www.therebelbelle.com/blog/2020/03/a-happy-birthday-celebration-of-myself.html>

I know from private conversations that many of you are struggling with this concept of self-love. I am going to pause here to add the wisdom from another shell I normally save until the end of the course. I trust the shells, and this particular shell has been on my mind during three private conversations this week, so I feel it is important to teach this now.

I want to revisit the Pink Mouth Murex... the inner child shell. This is shell #32 in *Ocean Oracle*, and you have already met this shell in Class 7.

To refresh your memory, let's review a little of the past information on the Pink Mouth Murex.

Because female mollusks abandon their eggs to the whims of fate, they often lay hundreds of eggs at a time. This strategy increases the odds that some will survive.



Egg case of *Haustellum elenae*

These murexes get together to spawn and create masses of eggs as large as a yard across. The light-weight egg mass blows up on shore after hatching and looks like a plastic float.

<http://www.shelltrips.com/Baja/pics.html>

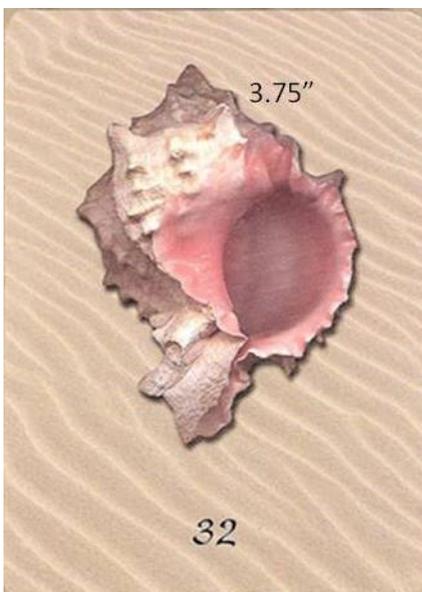


*Haustellum elenae* in egg mass

The animals are so intent on laying their eggs that they lay them on each other, trapping some of the mothers inside the egg case. Later, after hatching, you can find egg masses with shells still inside them.

Many species of murex females lay eggs in communal masses yielding millions of eggs at a time. As you can see in this picture to the left, it is not unusual for a female to become trapped in this egg mass and die.

This represents the stranglehold beliefs formulated in childhood can have upon our lives. Survival behaviors we developed as children may no longer serve us as adults. The issues stemming from childhood and our subconscious childhood beliefs cause suffering.



This connects to the wisdom behind the Pink Mouth Murex shell.

Let's take a closer look. When you are born, at some unconscious level, you recognize that you must depend upon others to feed and shelter you. Your mission becomes finding ways to assure that those you rely upon will love you enough to help you survive. While very young, you develop a plan for how you will achieve this. This is the M.O. for survival for your inner child. From the perspective of your inner child, each time you behave in a way that causes others to respond with love, you insure your survival. At a more conscious level, when you receive recognition or appreciation for your actions, it increases your self-esteem. This reward is powerful, and as you age, that behavior is placed on automatic pilot.

The important point is that these behaviors were developed out of fear for your survival. You were totally dependent upon others to love you enough to keep you alive. You took your cues from them as to what you needed to do to please them. Your inner child still resides within you, and there are times you look at the world through your inner child's eyes. In your quest for love, the beliefs held by your inner child impact your life.

As an adult, it is possible that those beliefs no longer serve you. Once you uncover your hidden thoughts and beliefs, if something is limiting you, you may opt to change that belief. However, it is one thing for you as an adult to determine a behavior no longer serves you. It is quite another for the inner child who still lives inside you to come to the same conclusion. Don't forget that this behavior was the key to its survival. If you choose to change, that decision becomes a threat to your inner child. Your inner child loves you and wants to protect you, but it trusts no one and that includes adult you. If you attempt to change a belief, your inner child will interpret this as a threat to its survival. It loves you, but it will try to sabotage you because it has to protect you from yourself. Should you try to alter a belief, your inner child will be terrified. Its thought will be "Are you crazy? Nobody will love us if you (fill in the blank.)"

Should you outgrow your inner child's beliefs, you don't want to ignore its feelings, or tell it you don't care what it thinks. That will increase its fear and the consequences will lead to sabotage.

Instead, try having a conversation and consider acknowledging its feelings. Assure your inner child that you understand how it feels because you recall how much your survival depended upon those behaviors. Let it express any emotion, whether it wants to scream or cry, and let it know that whatever it feels is appropriate. You want it to know that you are not standing in judgment. This is vital in order to gain its trust. It may take several conversations to build a bond. The conversations with your inner child do not have to be anything formal. As one student pointed out, it is important to think back to the age you were when you first formulated that belief. If you were very young, literally think of yourself talking to a child. Ask it what it would like to do that day. If your inner child says it would like to have ice cream, you physically do not have to go eat ice cream. At the end of the day, check in with your inner child and ask it what flavors it tried. You want to create a relationship of trust.

If you were older, hold a similar appropriate age level conversation. Eventually, your goal is to ask your inner child if you can become its parent. In this way, you will mother your own inner child. Once this is achieved, explain that you can feed yourself now and put a roof over your own head. You no longer need those skills you developed based upon pleasing others for your survival. Functioning from those beliefs may have kept you safe, but they also kept you from being in your truth.

Your inner child can be your worst enemy or your best ally. If it does not trust you, as mentioned, it will do all it can to stop you. If you encounter obstacles when initiating change, any doubts, fears, or guilt are from your inner child trying to make you stop. Anyone challenging you or withholding love due to this change is an agent employed by your inner child. If this succeeds in weakening your resolve, your inner child has fulfilled its desire preventing you from proceeding with that change. As you pursue your path in life, you are behind the wheel. When you encounter obstacles, it is your inner child trying to take the wheel from you. Once you recognize this, you have a new tool to smooth your journey. All it requires is a conversation.

Since the Pink Mouth Murex shell connects to your inner child, simply holding this shell while conversing with your inner child will improve your ability to "hear" your inner child. Think of this shell as the physical representation of your inner child. By holding the shell, it signals that you are willing to pay attention to the thoughts held by your inner child. When I ask clients how they feel when looking at this shell, I have heard a variety of comments. Often I am told it is very beautiful, which I am sure is wonderful news for the inner child

of the client. Sometimes I am told that it bothers someone or was not even noticed until I pointed it out. These are clients who have an angry inner child and if not even noticed, you can imagine the lengths the inner child has to go to just to let the client know that their actions are scaring their inner child. The message the inner child is hearing is that you don't care what it feels, and are even willing to ignore its existence. Can you think of a greater motivation for the inner child to go to extremes?

If you take the time to converse with your inner child first, so that it builds trust, then it will grant you a small window to try the new approach. When it sees the world does not fall apart, it will give you a bigger window. These are small steps that lead to huge rewards. Once your inner child trusts you, and is on the same page, any change you make in your belief will go very smoothly.

OK, back to the love lessons information....

When I made a commitment to teach this class, I vowed to myself to share my journey with you so that you can see how spiritual evolution can just sneak up on you before you know it. From your feedback, I have learned that my stories help some of you open to your own conversations with the shells. With that in mind, I have another story for you tonight. Do you recall my conversation with Little Moon Snail about growing the light to gain attention?

Just as the stories of Susie and Belle's Forever Selfish arrived when I was teaching the love lessons, after teaching this class, I received the story below. It represents the moon snail lesson of growing the light.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4UQcq4T3DeE> Johnny the bagger.

Once again, the shells seem to be guiding our class lessons arriving with Divine timing ☺

Since Moon Snail has become a major contributor to our spokes on the wheel, I thought you might benefit from hearing how I learned this information that led to that profound realization.

The shells continue to teach when I least expect it. I developed the deeper information about the psychology of love as attention, which was later confirmed by Little Moon Snail, during a weekend spiritual retreat. Let me make it clear that I did not go there for that purpose. In fact, I almost did not go there at all. Allow me to back up a bit. One spring, I was invited to attend a spiritual retreat taking place toward the end of summer. I told the woman hosting the conference that I was not sure I could make it due to other commitments. Meanwhile, two other friends of mine, a sound healer from Maryland, and a shaman from my area, were attending. Since I only lived an hour away from the retreat site, I offered my home as a place for them to meet and drive in together. About a week before the retreat, I contacted the host to inform her that I could make it after all. I could drive in with my friends, so I had transportation, but was there any place left for lodging? She replied that in her backyard she had a large tent reserved for my girlfriend the sound healer, but it could easily accommodate both of us. Camping would be a new experience for me, but I was delighted that I would be able to attend. The three of us piled into my shaman friend's jeep, and set off for this weekend retreat. When we arrived, all the guests were handed brochures of the weekend events. There were a few panel discussions planned, and I was shocked to see that I was a speaker on the panel as "The Ambassador of the Seashell Kingdom" and that I was giving a

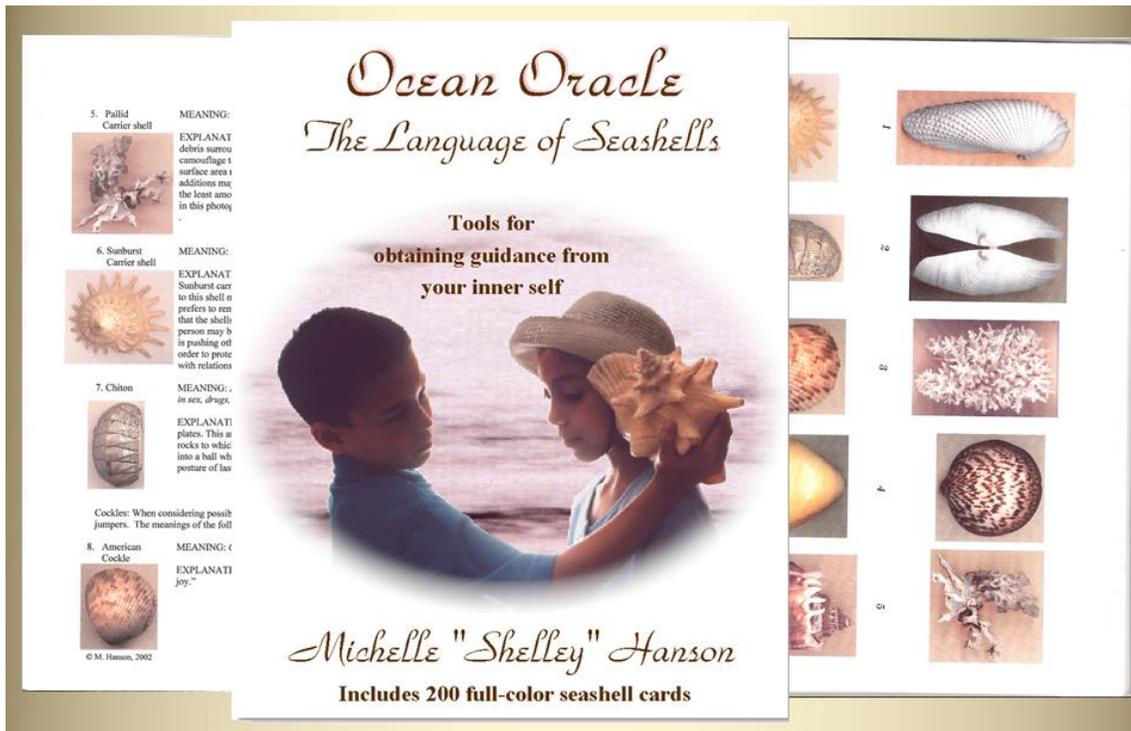
talk. That shook me in so many ways. First, what amazed me is that these brochures were designed and printed months in advance. How did she know I would be there? I certainly did not think I was able to come until a week before the event. This woman is my living Green Tree Snail. Any interaction I have with her pushes me out of my comfort zone. I thought camping out in the tent filled that slot, and I relaxed knowing for once I could handle the push out of my comfort zone. I should have known that was not the push she would provide. Once I processed that I was there as a teacher, not just a student, my second thought was my discomfort with the title “The Ambassador of the Seashell Kingdom.” The most I could feel comfortable with was “An Ambassador of the Seashell Kingdom” but I was not consulted. Just as she “knew” I would be there by following her inner guidance, she said she was guided to call me “The Ambassador of the Seashell Kingdom.” Third, and most important, I did not come prepared for this, and had no shells with me. YIKES! See what I mean about my living Green Tree Snail?

I learned that the object of the retreat was to encourage those attending to step into their gifts. She wanted me to share my story as an example, but I thought I had a long way to go before I could represent this concept.

So here I was at a retreat discovering that I was a featured speaker, and I had no shells. Within minutes, the magic of the Universe unfolded before my eyes. My shaman friend informed me that he had a carton of crystals and shells under his camping gear in the trunk of his jeep. Some of his shells were gifts I had given him, and I couldn't help but marvel that they had joined us on this adventure. Also, the woman who created the event had shells to contribute. Very quickly, my agenda was set by whatever shells were available. I spotted an enormous Moon Snail and shared what I knew at the time. I spoke about the tendency to wound ourselves and create disasters to receive attention. Later that day, I saw one of the students pick up the Moon Snail that was on the display table. I was startled when she suddenly cried out, “It is all your fault!” as if Moon Snails were responsible for all the misery in her life. My shaman friend also witnessed this outburst, and he turned to ask me how I felt when she did that. It was the first time I “heard” the shells speak. The Moon Snail was saying, “Please don't blame the messenger. I don't judge what you inflate in your life to gain attention.”

That was the “aha” moment for me. Recognizing that we have choice, and we can gain attention by increasing the wonderful things in our life. It took this injustice, watching her blame the innocent Moon Snail, for me to hear the shell speak. I think that shifted something in me to allow me to move farther away from the science and let them speak to me. I may take baby steps, but I am still taking them. My point is, I did not set out to try to hear the shell, it just started speaking due to the circumstances. I want you to see that if you are ready, the magic finds you without you having to do anything.

You may have heard the expression: When the student is ready, the teacher will appear. For many years, I sought teachers to guide me in learning about the shells. It is almost comical, but every time I came close....well, let me tell you another story.



In 2002, when I had self-published *Ocean Oracle* on my computer, (you can see the cover and some of the pages here,) I visited my parents during their vacation on Sanibel Island, Florida.

My proud parents had taken my book to a shell store they frequented, and showed the proprietor my efforts.

While I was off looking at some of his shells, a customer ventured into the store, and saw my book in the owner's hands. She asked where she could get one, and he sent her to speak to me.

When she asked how she could obtain a copy, I informed her that I made them on my computer. I offered to give her the one my parents showed the owner, but she insisted that I should take it around the Island because she thought I could sell it. She gave me her address, and I made arrangements to mail her a copy. Then she asked if I ever taught shell reading. I told her that I had taught workshops, but I didn't have any of my shells with me. She assured me that she had some shells, and she had friends that would love to learn about this subject. Her home was just a block from my motel, and she asked if I would come teach there. I only had one day left before my return flight, but I agreed to spend it at her home. When I arrived the next day, she took me out to her porch where she had a massive table covered with shells. I never expected the good fortune awaiting me. The shells in her display were not just from Sanibel, but from all over the world!

The first student who arrived was named Julie. She told me that she was so excited when she learned I would be teaching this that she called a friend of hers in Vermont to share the news. Her friend told her that there was someone named Shelley in her area who also taught about shell reading. I couldn't believe it! I was so excited....here was my teacher, and she lived in New England! And as if I needed any more encouragement, I felt an instant bond since we had the same first name. Eager to return to Massachusetts and contact this teacher, I asked Julie to please get me more contact information the next time she spoke to her friend in Vermont. We still had a few minutes before the workshop was scheduled to start, and Julie asked if she could leave to get her mother who would also want to hear about shell reading. Other students drifted in, and soon Julie returned with her mother. As she stepped out on the porch, Julie asked, "Shelley, isn't your last name Hanson?" When I told her it was, she said that she had called her friend in Vermont to get more information for me, and that was when she found out the person's last name was Hanson. Her friend must have seen my column in the Kaleidoscope magazine. I did not think the readership stretched that far, but reluctantly, I realized that her friend in Vermont was talking about me, and there was no teacher for me after all.

This happened to me a few times in my travels. Every time someone mentioned the deeper meaning of a shell, I asked where they learned that. It echoed my thoughts or theories, and I wanted to study with that teacher. When

I traced the convoluted path from that person to the person who told him or her, and then where that second person heard about this, it turned out the final source of the information was someone who read my shell column, or attended a workshop I gave. It all led right back to me. It took years for me to realize that my teacher was there all along, just not in the form I expected. Through his books, my first instructor was Dr R. Tucker Abbott, and you will note that I dedicate *Ocean Oracle* to him. Later, in *Ocean Wisdom*, the shells themselves became my teachers. I share this story with you to show you that if you are open, anything can be your guide. Master teachers don't always inhabit human bodies.

With that said, let's use the rest of class for shell readings, and apply their wisdom regarding love lessons.

In Class 21, you learned the wisdom from Moon Snail as the first spoke on the wheel of love. We covered so much material in that class, that many had reached the point of shell shock. I want to return to Moon Snail by using it in a shell reading experiment. I also want to point out a few new things. I would like you to pay as much attention to the questions as you do to the answers. This will help you learn how to probe deeper when working with the shells. Insights can be gained by asking questions. Think about your answers before referring to my thoughts written in red.



Imagine a woman selects both of these shells. She is attracted to both #81 Golden Cowrie "*Feeling cursed; a run of bad luck*" and #31 Moon snail "*Blowing things out of proportion*".

Using your journal, in a sentence or two, how would you interpret this combination?

On the surface this tells us that the client has a run of bad luck that is being blown out of proportion to the point she feels cursed.

But, if we dig deeper, shell readings are designed to reveal hidden thoughts that shine a light on what makes us tick psychologically. We could ask, how does the client benefit from this bad luck? Does anyone remember what spoke Moon Snail occupies on the wheel of love?

(Love as attention)

We gain greater insights. With what we know about the deeper motivation of Moon Snail, is there any way that this client might benefit from her bad luck?

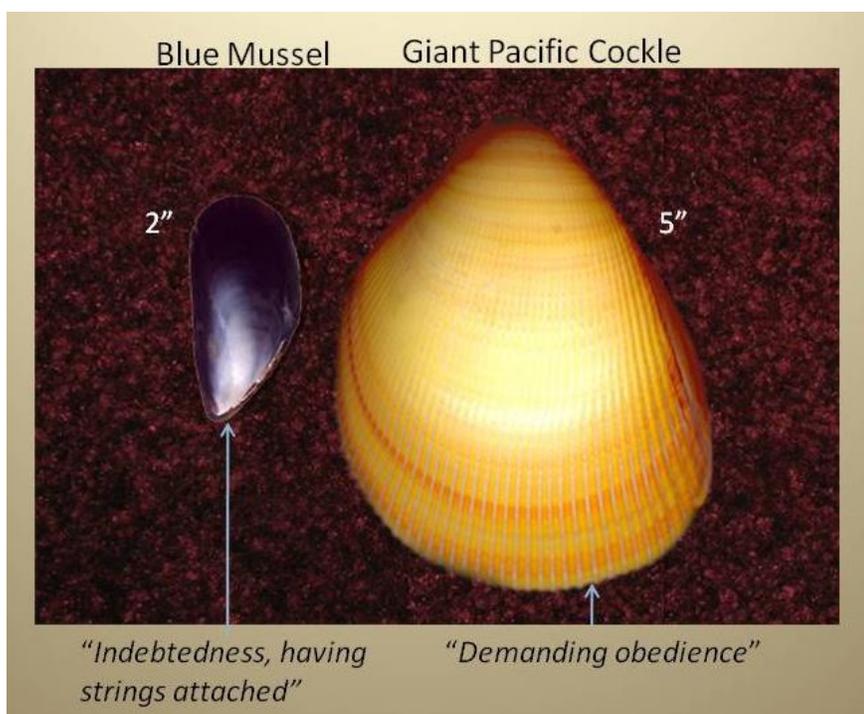
She feels that bad luck brings attention and compassion when she can tell others of her woes. This attention makes her feel loved.

With Moon Snail, to maintain that attention, she will have to keep increasing whatever method she chooses to receive attention. If her hidden belief is that she needs attention to feel loved, and she gains attention through bad things happening, then she needs bad luck in her life. In her case, she will have to increase her degree of bad luck to ensure that her experiences are worse than those around her. She needs the mountain, not the molehill, and that is why she may blow things up out of proportion...because it serves her. She will draw bad luck to her through catastrophes and physical illness even though her conscious self may be miserable. It is her tool to gain love. Do you see that the Golden Cowrie does not bring bad luck to her, rather she subconsciously believes bad luck has value, so she creates it?

It is important to recognize that the client may not have any idea why she is constantly having bad events occur in her life. This is why at the conscious level, she does not welcome the bad luck, and she may interpret all that bad luck as the feeling that she is cursed. Remember that these thoughts are subconscious. She may not know that she equates attention with love, and her path to gain that attention is to create the biggest catastrophe possible. I want to be sure you all get this. There are only two shells, but do you see there are layers, and these questions can take you to a deeper level as a psychological tool?

I think you are in a position to appreciate this: One of my friends started using seashells as vocabulary words when she speaks to me. A single shell can capture entire concepts. The first time she did this, she was describing someone who was blowing things out of proportion, reflecting that person's need for sympathy and attention. My friend simply said, "I think she is moon snailing." That told me everything I needed to know. So, at least among my friends, shells are infiltrating the lingo.

OK. Let's look at another client who values a different spoke on the wheel.



What about the client who is attracted to this combination? Here we see the Mussel #33 "*Indebtedness, having strings attached*" and Giant Pacific Cockle #9 "*Demanding obedience*" Someone demands you jump through hoops, and you are supposed to ask, "How high do you want me to go?" (this shell is from Lesson 2).

Over the years, I have observed something about shell #9 Giant Pacific Cockle. Whenever that shows up in a reading, the most demanding person in the client's life is the client. They have internalized the need to jump even higher than the hoop.

If the Mussel indicates the client's belief that any offering comes with strings attached, let's see where the strings are for our client with this combination of the Mussel and Giant Pacific Cockle.

Think of this as someone saying to the client "You can have this if \_\_\_\_." That is the Mussel half of the sentence. How would you complete this sentence using the Giant Pacific Cockle? What are your thoughts?

Initially the client's thought is any offering comes with strings attached. For her, the strings are the hidden hoops she has to jump through. The inner dialogue is "You can have this if you jump through that hoop."

Let's apply this to an example: Imagine the client is invited to go to the beach. She is excited at the prospect of an outing with friends, and agrees to come. Can you think of a string that her friends could attach in this situation? Let your imaginations go. There are many possibilities. Think of the concept: "You can come with us to the beach if \_\_\_\_\_." How would you complete this sentence?

My thought: She might be asked to drive. That is the string attached. Once she is asked to drive, she realizes that she was invited to the beach because she has the car.

These experiences contribute to her belief that nothing comes from the generosity of the heart. And we create from our beliefs, so operating on automatic pilot, she will experience more of the same. This client is all about jumping higher than the hoop, so not only will she drive, she might bring the food.

We can probe deeper. Why is she willing to jump through the hoops? Do you recall what we learned about the hidden motivation behind Mussel people who are generous? They give all the time to everyone...do you remember why?

If clients attracted to Mussels believe everything comes with strings attached, they don't believe anything comes from the generosity of the heart. This becomes a concern if they should ever need someone to come to their aid. Their solution is to be extremely generous so that the recipients will become indebted to them, and that would compel these recipients to come to the clients' aid.

With that in mind, let's return to our client. She is willing to drive, and bring the food. How does jumping through hoops serve this client? Remember, the client may not even realize she is doing this.

She is motivated to jump through the hoops because her hidden belief is that these deeds will create a sense of indebtedness in the person who is making the demands. Her hidden thought is, "If I just jump through enough hoops, you will owe me something. You might not come to my aid if I am in need, but you would if you owed me." Now it is the client who is operating with strings attached.

As mentioned with the Moon Snail reading, the client may be oblivious to what is motivating her. She does her best to fulfill every request made of her. It is on automatic pilot. When this information in her reading is brought to her awareness, she will have new options. If she chooses, she can stop jumping through every hoop out of fear, and just respond to the ones that are heartfelt. The irony is that when people are extremely generous all the time to everyone, or in this case, jumping through everyone's hoops, the generosity or jumping becomes taken for granted and diminishes in value. If people start to think "she does that all the time, for everyone" they will not feel special when they are the recipients of her generosity.

So, with Moon Snail, look for how the client seeks attention. And with Mussel, look for how the client creates indebtedness.

**HOMEWORK EXERCISE #7: A review for your own benefit (Using Class 21)**

Since every class builds on the information that came before it, it would greatly assist me as your teacher, if you would indulge me with one experiment.

I would like you to reread Class 21 if you have not had the opportunity, and then tell me your interpretation for the following exercise. There are two combinations. All shells are liked by the clients.

**Try to respond without rereading the information from this class.**

First look at the combinations for their surface interpretations:

Combo 1:

#81 Golden Cowrie and #31 Moon Snail

Combo 2:

#33 Blue Mussel and #9 Giant Pacific Cockle

After you complete your interpretations, would you also tell me what insights you gain about each of these clients. Remember the client may not be aware of these hidden thoughts, but see if you can find a benefit for the client with each of these combinations.

I want to be sure everyone is following along in class before we move on to new material. We have covered this in class, but I want to have you try this on your own. This exercise is very important in your development as a shell reader.