

TAROT FOR THE WILD SOUL

Episode 242. Anchor Cards for Shame, Bitterness, and Anger

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[Introduction]

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Hey, Loves. If you are looking to get some really incredible discounts on some of our beloved offerings and a new one, for the next week we have a very lovely offering for you. So from August 31st to September 7th, we will be running our [Back to Soul Sale](#), which will offer some really lovely discounts on [Spiralic Tarot: Autumn Edition](#), which runs every single season, four times a year, and is a channeled offering that focuses on the helpful Anchor Cards and Tarot medicine that can be of greatest use to us in the season ahead. And this one, of course, is all about Libra, Scorpio, and Sagittarius seasons. So you can get a lovely discount on that. We're running a lovely discount on [Soul Tarot 101](#), which is our perfect primer offering for any budding Tarot reader, any Tarot reader who's really new to this work, to Soul Tarot. This really incredible course comes with a beautiful video lesson that's very robust, an incredible e-book and a Q&A database. What's not to love about that? We also have a very deep discount on [Heart of Service](#), which is a course for creatives, artists, intuitives, and entrepreneurs who want to trust in the seasonality of their service, who long to weave in more soul and Spirit into their work and want some guidance on how the Tarot can assist with that. So whatever you're looking to really kick off in this autumnal season, be it your intuitively-led, soul-led business, your Tarot practice, or just wanting to get some really deep guidance on the season ahead, we got you and for a lovely discount. So you can go to the link in our show notes or to tarotforthewildsoul.com to take advantage of that sale while it's running. Thank you for being here.

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(Instrumental intro music)

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Welcome to Tarot for the Wild Soul, a podcast that explores the Tarot through an inclusive, soul centered, trauma-informed perspective for growth, healing, and evolution. I'm your host, Lindsay Mack.

Hello, loves, it's Linds. I hope everybody is having a lovely day. Welcome back to the pod. I don't usually do two episodes so quickly. Monthly Medicine just came out on Thursday, and today is Monday. But I don't know. I know that this is a day off for a lot of people. And for those of you who are working today, just really acknowledging and bowing to you. I got this question in Ask Lindsay and I just, for some reason, felt like it was... (*Lindsay laughs*) I don't know who wants to really listen to an episode about shame on, like, a potential vacation day. But somehow it felt right. So I just want to say welcome.

I was doing Mailbag Monday segments all through the summer where I was deeply spending time on either one question or a couple of questions. And I honestly loved that so much that I might just kind of weave it into the episodes of the podcast ongoing that aren't Monthly Medicine. I have one teed up for next week that, yeah, just is really nice. To be honest, I do find channeling cards for the week ahead to... I don't know that I have the capacity for that at this time. But if that changes then we'll go back to that. But keep sending your questions in to me because I can craft whole episodes around certain cards, certain sticky points, anything that you want to know about your practice, etc. In October we're going to do a whole Q&A series on intuition, so if you have intuition questions, [let me know](#). Yeah, so I'm just loving on all of you today. It felt right to do kind of like a double-up of episodes. I'm going to start. We're just going to do one question today. It likely won't be that long. Just a little bite episode.

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This wonderful question is from Kelly. Kelly asks,

Hello, Lindsay and Wild Soul team. I so appreciate all you do for this community.

Thanks, Kelly, and thanks for witnessing that.

I want to work more with Soul Tarot's idea of "Anchor Cards". I'm wondering what Anchor Cards you would use when shame comes up around a particular situation. I want to hold space for this feeling and I'm hoping there's an Anchor Card to help me process this

emotion, but also other negative emotions like anger or bitterness. Any advice or ideas to discover what cards might be helpful would be appreciated as well.

Well, first, Kelly, I want to thank you—as I do, I feel like, a lot but it does bear repeating. Just thank you for trusting me with this question. Just reminding you and everyone else that I'm not a therapist and that this is in no way a substitute for professional therapeutic advice. And just really honoring you for wanting to lean in and embrace these red-hot feelings. I mean, shame is really hard to hold. I think universally, it's so hard to lean in when shame shows up, and it is really hard to lean in when bitterness shows up, and anger can be hard. And it can be hard to know what to do with these things. You know? I get angry a lot and it's hard for me to know, like, "How exactly can I discharge this?" I feel like I find my way through, but it's hard. They definitely are feelings that show up so strongly in the body that demand such attention, so we're going to talk about them.

I thought it would be useful, even though we all know what shame is and what shame feels like. But I felt like the definition of it would be interesting to share, which is "a painful feeling of humiliation or distress caused by the consciousness of wrong or foolish behavior". So when I think about what cards can really help us be with shame. I think most strongly about Five of Swords. I think about all the cards... Sorry, not all the cards. All the cards, sure, but all the Fives. I think the Fives in general are really the Anchors that help us to show up for the toughest feeling states. That is where we are at our most jealous, where we feel shame, we feel the pierce of regret, where we might feel very bitter, we might feel very sardonic, we might feel even hateful, we might feel rage, we might be irrational; just really a side of ourselves that gets us caught into a lot of reactivity. I personally find and feel that those parts tend to show up around the Fives. Not because the Fives cause them, but the Fives actually allow for and call us into more skillful work around handling those emotions. So again, it's not a catch-all and it's not a total heal-all situation, these cards. But I do think if we're looking at them not as, "Oh, I'm in a Five. I'm going to feel all of these shitty feelings." It's more like the tough feelings are likely here. The Five is helping us to explore them in a way that is graceful and gentle, if possible, and helping to clarify what's present.

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Any experience like shame, guilt, bitterness—they are really contractive feelings, and contraction really shrinks our worldview and our lens view on what's going on. For example—this is a really personal share in terms of how I go—but I am a neurodivergent person. I have ADHD. I have other things that are... I'm on the spectrum. And I really have a

very difficult time getting assignments in on time. I've had a difficult time with, like, finances and taxes. My brain literally just doesn't work that way. It's very hard for me. Executive functioning is difficult. It really is. And it's always been difficult. And even though I have been diagnosed with ADHD since I was five years old, a tremendous amount was put on me and expected of me that I neurologically am not able to do, or at least I'm not able to do in the same way other people are. So shame is a very close feeling to me because I feel shame regularly about things where I'm like, "Oh my god, other people who do the work I do are so good at this and I'm not," or "Other people seem to be able to know how to get things done on time, and I do not." (*Lindsay sighs*) It's very hard not to beat myself up for those things.

And so when I am contracted with an experience of shame, having really regretted interrupting someone... That is a big way that that lack of executive functioning shows up for me. I have a hard time knowing when to jump into conversation. When I've done something that I know was a little out of step again with the more linear way that people are... Not to just... Yeah. When I feel a sense of like, "Ooh, I don't know that that was totally understood," or "That person did not like that," (*Lindsay laughs*) you know, which is valid of them. Or when, yeah, something shows up with work, or when I think I understand something then I realize I did not understand and I get really overwhelmed. All of those things for me show up as shame. I'm like, "Why can't I get this?" And it contracts me from the much more broad truth, which is that I really have set up my work and life to work spirally. You know, I'm also a chronically ill and chronically in pain person, and kind of do have my life and work set up to respect the fact that I'm neurodivergent. And while there are some things that occasionally are a little bit squeezed or difficult or tricky, or I have to explain to my team what's going on—I've hired a team who can accommodate that, who understand that—so remembering I even am neurodivergent, to begin with, all of that gets contracted out of the lens view when I'm in shame. And we forget when we're in shame.

Now, what happens when we've done something that's felt harmful and we feel shame, the squeeze of that is really, really overwhelming and really intense. And that is... So I share that personally not to overshare or whatever but to just say that, one, I think every single person alive understands shame so acutely. And two, I just thought I'd provide an example of how shame can be so contractive and can very easily strip something of its nuance and strip a sense of compassion, self-compassion out of the scenario.

Now, that's one specific example of shame where I'm really carrying shame that was put on me for having something different about my makeup. And why couldn't I behave in a way that was expected of me? That was something that was really placed on me by my caregivers and was very traumatic and very upsetting and very shameful.

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And then there are times where we fuck up and we do something really wrong, where we hurt somebody and the shame we feel for that is extraordinary. We act in a way that we regret because we were moving through something, we were under the influence of something. Now we're in recovery, the shame can be overwhelming, you know? Five of Swords kind of is the card. While all the Fives are useful, Five of Swords is the card that we're talking about when we talk about working with shame. Five of Swords, whether real or imagined, is a feeling like we've lost a bet. Like we gambled, we lost bitterly, we lost publicly. We're embarrassed, we're so ashamed, and our regret is profound. It's not always the way this card shows up, but it can be the way it shows up. It's present in the imagery in the Smith-Rider-Waite. You know, the two people who've lost their swords to the person in the forefront who's carrying all of them are devastated. They went up against this person and they lost, right?

It's really very difficult. And sometimes Five of Swords is really tricky. It's connected to the mind so it can be really challenging to sense into, like, is this a really old trauma, really old belief system that's informing the shame? Like my example, there's nothing to be ashamed of—it's shameful that the world is not more accommodating to folks who are neurodivergent, you know? And it's amazing that I've set up my life to be as accommodating as I can be. It wasn't always this way in my business. There was a long time where I was really trying to force myself into, I think, more situations that were informed by my own internalized ableism. So all of that is a celebration.

There are times in Five of Swords where we haven't actually done anything wrong, but we feel like we have or we feel a sense of shame. And then there are times where we have acted in a way that we deeply regret, or that we now realize has brought a lot of harm to someone else or a lot of pain to someone else, or have behaved in a way that we really wish we hadn't. So the first thing I think that we can do is, in whatever way feels like it doesn't overwhelm our capacity to be with it or to be present with it, is to just name what's here. Like, "Okay, at the bottom of this swirl, this storm, blaming others, blaming myself, there is shame here. There's huge shame. There's a belief that I'm not good, that they're not good or whatever, but that I'm not okay, that I'm bad. I'm messed up. That I shouldn't have done this," and then XYZ, whatever our story is. I think just naming is the first thing that I think Five of Swords calls upon us to do, is to just say like, "Okay, the reality is these following things happened and I am interpreting it as this, and it feels like shame to me."

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And so then we witness that in ourselves. We give ourselves the grace, before we do anything else, to be able to say, “Wow, this is really strong.” What does it feel like? Is there a shape, a color, pressure, squeezing? Is there a density to the feeling? Where is it located in the body? We might sense into things like that. We might also feel into emotions. Is there grief? Is there anger? Is there a feeling of frustration? What feelings states are present, right? And then we sense into, is there an appropriate or aligned action to take that would help repair? Right? So if it is a situation where we can safely tell someone, “I messed up and I feel so ashamed and there's...you know? I am willing to repair in whatever way might be appropriate to this relationship. If you don't want to hear from me again, that's okay. I'm willing to be held accountable.” And then there are times where we are saying that to ourselves. “I'm sorry. Please forgive me. I'm so sorry that this happened.” And sometimes we're showing up from the lens view of an inner parent, the parent that we wish we had. “You're loved no matter what. People make mistakes. It's really, really hard. You're doing your absolute best.” What support might be needed here? What kind of witness, what kind of tender care might be needed here? All of that is where we can take the experience of shame.

Now, Anchor Cards to help us be with an experience of shame like that? I think a really graceful set are actually the Sixes. The Sixes are the expansion to the Fives' contractions, right? And really, we can fold in the exact same framework for bitterness, jealousy, whatever—you didn't mention jealousy, but other kind of really spiky experiences—because there's something going on usually at the root which is, “I'm bad,” or “I'm not loved,” or whatever the story might be. There's something underneath the shame buried that typically really wants to be nurtured, and witnessed, and validated, and held, and seen, you know? And all of that can be really important as we kind of travel through these experiences. And just to remind everybody, you don't have to do this alone. Ideally, you're doing it with a therapist, a coach, a processor of some sort. And if you're doing it alone and that feels safe and appropriate, that's great. But just, you don't have to, you know? You don't have to do this at all (*Lindsay laughs*), you know? These are just anecdotal suggestions, truly.

The Fives are tremendous Anchors for experiences, real spiky feelings, hot feelings like shame, like bitterness, like anger. Anger requires, I feel, a discharge, a physical discharge. This is something I learned from my therapist, Jen, who's a genius, at session one many years ago. Jen said anger is one of the only experiences that has to be physicalized, whether you're biting on a washcloth and really mashing it with your teeth, whether you are screaming, whether you are moving your body, running, something. It has to be channeled out in some way. It can't be talked around or anything. We have to physically get anger out of the body. And in that way, I

think it is different from maybe the experience of shame, at least in my opinion. But with these types of feelings, how the Sixes help is that all of the Sixes have the same thing in common. They all show... Now if we're looking at Smith-Rider-Waite imagery which, again, is the kind of foundational bedrock for most of the cards that have been created in modern times... Not to look at it with a sense of overemphasis, but it is helpful to know where we're extracting the kind of root understanding of these cards. So if we're looking at the images in all the Sixes, no one is alone. Every Six involves someone with another person, in relationship with the other person. All four of those cards give us something very important about transforming or being with experiences like shame, which are tremendously isolating.

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Like, even me telling y'all this about my neurodivergence and my stuff with, like, taxes and whatever, I don't want to tell you that (*Lindsay laughs*). I don't want to. Like, why would I want to tell you that? I want to give the appearance of looking successful, that I know what I'm doing, that it's very easy for me to do this work. It isn't. It's very complicated. And there are times where people reach a level of success very quickly before they know what the fuck they're talking about in terms of, again, things like taxes and shit like that. That happens all the time and I just choose to speak on it. Maybe I shouldn't but I will, damn it, because I know I'm not alone in it. And shame is an isolator. So I would say, are there people who are probably ahead of the game as far as that's concerned? Yes. And I'm sure I'm ahead of the game in some other areas, too. It's just to say that shame is very isolating.

So the Sixes show us, just by virtue of looking at the imagery, that one of the first things we want to do when we get really caught in shame is to see how it might feel to let someone else witness us in that shame. Maybe a therapist, maybe a super safe friend. And maybe it's not even like they have to fix it or anything. We're just saying like, "Whew, I am having the toughest, hardest invitation into shame right now about XYZ," or maybe even not about XYZ, "...into shame. And I honestly just needed to say it, and to be witnessed and to be loved through it because it's really hard. You know? It's really hard." And that's step one, right? Because we're ideally witnessing ourselves and saying, "I love you. You've got this. I'm holding you in this experience." But it's very important to be witnessed by someone who is an appropriate witness, right? Not just anyone can land with that.

The other thing that I would argue that all of the Sixes have in common with one another is an expansiveness of the heart, open-heartedness. Again, we're just looking at Smith-Rider-Waite. In Six of Pentacles, we have an experience of equitable giving, of tending to other people,

witnessing them, helping them. In Six of Cups, we have two children being incredibly tender with one another, and sharing with one another about how they feel about who knows what they're talking about. But, you know, hearts toward each other. In Six of Wands we... You know, I would argue some people have tricky feelings about Six of Wands in the Smith-Rider-Waite, I do think that there's some sort of something in this card traditionally that has to do with like, somebody being high up on a pedestal on a horse that kind of looks like a fake horse that doesn't...you know what I mean? And then when you have the Seven in the Smith-Rider-Waite, it's kind of like this person who's planted themselves in a position of power, and now is kind of paranoid about losing that power. That's there in this deck absolutely, and I don't want to bypass that. But I do think that there is also something to extract that is much truer about... Because I don't necessarily feel that the way that the Wands are depicted in the Smith-Rider-Waite... With all respect to Pamela Coleman Smith, I don't know if... I appreciate what she was doing with the Wands. I just don't know if that's ever really been the way that the Wands have sort of expressed themselves, at least to me. So I'll hold myself and I'll just say personally, they've never really made a whole lot of sense to me, that depiction of them.

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How the Wands do really make sense to me is looking to the inner Wand to be sort of a barometer of our capacity for creation, for energy. Some of us have very different capacities day-to-day. Some of us have very different capacities from one another. So how do we respect that and move through the world in a way that is in great respect toward that? And so I think there's something to be said for the Six of Wands that has to do with celebrating. Like, actually celebrating ourselves and celebrating others, and legitimately being in an energy of like, "Can I just celebrate how far I've come? I'm not all the way but I don't have to be all the way. Can I just celebrate where I'm at and honor that as being valid and important for where I am today?" So I think there's something to extract from that, absolutely.

And then Six of Swords, we have somebody who is unable for one way, shape, or form, for one reason or another to kind of row their own boat, to see clearly, to take themselves from one place to another. Someone is helping them do it. Every single person, every time we have a therapy session, every time we get a Tarot reading, we are in a Six of Swords exchange. It's impossible sometimes to understand things objectively. And then when we have the right person or the right processor, sometimes we can have illuminations, or things can be explained or put to us in ways that are really different from how we ever imagined them to be. So all of that, it's all folks helping each other. It's all folks witnessing each other in the best possible sense. Again, we don't have to necessarily agree, but that's part of what's present in that card.

So being witnessed, coming from a heart-focused, heart-centered place, kind of letting ourselves feel the really raw feelings and then, again, coming back to the heart's truth: "This is really painful. This is really raw and underneath it, I feel a sense of I'm not good enough. Maybe I'm bad. Maybe I'm unforgivable." Whatever the story is, being with that story and respecting those tender feelings, you know? Really validating the feelings that are there underneath that. And in my experience, again, I'm not... You know, who am I? I'm just a person. But I know for myself, when I am able to honor what's really going on underneath the surface, and be really clear for myself about what is feeling really inflamed and painful so that I can be in direct tending to it, it changes the way I respond, or the way that I apologize, or the way that I clarify, or the way that I even take something in.

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So I think the Sixes are incredibly helpful for all of that. And I think that sometimes the Sixes...like Six of Pentacles is like, how can we receive some help if we need it? What is it like to equitably give if we've got it to give? And with Six of Cups, how do we really share the vulnerable, like *major* vulnerabilities on our heart? How do we let ourselves be witnessed by another person? Those are major questions. How do we let others help us, help us see objectively the forest from the trees? How do we celebrate ourselves and how far we've come, and witness all the things that we're doing right and all the ways that we're trying really hard? And none of those things have to exist independently from being an honest, humble person who's willing to admit when they're wrong, you know? I think that that's all the inner work that has to happen alongside us offering repair if needed.

So that's what I would say. I'd say Fives and Sixes can be really helpful for all of the emotions you mentioned. Anger can show up really strongly with Five of Wands energy, for sure. It can sometimes show up outside of that, too (*Lindsay laughs*). But yeah, these are super helpful cards both that can help us to sort of be with the challenges that we're feeling, and also to help us to get down to the heart of what's really going on. I really hope that helps. So much love to all of you and, yeah, I'll talk to you soon. I will see you next week.

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[Conclusion]

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This podcast was edited by Chase Voorhees, podcast art by Rachelle Sartini Gardener, and this episode was transcribed by one of our absolutely brilliant and beautiful transcriptionists, all of which you can learn more about or read about on our website tarotforthewildsoul.com.

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And finally, if you have a question for me to answer at the podcast, or if you'd like to work with me live on the podcast, or if you'd like your question answered on the podcast, please click the link to [Ask Lindsay](#) and send me your Qs. Thank you so much for being here.