

**PreLessons**

# **Four Cowrie Shell**

## **Lesson 0.0**



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# A) Motivation

Why this course?

This is an offering for the enlightenment seekers. This is for those seekers who discover that blessings can appear as calamity, disaster, and delay. Having access to the uncompromising can reveal the sacredness of the seeker's relationship to these three distractions. Transforming distraction into blessedness is breast milk for the seeker. Integrating tools, skills, art forms, or behaviors developed during this transformation period nourishes self realization.

Enlightenment is not what it appears to be, and is nevertheless beneficial. Self realization is only temporal. This course may serve as a tool to pierce the veil of the One Truth. Hence this course is beneficial only to the enlightenment seekers.

This offering promotes conscious triangulation of inner knowing, Spirit, and the 3-D plane. The intersection of these three provide a portal. The other side of this portal MAY lead towards enlightenment. and it may not. Enlightenment is not a place of promises, guarantees, and simple difficulties. It is a journey, not a destination.

“Yes; Probably ; Definitely; Probably ; No”, are the five (5)<sup>1</sup> responses that are beneficial for transforming apparent difficulties into conscious intentional behaviors. These pentagonal responses have unique cultural expressions in the Yoruba language and are revealed later in this lesson. This pentagonal relationship is also found in other culturally-based oracle systems. Obi Abata, Metu Neter, I Ching, and Tarot are some examples of such systems. Other oracle systems are discussed in later lessons designed for those bound to the path of enlightenment. Four Cowry Shell system provides a foundation for the casual and the more-than-curious seeker.

- This course offers supplemental and uncompromising support for the more-than-casual seeker of self realization.
- This course stimulates deeper insights, broader perspectives with the opportunity to reassemble the fragmented self
- This course compels clarity of purpose and requires recommitment to that which is most important.
- This course provides a baseline for intuitive expression within an ancestral framework

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<sup>1</sup> Why are there only five (5) unique responses?

- This course sifts those desiring spiritual adornments from those desiring spiritual alignment.
- This course is an incomplete offering for the authentic enlightenment seeker.
- This course precedes the beginning.

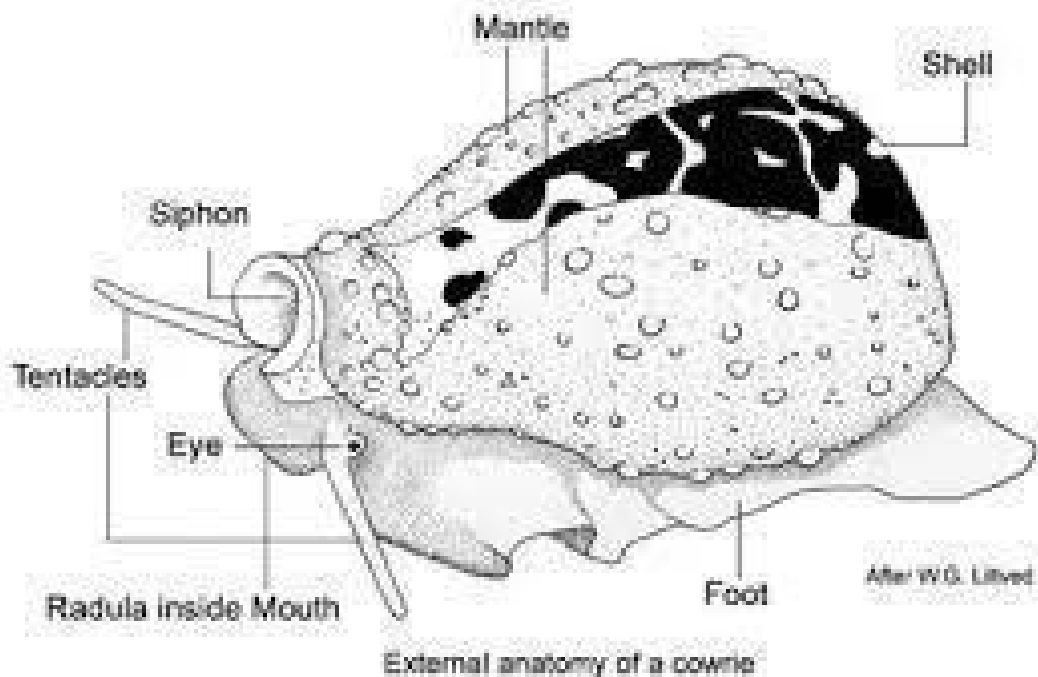
## B) Cowrie Snail



What is a cowrie?

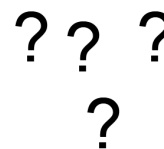
“**Cowrie** or **cowry** (pl. **cowries**) is the [common name](#) for a group of small to large [sea snails](#), [marine gastropod mollusks](#) in the family [Cypraeidae](#)”<sup>2</sup>

Cowrie, cowrie, and cowry are some of the spellings that are known in the diaspora. The spellings are used interchangeably here to avoid attachment to any one spelling. Cowrie snails travel with their shell opening toward the earth- ventral facing. This earth facing part of the cowries’ anatomy that is in contact with the earth is called the foot. This earth facing part of the cowrie shell that contains the foot has rough ridges known as ‘teeth’. These rough ridges on the ventral side of the cowrie shell resembling teeth might be referred to as the mouth when the shell is used for spiritual purposes. Biologically, the cowrie is the animal living within its shell. The shell without the animal is called a cowrie shell. This course Four Cowrie Shell actually deals with cowrie shells.



<sup>2</sup> <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cowrie>

## C) Asking Questions<sup>3</sup>



Only certain types of questions are encouraged. Limit questions to those that require a yes or a no response. Avoid the following:

- a) Questions that have answers already known
- b) Questions that harm the environment
- c) Questions that harm others
- d) Questions already asked
- e) Questions deemed illegal or immoral
- f) Questions that harm the questioner.



The most challenging aspect of a meaningful Four Cowrie Shell session is developing well formed questions. The Four Cowrie Shells will **only** respond to the questions that are asked of the Four Cowrie Shells. Be clear on this matter. It is Four Cowrie Shells that respond to questions asked of them and only Four Cowrie Shells. The interpretation, meaning, clarity or lack thereof rests within the questioner. Who responds through Four Cowrie Shells is the same 'Who' that posed question of Four Cowrie Shells. More on responses later in this lesson.

Well formed questions provide an opportunity that Four Cowrie Shell will respond to with clear and concise courses of action.

Example(1): Should I accept the new position offered at work today?<sup>4</sup>

Ill-formed questions provide an opportunity that Four Cowrie Shell will respond to with unclear and approximate courses of action.

Example (2): Should I accept the new position offered at work today or wait for a better opportunity?

Notice that the above two(2) questions can both be answered with yes or no. The Four Cowrie can respond to example(1) with Yes, I should accept the new position offered at work today.

<sup>3</sup> Why only yes or no questions?

<sup>4</sup> Create ten(10) well formed questions and ten(10) ill-formed questions.

Similarly, the above ill-formed question example(2) will be answered by Four Cowrie. Four Cowrie can answer Yes I should accept the new position offered at work today or wait for a better opportunity.

The Four Cowrie responded to the well formed question concisely and it responded to the ill-formed question ambiguously.

Four Cowrie Shell sessions can be summarized paraphrasing the First(1st) Law of Thermodynamics:

***Garbage in = Garbage out***

## D) Orientation

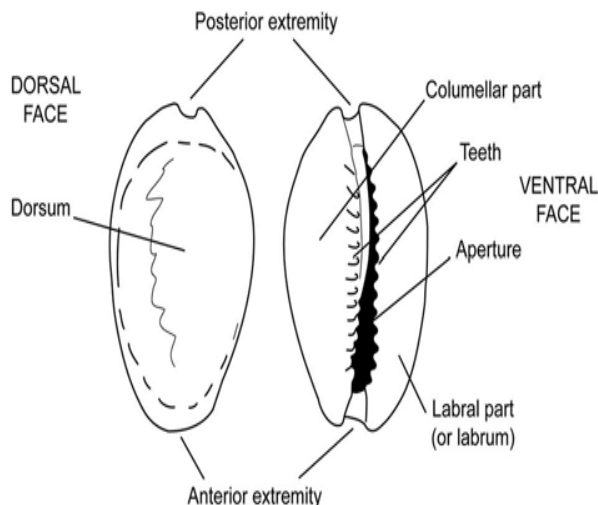
### **Skyward(mouth open)**

When a cowrie shell lands with its ventral face towards the observer then it is considered 'open', facing up or skyward. This is arbitrarily associated with success.

### **Earthward (mouth closed)**

When a cowrie shell lands with its ventral face away from the observer then it is considered 'closed', downward or earthward. Technically this position is also skyward since the earth is enveloped by sky in all directions. To reach the sky

however this cowrie must first travel through the earth. This is arbitrarily associated with success **after** struggle.





When four(4) cowrie shells are cast or splayed onto a divining surface, the shells can then be referred to as 'Obi'. If other objects are used in the place of cowrie shells then one establishes the dorsal and ventral condition and proceeds as outlined above. Casting four(4) coins, pebbles, buttons or other objects while using the system of Four Cowrie Shells happens frequently. In such cases the objects cast can be referred to as 'elements'. If the objects of Four Cowrie Shells are traditionally sacred objects then the elements can be called Obi. If the objects of such castings are non-traditional then referring to them as elements is more appropriate.





## E) Casting/Response

There are five (5) possible families or castings using Four Cowrie Shell.

**Cowrie (1): Devotion-** one cowrie open  (Doubtful)






**Cowrie (2): Infinite Wisdom** two cowrie open  Definitely)

**Cowrie (3): Power of Word** three cowrie open  (Probably)

**Cowrie (4): Iwa-Pele** four cowrie open  (Yes)

**Cowrie (-4): Iwa-Baruku (Negative)** zero open  (No)

These are summarized in the table below.

Name	Casting	Response	Orientation- Governing Principle
Alafia		Yes, with a blessing	All shells same side <b>Iwa Pele(+)</b> Well formed Good Character
Etawa		Probably! Rephrase question adding single suggestion on how to proceed. Next throw is answer	3 same side 1 other <b>Devotion- what are you devoted to really?</b>
Ejife		Definitely! With a blessing of wisdom even if there is minor struggle	2 same side 2 other <b>Accessing infinite wisdom</b>
Okanran		Doubtful! Perhaps misunderstanding of issue. Rephrase from a different perspective	1 same side 3 other <b>Words of Power- negative self talk re-framed</b>
Oyeku		NO! . Refresh shell and change line of questions. Consult a higher level of divination about the subject if falls twice in sequence.	All shells other side <b>Iwa Buruku(-)</b> Ill formed Character

## Optional Pre-Initiation Assignment

Practice casting Four Cowrie Shells a fixed number of times daily for 21 consecutive days. Casting builds confidence and supports trust in the higher self. Document and name each cast. This should be completed within a Lunar cycle. The advanced seeker will submit documentation for comment and review. Submissions are closed after two Lunar cycles.