

Need: The Fuel Behind Every Reading

Hello and welcome to Mediumship Matters, with me, Hannah Macintyre. Following on from the last episode on energy and going through the gears, I want to talk about need. I've resisted this one a little, because I've talked about it before and I'm never sure how much ground I've already covered — if I repeat myself, you'll tell me. But this matters to me, because it's something nobody talked about in my own development, and it should have been.

The right need for an evidential reading

Need is the fuel that powers a reading — it's where the energy actually comes from. My ideal client for an evidential connection is someone missing their loved one, but not in the depths of raw, crushing grief. They might be drawn to a reading because they've had an undeniable sense that their loved one is still with them, even if it doesn't make logical sense. Maybe they've been getting signs. Maybe something's happening in their life and they want to know if their loved one can see it, or they simply want support.

Notice what's present in all of that: real need, but not “my life will fall apart unless this reading fixes everything” need. It's more “I'm getting through, it's not always easy, but I'm managing — I just hope they're around, I hope they can see me.” You want someone who's ready to learn how to live alongside the knowledge that their loved one is still near, not someone so devastated they're not sure they can keep going. Those people need grief counselling, not a reading.

With card readings, it's a different flavour of need. What you want isn't someone saying “just tell me what to do and I'll do it,” but someone looking for inspiration — wanting to be nudged toward their potential and given the push to take the next step.

Why repeat readings run out of road

Here's an interesting problem: I don't actually want people coming back again and again for more evidential readings with the same spirit. With cards, ideally you'd have a reading once a year, maybe every six months if a lot has changed — you need time to actually put the guidance into action, and to start trusting your own instincts rather than needing someone else to confirm them every time. There's no shame in the odd reading for reassurance — I still get my friend Sue to pull cards for me occasionally, when I need it.

But with evidential readings, once a connection has proven itself — once your loved one has shown you they're still with you — the honest, if unfortunate, truth is: you need to learn to live. Occasional readings are fine. Regular ones aren't. It's not a haircut. You don't need a trim every six weeks.

Practice groups: where the need shifts

That's the need from a working professional medium's perspective. Developing mediums face something completely different. As a professional, your clients have researched you, chosen you, made sure you're the right fit — that's the ideal. As a developing medium, you get whoever's in the Zoom room, whoever's offered to sit for you that day. And typically, those people are also having a lot of readings themselves, because when you're developing, that's what you do. So the need simply isn't there. They're not desperate for proof their loved one is still around — they're there to help you learn, in exchange for you helping them.

In a paid, booked reading, the need sits with the sitter. In a practice group, the need sits with you, the developing medium — because the whole point is for spirit to teach you whatever they can in that moment. That's a completely different energy, nowhere near the fifth or sixth gear I talked about last episode. What you might need to learn in practice is how to stick with a spirit nobody recognises, how to work with obscure evidence, how to read when there's no emotional charge coming through and it feels like you're getting the silent treatment, or how to keep going despite self-doubt — so that later, when a real need is in front of you, fear doesn't get in the way.

This is a genuine problem for developing mediums. I run a supportive developing-medium group on Facebook that I honestly can't wait to retire — because even with several thousand members, the algorithm keeps showing spaces to the same handful of people. So you end up with sitters having two or three readings a week from different developing mediums. There's no need left in that at all, and nothing good comes of it. All that's left is someone quietly comparing you to whoever read for them last week. They can't help it — it's human nature — but it's not a good space for you to develop in.

I saw a TikTok recently from a medium saying that finishing a few courses doesn't mean you're ready to read for the public, and I completely agree — there's a real problem right now with people skipping the work and setting up anyway, and it is genuinely risky. But the flip side is just as real: reading for people who aren't in need — who feel they're doing you a favour by sitting for you, or who are quietly scoring your development against their own — isn't good energy either. You're stuck in an odd place: you need to develop, but developing means the need is with you, not your sitter, and your readings won't often carry that big charge behind them, because that charge tends to come from someone actually investing in the reading — usually because they're paying for it.

That's an uncomfortable truth, but the more I've charged for readings over the years, the better my sitters have become, quite aside from any question of being of service. And that raises a real question: is offering readings to people who aren't ready for them actually being of service to spirit — or is it more like self-flagellation? It might serve your own development, so you can be of service later. But in that moment, for that sitter, it isn't changing much.

The diminishing returns of repeat evidence

Nobody talked to me about any of this when I was developing. Think about the first time someone's mother comes through in a reading — how mind-blowing that is. If it's the first reading in five years and a lot has happened, the second time can be just as powerful. But by the twelfth reading in two weeks, it

plays out differently: mind-blowing, then great, then incredible, then lovely, then “oh, that's an interesting detail I haven't heard before,” then “that's the same thing I get every time,” then “that actually sounds more like my nan,” then “this medium seems weaker than the last one.” None of that is a reflection of your skill — it's simply what happens when the need has already been met repeatedly.

When it's time to start charging

If you're chasing fifth- or sixth-gear evidence to prove to yourself that you're doing this well, and it never comes — that might just be because there's no real need left in the room to fuel it. Someone once asked me on Spirit Social how long you need to develop before setting up as a medium, and honestly, there's no fixed rule. I've met people who'd been going to college for thirty years but only attended twice a year with no practice in between, and people who'd developed for just one year but had done hundreds of practice readings. Time alone doesn't tell you anything.

If you're waiting for your mediumship to prove itself to you, you may be stuck for a different reason: without genuine need in the room, you won't get that “oh my God” feeling — because you're reading for someone who's heard from their loved one thirty times already. It isn't the same.

So keep your analytical mind switched on. When you notice you're being held back — surrounded by sitters who aren't bringing energy, focus, or wonder into the reading — that's your sign to start charging, even a small amount. Practice matters, you have to do it. But once you're consistently hearing “this is my twelfth reading in two weeks,” take that as the universe telling you it's time for something else.

And never forget: practice is not meant to be a comfortable space. You're there for your biggest lessons, not your best work — nor should it be. It's a space to learn, not to be validated. It's a strange tension: you're asking spirit to expand your evidence and your mediumship, and then the reading that actually does that doesn't feel good while it's happening. It hurts. You get things wrong, you feel evidence you've never felt before, it takes several attempts to land it, and you feel disheartened with yourself. That's exactly as it should be — because in that space, the need is with you, the developing medium, not with the person sitting across from you.

I hope that makes sense. Thank you for listening — and yes, I'm going to ask: please do leave a review. And if you'd like to be considered for Season 9, now's the time to get your questions in — otherwise it'll likely be Season 10. Email podcast@hannahmedium.co.uk. Thanks, guys.