

Are We Ruining Mediumship in Our Quest to Get Better at It?

Hello and welcome to Mediumship Matters, with me, Hannah Macintyre. Something came up working with students this week that I want to share.

As the Gateway winds down, we've spent the last six months on trance mediumship. I'm a bit of an anomaly in the trance community — I believe in it, I love its power, I've witnessed extraordinary things through trance and transfiguration, but I also think it gets over-egged and misrepresented (“spirit came in and completely took me over” territory). I sit somewhere in the middle: for me, it's always a collaboration.

A trance night that started all this

Because so many members have left the Gateway, our group is small now — small enough that we all fit in one room. We had a genuinely magical night: spirit stepped forward, everyone could feel it, people closing their eyes and drifting into it. Afterwards, someone said they preferred that kind of mediumship to evidential work. I said, well, it should be present in evidential mediumship too — and that spiralled into a bigger question: in our quest to be better mediums, are we actually ruining mediumship?

I teach the Five Frequencies (if you don't know them, there's a whole book and several episodes on that — I won't repeat it here). Two of those frequencies, trance and healing, should really be present in every form of mediumship. Going back to the gears analogy: sixth gear in evidential work is that strong a blend with spirit that you don't know where you end and they begin — which is exactly what good trance is. You still hold sovereignty over your body, you still use your own words, but the blend is deep.

I think a genuinely good reading has two components running simultaneously: the verbal information the medium delivers (unless you're a psychic artist), and — equally important, though often missing — an energetic conversation happening underneath it, where you become the conduit for spirit's love and presence to actually touch the sitter. In that trance session, we had oodles of presence, because we were leaning fully into the newness of it. That doesn't mean evidential readings shouldn't have oodles of presence too. And I think that's genuinely worth sitting with.

When I put spirit in a chokehold

About six months ago, I got what felt like a very right, very true telling-off from my spirit guides: I'd made my mediumship all about myself. It was a bitter pill, but they were right. I'd slipped into wanting my own logical brain satisfied by the reading — which isn't service to the sitter, and isn't service to spirit. It's service to me. I'd fallen into a subconscious loop of more evidence, more evidence, what else have you got — and in doing that, I'd essentially put spirit in a chokehold. The only thing left for them to do was keep supplying facts; they couldn't simply share, in their own intelligence, whatever the sitter actually needed to hear.

It was hard to see that in myself, and I was genuinely upset once I did. But the moment I recognised it and addressed it, my readings changed instantly — far more presence, far more feeling than before.

I've talked before about how social media distorts mediumship by only showing the flashiest evidence. Here's the truth: the best, most moving pieces of evidence I bring through — the ones that genuinely land — come from the moments I've surrendered and let spirit take the wheel. Every time I chase “more evidence,” I'm actually blocking the very thing I'm chasing, and draining the reading of its power. I didn't consciously choose to start doing this — it crept in while I was comparing my mediumship to other people's, caught up in worrying whether other mediums were secretly looking clients up online or were simply better than me. Somewhere in that spiral, I lost the actual point of the work.

Evidence as building blocks, not a checklist

To be clear: surrendering to spirit doesn't mean losing evidence. If you trust them to show you what they want to show you, it will still be evidential — I have zero tolerance for wishy-washy mediumship, never have, it makes my “sucking a lemon” face every time. But it becomes more magical. Evidence works like building blocks; if you're gripping tightly to specifics purely to prove your mediumship to yourself or your sitter, you'll miss the fuller unfolding of the magic. Some of the most powerful evidence I've ever received started life as something my logical brain dismissed — that's too generic, that could apply to anybody, that's rubbish — and that flimsy, unconvincing first thread is often exactly what leads to the thing that actually is exciting.

Since spirit called me out on this, I've noticed the same pattern across nearly every student I teach — including people trained elsewhere: evidence, evidence, evidence, evidence, and somewhere in the pursuit of it, the magic quietly disappears. So the real question for anyone on a development journey is whether we're actually ruining our own mediumship chasing the very evidence we're desperate for — and whether we can learn to walk the tightrope between genuinely pushing into new evidence and unfoldment, and simply allowing and surrendering.

Who are you actually trying to convince?

If a sitter in front of you only wants evidence, checklist-style, I don't think that's necessarily the right fit for me — even though I believe wholeheartedly in evidence itself. For me, the entire point of mediumship is reuniting someone in spirit with someone still here, and reuniting is a feeling, not a data point. Somewhere along the way, I'd let my readings become a list of information rather than presence.

I think back to the very first reading I ever received, unexpectedly. It had evidence in it, but it wasn't “your grandfather died around this age, of this cause, left behind a wife.” It was “do you remember when we did this together — here's what I've seen in your life since.” That's what created the presence for me. These days, when my grandmother comes through — she's the one who shows up now, she always did like being centre stage — I don't actually need the evidence. I already believe the spirit world exists; nobody has to convince me. And on the flip side, if I were a genuine sceptic, no quality or quantity of evidence would move the needle either — every sceptic I've ever seen online dismisses the evidence regardless of its calibre. So really: who are we trying to convince in our mediumship? Is it the sitter — or ourselves?

What I actually need from a reading

When my grandmother comes through, I need one single thing to know it's her. After that, what do I actually want from the reading? After the difficult year I've had, I want to know I'm making good choices. I want to know that whatever happens, I'll be okay. I want to know they're proud of me, that I'm still aligned. If I could ask spirit for one thing, it would be reassurance that I'm doing a good job for them.

I never get that directly. I only ever get facts and information. Which makes me wonder how often any of us, hearing “they're proud of you” in a reading, actually let that land fully rather than just noting it and moving on.

This matters even more once you're working with the public and monetising your mediumship. Getting paid matters — it lets you live, and it filters in the right people to sit with you — but how do you explain, in an accessible way, that you'll absolutely bring evidence, while also being honest that evidence alone isn't the whole point? What I actually want to do is sit with spirit and write someone a love letter from the spirit world — a collection of remembrances, connections, thoughts, and feelings — not just a list of facts. That doesn't make fact-focused mediums wrong. It just makes us different, and maybe part of our job is explaining that difference more clearly to the people we serve.

The message matters more than the proof

So many developing mediums, given ten minutes to read, spend nine minutes on evidence and squeeze in the message almost as an afterthought, because time's nearly up. But isn't the message the whole point? If I died tomorrow — hopefully not — and my children grew up and eventually saw a medium, of course I'd want them to know for certain it was me. But what I'd actually want most is what I had to say to them: that I've been around, that I haven't missed anything, that when they think “Mum would have loved this,” I did see it, I do love it, I am with them. That, to me, is the actual magic of mediumship.

That's today's thought. I'd love to know what you think — have I lost the plot, or does this land? What matters most to you in your own mediumship right now is worth revisiting, especially if you're still on your development journey. Thank you so much for listening. I'll catch up with you again soon.