

Shrink Rap Radio #178, October 17, 2008 – Intuition and the Voyager Tarot
David Van Nuys, Ph.D., interviews James Wanless, Ph.D.
(transcribed from www.ShrinkRapRadio by Susan Argyelan)

Excerpt: *You know, I just use a lot of intuitive techniques. I actually worked with Oracle, the big, large computer company, several years ago for a whole afternoon with their accounting division, which are probably the least intuitive, if you will, kinds of people! And, you know, I get them doing these processes, and it just gets them out of the box. And, they love it! And, it just catalyzes... I'll tell you, for brainstorming, whether it's the tarot cards or intuition – you know, whatever processes – it gets people imagining and so creative!*

Introduction: That was the voice of my guest, James Wanless, Ph.D., author and an internationally known workshop leader on intuition, leadership, and personal sustainability, as well as creator of the Voyager Tarot deck. You can find out more about Dr. Wanless in our show notes at www.ShrinkRapRadio. Now, here's the interview.

Dr. Dave: Dr. James Wanless, welcome to Shrink Rap Radio.

James Wanless: Wow! It's my pleasure to be with you. This should be fun.

Dr. Dave: Yes. Indeed, we've been chatting, actually, just before getting started here. Already we're having a lot of fun, and I'm regretting all this, all these wonderful things that you said that I haven't captured yet. I had remarked to you that... Well, actually you mentioned that you played football in high school, and I said I had surmised that you were an athlete.

Wanless: Yeah, and that's an amazing intuition that you did that. And, you must... I guess you gleaned that a little bit from how I write, or just my style of presentation.

Dr. Dave: Yeah! Somehow, the way you come across in your book has what... Sheldon, an old typologist from long ago, talked about ectomorphs, endomorphs and mesomorphs. And, the mesomorph is the athletic type, the very muscular type. In your book, you come across with energy and enthusiasm and self-confidence and all of those things that really flow out of that body type, according to Sheldon. And, to me, that typology, it's always been a good sort of thumbnail little bit of truth. (laughs)

Wanless: Yeah, and you know, working in the intuition world as I do, I guess I call that which would correlate with the "mesomorph" to the kinesthetic intuitive.

Dr. Dave: Okay.

Wanless: And, a kinesthetic person like myself, a mesomorph, is... I mean, I get it a lot – I get things a lot – intuitively when I *do*: when I walk around, or do something

with my hands, or express it with my voice. Something like that, I *get* inspiration, I get insights. But, sometimes, if I just sit and reflect and think, I don't know where I go.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. Yeah, that's not your path, clearly. Well, tell us a bit about your background, just quickly – where you grew up, went to school, etc.

Wanless: Well, I guess I'm a California boy. I mean, I grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area. Actually, I used to live in this town called Los Gatos, which is in the foothills above Santa Clara Valley, which is now (laughs) Silicon Valley.

Dr. Dave: Sure.

Wanless: Way back then, it was orchards...

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Wanless: ...and beautiful, and those "white" times in the spring with all the flowers, and now it's all gray. It's concrete; it's all silicon.

Dr. Dave: Wow.

Wanless: But yeah, I mean, I guess I was in that kind of culture of Stanford and Berkeley and all of that, and then, you know, did my undergraduate work, and then ended up, actually, getting my Ph.D. in political science at Columbia University. And, that was back in the late 60s, and we took over the university (inaudible) '68.

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Wanless: And, those were some wild times!

Dr. Dave: Are you saying you were a radical?

Wanless: No, I was there as a student (laughs).

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Wanless: The radicals did all their mojo without me having to be a participant, really.

Dr. Dave: Okay.

Wanless: But, it was quite an amazing, amazing time. I was pretty straight at that time, and you know, I went ahead and got my degree and... Boy, I'll tell you, though, the minute I got that Ph.D. – "Powerful Head Damage" – (laughs)

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Wanless: I was out of there!

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Wanless: I mean, I went and I traveled to Africa and this and that, and then got into meditation. Meditation took me to the Tarot and spirituality and all of that, and that's kind of been my path ever since.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, I wanted to ask you about that part, but before we get there, you became a political science professor. How long did you do that?

Wanless: I did it long enough to know I didn't want to do it.

Dr. Dave: (laughs) Okay.

Wanless: Which was three semesters of teaching.

Dr. Dave: Okay. Only three semesters! Boy! You're a quick learner!

Wanless: It was at an American University in Cairo, and then in Beirut, so... But they were American-style education systems, so I got into the system and I said, you know, I just don't fit. I don't fit...

Dr. Dave: Yeah, yeah.

Wanless: ...into the system.

Dr. Dave: And, you confessed to me before we officially started this call that you only ever took one course in psychology.

Wanless: That's...(laughs) That is correct! And just enough to be dangerous!

Dr. Dave: Right. So, how does a nice political science professor evolve into a titan of the Human Potential Movement?

Wanless: (laughs) Thank you. "Titan," though – that was...(laughs)

Dr. Dave: You liked that, huh?

Wanless: Yeah. Well, you know, I love... We were talking about types, like the mesomorph type and all that. I just love the idea of archetypes...

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Wanless: Personality archetypes in the kind of the Carl Jung, the Jungian sense of psychology. But, that was not the psychology, you know, I took.

Dr. Dave: Right.

Wanless: (laughs) as an undergraduate.

Dr. Dave: So, how did you first get exposed to meditation? 'Cause you said that was kind of the doorway in for you. I know right now, you're living really close to Esalen...

Wanless: Mm-hmm...

Dr. Dave: So, I'm wondering if the Esalen Institute had anything to do with that.

Wanless: No, not really, but it was funny. I mean, here we are – I mean, you have a Ph.D.; I have a Ph.D. – and I kind of got this, and I said, like, "So?" (laughs)

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Wanless: Is this it? Does this mean I'm supposed to know something, or be at the top of a field of a certain way of using the brain? And, is that it? Isn't there something more than this? And, it's that wonder and that question that took me into, basically, Transcendental Meditation, the old TM stuff...

Dr. Dave: Okay.

Wanless: ...that started out in the early '70s. And, I just took a class and just really, really enjoyed it. If nothing else, I just enjoyed it, the meditation process.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, well, that's interesting, given what you said earlier about being an action-oriented, athletic guy. I would've thought the meditation stuff might've kind of driven you crazy, just sitting there. (laughs)

Wanless: Well, but we have different sides to our nature, and I must've, at a very deep level, realized I needed – and I still need – to slow myself down.

Dr. Dave: Aha...

Wanless: And sit down and not go ADD, off crazy, you know?

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Wanless: And meditation, I can do. It's very funny. I mean, I have a hard time just sittin' around, like listening to a lecture or whatever, even watching something,

without getting up and moving around. But, I can sit and do my mantra, or do the observation meditation without a problem. It's very strange.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, that's fascinating. Now, you've written a beautiful little book on intuition called *Intuition at Work*. It's physically small – it's like about five by seven inches – kind of like one of those checkout-counter books. But, it's filled with lots of wisdom, and it's written in a very personal and straightforward way.

Wanless: Mm-hmm...well, thank you for that.

Dr. Dave: Yeah – very readable.

Wanless: This - I've got to tell you, though, this is one of those books that... It's still out. I mean, you can get it through Amazon or wherever. But it never got placed in business sections...where it even says on the back of the book, it goes into business. But, it always gets placed kind of in a New Age section, but it's a little too much of a corporate look for New Age, so it kind of fell between the aisles.

Dr. Dave: Interesting.

Wanless: If you will.

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Wanless: But, thank you for saying that. I just loved writing this book, and it was written, actually, in response to doing a keynote and a workshop for Bayer Chemical – (laughs) interesting company – in Australia about intuition.

Dr. Dave: Aha.

Wanless: And, they needed something. They needed something written. I said, "Well...okay. I'll write a book!"

Dr. Dave: Wow! So, how did you get interested in intuition?

Wanless: Well, through the Tarot. People who probably Google me will find me under "Voyager Tarot." And, Tarot is basically cards, and it's all about intuition – the card that you pick, and how you interpret it – that's an intuitive thing. And, so I just said, "Hey, I'm just going to carry the 'intuition ball,' here, for a while," because I must tell you, professionally I love the Tarot, and yet it's kind of been the cross I've had to bear. Because the word "Tarot," it sounds like "terror" (laughs) to a lot of people!

Dr. Dave: Huh...yeah.

Wanless: And so, it's kind of boxed me in and limited me, so one of my ways of breaking out of just that was through the intuition field.

Dr. Dave: Okay, so that's fascinating. So, should we talk... We can drill down some more into your book, or we can drill down into the Tarot deck that you did. Which would you prefer?

Wanless: I am so open. I can go... You know, I'm cultivating my personal diversity.

Dr. Dave: Well, let's go into the book a bit, and then we'll move and we'll talk some about the Tarot...

Wanless: Sure.

Dr. Dave: ...and maybe even...

Wanless: Absolutely.

Dr. Dave: ...do a little demo, using me as a guinea pig.

Wanless: Oh, good!

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Wanless: Yeah. Yeah, yeah...

Dr. Dave: Okay. So, you know, one of the fascinating things is that you've got one foot firmly planted in this whole world of the intuitive and also in the world of business. And, coming from political science, that's interesting.

Wanless: Yeah, right.

Dr. Dave: And, in your book, you say, "A business approach to life sharpens the use of our intuitive skills."

Wanless: Mm-hmm...

Dr. Dave: That sounds like a pretty original statement. What's the role of intuition in business, as you see it?

Wanless: Yeah. Well, it certainly can; it all depends upon your function in the business world. But, the Harvard business studies have shown that the higher a person goes up in a company – meaning, you have to be a decision-maker – the more intuitive you are, and the more intuitive you simply have to be.

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...

Wanless: Because who knows what's going on in these days of change and uncertainty. So great – I just really believe that great CEOs, they can be visionaries and all that. But they have to have a sense – a feeling – you know, that intuitive sense. And, you know, a lot of us also are in our own businesses now, and so we have to make decisions in our sole proprietorship, or whatever. Again, it's an intuitive call. I guess it's the guys working online, you know, putting a widget together. You know, an assembly line – that's not particularly intuitive (laughs).

Dr. Dave: Right, right.

Wanless: But, for all of us who have to make decisions on the fly, particularly in today's world of speed, complexity and choice, how do we know? It's a feeling; we just go with it and see what happens.

Dr. Dave: Well, I can relate to that. I have a market research business that I do off of a website and also these podcasts that I do. And, all of that's been pretty intuitively driven. I sort of just do what I want to do (laughs) and what I think will work, you know, without a lot of consultation, and...

Wanless: Absolutely! I mean, it *is* a new world, as you know. And, it used to be “ready, aim, fire!” Now to me, it's “fire, ready, aim!” (laughs)

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Wanless: And just see what sticks, because we really don't know!

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Wanless: And, we're doing that... You know, you do it; I do it. All of us do it, probably.

Dr. Dave: Talking about...

Wanless: We have the trust.

Dr. Dave: Yeah...

Wanless: We (inaudible) trust.

Dr. Dave: Isn't it, though, sometimes hard to distinguish between the soft voice of intuition vs. fear or wishful thinking?

Wanless: Mmmm! Mmmm! Yeah, that... Because when I say, “Follow the little feeling” as your intuition, well, that could be following the feeling of this incredible, irrational fear or terror or anger or whatever. And, that's not what I'm talking about with intuition. It's like you said – that soft inner feeling that comes

out of some kind of objectivity or balance or centeredness or dispassionate sense (inaudible). So, we might have this great feeling to do this, do that, *and* what I counsel in this Intuition at Work book is, “Hey, *wait* a minute! Wait a minute! Sit down, breathe, relax, go inside, and get centered, if you will, in a way. And really – what does your voice say at that point?” And, I think that’s also what the people would call “emotional intelligence” here. Because, I mean a lot of us are just, we’re off-base, and we just *react emotionally* about this and that and everything – fly off the handle. And, I don’t... That’s not what I’m talking about with true, deep or high intuition. It takes a little moment of reflection and “feeling in,” and going in and being open.

Dr. Dave: So I can see –

Wanless: You know, beyond...

Dr. Dave: So, I can see how that ties in to your experience with meditation.

Wanless: Mm-hmm...

Dr. Dave: So, it sounds like ideally, you really want to tap in to that sort of a space and then listen to your intuition.

Wanless: Exactly, and that’s why I say a meditation practice of *some* kind... I think everybody should have *some* kind of, at least something about it being able to sit down, close your eyes, and go with it.

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...

Wanless: It doesn’t have to be a heavy-duty, deep Samadhi or whatever (laughs) kind of meditation. It can be pretty simple.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. I wanted to ask you how we learn to develop our intuition, and maybe that’s maybe what you’ve just said is it. Anything else you’d want to say about that?

Wanless: Well, a lot of people... I particularly think those of us – what do they call us? Kind of “iBrain” (?), the “digital immigrants,” probably. Digital immigrants are people like you and me, David. We’re not young kids, right? And we learned in classic education, classic reading a book, and so we spent a lot of time writing papers, or reading this and reflecting about that – and that’s a very quiet mental time. And, particularly compared to digital natives, young people today who, when you get online, it’s “this and that and uh and uh, impulse, impulse, dit-duh-duh-duh!” It’s hard to really kind of quiet down and still down. So, I think a lot of us, in a certain kind of way, are prepared for that meditation kind of practice.

Dr. Dave: That’s interesting, “digital immigrants” vs. “digital natives.”

Wanless: Mm-hmm...

Dr. Dave: I hadn't heard that. (laughs) I like that.

Wanless: Yeah. That is fascinating stuff, the iBrain, you know – how our brains are reconfiguring our cells based on all the Internet stuff we do.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. Now, in your book, you say intuition is tied into our feelings. Can you say a bit about that?

Wanless: Yeah. Well, it *is* a feeling – intuition's not a... It can come as an idea or as a picture or something like that, but ultimately the decision-maker in all of us, whatever we decide to do, there's an impulse – “to do,” “yes,” “no.” It's an impulse; it's a feeling, if you will. And, it's kind of a life feeling. It's kind of an impulse of life energy, almost, if you will. I don't know what we can call it. I could say an impulse, but then people get, rag on “impulsive” and “you're so impulsive!” And, I'm not talking about *that* so much. So, I use that word “little,” “little feeling,” I guess, to describe it, but it's so subtle. And, we're usually caught up in our minds, thinking about whatever, that we don't pay much attention to that little feeling, which really does drive us and make all our decisions and govern our lives.

Dr. Dave: Yes. I was also struck by the little discussion that you had in there about masculine and feminine...

Wanless: Hmm...

Dr. Dave: ...and, you know, that notion that intuition – you say intuition is often dismissed as a woman's thing.

Wanless: Yeah. (laughs) Oh...well, you know, women – yeah. I mean, this is probably more of a cultural thing and conditioning. We might agree about that. For example, women – in terms of communication with other people – have been proven over and over again to be far more empathic. You know, to feel into where another person is coming from and then kind of follow that feeling in a communication style, whereas “men-tal” men – men that we are, or “men-tal,” we have more of an abstract idea, reasoning way, let's say, of communicating, coming from an idea realm, whereas maybe a woman – particularly in communication – might be coming from a *feeling* realm. But, you know, David, the truth is, all the studies about intuition show that it exists equally in male and female brains (laughs).

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...

Wanless: But, I think it's just that women are given, perhaps, *more permission* to be a little softer. And, they're saying, "Well, I feel that this is the way to go." I mean, I've once stood up in a big meeting – it was in a faculty meeting. And, they were going through, "Well, should we do this?" and, "Should we do that?" And, at some point, I had such a strong feeling about that, I got up and said, "Well, I feel that..." And then, all the professors, my peers, they all looked at me – all these guys – and they said, "Well, what are your statistics? What's your science behind this?" And, I said, "I don't know. I just have a *feeling*." That's tough to back up, you know?

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Wanless: You know, and women would say that a lot more, probably, than guys.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. You know, I think I'm a feeling/intuitive type of person, and I think that made it hard in the university and faculty meetings, and so on, because that's the place that I tend to come from more than from my head and more than from theory and so on.

Wanless: Mm-hmm...

Dr. Dave: So, I really relate to the frustration that you felt with that, and I know many times, I've kind of felt a frustration around that as well.

Wanless: Well, I mean – yeah! Right. So, I'm not really familiar with all of your work, but so, in a way, where do you stand now in the whole field of psychology and the kind of work you do as an intuitive, now, really, that you are?

Dr. Dave: Well, I became very identified with the whole humanistic transpersonal movement...

Wanless: Uh-huh...yeah.

Dr. Dave: ...and the department I was in. So, it was actually, the place I ended up in, in terms of the psychology dept. at Sonoma State University, was probably the best place (laughs) for somebody like me to be, because it really encouraged – it gave a home to the kind of person that I am. And, now this podcasting world really is a way of extending that out into the world, because it allows me to give voice to this very broad, catholic – in the sense of broad, universal – view of psychology and human nature, trying to pull all these different threads in. So, how did you get involved with business? I gather you do a lot of business consulting these days. You do keynotes; you do workshops. How did all that come about?

Wanless: Well, I don't know, actually, I don't do as much as I'd *like* to do, because it's kind of hard to get through the door.

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Wanless: (inaudible) a business (laughs).

Dr. Dave: Well, I found that to be true, too! (laughs)

Wanless: Yeah. But once we're in, it's spectacular!

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Wanless: It really is, and you know, I just use a lot of intuitive techniques. I actually worked with Oracle, the big, large computer company, several years ago for a whole afternoon with their accounting division, which are probably the least intuitive, if you will, kinds of people! And, you know, I get them doing these processes, and it just gets them out of the box. And, they love it! And, it just catalyzes... I'll tell you, for brainstorming, whether it's the tarot cards or intuition – you know, whatever processes – it gets people imagining and so creative! The brainstorming thing is really phenomenal.

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Wanless: People open up for that.

Dr. Dave: Right, right...and I would think that your energy, your enthusiasm would help to carry that quite a bit.

Wanless: Yeah. So, it is really good for creativity, and it's really good for personal empowerment. I know that "empowerment" word's used a lot, but it's true! I mean, a lot of people are just simply not validated for a wild idea they might have! Which, in fact, might be the savior idea for a company. (laughs)

Dr. Dave: Right, right. So, how did you get into the Tarot?

Wanless: The Tarot! Wow, yeah, you know... This is, I was... I really got heavily into meditation when I was in Nepal. And, I came down with – oh, God, what's the disease where you can't even get out of bed, you turn yellow...

Dr. Dave: Malaria?

Wanless: Not malaria (laughs), but hepatitis.

Dr. Dave: Hepatitis, huh?

Wanless: And, so here I was in downtown Katmandu. I wanted to go climb the mountains and I couldn't get out of bed. And all of a sudden, I heard there was a meditation course going on for Westerners in a Tibetan Buddhist monastery. And, I said, wow, okay, I can do that because all I can do is sit around and lie around,

anyway. And, so I did that for a month, never took any medication, did the gold-light meditations down to my liver, whatever, and walked out of there a changed person.

Dr. Dave: Wow...

Wanless: I never went back to political science. I was kind of bitten by the spiritual path, if you will, but you still have to make a living!

Dr. Dave: Yes. (laughs)

Wanless: Bummer! (laughs)

Dr. Dave: (laughs) Right!

Wanless: So, as I came back to the San Francisco Bay Area, eventually, and said, oh well, okay...I didn't really want to particularly be teaching meditation; I'm just too expressive. It's not me. I love it, but it's really not me. And then, I had a Tarot reading one day with maybe somebody you've heard of – Angeles Arrien?

Dr. Dave: Oh, yes! Yes.

Wanless: Angeles, yeah! And, at this faculty of the California Institute of Integral Studies...

Dr. Dave: Right.

Wanless: Used to be CIAS – Asian Studies. And, she gave me a reading and I said, I love this stuff! I can do it. It's great, it's powerful, and (laughs) it can be a moneymaker! (laughs)

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Wanless: You know? Basically turned passion into profits, if you will.

Dr. Dave: Uh-huh.

Wanless: I never looked back!

Dr. Dave: Interesting.

Wanless: I just started doing readings and eventually developed my own deck, and so on and so forth.

Dr. Dave: Yes. So, what led you to develop your own deck?

Wanless: Well, yeah... I just got really bored with old Tarot, I must say. I mean, I love the Tarot process, but come on! This is the 21st century. Well...this is 1980s that I started. And, I said, hey. You know? Kings and queens and castles and swords and blood and...argh! You know?

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Wanless: Rich symbology, medieval, old, antiquated – I’m not interested. Honestly. And I said, you know, I’d love to make a deck that was much more universal to the human experience; much more multi-cultural, much more open to diversity, and not just a bunch of white Europeans! But brown people and black people and yellow people and blue people and green people, if you will! (laughs) So, that was kind of the motivation behind it, yeah.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, fascinating. I have a friend; maybe later, I’ll tell you a little bit more.

Wanless: Mm-hmm...

Dr. Dave: But, a friend who’s just come up with a deck that also is very much not rooted in the traditional. So, that’s interesting.

Wanless: Good! (laughs)

Dr. Dave: Yeah. So, let’s... The images on the cards are made up from collages. So, how did you come to do that?

Wanless: Yeah. It is cut-and-paste; it’s not... It’s before Photoshop! (laughs) I mean, this is old-world art – you know, magazines and glue and...

Dr. Dave: But they look very polished...

Wanless: Well, they do. Well, I worked - I was not the hands-on artist.

Dr. Dave: Okay.

Wanless: I worked with a very dear and close neighbor-friend of mine back in Marin County, actually, in – we started in ’81. He’d been wanting to do an art project. He was an oil painter – impressionist – wanting to do a collage project. And, I said to Ken one day – under the influence of caffeine, I think –

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Wanless: (laughs) I said, “Ken, let’s make the magician.” And, he said, “Who? Why? What? How?” You know, that kind of thing. He knew nothing of the Tarot – zero knowledge, which is perfect. And, we started making these cards, and I would collect the imagery from wherever, take it to him and say, “Okay, the magician is

an archetype who does and has these qualities, and here are the images,” and that’s how we started. And, four years later, we had the deck! (laughs)

Dr. Dave: So, it was kind of a collaborative process; you were giving him...

Wanless: Absolutely collaborative process!

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Wanless: Collaborative, co-creative, and... which is hard to do! But, it’s the best, if you can do it with a partner.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. Well, let’s talk a bit about some of the specific differences of your deck compared to other decks. You’ve preserved the overall structure in terms of 56 Minor Arcana cards and 22 Major Arcana cards, for a total of 78. You’ve kept two of the original suits – Cups and Wands – but you’ve replaced Pentacles and Swords with Crystals and Worlds. What are these changes about?

Wanless: Well, David, I’m impressed! You’ve really done your homework! (laughs)

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Wanless: Well, thank you! Well, yeah – in traditional classic Tarot, there are the suit of cards – like, there’s four suits of playing cards – as in Tarot, a suit called Swords. And, Swords represent the mind, and certainly, the Sword can cut through things to get the great “Aha!” Often, Swords can also cut and slay and devastate as the mind can do, we well know. I just thought it was a violent symbol for the mind. I understand its richness and all that. And, I said, “I’m going to drop the Swords. Let’s drop the Swords,” and *immediately* came to my mind, crystals. So in Voyager Tarot, the Crystals cards – all represented by crystals – represent our thinking mind. And, I just think it’s just a better symbol... (laughs)

Dr. Dave: Okay, okay.

Wanless: ...for that, and then Pentacles, which are an old kind of go (inaudible) back to pagan times. So, the circle with the five-pointed star in there is very symbolic of the material, physical life that we lead, you know, and of money and body and stuff and nature – things, physical, earth. And, I said, well, that’s a good, nice abstract symbol. Why not let’s look at the worldly life (?) represented by real worlds (?) of different planets? And so, the two of Worlds, for example, which is a card called Reflection, has two moon planets in there. The four of Worlds, which is an Aries sign, has four Mars planets in there. So, and (inaudible) what’s interesting, these were all taken by the Voyager spacecraft... was taking pictures of our solar system in the 70s and 80s. And, I said, “Well, that’s the journey to the external universe. Voyager Tarot is a journey to the inner worlds.”

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...

Wanless: And, that's why I use a lot of these different kind of symbols, because they're real-life experience...and 21st-century, I believe.

Dr. Dave: Okay. Yeah...this is all fascinating. Now, you've also made interesting changes to the traditional royal cards of King, Queen, Knight, and Page. Tell us about those substitutions that you made.

Wanless: Well, thank u. I said, "Off with their heads!"

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Wanless: "Let's get..." (laughs) I have to watch it a little here, particularly when I work in Europe with the cards. (inaudible) but the royalty or the court cards, like you say, of Kings and Queens and all of them, I said, that's an interesting political system and *archaic!* That's not what's happening anymore in the world. They still sort of exist here and there, but I said, no more of those. But, like you say, I kept the same old structure of the Tarot, so I have four cards for each suit. But, they're not court cards. They're *Human Family* cards. In these cards, there's one card called the Sage, and the Sages represent the inner grandmother, the inner grandfather in ourselves – the inner elder, the inner crone, the inner wise one that we all have. We've been around the block a few times, probably, you know? So that's our inner wisdom, and then in contrast to that are the Child cards, representing the inner kid, the inner child in us. And then in between would be the feminine and the masculine images, the yin and the yang. So, that's what I've done. It's called the Human Family and not associated with an archaic political system.

Dr. Dave: Okay, so instead of King, Queen, Knight, Page, we have Sage, Child, Woman, Man.

Wanless: Yes.

Dr. Dave: Okay.

Wanless: And basically, that's like three inner generations of the grandmother, grandfather, the inner parent, male, female, and the inner child.

Dr. Dave: Okay. So these are all archetypes within us.

Wanless: Yeah, and I think you could do some very interesting relationship readings, David, with just those cards, because, like, who's who in this relationship? (laughs)

Dr. Dave: Uh-huh...

And then you pick the card, “Well, I guess I’m the Child and she’s the Mother!” or whatever (laughs).

Dr. Dave: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Wanless: Which *does happen!* (laughs)

Dr. Dave: Well, in the manual that comes with the deck, you have some very nice, creative ideas for different kinds of spreads, different kinds of uses. Now, all the Lower Arcana cards have a World associated with them. For example, the three of Worlds is Nurturing; the three of Cups is Love; the three of Crystals is Creativity; the three of Wands is Compassion.

Wanless: Mm-hmm...

Dr. Dave: How did you come to associate these particular qualities with these particular cards? Or, doesn’t it matter?

Wanless: Oh, it matters a lot.

Dr. Dave: Okay.

Wanless: And, I spent a lot of attention to this because *the* number three card – major number three card in every Tarot deck – is the Empress, or the feminine principle of Mother Nature, or the Goddess, you know? And, all the number three cards of the suits that represent the Mental and the Emotional, the Physical, the Spiritual – the four suits and those four dimensions of us – those threes – three of Crystals, three of Cups, so on – I said, okay, these have to be qualities of the number three archetype, the Empress.

Dr. Dave: Uh-huh.

Wanless: So, I was thinking, what would the Empress, the feminine principle, in a sense, be like mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually? I came up with those cards of nurturing and compassionate and loving and creative. And, that’s where the Voyager Tarot really differs a lot from classic Tarot, is I *really* paid a lot of attention to kind of creating a holistic – these are big words – archetypal psychology, if you will.

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Wanless: Voyager has actually been called by one of the real masters of the Tarot who’s written lots of books, Rachel Pollack, Voyager Tarot is the psychology deck.

Dr. Dave: From the guy who took one course! One lousy course in psychology! (laughs)

Wanless: Oh, boy! Just enough to be dangerous!

Dr. Dave: Yes, right!

Wanless: *And* outside the box and free to think that way. Because you know, a lot of times, as we because the expert in a field and we have to kind of stay in that field or in that box, and as you know, sometimes it prevents us from really thinking freely and being revolutionary and making changes.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, yeah. So, I'm glad to hear that these - you know, I like the fact that there are words on each card because it makes it accessible to the "untutored person." Somebody could come to it raw and begin to have associations and work with it, you know, in terms of what these words might trigger for them. And, on first glance, one could get the impression, "Well, these words were all arbitrary." As I looked at it in more detail, I could see that there was some kind of thought process behind it all. And, so it's good to hear you kind of spell (?) that out.
(laughs)

Wanless: Well, that's good! And, I love what you said about triggers. I mean, the words are triggers. There's no doubt. Cards are triggers. They're only catalysts or sparks to our own inner knowing, if you will.

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Wanless: But, a lot of people say, "Well, can I read the cards? Can I, should I do this? Am I psychic?" And, I say, "Hey. Get over it."

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Wanless: These cards have a title on them. If it says Compassion, what does that mean to you? And, it's a trigger...to your own knowing (inaudible).

Dr. Dave: Exactly.

Wanless: But, I must say, that's the left-brain way of looking at the cards, and there's a complete right-brain way of doing Tarot or Voyager, which is to look at the imagery. And the imagery, as you know, in Voyager is rich! I mean, it's busy.

Dr. Dave: Yes. Yes, you have to look really closely.

Wanless: Yeah, and I always have people - 'cause I love to teach how to do this - just pick one image. You know, you pick your card, read the word, get what you get, and then look at the imagery, pick one out that strikes your eye...

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...

Wanless: ...for no reason, really, and what does *that* tell you? Now, that is creative intuition – reading, picture, symbols. That is where the most interesting things come from, honestly.

Dr. Dave: Okay. Well, I –

Wanless: (inaudible) the whole-brain process, yeah.

Dr. Dave: I have a deck of your cards here that you kindly sent. Is there any way we could do a little mini-reading right now on a question that I might pose?

Wanless: Hey! Let's do it! No problem. You've got the cards. Do you have them in hand?

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Wanless: Do you have a particular... And, I think intention is really important in doing a reading. Like, what's your intention? What's the question? What do you want to know?

Dr. Dave: Well, I do have a question. I retired from my psychology department, and –

Wanless: And, you've RE-fired! It's not about retirement; it's "refirement," I call it.

Dr. Dave: Oh, great! I like that, I like that. So, they've offered me a course. They've offered me a chance. I've been away now for about three years, from teaching...

Wanless: Uh-huh...

Dr. Dave: ...and they've offered me the opportunity to come back and teach a class that I taught for many years called "Myth, Dream, and Symbol," in which we do things like using the Tarot for some of the processes and exercises. And, we do a lot of dream work and a lot of dream sharing, and so on.

Wanless: Oh, fun stuff!

Dr. Dave: It is fun stuff, but it's something that I did for many, many, many, many years, so I'm a little ambivalent about, do I want to go back and tie myself up for 15 weeks or not? I need the money on the one hand, but do I really? (laughs)

Wanless: If you *didn't* need the money, what would you...(laughs)

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Wanless: I know. So, that's the question you want to ask.

Dr. Dave: That's the question. Yeah, I'm looking for just a little clarity, confirmation, whatever.

Wanless: Beautiful, beautiful. So, let's ask the question, "So, what about going back into teaching, doing this one course?"

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Wanless: Let's make it the "what about" question.

Dr. Dave: Okay.

Wanless: What about doing the course? What about it? Pick a card. Just a card.

Dr. Dave: Okay. Just randomly, reaching down into the deck?

Wanless: Yeah, all "random."

Dr. Dave: I have a card, and it is – should I turn it up? (laughs)

Wanless: Yeah, yeah...that would be good.

Dr. Dave: Already turned it up. It is the Star.

Wanless: Wow.

Dr. Dave: ...is the name of the card.

Wanless: Well, good for you! (laughs) Who doesn't want to be a star?

Dr. Dave: Yeah, well, I could confess to that.

Wanless: And you know, when you look at the Star card in Voyager, it's a beautiful sculpture piece. I use a lot of sculpture, kind of archetypal sculptures. This one is Kwan-Yin. In Asia Kwan-Yin is our equivalent to the Egyptian Isis, or Mother Mary in Christianity. It's the priestess; it's a woman who knows and inspires.

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...

Wanless: It's an Aquarian card. I mean, so the card is saying – at least what it's telling me – that this is an opportunity for you to again inspire other, your students.

Dr. Dave: Aha.

Wanless: And to be a way shower, a star guide. A star catalyst for people to find their own light and find their way for the kind of teachings that you give to them. So, I mean that is rich!

Dr. Dave: Well, that's exactly how I see it. I mean, that's how I see my role.

Wanless: Uh-huh. Let me ask you this: Would you see yourself teaching it a little differently than you did several years ago?

Dr. Dave: I've been wrestling with that because, you know, it's the easy vs. the hard.

Wanless: Yep.

Dr. Dave: (laughs) I've got a bunch of materials, I've got a book list. It's sort of more work, but I have to change some things, I think, in order to enliven it for myself.

Wanless: Right. And that's the star: It better be bright and shiny for you; otherwise, it's the same old, same old, you know? Like, "Oh, God."

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Wanless: "Oh, no!" So, I would do it, not only do you inspire others but you kind of re-inspire yourself and kind of re-imagine this and re-enact it and re-study it. I love the "re-" words. (laughs) So, in a sense, *you* grow in consciousness, and they grow. And so in a sense, it's putting yourself back in school here – what have I learned? What can I learn doing this?

Dr. Dave: That's one of the things I've always liked about this class, is, I sort of feel like, well, I have to do what I ask other people to do. So, I ask them to keep a dream journal, so it makes me more diligent about my dream journal and various other activities and processes that I put them in. It kind of holds my feet to the fire a bit as well.

Wanless: Oh, see, that – you know, there are so many professors – I mean, we've probably all known them – who don't do the work anymore.

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Wanless: You know? And don't grow. But, that's the real deal. It's walking the talk when you do that. That is phenomenal. Well, let's just find out. Let's say okay, you do that, like we're talking about...

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...

Wanless: What's an outcome for you? The growth, the opportunity that comes to you out of teaching this course? Let's pick another card.

Dr. Dave: Oh, okay. Okay.

Wanless: Tarot for me is a Q and A. It's a question-and-answer process, and cards are information and catalysts.

Dr. Dave: The next card that I got is the Woman of Worlds, and it says Preserver at the top.

Wanless: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Worlds is very down-to-earth, you know, so it would be very grounding, you know, for you to be doing this kind of thing. And, not throwing away the Preserver; therefore, not throwing away a lot of valuable wisdom and knowledge that you do have here. It's interesting. It's a pregnant lady there, right?

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Wanless: Yeah. So, in some way, it kind of rebirths you. It renews you – something creative coming out of this for you. That's what I would get about what that is...

Dr. Dave: I like that.

Wanless: So, I would *use* that class! (laughs) I mean, use it for *yourself* and your own regeneration and creation.

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Wanless: That's such a productive card, too! It's like, maybe out of this course comes another podcast series, or another new book, or another – I don't know, you know. An article or who knows what, but something that's a producer card – stuff is being created.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. I actually, I had a fantasy of, you know, I like to bring in some outside guests when I can. Who knows? Maybe I can talk you into coming up here for lunch or something. I don't have a "budget," but I would love to have you as a guest.

Wanless: (laughs) A gas budget!

Dr. Dave: (laughs) Yeah! That's what's needed, is a gasoline budget, these days.

Wanless: But, you know, that's what's great about your podcast, too, is the richness of the diverse people that you interview.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. So, I had a fantasy that... because I was thinking, well, if I teach this class, it takes away from some of the time and energy that I have for creating the

podcast. And, then I thought, well, maybe when I have a guest, I could record that and make that a podcast – and kill two birds with one stone. Or give birth to two birds...(laughs) with one birthing!

Wanless: We say “kill two birds with one stone...” I say that; I thought, wait a minute, wait a minute! (laughs) We just birthed...

Dr. Dave: (laughs) Yeah.

Wanless: I think that is a brilliant idea. And, honestly, because we’re doing this and doing that, we’ve got to use it all so it covers different media.

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...

Wanless: I just think that is... Well, I don’t even think that’s a fantasy! I think that’s a reality.

Dr. Dave: Huh.

Wanless: That’s that Preserver card. Something – a product – is going to come out of this class. Product beyond the class.

Dr. Dave: Okay, great.

Wanless: To the world. Oh, yeah! I mean, why would you not do it? I guess it’s ‘cause it’s 15 weeks, right?

Dr. Dave: Yes. It’s the 15 weeks, it’s the... You know, I hate to confess this over the air, but maybe people already know this about me. But, in some ways I’m phobic about – you know, I’ve taught for years and years and years and years...and I’m fully confident and present, usually, when I’m in the situation, but I’m anxious about it, too. And so, it felt very good to retire and say, “Ah! No more anxiety about being good enough, about being prepared enough, about all of that.”

Wanless: Right, right, right. But, let me ask you – yeah, I understand your point completely. But, when you do these podcasts, you have to prepare. You go – I mean, who knows who’s listening to this all over the globe. I mean, is there any anxiety over this?

Dr. Dave: No. (laughs)

Wanless: No.

Dr. Dave: None at all! Because I’m not the person on the spot; I’m an interviewer, and so I don’t –

Wanless: And you can edit...

Dr. Dave: Yeah, yeah. I can edit, although I don't do much of that.

Wanless: Right...(laughs) So, you're the interviewer.

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Wanless: You're the quarterback. You basically kind of distribute the ball.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, yeah.

Wanless: But, why not do that in these classes? Pull in...(inaudible)

Dr. Dave: Well, I do that. Actually, I do a lot of that. I'll have TAs, I'll find some good people to be assistants, and I get the students involved in dream groups and try to do a lot of things where I don't have to be the person on center stage all the time, dispensing tons of content and wisdom.

Wanless: Right. Well, there you go. I mean, hey – you want to pick another card on this kind of issue, though? The kind of claustrophobia, the 15 weeks – all this kind of (inaudible).

Dr. Dave: Okay. We've put it out there; I might as well. (laughs)

Wanless: It's all about transparency here, huh?

Dr. Dave: Okay, right. Okay, here we go.

Wanless: An exposé.

Dr. Dave: Yes, an exposé. Okay, I've drawn a card, the two of Cups. The key word with it is Equilibrium.

Wanless: Mmmm! Equilibrium! It's a number two card, so it refers to balance, of this side and that side. So, the balancing of poles or opposites. It belongs to the number two archetype, the Priestess. The Priestess, who is – I must say, however, the Priestess knows her stuff but does not like to appear in public. (laughs)

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Wanless: And, you look at that two of cups and yeah, I mean, it's a beautiful duck vase coming down the river of life, in a sense, but it's a cactus, actually, inside the vase. And cactuses are pretty self-sufficient and independent. They don't need to be out there, flowering for the world. They're pretty hidden away. They're very hermit-like, if you will.

Dr. Dave: Okay.

Wanless: So, I mean, the card is definitely reflecting on your own kind of sense of privacy and not wanting to be out there in person, in public a lot. No doubt. But it's a card of equilibrium, meaning hey, you can do this.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. Yeah...that's, I'm very much about balance, the middle path – that's me, all the way.

Wanless: Yeah. You know, when you mentioned that word “claustrophobia,” I had to laugh, because I was listening to one of your podcasts when you were talking about how our brains are being reconfigured by the Internet, and all of that kind of stuff...

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Wanless: And, I ran across this article on the MRI – the magnetic resonance stuff –

Dr. Dave: Right.

Wanless: Brain, brain scanning, the neuroscience stuff – which I think is *totally* fascinating.

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Wanless: But, this article was about how these brain-imaging things are a little bit gross. I mean, they're not exactly accurate. (inaudible) okay, let me read that! (laughs) One of the reasons they're not totally accurate is 20% of the population will not get in to that MRI tube...

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Wanless: ...for the experiment, because of claustrophobia. And, I am one of them.

Dr. Dave: Oh, really?

Wanless: I will not go in there and... And, I don't know whether you... You might or not, I don't know, but...

Dr. Dave: Yeah, I've been in there. (laughs)

Wanless: You have?

Dr. Dave: Yeah!

Wanless: Well, if you can do that, I'm impressed! If you can do that, forget about the - I'll do the classes; you do the tube. I mean, I wonder what my brain would look like, because I'm not going to get in there. So, there's fully 20% of claustrophobes who won't go there! (laughs)

Dr. Dave: Yeah...yeah...yeah. All right.

Wanless: But, that is interesting. And, if you can go in one of those, boy, you're great for the meditative world, the inner-journey world and all of that.

Dr. Dave: Well, that's what you have to do when you go in there, is close your eyes...because if you leave them open, you realize, "Help! I'm in this tight little tube!"

Wanless: Yeah. Don't get me close to (inaudible) talk about it.

Dr. Dave: Okay. (laughs)

Wanless: I was in a lava tube - it's called the "goddess cave" - in Hawaii, the big island. I lead retreats there; I go there all the time - in this incredible journey! It's like the women's journey, you know? Down from the ovaries, the Fallopian tubes, and all this kind of stuff. And, it was a women's ritual. I happened to be along for the ride, there. I got so claustrophobic in this place while the labor pains are going on - women were wailing or whatever. But, the thing that saved me was a drop of water that came off the top of the lava tube, the cave. And, it's just this cool water fell on my head, and I was *immediately* into a state of balance and equilibrium.

Dr. Dave: Oh. Right, right.

Wanless: Weird (?) (inaudible) somehow. But, back to you again. I think that the podcast realm for you is terrific because you can do it in your own hermitage.

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Wanless: You know, you don't have to show yourself "out there" to the world, and you can do it in your own time, in your own way, and edit it and all of that. It's a perfect medium for the Priestess-type person...

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Wanless: ...that doesn't particularly want to be out there in public, in person.

Dr. Dave: Well, this has been great. And, I'm starting to be aware of time, and it's probably time for us to wrap it up. I want to thank you very much for that reading, and as we wrap it up, is there anything else you'd like to leave our audience with? I will put links to your website, by the way.

Wanless: Yeah. Well, I'm wondering, you know – we don't have to get into this now – but a lot of people do online cards. Like, I have a card-a-day on my VoyagerTarot.com site, and you can hit the back side of the card, and immediately, it turns around, and that's your card.

Dr. Dave: Uh-huh.

Wanless: And, there's a random generator going on there. The cards are kind of shuffling through the machine. But, what do you say? I mean, there's a difference between actually feeling the cards in your hands, shuffling them, and picking one, as opposed to going to the computer and hitting the button that says "now" and picking a card that comes up.

Dr. Dave: Yeah... I have to agree with you that I would prefer the hands-on process, although from an objective point of view, you know, there's absolutely no reason why there should be that big a difference. (laughs)

Wanless: (laughs) That's right. But I guess the last thing I guess we want to lead with, maybe, or leave with, is everybody has their own style.

Dr. Dave: Okay.

Wanless: You know, of being and of doing and of creating. And, now there's so many different kinds of media in the world that it's kind of... We're all mediums, but the medium of what media... and it's kind of like, "So, what's your magic? What is the particular technology or form or medium in which I can excel?" And, getting to know who you are, and then doing that and being that.

Dr. Dave: Well, that's great. I could tell from your book that I was going to enjoy speaking with you, and indeed I have. So, Dr. Jim Wanless, thanks so much for being my guest today on Shrink Rap Radio.

Wanless: My pleasure. It's been a blast, and I'll come up to Sonoma State. I'd love to.