

# Ep #226: Working with Unhealable Wounds with Karen Hawkwood (Part 1)

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With Your Host

**Simone Grace Seol**

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Welcome to *Joyful Marketing*! I'm Simone Seol, and I teach you how to get your life coaching practice fully booked without having to pay for ads, buy Instagram followers, or complicated sales funnels. It's not rocket science, and you can do it, too. Listen on to find out how.

Simone Seol: Hey, everybody. I'm talking to KJ Sassy Pants front of the show. Is this your third time being on?

Karen Hawkwood: Yes. This is the third time. I'm very grateful.

Simone: Longtime listeners know who you are and are such big fans of you. But I brought you on a third time. Hopefully, or definitely, not the last time. Because I want to talk to you about something, something that you teach that I haven't seen, well, I don't want to say nobody else teaches it. But no one else I see teaching it the way you do.

Which was a big shock to my system when I first learned it from you. And it was the kind of shock that was a profound, soul deep relief at the same time. And I've been thinking for a while that I need to bring this medicine to my people. And this thing is strange because, I said, it's a big, soul deep relief, but it's also a profound bummer at the same time. It's a paradox.

Karen: Yes, it is.

Simone: It's a giant bummer and a giant relief. And I feel very, very, very strongly that this knowledge, this wisdom, needs to be out in the world. And I feel even more strongly that this wisdom needs to reach coaches, healers, therapists, counselors. Humans who work with humans. Very important. And I am so grateful that you agreed to come on and have this conversation with me. So, I'm just gonna get right into it.

Karen: I'm here for it.

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Simone: I'm just going to go in and ask you. The thing is this, the profound bummer is that not all wounds that we have can be healed. Not every point of tension, point of pain, grief, what have you, that we carry is meant to be solved, cured, healed. And it's something that we carry with us until we die.

And that idea is very anathema to many strands of thinking in self-help, self-development, coaching. Because it's all about we can go in there and heal all the things and perfect all the things. And KJ says, "Actually, no, we can't." Tell us more about that.

Karen: Okay. So, there's one thing that I want to say at the very beginning because I think it's a very important part of how I frame this and understand it. To me, our archetypal nature, which this is part of... We're going to talk about this very specifically today. But we have a nature; we have a way that we're made, that's here when we get here.

Then, what happens in our lives layers on top of that and shapes it. And so, the conversations we're all learning to have, more and more, about trauma are part of that layer. They're part of the layer that happens when we get here. Other than, perhaps, epigenetic trauma, which is, you know, comes in with us, too. But that's, I think, a different conversation.

But I think a lot of us have an unconscious, but very strong idea, that when we come here, we're not already hurt. And Chiron is...

Simone: Hold on, hold on. I just want to pause there. We have this idea that when we arrive here, meaning we're born on Earth, that we are not already hurt. Meaning... Let me just rephrase that just because it's such a whopper. It's a whopper. We arrive on Earth wounded in a way that is actually separate, independent, from the epigenetic trauma, cultural, all that stuff.

Karen: Correct. That's my framing. It's a framing I participate in.

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Simone: We are born with a pain that is specific to who we are.

Karen: Yes. That's before anything happens to us. And it is separate, although it can be intertwined with family, like inherited stuff. It's not that either. And that's here, right when we get here.

Simone: I just have to take a moment to process that. Go on.

Karen: This is why this is such an important conversation and such a difficult one. Because that right there is just, you know, it takes everybody... I can only be so calm about it because I've sat with this for so long now. I've spent so much time in the company of that awareness.

And I think this gets right to the heart of Chiron. So, Chiron is a body that orbits in our solar system; it is not a planet. There's a couple of interesting things I might talk about later, if that makes sense, around that. But it is something that can be found in your astrological chart, that talks about this piece.

And the essence of Chiron is exactly what you said that we have a wounded place in us that cannot be healed. Which is so difficult, right off the bat, for so many of us. But the essence of this wounding, is that it is unfair. And the very idea that we are born wounded, when we're the soft, innocent, little creatures that haven't even done anything yet, is unfair. It's fundamentally unfair and wrong.

Simone: And yet, and here we are. It is how it is.

Karen: Yeah. I mean, that's what I see. I know, there's lots and lots of people that would disagree with me. And, this is why I don't get invited to a lot of parties. Because...

Simone: You're invited to this party.

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Karen: I love that you would invite me, specifically to this party, to talk about this very difficult stuff. Because I see it. I am such a pragmatist at the end of the day. And if I did not find the resonance in this, over and over and over, in people who are not already primed to behave the way they think I want them to behave, because there Chiron is this...

In other words, I have not created a self-fulfilling prophecy. And yet, I see the truth of it, over and over and over. And that's why I'm more in relationship with Chiron than I've ever been, is because I see the truth of it. So, I respect that there are plenty of people who see it differently. But I have found a lot of healing in this.

Simone: Let's, at least, present people with what it is, so that you can make up your mind about if you agree or not, whether it resonates or not. So, give us some examples of how people might recognize this in their lives. How it might come up.

Karen: Well, gosh, it can look like anything. The truth is it can look like anything. I have found, in working with people, in doing both one-on-one and in group settings, this particular injured place in us actually, it hurts so much that we protect ourselves from it so thoroughly. That more than any other part of the chart, when I start to describe it to people, based on what I see, they just look at me like a deer in headlights.

And they're like, "I'm not trying to be difficult. I just honestly don't know what you mean." Which was very unnerving for me, when it first happened. Because it happened a bunch, just around Chiron. I didn't have this issue with other parts of the chart.

And I thought, "What am I doing wrong? I must be missing something." And so, what I found is, it's a shell that we put around that...

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Simone: Is it like we construct whole identities and ways of being to avoid that pain, because it's so painful? So, when somebody says that's your pain, you're like, what?

Karen: Not even objecting to it. Just like, blank. I don't even know really, the word... Like, I've literally had people say, "I know you just said words to me, and I don't know what they were." It's that level of protection, that the psyche will employ to keep you from going anywhere near that territory.

And then inevitably, if people are willing, you know, if they're... Because I never push, especially not with this. But if we just spend time with it, that shell will crack. And then, we get down into it. And then, I get to see, you know, how spectacularly painful it is.

But this essence of unfairness is part of the reason why it's so hurtful. And, almost anything can feel unfair to us. That's why Chiron doesn't have one particular way that it shows up. It's not always in this part of life, or characterized by this kind of experience.

Simone: Even so, I would not like to go further until I give people a way of connecting with that might be for them. Or, maybe you can talk about some examples of what the essential wounding, Chironic, is that a word, might be? Because I don't want it to be a theoretical exercise for people. So, for those who are like; okay, I'm resonating. I'm curious.

Karen: But I also don't want to try to formalize it or ground it in ways that don't end up working for people, because then they might think that they're not getting it or they're not doing it right. And, I don't want to participate in that. So, that's why I said, we often have protected ourselves so thoroughly.

Because if people listen to this, and they're like; I don't have that. That's not in me; that's fine. Nobody's going to come knocking at your door and have

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an argument with you about it. I will tell you, if it doesn't feel like it's in you, that doesn't mean that it isn't. It just probably means you're really insulated against it.

But the unfair part tends to be the key. Because there is some part of life, some... Not part of life, by which I mean, work or relationships. I mean, there's some dimension of human existence where we hold a belief so deeply that we don't even know we're doing it. About the way things should be, and they're not that way.

It sounds really over-simplistic; this can be a hard thing to talk about sometimes, because it sounds so... It's like, I have Chiron in Pisces. And my belief, that Chironian place in me, says everyone should be able to feel the feelings of other people, on at least a basic level. Enough to be able to empathize with their experience. That's just is how it should be. And it hurts me, so much, that it's not how it is. That's not how the world is.

You have Chiron in Gemini.

Simone: What does that mean, again?

Karen: And my sense, the way that I would describe that to you, is that you have a place in you that believes that everyone, not just you... This is one of the things about Chiron, too, that's very interesting. Each of us has it in us, but it's a place that we connect with the collective. So, Chiron is a collective wound, that each of us has a little fragment of. But it's connected to something bigger than ourselves.

So, you might not use these words, but the way that I would surmise that it works in you, is that you believe that everyone should have this kind of freedom of being like an innocent child. Being able to just run trustingly, with mad curiosity into the world, and just go anywhere and explore anything, and be free; both free and safe to do that.

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Simone: Yes. It's extremely painful to me that that's not the reality of the world. And in the most fundamental core place, it's a giant, flaring, red, pulsing pain that that is not a truth of the world.

Karen: Yes. Chironian pain has felt to me, like a third-degree burn. It's that kind of pain. That just pulsing, aching place in you. And it isn't just about you, it's about the world. It's about that sense that this is how... If things were right, this is how it would be. And it's so, fundamentally, not that way.

And other people can look at... Like, I don't have that achy place around the way it should be about freedom and curiosity and innocence. That's not my Chiron, right? You don't ache, probably, the same way that I do, about that seeming absence of empathy. That seeming rupture, and the ability to look at another human person who is suffering and not feel it. I mean, you do. But you don't feel it the way I do, because that is my Chiron.

We have a whole group of people, right now, that are going through their Chiron return, which is the thing that happens to us at 50, the age of 50. Everybody, that's when Chiron comes back to where it was when we were born. So, it's a particularly ouchy time in our lives. And their Chiron is in Aries. And their wound...

So, without going through all 12 signs, that's one of the ways that I can ground it for your people. It's like, you can at least look up the sign that Chiron is in for you. But the Chiron in Aries people have a fundamental belief, that deep-seated place in them, that says everyone should have agency. Everyone should have the power to be able to be under their own direction.

You know what I mean? Like, I choose what I want to do. Well, obviously, that's just not on offer for an awful lot of people. And so, that's their third-degree burn place.



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So, the unfairness is part of the essence of this particular work. And the other part of the unfairness of it, it's like layers and layers of unfairness, is that we didn't deserve this wound. We didn't do anything to have been wounded in this way. It is not any kind of consequence of our own behavior, or even our parents behavior, or our parents-parents behavior.

I'm not going to tell the whole story, although, anyone who's interested, I actually have a whole, like two-hour call on this archetype. Where I tell the myth of Chiron. But in the Greek myth, and there are multiple versions, as there are with all Greek myths, the story is told in different ways.

But it's remarkable, because it's so rare, it's vanishingly rare in Greek myth, that something is an accident. Bad things happen in Greek myth, because the Gods got butthurt and start shit because of that. Or, a human showed their ass, and gets visited the consequences upon them. Therefore,...

Simone: It's always that someone did something, and then there's a consequence.

Karen: Someone did something, and there's a consequence. Chiron was wounded twice over; he is the child of rape, and he was abandoned by his mother in the moment of his birth. That was his first injury. Totally not his fault. Has nothing to do with her antecedents. His mother's antecedents were, you know, the god doing this, Kronos, doing the thing that gods do, in Greek myth.

But it was nothing to do with him, and yet, he came into life with that. And then later in his life, he received the poisoned wound, by accident, from his friend. His injurer was his friend, because it was an accident. So, twice over in his life, he's wounded for things that have nothing to do with him.

And that stands out so sharply, because it just doesn't happen that way. What happens to any of us when we are hurt in a way that we have

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absolutely no connection to? It's wildly unfair. But we still have to deal with it.

Simone: And I think one thing that's profoundly lacking, is the acknowledgement that this kind of pain exists in the world, and it exists in fucking spades. The kind of pain where there's no rhyme or reason, nobody did anything to deserve it. It just is profoundly painful and profoundly unfair. And, it just is. I think this awareness is rare, because it's so painful, that we humans try to resist it and we try to concoct all these, you know, narratives around it to be able to avoid, or at least numb ourselves temporarily, from this awareness.

But there exists lots of pain that has no cause, and is profoundly unfair. Just saying that out loud is radical, because nobody says it. I think, it's because it's so painful.

Karen: We don't want it to be true. So, we will find any shenanigans around that to make that not be true.

Simone: We would drug ourselves, we will distract ourselves, we will, you know, do anything. We would rather gouge our own eyes out, and plug our ears, and go la-la-la, than to be able to look at that, because it is so painful.

Karen: I find, too... Because I tend to frame... My people know this, I talk about what I call the "ditches", like the ditches on the side of the road, right? Because you're trying to steer down the road and it's really hard, so you fall into the ditch. And one of the classic ditches around Chiron, is bypassing. I know this is going to be offensive to some people, and I don't mean to be offensive.

So, I'm not going to apologize for something I'm not sorry for, because I'm not sorry that this is my view. But I fundamentally do not believe that

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everything happens for a reason. I have seen that belief structure create a lot of injury. And I have dealt with that injury with people, around it.

But I think that there is a significant chunk of that... And I'm not saying that's in everyone, or that everyone who feels that way is wrong. But I think that's a really natural human response. Because if we believe there's a reason, then it wasn't an accident. It was purposeful, somehow. And that feels so much more comforting to us, that we hold that really tightly.

And so, it's a hard one.

Simone: This is how I personally feel it. Sorry, if you can hear my baby crying in the background. It feels like an affront to the dignity and sanctity of life, to have the kinds of things happen that trample on the dignity and sanctity of life, for no reason. It feels like an affront.

Karen: That we can see.

Simone: Right, right. And to say there was no reason, it feels like, not a slap in the face. It feels like, I don't know, just like my whole being like, being run over with a truck. Like, oh, this horrible thing happened. There's no reason. You just got fucked over. That's it. Right?

Karen: Yes, you are in the wrong place, at the wrong time. Tough titties. You're dead in a ditch, moving on. I mean, every particle of us just recoils in the face of that.

Simone: And yet, here it is. It dogs us. It haunts us. I don't think anyone could say honestly, with a straight face, that they don't have an awareness of the phenomena that we're talking about. You know what I mean? No matter how...

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Karen: I've talked to some people who are like, "Absolutely, that happened for a reason. Just because we don't know what it is, doesn't mean there wasn't a reason for it." And I can't say... I mean, nobody died and made me God. I can't say, "I know," that it didn't happen for a reason. I don't think so. When I look at the world, that doesn't ring true in my body, you know. But for other people, it does. So, I don't know, I can't say.

But I do think I am... You know that I am really attuned to what I call "the underworld". Which is, all the stuff that most of us don't want to look at. That we're not comfortable with. And things that worldviews and orientations to life that essentially sort of protect us from that, don't ring true to me. But that's all I can say. I can only speak for myself.

Simone: Okay, so I know what you mean when you say the underworld, because I've been working with you for years. Can you define that for us, a little bit?

Karen: It's the place that sits underneath the level of being human. It sits beneath what we would think of maybe, as civilized. Although, we've all learned to question what civilization means. Because a lot of that is very colonialist, in terms of values.

But in the underworld, we encounter rage, we encounter jealousy, we encounter spite, we encounter primal passion. I mean, it's not like seven sins down there. There's a lot of raw aliveness, but it is not safe. It is not tamed. And we, in the underworld, when we land in the underworld... Which all of us will at some point, if we're alive for long enough. Which is about 15 minutes. We will land in the underworld at some point in our lives.

And when we are in the underworld, we also are acutely aware that we, our conscious human selves, are not in control of what's going on. The underworld is a place that we get dragged, and we get tumbled, and we die

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in the underworld. And, we are transformed. If we can stay with the process long enough, we are then reborn out of the underworld.

But that is a process that sounds incredibly sexy, and wonderful and spiritual to talk about. And it is the most miserable, unsurvivable experience when we're in it, you know? So, yeah, I think we do a lot to protect ourselves from that. And this Chironian place is an underworld place, for me. Or, that's my observation.

Simone: Do you think, it might or might not, be useful to give just some more examples of if your Chiron is in this placement...?

Karen: Sure. It's simplistic, and I have to ask everybody to forgive me. But I'll walk through the 12 signs.

Simone: I would love that, actually. And by the way, if you're like, what? If you're like, "What are you talking about? Chiron placement and planets, what?" Tell me if you think this is okay. If you know your birth, date, and time, and place, then you can punch it into, like google...

Karen: I send people to Astro.com. That's really the best site.

Simone: Okay, great. You punch in your information; birth time, date, place, and it'll give you where your Chiron is.

Karen: You don't have to worry about all the other gobbledygook.

Simone: There's a lot of other stuff. But there's gonna be a piece of all that information where one part of it is going to tell you what your Chiron is in.

Karen: The sign of the zodiac.

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Simone: Yes. Right. We already talked about Aries, Pisces, and Gemini. Walk us through the rest of it. I think this will be really interesting. I'm like, this is what I would want to know if I were listening.

Karen: Absolutely. I mean, you don't have to twist my arm. I just want to make sure that I'm staying on track. So, Aries is the first sign of the zodiac, and I did talk about that a minute ago. Taurus, which comes after Aries, is the... I've learned a lot of this through working with clients. I have a number of clients with Chiron in Taurus. And it's this underlying belief that we should all be at home in our bodies. That the body should be a solid and welcoming place.

Now, just because you don't have Chiron in Taurus doesn't mean you automatically feel at home in your body. Don't mistake this for being the only injury, is what I'm saying. But also, there's an additional dimension to Chiron in Taurus that everybody plays.

Which is, that everyone should have the basic resources that they need, to live in their bodies. So, the massive affrontedness at the fact that people starve to death, in a world that's wealthier and more abundantly resourced than it's ever been in all of our history. That's the third-degree burn for a lot of Chiron in Taurus people.

It's either that they just never feel at home in their bodies. They don't ever feel like this is their natural habitation. And/or that there is the availability of what we need to live, and people don't have access to it.

The Gemini one, is the one I described more for you.

Chiron in Cancer is that everyone deserves to belong. Not to belong in a conceptual way. To belong, like somebody opens the door and pulls you into a hug, way. And they don't, they just don't. And that family, in particular, should be the people who have your back. They should be the

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place where you are always safe and always welcome. And of course, we all know, in this world, it is largely the opposite, sadly.

Chiron in Leo, is the belief that everyone should be able to shine as an individual. That everyone should be able to radiate their own specialness into the world, and at least be allowed to do that. If not, be actively welcomed and appreciated for doing that. But certainly, they should not be crushed and punished for doing that, which is usually the way we're received.

Chiron in Virgo is a belief that life should be orderly. It's the belief that there should be a pragmatic, internally consistent and recognizable structure to life, to existence.

Simone: Wouldn't that be nice?

Karen: I would sign up for that, I would sign up for that. But I have my share of Virgo in other ways, so I come by that naturally. And, that the world should attend to things working well. It sounds so basic; Virgo language almost always does. But Virgo understands that the minutia...

My thing for Virgo, is that old poem, "For Want of a Nail: For want of a nail, a shoe was lost. For want of a shoe, a horse was lost. For want of a horse, the rider was lost. For want of a rider, the message was lost..." It goes on and on and on. And the last stanza is, "For want... a war was lost. All for want of a horseshoe nail." That's the medicine of Virgo.

So, Chiron in Virgo, is this belief that if we just attend to the details, if we just took care of all of those horseshoe nail moments, everything would work for everybody. A world would work. If only, and here we are. Right?

So, Chiron in Libra, believes fundamentally, above all things, in justice. And that there is a balance of right and wrong, of good and bad. But right and

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wrong especially, because right and wrong are human constructs. There is no concept of right and wrong in nature.

And Libra is fundamentally an energy, more than any other, except maybe Aquarius, that is on the human end of the human-animal hybrid, that we are. And so, justice is an abstract concept. It's an ideal that we have developed as human people.

And people with Chiron in Libra just feel, at the depth of their being, that everyone should have that ideal active within them. And that we would, if we all operated according to those principles of justice. That staggers me, to even try to imagine what the world would look like. And of course, it's not.

Chiron in Scorpio, the unfairness there, is that everyone should recognize and be respectful of the underworld. That everyone should understand that we are also animals. That our primality, the raw, passionate, primal, intense, "uncivilized"... And I'm really emphasizing the quotes there, because that's a very cultural judgment. But that "uncivilized" dimension of our human nature is so much of what we are.

It's so funny, because Libra and Scorpio are right next to each other, and they are just polar opposites. Because if we did it the Libra way, everyone would be so respectful and so polite, and so fair, right? If we did it the Scorpio way, we would live like animals do, with each other. Follow the rules or I bite you. And if you fuck with me a second time...

Simone: And if I'm hungry...

Karen: If I'm hungry, I will try to eat you. My right is not right. But my power is to try to eat you, your power is to try to get away. Or, maybe to try to eat me, in turn. But I think, none of us would deny the fact that animals live very peacefully with each other, about 98% of the time.



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Simone: They don't enslave other animals. They don't subjugate, create class divisions and subjugate other animals. There's a cleanliness to how animals...

Karen: They don't extract labor from other animals. I mean, they do. There are places where animals will take advantage of other animals' labor, but there's a cleanness to it. I think the way that you put it, is really good. And that we could operate that way, and also have a better life.

And people with Chiron in Scorpio also, I think, feel... Because in the world that Chiron in Scorpio people imagine, all of those primal feelings would be okay. And, they're not. We would be able to share them. We would be able to express them, even appropriately, right? Not ripping people's throats out in the dark drawing room, or whatnot.

But we would be able to show them, in a way that would be welcomed and appreciated. We all know, that isn't this world.

Chiron in Sagittarius people, really believe that all of us should have a sense of the meaning of life. That we should all have that sense of purposefulness. That everything has meaning. It's a very Sagittarian thing. We don't all have to be Sagittarians to have it. But that's very connected to the core energy of Sagittarius. Which is, that all the pieces fit together and make a pattern. And, things don't always fit together that neatly.

A lot of times, you know, this kind of randomness happens. Accidents happen, things happen that just jar, they grind when we try to fit the pieces together. And that hurts Chiron in Sagittarius people, deeply.

Chiron in Capricorn people, and I have had the chance to work with some of those folks, who are elders now. Is that we should have structures of rightful authority, that do what they're supposed to do in society. That have integrity, that are trustworthy, that protect at least the majority of people in

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ways... Not protect power, not protect influence, right? But actually, protect the people that they are put there to protect. That one goes without saying, especially after 15 years of Pluto in Scorpio.

And then, Chiron in Aquarius, that deep belief the way the world should be, is that everyone should be equally valued and important. And that the structures of humanity, relating to humanity, should be basically entirely flat. In the sense of everyone should have equal opportunities to engage in the world, in whatever way that they want to do. Because they have equal value.

Because there's equal value, there should be equal access, there should be equal everything. And not just equal in the old sense of everyone gets the same slice of pie, but that it really should be equity. That everyone should have what truly serves them. Aquarius has some of the deepest ideals of all of the archetypes of human nature. And again, fundamentally, not the case.

And then, finishing up with Chiron in Pisces, is that all of us should feel our hearts and other's hearts, as our own. Not in an enmeshed or unhealthy kind of codependent entwinement. But like tuning forks, you know, that we should resonate with each other's suffering in a way that would automatically lead us to try to mitigate it. It's just not that world.

Simone: Connect more deeply to... Our interconnected humanity. Yeah,

Karen: So, there's a quick, well, quickish journey.

Simone: Well, I was really impressed. I was like, "Damn, that's good CliffsNotes." Wow. Okay. I think at least some people listening probably feel like; okay, I know my Chiron is only in one place, but I can kind of identify with a lot of these. Like, yeah, I feel that pain, I feel that pain. That's normal, right KJ?

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Karen: It is. it is. But what I would say, is that once you understand your own Chiron, and kind of pay attention to it and learn some more about it, you will begin to be able to distinguish that third-degree burn feeling about that particular source of ill in the world from the others. It doesn't mean they don't hurt. It doesn't you don't care about that.

Simone: It's like the difference between, "Oh man, that sucks. I'm hurt by that. That infuriates me." Versus, "I can't even look at it. It's so painful, I can't even." That's what the difference feels like to me.

Karen: Yeah, that's it. That's it. That's beautifully articulated. Because the Chiron pain is so bad that we flinch away from it reflexively, instinctively.

Simone: I'm about to ask a question, that you're probably going to do a whole year-long course around to begin to deliver an adequate answer to. But as coaches, healers, practitioners, wherever you call yourself, we do what we do. We're here because we want to help people feel better, and to you know, to have less pain and all that.

And so, it probably hurts us in this profession, maybe a bit more acutely than people in other professions. So, what do we do with this? What do we do with it? What do we deal with these unhealable wounds? We can't just sit down and say, "Well..." I mean, I guess we do, in a way. But like, what do we do?

Karen: What we don't do is... I did talk about how one defense, a common defense, against Chiron is the bypassing; the finding a reason, you know, the finding a way that everything's okay somehow, to skirt around that. But the other defense, is absolute cynicism.

Simone: Hmm. It's this defense mechanism there.

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Karen: It's this black, bitter place of like, everything is fucked. Nothing has meaning. Humans are absolute pigs. Everything is fucked on this plane. And, well, it's a defense. It's a defense. That's how I look at it.

Simone: I'm being mean about it.

Karen: It's so anathema to your nature, Simone. It's so anathema to your nature. I can resonate with that place more than you can, because of the way that I'm made. But it's also, not true. You know, neither of them are true. But I hold the understanding of them as defenses, because it keeps me in compassion.

So, what we can do, and what I think we have to do, if we're going to have any kind of peace. If that's even a word to invoke here. Is we learn how to carry. We carry the Chironian wound as part of us. And, it is an acknowledged part of us. But it does not define us. So, that's when we begin...

Because the other, there's two figures here, there's two faces, in a way, that's really one face of Chiron. One is the unhealable wound, and one is the wounded healer. And, people love to talk about the wounded healer.

You hear that's how Chiron is referred to, a lot. And I'm like yes, and... The wounded healer never heals himself. Never.

Simone: And that's not out of his lack of capacity, or lack of intelligence, or lack of skill, or lack of integrity...

Karen: ...knowledge, or wisdom, or any of it. He devoted the rest of his very long life... He had been a teacher before that, of many things. But he devoted himself to healing. Perfectly legitimately, to try to find a solution to his own, and he never found it. He never found it. But he had a choice.

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Now, the myth does not explicate this. To be very clear, this is my understanding of it.

But when he received that poisoned wound, that is the wound he's the most famous for, he had a choice. He could have given up and just laid in his cave and screamed until whenever, because he's immortal. He's an immortal being. And the only reason he finally died, is because he did a deal with the gods, and they let him out.

There's a whole thing about his relationship with Prometheus, that has... I want to comment very briefly on that at the end, but not now. So, he could have done that, and gone into the black cynicism and bitterness, and just let it swallow him. Right? He could have searched for his own healing, purely for himself. And if it didn't work, discarded it. And have that be a totally solo pursuit.

Instead, what he chose, was to search for his own healing, absolutely. But to then, recognize the value that that could bring to others, and to share it with them. That isn't why he was doing it. So, I think we have to be careful not to impose a kind of idealized altruism on him.

And that's part of what I hear, when people talk about the wounded healer. There's some real inflated stuff there, that I don't like. He wasn't doing it for them. He was doing it for himself. But there was also benefit to them. And I think eventually, that came to mean a great deal to him. But it was always a compound situation.

So, he did not let the wound define him, but it was ever-present. It was ever-present. It was not something that ever went away, out of his awareness.

The other thing I've learned, is that in carrying the wound, the wound cannot be healed in that whole, complete, fixed, finish, ta-da, kind of way.

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But that doesn't mean it can't be tended to. And there is a kind of humbleness, that is so beautiful, when we learn to tend to that wound that is so awful, that it makes us just like flinch away from it.

But we can learn to bear it, in a way that allows us to approach ourselves with fresh bandages. I just have always had this image of like soaking the crusty bandage off with lavender water, and bathing.

Simone: That's like, gross and beautiful at the same time.

Karen: Yeah, I know, this is the thing. I'm not trying to amp up the grossness of it. But this is a poisoned wound. I am confident that that wound smelled really bad. It's dying flesh. And on the interior level of experience of Chiron, the number one thing that I run into with people, is that wherever we have Chiron we feel ugly.

We feel gross, and repulsive. That's not usually how other people experience us. But we feel it in ourselves, nonetheless. And the answer to that, is not to do some bypassing shenanigan stuff. Where we try to make believe that the wound is in fact really beautiful, it's not. It's not. But that doesn't mean we can't love it and bring compassion to it.

We can also hate it, at the same time. If there's any place that we have to be able to hold paradox, it's Chiron. And so, when we can be in this place where we're not trying to bypass the unfairness, the undeservedness, the randomness of it. And we're not letting it define us and swallow us into the black cynical hole. We can find a place that... There's a thing that I call "gritty compassion".

And this is not the compassion of... And there's nothing wrong with this, to be clear, I'm not criticizing in any way. But this is not the compassion of sitting in loving kindness meditation and filling yourself with white light. That can be an incredibly beautiful and powerful and healing experience. But

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this is the kind of compassion of sitting down next to an unhoused person, who is a drug addict, on the sidewalk, knowing that you cannot help them and sitting with them.

See? This really just gets me every single time. You're willing to sit with them, anyway. And just look at them, and be with them. That's what Chiron can give us the ability to do, that nothing else, in my experience, can. And, that's the medicine. That when we can have that relationship with that wounded place in ourselves and in others, we can begin to find the medicine in our own wound, in ourselves. That we can then bring to the world.

But the medicine isn't the reason for the wound, in my view. And the medicine doesn't somehow wipe out the pain and the yuckiness of the wound. It's just, that they're there together. I think gritty compassion is the key, to me.

Simone: I think that might be a medicine, that might be a kind of presence that I think is missing, lacking, the most in the world. And one of the things that we have the least capacity for, the least skillfulness around. Just because there's so little awareness of what this kind of wounding is, and how to tend to it. Or, even the idea that it's possible to tend to it. Yeah. That it's available to us. That, to me, feels like a weird mic-drop moment.

Karen: Every time I come into the presence of Chiron like this, and really drop down into it, there's some wordless places.

Simone: This is just my view, my personal view, but I think Chiron might be why we are incarnated on earth. Like, to learn.

Karen: Well, here's the thing that I'll... This is a perfect place to share this piece that has intrigued me so deeply, ever since I put the pieces together. In archetypal astrology, the way that I work with it, the planet Uranus, is

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very deeply connected to the archetype of the visionary. And mythically, it's connected to the Titan, Prometheus.

And Prometheus was known as the one who created humans out of dirt, and breathed life into them as living beings. But he was endlessly frustrated that they were basically just animals. They didn't have awareness, and they didn't strive for something better. They didn't have any sort of nobility of spirit.

And that's why he stole the fire from Heaven, to give them. Because the fire that he gave them was not just physical fire, it was the fire of consciousness, and it was knowledge. He gave them the knowledge of metalworking, and woodworking, and agriculture, and astronomy and astrology, and philosophy. I mean, just everything, all the awareness.

But they had to have the consciousness to be able to take it in. And he held that vision. He knew that they could be more. And he was willing to endure the punishment, because he knew perfectly well what his punishment would be, if he did that. And he was willing to endure that punishment, in order to bring his vision into being for humans to rise above the level of being these muddy, dirty animals that would just basically eat, fuck, and die.

And so, his punishment was to be chained, in isolation, and have an eagle eat his liver out every day. And then, his liver would regenerate because he was immortal. Once again. And eventually, what happened is that he exchanged places with Chiron. Chiron gave up his immortality, in exchange for Prometheus' freedom. So, Chiron was allowed to die and finally be free of his suffering. And Prometheus was freed from his chains, and allowed to be free of his suffering.

In the sky, the planet Uranus, which is the closest we have to Prometheus... And, we think Chiron is a cometary core that got captured in



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our solar system... Have been in opposition to one another, like on a teeter-totter, from about 1950 to about 1991, or 92. Almost every single human on Earth during that 40-45 year period, has those two faced off against each other.

It says something to me, about this bright, shining vision of what is possible, what is more, what is the most noble, and sort of arising into gloriousness in the human spirit. And, the woundedness that comes with it. And that no matter how beautiful of a world we create, with all that knowledge that Prometheus gave us, this wound is always there. And so, that, to me, is the story of humanity is these two in conversation with each other. Which they are, in almost every single one of us, who's alive right now.

Simone: So, if you're like, "Okay, whoa. Okay, thanks..."

Karen: This is not exactly marketing advice, folks. But thanks for bearing with us. I think it's important.

Simone: But isn't it? Listen, if you're like...

Karen: You know how I look at the world.

Simone: "This is crazy, I need more," then... We got to wrap up at some point. We're coming back to you with more, tomorrow, actually. But for now, if you want more, you can go find more of KJ's work at...

Karen: Tune in for next episode. Yes, and you can find me...

Simone: [KarenHawkwood.com](http://KarenHawkwood.com) The links are gonna be in the show notes. KJ Sassy Pants on Instagram and Facebook. And we're gonna be back tomorrow. Don't miss it.

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