

Just Maybe?!
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Preface

I wrote this book approximately 5 years ago, at the end of 2010. Today is December 28, 2015, and I wanted to update my thoughts on what I wrote so long ago. I have read the material numerous times and I still stand by everything I have stated in this compilation of thoughts. However, I felt it necessary to add some additional explanation and insight into why I wrote the book and what I wanted to accomplish at the time that I wrote it.

I wrote this book because there was something inside of me incessantly prodding me to put my thoughts to paper. During this time – which was over a period of 4 years – I was very busy reading, processing and scribbling. It took over a year to compile my scribbles into some sort of organized, readable material. What did I hope to accomplish.....I have no idea.

I just wrote and thought, erased and read, wrote and learned... for 4 years. After a person experiences something traumatic, it takes a while to process the event. That is what I did with no actual end result in mind. When I did finally put this book on the internet, I definitely had a naïve expectation. I was sure that when someone would read my book they would immediately sense that I had something to offer the world in terms of understanding humanity in a different way and that with that knowledge and understanding, shackles could be broken. Boy was I wrong.

I started a blog as well which I diligently added blog after blog waiting to catch someone in a controversial conversation that would possibly stimulate thought on both ends. But...nope. Nothing.

I gave up after about 6 months due to opposition. I lost my motivation. Not one person found my thoughts to be interesting and/or thought provoking let alone life changing. Five years later, I don't care. Finally, after a lot more soul searching and a lot more research on some crazy subjects such as the Occult and Secret Societies, I found the motivation to try again.

I am, at this point in my life, convinced that what happened to me almost ten years ago, was a supernatural occurrence that provided information to me as well as the will to disclose this information to others. My ego stopped the process. I have since become a much stronger person with a deep sense of self and I am ready to take on the critics, the liars, the frightened, those that are delusional and the abusers that make up most of our population.

I am ready to fight for humanity's right to freedom - a natural born right – even if humanity is willing to put me down and call me stupid, crazy, a liar, delusional or even a criminal for suggesting that we live in bondage and before we can be considered free, we must admit that we are currently in bondage.

I am not going to revise my book at this time, however, there is so much I would like to talk about that my next endeavor will be to find a new format allowing me to invite real thought provoking discussions on some taboo and controversial subjects that will, hopefully, find the key(s) to some hearts and minds and unlock them, opening a door to a new, free world.

Please note; the rest of this book was written approximately 5 years ago.

Introduction

Four years ago, I had what most people would call a nervous breakdown mixed with a little psychosis. I was having a tough time in my life and I wasn't sleeping and I was smoking too much weed and I snapped. From that point on, my whole perspective on life changed.

I can't say that my life has been "charmed." My childhood was uneventful, other than the fact that my mother and father were hard working, strict parents. They were not the warmest parents, but they made sure they lived an honest life and did the best they could for us.

I got married when I was 23 and had two kids by the age of 27. My first husband was a nice guy, but expected me to be the typical housewife and mother; you know, the kind that listens and does what she is expected, such as making sure the house is presentable, preparing meals, doing laundry, babysitting and holding down a job. I thought I was that kind of housewife and mother and tried to live up to that definition. After all, wasn't that how a "good" housewife and mother should be?

It didn't take long to discover that no matter what I did, it wasn't good enough for my family. I tried, but I couldn't completely satisfy my husband, although he wasn't at all concerned with the fact that maybe he wasn't completely satisfying me. Unfortunately, I was not concerned with that fact either. On the contrary, my only concern was that I was not doing enough to satisfy him. Towards the end of our marriage, he told me he didn't know if he ever loved me

and we divorced in 2002. The story is obviously more complicated than that, but that is not what this book is about.

In 2003, I got remarried to my current husband, Eyal. Eyal does not have a bad intentioned bone in his body, but a couple of years into the marriage, I had to once again face the fact that my husband was not going to take care of me. I had to take care of my husband. Eyal lost his job and I was the only one working for a while. At the time, I was an office manager in a small accounting firm in Brooklyn. I had a second job teaching aerobics. My husband and I, his 25 year old brother and my two kids lived in a very, and I mean very, small apartment together and I felt like I was the only one doing anything for our future. I tried to make the best of it, but eventually all I could do was come home after work, try and straighten up the house after the mess my husband, his brother and their friends made while I was at work, roll up into a fetal position and go to sleep. My brother-in-law came to New York to sell jewelry that his mother made in Israel, but the only place he could sell the jewelry was on the weekends in the NYC street fairs. I don't know if he made money or not, but whatever money was made did not go towards rent. Everyone else (except my children) was playing around and smoking weed. Eventually I started to smoke weed with them. I tried to make sure my kids didn't catch me, but sure enough they caught me. They insisted that I let them move in with their father. They are living with my ex until this day.

At this point, my kids have moved out, my ex-husband is on one side telling me what a disgraceful mother I am and that the kids cannot live with me. My new husband is not bringing money into the house and leaving that part up to me. I am the only one working and paying bills and cleaning up after everyone's crap

– everyday. Here I go again. Why am I working so hard and getting absolutely no appreciation from anyone? Why is this happening to me?

I am also Jewish which was, and is, a major influence in my life. I attended Yeshiva Day School and Yeshiva High School and even lived in Israel for a year following graduation. At the conclusion of that year, I moved to Brooklyn, NY, the home of all my Israeli friends. As you can see, my life just about revolved around my religion, with Judaism as the foundation of my education and experiences. Even my father, who converted from Jehovah's Witness to Judaism, made sure that Judaism was the prevalent source of our understandings of the world. My parents were not, themselves, observant, but they raised us to be religious. Although, my brother and my sister are not affiliated with Judaism at all, I maintained a dedicated spirit to my religion and when I moved to Brooklyn became what is called "modern orthodox." I adhered to the basic Jewish rituals (or mitzvot), but I still did a few things here and there that "orthodox" Jews might disapprove of.

The Jewish thing, the housewife thing and the mother thing eventually got to me. For what and for whom am I doing all of this? I am getting absolutely nothing in return. Why am I even trying? Where is G-d when I need him? I am trying so hard and I devote a lot of energy to G-d's requirements, so why am I not seeing results? Why do I have to wait for "heaven" to have good in my life? What if "heaven" sucks? How do I know I want "heaven"? Maybe "hell" is better. At one point, I even started feeling slightly suicidal because once I started hammering these questions into my head, I felt like there was and would never be answers to these mysteries of the world. If no one knows the answers then why am I here?

These questions and other commonly asked questions would not stop running through my mind. At work, I could no longer concentrate and my boss started noticing a change in me. Once I started smoking weed, I started getting some answers, but not the way most people want to receive answers.

After about two to three months of heavy weed smoking and reflecting on my sorry life, I eventually could not sleep. What once started out as mere questions became an overwhelming presence over me. The questions would not stop coming. I needed answers and there were none. How was I going to have peace of mind if I could not find answers. Before long, I snapped.

The combination of not sleeping and smoking weed heavily took me out of a physical state of mind to a new spiritual state of mind. This was not in my control. I don't want to speak about the details, because they are slightly foggy and I don't want to misrepresent my experience, but my experience told me that I had some sort of spiritual epiphany. My husband was there throughout the entire experience and he was very scared that I would not pop out of the psychosis that I was under. My thoughts and actions were pretty crazy, but I said things and heard things in my head that I had never heard before. Where was this information coming from? I truly believed that I was receiving insight to my questions. I still believe that is what I received.

It is hard for me to convince anyone that my experience is true. My husband, who witnessed my behavior, is adamant that I was not possessed by a spirit that was providing answers to me, but simply momentarily crazy because I didn't

sleep for a long time. I can understand his view because before this happened to me I did not believe in anything other than what most people call “reality.”

Reality, according to most of the world, is completely based in physicality. Our “reality” is that in order to be successful in life, you have to have some sort of skill or occupation and be very good at it. “Reality” is that if you don’t do something for yourself, G-d is not going to help you. “Reality” is if you are a bad mother you are no good. “Reality” is if you are not physically attractive or don’t try to appear physically attractive, you are not worthy of love. “Reality” is that those with money are the ones with power. “Reality” is that if you work hard, you will reap the rewards. “Reality” is that if you are a good mother, your children will be good kids. “Reality” is that if you treat your husband well, he will not cheat on you. “Reality” means war is necessary to rid the world of “evil.”

I could go on. All of the “realities” that I have listed are ones that are believed by a lot of people on this planet, including myself. Correction, these are realities that I used to believe in. I have since discovered that “reality” exists only in the eyes of the beholder. In other words, your “reality” is what you make it to be.

Soon after I got out of the hospital, I started reading books I had never read on Kabbalah, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and other esoteric philosophies. It didn’t take long to notice a familiar theme running through the lines of each book, within every different form of religion and/or belief system. I felt confirmed that what I was ranting about while I was “crazy” was really answers to my questions (for lack of a better explanation). The answers that I received came to me through a voice (or thoughts) in my head that was distinctly separate

from my regular voice (or thoughts). The essential message that I received from this voice (or thoughts) while I was “crazy” was that everything that we believe to be “reality” is nothing more than an illusion.

This sounds scary when you first hear it, but it is actually freeing once you start to understand and apply the concept to your life. As soon as we can accept that nothing is really “real,” we can start creating our own reality. After all, we do live in the physical world and we do need some rules to follow, otherwise we might end up damaging the beautiful world that we live in.

So that is what I did. I created my own rules of “reality.” These rules revolve around the long-term goal of surrounding myself with peace, happiness and love. If a thought or an action does not work towards the goal of peace or happiness or love, according to my own rules, I must try not to think that thought or do that action. Simple right? Wrong. It is very hard in the beginning to dedicate yourself to your goals, especially when those goals are very different than what you are accustomed to.

By writing this book, I was hoping to be able to take the chaos of my thoughts and create order out of them, hopefully enough to clearly illustrate that everyone is part of an eternal process that I (and many others) call evolution. When we discuss evolution, we immediately have opinions about it. Evolution somehow became a controversial subject. If you believe in evolution, you don't believe in G-d and if you don't believe in evolution you are basically an idiot that doesn't know anything about the history of our planet and its inhabitants. I want to try, as hard as it might be, to change your mind either way. Evolution, in my opinion, is a spiritual process as opposed to a physical process and G-d is

closely involved with this process. If you don't realize that this process exists, it is because evolution has been represented inaccurately to you and you have decided to accept this distorted interpretation.

Another concept I would like to alter in those that it has the greatest hold on is the concept of G-d. From here on I will be referring to what most of us call G-d, as the Life Force of the Universe. I felt attaching a descriptive name to G-d, opens up the mind to a bigger concept of G-d. Limiting the Life Force of the Universe to a king in the sky that wants us to be good boys and girls, otherwise we may have to deal with his wrath, may actually hinder our personal evolution.

My goal is to open your mind and perhaps help you to say "maybe." I am not looking for anyone to adopt my ideas as their own, I am only hoping that those who limit their beliefs to archaic concepts that have not been developed past just a thought, are able to finally admit that *MAYBE* there is a much bigger picture here that we just don't understand, and that we certainly cannot conclusively say something is or isn't a certain way. I believe with full faith that only the Life Force of the Universe knows anything for certain; that's why we have to have faith in It.

I truly believe that this simple philosophy has the potential to alter everyone's perspective in some sort of prolific way that won't be understood until you experience what it feels like to be certain that you just don't know.

This declaration is just one of many that I am comfortable stating with a sense of certitude. Although, I am a firm believer in the fact that insisting that any

personal belief is undoubtedly universally true is foolish, I do believe that certain personal articles of faith are integral to a quality life.

When you finally realize that you can decide to change your reality by simply thinking positively, your life will change for the better. And on the other side of the coin, when you realize the situations in your life that are not the way you would have liked them to be are and were never in your control, and that you have no choice but to depend on the Universe for your happiness, you'll discover a new freedom.

According to my "reality" the only world that has a chance of surviving is the one that relies completely on the Universe. The Universe sustains the things that need it. If you need the Universe and treat the Universe and everything in the Universe with respect, it can and will sustain you, and (here's the kicker) with no effort on your part.

In the following chapters, I am going to attempt to illustrate how reality is relative to each person based on their situation, acquaintances, family and place in history. Every version of reality has exactly the opposite version somewhere in time. Throughout the course of this book, I will try to emphasize that understanding and accepting opposite versions of your own beliefs helps you to better listen to your gut feelings, even if your gut is telling you something that other people may not approve of. When you are comfortable in your own skin, you can more easily accept differences in others and are free to embrace your own differences and love yourself for your unique qualities. How? Once you know that anyone can have any opinion they want, that means you can too.

All of this information has been written before by so many unbelievable authors, but I always found a slightly different nuance from one book to another, even if the subject was exactly the same. I realized that even though the writers were writing about the same exact thing, their individual perspectives opened my mind to a new specific understanding of myself. In other words, one sentence in a book that hits you in the right place can be the exact thing you needed to hear at exactly the right time that made enough sense to you that something all of the sudden clicks. That is the “click” everyone who has written a book on this subject hopes for. It takes the slightest switch inside the brain and once you find it and turn on this switch, you can begin this journey called “life.” Further, although you may turn it on and off (and believe me, you will – a lot), at least you know it’s there – or at least, you are a little more convinced. That is the place I want to take you. I cannot do the work for you, but I can try to convince you that life is not black and white. But I mean to convince you.

Gray is going to be your new favorite color.

SHAYNA ABRAMS' ARTICLES OF FAITH

There is a higher purpose for each and every one of us, but sometimes we don't know what that purpose is.

If I *try* and trust everything is for the best, I can never be disappointed. I am always looking for the best reason I can find as far as why things happen the way that they happen.

I *try* to remember that everything is perfect and as it should be. This comforts me when things go wrong.

When I *try* to stop worrying about tomorrow and enjoy today, life becomes worth living.

Once you are happy, everyone around you is also happy. Your happiness is actually catching.

The Universe aids in your growth as it does in the growth of everything else. You don't need anything but faith in the system of the Universe.

People are inherently good. With the proper care (love), that goodness can be harnessed in the right direction.

When I *try* to love someone unconditionally, that person will automatically love me back – whether they want to or not.

Our Universe guides us along an evolutionary mission. Our destination is a peaceful world. The more people on board to carry out the mission, the faster the mission will be a success.

Inflicting my opinions on others is just as harmful as causing other people physical pain.

When I talk, I must *try* to speak what is truth in my eyes. If, for some reason my truth cannot be revealed, I *try* to refrain from talking at all.

I refuse to accept any other human being's advice, no matter how much that person claims to know, if I don't understand it. For example: my friend Jennifer is having a hard time losing weight. She goes on a watermelon diet because she loves watermelon. She loses all her weight in a very short amount of time. She swears by this watermelon diet of hers. Why wouldn't she? It worked for her. But would it work for me? I hate watermelon.

I *try* to give people the benefit of the doubt and trust them – even if I think they can't be trusted. Everyone is innocent until proven guilty.

Chapter 1 – Evolution – A New Perspective

What kind of world would it be if everyone believed that there was a greater unexplainable power in the Universe that gave human beings exactly what they need exactly when they need it? The same power that gave all the trees, flowers and wildlife all they need to sustain billions of years on this earth. If we could all commit to a united belief system that flowed with the Universe and believe that everything happens intentionally and for a reason, we would never take it personally when someone disagrees with us and we would have no reason to be jealous, to judge, to take revenge, to steal or especially, to kill another person.

So what if that person has more than you and he hardly had to work for it and you did? You would know the Universe has a plan and needs your soul to work harder towards a greater purpose and that person doesn't need that life lesson; that person needs to learn a different life lesson.

So what if that person rejected you because he wasn't attracted to you? You would automatically know that the Universe would only cause two people to attract if there was a greater purpose – no attraction, no purpose.

So what if your co-worker that you trained got the promotion and you didn't? There is a reason. That doesn't mean that you have to continue following the same path you have been on. You could choose to quit your ungrateful job instead and pursue your "calling" in life. You could choose to allow the Universe to take you to the next stop in this game called life. You decide – it's

your life. Don't worry about what other people do. You are you. No one else is you. No one on this entire planet is anything like you. For someone to be exactly like you they would have to look like you from birth, have the same family and friends, bosses and co-workers, watch the same television shows, marry the same spouse and have the same kids. Their lives would have to match yours identically for them to be exactly like you.

What I believe is that the Universe guides us to our soul's needs at every moment. Sometimes that might mean that you need to release negativity and the only way to get it out is to put yourself in a situation that forces you to make a decision that may seem terrible at first, but ends up being the best move you ever made.

What is evolution?

According to Oxford Concise Science Dictionary evolution is the "gradual process by which the present diversity of plant and animal life arose from the earliest and most primitive organisms, which is believed to have been continuing for the past 3000 million years."

This definition seems to be missing answers to many of the questions that have baffled scientists. If evolution is a "gradual" process, how do scientists explain the various behavioral changes that took place globally in a seemingly short span of time approximately 50,000 years ago in a period called "The Great Leap Forward"?

Also, according to this definition, humans are either considered “animals” or not included in the process of evolution. If we are considered “animals,” how do the scientists explain our ability to communicate through language, develop opinions, make decisions and everything else “animals” cannot do? And if we are indeed a different species than all other animals (which we are), then where do we fall into this definition? Have humans “evolved”? If so, how?

I am not trying to rip apart all of our scientists’ hard work over the centuries, but I do want to emphasize that science does not have all the answers. Science cannot have all the answers, because if science had all the answers, there would no longer be a question as to whether or not there is a G-d; science would have the answer.

Although science has revealed so much knowledge to us, there are many more mysteries that we are not privy to because we have not “evolved” enough as a species to accept them. This is the concept that I would like to bring forward to everyone who is reading this book. Evolution should not be limited to a biological definition. This is the mistake that creates the vast controversy around this subject. Evolutionary changes, of course, can occur biologically, such as a gene mutation necessary for the species’ long term survival, but I also contend that “evolution” takes place spiritually and morally as well. Spiritual and moral changes that human beings have made and are still on the course of making are the most vital changes necessary to our existence.

If we take a closer look at our growth, we can clearly see that we have collectively shifted our behavior over history from barbaric and savage to a more gracious and socially acceptable way of living. In ancient times, children

were sacrificed in the name of adulation of the gods. In medieval times, at least you had to commit a “crime” to be beheaded, but the “crime” could have been witchcraft. And so on through history we have collectively evolved. Therefore, as a species, just like the giraffe’s neck grew so it could eat from the trees, the evolutionary path we need to be on to ensure our survival regards our relationships with other people. In order for our species to survive and prosper, we need to stop fighting with each other and punishing each other for not being a certain way. To live harmoniously on this planet together, our spiritual evolution is not only necessary, but is unavoidable.

The Universe needs the earth for many things that the earth has that no other planet in the entire galaxy has, one being organic life. Our planet is the only planet (that we are aware of) that is hospitable to life. Every once in a while I would like to request that after you read certain sentences, you take a moment and digest the implications of that sentence.

Earth is the only planet that we know of that is hospitable to organic life.

Physicists are aware of this, but their perspective is limited to the study of *what* makes the earth hospitable and *how* the earth is hospitable, rather than *why* only the earth is hospitable. Why is earth the only planet that we know of that has trees, plants, vegetation, water, animals and humans? This question cannot be answered by physics, because there would be no way to say for sure that there is one specific answer. Even if physicists would be able to postulate some sort of theory, who is to say that it is exclusively correct. What if there are many reasons why the earth needs organic life while other planets don’t? What if

some of the reasons are spiritual reasons and cannot be found through physical measures?

Before I continue, I would like to emphasize that I am not a scientist nor do I have anywhere near enough knowledge of science to state anything as fact. Additionally, I would like to emphasize that nothing in this book is “fact.” A fact is something that is believed to be true based on knowledge or events that took place.

The problem with “facts” is that they are limited to the perspective of those insisting that they are “facts.” In other words, I would like to say for a fact that there is a G-d, because I have experienced events that could not have taken place without some type of intervention from what I call G-d, but, as you well know, saying that it is a “fact” that G-d exists actually offends people. But it is a fact to me. So, in the same way that “facts” that I believe in for various reasons cannot be called “facts” for everyone, I do not accept other people’s facts as my own – until I have done my research.

That is all I am trying to ask of you. Do your own research before accepting anything that you hear or read as “fact.” “Facts” are only facts to the *specific* person who experienced the events that caused that *specific* person to acquire knowledge that convinced that *specific* person to believe something (or someone). If that *specific* person has enough evidence that something can be accepted as “fact” for others beside himself, than the evidence must be able to exclude all other opposing possibilities. In other words, if you think something is a fact and someone else disagrees with you and has evidence to support his opinion (or theory), then what you thought was a “fact” turns into an opinion (or

theory) because someone else has a viable opposing viewpoint. There is no such thing as opposing facts. Take a moment to digest what I am trying to say:

For something to be stated as “fact” there must be no other viable opposing possibilities.

If this is understood, it is easier to digest some of the things I will be discussing throughout this book. It will also be easier to accept that what you may have once thought to be true, or “fact” before, may be implausible if viewed from a different perspective.

With this in mind, I would like to discuss why I think spiritual evolution is in need of further study in order to move us ahead to our next stage of evolution, which, in my opinion, could only be the Era of Peace.

I believe that the only world that has a chance of surviving is the one that relies completely on the Universe. The Universe sustains what needs it. Everything in the Universe continues with its life without “worrying” about how it’s going to live, except for us. We have spent so many centuries studying how to sustain ourselves in the Universe that the thought that perhaps we don’t need to sustain ourselves has never crossed our minds. Why should we human beings, supposedly on a higher spiritual plane of existence than a mere animal, be bothered to waste our time on menial tasks of basic survival when we have much more to offer than animals? Even animals don’t “worry” about their survival. They just survive, or don’t survive. There is no “worrying” about survival. Humans, on the other hand spend so much time worrying about our

survival that we don't have any time left to be concerned with what we came here to learn, such as, why are we here in the first place?

Food for Thought

In order to evolve physically and technologically, we necessarily needed to evolve spiritually as well.

What I am suggesting is that we not only evolved spiritually, but that we *can* only evolve spiritually. Physical and mental heights can be reached solely as a result of a spiritual change.

This would mean that science has been studying it backwards all along. Science has assumed that evolution consisted of biological changes. I am saying that evolution can only be stimulated by spiritual changes. Now, all of the sudden, if my logic is correct, we can dispel the idea of defining evolution as occurring only within biological changes as “fact.” This would not be fact, because we have not studied the possibilities that we evolved spiritually first and only then were we able to “evolve” biologically. If we can eliminate this piece of information as being “fact,” we can now dismiss the argument entirely as far as “religionists” vs. “realists” are concerned. Religions tend to dismiss evolution because, according to what religions have chosen to believe as “fact,” if someone believes in evolution, they must also believe that they came from a monkey. So, according to a lot of religious minded people, based on the information provided by their leaders over many generations, evolution is not an acceptable belief. If G-d created us as a spiritually higher species than animals, accordingly we could not possibly share any of the same genetics. On the other

hand, “realists,” as they like to call themselves, imply that the religious rite has to be one step short of crazy to actually be able to so flippantly dismiss all of the scientific “facts” that confirm evolution. However, if it were true that we first had to “evolve” spiritually before we could have evolved physically, then each side could define “evolution” however they like but there would be no dispute as to the “fact” that some sort of *human* “evolution” took place over time.

Recognizable Spiritual Stages of Evolution

According to my theory, human evolution has taken place in every generation since the beginning of time. Furthermore, we each have the possibility to evolve to the highest levels of spirituality, even within our own lifetimes, if we exert some effort. For example, a criminal who has no concept of rules or respect of another human being needs to evolve spiritually in order to change his ways for the better. By a spiritual change, I mean that some introspection into his or her soul has to inspire lasting change. The criminal must agree to abide by a set of social rules so that he or she can successfully live amongst society. If the person is only agreeing to these rules out of fear (i.e. going back to jail, getting caught, etc.), eventually they may forget about their fear and stop following those rules that are necessary for successful human interaction. I don’t have to tell you that repeat offenders are a dime a dozen.

On the other hand, if a “spiritual” or introspective change occurs, coming from a deeper place in the mind, that change will usually stick. That change comes from a deeper understanding of what our purpose truly is, or simply that we *have* a purpose. Once we are convinced of this, it is hard to be concerned with anything other than trying to figure out what our purpose is and how to fulfill it.

A criminal who can accept that they made a mistake in the past and acknowledge that their actions were wrong and make efforts to improve his or her behavior for the sake of his or her soul, can more easily move ahead with their life, no matter what the situation is. Once a person finally accepts responsibility for their behavior and understands that consequences must be accepted and then deals with them with minimum resistance, guilt and shame, which usually cloud our decision making process, no longer have power over them and the necessary course in life that needs to be taken all of the sudden becomes much clearer. That person who was once considered to be a criminal has the potential to be an asset to society if he or she follows the rules of the system and concentrates on finding his or her purpose in life.

The next stage of evolution is a little more challenging.

The problem with rules is that it's very hard to create a set of rules to cover every detail of every situation individually. The rules are generally too broad. Even our legal system is flawed because people often have a hard time seeing another side to a story. They have already cast judgment and these people are the ones running our legal system. Unfortunately, due to the imperfections of humans, the best legal system inevitably has cracks in it because people are imperfect. Sometimes there are gaping holes in it. (O.J. Simpson?).

How do we, with our limited experience, judge all of the contradictory evidence with honest evaluation? For instance, how can we know if abortion is right or wrong? There are many situations where having an abortion would be

considered wrong by the majority and other situations where it would be considered wrong not to have an abortion by the majority.

Due to the vast number of opinions, we have only one choice but to put a governing body of people who have, hopefully, been chosen by their constituents to make laws, or rules, that will be deemed acceptable to the majority of its citizens. This governing body will also have to create a system of justice to uphold these laws within their country. Unfortunately, not all the laws that governing bodies – even democratic ones – make are acceptable to the majority of people and the justice system definitely cannot always be trusted to be fair and impartial. Just as DNA evidence has been used to convict people of crimes, innocent people wrongly accused have also been freed based on DNA evidence analyzed after the fact. Some people on death row were not as lucky.

So now what do we do? We are smart enough to understand that something is not right here, but what are we going to do about it? What *can* we do about it? The problem seems too big to even think about – so we don't. That is the problem. That is why we have not yet evolved into the next phase of our existence – the Era of Peace. **WAKE UP PEOPLE!!!** The times they are a changin'. We need to figure out what we, each and every one of us, can do to usher in the Era of Peace!

Our scientists have spent hundreds of years collecting millions of pages of data on the age of the Universe and explanations of evolution patterns and have proved that, at one point, the Universe was very different than it is now. We have no reason to believe that it can't change for the sake of its own survival. In fact, why someone would want to believe that the Universe can't change for the

sake of its own survival is incomprehensible to me. What is the proof that the Universe cannot adjust to changes in the system? If living creatures have walked this planet for billions of years, what proof do we have that the Universe does not take care of its inhabitants?

Yes, there are natural disasters that take place that eliminate massive amounts of life, but these are the slaps the Life Force of the Universe is sending us that are supposed to wake us up. They will keep happening more frequently and harder if we don't wake up and smell the coffee. Our negative actions create hostile weather conditions. You don't have to believe anything I am saying is fact. All you have to do is say – maybe....

We went from little dagger like spears to man-made bows and arrows to spears to knives to guns to cannons to grenades to bombs to sophisticated bombs to nuclear bombs. What is it going to take for us to realize we have to start somewhere? The place to begin is at home with our family.

Give respect; get respect. Give truth; get truth. Give love; get love. It is only hard to change yourself in the beginning. Once you understand why you are making changes and start feeling happier because you have made these changes, you will not need to put forth much effort to change. Much of the time, change happens all by itself.

It works like this. Giving respect, truth and love is not so easy initially, but once you dedicate yourself to these rules of living, there are rewards. It takes a while to see results, but once you receive the rewards for trying, it is very hard not to keep “trying.” If we could all simply put forth a little effort into our

relationships with the people around us for the sake of ourselves and our families, we would forget about leaving things up to our leaders and we, ourselves, could try to build some kind of fortress of peace in our world. Because, it is after all, OUR WORLD!!!

It starts with one small step. Instead of yelling at your waitress for being too slow, take a deep breath and enjoy the opportunity to admire the beautiful tree outside. Patiently wait for your coffee, leave a generous tip and say thank you and see if it doesn't make the other person smile back. If everyone was on the same page, we could legitimately imagine the kind of world you can only make a movie about nowadays. It would be a world where everyone worked together and it doesn't matter what another has or doesn't have. We would be able to enjoy everyone and appreciate our differences. Enlightenment would be our ultimate goal and we would have the power to enlighten others in some small way. In the new world, we would be astute enough to find everyone's unique beauty and "cash-in" on it.

This might sound like a cliché version of utopia, and I realize I am not introducing something new to you, but why haven't we gotten there yet? Because we don't think we can. I implore you to understand that this is not even up to us; we will be forced there by whatever means necessary. There is a difference in understanding that we can improve the quality of our life during the process as opposed to others who insist on believing that there is nothing that can be done on an individual level to improve the situation so why not live life till it hurts.

Every positive effort you make towards your own evolution creates a ripple effect around you that has a much bigger impact on our Universe than you might ever know. Unfortunately, negativity has the same ripple effect. That is why we must voluntarily evolve rather than wait for further negative ripple effects.

I want to bring in a point that I will speak more about later. Our experiences are brought to us through the Life Force of the Universe. They are brought to us because we need to learn something from them. The Universe guides us to our soul's needs at every moment. Sometimes that might mean that the experience may not be the most comfortable, but it may be poignant. If an experience can move you emotionally, hold on to that experience and analyze those emotions. Emotions are indications that you feel something and your feelings are important. Even if you have "bad" feelings, if you are able to pinpoint the source of all your feelings, you have the power to change the "bad" feelings into "good" feelings. Emotional experiences are a source of learning. If you do not forget this, you will have a real opportunity to wake yourself up which is what evolution ultimately is.

Take a moment to digest what I am trying to say, keeping in mind your own life and all of its pivotal moments that led to a significant change due to a decision you were forced to make (or you thought at the time you were forced to make). How do you feel about that decision today? Can you understand retrospectively why that decision was ultimately necessary to move forward with your life? Would you have done something different if you knew then what you know now? What lessons have you learned from that decision? Are the lessons you learned valuable? These are just some of the questions you need to ask yourself if you want to improve the decisions you make on a regular basis.

With a little introspection, you might be able to see why you did what you did, why you had to do what you did, why you had to learn the lessons you learned and how your decision has changed your life or your reality to suit your newly learned lessons.

These pivotal moments in one's life that lead to change are the very moments the Universe uses to alter your reality to suit changes you need to make in order to evolve to the next stage of humanity.

In Summary

According to my own version of reality, humans are on a path of evolution to higher beings. We are all on different planes of an evolutionary path. We have to put together the pieces to our own unique puzzle using the tool called "perspective," given to us from the Life Force of the Universe. We don't always know what pieces each of us are missing that would allow us to evolve to higher beings that can live together symbiotically, but our job is to figure it out, preferably in this lifetime.

I know I need to learn patience. All of my life I have lacked this virtue, despite the fact that when I am not patient, the situation usually gets worse. I had experienced so many things that tried my patience until finally I had no choice but to realize that there is nothing I can do about waiting. Time doesn't move any faster no matter how much I might want it to. When I finally gave in to the idea that I was not in control of what happens to me, I was then able to learn that as long as I am patient, everything I need comes at the right time. I had to strip

myself of expectation and wait. That took patience and I had no choice but to have some.

All anyone needs to know or believe is that there really is potential to reach mental and physical heights that cannot be explained but through experience. Once you understand that experience is the only way to evolve, then you very likely will appreciate all of your experiences instead of wishing you didn't have to have them. If you get nothing else out of this book, I hope that I can give you a good enough reason to allow your mind to open up and accept all of your experiences as positive learning experiences.

In the beginning, you may struggle with always trying to confirm what you already believe to be true through your experiences, but if deep down you don't really feel confirmed, you can count on the Life Force of the Universe to point out the conflicts within you so that you may make a more honest assessment of the situation. Everything will be made clear the more we search for answers. We must ask the questions to receive the answers. Don't take for granted everything you see and hear. Use logic to allow yourself to dismiss all the things that you consider "fact" at this point in your life and reevaluate them. Make sure there is no other perspective that may oppose what you think is "fact." When you finally strip the files in your brain down to what is really fact and what you just don't know whether it is fact or not, you will have a lot more room up there to work with.

Chapter 1 Life work

Before going to the next chapter; take a day and practice understanding perspectives. If something happens that annoys you or worse yet causes you to act in an aggressive manner towards another person, make an effort to analyze the situation and see it from the other person's perspective. Try to find a point that the other person may have that you didn't see. Think about the fact that if you look at the very same situation from a different angle – as if you were the other person – you may feel differently about the same situation.

Before you can progress spiritually, you must accept that each spirit has something unique to offer this world. You must rid your mind of any barriers that may prevent you from accepting that every person has a purpose and a perspective given to them with which to serve that purpose. Any lingering feelings of superiority or inferiority will hinder your personal development. This sounds easier than it is.

We are all born and bred to believe that we are better than others in one way or another, that our families are better than other families in some way and that our culture or religion is better than other cultures and religions. Unfortunately, we are also convinced along the way that we are not as good as other people, our family isn't as good as other families or we are not worthy of being a part of a culture or religion or we are too good to be a part of a culture or religion.

It is not a “fact” that there is even one person that is better than another person. It cannot be a “fact” because there would be no way to prove it. We have no basis of comparison because there is no person out there that is better than all the rest, and there is no person out there that is worse than all the rest,. Therefore, based on logic, no one is better than anyone else. There is no scale

available to tell us which traits are considered most desirable and which are considered least desirable.

Take today to concentrate on this point and try to erase your mind of all the things you think you are better at than others and all the things that you think you are worse at than others. Stay neutral as if you are just meeting yourself. Once you erase (or, at least, be aware that something needs to be erased) any preconceived notions about anything and start with a clean slate, things will appear a little clearer to you and you will be able to reconsider everything you just read, understanding life in a whole new way. That is how precarious perspectives are. However, every perspective teaches us something new about ourselves and others.

Introduction to Chapter Two

In the next chapter we will explore step number two, learning to identify parts of our ego and how each part is just another aspect of ourselves that we may or may not be aware of but can usually see in others. This is accomplished when we are able to identify what part of ourselves is causing the desired or undesired behavior.

What you define as desired or undesired behavior is relative to how you perceive others' behavior towards you. Do you desire to emulate the perceived behavior or not? Did experiencing behavior outside of yourself open your mind to some of your own behaviors, favorable or not?

Think about this, briefly opening up to accept new ideas about our existence. You must allow yourself to open your mind without fear. Separate yourself from any apprehension you may have and practice self-analysis, as if you are watching yourself in a movie. Take particular notice of other people's behavior that you find particularly comfortable and other behavior that makes you uncomfortable. Try to notice a reflection of yourself in others and see if the person who displays personality traits that you admire reminds you of yourself at all. Make sure you do the same with the character traits that you don't admire. Be brutally honest with yourself, not being ashamed to admit that by your own standards you have a few flawed character traits. You don't have to tell the world about them, just think about them privately, admitting to yourself that they are there. Now you can begin to get rid of them.

Chapter 2 – Understanding the Big Bad Ego

I hope that you took some time to think about everything you read in Chapter 1. The deeper your understanding, the more successful you will be in finding peace within yourself.

Let's discuss the big bad ego. Everyone has an opinion about the ego. We may not have that same opinion about our own, but that is what we are going to find out. Analyze what you think an ego is and figure out if you have one, if you need one and if you do need one, when is it appropriate for it to show itself?

For example, I believe that the ego is simply who we think we are. It is the physical aspect of us. My goal is to align my ego with my soul. Sounds like a lofty plan, but in my opinion, this is THE plan.

Most likely, I have had an advantage over most of you as I stay at home and do nothing all day but ponder this subject. Most people who know me probably think I'm a little out there or maybe a little not there, but ask me if I care! I only say this because to get the true benefit of becoming more conscious about your behavior, you must put substantial time towards focusing on your observations. Your mind cannot be occupied by worrisome situations in your life. This may sound scary to some people or impossible to others. Not only that, but while you are observing your experiences and trying to remain as conscious as possible throughout the process you may have to adjust your personality. In the beginning, others might notice something a little different about you, thus

causing you to become uncomfortable enough to stop standing back and observing the situation from a distance. You will soon bounce right back to behaving unconsciously.

Therefore, if you are prepared to swallow your pride for a while and ready to allow others to think you may have lost it a little and you are ready to move ahead with your opportunity to grow as a person, let's start by taking apart our ego.

Why don't we take a moment and assume that the ego is simply what we perceive ourselves to be? We don't need to get more philosophical than that. Our ego is our perceived self. Our soul is our real self. The next question obviously is "how do we figure out which part of ourselves is a perception and which part of ourselves is the real us or the part that is our soul?"

In order to differentiate, we have to come back to trying to come up with a goal or purpose for our soul. Without defining a purpose, we have no path to follow towards that purpose. Our decisions will be foggy because our path will not be clear. Also, I believe our true purpose has to come from our soul, otherwise the purpose would be a temporary one and a purpose that can only have temporary effects is of no value.

By now, you should know that I believe that the purpose of every soul is to guide our physical egos into living harmoniously with humankind so that there can be peace on the earth. We have to believe that our soul has much more ambitious aspirations than we can even begin to imagine.

The next thing I have to ask myself is whether or not my behavior is always in alignment with my soul's purpose. This is where an honest, thorough evaluation of myself is not only necessary, but mandatory for further progress.

We have come to the hardest part of this mission. You must be honest with yourself. Without knowing you, I cannot tell you what it is that you must face, but what I can tell you is that you are human and by definition you are not perfect. No human being was created perfect. Imperfection is what makes us human beings and not deities. You must find all of your imperfections, especially the ones you accuse others of having. By accepting the ugliest part of yourself, you have the potential to open up to the possibility of accepting the ugliest part of others.

One warning; don't cheat. When I talk to particularly close minded people, I find that they cheat. I have seen people with my own eyes deny that they would ever behave a certain way, and exactly ten minutes after swearing up and down that they would "never do something like that," do exactly that. When confronted with their hypocrisy, the close minded person, without fail, feels attacked and becomes defensive, when all along they should simply accept the criticism as a potential learning experience and move on. By becoming defensive, you are in essence excusing your behavior, despite the fact that even you are disappointed with yourself. Excusing behavior that you would ideally like to change will do nothing but keep your ugliness hidden from you. If it is hidden from you, you will have a harder time finding it and if you can't find it, how are you going to change it?

We all do it, including myself. As much as I am preaching that everyone must identify their unattractive qualities, I still have a hard time stopping myself before I behave in ways that I do not find becoming. The trick is not necessarily catching yourself in action, but analyzing your reaction retroactively and accepting the situation as a learning experience.

For example, every once in a while I work as a substitute waitress at a friend's restaurant. Normally, the other girls there will naturally give me a little more respect because I am older and experienced and I am also friends with the boss. But, the last time I was there, this young girl came over to me and told me, as if she was my boss, to go and clean a table. I don't know what happened, but I saw stars. I snapped back pretty uncontrollably and she told me to calm down. Ironically, this happened after I had just finished writing page 112 in this book. Once she told me to calm down, I became angry at myself and embarrassed. Holy Crap, what the f*** was that reaction to? Yeah, she told me to go clean the table like she was my boss, but that alone is justification for verbal aggression on my part?

This young girl had every right to believe she was my boss, especially if all she wanted was work to be done promptly for the benefit of the restaurant. She even had a right to bark orders at me, like I was her slave. It was her right to make any decision she wanted to make. But, I had the option to respond or not. By responding with such aggressive and self-important behavior, the part of my ego that is not aligned with my soul reared its ugly head. As long as I am aware that it happened, I can make a change. Not only can I make a temporary change by simply apologizing, but I can make a long term change by realizing that my

behavior was inappropriate, regardless of whether I was right or wrong, and that it did not serve a higher purpose.

I realized that my reaction to this situation was an indication that I still have much room to grow. As much as I understand what it is that I have to do, putting the understanding into practice is much more difficult because I must remain conscious of my behavior on a constant basis. We must be acutely aware of our behavior at all times, otherwise, we can lose ourselves. It is okay to lose ourselves for a moment, as long as we have the understanding to recognize our faulty behavior and try to resolve the problem.

The instant that I lost my cool was the instant that I forgot about the higher purpose of my soul and discovered the part of my brain that needs reprogramming. It is my responsibility to be aware of that. I can choose what I want to reprogram, but there is no choice possible if I don't make one appear. Do I want to continue as is and keep losing my cool in the midst of a situation that keeps popping up on me (probably because the Life Force of the Universe is overloading me with opportunities to reprogram myself), or do I reprogram myself by learning from my mistakes and be grateful to the Life Force of the Universe for helping me find them?

It is kind of like when your computer is running too slow and over time you get rid of the programs and other unnecessary items that are taking up space in your computer. The idea here is generally the same. Changing yourself takes time because a lot of the information is in hidden files that we must uncover. Impulsive reactions are the indicators that you have found a hidden file. Now, you have to review the entire file word for word before you can safely discard it.

After my incident at the restaurant, I went home to think about why I acted the way that I did, especially when I don't enjoy losing my cool. I reviewed that file with a magnifying glass and I came up with this; I was the oldest of three and my mother was harder on me than on my brother and sister, demanding more of me than the other kids. I was the oldest female and I was obedient by nature. When she wanted something, I remember her barking orders at me. Whether this is accurate or not, I don't even know, but my memories in that file led me to remember that my mother never asked me nicely for things. Quite the contrary, she asked me to do things in a demanding and a demeaning way. Now, the funny thing is that many years have passed since my childhood and those memories are really vague and unimportant at this stage of my life and my mother and I have discussed our past relationship and everything is long forgiven and forgotten, but apparently my brain is holding onto this hidden file because I haven't resolved my anger in this area. I know this because the Universe created a situation that I am supposed to be able to deal with, but I don't know how and I have to see that as a red light signaling to me that I need to grow in this area. I could choose to work on myself now or wait for the next opportunity the Universe will send me, but like I said before, I don't want to wait for the Universe to slap me before I fix myself. I'd rather get fewer slaps so I try and pay attention, particularly to situations that repeat themselves often. I am not always successful, but hopefully, I have read enough of that file and can discard it once and for all.

Food for Thought

Practice detaching your ego (not your soul) from situations and allow everyone around you to behave the way that is comfortable for them without getting offended or upset. If you have truly detached your ego from the situation, notice how much less others' behavior affects you. Take a moment and experience how it feels not to take things personally and, instead, be able to sit back and watch your life like it is a movie with a lot of exciting twists and turns.

Once you give space to others and stop inflicting your own rational and purpose onto other people, especially those closest to you, you should be able to see everything around you differently than before. When you try to see other perspectives, you realize how silly you have been thinking that your perspective was the only one that was accurate. If you think about it logically, it really makes no sense that what is good for me is in fact good for everybody else in the entire world. Are soy nuts good for everybody? Some people are allergic to them. Others need them for a vital protein source. Is marijuana bad for everyone? Some people live in states where medical marijuana is legal. Is having a lot of money good for everybody? Some people decide that they have so much money they don't know what to do with it so they spend it on dangerous drugs that can kill them. Well, you ask – or should ask – if it's not good for those people, why are they choosing that life path? I believe it is for the benefit of a learning experience. That's why I *try* not to judge others. I have no choice but to force myself to understand that each person has different individual goals. When we need to learn something we need punishment to be able to guide ourselves to higher ground. We need to have some indication that

our actions must be adjusted for the sake of ourselves. It is the same as the reason we are able to feel physical pain. If we didn't feel pain we would not be forewarned of something more serious behind the pain. When something is uncomfortable, we should search for the root or the cause of the pain.

A physical example might be; if we have constant sharp pains coming from our abdominal area, we go to the doctor to make sure it is not serious. A spiritual example would be something like this; your spouse cheats on you and you are so angry you actually feel like you want to inflict pain on your spouse as punishment. The problem is that you haven't had any time to stop loving your spouse. This whole time, hopefully, you have been a loving and devoted companion and you can't understand how this could have happened. You have to understand that there is a life lesson here to be learned. I cannot speak specifically about your situation, if this is something you are going through, but I can give you a general idea of what I mean.

What I would do is sit down and list my feelings on the situation, as many as I could find. Here are some feelings that may come up:

1. Maybe I suspect that my own behavior drove him to cheat.
2. Maybe I don't understand why my spouse would feel so free to hurt me like that, for no reason. I feel like he owes me his life and I cannot for the life of me figure out why he would leave me.
3. Maybe I think I'm not sexy enough and he was tempted by someone else.
4. Maybe I still love my husband, but I am scared that I can't continue a relationship without trust.

There are other little side concerns, such as money being spent on the other person, private issues being shared with an outsider, but these little issues are of no consequence because once the big problem is solved, the little problems go away.

Once I analyze the reason(s) I might have for feeling what I am feeling, I should be able to find the root of my pain, and then, maybe I will be able to heal it.

1. Maybe I suspect that my own behavior drove him to cheat.

If I suspect that my behavior was the cause of the affair, then the affair is alerting me that I have guilt to work out and if I don't work it out, it becomes stress which actually affects my physical well being. The stress of guilt might have gotten to the point that it is actually hurting me physically and it is the affair that is forcing me to release it.

Believe it or not, when you adopt this way of thinking, you will all of a sudden feel blessed that the affair happened and that it is giving you the opportunity to correct your own behavior.

In reading this book back to myself, some of it sounds a little patronizing. This is not the tone I want to set. When I suggest that a person needs to correct themselves in response to something that was done wrong to them, you must understand that it is because it is for your own benefit. If you don't care about the spouse that cheated on you, then you don't have a problem, you can simply get a divorce. But if you still love your spouse, then it serves your purposes to

try and make your marriage better. Your spouse's unfaithfulness can only cause you to assume that your marriage needed help.

Cheating behind someone's back is a passive way of saying "I don't know if I love you anymore." This may sound harsh and the person cheating may not even know this is how they feel. But if your spouse, the person that swore they would spend the rest of their life with you in good times and in bad, cheats on you, you can be sure they aren't really sure how they feel about you and they're trying to find out. This, of course, does not mean that they no longer love you; it means that they need to explore their feelings.

The other side of the coin is that you should never feel that just because you might have made a mistake, your spouse does not have the responsibility of being honest with you. Even if you made mistakes along the way, like everyone in the entire world does, your spouse made also made a really big mistake. They neglected to discuss their feelings with you openly and honestly. If your spouse would have stuck to their part of the bargain to love, honor and cherish you, the whole problem could have been avoided.

If two people in a marriage are aware of what they both need and want as a unit, they may fight and disagree but at the end of the day there is no fear that one will hurt the other because they have decided to be on the same team. If you cheat on your spouse or your spouse cheats on you, you are playing on opposing teams. An affair alerts you that someone is considering switching teams. Now you have to decide if that player is valuable to you, and, if they are, you need to figure out why they would want to switch teams. Sometimes, the problem could never have been foreseen. Both of you have matured, years have passed and

you have shared new experiences together that may have altered the way you used to relate to one another. If you and your spouse are able to isolate what needs to be refreshed in your relationship, rip up the old contract and write a new one. This is a great big step towards a magical relationship.

2. Maybe I don't understand why my spouse would feel so free to hurt me like that, for no reason. I feel like he owes me his life and I cannot for the life of me figure out why he would leave me.

You've heard it before;

"I was the best thing that ever happened to him/her."

"What does he/she have that I don't have?"

"Why would someone give up a prize like me?"

"I didn't need him/her anyway."

Well, unfortunately, it might be hard to hear, but you may very well have to face the fact that you may have failed somewhere. The failure may lie in not seeing what an asshole the person you married was before you married them but that too is a failure. Either way, the same rule applies; the affair might have been the only way to open your eyes to see a deeper truth.

3. Maybe I think I'm not sexy enough and he was tempted by someone else.

Worrying about the fact that you might not be attractive enough to hold a man down is ridiculous. I can say that with that much venom because I was guilty of this stupidity. This is a very personal issue to me. I struggle with these thoughts on a daily basis and I am sure I am not alone in this struggle. Women

everywhere know how I, and millions of other misguided women, feel when it comes to our looks.

I have spent many hours dissecting this particular fear. I have always subconsciously felt that unless I look good, I don't deserve to be loved. I was only made aware of this feeling after years of self-analysis. There are many reasons I felt this way and I'm sure a lot of them are rooted in my childhood, but my childhood is over now and I want to focus on the more recent years and the experiences that pushed me into discovering that I was as shallow as my shallow husband.

Melech, my first husband, loves women. Everyone who knows him knows that he loves women. To not be aware of this fact or to think this fact will just disappear is very naïve. In order to fix something, you first must know it is there. It will not disappear by itself.

He used to tell me that he thought my face was pretty, but I was too heavy for him. Before we got married, he encouraged me to go to the gym and that is exactly what I did. I went to the gym five days a week for at least 2 hours a day for an entire year. I followed some sort of fat free diet and lost 15 pounds which put me into an acceptable body proportion range for Melech right in time for the wedding. I can't say that I didn't look good, but it was only 15 pounds. Honestly, how much "better" did that make me?

About a month after the wedding, I became pregnant with my first daughter. Now, I worked *hard* to look as good as I looked, and within 9 months, everything that I worked for was gone. My proportions weren't quite right

anymore. The sad and scary thing is that now I had a new born baby, and yes, I loved that baby very much and wanted to take care of her with all my might, give her things that I never had, hug her and kiss her everyday, but I couldn't stop thinking about the fact that all that hard work went right down the drain and now I have to hold a job, go to the gym AND take care of a newborn. I was starting to feel overwhelmed.

Long story short, I trained to be an aerobic's instructor, got a second job, eventually quit my first one, had another baby, got another job and throughout everything I never lost that 15 pounds. In fact, I gained about 10. Now, does this seem fair? I can tell you that it definitely did not seem fair to me at the time. Melech was not afraid to constantly be verbal about his feelings about my weight. All I can say is this; I was not happy during my marriage to Melech. I cannot say that it was his fault because it was clear before we got married that he wanted a specific type of woman and I married him anyway. There is only one reason why I would have married a man that was apparently so shallow; because I believed the same as him. If I am not attractive I am not worthy of love. And secretly, yes, I have to admit that I believed the same for everybody else. As terrible as that sounds, it's true.

Yes, this does sound ridiculous. But the sick part about it is, if someone would have told me back then that I was superficial, I would have laughed in their face. No, that's not true. I would have been quite offended, because I really didn't think I was shallow at all and I'm not. However, by marrying Melech I exposed a very small-minded side to myself and when I saw it, I didn't like it so I disposed of it.

All my life I had been insecure about my looks, and with the help of the Life Force of the Universe, Melech came along and confirmed my hidden feelings that looks were pretty much all that mattered. Because I was not aware of the fact that I felt this way deep down, and because I had no respect for such one-dimensional thinking, I wanted to blame the way I felt on someone else. I could then point my finger and say that he was the one making me feel these trivial, petty feelings. I had nothing to do with it. According to me, I was too “intelligent” to stoop to such childish ways of thinking.

Also, by even humoring the notion that my physical flaws were so important that they could override the beauty of my soul, I gave all my power over to the physical part of the Universe. Meaning, all of my energy went into something physical and not something spiritual. This is a very undesirable circumstance because the physical cannot provide us with true pleasure. Material objects have no power by themselves and they need your energy invested into them so that they can remain “powerful.” In other words, the only way you can get any pleasure out of a material object is by collecting them and worrying about them. Understanding this concept allows you to understand why it is never a good idea to attribute your happiness to anything other than the Life Force of the Universe. The essence of the beauty of everyone’s soul is part of the Life Force of the Universe. This is the most beautiful part of you that you want to shine through. Twenty five pounds should not have the power to destroy a family or disguise the essence of a soul.

The Life Force of the Universe opened my eyes to a personality flaw I had that I was not pleased with that did not align with the intentions of my soul. I had no choice but to align with these intentions and the Life Force of the Universe made

sure that I was able to. At the time that all of this was happening, I assure you that I was completely unaware of anything that I am talking about here and I was not handling the situation properly. I have tried to mend the past as much as I can, but I still have a long road ahead – Thank Life Force of the Universe.

4. Maybe I still love my husband, but I am scared that I can't continue a relationship without trust.

The fourth reason that I listed is a little different than the others, because it can bring up feelings that a person may never have dealt with before. Maybe you did truly trust the person you were with and you are wrestling with a feeling of uncertainty rather than anger and sadness.

This became an issue for me in my second marriage. Because of the feelings that surfaced in my first marriage, trust was and still is the biggest hurdle I have to overcome. I have been with my current husband, Eyal, for the last seven years. Eyal has been nothing but devoted to loving me and I sometimes feel almost guilty that he tries as hard as he does to make our marriage work. I do appreciate his efforts, for they have made me a better person.

Let me tell you something else about Eyal. Eyal will not do *anything* he does not want to do, for anybody. This is the truth. If I need physical help from Eyal for anything, I can pretty much forget about it (unless of course we make some kind of deal). But, when it comes to working at our marriage, I am bowled over by his efforts. We have never, not once, in all the years that we have known each other, gone to bed angry. Yes, I am very verbal and want to talk about everything and make peace, but Eyal just wants to be left alone. That is his

nature. This is the way he was before we got married. Eyal is not interested in discussing stupid issues that don't make a difference one way or another such as putting your dirty clothes *inside* the hamper. And, almost every issue is considered as petty as this one to Eyal. I have actually never met anyone like Eyal. Nothing really upsets him. He rarely gets offended by other people. Most people like him and respect him because he just somehow passively commands it. Now, don't forget this is a guy that doesn't work if he doesn't want to, doesn't ask anybody for anything, smokes weed all day and could care less what kind of clothes he is wearing or whether a person likes him or doesn't like him. He marches to the beat of his own drum, but at the same time, meshes very well with almost every type of character. His motto is "live and let live." He is my husband and my teacher.

The one thing Eyal cares about more than anything else in his life is our marriage. He regularly invests effort into our relationship. I know that it is difficult for Eyal to consider our petty fights with any level of significance, but in order to be able to understand his wife in a way that could lead to a peaceful marriage in the future, it became important to *him* to talk things out with me. I feel the torture he goes through every time we have an argument and he sits me down as patiently as he can and discusses all the pieces of it and how he felt about it. I know that deep down he is really feeling like a pussy (his terminology). When the fight gets resolved, and it always gets completely resolved, I make sure to let him know that I understand that he went above and beyond his own nature for the sake of our marriage and that is the reason why I love him.

This is the reason why I can understand how scary the notion is of not being able to trust anyone again, especially a spouse that cheats on you. I have absolutely no reason at all not to be able to trust Eyal, yet in the back of my head there is always a little voice telling me to check his phone, call him to see where he is and question if there are any minute discrepancies. Again, Eyal is one of the most understanding husbands in the world, but the constant distrust got to him eventually. This was another reason that he has put so much emotional effort into our relationship; he was trying very hard to build trust in me. After 7 years, I definitely feel like I can completely trust him, but those ugly thoughts always creeps up on me. What if I am wrong? What if Eyal cheats on me? I have no reason to believe he will cheat on me, because he is devoted to me and our marriage. But, nonetheless, I still fear that the day might come when I will have to face the fact that this man that I love so much and I thought loved me just as much, cheats on me.

What would I do? I'll tell you what I think I would do. I wouldn't even care because, if he were to cheat on me, I would not recognize him as my husband. My husband would never cheat on me because he loves me. If this man would take the chance of losing me, after all the work he had done on himself for me, and after knowing how much I loved him, I wouldn't even be able to recognize him. I really believe that I would detach my spousal feelings for him and he would become like any other person to me. I would have nothing more than detached feelings of pity. As bad as it may sound, I truly believe that is the way I would feel about it yet I didn't always feel this way.

Until recently, the fear that Eyal would cheat inspired feelings of rage and hurt, but once I dissected why I might feel rage or why I might feel hurt, I discovered

that it would have been the same reason I was mad at Melech for cheating on me. Deep down, I still felt like I was unworthy of love and wanted to blame this feeling on someone else. Because Eyal has taught me how worthy I am of love, because he gives me so much of it, I have learned to understand that if just because someone does something bad to you, it never means that they have a *right* to. You have to understand that person's motives so that you can heal your own feelings. If you find that you are feeling you might have *deserved* such negative treatment, you must remedy this defective thought pattern.

What does analyzing our feelings do for us in the long run?

When we can regularly analyze our feelings, we give ourselves the opportunity to treasure our good feelings and discard the bad feelings. This is the very definition of free will. In my opinion, free will means the right to decide if something is good or bad – TO OURSELVES - and act accordingly. Free will is what the Life Force of the Universe gave us as a gift. Free will is what separates us from all other life forms. Free will is what we were given and all we want. To not be able to control our own feelings and as a result, not be able to avoid unnecessary and undesirable confrontation with others, takes away our free will. If we are not able to break down what is good for us in the long term and only consider what makes us feel good for the short term, we are denying our will or, in other words, not giving it or “feeding” it what it needs. All we want (or all our soul) really wants is long term happiness. What else could it want? When we fail to deliver long term happiness to the will of our soul, the will is undernourished, weak, and ultimately, may even die. A weak will inhibits us from acknowledging and resisting behavior that prevents us from acquiring long term happiness.

However, if you insist on identifying what is good to you as anything other than long term happiness, you may have to deal with some resistance from the Life Force of the Universe. In other words, if you enjoy unnecessary confrontation with people who don't enjoy it, you are not living towards the soul's purpose of long term happiness. You can be sure that if you make someone else upset in any way, that person will most likely return that negative behavior, or perhaps just pray that you get what is coming to you. You may have fulfilled the short term pleasure of being a bully or letting someone have it just because you can, but you can count on the fact that the Life Force of the Universe will create a situation for you that will reflect your behavior right back to you. The Universe gives you the opportunity to honestly judge whether or not the behavior that you display towards others is alright with you. The question the Life Force of the Universe wants you to ask yourself is - would you be able to deal with what you dish?

If you insulted someone ten years ago, and ten years later that person comes and insults you back in retaliation, are you going to remember that you insulted the person first or are you just going to get angry that they had the nerve to insult you? Most likely, like everyone else, you are simply going to get angry and now nothing has been accomplished and you have lost the opportunity to repair the situation. If you can realize and accept that 10 years ago you exhibited the same behavior, or at least, that you are guilty of such treatment to someone at some point in your life, it is easier to avoid conflict. Realizing that you are just as bad as the other person not only brings you one step closer to your goal of long term happiness, but creates a butterfly effect.

The butterfly effect, according to Wikipedia is a:

“metaphor that encapsulates the concept of *sensitive dependence on initial conditions* in chaos theory; namely that small differences in the initial condition of a dynamical system may produce large variations in the long term behavior of the system.”

Wikipedia goes on to describe the implications of the “butterfly effect:”

“The phrase refers to the idea that a butterfly's wings might create tiny changes in the atmosphere that may ultimately alter the path of a tornado or delay, accelerate or even prevent the occurrence of a tornado in a certain location. The flapping wing represents a small change in the initial condition of the system, which causes a chain of events leading to large-scale alterations of events.”

This is an unbelievable concept that most of us don't believe or can't understand. If a butterfly flaps its wings in Africa, it may result in a tornado in China. But it is true according to scientists and this concept is also true according to the rules of spirituality. Positive effort you put into this Universe will bring forth positive results somewhere, some time for someone. In other words, if you want results, all you have to do is try.

Let's say you are on a very long line in a government agency to apply for government aid and you know you are going to have to be there for a while. After two hours of standing and waiting, your name is called and the person who calls you is ready for a show down even before you get up to the counter. I

know you're feeling me here. You're not in the best of moods either after waiting so long and you definitely aren't in the mood to be treated like a criminal. Sure enough, as soon as you get to the counter, the employee releases their attitude from its cage onto you. At this point you have two choices: (1) return the attitude because who are they to give *you* attitude; or (2) try to see the person behind the attitude.

If you look at the person behind the counter, you will see that the employee is exactly like you. This person did not want to have to get out of bed at the crack of dawn for \$15 an hour just to deal with complaints and requests from people they don't know and don't care about all day long. They probably want the work day to end so they can go home and eat a big old hamburger and fries in front of the TV and wash it down with a banana split. The last thing this person wants to do right now is deal with your whiny ass.

You might want to say to me - so what? That's the breaks. We all have to get up and go to work. Get over it. Tell that person to look deep inside of me and understand me. Why should I have to understand them?

Here's the reason; you need something from them. This person does not need anything from you. There is no answer other than that. You can do whatever you want, but the goal is peace, love and happiness. Since you need something from the employee, you have no choice but to break the tension and inspire peace. Of course, that's only if you want to get whatever you need calmly.

The key is to understand the difference between long term happiness and a momentary high that can trick you into believing you are happy. Yes, giving the

person behind the counter a smarter, bolder and cheekier attitude than the one they gave you will give you a momentary feeling of elation, but if the issue at hand did not get resolved, there goes your long term happiness.

Eventually, after some practice, you will master the art of diplomacy.

Fortunately, diplomacy is easy to learn. However, it can be very hard to maintain. If you are able to train yourself in the art of treating others how you would want to be treated, you will soon discover that it becomes effortless after a while. Not only does it become effortless, but you start to notice that a sense of serenity and confidence that wasn't there before accompanies you during all of your daily interactions.

In Summary

We have to be astute enough to find the parts of ourselves that we like and the parts that we are not so pleased with. When we observe everything around us, we should be able to see reflections of ourselves clear enough to identify those parts.

Yes, it does sound easy, but it means that you have to relearn everything you have been taught by your family, friends and teachers and what they have been taught by their family, friends and teachers and so on. Simply put, you must “reformat” your brain and all of its memories so that you can allow new thought patterns to enter. You cannot hold onto old resentments and bitterness. You must release such negative feelings, because all of this is stored in your brain somewhere. If a situation arises that aggravates that part of the brain, it will cause you to lose focus on your goal of long term happiness. Before you can be

truly content, you have to deal with everything that makes you angry, hurt, jealous, scared or guilty. Figure out the root of why something makes you feel a certain way. Decide if the way that you feel is leading towards the right or the “good” direction or the wrong or “bad” direction.

Picture yourself like the most valuable diamond. When a person wants to buy a diamond, they want to see the quality of the individual diamond up close. The more flawless the diamond is, the more valuable it is. The setting the diamond will be placed in, at this point, does not matter. On the other hand, if you buy a piece of cheap jewelry that does not have value, the setting is the only thing that matters. You will never walk into a store that sells single cubic zirconium and pick one based on its flawlessness. One cubic zirconium needs other cubic zirconium for embellishment. It’s the same for us. Don’t be just one of the crowd, be special. Embody an individual that has something special to offer besides just the “setting.”

Always remember that even though you may not look like you are worth a million bucks, live in an expensive house, drive a \$70,000 car or have any Gucci or Prada in your closet, you are flawless the way you are. Soon, you will realize that “settings” are only for cubic zirconium.

Chapter 2 Life Work

Before you move on to Chapter 3, “What is “good” and what is “evil,”” spend some time thinking about the different parts of your ego and write them down on paper.

Ask yourself questions like:

What makes me mad? Why?

What makes me sad? Why?

What makes me happy? Why?

Are there times that something that usually makes me happy, can also make me angry?

Are there behaviors that various friends and family members display that I wish I had or know I have and don't want?

Do I treat some people better than others? Why?

Do I treat some people worse than others? Why?

Do I think I am better than anyone that I know? Why?

Do I think anyone I know is better than I am? Why?

I could go on, but I think you get the idea.

One of my skills that I have discovered through introspection is that I am particularly good at turning chaos into order. Coincidentally, throughout my life I have had a lot of friends that can't let go of their possessions. After a while, their belongings pile up and they become trapped by them. They want to make space for themselves, but they cannot let go of the possessions that are filling up their space. That is when they call me.

My sole purpose is to go through their belongings item by item and talk them out of the thought that they need these things. I am being completely serious. All I do is tell them they don't really need that item and it is okay to throw it away. The process is always a struggle and sometimes even emotional, but I get the job done and whoever I am helping at the time is, by the time it is over,

always so thankful and relieved that the clutter is finally gone and the stress of decluttering is forgotten and they can move on with their lives in a more productive manner.

Organizing your mind and departmentalizing your ego is much the same. It is an emotional process in the beginning, but in the end, you will be thankful that the clutter is gone and the stress of the process has been forgotten and you can now proceed to live a life of long term happiness. You also get to enjoy having a healthy will; a will that knows what it wants and has no reason to feel guilty about getting it. You will feel confident that anything that you do in the effort of long term happiness is acceptable.

Introduction to Chapter 3 – What is “good” and what is “evil”

After we break down our ego into the “good” parts and the “bad” parts, we should be able to realize that sometimes what is considered “good” in one instance could be considered “bad” in another instance. For example, most of the time confrontation would be considered “bad,” but there are times when confrontation is necessary for long term happiness, which would make it “good.”

In the next chapter, we will discuss the concept of “good” and “evil,” and I will attempt to at least minimize, if not eliminate, the idea that either of these things exist on a collective scale. “Good” and “evil” can only be defined individually. What is “good” to one person is “evil” to another and vice versa.

This is important to accept because if we can eliminate the need to classify people according “good” and “bad” categories, we can stop classifying ourselves as well. This is the next step to attaining complete free will.

Chapter 3 – What is “Good” and What is “Evil”?

What is good? My definition of good is something that contributes to my eternal happiness. This definition allows everything and everyone on this planet to be considered potentially “good,” you just have to know how to find the part that is “good.” If your intention is to get some sort of pleasure in the form of happiness from an experience, just look for the positive aspect of that experience.

Within every situation and experience there is, and have always been, negative and positive points. I am sure you have considered the fact that for everything you believe, there is another person who believes exactly the opposite. So, who is right? Who is wrong? Do you really believe in the depths of your heart and soul that everything that you accept as true is a rule and should hold true for everyone else on the planet? Yes, most people believe that certain behaviors are considered “evil,” however I want to try and persuade you that the word “evil” is relative.

Recently, I saw an interview with Jeffrey Dahmer. If you don’t know who Jeffrey Dahmer is, let me fill you in. He is a high profile serial killer who used to invite his victims to his home, have sex with them and if they tried to leave, he would kill them, have sex with them again, then dismember them. If this guy doesn’t sound “evil” to you, I don’t know who or what else would. However, the more I observed and listened to this human monster explain to the public why he would commit such atrocious acts, I realized that I felt a little sorry for

him. Yes, I know that I shouldn't have felt sorry for him, but I did. You see, when he was young, his parents, who were very loving to Jeffrey, did not get along with each other and that had a significant impact on Jeffrey as a child. He explained that he wasn't ever going to get married because he never wanted to go through anything like that. He also needed surgery for a double hernia around the age of 4 and felt violated by strangers exploring his body and not explaining why they were doing it. This experience evidently marked his subconscious forever. We have to assume that incidents in our childhood have a much bigger influence on our overall adult personality than we think.

Jeffrey Dahmer sounds to me like he was in fact a very sensitive child, possibly more sensitive than the average child. This would explain the incredible impact these experiences had on him. In fact, he said that his desire was not to kill these unfortunate people, but to keep them around. I believe that Jeffrey Dahmer, one of the most vicious serial killers in history, needed love and just did not know how to go about getting it, let alone keeping it. He was once quoted as saying that if he would be killed in prison, that would be the best thing that could happen. He was later bludgeoned to death in prison.

My point in telling you all of this is that we cannot see into the minds of other people. We don't know what makes anyone but ourselves tick. We sometimes don't even know what makes ourselves tick. We cannot judge, because we don't know enough. Is it fair that Jeffrey Dahmer seemed to have been born to the wrong family who didn't know how to fuel their son's needs in the best way possible? Can't we say the same for every child? Do you really think that every parent has the exact tools they need to raise each individual child in the most suitable way? Don't forget that our children are never exactly like us. No one is

exactly like you. We have to use a higher form of understanding to be able to deal with other people, including our own children. We can never apply our thinking to someone else or disaster may ensue. The question is, how do we acquire this higher form of understanding? Where does it come from and how do we know when we have it?

When we are working at breaking down our ego, we have to decide what is “good” and what is “evil” within us by trying to align it with our soul, which is what holds our truest and most glorious desires. This is how we can distinguish between our soul’s desires and our ego’s desires effectively. If our desire accomplishes eternal happiness, we can define this desire as “good,” otherwise we may as well define it as “evil.”

You might respond to these ideas by saying that you just don’t care about what happens after you die, after all, you will be dead. Maybe you feel like the only time you have is now in the physical world and you need to make the best out of it. This talk would only be coming from someone who insists on living life filled with temporary pleasures and this person will never truly understand what it means to fulfill the desire for eternal happiness. They will never understand the pleasure of having free will in this world and what free will was meant to be.

There is nothing wrong with fulfilling temporary desires, especially if you don’t know what you are missing. However, this behavior is like only eating french fries because they taste so good and you can’t imagine that any other food could be better. Think about all the other amazing food you would be missing out on.

Good vs. Evil – Conflicts that we Face in Our World Today

The way I see it, there are two huge conflicts in this world happening right now as we speak. One is between the rich and the poor and the other is among religions. Let me ask you a very important question. Which side of each conflict would be considered the “good” side and which side would be considered the “bad” side?

Of course, your first instinct may be to answer based solely on your own perspective. Of course, I’m going to remind you that you can’t do that. You must consider every perspective.

Journalists have a very difficult job. Many times their job requires that they report a story according to the perspective of whoever is paying their salary. How many times have you listened to a story on Fox News Channel and turned it to CNN and the same story is being reported, but from a completely different perspective? A great example of this would be the Israeli-Palestinian controversy. We all know the controversy and I am definitely not going to discuss that, but why do Fox and CNN have two different versions of what is going on? Fox is way more pro-Israeli and presents a picture that Israel is defending itself against terrorists who want to take the entire country down. CNN paints the picture that Israel is unfairly occupying their Palestinian neighbors’ territory for too long and too intensely and something needs to be done about it immediately. How could our two top news stations have such conflicting view points? What are we, the ones they are reporting to, supposed to believe?

Well, this is the way it works.

If you like Bill O'Reilly and Sean Hannity, you watch Fox News. If you like Anderson Cooper and Larry King, you watch CNN. If you like a little of everything, you watch both and then you become confused. In other words, whatever sings to you is what you listen to. If you want to wake up, allow everything to sing to you and hope that you become confused enough to finally start asking questions.

The Middle East Conflict

I know I said before that I'm not going to discuss the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but I can't help it, I just have to.

Maybe the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is just another 'which came first' story. Something happened that caused tension in the region and from that point on each side thinks the other side is to blame. What I am suggesting is that "something" happened in that region long ago, because each side has a different opinion of what happened and many years have passed and no one really remembers or really knows the truth anymore. The leaders on each side are only going to pass down a story to their people that will represent the own perspective so that their people will assist them in fighting the "enemy." Now, each side has to maintain a stronger front than the other side to defend their position that they are not the ones to blame. Every generation, growing numbers of Palestinians and Israelis are enlisted to fight in a war that has been perpetrated by its leaders and misrepresented to its followers. If we continue to forget that we don't even know the cause of this anymore and continue to believe the

hearsay and the brainwash that the media presents us with, we will persist on this path to absolutely nowhere and nothing.

In other words, does it really matter what the cause was at this point when the effect is clearly terrible? We can say for sure that the cause of the problem was not because each side tried to develop peaceful relations with one another. Since we know the cause of this problem was not because we tried to make peace, my advice, if you are asking, is to forget about the original cause and start over. Accept that whatever caused the Palestinian-Israeli conflict to occur, should not have, because we know the effect was undesirable. We know that the cause could not have been an attempt at peace, because we know that has not happened, yet. Now, using logic, let's look take a further look at what I am saying.

Given:

Something happened in the country of Israel many years ago that caused endless bloodshed and unrest in the region (original cause).

There is still tension in this region many years later that is leading to much violence and world wide concern (original cause = long lasting negative effect(s)).

People on both sides of the story are suffering. Many Palestinian families are living in substandard conditions and are not allowed complete freedom in their own territories. Many Israeli families wake up everyday and live in fear of random terrorist attacks happening within the streets of their own country (original cause = complete negative effect, meaning **NO ONE IS HAPPY ON EITHER SIDE!**).

The Palestinians are attempting to defend what we call their constitutional right to freedom, liberty and justice for all.

The Israelis are attempting to defend what we call their constitutional right to freedom, liberty and justice for all.

Attempts at peace were never seriously tried (new cause).

If peace could exist in this region, many people would be much happier and less people would die unnecessarily (new cause=positive long term effect).

If war continues in this region, people will die unnecessarily (original cause = negative long term effect).

Original Cause of Unrest in Middle East = zero
(who knows and who really cares at this point?)

Palestinian People = a

Israeli People = b

Peace (“good” effect) = c

War (“bad” effect) = d

This is what the equation looks like right now:

$$(a+b) + \text{zero} = d$$

Here is what our equation should look like:

$$(a+b) - \text{zero} = c$$

Look, I am not naïve enough to think that Mr. Netanyahu and Mr. Abbas are going to start making peace deals just because I, or anybody else for that matter, says that they should go ahead and forget all of these years of turmoil for the sake of peace. But what I am saying is that we, the little guys, really don't know

the whole story and we really don't need to know the whole story because there is fanatical violence happening right now as we speak and many innocent people are dying. No one in the region is happy and these feelings of unrest are, and have been, carrying into the general population for a while now. The disease of violence, anger and fear is coming for us. Believe it or not, by taking sides in a war that you know nothing about and have nothing to do with, you are actually inviting this disease into you. All we know is that there is no peace and peace is what we need. I am simply proposing that we stop taking sides in a fight that has nothing to do with us and thus adding fuel to a flame that should have been extinguished long ago by the ones involved.

The fear here might be that we think that if we don't take the "good" side, the "evil" side will win. So, we think that by voicing an opinion one way or another, regardless of the "facts," we can join forces with the right or "good" side. We need to simply try to remember what we already know *could* be true, that "good" and "evil" are only in the eyes of the beholder, and unless we have all the "facts" that were beheld, we are not equipped to make any judgment as to what would be considered "good" and what would be considered "evil." Also, "evil," which, according to me is anything that acts in opposition to the Life Force of the Universe or anything that works against the benefit of the whole, cannot, by definition, survive because it is working against itself. Therefore, we never have a reason to fear "evil."

Learn from our history. If we continue to believe that there is a chance that "evil" will dominate our world one day, we are setting ourselves up for disaster. By believing that "evil" can have any power at all, we are taking that power that we believe "evil" has away from the Life Force of the Universe and giving it to

“evil.” We are not even aware that we are doing it. If you believe that terrorists have more power than the Life Force of the Universe to destroy the world that was created by the Life Force of the Universe, you are not thinking logically. Even if you don’t want to believe that we should leave *everything* up to our Life Force, you have got to agree that we should leave the things that we can’t handle up to It. Terrorism can barely be handled by countries that are experts in the minds of terrorists. We little people definitely can’t handle terrorism, nor do we want to. We can, however, deal with ourselves.

Treat everyone that you come in contact with on a daily basis nicely and respectfully. This is how *we* can deal with terrorism

Another reason why we would have no logical reason to believe that “the evil doers” can destroy this planet is because no “evil” empire still exists. They always, as far as I know, implode. My definition of “evil” is anything that acts in opposition to the Life Force of the Universe, or anything that works against the benefit of the whole. By this definition, “evil” is not bad or good. It is misguided. “Evil” at the core does not care about the Universe at all; it only cares for itself. It can only take and never give. “Evil” thinks that taking is necessary for its survival. “Evil” does not realize that the “power” of evil is fear, and fear can only come from an energy source other than love.

Every time we fear something, it is because we don’t trust the Life Force of the Universe to take care of us. If we fear anything, energy is being transferred to the object of fear. Now that it has energy invested in it, the object becomes powerful. However, its powers are only valuable to the one who gave it the energy. Now the person who feared the object and the object itself share part of

the same energy. In other words, by fearing something, you give it power to be feared by sharing energy with it.

Am I “evil” if I don’t trust the Life Force of the Universe for everything? I would have to say that I have been and am currently “evil” on occasion. If we were all completely giving creatures, who would the Life Force of the Universe give to? We all must have “evil” in us because we are not the Life Force of the Universe. In order to allow us to receive, we had to be different that the Life Force of the Universe. We had to need something in order for the Universe to flourish and give us all the beautiful things that we have.

So, is it “evil” to take? The Universe needs us to take from it for the sake of its survival. Yes, we are all “evil,” but there is a purpose for “evil.” Without “evil” we would never be able to see good. It has taken billions of years already, but slow and steady progress has been made and with a little effort on our part we can transform this planet by choosing not to be “evil.” Instead, we can choose to thank “evil” for helping us see the good in everything. Gratitude and appreciation are the only things that we can give back to the Life Force of the Universe. By giving gratitude and appreciation to the Life Force of the Universe for everything that we have, including “evil, we are refusing to succumb to “evil” energy and instead, we use loving energy to extinguish the “evil” energy, because, as we all should know by now, loving energy is the only energy that really has any power. “Evil” energy only has the power we give to it, which is none. We don’t have power to give without receiving it from the Life Force of the Universe. We cannot give loving energy to “evil” energy. “Evil” will not accept love.

Is our Ego “Evil”?

I’m sure most of us have read somewhere or heard somewhere that our ego is the root of all that is bad. Well maybe our ego, if fed that it is special only because of our possessions, physical appearance or current status in life, will desire those items in order to feed itself and will die without them. When you can’t fulfill the ego’s desire, which is to feel special, it becomes a very unhappy ego. It needs its nourishment, i.e. all the things that make it important.

Or, on the other end of the spectrum, if the ego doesn’t ever receive the material possessions that it thinks it needs to grow, it will weaken and will need help from other egos, either to continuously tell it how good it is (even though it doesn’t have as many possessions or as much power or what is considered physically beautiful to others) or to confirm the fact that it has no meaning or value to anyone else, thereby disabling it, because it has nothing to “live” for.

If your ego feeds off of your kindness to others, which is the same food that feeds the soul (keeping in mind the simple fact that your intentions try to remain honest whenever possible) you can never have too many people to help. Therefore, you don’t have to harbor guilt about something you might have done that may have brought negative results because you know – and I mean *you know* – that your intentions were good.

But, you will also know that in order to feed your ego and your soul optimally, you will have to work towards minimizing negative results when you are dealing with other people. The ego wants to be fed the same thing that the soul wants - mutual kindness rather than confrontation. The unification of the ego and soul

can only handle confrontation as a once in a while snack, otherwise it may get sick.

Food for Thought:

Our soul deeply desires to feel special. After all, what makes us happier than feeling special to one person, not to mention the potential of feeling special to the entire world? If the ego and the soul share the desire to feel “special,” that would mean that the ego and soul are in alignment here which would be considered “good” in terms of eternal happiness. However, if I need to feel “special” at the expense of others, I cannot forget that this would be considered an “evil” action or something that is acting in opposition to the Life Force of the Universe.

The Rich vs. Poor Conflict

There seems to be quite a disparity between the rich and the poor throughout the world. It seems that our leaders and the government that supports them somehow manage to keep the money on top and make it nearly impossible for the rest of us to get a piece of the pie, so to speak. I say to you, you can only be upset about that if money has power over you.

If you can give up thinking that money is all you need, even at the expense of your happiness, and stand up for your right to entitlement to everything this earth has to offer, you do not need to listen to anybody tell you what to do, especially if you are right. People are entitled to basic human dignities such as food, a safe place to sleep and peace of mind. I believe that I am entitled to

these things just as my children are entitled to them. We are, in essence, the children of the Life Force of the Universe and It wants to give us the basics to help us survive the journey. We do not have to work for these things, they will automatically be given to us, but you must believe that they will be.

If you believe that money has power and that you need money to provide for your basic needs, then you will have no choice but to rely on the thing you gave your power to, or, in other words, your energy to.

However, if you don't give your power (energy) to money, then money does not receive power from you (energy) and cannot control you. If, on the other hand, you give your energy (power) to money, then you will depend on money for energy (power). You will require money to satisfy your need for energy (power). This is the same principle as in any relationship.

By no means do we assume that money and power are "bad" things. On the contrary, you should have respect for money and power, as you would any of the creations of the Life Force of the Universe, but don't let them cloud your thinking. You do not need either for your happiness. When we take the power (energy) of money away as a group and hand that energy (power) over to eternal happiness instead, it will disappear like every powerful empire has done throughout history.

6 Rules to Live By

Here are some ways that, if you are not practicing them already, are small steps in the right direction towards taking power away from things that do not move towards your assumed goal of happiness.

Every time you get angry, analyze why and try to figure out a better solution in the future.

Never assume someone means to hurt you even if they do.

Treat everybody as though they have innocent intentions and watch what effects it will have on the other person. This is how you take power away from someone. Don't let them be successful when they flex.

Try to find the silver lining in every situation.

There usually is one if you dig deep enough. Whatever you do, don't ignore the situation because any emotions you are holding back are gathering in those hidden files in that part of your brain that needs to be reprogrammed so you're just pushing off the inevitable.

Try and be as honest as possible in all of your relationships.

When you act honestly, the Life Force of the Universe will want to return the favor. Once you start acting honestly with "unarmed truth," most people will give you the same respect. Before you try to argue this point, you must first experience it in motion. Try treating everyone you know with great respect (without letting people walk all over you, I'll discuss that soon). For example, if

you are not busy one night and your friend happens to call you for a favor, don't tally in your mind who has done who more favors. Do your friend the favor because you want to and they deserve it just for being a good friend, even if in the back of your mind they "owe" you one. Just do it. Great rewards will follow if you take these opportunities to give of yourself selflessly, from the heart.

Whenever you have a chance to help a poor stranger on the street, don't just take the opportunity begrudgingly, run for that opportunity!

These are golden opportunities. When you can have a positive impact on another person's life for no personal gain, other than wanting to be in a good mood, you are showing someone else how good it feels for someone to have a random act of kindness thrown at them. The more you do practice kindness, the more people you will bring sincere pleasure. That pleasure is catching. Most people feel wonderful when they do something for someone and that person can't stop thanking them and telling them that they appreciate it. We love the feeling we get when we do something we feel is so negligible compared to the pleasure that person gets from receiving it. This is an important concept to think about for a moment. Concentrate on the fact that when we give of ourselves to a loved one and they seem to not appreciate it, we are disappointed sometimes to the point that we might not do another thing for that person ever again. Now concentrate on how it might feel if you were to give a twenty dollar bill to a stranger that is on the checkout line in front of you and is short \$20. Why does it feel better to help a stranger and not a loved one? We want appreciation. I rest my peace.

There is nothing wrong with receiving appreciation. You have just received energy (power) from the person who is appreciating you. In the ideal Universe you can now take that energy (power) and pass it around to those that need it most. No one loses. On the other hand, when you hog up all the appreciation and don't pass out any to anyone else, people aren't as likely to share their energy (power) with you; you might just have to fight for it. If this fulfills you, who am I to judge? Otherwise, consider showing appreciation to others once in a while.

If you do not feel at peace about doing something for someone else do not waste your time doing it.

At the same time that you run around and do only good things for people, don't forget that there are a lot of people that haven't read my book yet and are still inside the belief that the ego needs anything other than love for their energy (power) and will do anything to get it. Remember, the ego cannot survive without some kind of energy or power to feed it.

I do not want to give my "good" or positive energy away just to feed an ego that is nothing but a never ending pit. I generally, if the option is made clear to me by the Life Force of the Universe, choose not to give any of my "good" intentioned energy to a black hole most likely never to be seen again and not used for any positive purpose in the Universe. If I sense that after a few times of trying to supply someone else with my energy, out of truly good intentions, and seeing absolutely no positive results, I know that is the point I must stop trying. I am wasting my energy.

This feeling of wasting energy comes from the fact that the person you are sincerely trying to supply energy to, is being reflected back to you by the Life Force of the Universe because they deny energy from the source of love. They only want energy from the source that gives them power – anything but love. Meaning, all the good intentioned energy that you may have showered this unappreciative person with may be sent back to you by the Life Force of the Universe and all the while you may be bottling up this returned energy which will eventually need to come out – you know what I’m talking about here. Long story short, you have to figure out why you feel uncomfortable. Most likely, you have something to say and you are not expressing yourself.

In other words you have pent up emotion that needs to be expressed until it is understood. The Life Force of the Universe will not even let you – even if you want to – supply this person with your energy – *for that person’s benefit!* Let’s just call this process ego-detox. If you provide this well intentioned energy freely to everyone, there are some people who use that energy to do things that they just don’t have the energy for. For example, someone might ask you for a favor, like “could you watch my kids for an hour?” or “as a manager, you have to be available at all hours just in case we need you” or better yet, “you’re a plumber and my good friend, my toilet is clogged and I thought maybe, because you like me so much, you could pop on down and unclog it for me.” These individuals want something from you that they would never waste their own attention or energy on.

The Power of Communication

After a while, once you realize you're not doing anyone any favors, you may be brought to a place where you can find the power (energy) to open up to that person and explain to them in the most diplomatic way possible what it is you have to say to them. By being honest with them you are preventing your "good" or well intentioned energy from being wasted, or, becoming like a drug to their ego. Instead, you slowly introduce them to your form of energy, which is loving energy. Be prepared that this is a source of energy they may reject because they have for so long.

This is where the power of communication comes in handy. The power of effective communication has a much stronger influence than you might believe, but it is definitely real. Everyone has this power, you just have to know when and how to use it. If you are clear about how you feel and why and express yourself without being accusatory to the person that is causing you to have "bad" feelings, you may be surprised at how easy it is to clear the air. At first, the idea of telling someone how you feel seems frightening, but, after you take a deep breath and do it in the kindest way possible, you will be amazed at the results and the fights and uncomfortable situations that you can avoid. In fact, you'll probably wonder why you were never this honest with people before.

Sometimes, like in this case, where the person you are trying to help is only taking advantage of your kindness, you will not be able to communicate effectively unless you withhold your kindness. This may seem unloving, but because it definitely contributes to your eternal happiness and could potentially

contribute to the other person's eternal happiness, you can be assured that what you are doing is "good" or loving.

If you communicate your concerns to this person and they become defensive, immediately you should understand that their system is not used to this feeling of loving energy. It has not accepted loving energy often, or possibly at all, until this moment. Too much loving energy too soon supplied to a human that does not accept loving energy as an acceptable exclusive energy source, will often manifest itself as fear. They most likely will not be able to accept this source of energy because they tried to consume too much of it all at once and find it repulsive. Most likely the person who you are trying to supply a large amount of loving energy to all at once does not trust this energy because he or she does not recognize it. Don't forget that the only type of energy that this person generally consumes is anything but loving. They have dabbled in several types of energy but loving energy is not familiar and the only feeling they can recognize is a feeling that is *not* love. Since this is the only feeling (energy) that can be felt (digested), this is the only feeling (energy) that can be released (used). This is when Life Force intervention is necessary and "ego-detox" comes into play.

You can think of it like overdosing on a drug or drinking too much alcohol. Just the same as a person who needs regular detoxification of any sort, you have to take them off the "wrong" drug completely and then provide them with regulated amounts of the most effective alternate "drug" in order to minimize the withdrawal effects. In other words, you are providing "ego-detox" to this person by telling them exactly how you feel as gently as possible, and in a way that they get the point without feeling terrible. Hopefully, they will remember

this point in future situations; that is their decision. Ultimately, that is not your concern. You only have to worry about what kind of positive effect on the Universe you are going to have, and, if you are a fully well intentioned being, you will have no energy to give but the energy of love. So, ultimately this is not under your control either.

What I want to bring out is that there is no way that is wrong or bad or right or good, there is only how you feel, why you feel that way and if you can successfully (or unsuccessfully) express those feelings to those around you, bringing out as many positive results as possible.

Is Hollywood “good” or “evil”?

If we pay attention to Hollywood and all of its antics and infamous backstabbing, we can see the truth much more clearly. We can also see a larger scope of reality. As low as we watch some of these celebrities go, there is also a level that can be attained by celebrities that almost no one else has the ability to attain. As a celebrity, in exchange for living a lifestyle that most of us can only dream about, they can use their celebrity status to make great changes in the world. Oprah, Will Smith, Angelina Jolie, Madonna, U2 are just a few examples.... I could keep going on but the list is endless. As bad as our society portrays celebrities, how many of us “regular” people can stake claim to raising awareness of significant issues like world hunger, disease and war? Not only do celebrities have the power to raise our awareness of important social issues, but they actually contribute tons of money to these causes, which means that they are actually giving back to the Universe.

Not only are they giving back monetarily, but they give back in joy as well. Without the entertainment industry, life would be a whole lot more boring. Don't ever deny the fact that you need people like Britney and Lindsey in your life. You may think it is because they are a reminder of what *not* to do with your life but actually, you can be your own reminder of what not to do with your life. They are reminders that we often do not appreciate, consider and/or respect other human beings. They are young, inexperienced girls struggling with huge responsibilities and deal with issues many adults won't face in their entire lifetime. They are young and ill equipped to handle the pressures that society places on people like these talented young girls. Yes, they are suffering the consequences of a system we are all responsible for. Yes, they are one of the effects of the original cause, but they have to figure out how to find the answers they are looking for on their own. It is their journey. Our journey involves having empathy for suffering. I too am guilty of reading tabloids and watching VH1 reality shows. I actually love these guilty pleasures, as some may call them. I learn a lot about human nature from Hollywood. You may think everything is fake in Hollywood, but in my opinion, the essence of a person cannot be faked.

Hollywood is also famous (or infamous, however you want to look at it) for creating the standard of beauty. My husband thinks I am beautiful. I am definitely not up to Hollywood's standards by any stretch of the imagination. For too long, we have listened and actually accepted as truth, Hollywood's standard of beauty. Who came up with this standard and why are we subject to it? Why should we have to feel that just because someone decided Pamela Anderson is the way women should look, that is the way a woman should look? Don't get me wrong, if I looked like Pamela Anderson I would not complain.

But that's not my point. I don't look like Pamela Anderson and my husband still loves me. And, get this; he doesn't think Pamela is that hot. Sorry Pam, but if it's any consolation, the rest of the male population is all yours.

I know many of you think that it is crazy that I would have to convince someone that they are acceptable enough to be seen in public, even if they don't look like a Hollywood celebrity, but I had to convince myself of this, so it is very hard for me to believe that in a world of 7,000,000,000 people, I am the only one who has encountered this problem.

Our physical self image is essential, but if it interferes with our confidence as a human, than it becomes "evil." When we believe that our identity revolves around what we have, what we wear, how well our make-up is applied or how thin we are, that's when we get into trouble. We are screwing ourselves from the get go. We are not even giving ourselves a chance to be special. We have just allowed ourselves to be convinced by other people that we don't even know or care about that we are not as important or that we are more important than someone else, just because we have shiny long hair or we weigh under 110 lbs. What about the real reason why we are unique? That is the question we need to answer in order to align our egotistic desires with the deep desires of our soul.

In Summary

The definitions of "good" and "evil" can only be created by the person who wants to live by those definitions. No one can decide what is "good" for another person or what other people shouldn't do because it is "evil." Different circumstances create different experiences from which each of us build our own

unique set of perceptions. These perceptions combine to create our individual perspective of life which becomes the tool we will use to navigate through this crazy thing called life.

The Life Force of the Universe has a plan for all of us. We all have a place, we just need to know where it is, how to get there and what tools we have to take with us on our journey.

Chapter 3 Life Work

Before moving on to Chapter 4 – “Building Trust and Respect Within Our Relationships,” try to think about everything that you, at this point in your life, consider to be “evil” and everything that you consider to be “good” (or “holy”). Now, think about how that same thing that you consider to be “evil” can be thought of as “good” from a different perspective and vice versa.

Try and erase the concept that “good” and “evil” must be defined collectively. Create your own set of rules that enable you to distinguish whether or not your own behavior is “good” or “evil” according to your own standards. Practice sticking to your own rules. Practice the art of not worrying about what other people think or do.

Sometimes your own rules might ruffle someone’s feathers even if that wasn’t your intention. This is because, although your rules are for the benefit of your eternal happiness and though you may know that your eternal happiness relies on the survival of the Universe, others may not realize where your intentions lie. In fact, if someone is particularly self-centered, if that person is not being

serviced in some way at every moment, their feathers will inevitably be ruffled. So, if by serving your purpose of eternal happiness ruffles someone's feathers, don't worry – that is not your problem. However, be careful that you are not just *unconsciously* ruffling other people's feathers.

Introduction to Chapter 4 – Building Trust and Respect Within Our Relationships

In the next chapter I will focus on how to put together everything up until this point and apply what we have learned to our personal relationships, which, I don't have to tell you, is really the hardest thing to do.

We often spend many hours a day with certain people, and when you spend that much time with any one person, lots of character collisions will occur. It is so important to be conscious of these personality clashes because through these areas of strife, the Life Force of the Universe is trying to make clear to us that we need some improvement.

Again, this does not mean that we are “bad” or “evil” if we don't find it easy to adjust to the perspective of our peers and family members. We only want to make adjustments for the sake of our eternal happiness. If putting too much energy into what someone important to you wants does not have the effect that you were expecting, sometimes we must maintain our position and do things our way if there is a chance of changing the negative effect that trying to please someone may have had.

I know that a lot of this sounds a little confusing, but the basic idea to keep in mind when it comes to all interaction with others is quite simple:

Do everything and anything that you want to do as long as you are contributing to our evolution into the Era of Peace.

Do NOT do anything that affects another person negatively, unless you are contributing to our evolution into the Era of Peace.

Chapter 4 – Building Trust and Respect Within Our Relationships

How do we evolve? Usually, when the Universe creates a situation for us, we have to make some kind of decision. That decision leads us in a chosen direction on the path of our journey through life. How do we know that we made the right decision?

Relationships are the best indicator of “right” and “wrong” choices.

Relationships let you know whether someone approves of your behavior or disapproves of your behavior. Who is right versus who is wrong is usually the cause of a fight, but if we could learn how to communicate our feelings to our loved ones better with the intention of avoiding conflict, how much easier would our lives be? If we were able to go to work in peace and come home in peace and everywhere else in between in peace, wouldn't that be blissful?

Let's imagine a situation where a co-worker that you trained, gets “the” big promotion. In this case, there are three things you can do. You can be really angry and create a ruckus in the office taking a chance that your tantrum will change things (in a positive way) for you. Or, you can give in to the situation and forget about it and quietly back off and wait for your next opportunity. Or, choice number 3, you can quit your ungrateful job because working for people who are not out for your best interest leaves a bad taste in your mouth and no salary in the world is worth that feeling. You decide; it's your life. Don't worry about what other people do. You do what feels right for you. I personally

would choose option number 3. That's just me. I cannot stand the feeling of being liable to someone because they pay me. It makes me feel like a slave.

Here is my point; no matter what decision you make, if it makes you and everyone else around you happier or a better person in any way, you have made the right one. If you decide to throw a tantrum after you find out that you did not get the promotion and it works and they give it to you because they realized that they just forgot what a good employee you have been all these years and they needed you to remind them, then great, you made the right decision.

But, if you decide to keep your mouth shut and wait for your next opportunity and it doesn't come quick enough, you may be quietly building up resentment inside you and ultimately wind up taking the first option anyway. These are the choices that we all have to make and based on the results, we know whether or not we made the right choice.

Food For Thought

Sometimes we try and “give” too much of ourselves or “help” others who seem not to appreciate our assistance. We have to realize that we may be trying to “give” or “help” so that we can get something in return. If our motivation for giving is to get, we may be disappointed by those to whom we “give.”

How many times have you done something for somebody else only to resent the fact that you did it? The reason that you resented doing it is because you did not do it because you wanted to. You only did it to please someone. If that person

was not overtly pleased than you have just done something for no reason. So the whole reason that you did it in the first place is on the condition that a positive result, such as appreciation from another person, would occur. When that outcome does not occur, disappointment usually follows. If you are continually disappointed for the same reason, the source of the disappointment will eventually be hard to pinpoint as the thought of “how can you not appreciate all I am doing for you?” is already ingrained in your head. The expectation overrides the deed because the deed wasn’t what you originally wanted, you only desired the positive result.

My current husband, Eyal, taught me this by his inaction. He did not require anything of me other than my love and in exchange for his love I could not require anything of him. It was, and still is, an unspoken understanding. If we do something for each other, it is simply because we love each other, not for any other reason. Eyal taught me that it is not worth it to fight with each other because we think we “need” something other than love from the other. We don’t need anything. We can both take care of ourselves. What we need from each other is a companion that we feel completely comfortable with because we have taken the time and patience to understand each other to the extent that we can truly be free to act how we feel comfortable.

I truly believe that Eyal has given me unconditional love and in return I give it to him. My ex-husband and my kids do not understand this and are having a very hard time with my inability to give more of myself than I am willing to. My ex-husband is definitely not used to me standing up for myself and not obeying his every command. In turn, he implies that my unwillingness to do so is a reflection of my lack of love for my kids. I had to come to terms with my

guilt in this area, because after all, motherhood is a very sensitive issue. We are bred to believe that a mother is far more necessary than a father and that we are the ones that provide every source of security for our child. This was, and to be honest, still is an area that I am not fully comfortable with.

I love my kids. But my behavior as a mother is not typically “motherly.” My position in the lives of my kids is not what I thought it should be or worse yet, would be. I wanted to be the classic “supermom” that had food on the table when the kids got home from school, breakfast on the table before they left, clean linens on the beds every day and still managed to go to the gym and hold a job down. I just was not good enough for my first husband. He wanted a more “hands on” mother. Melech expected a wife and mother that took his kids to the park and played hide and seek with them. He wanted me to give unconditional respect to his mother despite the fact that she would continuously attempt to usurp my role as a wife and mother when she was in my home. He thought I should be a housewife and mother and desire nothing else. I tried to fit into this role, despite the fact that this was not who I really wanted to be. I thought this is what I had to do. I thought that if I was a good wife and mother, my husband and kids would need me so much they would never be able to be without me. Guess what – they are living without me and they are fine.

Now, because Eyal has taught me that sometimes the right thing to do is nothing, I have changed my behavior. I do not allow my ex-husband and my children to require my service because that is my “obligation” as a mother. If I want to do something for my kids, I do, not because they have been successful in guilting me into it, but because I love them and I want to. My kids are typical kids that don’t always have the proper amount of appreciate and think parents

are only here to take care of them. This is the view of parenting that my ex and his mother tried to convince me was valid. I am not convinced, but my kids are.

This has proven to be a very challenging situation. Try explaining to your loved ones that were once receiving your services free of charge for years that they will no longer be receiving them at their whim. They will not understand, initially, that you are in fact making these changes out of love. They will try every trick in the book to make you feel guilty and use those guilty feelings against you.

When you do decide to change your behavior in an effort to be happier, it is almost like the old you has died and has been replaced by the new you. The new you inevitably is going to be a much more spiritual and joyful person because now you are finally fulfilling your potential as a human being. You are no longer using all of your energy to manipulate and extract something you think you “need” from another person. And, you are also no longer allowing others to suck up your energy.

However, the people who knew the you that “died” think they are still dealing with the “dead” you. They don’t know the new you. They don’t understand that you are happier. All they know is that you are not reacting the same way to their behavior as they are used to and this causes frustration over time.

I am in the throws of this right now as my kids and my husband think that I am going to eternally be there to serve them. They don’t understand that I refuse to serve anyone but the Life Force of the Universe. I will selflessly help others as long as I don’t feel I am “serving” them. Once the transition from “help” to “the

help” transpires, that is when I politely stop “helping.” Yes, again, I may be paranoid and they may not interpret my help as “service,” however, if I am uncomfortable for whatever reason, unless I can accept and trust the fact that my personal principles are not being violated, it does no one in the situation any good if I “help” someone and it feels to me like I am “the help,” if you know what I mean. This is how resentment builds.

Resentment is a “bad” emotion because it is another form of denial that cannot be easily identified. Resentment is your own guilt that you cannot deal with or may not even recognize, which is transferred in the form of blame on the person who becomes the object of your resentment.

When you do something for someone else that you would rather not do, over time resentment builds. When resentment piles up it has the same result as denied guilt. You get lost in the resentment and don’t even realize that you, all on your own, offered yourself to the person you resent in some way that you were not comfortable with.

Whether it be that you didn’t get compensated as much as you thought you should or that you needed a favor in return from that person and they were not forthcoming with help, it is your obligation to understand that when you do something for somebody, there should be no strings attached or all the “good” that should come out of it will be turned into “bad” through resentment, blame and guilt.

You cannot expect reciprocation for your good deeds. If you do expect some sort of reciprocation, you are not giving of yourself from your heart. Your good

deed comes from the wrong intention. Once you start acting with the right intention, you will soon realize that reciprocation doesn't even come into your thought process. If your deed is reciprocated by another "good" soul and you weren't expecting anything in return, the appreciation you will show will be intensified, thereby encouraging the doer to continue on in their "good" deeds.

This is the cycle that everyone needs to understand. Do something truly nice for someone else, and people will do nice things for you. It's simple and straightforward. It goes the other way as well. *Don't* do unto others as you would *not* like done unto you. We have heard all of this before and we have heard it often. Take this to heart. This is the best advice anyone can give if you need a starting place. Treat others the way you want to be treated.

Bottom Line – DO NOT EVER compromise your principles, beliefs or comfort for anyone if you are going to end up resenting it!

Relationships With Our Children

I believe relationships with our children are the most important relationships we have. But, my reasons are not typical. Our children are our future, but not because they are "our" children. Our children are not mini me's. We have to teach our children in the way of the Universe, not our own ways. Over the years, I have established a cardinal rule between me and my teenage daughters. I understand that I am not going to be there forever to make their decisions for them, but I can teach them how to make a decision and let them loose to learn the rest on their own. I also insist that my kids extend that same respect to me. They are not my bosses and I do not have to listen to them. I do not owe them

anything. They were meant to be born with a list of their own problems that they have to learn to take care of effectively. I will definitely provide them frequently with well intentioned energy that I will teach them how to use optimally. In fact, because I love my children more than anyone else, I will provide them with unlimited and unconditional love (energy) that they can do with whatever they want. Hopefully, with the help of the Life Force of the Universe, they will learn how to use that energy effectively.

Our kids want and need to live their lives through their own eyes. We need to let them be free to make decisions the same way we do. We can't be there for their every move in every situation. Being a responsible parent does not mean that we have to give our kids everything we didn't have and make sure they have more "opportunities" in life than we did. We don't need them to be smarter than us or better looking than us. They do not need to be more successful than us. We don't need them to agree with us or act like us. We don't need them to be cute or funny. And, we especially don't need anybody to "approve" of them so that we can feel accomplished as parents.

We need them to be assets to the survival of the Universe and not just because it sounds nice but because it will enhance the quality of their lives. We have been focusing on quantity up until now, and hopefully, we can soon experience the days that the *quality* of life is our motivation. But why can't our children? There are many negative circumstances that I see in our schools and on television shows, and problems other children bring from their homes into our children's lives that have to be addressed and corrected immediately. We have to be there to address these concerns in a way that can be understood on a bigger scale, not simply in terms of "right" and "wrong." We cannot leave this

responsibility to our leaders. Our leaders don't even know our children and they certainly, no matter how well intentioned they are, don't love them as much we do.

This does not mean that you should encourage your child to go ahead and explore a homosexual experience before they can decide whether they want it or not. It means, age appropriately (age is discretionary of course) discuss the positives and the negatives involved with being gay. You have no choice but to discuss this according to your own perspective, but explain your ideas to your children. Make sure they understand that this is only your perspective of this controversial topic, and others may have a different perspective. But first and foremost, always remind them that everyone's perspective is sacred, if only to the person who holds it.

I would love to be able to write to my president and suggest that we spend as much time making sure our kids are taught values and honesty as we do teaching them that to be a "successful" person, they have to be "educated." Educated to do what exactly? I will leave that for you to answer.

In fact, I honestly believe that by teaching our children about unconditional love first, we can give our children a foundation of security that will ultimately discourage a child from doing things that could destroy a future that they see hope in. The alternative has clearly not worked. Throwing a kid into a rehabilitation institution instead of teaching them about unconditional love has not been effective. Am I not making sense? It just seems so elementary. Why (and how) have we allowed ourselves to believe in something else (an energy source other than love) for so long? Why are we not stopping the problem

before it happens when it comes to our children's souls? Why do we create the problem and then complain about it and do nothing to solve it? The fact that our kids are currently being exposed and having direct access to situations and experiences that I have yet to experience should be a wake up call. The Life Force of the Universe is trying to wake us all up with another big slap! And, if I am correct, it will keep slapping us until we get it. The message I am receiving is that my kids are being attacked and I must save them from their enemy called brainwashing.

You do not conquer brainwashing by feeding into the illusion. The only way to conquer brainwashing is by somehow assuring the person (or child in this case) that they are never obligated to believe what others tell them if they are not comfortable with the implications.

For example, when a television ad claims that their product is superior to all other competing products, it is 50% cheaper and there is a full refund if you are not fully satisfied with the product, you have the responsibility of teaching your child that although the product sounds great, they have to look at the fine print that says that they have to pay shipping and handling that is almost as much as the product itself. You must also inform them that this shipping and handling cost will not be refunded if they are not satisfied with their purchase. So the decision is theirs, but you must warn them not to be surprised if they aren't as satisfied with the product as they think they might be.

I want to take every opportunity to teach my kids to sniff out fishy signs when trying to detect the truth. The first one I would teach them is; if the information is not true, you will definitely lose something and be disappointed or unhappy in

some way. What do you lose if the information you are receiving is not true? In the above case it would be the cost of shipping and handling. Now let's take it somewhere else. When your kid comes to you and wants you to buy them something because all of the other kids have it, go ahead and buy it for your kid or don't, that is your choice. However, whatever you choose to do, please explain to them that their happiness does not have anything to do with what someone else has. Try to explain to them that they will never be completely satisfied if they want what everyone else has, because everyone will always have something else that they want. This does not have to be one time and one time only. Remind them every chance you get, just like a parent reminds their child about their homework. Yes, you will annoy your kids, but they will get your message eventually. It will be embedded in them by the time they are your age. What better gift could you give your child other than their own mind? I can't think of one!

Most importantly, and this is very important, you must be a role model for your child. If you do not behave in the way that you are teaching your child to behave, you are having no impact on them whatsoever. Your actions may even be working against you, and, ultimately your children. This is why we must work on ourselves before we can work on any other areas.

A clever person would realize at this point that because we are not able to be effective unless we are conscious, and it takes a lot of work to comprehend clearly whether or not we are completely conscious at this stage in our evolution, we can only do one thing. Rely on the Life Force of the Universe to help us. We have no choice but to invest all of our trust and faith into the

Universe so our children, who are our future, have all they need to make this world a better place.

Another thing most of us do which I really don't understand is lie to our kids about things we think we have to lie about for their protection or things we believe they won't find out about. Then we tell them not to lie. Huh?! What happens when your kid catches you in one of your lies? Take it from me, you just lost a lot of brownie points in the respect department. Don't ever forget who you are to your kids. You are the same thing your parents were to you; an example of how adults are supposed to act. Beware if you disappoint them. Da Da Da Daaaaaaaa.

That's why it pays, in my opinion, to be straight up with them or don't discuss the topic until you are more comfortable with telling your kids the truth. But - don't lie! If your kids ask you if you ever drank alcohol and got drunk and you say "never!" and one night, after a few too many, you come home tipsy and your kid just happens to be up to witness the whole scene, you will have some explaining to do. When my kids ask me questions like this, I try to speak the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, but explain to them that I am an adult and I have had twenty plus years to learn how to make decisions about my behavior and what I am comfortable with. In order to avoid wrong decisions that may lead to regret, experience is necessary. The more you experience, the more you learn and thereby prepare yourself for your next experience. That is why an adult can freely do more than a child.

This goes the same for trust. Trust your children and your children will more likely be able to tell you things that you need to know. My oldest daughter is 15

years old and she has a lot more freedom than her friends. So far, I have not heard or seen any reason not to trust her and I can tell that it makes her feel good that I trust her instincts. As a result, Kayla is always proud to tell me about how she takes the high road as opposed to giving in to peer pressure when she is faced with a situation.

Another thing that drives me crazy that we instill in our kids is the concept of “fair” and “not fair.” If you don’t share with your sister, your sister doesn’t have to share with you. We have all said things like this to our children. We are literally, although we are unaware that we are doing it, teaching our children not to share. Sharing is not fair. The definition of sharing is using or enjoying something with others; this has nothing to do with fair.

I try to explain to my kids that it doesn’t matter who gave who what first and what is fair. If your sister needs to borrow something from you, let her, and keep letting her. One day she will come around and give back to you and now you both have discovered a way to double your wardrobe!

At this point, my daughters and I have a different relationship than the average mother and daughter. We don’t live together and we see each other about once a week. I try to keep our communication honest and open by listening to them and attempting to hear what they really want from me. Sometimes they get frustrated and they don’t understand what they want either so they can’t tell me. Sometimes, in fact, most of the time, they just want me to go away because I talk too much, but no matter what, because I love them unconditionally, I try to maintain patience and love in order to teach them how to feel their emotions without getting overwhelmed by them. I also make sure that there is no

confusion as to my position in their lives. I think they are confident that I love them and that through thick and thin I will be there for them. I assure them that they can tell me anything and I give them space to make decisions. I explain the concept of consequences to them on a daily basis. My oldest is 15 and my youngest is 12 and I'm pretty sure they know that if they ever have a problem with sex, drugs or anything else, they can come to me. What is most important is understanding them. If I can understand them, I can help them. If I don't understand them, I am of no use to them. We are still working things out, and I'm sure it will take a lifetime, but at least I have learned what I need to do to be a more effective parent to my children. As you can see, the definition of an effective parent varies from person to person.

Food for Thought:

Respect for ourselves is just as important as having respect for others. In fact, we cannot have respect for others without having respect for ourselves first.

I try, and try is the key word here, to maintain a high amount of respect for all human beings on this planet. We all deserve respect. In my opinion, not demanding respect is like killing yourself. That absolutely does not mean that I think everyone reading this book should automatically rebel against being "disrespected." What I am saying is that we first have to know ourselves. Some people do not mind being "disrespected" and do not take it personally which is the ideal way to be if you *truly* don't take things to heart. In fact, the definition of respect varies quite a bit amongst us. My definition of respect is probably a lot more inclusive than most people's, but there are some who expect way more

respect than what my definition offers. For instance, if someone doesn't open the car door for me, I'm going to be okay.

My definition of respect is simple. First, you must simply accept others. Acceptance means that you allow everyone to live the way in which they are comfortable and you do not conflict with anyone's personal space or rights. Once you have accepted a person, eventually you can form an appreciation of their essence. If, for any reason you have not accepted that person and their behaviors for what they are, and instead you feel threatened, frightened, unloving, hateful, disgusted or any other negative emotion, you will never fully be grateful for them. You have to try to accept people, so you can appreciate them from the inside. It is to your benefit to understand what makes another person "tick." You will find that you can like people that you never knew that you could. You may not be able to be best friends with them, but you can enjoy them. Once you develop a fondness for someone, respect naturally follows.

Respect is a natural reaction to a person that you like and are comfortable with. If I feel that someone doesn't respect me, it would mean to me that they don't like something about me and they are having a negative reaction to some of my behaviors. If this is the case and disrespect is the outcome, the first thing I will do, if it is a friend of mine, is explain to them that I feel disrespected and ask them why they are treating me that way. If it is something that I am unaware of, I have just had an "enlightening" experience. If my friend is simply being unconsciously disrespectful, then I, by bringing it up, am helping my friend become more conscious. If it is a real friend of mine, this alone will fix the situation. But, if the person disrespecting me is not a friend of mine, I don't feel that sticking around is going to help or heal the situation. For my own personal

comfort, I will always choose to leave the situation, not because I do not “respect” the person, but because they do not respect me.

Sometimes, we are too proud to ask for respect and deny that we feel disrespected because we are actually humiliated by the feeling. In my opinion, this is the worst thing you can do. Being out of touch with your own feelings will eventually leave you lost and unable to make good decisions. You must, and I mean must, analyze your feelings and why you feel the way you do. If you want to evolve, you must wake up and understand yourself. You must realize what brings you success, what makes you unhappy, what causes excitement, what inspires you to sing, what makes you dance, what influences your work, what makes you sleep, what produces laughter and on and on. If you can't identify what makes you tick, it will be impossible to understand anyone around you.

If you don't know why you feel angry at someone, you just keep quiet because you are unsure of yourself. By keeping quiet, you have accomplished nothing but holding unnecessary “bad” feelings inside and not making room for more positive emotions. You do not have room inside of you for both “bad” and “good” feelings. You must choose between these feelings. You can change your mind later, but first you must realize you need to empty your undesired, negative emotions before exchanging them with positive feelings.

You must understand something very important. You are you. No one else is you and no one on this planet is the same as you. For two people to be exactly the same, they would have to look like you from birth, had the same parents, family & friends, bosses and coworkers, watch the same television shows, marry

the same person and have the same kids and so on. No one thinks or acts like you, because you are a unique manifestation of the Life Force of the Universe. Thinking for a second that you must conform to the behavior of those around you is the biggest mistake that you could possibly make.

Conforming to others takes away from our own self. Of course, in certain situations a *conscious* decision to conform is necessary so that you do not disturb or invade the space of others. But conforming because you are afraid to say what you really think, even though you feel you have a right to speak your piece, is deadly not only to you, but to those who agree with you and are also too insecure to speak out. When you conform to someone else unwillingly, even if it is a subconscious action, you lose the opportunity to a) get to know yourself better; b) know the people around you a little better; c) evolve into a better human being; and d) rid yourself of “bad” feelings and replace them with “good” feelings.

Feeling Inferior in the Presence of Wealth

Let's discuss an example that most of us are guilty of; conforming to those who we feel are more respectable than ourselves because they are wealthy. Do you have rich friends and/or relatives that own beautiful homes and employ live-in help, so everything appears perfect when you come in? Are looks and brand names of great importance to some of your family and/or friends? Does making a “bad” impression in front of your wealthy hosts frighten you? Are you worried about how to dress, talk and walk when you walk into any of these homes?

My husband has a huge family and a lot of them are quite wealthy. He is not very close with any of his family, but he still gets invited to many social functions. In the past, when attending my husband's wealthy relative's home, I would simply stay quiet and do what they asked me to so that I would fit in as well as I could, without sticking out like a sore thumb dressed in an outfit that I bought off the clearance rack in Marshalls. However, I soon realized that no matter how much I tried to stay out of everybody's line of view, someone would inevitably find me and ask me to do something, as if I were the help.

After a few years of this, I began building much resentment toward my husband's family. I started feeling like I might even be viewed as annoying to some of his aunts, even though I was their nephew's wife. For years, Eyal tried to explain to me that I was the one allowing them to make me feel inferior and he wanted his wife to be above that. This would inevitably cause fights because I wanted him to defend me, not tell me I had to change. He didn't understand me and I didn't understand him. Although it took a few years, we now understand each other.

I have learned not to take people's unconscious behavior so seriously, because, if I take a good look past all the hoopla, I understand that everyone is just a human being struggling to survive, the same as me. Some may have a few more material possessions, but their struggle is the same.

When I was able to identify with Eyal's relatives in some way, I was able to understand them a little better. Will I do lunch with them? Probably not. Do I feel uncomfortable when I go to a \$200 a plate social function? I try not to. It takes a lot of practice but I try and remember one thing - no one is better than

me and I am no better than anyone else. We are just different people with different lives.

At this point, when I must go to one of my husband's family's social functions, I go with a smile and I refuse to feel inferior, even if that means that I don't offer "help" like a proper guest would. But, if I don't agree with something and/or I am directly asked for my opinion, I will give it - lock, stock and barrel. If I am asked why I don't have a job and why my kids don't live with me, I will simply explain to the asshole asking that I chose to do what was good for me.

I will not (now or ever!) worry about how someone might perceive me, if my intentions are pure. I have worked hard to understand what makes me tick and I will let no one get in the way of my progress.

Jealousy

You have a friend that you get along with very well because she is a great person; she is pleasant, funny, loves animals, is a great homemaker and she is beautiful – and your husband never lets you forget it. This problem was a regular issue with my first husband. This is a tough one, because you don't want to come off jealous and you also don't want to feel insecure that your husband has a secret desire for your friend. You actually start to dislike your friend because of the feelings of inferiority that you have. You know deep down in your heart that your friend is a good person and that is why your husband seems to like her, but you want to believe she is not as good as he thinks. You start ripping her apart in your head and possibly out loud to other people. What are you supposed to do?

I say, learn from your friend. Yes, that's right – admire her the same way you feel your husband does and once you start really appreciating all the good things about your friend, you might naturally pick up some of her good qualities. You know your friend always has a hot meal ready for her husband when he gets home from work. You have a feeling that she may be very accommodating in the bedroom, which you know for sure would be a good improvement in your relationship. You also are a witness to the fact that your friend and her husband never talk to each other with venom or even raise their voices at one another, also a great goal for you and your husband. I know that a reaction to all this may go something like this:

“What?!?! You are suggesting that I become subservient to my husband because he might think some bitch is a better wife than I am to him? How would he know? Does she get up with him every morning while he farts up a storm and pees all over the toilet? Huh, does she? Does she live on my husband's salary? No, she doesn't. She lives on triple my husband's salary. Did she ever meet my husband's mother? Why should I change to suit him? Why shouldn't he change to suit me?”

What I am suggesting is this; if you have respect and love in your marriage, which, for your sake I hope you do, then you will do anything in your power to make sure that you give it your all. The only way you can ever create a change in your life is by changing something in yourself. If you want your husband to admire and respect you the same way you feel he might admire and respect your friend, why would it hurt to start doing some of things he is expressing that he would appreciate?

On the other hand, if you are trying to trick someone into believing that you are something that you are not, forget about getting the results you are looking for. Duping someone into believing you are someone else and trying to make a person happy are two very different things. If you do decide to make some positive changes for the benefit of the team, but it is an effort, realize the effort you are making is out of love for your partner. Never do anything looking for appreciation and assume that appreciation is not what you are going to get from your efforts. Look at it like you are taking some of your positive energy and investing into your relationship, which should result in a more positive atmosphere in your home. If your husband loved you before, he will love you no matter what you do. The extras only enhance the relationship. Pretty soon, if you *and* your husband start investing positive personal energy into your relationship, unconditional love forms because you are sharing the same energy. The two of you who were once individuals with your own energy now have combined energy and are operating from the same source of energy. You cannot love yourself without loving your partner. You will realize that you have just combined energy and now, as two, you are way more powerful than you were as one. This is the ultimate benefit of doing something for someone you love that has nothing to do with gaining anything in return. It is the benefit of unconditional love.

Look at your friend, not as an opponent in the game of life, but as a gift the Life Force of the Universe is sending you so that you may gain valuable insight. You are free to choose whether you put forth positive effort or not, but the Universe is going to push you in one direction towards your long term happiness. Whether you hate your husband and you want a divorce or you love your

husband and you want to combine energies, the Life Force of the Universe is presenting opportunities for you to learn about yourself and what will make you happy. Use the situations the Universe puts you in to steer through the decisions. Decide what will ultimately make you the happiest for the longest amount of time and make efforts towards that outcome. You may say that you want a certain outcome, but you don't want to be the only one working to get it. What I am trying to emphasize is that when you are clearly aware of reaching your goal, you will not care about being right or whether something is "fair" or not, because that is not what this is about. This is about being happy for the rest of your life. When you know for certain that the Universe pushes us in the way of our truest intentions, which are always our highest ones, we will know immediately, based on whether or not we are happy, whether our decisions are working for us.

By the way, the power of unconditional love does not have to be limited to your husband and family. Anyone you join energies with will have the same results. Unconditional love for others means that you are sharing energy with everybody. If that sounds powerful to you, that's because it is!

In Summary

Imagine we weren't so tired from life that we could actually enjoy a sunset in our backyard and we wouldn't have to wait until our annual trip to Tahiti. No matter which way I try to twist and turn to fit our current way of living, it doesn't make sense to me that we continue fighting amongst ourselves. At some point, for the sake of the survival of our Universe, we must realize this sooner than later. When we watch the news and see calamity happening all over the

world, should we close our eyes and think that it is not our problem? We are all in this together, like it or not. No, you can't do something about the world's problems by yourself but you can if you join forces with the people around you, even if it is only within your neighborhood. If the change is simply within your own household, at least you know you have done something to make this world a better place. Believe it or not, every positive change, no matter how small, will have a positive effect on the Universe as a whole.

Try to conceptualize what the world would be like if we devoted all of our efforts toward teaching our children about the pleasures the Universe has given to use for our endless enjoyment, if only we would pay attention! Instead, we emphasize man-made pleasure stimulators to our children that need to be replaced once the initial excitement over them wears off.

Imagine if we had some time between our jobs. Instead, we must have a job so that we can live in a big house with nice furnishings, making sure that it is as clean as Margaret's house down the block. Of course, we also need a two car garage because our two newly leased Honda Accords need a home as well. This is only the beginning of the bottomless pit. Computers, televisions, home theaters, clothing, shoes, pocketbooks, expensive vacations, expensive home décor; why do we *need* all this stuff? Could it simply be because everyone else has it? If you were all alone, would you need or even care about this stuff? You might need clothing, but it probably wouldn't have to be designer.

Material possessions are not "bad." It is the way we view these possessions that causes our downfall. If we view luxuries as necessities with which we can qualify as part of the "have" group, then these things ultimately become a

burden. You will forever be chasing “things” because there will always be something else you don’t have. Not only that, but you actually lose the pleasure of the luxury itself because you are more interested in its acquisition.

Also, let me remind you that all of the energy we invest into our material wealth is energy that is not being invested into something that is much more important in terms of our eternal happiness – our personal relationships.

Chapter 4 Life Work

Your homework for today, and forever, is simple. Try and give everyone that matters to you unconditional love. Love them expecting nothing in return but their happiness.

Introduction to Chapter 5 – “Brainwashing and its Effects”

In the next chapter, I will attempt to explain the difference between what we should consider “brainwashing” and what is truly beneficial education for the purpose of our eternal happiness.

Before you begin reading, be warned that I think everything is brainwashing. Very few things do I accept as “beneficial education.” Math is beneficial education. Knowledge of science and history is beneficial education, but unless you know everything about everything there is to know about the specific topic you claim to know and build opinions about, in my opinion, you are not qualified enough to interpret what opinions should be stated as “fact” or even as beneficial education.

In other words, if something cannot be proven not to be “brainwashing” then it is brainwashing – until it is proven otherwise.

Chapter 5 – Brainwashing and its Effects

Throughout history, we have been complacent, letting our leaders decide how we should live. We have been okay with others telling us what is healthy and what is not. We have been satisfied with others telling us what is considered “good” behavior and what is considered “bad” behavior. We have allowed others to tell us what is “attractive” and what is “unattractive.” We have even been okay with others telling us what to wear.

When is this going to end? We need to tell ourselves what is right for us. We can no longer listen to other people’s opinions – because that is all that they are (unless, of course, there is enough evidence to eliminate all other opposing possibilities).

How do we consumers decipher whether or not Colgate Complete toothpaste is better for our teeth than Total Care?

Should I use Pantene Shampoo for thick hair on thin hair?

Is Charmin really the softest toilet paper?

If I drink Arizona Green Tea all day, will I lose weight?

Do I need to eat right, drink right and exercise daily to optimally survive?

What about those of us who don't eat right, drink all wrong and never exercise *and* live a long time *and* live life to the fullest?

You may not believe me, but I'm here to tell you that there is a source other than advertisements that we can believe in. The Life Force of the Universe guides us in every aspect of our lives. I believe this because I have experienced it.

As I shared earlier, at the age of 24, after I had my first child, I gained weight which I had worked very hard the year before I got pregnant to take off. For the next 10 years, I taught aerobics on and off and went to the gym frequently. I hated it. I tried to eat only healthy foods and limited junk food because I loved it so much. I was healthy, but I did not lose any weight after I gave birth. By the time my second child was born, I gained another 10 pounds.

I stressed over this extra weight constantly, always thinking about it. Every time I didn't go to the gym or ate a potato chip, I would tear myself apart and convince myself that I did not have will power and I was doomed to being overweight because I couldn't control myself. My husband didn't help here at all, because he was the one I was ultimately worried about pleasing and he was very clear about the fact that he was not attracted to overweight women, even before he married me.

Long story short, after I went into the hospital in 2006, I lost my desire to worry about my health and my weight. My mind was elsewhere. Four years have passed and I have lost most of the weight and I feel healthier than ever – with no effort and more importantly, no worry. I eat whatever I want now and when I am full, I am finished eating. I exercise when I feel like it, and if I don't feel

like exercising, I don't (which is most of the time). When I do exercise, I don't go to the gym. I live in New York City, so my favorite thing to do is hop on the train and get off somewhere in the middle of Manhattan and walk all over the city. Exploring the city doesn't even feel like exercise while I am doing it, but 5-6 hours of straight walking can definitely be felt the next day.

I am not trying to tell you not to consider your health important. If you are not healthy, you cannot live a long, productive life. What I am trying to tell you is not to *worry* about your health. The Life Force of the Universe has got that under Its control.

If you don't feel physically well, consider that an indication that a change is necessary. What *kind* of change, you must determine. But, if you have faith in the Life Force of the Universe, the change that is necessary will be revealed to you promptly and once you make it, you should feel healthy again.

We should not waste our precious time on this earth worrying about what we cannot control. We know that we cannot control how long we live, because no matter how "healthy" we are, we could get hit by a car tomorrow. We have only one thing to worry about – our purpose – and I refuse to believe that our purpose is mere survival.

Trust

Trust is a huge issue in the world today. We have to try to not fear someone we don't feel we can trust. Anything that you fear takes power away from you and hands it over to the object of your fear. I am mentioning this concept now

because this is one the most difficult problems that I personally struggle with. I intellectually understand that if I want to have complete faith in the Life Force of the Universe, I have to trust that everything will be okay, whatever that means. But, the problem comes when I have to trust other people. What should I do? Should I trust everybody? Should I trust no one? I have no idea what the answer is to that question so I choose to consider a different perspective.

I cannot say for certain who is lying and who is being honest with me, but what I do know for certain is that I can definitely trust the Life Force of the Universe. Now, I proceed to twist and turn situations to see what I want to see. First I say to myself that the Life Force of the Universe *needs* me to be able to trust It, because It *needs* me to fulfill my unique purpose for the sake of the evolution of the Universe, and *needs* me to follow Its lead. I can assume this is true because I am here for something, aren't I? Next, I realize that human nature tells me that in order to gain trust, I have to be trustworthy. So, based on the fact that human nature is all I have to work with, I accept this as reasonable proof that I can rest assured that the Life Force of the Universe has got my back.

You're probably thinking that I still have the original problem of trusting other people. Not really, because now I can trust who I feel like trusting and not trust who I don't feel like trusting. You see, it really doesn't matter who you trust or don't trust. Everything you need to know will eventually be revealed to you if you have faith. I can continue doing what I have been doing; keeping myself honest and doing what I choose to do and not doing what I choose not to do; in other words, using my free will.

I also try not to get carried away with what others say to me. Basically, I'd encourage you to take everything with a grain of salt. This is not as easy as it sounds. In fact, I really struggle with this one! The good news is, once you understand the concept, you are half way there.

In my case, I have a particular pet peeve about honesty. I hate liars. That's just me. Anyway, I find that because my number one requirement in any relationship is honesty, I am the most careful (or try to be the most careful) about being honest. This is a challenge because honesty sounds simple, but it's not. Being truthful is hard work, but the rewards are bountiful. You would be surprised how nice people can be when they feel like they can trust you.

We all know how hard it is to trust people these days. We know that if we are saying and doing things that are different than what we are thinking, most likely so are others. Lying is a vicious cycle that it is very hard to break. Lucky for me, my mother and father beat the lying out of me and I am actually scared of getting caught in a lie! Don't get me wrong, I do lie, when there is no other choice and no long term harm can be done. However, if there are going to be negative repercussions that I may find uncomfortable down the road, I avoid lying at all costs.

What is Brainwashing?

Because of our long history of being brainwashed by leaders who need their constituents to believe in them, some of you may have been bred to believe that if you are rich and successful, you are more valuable as a human. If you believe this, then you also believe that not being rich and successful means that you are

not as valuable as a human being. Some of you may have been raised to believe that the lifestyles of the rich and famous are immoral and that money comes from the devil.

As a result, we have now created two separate groups of people, the rich and the poor. The rich hate the poor because most rich people don't want to defend their right to be able to have what they worked for their whole life. They are definitely not willing to just hand it over to people who obviously don't want it as much. In their eyes, if they would have wanted it, they would have worked for it. The poor hate the rich because most poor people work very hard for a living. They may not have had the same opportunity to climb the ladder of success, but most poor people do have a good work ethic. Not only do most poor people work hard, but their bosses are usually wealthy. It is very hard to come to work every day for minimal pay and work for a boss that *expects* your efforts rather than appreciates the fact that you are helping HIM make money.

The entertainment industry and the health and beauty industries are, in my opinion, the biggest brainwashing culprits. What's funny about what we see in television and the movies is that everyone will agree that what we see is not real. So it it's not real, why are we trying so hard to emulate what we see?! Most of us view opulence and wealth as some form of reward. A lot of us, even if we don't admit it, want to look like and act like people we see on TV and in the movies. The problem is that we don't. Does that make us less of a human being? We buy tabloids that confirm everything we believe to be true. Celebrities really are selfish and self-centered, they can't stay married, they get cheated on too – but *they* deserve it, they are terrible parents and on and on. If it weren't for the tabloids and the media, we would have no reason to believe that

we were any better. I think that out of some sort of primitive survival instinct, we created the idea of good and better, bad and worse to make ourselves feel better about ourselves when it was never necessary. All we had to do was know that everything is good, even if you are not living like Bill Gates. And, I bet if you asked Bill Gates he would tell you the same thing!

As far as the health and beauty industries, we must understand that what is considered beautiful nowadays is artificial because the standard changes from generation to generation. In the 80's, waifs were "in." Nowadays, ladies gotta' have some booty! When we run with these ever changing fads, we can never appreciate our true beauty. We are cheating ourselves because we are wasting our time on things that do not last. Money and looks alone do not provide us eternal happiness.

Not only do money and beauty not provide us with eternal happiness, they prevent some people from being happy at all. If we continue believing that those with money, attractiveness and/or fame are "better" than everyone else, the ones that are not "better" are not going to be happy. It is as simple as that. Why should anyone be unhappy over something as silly as an illusion? When we meet someone for the first time, do we study what they look like and assess them based on their external appearance? Or, do we talk to the person and try to appreciate who they truly are?

You may think these little trivial interactions don't really matter in the grand scheme of things, but we can plainly see that they very much do matter. The tiniest, most inconsequential circumstances are often the reason for feuds that spread out over decades, even centuries. Never trivialize the importance of

searching for someone's essence and making that the most important part of a person.

What's the solution? If society as a whole continues to believe the hype that possessions and artificial beauty are what is "good" to obtain, we are really cheating ourselves. We are leaving the door wide open for the ones "on top" who are making money on these false perceptions to continue on convincing us of their importance. They will, as long as we let them, continue to encourage us to invest our precious time and what little money we already have into gaining even more money and making sure our physical appearance is acceptable to others.

When we die we cannot take our money or our looks with us. Not only that, but if we would put less emphasis on these things, we would free up our time to develop more important ideas, like trying to wake up from our ancient stupor. We also have a terrible tendency of projecting our personal beliefs onto others and in this situation that causes a variety of problems.

Having money and a healthy physical appearance is important, but these two things have turned into two of the biggest manmade illusions, leaving us wide open to the effects of brainwashing.

Giving and Getting "Advice"

My ex-husband and I have two kids together and we have tried over the years to remain very civil, even family-like, for the sake of our children. My current husband set up some boundaries and I abide by them and everything has been

pretty much smooth sailing as far as the dynamic of this unusual situation.

However, because my current husband has not worked for the last 4 years and he is an avid marijuana smoker, I am unable to live with my children because I cannot afford to. They live with my ex. Now I am not going to waste even one more sentence defending myself to anyone. My kids don't live with me, their mother, so there. My kids live with their father because it is a better environment for them.

Do I think it's a good situation? There are good points and bad points about it. Do I think the situation would be better if they were able to live with me? There would be good points and bad points about it. Do you think I want to hear one more person tell me that my kids should live with me and then ask me why they don't?

Mind you, anyone who knows me will tell you that I don't take kindly to "friendly advice" unless I am sure its coming from a friend. Anyone who would insinuate that they care more about my children than I do by assuming they would somehow know better than me what is best for my children, would not be a friend of mine. So in this case, "friendly advice" is unfriendly. If, on the other hand, a trusted friend of mine was really concerned about my situation and suggested, without the use of judgment, that if I really wanted my kids to move back in with me and my husband, she could help me do it, this would be true "friendly advice." By offering her help, my friend has just given me advice that I really can consider that could actually change my situation. But that would be going above and beyond for a lot of people, so it's better not to give advice.

If you must insist on sharing your pearls of wisdom, I suggest that you try to be conscious of not triggering that person's Identity Defense System (IDS). This is a term that I created to describe why most of us don't like it when people don't agree with us.

Sometimes a person really does have the best of intentions when they are trying to persuade another person to listen to what they have to say. Often, you simply might feel like explaining to a loved one that they are getting upset for no reason. By saying this, you are also implying that you don't agree with your friend's reason for being upset. Now your friend has only one choice but to defend their truth. They do have a right to be upset. Who are you to tell your friend that you are more right about her being upset than they have the right to be?

People generally see themselves only through others' eyes. Meaning, whatever you are told about yourself that makes you feel good forms your identity. Whatever you are told about yourself that makes you feel defensive is igniting your IDS. What people say about you to your face and behind your back is most likely what comprises your personal identity. The problem with this is that people don't know what they are talking about most of the time and building your own personal identity based on other people's opinions about you is definitely a gamble.

Opinions are NOT "Facts"!!

We are not bound by other people's opinions. In fact, one of the funniest things I find is that people get offended if someone doesn't like the food they cooked.

If I cooked it and I think the food is good and I served it to you, why would it (or should it) bother me if the food didn't suit your taste? But yet, despite the fact that taste varies from person to person, so there is no accounting for it, most of us either get offended if someone dislikes our latest culinary creation or think that what they like or dislike sets the standards. I know this has to make reasonable sense to you, but there are a few arguments that you could make, such as, what about the great chefs of the world? Isn't their palate more refined, thereby making it "better"? If you think that having a refined palate amounts to being better then, yes, you have a point. But, my point is that "refined" does not equal "better."

Developing any sense to a higher level than the average person is definitely admirable and if I wanted to learn how to refine my sense of taste, I would take lessons from the masters. However, no one else can benefit from your developed sense of taste except you. You may gain greater enjoyment from the foods that you eat, but you don't have "better" taste as far as what another person will enjoy. You cannot be assured, even if you are proclaimed to be the best chef in the entire world, that everyone will enjoy *all* of your food *all* of the time. In fact, most people with a less refined sense of taste will not be able to appreciate the subtleties of upscale cuisine and may not even find it tasty at all.

Does that mean that if I don't like a dish that Daniel Boulard created, I have "bad" taste? That's for you to decide. I have decided that according to my reality, I like my taste and I trust my taste, so my taste is good to *me!* If someone doesn't like my food, my food tastes bad to them, but I still have good taste. Even if my food tastes bad to everybody, my taste remains good to me, because, I'm the only one that can taste what I taste. I am the only one who can

judge what tastes good to me. Following through with this idea, treating everyone the way that I would like to be treated means allowing others to their personal tastes as well.

Does that mean that I should keep serving meals that everybody hates because I like it and I have good taste? No. I would never want to feed people food that they dislike, so it pays to tell someone that you did not enjoy the meal so they can make something different next time. Now everybody's happy and no one is offended. What is wrong with building relationships in this manner?

But we don't. Instead we go to family weddings and complain about the quality of the food. And when the bride or groom ask if we are having a good time, we tell them we're having a great time and the food is great. So, what are you supposed to do...tell them that the food was bad? Of course not, they may get offended. Simply don't eat what you don't like and eat what you like or don't eat anything at all and get something later, but whatever you do – keep your mouth shut! It doesn't do anything but cause other people to start following in your footsteps and pretty soon everybody at the wedding is whispering about how bad the food is, and for what? Is anyone getting their money back? The food wasn't rotten, it wasn't to your taste. All that was accomplished by being verbal with your silly, unimportant opinion is now everyone at your table won't be able to enjoy their food in peace and the people who paid for the wedding will feel very disappointed. Did anything good come out of this scenario? I think not. So, when you are at a wedding and you don't like the food, keep it to yourself. And tell everyone else to also.

Just know that your opinion is your opinion and you are entitled to it, but no one is entitled to embarrass or berate someone. Remember to give other people the same respect that you expect.

Opinions and tastes are relative to the person holding them. Just because you hate anchovies doesn't mean that I have to hate anchovies. This philosophy, once practiced and *deeply* understood, goes a long way in helping most people deal with a lot of their problems. You must realize that you're entitled to every single last opinion and every single last taste that you have. Not only are you entitled to have them but you are entitled to change them as often as you want as well. You are, and so is everyone else!

Adopting other people's opinions without first taking the time to research their validity or even just simply *thinking* about ALL OF THE implications of that opinion, is called being brainwashed.

We are all brainwashed in one way or another.

Formalities & Etiquette

Formalities and rules of etiquette frustrate me very much. Some people, though they have every right to follow rules of formality and etiquette, insist that everyone follow those rules as well. My question is, what are the "rules" of etiquette?

These rules vary from person to person. For example, I could care less if someone sends me a thank you note for a gift I may have given them. However,

because I don't care about this issue, I am a little lax about sending thank you notes. I explain this to the people who know me well, but people who don't know me well have a hard time with my informality. But, I also really want to be able to live my life the way it is comfortable for me and if our ideas of comfortable clash, then, what should I say? I will seek out members of my own "soul group" who see my views as comforting and we shall co-exist peacefully.

I have nothing against people who insist on formalities, except that they won't like me. Does that offend me? Not at all, because truthfully I feel that formalities are a waste of time. To be honest with you, formalities are against my principles because they rely on someone telling someone else what they should be doing. Do I dislike people who have a passion for formalities? Not necessarily. I may not be the closest of friends with those who will inevitably take offense every time a gift is exchanged or invitations are handed out, but that doesn't mean I don't like them. That would mean that I wouldn't like the majority of civilized people, because most civilized people require some sort of formality between friends and family. It only means that unless they can understand my disinterest in any sort of formalities, they may be subject to what they consider offensive behavior.

Choosing to do something that may not be in your own best interest, such as going against your own principles, does not lead you towards your purpose in life. Your purpose in life has to feel right. If you don't feel "right," you are not moving towards your unique purpose. I particularly find it hard to deal with individuals who "enslave" others by insisting certain behaviors are acceptable while others are not.

In the past, when such individuals have tried to establish this master-slave relationship with me, I wouldn't immediately understand why I felt such intense animosity toward them. The feeling that I would get when someone would insinuate that their way was more desirable, smarter or cleaner than my way would drive me crazy. I did not understand at the time that it didn't matter that they thought their way was "better," because I should know that there is no "better" way. There is only the unique "path" that each human being decides to take. Insisting one way is better than another, irrespective of the fact that everyone is different and living with a different set of circumstances, is, to put it bluntly, ignorant.

Religion and Brainwashing

Religion is tricky. Everyone who is "religious" is sensitive to anti-religious talk. Anything "anti-religion" is considered blasphemy. Everyone who is not "religious," will have nothing to do with anything "religious" because, among other reasons, G-d is not a recognizable force on the earth. Secularists don't want to be controlled by a set of rules that were supposedly handed down to us by a "G-d" that may not exist.

This is precisely what I mean when I say that accepting and adopting opinions from one side of the story without at least thinking about the points made on the other side is a very ignorant thing to do. In this case, both sides of this millennia long controversy clearly have points that cannot be denied.

Religionists believe that the almighty G-d is the ruler of the Universe and we, his lowly creations, have to worship him the way he wants us to if we want to be

rewarded in the world to come. This understanding of G-d leaves a person with no choice but to avoid anything that even sounds slightly blasphemous lest they go to hell for their lack of obedience.

Secularists do not understand why anyone would blindly follow rules that were given thousands of years ago by a thing called “G-d” that does not makes His presence known and expects His followers to blindly serve Him – or else.

This is the point where you must think about your view of “religion” and decide what makes sense to you. I want to imply that organized religion, in some cases, definitely seems to have ulterior motives, but I know this is a very offensive thing for some people to hear. So I am not going to imply it, but if you are serious about making an “educated” decision about religion, please read about all of them and their history and you will understand that politics and religion, unfortunately in this case, do integrate and the result is that we sometimes cannot tell the difference between the two.

The real test is getting over the fear of asking questions about something you were taught never to ask about. Most of us, if we had a religious education of any kind, are afraid to ask questions because we were taught that we just have to believe. Asking questions means that you have doubt and doubt prevents you from having true faith.

Food for Thought

Questions are the only way you can build your faith.

In order to figure out why we are here and what our special purpose is, we have to ask questions. We have the right as human beings to believe that we somehow matter in the Universe. Everyone we ask may say things like “yes, if you do this or that” or “sure, if you think like this or that,” but all they are really saying is that they think they know a better path to the feeling of being integral to the Universe. They want to help us find that path to a purpose and the only way they know how is the way they are trying to explain to us. But it is your responsibility to ask questions and try to find answers on your own. Someone else cannot be responsible for your understandings. If something does not make sense to you, don't just sit there and accept it as true, do your research. Be responsible for yourself.

Conclusion

We have to remember that we all need each other in order to understand ourselves. Other people reflect behavior back to you and you decide if this is behavior you would like to emulate or not. Sometimes, unfortunately, we forget that some behavior we would never consciously decide to emulate and do so anyway. Further, one reason we choose to act in a way that we really don't want to is because someone or a group of people have brainwashed us into thinking that certain unloving behavior should be imitated so that we may feel accepted. When you behave unlovingly in order to become acceptable to others, you have just switched the power of your allegiance to a different source – a source that is outside of love.

Just to put it into perspective, a lot of times we need others to make ourselves appear more “attractive” than we really are, or what we think we really are. When we allow others to influence our behavior, we are admitting to them that their way is more “attractive” than ours and we are giving our energy away to nothingness. Our species has done this for so many generations that stopping people from deluding themselves all at once is probably not going to happen. You can see with your own eyes what buying into the brainwashing concept of “he who *has* more *is* more” has done to us. All you need to do is spend 15 minutes thinking about it. You can also realize that the idea of “better” or “worse” is also destroying us. Any notion that creates possible opposition is not leading us into the harmony that the Life Force of the Universe desires us to live in. Opposition cannot demonstrate unity. Anything that is not unified is not in tune with the Universe.

Create your own reality and live inside of it with people and not in response to people.

If we are aware that the Universe has survived great global catastrophes in the past and still keeps on ticking and people have survived wars and hate and we are still alive to tell our kids about it – do you really believe that there will be an end to the cycle of life without first discovering an obvious purpose to our existence for billions of years? Does that sound logical to you? Trust the Universe.

My life is exactly the way it should be. I pray every day that I will receive exactly what I need to fulfill my purpose and I trust that my prayers are being answered. It's easy. What if something bad happens you ask? Will I still have the same attitude? Well that is a great question and a hard one to answer. I am going to choose my words very carefully here so that I don't, by accident, confuse what I am trying to say. "Bad" things have happened to me. They happen to me all the time. I cry a lot. I have a hard time coping with difficulties just like everyone else. I ask "why me?" quite often. But after I have my pity party, I realize that there is something bigger and better out there that I just don't understand and can't see, because my perspective of the world is the same as an ant's perspective of a one mile circumference surrounding it.

My journey is going to carry me to my purpose with bumps along the way. I kind of imagine hard times like a trip to Hawaii where maybe the plane was grounded in Siberia for a while. Sounds bad, but there are people who live for long periods of time in Siberia without knowing that eventually they are going

to end up in Hawaii. They live there and deal with it. It may be uncomfortable, but since that's the situation and there is no way out, they make the best of it. But if you add to the mix that they will be in Hawaii as soon as they conquer whatever it is they have to learn in Siberia, and whatever they learn in Siberia is going to enhance their stay in Hawaii, don't you think it's possible that they will make it their business to get the job done quickly and with as few errors as possible?

PART II

Introduction

Part two focuses on pivotal moments in history and in the Bible, as well as new discoveries in science that prove that reality is what we choose to see.

There is so much historical data, that someone who does not study history as a profession, does not have the qualifications to decide what is historical “fact” and what is historical theory. I contend that all history is theory because the record keeper wrote according to their own perspective. I am sure that if you read historical records of Columbus discovering America written by Columbus, those records would be very different than the ones written by the Indians.

Religion is more complex. I am not willing to dismiss religious writings as opinion or theory. Our way of life and culture, as well as life and culture around the world, is heavily influenced by the Bible. Whether this is good or bad is not the issue. It is the hold that religion has over the free will of people that is my concern.

Quantum theory is the theoretical basis of modern physics that explains the nature and behavior of matter and energy on the atomic and subatomic level. Again, I am not a scientist, but if you are unaware of how quantum physics influences our lives, I’m going to fill you in on some astounding quantum theories.

Simply put, quantum theory implies that matter does not really exist except in an undefined state of potentialities. Matter does not become “real” until a mind

interacts with the particles that make up matter and believes them to be “real.”

Quantum physics has actually revealed that your every conscious and subconscious thought creates your reality.

This may sound hokey, but that is what quantum physics teaches us. The implications are astounding and definitely provide substantial evidence that we are in complete control of *our own* perspective of reality.

Science, religion and spirituality may have taken different paths, but now they all lead to the same truth.

This is our world and we have to stick together to make it a place that we want to live in.

Division creates conflict. Conflict creates wars. Wars create destruction and death.

Unity creates harmony. Harmony creates joy. Joy creates love. Love creates peace.

Which one will you choose?

Religion – A New Perspective

I don't have to tell you that religion is a very touchy subject. I come from a traditional Jewish family, however, my father converted from Jehovah's Witness to Judaism. His prior beliefs always added a little color to my impression of religion, but Judaism has spiritually impacted me most deeply.

I went to Israel after high school for a year and a lot of the friends that I made were from Brooklyn. I had a boyfriend in Israel that I became obsessed with and soon followed him back to New York. Needless to say, I broke up with him long ago, but I never left Brooklyn.

In the last 19 years, I have learned so much about my religion - much more than the 12 years I spent studying about Judaism in Yeshiva. I found out a few things that strengthened my connection with Judaism, as well as a few things that shattered my pristine image of Judaism. Later I will discuss all the strong, innately wonderful aspects of Judaism because I truly believe all religions are based on the same vital principals as Judaism, they are just practiced differently.

The problem with any organized religion is that the dogmatic beliefs espoused by its leaders sometimes seem to contradict each other. For example, all religions allude to the fact that G-d is merciful. But what kind of mercy is it to create us with our desires and then punish us for having them? These two pieces of information that the three main religions all agree on are contradictory. Am I to believe that I am more merciful than G-d himself because I would never give

something to someone and then a day later yell at them for having it? If I am more merciful than G-d, and mercy is what I need, why would I choose to worship a G-d that can't provide what I need (mercy) because I already have more of it than He does? This same G-d also claims to have given us a gift – free will. I don't even have a right, according to dogmatic religious beliefs to use my free will and choose not to believe in this G-d. This is what leads to confusion and could ultimately lead to making poor, self-destructive decisions. When I think about all of this and try to come up with an answer as to why I should remain religious or orthodox (as I would have described myself), I have a very hard time coming up with that answer. The answer has to make sense and in my head, this doesn't.

For some reason, religious (or orthodox) Jews generally identify religion specifically with rituals that they adhere to strictly and insist that the entire religion rely on these rituals for its existence. Despite this fact, Judaism has such incredible sources and testaments that really explain the real root of this religion. At the same time, religious Jews will also tell you that you must have the utmost faith in Hashem (G-d). If I am to have faith in something I cannot see, hear or understand with any of my physical senses, how does telling me that I have to do something in order to protect the religion from collapse, lead me to faith in an unseen G-d? Shouldn't that mysterious G-d that I keep being told that I should have faith in help out with keeping his religion alive? If He can't do it, how can I? So now, not only do I have to have faith in an invisible G-d who shows less mercy to people than I do, but the religion that I choose to show my faith through insists that my faith doesn't even matter unless I perpetuate the religion through my deeds. If the religion itself is necessary to show us the nature of our G-d and how to live peacefully in this world, why are there peaceful people who

are not identified with any single religion? Why are there ethically immoral people who claim to be our “religious” leaders? My answer to this question is a lengthy one, but one that may change your perspective about religion.

During the last few years of my life, I have done a lot of soul searching. I, like mostly everyone else, need to feel a sense of purpose. Religious lifestyles offer that sense of purpose to their followers by teaching them that something called “G-d” will always be there for you in times of trouble as long as you have faith in this “G-d.” The problem is that religious rhetoric does not offer an all inclusive definition of G-d, and leaves its followers hanging as to what kind of G-d they are worshipping. To some its sounds like the kind of G-d that they are being asked to worship is very fickle and really doesn’t care about them very much. It sounds like a human version of a god; one that intimidates, oppresses, terrorizes and prosecutes. Unless, of course, you do exactly what he says you have to do and then, maybe, you will be rewarded with a “good” life.

Think about this for at least a few moments. What do we consider a “good” life? Two new cars, a beautiful house with gorgeous furnishings, great clothes and dinner and a movie once a week, right? Wrong. We know from our experiences that this is not a true definition of what a “good” life is because many people in the world have this and their lives are not necessarily “good.” We have no idea what a “good” life is. Is your life “good”? Would everyone consider your life “good” from all angles at all times? If there is “bad” in your life, does that mean you are a “bad” person? Does the Bible delineate what a “good” life is? I believe it does, but we have chosen to ignore the message and let the rhetoric define it for us. At this point in time, do you think it is possible to recreate a new definition for what a “good” life is or should be? I think that

not only is it possible, but we better start defining it fast because the old view of what a “good” life is just doesn’t cut it anymore.

Let’s begin by trying to chisel out some sort of broad definition of what a “good” life may be. First of all, let’s talk about what emotions come up through our experiences. We may feel excited, happy, proud, silly, empathetic, sympathetic, merciful, forgiving and thankful, amongst other types of “good” emotions. We may also feel a few “bad” emotions, such as sadness, anger, jealousy, denial, guilt, depression and fear. In my opinion, using our emotions to define whether something is “good” or “bad” is an acceptable decision making method. As we can see, emotions, once we analyze them, can pretty easily be divided into “good” and “bad” categories.

Secondly, once we can agree that we would like to maintain only good emotions, we can now figure out what actions to take to ensure that only good emotions will be brought forward by all parties involved. Actions are what we do here in our physical world to cause any sort of movement towards the spiritual path or towards the physical path. Here is where we make our choice using our gift of free will. If our actions match our desire for good emotions, we will always use our free will correctly. A good example of this would be as follows:

Imagine that you live with a roommate that is extremely messy and you are very organized and neat. In every other situation you and your roommate get along famously. However, everyday is an emotional battlefield because you live with this person and you are not happy with your living conditions. You don’t want to be mean or insensitive, but unless a peaceful solution is found, you know

there is going to be trouble. You have tried to talk to your roommate, but you can see that keeping their stuff neat *for you* is impossible. What do you do? Here is what I would do. I would immediately recognize that the emotions that I am having are uncomfortable, therefore undesirable. Undesirable=bad. I would like to perpetrate only good emotions, or, ones that I am comfortable with. I am not content with creating an uncomfortable environment for my roommate by being angry and upset all the time, because we live together. If my roommate is unhappy, I can rest assured that it won't take long for them to turn the tables on me and make me uncomfortable. The way I see it, I have four choices:

Clean up after my roommate, even though it is not my mess.

Don't clean up after their mess, and try to ignore it, after all, it isn't my mess.

Get a maid to clean the entire apartment and split the cost with your roommate.

Move out to avoid the emotional backlash.

Any one of these choices would be fine, depending on the emotional outcome. After spending time contemplating which choice would make you and your roommate the happiest (a good emotion), make a decision and act on it. By consciously making a well thought out decision, you nearly eliminate the possibility of unexpected negative backlash. You can more easily identify positive and negative emotions and adjust accordingly, which, in most cases, will bring forth positive results. This is a simple example of how to make a wise decision that will safely limit negative results.

Some of the hardest decisions to make are the ones when "bad" or negative emotions that you are feeling cannot be conclusively identified. You are not sure why you have feelings of insecurity regarding religion. You are not

confident that you have made all the right decisions when it comes to the ones you love the most, your children. You are unsure if you truly love your husband.

Think about what you are scared of and what you feel guilty about. Guilt comes from two places. Sometimes guilt comes from unwarranted blame, which comes from the guilt of others being transferred to a potential victim that they can successfully blame. Another form of guilt is actual guilt because you honestly did something that you feel is wrong and are afraid of future consequences. I have to add one more form of guilt but I can not say there are three forms because this form of guilt is hidden from the one(s) who should be feeling it, so essentially we don't really know it is there. This is the denial of guilt. Those who experience denial of guilt are some of the most tortured souls. They are so afraid of the consequences of their deeds that they literally justify everything they do. When something "bad" happens to these tortured souls, they interpret it as a cruel and unusual punishment, seeing themselves as victims. Now, this is the scary part. Once we humans are the victims of a crime, most of us forever avenge the perpetrator. In some cases we don't know who the perpetrator is so we assume it is the famous "G-d" that everyone talks about - the king in the sky waiting to punish us until the end. This is when we start to make the choices, whether right or wrong, that will make us or break us.

I speak about these souls as if I can't identify with them. However, I should let you in on a little secret. I am one of these souls and you are one of these souls. We all play the victim in one form or another, we just don't know we are doing it. Yes, it is kind of like a mental disease.

I am here to let you know though that it really isn't that scary and the cure for this disease is within us. The time will come for each and every one of us to find that cure within ourselves. Our species has not been ready, until now, to accept that G-d, or as I like to refer to as the Life Force of the Universe (or in scientific terms - energy), put this plan in motion so that we would have the tools we needed to prepare ourselves to live in a world of peace and harmony. The Universe is a symphony that, for years, has been warming up and practicing for the concert of a lifetime. If we would just stop and take a deep breath, enjoying the ocean or a mountain view, we would be able to actually feel the harmony that life is meant to be.

To cure this mental disease, we need to digest a form of energy that is simply digested for some, but for others, may cause a feeling of being poisoned for a while. In order to recognize the denial of our guilt so that we may deal with it appropriately, we must learn to understand those areas of our lives we perceive as "bad." We need to sit down and identify all those "bad" things and turn them around. Go through them item by item and pick our brain as to why we believe these things are "bad" and then GET RID OF THEM!

One rule before you begin this process; you must understand and come to terms with the idea that no one and nothing is innately "bad." We all want the same thing, a peaceful and joyful existence. The energy that I am speaking about is a life giving and sustaining energy. Call it whatever you want to call it, but it's there and it wants peace on this planet more than all of us put together because peace on this planet is what is necessary to keep the Universe balanced. If you want peace and believe in peace as an option, this energy that you may think is "bad" can easily be turned into "good." You will be able to understand that the

intention of the Universe is good and therefore there *can be no bad*. You will then understand that anything that you have done in the past that you perceived as “bad” was really just a learning experience. You will at this point be able to take responsibility for anything that you may have done wrong while you were “asleep,” and accept whatever minor consequences there might be (in relation to what it was that you did) and move on.

Faith is necessary here so that you can feel assured that any consequence that you may have to face will be severely lessened once you accept the guilt, rid yourself of it and accept whatever consequence is sentenced. You see, faith is very necessary, because ultimately, our faith is the energy that guides us. If we don't have faith in everything we do, the lack of faith or the lack of the guiding energy leads us astray. We simply get lost. Picture it as an actual light guiding our path and when we forget that it is there and think we can do without it, it disappears, leaving our path pitch black.

When our path is black and the light is hidden, we are not able to discern which way to go. Since we live in a physical world, most of our wants and presumed needs are physical. We are led to believe that if we are good Jews, good Muslims, good Christians or good Catholics we will be rewarded with some sort of physical pleasure, such as a nice house on the Jones' s block or sex with 70 young virgins. Now, what if you are not given your share in physicality and you think you have tried to do everything right according to the way G-d would want you to? Are you going to feel that G-d doesn't love you anymore, because your expectations of G-d were not met? Are you going to feel as if G-d did not live up to His/Her part of the deal? The choice of a lifetime is to be made at this

point? Do you think G-d is victimizing you – or – do you think there might be a plan that is bigger than you and your so-called needs?

Understanding that being concerned with our “needs” is extremely petty when the Universe has bigger problems at hand is the first step to freeing ourselves from torture. This sounds harsh, but it is not. It is the truth and we all need to realize this immediately. Our “needs” should be limited to necessities such as food, water, clean clothing and shelter. When we can understand what it is that we really need, only then can we start our journey to freedom. We have to perceive that although we may want the latest Gucci Handbag and we may want a new car, we really do not *need* it. That does not under any circumstance mean that if you have these material possessions you are bad or that you should give them away. Absolutely not! If you are feeling this way this is an example of the first type of guilt I described above - the kind that someone else relieves themselves of and transfers to someone else with blame. Everyone is entitled to their possessions. Possessions are not evil or bad. People are not evil or bad. When people rely on possessions as opposed to the Life Force of the Universe to make them happy, that would be what is called “bad.” By “bad” I mean, without energy or light from the Life Force of the Universe. If you don’t rely on the Universe to provide you with your needs, It will leave it to you. After all, that is what you insist is your reality.

In simple terms, if you are ruled by possessions, then those possessions have the potential to rule over you. If you are ruled by the Life Force of the Universe, then the Life Force of the Universe will rule over you. The difference between the two forces is that one force is not a force at all, it is a black hole that sucks you in deeper and deeper until you eventually lose yourself. The other force is

the Life Force and wants you to initiate peace and harmony into the Universe so that the kingdom of the Life Force of the Universe can continue to exist into eternity.

In order to understand that even Hitler had good intentions from the purpose of the soul, we must understand that we are all infected with the same disease Hitler had; only his soul, from one reincarnation to another, apparently, was never able to understand and accept the cure. To Hitler, believing that there was a power greater than his was like tasting a bitter pill. He would waste absolutely no time with the thought that G-d was more powerful than he. His guilt would never be exposed because he denied it. We don't know why some people become more terrible than others, but there is a reason and it is not because "G-d" wants to punish us. It is because, as I said before, we are rehearsing for the greatest symphony in the history of the Universe. We don't know what the violins sound like on one side of the room while we are playing the tuba on the other. Once we know realize that we need a conductor to guide us with our cues, we can perform. Up until now, most of us have been trying to make music together without a conductor and it hasn't worked out very well. Good thing for us that the conductor has been patient and is ready to work with us toward a common goal.

I know that it may seem that I have gone off topic, but my goal is to make you as comfortable with accepting the idea that our view of religion is not as black and white as we want to believe. Repeating the same idea in different ways is necessary so that understanding is fully possible. The subject of religion particularly requires the speaker or the teacher to be sensitive to the concept of G-d, or everything that is being said will be dismissed as blasphemous.

Please digest the concepts that you have already read and try to bring your heart to a place where you will find it comfortable to hear me say that our definition of G-d may be altogether wrong.

Food for Thought

Although most of our religious leaders throughout history had holy intentions, we must understand that the human side spills out of all of us sometimes – no matter who we are – and the consequences of human error cannot be avoided. The Life Force of the Universe will eventually, out of necessity, expose all human error and lead us on the right path.

I want to go over an essential point that needs to be discussed for the benefit of the world that we live in. I experienced a particularly rude awakening after moving to Brooklyn. I realized that just because someone looked a certain way, it did not mean that their actions lived up to their image. Because there is already so much anti-Semitism, as well as general unnecessary racism, I am not going to describe specifically how I was duped by Jewish impersonators, but I am going to say there are impersonators and infiltrators everywhere and in every religion. It is your obligation to be astute enough to recognize who they are.

Some religious leaders have unintentionally (and sometimes intentionally) misled us followers with regard to religion. Many have intentionally removed the spirituality from religion so that a system could be implemented to control the masses and maintain power. Other religious leaders understood that we were not ready for the enlightenment that we are ready for now. The religious

leaders with good intentions led their followers in the right direction because the ultimate intention was to reach the final solution, and it needed to be done in small steps. Those same leaders from every generation are here now to help us understand the next step. They will obviously not be able to reveal themselves to us for whatever reason because at this point in our development as human beings, we are not collectively ready for this. It is up to you to believe that the information is out there and if you are looking for it, it will find you. These leaders will make sure of it since that was their intention all along. As for the other leaders with self-absorbed intentions, unless during one of their lifetimes they have come to terms with their guilt and are able to move on to their purpose, the denial of guilt over numerous life cycles will eventually drain them of the energy of the Life Force and will lead them into a black hole (symbolic) which will ultimately suck them in. Let me assure you that getting out will be a bitch!

You might say that this knowledge works against you because you really don't know who to trust. Exactly! You only have one thing you can trust - The Life Force of the Universe. You must believe in a Force greater than yourself and accept that this Force only cares about the Universe as a whole. It does not care about your petty needs. You must be willing to give up the idea of "needing" material things and accept that the only thing you need is faith. Please understand that a "need" or "want" of material positions in and of itself is not the problem. The problem is relying on any human being, as opposed to the Life Force of the Universe, to give you what you think you "need" or "want." If you do this, you are setting yourself up for disappointment. Remember Psalm 146:3 "Do not trust in princes or in mortal man, in whom there is no salvation."

Accordingly, we can rest assured that as long as we maintain a simple belief in a Force that is larger, more intelligent and way stronger than we are, we can commence our journey into our destiny, which is ultimately free will. Once we realize that there is a greater Life Force working with us, we have to be aware that we are not capable of understanding everything all at once. We need to take small steps down the path of our journey. When you accept that you just don't know, new information is awarded to you; information that you feel is right. This is how you know that you have maintained faith. Faith does not let you down. If your faith is true, it is true to you.

Only you can decide if your faith is real or not, and, believe me, it is not so easy to tell. One minute you might advise a friend that is having some sort of problem in their life to have faith and everything will be all right and the next minute you're complaining that the economy is going to collapse unless the government does something.

Faith has to be complete. Faith has to be in everything in all times, not only sometimes. This is the first and foremost work that we need to do. No other type of work is beneficial unless this work is done first. Once you accomplish this work, all other work is enhanced. You are working from a different energy level. The new energy is directly from the source of all energy, the Life Force Itself.

I hope that you understand that I am trying to the best of my uneducated ability to explain these concepts on paper. These are concepts that I have been made aware of through my personal experiences. I can't really describe what the energy feels like or if it looks like something or really anything at all. All I can

explain to you is that the minute that I fully accepted the Life Force of the Universe as the source of all power and I deeply understood that the intention of this Life Force is to manifest peace and love throughout its creation, I was happier. Did my life physically change in any way? Not really, although I did lose a few pounds. The change that you are looking for is not a physical change so I therefore cannot explain it to you. It is a personal spiritual connection that you feel, an intuition that something feels right and therefore, loving. You have to find it for yourself, as I am sure that for each person the experience is different and therefore cannot be explained the same way.

Part of my problem growing up was my confusion about Judaism. Now, so I don't offend anyone, I would like to state for the record that I believe that to be a Jew true to the essence of our religion, we should, for the benefit of our soul, observe the rituals that accompany the religion. But, before you can have a negative opinion about the Jewish lifestyle, you must witness a Jewish family celebrating Shabbat.

Shabbat lasts 24 hours (Friday night until Saturday night), although the preparation for this day usually starts on Wednesday. Menu planning and grocery shopping has to be done by Thursday morning so that the *balebuste* (lady of the house) can start cooking and baking for the Holy Day. The meals consist of tons of food, tons of family and friends and tons of singing and laughing. After praying in synagogue all morning on Saturday, the *balebust* (man of the house) comes home to make Kiddush (a prayer on wine to sanctify the day) for the family. After the meal on Saturday, the family thanks G-d for the food and everyone takes a Shabbat rest.

Every Jewish family that celebrates Shabbat with love proves why we are so attached to our laws. The laws affect our people in a very positive way, if kept with the right intention. Every law in the Jewish religion, if understood from a certain perspective, not only encourages peaceful interpersonal relationships, but enforces them. You can understand that this is true when you witness how beautiful and therapeutic a Shabbat can be for a family and their friends, if it is celebrated from the heart.

I myself struggle with this as my life circumstances are not inviting me to be open to this obligation. Throughout my first marriage, my ex and I observed the Jewish rituals moderately. We would be considered, to those of you who understand the terminology, “modern orthodox.”

To make a long story short, I was pretty fearful that if I didn't keep to the system, G-d was going to punish me. The problem was that I set myself up for disaster. I wasn't completely orthodox. I cheated sometimes- here and there. I left the TV on over the Sabbath so my kids could be entertained. Once in a while, I carried an item outside on the Sabbath even though I knew I wasn't supposed to. I wore pants, which according to the orthodox Jews, was strictly prohibited. I did a lot of little things wrong as well as a couple of bigger things.

Eventually, I married Eyal who was not orthodox at all. Now I had a choice to make. Judaism was (and still is) very important to me, but this guy that I love and that seems to love me was (and still is) also very important to me. Did G-d want to me to suffer just for the sake of suffering? When I married Eyal, I knew that I was not going to be as involved with Judaism as I was when I was married to Melech. I loved Eyal and I chose Eyal instead of the Jewish rituals. Am I

going to be punished for this choice? Many religious Jewish people insist that I will be.

This is where my questions and confusion began, and here is the reason why. When Melech and I were near divorce, I remember distinctly how emotionally I prayed for someone to love me. I remember the pain of not understanding why it felt like I was all alone on this earth and why G-d was not helping me. I prayed that G-d would send me a man who would love me. Eyal came to me soon after and I thought my prayers were answered, but he wasn't religious. The confusion started setting in. What does G-d want from me? Why did I feel so confused about the legitimacy of my religion? Why would G-d put me in a situation like this, having to choose between a man that I knew was going to be a devoted husband (which is all I wanted) or religious rituals that really didn't mean anything to me emotionally.

Why are we all so convinced that our religion, if we have one that we follow, is the absolute correct one *AND* that everything we think we know about it is taught to us from an accurate perspective? More than that, how could we possibly think, if we assume we are thinking sanely, that not only are we absolutely correct about this, but that any other person with any other set of beliefs are doomed to hell for eternity – unless, of course, that person decides to switch his belief system to the “right” one, which is only yours.

Would this hold up in court? It sounds pretty one-sided. I would probably ask for a defense attorney in this case. Since there is no defense attorney to consult when it comes to religion, because no one on this planet could say for sure whether you are innocent or guilty, you can only create your own defense

attorney. You can fashion your own set of laws based on concrete goals that you set for yourself while always keeping in mind the main goal we are striving for, what we envision a greater life to be.

Whether that be here on this planet, somewhere far away on a different planet, somewhere in the heavens, or maybe some of you love pain so much, you require hell for yourself, whatever you choose, that is the goal we are all seeking. No matter what religion we come from, we are seeking eternal bliss and happiness, according to how you define these ideas. If you believe you have to attain happiness through your works then determine what you have to do and make sure you do it. In most religions, there are some loosely defined rules that we are instructed to follow to ensure our happiness. I firmly believe, however, that we each have an obligation to study whatever those books are that have set up the boundaries of our respective religions. Or, the other option is to not claim to know what these books say, because what they say is different depending on who is reading them. I'm sure I don't even have to remind you about how many "ways" there are around the world just to drink a cup of coffee. Is there a right way to drink a cup of coffee? Don't laugh, although I really do think this is funny, but some people will tell you that there actually is a right way to drink coffee. Knock, Knock – for you there might be. For me, any way will do as long as I don't throw up or get the runs.

I know that a lot of what I am saying right now may be uncomfortable for some of the more religious or orthodox people who may be reading this book. I realize that this may not sound right to you. It would never have sounded right to me a few years ago either. I love Judaism and I believe that the text has so much to offer every person in the world. I only wish that one day I would be

able to deeply observe all of the commandments that Hashem, or as I like to refer to as the Life Force of the Universe, has commanded. On the contrary, I have not been able to and I blame that on life circumstances. So technically, you could say I blame it on the Life Force of the Universe. If you look at it like that, that is what I am doing, but it doesn't sound that way in my head.

I do not allow guilt to screw with my head. If I had kept hold of the guilt of not being capable of being a "perfect" Jew or a *Tzadeket* (a righteous woman), I would still be having nervous breakdowns every month. I could not bare the responsibility of all the things I had to do. It became too much for me and one day, I finally broke. From that day forward, I have been a new person with a new set of principles that guide me and I do not budge. Ask anyone!

Just to clarify, this is not the same thing as justifying something that I did wrong to another person. When we do something wrong to others, we cannot go into their head and help them analyze the situation so they can see it more clearly. Rather, we are subject to their interpretation of what we did. If they think that what we did was done with malicious intent, we cannot make them think otherwise. The only thing we can do is accept that we made them feel that way and apologize and, hopefully, not do it again.

In this situation, when there is no one to apologize to, and we don't get a response as to whether or not we really did something wrong, we have to make that decision ourselves and be comfortable with that decision.

I decided that the Life Force of the Universe wanted me to be happy and sent me Eyal, my loving husband, as an answer to my prayer. I don't believe that G-d,

or the Life Force of the Universe, plays tricks with my feelings. The Life Force of the Universe is not purposely trying to confuse me so that my devotion to It will become stronger, which is the only way to explain why I was sent a man that I think truly loves me only to have to pick between him and my faith in G-d.

What I really want to bring forth from all of this is that religion is beautiful in the right hands. In the wrong hands, it becomes dangerous. In other words, religion can only be observed with loving intention, otherwise religion turns condemnatory. When religionists become judgmental, the essence of the religion is lost.

We must think about all of these concepts and understand that we can't trust everything everyone tells us. We have to use a little common sense and intuition. Depending on the context in which you are discussing a topic from the Bible, the Torah or the Quran, the same text could be interpreted many different ways. Moreover, this is not what I am saying and asking you to believe; this is common knowledge. Any Priest, Rabbi or Sufi will tell you that this is true. The only problem is that it is not publicized. It is considered secret knowledge from secret ancient text that was not available to the masses. There is a very good reason for this. If this knowledge would have been available to the masses, no one would have been able to understand it the way it was intended to be understood.

Nowadays, when you walk through the Metaphysical section in Borders and the New Age section in Barnes & Noble, you can see how much information about the mystical side of each religion has become available. This is also something that we should understand. Everything happens for a reason. It is no

coincidence that it is easy to obtain information about anything nowadays. We need to be informed. This is the work we need to do right now. We need to understand our religions on a different level, find the intention of the religion and live up to it however we can. There is a purpose to our lives and religion is trying to get us there, but we need to be introduced to our purpose slowly. Don't deny that you feel that there is something bigger that you are awakening to and that this is the reason why you are even reading this book. You can feel it and so can I! Now all we have to do is understand it, or at least try to.

Since all three major religions accept the Old Testament as a Holy Source and because I was raised with an education in Judaism and its books, I chose some stories from Genesis as an illustration of how ancient texts can be viewed from more than one perspective.

If you insist on accepting the literal translation of the Bible, that is fine, because we must be able to assume that the stories in the Bible really did happen. However, to limit the translation to a literal one can cause you to overlook the deeper meanings that actually bring you one step closer to understanding our collective purpose. For example:

We struggle with the concept that G-d created the world in just six days before He rested. But science tells us that billions of years have passed since the big bang. There are so many understandings inside of this, someone could write a whole different book just on that topic alone (and same goes for each and every verse of the Bible).

The basic understanding is that there were simply six days of Creation. Great. So what? Why do I need to know that information? Now if you want to answer that question, you have to start thinking in terms of why six days would be an important piece of information. There could be a million answers to this question, but I want to tell you one thing. I am not by any means an authority on Kabbalah, but I would like to briefly and simply describe some general concepts. These matters are complex and I do not claim to be an expert. With that being said, I am going to keep it simple.

Seven represents completion. What is very interesting when we realize that there is a consensus between mystics of all religions that this is a true statement, we can now understand that just researching this one statement could take years, if not a lifetime.

What I am trying to bring forth is the idea that there is no mundane, unnecessary information inside anyone's Bible. Whatever was sent forth into this world was sent by the main "Man" himself, the Life Force of the Universe.

Now, let me repeat, just to remind you – if we are to maintain faith and trust in the Life Force of the Universe, we cannot do anything else but believe that everything in this world is sent here from the Life Force of the Universe for a specific reason.

The most interesting part of this plea to humanity is that this is exactly what all religions teach us. They all root in some sort of faith in a higher power. How can we get it through our thick skulls that without trust there cannot be true and heart felt faith? We have to accept the fact that right now, we don't understand

or know anything for sure. Right now all we can do is trust the process and stick to our principles like glue, whatever those principles may be.

Now, if we would like to continue understanding only the literal translation of what most consider one of the most holy, if not the holiest, books that we know of to date, we for sure would have lost out on the opportunity to research what “completion” is in relation to our Universe and why the number “7” represents this concept. We would have been lost inside of the six day discrepancy and unable to get out. Kind of like that black hole I was talking about earlier. I say let the discrepancy go and move on to bigger and better things.

Another confusing story is the whole tree and snake act. We all know it. G-d put a naked Adam in the Garden of Eden, gave him a naked female helper (which is an entirely different book) and told him that he may eat from all the trees in the Garden, except the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*. It’s already mysterious and nothing even happened. Couldn’t the Life Force of the Universe leave well enough alone (another whole different book)?

And on the story goes: Eve, Adam’s “helper,” finds a snake that convinces her to eat whatever fruit that grew on that tree (you guessed it...a whole different book). Here is where it gets good. The snake asked Eve what she knew about this very interesting tree. She informs him that she was instructed by G-d not to touch the tree or else she would die (whatever that could have possibly meant to her at that time). The snake of course saw an opportunity and went for it, as any good snake would. His obvious response to Eve was that G-d lied to her because G-d did not want to share information with her. The snake proved this by forcing her to touch the tree so she could see that she would not “die.” Once

she saw that she did not “die,” she took a bite of the fruit and gave some to Adam. Big Mistake. Whoops.

We, according to all of the literal interpretations of our religions, are paying dearly for Eve’s mistake ever since.

Now, come on people! Do I really have to insist that there is more to this story than meets the eye? WAKE UP!! This cannot be taken literally so easily. You might want to, but even if you try, let me ask you these questions and you can only answer them according to the literal translation of the text:

Why did it only matter after they ate the fruit of the tree that they were naked? If you think it was simply because they ate forbidden fruit from a tree, great. But now, please explain to me why the fruit was so special and what kind of tree it was. Why were we forbidden to eat from it? The Tree was called the “Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.” It sounds like we STILL have a lot to learn from this tree. I suggest that maybe, FOR OUR OWN SAFETY, G-d knew that the concept of “good” and “evil” could end up being a little dangerous for our simple minds and tried to help us avoid the trauma of learning about it. But fate (the Life Force of the Universe) has a way of making sure we learn all the lessons we need to learn, exactly when we need to learn them.

Why would G-d, who is supposed to be, according to all of the religions, our role model when it comes to truth and justice, intentionally put an obstacle in our path that would impede our progress as human beings? You may want to insist that it was a “test.” Exactly what was the purpose of this test? It ended in failure and now we are here, thousands of years later and not one bit smarter. Wasn’t it called the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil?! Yes, death came

into existence at this point according to the literal text, but according to the same text, Adam and Eve had never experienced death up until now so how would they know that they didn't want it? Why would a merciful G-d, who wants the best for his creation, tease his creation with an incomplete concept of death and use it to entice Adam and Eve into "sinning." In other words, it would be the same as trying to explain to my twelve year old daughter that she better stay far away from a surprise I had for her that, as far she knows, based on the information that I provided, she might never be able to open. And even further, telling her that her punishment for opening it would be a spiritual awakening. Why would a parent do this to a child? Food for thought....Maybe G-d knew that we needed to eat from that tree of "knowledge of good and evil" in order for us to evolve even though He also knew what kind of suffering we would have to deal with until we understood this concept the way we were supposed to. Maybe, (I am only considering the possibility) just maybe, G-d, because He really is all good, was actually torn in his decision to force us to eat from this tree that was necessary to eat from, but would inevitably be the source of all our misery until the "end of times." Maybe, just maybe, G-d had to work through the "snake," or the "evil" serpent, to get us humans to do what we needed to do, but to disguise the act as something separate from Himself. In doing so, we would have somewhere to turn in the future which would have to be a source of only good that we could depend on.

Why would Eve misrepresent what G-d himself told Adam? G-d clearly says in the text that Adam was not to eat from the tree. Eve thought she could not even touch the tree. This mistake which was, assumedly, intended to protect Adam and Eve from committing the "Original Sin," was our biggest downfall. For all we know, if Eve would have repeated G-d's commandment accurately, things would have turned out differently. But the real question here is this: According

to the literal translation of the text, why does Eve's punishment seem incredibly disproportionate to the "evil" committed? Adam and Eve tried to refrain from doing what they weren't supposed to do, even though they did not even understand what they should have feared. Adam tried so hard that he made the rule even more stringent. Eve, the devoted helper that she was, tried to listen to her master, but the big bad snake tricked her into using her own devotion against her. Now G-d goes ahead and punishes generations to come because of this "sin."

My advice to anyone who is asking for it is to pay attention to what your religious leaders have to say. Ask questions and don't just assume they know what they are talking about. Nowadays, there are plenty of legitimate religious role models, but there are also plenty of liars and thieves out there that will use any format, especially religion, to misguide you and convince you that the power is really within the hands of the religious leaders and not G-d himself. This type of brainwashing has been very useful throughout history, especially when it comes to "collecting" money from strangers.

By now, I hope that I have been able to clearly explain that ancient holy text can be taken literally, but the most important concepts will undeniably get lost in translation.

Some of us don't mind keeping it simple and literal. These technical questions that try and confuse the simple understanding of the text serve as a hindrance and cause unnecessary confusion to some. Many people use the literal text as a lesson in psychology. If you actually read the stories in the Old Testament, you will be amazed at the fact that the characters are really no different than me or

you. They get angry, they get jealous, they laugh, they cry and some of the characters don't even realize that the Life Force of the Universe exists. Others worship the Life Force with love and respect and know that if you can do that from your heart, everything will be fine.

I cannot tell you what you need to hear. I am just trying to get you to think for yourself. Wake up - that is all you have to do. Ask questions. Don't be afraid. By no means does asking questions mean that you have to behave blasphemously and give up your religious values, even if the questions appear to be blasphemous. Understand this. Sometimes, in order to understand something more clearly you need to ask clearly, even if the person you are asking may be offended. If you can figure out how to ask questions without being offensive you have won the game, or at least you're in the lead. Otherwise, try not to offend anyone, but seek the information you need using all the tools that were given to you by the One that created you. If we hold on to trust in faith throughout our journey, according to the root of all of our beliefs, we will not be sorry.

We have all come across an experience that makes us wonder how G-d expects us to believe when there is nothing to believe in. Everything seems like a lie. We can feel it. Some of us are scared to express this feeling because it is "blasphemous," yet that feeling needs to be expressed. If you have an ominous feeling and cannot pin point what it is, explore that feeling. Don't let yourself get sucked into the black hole with all of the malicious leaders that are hidden within us. They have no power unless you give them that power by not questioning them. A true religious leader will invite your questions with absolutely no judgment. A true religious leader will answer them to the best of

their ability and if they cannot answer them, they will attempt to direct you to someone who can. This is a sure fire way to know the difference between a leader that you can follow and one you better stay far away from.

Unfortunately, (or fortunately, however you want to look at it) I have had many, many incidents that tested my faith in my religion. Eventually, these incidents opened my eyes to the fact that being “religious” meant different things to different people. I started reading about other spiritual philosophies and religions and what I found interesting was that they all root in some sort of faith. Faith in Hashem, Jesus, Allah, Karma, Nature, the Sun, the Moon, Yourself – It doesn’t matter. It seems as though faith is truly the first commandment.

Coincidence? I doubt it. Once you have true faith in whatever you have faith in, I believe you don’t need anything else. I have faith in whatever the source of our Universe is. Whatever constructed our Universe and has sustained it for billions of years must know what It is doing. I have to believe that wherever and for whatever reason this Universe came into being, it must be for a better good because that is what feels right to me. I gain nothing in believing, even if only for a second, that the Universe has bad intentions, or even no intentions. Those ideas only leave me with an empty, pointless life.

My goal right now is to learn and evolve. The Universe naturally guides me to my goal. I don’t have to work at it. One of the lessons I learned by paying attention to what the Life Force of the Universe was trying to teach me was that I cannot expect everything to go my way. Actually, to put it more bluntly, I cannot expect anything at all to go my way. Once I was able to align my

thinking as well as my behavior with this idea, it slowly become clear to me that the expectation itself was what was holding me back all these years.

When I was married to Melech, not only did I expect of myself perfect discipline in exercise, religious rituals, work ethic, and housework, instead of only beating myself up, which would have been bad enough, I blamed everyone else for my failures. I did this all the way up to the day that I was hospitalized for psychosis due to a combination of lack of sleep and marijuana. I worried myself crazy. Since then, I have quit my job of 17 years, went to culinary school paid for through a two year work study program and now I am waiting for the next situation the Universe throws me into. You can call me crazy and I would have called myself crazy five years ago, but the reality that I have created for myself works for me. I am happy and the people around me are happy. Somehow we have managed to survive through what should be a very stressful time but what has turned out to be my greatest learning experience thus far. Faith has been at the root and I can personally attest to the fact that faith has not let me down. You might want to add the word “yet,” but I say faith doesn’t allow me to worry about the future. I have learned that everything that happens, happens for a reason. My responsibility is to stay in the present as best as I can so I can clearly observe the whole picture and make the most accurate assessment of the reason we are here. This reason needs to be extracted from a moment that you have that may not be one of your best moments. Soon you will have trained yourself to be astute enough to identify repetitive behaviors in yourself that produce unwanted effects every time. Once you identify the cause of this negative behavior, you can choose to change the behavior. You will find this is rather easy because you will have understood that the Universe was trying to whack you on the head this whole time and you were too busy worrying about

things you never needed to worry about from the beginning. Yes, it's circular reasoning, but that's what faith is. You have to believe in something you can't physically sense, but you know it is there. I have found that this circular logic is exactly what prevents me from losing my grip on faith. It is circular and no matter which way it turns it always comes back to the same point – FAITH!

If we could all just imagine that we are like branches on one big tree rooted in the ground by faith, we would automatically understand that if we cut any of the other branches off for no good reason, we are destroying the beauty of the tree.

Furthermore, ask yourself if you are a weak branch on the tree or a strong branch that holds tightly to your Life Source (the roots, in other words, faith) and cannot fall to the ground so easily.

Ultimately, I chose a widely accepted story of our beginning to try and point out something about what we need to understand regarding the relationship between cause and effect. It is true (as far as I know) that every cause has an effect. But, sometimes we tend to simplify this concept by saying that each cause has a concrete effect that is either “good” or “bad.” This is where we get messed up. If we touch a hot stove, we will get burned – BAD. If we are nice to others, they will be nice back – GOOD. When we divide everything up into good and bad, how do we classify those areas that are neither good nor bad? If we don't know what to call those “gray” areas, how can we truly describe the effect they have and if that effect is desirable or undesirable. For example: a friend of mine took me out to sushi for the first time in my life. I ate a few pieces and was not impressed. I absolutely did not get the sushi thing. Was this sushi eating experience a “bad” one? No, because I had a great time with my friend and I

tasted some food that I had never tasted before. Was eating the sushi a “good” experience? Not necessarily. I didn’t enjoy the sushi. So, what kind of effect did eating the sushi have? Not really any effect that can be seen very clearly from the actual experience. But there was an effect. An effect did take place over time, that could not have been identified at the moment I ate the sushi (which is technically the “cause” of the effect I’m about to talk about). The effect was that I love sushi. It is one of my favorite things to eat. And, one more thing, who would have predicted that this sushi eating experience is also being used in this book as an analogy about cause and effect. The effect took a while to manifest itself, but if I would have never eaten the sushi in the first place, the effect would never have materialized.

This just confirms what I keep trying to bring out throughout this entire book. Nothing is cut and dried when it comes to this topic. We want to hang on to the belief, for whatever reason, that there is a pat answer to all of our questions and we just haven’t gotten it yet. I think the reason we hold on so tightly to the idea that there are answers is simply because we want to feel secure and if things are always the same and predictable, we feel safe.

Think about it, why is there something wrong with coming up with your own explanation of how you got here and what your own purpose is. You would only be doing what the greatest thinkers throughout the ages have done. That includes thinkers like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We are all human. No one has died and come back to tell us about it. No one knows anything for sure about where we came from and where we are going. There are a lot of great, almost undeniably, convincing explanations. But, the problem is that we must choose *one*, whatever one we are comfortable with, and devote ourselves to its

principles. We will make mistakes along the way but the Universe wants to keep us happy, healthy and beautiful so it will always attempt to show us our mistakes so that we can learn from them. We have the obligation of being alert enough to pick up the signs the Universe is sending us.

For example, let's say you decide that you want to try to be understanding of everybody, staying as non-judgmental as possible, avoiding getting angry too often and trying to deal with everyone that you come across with patience. However, there is one person in your life that you constantly avoid because you have a hard time keeping your cool with that person. Truthfully, you can't stand them and you just don't know what to do with those feelings, so you just stay away. Then one day you start a new job with great pay and top of the line benefits and this person, who you can't stand, ends up being a co-worker. Not just any co-worker, but the one training you and responsible for reporting all of your mistakes to the supervisor. The Universe is giving you two choices (maybe more depending on how you look at it). You can choose to retreat like before and quit your job because you will probably not be able to stand this person for more than one hour, let alone an unspecified amount of time. Or, you can see it as an opportunity to learn something and evolve into a better person.

You were forced into the choice by the Universe. Faith also enables you to believe that the Life Force of the Universe knows what is good for you, better than you do. Believe it or not, you probably barely know yourself. You may not even be aware that the only thing you really want in the world is peace, love and happiness. I say this because most of us are so lost in what we think will make us happy that when we get it and are still not happy, our diseased brains

think it is because we just don't have enough of it. So this is when the Universe tries to meddle into your business and it brings experiences to you.

The Life Force of the Universe knows what you need, but It also knows that you don't understand what you need, so It tries to make you realize this by pushing you towards things you definitely don't want. The only way that you can even start to become aware is by paying attention to where you are getting pushed. A big obstacle for most people is the silly stuff that interferes with the bigger picture. Some people like to over exaggerate the bad in any given situation, thereby ignoring the good. Every little aggravation that you invent in your head, disguises the source of your happiness. These dumb aggravations keep you sleeping. When you are obsessed with a clean home and can only focus on the spot on the wall that is sticking out like a sore thumb, you completely forget about the rest of your immaculate home. This is called sleeping.

The minute you feel a little "awake," most of your experiences, if observed correctly, will have deeper meaning to you. You will also realize that you may not understand the "effect" of the experience yet, but you will be able to at least recognize the cause. Then, because all causes ultimately have an effect, you will be actively looking for the effect of the cause you marked. Once you find it, you have just completed a small portion of the puzzle called life.

Wake Up People!!! Smell the roses, drink your coffee outside in your pajamas and enjoy the new day and all of the exciting possibilities in store for you. Let us exalt the differences in people instead of fearing them. Let us learn from other religions instead of being apprehensive toward them. Let us live together

in peace, love and happiness instead of fear, guilt and anger. Does this sound like a bad solution?

Two “Life as We Know It” Changes in History

History is valuable because we can learn from our past mistakes. However, the catch to learning from our failures is to first admit to making them. We can then give up our old ways and adopt new ways to make sure that we don't repeat the same mistake(s). Unfortunately, though we have progressed, we have yet to reach a state of unity in the world. We still cannot live peacefully with each other. Heavy violence, hatred and crime still persist.

Until we reach a state of unity amongst people over the entire globe, the Universe itself will get rid of anything in its way on its course to perfection. We don't have a choice. We have to change as a nation and as a species. As long as there is violence, destruction, greed and jealousy, the Universe will continue to attempt to purge itself of these diseases. I am not saying that if G-d forbid a loved one passes away that they were evil doers and they deserved to have their lives taken. What I am saying is that the Universe will rattle us into changing for its own self preservation. I don't know about you, but seeing innocent people die everyday is definitely rattling to me.

Every living creature on the planet has a survival instinct. We all have the innate instincts to do whatever is necessary to survive. This is the most primal instinct that we have. Without this very deep need and yearning to survive that is programmed into each of us, how would we? History can prove to us that, against all odds, we will survive. We will survive just like the rest of the

Universe does. We will survive because we have no choice. It is up to the Life Force of the Universe to sustain us and that is precisely what It does.

I use the word prove, because I really feel we are failing as a species because we do not trust that there is a greater power that only cares about our survival. We think we have to do something to earn that privilege. We do not trust that there is enough of anything to go around so we have to do something to earn the privilege of universal protection. Or, we think that the Universe just doesn't care about us because we are so insignificant, which in one way is true.

It is true that the Universe will not serve one person rather than the whole. It is simply impossible logistically. If only one piece of a whole is served, or cared for the rest of the unit will waste away due to lack of "maintenance." For example, if you buy a beautiful car and you love it because it is such a beautiful color and you work and work to maintain that color for years, but all of your resources were invested into maintaining the color of your car while the regular "maintenance" of your car was neglected, that car will not last long and therefore not be of as much value as a car that was steadily maintained, meaning every seemingly insignificant screw was tightened exactly when it needed to be tightened and the exact amount of torque was applied to make sure this seemingly insignificant screw would be in the best position to do its job.

That is how I imagine the Universe working, as a machine. Any screw(ball) that is not in its right place doing what it (he/she) is supposed to do, compromises the integrity of the entire machine (Universe). So, back to what I was saying before - we humans need proof that such an entity exists. All we need is proof that we can sit back and rely on a greater power (the Universe) to take care of us. The

proof is in our history. No matter what catastrophe has occurred, we are still here to talk about it and to learn from it. Wake up humans!!!! Let's take our proof from history and realize the Universe is our friend, not our enemy. We were and are meant to survive as a species and as a planet. The proof is in the pudding. We are still here. Despite the calamities of our planet's history, we have survived. There is a catch though. To take care of only one part (person) of the entire unit (the Universe) while neglecting the rest of the unit (everybody else in the Universe) is not productive to the survival of the entire unit (the Universe). In other words, you don't count by yourself. If a screw(ball) separates itself from the rest of the machine (Universe) and can't be found (can't reconnect), that screw(ball) is of no use to the machine it was once a part of. Get the picture? If you are not working for the "whole unit," you are not important to the ultimate plan of the "whole unit."

In other words – IF YOU ONLY CARE ABOUT YOURSELF, YOU ARE USELESS!!!

History is our proof.

The Great Leap Forward

Not much more than approximately 50,000 years ago, humans looked like humans but were behaviorally primitive and indistinguishable from other extinct hominids such as the Neanderthals or Homo Erectus. Prior to this period, the abundance of complex artifacts, such as artwork and bone tools of the period that many anthropologists refer to as the “The Great Leap Forward,” appear in the fossil record after 50,000 years ago, but are absent from the fossil record prior to 50,000 years ago. This seems to indicate that earlier hominids lacked the cognitive skills required to produce such artifacts.

During this period called “The Great Leap Forward,” modern culture began to change at a much greater speed. The ability to use highly complex language from this time is indisputable. More complex language led to the ability to form more complex social relationships. The tools that human beings used became more intricate. They began to cook their food. They began to create artwork in abundance. They began to decorate their bodies with tattoos, paints, and jewelry. They began to exchange goods and materials over long-distances. They created musical instruments, and accompanied the playing of these instruments with singing and dancing. They began to bury their dead, and created funeral rituals that demonstrated they were developing notions of religion and an afterlife.

What is interesting about this period is that there is an ongoing debate – not about the fact that there was clear evidence of some sort of transitional

circumstance that influenced the evolution of mankind, but what exactly was that transitional circumstance? What caused humans to evolve? Here is where the debate comes into play. One side believes that a major genetic mutation took place as a result of a biological reorganization of the brain. In other words, some believe that the “Great Leap Forward” was an actual physical change in our systems that made our brains work differently and allowed us to take in more “information.” Interesting.

The second theory holds that there was never any single technological or cognitive revolution. Proponents of this view argue that modern human behavior is basically the result of the gradual accumulation of knowledge, skills and culture occurring over hundreds of thousands of years of human evolution. In other words, we evolved because we just got smarter systematically.¹ Wikipedia, Behavioral Modernity, Human Evolution

Either way, there is no argument that there was an abrupt change in human behavior approximately 50,000 years ago that is referred to as the “Great Leap Forward.” What is even more interesting is that after doing a little more research on the subject, I find that one of the accepted reasons as to what could have caused this abrupt change in humanity is that the Cro-Magnon were in the midst of gradually replacing Neanderthals as the more modern version of humanity. Although the Neanderthal were bigger and stronger, the Cro-Magnon were able to use tools, spoke and probably sang, made weapons, lived in huts, wove cloth, wore skins, made jewelry, used burial rituals, made cave paintings, and even came up with a calendar. Eventually, the Neanderthals were either “conquered” by the Cro-Magnon or interbreeding took place, which could potentially lead to cultural and genetic exchanges, which in turn would

eventually lead to the termination of the weakest and most useless genes. Since the Neanderthals were unarguably the less advanced of the two, if any type of interbreeding did take place, the Neanderthals, due to the rule of survival of the fittest, would be the more likely to pass Cro-Magnon genetics, which were apparently the stronger genetics, to their offspring and so on, thereby resulting in the eventual extinction of the “Neanderthal.” Another interesting theory is that the Cro-Magnon were better equipped to handle the climate changes at the time. Whatever theory you want to accept, the fact remains that something happened in the Universe approximately 50,000 years ago causing physical, intellectual and moral changes in the human species as a whole. The changes caused humans to need other humans. This need either came from the natural intelligence that hominoids acquired over time that led to more intricate systems of production which necessitated the need for human labor, or there was a physical or mental change of some sort that caused us to feel the need for human companionship and from this need we began creating environments that would encourage human contact. What is particularly interesting to me is that two of the significant changes that took place at the time were in language and expression. These two areas are absolutely unnecessary in a world that each man lives only for himself. A man that lives in a world with others, but who can only care about himself, will not ask for what he wants, he will just take it. There would be no need to have to express any sort of emotion at all except detachment.

This is how I imagine the world before the “Great Leap Forward.” Before there was a need for another human, each “man” had to live only for himself. He had his personal survival to worry about and could not be bothered dealing with the survival of others, especially if it would interfere with his own survival.

Suddenly something happened, and our minds opened up in some way and we were able to evolve in a way that encouraged us to include others in our exclusive world.

Earlier, I stated that there are two sides of the debate as to whether or not the “Great Leap Forward” came from some sort of rewiring of our brain or a systematic increase in intelligence. There is also a third side that is very possible and more than possible, probable. I propose that both happened simultaneously. Right at the time the Life Force of the Universe decided to prepare humans for the next phase of evolution, free will still reigned (and still reigns) supreme. Some hominoids decided they wanted to expand their knowledge of the physical land so they developed according to that path. This was a necessary path to explore, despite its disastrous effects that we strongly feel today.

Other hominoids were more faith-based and didn’t worry about exploring that path as much as trying to understand the natural flow of the Universe and live within that system. This, I believe, may have allowed the Life Force of the Universe to open up the minds of these hominoids, because that is what they wanted more than the understanding of the physical land. Each side used their free will and got what they wanted. Some hominoids chose the “spiritual” path while others chose the “physical” path.

A spiritual path, in this case, means that you attribute all experiences that you have to the creative powers of the Life Force of the Universe. A “spiritual” person knows that there is some sort of higher purpose operating within them as well as outside of themselves that is guiding the entire Universe and every being in it to a new level of evolution. With this in mind, you can try to imagine how

easy it would be to flip something you may want to initially interpret as “bad” into a good thing - if only you could really believe this is true.

Accordingly, “physicality” would be the opposite of “spirituality.” A person that is more easily pulled by the physical polarity of the Universe (as opposed to being more easily pulled by the spiritual polarity of the Universe) would be very interested in growth in things like medicine and technology. This interest is not “bad.” I may be presenting this idea as if I think a person attracted to the physical polarity of the Universe is a “bad” person, but that is not how I believe or anyone should even remotely believe. Without all of the people throughout history that have made enormous contributions to science and medicine, we would still be in the jungle, hitting others over the head for dinner.

Humans had to evolve socially in order to relate to other humans more effectively. These changes needed to occur in order for humans to successfully continue their journey through history. Whatever affects the Universe in the most positive way will be kept and treasured, and anything that affects the Universe negatively will be disposed of mercifully. You can understand this any way you want, with fear or otherwise. My advice to you is to take everything that you read and hear with a grain of salt, until you experience what you have read and heard for yourself.

The Decline of the Roman Empire

“From the eighteenth century onward, we have been obsessed with the fall: it has been valued as an archetype for every perceived decline, and, hence, as a symbol for our own fears”¹ Bowersock, "The Vanishing Paradigm of the Fall of Rome" *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 49.8 (May 1996:29-43) p. 31.

When, how and why the Roman Empire fell is not completely clear. However, in order to make a point, I am going to briefly discuss some of the dozens of theories as to why it collapsed. When it collapsed and how it collapsed are kind of irrelevant to me in this discussion, as the point I would like to emphasize throughout this book is not the “whens” or “hows,” but the “whys.” Mainly, why does the survival of our species seem to be threatened periodically throughout our history, but despite this fact, we somehow do not succumb to the threats of complete annihilation? Ultimately, we survive.

The next important why, in my opinion, would be - why do we survive? How do we survive would be a question that does not interest me so much simply because there are many different ways that a person could find a way to survive so “how” we survive could not have one specific answer. However, “why” we survive is a different question. How many answers could there be. We want to survive. Human beings, regardless of what type of person they may be, want to live. Why do we want to survive? Do we even know why we want to or did the Universe simply equip us with a primal instinct for survival. If that is the case,

it wouldn't matter what the circumstances are, like breathing, our species would survive, unconsciously and involuntarily.

In fact, I take back what I said earlier. "How" and "why" we survive must be answered together so that the answer can make sense and have meaning. Why does Life survive? Life wants to. How does Life survive? Life is programmed to. As long as Life wants to survive, Life is programmed to survive. Once Life does not want to survive anymore, we can imagine something like a "computer virus" invading our system and the internal program to survive deconstructing and no longer performing at its optimal potential.

My next "why" is why does the Universe want us, or appear to want us to survive and live on? This entire book is really asking this question in a hundred different ways. This question is another question that can't be answered specifically, but has a different answer in every unique circumstance. So knowing this, I can always ask this question in relation to any circumstance or decision that I am in the midst of and create an answer that serves a higher purpose.

My answer to "why does the Universe appear to want us to survive" is always that I don't know, but I do believe that there is some sort of deeper purpose within the system of the Universe and with that knowledge alone, I can make a better decision. I can assume that one of the purposes must be so that the free will of humans can evolve to a level of certainty. We can no longer stay confused as to what is right and wrong. We have to be attuned to a higher purpose, such as peace, so that we can instinctively move through our life towards that purpose. When I say instinctively, I mean the same way we are

programmed to simply survive we need to program ourselves through our gift of free will to not just survive, but to instinctively propagate patience, trust and faith in the Universe and amongst ourselves.

The Fall of the Roman Empire is a very lengthy subject with many opinions and facts that, unless you devote yourself to in-depth study of the topic, you won't have a complete understanding as to what took place during this period in history. I chose to summarize certain aspects because it seems to me that there was a major transition over a few hundred years due to the activity of the Romans, their constituents and their enemies that contributed to a major shift in our spiritual evolution - the same spiritual evolution that I believe was always evolving, will always be evolving and is, at this very moment, evolving. As we all know, after the disappearance of the Roman Empire, Christianity and Catholicism were formed and from then on the Church (today the Vatican) sets the religious standards for the rest of the world.

As I said before, this subject is very exhaustive and since I do not claim to an expert on the subject, I am unable to provide you with substantial amounts of information and facts. I am, therefore, reducing my argument to one fact. The Roman Empire eventually disintegrated for various reasons, however, due to the intensity and suffering of the common person during the collapse of this great empire, the entire mindset of people AROUND THE WORLD changed during this period.

After the third century when the Roman Republic became the Roman Empire, political and military problems were so great that the Empire shrank and nearly collapsed. By the end of the fourth century, the Empire was split into Western

(most of what we call Europe today) and Eastern (mainly Greece, Italy and some of Asia and Africa) halves. The West was increasingly rural, subject to invasion and in general decline. The East turned into the long-lasting Byzantine Empire. By the end of the fifth century, what was once the Western Empire was little more than just a memory. According to some historians, the period from 450-500 A.D. was the darkest in the history of western civilization. The Byzantine Empire was unable to re-create the peace and minimal military expansion that was established by Caesar Augustus (sometimes called the Pax Romana or Pax Augustus) so eventually literacy, commerce and law became scarce within the Empire.

Instead, people became illiterate and the arts, philosophy and other leisure activities that contributed to the stability of the Roman political system were gone. Roads became too dangerous to travel as the law was one of arbitrary violence and force. Because people could not freely travel about due to the danger amidst them, they were limited to learning and experiencing from the small area of their birthplace, the same place they ultimately would die. Commerce shrunk to subsistence living and barter became the main mechanism of trade as the coins of the old Roman Empire were used up. The population ultimately waned as a result of this instability.

Whatever the reason for the permanent destruction and replacement of the Roman Empire with a different type of era, I would like to emphasize that perspective matters in as much as it can illustrate to someone the varied ideas there are regarding almost any subject and with that knowledge, we can more readily accept our own perspective. In other words, if there was only one

“right” answer, we would all have to agree, but because there is never one “right” answer, we can make up our own – which is what I am about to do.

1. Due to the incredible size of the Empire, a huge budget was necessary to maintain many key elements in its survival, such as roads essential for communication, transportation, and the moving of armies and aqueducts. Many of Rome's cities relied on the water that it provided. At the time, the Empire was fighting enemies on all sides due to its expansion into their territories and was already contributing huge sums of silver and gold to support its armies. To try to combat both problems, the Empire was forced to raise taxes, causing inflation to skyrocket. This in turn caused the major economic stress that others attribute as one of the causes for Rome's decline.

Because maintaining an army to defend Rome’s borders from foreign attacks was a constant drain on the government, frustrated Romans eventually lost the desire to defend the Empire. The Empire had to begin hiring soldiers recruited from the unemployed city mobs or worse from foreign countries (Germanic mercenaries). Such an army was not only unreliable, but very expensive. Due to the semi-“Germanization” of the Roman military, the Romans gradually entrusted the role of defending the Empire to the German mercenaries who eventually turned on them, ultimately corrupting the integrity of the Empire. The Sassanids (Persian Empire) were powerful enough to push the Romans away from the Euphrates and from much of Armenia and southeast Turkey, which turned the Persians into a genuine threat to the Roman Empire. It took the Roman Empire about half a century to cope with the Sassanid threat, which it did by stripping the western provincial towns and cities of their regional taxation income, leaving a negative long-term impact. Due to lack of tax money,

the development of local infrastructure in the Western Empire decreased, allowing other hostile invasions into Roman territory.

Since private farmers were not able to compete with the wealthier farmers who were able to use slave labor, agricultural production consequently diminished. The combination of the decline of agricultural output as well as an increase in population caused the per-capita energy resource availability to drop. The Romans solved this problem in the short-term by conquering their neighbors to appropriate their energy surpluses such as metals, grain, slaves, etc. However, this solution merely exacerbated the issue over the long-term. As the Empire's land and population expanded, the cost of maintaining communications, civil government and land maintenance increased. Eventually, these costs grew so great that any new challenges such as invasions and crop failures could not be solved by the acquisition of more territory. At that point, the Empire fragmented into smaller units.

Gradually, environmental degradation caused population and economic decline. Deforestation and excessive grazing led to the erosion of meadows as well as croplands. These activities resulted in fertile land becoming nonproductive. Besides affecting the human population, food and water shortages contributed to the extinction of many animal species in the region, such as the gomphothere, an elephant-like species.

Output from the silver mine at Rio Tinto reached an all time high in 79 A.D., corresponding to the beginning of the era of coin debasement, inflation and over-taxation. The Roman Emperor debased the coinage because Roman mines had peaked and output was declining. The thesis is that mines of all

commodities were being depleted, including gold, silver, iron and so forth. This led to the decline of Roman technological and economic sophistication.

A severe decline in morals and values, according to many historians, also contributed to the collapse of the Roman Empire. Emperors like Caligula and Nero became infamous for wasting money on lavish parties where guests drank and ate until they became sick. Prostitutes were everywhere and the most popular amusement was watching the gladiatorial combats in the Coliseum.

There were many public health and environmental problems. Many of the wealthy had water brought to their homes through lead pipes, causing a high death rate due to lead poisoning. Because of the general economic stress, many poor people lived in terrible, cramped and unsanitary conditions which consequently spread uninterrupted strains of disease throughout their community. Alcohol use also increased adding to the incompetency of the general public.

The Romans never created an effective system to determine how new emperors would be selected. The choice was always open to debate between the old emperor, the Senate, the Praetorian Guard (the emperor's private army) and the army. Gradually the Praetorian Guard gained complete authority to choose the new emperor, who rewarded the guard who then became more influential, perpetuating the cycle. Then in 186 A.D., the army strangled the new emperor and the practice began of selling the throne to the highest bidder. During the next 100 years, Rome had 37 different emperors, 25 of whom were removed from office by assassination. This contributed to the overall weaknesses, decline and fall of the Empire.

Once the Romans stopped conquering new lands, the flow of gold into the Roman economy decreased. Yet, much gold was being spent by the Romans to pay for luxury items. This meant that there were less gold coins to use. As the amount of gold used in coins decreased, the coins became less valuable. To make up for this loss in value, merchants raised the prices on the goods they sold. Many people stopped using coins and began to barter to get what they needed. Eventually salaries had to be paid in food and clothing and taxes were collected in fruits and vegetables. Most Romans were not rich and lived in squalor in exchange for rent. Anyone who could not pay the rent was forced to move out and live on the crime infested streets. Because of this, the cities began to decay.

In summary, there are a combination of theories as to what specifically caused the fall of the great Roman Empire. Let's review the reasons listed below and you can decide for yourself if you notice correlations relating to the situation in America.

Major tax increases to support numerous wars.

Unfriendly foreigners enlisted in the Roman army and the Romans trusted them, until it was too late.

Private farmers (smaller businesses) were not able to compete with the wealthier businesses resulting in less goods being produced, despite population increase.

Environmental degradation caused population and economic decline.

Commodity output reached its peak in 79 A.D. resulting in inflation and coin debasement.

A severe decline in morals and values.

Public health and environmental problems.

The voting process was not as ethical as it should have been.

Government officials used actual gold to pay for luxury items, thereby making coins less valuable.

I don't know about you, but it looks to me that we should really think about our future, if there is one, as a world "super-power."

Since I am not a historian and I particularly can't stand doing research papers, I'm simply going to tie these two pivotal moments in history together and highlight the correlation between these two history changing moments with what is currently happening in our world.

Let's first discuss the similarities between our first obvious evolutionary transition, the "Great Leap Forward" and the situation in the world right now. Right now, as I am writing this book, there is worldwide interest in a mosque that a group of Moslems are considering building very close to the site of Ground Zero.

I doubt I even need to explain what I am trying to get at, but let me try to anyway. We can't know the outcome of this battle before it happens, but we can use our extensive knowledge of the past to make an educated assessment of the situation. If we are in a transitional phase of our evolution, then we can learn from history that anything that brings us closer or encourages us to cooperate as a collective unit of people all working together for the same goal (spiritual growth) will be able to successfully carry us forward into the purpose of our existence.

We can see this from the effect of whatever caused the "Great Leap Forward." Humans evolved into something greater than we were. And, on the flip side, those that didn't keep up with the evolutionary trend became extinct. We know this from the fact that one type of hominoid (in this case, the Cro-Magnon)

either conquered the other (in this case, the Neanderthal) or interbreeding (genetic manipulation) caused the other type to become extinct. Whichever way it happened, one type of hominoid did not survive the transition.

I propose that the evolutionary change that took place 50,000 years ago was not necessarily a physical change. There may have been some physical changes but the most important change was really philosophical. Somehow, in a world where individual survival was all that was understood, the choice to unite in groups was brought forward. Apparently, a collective decision was made by the majority of the hominoids existing at the time to move towards a world where humans interacted with each other. This is not deciding whether or not we have to brush our teeth to prevent cavities. This is a decision that requires us to leap into the unknown and take a chance.

We were forced to make a *philosophical* decision, because there were no hard facts on which to base this decision. We came across some fundamental problems concerning matters such as existence, knowledge, values, reason, mind, and language that we needed to solve. Using some sort of systematic approach, we were able to reason that combining human power and strength might make us stronger as a species. We can see now that this philosophical decision was an immediate success, but we didn't understand the complete picture at the time.

Further, we must discuss this new philosophy of human interaction. This steadily becomes much trickier than we ever thought it would be. That's actually the problem with philosophy. Something may make sense initially, but

once put into practice, new ideas and problems that were not thought of previously all of a sudden pop up and require solutions.

The point I want to loudly emphasize here is this; we are still, to this day, trying to find solutions for that philosophical decision we made 50,000 years ago.

However, we can use our collective history to make the next educated philosophical decision. I know that I may sound like a typical Bible thumper, but, I hate to say it, the signs are here.

Let's go back to the players on Team "Build Mosque" and Team "DO NOT Build Mosque," and we can't forget those independent parties that never seem to be heard. What I want to point out before we start to analyze our position in this philosophical war around one mosque, is that if you think about this coming from a perspective of detachment, you will discover that the whole argument is silly. Build the mosque, don't build the mosque – if either of these decisions were made, could either decision ever really hurt me if I am not attached to the problem? But, we have one huge side issue; this "problem" could cause World War III and with all the nuclear weapons out there, there isn't much chance of survival if it ever gets to that level. So now, I (and everyone else IN THE ENTIRE WORLD) am attached to this problem. Here we are, sitting with fundamental problems inhibiting our existence once again. It's time to make another historical philosophical decision, or an educated decision grounded in a leap of faith, that catapults us into the next phase of our existence.

How do we make an educated philosophical decision? This sounds like a really dumb question to me because 50,000 years ago we were able to do it without any written history, science or knowledge of any kind. Today, we have

unlimited amounts of historical, scientific, political and religious data to see a much clearer picture of our world and ourselves than we had 50,000 years ago. If you don't mind me saying so, we should be ashamed of ourselves if we still can't get it right!

The Fall of the Roman Empire should be a significant reminder to us that when leaders become tyrannical and citizens feel like there is a definite imbalance in the system, that is when life in the fast lane comes to a crashing halt. I am not really sure why the leaders of our generation cannot see this clearly, but in case any of them happen to read my book, just a reminder – you need us, the little people, on your side in this fight for survival.

All you have to do is remember all the great empires that are no longer with us because the rulers no longer cared about the little people. They thought that we were unnecessary in this world. Even if the intent of the leaders is, and was, not to aggressively destroy all the “have-nots,” neglect of the world's underprivileged is just as bad. The world rulers that are working against the unity of the Universe, be wary because the work that is set out for you is going to be tough and eventually the rest of us are going to wake up and realize that we need, want and ache for survival. Once we wake up and realize this, it's on! The human race will survive. History has proven it to us. Empires may not survive, but the human race will. Not only will the human race merely survive, we will inevitably become unified and conflict will only be a concept of the past.

Now, with that being said, what can we do as a united front with regard to this mosque issue? I don't know about you, but I would like to continue moving

towards a new spiritual attitude that may bring us closer to our purpose, or at least the knowledge of our purpose. First I remind myself that, if I could decide for everybody trying to keep everyone's happiness in mind, I would very soon understand that not everybody is going to be happy, ever. Since I do not want to take the responsibility of making the right decision here, I go to plan B – relying on a higher power to take care of these great problems for me. We all need to realize that there is nothing that is going to be 100% successful short of trying to live our own life as spiritually as possible, maybe even positively influencing others around us along the way. This is because we are all different. We all tick according to our own settings. We can only worry about our own behavior and we cannot force others to behave the way we want them to. Our job as the little people in this scenario is to have faith; this is all we can do. We didn't cause the situation at hand and we cannot solve it.

Our next hurdle in the struggle with faith is accepting that faith insists that we have trust in a greater power. In order to maintain faith, we are required to trust that the Life Force of the Universe intends to deal with our species gently and mercifully. In an attempt to help you through this hurdle, I would like to clearly point out once again that we can feel comfortable trusting in the grand scheme of things because the Life Force hasn't failed us yet. The world is still here, more heavily populated than ever. That is all we have to remember. We can also feel comfortable with the philosophy that we touched upon 50,000 years ago that lead to a "great leap forward." We need other humans in our life for many different reasons and if we don't or can't incorporate others into our lives, we cannot evolve. It's that simple.

Without some sort of people skills (ethical and unethical), we would most likely cease to exist because in order to grow as a human we have to learn how to interact with each other. Animals and plant life understand that they have to follow the patterns of nature and interact with one another in order to survive. We have not figured that out yet.

If your belief is aligned with my belief, you will accept that there is enough basis within my “proof” to accept it as a possible truth. If you don’t believe the way I do, you will realize, rightfully so, that two random moments in history are not enough proof of anything. There is an infinite amount of history to sift through detail by detail before you can be comfortable enough to accept a truth based on such a small increment of the total information available. After you study everything there is to study on the subject, at least a few times over, and find that all of the historic detail actually confirms the opposite of what you have believed until now, maybe then you will be ready to accept a new belief totally opposite of what you initially swore you would take to the grave.

I say forget about trying to confirm or reject any belief system as true (or false for that matter). Believe what you want until proven otherwise. The key is to know that what you believe is not necessarily true in every situation but you should also be aware that it *may* be true, even if it sounds ridiculous.

I am very aware that trying to “prove” that we have the potential to change our reality by learning from history and limiting my proof to two single historical moments that took place with thousands of years between them, that my basis is at best, very flimsy. However, maybe not if you understand that all I am trying to say is that anyone, when they believe something deeply enough will be able

to sell that belief by finding as many proofs or confirmations of that belief, even if it means that you will sometimes be pulling those proofs from very flimsy sources or unsubstantial or non-contextual evidence, as someone who is reading this book may accuse me of doing. What I am really trying to do is to build a viable case that we all invent beliefs based on facts that we hear throughout the day and accumulate, regardless of the source of the information.

However, like everything else, there are pros and cons to creating whole beliefs from an incomplete or inaccurate set of details. Accepting the details presented to you as proof without any research of your own is not only foolish, but dangerous. Let's take for example the situation in totalitarian countries. The populace are only presented with the details that the regime wants them to have in order to maintain control of the population. The people who live in these countries are brainwashed into thinking that they don't have a way out. They rely on their "government" for their sense of security. They depend on their leaders so much that they are afraid of what their leaders would do if they were to resist. Where would they go? Their land is all they have and leaving their land would be more devastating than revolting against what the rest of the world would consider substandard living conditions.

But must these people continue to accept these substandard conditions and unreasonable laws? I say no. I say that they only think they must because they don't have all the facts. They only have the facts that were presented to them by people who specifically did not want to expose the whole truth in order to protect themselves and their power. If all of the information concerning personal freedom would be made available to them, you might then see groups

within these countries gather in protest against their oppressors and a statement of freedom would then be made.

Everybody should be free to choose how to live. That choice should not be threatened by the idea of death. Everybody should be willing to DIE for that right. How could I say that? Because, a “life” without the basic human right of free will is equivalent to living life without an energy source. We don’t operate solely according to nature, like everything else does. Our free will is our power. Our free will is what creates our experiences, good or bad. What we do with that power is what the purpose of life is. If that power is unfairly stripped from us in any way by others, we lose the only unique power we have as human beings. We are then forced to live according to how someone else thinks we should, kind of like someone’s animal.

In the case of the mosque, if anyone expects the entire world to agree collectively with any one measly, inconsequential, isolated philosophy with regard to this highly heated dispute, they would have had to have fallen hard on their head first.

Conflict causes division. Sometimes the conflict is simply a fight over who is right and who is wrong. Does it matter who is right and who is wrong? If all you care about is being right, which would cause you to insist others agree with you, you can take your insignificant opinion and keep it to yourself. No one cares about only your opinion. However, if you care about the state of the world from the depths of your heart, your opinion will matter because it would never be forced down another’s throat. For the state of the world to flourish, we cannot, under any circumstance, take away anyone’s personal free will. The

only thing we can do is learn from our experiences and work on ourselves so that we may be a confident and valuable, *non-aggressive* influence in the world around us.

Quantum Physics - This Is The Clincher

Quantum physics is a branch of science that deals with discrete, indivisible units of energy called quanta. There are five main ideas represented in Quantum Theory:

Energy is not continuous, but comes in small but discrete units.

The elementary particles behave both like particles *and* like waves.

The movement of these particles is inherently random.

It is *physically impossible* to know both the position and the momentum of a particle at the same time. The more precisely one is known, the less precise the measurement of the other.

The atomic world is *nothing* like the world we live in.

The truth is that physicists are in general agreement that no one really understands quantum mechanics.

In order to try and understand quantum theory, we need to forget everything we know about cause, effect and reality. Quantum physics has its own rules of probability that make no sense in our everyday world. It reveals something extraordinary about our very understanding of what constitutes reality.

Quantum theory is so complex that trying to explain even a limited overview of this topic in one chapter is impossible. However, in order to grasp the basic principles involved, I found a great explanation of two vital experiments that

should give you a better picture of what quantum theory is trying to tell us. The explanation of these experiments has been provided by Mr. Keith Mayes. You can read more of his very reader friendly explanations of quantum mechanics at www.thekeyboard.org.uk.

We will start with the famous double slit experiment as it demonstrates beautifully the central mystery of quantum theory. Quantum theory however, needs some introduction before we get too involved in the experiment.

Because of the work done in Copenhagen by Danish physicist Niels Bohr, the standard explanation of what takes place at the quantum level is known as the Copenhagen Interpretation.

In the past, physicists have imagined the electron orbiting around the nucleus. It turns out that that is not what is happening. In fact, in quantum mechanics in order to integrate the idea of an electron having both particle and wave characteristics, you have to imagine that the electron of the atom does not travel on a distinct path like a typical particle might. Instead of traveling on a distinct path around the nucleus, it kind of 'teleports' itself around the area of the nucleus.

In other words, imagine a “pulse” on a string traveling down the string. Now imagine the electron “teleporting” within the region of the pulse as it moves down the string. Now imagine that the “pulse” is not a single “pulse” but a short wave train. The electron essentially jumps from one wave to another.

An analogy that could explain this concept slightly better would be imagining a surfer on their surfboard riding one wave then another. The surfer (or the electron), although they are something independent from the waves (a particle), essentially becomes part of the waves if they are a really good surfer.

Because particles such as electrons behave like waves as well, it is necessary to have a different set of rules to explain the behavior of particles sub-atomically. Physical laws for larger tangible objects, such as marbles, for example, make it possible to describe precisely where the marble is, what it is doing and what it is about to do.

The same cannot be said for particles. They are, quite literally, a law unto themselves. The classic experiment to illustrate this is the famous double slit experiment, originally devised to determine if light travels as waves or particles.

The Double Slit Experiment

If light travels as particles, we can imagine particles of light, otherwise known as photons, as bullets fired from a rifle. Imagine a brick wall with two holes in it, each the same size and large enough to fire bullets through, with a second wall behind where the bullets will strike. After firing a few rounds you would expect to see on the second wall two clusters of hits in line with the two holes. This is, of course, precisely what you get with bullets, so if we get the same result with photons we can say they are particles.

Now imagine that instead of particles, that light travels as a wave. Imagine a wave inside a water tank. As the wave spreads out from its source it would

reach both holes at the same time and each hole would then act as a new source. Waves would then spread out again from each of the holes, exactly in step, or in phase, and as the waves moved forward, spreading as they go, they would eventually interfere with one another. Where both waves are lifting the water surface upward, we get a more pronounced crest; where one wave is trying to create a crest and the other is trying to create a trough the two cancel out and the water level is undisturbed. The effects are called constructive and destructive interference.

If we carried out this procedure with light instead of water, and if light travels as waves, then the pattern on the second wall would appear as an interference pattern of alternate dark and light bands across the wall. Particles, on the other hand, would produce two separate areas of light (where the bullets would hit). This experiment has in fact been carried out many, many times, with the same results every time, and the results are nothing less than amazing.

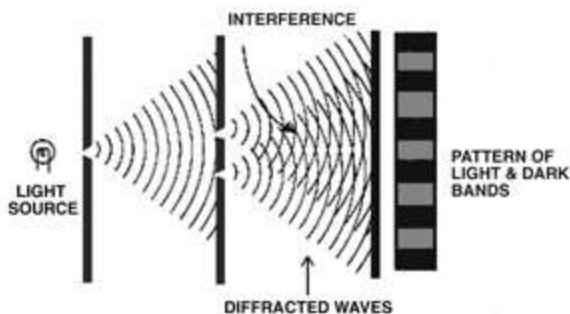


Diagram provided by Mr. Keith Mayes at <http://www.thekeyboard.org.uk>

When the experiment is set up as shown in the above diagram, with both slits open, the resulting interference pattern clearly shows that light behaves as a wave. Now if that was all there was to it we could all fold up our tents and go

home, happy in the knowledge that light travels as a wave; but there is much more to it than that. This is where the word 'weird' can become over-used.

If the experiment is set up to fire *individual* photons, so that only one photon at a time goes through the set up, we would not expect the same interference pattern to build up; we would surely expect that a single photon would only go through one hole or another, it cannot go through both at the same time and create an interference pattern. So what happens?

If we wait until enough individual photons have passed through to build up a pattern - and this takes millions of photons - we do not get two clusters opposite the two holes, we get the same interference pattern! It is as if each individual photon “knows” that both holes are open and gives that result. Each individual photon, passing through the set up will place itself on the wall in such a position that when enough have passed through they have collectively built up an interference pattern, when there cannot possibly be any interference!

If we repeat the experiment, this time with only one hole open, the individual photons behave themselves and all cluster around a point on the detector screen behind the open hole, just as you would expect. However, as soon as the second hole is opened they again immediately start to form an interference pattern. An individual photon passing through one of the holes is not only aware of the other hole, but also aware of whether or not it is open!

We could try peeking, to see which hole the photon goes through, and to see if it goes through both holes at once, or if half a photon goes through each hole. When the experiment is carried out, and detectors are placed at the holes to

record the passage of electrons through each of the holes, the result is even more bizarre. Imagine an arrangement that records which hole a photon goes through but lets it pass on its way to the detector screen. Now the photons behave like normal, self respecting everyday particles. We always see a photon at one hole or the other, never both at once, and now the pattern that builds up on the detector screen is exactly equivalent to the pattern for bullets, with no trace of interference. As if that was not bad enough, it gets even worse! We do not need to place detectors at both holes, we can get the same result by watching just one hole. If a photon passes through a hole that does not have a detector, it not only knows if the other hole is open or not, it knows if the other hole is being observed! If there is no detector at the other hole as well as the one it is passing through, it will produce an interference pattern, otherwise it will act as a particle. When we are watching the holes we can't catch the photon going through both at once, it will only go through one. When we are not watching, it will go through both at the same time! There is no clearer example of the interaction of the observer with the experiment. When we try to look at the spread-out photon wave, it collapses into a definite particle, but when we are not looking it keeps its options open.

What the double slit experiment demonstrates is this: each photon starts out as a single photon - a particle - and arrives at the detector as a particle, but appears to have gone through both holes at once, interfered with itself, and worked out just where to place itself on the detector to make its own small contribution to the overall interference pattern. This behavior raises a number of significant problems! Does the photon go through both holes at the same time? How does a photon go through both holes at the same time? How does it know where to

place itself on the detector to form part of the overall pattern? Why don't all the photons follow the same path and end up in the same place?

As a possible explanation it could perhaps be said that this is just one more example of the extraordinary nature of light, after all it does have some very unusual properties. Photons have no rest mass for example, a very odd property! Light is also unique in that it always travels at the same speed. However you move, and however the light source moves, when you measure the speed of light you always come up with the same answer. By way of comparison, two cars approaching each other and each having a speed of 30 mph will be approaching each other at a speed of 60 mph. Two light beams, both travelling of course at the speed of light, will be approaching each other at the speed of light, not twice the speed of light. Perhaps the weird behavior of photons in the experiment is due to the weird nature of light. Unfortunately, further experiments have demonstrated that this is not the case. Electrons have been used instead of photons, and they not only have mass, they have an electric charge, and furthermore they move at different speeds depending on circumstances, like normal everyday objects. The double slit experiments still gives the same result using electrons as it does using photons; electrons also alter their behavior depending on whether or not they are being observed. The experiment has even been performed using atoms, again with the same result, and atoms are large enough to be individually photographed, they are very real solid objects. This odd behavior of particles is a very *real* phenomenon.

The double slit experiment is not simply an oddball theory that has no application in the real world. This strange behavior of particles lies at the very heart of our understanding of the physical properties of the world. Quantum

theory is used in many applications, including television and computers, and even explains the nuclear processes taking place inside stars.

One possible explanation for quantum weirdness is a theory concerning the nature of the wave that is passing through the experiment. The key concept of the theory, which forms a central part of the Copenhagen Interpretation, is known as the “collapse of the wave function.” The theory seeks to explain how an entity such as a photon or an electron, could “travel as a wave but arrive as a particle.” According to the theory, what is passing through the experiment is not a material wave at all, but is a “probability wave.” In other words, the particle does not have a definite location, but has a probability of being here or there, or somewhere else entirely. Some locations will be more probable than others, such as the light areas in the interference pattern for example, and some will be less probable, such as in the dark areas. In this theory, an electron that is not being observed does not exist as a particle at all, but has a wave-like property covering the areas of probability where it could be found. Once the electron is observed, the wave function collapses and the electron becomes a particle. This theory rather neatly explains the behavior of the particles in the double slit experiment. When we are not looking at the particle, the probability wave, of even a single particle, is spread out and will pass through both slits at the same time and arrive at the detector as a wave showing an interference pattern. When we observe the electron by placing detectors at the slits, it is forced into revealing its location which causes the probability wave to collapse into a particle. If the theory is correct, its implications are staggering. What it suggests is that nothing is real until it has been observed!

Nothing is real until it has been observed! This thought clearly needs consideration. Are we really saying that in the “real” world - outside of the laboratory - that until a thing has been observed it doesn't exist? This is precisely what the Copenhagen Interpretation is telling us about reality. This has caused some very well respected cosmologists (Stephen Hawking for one) to worry that this implies that there must actually be something “outside” the Universe (maybe the Life Force of the Universe, or, in other words, G-d) to look at the Universe as a whole and collapse its overall wave function. John Wheeler puts forward an argument that it is only the presence of conscious observers, in the form of ourselves, that has collapsed the wave function and made the Universe exist. If we take this to be true, then the Universe only exists because *we* are looking at it. As this is heading into very deep water, I think we will have to leave it there and move on to the next experiment.

Schrödinger 's 'Cat-in-the-Box Experiment'

According to the Copenhagen Interpretation, the probability wave of an electron requires the act of observation by a conscious observer to collapse it into a definite particle, and thus have a definite location. We can imagine a closed box containing just a single electron. Now until someone looks in the box, the probability wave associated with the electron will fill the box uniformly, thus giving an equal probability of finding the electron anywhere inside the box. If a partition is introduced into the middle of the box that divides it into two equal boxes, still without anyone looking inside, then common sense tells us that the electron must be in one side of the box or the other. But this is not the case according to the Copenhagen Interpretation which says that the probability wave is still evenly distributed across both half-boxes. This means that there is still a

50:50 chance of finding the electron in *either* side of the box. When somebody looks into the box, the wave will then collapse and the electron will be noticed in one half of the box or the other, but it will only at the moment of observation “decide” which half it will be in. At the same time the probability wave in the other half of the box vanishes. If the box is then closed, and the electron no longer observed, its probability wave will again spread out to fill the half box, but cannot spread back into the other half of the box that was empty.

The way that a quantum wave moves is described by Erwin Schrödinger's wave equation and describes the probability for finding a photon, or electron, at a particular place. Schrödinger did not however, go along with the “collapse of the wave function” theory, he thought it was nonsense, and designed “thought experiments” to prove his point. In an attempt to demonstrate the foolishness - as he saw it - of quantum theory, Schrödinger devised the cat-in-a-box thought experiment.

In Schrödinger's original thought experiment he used radioactive decay because that also obeys the rules of probability. We, however, shall use our box with the partition and electron again, as we are now familiar with it.

Imagine we have our box with the partition in place, and the electron's probability wave evenly spread between both halves of the box. We have now added a device that will, at a given time, automatically open up one half of the box to the room. There is a 50:50 chance that when opened the box will contain the electron that is now free to enter the room. The room is sealed and has no windows that would allow any outside observations to be made. Inside the sealed room there is a cat, a container of poisonous gas, and an electron detector.

The experiment is so designed that if the electron detector detects an electron it will release the poisonous gas into the room, which would prove very unfortunate for the poor cat. If, on the other hand, that half of the box does not contain the electron, the poisonous gas will not be released into the room and our cat, henceforth known as Lucky, will continue to enjoy good health, providing it keeps away from busy roads.

Taking a common sense view of the situation, we would say that when the experiment has run its course, and an observer enters the room, they will find the cat either dead or alive. But we already know enough about quantum theory to realize that common sense doesn't apply here, and instead we have to turn to the Copenhagen Interpretation for an explanation.

According to the Copenhagen Interpretation, when the lid of one half of the box is opened, it is not an electron, or not as the case may be, that is released into the room, but the probability wave of the electron as it has not yet been observed. This raises the question of whether or not the cat can be regarded as a conscious observer. If it can be then where do we draw the line? Would a fly or an ant count? How about a bacterium? As this is again getting into rather deep and murky water, we will skip over this problem and continue with our experiment, otherwise we run the risk of becoming seriously side-tracked. So the probability wave spreads into the room, not an electron (or no electron). The electron detector is itself composed of microscopic entities of the quantum world (atoms, particles and so on) and the interaction of the electron with it would take place at this level, so the detector is also subject to the quantum rules of probability. Taking this view, the wave function of the whole system will not collapse until a conscious observer enters the room. At *that moment* the electron “decides”

whether it is inside the box or in the room, the detector “decides” whether it has detected an electron or not, and the cat “decides” whether it is dead or alive. Until that moment, according to the Copenhagen Interpretation, the cat is not either dead or alive, it describes the situation as a “superposition of states.” Only the act of observation will cause it to become one or the other. Schrödinger described the situation as *'having in it the living and the dead cat mixed or smeared out in equal parts.'* The Copenhagen Interpretation does not allow for the room to actually contain a cat that is both dead and alive at the same time, or a cat that is neither dead nor alive, suspended in limbo. But contains *either* a dead cat or a live cat, *until someone looks*, and it is then that the actual reality of the situation is determined.

Cat lovers please note. This experiment has never been carried out, and never will be. This is not only because it would be a very cruel thing to do, but because it wouldn't prove anything. An observer upon entering the room would find either a dead cat or a living one, but could not observe what processes preceded this event. Any previous observation would of course defeat the object of the experiment.

The problems highlighted by the cat-in-a-box experiment raise some very deep questions. What, for example, are the requirements needed to qualify as a “conscious observer?” Do the probability waves of particles spread out again when not observed and particles somehow become less “real,” as described by the Copenhagen Interpretation? Does the Universe exist only because we are here to observe it? Could a cat really be in a “superposition of states,” either dead or alive, until the moment of observation? This goes entirely against all our common sense experience of life, we would naturally conclude upon finding the

cat alive that it had “obviously” been alive all the time. Quantum theory is telling us that we could be very wrong in our thinking regarding what reality really is.

What Does This Prove?

Actually, these experiments don’t “prove” anything at all. The only thing we can really learn from these experiments is that we don’t know anything. Even scientists, after hundreds of years of studying the physical properties of the world that we live in, have been set back by these relatively new theories.

These theories cannot be explained in terms of physicality. They can only be discussed in terms of “what if?” That is all I want you to ask yourself. What if? What if there is a greater power than you?

What if this greater power wants you to survive for the sake of the rest of the Universe?

What if you could find out the secrets of the Universe?

What if everything that you think about manifests itself in some way that is hidden in your perspective of reality? In other words, what if you actually have what you were asking for the whole time and just don’t understand that it was you were requesting?

What if you were able to analyze your life under a microscope, paying special attention to the repetitive experiences, and found that you are able to see a clearer picture as to why things happen to you the way they do?

What if you were able to learn something about yourself after you discover that you never really wanted what you thought you wanted?

What if, after figuring out that you may have been “wanting” something other than what you really want, you are able change what you want into something more valuable to yourself?

What if after you started thinking about “wanting” something else, you were able to actually experience those thoughts manifesting themselves into physicality as long as you maintained patience and faith in the Life Force of the Universe?

What if all this were true? Would you try and work on yourself? Would it make the work seem worth the effort if you knew in your heart that we each have a unique purpose in this world and in order to enhance our experiences here, we must first find our purpose?

If you knew for sure that there was a higher ulterior purpose to living, would you really care about some of the things you think you care about now?

Is it possible for you to reconsider any and all information that does not stand up to the criteria of being considered a “fact” and understand that they may not be actual “facts”? This does not mean that you have to argue with everyone

because they don't know what they are talking about. It means that you have to assume they don't know what they are talking about when it comes to your life.

Are you able to acknowledge that things that you might want to call "facts" may only be your opinion?

With regards to other peoples' life, beliefs and opinions – are you able to understand and/or empathize, but not necessarily agree with, another perspective besides your own?

How important is world peace to you?

What can you do that would help bring a peaceful existence to our world?

This last question is, depending on how important peace is to you, the most important question you can ask yourself. This may seem like a very loaded question, but that is because we tend to think big when it comes to this subject. Try thinking very small this time. Think baby steps. What can you do to bring peace into your personal environment?

By consistently behaving respectfully and lovingly to others that are in your personal life, you will eventually open the hearts of those people and they, maybe not even consciously, will reciprocate your behavior to others that are in their personal lives and so on.

It really does work like this. It does take a lot of time and patience and is not a quick fix. Everyone must do their part – even if their part is infinitesimal. It

won't be easy, but you have already begun the process by reading about this subject. There are many, many more books like this one, but written from a different perspective that may help you see your life that much more clearly. I have included a recommended reading list at the end of this book for those of you who would like to explore this topic more deeply. Encourage others to try and open their minds as well. Live life peacefully and with joy. This is all we really have to do in order to evolve according to the plans of the Life Force of the Universe.

You don't have to believe anything I say, you only have to say maybe....