

UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF

We are one in the same with which created us. The Universe. It makes sense that we would all have a vast universe within.

I believe that every single person on this planet has an universe inside of them. When I walk past people on the street, I sometimes visualize what it would be like to see their universe. I see beauty, pain, swirling lights and colors, matter colliding, elements in perfect harmony, love, authenticity and even fear of not being enough. I feel most connected to others when I step into this perspective. When I work with clients, we pull out the telescope and start the process of understanding and organizing their universe. A healthy inner environment is all about becoming aware of our own unique universe. Admiring the magnificence of the stars within while also having the courage to face our unnerving black holes.

Our individual universe is made up of many, many different elements. Every experience we have ever had. Hundreds of pieces of ourselves, like the "inner child" or the part of you that hates taking out the trash. Beliefs about our self, our identity and our purpose that we've cultivated along our journey. Hundreds of biological chemicals. How we were treated by our parents. Our soul. Inherited familial lineages. Conditioning from that lineage, society, the media, school and so on. We are the culmination of everything we have experienced.

When we are in relationship, we are bringing two uniquely different universes together and this is why relationships can be so confusing, muddled or even chaotic. To make matters more complicated, pieces of our universe can react in a strong physical way when triggered by our external environment. In this case, that external environment is our life with our partner. This is why understanding our own universe is paramount. It allows us the opportunity to act out of love, instead of old experiences or wounding. It is extremely difficult to work out issues and create safety and soothing in a relationship when one, or both, partners don't know exactly what is causing them pain.

I recently worked with a woman who would sometimes come home feeling exhausted from her work day. She would feel withdrawn and ready for bed. Her husband would then be triggered into asking her if "everything was ok". No matter how many times she said yes, he couldn't accept her answer. It left her feeling even more exhausted and even guilty that she couldn't give her husband the reassurance he needed. He wouldn't let her sleep because he couldn't accept that she was just tired. There had to be something more to the story for him. Eventually all this would spiral into an all night struggle. There was no way she could convince him that she was just tired and her expression of exhaustion was not a reflection of how she felt about him or their marriage. This is what I like to call a "surface" problem. What happens when we peer deep into the husband's universe? We find many instances and experiences that taught him that a withdrawn woman is withdrawn because she is cheating.

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The beauty of becoming aware of your own universe is that you can communicate effectively and authentically. If you don't even know what's going on inside of you, there is a zero chance that your partner ever will. Instead of a long and exhausting night of dancing around what the true issue was, he could have done some internal investigating and approached his wife and said, "I feel you are very withdrawn tonight and that triggers the part of me that believes this behavior is caused by you cheating on me." This statement gets right to the authentic core of the trigger. Sometimes just naming the pain out loud and having your partner hear you is all it takes to calm it. It is a vulnerable approach. There is no blame, no lashing out and no need to keep your partner up all night.

Important points to remember:

- Relationships are about understanding yourself. When you understand yourself, you understand your partner. Unconditional love is being able to understand, resonate with and accept your partner for all that they are.
- We are taught that we will find "the one" and everything will be easy, but the truth is that we are the culmination of everything we ever experienced (so is your partner) and all of those experiences come together in a relationship.
- Everything we experience through repetition becomes a physical neural network in our brain that is subconscious and drives our behavior.
- When we are born we have 2 things: our original essence (our natural personality or energy) and our subconscious programming to stay alive.
- As we move through life, the ideas and experiences we are exposed to layer "programs" on top of our original essence, making it difficult to connect with our own authenticity, power and love. It can also cause us to feel out of control.
- These programs are unique to us. When someone else's program lines up with our own, it makes us feel so deeply seen and understood. That person experiences the same emotions and feelings as a result of having a similar program. This is one of the reasons we fall in love with someone. You can feel that they understand you deep in their soul - because they do - they have similar programs. They get it. They resonate with you. The problem in relationships is that since we are all unique, the programs that DON'T line up with your partner's can cause an endless loop and cycle to begin. "You understand me so well in this area, but I don't get why you can't see where I am coming from about this as well! You must not love me!" Your partner just has a different program.

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- The 3 psychological needs that must be fulfilled and are constantly monitored by the subconscious are love, safety and belonging. This part of the brain is concerned with keeping you alive - NOT with your happiness and fulfillment. The area of the brain is ancient and has not evolved as fast as our conscious mind. It still believes that without your tribe - being loved by them and belonging to them - you will be on your own and this will lead to your death. These 3 needs get triggered in your relationship constantly. It feels like there are a lot of little things that you and your partner could be arguing about - but every single thing comes back to these 3 needs.

- The conscious mind is concerned with with happiness, fulfillment and pleasure. This is why there can be a inner battle between logic and emotion. These 2 parts of the brain have 2 separate goals. Not everything that leads to happiness or fulfillment feels safe to the subconscious and not everything that lead to love, safety and belonging feels fulfilling to the conscious mind. It's an ongoing tug of war when you are not aware!

- A healthy, thriving relationship sits on top of CONSCIOUSNESS. It sits on top of the foundation of understanding yourself and your partner. Through awareness you gain the power of choice. Instead of running on an unconscious program or behavior and feeling powerless and stuck on a loop in your relationship - you can now CHOOSE what you want to create. Moving up and out of the cycle, into thriving.

- Everything your partner does can feel like a reflection of you - but it's not true. They are a reflection of everything they've experienced in their life and everything they have practiced.

This is an adventure. This is a journey to deep, fulfilling love. It takes work, patience and courage, but there's nothing more beautiful or powerful than conscious unconditional love. It's what everyone on earth wants - and you get to create it through this work.