

Taking the Mystery out of the Mystic

OUTLINE

Introduction

Importance of the Foundation

Tips for Opening to the Mystic Perspective

1. Go beyond words.
2. Set aside, for a test period of several months, any doubt or resistance to the concept of God and begin to personally walk and talk with the God seen through the eyes of the mystics.
3. Common obstacles to avoid.
4. Trust but verify; exploring with an open mind does not mean we should be gullible.
5. Mystic perspective metaphors to explore.

Fingers Pointing at the Moon

1. Tangible proof that significant phenomena exist beyond the current boundary of the revealed world.
 - A. Near-Death Experiences
 - B. Communications with people who have passed on and other confirmation that we exist prior to entering the human body and after we leave it
 - C. Cases suggestive of reincarnation.
 - D. Physical healing beyond the expectations, capabilities and understanding of modern allopathic medicine.
 - E. Other extrasensory perception and psychokinetic phenomena.
2. Active fields of science and academic research having the strongest potential to uncover aspects of the hidden world.
3. Research confirming that living in harmony with the hidden world improves longevity, satisfaction with life and general wellbeing.

Introduction

The mystic perspective appears mysterious because it is perceived as going beyond that which can be verified through use of our physical senses or current science and technology. Spiritual matters, such as our relationship to a Higher Being or the continuance of life beyond the physical death, appear less certain than physical ones. That being said, most of us will acknowledge that there have been events that cannot be explained through use of our senses, science and technology. Several types of examples are discussed later in this article and include healings that defy science that have been documented by treating physicians and others.

These events serve as “red flags” putting us on notice that there is something more to be understood than meets the eye. Yet, when we cannot replicate the events or explain the mechanism through which the results were achieved, we tend to categorize them, like other spiritual matters, as matters of faith instead of fact or science. Believers quickly label them “miracles” caused by a benevolent Higher Being. Nonbelievers are just as quick to deny any significance on the presumption that the events must have been fabricated, exaggerated or imagined. Alternatively, they could dismiss them as random freaks of nature or coincidences. The third, and perhaps most common, adverse response is to simply ignore them without investigation as if they were obviously meritless, did not happen or were insignificant. Whether believer or nonbeliever, the typical response is based on a pre-existing worldview rather than an open-minded inquiry.

The potential to learn from these events, and begin to integrate the spiritual and the physical, need not be so readily overlooked. Even mystics recognize a distinction between the realms of things grasped through our senses, science and technology and things that are currently beyond their reach. According to Kabbalists, the former is the “revealed world” and the latter is the “hidden world.” The hidden world is permanent and infinite. It is not only relevant to anything that is real in the revealed world. It is the source of it. Understanding it helps us better understand who we are, why we are here, how we are connected to each other and why we are experiencing what we experience. The revealed world has a purpose, but is ephemeral. It is not as solid or important as we think. The combination of the two worlds is our whole reality. We call it the “mystic perspective” of reality.

Despite the “hidden” connotation, the hidden world is not beyond our ability to experience and verify. In fact, to the extent it is hidden, much of it hides right before our eyes, waiting to be found. Anyone who has stared at a “Where’s Waldo” poster understands the fact that we have to look hard for something does not mean it is not there. Believing that Waldo is on the poster for us to find, we usually succeed after some effort. If we are not specifically looking for him on the poster, we are not likely to notice him. He is still there, but is lost in the background as our mind chooses other aspects of the poster to notice.

Similarly, a person whose mind is closed to the hidden world has little chance of finding it. The hidden world is too easy to overlook and the “still, small voice”¹ within, which confirms its truth, is too easy to drown out or ignore. The deep, inner, intuitive side of our nature has to be developed. For some people, access to the hidden world comes quite naturally. For others, it takes considerable effort over time. All of us can do it.

The purpose of this section is to help any open-minded person investigate the mystic perspective and discover what it means for him or her. Neither blind faith nor adherence to a particular religion is required. That being said, there is much to learn from religious materials, particularly those of the mystics. A religious practice can also be helpful in developing spiritual discipline and the intuitive faculties.

Importance of the Foundation

Several years ago, a friend requested information on a spiritual matter. After reviewing the materials given him, he indicated that one particular statement was “way out there,” meaning that it was so foreign to his worldview that it was hard for him to believe. My friend was an intelligent, spiritually oriented man with an open mind. From my perspective, the spiritual statement was rock solid. I was surprised that my friend did not see it.

This experience triggered one of those epiphanies that seem obvious in hindsight. The fact that something appears to be “way out there” does not mean it is false. It may simply mean that we do not “see” the foundation upon which the statement rests. For example, a person in the seventeenth century would have found it hard to believe that man could walk on the moon. The concept became more believable as we became aware of the knowledgebase, technology and skill that by 1969 confirmed that such a walk could occur.

A more mystic example is the concept that man could walk on water. According to the New Testament, Jesus walked on the surface of the Sea of Galilee. One of his disciples, Peter, also walked on Sea’s surface, but temporarily. Jesus indicated that Peter could do it on a more extended basis if his “faith” were strong enough.²

Unless accepted on faith, which is the case for Christians around the world, these concepts clearly qualify for the “way out there” label. In the revealed world perspective, man cannot walk on water. We know this by experience, each of us having stepped into water and either sunk or swam. Even if we assume Jesus is not an ordinary person and therefore should not count, we are still left with the “way out there” concept that pre-sainthood Peter, an ordinary, flawed human like the rest of us, could walk on water if only his “faith” were strong enough.

For purposes of illustrating the difference a foundation makes, let us accept that Jesus made this statement and that it is true. What could be the foundation that would take Jesus’ statement out of the “way out there” category? For many Christians, the simple fact that the statement is found in the New Testament is sufficient to establish its truth even if they do not understand the mechanics of how it could happen. To take this pre-existing faith element out of the picture, let us assume that the statement is being heard by someone who is not Christian and knows nothing about Jesus. Under this assumption, the statement that Peter could walk on water has to stand on its own merits.

Here is an educated hypothesis for building blocks that, if true, would provide the necessary foundation:

- **Everything derives from vibration:** Our world is not the solid thing it appears to be. At its essence, everything is vibration (some Kabbalists refer to it as “Infinite Light”) that assumes the form of solid, liquid or gas depending on how it vibrates. This is not as crazy as it might first appear.

- Once mankind developed the knowledgebase and technology to dig into the structure of atoms, we found that they were not solid particles. Rather, they were made up of sub-atomic particles moving quickly in space to create the illusion and characteristics of solidity.
- The continued study of the smaller sub-atomic particles revealed they also had sub-structures made up of even smaller particles moving in sub-atomic space. It has been akin to an endless game of opening a big box, only to find a smaller box inside. Inside the smallest box thus far opened is something called a “zero point field” or “cosmological constant,” which is essentially a field of energy that holds the potential for all of the matter that is formed.³
- The general consensus in quantum physics, especially starting with Albert Einstein’s discovery of the $E = MC^2$ formula in the early 20th Century, is that mass is at the fundamental level interchangeable with energy. Mass converts to energy and energy imparts mass. The development of the atomic bomb, for example, was based on this principle.
- Even when they remain invisible to us, vibrations can still impart attributes of a solid. Researchers from ETH Zurich have developed a device that demonstrates that sound vibrations can be manipulated to suspend and maneuver toothpicks, coffee granules and water droplets objects in thin air. The suspension of objects had been previously accomplished using electromagnetic vibrations (since the north and south poles of a magnet repulse each other), but this levitation was accomplished without the use of any magnetic force. There is hope that it will eventually be able to be used to levitate and maneuver much larger objects.⁴
- Long before the development of the modern physics, mystics have understood the physical world that we touch and see to be a form of vibration, whether called energy or infinite light, emanating from a First Cause and manifesting as a physical world.
- **Man influences manifestation:** How the vibration manifests in the revealed world is affected to some degree by our individual and collective minds. This concept has strong support in the mystic traditions, including Chinese healing and martial arts (Qi Gong), Kabbalah and the Edgar Cayce readings. It also has support in the revealed world:
 - Research by the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research (“PEAR”) laboratory at Princeton University demonstrated that human thought and emotion can measurably influence physical reality and that the collective consciousness of humans can be measured to some degree by physical devices.⁵ This finding has been corroborated⁶ by research at the Mind Science Foundation in San Antonio Texas.
 - Physicists have discovered that human observation often makes changes to the phenomenon being observed (called the “observation effect”). For example, the study of light by physicists reveals that its behavior changes when observed by humans. It acts like a wave when not observed, but travels as an intact particle when a detector allowing human observation is present.⁷

- There are a substantial number of healing disciplines⁸, ancient and new, based on the existence of an energy system for the human body that is as real as the endocrine or digestive systems. The effectiveness of some of these, including acupuncture and Qi Gong, have been researched by the academic and scientific communities and found to have merit. Here is a deeper look:
 - i. The human energy system is “physical” to some extent. If one quiets his mind, holds his hands in front of his body about eighteen inches apart and starts to move them towards each other slowly and pauses when he first detects the slightest resistance, he can feel the slight resistance get stronger as his hands get closer. The resistance is energy from the human energy system. It is centered in the body and is easier to “feel” with one hand as it gets closer to the energy field centered in the opposing hand (and *vice versa*).
 - ii. The interrelationship between the mind and the energy manifestation is captured in the ancient Chinese saying that the Qi (life energy) follows the mind. Disturbances created by the mind, such as resentments, prejudices and emotional scars, create obstructions to the flow of the energy system. Deeply engrained disturbances in the energy system adversely impact the biological systems. Energy-based treatment modalities succeed because they address the disturbances in the energy that carry over into the physical.
 - iii. The patient’s mental patterns and habits, such as negative thinking, are the root cause of the energetic and physical problems. If the patient does not also improve the mental patterns, the energy-based relief will be temporary because the mental patterns will create more disturbances.
- There is substantial academic research⁹ correlating
 - i. spirituality and prayer with improved health and wellbeing,
 - ii. group prayer with decreased incidence in accidents and crime (the so-called “Maharishi Effect”), and
 - iii. people who are prayed for with improved rate of recovery.
- **Strength of Faith**: The development of this type of faith is not to be confused with the “Peter Pan notion” that wishing hard enough will make the wish come true. At the core of a wish is the premise that the wisher does not presently have what he wants. That premise actually pushes away the result that the wisher seeks. The faith to which we refer is experiential knowledge of the reality that is already in existence. The strength of the human mind’s influence on how the physical world manifests is affected by factors such as the following:
 - **The degree to which one has actually experienced this aspect of the reality of the hidden world.** When someone has experienced the reality of the hidden world, such as through paying attention to life experiences or a supervening event like a near-death experience, belief is transformed into experiential knowledge.

- **The alignment of one's thought with his higher self (that part of his spirit connected directly to the Source)**. It matters whether one is serving higher self and God rather than his ego. An illustration from St. Francis' prayer is, "Lord, let me be an instrument of thy peace." Rather than acting to satisfy his ego, St. Francis places himself as one who carries out the wishes of the Higher Authority as best as he can discern them. He is God's banker when he gives money to charity, God's voice when he offers an encouraging word to someone in crisis and God's hand when he clothes the naked or feeds the hungry. It is important to note that one's actions can be influenced by the ego even when he says (or even thinks) his actions reflect God's will. These strands of ego motivation are a weakening influence on the strength of one's faith.
- **The degree of certainty of the knowledge**. The spectrum of certainty ranges from "I want it, but know it will not happen" to "I know it is already in place because I have experienced it many times and found it reliable."
 - i. The closer a person is to the experiential-knowledge end of the spectrum, the more powerful the thought. Mere belief and intellectual knowledge are not experiential knowledge. They lie someplace between the two extremes of the spectrum.
 - ii. Thoughts become more powerful when they are persistent and sustained. When we alternate between moments of belief and moments of doubt, our influences on the physical world tend to cancel each other. Moreover, fear, doubt and other distractions tend to dissipate the power of whatever experiential knowledge we have.
- **The Effect of Mastery**: Jesus was sufficiently aligned with the Divine Presence flowing down through his highest self and free of doubt and distraction that when he wanted water to support him as he walked, it did. Jesus knew the water would support him with the same confidence that the rest of us have that it will give way and we will sink. Peter believed in Jesus strongly enough that he accepted that the water would hold him. It did for a moment. As Peter's intellect began to reassert itself, fear and doubt set in. He began to sink and had to be rescued. Jesus described this as a failure of faith.

The point here is not to definitively prove that Jesus and Peter walked on water or how they did it. Those of us who did not witness such an act are left to the guidance of the still, small voice within to assess its truth. The point is to illustrate how a grasp of the foundation of a concept can transform it from "way out there" to something that is believable and enlightening. We also illustrate how something long regarded as a miracle is not necessarily a magical act. There could be a "nuts and bolts" mechanism to it that is worth studying for the purpose of expanding our understanding of the reality in which we live. To do this successfully, we have to allow our worldview to expand.

Tips for Opening to the Mystic Perspective

A good way to start tapping into the mystic perspective is to read materials written by and about mystics. In addition, as described in *Love Life 101*, each of our lives is an extended education for the soul. Class is in session even when we are not aware of it. Becoming more conscious of what is going on and working with this “school of life” is as important as reading mystic literature. There is a synergy. The reading helps us become more aware of the school of life; paying attention to the day-to-day lessons in the school of life gives us a deeper understanding of what we read.

Here are several tips that will help tap into the mystic perspective when both reading and working through other aspects of the school of life:

- 1. Go beyond words.**
- 2. Set aside, for a test period of several months, any doubt or resistance to the concept of God and begin to personally walk and talk with the God seen through the eyes of the mystics.**
- 3. Some common obstacles to avoid.**
- 4. Trust but verify; exploring with an open mind does not mean we should be gullible.**
- 5. Mystic perspective metaphors to explore.**

1. Go beyond words.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to capture an infinite truth with finite words. For example, “God is Love” is a truth, but it is also an enigma. On the one hand it tells us everything about God. On the other hand, all it gives us is a starting point for our investigation. Can God be reduced to an emotion? If not, what does “love” mean? Do we look to our concept of God to inform us about love or do we look to our concept of love to inform us about God?

This is why mystics such as Jesus often use parables and metaphors to communicate a truth. It is easier for us to relate to parables and metaphors. Often they have one level of meaning for the child and another for the scholar. They are easier to remember and explore. They reveal deeper wisdom as one further contemplates their lessons or applies them in his life.

Moreover, when not anchored in something like a parable or metaphor, words are vulnerable to extreme mischief. Metaphorically speaking, the physical word is a body and the deeper intent and context are its spirit. When the spirit is unknown or ignored, the word becomes a zombie that will serve the prejudices, ambition, greed, resentments and dishonesty of every new master that comes along. As an attorney, I have seen firsthand how words in a contract or regulation can be twisted retroactively to justify a position contrary to the original intent. I was involved in litigation lasting more than ten years over the meaning of the word “use” and another case lasting eight years over the meaning of the phrase “emanating from.” In each case, the original intent appeared to be clear, yet hundreds of thousands of dollars had to be spent in litigation to get a resolution. Unfortunately, this type of occurrence is commonplace.

An example arising from the Jewish and Christian traditions involves the meaning of the Torah, adopted into the Christian tradition as the Old Testament. The Jewish tradition holds that the written Torah given to them by God at Mount Sinai was accompanied by an “Oral Torah,” a legal and interpretive component that was transmitted from generation to generation orally. The written Torah was translated into Greek at the direction of Ptolemy II in the third century, BCE. Divorced from its oral/mystic component, the written Torah often paints a picture at times of a two-dimensional God that vents His anger on those who displease Him or test His patience. When revisited in the context of the Oral Torah, God becomes much more complex and more consistent with Jesus’ teaching that God is love. Viewed in the context of the Oral Torah, much of the pain we experience is either the natural consequence of our own imprudent choices or the birth pains of well-intended change or growth. Everything we encounter has a constructive purpose even when we, like Job, cannot see it at the moment.

The ability to twist a word becomes even more dangerous in a religious context because blind faith is frequently applied to the warped interpretation. As a result, the twisted meaning becomes immunized against logic, common sense and conflicting opinions. To the believer, the twisted meaning is God’s will and that is the end of any questioning. As a result, sacred texts that have inspired saints like St. Francis, Mother Teresa, the Bal Shem Tov, Rumi and Rabia have been twisted to justify, even compel, some of the worst atrocities inflicted on men, women and children.

From the mystic perspective, when it comes to communicating a truth, the words we read and the experiences we encounter are only stimuli. Our real teacher is the “still, small voice” that resonates deep within the intuitive side of each of us. If we are paying attention, the still, small voice reacts to the stimuli to reveal truth. Often the truth is completely different than the meaning intended by the creator of the stimulus. For example, a friend may be complaining about everything that occurs during a car trip, hoping to influence our own perspective on the trip and get some sympathy. Instead of indicating that the friend is correct, the still, small voice may draw our attention to the harmful effect we have on ourselves and others when we indulge in the type of negativity and self-pity displayed at that moment by the friend.

With that in mind, here are some suggestions for getting the deeper meaning out of spiritual reading material:

- **Read (and engage your experiences) with an open mind and heart, even if you do not currently believe in a God or mystic perspective.**
- **Be honest as to that which resonates deep within.** As explained in *Love Life 101*, most of our reactions to the things we encounter do not originate from the still, small voice. Rather they come from fears, prejudices, resentment, greed and the like that we unfortunately harbor within our psyche. These distractions are very loud in comparison to the more constructive, deeper and quieter resonance of the still, small voice. Part of the challenge to experiencing God and the mystic perspective involves distinguishing the still, small voice from these noisy, more superficial distractions and clearing away the sources of the distractions to improve our ability to “hear” the still, small voice.

- **Important truths can come in unattractive packages.** As a way of keeping us open to parts of Creation we might otherwise shut out, the guidance that we need is sometimes provided through sources to which we have closed our minds. The messengers could be anyone or anything -- an adverse experience, a mother-in-law, a bum on the street or a bigot from someone else's religion. In almost every experience, we encounter a mixture of truth (that which is constructive) and imperfection. As a general rule, it is important to keep the focus on what is true and helpful rather than being distracted by the imperfections.
 - This keeps us on the trail. Obsessing on the flaws is a distraction akin to the guard dog that is thrown a hunk of raw steak to keep him busy while the house is being burgled. By magnifying the flaws, we make it harder to find the gems of truth and assistance. Even if we notice them, the gems seem insignificant in comparison to the flaws we have magnified when in fact the gems are the prizes we seek.
 - The mystic perspective honors God and truth wherever they are and they are everywhere. When we reject a truth simply because it is uttered by someone we dislike or in support of a conclusion that we oppose, we hurt our grip on reality rather than help it.
 - Every religion has its truths. Being fair when listening to people of other faiths or opinions helps avoid throwing away the baby simply because we perceive her to be sitting in dirty bathwater. This approach also helps us recognize when people of different cultures or faiths are trying to deal with the same truth. For example, a version of the "Golden Rule¹⁰" can be found in the Baha'i Faith, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Zoroastrianism.¹¹ If we obsess on wording differences, we may miss the universal nature of this truth. Often a metaphor or parable from a different religion helps us understand a familiar truth (such as the Golden Rule) at a deeper, more universal level.

- **Words are like fingers pointing at the moon (a Zen Buddhist metaphor).** We can use our finger (our words) to point to the moon (the truth), but the finger should not be confused with the moon. The moon exists independent of the finger. The finger may be helpful, but we do not need to see the finger to see the moon. Also, there is no limit on the number and variety of fingers that can point to the moon.

- **At some point, our growing awareness of God and the mystic perspective will lead to a "paradigm shift."** Paradigm shift is a term coined by Thomas Kuhn to describe the revolutions in perspective that have taken place in the history of science. An example is the repositioning of Newton's mechanical view of physics brought about by Einstein's relativistic worldview. Everything is the same as it was before except that we better understand how everything works (similar to the "bigger picture" concept discussed in *Love Life 101*). A paradigm shift to the mystic perspective leads us to engage life differently. For example, instead of harboring a grudge for a perceived slight, we will try harder to forgive and take the additional action needed to be constructive. Mystics know on an experiential level that harboring a grudge makes things worse rather than better.

- Other suggestions are provided in *Love Life 101*, particularly Chapters 4 and 9.
2. **Set aside, for a test period of several months, any doubt or resistance to the concept of God and begin to personally walk and talk with the God seen through the eyes of the mystics.**

There is a limit on what can be learned about the mystic perspective and God by one who is deliberately maintaining his distance. We can observe others experience God and the mystic perspective, as a scientist would observe the subjects of a research project. However, that will only tell us what other people conclude. Some will be more successful than others. The mere observer is less able to distinguish between the experiences that are real and ones heavily influenced by the subjects' imagination. To verify the experience firsthand, we have to give up the perch of an observer and become personally involved in the search as if we were a part of the population being studied. This is by design and here is why:

- **As explained in *Love Life 101*, our higher purpose in life is to know our oneness with God on an intimate, experiential basis.** Every part of our life, even a scientific research project, has this deeper purpose. Thus, by its very design, the study of God requires our intimate involvement to be successful. We cannot find out what is inside this "house" without first walking through the door.
- **The proof of God and the mystic perspective is in the experience.** Although reading, study and observation of others are important to feed the effort, intellectual knowledge alone is not enough. Similarly, belief, though important to sustain the effort, is not enough. Through our sustained experience, we can know the reality of God and the mystic perspective with the same degree of confidence we have that day will follow night. As we become more experienced, we can navigate the reality of the mystic perspective as if we had a map. However, knowing what to do and doing it are two different things. We may know that it is best to forgive, but find it difficult to shake the anger or hurt feelings that we blame on the one who "wronged" us. Our anger and resentments get in the way of our experience of God. Efforts to release them get easier only with practice.
- **As described in *Love Life 101*, the investigation of the mystic perspective and God is an interactive, personal growth process.** It is important to realize that we do not have complete control of the process. We are working with a Higher Being and have to leave space for the input of that Higher Being in our decision-making process. It is an interactive dance. God moves, then we respond; God responds, and so on. We have to use the information and insights that we have in hand about God and the mystic perspective, apply what we know to do in the situations that we face and see what we learn from the experience. In that experience is a response from God. When we are ready for more, the next opportunities for growth will become available, courtesy of God. If we are not working with what we have in hand, it is harder to reach that next level of progress.
- **The experiences and lessons that we receive do not proceed in linear fashion.** Sometimes we can perceive the logic of our experiences and lessons in hindsight, but not at the moment we make our choices. When that occurs, we have to move forward looking for the constructive

aspect of the experience based on trust. Moreover, it is not unusual to learn one truth and work with it, only to later encounter another truth that appears to conflict. Often this is a clue that there is a deeper truth to be learned that brings them both into perspective. This type of experience takes us deeper and deeper into the understanding of God and the mystic perspective.

3. Some common obstacles to avoid.

As skeptical as we might start out, no harm can come from opening the door (our heart and mind) and walking inside the “house” of our relationship with God and the mystic perspective. We do not lose our free will. There is nothing that imprisons us in this metaphorical house or requires us to do silly stuff in blind faith of something unknown. We can choose baby steps over immersion. We can leave the house at any time, closing the door behind us, if we do not find a growing awareness of a relationship that resonates in the very core of our being. We simply have to open up and work with what we are given. When we are ready for more, more will be given.

If we can always change our minds, what could stop us from opening the door and going inside this metaphorical home? What might work against our efforts to dance with the Divine? Are we afraid of something? Is there something more important to do? Are we comfortable that we already know the answers to all of the questions that matter?

Here are some obstacles that tend to get in the way of experiencing God and the mystic perspective. Most of them can impair both believers and nonbelievers. The ideal that leads the way has to be a search for truth rather than a quest to prove a particular result.

- **Our conscious mind tends to filter out data that cannot be fit into our existing worldview.** We are bombarded with a lot more stimuli than our conscious mind can process at any one time. The mind, either on a conscious or sub-conscious level, has to choose what we will notice with our conscious mind and what will fade into the background as if it did not exist. Like a pair of sunglasses, our mind can filter out “light” that is too bright for our existing worldview. For example, when we are prejudiced against a certain race or religion, we tend to zoom in on behavior and traits that support our prejudice and filter out those that contradict it. When committed to a particular theology, we tend to measure the truth in other religions, science and anything else by how consistent they are with that theology. Examples include:
 - Darwin’s theories were rejected wholesale by many when they first were published (and even today) based solely on a perceived conflict with the account of creation found in *Genesis*. At the same time, others have looked at Darwin’s work and noticed how the pattern of evolution he observed in nature follows the pattern of Creation described in *Genesis*. Rather than finding a threat to a belief in God, they found that Darwin tends to corroborate *Genesis* and give additional insight into how God works.
 - There was a time when the Catholic Church’s theology incorporated the hypothesis that the sun and stars revolve around the Earth. When Galileo suggested that the earth revolved around the sun, he was treated as a heretic and punished with the intent of

making him recant. Eventually, the Church opened its mind to the truth Galileo tried to share.

Science often operates as a theology that suppresses the exploration of views that appear to challenge its existing tenets. Some researchers studying the ramifications of quantum physics, human consciousness, reincarnation, paranormal phenomena, prayer and faith-healing think that the phenomena they are seeing may be an indication of an intelligent, unifying Creative Force. Although they stand on the verge of an important paradigm shift, they encounter an artificial limitation unofficially imposed by the scientific community on what is considered legitimate scientific inquiry. The theology of the scientific community is that science and God do not mix. As a result, researchers are typically reluctant to discuss data-based hypothesis involving a Higher, Unifying Creative Presence for fear of being shunned by their colleagues. Such hypotheses are deprived the objective scientific investigation they deserve.

The concept that science is a better measure of the “real world” than our spiritual “truths” has a ripple effect in society at large. Most members of society affiliate with a religion premised on the existence of God, miracles and a divine presence in our lives. In addition, they have access, either through personal experience or information from credible sources, to numerous examples of occurrences that are unexplainable within the four corners of the prevailing scientific community’s revealed-world view of reality. These include:

- incredible synchronicities experienced by each of us every day
- faith-based healings
- near-death experiences
- premonition dreams
- research on reincarnation, mental telepathy, mediums, psychic phenomena, effects of prayer, and
- the greater implications of quantum physics, relativity of time and space, and effects of thought on physical devices.

Yet despite their faith that there is a God and the availability of this documented body of information, they tend to use the prevailing scientific community’s, revealed-world view of reality as the yardstick by which all secular ideas are measured.

- **When there is a gap in our knowledge, it takes a conscious effort to leave space for that gap until the yet-unknown facts that occupy that gap are discovered.** The mind is powerful in that it can create a “half-truth” type of illusion by emphasis on some facts, suppression of others and speculation to fill in perceived gaps. Reality is replaced with an illusion that makes the potential for success harder to see. This illusion, in turn, tends to discourage us from looking for ways to succeed when the first efforts fail. To the extent we are encumbered by prejudice or the illusion of doubt and expectancy of failure, we have to work harder to persevere in our efforts long enough to experience the results that working with the truth will bring.

- **The noise and distraction of an adrenaline-driven life drowns out the still, small voice and takes the focus away from the more important but subtle hidden-world reality.** To explore our relationship to the “mother ship” (God) and the mystic perspective we have to make space in our lives to quiet down and find our center. Reserving one day a week (for example, the Sabbath) as a refuge from the hubbub of work life and time for family focus and reflection is very useful as is a daily routine of prayer and meditation.

To gain insight into the mechanics of why this is necessary, imagine a man running full steam through a long, dimly lit tunnel. There is a light at the end of the tunnel and he believes there is a pot of gold there that could be claimed by someone else at any minute. He is also being chased by a lion. As he runs toward the gold, he passes through a lot of nuisances – areas of foul odors, cobwebs, dripping water, loud noises, mice, spiders, firecracker explosions and dust clouds. As he gets closer to the end of the tunnel, he runs through a ten-foot stretch of tunnel that is dry and clear of nuisances. It is clear sailing. He then runs through a three-foot stretch in which the humidity is elevated. It is not dripping wet, but clearly noticeable to someone looking for it.

There he is – wet from the past dripping water, sore from bruises, decorated with cobwebs and other debris, wondering if he will ever get rid of the foul odor lingering in his nostrils and on his clothes, afraid of being killed by the lion and desperately pursuing the pot of gold. Is this man likely to have noticed the slightly elevated humidity? Later, when he talks about all that happened to him in the tunnel, will he remember the moment of slightly elevated humidity? If he remembers the humidity, will he think it important enough to mention in light of all of the more dramatic things that were going on?

We chase many “pots of gold” in our lives, have many fears and endure many distractions. The things that are most important to us are very subtle. They include God, the mystic perspective, the still, small voice and our energy system. These bring our whole life into perspective and help us understand who we are and why we are here. They hold the key to our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing. They help us find meaning in our lives. They are worth the effort required to carve out time and space in our busy lives to attune to their subtle nature.

- **Some of the biggest sources of noise and distraction in our lives are our fears, resentments, emotional scars, prejudices, greed and the like.** We are blind to many of these. To the extent that we recognize them, we may see nothing wrong with them or feel powerless to change them. However, each tends to lead us away from truth. Like a pair of sunglasses, they filter out what we see. As discussed more extensively in *Love Life 101*, any serious effort to attune to God and the mystic perspective requires that we become more aware of these distractions and start to heal them.
- **Satisfaction with the “revealed world” can hinder our recognition of the value of investigating God and the mystic perspective.** The hidden world is, to a large extent, like a radio frequency: it

is there but we do not access it unless we tune into it. This requires sustained effort, which we are unlikely to invest if we do not see any real value in it.

When things appear to be going well in our lives, there is typically no burning need to search beyond the revealed world. Often it takes a personal crisis such as an illness or loss of a loved one, to strip the revealed world of its illusion of security and inspire us to seek a more secure foundation as if our wellbeing depended on finding it.

Usually our spiritual progress contributes to the improvement of our revealed world situation. As our material world situation gets better, we can become satisfied once again with the revealed world and lose touch with the value of cultivating our spiritual relationships.

This will lead to spiritual regression, which in turn makes our spiritual growth dependent upon another personal crisis. As a result, our spiritual journey, which is the ultimate purpose of our physical life, becomes a harsh roller coaster ride of satisfaction, regression, crisis, spiritual progress, satisfaction, regression, crisis and so forth.

- **Time and space mask the causal link between many of the choices we make (including our choice of thoughts) and the effects they trigger.** Time and space are attributes built into the revealed world we experience. As a result, it takes patience to discern the causal link between the choices we make and the life we experience. As we become more aware of that link, we realize on an experiential basis that choices that promote our spiritual wellbeing also promote our revealed world wellbeing.

When we indulge in negative thought, for example, we may recognize it as something that we should avoid on spiritual grounds, but fail to see any meaningful effect on what happens in the revealed world. At most, it might be something that is held against us when we are judged after our death, assuming we believe in some type of post-death spiritual reckoning. But how could a thought hurt anyone or change anything outside of our mind?

Every choice that we make has a revealed-world effect as well as a hidden-world effect. Negative thoughts lead to a negative mindset. A negative mindset filters out the blessings in our lives and exaggerates the negativity. This colors the motives we perceive in the people we encounter, the prospects for success that we perceive in the tasks we undertake and the feelings we have about our lives in general. As a result, we tend to base our words and actions towards the opportunities that arise and the people we meet on the negative illusion that we have created rather than the reality of what is. These opportunities and people, in turn, react to the negativity we project. Our expectation of negativity and failure becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

There is powerful wisdom in the oft-quoted adage:

Watch your thoughts, for they become words.
Watch your words, for they become actions.

Watch your actions, for they become habits.
Watch your habits, for they become your character.
Watch your character, for it becomes your destiny.

The problem is that the interplay of time and space means that there appears to be a delay between the cause and manifestation of the effect. When the consequences come to roost, we usually have no clue that it is causally related to our earlier choice. The consequence appears to be a random occurrence or a wrong done to us without any provocation on our part. We feel we have no control over what happens to us.

Similarly, when we begin to make more constructive choices, the beneficial effects may be delayed in time and subtle in impact. However, that does not mean that they are not there or that they are not important. A general trend in improvement of our choices will result in a general trend in improvement in our revealed world wellbeing. With patience and the help of the still, small voice within, we become better at recognizing the effects and linking them to the cause. Usually, as we become more adept at this, the time span between cause and effect seems to shorten. We are better at recognizing effects while they are subtle and before they snowball into something with a big, revealed-world impact, such as illness, alienation of friends, divorce or bankruptcy.

- **The ability to perceive God and the mystic perspective does not come as easily to some people as it does to others, but can be cultivated.** For example, we all have some degree of psychic abilities and have access to the same stimuli that psychics pick up. In the same way that some people are more musically talented than others, a psychic may be naturally more gifted in attuning to psychic phenomena.

The same is true for the ability to discern other aspects of the mystic perspective and our ongoing interaction with God. The effect of this disparity is that some of us have to work harder than others to develop a comparable level of perception. As we read more about God and the mystic perspective and put into action those things that we know to do, we become more knowledgeable about how things interact with each other. We can recognize and act upon the spiritual implications of events in our lives. It is similar to how study and experience helps a global economist recognize the effect which a bombing in Saudi Arabia will have on stock markets in New York.

- By the time he hears of the bombing, the global economist already knows the type of events that impact Saudi Arabia's oil supply and the impact on the economy that a reduced oil supply would cause. For most of us, it is just another news story. For the global economist, it is a neon sign of an investment opportunity that has to be acted upon quickly.
- He was not born with the ability to predict impacts on the stock market. It is a skill he acquired through education and experience. We can do the same in our interaction with God and the mystic perspective.

There is no shame in having to work harder. No one person is better than another. Someone who is gifted in one area may be weak in another. The purpose of *Love Life 101* and this website is to provide information that can help those ready to work a little harder than before become more aware of God and the mystic perspective.

- **Indulging in retroactive skepticism can act as a spiritual eraser.** Each of us recognizes evidence of the hidden reality from time to time. Sometimes it is so remarkable that we take notice and are acutely aware in the moment that it is beyond the ken of the revealed world. It can range from miraculous healings to remarkable synchronicities. Indeed, life itself is a miracle. Despite the occasional moments of awakening, we can easily revert to a state in which we are oblivious to many of the ways that God and the hidden world manifest in our revealed world experiences.

In hindsight, almost everything looks like it was obviously going to occur. A big example is the end of the Cold War symbolized by the fall of the Berlin Wall. For decades, this appeared to be an event that would never occur. Twenty-some years after the people of Berlin spontaneously tore down the wall, the world has adjusted. New challenges have arisen to replace the old. People have become familiar with the mechanics of how this milestone came about. The fall seems to have been inevitable, but that is the mind rewriting history. At the time it happened, the change in global dynamics and the relaxation of military defense strategies based on mutually assured destruction were nothing short of miraculous.

On a more personal level, the preface to *Love Life 101* discusses the real life story of a doctor whose patient came back to life after being declared dead by all of the medical professionals in the room and disconnected from life support. Upon his spontaneous revival, the patient sat up, delivered an incredible spiritual message tailored for a doctor whom he had not previously met and then quickly passed away again. The story has many implications, but one wrinkle involves what happened next as the doctor moved on to his next emergency. The incredible spiritual revelation that he had experienced only a few minutes earlier quickly faded into the background as he resumed the drama and stress of his every day work life.

Like that doctor, we tend to become less certain about our spiritual revelations as we resume the challenges and drama of our everyday lives. To the extent that we remember the events associated with the revelations, the skeptical side of our nature will start to question whether they were really linked to anything spiritual. We can forget that they happened or come up with alternate explanations such as coincidence and imagination. Soon, the incredible moment of spiritual awakening and growth is retroactively erased, almost as if it never happened.

4. Trust but verify; exploring with an open mind does not mean we should be gullible.

An exploration of God and the mystic perspective does not require a “leap of faith,” as if stepping off a cliff to prove that the air will support us. This is a journey towards experiential knowledge. Sometimes we are forced into situations such as personal hardships or miraculous healings where things move fast, the veneer of the revealed world is stripped away and we experience firsthand that which is

normally hidden to us. Most of the time, however, our spiritual awakening proceeds at a slower pace. It is helpful to take “baby steps” where needed to get comfortable with concepts that seem strange at first or challenge our existing worldview. In both cases, we can build on the moments of revelation to let God and the mystic perspective become more and more a part of our conscious life.

“Trust, but verify” is different than blind faith because blind faith leaves us both blind and gullible. What is needed is a sincere willingness to learn the truth about the Unifying Presence in the universe, without preconditions as to what that truth is, and a sustained effort in pursuit of that truth. Truth is truth. Testing that which we perceive to be true does not make the real truth go away. It gives us the opportunity to expose any illusions in our thinking and drill deeper into that which bears fruit.

What follows is best described as a journey to awakening and knowing and away from blindness and gullibility. We start from wherever we are and work with whatever we have been given. With openness to the still, small voice within, we put into action those things that we know to do and learn from how it goes. We monitor both the short-term outcomes as well as the long-term trends. There are subtle distinctions to be sorted out so patience and persistence is in order. What appears to be a failure may simply indicate that there are more layers of the onion to be peeled off. As we are ready for further development, the opportunities will be provided. We look for the constructive perspective on each situation. From that perspective, we seek to discern the way forward.

The realization that we are not alone in this endeavor will open a crucial door to help. The guidance from the spiritual realm becomes stronger as we make room for it in our planning, attune to it, put it into action and pay attention to the results. For example, we will hear many things that others advocate to us as truths. Sometimes the advocate’s logic seems irrefutable, yet we are not comfortable accepting the argument even though we cannot identify at that moment what gives us pause. At other times, our initial reaction to a new concept is to dismiss it out of hand, but it catches our attention and we ultimately recognize it as a springboard to a deeper understanding of reality.

Leaving space in our lives for interaction with God requires that we refrain from making a hasty final judgment in these types of situations. In both cases, God is likely taking the first step in introducing us to a new concept. When we recognize this type of development, it is good to mark the issue in our minds as something to watch. Opportunities will arise to understand it on a deeper level.

At points in our journey, we will learn one truth and become satisfied that it is rock solid only to subsequently learn another “rock solid” truth that seems to conflict with the first truth. This is just a continuation of the interaction with God. It opens a door of inquiry to an even deeper truth that puts both of the prior truths into context. For example, there is a Christian teaching that Jesus the Christ is the way, the truth and the life and no one goes to God except through him.¹² A person who accepts this truth may subsequently encounter people of other religious backgrounds who do not recognize Jesus as the way, the truth and the life, but nonetheless recognize the way, truth and life that Jesus personified. Such people are holy and sincere. Their connection with God cannot reasonably be denied. If both the Christian teaching and these observations about people who are not Christian ring true, how can they be reconciled? This is a question that most of us do not have to face because we belong wholly in one camp

or the other. For those of us whose life path takes us deeply into both camps, having to face that question will open the door to yet a deeper truth.

Through prayer and our thoughts, we talk to God. Through meditation and reflection, we listen to Him. All of our prayers are heard and answered, but the answer can frequently unfold through channels, in ways and on timetables we do not expect. Vigilance and a willingness to expand our worldview will help us recognize these blessings when they manifest. It is in this interaction with spirit and applying what we know to do that we gain the spiritual growth and experiential knowledge that we seek.

5. Mystic perspective metaphors to explore.

One purpose of *Love Life 101* is to lay out a path that leads a person having an open mind step-by-step from a revealed-world orientation to an awareness of the mystic perspective and the importance of his or her intimate relationship with God. Because of the clumsiness of finite words when describing infinite truths, *Love Life 101* often relies on analogies, metaphors and parables. These include the “chicken fat island” parable, the divine spark and symphony analogies, the “your fellow is your mirror” metaphor and principles such as “specific divine providence” and “being true to your true self.”

Here are some analogies not covered in *Love Life 101* for understanding and navigating the mystic perspective:

- **A stick in water.** The insertion of a stick in a glass tank filled with water demonstrates how reality can be different than it looks. The light rays are refracted by the water in the tank creating an illusion. From the side of the tank, the stick in the water appears to be detached from the part outside the water. It can look closer than it actually is. From the perspective of the revealed world, we look detached from our higher selves, our Creator and each other. In reality, we are still connected. Yet because of the illusion, we act as if we are not.

If we do not actively cultivate our awareness of this connection, the awareness fades into the background and ceases to be a part of our conscious reality. Even when we are blind to it, this connection is still real. When we rebel or self-indulge at the unfair expense of others or the greater good, we are in reality hurting ourselves. We incur harsh experiences and maladies that seem random and unfair, but are really the consequences of our own choices.

To bring our lives back into harmony, we have to cultivate our awareness and relationship with the oneness – with the part of the stick that remains outside the tank of water. This perception of the greater reality, in turn, becomes the background that informs our choices.

- **“Hidden Math.”** When does $1 + 1 = 5$? Although we may be focusing on the revealed world as if it were all of reality, the hidden world is always there affecting the flow of the life we experience and reacting to our choices. When we are unaware of the hidden world, the results of this “intervention” of the hidden world appear random and illogical. That is not the case,

however. There is logic and a mechanism for everything that we experience just as there is in a mathematical equation.

The problem is that parts of the equation are hidden to us because of our fixation on the revealed world. When the hidden world mechanisms are taken into account (which is the mystic perspective), the equation balances. Using the $1 - 3 = 4$ equation as an example:

+1 A revealed world factor such as an everyday drive to visit a relative.

+1 (hidden world factors such as grace, good deeds and a decision by the higher self to endure challenging circumstances in the physical life to speed up the rate of spiritual growth)

- 4 (hidden world factors such as complacency, a negative outlook and ill-advised choices that tend to conceal the connection to God and all of creation)

-3 A revealed world experience of a car accident caused by a drunk driver that leads to serious physical injury.

+9 (car accident results in a hidden world opportunity to experience the spiritual growth that comes from cleansing the effect of prior harmful choices, stripping away the illusion of self-sufficiency, prompting the earnest pursuit of help from God and a deeper understanding of what is going on and facilitating spiritual healing through forgiveness and unconditional love; all of these have benefits that extend beyond this physical life)

= 4 The resulting progress towards personal growth and wellbeing.

The practical, and sometimes very harsh, lesson of this analogy is that when we encounter an equation in our lives that does not add up, it is a signal that something is missing. It behooves us to raise our antenna to try to pick up on the missing pieces. Many things will remain a mystery, but the more we pay attention, the more we begin to understand about the “hidden” part of the equation.

This type of mathematical exercise helped astronomers discover the existence of Neptune and Pluto. In the 1840’s, an astronomer noticed that Uranus was not orbiting in the manner that would be expected given the force of gravity and the location of the then-known planets. He engaged in some mathematical analysis to identify what additional body would have to be present to explain Saturn’s actual movement. He then scanned the sky in the area that his math predicted a planet would be located and found Uranus. Pluto was discovered nearly a century later in the same way.

Even when pieces of the equation remain hidden to us, the knowledge that there is more to the equation than what we see can help us stay on track when we encounter experiences that are painful or seem scary and unfair. Rather than turning our back on that

which will lead us through the challenge (God) and falling into a tailspin of fear and self-pity, we can keep in mind that every experience we encounter has a constructive purpose and we are never alone in facing it. While doing our best to deal with the adverse situation, we can keep our eyes open for that constructive purpose. We can take advantage of the opportunities that present themselves to bring light out of the dark.

- **Using Universal Truth as a Compass.** This is like using a principle understood to be true like we use the “north” identified by a compass to orient ourselves on a map. There is a way to expose the ways in which we currently screen out a “universal truth.” An example of a truth that seems challenging for many are the concepts that God is involved in every aspect of our lives – what we consider “bad” as well as what we consider “good” – and that even our worst test or hardship has a constructive purpose that will manifest if we align ourselves properly.

The first step of the exercise, after identifying such a truth, is to apply it literally and honestly to challenging real-life situations and observe our reaction. What objections or questions storm into our minds? What firmly held tenets are brought into question if such a premise is true? For example, once we label events as “good” and “bad,” we may find it hard to accept that God could be involved in things that we view as “bad” even though the Book of Job provides us with a classic example to contemplate. We may be tempted to reject the concept of God on the hypothesis that a benevolent God would not allow “bad” to happen. Those who cling to the concept of God, may prefer to distance Him from the bad events by blaming the “bad” on human free will gone awry or perhaps even a “devil.”

Since the involvement of God and the constructive nature of the events are accepted as true for purposes of this exercise, we are forced to take a closer look at the judgment we exercised when labeling events as “good” or “bad.” It becomes apparent that we did not have enough information to make such a judgment. We have to make space in our thinking for a bigger picture with more in it. As an example of how perception is changed when more of the context is understood, the horrible crime we perceive when hear that one man has cut open another and taken out his heart becomes an act of kindness when we learn of additional details indicating that what is really going on is life-saving surgery.

This exercise opens our eyes to the magnitude of the work to be done to bring our individual perception more into alignment with the universal truth with which we chose to work. Perhaps it causes us to reconsider our faith in the “universal truth.” Although the answers may not be readily apparent, becoming aware of the questions will better position us to learn as the opportunities to learn arise in the daily activity of the School of Life. We do not get all of the answers quickly because there is a lot of foundation to be unveiled through School of Life activity.

Initially, this is an intellectual exercise, but the intellectual part is only a beginning. Much of this journey has to be accomplished through experiential lessons and consistent application of an “ideal”¹³ that is faithful to the “universal truths.” Consistent and mindful

application of the “truth,” is how we begin to own it. Application, more than anything else, opens our awareness of “the bigger picture” that, using the metaphor given above, transforms a life-threatening crime into a life-preserving surgery.

For example, experiential work with universal truths mentioned above would require that we engage the next few instances of unfairness, setback or hardship that we encounter from the perspective that God intended it for our constructive development and that God is with us throughout it (though we may see no sign of it). We would have to be careful with our choices (even our thoughts) to make sure they are constructive in nature (even if it seems like it does not matter). We could engage in some self-examination as well as examination of the situation to look for insight into the potential constructive purposes.

These constructive purposes and God’s assistance may not be clear at first. The early insights may not turn out to be accurate. In some situations, we may never know the bigger picture before we have to move on. Over the long term, however, we should find that there are constructive purposes and our best way of bringing them into fruition for our benefit and the benefit of others is to engage each challenge with an attitude of understanding that God has His constructive purpose and we are here to help.

Fingers Pointing at the Moon

According to the Zen Buddhist metaphor previously introduced, words used to describe a universal truth are like fingers pointing to the moon.

- Viewed individually, each finger provides independent insight that can lead to discovery of the moon (a universal truth). If we reject one or more of the fingers, the others are still there. Of course, the moon exists independent of the fingers. If we reject all of the fingers, the moon is still there. We simply lose an opportunity to find it.
- Considered collectively, the added perspective provided by a diversity of fingers gives a broader base for finding and understanding the moon.

There are at least eight of these “fingers” pointing to the “hidden world” acknowledged by mystics of all stripes. The fingers fall into the following categories: 1) tangible proof that significant phenomena exist beyond the current boundary of the revealed world, 2) active fields of science and academic research having potential to uncover aspects of the hidden world, and 3) research confirmation that harmonizing with the hidden world improves longevity, satisfaction with life and general wellbeing.

A grasp of the hidden world would impact each of us in very practical ways as we better understand the purpose of our lives and make more informed choices. The effect on science and academia, however, would be even more profound. It would bring about a paradigm shift more significant than the shift from the Ptolemaic view that the Sun orbits the Earth to the view of Copernicus and Galileo that the Earth orbits the Sun. Reality does not change, but our better understanding of it becomes a foundation for further progress.

A paradigm shift typically emerges with significant birth pains due to resistance in society and the scientific community to venturing outside the comfort of the existing, well established paradigm. A shift typically begins with pesky observations made by researchers working on the fringes of the existing paradigm that tend to bring that existing paradigm into question. Researchers that pursue those observations and their implications are often marginalized by the mainstream scientific community. Their observations and hypotheses are often dismissed summarily as if undeserving of any thought. Over time, more scientists pick up the research and eventually the once-ridiculed theory gains enough acceptance to become the new paradigm.

One person who has experienced both sides of the “hidden world” paradigm shift is Dr. Eben Alexander¹⁴. Prior to 2008, Dr. Alexander was a successful neurosurgeon who trained at Duke and taught at Harvard. He published many articles on neuroscience. He regarded any suggestions of a consciousness independent of the human brain as unscientific and not worthy of serious thought. In 2008, he had a near-death experience (“NDE”) and encountered things that his disease-compromised brain could not have accessed and that were independently corroborated after the fact. He wrote a book sharing this experience and co-founded a foundation to encourage a scientific investigation into the greater reality unveiled to him in his NDE (the hidden world).

Although his own NDE brought about a personal awakening, he is often greeted by fellow members of the medical and scientific community with the same back-of-the-hand dismissal that he routinely gave prior to the NDE. The fact that he stands on equal footing with his colleagues regarding knowledge of the human brain and human consciousness, however, makes the phenomena more personal for them and harder to dismiss without thought. Unfortunately, some have resorted to *ad hominem* attacks on Dr. Alexander as a means to discredit his story.

Hopefully, other members of the scientific and academic community will not require their own NDE in order to look more carefully at the eight fingers and their implications for revolutionizing our understanding of the reality in which we live. As more of this research is conducted and published and events such as Dr. Alexander’s NDE gain visibility, more aspects of the hidden world will likely gain wider acceptance within science and academia.

Even before Dr. Alexander’s “conversion,” there were others who sponsored the type of scientific investigation that he now advocates. The Mind Science Foundation, for example, was founded by philanthropist and entrepreneur Tom Slick in 1958.¹⁵ The Institute of Noetic Sciences was founded in 1973 by Astronaut Edgar Mitchell.¹⁶ Sir John Templeton established The Templeton Foundation in 1987.¹⁷ Each of these organizations and others invest significant funds each year in research into the realm of the hidden world in which science and spirituality overlap. Given these sources of funding and more visibility of findings, the hidden world is becoming more accessible to the science and academic communities through application of disciplined research techniques.

In the end, an open mind is a choice. The hidden world reality discussed here is available to all. There are many who have done their homework and laid it out in the language of science and academia and even the logical language that a lawyer would use to persuade a jury.¹⁸ Nevertheless, the hidden

world reality can be shut out by anyone while in the physical body until the eyes are forced open by the physical death. As Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, the pioneer researcher on death and dying whose observations often challenged aspects of the visible world paradigm, observed:

Many people say: "Of course, Doctor Ross has seen too many dying patients. Now she starts getting a bit funny." The opinion which other people have is their problem, not yours. This is very important to know. If you have a clear conscience and are doing your work with love, others will spit on you and try to make your life miserable. Then, ten years later, you are honored with eighteen doctorates for the same work. This is the situation in which I find myself. . . .

We have studied twenty thousand cases of people all over the world who had been declared clinically dead and who later returned to life. Some awoke quite naturally, others through reanimation.

I want to sum up briefly what every human being is going to experience at the moment of death. This experience is the same for everyone regardless of whether you are an Aboriginal of Australia, a Hindu, a Moslem, a Christian, or an unbeliever. In the same way, this experience doesn't depend on age or economic status. Dying is a human process in the same way that being born is a normal and all-human process.

The dying experience is almost identical to the experience at birth. It is a birth into a different existence which can be proven quite simply. For thousands of years you were made to "believe" in the things concerning the beyond. But for me, it is no longer a matter of belief, but rather a matter of knowing. And I am prepared to tell you how you can obtain this knowledge, provided you really want to know. If you are not interested in knowing about it, it doesn't make any difference because once you have died you will know it anyway. And I will sit there and will be full of joy, especially for those who now say: "Poor little Doctor Ross!"¹⁹

1. Tangible proof that significant phenomena exist beyond the current boundary of the revealed world.

There are four distinct types of objectively verified phenomena that defy explanation within the current paradigm of the revealed world.

- A. Near-death experiences (NDEs);
- B. Communications with people who have passed on and other confirmation that we exist prior to entering the human body and after we leave it;
- C. Cases suggestive of reincarnation;
- D. Physical healing beyond the expectations and capabilities of modern allopathic medicine; and
- E. Other extrasensory perception (sensing beyond the ordinary five senses) and psychokinetic phenomena (the human mind's subtle influence on the behavior of matter).

Once any objectively validated example of one of these phenomena is acknowledged, the debate over whether the hidden world is real should be over. The focus instead should be on

- the implications of these and other sources of insight into this hidden world,
- the types of investigation that would advance our understanding, and
- the practical ramifications of this evolutionary shift in our view of reality.

That effort would be aided by looking at all of the “fingers” as a whole, using their data, implications and proffered explanations to better understand the bigger picture. From this better understanding, researchers may be able to develop credible hypotheses that could be tested through scientific and other disciplined methods as they evolve with progress and adjust to the nature of the phenomena being studied.

Those inclined to preserve the existing paradigm have a tough challenge. They have to discredit or otherwise explain away all of the proffers of proof, many of which have been offered by honest and well-educated researchers that have collected considerable data and plumbed the subject matter in great depth. To date, the champions of the status quo have not invested comparable effort into the research. At least one skeptic, Dr. Michael Sabom, turned into a proponent once he saw the results of the research he conducted to debunk the NDE claims.

Once he digs in and allows those experiencing the phenomena to open up to him, a would-be debunker who is also committed to objectively research these phenomena will find many more instances of the phenomena than he anticipated. Witnesses are not limited by age, gender, race, national origin, religion, income, education or intelligence. There is no magic wand to dismiss their credibility as a group. The credibility on an individual basis will vary, but many will be hard to dismiss once their information is received face-to-face, where facial expressions, speech delivery, general demeanor and the ability to ask follow up questions are available. Some of these witnesses can provide enough external corroboration for aspects of their experience to rule out efforts to discredit based on brain chemistry or self-delusion.

The similarities in the accounts and patterns are hard to miss. The possibility that so many people could have colluded is preposterous. Even if a debunker can objectively explain away 90 out of 100 cases, it only takes one case to establish that there is more to reality than the revealed world and that the “more” is significant.

A. Near-Death Experiences

The lid has been lifted on the NDE phenomenon. New accounts are reported and new studies published with increased frequency by scholarly, scientifically trained researchers such as Dr. Ian Stevenson and Dr. Bruce Greyson at the University of Virginia School of Medicine, Dr. Kenneth Ring at the University of Connecticut and Craig Lundahl, Ph.D. at Western New Mexico University.²⁰ Organizations such as the International Association of Near-Death Studies²¹ and the Near-Death Experience Research Foundation²² have been established to foster research and provide NDEers and others with ready access to the available information. Although some skeptics have struggled to

formulate alternate explanations for this phenomenon, there are credible NDE examples that refute each hypothesis offered to debunk. NDE researchers have catalogued the alternate explanations and exposed the flaws.²³

By way of background, near-death experience is a term coined by Dr. Raymond Moody in his 1975 landmark book, *Life after Life: The Investigation of a Phenomenon – Survival of Bodily Death*,²⁴ for an experience many people have had during events like drowning or extended cardiac arrest in which the body is clinically dead for some time before coming back to life. Although the phenomenon has “come out of the closet” in the aftermath of Dr. Moody’s book, it is not new.²⁵ Reports of such experiences are even found in ancient literature.²⁶ Improvement in medical technology may enable it to occur more frequently.

NDE researchers have identified several distinct elements of the NDE phenomena based on thousands of interviews of NDEers (people who experience an NDE).²⁷ Some NDEs are more extensive than others. Many NDEs involve only a couple of these elements while a smaller number experience virtually the full range. The elements are:

- Ineffability
- Hearing the news of their death and/or a sense of being dead
- Feelings of peace, painlessness and quiet
- A noise (not attributed to physical events)
- Out of body experience
- Heightened Senses
 - Accurate visual perception
 - Audible sounds or voices
- Encountering a mystical or brilliant light
- The tunnel experience
- Meeting others (spiritual beings; often loved ones who had previously passed on)
- Communication through thoughts rather than spoken words
- The being of light
- The life review
- Rising rapidly into the heavens
- The realm of “bewildered spirits”
- The border or limit (which if crossed would preclude return to the physical body)
- Coming back (to the physical body; often done reluctantly)
- Different experience of time and space
- Encountering or learning special knowledge
- Glimpse into the future
- Transformative effect on life of NDEer
- New perspective on death (usually absence of fear)

NDE accounts have been corroborated by researchers in a number of ways. The citations provided for these examples are not exhaustive, nor could they be. The patterns are pervasive. The more one investigates, the more one finds. The following NDE-related occurrences cannot be explained within the present parameters of the revealed world.

- Treating physicians report being “utterly baffled about how patients with no medical knowledge could describe in such detail and so correctly the procedure used in resuscitation attempts, even though these events took place while the doctors knew the patients involved to be ‘dead’”.²⁸
- NDEers describe events or objects they witnessed while they were clinically “dead” and out of their bodies, even though the events either occurred outside the room in which their bodies were located or were not visible from where their bodies were located. The events or objects were corroborated by the third parties involved in them.²⁹
- While in an NDE, NDEers meet a person (usually a relative) that they did not know existed and the existence and relationship was subsequently confirmed by others; sometimes the NDEer was able to identify the person from a photograph.³⁰
- NDEers meet a person thought to be alive; after the NDE, it is confirmed by others that the person died shortly before the NDEer’s NDE.³¹
- The return to the body takes place after an extended period of clinical death, well beyond that which would be expected to result in irreversible brain damage, without any apparent brain damage.³²
- NDEers who were blind from physical birth report experiencing sight during the NDE.³³
- Third parties (usually loved ones) unaware of the NDE condition receive and act upon telepathic communications from the NDEer delivered while in the NDE state.³⁴
- The NDEer is told or shown things that are to happen in the future after he or she resumes his physical life and they subsequently come true.³⁵
- The NDEer gains special knowledge during the NDE, such as scientific insight or insight on what is causing his health issues, which he successfully puts to use after recovering.³⁶
- The NDEer experiences persisting or enhanced mentation at a time of substantially diminished, if not non-existent, physiological function of the brain and body.³⁷

B. Communications with people who have passed on and other confirmation that we exist prior to entering the human body and after we leave it

Like NDEs, accounts of communication with people known to be dead in the physical sense have a long history, even biblical accounts³⁸, and a significant amount of objective investigation and corroboration. Unlike NDEs, these events can be initiated at will by people who have developed the skill as mediums or the audio or video technology to record a communication from someone who has passed on. This phenomenon occurs to a wider range of people than NDEs. It occurs through dreams and mental telepathy from loved ones passed on, but is often dismissed as imagination and forgotten.

We who still reside in the physical body live in a world that vibrates at a certain rate of speed. People who have left the physical body still have a physical existence, but one that is invisible to us

because it vibrates at a much higher rate of speed. It is akin to the spokes on a bicycle wheel that are visible to us when the bicycle is not moving or is moving slow, but become invisible as the wheels begin to revolve at a higher rate of speed.

There is a range where the vibrations can overlap and communication can be recognized. Those in the physical have to attune to the higher frequency, either psychically or through technology. The people who have passed on have to slow down their frequency. Some people are better at this than others. The communication is not as clear as communicating with someone on the same plane. Often, some of the communication is conducted through use of symbols rather than words, but it is real. It is not voodoo. It is not magic. It is not even mystical. It is like communicating by radio except the technology of our “receivers” varies from person to person and machine to machine. In general, there is plenty of room for improvement.

Not every claim of a ghost sighting or communication is real. Some have been exposed as frauds and others could be honest mistakes. However, the presence of some fraudulent or erroneous example, does not disprove the numerous real ones. It only takes one real instance to establish that the existence of a phenomenon that needs to be examined more closely.

There are more than enough clear and corroborated instances of interaction and communication with people who have passed on to establish that we do not cease to exist when the body dies.³⁹ For those who do their homework with an open mind, there is at least one realm beyond the physical one. There is an interrelationship between our physical reality and that other realm. There is more that could be learned about that other realm and the interrelationship if we were to study it with the same type of commitment that we apply to the study of other aspects of our world such as sub-atomic particles. In so doing, we would add other dimensions to our understanding of our physical world and what makes it tick.

Here are several types of documented interactions with people who have left the physical body.

- Observation of “ghosts” by credible, reliable people.⁴⁰
- The recording of images and/or communications from people who have passed on through the use of sensitive audio or video recording equipment.⁴¹
- Physical manifestation of people who have passed on, including a personal experience reported by Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross that had a pivotal effect on her pioneering career in the study of near-death experiences, death and dying.⁴²
- Moving of physical objects by people who have passed on.⁴³
- The communication with people who have passed on through people who have developed psychic skills as mediums. Generally, the information obtained is validated as unique to the person passed on. Sometimes the information has been used to solve crimes. This form of communication has been subjected to disciplined fact-finding investigation and even double-blind test scenarios.⁴⁴
- The communication with people who have passed on by ordinary people without the aid of a medium, someone with enhanced psychic skills or recording equipment.⁴⁵

- Communication by a person who has passed on to an ordinary person through a telephone.⁴⁶
- “Deathbed visions” - apparitions of deceased loved ones reported by people in the process of dying.⁴⁷
- Accounts of a person who has passed on taking possession of a body of someone who is still alive.⁴⁸

Organizations such as England’s Society for Psychical Research, the University of Arizona’s Laboratory for Laboratory for Advances in Consciousness and Health and the Division of Perceptual Studies at the University of Virginia’s School of Medicine, have collected information on this type of phenomena and conducted follow up investigations. These can be consulted by anyone seriously interested in finding more information.⁴⁹

C. Cases suggestive of reincarnation.

Human awareness of reincarnation is probably as ancient and widespread as religion.⁵⁰ It is accepted as fact within the religions and cultures of Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Orthodox Judaism, Jainism, Pythagoreanism, the Baha’i Faith and Spiritism. Through Orthodox Judaism,⁵¹ reincarnation was part of the background from which Jesus’ ministry emerged. It was part of early Christianity until voted an anathema during a power struggle at the Fifth Ecumenical Council in 533 CE.⁵² There are even a few statements attributed to Jesus in the New Testament that are hard to explain without some reliance by Jesus on reincarnation.⁵³ Although still not accepted by the Roman Catholic Church and many other Christian denominations, it is accepted by many members of those denominations as well as some of the smaller Christian-based denominations. In the US, a predominately Christian country, a survey conducted in 2003 reported that nearly 50% of those polled either believed reincarnation was possible or accepted it as fact. In Islam, it is rejected by fundamentalists, but accepted by the Sufi and Druze.⁵⁴

Reincarnation is validated by a substantial and growing body of objective documentation. The most prominent academic researcher is Ian Stevenson, M.D., who founded and directed the Division of Perceptual Studies in the University of Virginia’s Department of Psychiatric Medicine. In a research career that spanned more than 40 years, he investigated from a cautious scientific perspective more than 2,000 cases from around the world of children who claimed to remember previous lives. He and the Division of Perceptual Studies observed strict protocols in interviewing witnesses, documenting the degree to which past life memories were corroborated and ruling out alternative explanations. Hundreds of cases were identified for which reincarnation is the only plausible explanation. Many of their case studies and other observations are documented in an imposing body of books⁵⁵ and peer-reviewed journals⁵⁶. Hypotheses offered to explain away the evidence of reincarnation have also been carefully considered from a scientific perspective and found wanting.⁵⁷ The Division of Perceptual Studies research continues under the direction of Dr. Bruce Greyson after Dr. Stevenson’s passing in 2007.⁵⁸

In addition to the instances studied by Dr. Stevenson in which memories of past lives have surfaced spontaneously, past lives that have been remembered through past life hypnotic regression. Dr. Stevenson expressed concern about this technique for accessing past life information due to the

potential for hypnosis to increase the level of inaccuracies in the memory. However, he was sufficiently impressed with cases in which the person being regressed spoke foreign or ancient languages that he had not learned outside of hypnosis (“xenoglossy”) and a few other instances of past life regression work that he believed more research was merited.⁵⁹

Others have continued to work with past life regression hypnosis, but with a greater emphasis on treatment of symptoms attributed to the carry-over effects of past lives than on the type of strict research practiced by Dr. Stevenson. They include Brian Weiss, M.D., Helen Wambach, Ph.D., Hazel Denning, Ph.D., Carol Bowman and Michael Newton, Ph.D.

- Dr. Weiss, a graduate of Columbia University and Yale Medical School, is probably the most visible past life regression therapist due to his impressive academic and professional credentials prior to stumbling into a past life regression practice and the number of best-selling books he has authored about his experiences.
- Dr. Hazel Denning is a past-life regression therapy pioneer, co-founding the Parapsychological Association of Riverside in 1971 and the Association for Past Life Research and Therapies (“APLRT”) in 1980. APLRT is now the International Association of Regression Research and Therapies, Inc.⁶⁰ She had a full time past-life regression therapy practice for thirty-seven years and published three books after retiring.
- Dr. Helen Wambach is notable for the research she conducted, enlisting college students as subjects.
- Carol Bowman is notable for drawing attention to the importance of being open to expressions of past life memories by young children and techniques for helping children heal phobias and other negative residue from a past life.
- Dr. Michael Newton’s unique contribution is his use of past-life regression to focus his clients primarily on what we go through from the point of physical death in one life through the point of physical birth in the next physical life. Over time he collected a substantial body of case studies and published his findings, annotated with excerpts from the case studies in three different books.⁶¹ The accounts collected by Dr. Newton of what happens after death are very consistent with the shorter glimpses reported by people who return from near-death experiences.

Between the research on spontaneous recall of past life memories by Dr. Stevenson and others and extensive work with past life regression, there is an impressive body of documented memories of objectively verified past life information that could not have been learned by the person reporting the past life experience through any known means other than having personal mental access to that past life as if he or she lived it. They include:

- People, particularly children, who have memories of past lives that are sufficient to allow independent corroboration through historical investigation.⁶²

- According to Dr. Ian Stevenson in his book, *Children Who Remember Previous Lives: A Question of Reincarnation*, one of the children, Suzanne Ghanem of Lebanon, knew ‘the names of 23 members of the family to which she referred and two acquaintances. Moreover, she placed all but one of these persons in their proper relationship to Saada, the woman whose life she remembered.’⁶³
- In a notable published example from the United States, a two-year old toddler named James Leininger started having nightmares in 2000 as he re-lived being shot down in a U.S. Navy fighter plane in the Pacific theater of operations during World War II.⁶⁴ As James matured and shared more of his memories over the next six years, his memories, including the name of the ship to which he was assigned, names of his fellow pilots and circumstances of his demise, were corroborated through the efforts of his father who did not believe in reincarnation and was primarily trying to rule out reincarnation as an explanation for what his son was experiencing. At a reunion of the Navy unit from James’ prior life, one of the pilots James with whom James had flown in his prior life walked up to James unannounced and asked James if he knew who he was. James immediately gave the name of the veteran, recognizing him by his voice rather than physical appearance. Later during the reunion, James’ mother noticed that James was troubled and pressed him to explain what was on his mind. James said that he was sad that “everyone is so old.”⁶⁵
- Sometimes innate skills from the child’s past life are carried over into the present one.⁶⁶
- Child memories from between lifetimes in which they watched things that happened to a parent or someone else before they were born and the facts of which were verified by the parent.⁶⁷
- Memories of past lives accessed at least in part with the aid of past life regression therapy.⁶⁸ Some examples recalled names that were able to be independently verified. In many instances, the past life memories explained physical and emotional symptoms in the current life and led to healing. Although some of the accounts published were parts of research projects, none appear to have adopted protocols as stringent as those employed by Dr. Ian Stevenson and the University of Virginia Division of Perceptual Studies. Nevertheless, the volume of anecdotal accounts, case studies and success stories that has been amassed is growing and too substantial to be ignored.
 - In one instance reported by Rabbi Yonassan Gershom, a Christian man in Canada had vivid recurring dreams of being a Jew hiding in German-occupied Holland and being discovered and arrested. The dreams also featured an antique clock on a table in the home in which his family hid. In one dream he was told that the clock was now in Canada. In a later dream, he was given directions to a new antique store where it could be found. Later dreams showed him being shot as part of a mass execution and smothered as other bodies fell on top of him. Eventually, he traveled to the antique store and found the clock that he had seen in his dream, but it was too expensive for

him to purchase. Asked where he found the clock, the owner of the store said he had purchased it in Holland when the government had opened up a warehouse of unclaimed possessions of Dutch Jews confiscated by the Nazis during World War II. The man subsequently underwent past life regression and recalled more details of his life as a Dutch Jew and the circumstances of his arrest and death. Eventually, when the story came to Rabbi Gershom's attention, many people donated to a "ransom the clock fund" and redeemed the clock from the antique store for its past life owner.⁶⁹

- Instances of xenoglossy, which is the ability to speak a foreign or ancient language associated with a past life memory that the person had not learned in the current life.⁷⁰ This has occurred both through spontaneous memories and past life regression. A related phenomena explained by past lives is the manifestation of an extraordinary talent or skill, such as Mozart's innate musical abilities or James Leininger's knowledge of Japanese and American fighter planes from World War II, in a child too young to have acquired it.⁷¹

Some of the past-life regression has begun to focus on the effect that life choices made in this life impact our position in future lives. For example, progress in dealing with life issues in this life may make it unnecessary to face them in a future life.⁷² Unlike our interconnection with past lives, however, there is no known way to locate outside evidence to corroborate the facts accessed under hypnosis regarding future lives. It is nonetheless worth further consideration for its potential to expand our awareness of the "hidden world" reality.

Finally, we offer a reincarnation hypothesis for consideration as more is learned. The concept of reincarnation found in religions and common usage developed as an attempt to describe what is really going on in a way that can be grasped by minds oriented to a linear reality of past, present, future. Albert Einstein scratched the surface when he discovered that time is not the fixed concept we think it is. We measure time by the movement of the Earth around the Sun, but that is a "clock" that is meaningless to most of creation. For example, a person having a near-death experience can reunite with loved ones, re-experience eighty years of life from many different perspectives and be given a tour of "heaven" even though less than an hour elapses between the time his body stopped functioning and it is revived.

In ultimate reality, there is no such thing as time. Past, present and future are features created by God to help define the finite sandbox we call Earth into which a portion of our consciousness enters to experience an individual life. Time and space break up that experience into small parts that appear separate. In truth, we are much bigger than our physical body and conscious mind. While part of us is here in the present physical life, other parts are experiencing lives that would appear to us, due to the linear orientation of our reality, as past and future lives as well as life in between physical lives. As suggested in the "string theory" developed by quantum physicists, all of this is happening simultaneously.

Ordinarily, there are "veils" of some sort that limit our conscious awareness of the so-called past, future and in-between lives. Below the surface, they are very interconnected. The personal growth

that we make in this life can help us in both past and future lives. This could happen in many ways. For example, when we learn from errors of the past (such as when we finally see the error of a deeply held prejudice and release it), we transform those errors into stepping stones to a deeper wisdom and deposit that wisdom into a subconscious that we draw upon in all of the “lives” (past, present and future) we are experiencing. Once we learn that lesson, it becomes unnecessary to relearn it in the lives we perceive as future and a shift occurs in the “future” life to drop that lesson and move on to others that still need to be addressed.

D. Physical healing beyond the expectations, capabilities and understanding of modern allopathic medicine.

Allopathic medicine is generally considered the conventional approach to healing in the Western Hemisphere. Its adherents take pride in use of the scientific method and rely heavily on pharmaceuticals and surgery to cure disease. As the standard bearers for the revealed world perspective in the human health field, allopathic physicians have traditionally rejected or marginalized healing practices that do not fit into the allopathic medicine paradigm. In recent years, however, there has been allowance for other healing approaches, such as acupuncture, under the label of “alternate” or “complementary” healing. The prestigious Mayo Clinic, for example, has published a useful guide entitled, *Mayo Clinic Book of Alternative Medicine*,⁷³ which identifies several alternative healing therapies and cites studies that support some of them.

The willingness to embrace “alternative” healing practices is a start, but falls short of the revolution in healing that is possible. As successful as allopathic medicine has been, there are many documented examples of human health phenomena that cannot be explained within the allopathic paradigm. However, useful explanations are available from understandings of human health that allopathic medicine reject or labels as alternative. For example, in 2006, Anita Moorjani reached the point of death after a long battle with grade 4B lymphoma cancer. Allopathic medicine had done all it could, but had failed. Instead of remaining dead, however, Anita had a remarkable NDE in which she learned how her mental choices had contributed to her illness. She was completely healed of the cancer within a matter of days of her return from the NDE. Based on information she learned during her NDE, Anita is able to explain how that healing occurred and why it did not occur earlier.⁷⁴

If nothing else, an event such as this – and there are others, exposes a blind spot in the allopathic paradigm. If unwilling to revisit the foundations of its paradigm, allopathic physicians can only greet such claims with a back of the hand denial or marginalize them as unknowable anomalies. In so doing, they forfeit the opportunity for a deeper understanding of who we are and the universe in which we live. They are shown a finger pointing to the moon, but do not recognize its significance.

Here is a sampling of phenomena that should cause a reexamination of the “revealed world” paradigm held by the allopathic community:

- Spontaneous healing. There is an extensive body of documented faith-based or other spontaneous healings, like the one experienced by Anita Moorjani, that defy explanation with the allopathic worldview.⁷⁵

- Placebo and nocebo effects. The placebo effect is the phenomena by which about one-third of the people who have the expectation of receiving a curative treatment for their disease will show improvement even though they are treated with fake treatments such as sugar pills or salt water. The improvement includes measurable physiological changes that cannot be dismissed as a figment of their imagination. The nocebo effect is the flip side of the placebo effect documenting the adverse effects of negative expectations. In her book, *Mind Over Medicine: Scientific Proof that You Can Heal Yourself*,⁷⁶ Lissa Rankin, M.D. reports,

[P]atients in a control group for a new chemotherapy drug were given nothing but saline, yet they were warned it could be chemotherapy, and 30 percent of them lost their hair. In another study, hospitalized patients were given sugar water and told it would make them throw up. Eighty percent of them vomited.

The validity of the placebo and nocebo effects is accepted within allopathic medicine, but little has been done to understand and benefit from the mechanism by which they occur. The main role assigned to the placebo effect is to establish a standard against which experimental pharmaceuticals are measured to determine whether they are efficacious.

- Physical healing through hypnosis. Functioning solely as a technique to sharpen the patient's mental focus, hypnotism has demonstrated the human mind's ability to bring about physical healing.⁷⁷ Although there are more ancient examples of its use, the early medical practitioners in western medicine include Franz Mesmer, John Elliotson, James Esdaille and James Braid.⁷⁸ More modern studies have shown successful use self-hypnosis, self-visualization and biofeedback to increase the survival time of children with leukemia, reduce vomiting of children undergoing chemotherapy and control migraines in children better than medication. It has even been demonstrated to add two inches to the bustline of women who use it instead of plastic surgery.⁷⁹
- The human energy system.⁸⁰ Some successful healing therapies outside the realm of allopathic medicine are based on the premise that, in addition to the various biological systems found in the human body, human beings have an energy system that has a significant impact on our physical, mental and emotional health.⁸¹ Although some practitioners are more skilled than others, studies have proven acupuncture⁸², tai chi and Qigong and others to be beneficial beyond the placebo effect.⁸³ Studies conducted by Gary Schwartz, Ph.D., a professor of psychology, medicine, neurology, psychiatry and surgery at the University of Arizona, used various meters and instruments to verify the existence of a human energy field as well as the energy emitted from a healer's hand during a healing.⁸⁴ Schwartz's research established that even crystals have energy discernible by sensitive humans.⁸⁵ In addition to successfully testing energy-based therapy on human beings, Schwartz set up studies with plants, e coli bacteria and rats to take the placebo effect out of the equation. The results showed that energy-based therapy provided beneficial effects that were a statistically significant improvement over the control group.⁸⁶ Interestingly, work with the human energy system gained prominence in western medicine for a time through the work of Franz Mesmer. He called it "animal

magnetism” and described the energy transference between animate and inanimate objects at times as acting like a “fluid.” Mesmer’s work with the human energy system gained him a considerable reputation as a healer and, at the same time, spawned controversy within the medical profession.⁸⁷

Here are two exercises that can be done to help you feel your energy body. To a beginner, the energy field is very subtle. You need to quiet yourself a moment before undertaking these exercise.

- Exercise 1. Hold your two hands out in front about two feet apart as if you were about to clap. Slowly start to close them until you feel a slight resistance. Pull your hands back a little and then slowly close them a little to bounce them on the point of resistance. As you get more sensitive, you will feel the resistance when the hands are further apart.
- Exercise 2. Hold one hand out, palm open. Take the index finger of the other hand and point it at the palm of the first hand. Without touching the open palm, slowly move the finger around as if making the shape of a letter. Move the finger closer to the palm of the opposing hand until you feel the movement of the finger without the finger actually touching the palm.
- Non-local medical intuitive diagnoses. Researchers working with “medical intuitives” have found that some are able to diagnose patients with more than 90% accuracy even though they have not physically examined the patients or had access to their medical records.⁸⁸ Perhaps the most documented example of a medical intuitive is Edgar Cayce.⁸⁹ Having only an eighth grade education, he could go into a trance and diagnose physical conditions in people located in other states and prescribe curative measures. During his life, over 14,000 readings, 9,000 of which were health related, were transcribed. Many resulted in healing physical conditions that had baffled medical specialists in the field. During a reading given for himself early in his career to deal with a condition that left him unable to talk beyond a whisper, Cayce demonstrated the power of the mind over the body. The reading instructed that Cayce be told while in the trance to flood the affected area with blood and that would cure the condition. He was given the instruction. His throat area turned red. When he awakened from trance, his voice was back to normal.⁹⁰ The Association for Research and Enlightenment has preserved the transcripts of the readings, which have been studied by physicians and people of all walks of life in the 65+ years since his death.⁹¹
- Non-local spiritual or energy-based healing.⁹² Some people, such as Olga Worrall, have demonstrated the ability to help others to heal through energetic or spiritual means. Ms. Worrall was tested by Dr. Norman Shealy and others and found able to trigger instantaneous, measurable physical changes in the body of a patient seeking her help even when at a great distance from the patient.⁹³

- Some allopathic and osteopathic physicians have had success combining the healing therapies developed within their respective professions with those that involve energy-based therapies and intuitive based diagnoses.⁹⁴
- Non-local healing effects of prayer. There is a growing body of scholarly research that correlates prayer with improved healing and wellbeing.⁹⁵ The Duke University Center for Spirituality, Theology and Health does an excellent job of tracking all research in this area and making it available to the public through its website.⁹⁶ There are also individual accounts from honest, law-abiding people that attest to how healing is beneficially affected by prayer through mechanisms not known in the allopathic medicine paradigm. A good example is this account told by a Californian rabbi about his wife:

About ten years ago my wife went into the hospital for routine surgery. Due to a surgical error she developed a life-threatening blood infection, coupled with pneumonia and other complications. The doctors gave her less than a ten percent chance of survival. She had a tube inserted in her throat to aid her with breathing, which prevented her from speaking. When they finally removed her breathing tube, she said, “While I was declining in strength and my pain was increasing, I became aware of all the prayers that people were saying for me. I could actually hear their voices. The prayers formed a cocoon-like structure around me. Each prayer added to the enveloping support. Why is it,” she asked, “that our friends the Weisses weren’t praying for me?”

What she could not have known was that the Weisses were in Europe around the time that she went in for routine surgery. They did not know she had been gravely ill. I still have no way to explain her uncanny knowledge and the sense that words of prayer had kept her alive.⁹⁷

A person who was out of his body in an NDE after having been thrown from his car in an automobile accident reported the contrasting effect of the thoughts entertained by two of the many people who gathered to watch as two doctors tried to revive him.

It was extraordinary that I could perceive not only the words spoken aloud by the people around my body, but also their thoughts. For example, a woman from Tessin, accompanied by a daughter of about 7 years, was shocked when she saw my corpse. The young girl wanted to run away, but her mother caught her by the left hand and held her back while she silently prayed, first an “Our Father” and then a “Holy Mary,” after which she asked forgiveness for the sins of this unfortunate man. This woman’s unselfish prayer impressed me greatly, made me joyous, and I felt radiated with love.

On the other hand, there was an older man with a moustache [in the crowd of onlookers], who had negative thoughts about me: “Well, he is done for. But it was certainly his own fault. He was just the sort of person who would rush

thoughtlessly through this area in a sports car.” I wanted to call down to him from “above”: “Stop talking nonsense. I was not even driving. I was only a passenger.” I somehow sensed the negative, even evil vibrations of this man
....⁹⁸

Three years later, the NDEer located both of these onlookers. He visited the office of the man who had entertained the negative thoughts, but ultimately left without talking to him. He visited the lady, whom he located based on names observed on the side of her vehicle while out-of-body. She remembered the accident and the prayer and they both wept.⁹⁹

- Examples of extraordinary healing intervention.¹⁰⁰ The following account of healing intervention by an Indian spiritual leader reported by Gary Schwartz, Ph.D. This type of healing must look like magic to anyone who will not look beyond the allopathic worldview.

In brief, a cardiologist who was a successful, responsible, and careful physician was doing volunteer work at a children’s hospital outside Bangalore, India. He had just finished assisting a cardiac surgeon in the repair of a congenital heart deficit (called tetralogy of Fallot) in a young boy, aged three or four. If the patient’s heart rate drops too low following surgery, it’s often necessary to implant a cardiac pacemaker to maintain a healthy heart rhythm. The young boy’s heart rate was dropping, it was fifty going on forty, and the cardiologist was about to install the pacemaker, when an unanticipated meeting occurred.

A distinguished Indian spiritual leader, famed internationally as a Hindu wisdom keeper, or avatar, came up to him and asked what he was doing. When the cardiologist explained the child’s condition, the avatar asked, “What can I do to help?”

The physician, doubtful yet open because of the other man’s renown, asked, “Can you increase his heart rate?”

The avatar answered with a question: “What heart rate would you like?”

The cardiologist replied, “Seventy beats per minute.”

“Let me see what I can do,” the Indian answered. He gently took the child’s wrist in his hands. In a few minutes, as the cardiologist watched, astonished, the EKG monitor showed that the child’s heart rate had settled at a steady seventy-plus beats per minute.

Seeing this, the cardiologist asked, “Can you make it eighty?” A few minutes went by. When it was clear that the child’s heart rate was holding, the cardiologist recognized that the youngster no longer needed a pacemaker.¹⁰¹

E. Other extrasensory perception and psychokinetic phenomena.

Instances of extrasensory perception (commonly referred to as “ESP”) and psychokinesis have been reported throughout history. They have been studied in the field and in university research laboratories by science-oriented investigators for decades.¹⁰² ESP is our mind’s ability to sense beyond that which is possible through the five physical senses. It has helped save lives and solve crimes. Examples include psychic awareness, mental telepathy and premonitions. Medium, psychic and medical intuitive skills involve ESP. We all have some degree of ESP although we may not recognize it as such. We use it whenever we are guided by our intuition. Psychokinesis is perhaps not as widely recognized. It is the interaction of the human mind with matter to produce a subtle influence on the behavior of matter. It includes energy healing, spoon bending and the levitation of objects.

We provide examples of applications of ESP and psychokinesis below and some references to reports documenting the events. Viewed in isolation, these may appear to have no more significance than interesting parlor tricks. What is the big deal if Edgar Cayce could learn the entire contents of a book simply by sleeping with it, Uri Geller could bend Clint Eastwood’s house key with his mind or Daniel Douglas Home could levitate objects (and himself)? Does the fact that a volunteer searcher has vivid dreams that lead her to the location of an accident victim missing for more eight days have any significance beyond the rescue of the victim? Each of these is a physical world manifestation of the hidden world reality. Each is a finger pointing to the moon. When we understand there is an overlap between what happens during a NDE and the mechanics of an exercise of ESP or psychokinesis, we gain access to a lot more data points from which to expand our awareness of the hidden world.

Here are some documented examples of ESP:

- **Intuition.** Examples include Winston Churchill’s sudden flash of intuition prompting him to evacuate the household staff from the kitchen a few minutes before it was destroyed by a bomb during the Battle of Britain.¹⁰³ On the morning of President Lincoln’s assassination, the wife of General Ulysses Grant awoke with a strong uneasy feeling and a desire to return home despite the General’s prior commitment to attend several functions celebrating the war’s end, including accompanying the president to the theater. The general relented to his wife’s urgings and learned of the President’s assassination when his train stopped in Philadelphia. Grant was on John Wilkes Booth’s list of people to be assassinated.¹⁰⁴ Numerous instances in which a person has a strong impression that something is happening to a loved one or other acquaintance a considerable distance away.¹⁰⁵ In the Edgar Cayce Readings, our intuitive side is described as our connection with our higher selves. From there, we are connected with the Divine Presence that manifests within us.¹⁰⁶ Thus, according to one reading, the “more each is impelled by that which is intuitive, or the relying upon the soul force within, the greater, the farther, the deeper, the broader, the more constructive may be the result.”¹⁰⁷ Dr. Gary E. Schwartz, through his work at the University of Arizona Laboratory for the Advancement of Consciousness and Health, has ventured into the paradigm shifting direction of seeking to understand this intuitive link to Spirit through use of the Scientific Method.¹⁰⁸

- Premonitions. One famous example is Abraham Lincoln's premonition of his own assassination as reported by a close friend and former law partner.¹⁰⁹ There are several documented premonitions about sinking of the Titanic. One of them was published in 1897 as a fictional story entitled *The Wreck of the Titan, or Futility*. It was based on a vision that came to the author as he was working through a bout of writer's block. He saw the name "Titan" on the bow of the ship. The similarities between the fictional story and the real life sinking of the Titanic are quite striking.¹¹⁰
- Extrasensory Information Provided in Dreams. In addition to premonition dreams, other dreams provide information to which the waking mind had not been given access. In 2004, 17-year old Laura Hatch, missing for eight days after leaving a party to go home, was located by Sha Nohr, the mother of Laura's friend, after Sha had vivid dreams of the wooded area in which she later located Laura's wrecked car.¹¹¹
- Medium Ability to Communicate with People Who Have Passed On. Some mediums have been validated through systematic study under conditions designed to rule out other explanations such as trickery or mental telepathy.¹¹²
- Medical Intuitives. Edgar Cayce, Carolyn Myss and Olga Worrell are heavily scrutinized and well documented examples.¹¹³
- Psychics who have provided information that Helped Solve Crimes.¹¹⁴
- Remote viewing.¹¹⁵ Edgar Cayce provides a well-documented example,¹¹⁶ but there are others, such as Ingo Swann, whose research in the 1970's was sponsored by US intelligence and military agencies.¹¹⁷ It is a skill that is teachable with varying degrees of success depending on the innate abilities of the student.¹¹⁸
- Ability to "see" objects in a sealed container (clairvoyance).¹¹⁹
- Bilocation and out-of-body experiences.¹²⁰
- Mental Telepathy.¹²¹ Ironically, mental telepathy is often suggested by skeptics as an explanation for other psychic phenomena such as accurate readings by mediums when all physical world explanations have been ruled out due to the design of the experiment.¹²² Whether the cause is mental telepathy or a true communication from someone who has passed on, there is a paradigm shifting wake-up call for those science-minded people who have closed their minds to the reality that extends beyond the three dimensions and five senses.
- Laboratory Tested ESP and parapsychology phenomena or abilities considered as a group (Psi).¹²³ The authors of *The Irreducible Mind: Toward a Psychology for the 21st Century* list research in this area in the Appendix and describe Psi as a "scientific reality with which we must somehow come to terms."¹²⁴
- "Psychic surgery".¹²⁵

Documented examples of ESP and psychokinesis include:

- Spiritual or energy-based Healing.¹²⁶
- Levitation or other movement of objects.¹²⁷ Interestingly, there are documented examples of instances in which scientifically trained researchers observed objects being levitated or knocked about and all possible physical means were ruled out. The debate in which the researchers engaged was whether the flying objects were the result of poltergeists, proving the reality and physicality of the consciousness after death of the physical body, or a subconscious psychokinetic action of a human being around which the levitation and knocked-about objects seemed to center.¹²⁸ Either way, the observation confirms the reality and physicality of hidden world phenomena and its connection to the human mind (either one that has passed on or the other that still inhabits a physical human body).
- Spoonbending without using physical force. Uri Geller¹²⁹ is perhaps the most famous. His website includes testimony by Clint Eastwood who witnessed Uri Geller bend the key to Clint's house.¹³⁰ Skeptics dismiss his public, documented displays of spoonbending as a very good magician's illusion.¹³¹ However, the phenomenon has been reproduced in workshops and parties by students practicing the spoonbending techniques taught by Uri Geller and others.¹³²
- Research documenting that the human mind influences the behavior of matter and the existence of a "global consciousness." All of the research on psychokinesis discussed above demonstrates the human mind's physical influence on the behavior of matter. In addition, research in quantum physics and the behavior of light have demonstrated that human observation changes the outcome of the experiments.¹³³ Other research institutions, including the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research Institute at Princeton University¹³⁴ and the Mind Science Foundation in Texas¹³⁵, have demonstrated the human mind's influence on matter through research with instruments designed to randomly generate data that over the long haul results in a 50/50 split of outcomes.¹³⁶ This is similar to the way 1,000 coin tosses should result in about 50% "heads" and 50% tails. On September 11, 2001, the day terrorists flew airliners into the New York City's World Trade Center, Random Event Generators positioned by Princeton University's PEAR Institute to monitor changes in collective human consciousness started registering a significant change in behavior a few hours before the crash into the World Trade Center and continued for several days.¹³⁷ These Random Event Generators also registered significant effects in collective consciousness triggered by the death of Diana Spencer, the Princess of Wales.¹³⁸ On a more localized basis, the Random Event Generators show significant shifts in collective consciousness at funerals, football games and locations such as cathedrals and the Great Pyramid of Egypt.¹³⁹ Research by physicist Helmut Schmidt of the Mind Science Foundation even demonstrated that the human mind's influence on the behavior of the Random Event Generator could occur retroactively as long as the Random Event Generator had not been observed by a human being prior to the point at which the human mind attempted the retroactive influence.¹⁴⁰

It is an underlying theme of this presentation that things like levitation, near-death experiences, energy-based healing and communication with people who have passed on are not instances of magic. They just appear to be magical (and therefore hard to believe without a better factual foundation) because some of the components that cause them to manifest are not yet part of our revealed world awareness. As we study these phenomena and go deeper into learning how they relate to one another, the scope of our “revealed world analysis” expands. The concept of an airplane would have seemed like impossible magic in the twelfth century, but it is “old hat” in the twenty-first. In this respect, researchers have made inroads in some areas such as levitation. They have demonstrated that vibrations can be manipulated to suspend objects in thin air. In addition to electromagnetic vibrations, researchers have developed equipment to manipulate sound waves so that they can suspend and maneuver small objects in the air.¹⁴¹

Mystics have long known that vibration is the building block of matter. Quantum physicists have discovered this too. Mystics have long known that that vibration emanates from the First Cause and to a lesser but nonetheless important extent the way the vibration manifests is influenced by the human mind. It is here that many quantum physicists and other scientists have the biggest need to catch up. It is very difficult to expand the revealed world awareness in this area, however, if one at the same time religiously closes one’s mind to the very possibilities that will lead to his progress.

2. Active fields of science and academic research having the strongest potential to uncover aspects of the hidden world.

The fields of science in which existing research and theory show the greatest promise for pulling back the veil on the “hidden world” are the study of quantum physics and human consciousness.

Research into the field of human consciousness has revealed data from several angles confirming that the mind is not merely a product of the chemical and electrical processes of the physical brain.¹⁴² It exists independent of the brain, but manifests through the brain similar to how radio signals make sound through a radio. If the radio is flawed, the sound that manifests through the radio will be distorted, even when the radio signal is perfect.

The field of quantum physics was developed with key help from prominent physicists who derived inspiration from the mystic perspective, including Niels Bohr, Werner Heisenberg, Max Planck, Wolfgang Pauli, Erwin Schrödinger, David Bohm and Hermann Weyl.¹⁴³ For example, an interview in 1972 with Werner Heisenberg, a Nobel Prize winner for his work in the creation of quantum physics and famous for his discovery of the uncertainty principle, revealed the following:

Heisenberg told me that he had repeatedly thought that the great contributions of Japanese physicists during recent decades might be owing to a basic similarity between the philosophical traditions of the East and the philosophy of quantum physics. I remarked that the discussions I had had with Japanese colleagues had not shown me that they were aware of this connection, and Heisenberg agreed: “Japanese physicists have a real taboo against speaking about their own culture, so much have they been

influenced by the United States.” Heisenberg believed that Indian physicists were somewhat more open in this respect, which had been my experience.

When I asked Heisenberg about his own thoughts on Eastern philosophy, he told me to my great surprise not only that he had been well aware of the parallels between quantum physics and Eastern thought, but also that his own scientific work had been influenced, at least at the subconscious level, by Indian philosophy.

In 1929 Heisenberg spent some time in India as the guest of the celebrated Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore, with whom he had long conversations about science and Indian philosophy. This introduction to Indian thought brought Heisenberg great comfort, he told me. He began to see that the recognition of relativity, interconnectedness, and impermanence as fundamental aspects of physical reality, which had been so difficult for himself and his fellow physicists, was the very basis of the Indian spiritual traditions. “After these conversations with Tagore,” he said, “some of the ideas that had seemed so crazy suddenly made much more sense. That was a great help for me.”¹⁴⁴

Quantum physics research and theory currently indicate that matter forms out of a “zero point” field of energy, sometimes referred to as the “cosmological constant,”¹⁴⁵ and its performance is influenced to some extent by the human mind.¹⁴⁶ Carefully designed research has shown an ability of the mind to influence matter on a retroactive basis and to “see” future material developments as if they existed in the present.¹⁴⁷ The effect of the mind’s influence on matter is particularly well documented in the health field where research has uncovered the mind’s ability to change the physiology of the body in ways that are sometimes taken for granted (such as the placebo effect) and other times considered miraculous (such as spontaneous healing of cancer).¹⁴⁸

The ability of the human mind to influence matter other than the human body has also been documented through decades of research. Research with Random Event Generators, devices that simulate a coin toss, showed with persistent statistical significance that it can be influenced by the human mind. The testing did not show that the electronic coin toss obeyed the human mind 100% of the time. Rather, researchers found a statistically significant increase in the frequency of the outcomes sought by the human research subject. Some people were more effective at influencing matter with the mind than others. Couples who shared an emotional bond or shared intent were more effective than individuals. A response that strongly resonates with a larger group or a wide segment of the population in general, such as the reaction to the 9/11 terrorist attack or response to a sacred site, have an even greater effect.¹⁴⁹

As important and statistically significant as these results are, however, the changes measured on the Random Event Generators are matters of degree. It is not as dramatic as the anecdotal accounts of people observed levitating objects or moderating the heart rate of a young boy following surgery or other psychokinetic phenomena discussed previously.¹⁵⁰ The practical implications may not be easy to see even if the validity of the research is accepted.

Even when the change seems subtle, the research demonstrates that the mind's influence on matter should not be ignored. There must be a mechanism through which the effect takes place. Quantum physics research seems to be looking for this same mechanism when focusing on how particles emerge from energy fields and can be influenced in behavior by human observation. The fact that the impact is stronger in some circumstances than others provides vital clues to be pursued for further understanding the mechanism. Increasing our understanding of the mechanism by which small changes in the behavior of matter is influenced by human minds is a step toward understanding how matter is influenced on a larger scale.

For physicists akin to Max Planck, Niels Bohr, Werner Heisenberg, Wolfgang Pauli, Erwin Schrödinger and David Bohm in their familiarity with the mystic perspective, study of the human mind's influence on matter also provides an opportunity to develop and test hypotheses based on the mystic principle that man (meaning the mind/spirit rather than the body) is created in the image of his Creator. If the human mind and spirit are a microcosmic reflection of the unifying source from which human beings and all of creation are derived, then micro-scale concepts learned in the study of the human-based mechanism should provide insight on how matter emerges from the zero point field on a macro scale.

Unfortunately, involvement of the "God" label, with all of its entanglement in theology, creates an aura of sorts that influences people to accept or reject propositions without first becoming objectively informed and giving it thoughtful consideration. This is especially true of many scientists who fear a throwback to the days of Galileo when theology dictated boundaries for scientific inquiry. Yet scientists who are not open to the concept of a God that rules the universe may be open to the possibility that there is an inherent order, intelligence and interconnectedness to the universe, the attributes and boundaries of which are not yet charted but are worth pursuing. They may also be willing to acknowledge that as proud as they are about what science has uncovered, they are even more humbled by what it still does not know.

When the "God" label gets in the way of an honest effort to understand the underlying order, interconnectedness and intelligence of the universe, perhaps we can find a more neutral term that allows the data to be pursued and the chips to fall where they may. Such a term should allow for the possibility that the end result, when all is comprehended, may or may not resemble the concept of God as held by one or more religions. "Creative Forces" or "First Cause" are good candidates found in the Cayce Readings, but it is the concept that is important. Labels should not be allowed to get in the way.

The study of prayer can be similarly confounded due its link to the God concept. There is enough positive prayer research, faith-based healing and very revealing anecdotal accounts of the energetic effects of prayer¹⁵¹ that there should be no question about whether prayer merits further investigation. However, if one views prayer as a request for a favor from a magician in the sky, the opportunity to understand what is going on is reduced. For research purposes, it may be useful to view prayer as a focused application of the human mind on the development of the world around us. Unlike an ordinary thought, prayer includes an intent to source the desired force for change from a deeper/higher energetic and spiritual point rather than sourcing it only in the human mind. In theory,

this makes the desired influence more powerful and presumably more wisely guided. In instances of group prayer, there is an additional intent to join one's effort with that of other likeminded spiritual beings to increase the power of the effort.

Research on prayer demonstrates how progress comes from those pioneers who look at the data for what it is and pursue it where it goes. Among the many studies on the health effects of prayer, there is a study, carefully structured by well-trained researchers, in which hospitalized cardiac patients who had been the beneficiaries of prayer showed a significant improvement in healing when compared to a control group that had not been prayed for. Building on this study, a larger research project was developed and initiated. Soon after it started, the 9/11 terrorist attack occurred leaving a major impact on the country's psyche. Enrollment in the research study dropped sharply. The study was redesigned to accommodate the smaller population. At the end of the study, the results did not show a significant improvement between those for whom prayers were elicited and the control group.

To scientists who are not open to the possibility that prayer could affect healing, the second, larger study authoritatively disproved any tangible physical benefit from prayer and closes the book on the whole issue. Nothing further of significance could be learned.

Scientists who are more committed to the power of prayer or learning the truth in the area would examine the differences between the two studies to develop hypotheses for what could have led to the differences in results. The hypotheses could later be tested through further research. This is a standard application of the scientific process and can be fruitful if pointed in the right direction and allowed to work.

Those scientists interested in further study of prayer have more to sort out than those who study the effect of thought without the involvement of the God factor. Although researchers often identify control groups against which "prayed for" groups are compared, it is highly likely that even members of the control group are "prayed for" as they, their friends and family seek God's help in time of crisis. Also, the type of healing that prayer might bring about is not always physical. The more important healing may be spiritual, which is progress that researchers are less likely to attempt to measure.

There is a growing crescendo of books and other publications that try to connect the dots for the scientific community and public between human consciousness and quantum physics.¹⁵² Although disregarded by too much of the scientific community, promising research continues to be pursued through the sponsorship of notable organizations such as the University of Virginia School of Medicine Division of Perceptual Studies,¹⁵³ the International Consciousness Research Laboratory¹⁵⁴ (successor to Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research Laboratory¹⁵⁵), the Institute of Noetic Sciences,¹⁵⁶ the Mind Science Foundation,¹⁵⁷ the Templeton Foundation,¹⁵⁸ the UCLA Center for Neurobiology of Stress,¹⁵⁹ the Mind & Life Institute,¹⁶⁰ the Center for Mind-Body Research at Johns Hopkins University,¹⁶¹ the Myrna Brind Center for Integrative Medicine at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital and Medical College¹⁶² and the Duke University Center for Spirituality, Theology and Health¹⁶³.

If there is to be a breakthrough in the mainstream scientific community's understanding of the interconnection of these two fields, it is likely to emerge from theory development and research that focus in the following areas:

- What makes the human mind more effective in influencing the development or performance of matter? What things cloud the ability? Why are some people better able to influence matter than others? Why is the influence of couples with emotional bonds or shared intent more powerful than that of people acting alone or other types of couples? What happens if one or more human minds attempt to influence matter in conflicting ways? To what extent is the behavior of matter at a quantum physics level accounted for by activities of the human mind, whether acting individually or in concert with others? What accounts for that portion of the behavior of matter, if any, that appears to be beyond the reach of the human mind?
- Quantum physicists have observed that fields and matter can become “entangled” so that particles and waves continue acting in concert even though they are no longer physically near each other.¹⁶⁴ How does this entanglement happen? What additional light is shed on the phenomena from study of the interconnectedness and non-local reach of the human mind demonstrated through research on the human mind's influence on matter, the interconnectedness of consciousness¹⁶⁵, psychic phenomena, remote viewing, near-death experiences, communications with people who have passed on, mental telepathy, premonitions, energy and spiritual healing and psychokinesis¹⁶⁶?
- What is the source of the “zero point” field of energy, sometimes referred to as the “cosmological constant?” How does it function? How does it factor into non-local interconnection of waves and particles?
- Are there other dimensions that exist simultaneously, a possibility being pursued by adherents of the “string theory” of quantum physics?¹⁶⁷
- With the breakthrough discovery of the relativity of time and the ability of the mind to influence matter retroactively,¹⁶⁸ are the past, present and future¹⁶⁹ examples of dimensions existing simultaneously and subconsciously influencing each other?
- Is it possible that the force (or yet undiscovered law of quantum physics) that creates, sustains and controls the Zero Point Field can touch, sustain and influence all of the rest of Creation at the same time because it is anchored in a different dimension that overlaps the dimension we view as our physical reality?¹⁷⁰
- Can enhanced understanding of how the human mind influences the behavior of matter on a micro scale provide insights for helping us better understand how matter is influenced on a macro scale? Research shows that the human mind influences how matter behaves, but it is far from establishing that the human mind is the primary influence. Perhaps the greatest significance of investigating the human mechanism is the insight it may give on other sources and mechanisms that exert a greater influence.
- Is the human mind connected to something much deeper¹⁷¹, whether called an energy field, projection of the Zero Point Field, soul or spirit, that keeps it connected on some leveled with the minds?

3. Research confirming that living in harmony with the hidden world improves longevity, satisfaction with life and general wellbeing.

The last of the eight “fingers pointing to the moon” is the fact, confirmed in some interesting research, that living in harmony with the mystic perspective makes a practical, favorable difference in our longevity, satisfaction with life and general wellbeing. In Chapter 4 of *Love Life 101*, we suggest that the pursuit of a higher purpose is the primary factor affecting whether we are likely to find meaning in our lives when we ultimately look back on them. The highest pursuit that brings the most meaning is a spiritual one that involves all aspects of life. When finally understood, it is a quest to know God on an intimate basis.

Unfortunately, use of the word “God” has a myriad of theological connotations that will cause confusion as to what is meant. This is clarified as well as possible in *Love Life 101*. Knowing God on an intimate basis can involve religion, but does not have to do so. Suffice it to say that from a mystic perspective, the pursuit of intimacy with God involves

- knowing one’s self on a deep level – so deep that we uncover our direct connection to all that is,
- realizing that there is an all-encompassing intelligence, interconnection and purpose in the universe, and
- recognizing that everything we encounter in life, the good, the bad and the ugly, provides a constructive opportunity to better understand ourselves and our relationship with that intelligence, interconnection and purpose that pervades the universe and remains constant, while the physical comes and goes.

When in this posture, our life comes into focus and has meaning. We are psychologically and physically healthier. We tend to live longer. We are satisfied with how we use our time. In footnote 3 of Chapter 4 of *Love Life 101*, we provide the following discussion of scientific studies highlighting the importance of spirituality and an awareness of one’s purpose in life.

In one particularly interesting study, scientists trying to identify human behaviors that most contribute to a long, healthy life studied communities in four parts of the world (dubbed the “Blue Zones”). These communities have the best record for healthy longevity, including the highest rate of people who live past 100 years of age. The awareness of one’s purpose in life and regular participation in a spiritual community were two of nine behaviors¹⁷² found in the four groups that contribute to healthy longevity.¹⁷³

Spirituality often leads to a purposeful life. “It’s the sense,” observed Duke University’s Dr. Harold Koenig, “that God has a purpose for humanity and for all of creation, and that each of us has a special role in that divine plan.”¹⁷⁴ Duke University’s Center for Spirituality, Theology and Health, founded by Dr. Koenig, tracks research¹⁷⁵ which attempts to assess the relationship between spirituality and physical wellbeing. Thousands of these studies have been completed and new studies are conducted every year all over the world. This research, like the studies that focused on the Blue Zones, indicates that people who have a regular

spiritual practice, such as attending a church, temple or mosque, tend to live longer and “are less likely to engage in risky behavior, be depressed or feel chronic stress.”¹⁷⁶

There are some subtleties in the studies regarding the beneficial effects of a regular spiritual practice that are worth noting. First, we may have a diligent religious practice, but it makes a difference whether the practice is driven by our internal beliefs and spirituality as distinguished from attempts to create an external self-image to impress others. A study that confirmed the link between regular religious involvement and lower rates of depression found that the beneficial effect goes away if the purpose of the church attendance is to create a positive external self-image (“extrinsic religiosity”) rather than motivated by internal spiritual beliefs and pursuit of religion for its own sake (“intrinsic religiosity”). In fact, the extrinsic religiosity was actually associated with an increase in depression incidence.¹⁷⁷

Second, our understanding of God’s nature makes a difference. The positive affect that a belief in God and a regular spiritual practice has on our physical health, mental outlook and longevity is undermined to some extent if our primary concept of God is more fear-based (God punishes and abandons those who disobey) than love-based (God is a benevolent, caring presence). One study on the subject focused on the impact of “spirituality and God attachment” in Jesuit seminarians and Catholic nuns in India. Participants who had a “positive God image” tended to show a more positive affect and greater satisfaction with life. Participants who had a “negative God image” tended to have an increased negative affect, a decreased positive affect and a decreased satisfaction with life.¹⁷⁸

* * *

The first five fingers pointing to the moon provide confirmed, documented instances that show there is significantly more going on than is acknowledged by the prevailing worldview held by the mainstream science community. The next two fingers reveal the areas of current scientific research that provide the greatest opportunity for a breakthrough that introduces important aspects of this heretofore “hidden” reality into the mainstream worldview. The eighth and final finger confirms that this potential paradigm shift in perspective has great practical significance for us as individuals as well as society as a whole.

¹ This is a phrase from 1 Kings 19:11-13 in which the Prophet Elijah is taught that the presence of God speaks to each of us through the still, small voice within.

² Matthew 14:22-33.

³ This is covered more extensively later in this article in connection with a discussion of quantum physics and human consciousness.

⁴ Meghan Rosen, "Sound Waves Put Levitation on the Move: Technique Transports Nonmagnetic Particles such as Cells, Water Droplets and Coffee Grounds," *Science News*, web ed. (July 15, 2013) accessed at http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/351634/description/Sound_waves_put_levitation_on_the_move accessed on October 1, 2013.

⁵ Information on this research can be found at <http://www.princeton.edu/~pear/>. We also discuss the existing research confirming the ability of human consciousness to influence the behavior of matter later in this article.

⁶ Larry Doss, M.D., *Healing Words: The Power of Prayer and the Practice of Medicine* (Harper Paperbacks 1997), pp. 164-166, and the studies he references in his footnotes.

⁷ T. Lee Baumann, M.D., *God at the Speed of Light: The Melding of Science and Spirituality* (ARE Press 2001), Chapter 4. We also discuss the existing research confirming the ability of human consciousness to influence the behavior of matter later in this article.

⁸ Information about these healing disciplines is provided later in this article.

⁹ Information about this research is provided later in this article.

¹⁰ "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Matthew 7:12.

¹¹ <http://www.bahai.us/welcome/spiritual-concepts/oneness-of-god/>

¹² John 14:6.

¹³ Consult the glossary for an explanation of what is meant here by the term "ideals."

¹⁴ Eben Alexander, *Proof of Heaven: A Neurosurgeon's Journey into the Afterlife* (Simon & Schuster 2012).

¹⁵ <http://www.mindscience.org/>.

¹⁶ <http://noetic.org/>.

¹⁷ <http://www.templeton.org/>.

¹⁸ E.g., Chris Carter, *Science and the Afterlife Experience: Evidence for the Immortality of Consciousness* (Inner Traditions (2012)); Chris Carter, *Science and the Near-Death Experience: How Consciousness Survives Death* (Inner Traditions 2010); Joseph Head and S. L. Cranston, editors, *Reincarnation: The Phoenix Fire Mystery* (Julian Press/Crown Publishers 1977); Roy Stemman, *The Big Book of Reincarnation: Examining The Evidence That We Have All Lived Before* (Hierophant Publishing 2012); Geoff Viney, *Surviving Death: Evidence of the Afterlife* (St. Martin's Press 1993); Victor and Wendy Zammit, *A Lawyer Presents the Evidence for the Afterlife: What Happens When We Die* (White Crow Books 2013).

¹⁹ Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, M.D., *On Life after Death* (Celestial Arts 1991), 2 – 3.

²⁰ See, e.g., Bruce Greyson, M.D., "Ian Stevenson's Contributions to Near-Death Studies," *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 22 (2008): 54-63; Craig R. Lundahl, Ph.D. and Harold A. Widdison, Ph.D., *The Eternal Journey: How Near-Death Experiences Illuminate Our Earthly Lives* (Warner 1997); Kenneth Ring, Ph.D. and Evelyn Elsaesser Valarino, *Lessons From the Light: What We Can Learn From the Near-Death Experience* (Moment Point 2000).

²¹ See <http://iands.org/home.html>.

²² See <http://www.nderf.org/>.

²³ Eben Alexander, *Proof of Heaven: A Neurosurgeon's Journey into the Afterlife* (Simon & Schuster 2012), 140 – 146, 149 – 171, 183 - 188; P.M.H. Atwater, Lh.D., *Beyond the Light: What Isn't Being Said About Near-Death Experience* (Birch Lane Press 1994), 15-21; P.M.H. Atwater, Lh.D., *The Big Book of Near-Death Experiences: The Ultimate Guide to What Happens When We Die* (Hampton Roads 2007), 175-224; Geena K. Athappilly, M.D., Bruce Greyson, M.D., Ian Stevenson, M.D., "Do Prevailing Societal Models Influence Reports of Near-Death Experiences? A Comparison of Accounts Reported Before and After 1975," *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease* 194(3) (March 2006): 218-222; Chris Carter, *Science and the Near-Death Experience: How Consciousness Survives Death* (Inner Traditions 2010), 160 – 234;

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¹⁵¹ See the earlier discussion on prayer. <http://www.spiritualityandhealth.duke.edu/research/research.html> ; Emily Williams Cook, Bruce Greyson, Ian Stevenson, "Do Any Near-Death Experiences Provide Evidence for the Survival of Human Personality after Death? Relevant Features and Illustrative Case Reports," *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 12(3) (1988): 377-406, 395-398; Larry Dossey, MD, *Healing Words: The Power of Prayer and the Practice of Medicine* (Harper 1993); Larry Dossey, MD, *Be Careful What You Pray For...You Just Might Get It* (HarperOne 1998); Lynne McTaggart, *The Intention Experiment: Using Your Thoughts to Change Your Life and the World* (Free Press 2007), 78-97, 182-183; Look into prayer fields and their effect on crime as well as their effect on remote event generators. (Lynn McTaggart addresses these in *The Intention Experiment*).

¹⁵² T. Lee Baumann, M.D., *God at the Speed of Light: The Melding of Science and Spirituality* (ARE Press 2001); David Boehm, Basil Hiley, *The Undivided Universe: An Ontological Interpretation of Quantum Theory* (Routledge 1995); David Boehm, *Wholeness and the Implicate Order* (Routledge 2002); Larry Crenshaw, "Science Proves Psychic Healing" *FATE Magazine* (January 1976) <http://www.scribd.com/doc/3138098/Science-Proves-Psychic-Healing>; William Braud, PhD, *Distant Mental Influence: Its Contributions to Science, Healing, and Human Interactions* (Hampton Roads 2003); Fritjof Capra, *The Tao of Physics: An Exploration of the Parallels between Modern Physics and Eastern Mysticism* (Shambhala 2010); Bruce Greyson, MD, "Editorial: Can Science Explain the Near-Death Experience?" *Journal of Near-Death Studies* 8(2) (Winter 1989); Bruce Greyson, "Implications of Near-Death Experiences for a Postmaterialist Psychology," *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality* 2(1) (2010); Pam Grout, *E-Squared: Nine Do-It-Yourself Energy Experiments That Prove Your Thoughts Create Your Reality* (Hay House 2012); Larry Dossey, MD, *Space, Time & Medicine* (Shambhala 1982); Joseph Head, S.L. Cranston, editors, *Reincarnation: An East – West Anthology* (Aeon Publishing 2000), 364-408; Marie D. Jones, *PSience: How New Discoveries in Quantum Physics and New Science May Explain the Existence of Paranormal Phenomena* (New Page 2006); Marie D. Jones, Larry Flaxman, *The Resonance Key: Exploring the Links Between Vibration, Consciousness and the Zero Point Grid* (New Page 2009); Marie D. Jones, Larry Flaxman, *The Grid: Exploring the Hidden Infrastructure of Reality* (Hierophant Publishing 2013); Michio Kaku, *Parallel Worlds: A Journey Through Creation, Higher Dimensions, and the Future of the Cosmos* (Anchor 2006); Edward R. Kelly, Emily Williams Kelly, Adam Crabtree, Alan Gauld, Michael Grosso, Bruce Greyson, *Irreducible Mind: Toward A Psychology for the 21st Century* (Rowman & Littlefield 2007); Lynne McTaggart, *The Field: The Quest for the Secret Force of the Universe* (Quill 2003); Lynne McTaggart, *The Intention Experiment: Using Your Thoughts to Change Your Life and the World* (Free Press 2007); Dean Radin, *Entangled Minds: Extrasensory Experiences in a Quantum Reality* (Paraview 2006); Dean Radin, PhD, *The Conscious Universe: The Scientific Truth of Psychic Phenomenon* (HarperOne 2009); Bruce Rosenblum, Fred Kuttner, *Quantum Enigma: Physics Encounters Consciousness* (Oxford University Press 2005); Michael Talbot, *Mysticism and the New Physics*, rev. ed. (Penguin 1993); Michael Talbot, *The Holographic Universe: The Revolutionary Theory of Reality* (Harper Perennial 2011); Russell Targ, *The Reality of ESP: A Physicist's Proof of Psychic Abilities*(Quest 2012); Charles Tart, *The End of Materialism: How Evidence of the Paranormal Is Bringing Science and Spirit Together* (New Harbinger 2009); Geoff Viney, *Surviving Death: Evidence of the Afterlife* (St. Martin's Press 1993), 304-309; Evan Harris Walker, *The Physics Of Consciousness: The Quantum Mind And The Meaning Of Life* (Perseus 2000); *What the Bleep Do We Know* (Captured Light & Lord of the Wind Films LLC 2004); Fred Alan Wolf, PhD, *The Spiritual Universe: How Quantum Physics Proves the Existence of the Soul* (Simon & Schuster 1996); Fred Alan Wolf, PhD, *Dr. Quantum's Little Book Of Big Ideas: Where Science Meets Spirit* (Moment Point 2008); Fred Alan Wolf, PhD, *Time Loops and Space Twists: How God Created the Universe* (Hierophant 2013).

¹⁵³ http://www.medicine.virginia.edu/clinical/departments/psychiatry/sections/cspp/dops/we_are-page.

¹⁵⁴ <http://icrl.org/>.

¹⁵⁵ <http://www.princeton.edu/~pear/>.

¹⁵⁶ <http://noetic.org/>.

¹⁵⁷ <https://www.mindscience.org/>.

¹⁵⁸ <http://www.templeton.org/>.

¹⁵⁹ <http://uclacns.org/>.

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¹⁶¹ <http://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/johns-hopkins-center-for-mind-body-research/>.

¹⁶² <http://www.jeffersonhospital.org/departments-and-services/myrna-brind-center-integrative-medicine>.

¹⁶³ <http://www.spiritualityandhealth.duke.edu/>.

¹⁶⁴ Dean Radin, *Entangled Minds: Extrasensory Experiences in a Quantum Reality* (Paraview 2006); Russell Targ, *The Reality of ESP: A Physicist's Proof of Psychic Abilities* (Quest 2012).

¹⁶⁵ Larry Dossey, MD, *One Mind: How Our Individual Mind Is Part of a Greater Consciousness and Why It Matters* (Hay House 2013).

¹⁶⁶ See the prior discussion of research on extrasensory perception.

¹⁶⁷ Brian Greene, *The Hidden Reality: Parallel Universes and the Deep Laws of the Cosmos* (Vintage 2011); Michio Kaku, *Parallel Worlds: A Journey Through Creation, Higher Dimensions, and the Future of the Cosmos* (Anchor 2006).

¹⁶⁸ T. Lee Baumann, M.D., *God at the Speed of Light: The Melding of Science and Spirituality* (ARE Press 2001), 28, 44, 51; Larry Dossey, MD, *Space, Time & Medicine* (Shambhala 1982); Larry Dossey, MD, *Healing Words: The Power of Prayer and the Practice of Medicine* (Harper 1993), 155-156, 163-182; Lynne McTaggart, *The Field: The Quest for the Secret Force of the Universe* (Quill 2003), 163 - 175; Lynne McTaggart, *The Intention Experiment: Using Your Thoughts to Change Your Life and the World* (Free Press 2007), 161-175.

¹⁶⁹ Brian L. Weiss, MD, *Same Soul, Many Bodies: Discover the Healing Power of Future Lives Through Progression Therapy* (Free Press 2004).

¹⁷⁰ Marie D. Jones, Larry Flaxman, *The Grid: Exploring the Hidden Infrastructure of Reality* (Hierophant Publishing 2013); Michio Kaku, *Parallel Worlds: A Journey Through Creation, Higher Dimensions, and the Future of the Cosmos* (Anchor 2006).

¹⁷¹ Chris Carter, *Science and Psychic Phenomena: The Fall of the House of Skeptics* (Inner Traditions 2012);

Larry Dossey, MD, *One Mind: How Our Individual Mind Is Part of a Greater Consciousness and Why It Matters* (Hay House 2013); Russell Targ, *Limitless Mind: A Guide to Remote Viewing and Transformation of Consciousness* (New World Library 2012); Fred Alan Wolf, PhD, *The Spiritual Universe: How Quantum Physics Proves the Existence of the Soul* (Simon & Schuster 1996).

¹⁷² The total list of "Blue Zone" behaviors are :

1. *Move naturally*: – Be active without having to think about it.
2. *Hara Hachi Bu* (Confucian-inspired reminder to stop eating before full): Painlessly cut calories by 20 percent.
3. *Plant slant*: Avoid meat and processed foods.
4. *Grapes of Life*: Drink red wine (in moderation).
5. *Purpose now*: Take time to see the big picture.
6. *Downshift*: Take time to relieve stress.

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7. *Belong: Participate in a spiritual community.*
 8. *Loved ones first: Make family a priority.*
 9. *Right tribe: Be surrounded by those who share the Blue Zone values.*

Dan Buettner, *The Blue Zones: Lessons for Living Longer from the People Who've Lived the Longest* (National Geographic 2008), 231 – 262.

¹⁷³ Dan Buettner, *The Blue Zones: Lessons for Living Longer from the People Who've Lived the Longest* (National Geographic 2008), 231 – 262.

¹⁷⁴ Dan Buettner, "Find Purpose, Live Longer: Add Years to Your Life – By Adding Life to Your Years," *AARP* (Nov./Dec. 2008), 30, 34.

¹⁷⁵ A massive compilation of studies in this area are tracked on the Center's website at <http://www.spiritualityandhealth.duke.edu/research/research.html>.

¹⁷⁶ Dan Buettner, "Find Purpose, Live Longer," 30, 34.

¹⁷⁷ "PSI Research," *Venture Inward* (Association for Research and Enlightenment September/October 2002), 9; T. Smith, M. McCullough J. Poll, "Religiousness and Depression: Evidence for a Main Effect and the Moderating Influence of Stressful Life Events," *Psychological Bulletin* 129, No. 4 (2003): 614-636.

¹⁷⁸ D. Mendonca, K.E. Oakes, J.W. Ciarrocchi, K. Gillespie "Spirituality and God attachment as predictors of subjective wellbeing for seminarians and nuns in India," *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion* 18 (2007): 121-140.