

g u t t e r

The InnerMatrix

a guide to transforming your life and awakening your spirit

JOEY KLEIN



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Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct
your life and you will call it fate.

—Carl J

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Introduction

The Power of the Matrix

I am the master of my fate. I am the captain of my soul.

—William Ernest Henley,
In "Invictus"

When I ask people to identify the most important relationship with the greatest impact on their lives, almost everyone points to someone they loved deeply, such as a child, spouse, parent, mentor, or best friend. It always comes as a shock when I tell them that their answer is wrong. The truth is that the most important relationship, with the most profound impact on our lives, is the relationship we have with our self.

It is what lives inside our mind, emotions, body, and spirit that creates the matrix of our inner experience. In turn, that inner matrix determines how we process and define our world. We bring our mind, emotions, body, and spirit to the relationships we have with others, and this inner matrix dictates our ability or inability to thrive in those relationships. Through the lens of our mind, emotions, body, and spirit, we process, define, and influence everything that shows up in our lives.

So what does it mean to be in a relationship with our inner matrix? Most of us assume that because we eat, live, and breathe, we understand who we are and know how to *be* in the world. Few of us pause to consider that appropriate training and education are required if we wish to do anything with excellence in this life. Would you allow a neurosurgeon to operate on your brain if she had not been trained? Would you hire a mechanic to fix your car if he had never repaired a car? Would you hire an attorney who had never been to law school to represent you in court? We can easily imagine that the outcome of any of these situations would be potentially disastrous.

Most of us do not seek to train our inner matrix despite the fact that it defines our quality of life and the level of success we achieve.

We simply do not realize that we can train all aspects of our being, instead believing we are born the way we are. We believe that we either have an inner matrix that creates peace, well-being, and success in life, or we don't. However, the truth is that if we are taught the skills and tools to master our inner matrix, we can shift and change our mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual state to align with any vision we have for our lives. When we learn how to align our inner matrix with any vision we choose, in that moment, our vision instantly becomes our reality. If we wish to create a life of love, peace, and joy, we can do so. All we truly need is to master the skills necessary to be in this world in a state of excellence. When we engage such training, we can begin to consciously evolve our inner matrix in a way that serves us to reach our highest potential in life.

Almost all of us have an area in our lives that is not functioning on an optimal level or where some amount of pain and suffering shows up. Perhaps we have a relationship where conflict is present. It may be a job where we believe our skills are not being appropriately utilized. Our finances may be a source of struggle from time to time. Even when all is right in the world, we may just have a sense that a deeper, more fulfilling experience is possible.

No matter what level we are functioning on, most of us have an intuitive knowing that we can develop ourselves beyond our current state. For many of us, we have just not found the tools we were looking for to create the life we know is possible. The good news is that this book provides the opportunity to gain practical and easy-to-apply tools that can facilitate true transformation in any aspect of life. By learning to shift the mind, emotions, physical body, and spirit we simply gain the power to change every experience we have in this world.

If our mind is disciplined, our emotions are peaceful, and our physicality is strong, we will have one experience of the world. If our mind is chaotic, our emotions are frenzied, and our physical body is weak, our experience of that exact same world will be radically different. Although we have long recognized that we can strengthen a weak human body,

not everyone understands that we can train all aspects of our internal life, including the mind, emotions, physical body, and spirit. When we change these inner aspects, the world interacts with us differently. Therefore, if we wish to shape our relationships with family, friends, coworkers, humanity, and the world at large, the first place that we must look is inside ourselves.

When we were born, very few of us received an instruction manual for our inner matrix. We were not trained to look inside and optimize our state of being. We were not educated about the impact our internal state of being has on the quality of experiences we create in this world. Instead, the random set of experiences we encountered in this life conditioned our mind, emotions, and physical bodies to react to our environment in certain specific ways. As a result, we operate in our lives without fully understanding who we are or how we function. We also fail to grasp the true extent of the influence we have on the world around us, as well as the influence the world has on us.

In order to truly thrive in our lives, we must first understand how we work, and to do that we must build a relationship with our inner matrix. Having gained this understanding, we can then execute the necessary changes to eliminate our current areas of suffering, define our dreams and visions, and create an extraordinary life. Without such education and training, our lives become chaotic and painful. We are left to wonder how we ended up in a place of mental, emotional, and physical turmoil, without hope for escape.

I did not grow up in an environment saturated in peace, love, and joy. What looked like a rather idyllic middle-class, suburban world had its fair share of anger, conflict, resentment, pain, and suffering. As I approached my teenage years, I began to focus on how I would chart my own destiny in this life. When I looked at those around me, I was aware that although these people experienced moments of happiness, no one seemed to be at peace within themselves or living a fulfilled life. When they did experience happiness, it was only as a result of something that had showed up in their outside world. Lacking the skills to manage their

internal states, they were forced to look to their outside environments to trigger the internal experience they desired.

My parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, friends, religious leaders, and even teachers seemed generally dissatisfied with their lives. For example, nothing would excite my dad more than the prospect of a new job. He would convince himself that a new company or a new position at work would make all the difference for him. However, a few months after obtaining his new job, my dad would again be complaining about his boss, how much he was getting paid, and the work he had to perform. In no time at all, he would want to leave the job he had been so excited to obtain.

For my mom, she would be happy when her family and friends would come to visit. Once they left, she would slip back into a state of general depression, watching television, reading a book, and basically detaching from her world. My mother lived an isolated and lonely existence despite the fact that she had a husband and children who loved her and desperately hungered for her attention. My mother was trapped, unable to experience the beauty that was right in front of her, available for her own taking.

My teachers did not seem fulfilled either. They appeared to just be working a job as opposed to having a true passion for their vocation. Something was missing. Even my best friend's mom was no different. Although she would be elated when she got a new car, the angry face she typically displayed for the world would quickly return. The external circumstances she thought would bring her happiness, failed time and time again to create the lasting experience she yearned for in this life.

I was raised in a family with two religions: my mother was Catholic and my father was Jewish. As the time for my bar mitzvah approached, my father insisted that I attend countless hours of Hebrew school. I secretly hoped that my synagogue would lead me to a place of peace, love, and joy. However, this religious experience failed to offer me a way out. As I asked increasingly inquisitive questions about life, my rabbi, who lacked the answers himself, often became angry and would punish me.

He would attempt to shame me, telling me I should have faith and obey. No questioning was allowed.

The people surrounding me reiterated a broader societal message to me about how to live a happy life. The message was to go to college, get a well-paying job, find a nice girl, and have a family of my own. In other words, I needed to do exactly what those around me had done and then I would reach the promised land. The problem was that I did not want to grow up to have their experiences of life. I had the sense that if I took their advice, that was exactly where I would end up. As a result, I was very hesitant to follow in the footsteps of those whom I knew.

I had been born with a level of awareness that those around me did not appear to share. I saw my parents and the adults I knew repeatedly engage in the same patterns of behavior that did not serve their highest or best interests. I knew they were trapped in these patterns, unable to choose a different way of being in the world. I could not understand why they engaged in the same behavioral patterns over and over again, each time thinking that this time, they would get a different result.

I began to feel like I was trapped in my own version of Bill Murray's *Groundhog Day*. In that movie, the central character repeats the same day over and over again with the same disappointing and painful results. In the movie, the character actually realizes that he is trapped and repeating the same failed behavior causing the same disastrous outcomes; whereas those around me seemed to be slumbering through their lives, believing that they were exercising choice in the world when they were actually the architects of their own conditioned prison.

Conversely, I carried a deep conviction that there was simply a better way to be in this world, though I had never been shown an example of what that could look like. I believed that my relationships should be harmonious. I was convinced it was possible to live in states of peace and serenity. I knew that unconditional love was possible. I hungered for a deep and ever-present connection to spirit. The problem was that I did not know how to show up in such capacities, and I had never met anyone who did.

Although I had not found a guide for my journey, as soon as I was able, I set out to pave my own road in the world. I was determined to live a life quite different from what I had seen around me. My best friend and I moved out of our parents' homes, got an apartment together with our girlfriends, and entered a very rebellious time. At first there was a sense of freedom and excitement about the promise this new existence held. We had rejected society's fantasy-recipe for happiness, and instead, we were creating something better. We were committed to doing things differently and living happily ever after.

Quickly, our venture turned into something we had neither intended nor anticipated. Our new world became a chaotic existence filled with more pain and suffering than I had ever known—even more than in the path I was rebelling against. In a short period of time, I learned that awareness of what was wrong with my life did not provide a solution. Soon I found myself working a meaningless job during the day and partying at night. It was not long before hopelessness and despair filled my inner world. In an attempt to avoid the pain, I began to numb myself. My life became filled with drugs and alcohol. My girlfriend and I broke up, and my relationship with my best friend dissolved into conflict.

In the life I had sought to escape, I had known anger, resentment, depression, pain, and suffering, but not at these levels, which had escalated to the point of excruciating. Although I was aware of the patterns my parents had engaged in and the pain they had created for themselves, to my dismay, I found myself engaging in the same patterns I had intended to step away from. My heightened sense of awareness seemed only to have amplified my level of suffering and the speed at which I encountered it. It had done nothing to create the different life I had intended. My life had become unbearable.

Eventually, I found myself at rock bottom. A night of partying began like any other, but this time, I began to spiral out of control. I was drinking heavily and doing drugs. One night turned into three. With no food or sleep, I began to hallucinate. In the middle of the third night, I was watching a movie with friends, when all of a sudden, a band of

dancing bears appeared in the living room! I was thrilled to see them and could not figure out why everyone else was missing this amazing opportunity to dance with bears.

At some point, however, I noticed the horrified looks on my friends' faces and excused myself to go to my room and try to sleep. After a while, I tried to get up to get a drink of water but couldn't move my body. I became aware that the sound of my heartbeat was slowing down. Soon, I found myself above my body looking down at my resting form in the bed. I heard a voice say, "We don't have time to build another vehicle. We have to fix this one." Suddenly I was back in my body.

By morning, I had made a decision. I knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that if I stayed in my current environment, I would be dead soon. I also knew that I had not come to this life to live in an alcohol-and-drug-induced haze. On the other hand, I had no intention of leading a mundane or meaningless existence either. I believed that I was here to accomplish something more. I was in a place of decision that would lead me to a radical transformation. So much for my happily-ever-after fantasy; for now, it was back to my parents' basement.

Home with my parents, I entered a time of deep, internal reflection. Over and over I asked, *What is my purpose? Who am I? And Why am I here?* For months, I isolated myself from the outside world and dove deeper into the depths of my inner matrix. Far from feeling defeated, I became more determined than ever to find the answers, heal my inner world, and ultimately reach a place of fulfillment. Armed with that determination and the painful lessons learned, I set out to find real teachers who could show me another way of being in this life.

Ultimately, this journey brought me to an unexpected place: a teacher from India. The moment I met my teacher, I experienced a sense of deep and profound recognition. She was at once all-powerful and all-loving, fierce and gentle, peaceful and yet fully expressive in the moment. Before me sat the example of unconditional love that I had believed was possible but had almost given up on finding in this life. Although I knew almost nothing about her tradition or culture, I immediately knew that the

presence she carried was what I had been searching for and something I wished to devote my life to awakening within myself. Sitting in a room with several hundred other attendees, I realized that she had the capacity to guide me to a new way of being. I knew this teacher would show me what it was to truly live. For the first time, I had a taste of what was possible.

My teacher brought with her an eclectic background, steeped in mystical Eastern tradition and yoga as well as Western psychology. She had practiced as a therapist in France for years. She was trained in naturopathic, homeopathic, and osteopathic therapies and had enjoyed an extensive health-and-wellness practice. Although she had risen to the highest rank ever awarded a woman in 2,700 years of Vedic tradition, at the time I met her, she was relatively unknown in the United States. Pulling on this vast and varied training, she was capable of guiding people through deep transformation and could eliminate extreme suffering of all kinds. Although traditional Western thought teaches us that such profound change takes years of therapy if not a lifetime, she often created such transformation in a matter of hours or even minutes. I was in awe.

As I dived into the work with my teacher, she brought me to a place where I could see that my outer world was a reflection of my inner matrix and that if I wanted to change my experience of life, I had to change myself. As I continued with her work and took accountability for my life, in a short period of time, my entire world shifted on a deep and profound level.

I moved from extreme suffering to a place of authentic peace and well-being inside of myself. It no longer mattered what happened around me. Now I was able to maintain states of peace and joy despite what showed up in my life. Although I did not understand how these changes were possible, everything in my life had shifted in a relatively short period of time. Those around me were also transforming in ways that I could not explain. Even my parents were changing. My father stopped complaining and actually began enjoying his work. My mother finally found a sense of

joy in her life. Seeing these radical transformations, I knew I had found my life's work.

Over time, my teacher asked me to share what I had learned with others. It was not long before I had a thriving private-coaching practice with sixty people on my books and a long waiting list. Because I could only accommodate a limited number of clients in private practice and my wait list was growing longer with each passing week, I began offering weekend seminars to bring these practices to a wider audience. Ultimately, these programs grew to my teaching over thirty seminars a year in cities across the United States.

During this same time, I discovered a traditional Korean martial-arts school in Los Angeles, California, that taught me the importance of developing the physical body in relationship to one's internal life. Through intense study, I learned how to face fear by entering the ring as a warrior. This skill translated outside of the martial-arts studio and into my daily life. As a result of this practice, I discovered the importance of discipline and how to cultivate true inner strength. Teaching at the martial-arts studio, known as a *dojang*, I developed critical leadership skills rooted in a tradition thousands of years old. Recognizing the value these ancient skills and traditions had to offer, I set out to fully embody them.

In Beverly Hills, I met a highly regarded psychologist whose clients included many of Hollywood's high-profile figures in film and music. This psychologist began to mentor me and ultimately invited me to coach many of her clients. As a result of my work with her, I became intrigued by the world of science and what Western research has discovered about internal development. I began to read books about psychology, neuroplasticity, and epigenetics. Although the field of psychology has been around for over a century, neuroplasticity and epigenetics are relatively new scientific arenas addressing how the brain can be rewired and our genetic expression altered by activities such as mindfulness meditation. I desired to understand, from a scientific standpoint, why I had been able to achieve such radical changes in my life through employing the

principals I had learned from my other teachers. These emerging areas of research offered the explanation I had sought to find. The information I discovered deepened my understanding of inner transformational work and emerging areas of science that now support many of these ancient traditions.

In the course of this work, I learned that we no longer have to guess at how to empower ourselves. The research and scientific support for how to step into strong and fulfilling lives exists, but a relatively small amount of that work has been summarized and distributed to a mainstream audience. I knew that one of my lifelong goals would be to merge the areas of ancient mystical practices and modern scientific development to revolutionize the work of inner transformation.

While living in Los Angeles, I also met a Kabbalistic rabbi who took me deep into the world of ancient Jewish mysticism. Unlike my childhood rabbi who punished my questioning because he lacked the answers, this wise Kabbalist encouraged me to question and expertly directed me on a path to discover the answers I had sought for myself. I became a devoted private student of his and studied with him for years. In the end, I gained a deep appreciation for the beauty that lies in our great wisdom traditions when we have an experienced guide who can take us beyond the dogma and into the profound and limitless experience of spirit.

During my vast and varied training, I found myself challenging the methods our society has long offered as solutions to our human suffering and guidance for transforming our lives. For example, many have been to a therapist or coach and were taught that if we are aware of what we are doing and why we are doing it, then we can change ourselves for the better. Unfortunately, awareness of a problem does not define a solution. A lyric from a popular 1980s song, *The Policy of Truth* by Depeche Mode perfectly summarizes the experience that almost everyone has had in life: “Never again is what you swore the time before.” We see what we are doing. We vow to change and never to do it again. We hold the best of intentions. Then, to our dismay, we find ourselves engaging in the same destructive behavior over and over.

Far from providing a solution, what neurologists have now discovered is that when we think about a pattern we wish to change, neurologically that pattern gets stronger. Because the brain functions in the same way a muscle does, the more exercise any pathway receives, the stronger it becomes. When we think about how we feel and try to discover the reasons for why we feel a certain way, we are engaging the neurological connections for the patterns we are trying to escape. Instead of eliminating the pattern, it grows stronger. As a result, thinking our way out of a problem simply fails.

The other popular suggestion for how to guide our lives out of suffering is to follow our gut instincts. A common misperception is that our intuition lives in our gut and if we follow its guidance, things will get better. As scientists in the emerging field of neurogastroenterology have discovered, a large portion of our emotions actually live in our gut. The gut is often referred to as our *second brain*. However, this *second brain* does not control any higher intellectual functioning. Instead, our gut's neurological purpose is a site for emotional patterning. We all have felt butterflies in our stomach when we were anxious. We have all experienced an emotional situation that was so intense, it made our stomach hurt. Science now understands that the reason we have these common experiences is that some of our emotional neurology lives in our gut.

When we follow our gut, instead of accessing higher-level intuition, we are actually accessing our lower, often times destructive, emotional patterns. Because we have engaged these emotional patterns our entire lives on some level, they actually feel comfortable. In fact, they feel *right* to us. As a result, we mistake this feeling of familiarity as some intuitive sign that we are on the right path. Instead, we are on the same path that ends up taking us to the same place of familiar suffering. When we don't understand that we are accessing our emotions instead of our spirit or higher intuition, we are left wondering how spirit could have failed us.

Through my journey into the inner matrix, I not only realized what wasn't working, but I also began to synthesize certain fundamental

principles that were transforming the lives of my private clients and the students at my seminars. I drew my teachings from the wide and varied traditions, both modern and ancient, that I had studied and developed a system known as *Conscious Transformation*. Through these methods, I transformed my own life and showed people how to consciously transform their lives on all levels. This system of Conscious Transformation empowers individuals to become the architect of their lives, giving them practical tools to intentionally create any vision they choose.

People who were on the brink of divorce developed stable and loving relationships with their partners. Those who faced professional challenges discovered career success and thrived financially. Clients who suffered from serious and even debilitating physical illnesses shifted into states of health and vibrancy. Over and over again, my clients were learning that it was not necessary for them to suffer in this life, and armed with the tools I gave them, they were stepping out of pain and into states of joy and bliss. Through the practice of Conscious Transformation, profound changes were coming in a matter of months, weeks, and sometimes, even days. In this book, I seek to share my discoveries with you.

So why has this work been effective at addressing such varied issues and situations? Romantic relationships, families, physical health, businesses, and careers are all based on a single foundation: the relationship with the inner matrix. This internal relationship is the most important relationship we have, and it is the most overlooked. It is the topic about which we receive the least education, but it is the one where we should receive the most. Although the ancients knew this truth, our popular culture seems to have lost sight of this great wisdom. When you master your internal state, you master your world. It is just that simple.

The world is full of examples of how those who master their internal states are capable of looking tragedies in the face and thriving, while those who do not are crippled by life's challenges. World-famous physicist and author Stephen Hawking, who was diagnosed with ALS when he was twenty-one and not expected to live beyond the age of twenty-three is a good example. Hawking says, "I try to lead as normal a life as possible

and not think about my condition or regret the things it prevents me from doing, which are not many.” Now in his seventies, Hawking, who is married with three children, has not been able to walk or talk for decades, but his work as head of the Center for Theoretical Cosmology at Cambridge has literally changed the way humanity sees the universe and our place in it.

On the other hand, when we do not master ourselves and difficult challenges show up, those moments define us, permanently transforming our lives into something we did not intend. A client of mine is an attorney who built a national law practice representing those who suffer severe burn injuries. For twenty-five years, she has seen example after example of how a split-second can chart the course of our lives when we allow it.

This attorney has watched her clients’ lives disintegrate after a catastrophic injury. Otherwise functional individuals simply cannot find the strength to go on. Her clients slip into depression, anxiety, and often prescription-drug addiction. Marriages and entire families are routinely destroyed as grief, anger, and regret consume those affected by these misfortunes. Parents who have lost children frequently suffer severe and even deadly physical illness, not to mention levels of trauma so deep that suicide seems the only way out. When unprepared for the dark night of the soul that comes for us all, that darkness can be all consuming.

One of the reasons this attorney became involved with my work was that, for the first time, she saw a system that could empower people to face even life’s most daunting challenges. Having watched so many be crippled by life’s experiences, she sought to be a force capable of influencing the world instead of one who was crushed by external circumstances. At my programs, she witnessed students of mine developing internal discipline that allowed them to face their most terrifying inner demons and thrive when most would crumble. Through my teachings, she learned how to make an impact on her own world instead of allowing the tragedy surrounding her professional life to impact her. The potential to be a force in this world instead of a prisoner to it is a gift I offer to you.

When we are taught basic skills for mastering our inner matrix, we become the force that influences the world instead of the victim of what shows up in our lives. In our day-to-day existence, we are able to bring meaning and purpose to even the most mundane tasks. In what would otherwise be devastating situations, we suddenly see the power of potential staring back at us. Armed with tools to train our internal state, we are able to master our destiny even in the face of life's most formidable storms.

* * *

To begin training your internal state, first read the book in its entirety before doing the practices contained within. The book contains the knowledge you need to train your internal matrix. At the end of the book, you will find a strategy guide providing the practices for creating Conscious Transformation. Through these practices, you apply the book's teachings to your life. Transformation requires both knowledge and application. Application requires consistent practice. Knowledge alone is useless if you do not apply that knowledge to your life. My goal is not just to inform you but to empower you.

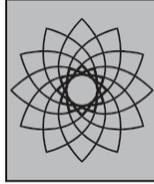
While you engage this book, I challenge you to temporarily drop your preconceived ideas of who you are, how you function, and what it is that will take you out of suffering and into a new state of being. As Socrates noted, "an unexamined life is not worth living." Dive into your inner world. Set the intention to stay open to learning about your inner matrix. Entertain the idea that perhaps the world and your place in it is not exactly as you might have believed it to be in the past. If you're willing to drop your current worldview and allow yourself to temporarily entertain the possibility of an alternative one, a grand journey into the inner depths of your magnificent being will emerge. If you engage this quest fully, you will discover who you truly are and a radical new way of existing in this world that empowers you to choose the experiences you wish to create.

Having the courage to embark upon a journey to examine what lives in your inner matrix and the determination to see this adventure through with humor is critical if you wish to experience transformation. However, in the end, what I am offering you is a no-risk proposition. If you choose to become committed to taking the journey into the inner matrix with me, a new experience of the human existence and all you have sensed was possible lies on this path. If you choose not to engage a new way of being, your old existence will still be waiting for you.

In the course of my practice, I have worked with individuals from all socioeconomic backgrounds, religions, cultures, and ethnicities. All have benefited from the practices of Conscious Transformation and its easy-to-use tools to empower a modern society. Throughout this book, I share with you stories of transformation from a number of my clients who experienced radical change. Their names and certain identifying details have been changed to protect their privacy.

These techniques, which I will share with you, can be applied to your daily life so that you can create an extraordinary existence by learning how to navigate yourself and, at the same time, begin to understand the science supporting these empowering practices. Once you learn how to be the architect of your mind, emotions, and physical body, and have the power to access your spiritual intuition, radical transformation will unfold throughout your entire life.

Although we have been told that such radical transformation takes a long time, the truth is it doesn't have to take years, months, or even weeks. Stepping out of pain and suffering, opening ourselves to all that is possible in this human experience and, thereby, completely transforming all aspects of ourselves does not have to be a lifetime affair. Transformation always happens in just one moment. This book will show you how to create that moment.



Chapter 1

The First Relationships

Everything that we see is a shadow cast by that which we do not see.

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

We often associate the term *relationship* with the connection we have to a spouse, lover, or family member. In truth, we are actually in relationship with everything outside of ourselves. We are in relationship with friends, acquaintances, jobs, houses, cars, and even the person who cuts us off in traffic. The very fabric of our lives is woven through the lens of relationship.

Our inner matrix and the level of consciousness we embody define the experience that we have of each relationship in our lives. Most people think that the people or things in their outside world determine their experiences in life. Our society teaches that if we have the right relationship, the right house, and the right job, all will be well. As a result, we try moving the pieces on our external checkerboards to get all of the pieces in the right places. When this fails to make us happy, we think we have the wrong pieces on our board, so we change the people, places, or things in our lives.

We believe our external world is the cause of our unhappiness, because we cannot see our internal state of being. The truth is, it is extremely difficult to see ourselves, without the right internal training and tools. Because we are unable to see inside ourselves, we can't change what we can't see. To see our inner matrix and how it creates every aspect of our lives, we need powerful techniques. When equipped with the right tools, relationships serve as a type of inner telescope, enabling us to see what lies deep within and to facilitate Conscious Transformation. When we transform in this profound way, our experience of life and the relationships in our lives will radically improve.

Each time we engage someone in a relationship, an energy exists between the two of us. Although most of us have limited knowledge about this phenomenon, on an intuitive level, we know it to be true. In describing relationships, we even use common phrases that evoke a sense of this energetic presence. When two people are attracted to each other, we talk in terms of the “electricity” between them. When anger exists between two people, we often hear someone comment “you could cut the tension with a knife.” Most of us have been to a funeral or a hospital where people were grieving and heard the sadness described as “hanging in the air.”

So what accounts for our tangible experience of this intangible element of relationship? In such situations, we simply sense the energy that is the building block of everything in our world. Physics now teaches that everything in existence is made up of vibrating strings of energy. The only differentiation among these strings of energy is with regard to how each string vibrates and its rate of vibration. Quantum physics refers to this concept as *string theory*. On our most elemental level, human beings are merely strings of vibrating energy in empty space. Even our thoughts and emotions are actually vibrating energy. These vibrating strings or waves of energy are the building blocks of consciousness.

All living things, from plants to animals, are conscious on some level or another, but not all living things are self-aware. For example, although a tiger is conscious, it takes action from a place of instinct, not a place of awareness. A tiger does not know that it is a tiger. A tiger is not self-aware. A tiger takes action based upon its nature through instinct; it cannot change its nature or its instinct. A tiger will always do what a tiger is designed to do. It does not stop to analyze whether it is morally appropriate to kill a gazelle. If it is hungry, it follows its instinct and feeds its hunger. It does not ponder whether it should have grass or gazelle. A tiger eats what a tiger eats.

Human beings are conscious, but we are also self-aware. We can identify that we are human. We can perceive our own thoughts, our emotions, and the sensations in our bodies. We have the ability to

question our own existence and aspire to evolve beyond our current state. Through awareness, we can alter our level of consciousness by shifting how we think, how we feel, and the condition of our bodies. The level of consciousness that we embody as human beings defines our experience of life and our capacity to influence the world around us. When armed with the right tools, we can create our environments instead of allowing our environments to influence and impact us.

In order to elevate our level of consciousness and expand our ability to be self-aware, we must first understand how our level of consciousness came to be what it is today. The key is to explore our inner matrix. Once we understand how our inner matrix was developed, we gain access to how that matrix functions within us and the impact it has on the world around us. Expanding our awareness is the first step to consciously transforming our lives.

As we discussed, the inner matrix is comprised of four separate yet interrelated bodies. These are the mental, emotional, and physical bodies and a fourth body that we refer to as the spiritual body. The spiritual body is the part of us that extends beyond our human existence. We discover the inner matrix within the intricate facets of our minds, the vast expressions that we call our emotions, the intoxicating sensations we experience in the body, and the infinite, divine mystery that is our spiritual self. We expand our awareness of the inner matrix by looking within and having the courage to explore the vast creation that exists inside each and every one of us. If we wish to realize our full potential and go beyond the mundane experience of life, we must be willing to master our mind, emotions, and physical body, and increase our opening to spirit.

As a starting point for understanding how we develop, it is important to acknowledge that everything that exists in this universe existed as something else before it took its current form. Before a plant became a plant, an animal became an animal, a human became a human, and the world became our beloved planet, each existed as pure, formless energy or *Presence*. This Presence then took form and became a tree, an animal, a human, or the very world we inhabit. It is this same energy that gives

us the ability to feel, to think, and to have sensation in the body. Before we were in our physical forms experiencing human consciousness, we too existed as formless energy.

At the time of conception, this pure, formless energy entered the wombs of our mothers. Although we were just molecules and cells coming into form, these molecules and cells embodied consciousness. A level of intelligence existed in these molecules and cells that held the blueprint for who we were to become. In this initial moment we received genetic and epigenetic coding from both our mother and our father. The *epigenome* is like a switch that sits on top of the gene and is affected by environmental triggers, including stress and trauma. An event occurs in our external environment and that event causes the epigenetic switch to turn the gene on, turn it off, or increase or decrease the intensity with which the gene expresses itself. Such changes in the epigenome are now understood to be passed from one generation to the next. Through the epigenome, a multitude of information is passed from parent to child including emotional programming.

In a study from Emory University, scientists taught male mice to fear the smell of cherry-blossoms by associating the smell with mild foot shocks over a period of three days. Later the mice bred and both their children and grandchildren feared the smell of cherry blossoms even though the resulting generations had never been shocked in response to this smell. The offspring were even born with more cherry-blossom detecting neurons in their noses and more space in their brain devoted to cherry-blossom smelling. As the Washington Post noted, this study “adds to a growing pile of evidence suggesting that characteristics outside of the strict genetic code may also be acquired from our parents through epigenetic inheritance.” In other words, science is now proving that fear and other learned emotional expressions are imprinted at an epigenetic level and passed from one generation to the next.

Once we were in utero, our mother’s environment began to impact our epigenetic settings having the ability to turn these switches on and off. Because our physicality was attached to our mother’s in this initial stage,

we began to experience what our mother was experiencing through her patterns of vibrating energy. Our mother's world was our world. As our mother felt emotions, these energetic patterns began to imprint into our developing emotional body. As our mother had thoughts, beliefs, and concepts run through her mind, our developing mind was energetically imprinted with these patterns of information. As our mother experienced physical sensations, our forming physical body was imprinted with this information as well. In fact, all that we could experience at that point was our mother's experiences passed on to us as information through patterns of vibrating energy. This is why our relationship with our mother was the most powerful and influential relationship.

As any builder will tell you, nothing is more important to a structure than the foundation on which it is built. While we were in our mother's womb, we did not have developed mental, emotional, or physical bodies. The patterns of vibrating energy that we received from our mother's experiences laid the foundation for how our mind, body, and emotions would function throughout our lives. Our very first experiences of being human were experienced through our mothers. This first relationship with our mother clearly defined how we would be in relationship with ourselves, with others, and with the world in general.

This first relationship exerts a power in development that is still not fully appreciated in our modern society but is becoming more and more recognized by our scientific community. The topic of the mother's impact upon her developing child is tackled in a well-regarded book written by three preeminent psychiatrists, Thomas Lewis, Fari Amini and Richard Lannon entitled *A General Theory of Love*. In this book, the authors reconcile ancient beliefs with what science has now learned about the function and construction of the human brain. In doing so, they recognize that we have a deep need for love, even in our earliest moments, and that our neurological development is directly affected by whether we receive love during those earliest moments in human form.

These authors conclude that scientific research shows that our nervous systems, and our brains in particular, are not self-contained. Instead, from

these earliest moments inside our mother's womb, our brains actually *link* with those of the people close to us in a rhythm that physically imprints the very structure of our brains and influences our functioning for the rest of our lives. In this way, our mother's experiences literally shape our own.

These imprints from our mothers construct lifelong emotional patterns. These emotional patterns then chart the course of our lives. When we don't receive essential emotional patterning such as love, which our brains require for healthy development, we spend our lives trying to "fill in" that empty place. We look to relationships outside of ourselves. Sometimes we numb our pain through unhealthy external means such as drugs, alcohol, food, sex, or other types of mood-altering behavior.

Several years ago, I had an opportunity to witness firsthand a community that appreciates the essential fact that we all need to be loved in order to blossom. I was invited to speak at a United Nations conference on peace in Bangkok, Thailand. While I was there, I stayed for three weeks as a guest at a Buddhist ashram.

Every morning around nine o'clock, approximately forty pregnant women would come and sit for several hours with the Buddhist monk who presided over the ashram. When I asked what was happening, it was explained to me that these women had been raped, abused, or abandoned by their babies' fathers. The monk was teaching the mothers how to love, care for, and nurture their unborn children, despite their difficult situations.

These monks understood that the thoughts, emotions, and sensations that these mothers had about their unborn children as well as the world around them would mold and imprint the mental, emotional, and physical bodies of their children. In fact, these very thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations would become the building blocks upon which the children's inner matrixes would be constructed. This foundation would then determine the overall state of well-being for each child. The monks knew that during these initial moments of our existence in utero, we are imprinted with mental, emotional, and physical patterns that exert a powerful force defining the trajectory of the rest of our lives.

For example, we can imagine the feelings that we would have if we were a mother who had become pregnant as the result of a rape or other traumatic experience. We would most likely have feelings of horror, disgust, shame, worthlessness, anger, guilt, regret, rage, and humiliation. Those emotions would then fuel certain thoughts like *every time I look at my child, I will think of what happened, or how can I possibly tell my child how he or she came to be?* These thoughts and emotions would cause physical expressions to follow. Our hearts would race or ache. Our bodies would most likely feel tight, constricted, tired, and even painful.

Perhaps we would be forced to take on multiple jobs just to support ourselves. We might even be living in an abusive environment. Such situations cause enormous mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual trauma. We would be directly affected by each experience of fear, exhaustion, pain, and lack.

In turn, our unborn child would also have the experience of each one of our thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations. As we have discussed, these thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations create energetic imprints on our developing children, thereby shaping each child's emerging inner matrix. Unless attended to, those imprints would last a lifetime. In such a situation, the foundation of the child's developing inner matrix would be laid by patterns created out of a deep level of mental, emotional, and physical suffering. These imprints would carry the information of disgust, shame, worthlessness, anger, regret, rage, and humiliation. In turn, these imprints would cause our children's consciousness to vibrate at the level of disgust, shame, worthlessness, anger, guilt, regret, rage and humiliation.

Research conducted on pregnant women who were either at the World Trade Center during the September 11, 2001, attack or close by confirms that such trauma is actually passed onto children. Researchers at the Traumatic Stress Studies Division of the Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York studied a group of these women and their babies. The mothers who were traumatized by the events of 9/11 were significantly

more likely to have babies who showed substantially increased distress in response to loud noises, unfamiliar faces, and new food.

The Mount Sinai researchers concluded that these mothers passed their trauma onto their children through epigenetic means. This research underlies how environmental forces, even when we are in utero have the potential to impact us to the point of our genetic expression. With this scientific understanding of the impact of the experiences we receive in utero, the importance of consciously cultivating a loving experience while a mother is pregnant and its potential effect on current and future generations becomes clear.

These same principles hold true in more positive situations as well. Imagine that while you were pregnant, you had a loving partner, a stable family, and a supportive community. In this situation, you would not have to work a job or be concerned about having good food or shelter. You could be excited about the prospect of being a mother and bringing this child into the world. You would feel supported by your spouse and family in a happy household.

On an emotional level, under these circumstances, you would experience joy, contentment, peace, hope, and love. These feelings would fuel thoughts such as *I am so lucky to be having a baby; I can't wait to be a mother; or I look forward to all of the things my husband and I will do with our new child.* In return, these thoughts and emotions would create certain physical sensations. You might feel relaxed, energetic, strong, and vibrant.

All these emotions, thoughts, and physical sensations once again would leave a certain imprint on the developing inner matrix of your unborn child. Later in life, your child would still carry these energetic patterns at its most basic level. These imprints carrying the information of joy, contentment, peace, hope, and love would cause your child's consciousness to vibrate at the level of joy, contentment, peace, hope, and love. These emotional influences, having had an epigenetic impact, could be passed from one generation to the next.

Clearly, we only have the capacity to give an unborn child what we already have ourselves. Mothers can wish for a joyful existence for

their children, but if the mother is not experiencing joy, the energetic pattern of joy will not be passed on to the child. If the child does not receive the information of joy, then the child will be unable to create or experience joy within him or herself. Having never received the energetic imprint of joy, the child would not have an active consciousness of joy within.

A child who does not embody an active consciousness of joy is unable to recognize or experience joy when it appears in his or her world. To this child, a pattern of joy would be like someone speaking a foreign language that cannot be understood. The child knows only the language of his or her active emotional patterns, which are determined by the information passed to the child from the mother's experiences. As a result, the first relationship we experience in our life, the relationship with our mother, has a significant bearing on every relationship to follow.

* * *

My client Elizabeth is another highly accomplished attorney who has achieved success in almost every arena she has ever entered. Yet Elizabeth can't accept compliments. They make her uncomfortable. She is highly self-driven and, despite her successes, no accomplishment has ever been enough. Critical comments, on the other hand, Elizabeth hears over and over again in her head for weeks. She beats herself up over the smallest of failings. She has spent her life trying to live up to her own unreasonable expectations, not stopping to enjoy her triumphs but instead moving on toward her next goal.

Elizabeth graduated at the top of her class in law school. She was so focused and concerned about how she would do in her next phase that she started work before she even graduated, instead of taking a little time off with the rest of her peers to enjoy her academic achievement. She thought little about what she had accomplished and instead worried incessantly about whether she would be able to succeed in the competitive law practice she now worked in.

As a young associate, Elizabeth billed more hours to clients than anyone else on her level, but when she received compliments, she could not enjoy them. After she would take a deposition or have a hearing in court, she would play back pieces of those events over and over again in her mind, thinking that she could have done better and experiencing great anxiety, guilt, and shame. When her boyfriend would compliment her on the beautiful dinner she had made, she would think secretly to herself that he didn't really mean it. When someone would tell her how pretty she looked, her mind would go to the weight she needed to lose or the concern that her hair was not perfect.

Elizabeth now has a daughter, Elise. Elise makes straight As and is at the top of her class academically. She published a book at age twelve. She goes to her martial-arts dojo five nights a week and received her black belt a year ahead of schedule. Elise makes self-deprecating comments, just like her mother, in the face of well-earned compliments. She is uncomfortable with praise. She is quietly devastated by what she perceives to be the smallest of criticisms. She is unable to enjoy her successes, because no achievement is quite enough.

Elizabeth was born to an unmarried woman and given up for adoption. Elizabeth lacked the consciousness of healthy self-pride and a feeling of worthiness because her mother did not have those patterns to pass on to her daughter. As a result, Elizabeth spent her life trying to compensate for a general feeling of lack, certain that her next accomplishment would fill that sense of emptiness.

Because Elizabeth didn't hold healthy emotional patterns herself, she was unable to pass them on to her daughter. Despite the fact that Elizabeth wanted desperately for her daughter to experience self-pride, worthiness, and contentment in her life, Elizabeth could not *transmit* an energetic pattern that she did not have. She could only pass on to Elise the same unconscious negative patterns she had absorbed. By working with me to learn the skills to develop her inner matrix, Elizabeth and Elise were able to elevate their levels of consciousness, allowing them to experience the positive states that they had both longed for.

If mothers are aware and know how to create healthier mental, emotional, and physical bodies for themselves, then their unborn children will have access to those same energetic patterns. Therefore, we can easily see how mothers in both negative and positive scenarios could benefit from teachings like those delivered by the Buddhist monk. The monk's teachings would create healthier thoughts, emotions, and physical experiences in the mothers, thereby altering their children's development on a very profound level. I can't think of a mother who would not make such changes, if she understood the importance of her experiences in constructing her child's life and had the tools to create such experiences at will for herself.

The mothers in each of these scenarios are products of their own upbringing and environment, as are we. None of us has access to what we have not experienced and what we have not received. Unless we learn how to expand, shift, and evolve, we will always be limited by the past experiences that have molded our current states of consciousness.

By the time a child is born, a significant amount of imprinting has already occurred within the child's inner matrix. As we have discussed, although we begin as pure energy, we take on a tremendous amount of energetic imprinting from our mother and her surrounding environment while we are in the womb. Therefore, by the time we draw our first breath, we carry these initial ingrained emotional, mental, and physical patterns into our lives.

The moment of birth is our very first experience of being independent and separate from all other things. Although we do not have the mental capacity at that point to understand separateness on an intellectual level, we have the direct experience of suddenly being physically separated from our mother, who had been our entire world. For the first time, we are no longer one with her.

Even though our physical body is now separate from our mother and all other things, on an energetic level, we continue to take on imprints from everyone with whom we come into contact. During infancy, the primary imprints we absorb are those from our parents and caregivers. If

loving and peaceful people care for us, then loving and peaceful patterns will resonate with us. If those around us are sad and angry, then these disruptive patterns will feel most familiar.

We will align and be most comfortable with the energetic patterns that were imprinted in our inner matrix. Like those imprints from the womb, the imprints we receive until we are about two years of age are laid down at a foundational level in our inner matrix and become the platform for our experiences throughout the rest of our lives, unless we learn another way.

From the time we are in our mother's womb through our infancy and early childhood, our inner matrix is like a farmer's field that has been tilled and is ready for seeds to be planted. On the emotional, mental, and physical levels, our *fields* are ready for the planting of energetic patterns. But the analogy ends there. The farmer, when planting seeds in his soil, is intentional about what he sows. He carefully picks and chooses which seeds he will plant and where he will plant them. By contrast, in our earliest days, we have no ability to choose which mental, emotional, and physical patterns our first relationships will plant in the fields of our inner matrix. Whether the pattern serves us or not, every pattern we encounter in our environment is directly imprinted within us.

During our early days in these first relationships, we have no ability to reject anything we encounter in our environments. A flood of energetic information flows into our developing inner matrix, and all of these imprints make an impact. At these earliest stages, we are unable to make any choices for ourselves. We do not choose what to eat, when to be put down for sleep, what activities we will participate in, where we will go, or what experiences we will be exposed to.

We are also unable to choose the imprints and experiences from our environment. We cannot choose to keep the imprints and experiences that will create a positive effect in our lives and deny the negative imprints and experiences that will not serve us. We have no ability to reject our father's anger or our mother's shame because they will cause us to suffer. Instead, both positive and negative imprints impact us equally, and we

are left at the mercy of our environments. As a result, every thought, emotion, and action we take in our lives is influenced and directed by our first relationships.

A farmer may plant thousands of seeds. Hundreds may sprout and become usable crops. Hundreds may sprout and die. Hundreds may never sprout at all, or may grow only every few years. In the same way, our mental, emotional, and physical patterns may appear to rule and define our lives. Some of these energetic imprints may appear to come and go and some seem as though they are not there at all. However, once a seed is planted in the soil, whether it sprouts or not, it will always be part of the soil. Likewise, an imprinted pattern will be part of our conditioned inner matrix, whether we are aware of the pattern or have access to it. What grows in the field is always dependent upon what was planted. A lemon seed will never become an apple tree. On the other hand, if the seed is not planted, it can never hope to flower.

Identifying the patterns that exist within our inner matrix is the first step to expanding our awareness. Taking the time to develop this increased level of awareness is critical. We cannot begin to transform a pattern within the inner matrix unless we know that it exists and is not serving what we wish to create. By expanding our awareness, we begin our journey of Conscious Transformation.

One way to expand our awareness is by reflecting on our initial experiences of life. The first relationship we experience, the relationship with our mother, has a significant bearing on every relationship to follow. In order to begin to understand our relationships with the world and others, we must first take time to reflect on what initial energetic patterns were laid down while we were in our mother's womb.

Take a few minutes and think back to when you were in the womb of your mother. What were the conditions of your mother's life? What were the experiences that were unfolding for your mother at the time you were in her womb? Did your mother have a supportive environment as she was bringing you into the world? What challenges did your mother face at this time in her life? Take time to reflect on your mother's mental,

emotional, physical, and spiritual capacity at the time you were in her womb and what information would have been passed on to you that created the foundation for your inner matrix. Sit quietly and allow what is there from your inner matrix to surface from within before reading further.

If your physical birth mother is not known to you, imagine what she may have been like, what her experience might have been, and what imprints could have been passed on to you. Oftentimes, when people open themselves to an intuitive *guess* regarding their mothers' patterns, they tend to have more insight than they might imagine. That is because at some level, our mother's energetic *seeds* have already been sown, and those same patterns exist inside of us.

Also take time to reflect on who your primary caregivers were while you were a small child. What mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual capacities did these individuals have at that time to pass on to you? What were the conditions of the environment you grew up in? What imprints, both positive and negative, could have been established in your inner matrix at this time in your development? Sit quietly and allow what is there from your inner matrix to surface from within before reading further.

Through this process of asking our inner selves to reveal what has been hidden, we begin to develop conscious awareness of our imprinted patterning. This exercise is critical, given that we cannot change a pattern if we are not aware of its existence. As with all things in life, we get out of these practices what we put into them. The more time and attention we focus on these practices, the more the inner matrix will reveal to us. The greater our awareness of what information was imprinted into the inner matrix at these critical times, the more we will come to know ourselves and be able to see how we are affecting our world.

Because almost everyone has imprinted patterning that is not serving their highest good, taking time to develop this awareness is a critical step toward evolving our lives into a healthier existence. By reflecting in this way, we begin our journey into the self and take the first step toward

getting to know our inner terrain. Like any exploration into uncharted territory, we are likely to find something we didn't expect. As a result, a good sense of humor about ourselves and a genuine sense of curiosity and adventure are critical components to a successful inward journey. Keep in mind that this inward journey is the greatest adventure of any lifetime.

