

Conscious Creation: Module 2

What is Conscious Creation?

You cannot be your Authentic Self without becoming intimate with your true nature, without going beyond personality, cherished beliefs, likes, and dislikes. To discover your core self, you must be willing to break the agreements you have made with mediocrity. The moment you stop running the racket of staying small to please society, family, friends, or bosses, your original face will start to come into focus and you will know who and what you really are as an emanation of the Universal One. As you come into an understanding of your true essence, you automatically want to know how you are to express it on the planet.

— Michael Bernard Beckwith, *Spiritual Liberation*

Imagine you're planting maple seeds. When you plant those seeds, you would expect a maple tree to grow—correct? Wouldn't it be irrational to expect an elm tree to grow? Or a palm tree? Or a Christmas tree? The seeds of our deepest beliefs are planted within us when we are very young. They come from our early experiences, from our parents, from traumatic events, even from seemingly benign situations. As we grow, those seeds are nurtured, watered, and fed by additional experiences. For example, if we start to believe at a young age that we are unlovable, and if that belief is nurtured by further experience, then the belief grows along with us, and by the time we are adults the kind of tree we have is an "I'm not lovable" tree. Given the seed and the way it's been watered and fertilized, we can't just think or "visualize" our way to another variety of tree. It takes deeper work.

Often, however, we are unaware of the type of tree we've raised. We grow up with it—we rest in its shade, we play in its branches, but we sometimes don't investigate its roots. Of course, we know something feels out of sorts, but we try to make the tree function for us. We trim it and decorate it, we supplement it with more fertilizer, but from the ground up it's still an "I'm not lovable" tree. It can't help it. Conscious Creation invites us to shift our focus from the tree—the manifestation of our core false beliefs—and look more thoroughly at the roots and the seed that started it all. In this process we identify the underlying beliefs at the core of our unhappiness, and we discover ways to overcome them so that we can plant a new seed and nurture a new tree.

Awareness and Growth

Awareness and growth are intrinsic to all life on earth. All life is organized around awareness, and all life grows; it moves, changes, transforms. From primates like us to tiny bacteria, all living creatures have receptive components (awareness) and responsive components (growth). Even one-celled organisms are receptive to stimuli—they are designed to receive, interpret, and respond to the world. So are humans. We are designed to grow through awareness. The more aware we are, the more we can grow. The same is true in creating the life of your dreams.

But I am aware. Are you thinking this? Well, you're not incorrect. It's just that we can all have a greater level of awareness. Continuously. The fact that you've picked up this book indicates that you are being directed to your next level of conscious awareness. When you're in this position, it can feel energizing and exhilarating, but it can also feel like discomfort, like something is not quite authentic for you. It may be an acute and continual feeling of being stuck or trapped, or even a feeling of desperation to get out of whatever pattern in which you find yourself. Or the feeling may be more subtle and less frequent—like wondering if there's something else for you to learn or do, or an intermittent feeling of emptiness, or lack of purpose and direction.

Travis and Sasha

In the following chapters, you will get to know two people who are undergoing the discomfort that leads to an ensuing level of awareness: Travis and Sasha.¹

Travis

A youthful twenty-three when I met him, Travis is attractive. Not just ordinarily handsome, more like a striking movie star. His beautiful face masked a lifetime of pain and suffering from traumas in his early childhood. His mother abandoned him, and he had grown up in foster care. After his emancipation, he lived on the streets and became severely addicted to drugs and alcohol.

What were the core beliefs at the root of Travis's suffering? When I met him, he was conscious of two beliefs: "Foster kids never succeed" and "I'll never have a normal life." He

¹ These are not their real names. Names and identifying details have been modified to ensure their privacy and protect the sacred relationship between counselor and client.

was working to overcome those beliefs through arduous practice and mental discipline. He was in recovery and had a job. However, he wasn't yet aware of a deeper core false belief he had been carrying with him since early childhood. What brought Travis to my office was a pattern of choosing partners who were themselves addicted. He was truly flummoxed and wanted desperately to find genuine love. "Why does this keep happening?" he asked. We'll see the answer in Steps 1 and 2.

Sasha

At first, I knew Sasha only socially—enough to chat periodically. She is beautiful and thin and well put together, as the saying goes. She appears a bit intense—the type A kind—complete with perfect hair and clothes, always rushing off to something, always striving for more success.

When I ran into Sasha at a fundraiser one spring evening, she told me she had just been promoted to junior partner in a downtown law firm, and she was almost manic in her confidence. "TJ, this is really important to me. I'm making it, you know? It's just such a rush. And it's an important step toward becoming a full partner. That's my dream. I just have to beat out the competition, which shouldn't be hard. You should see these people."

Over the next several years I rarely saw her, though I'd hear from friends that she was working crazy hours, nights and weekends, trying to prove herself. On the rare occasions when our paths crossed, she would confide her doubt: "Why do I keep doing this, TJ? I don't have any friends, no social life. And I have terrible insomnia." She was beginning to realize that her unconscious strategy was no longer working.

As the following pages walk you through making peace with the past and overcoming core false beliefs, you may find that the experiences of Travis and Sasha hold some parallels to your own. Travis and Sasha are not frozen in unchanging views of how the world functions. They've been growing all along, on a level that's moderately unconscious. But now they're starting to look at their life stories and notice patterns; they've started to say, "Gee, it looks like I've been doing the same thing for a while, and it's not going so well." Their unconscious beliefs have produced a specific kind of movie for each of them, and now they're unhappy with the final edit. Their beliefs have been driving the conditions of their lives, and they're now questioning that reality. This is a creative process of awareness and growth. It can be uncomfortable. But this particular kind of discomfort is an encouraging sign; it cues us to a deeper awareness and signals us to bring the unconscious into consciousness awareness.

Changing Your Movie

Bringing the unconscious to consciousness is the first part of consciously creating the life of your dreams. Conscious Creation requires unearthing what lies in the shadows, the beliefs and patterns you've unconsciously created. Making peace with and overcoming the adverse stories and physical patterning you've created unconsciously will release your genuine dreams. And these may not be what you thought they were. In fact, Conscious Creation can open you up to an awareness in which the dreams you believed you had—maybe they're dreams of security, success, health, or love—don't even matter as much as they once did. And when they matter less, anything is possible.

Travis isn't yet aware of how his traumatic early experiences and core beliefs have worked together to create his desperate view of life. At first glance, Sasha's awareness appears to be a little more developed, but she too has an immense blind spot, a dark place she has yet to touch. (Whatever it is, it's powerful. It affects her nervous system, the sleep center of her brain, and as a consequence, her life is diminished.) How much more energized and captivating could their lives be if they could release this mystery? How much bolder and more interesting could your life be if you could make decisions in growing conscious awareness?

As humans we are continuously creating our own lives, consciously or unconsciously. We each create the movie of our life and our view of reality. We edit, rewrite, and produce sequels, and when everything is going well it can look delightful. The problem is that many of us don't even realize that we have a movie, much less that we are choosing it. We're making creative decisions, but they're unconscious decisions. We are trapped in unconscious creation. This often leaves us in upsetting and painful patterns of living. Because we're unaware of our capacity to consciously create, we're living lives that are too little for us. We are "running the racket of staying small."

Here's an image that we'll play with throughout the book, an acronym and metaphor that will help you remember the five steps. It's MOVIE: *M* is for Making Peace with the Past, *O* is for Overcoming Core False Beliefs, *V* is for Visioning, *I* is for Intention Setting, and *E* is for Embodying the Vision. Why MOVIE? Because filmmaking is a creative process, and in Conscious Creation you are creating the movie of your life. In Steps 1 and 2 you are recognizing and unlearning the old script that you have unconsciously created and lived by, the script that is no longer working for you. In Step 3 you're opening to a new script, a new story that you write, cast, film, edit, and produce, with help from others, in Steps 4 and 5.

Step 1, Making Peace with the Past, and Step 2, Overcoming Core False Beliefs, represent that work of inner clarity and release. Step 3, Visioning, is openness to our inner wisdom. Step 4, Intention Setting, furthers the visioning process by making our vision clear, detailed, and actionable, and Step 5, Embodying Our Vision, brings the vision into our very being as we live in love, connection, and oneness. As we move through these five steps, we also receive their inheritance: the unfolding of our vision as it manifests in the world.

What about the Law of Attraction?

You may be thinking that this sounds something like the Law of Attraction. Put simply, the Law of Attraction says that our reality is formed or manifested by our habits of thought. Negative thoughts attract negative reality; positive thoughts attract positive reality. When we change our thoughts, we change our frequency, and the world, or universe, responds.

There is a great deal of truth to this, and the Law of Attraction does work well for many people. This is why the five steps of Conscious Creation include the insights of the Law of Attraction; they are valuable and represent a leap forward in conscious evolution. If you change your thinking and your habits, you can change your life. But many people find that the Law of Attraction alone doesn't work for them, or that it works only temporarily.

Sasha had become exhausted from lack of sleep and could barely force herself through each day. She'd tried prescription drugs, multiple supplements, a darkened bedroom, white noise—everything she could find. She was about to give up. Then, one February morning, while sorting through her file of articles on sleep, Sasha found some pages clipped together with a Post-it reading "Visualization." She almost put it on the recycling pile. When she'd first read about visualization as an exercise for insomnia a year prior, she had decided it didn't suit her. She'd never resonated with the "New-Agey" stuff; she preferred concrete action and control. But she was nearing a breaking point and needed something, anything, to work. She got up slowly and took the pages to her reading chair.

Sasha read again about visualization: "If you had a fresh canvas on which to paint your life, what would you paint?" She read again about how changing one's thoughts can change one's reality. Today, for some reason, the idea didn't seem far-fetched. So after a healthy lunch, she spent all afternoon flipping through old magazines looking for pictures for a vision board focused on sleep. Happy that this visualization business wasn't so "out there," she found herself enjoying the creative process of choosing the images and positioning them on the board. In the end, her vision board was beautiful, a glimmering pastel montage of dreamy images and calming colors.

Over the next week Sasha meditated on her board and worked on becoming aware of her thoughts about sleep. She became aware that, as positive as she had tried to be, her thoughts had become negative again: “I’ll never fix this problem,” “This is just my cross to bear,” and even “Maybe I should just take a bottle of sleeping pills and never wake up.” By becoming aware of her limiting thoughts, she was learning to replace them with the seemingly more positive: “Sleep is coming to me.” “I deserve a beautiful sleep.” “Rest is the most natural thing in the world.”

And what happened? Her periods of sleep became longer and deeper. It was working. The fact that it was working only deepened her belief, and when she repeated her uplifting mantras, it was less experimental and felt more like truth. She did deserve a beautiful sleep. Then, all of a sudden, it simply stopped working.

Like Sasha, you might have been excited to find that the Law of Attraction worked for you. You also may have found that it seemed to stop working at some point. You might worry that your practice stopped working because you were “doing it wrong,” which only adds to your frustration and sense of failure. Or maybe you’ve found that the Law of Attraction continues to work beautifully—you’ve mastered it and manifested everything your heart desires. Now you want to take it to the next level. Or perhaps it worked, but you found it didn’t bring you the sense of happiness and fulfillment you were anticipating.

Applying the Law of Attraction without making peace with your past and overcoming your core false beliefs can leave you feeling stuck, hindering your growth in conscious awareness. Or it can leave you wanting more. In either case, the five steps of Conscious Creation provide a way to go deeper, to clear away what hinders you, to move beyond the stuck place. The five steps don’t ignore or throw away the Law of Attraction—they expand upon it so that it not only applies to your thoughts but also taps into your feelings and the energy field from which you are vibrating.

How the Law of Attraction Works (or Doesn’t)

People often look to the Law of Attraction to make a big change in their lives, assuring themselves that “this time, it’s going to be different!” They apply the law diligently, focusing on positive thoughts, surrounding themselves with positive people, and striving to create healthy habits and goals. But in six months, despite all this, they realize they’ve ended up with the same kind of partner, made the same mistake in their workplace, followed the same pattern they’ve been trying to break. It would be easy to conclude that the Law of Attraction doesn’t work for them.

The Law of Attraction does work, to a degree. However, what often happens is that we limit the way we work with it. The problem is that something is perpetuating the same old pattern. It might have shifted slightly through our work with the Law of Attraction, but not enough. Conscious Creation offers a deeper, more powerful, and more effective approach. Because what's at work here is really more than our thoughts or our visualization or other daily habits—it's the energy field of our consciousness. Whatever consciousness we're holding will ultimately come into manifestation. And our energy, our frequency if you will, is often based on what's living deeply below our conscious awareness.

Let's say you've been changing your thoughts in order to manifest love. This might cause a slight shift that feels uplifting. But if you haven't undertaken Steps 1 and 2 and you're still holding a core belief that you are unlovable, then that belief will continue to be activated by the energy it has built up over the years. So the changes that come from your altered thoughts will likely be, at best, temporary. You can accept only what you truly imagine you deserve. The most loving partner may be standing right in front of you, but you won't be able to recognize them unless you know, deep down, at a vibrational level, that you deserve true and authentic love.

Expanding Consciousness

One way to understand the movement out of unconscious creation is to look at consciousness not as a knowledge that is acquired once and for all, but as expanding and expansive awareness. To the extent that we're unconscious, we're relatively static. The key to growth, openness, and change is deepening our level of awareness. There's a big difference between Travis's awareness now and his awareness four years ago. And Sasha's awareness certainly has further and deeper to go. Consciously creating calls us to move to an ever-deeper awareness, wherever we stand. At any moment, each of us is living for the most part from a particular level of awareness. Over our lifetime we move through and between levels. By "level" I simply mean a particular way of relating to and being in the world. We could call this a paradigm. As we evolve, our way of making sense of the world broadens and deepens, and a new level, or paradigm, opens to us.

I've noticed that whenever I reach a goal that I've been striving toward, it doesn't take long for me to think, *Now what?* I have accomplished what I wanted, whether that's a healthier diet or a deeper insight, and now I find myself at another new beginning. I am ready to expand my level of understanding beyond the one I previously held. Moving from one level of consciousness to the next is how we grow. We can talk about this growth in terms of any type of experience, whether that awareness be of sensation (physical), thought (intellect), feelings (emotion), or connection (spirit).

The Four Levels of Consciousness

I've described this movement or progression as a set of four levels of consciousness: Martyr Consciousness, Magical Thinking Consciousness, Metaphysical Consciousness, and Mystical Consciousness. The movement through these levels is not entirely linear, even though I speak of forward progression from level one to level four.² They simply provide a framework for something that in actuality is fluid and intricate. For example, even as we're starting to experience level four, we may sometimes still have things to work through in level three, and maybe even in levels one and two. At any time in our lives we might move in and out of the different levels, even though we tend to operate primarily from one level.

Level 1: Martyr Consciousness

Things happen to me.

In Martyr Consciousness, we are outer-focused and seek answers and solutions from others. Things seem to happen *to us*. We frequently feel powerless over our circumstances and at the mercy of other people's decisions and behavior. We believe we have no control over what happens in our lives. This level could also be described as "victim consciousness." The primary focus of this level is on the physical world and what we might perceive as reality through the five senses.

In the Martyr level of awareness, it seems as if there are powerful external forces that work against us and our will. We experience these external forces as circumstances—other people (especially authority figures), the government, God, or life in general. If we live in this paradigm, we believe others wield power over us and define what is right and wrong. Perceived failure generally means that we are not living up to someone else's expectations of us. If we experience seeming failure or unhappiness, we tend to think the world is out to get us or that we are doing something wrong.

Many relationships at this level are comparable to a child's dysfunctional relationship to an totalitarian parent. We imagine that in order to get approval, we need to do everything perfectly. If we make one wrong move, we will be punished. If we believe in a higher power, it generally takes the form of an external, authoritarian, judging, punishing (or rewarding) God. We do our best to obey God's will so that he (at this level, God is often perceived as a male figure) will save us. Many of the world's religions and governments operate at this level. They make clear-cut definitions of what is considered right or wrong and what is good or

² I'm using the word "level" in much the way I use "step" (see note 1). It's a description, not a definition.

bad. Indeed, the majority of humanity operates—to a greater or lesser degree—at the Martyr level. And for many, living at the Martyr level is tolerable, even desirable, so long as their rudimentary needs are being met.

But Martyr Consciousness is quite limited, and many people eventually come up against those restrictions. Something occurs that causes them to question the paradigm in which they live. It might be a major loss, an illness, or some other distressing event. It's often pain that wakes people up from this level of awareness. Pain or limitation causes us to inquire whether there might be another way of living. The frustration of unsuccessfully trying to manipulate the external world to our satisfaction can also drive us to seek answers on a deeper level. As Einstein is often quoted as saying, "Problems cannot be solved by the same level of thinking that created them."³

Level 2: Magical Thinking Consciousness

I make things happen.

People move out of the Martyr level of consciousness by implementing an outlook that is still primarily outer-focused but now acknowledges an inner reality. This level is more results-oriented and its primary focus is related to the intellect. It is usually a welcome relief to ascertain that by taking greater ownership of our thoughts and directing them in focused ways, we can positively affect events and outcomes in our lives. In this level of consciousness, which I call Magical Thinking, we realize that causative power is not only outside us but also within. We become aware that the thoughts we choose to entertain will grow. By changing our thinking we begin to govern our experiences and understand that we can effect change in areas of our lives where we formerly felt powerless. We become able to take responsibility for both our inner and outer lives. It feels like magic.

Many of us apply the Law of Attraction from the Magical Thinking level of consciousness. We use positive affirmations and thought awareness in order to manifest the lives we want to live. In order to increase our happiness, we ask ourselves, "What do I want, and how can I create it?"

Most obstacles we encounter at this level reside within. They come from our self-doubt or feeling like we don't deserve the things we desire. We address these inner issues by applying our new conscious awareness of our own power. For instance, if we're working on

³ It seems doubtful that Einstein actually said or wrote those exact words. See "Einstein Enigmatic Quote," *Icarus Falling* (blog), June 24, 2009, <http://icarus-falling.blogspot.com/2009/06/einstein-enigma.html>.

abundance issues from this level, we might use affirmations like “I love money and money loves me,” or “I’m a money magnet.” We learn techniques to influence the world to suit our desires. When it works, it’s great.

I know this from personal experience. When I moved from the Martyr level to the Magical Thinking level of awareness, I was able to use mind-awareness techniques and affirmations to successfully build what I thought was the life of my dreams. I acquired all that I wanted on a material level. But once I had achieved my outer goals, I discovered that I still had an inner yearning for something more. Another “Now what?” moment presented itself, which led me to the level of consciousness that I call Metaphysical.

Level 3: Metaphysical Consciousness

Things happen through me/I let things happen.

As we relinquish the sense of control that we developed in the Magical Thinking level of consciousness, our awareness becomes more inner-focused, and we become more able to allow life to happen *through* us. In this reality, we understand deeply that we are part of a larger, interconnected whole and that our individual purpose is tied up with the purpose of that whole. We are willing to trust a higher intelligence to guide and inform us about our place in the world in a way that serves the well-being of humanity. Even though we cannot personally see the bigger picture from our ego’s narrow perspective, we believe that our fulfillment is derived from our willingness to unite with a higher intelligence that comprehends the broader view. We trust in the guidance of the still, small voice within, more than the limited knowledge of the logical mind. The primary focus of this level is related to the emotional center, or “heart-based” reality.

This level, which I call Metaphysical Consciousness, is where much of the New Age exists. At this level, we choose to surrender to a higher power, but not in the subservient, codependent way that we did at the Martyr level. At the Metaphysical level, the metaphor is not that of a dependent child and a punishing father but one of a trusting, loving partnership between equals.

When we are living from this level, we believe in a loving source or spirit who lives *within* us. We might hear “God lives in my heart” at this level of awareness. We may also find external tools for accessing a divine plan, like astrology, crystals, and tarot cards, for example. We might use prayer and affirmations as a way to lift ourselves to a more loving existence. Because we trust that source wants the best for us and is nurturing our well-being and supporting our goals, we’re able to let go and relax, trusting that life will take care of us.

At the Metaphysical level we are no longer overly identified with our minds. We have learned to pay attention to the wisdom of our emotional inner landscape. We understand that our heart arises from a place of connectedness to the whole and is therefore the mouthpiece of higher intelligence. In this reality, we are aware of our personal desires, but we don't necessarily see them as personal any more. We realize that we are each a unique strand in the web of life, and that our desires are delivered to us from within. Life prompts us to serve its higher purpose. We have learned that it is therefore our responsibility to honor what is authentic for us. We don't deny our truth out of fear that it will not match somebody else's truth or their expectation of us. Living authentically, to the best of our ability, is how we serve life.

As we continue to develop our spiritual practices of meditation and sitting in the silence, we fully integrate our inner and outer lives, our sense of relative and ultimate reality. We reside more and more in the truth of who and what we are on an essential level. In some moments and in some aspects of our lives, we move into a deeper stillness, a more profound unity with source. This is what I call Mystical Consciousness.

Level 4: Mystical Consciousness

Things happen as me.

Beyond the Metaphysical level is Mystical Consciousness, an inner-focused consciousness where no outer answers are needed. At this level, we call off the search and rest in the truth that has always been. We recognize that we came into this world as whole and perfect spiritual beings and we have simply "forgotten" who and what we authentically are. From this level of consciousness, there is no longer any real distinction between ourselves and the world around us. Neither is there any separation between us and source. The primary focus of this level of awareness is spirit.

At this level, the "God idea" is simply everything. We are no longer separate in any way. Source as love is the only true reality. We surrender to an internal power, guided by inner knowing and meditation, which becomes the way to access this inner voice. As a matter of fact, at this level, we will most likely no longer use the word God but will shift to a broader, more expansive way of defining it. We might change our language and use terms such as source, love, light, eternal beingness, or ultimate intelligence to describe divinity. We also recognize we are each perfect expressions and emanations of the one power and one presence.

From this Mystical place we understand—both intellectually and experientially—that all is one. We therefore are not capable of doing anything separate from the energy that creates and moves everything in this world. This energy moves our bodies, speaks our words, and thinks our thoughts. In this reality, we are the eyes, ears, hands, and feet of divine love. We perceive that life is happening *as us*.

We understand that everything that occurs is a perfect expression of source energy. We know that whatever another says or does is a perfect expression of the divine. It is love in action. In this reality, there is no longer any distinction between right and wrong or good and bad. There is no such thing as an enemy. There is only the continuously unfolding, moment-to-moment expression of life, which arises from one source. There is just what is, and all of it is sacred.

When we find ourselves at this Mystical level, there is no longer seeking anything other than what we are presently experiencing. This moment is enough. We recognize that every moment is an extraordinary moment. We no longer seek peace, because we understand that we are peace. We no longer seek love, because we know ourselves to be love. We realize that we are what we've been seeking. There is an awareness of the unchanging, eternal presence that witnesses this moment. There is total acceptance of what is happening in this ever-changing moment. In this state, there is nothing to do. There is nothing to hold on to. There is nothing to acquire. No answers. We understand that the spiritual path isn't about finding answers—it's about opening to infinite possibilities. We don't become enlightened. Enlightenment is revealed.

For many of us, the Mystical level is something we might experience momentarily, in those mountaintop experiences where all is one, where nothing matters, yet everything matters. We have the authentic experience of one life and one love. After that peak moment, we might slip back to whatever level we were primarily living from, so it may then be difficult to imagine what it would be like to live more fully at the Mystical level. What I know to be true is that we can have a permanent shift in our consciousness and live primarily at this heightened level of awareness. This is not only possible, it is our birthright as spiritual beings.

There are people who are said to have lived continuously at this level, like Buddha, Lao Tzu, or Jesus, to name a few. But even there we have stories that show they slipped momentarily into another level, showing us that this is not about reaching some kind of finish line and never again experiencing the other levels. It is about having enough awareness to gently return to the ultimate truth of our existence and experiencing ourselves as a perfect expression of divinity.

Living in Conscious Awareness

For some of you, these ideas may sound pretty foreign. The descriptions of levels of conscious awareness can also sound judgmental—the very use of the word “levels” might be read as implying good and bad or at least less advanced and more advanced. That’s a fair point, so I want to be clear: I’m not using the word “level” to measure the depth of your worthiness. Instead, think of these four levels as a way to measure your growth in conscious awareness.

This Ram Dass quote illustrates this perfectly: “When you look at the world you will see there are many different levels of spiritual evolution. They are merely stages of development. Be careful not to impose values of ‘better’ or ‘worse.’ It is no better to be an adolescent than to be a child. It is not better to be an old person than middle aged. These are just different stages of development.”

Your responses to things in life—whether that be an everyday challenge like getting stuck in traffic or a seemingly major crisis like death or divorce—can be viewed in terms of these four different levels of experience, and knowing where your challenges lie along the spectrum can help you stay centered and focused. Life’s perceived challenges then become an invitation to your greatest awakening. Any of us can, at one moment, be feeling perfectly surrendered, trusting that all is exactly as it is intended to be, and the next, we want to scream at the universe because someone has said or done something that has touched an unhealed wound. That’s all it takes sometimes—a place deep within us is activated, and suddenly we are in a mindset in which we feel powerless over our circumstances.

Conscious awareness is about making moment-to-moment decisions about where we place our focus. Do we want to focus on the part of ourselves that experiences the pain of that wound? Or do we want to focus on the part that is love and light and one with source? As we grow into deeper consciousness, we are able to recognize this choice. We are able to see what’s happening as we respond to events that appear to be happening to us. The better we are at understanding which responses will not serve us in a given moment, the better we are able to choose a different response. As we grow into deeper consciousness we can return to a more loving, heart-centered perspective more quickly and more fully. You will see many examples of this in the pages that follow.

Beyond the Law of Attraction

Working with the Law of Attraction, you may have made progress in changing your thoughts and manifesting something new. You may have tried affirmations such as “I am love” or “I am open” to manifest a change you desire, whether that’s a healthier relationship or more

fulfilling work. Maybe you've manifested the very things you've visualized. But our use of the Law of Attraction can end up being like Magical Thinking: "I'm going to have this thought and get this shiny new toy." That's where Conscious Creation deepens things, moving into the Metaphysical and the Mystical. Pure awareness is beyond any construct the mind can create. Using the five steps, we move from "What do I want?" to "Is this bringing me happiness?" to "Is this the thing I was born to do?" to "Is this my deepest, most essential purpose?"

When we live beyond our stories and make peace with the past, we start to shift from a focus on "me" to a focus on "we" in a profound way. When we catch a deep vision, when we clearly set an intention, then we become that which we are meant to be, quite literally. We feel deeply that this is who and what we are. This is being and living on a quantum level in the truth that all are one and one with source. It's shifting from the apparent reality to what is authentically real, from limitation to limitlessness. That's pretty much the ultimate awesome.

From Manifestation to Magnification

The Law of Attraction focuses on manifestation. That is, it focuses on creating an outer experience, making things happen. "I am going to manifest x." In Conscious Creation, we are clearing our core false beliefs and going beyond manifestation. Our spiritual self, what we can also refer to as our "core self" or our "original face" then becomes magnified. We are living as expressions of source. We no longer have to manifest anything; it's no longer about attracting things by changing our thoughts, like a magnet. It's about opening up to the infinite possibilities all around us.

Here is a perfect example of this concept. Let's say that for many years you've gone to the same café every morning to get a small coffee and a bagel. The café owner, Phil, knows you by name, and he knows your order. You happen to be studying the Law of Attraction, so you decide to practice it on your breakfast options: "I'm going to manifest a croissant instead of a bagel." Every day you visualize croissants, you affirm your openness to croissants, you use "I deserve croissants" as your mantra. Finally, weeks later, you're ready. You wake up and head to the café, psyching yourself up all the way there: "I will attract a croissant."

Finally, it's time. You order your small coffee and, yes, a croissant. Suddenly, you receive the croissant, and you declare: "Look what I manifested!" You're so excited that you say to Phil, "Look how powerful I am. I manifested this croissant." But Phil looks at you quizzically. "You know we've always had croissants, right? They've been right there, on the shelf under the bagels." You didn't make the croissant appear. It was there all along.

Here is another example. Have you ever been shopping for a new car, and you become aware of a brand you didn't notice before? Once you became conscious of it, didn't you find yourself seeing that brand of car everywhere? We can easily assume that they were there along, but our change of awareness seemed to bring them into focus, or into manifestation.

We can't really see it until we see it. And we can't see it until the internal conditions are cultivated, until our consciousness is there, ready to be open to it. Ultimately, as we develop spiritually and practice elevating our level of conscious awareness, we come to discover a profound transformation. We begin to shift from the Law of Attraction to the Law of Radiance. We tap into the deeper awareness that love, light, and divinity have always been the truth of who and what we are. We then recognize our true purpose: to radiate this love and light into the world. We no longer need to attract anything because we already are everything. We are the ones we've been waiting for. And when we truly understand this, everything changes.

This Rumi quote illustrates this beautifully: "You are not a drop in the ocean. You are the entire ocean in a drop."