

The Inner Space Traveler

*Seven Principles for Healing Trauma
and Transforming Consciousness*

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INTRODUCTION

The Journey Within

You are about to embark on a journey unlike any other. Not a journey to some distant destination, but a journey inward—into the immense space within yourself that few venture into or even acknowledge.

This is not a book about finding yourself. You are not lost. You have simply been looking in the wrong direction—outward instead of inward, at thoughts instead of awareness, at solutions instead of what creates the need for solutions.

Most self-help approaches focus on changing who you are—fixing your flaws, overcoming your limitations, becoming better, stronger, more successful. This book takes a radically different approach. It suggests that trying to change is the very thing keeping you stuck. That effort reinforces what you're trying to change. That the answer lies not in doing more but in doing less.

The Counterintuitive Path

The path presented here is counterintuitive. It asks you to:

- Embrace feelings you've spent a lifetime avoiding
- Allow pain instead of escaping from it
- Observe reactions without trying to change them
- Admit you don't know rather than pretending you do
- Become relative to your identity rather than defending it

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This goes against every instinct, every cultural message, every self-help methodology you've encountered. Yet it is precisely this reversal—this movement from doing to being, from controlling to allowing, from knowing to not-knowing—that creates space for genuine transformation.

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES

This book is organized around seven guiding principles of personal transformation:

I. Nothing is personal

II. Consciousness creates your experience; awareness changes consciousness

III. Whatever you do to change reinforces the belief causing distress

IV. Truth is the foundation of being

V. Meaning arises from the relationship between form and emptiness

VI. Change is organic, unconscious, and mechanical

VII. You must become the impartial observer of yourself

These principles are not rules to follow but descriptions of how transformation actually works. They point toward a fundamental shift in how you relate to yourself and your experience.

How To Use This Book

This book is divided into four parts:

Part I: Foundations (Chapters 1-2)— Understanding inherited trauma and why conventional approaches fall short.

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Part II: The Inner Journey (Chapters 3-9)—The core philosophical and practical framework for transformation.

Part III: Living the Practice (Chapters 10-20) — Working with specific aspects of experience—feelings, grief, shame, depression, and consciousness itself.

Part IV: Integration (Chapters 21-27) — exploring practical applications including the three-legged stool method for dissolving beliefs, the role of maturity, and why ultimately you are the book you must read.

You can read this book linearly, from beginning to end. Or you can open it to whatever chapter calls to you. Each chapter is designed to stand alone while contributing to the larger whole.

But reading alone will not transform you. Only the practice—the actual observation of yourself without reaction—creates change. This book is a guide, not a solution. The work is yours to do.

A Word About Language

Throughout this book, I use several terms that may be unfamiliar:

Consciousness: The organizing intelligence that evolved life from elements and continues to orient all living things. Not your thoughts or awareness, but the deeper intelligence that creates thought and awareness.

Awareness: Your capacity to notice what's happening—thoughts, feelings, sensations, patterns. The light you shine on experience.

Impartial observation: Witnessing without judgment, resistance, or the agenda to change what you're observing. Not passive resignation, but active, curious presence.

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Feeling complex: Your unique combination of sensations, emotions, and somatic experiences associated with any belief or identity. Not just one feeling, but an intricate constellation of embodied experience.

Pain/body: The intersection where emotional pain manifests as physical sensation. Where feeling becomes sensation becomes suffering.

Reaction: A behavior, thought, perception, or belief that shields a feeling.

Relativity: Seeing how your feelings and way of being are dependent upon your conditioning, beliefs, and dynamic for their existence.

Note: Quotations at the beginning of each chapter are excerpts from the chapter itself.

Who This Book Is For

You may benefit from this work if you:

- Have tried conventional self-help and found it lacking
- Feel stuck despite years of therapy or personal development work
- Experience anxiety, depression, or low self-esteem that seems disconnected from your actual life circumstances
- Carry a sense that something is fundamentally wrong with you
- Notice patterns repeating despite your best efforts to change them
- Feel exhausted from trying to be a “better person”
- Sense that your struggle itself is part of the problem
- Are curious about a radically different approach to transformation

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This work complements therapy, meditation practice, and other healing modalities. It's not better than or opposed to conventional approaches—it offers a different angle on the same territory.

A WARNING

This book asks nothing of you except honest attention. You don't need to believe these principles—only to notice whether they reflect your actual experience.

You don't need to practice anything, achieve anything, or become anything. You only need to be present to what is.

This path is not easy. It requires facing what you've spent a lifetime avoiding, staying with discomfort when every fiber of your being wants to escape. It supports the courage to see yourself with increasing clarity, without excuse or justification.

There will be moments when you want to quit, when the old ways seem easier, when the pain feels unbearable. This is normal. It's part of the process. Take a break and come back to it.

What awaits on the other side is freedom—not from life's challenges, but from the inherited patterns and false identities that have been running your life. Freedom to be yourself, by yourself. Freedom to meet life as it is, not as you wish it to be.

The Journey Begins

You travel inner space alone. No teacher, no book, no practice can do this work for you. But you are not without guidance. The principles in this book point the way. Your own awareness lights the path. And consciousness itself—the organizing intelligence that created you—knows exactly how to orient you.

The journey begins with a single question: Are you willing to observe yourself—truly observe, without judgment, without trying to change, without taking anything personally?

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If the answer is yes, turn the page.

The adventure awaits.

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Chapter 2

INHERITED TRAUMA

*When you honestly look, you must accept the possibility
that what you have been conditioned to believe
about yourself is true.*

TRANSITION FROM CHAPTER 1:

In the previous chapter, we explored how humanity's unprocessed trauma has been passed down through generations. Now we need to understand this inheritance more intimately—how it lives in your body, shapes your identity, and perpetuates itself through your reactions.

This chapter will be uncomfortable. It contains graphic historical examples that may disturb you. That discomfort is important—it's a window into the terror your ancestors lived with daily. Stay present to your reactions as you read. They're information.

Chris's Story: A Modern Inheritance

Chris identified with "I'll never be good enough."

Where did this belief come from? Not from his actual life circumstances.

Chris had supportive parents, did well in school, and had friends. By any objective measure, he was “good enough.” Yet the feeling persisted—a deep, unshakeable sense of inadequacy.

The belief was inherited.

“Not good enough” was imprinted into Chris from conception. It’s what one or both of his parents felt, what his grandparents felt. He absorbed this feeling while in his mother’s womb through chemical reactions to her stresses and joys, through the sounds of her world, through the quality of his parents’ relationship.¹

But it goes deeper than learned behavior. The inheritance may be epigenetic—passed through sperm and egg at the moment of conception:

*Our experiences, and those of our forebears, are never gone, even if they have been forgotten. They become a part of us, a molecular residue holding fast to our genetic scaffolding. The DNA remains the same, but psychological and behavioral tendencies are inherited. You might have inherited not just your grandmother’s knobby knees, but also her predisposition toward depression caused by the neglect she suffered as a newborn.*²

After his birth, “not good enough” continued through his parents’ attitude toward him—not because they were bad parents, but because this was their attitude toward themselves. They couldn’t give him what they didn’t have.

The Ancestral Question

But why was “not good enough” part of Chris’s parents’ and grandparents’ identity?

Were they really an inferior breed? Of course not.

A brief review of social history answers the question clearly: **When you are oppressed and traumatized, every part of you shuts down—genes are literally silenced.**

How Trauma Changes Your Biology

Your feelings affect every cell of your body.

Under stress, methyl groups (modifiers of gene expression) can attach to cytosine, a chemical base of DNA, creating “epigenetic” changes. These methyl attachments are typically associated with gene silencing—making it harder for a gene to transcribe its protein.

When certain genes are silenced, you become less expressive socially and interpersonally. ³ You shut down. You hide. You become smaller.

The good news: Nurturing reverses these effects. ^{4, 5} Nurturing—which includes food, shelter, grooming, and above all, understanding—can turn silenced genes back on. You can become expressive again.

But here’s the problem: If your parents received inadequate nurturing, they couldn’t provide the understanding you needed. They passed down the silencing. Generation after generation.

The Long Shadow of History

Let’s trace Chris’s conditioning back through his ancestors.

We all came from humble and traumatic beginnings. Until two hundred years ago, most people lived within rigid class systems. Only wealthy males enjoyed any semblance of autonomy. Everyone else was dominated or—like serfs—outright owned.

Imagine: An illiterate peasant being subjugated by a feudal lord didn’t look him in the eye. To do so would be an act of defiance, inviting further punishment.

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Part of Chris's ancestor's conditioning was accepting subjugation. Another part was accepting humiliation. Not as a conscious choice, but as survival strategy transmitted through generations.

Fast forward two hundred years. No one in Chris's family remembers the feudal lord. But nobody wants to look too closely either.

Why? Because looking creates consternation. It triggers phantom fears of punishment—fears that are part of Chris's inherited conditioning.

To look, Chris must not only face his ancestors' fears but also question the identity they were forced to accept—an identity they unintentionally affirmed through generations of acquiescence.

It's one thing to counteract your fear with "I am too good enough"—that's what Chris's ancestors did, what his parents did, what Chris himself has been doing. It's another thing entirely to face your fear.

When you honestly look, you must accept the possibility that what you have been conditioned to believe about yourself is true.

Conditioning creates its own reality—identities appear to be true.

To get relative to "Not good enough" you have to fully experience the feeling without *reacting* to it:

- *Impartially* experience the feeling: "I MAY NOT be good enough."
- The feeling uniquely identifies your conditioning to consciousness.
- Not *reacting* allows your conditioning—to dissolve.
- If "Not good enough" is self-imposed, it begins triggering you less and less—then, not at all.
- You learn experientially that what you were taught to believe about yourself was false.

The Nebulous Enemy

The problem has become even more convoluted than it was for Chris's ancestors.

His ancestor had a clear enemy: the lord of the realm, the inquisitor, the slave master. A concrete bully to relate to, however terrifying.

What Chris has is far more nebulous.

His inheritance includes conditioning communicated through the insensitivities of abused parents—insensitivities that include irrelevant fears, outdated beliefs, and maladaptive coping strategies that evolved to avoid humiliation.

These are essentially prescriptions for getting through life without looking. They've been unwittingly passed from parent to child for thousands of years—unconsciously reacted against and thereby reinforced in the collective unconscious.

The “doing” trap: Chris wouldn't be trying to prove he was “good enough” if he didn't already believe he was “not good enough.” Everything he did to show he was good only reinforced his belief that he was bad.

By the time Chris became self-aware, he was already in conflict with an identity he inadvertently affirmed through his own efforts to change.

A Personal Journey Into Historical Trauma

Let me share my own exploration of inherited trauma.

As an adolescent, I experienced a particular fear—one that seemed out of proportion to my actual circumstances. It had a specific quality, a particular “edge and shape” that didn't match anything in my personal history.

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I began researching historical trauma, looking for something that matched this feeling.

I explored the Middle Ages. I studied the hundreds of years of the Catholic Inquisition. And there I found it—a match to the edge and shape of my fear.

Flimsy accusations. Coerced confessions. Horrific punishments.

What follows is a graphic historical account. I include it not for shock value, but because understanding the actual conditions our ancestors endured is essential to understanding the terror we've inherited.

Content Warning: The next section contains detailed descriptions of torture and execution that some readers may find disturbing. If you need to skip it, the summary is: Our ancestors lived under systematic terror that fundamentally altered their biology, psychology, and capacity for self-expression.

The Execution of Bishop Hooper (1555)

The following account by Henry Moore describes the execution of Lord Bishop Hooper, a Protestant condemned by Queen Mary of England to burn at the stake:

The portly bishop, who was in his fifties, stripped to the waist and was affixed to the stake by a single iron band, refusing the two others. The hoop was too short and he had to draw in his stomach to allow the band to be fixed. His paunch hung over the top of it. He had a pound of gunpowder in a bladder in his groin and a pound similarly also under each arm.

The man laying the reeds for the pyre asked forgiveness and the bishop told him there was no need. It was his duty and God forgave him. The man then continued to throw up the reeds in a pile about the Lord Bishop. Hooper caught bundles of the reeds and put them too under each arm.

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The command to light the pyre came but it burned poorly, many of the reeds being green. The day was also cold (it was February) and a brisk wind was blowing the flames flat rather than allowing them to rise. Drier tinder was brought and a fiercer fire built causing the gunpowder to flash. Hooper remained alive.

In pain, he now prayed in a loud voice: "Lord Jesus, have mercy on me. Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." He continued to repeat these words, the last he ever spoke. Even when his face had completely blackened, and his tongue had swollen so that he could no longer be heard, his lips could be seen moving until they were shrunk to the gums.

He began to knock his breast with his hands, but one of his forearms soon fell off, leaving him pummeling his chest with the other. Fat, water and blood oozed from his finger ends and splashed about with his movements.

More tinder had to be brought as the fire died down. Hooper was losing his strength and he thrust his hand into the iron hoop around his waist. Now the whole of the lower part of his body was burnt away, and then his guts burst out of his paunch, falling over the hoop, and shortly after he keeled over the hoop and fell into the embers, raising a horrified yell from the crowd of 7,000 onlookers.

It took almost an hour for the bishop to die on the pyre.⁶

Seven thousand people were forced to watch. Imagine being in that crowd. Imagine being a parent holding your child's hand as this horror unfolds.

Now imagine this happening not once, but regularly.

Approximately once every two days during the 200 years of just the Spanish Inquisition alone.⁷

The Scale of Terror

Juan Antonio Llorente (1756-1823), former secretary to the Inquisition, estimates that 32,000 “heretics” were burned at the stake during the Spanish Inquisition. ⁸

But that’s just formal executions in one country:

If the historian includes forms of torture and killing that did not involve a formal trial, along with religious wars and other forms of Catholic violence enacted against Protestants and other non-Catholics (in areas outside of Spain and Portugal), then one can easily speak in terms of millions of people who were killed. ⁹

Millions. Of. People.

These weren’t abstract statistics. They were your ancestors. My ancestors. People who carried our genetic code watched others burn, knowing they could be next.

Finding My Fear’s Origin

I cannot be certain that my adolescent fear came from cultural trauma created by events like the Inquisition.

But finding a historical scenario that so closely matched the edge and shape of my feeling provided the relativity I needed to stop reacting. As I stopped reacting, I noticed my fear began to fade. I could see the fear as inherited rather than personally valid.

Within weeks, it was gone.

Not because I analyzed it away. Not because I convinced myself it was irrational. But because I stopped reinforcing it through resistance —and allowed the information of feelings to interpret its origin.

Life Under Systematic Terror

Imagine living as a peasant during the Inquisition.

You're illiterate, impoverished, vulnerable. You and your family are property of the great lord whose land you work—to do with as he wishes. Your knowledge of the world is filled with superstitions and fears.

In the face of the inquisitor, you become very orthodox and faithful. You become subjective and self-effacing. You teach your children not to think, not to question authority.

Over time—some 500 years of the European Inquisition—this response becomes conditioned. The conflict and devotion imbued by such historical trauma (good/bad, right/wrong, shame/guilt) can now be evoked by just a word or a symbol.

This matters because: For most of us, our self-image and social orientation evolved from illiterate peasant ancestors. Their perception, the product of horrific abuse, created their reality. And their reality reinforced their beliefs down through the ages—right into Chris's body, into your body, into the bodies of everyone reading this.

The Machinery of Thought Control

The crime of heresy wasn't something you did. It was something you thought.

Let that sink in. Your thoughts themselves were criminal.

Proving heresy required a confession. Confessions generally required coercion. The inquisitors always showed the accused the instruments of torture first: ¹⁰

- A scourge for flogging
- A rack for pulling the limbs until joints cracked

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- A strappado (suspension by wrists tied behind the back, then jerking downward)
- A brazier of burning coals to be applied to bare feet

Any form of evidence could be used against you:

- Trickery
- False witness by enemies
- Testimony by children as young as seven
- Rumors
- Anything you or any witness confessed under torture

The accused were placed in solitary dungeons for ten or more years to extract confessions.

Roman Law, which had governed courts prior to the Inquisition, was set aside:

- You weren't allowed to know your accusers or the charges
- You weren't allowed to present evidence
- Lawyers who defended you risked being tried themselves
- The inquisitor was both prosecution and judge
- You were presumed guilty until proven innocent

Evidence retracted that favored the prosecution was considered true. Evidence retracted that favored the defense was considered perjury and subject to punishment.

Numerous spies and investigators with authority to carry arms and enter homes provided evidence. The Church, secular governments, and entire coerced populations became informants.

Interrogations were held in secret. But the populations of whole towns were compelled to hear the charges and witness executions.

The Outcomes

- Heretics who confessed had their possessions confiscated.
- Those who repented were imprisoned for life.

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- Those who merely confessed were burned at the stake.
- People dead for thirty years were convicted posthumously, their bones exhumed and burned, their families disinherited. ¹¹

The Legacy In Modern Law

We like to think we've moved beyond such barbarism. But consider this observation from legal scholarship:

We find in the civil law of today many evidences of inquisitorial origin. ¹²

The structures designed to control thought and crush dissent didn't disappear. They evolved. They became subtler, more sophisticated—but the basic mechanisms persist.

Under such systematic abuse across generations, parts of you shut down. You discount inherent wisdom. You acquiesce to the political narrative, whatever it may be.

Fear, self-doubt, and insensitivity become your way of life—and your children's way of life, and their children's way of life.

The Mechanism of Perpetuation

Here's how inherited trauma perpetuates itself:

1. **Historical trauma occurs** (oppression, violence, systematic terror, natural catastrophes)
2. **Biological adaptation** (genes silence, stress responses become hair-trigger)
3. **Psychological conditioning** (don't speak up, don't trust yourself, don't question authority)
4. **Transmission to offspring** (through epigenetics, modeling, emotional climate)**Reinforcement through reaction** (the child tries to prove they're "good enough," thereby reinforcing the belief they're not)

5. **Repetition across generations** (each generation passes it down, often intensified)

The conditioning trauma your ancestors experienced doesn't need to happen again. It's already happening—through your reactions to the conditioning you inherited.

Every time Chris tries to prove he's good enough, he reinforces the belief that he's not. Every time you react against your inadequacy, you validate its existence. Every time you fight your inherited conditioning, you strengthen it.

Breaking The Cycle

So, while it's important to understand the injustice and heroism of your ancestors, it's vital that you remain sensitive to the information contained in your unique feelings.

Why? Because unacknowledged trauma creates conflicts that you unconsciously react against. And these reactions have a way of recreating the original injury in yourself and your descendants.

The solution isn't to analyze your ancestry. Most of us can't trace our trauma to specific historical events as I happened to do with the Inquisition.

The solution is to become the *impartial* observer of yourself (Chapter 9). To allow your feelings—including the fear, the inadequacy, the shame—to exist without reacting against them.

When you stop reacting, you stop reinforcing. When you stop reinforcing, the conditioning (known or not) begins to fade. Not because you made it fade, but because you stopped feeding it.

What Inherited Trauma Looks Like Today

You may be carrying inherited trauma if you experience:

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Disproportionate reactions:

- Fear of authority that doesn't match your actual conditions
- Shame about minor mistakes
- Terror of visibility or being "found out"
- Panic when questioned or challenged

Inexplicable beliefs:

- "I'm fundamentally defective" despite evidence to the contrary
- "The world is dangerous" despite living in relative safety
- "I must hide my true self" even with trustworthy people
- "Speaking up will result in punishment" even when it won't

Physical manifestations:

- Chronic tension that won't release
- Autoimmune conditions (body attacking itself)
- Digestive issues (gut unable to relax)
- Difficulty regulating emotions (nervous system stuck in threat response)

Relationship patterns:

- Difficulty with authority figures
- Compulsive people-pleasing
- Sabotaging success when it comes
- Choosing partners who recreate family dynamics

None of these definitively prove inherited trauma. But if you recognize several, it's worth considering: This might not be about you. This might be about what was done to your ancestors—and what you're unconsciously perpetuating through your reactions.

The Difference Between Personal and Inherited Trauma

Personal trauma is what happened to you directly:

- Abuse you experienced
- Losses you suffered
- Violations you endured
- Betrayals you faced

Inherited trauma is what happened to your ancestors:

- The oppression they lived under
- The violence they witnessed
- The terror they absorbed
- The adaptations they made to survive

Both are real. Both affect you. But they require different approaches.

Personal trauma often benefits from direct therapeutic work, processing, and integration.

Inherited trauma dissolves through recognition that self-defeating behaviors and beliefs are not personally yours—and through impartial observation of how you’ve been unconsciously perpetuating them.

When Chris realized his “not good enough” belief didn’t originate with him—that it was his ancestors’ survival adaptation—something shifted. The belief was still there, but he stopped identifying with it as his essential truth.

That space between the belief and his identity was the beginning of freedom.

Why This Matters For Transformation

You cannot heal what you cannot see. You cannot stop perpetuating what you don't recognize.

Understanding inherited trauma is essential because:

1. **It removes personal blame** — You're not defective; you're carrying ancestral adaptations that no longer serve
2. **It provides context** — Your reactions make sense when you understand the terror your ancestors faced
3. **It reveals the mechanism** — You can see how reactions reinforce conditioning across generations
4. **It shows the way out** — Stop reacting, stop reinforcing, allow the conditioning to dissolve
5. **It connects you to lineage** — You're not alone; you're part of a line of survivors who did their best under impossible conditions
6. **It offers hope for descendants** — What you resolve doesn't get passed to your children

A Practice: Meeting Your Ancestors

When you notice feelings of inadequacy, shame, or fear that seem disproportionate to your circumstances, try this:

Don't try to fix the feeling. Instead, ask:

- Who in my family line might have felt this?
- What historical conditions might have created this feeling?
- What was this feeling protecting them from?

You don't need accurate historical knowledge. Just the willingness to recognize: This might not be mine. This might be theirs—and I've been perpetuating it. ¹³

Then: Feel the feeling without judging it or trying to change it.

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Feel it as if you're feeling it on behalf of your ancestors—holding it with compassion rather than fighting it with resistance.

Notice what happens. Often, just this shift in perspective creates space. The feeling is still there, but you're no longer identified as the feeling. You're the one witnessing it.

That witnessing—that *impartial* observation—begins to dissolve what effort could never touch.

SUMMARY: KEY POINTS ABOUT INHERITED TRAUMA

What it is:

- Trauma passed down through generations via epigenetics, modeling, and family systems
- Biological adaptations inadvertently incurred by ancestors that do not serve you
- Conditioning absorbed before you could question it

How it works:

- Stress silences genes, reducing expressiveness and vitality
- Fear and shame get encoded in your nervous system
- Children absorb parents' attitudes, especially what parents feel about themselves
- Reactions against the conditioning reinforce it across generations

Why it persists:

- No one wants to look (looking feels dangerous)
- We react against feelings rather than experiencing them
- Trying to prove we're "good enough" confirms we believe we're not
- The original threat is gone but the adaptation remains

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How it resolves:

- Recognize it's not personally yours
- Stop reacting against it
- Allow impartial observation
- Feel it without feeding it
- Let consciousness reorganize based on accurate information
- Conditioning dissolves

THE PROMISE:

- What you resolve doesn't pass to your children
- Historical trauma can finally be processed
- You can become the generation that breaks the cycle

LOOKING AHEAD: Now that we understand how deeply conditioning runs—how it's woven into your biology, psychology, and very sense of self—we can begin exploring the Seven Principles that allow this conditioning to dissolve.

The first principle may sound shocking: **Nothing is personal.**

Not even this inherited trauma you've been carrying.

Let's find out why.