Opening on curiosity and mystery

And we always ask people this, what are you curious about? What am I curious about? I'm getting, well, enfoldment. So there's this word called enfoldment, which I learned, which is I'm curious about the next moment.

I used to have an addiction to trying to predict the future and I let it go. And sometimes I saw the future before it happened, but sometimes they're like, yeah, but it's more fun when you don't need to.

Like, what if you could have a relationship with mystery? Unlike you've ever ever. Whoa, that was an interesting. That's animism, by the way. Sound bad equipment.

Yeah. Well, something that anim, I don't know, animism is where the universe just drops in or something weird. So maybe that was like, like I, we didn't plan that.

That's a God wink right there. So maybe I'm supposed to end with that. What if everyone could have a safe but curious relationship with mystery? Welcome to the To Curious MD podcast.

I'm Dr. Ali Ahmed. And I'm Dr. Surya Rapan. With the wisdom from holistic, alternative, and these conventional medicines, we are here to challenge the status quo.

We're curious about the connectivity and complexity between diverse fields of knowledge as it relates to consciousness, chronic illness, mental health, resilience, and beyond.

learning more about the art and science of healing, or listening to stories of extraordinary healing. You're in the right place. Let's dive in. That's exactly what, you know, authors and psychologists like Ian McGilchrist are talking about when they're talking about the master and the emissary, you know, the intuition and the rational mind.

Master and emissary: intuition and rational mind

I love how this concept gets reiterated and kind of reified each time because there is a construct for this and you said it so beautifully, the Vajrayana Buddhists studied their own mind and they discovered something about it that then got codified and held in practices of discovery that if anybody were to engage in, they would find was true for themselves.

So we're talking about that level of truth that we can all reach. And what Ian McGilgrise kind of talks about is that we have this in our brain, this is actually kind of a, he maps it from the anatomy, the neuroanatomy of how our mind works.

and how our brain is kind of organized left side, right side, you know, kind of just like how we make language and how we make meaning and where memories are stored and where is that sense of self and really understanding it as the connection between the left and right brain.

You know, the corpus callosum, the thickness of it actually indicates good health or not. that's one of the kind of one of the connectivities between the left and right and so language and meaning and that flexibility of language and meaning and sometimes when we can kind of get stuck in one kind of meaning and never kind of connect to that larger sense that you're talking about because in that a priori place is where all exists so you can think from that and everything is available, but if you've never been there and then you don't even know how to access it or invite it to exist, so that corpus colossal connection he talks about is that, and I love how he talks about the master and the emissary because it talks about the power differential.

So the master is that other space, which is that intuition or that larger sense of that place. And then the rational

mind, the material, the one that goes out every day into the world, learns things and programs and does everything.

has a model of the world that needs to come back and actually connect with that larger kind of universe of information and also hear what fits, what doesn't, what feels true, what is true, like you just mentioned.

There's some things you're just like, oh yeah, this is track. You've got to have that discrimination, but then there's those gems that you pick out. And I love how you mentioned that there were a few gems that rose for you to the surface.

Can you describe what those may be or what are for you or may have evolved over time? Okay. Yes. When, which dimension did you want me to cover that into?

The dimension of? I mean, I could give you some categories. I mean, do you want me to talk about shadow? Star Wars, like shadow, individual shadow collective are just, or even human flourishing tools for us to move forward.

I mean, I could take it in a lot of different directions. this is what I love about these conversations is, you know, and you had mentioned a road through that was really important, which I think, because we're talking about discrimination and we're talking about the master and emissary and the mystical versus the material, I think that also maps into this, you know?

And you had talked about how it helped you just deconstruct the material and the mystical and why that's important for the work you're doing now. but also to the greater collective.

How does that sound for landing it in? My intuition has got three things that has not told me that I'm just going to go through. The first one is about our relationship to the word magic.

First off, I'm going to bring three subtle distinctions to magic. First off, nobody knows how anything exists. Okay. There's only theories. Nobody knows how to get out of the chicken and the egg problem.

I don't, I don't think you can solve it. So there's like whatever version of existence we have, it's default. I describe it as magic because I can't come up with a better way.

So that's magic. Number one is magic is the only thing that's real from my opinion. Now, in a grounded sense, I have discovered cause and effect is also real.

And it turns out, magic for me is just also was like things that are like, I don't know how that happened.

Magic, metaphysics, and human flourishing

It's my language, but how that happened yet. But I discovered I'm interested in my mind. Like, I wonder if what's something else is going on. So when I started looking in opening up to my mind into different ideas like a deeper metaphysics something opened up for me that like a lot of the things that the mystics were doing and as I understood psychology deep psychology deep energy and deep esoteric wisdom I started to say like, oh, I think I could see how these things come together and I could actually describe it.

So practical magic. To me, I actually have to go back two things. What I want to talk about, I have some pretty, I feel very confident about my formula for human flourishing.

that I think just hangs by itself. And I have some stories about what I think happened in metaphysics, like how life actually unfolded that support my theory of human flourishing that in itself are a little bit harder to prove, but I think it makes sense.

So let me just tell that story really quickly, because I think that somehow the universe wants to know what existence is. It's the only thing that makes any sense to me.

So after I gave up on like, how can they exist? Some part of me is like, well, now that you've got some closure on that, it's magic. Well, does there a question being asked?

I'm like, I don't know. The first question is going to be like, what is existence? Because I don't know how you ask another question. Do you taste it?

So it's got to taste it. So then I'm like, I don't know, I'll go to the Bible, maybe they got the first step right, let there be light. So turns out I can make that work in the Buddhist view and in the Christian view at the same time, or the Western, let there be like, the Buddhist, I think the final Let's say everything's like a mirror, mirror-like awareness.

So God's looking in a mirror and he sees his light. And then here's the thing is he's a consciousness. So he sees the light and he's already having reactions to it.

It's telling you that in the beginning, there was just a mirror that had perspectives. And then as soon as it has one perspective, that has another perspective.

That's all you need to create all of existence. Once you have that, that mind can then make choices. You know, doesn't it say in the Bible like I made you in like the same way I made me in my image?

Well, what is that image? It's consciousness. The same global metacognition is the same consciousness that we are, you know, might have. different roles like metacognition might be have to upload and download from the souls and like a giant AI and figure out, well, she's a lot of luck going on to figure out.

So he's, you know, that's why that intelligence wants to get this the bigger wisdom out to as many nodes as possible. Because, you know, that's how I think it's about education.

I jump in. Am I being coherent here? You are. And when you said education, you and I are tracking because there's a moment in every human's life when that happens and it happens at a certain age where that consciousness reflecting back to itself occurs.

And you may remember that moment. You know, when does a baby actually become aware that it is aware? you know, is an actual step in human development of, you know, like, oh, all of this is making sense because when you're a baby, it's just disjointed lights and sounds and sensations and you have, you know, your processing of what all that means is coarser.

and you don't really have the language to explain it to yourself, which is why everything is very embodied and needs to be very somatic and driven by voice and good environment versus, okay, now you're differentiating a little bit more.

You actually have words to describe your experience. And I remember this. I remember because I had to figure out a lot of things on my own growing up.

And I remember feeling things dropping in as I poked at reality. You know, like reading a word and being like, breaking it down into syllables and going, I don't understand what this word is, but I see it every day.

And I feel like there's a way to say it that is not how, cause it was the word natural. But when you break it down, I was like, it's not your role. What is not your role?

I've never heard that word. And I remember the moment of click that happened when my auditory and my visual kind of went, this is the same thing. And I remember that age.

I remember that the bottle I was looking at, you know, there was like a moment of crystalline. Wow. You know, and that happens, you know, that's how we learn things if we pay attention to what's happening, right?

That metacognition that you talked about. Yeah, metacognition. A lot of people say that's the most kind of

intelligence is metacognition. Yeah, I remember my son at the time was I think two and a half or three.

And he said something what made me kind of shake my head and go, oh, you finally figured out that you're conscious. Like there was like this moment where language he was like, what is this we're in or something very innocently said.

And he's been very aligned in that way ever since, like very able to kind of be like, yeah, and start from that place.

Metacognition, ego, and childhood awareness

Like I love when young in young kids and, you know, I, so I think what I'm, I'm making the case for is that in childhood, we are always in that a priori space.

We're more in touch with that a priori space. And we start to lose it as identity builds and we, you know, kind of step out of it more and maybe lose creativity or, you know, stop playing maybe and creating and imagining, right?

I think artists hold onto that space and have a lot of good relationship with that space. Yeah, I agree with that. I just want to re-contextualize that.

What happens is, let's talk about the word ego. A lot of people make ego, it just means sense of self. That's literally what it means. It turns out, I think the healthiest view of ego is to understand there's any description between your observer and what you're describing that you're making a sound.

So like even saying, Like black is black. It looks like a certain color. That's a sense of self. That's ego. Like that's not how most people think about it.

But literally, why do I want I think it's actually really important because people think it's one thing and it's a bad guy. It's like, whoa, he's way off.

It's not really that. And so many people get lost in that. And it obfuscates their ability to see what's really going on. You really have to make big change.

And this is about really supporting. I really want to support. the field because I've been, I've been immersed in transformation in my whole life. You know, both from a study through my own two clients, you know, all kinds of professions, all that study, literally, you really want to notice the very details of you, your habits and like, You know, you're not here to make them all band around.

You're here to notice the subtle habit loops, habits of mind to certain sense comes in. You interpret it and you automatically go here, here, here. Is that which is the loops, those feedback loops that are getting in your way and which of which new feedback loops do you need to create to move towards your dream?

That's the game you want to play. It's not some big curse or metanarrative. It's like blah, blah, whatever. Cause it's, it's never any of that. It really just comes down to what are you, what patterns are you replaying?

It's, you know, it can be like have depth to it. Like it might be lodged pretty deep because trauma's got a lot goes into lots of things. So I'm not going to say everyone can snap their fingers and get rid of something fast.

However, this is universally true. Everyone, no matter how, whether it's a short one or a big one, is to get into the details the more specific you can describe at the more layers of your all of your mind body soul spirit intuition like how it plays out in the details and then get clear where you want to go and which habit loops do you need to get rid of which ones you got to combine like that's where that's where the rubber meets the road and i'm really nerdy and geeky about how to deconstruct that.

And my vision, I've committed to this with all my thing is to work with other people and just up level each other, maybe even great in AI and get some best practices.

But my intuition is there's a lot of people have different ways of doing it. And some people like I think I've come, I've discovered some cool stuff, but I know other people have also done cool stuff.

I'm I know enough to know I have some offer, but I'm also humble enough. I haven't I'm here to learn. So how do we create like a teamwork? I'm excited about having a teamwork.

This is what we do have. We come back to measurement. I want to work with people who have enough self-esteem is like, OK, and like enough humility is like, great, we'll find out.

We might find out that we're best in the world for with a certain demographic where we suck with these other people. We don't I don't know what's going to happen.

But just by creating more sharing of measurement and doing and working as a team, we can all up level each other if we can create a community of safety and trustful processes.

So that excites me because I think that can really, you get that organization right and with the right core leadership and right measurement protocols, it can really create a supportive system.

Especially as people are starting to bring things together, like we're bringing in state training and East and Western and integrated medicine with Western medicine.

I think that none of them are bad. I think they all have something to offer each other, but we got to create a space where they can. people can hear each other and measure.

I love that. I love that. You have just described kind of in a nugget what ketamine therapy is. It's just kind of traveled through all of it because you started with the ego.

It's like, okay, what is the ego? It's the construction of what we call actually corresponds to the default mode network in the brain. Yes. and that's the network that gets kind of destabilized or people say it gets quiet and it actually kind of goes offline a little bit.

All those things are true and the sense of self dissolving or that ego death that people talk about in that psychedelic experience and how that mystical experience that stepping into just kind of feeling that happen at least once Feeling it loosen is a learning experience for the brain.

And then you're talking about, okay, what do we do now that we've kind of crossed that threshold and we've entered into this new state of neuroplasticity because that's when the brain gets into neuroplasticity because all of a sudden the signal has been sent to the entire being that says something new is afoot.

Healing through patterns, teamwork, and measurement

There is new energy here to drive. And now there's availability. You know, with ketamine, it's two days. With mushrooms, it's a week. With LSD, it's a couple of weeks.

With Ibogaine, it's actually like, I don't know, like two to three months. And we're talking about this state that we can hold. the brain in so that we can, you know, just kind of accelerate this transformational process because there's, you know, the pace at which it goes if you're doing it for, you know, kind of biohacking and kind of improvement and leadership, but there's a pace at which it needs to go when you have treatment resistant depression, OCD, because those are also disorders of an overactive default mode network.

So what you're talking about with peeling away of the different layers of the default mode network, that is an entire, like you're saying, it's a network of meaning.

And so in transformation, how do you move through those shifts in ways that don't tax the system, create stress? create trauma instead of actually heal trauma, right?

So there's that also, the gentleness I feel and just the care given to like, oh, this is important to pay attention to. I really love ketamine. It's a really powerful disassociate.

And I can take you to the state that meditators go there. I'm actually a fan of both as the fastest path because one, like people learn through repetition.

and logic, but also they learn through extreme experiences. And actually I think if you can take people to these spaces using breath work and entheogens, whatever, ketamine, whatever, the different kinds of things, you can, and you have ways to name it and make people, by naming it, like I can help people name a state they're in and show people how to use that state or suggest things they're going to have to discover for themselves, but it helps.

For a newb to be around someone who knows that territory, like the back of their hand. So they don't like freak out because you can freak out. I mean, uh, uh, like you can go to like, uh, like a state where there's no, there's no, it's just information.

And you realize even the sense of self as a construction and not like freak out because you have to have the right skills, but that's actually, it's kind of like a really calm space where you let more of this free energy come in.

You have to learn to trust this free energy. It's cause it's your sense of safety is not built around it. It's actually built to avoid some things you're afraid of.

Right. And so you actually, for those who want to take the journey to its furthest place, uh, it's about a relationship between your current safety sparts, which you're going to have to get to know really intimately.

I recommend the book, the five personality patterns by Steven Kessler is really good. Andy Ram's really good. Nope. But there's some archetypes that really help you get there faster.

And you got to you got to know those parts and you got to know this deeper sense of self and they got to work together. And this part also has to wait.

Where are you going in life? What are you doing? Because where you want to go isn't people might think, oh, enlightenment's always the same. There are some things that I think are similar, like becoming the space because you want to be in a sense of self that's bigger than just you.

A lot of people's like sent themselves in their head and they're just thinking, how can I, how can I do good for me? How can I avoid my biggest fears unconsciously?

They don't even know that they're not even control most of the thing. Most people are just trying to avoid things. This is where I want to come back to.

This is where I want to go before, because this is about magic and laws. So I believe that if you're if you're primarily a goal is to know existence, I want your feedback on this.

then as a kid when you decide like, I don't know, I don't want to be with shame at level nine and I'm going to build a leaving pattern. So I avoid it.

Are you doing God's work? I mean, you're yes and no, because you're kind of skipping something. But also you wanted to know that you skip something like that's part of being alive.

So I think it's both but I actually think this understanding that we're here to know things and oh geez we skipped something maybe we have to go back because once you go back and integrate that thing and you become whole again so there's all these things that we didn't integrate as kids or past laws or whatever like why did things go down like that and some part of us is still stuck there and when we actually bring this higher energy this better discernment plus more energy, we can integrate all that stuff and then we can return to now and be more effective in the now.

So I think there's this whole, we talked about skills of getting whole. So getting whole to me has three primary vector zones. One is like, how do we get whole with stuff that's happened to us personally and resolve traumas and anything that overwhelmed us?

Does it make sense yet? How do we get make sense of how life is organized? Why is it like this? Why does Hitler have to come? You know, like people stuff like that puzzle people, you know, I don't know why God made these choices.

Why is he? Why does he give some kids cancer? You know, I just can't get over it. You know what I mean? But like that's everyone's got their stuff. Right.

And then like, how do we get along with each other? So what if all three of those could be resolved? through more intelligence, use of energy, intelligence to have like, these are known things.

I mean, I already know how to do all of that. And even if I don't, I know other people who know stuff. Like, I don't know, I don't feel like, cause then we then get everyone's energy returning to presence with really good conflict resolution skills.

And I believe the species will just, that's it. That's all we need. We just need to resolve conflict better. So I don't feel like there has to be. Yeah, we just need to get better at dialogue.

That's so true. I love how you get to the simple, pithy statement because I think that's the activating part, but you distill it down. And what really came to me as you were talking was Enneagram and fact personalities, like how this happened unfolded for me was I was going through burnout and of course, And I decided to do a master's in medical education where that includes some leadership training.

Ketamine, neuroplasticity, and safe transformation

And there's this one semester in which I got to kind of do my kind of, you know, kind of know my archetype, get to know myself really just kind of with my colleagues, with a kind of a sense of like, who am I as a teacher?

You know, what's my teacher identity? And it was done in such a wonderful way. And it really unlocked something. It really brought along kind of like a piece.

It's like this is how I've careened my way across the globe and landed up here. You know, it can seem very disorganized and very haphazard when you think of migration and, you know, trauma and this and that.

It's like the story can get real dark. And then I find myself kind of on the redemptive end of that story going, I'm exactly where I'm supposed to be.

Nice. Because all of these things have unfolded and there's no way I could have predicted it. But there's no doubt in my mind that I followed that intuition each time.

And even through my mistakes, like, you know, you said like your holistic, like, own your mistakes. It's like, I made them. They're there for a reason.

That was a hard one lesson. Don't you take that mistake away from me, you know? That's also, you know, what I want people to like really get real loose with judgment.

Because I feel like so much of what we do in ketamine therapy is like we hear that judgy voice and we're like, I'm not that voice. Whose voice is that?

When did that internalize? And as kids, we internalize the voices. A lack of self-compassion. Right? And that breeds a lack of self-compassion because that inner judge voice may have been the voice that kept you safe.

The voice that was voice of somebody who loved you, but maybe the words were harsh. Just the things, like you're saying, the things we carry that we don't need to anymore because we're here now and there's none of that.

So as you're going forward, I feel like, yes, we've built up a lot, but you slow it down, you bring it to the piffy takeaway. So Jonathan, Moz and Derez, we're heading into the end of our conversation.

What are you curious about? And we always ask people this, what are you curious about? What am I curious about? I'm getting, well, enfoldment. So there's this word called enfoldment, which I learned, which is I'm curious about the next moment.

I used to have an addiction to trying to predict the future and I let it go. And sometimes I saw the future before it happened, but sometimes they're like, yeah, but it's more fun when you don't need to.

Like, what if you could have a relationship with mystery? Unlike you've ever ever. Whoa, that was an interesting. That's the animism, by the way. Sound bad.

Yeah. Well, something that anim, I don't know, animism is where the universe drops in or something weird. So maybe that was like, like I, we didn't plan that.

That's a God wink right there. So maybe I'm supposed to end with that fault. What if everyone could have a safe, but curious Relationship with mystery and how what would that change if we went from anxiety to safe?

Loving of mystery and I have some ideas on how I get there, but I don't know of which ones will work So here's the other thing is I am super passionate about everything I talked about and I'm in a new phase of life where I want I'm looking for All kinds of new people, collaborators, new students.

I'm here in LA. We're talking about people who are in the healing space who want to mix, do it very safely. But I think there's some patterns to be revealed around conflict resolutions.

So I'm open. Mo's enter.com Mo's enter a proton may or whatever if you're interested if what I've said is exciting to you reach out Maybe just have a quicker zoom and we'll see what goes I'm in a new connector phase So I'm curious to see what how the mystery is gonna bring the most amazing fellow God friends to both to me, but also to You and I in the LA area.

Enfoldment, mystery, and closing reflections

So anyways, I'll leave it there. I love the mystery Beautiful, beautiful. Thank you. I mean, this has come up a couple of times and it's been mentioned by many people in the last couple of days.

And I think this is a reminder from you is when you step into the mystery, the mystery meets you. Like you get met halfway and you just brought that energy.

It's like, I'm just stepping out and I'm trusting and I have this deep trust in the universe to meet me where I am. And you also mentioned something that our patients really mentioned is you've got to get really clear on your intention.

And the more you can distill your intention, the more you can make it clear, your vision, it comes true. And this is something I remember discovering about myself at 15. is that I was very good at imagining, I was very good at future casting, and I would watch something come true just because I had wanted it to.

And it convinced me on some level that there were some witchy vibes here that we possess. And I think the teenage brain is one of those that is very pliable and powerful.

And sometimes we discover those things in that time. So I'm curious to have this conversation in person and in group. And in Los Angeles, I think we are very excited to be in the midst of a lot of intersections of the creative communities and the science communities and the arts community and the healthcare community, the healer

space.

I think that's what's really coming to me is, you know, if the universe is listening to our podcast today. Yeah. I love what you just said. And yeah, I guess there was a project, something where we both went to where we maybe met or we had this lamps thing.

And I worked with them to create the marketing. It was interesting. I think we came up with. with seven distinct groups. I think you named them all, which is fascinating because we didn't talk about it.

But like with LA, we are at this intersection of like healers, like researchers, people who are into the creative, like film, music, animation, sound, psychedelic research.

So it's like a lot's happening here. But yeah, I believe the arts. are a big part of this transformation. I think there's a logical skill thing, but I think we also need a new culture that co-arises with it.

So I'm excited for all those communities to come together and play together. Absolutely. Here we go. And with that firehorse energy, thank you so much Jonathan for this wonderful conversation.

We did it. We landed it. It was perfect. All right. Thanks for joining us on the Two Curious MD podcast. We hope today's episode inspired you to ask new questions and explore fresh perspectives.

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