

" [This] book is beyond spectacular. It's funny, uplifting, delightful, and profound."
— Christiane Northrup, M.D., best-selling author of *Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom*

P A M G R O U T



NINE DO-IT-YOURSELF
ENERGY EXPERIMENTS THAT
PROVE YOUR THOUGHTS
CREATE YOUR REALITY

PRAISE FOR *E-SQUARED*

“[This] book is beyond spectacular. It’s funny, uplifting, delightful, and profound.”

—**Christiane Northrup, M.D.**, best-selling author of *Women’s Bodies, Women’s Wisdom*

“I absolutely love this book. Pam has combined a writing style as funny as Ellen DeGeneres with a wisdom as deep and profound as Deepak Chopra’s to deliver a powerful message and a set of experiments that will prove to you beyond a doubt that our thoughts really do create our reality.”

—**Jack Canfield**, co-creator of the *New York Times* best-selling *Chicken Soup for the Soul*[®] series and *The Success Principles*

“I figure if a 53-year-old Midwestern, skeptical, tough-talking radio host found this perhaps the most insightful and on-target book with regard to ‘how it works,’ then the bestseller list cannot be far behind. [Pam’s] journey ... message and honesty and humor about the human condition are nothing short of profound.”

—**John St. Augustine**, former producer for *Oprah and Friends* and author of *Every Moment Matters*

“I drank in this book like a tall lemonade on a hot day. I kept highlighting, and writing things in the margins like ‘Yes!’ This is a truly glorious book: in-your-face and young and fun, yet wise in a very deep and satisfying way. Pam Grout doesn’t pull any punches: you may agree with her take on spirituality or you may not, but I can’t believe anyone could read this book and not feel surer that there’s a positive purpose to all this. That we’re loved. That we have important work to do.”

—**Victoria Moran**, life coach and author of ten books, including *Creating a Charmed Life* and *Lit from Within*

“This book is a refreshing guide to practical mysticism. I love that it doesn’t ask me to throw out reason. Instead, I get to satisfy the skeptic in me by trying out these simple experiments and looking at the results for myself. And guess what? They work!”

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*For Roosky.
May your light forever shine.*



CONTENTS

Foreword by Joyce Barrett, Ph.D.

Preface

Introduction: Collapse of the Wave:
Where We Learn We Are Badly Misinformed

The Preliminaries

Experiment #1: The Dude Abides Principle:
There Is an Invisible Energy Force or Field of Infinite Possibilities

Experiment #2: The Volkswagen Jetta Principle:
*You Impact the Field and Draw from It According to
Your Beliefs and Expectations*

Experiment #3: The Alby Einstein Principle:
You, Too, Are a Field of Energy

Experiment #4: The Abracadabra Principle:
Whatever You Focus on Expands

Experiment #5: The Dear Abby Principle:
Your Connection to the Field Provides Accurate and Unlimited Guidance

Experiment #6: The Superhero Principle:
Your Thoughts and Consciousness Impact Matter

Experiment #7: The Jenny Craig Principle:
*Your Thoughts and Consciousness Provide the
Scaffolding for Your Physical Body*

Experiment #8: The 101 Dalmatians Principle:
You Are Connected to Everything and Everyone Else in the Universe

Experiment #9: The Fish and Loaves Principle:
The Universe Is Limitless, Abundant, and Strangely Accommodating

Afterword: Lift Each Other Up

Acknowledgments

About the Author



FOREWORD

When I was a kid, I asked my Sunday-school teacher why miracles occurred in biblical times, but they didn't seem to be part of our lives today. She had no answer, and I gradually came to assume that God, church, and religious stuff were irrelevant and far removed from my own life (even though I never quite quit longing for something more). I left spirituality behind to pursue science, which at least made an attempt to explain how the world works.

It is a real treat to find Pam Grout's writings, which help doubters like me fill that desire for spirituality. She presents (in a delightful, fun way, at a level anyone can understand) that energy, power, and yes, even miracles are here, now, and available to everyone. The ideas and experiments in this book have helped me grasp, in language that makes sense, many of the things spiritual guides have been teaching for thousands of years.

I highly recommend this book to anyone who is seeking to understand spiritual ideas and how they apply to all of us, even someone like me with doubts about organized religion. As she points out, retraining the mind is much like potty-training a puppy—you have to keep taking it back outside and pointing out the beauty, the majesty, and the truth. Through simple, delightful baby steps, she guides the reader into awareness that miracles still happen, and that there is an amazing energy source available to everyone.

—**Joyce Barrett, Ph.D.**
Former NASA biologist



“The way we have been perceiving life needs to be rolled away, so that which is true can appear.”

—MICHELE LONGO O’DONNELL,
CREATOR OF *LIVING BEYOND DISEASE*



PREFACE

“Everyone who is seriously involved in the pursuit of science becomes convinced that a spirit is manifest in the laws of the universe—a spirit vastly superior to that of man.”

—ALBERT EINSTEIN, GERMAN THEORETICAL PHYSICIST

Two months before I turned 35, my longtime boyfriend dumped me for a 20-something law student with dark roots. Keep in mind that this was about the same time the single woman/asteroid study came out, the one that publicly revealed that women over 30 have roughly the same odds of walking down the nuptial aisle as they do of being sideswiped by an asteroid.

After several days of lying in bed and staring at my ceiling fan, I came to the conclusion that I had two choices left. I could either slit my veins in a warm bath ... or sign up for a month-long work-study program at Esalen, the self-improvement mecca in Big Sur, California. Knowing how my roommate and the time despised messes, I opted for Esalen.

On the second night there, I met a handsome former surfer named Stan who convinced me to spend the evening listening to the ocean crashing against the cliffs. We finally fell asleep in one of the massage rooms, huddled together to stay warm. Not that it worked. April winds off the Pacific can be ferocious, and even with our combined body heat we practically froze to death. Come to think of it, Stan would certainly have solved my messy suicide dilemma.

If Stan hadn't been so cute and I hadn't been so desperate to get over the jerk who'd tossed me aside like some empty bag of Doritos, I probably would have excused myself and gone back to my insulated sleeping bag. But I stayed until the next morning when the “dawn's early light” revealed that the whole time there'd been a space heater next to the mat where we'd been huddled. A space heater would have turned on and used to keep warm!

In a nutshell, that's what this book is about. There's a space heater—or rather an invisible energy force—that's constantly available for our use, and we haven't bothered to turn it on. Most of us are totally oblivious to the fact the “space heater” even exists. We think of life as a random crapshoot. *C'est la vie.*

Those of us who *do* know about the space heater (that is, the energetic field that gives us the ability to shape and design our lives) don't understand how it works. We've heard rumors that praying turns it on, that good works keep it going. But no one seems to know for sure. This guru tells us to chant. The next one suggests meditation. The one from last year insisted we clean up our thoughts and increase our vibrations. So which is it? Is the energy force really that vague and mysterious? And why does it only work sometimes? At best, it's finicky and fickle, certainly nothing you can bank on.

Or is it?

What I'd like to suggest is that this invisible energy field is 100 percent reliable. It works every time, like a math principle or a law of physics. Two plus two *always* equals four. Balls dropped off roofs *always* fall. Your every thought *always* affects physical reality.

Seeing Is Believing

“My fingers are being pried off all I think I know. Certainty is very useful, but it can really close you

mind off to the true light.”

—DAVID O. RUSSELL, FILMMAKER

If you’ve read *The Secret* or been in metaphysical, spiritual circles for any time at all, you already know your thoughts create your reality, that there’s a power in the universe that can heal, and that you and you alone design your own life. Unfortunately, there’s still this tiny little problem, this one itty-bitty catch.

You don’t *really* believe it. Not fully.

Most of us, in fact, are still operating out of the mental architecture of our ancestors. We think we’re running our lives with our brilliant ideas and thoughts. We think we’re affirming our intentions and creating new possibilities, but in reality we’re simply recycling old tapes, knee-jerk conditioning and automatic behaviors, most of which we picked up before we were five. We’re like Pavlov’s dog, simply reacting to patterns we picked up before we had the intelligence to wisely choose. Most of the thoughts we assume are our own are really the invisible and largely unquestioned beliefs we’ve downloaded from others. So we pit our positive thoughts against our old, disempowering programming. In other words, our consciousness, that force that *always* affects physical reality, has been hijacked.

Not long after I graduated from college, landed a job, and was running my own affairs, I noticed negative thoughts about money dive-bombing for my attention. I found myself worrying, wondering if running out of money was imminent, questioning whether or not I could afford the new bike I wanted or the new computer I needed. One day, during an early-morning jog, I suddenly got it. Those thoughts were exact clones of comments my mother often made when I was growing up. And even though there was no evidence to support those fears in my own life, I had downloaded them straight into my consciousness without even being aware of it.

Needless to say, that wasn’t a paradigm that served my highest good. I consciously rewrote the paradigm that ran my financial life to: “I can afford anything I want. In fact, I am so prosperous I never need worry again.” As an independent freelance writer, I also appointed God as the CEO of my career. I figured there was no way I could run this fickle writing business with the faulty wiring and negative thoughts I’d downloaded from my past. Clearly, I needed a new energetic imprint.

Reality’s Changed, Dude!

“If we worked on the assumption that what is accepted as true really is true, then there would be little hope for advance.”

—ORVILLE WRIGHT, AMERICAN INVENTOR

Even though the reductionist, mechanical worldview has been proved defective, it’s still deeply ingrained and embedded into our culture. Neuroscientists tell us that 95 percent of our thoughts are controlled by our preprogrammed subconscious mind. Instead of actually thinking, you’re looking at a “movie” of the past.

If you weren’t immersed in this nonstop riot of fragmented, old-school thinking, you’d be modifying your life at will. You’d have no fear around money, you’d have nothing but beautiful relationships, and you’d be so ecstatically content that it would never occur to you to pick up a book like this.

Quite frankly, I'm glad you did. This little book will prove to you once and for all that your thoughts have power and that a field of infinite possibilities awaits your claim. It will help you rewrite the outdated thinking that drives your life.

Instead of making a grand argument, the same grand argument you've read about in all the other books about changing reality, this book has nine easy-to-try experiments that offer real-time proof. It gives you the opportunity to move from "knowing" your thoughts create reality to witnessing them happen on a daily, decision-by-decision basis.

At this point, it's still a theory. Seeing with your own two eyes that you change reality simply by observing it will rewire your brain and divest you from old conditioning. Learning, through scientific experimentation, how deeply you are connected to the field of potentiality will literally set you free.

The Magic We Threw Overboard

"Oh my, how the world still dearly loves a cage."

—TESS LYNCH, WRITER, GENTLEWOMAN, AND ESSAYIST

Quantum physics defines the field as "invisible moving forces that influence the physical realm." In this book, you'll learn to use this field of potentiality (I like to call it the *FP*) to your advantage. Because energy is invisible and because we're still operating from old-school principles that put materiality first, we haven't learned to truly harness this fundamental building block.

For the next 21 days, roughly the time it takes to do the experiments in this book, you have the rare opportunity to develop a conscious relationship with energy (even matter, said quantum physicist David Bohm, is nothing but "frozen light") and learn to transform and parlay it into anything your heart desires—whether it be peace of mind, money, or a more rewarding career. You can even direct the *FP* to provide a vacation to Tahiti.

Take me, for example. A few years ago, I decided to spend a month in Australia. A chiropractor I had a huge crush on had just taken a job there to work with Aborigines. How, I wondered, were we going to fall in love when I was in Kansas and he was 10,683 miles away? One look at my bank statement would have convinced any reasonable person that a \$1,500 plane ticket to Sydney, the going price at that time, was out of the question. But I wanted to go, and I was lucky enough to know about the field of potentiality that could make that happen.

I started planning the trip, began picturing myself romping through the Sydney surf. I mean I got really worked up over this picture in my mind.

Within a week, my editor at *Modern Bride* magazine called.

"I know it's late notice," she began, "but is there any way you'd be willing to go to Australia to write a honeymoon story? We'll pay extra."

"Well, okay," I said. "If you insist."

You can transform energy to heal and change your body. I was hiking with a friend in the flatlands near Steamboat Springs, Colorado. Climbing up the one path in the entire park, she tripped over a rock, fell, and watched in horror as her ankle started swelling. I mean, this ankle *swelled*. It wouldn't have been a problem if this had happened next door to a free health clinic, but keep in mind the two of us were 70 minutes (and that's if you walk fast, which she couldn't do because she was limping) from the nearest phone connection, let alone a free health clinic. I told her to direct her body to quell the swelling. She started yelling, "Stop swelling! Heal! Stop Swelling! Heal!"

“It’s okay to say it quietly,” I reminded her.

We made it to our camp, and she never even had to see a doctor.

FP = IP (Infinite Potentiality)

“Life is waiting everywhere, the future is flowering everywhere, but we only see a small part of it and step on much of it with our feet.”

—HERMANN HESSE, GERMAN-SWISS POET AND NOVELIST

The nine experiments in this book, most of which take a short 48 hours or less, will prove that the FP, like electricity, is dependable, predictable, and available to everyone from St. Francis of Assisi to Barbara Walters. They’ll prove what physicists over the past 100 years have discovered—that the field connects all of us, and that the reason we control our lives is because every thought we have is a energy wave that affects everything else in the universe.

But, like electricity, you *do* have to plug into it. And you do have to quit being so gosh-darned wishy-washy. Nobody in his or her right mind would call up Sears and say, “Oh, just send me something I like.” Likewise, you wouldn’t call a plumber to fix your toilet with this proviso: “Just come whenever you feel like it.” Yet that’s how most of us interact with the field. We’re wimpy and vague, and don’t have a clue how it actually works.

E-Squared not only explains how the FP works, but it provides nine experiments, each of which can be conducted with absolutely no money and very little time expenditure, to prove that thoughts are actual physical “things.” Yes, you read that right. It says *prove*.

The nine energy principles presented in this book will confirm that the FP is at work in your life whether you’re aware of its existence or not. You’ll learn that it’s more profound than physical law and every bit as dependable as gravity—once you learn to be definite and crystal clear in your intentions. And agree to set deadlines. And get over this crazy illusion that something—you’re never even sure what—is wrong with you. To effectively work these spiritual laws, you have to “get it” deep down in your bones that the universe is bountiful and that, at all times, it has your back.

I don’t remember the exact moment I started conducting do-it-yourself experiments with my life, but I do know it had become increasingly clear to me that all the spiritual theories and books and classes that I was so fascinated with were basically worthless without my full participation.

Like most people, I started with baby steps—making simple intentions like securing up-front parking spots, finding four-leaf clovers, getting interviews with people in the headlines. But the “result” that finally convinced me that setting up a framework, posing a deadline, and using scientific style experimentation was imperative to real spiritual growth was what I now refer to as the nameless miracle.

For years, I hung a calendar beside my bed, plucking it down from time to time to jot down important events or to look back for the date I last cut my hair or met so-and-so or went to the dentist. One night, I grabbed the calendar a bit too eagerly and pulled out the small nail that secured it to the wall. I got down on my hands and knees to search for it. How far can a little nail go, right? I looked and I looked and I looked. Apparently, that little nail had secured a Harry Potter-style invisibility cloak, because it was nowhere to be found.

I finally concluded that I had spent enough time crawling around on my carpet and that I would just send out an intention for it to show up. Within 24 hours.

The next morning when I woke up, the nail was in my hand nestled between my thumb and forefinger. Since then, I've gone on to manifest all sorts of cool things—from dates with hot guys to a regular travel-writing gig to a Toyota Prius—but none of them made the kind of impression that the simple little nail did.

I was getting such convincing results with my own experiments that I decided it was time to reproduce them, to see if they'd work as well for others. I began suggesting some of these simple experiments to friends. One colleague, a Unity minister, had her whole congregation using the law reports you'll find at the end of each chapter.

Before long, YOU'ers (that's Youth of Unity) were visibly moving energy around with their homemade Einstein wands. Weekly groups were being formed to conduct regular experiments. People were manifesting all sorts of amazing things.

What I know for sure is that the best way to understand a spiritual principle, maybe the only way, is not to read about it in a book or to hear a speaker explain it from a podium, but to put it into a framework that demonstrates how it works. Seeing it in action, as you will in these experiments, leads to complete and certain conviction. And that's the only thing that will radically release you from "old school" mental architecture.

The New Curriculum

"I have to find it here, right here, bursting uncontainably through the slipshod, dragged down dead center of one ordinary life. ..."

—BOB SAVINO, POET AND KANSAS CITY SAGE

1. The Dude Abides Principle. This is the basic principle, the foundation upon which all the other principles rest. Basically what it says is, "There is an invisible energy force or field of infinite possibilities." The experiment could best be described as an ultimatum. You're going to give the force exactly 48 hours to make its presence known. You're going to demand a clear, unmistakable sign, something that cannot be written off as coincidence.

2. The Volkswagen Jetta Principle. Remember that new car you bought a few years ago? When you first decided it was the car of your dreams, it seemed like a unique car. You figured you'd be the only one in town to proudly drive one. Well, by the time you read up on it in *Consumer Reports*, you had decided on the price you needed to offer, and finally got yourself to the car dealership, you noticed that practically every eighth car was a Volkswagen Jetta or whatever car it was you wanted. And that's what happens when you begin to think about something—you draw it into your life.

Every thought we have, every judgment we make, impacts the field of potentiality. In fact, reality is nothing but waves of possibility that we have "observed" into form. This principle states, "You impact the field and draw from it according to your beliefs and expectations," and to prove it we'll set the following clear intention: "This is what I want to pull out of the field in the next 48 hours."

3. The Alby Einstein Principle. Even though this principle, "You, too, are a field of energy," is one of the cornerstone spiritual principles, it actually first came to light in a physics lab. Yes, it was scientists who discovered that, despite all appearances to the contrary, human beings are not matter but continually moving waves of energy. In fact, you probably noticed the title of this book is a play on Einstein's famous equation.

This is the only experiment that involves equipment—specially designed, perfectly tuned equipment. Okay, so it's a metal coat hanger (a specimen of which I'm assuming, unless you're complete and total slob, is available in your closet) and a drinking straw, something you can easily score free of charge at any McDonald's.

4. The Abracadabra Principle. Most people associate the word *abracadabra* with magicians pulling rabbits out of hats. It's actually an Aramaic term that translates into English as, "I will create as I speak." It's a powerful concept. It's why Edison often announced the invention of a device before he'd actually invented it. It's why Jim Carrey wrote himself a check for \$10 million long before he ever made a movie.

This principle simply says, "Whatever you focus on expands," and in the experiment you'll learn that there's no such thing as an idle thought and that all of us are way too cavalier and tolerant of our minds' wandering.

5. The Dear Abby Principle. This principle states: "Your connection to the field provides accurate and unlimited guidance." By realigning your consciousness, you can access reliable answers to every request you ever make. The reason you don't know this is because you've taught yourself the most unnatural habit of feeling separate, of not being in communion with the FP.

6. The Superhero Principle. In this experiment, governed by the principle "Your thoughts are your consciousness impact matter," you will duplicate an experiment conducted by Dr. Gary Schwartz, professor at the University of Arizona, which demonstrated that sending intention to plants made them grow faster and reflect more light than their nonintentioned counterparts.

7. The Jenny Craig Principle. Whether you're a label reader or not, you know the food you eat offers certain vitamins, minerals, and of course, calories. You probably think these nutrients are contained in the food and-dried, that if the back of the yogurt container says it has 187 calories, then it has 187 calories. What you may not know is that your thoughts about yourself and your food are in a constant dance with your body. And that when you feel guilty about consuming calories, your food picks up that negative vibe that ricochets right back at you. In this experiment, you'll prove the principle "Your thoughts and consciousness provide the scaffolding for your physical body" by infusing your food with love.

8. The 101 Dalmatians Principle. This all-important spiritual principle states: "You are connected to everything and everyone else in the universe." Scientists call it nonlocality, and if you watched the cartoon version of *101 Dalmatians*, you saw the principle in action. Remember when Cruella De Vil and her evil cohorts were trying to capture the escaped puppies? The old Scottish terrier in the barn where they were hiding barked for help to a basset hound in the next county, who, in turn, barked the message to a dachshund farther along the route. Only in quantum physics, the communication happens instantaneously. The very instant the Scottish terrier knows that the puppies require help, the dachshund, 20 miles away, also knows. Anything that happens to one particle is instantaneously communicated to the other. In this experiment, you'll send messages to people in other places without the use of e-mail, letters, or loud explosions.

9. The Fish and Loaves Principle. This principle states: "The universe is limitless, abundant, and strangely accommodating." It will also prove that your fears are pointless and that maybe it's okay

take a big, deep breath.

A Truer, Grander Vision

“You can never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.”

—BUCKMINSTER FULLER, AMERICAN FUTURIST

I hope it’s comforting to know that you won’t be the first to use your life as an experiment. When the late, great R. Buckminster Fuller was 32, he decided to conduct an experiment to see what one penniless unknown individual might be able to do on behalf of humanity. Dubbing himself Guinea Pig B, he dedicated himself to bringing about change in the world.

At the time he started the experiment, he was what you might call a “nobody.” Bankrupt and unemployed, he had a wife and baby to support. His first child, the baby’s older sister, had just died. He had been drinking heavily.

His prospects didn’t look promising. But he decided to cast aside the past, to give up limiting thoughts. He wanted to know, “What could one person do to change the world?”

For the next 56 years, he devoted himself to his unique experiment. He took risks. He asked, “What if?”

Not only did he become an architect, an inventor, an author, and a great leader of men, but between 1927, when he launched the experiment, and his death in 1983, he wrote 28 books, received 40 honorary degrees, registered 25 U.S. patents, and literally changed the way humans see themselves.

That’s what I hope *E-Squared* will do for you. I hope it will change the way you see yourself. I hope it will inspire you to conduct an experiment with your own life, to use your energy to become the most fantastic, the most joyful, wondrous, beautiful, tender human being you possibly can.





INTRODUCTION

Collapse of the Wave: Where We Learn We Are Badly Misinformed

“Man’s chief delusion is his conviction that there are causes other than his own state of consciousness.”

—NEVILLE GODDARD, BARBADIAN AUTHOR AND MYSTIC

Any illusionist worth his magic wand understands that the most important ingredient in his sleight-of-hand repertoire is diversion. A magician diverts his audience’s attention *away* from what he’s really doing and directs it *toward* something else that seems crucial but, of course, isn’t.

That’s what we’ve done—diverted all our attention to the physical world. These sensory “bluffs” have caused us to miss the fact that what is invisible, what we *can’t* see with our eyes, is actually more fundamental to life than what we do see.

Quantum physics tells us that the invisible energy realm—collectively referred to as the field, the “FP,” as I call it—is the primary governing force of the material realm. It’s the blueprint that forms reality. Indeed, we now know that the universe is made of nothing but waves and particles of energy that conform to our expectations, judgments, and beliefs.

Subtle energies, thoughts, emotions, and consciousness play the starring roles in our lives and experiences, but because they’re invisible, we haven’t attempted to understand them or use them to our favor. To change the world is a simple matter of changing these expectations and beliefs. It’s truly that easy. To bring something into the physical world requires focusing not on what we see, but on what we *want* to see.

Good, Good, Good, Good Vibrations

“‘El Niño of human consciousness’ has arrived.”

—DIANNE COLLINS, AUTHOR OF *DO YOU QUANTUM THINK?*

Okay, just say it: “How can something as simple as a thought influence the world?” Let me just point out that a hundred years ago nobody would have believed songs sung by a bunch of *American Idol* contestants could pass through brick, glass, wood, and steel to get from a transmitter tower to your television set, either. Nobody would have believed a cell phone no bigger than a deck of cards would allow you to talk to your sister 2,000 miles away.

Your thoughts, like the 289 TV channels and like your voice on the cell phone, are vibrational waves. When you hear Eminem rapping about his daughter Hailie, your eardrum is catching a vibrational sound wave. When you see Brad Pitt’s cane or Madonna’s single leather glove (accessories they sported at the 2012 Golden Globes), you’re seeing patterns of vibrational light waves.

And that’s what your thoughts are—vibrational energy waves that interact and influence the F

Every thought you have, have ever had, or ever will have creates a vibration that goes out into the FP extending forever. These vibrations meet other vibrations, crisscrossing in an incredible maze of energy. Get enough energy together and it clumps into matter. Remember what Einstein said—matter is formed out of energy.

The field of potentiality simply follows the energy you send out. And your thought vibrations draw other vibrations that match. Here's one small example: A few years ago, I wanted a potato masher. I didn't mention it to anyone. I just made a mental note: *Next time you're at Walmart, buy a potato masher.* That very night, my friend Wendy, who was cleaning out her drawers, stopped by with a couple of no-longer-needed cooking utensils, including a potato masher. Another time, I decided I needed more laughter in my life. Within a couple weeks, I began dating Todd, a funny co-worker who eventually became a comedian.

The coincidences we see in our lives are just energy and the FP at work. Most of the time, we employ energy inadvertently, totally oblivious to the fact that what we think, say, and do makes a difference. Consequently, we activate this limitless power to follow a default program that makes no use of imagination or possibility.

People think Jesus is the be-all and end-all, because he was so good at manipulating energy and matter. But, as he so poignantly pointed out (although these aren't his exact words), "You, too, are dust and man."

I'm a single mom, not exactly the best "stereotype" in which to be cast. Like being black or Jewish, it brings up certain preconceived notions. People automatically expect me to be poor, maybe on welfare.

While that's certainly one of the available channels, I prefer to watch a different channel. I prefer to focus on a different reality.

Here's what it says on my website: "Pam Grout is a world traveler, a loving mother, a best-selling author, a millionaire, and an inspiring witness to everyone she meets." I started focusing on those things 20 years ago, before I'd ever had a child, before I became a world traveler or an author, and before that matter, before I even liked myself all that much. Focusing on what I wanted obviously worked because now I can proudly say that all but one of the above are true. I'll let you guess which one is yet to manifest. So far, I've written 16 books, two screenplays, a live soap opera, and enough magazine articles that I haven't starved in 20 years without a 9-to-5 job. I maintain a travel blog (www.georgeclooneyslepthere.com) that has taken me to all seven continents. I've written about everything from bungee jumping in New Zealand to carpet buying in Morocco to picking coffee in Nicaragua.

I have yet to jump out of an airplane, but I have to save something for my 90th birthday.

The First Step in Spiritual Enlightenment: Give Up Your Powerful Attachment to Conventional Reality

"We are all captives of a story."

—DANIEL QUINN, AUTHOR OF *ISHMAEL*

Reality ain't all it's cracked up to be.

In fact, it's not a stretch to say that everything you think is real is not. Physicists, for going on 100 years now, have not known what to make of the fact that Newton's classical view of the world has

absolutely no bearing on the way the world works at its core. The subatomic realm so defies all reason and logic that most scientists, scared to endanger their academic credentials, have more or less ignored the fact that life is nothing like what we pretend it is.

In fact, it's so freaky—particles popping up out of nowhere, time slowing down and speeding up, particles reacting and communicating with each other even when separated by thousands of miles—that the only thing scientists have done with this information so far is develop technology that allows us to blow each other up, send text messages, receive cell-phone messages, and nuke our Hungry-Man TV dinners.

Even the two main fundamentals of physical reality—space and time—are not what they seem. The two physical mainstays are nothing but extremely convincing optical illusions. Physicists like Bernard d'Espagnat, recent winner of the \$1.4 million Templeton Prize, tell us it's high time we trade in our old formulation of natural law for a radically different, more accurate view of reality: namely, that consciousness itself creates the material world.

Even though every physicist on the planet knows about the freaky universe where matter pops into existence from nothing at all and where electrons can jump from one orbit to another without traveling across intervening space, most have chosen to ignore it, to shrug their shoulders, and to employ the old tween standby “Whatever!”

It's not that they're in total denial. As I mentioned, they've used the new physics to develop lasers, transistors, superconductors, and atom bombs. But they can't even begin to explain how this quantum world works. As physicist James Trefil observed, “We've encountered an area of the universe our brains just aren't wired to understand.”

A few brave physicists are starting to acknowledge that their precious assumptions may be wrong. They're admitting that the fundamental tenets of material reality just don't hold up. Some are even brave enough to admit that consciousness itself creates the physical world. (As Dr. Fred Alan Wolf, physicist popularly known as Dr. Quantum, says, “It boils down to this—the universe doesn't exist without a perceiver of that universe.”)

All I have to say is, “About time.”

A Course in Miracles, a self-study program in spiritual psychology that I've been practicing and teaching for 25 years, has always advocated the idea that consciousness creates the material world. It says we humans decide in advance how we're going to experience life, that we choose beforehand what we want to see.

The problem is, we all look at the world with a giant chip on our shoulder. All we need to do to change the course of our crummy lives is to get over our ongoing grudge against the world, to actively see and expect a different reality. As it is now, we devote all our time and attention (our consciousness, if you will) to things we do not want.

But it's nothing more than a bad habit. And like any bad habit, it can be changed with conscious and deliberate effort.

It Is What It Isn't

“Man's concept of his world built on the experience of the five senses is no longer adequate and in many cases no longer valid.”

—SHAFICA KARAGULLA, M.D.,
TURKISH-BORN PSYCHIATRIST

Right now, the planet you call home is spinning at a rate of roughly 930 miles per hour. It's orbiting the sun at an astonishing 66,486 miles per hour. But unless you just polished off a couple pitchers of beer, you probably aren't aware of any such movement. That's just one tiny example of how we distort reality.

Turns out that almost all the concepts and judgments we take for granted are distortions. Very early on—say, sometime around birth—our minds establish a pattern of perception and then proceed to filter out everything else. In other words, we only “experience” things that jibe with our very limited perception.

A girl from the Philippines told me it was weeks, if not months, after she arrived in the United States before she noticed that some people here had red hair, including people she knew and dealt with on a regular basis. Red hair was inconsistent with what she had been conditioned to see and expect. So for several months, she was subjectively blind to red hair, seeing it as the brunette of her culture.

Scientists now know the brain receives 400 billion bits of information each second. To give you some idea of just how much information that is, consider this: It would take nearly 600,000 average size books just to print 400 billion zeros. Needless to say, that's a heck of a lot of reality. So what do we do? We start screening. We start narrowing down. *I'll take that bit of information over there, and let's see—this one fits nicely with my ongoing soap opera about the opposite sex.* When all is said and done, we're down to 2,000 measly bits of information. Go ahead and take a bow, because even that's pretty impressive. We're talking 2,000 bits of information each and every second. But here's the problem. What we choose to take in is only one-half of one-millionth of a percent of what's out there.

Let's pretend that each dot of a pen point is one bit of information. I've been practicing, and the most dots I can reasonably make in one second is five. But let's be generous and assume you're a better pen dotter than I am—let's pretend you can make ten dots per second. Again, we're assuming each dot is a bit of information. To make as many dots as your brain processes in one second takes nearly three and a half minutes at your highly superior rate of ten dots per second. But if your brain were processing all the available information (400 billion dots), it would take 821 years!

Our brains continually sift through the possibilities and pick which bits of information to “see” and believe. Out of sheer laziness, the stuff we choose to perceive—and make no mistake ... it is a choice—is stuff we already know. It's stuff we decided on way back when. We see, feel, taste, touch, and smell not the real world, but a drastically condensed version of the world, a version that our brains literally concoct. The rest zooms by without recognition. John Maunsell, a neuroscientist at Harvard University, says, “People imagine they're seeing what's really there, but they're not.”

Once your brain decides which bits to let in, it builds bridges between various nerve cells, interlacing nerve fibers to create neural pathways. The average human has 100 billion nerve cells, each with innumerable extensions, so different highways get built in each brain. The map of neural pathways in your brain and, say, Johnny Depp's brain are as different as the maps of Wisconsin and Rhode Island.

Once you get the pathways set up, you quit traveling the rest of the country. Interstate 70 in my home state of Kansas makes for a perfect metaphor. Believe it or not, Kansas—the state *The Wizard of Oz* portrayed in black and white—actually contains lots of geological landmarks. There's a miniature Grand Canyon in the northwest corner, for example, and a huge seven-story limestone formation called Castle Rock near the town of Quinter. But since people traveling through Kansas rarely leave Interstate 70, nobody has a clue that these geological formations exist. They've literally bypassed all the beautiful, worthwhile stuff and come to the erroneous conclusion that Kansas is flat and boring. But that's not reality.

Like those highway planners who put I-70 on the flattest, quickest, and easiest route, we build our neural pathways on the least complicated routes—the ones we've traveled so many times before. But this doesn't show us reality. Not even close. We don't begin to see all that is there—only three and a half minutes, compared to 821 years.

The roads and highways of our brains get set up pretty early. When we're born, every possibility exists. Let's take language, for example. Within every newborn is the ability to pronounce every sound in every single language. The potential is there for the *r* rolling of the Spanish language. It's also there for those guttural German diphthongs.

But very early on, our brains lay down neural pathways that mesh with the sounds we hear every day, eliminating other sounds from other languages.

With the possible exception of Barbara Walters, pretty much everyone who speaks English can pronounce the following phrase: "Rolling Rock really rouses Roland Ratinsky." But when people from China try to learn English, they no longer have the neural pathways to properly say their *r*'s, so that's why "fried rice" becomes "fled lice." Just so no one thinks I'm ethnocentric, I should probably add that I've tried pronouncing some of those guttural German words only to discover that my German neural pathways have been shot to hell and back.

Perhaps the best example of how your mind creates its own virtual-reality game is the everyday garden-variety dream. When Morley Safer showed up on your doorstep last night asking all those embarrassing questions, it seemed pretty darn real. But once the alarm clock went off, Morley and the virtual *60 Minutes* interview popped like the flimsy soap bubble it was.

Our neural pathways establish reruns of what has gone on before. Like the three-year-old who insists on watching *The Little Mermaid* over and over and over again, we cling to our warped illusions with a tenacious grip. *Get your bloody hands off my illusion!* Even though it makes us miserable, we prefer to place our faith in the disaster we have made.

We Observe Things into Form

"It takes zero faith. What it takes is imagination. ... If it's clear in your thought, it is even this moment barreling down on you like a Mack truck."

—RICHARD BACH, AUTHOR OF *ILLUSIONS*
AND OTHER METAPHYSICAL NOVELS

If you ask me, learning how to transform energy is so important it should be taught along with reading, writing, and arithmetic. And it all starts with intent, the force that lies behind everything. It's the energy, the fuel, the electric charge that sets up a resonant field and sends out probability waves into the FP. Esther Hicks, who facilitates the Abraham-Hicks material, calls it "launching a rocket of desire." Giving it attention adds mass.

The minute you make an intention, you create it. It's instantaneous. It exists as an actual thing. You don't see it yet because you're still operating from linear time. You're still sold on the old-school adage "creating things takes time." So you keep working and waiting. You keep following the seven steps from the latest self-help book.

But here's what physicists tell us. Things, in the quantum world, do not happen in steps. They happen immediately.

So the thing you intend, the minute you intend it, exists, but like Schrödinger's cat, a famous thought experiment devised in 1935 by Austrian physicist Erwin Schrödinger, you're only aware of

the reality you choose to observe. The physical manifestation remains enfolded outside your current consciousness.

Cutting-edge physics tells us life is multidimensional. But most of us are stuck in our one-dimensional physical reality, restricted to what we experience with our five senses. What we experience with these alleged foolproof tools of observation are nothing but what we decide to look for. It's not even a chicken-or-egg question. What we see, experience, and feel with our five senses always comes after the decision to see, experience, and feel it.

I liken consciousness to a giant skyscraper. I may be living on the second floor, but the "thing" created with my thought is up on the 17th floor. Until I can get to the 17th floor, it appears it's still missing, that I'm still waiting.

Another great analogy is a television set. If you have cable, more than 100 channels are yours for the clicking. TiVo aside, you can only watch one channel at a time. When you're watching, say *Modern Family*, you're chuckling at the antics of Cam, Mitchell, Phil, and Gloria and you're completely unaware of the other 99 (or more) channels. That's why it's really important to stay on the channel you want. Don't give any airtime to the reality from which you're trying to escape. Tune in only to your intent.

Reasons We Dial into Programs We Don't Like

"We live in a world that worships limitations."

—TAMA KIEVES, AUTHOR OF *THIS TIME I DANCE!*

1. We're not really here—not in "this moment." The now is the point of power. That's why it's so easy for a yogi, who consciously clears out mental static, to change his heart rate, pulse, and other body functions. If you're not really here, your mind is not available to do what you're asking it to do. It's imperative to practice conscious, moment-by-moment awareness. Otherwise, you're operating out of old encrusted beliefs, beliefs you downloaded before you were five years old. Do you really want a five-year-old running your life?

When I find my consciousness operating outside "the now," which is unfortunately a great percentage of the time, I gently remind myself of this analogy: The UPS driver just delivered to my house every single thing I've ever wanted, but because I've left the building, I don't even realize it. I'm out hunting for paltry substitutes. Everything is right there, once I bring my consciousness back to the timelessness of "now."

2. We've named it difficult. The power to create with our thoughts is a piece of cake. That's not even up for debate. But we keep telling our friends and especially ourselves that it's hard or that we're still working on it. Just notice in the next couple of days how often you affirm that it's "hard" or "challenging." Pay attention to how often you say, "Things have always been like that," or "It runs in my family." We spend so much time talking about what doesn't work that we miss the whole point, namely, that we have the power to create something that *does*.

3. We stalk negativity. What do we study? Disease, problems, disasters of the past. What do we prepare for? Emergencies. We love to sink our teeth into problems and ask, "What's wrong?" It's an old-school model that sorely needs transformation. Once we begin to look for what's right, our lives begin spinning in unimaginably exciting new directions.

And here's the truth. Every "wrong" thing, which in reality is nothing but a foolhardy judgment, has a flip side. Lack is the flip side of abundance. Sickness is the flip side of health. Both ideas exist at the same time. Both are true. By choosing to see one aspect, the other equally likely aspect is hidden.

Unfortunately, while living in the consciousness of space and time, you can only observe one side of the coin at a time. But it's important to realize that the other side is just as real and that at any time you can simply flip it over. Opposites (for example, abundance/lack) are both true. It's a question of which reality you'd rather live from.

4. By George, we think we've got it. Once you define something, you no longer question it. Once you know something, it becomes your reality. But knowing anything is exceedingly restrictive. In quantum speak, it collapses the wave, leaving no room for mystery, wonder, and new discoveries. Think about it. If one of your arms is filled with books and the other with a bag of groceries, it's impossible to pick up anything else. You may have a lot of knowledge and a bunch of academic degrees, framed and hanging on the second floor of that skyscraper. But remember there are lots of other "floors" (that is, dimensions) and all that you "know" can block potentialities.

5. The mind is so powerful it can create something "outside" itself to be more powerful. That's why it's essential when doing the experiments to suspend judgment long enough to believe they'll work. If you're convinced they're a family-size bucket of bull, you'll collect data to support that viewpoint.

6. We haven't really practiced. Using the FP to direct your life is not an intellectual exercise. It's not a theory. It's a practice. Like mastering scales. Or learning to play Ping-Pong. Tiger Woods may have only been 18 when he won the U.S. Amateur Championship, but he'd already racked up 16 years of practice. And he still devotes many hours a day to conditioning and practice. You cannot know wisdom. You can only be wisdom. And that's where this book comes in.

Picking Another Channel

"Emancipate yourself from mental slavery. None but ourselves can free our minds."

—BUMPER STICKER FOR SALE ON GREEN LIVING WEBSITE

The purpose of this book is to release you from the imprisonment of your illusions, to help you see aside the manufactured press release you believe to be reality. The good news is you don't have to change a single one of your behaviors. All you have to do is change your mind.

In case you haven't checked Amazon lately, there are literally thousands of books on how to change your body. At last count, "buns" alone merited 678 books and CDs. But as far as I can tell, there's not a single book on how to shape your mind. Yet your mind, with all its preset, misconstrued neural pathways, is the root of all your problems. Remember that it is consciousness, as brave physicists such as Fred Wolf are starting to acknowledge, that creates physical reality. Even those buns that aren't steel yet.

You can go back time and time again to the shoe store, but it will never sell milk. And all those desperate attempts to change your body, your relationship, your fill-in-the-blank are never going to work until you learn to change and shape your mind.

It's pretty difficult to control your mind when you think you have to do it forever. But by setting u

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