

AJR Robert Atkinson Transcript

0:00:01 - Announcer

Julie Ryan, noted psychic and medical intuitive, is ready to answer your personal questions, even those you never knew you could ask. For more than 25 years, as she developed and refined her intuitive skills, Julie used her knowledge as a successful inventor and businesswoman to help others. Now she wants to help you to grow, heal and get the answers you've been longing to hear. Do you have a question for someone who's transitioned? Do you have a medical issue? What about your pet's health or behavior? Perhaps you have a loved one who's close to death and you'd like to know what's happening? Are you on the path to fulfill your life's purpose, no matter where you are in the world? Take a journey to the other side and Ask Julie Ryan

Hi everybody, welcome to the Ask Julie Ryan Show. It's where we blend spirituality and practicality to help you live a life of purpose and joy. What if every struggle, setback and success in your life was pointing you towards your soul's true calling? Well, my guest, Dr Robert Atkinson, is a developmental psychologist and author who helps people discover the deeper purpose hidden within their life stories. With wisdom drawn from spirituality, psychology and storytelling. Dr Atkinson shows us how to navigate life's challenges with trust, clarity and courage. Life's challenges with trust, clarity and courage. Join me as we explore practical ways to view your life through a spiritual lens, so that you can embrace the journey you're on and live with greater meaning, resilience and joy.

Please remember to subscribe, leave a comment and share this episode with your family and friends. Now let's go talk with Dr Atkinson. Bob, welcome to the show. I'm so delighted you could join us today, thank you.

0:02:55 - Robert

Julie, it's great to be with you.

0:02:59 - Julie

Do you believe our challenges are chosen by the soul before birth and, if so, how do they shape our life story?

0:03:08 - Robert

Ah, wow, great one to start off with. Does the soul choose its challenges? Well, you know there's a story about that and I think, because this story is so universal, it may help answer the question. So there is a story called the Angel and the Unborn Soul and what that's about. I mean, it's found in many traditions, including Jewish and many others. When the soul is in the womb, an angel comes to it and tells it I'm going to show you what your life is going to be like on earth. So it takes the soul from the womb to take it on this journey and it shows it what its life is going to be like and returns the soul to the womb. Nine months later, the soul and the body are born, forgetting what it has learned as a soul.

So our sort of job and purpose and direction from birth on is remembering what we forgot when we were showed what our life would be like as an unborn soul. And so, based on that story, which is pretty universal, there is a purpose to our lives and there's also a direction and something I mean. The angel knew what our life was going to be about and showed us, but we, as soon as we came into this physical plane, we forgot. And that's the challenge of our life is to remember. So the story that we tell about our lives is really about remembering who we are, where we came from and where we're going.

That's the important part. That gets to your question. Where we're going is part of what we remember and when we do that I mean. So I think we have. So it's there for us to discover and

to remember, and when we do get a sense of what that might be, something clicks within us and we recognize that that is really familiar to me, somehow, from somewhere. We may not be familiar with this legend of the angel and the unborn soul, but we can remember that what we're experiencing now in our 20s or 30s, whenever it is, is familiar to us and that's because we were shown what our life is going to be like as an unborn soul.

So there is that fairly universal legend that really answers your question in that way is that there is a purpose and a direction and we have to discover it, and when we do, when we get close to that, we have a recognition as well as a remembrance of what it is we're supposed to be doing in this life.

0:06:31 - Julie

All right, so your answer just generated about 15 million questions about that in my head, so let me go through them. First of all, do you think that has something to do with *deja vu*, that we remember seeing it because and did we fabricate it? Did the angel fabricate it? Was it fabricated by God or the universe or source? And then we're shown it, and the angels shown it. What's the what?

0:06:55 - Robert

do you think so? I think that's, I think that's totally what *deja vu* is about. There might be other forms of *deja vu* as well, but that's clearly one form of it which is remembering what we knew as a soul. And so then, when we have that to start with, that indicates to me that there is a greater design to all of life. Not only that we were born with this human body which has, you know, thousands and thousands of cells and different organs that all miraculously somehow know innately how to work together to maintain the wellness of our being. It knows that innately, but there may be something beyond that as well that we know that from. So my sense of that legend is that there is a greater, not only a greater purpose to everything, but a great designer of everything, and our challenge is to align with that great designer of everything, all things, including our own lives.

0:08:20 - Julie

So do they have like a script division in heaven where they got a bunch of writers going okay, now, Bob, we want you to incarnate and do this, this and this, and Julie, we want you to do that, that and that, and? Or is it a collaborative event where we're working with our guides God, the universe, whatever to come up with something that we want to experience and explore? I mean, who knows, We'll know when we go back to heaven, right? But what a thought-provoking question.

0:08:55 - Robert

Yeah, definitely, and I think it really is a collaborative effort that's. A big part of what we're here to discover is the collaboration involved in living out our lives within ourselves and the principle of as above so below. That might be one form of. We have scriptwriters here. We know there's plenty divine script writers as well.

0:09:54 - Julie

I think so too, absolutely. If you had to describe the soul's journey in three words, what would they be?

0:10:03 - Robert

Knowing, forgetting, remembering.

0:10:07 - Julie

Okay. So knowing, forgetting, remembering and when we remember what it is that we designed and we feel like we've fulfilled it, then we're back on to heaven and back and

dreaming up the next adventure is kind of how I think about it. My philosophy is happy, healthy, dead. When I'm done, I want to go back to heaven and then come up with my next adventure.

0:10:30 - Robert

Yeah, yeah, it's so that when we get to the remembering part of that journey, then the real work begins of living what we know, what we have remembered, of living what we know, what we have remembered, living it out for the rest of our lives and staying on that path. That has become clear to us, what our individual personal path is within the collective. And that's again about the collaboration and the above is below. Once we do remember who we are, where we're going, then our responsibility becomes living that path, that journey that was set out for us.

And there's a lot more to this too. I mean, this is part of what I go into in my latest book, the Way of Unity, to connect the origin of creation with what's happening right now in the world, which we can go into later, but it's all about, you know, how we understand the big picture of things. So I personally, in my book, takes a big picture, holistic view of all that that we're talking about now. And the thing about that holistic view is there's nothing that doesn't fit together with something else. Everything in creation is connected and interdependent and interrelated with everything else.

0:12:17 - Julie

I agree, and I'd like to do a deep dive into that here in a couple of minutes. Let's change directions for a second. Myths have been told for thousands of years. I love myths. What makes them still so relevant today and how do they help our spiritual growth?

0:12:38 - Robert

Yeah, great question, and I'm glad you asked that right up front, because there's such a misunderstanding of what myth is First of all.

First of all, myth is not what we think of it in the popular sense. Over the centuries, it has become something thought of as something that is not true, as a falsehood, but not true as a falsehood. But when we go back to the origin of myth and the way that it was used in the earliest of times, with the indigenous peoples everywhere, who each had their own set of myths some were creation myths, some were myths about how to live this life they were all true in a spiritual sense. So that's the first thing to remember about myth and the role of myth in our lives. They represent a true story, that they are a true story, and so we first of all need to turn around, reverse, turn inside out the popular definition and think of myth as something that is essentially, in its core and essence, is true, and so, with that understanding, we can understand better, at the same time, why stories were so central to Indigenous peoples everywhere. The stories told around the campfire or wherever it was were told for spiritual development reasons.

They were told about whether it was other creatures or whatever the story might be about. Many of them were told as metaphors of one way of describing something else, but they were essentially about a truth that we needed to be aware of so that we could live into it in our lives. And that's why, in indigenous cultures and traditional cultures all the way up to pretty much the 19th century, much the 19th century maintained the sharing of their myths and sacred stories. I mean, that's really another, better term for, or a better way to understand myth now is to think of them as a sacred story. So in that sense, they're as essential to all cultures all times as anything else we could think of, because they were guides for us. They were getting back to where we started myths, sacred stories, are guides for the soul living its life in this world.

0:15:51 - Julie

Myths and legends and sacred stories. All the same thing? Not exactly.

0:15:56 - Robert

I mean legend is another term, another form or type. It's like literature that has many genres, and a legend, academically, is a specific kind of story that also traditionally was true, or at least symbolically true of something, and in that way legends are similar to myths and sacred stories, but they also have their own unique characteristics that make them a little different.

0:16:43 - Julie

Can you give us an example of a myth, a legend and a sacred story that most of us would know or would have heard of?

0:16:51 - Robert

Okay, so one, one sacred story from the Bible was the story of Job. You know who? Well, yeah, job is one, but another one that's a that might be as well known or more, is Jonah and the belly of the whale. That's a story that is true on the inside, but not necessarily in the literal sense. So in the in the Bible it's told as a story to to present a, a truth, which is, in this case, the story of Jonah and the belly of the whale. That's a story about transformation and how transformation happens. Jonah, you know whatever the details were, ends up during his quest inside the belly of the whale. But the purpose of that, and in the quest that he was living out, and in the quest that he was living out, that represents the middle portion of the pattern of transformation. So let me put the story of Jonah in a three-part transformational process that it's really meant to to explain.

The first part is the beginning. He goes out, he's searching for something. The middle part is what I refer to as the muddle, and that is when we experience challenges in our life, whatever the challenge might be for us particularly. But that challenge is there for the purpose of helping to bring about and complete the transformation that we set out on a journey for, without necessarily knowing and the third part is what I call the resolution. So in order for Jonah's story to be completed, he has to come back out of the belly of the whale as a different person. That's how and why he was transformed. Why he went in in the first place and why he came out is he's now a different person. He's a transformed person. That's the basic three-part meaning of that particular story. And you know most of the other examples that I can think of. The thing about them is that they all follow that same pattern of beginning, muddle and resolution, because they are all describing the process of transformation.

0:19:53 - Julie

So is there a story that would be comparable, that would be a myth, and also a story that would be comparable, that would be considered to be a legend, with that same basic storyline that the parable of Jonah and the whale that you just described?

0:20:12 - Robert

Yeah. So one parallel for that pattern in myth would be Gilgamesh, or even Odysseus. You know, odysseus may be a little more well-known. He went through a sea journey that took him through the rough seas, the worst conditions, the worst circumstances possible on the sea, and it was the same thing, just different circumstances. The rough seas and everything that he experienced on his sea voyage were to bring about a transformation, and that's what happened to Odysseus as well. So that's the common pattern.

And, of course, if anyone is familiar with Joseph Campbell and his work, the Hero with a Thousand Faces that's exactly what he was describing was different versions of the same pattern that came out in 1949, contains dozens and dozens of examples like that. And what he did that was the first time that this had been done was he put all of those myths and legends and sacred stories. He broke them down into the same pattern. He had three main archetypes separation, initiation and return were the ones that he used, and then he broke each of those three major archetypes down into smaller motifs. And there are thousands of variations, but the

basic pattern is the same in everyone's story. Variations, but the basic pattern is the same in everyone's story.

And and um, I was um to bring my, to bring a little bit of my own story in here. I was um. I didn't know it at the time, but in my this is in my uh twenties I was living through some experiences that I knew were different and important and meaningful. But I didn't know at the time that I was following my experiences were leading me to places and to people that were helping to bring about an inner transformation for me as well. And I didn't know that until, by chance, I met Joseph Campbell at a talk that he gave. It was one of his Cooper Union talks in Greenwich Village, new York City, and by chance, I was in the city that day.

Didn't know about it, but I saw a poster on a bookstore bulletin board about his talk just a few blocks away.

I had enough time to walk over there, sat down and he explained in this huge hall about a thousand people, like he was just talking to me, with all these other hundreds of people around me, in a way that made complete sense of everything that I was experiencing at that time. So I had no idea at that time what my return part would be yet. That was still to come, but it meant so much to me to have that clarified for me that I went up afterwards and introduced myself and this was before he became very well known through his talks with Bill Morris, and he was very open and willing to talk with me further about that after that particular talk and so we kept in touch and he became a mentor for me. But that's an example of how it's not only a universal pattern that all the myths and legends and sacred stories follow. It's really the deeper level of what our personal lives are designed to follow as well.

0:24:22 - Julie

So we've got Odysseus as the myth. We've got Jonah and the whale as the sacred story. What's an example of a legend? We've got Jonah and the whale. Is this a sacred story? What's an example of a legend?

0:24:43 - Robert

Well, I mean, one might be something like Paul Bunyan. Is anybody familiar with Paul Bunyan? Sure.

0:24:56 - Julie

Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, he was a lumber. Yeah, yeah, lumberjack.

0:24:59 - Robert

He was a lumberjack, yeah, and the part that's known about him is that he was this huge giant of a lumberjack and could accomplish anything that he wanted to. But the lesser known part of that legend is how Paul Bunyan became the undefeatable giant of a lumberjack that he is. He wasn't born that way. He didn't just appear the way he was that we know him. His life went through its own transformational journey for him to become who he was and to recognize what his real role and purpose in life was. So that's just one legend of many that follows that same pattern.

0:26:01 - Julie

When it comes to legends and myths and stories? Is it because most of us were illiterate Most people were illiterate until fairly recently in the evolution of humanity and we taught through stories and we shared information through stories and all of that? So is it a nature or a nurture thing? Do we all come in kind of hardwired that stories resonate with us Because we start telling stories to babies? I mean, my gosh, all the nursery rhymes that we sing to babies. Those are all stories as well, and it helps them develop their neural pathways.

I've read articles and studies on that which I find fascinating, and every culture has their stories. I am fascinated with what you mentioned earlier too, Bob, in that how it's kind of like so many people throughout the ages have gotten the same divine downloads on the story of Jonah and the whale and whatever description it is, and then they put their twist on it and they make it conform to how it can be understandable within their tribe or their community. So do you think it's nature or nurture or both? Because we certainly all resonate with stories, whether they be myths or whether it be a family story.

0:27:27 - Robert

Yeah, you're right, it's definitely both. It has to be both, because pretty much everything is everything of importance, is a both and rather than a either or. And I'm not sure I would look at it as a matter of being illiterate, because when we go back to when and where sacred stories and myths were really the center of community life, people were not illiterate, it's more a matter of technology. There just wasn't the means technologically for those really important stories to be written down yet, so they had to be passed on by word of mouth. And that's what mythology and folklore are all about passing on traditions and wisdom by word of mouth. And you know, with a few millennia and the many centuries that have passed since that time, there have been other.

There have been many things come into our lives, especially technological things, you know, like the telegraph, the telephone, the radio, the newspaper printing, press and all of those. They were part of an evolutionary process that, on one level, took humanity away from its core, away from its center, from its core away from its center, by giving it these other things out there that could take the place of what we knew innately and were supported by the community around us. That's why stories were so central around the campfire. So it's not a matter of being illiterate. I think of it as people were born with and this relates to the legend of the angel and the unborn soul as well we were born with the knowledge within us. Well, we were born with the knowledge within us, but it may have not been in our consciousness when we became old enough to think about certain kinds of things. But that's what the community was for.

The community was there to assist that process of making the forgotten remembered and, as we know, there's no way that newspapers, printing press, tv, movie theaters are going to be able to do that in the same way that we can do it with each other in our homes or in our neighborhoods or communities, to have the opportunity to leave the comfortableness of their home, to go out into the unknown, to explore, to search for what they will find as being true for themselves, while at the same time discovering what it was that they needed to remember that they knew as an unborn soul.

So there's much more responsibility put upon each of us in our times because, as we know, so many young people today are glued to their phones and couldn't really care less about what else is going on in the world a lot of the time. But that's what's essential to life and to remembering what we forgot is getting out there in the world, getting into uncomfortable situations, getting into the unknown to explore what we're not familiar with, and that's what will help us, that's what will jog our memory and connect us to what was forgotten while we were being born into this world like God, is utilizing our imagination to your point to really help us expand ourselves spiritually.

0:32:25 - Julie

Imagination is a key component, and when you said, you can't do it in movies. That's why, when our imagination is kicked in, when reading a book and then we watch the movie, most of the time people that have read the book before they see the movie they say, oh, the movie was good, but the book was better. Well, it's because you're using your own imagination to envision all of these different things. I'm also fascinated with the Arthurian legends the lady in the lake, the sword in the stone, you know Camelot, all of that stuff, and I've read books and read

articles about how. To your point earlier, when we first started this conversation, bob, that myths have a semblance of truth. A semblance of truth, and many of those myths in the Arthurian legends have been proven where the source was. Where did that myth begin? And what I've read is it didn't happen in England, it happened in Scotland, which is interesting. And so is Camelot a myth. Is it a legend? Is it a sacred story? I, I would guess it's a myth well, that's.

0:33:44 - Robert

That's a. That could be a really interesting debate about that. By many people I would. I actually would think of that particular one as all three at the same time oh, maybe okay it.

I mean the one, one of one of the things that's really important about that particular myth, legend, sacred story is that it has so many inner levels to it and one of the sort of easy ways out. When we read a book or watch a movie or whatever it is, we may only read it or watch it on a surface level, but the real transformation happens on the deeper levels, when we're able to get to the deeper level of the meaning of the story itself. And that's a great example, because the deeper you go into that particular story, the more fascinating it is. As you described, and to go back to the way you started, it really is all about using our imagination in the way that was meant to be used. In the way that was meant to be used, we have the sense of imagination for a very important reason, and the full use of our innate imagination and creativity is really what moves us closer to what I would call a unitive consciousness, us closer to what I would call a unitive consciousness. There's a real, key, critical purpose to utilizing our own innate imagination, creativity, and so we could talk a lot more about what a unitive consciousness is and how we get there, but stories are key to that process, and the thing about utilizing our imagination, which allows us to implement our creativity, to be creative, to be creative. That is what leads us toward a journey and a process through which we will not only in that process of an unfettered search that we actually encounter the limited, divisive and exclusive forms of consciousness which we then, as we go deeper and deeper and further and further into that journey, we can recognize that we're not really comfortable with those divisive, exclusive forms of consciousness. So that leads us further on, and as we transcend and let go of those, we then can adopt a consciousness that brings about unity, a consciousness that brings about unity. So that's a really essential part of the world that we experience every day.

And the more we go into that process, the more we're able to, on our own and through the right sources, we're able to distinguish truth from falsehood or right from wrong. And I mean this really connects with what's going on today, of course, too, because it's the prevalence of disinformation that makes seeking a unit of consciousness one of the only ways that can save us from a make-believe realm of concoction or things being made up just for the sake of doing that. So we have an inherent urge to understand reality. That's the nature of who we are, as human beings and as spiritual beings with a body, spiritual beings with a body. And through that, through following our inherent urge to understand reality, we discover a fundamental obligation of our humanity, of our sacred nature, which is to seek and to fulfill this capacity and responsibility that is embedded within us. So it's really our pursuit of truth that leads us to understanding that truth is one.

0:38:52 - Julie

How'd you get into all of this? Were you reading myths, mythology and Camelot as a child? I mean, would you just wake up one day and think, oh, I'm going to go explore mythology and legends and stuff like that? What has your life's trajectory been to get you to this place, where you're one of the most well-known experts in this field?

0:39:22 - Robert

Well, that's a great question, and it's not that there isn't a short answer or a short or a really short period in my life when that, when that happened, it was rather a kind of a long process,

one of the things I mean. But I can identify certain key spots along the way, and one was when I was about nine years old, I think it was my grandmother was living with us for part of the year and I remember clearly observing my grandmother as a nine-year-old in her room spending hours reading the Bible in the upper room, another that went with the Bible in the upper room, another that went with the Bible, and I was as a nine-year-old, I was just fascinated by her devotion and I was curious about what it was that created her commitment to this daily practice of hers. So that was one thing, and not too long after that I had an experience. I was sitting on my bed one day around the same age, just gazing out the window from sitting on my bed, and I got this. This voice came to me and said someday you will know these mysteries. I have no idea where this came from, or or you know anything else, but it was a voice, that and a message that stayed with me on a deep level for a long, long time.

I didn't do anything about it immediately, obviously as a nine-year-old, but it did eventually, and high school was a whole different kind of experience. I think back on that almost as sleepwalking through high school. But when I did get to college I was beginning to remember some of those kinds of things from my childhood and where I really wanted to go, and I soon recognized, as a freshman in college, that I needed to major in philosophy. I had no idea what I was going to do with it that's another old story but I knew at that time as a freshman in college that I had a major in philosophy and that's really what led me to a focused, not only academic but personal, pursuit of philosophy, mythology, comparative religion and everything else that we've been talking about. So that was you know, how the long-term process kind of unfolded for me.

0:42:11 - Julie

So it's not like as kids you wanted to be a plumber and then one day you heard the voice that sounded like Morgan Freeman going. One day you will know the answers to all of these. And then you changed trajectories. It sounds like really out of the chute. You knew that that was going to be the trajectory of your life, even though you didn't know all the details, certainly as a child. And back to the Bible that your grandmother was reading are the stories in the Bible, are they parables? There's a lot of Christians that take it verbatim, those stories in the Bible. And then there are others that say you got to look at the bigger meaning. You know their parables, their analogies to help us look at the bigger picture, like how you so beautifully described Jonah and the whale. And people say, well, that's not right. And I say people have been analyzing the daylights out of the Bible and all the other holy texts since the beginning of time and they probably still will till the end of time. So what's your interpretation on that?

0:43:22 - Robert

Well, I tend to agree with those who have really identified the stories in the Bible both the Old Testament and the New Testament as parables. I mean, I think it's fairly well accepted now that Jesus spoke in parables and he chose that as a way to speak to his followers because that was one thing that was common and people knew about parables and what they were meant for even way back then. But the thing about parables is that they are told in something that may be familiar to us but are really describing something on a much deeper level that is not only familiar to us, but maybe that we've experienced in our own lives too. To us, but maybe that we've experienced in our own lives too, and so there was a way, there's a really important reason for using parables to teach the truth, the deeper truth of those stories, and I believe that's what they were used for. And so that means that reading the stories in the Bible to get the most meaning out of them requires reading them on the deepest level we can, whether that's again using our imagination to try to figure out what could be the deeper meaning of whatever in the story. That's why we have the sense of imagination to answer those kinds of questions about the real meaning of a story or a parable on our own, the real meaning of a story or a parable on our own.

And when that doesn't work for us directly, specifically, then we have the help of others in our family or community or faith community, whatever it might be, to help us with that. But ultimately it's got to become something that we pursue and arrive at on our own, so it really does become an independent search for truth. But we can't take things on the surface level. That's the thing about parables. Parables, they're not meant to be taken on the surface level. We have to look at them on as deep a level as we can.

0:46:11 - Julie

Interesting thing that's coming into my head as I'm listening to you talk about this is a lot of the work that I do, bob, is energy healing work. I'm a medical intuitive. I learned how to do all of this stuff and I teach people all over the world how to do it, and I'm like a human MRI and I, with somebody's permission, can look inside their body and see broken bones, torn ligaments, viral infections, whatever cancer, and then spirit works through me and with me to help facilitate healing on the energetic level. And it's all in metaphors, it's all analogies. If you listen to one of my call-in shows we do it every Thursday night you'll hear me say okay, now, bob, imagine that your elbow looks like whipped cream, and then imagine that there's a big beater like from a mixer that's going to mix it together and we're going to throw these other ingredients in there and it's going to be like a balm and it's going to heal that torn ligament or whatever that's going on in your elbow. And when this first started coming in for me, it was embarrassing, quite frankly. I was like people are just going to think I'm out of my ever loving mind, of my ever loving mind. However, what I've realized after doing this for 30 years is spirits using our imagination to help us envision a healing in a way that we can picture it or feel it or sense it, whatever. And the body's always going to follow what the brain's showing it, even if the brain doesn't believe it to be true. And in reality, when we look at, let's say, western medicine you got your leg, got a big cut on your leg. You go to the emergency room, the doctor's going to stitch it up and the doctor doesn't make your skin grow back. You make your own skin grow back.

Everybody heals themselves, but being able to envision and use our imaginations, it helps us heal. And really we don't see a cell attached to another cell, to another cell, to another cell that's going to cause a scab to form. And then we're watching all the other cells attached to one another to form skin underneath so that when the scab falls off, our wound is healed. But we know that it works. So I'm listening to you in your description of all of this and I'm thinking well, that's what spirit's doing with me, with these different analogies for things that are being used to describe the healing in a human frame of reference that we can understand and oftentimes it's hilarious, the images that I get. And when I ask Spirit about that, I hear it's supposed to be fun, because fun and joy is a high vibration and that's when the magic happens in the high vibration.

So I'm with you on the imagination. You'll hear me say if you listen to one of my shows okay, now, imagine this, imagine that, imagine this. And I wasn't trained to do that, it's just come in naturally for me to bring in a person's imagination, not only in the healing, but I find that in everything in the work that I do. Whether we're talking to somebody's grandmother in heaven, you know, and she's showing me a jar of strawberry jam and I'm thinking, okay, what's that got to do with anything? And my client's going, oh, she made the best strawberry jam and that's all she put on peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. And you know I mean there's always an image that involves our imagination. So I think you've really captured on something huge there that has a spiritual component to it that most people don't realize.

0:50:02 - Robert

Yeah, yeah, and of course, your work with healing, energy healing, and that work is so important, and that's another.

The work that you do is another really great example of how that works in the way that you described.

It's fun as well to recognize and acknowledge the connection between the kind of work you just described, which is healing work in its purest, and storytelling and creativity. The thing that connects all of those is our imagination. So the other thing I just want to mention quickly about our imagination is that that is the sense that we're born with. That is meant to connect us to our soul. And when we recognize things that are happening and, as you described it, when something works, we get a feeling of things being right and we also, at the same time, get a sense of that wholeness, that greater unity of all things. Greater unity of all things, Because that's what, if we were to imagine what the angel was showing the unborn soul when it took it from its mother's womb? It's something along the lines of preparing us for being able to recognize how all things in this creation are connected. And that's again where the hermetic principle of as above so below comes in. That applies to everything.

So I guess I would just encourage I would encourage listeners to begin, if they haven't already begin a practice of allowing your imagination to flow freely, take you where it wants to take you and watch and listen and see where it is leading you, because it's probably going to be taking you in a direction that will bring you toward what you need to remember from your soul journey with the angel. So that's how it's all connected and it's all about degrees and levels, and the more we can rely on and be comfortable with using our imagination to its fullest, the closer we'll become to that wholeness and the more connected we'll be to that greater wholeness, emotion of the entire creation.

0:53:41 - Julie

Is that what you're talking about when you use the description, which I love, the eye of oneness? Is that what you're describing? Did you just give us a definition of that?

0:53:53 - Robert

Yeah, yeah, thanks for making that connection. Yeah, that's what looking at things through the eye of oneness would be like.

0:54:09 - Julie

Exactly. You say every life's part of a greater divine story. I love that. How can somebody recognize this sacred arc in their own journey?

0:54:21 - Robert

Again, it has to do with you know. Again, it has to do with you know. You mentioned *deja vu* earlier. It has to do with that in a way.

In a certain way, whenever we get the sensation of *deja vu*, that kind of thing is happening for a very important reason. Reason, and that big reason is that it's helping us to reconnect with a deeper, really the eternal part of ourselves which we may have lost contact with or connection with by being in the world too much or something like that. It's about recognizing that. That's really where our imagination is trying to lead us to. It's trying to reconnect us to our deepest sense of self, with a capital S, and I think that's what happens when we allow our imagination to take us.

So that also relates to the very first motif or archetype in the mythic journey, which is call to adventure, or simply the call. And in my book from 2022, a *New Story of Wholeness*, I refer to that as the call to wholeness. But that's the beginning part of our journey of transformation that takes us to a deeper, much clearer sense of our own innate wholeness. And when we follow that call to wholeness and go through the middle part, which I call the path of purification, and then when we get to the third part, return to wholeness.

That's when we realize that our responsibility is to live out our lives with taking on the responsibility that we've been given to give back what we've been given. That we've been given to give back what we've been given. It's a cyclical process and while at the same time, assisting others to begin or follow that transformational process in their own lives.

0:57:25 - Julie

Along those lines. How can people reframe painful experiences and understand that they really are part of their soul's growth?

0:57:36 - Robert

Is there a technique, or I don't know that there's an easy way, but is there something that you've discovered along your studies and your experiences that can help others Well, I think a big part of that process that you're asking about is an inner understanding of the entire process, and so, again, going back to that basic pattern of beginning, muddle and resolution, the understanding that the muddle has a purpose in our lives and a role to play, that's the only thing that will bring us to the resolution, which will then enable us to carry out our lives, continue living our lives on a higher level. So it's almost as if those challenges and hurdles and struggles that everyone experiences in their lives are meant to move us further along in our journey. It's like further along in our journey. One of the easiest ways to get there is to have a set of stair steps that are allowing you to take those steps one by one to get to that place you want to be.

0:59:01 - Julie

And even though I mean even if the steps were spaced way out or whatever they were, Even if the steps were spaced way out or whatever they were, they're necessary for you to get to that higher place, does it?

0:59:17 - Robert

help us create too, because when we know we don't want it, it helps us create what we do want. Yeah, some of the greatest creations have come out of struggle, and the greatest challenges anyone could imagine have been born from that kind of struggle.

0:59:34 - Julie

Is there one simple practice if you had to distill it down that anybody could do to help them connect with their life's bigger story and purpose?

0:59:45 - Robert

Well, that's another great question to end there, because there are many, so to identify just one is pretty challenging.

0:59:55 - Julie

Like somebody that's just beginning to understand this stuff.

0:59:59 - Robert

So, having to narrow it down to one, I would just if people aren't already doing this, I would say the first step in that process of search and discover and transformation is a regular practice of meditation and prayer, practice of meditation and prayer. And I say that because those are two for me, those are two steps to a connected process. Through meditation, we listen for guidance, for a higher message, whatever it might be. Prayer is also a step toward something. It's not just saying something and letting it sit by itself. It's saying something, becoming aware of it and doing it. Another version or variation on that is a concept that I think of. It's very similar to that, and that is understanding that everything we do can have a three-part process.

So three is a big number here for everything transformation and everything else but there are three things that we need to understand to make things happen in our lives.

The first thing is knowledge of what we want, of what we want. The second thing is will or volition to make that happen, and then the third thing is taking action to make it happen. So it's a process of knowledge, volition and action.

1:02:15 - Julie

They're also interconnected and together they complete a process of bringing about what you envision in your life. Yeah, and I think that's a missing link with all this manifestation. You know, manifest whatever you want. What a lot of them leave out is you got to take action, because people say, oh, I do all of these affirmations every morning and it hasn't happened yet. I go, well, what are you doing now? But you know, start. You got to take action to create whatever it is you're trying to manifest. I completely agree with you. Create whatever it is you're trying to manifest. I completely agree with you. If people that have heard and watched this conversation today have just one main takeaway from our discussion, what do you hope it's going to be?

1:02:59 - Robert

Well, we've talked about a lot of different things in this hour. I guess the takeaway would be that don't let what you want in your life to feel like it's out of your control. You do have control of your life and that's where the what we were just talking about knowledge, volition and action. That's where that comes in so much. We have to first know what we want, then the will to want to make it happen. But, as you were saying too, the key is the taking the action that will make it happen. So that puts the knowing that and carrying that three-part process out in our lives keeps the agency with ourselves rather than giving it up to anything or anyone else.

1:03:59 - Julie

A couple more questions as we're winding down here here. Do you think that God, the angels, our spirits, our deceased loved ones, who are sending us guidance all the time? Do you think they whisper to us or do they shout it to us, or is it a combination of both?

1:04:18 - Robert

Yeah, depending on the circumstances, it could be a whisper, it could be shouting. And the other interesting part of that, I think, is that, unfortunately, due to our human nature and free will, they have to sometimes say the same thing over and over, again and again, again and again to us for us to get it. But, yeah, we get those kind of messages a lot, and so, again, it's a matter of being aware enough of ourselves, where we are, who we are, where we're going to recognize when those kinds of voices do come to us, because they have a really important purpose, and if we don't hear it the first time, they'll tell us the second, third, fourth time.

1:05:11 - Julie

Maybe that's why the same stories are told in all the cultures and all the religious texts, because they're wanting us to get it one way or the other and so they're going to present it in a bunch of different ways. Maybe that's part of the whole overall equation. With that last question, why do we incarnate? Why do we incarnate? Why do we incarnate period? Why do we come have this human experience?

1:05:38 - Robert

Yeah, that's great. I happen to believe that this human experience is, in a sense, sort of a training ground for not only what can be brought about on this plane and in this world, but also what we will experience as we continue our journey as souls into the next realm. So so our we. We incarnate into this world to perfect our qualities, attributes, virtues, and live our life according to those, so that we become the best version of what we're designed to become, and that's what will move us much further along in our eternal journey in our eternal journey.

1:06:45 - Julie

Well said, you, sir, are an extraordinary combination of brilliance and wisdom all rolled into one package. And when you said that Joseph Campbell was one of your mentors, I thought, well, yeah, no kidding. And it's really evident to me why the two of you were so close and worked together, and I would have loved to have been a fly on the wall in those conversations that you guys most likely had over the years and times spent together. So, thank you for the work that you're doing and thank you for enlightening us all. How can people learn more about you and your work?

1:07:29 - Robert

Yeah, thank you, Julie, it's been a pleasure being with you. Well, my website is my name, robertatkinson.net, and my newest book is the Way of Unity Essential Principles and Preconditions for Peace. So this is where in the new book is where I bring all of this thinking together in what I think of as being a very practical way and for practical reason, which is to bring about, to be part of the process of bringing about peace on earth, which has been so long promised by so many traditions. This is the book that will provide the stepping stones, the preconditions and everything else for that. It does have a study guide, so it's designed for groups and book clubs to work together and consult on the questions in the study guide. And, yeah, so there's more on that on my website, robertatkinson.net.

1:08:36 - Julie

Okay, terrific. We will have all of that in the show notes. In the meantime, everybody sending you lots of love from Sweet Home Alabama, and from Maine to where Bob is. We'll see you next time. Bye, everybody, Thanks for joining us.

1:08:52 - Annr

Be sure to follow Julie on Instagram and YouTube at AskJulieRyan, and like her on Facebook at AskJulieRyan. To schedule an appointment or submit a question, please visit AskJulieRyan.com.

1:09:06 - Disclaimer

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