

# Michael's Creed

I believe in an infinite, undefinable deity. I believe that the word deity is only a metonym for the indescribable.

I believe in the everlasting existence of the soul in all living creatures. As long as that soul is remembered it can help advise, console, and empower. These souls are what I believe angels and saints to be.

I believe that deity and soul are outside of reality. Appealing to our personal soul and to the greater host of souls is to appeal to that beyond our limitations of space and time.

I believe that the one true holy book is that which is written in the fundamental structure of reality. A book revealed to humans through the study of Mathematics and made manifest through its application in Science, Technology, Engineering, and the Arts. It is in this reality, that from our perception all things are made.

I believe deity does play dice with the universe, and the dice are loaded. All existence is a natural result of random chance. Every choice begetting new choices. I believe every decision affects the options available to others and as such global changes can be made through individual probability manipulation.

# Rochelle's Experience

As I watch the events of our world seemingly spin out of control and devolve into chaos. I wonder what my part is in all of it. I recognize that I am only one person, and one person without much power over the actions taken in this world, but I also recognize that I am one connection point on the interdependent web of existence. While I may not be able to affect all aspects of that web, I can be a connection point to an infinite number of other connection points on that web.

My actions, my energy, my presence can have an effect on every person with whom I come into contact. I cannot truly control the actions of any other person, but I can control who I am with other people. I hold a lot of power in how I show up in my life and in the lives of the people with whom I interact.

My truth lies not in one true God, or in a higher power that controls the actions of us down here on earth. I do not know if there is a God, I only know what I have experienced on this earth, what I have witnessed others experience on this earth. I know what I see and what I feel. I see and I feel the suffering of people world wide. I see this suffering in the oppressed and I see the suffering in those doing the oppressing. We are all suffering in some way with the actions that are taking place around the globe. I feel this suffering in my soul.

I watch as people deal with that suffering in innumerable different ways, through humor, through tears, through anger, through demonstrations, letter writing, substance abuse, gambling, mindless media consumption. I watch people isolate, I watch them come together to support one another.

I watch people fight, they fight with people with whom they disagree, they fight with people with whom they agree. Tension is high, some people engage and others distract and hide. Yet, what I see is people trying to cope with the pain in the best way they know how. I watch as people deal with the energy that binds all living and non-living things on this earth.

My truth lies in this energy that binds us all together. Not everyone is aware of this energy that connects us. I am sensitive. My entire life I have been told that I am too sensitive. I cry too easily, feel too deeply. Yet I am not only feeling my emotions, I feel the emotions of the other people in the room, the emotions of the people of the world.

At times, I am not able to shut people out. I become overwhelmed by the suffering of the world, because I feel that suffering inside of me, because with so much suffering, it tears out the bricks of the wall that I erect to protect me from the energy produced from that suffering. I have been labeled a highly sensitive person, but I prefer the term empath.

I prefer to look at this as not only a weakness, something that needs to be fixed, to be cured and taken away from me, but as a strength, as what makes me good at my job, what makes me a good friend, what gives me purpose in this world.

I have learned that I have power when I am aware of my energy and the energy of those around me. I can let their energy invade my system or I can use my energy to impact them. If I am not careful, someone's bad mood can hijack my soul and turn my mood, but I can also control my energy to help calm someone who is upset. I can turn just my presence into a calming intervention for someone in distress. I use my heart field by regulating the energy of my heart and soul in order to ease the distress of others.

I use this in both of my jobs, with preschoolers who are upset, and with clients in the midst of a mental health crisis. Yet this ability is draining. I find that I must reconnect with my energy source in order to continue to do this work. I find that I am exhausted at the end of the day, and my ability to not be hijacked goes away. I find that my defenses get weakened when I do this kind of work and do not replenish my energy source.

So, I have sought out how to replenish that energy. I have to have time alone, time where other people's energy is not competing with my own. I have to have time in nature, where I can connect with the interdependent web in a more basic way. I fill my energy coffers with the energy of the trees, the water, the air, the flowers and the birds and squirrels and baby rabbits. I feel at one with the world when I am alone in nature, where I do not need to protect myself from the energy of others and where I do not need to repair others' energy.

There, I can reconnect with my source, with my truth, with who I really am and with where my place is in the world. I also replenish myself by creating music, and art, and by spending time with people who understand me and the limits to my energy. I spend time meditating and doing yoga, searching for ways to calm the energy swirls that happen from time to time as I go about

the work of my life. I write, I paint, I garden, I run, and I read. I must vigorously protect this time from the demands of my life, or I cannot be with the people I care about without becoming overwhelmed and depleted.

I treasure the connections I have with people. I thrive on helping other people and making a difference in the world. I truly believe that I can have an effect on the greater world, just by having an effect on the person sitting across from me, because if I can change the energy that they are feeling and that they are emitting into this world, then maybe that will affect the people with whom they interact and it will serve as a catalyst for change. A “pay it forward” in a more basic energy and connection sort of way.

One of our principles as UUs is believing in the inherent worth and dignity of every human being. I have always been good at seeing that worth and dignity in others, even in others whom most people cannot. But I have struggled to see my own worth and dignity, especially outside of my ability to help others.

In order to do this, I have to remember that I am human, even if Michael does not always think that I am truly human, and to be honest, he is not the only one who has thought that, and that every human has a bad day, and that every human needs to be taken care of sometimes, not just take care of the world.

I have always been told that I am weird, abnormal, odd, different. Okay, that may be true, but maybe that is just because I am in tune with the energy of the world in a different way than most people. I feel the interdependent web that we so often talk about in a way different from most people. That is not either all good or all bad, it is just who I am. My hope is that as I learn more about this energy connection and how to control it, that it will exhaust my system less and that replenishment will become easier.

My truth is this, I am not just an overly sensitive cry baby. I am an important conduit for the energy of the universe and an important connection point on the interdependent web of existence, just like all of you are. Even if I cannot control the spiraling state of the world in which we live currently, I can control how I am with the person sitting across from me. I can choose to make an impact on the people in my life.

I still may write letters, sign petitions, march in demonstrations, but if I am too tired to do that today, it is because I have expended my energy working with the people who are in crisis in our community, and it is not my job to fix all of the ills of the world. I can only do so much as one person, but for my clients, maybe I can be the difference they need in their lives, and I can hope that they pay it forward to the next person. And ultimately, maybe in that way, I can change the world.