



Awakening to a Living Universe

JULIE KRULL, PhD

A World of Love Trilogy

A World of Love: Awakening to a Living Universe

The World that Love Built: Attuning to the Organizing Intelligence of Life

The Life that Love Lives: Becoming Relationally Human

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A World of Love
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a world of love

There are moments that quietly divide your life into before and after, though you rarely recognize them while you're living them. I imagined becoming a grandmother would be one of those moments. I expected the joy people so often describe: the tenderness of holding new life in my arms, the wonder of watching my son become a father.

What I didn't expect was that, as I walked into a hospital room to meet my first grandchild, I was also walking into the moment that would quietly reorder the rest of my life.

The maternity floor was unusually peaceful that morning. There is a certain kind of hush that seems to settle over places where new life enters the world. Even the ordinary sounds—the soft footsteps in the hallway, the gentle voices at the nurses' station, the distant cry of another newborn—seemed to belong to something larger than themselves. Outside the tall windows, the late autumn sky stretched across the Nebraska plains with a quiet spaciousness that somehow matched what I was already beginning to feel inside. It was one of those mornings that asks nothing of you except your presence.

My husband, Kevin, and I made our way down the hallway with hearts that were already overflowing. Our daughter-in-law's parents

and sister arrived around the same time we did, and together we stepped into the room where all the adults gathered around one tiny new life. Until only a few years earlier, our families had lived separate stories. We had different histories, different holiday traditions, different family photographs tucked away in albums and boxes. Yet there we stood together without a trace of separation between us, drawn effortlessly into the same circle by a little girl who had been in the world only a few hours. I don't think any of us paused to consider it then, but something entirely new had already come into being. Our granddaughter hadn't simply been born into two families. She had gathered them into one larger story.

The room itself held the unmistakable signs of a birth that had unfolded with astonishing speed. Blankets were folded over the back of a chair. A few overnight bags rested in the corner. A half-finished cup of coffee shared space with the usual hospital amenities. Every now and then someone laughed as the story was told again. A first baby is not supposed to arrive quite this quickly, yet my daughter-in-law had moved through labor with a strength and steadiness that left everyone marveling. She looked remarkably fresh, almost as though she had just finished one of her workouts rather than giving birth only hours before. There was a brightness in her face that seemed to radiate both relief and quiet confidence. She was already completely herself, only somehow more so. Motherhood had settled gently upon her.

Then there was my youngest son. My baby.

I had watched him grow through every season of his life. I remembered scraped knees, go kart races, school concerts, sporting events, long conversations, his first job mowing lawns, graduation, dreams, laughter, and the countless ordinary moments that gently



shape a life. Parenthood has a way of allowing you to witness another human being becoming more fully themselves over time. Yet there was something in his face I had never seen before. It wasn't dramatic. It was almost impossible to describe. There was a quiet steadiness in him, a depth that had always been waiting beneath the surface. Fatherhood hadn't changed who he was. It had revealed another dimension of the man he had been becoming all along.

Kevin, on the other hand, wasn't trying to hide anything. He looked exactly like a little boy on Christmas morning. He kept wandering back to the bassinet with the same expression of delighted disbelief, smiling every time he looked down as though he had just remembered all over again that this beautiful little girl was actually ours to love. Every few minutes he caught my eye and grinned, the kind of grin that doesn't need words because joy has already said everything.

There are moments in life when no one feels the need to hurry. This was one of them. After a remarkably fast labor and delivery, time seemed perfectly content to sit quietly beside us and slow down. We lingered there for quite a while, talking, laughing, replaying the story of the early morning adventure, marveling at the ordinary miracles that somehow never become ordinary.

Then my daughter-in-law looked over at me and smiled. "Would you like to hold her?" It was my turn. I walked toward the bed, and she gently placed this precious bundle into my arms.

She weighed almost nothing yet somehow carried the unmistakable gravity of an entire universe. Her tiny fingers instinctively curled around one of mine. Wisps of light hair framed a face that still held the softness of birth. Her breathing was slow

and rhythmic, and without realizing it, I found my own breathing beginning to match hers.

I don't know how long I stood there. Time had become strangely unimportant. There was nowhere else to be, nothing else to do. For those few moments, the whole world seemed content simply to breathe with us. I had come to the hospital to meet my first grandchild and somewhere in the stillness of those quiet moments, I realized I was also meeting a new part of myself.

With my granddaughter nestled against my heart, I became aware of a shift in my sense of time and space. My attention was no longer resting only on the beautiful little girl sleeping peacefully in my arms. It was as though the boundaries of the moment had dissolved, allowing me to glimpse something much larger than the hospital room, larger than our family gathered around her, even larger than my own lifetime.

I have often wondered whether love expands us long before it ever teaches us anything. We think we are simply loving another person, only to discover that our hearts have become capable of holding far more than they could the day before. That morning, love for my grandchild was unmistakably personal. She was my granddaughter. I could feel the warmth of her tiny body in my arms. I could trace the curve of her impossibly small fingers wrapped around my own. I wanted to memorize everything about her—the softness of her skin, the gentle rhythm of her breathing, the sweet smell of new life, the peaceful expression that only newborn babies seem to carry with them from wherever they have just been.

Yet the love I was experiencing refused to remain contained within that single relationship. Without losing any of its tenderness,



it continued widening until it seemed to embrace everyone in the room. Kevin. My son. My daughter-in-law, her parents, and sister.

The experience continued to grow. I saw our parents and grandparents who had come before us. The generations whose lives had made this morning possible. Then, somehow, it widened still further. I became aware of children I would never meet and faces I would never know. My new granddaughter's children. Her children's children and seven generations forward. The future no longer felt abstract. It had become astonishingly intimate. It felt as though the room itself was welcoming generations yet to come.

It is difficult to explain what happened because it did not unfold as a vision or a series of images. It felt more like recognition than revelation, as though something my soul had always known had gently risen into my awareness. I understood that I wasn't simply holding my granddaughter. I was holding the future's inheritance.

And with that realization came another.

The inheritance we leave our children reaches far beyond the homes we build, the money we save, the education we provide, or even the planet we hope to preserve. Every generation is also entrusted with the stories we believe about life itself. Along with those stories come the assumptions we rarely question, the ways we have learned to see ourselves, one another, and the living world. They shape our understanding of what it means to be human and the nature of reality. The stories we inherit unknowingly become the world we create.

As I looked into her peaceful face, one simple longing rose within me with a clarity that surprised me. More than anything else, I wanted this little girl to grow up in a world that remembered itself. I wanted her to inherit more than clean air, safe neighborhoods, good



schools, and opportunities to flourish, important as those things are. I wanted her to inherit a way of seeing that would never teach her she was separate from the living world, other people, or the love that had brought her into being. To be welcomed into a world where belonging was more fundamental than division, where relationship was understood as the fabric of reality itself, and where love was recognized not merely as something we feel from time to time, but as the living presence that holds life together.

In that moment, I found the simplest words to describe my longing.

I wanted her to inherit *a world of love*.

As those words formed within me, another recognition followed close behind. Relationship is not something we create after we arrive in the world. We are born into it. It is the condition from which life itself continually arises.

An Incomplete Picture

I would spend years trying to understand what had happened that morning. At first, I thought the experience itself was the story. Eventually I realized it had simply illuminated a story that had been consistently unfolding throughout my entire life.

For decades, I had carried the feeling that something essential had been left out of the story we tell ourselves about life. The question felt both immense and surprisingly simple at the same time. It reached beyond the familiar language of separation and unity. What I carried was less a conclusion than a persistent intuition—an embodied sense that reality itself was far more relational than we realized. It surfaced through moments in nature, in the therapy room, in conversations that reached beneath appearances, and in those rare moments that

seemed to arrive from somewhere beyond ordinary understanding. Like scattered pieces of a mosaic, each one hinted at a larger picture I couldn't yet fully see.

Holding this new life just a few hours after her birth, those scattered pieces began to recognize one another. I found myself remembering the questions that had followed me for most of my life. Questions that had refused to disappear simply because they couldn't be neatly answered. Why did healing so often emerge through relationship rather than technique? Why did some people transform in the presence of genuine love while others continued searching for answers that information alone could never provide? Why did forests, rivers, birds, mycelium, galaxies, and human communities all seem to reveal the same quiet pattern of participation and belonging? Why did life so consistently move toward relationship, toward increasing complexity, coherence, and wholeness whenever the conditions allowed?

Those questions had shaped my life far more than I realized. They became quiet companions, leading me into graduate school, psychotherapy, science, spirituality, and decades of listening to the stories people entrusted to me. They stayed with me through seasons of profound joy and through places where suffering seemed almost unbearable. Looking back now, I can see that I wasn't searching for answers nearly as much as I was learning how to pay attention.

Perhaps that is where every real apprenticeship begins. It begins with attention—with the quiet willingness to remain present long enough for life to reveal something it could never teach us while we were hurrying toward certainty.

For most of my adult life, I believed I was searching for a more unified understanding of reality. Psychology, spirituality, science,

nature, and the wisdom traditions all seemed to be pointing toward the same remarkable recognition: life was far more relational than the story many of us had inherited. Words like *unity*, *peace*, *wholeness*, *healing*, and *interconnectedness* became faithful companions because they gave language to how I perceived life and our place within it.

Holding my granddaughter that morning, however, I realized those beautiful words had been describing something even deeper. They were describing what love does.

It was as though I had been admiring the branches of a magnificent tree without fully appreciating the life moving through its roots. Everywhere I looked, I found the same quiet movement repeating itself. Healing drew fractured lives toward wholeness. Forests flourished through relationship. Families found their deepest strength in belonging. Communities became resilient through mutual care. Life, in every form I studied, seemed to organize itself toward increasing coherence, expanding participation, and ever-deepening expressions of beauty. For years I had admired these patterns without recognizing what they were revealing.

Beneath them all was something astonishingly simple, something so familiar that I had spent a lifetime overlooking its immensity because I believed I already knew what it meant.

Love.

The word itself was no longer large enough for what I was beginning to recognize. It had become something infinitely larger. I began to recognize love as the living reality through which life continually gathers itself into relationship. Everywhere I had looked for unity, love had quietly been organizing it from within.

That realization has continued unfolding ever since.



Today, when I look back across the years, I can see that my life was never leading me toward the idea of unity. It was teaching me to recognize the presence of love wherever life was becoming more whole, more alive, more deeply itself. Unity, I would eventually come to understand, is not something we manufacture through effort, agreement, or ideology. It is what naturally emerges whenever life is allowed to organize itself according to love.

As these recognitions settled into me, I found myself smiling through tears. Love had not suddenly entered my life. It had been patiently accompanying me for as long as I could remember. Holding this sweet girl, the grandmother became conscious of what every earlier version of myself had been learning all along.

Looking back now, I can see that every season of my life had been preparing me for that quiet moment in the hospital room. The curiosity of childhood, the experiences that shaped me, the people who entrusted me with their stories, the years spent listening to science and the wisdom traditions speak across disciplines, the heartbreaks, the healing, the ordinary moments of motherhood, the awe I felt standing beneath a night sky—all of it belonged to one long conversation I hadn't fully recognized until then. Nothing had been random. Nothing had been wasted. Love had been patiently teaching me through the curriculum of an entire lifetime.

Holding my granddaughter, I simply became conscious of the apprenticeship I had already been living.

I could not have imagined then where that apprenticeship would lead. I certainly wasn't thinking about writing this book, much less the two that would eventually follow. I simply knew that something within me had shifted in a way that could not be undone. The experience did not hand me a finished philosophy or a complete

worldview. Instead, it invited me to spend the years ahead searching for language spacious enough to describe what had become unmistakably clear in that quiet hospital room.

It sent me back into science with different eyes. It deepened my appreciation for the wisdom traditions that had been pointing toward these truths for thousands of years. It reshaped the way I understood healing, leadership, education, economics, community, and even what it means to be human. Everywhere I looked, I found myself asking the same simple question: *What changes if love is not merely part of reality, but the living dynamic through which reality continually organizes itself?*

I have spent the years since that morning discovering that when our understanding of love changes, everything else gradually begins to reorganize around it. The questions we ask shift. The way we understand ourselves seems different. The way we relate to one another transforms. Even the story we tell our children about the nature of reality begins to feel truer and more meaningful.

Perhaps that is why I have come to believe that every generation stands between two inheritances: the one it receives and the one it leaves behind. We do not choose the story that first shaped our understanding of the world. We inherit it. We breathe it in long before we have the capacity to question it. Yet there comes a moment in every life—and perhaps in every civilization—when we are invited to decide whether that story is spacious enough to carry the future.

As I looked down at my granddaughter, I knew with a quiet certainty that I could no longer leave her—or the generations who would follow—with only the story of separation. If there was a truer story waiting to be remembered, then I wanted to spend the rest of my life helping to remember it.

This book is part of that remembering. If these pages accomplish anything, I hope they help you remember what life has been patiently revealing all along.

We belong to one another. We belong to Earth and to this living, relational universe. Love has been here all along—patiently organizing life, weaving us into relationship, and inviting us to remember a world of love.

*We have always been held in love.
Before the world was named,
before we learned to see ourselves as separate,
we were already here—
moving as one life,
woven within a quiet, living wholeness.
We did not create love.
We are shaped by it,
sustained by it,
gently organized by its unseen coherence.
Even in forgetting,
we have never left it.
Even in searching,
we have never been outside of it.
Something within us has always known—
a soft, steady awareness
that life is not happening apart from us,
but through us... as us... in relationship with all things.
We are the life that love is living.
This is the world that love built.
We are the field in which love knows itself.
This is not the beginning of something new.
It is the quiet remembering
of what has always been true.
We are already within
a world of love.*

the moment of awakening

I was eleven years old when I first began to wonder if something about humanity had gone terribly wrong. It was an ordinary day, just a quiet afternoon when I wandered outside, sat down in the grass, and found myself thinking about the world in a way that felt strangely heavy for a child.

Even at that age, I had already noticed things about people that troubled me. The evening news carried images of war. Advertisements shared pictures of starving children in Africa with their distended bellies and flies swarming around their runny noses. I experienced suffering, abuse, domestic violence, and conflict at home. I saw war and injustice out in the world. Stories of cruelty appeared in places where kindness should have lived.

Somewhere inside my young mind, a question began forming that I could not find comforting answers to: *Why are humans like this?*

I remember sitting in the front yard looking out at the ordinary beauty of the world around me. The breeze flowed softly through the leaves. The ground beneath me felt steady and alive. Birds moved through the air with an ease that seemed completely natural. Nothing

in the landscape around me appeared confused about how life was supposed to work.

Yet humans seemed different. We fought with one another. We hurt one another. We created systems that rewarded greed and domination. Even as a child, I could sense the strange contradictions between the living world I was sitting in, the invisible realms I trusted, and the human conditioning I was being taught to accept as normal.

In my curiosity and contemplation, I continued a dialog with an ineffable presence I referred to as “God.” A question arose that changed the trajectory of my life: “Why? Why do humans treat each other the way they do?” I went on to ask, “Why do I have to be here? Why can’t I go home?”

I didn’t understand humans. If this was what life was all about, I didn’t want to be here. I wanted to return to my non-physical form. It was not despair, but a kind of bewilderment and grief. I felt alone. I loved the dirt beneath my feet. I loved the trees, the sky, the quiet rhythm of life unfolding all around me. I loved the spiritual realms that were just as real to me as the earth I sat on. What I could not understand was why humanity felt so out of harmony with the vast unfolding wisdom I sensed in nature and the relational intimacy—the animating essence—I experienced with the Divine.

The grass around me seemed to belong to a system that worked. The birds that woke me with their morning song belonged to a functional living pattern. The trees, the soil, the seasons—everything I could see appeared woven together by an invisible coherence that held life in balance. The natural world moved in a kind of quiet harmony. There was a rhythm, a responsiveness, an intelligence that did not announce itself but could be felt everywhere.



And yet, when I turned my attention toward humanity—toward the ways we treated one another—I felt a dissonance I could not ignore. Human beings appeared to have forgotten something essential. We were living as though we were separate from the very thing that was giving us life.

At eleven years old, I had no language for what I was sensing. I could not have explained it in philosophical or scientific terms. I simply knew that the world around me was alive and part of an interconnected, benevolent, loving creation. The spiritual realms felt as vital and interconnected as air and water. Yet humanity seemed strangely disconnected from that deeper pattern and at odds with life itself.

All the questions and doubt, all the loneliness, sadness and trauma swirled in my awareness until the loving universe gently opened into a profound, mystical experience and answered my question, “Why do humans treat each other the way they do?” I wrote about that mystical experience in *Fractured Grace*. I mention it here because the answer to that one question became the thread that has guided my entire life: the evolution of human awareness.

Understanding consciousness shaped my education, my work as a psychotherapist, and my decades of exploration into healing, wholeness, and the true nature of reality. Studying consciousness guided my development, experiences, and the intuitive capacities that began to open in the years that followed. What emerged in the wake of that day was not just more curiosity, but an expanded way of perceiving—one that would eventually include forms of knowing that are often dismissed or misunderstood: clairvoyance, clairsaudience, and claircognizance. It awakened a deep, inner cognition that did not rely on linear reasoning. It was a clear knowing.

That moment deepened and expanded an earlier incident from my childhood—a near-death experience at the age of four. What began as chronic tonsillitis eventually spread beyond my throat, allowing bacteria to invade deeper tissues and my bloodstream. The infection progressed into meningitis and then sepsis, leaving me gravely ill, unable to speak, and temporarily paralyzed from the neck down. That life changing experience introduced me to a presence I can only describe as “profoundly loving.” If my encounter at four revealed the essence of reality, this moment at eleven began to reveal the architecture beneath it.

It was here that my relationship with the universe became something more than belief. It became reciprocal. More alive and responsive. There was a sense, even then, that I was not alone in my awareness and that the intelligence I was perceiving was also, in some way, aware of me—not as a distant observer but as a participant in a shared field of experience.

A deeper relationship began that day. It has continued to unfold, expand, and refine over the course of my life. I would come to understand much more about that early experience in the years that followed. Reality is not inert. It is not indifferent or disconnected. It is relational. It is responsive. And at its core, it is organized through a kind of intelligence that is at once precise, creative, and deeply benevolent.

What I could not have known at eleven, but what has become increasingly clear through both lived experience and emerging science, is that this harmonic order is not something added to life. It is what life *is*. And the word we have used for it, across centuries and cultures, is *love*.

about the author



Dr. Julie Krull is an award-winning author, speaker, and evolutionary leader devoted to exploring what becomes possible as humanity awakens to a more relational, coherent, and interconnected understanding of reality—and new ways of being within it.

She is the author of the Nautilus Award–winning book *Fractured Grace* and A World of Love Trilogy—*A World of Love*, *The World That Love Built*, and *The Life That Love Lives*.

With a PhD in Counseling Psychology and more than three decades of experience spanning psychology, systems thinking, consciousness, healing, and emergent leadership, Julie has spent her life asking questions that sit at the intersection of science, spirituality, and what it means to be fully human. Her work has evolved through years of counseling, teaching, mentoring, consulting, speaking, and deep inquiry into the conditions that help individuals and communities move from fragmentation toward greater wholeness.



Known for her rare ability to translate complexity into clarity, Julie helps people sense the deeper patterns emerging beneath the turbulence of our time and cultivate the inner and collective capacities needed to participate meaningfully in a rapidly changing world. Her work bridges personal transformation and collective evolution, inviting a more integrated approach to human flourishing, cultural renewal, and the future we are creating together.

Julie is the founder of Imaginal Souls, co-founder of GOOD of the WHOLE, and longtime host of The Dr. Julie Show: All Things Connected and other conversations exploring consciousness, leadership, and human becoming. Her work has brought her into dialogue and collaboration with global visionaries, changemakers, and communities exploring the leading edges of consciousness, coherence, and regenerative futures.

At the heart of Julie's writing is a simple yet expansive idea: love is not merely an emotion or ideal, but the organizing intelligence of life—the living relational dynamic through which greater creativity, coherence, and wholeness continually emerge.

Whether writing, speaking, mentoring, or convening conversations, Julie invites a different kind of engagement—one where wisdom becomes participatory, leadership becomes harmonic, and the future becomes something we co-create together.

Find out more at <https://juliekrull.com>

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