

Dear Uncle Mike,

Einstein said gravity isn't love. If it's not, what is?

Curious in Seattle

Dear Curious,

First off, Uncle Mike would like to thank you for writing. Knowing there's at least one human in Seattle who thinks about something more than what flavor of latte to have for the high velocity commute to the virtual factory where legions of young millionaires devise new ways to patent freedom of information cheers Uncle Mike greatly. You must be lonely.

When it comes to love in a quantum universe, Uncle Mike agrees with Einstein, a stance that's paid off in the past. According to general relativity, gravity is a topographical map of a space/time warped by mass. Pretty as this is, it's not, even to the desperate, the stuff of romance. The love/gravity connection comes from the equations of classical physics, in which Newton (Isaac, not Olivia) described gravitation as the universal attraction every bit of mass in the universe has for every other. In either view, the moon loves the earth, the earth loves the sun, and everything loves black holes. Gravity is more like lust: discreet masses behaving indiscriminately. If gravity were love, we'd all live in the mountains and have daydreams about lead.

(Note: Just because relativistic gravitation reflects the universe's urge to curl up with itself and achieve dimensionless unity, it's not the source of mystical love either. That feeling of oneness is phase entanglement, the flip side of gravity in which every photon's waveform is the product of every other waveform it's encountered since the beginning of space/time.)

Okay, so what's love? Uncle Mike thinks it's resonance. Resonance (from the Latin: to sound again) is the vibration induced in a body by the vibration of another body. Uncle Mike's body, and yours, is an electromagnetic event. The little iron atoms in the blood circulate, the little synapses fire, we wonder about love. DNA being the impressive alphabet it is, no two human circuits are alike. In Seattle terms, the hardware's fairly consistent, but the software's random. Our operating frequency is a reflection of who we are and how we relate to and interact with the world. Some people, for instance, like Barry Manilow and believe Bill Gates likes them.

So there we are, vibrating at a rate determined by an organizing principle which, for want of a better term, we'll call our spirit. All vibrations effect us, we either like professional wrestling or we don't. Resonance occurs when the frequency of the oscillation matches our own and our strings begin to vibrate. In extreme cases, or after several gin rickeys, there's an unsettling free fall in the abdomen as the iron atoms dance little polar shifts.

Love that lasts longer than the warranty on an average new car reflects an intricate mix of commonalities and contrasts that, instead of damping our circuits, augments them. Love is the only sum greater than its parts. When we love and are loved, we become more of who we are. Love is the art, and the wisdom, of taking all that's offered and giving all you have. It's nice it's no more complicated than humming along with the music and listening for harmony.

Dear Uncle Mike,

My boyfriend and I have been living together for about a year. I thought everything was fine. Then two months ago an old girlfriend of mine moved back to town. We've been seeing a lot of her. Maybe too much. She's really good looking and has always been a flirt. Lately I don't like the way the two of them are together. When she comes over for dinner, the goodbye hugs are lasting a little too long. Brad says I'm imagining things. She laughs and says I'm being silly. I'm not sure what to do. What would you do?

Worried in Astoria

Dear Worried,

The first thing Uncle Mike would do is stop worrying. What you're looking for is the truth. Invite the little trollop over for dinner and observe how much your dog of a boyfriend wags his tail. When the meal's over and the coffee's poured, put on your coat. Tell them you're off to spend the night in a hotel so they'll have a chance to discuss issues of hormones and loyalty and won't be disturbed by the sight of you putting your fingers down your throat.

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