LISTENING IN WITH...

BRUCE LIPTON

FROM CHAOS TO COMMUNITY

BRUCE LIPTON, PH.D., is a leading voice in mind-body biology. Decades ago, he pioneered research on epigenetics, the science of how environment and consciousness control gene activity without changing the actual DNA itself. This new science reveals that we can directly control the expression of our genes through our thoughts, our beliefs, our lifestyle choices, and our environment. Lipton’s current work helps empower people to do just that. He’s also eager to share how vital it is to come together as one during this challenging time on the planet, as he does here in this conversation with Unity Magazine editor KATY KOONTZ. As we navigate the repercussions of the global pandemic, his insights and vision could not be more relevant.
KATY KOONTZ: You teach that the power of positive thinking doesn’t work—at least for most people, most of the time. Why not?

BRUCE LIPTON: Five percent of our life is controlled by the creative conscious mind. That’s it. Ninety-five percent comes from programs in the subconscious mind. The conscious mind is filled with wishes and desires, but the programs you run in your subconscious rarely fully support them. Fortunately, you can reprogram your subconscious mind, but first, you have to become aware that you are programmed.

KK: So that’s step one: recognizing we’re programmed.

BL: Yes, and if you want to know what that programming is, just look at your life. Your life is a printout of your program because 95 percent of it is coming from that program. From the last trimester of pregnancy through age 7, a child’s brain operates in theta brain waves, a state of hypnosis—that’s a neurological vibration lower than consciousness. That’s why we’re unaware of the programs. Those things you want that come into your life easily are there because your programs support their existence. But you have to struggle so hard for other things you want, not because conditions outside you are preventing that—but instead, it’s almost always because your programming doesn’t support those wishes. Your subconscious isn’t on board. Once you identify where your struggles are limiting you, though, you can rewrite the program to support more empowering beliefs.

KK: Tools like prayer and meditation can help you change the program, yes?

BL: They can, but repetition is fundamental in changing the subconscious. If I say a prayer today and forget about it, I’m not really changing my energy field—it’s more akin to a suggestion. I have to consciously and repeatedly visualize what I want and radiate thoughts (which are electromagnetic energies) that resonate with that. As a spiritual but nonreligious person, I practice a different form of prayer.

KK: I’m with you there.

BL: Most people’s prayers come from wants and needs. In a way, they are seeing themselves as victims because they are focusing on what they don’t have. But when we instead focus on appreciation and gratitude, we are thanking God for a wonderful life, and so we attract more of those positive experiences that we are expressing gratitude for.

KK: Unity teaches affirmative prayer, which has a whole different spin.

BL: Now that’s the kind of prayer that enhances our lives because those positive thoughts physiologically support our biology and behavior. The brain chemistry you create with positive thoughts is what empowers the placebo effect—healing through just the power of the mind.

KK: Does the nocebo effect—where you get a negative effect after expecting harm or having negative expectations—work in a similar way?

BL: Yes, because negative thoughts release brain chemistry that can actually cause any disease and even death. That’s important because an overwhelming number of our thoughts—up to 70 percent—are negative. The way we express our consciousness through prayer profoundly influences both our health and our life experiences.

KK: But as you said before, it’s not a quick one-time thing.

BL: Yes, reprogramming the subconscious mind requires effort. While the creative conscious mind can effortlessly change its beliefs in an instant, the subconscious mind doesn’t learn that way. It takes a lot more to reprogram it. First, you have to use positive, present-tense wording. For example, you don’t want to program, “I do not want cancer,” because that’s a belief statement that emphasizes the word “cancer.” Also avoid wording that uses future tense, such as “I will be healthy” or “I want to be healthy.” The function of the mind is to manifest the new program as reality, so if the truth you program is “I want to be healthy,” the program would have you always seeking health—but not necessarily being able to get there. If, on the other hand, you program “I am healthy,” even if your body is currently sick as a dog, the program will cause the mind to engage a healing response so that the body matches the mind’s programmed wish for health.

KK: So the subconscious is extremely literal. What’s next?

BL: Then you can use any of three fundamental processes to carry out the reprogramming. The first is hypnosis. A simple example is falling asleep with earphones as you listen to a program you want to be true, maybe on a self-help audio recording. The second is the process of repeating a belief statement, as we just talked about. The third is
using energy psychology, which is the quickest and most effective. All these techniques engage the brain’s super-learning processes.

**KK:** Can you share an example of energy psychology?

**BL:** While I can't say one process works best for everyone, I personally find PSYCH-K to be the simplest and the fastest. You can learn it in a weekend. With PSYCH-K, you don’t have to go back into the past. It teaches you to look at your present life and then focus on what you want to experience. It teaches you how to best define that and then how to use muscle-testing to see if your current subconscious programs support that desire. If you find you need to install a new program, PSYCH-K offers simple physical exercises that help you engage the “whole-brain” state, which occurs when the intellectual left brain and the emotional right brain become synchronized.

**KK:** Can you say more about getting both the conscious and subconscious minds aligned?

**BL:** The conscious mind is creative; it can imagine all sorts of things. But the subconscious mind judges those ideas based on its programmed life experiences. So if my creative conscious mind imagines, I have two heads, my subconscious mind would then think, Nah, that’s not true.

The subconscious mind controls your muscles, thanks to its massive computational power. It’s a million times more powerful a processor than the conscious mind. The conscious mind can’t control walking, for example, because it requires too much neural connectivity. Coordinating the simultaneous contractions of so many muscles is just too complex. When we were children, learning to walk took a lot of effort, but once we learned, our conscious mind didn’t have to pay any attention to the process at all. So if you download your wishes and desires as a subconscious program, then whether you’re consciously thinking about them or not, your subconscious is making it happen for you without effort.

**KK:** You teach that each human body is actually a living community of 50 trillion cells. What a fascinating idea—self as community.

**BL:** A human being is what’s now being referred to as a superorganism because we have up to 10 times as many bacteria and parasite cells living in our body as we have human cells. Those microorganisms are collectively called the microbiome, and we can’t live without them. For example, while the acid and enzymes in our digestive tract break down food into small pieces, our gut bacteria further break down those food particles so we can absorb nutrients. In addition, our skin as well as the lining of our respiratory, digestive, and urogenital tracts are covered by microbiome cells—they’re our first line of defense against invasive microorganisms. This community of cells is an integral part of each human being.

**KK:** And the goal is to have our community of cells working in harmony, right?

**BL:** If our cells are living in harmony, then we express health. But if they’re in disharmony, then we manifest disease. Health issues are a sign that our cellular community is not living in harmony.

**KK:** That’s a great metaphor for what’s happening globally.

**BL:** It’s a great metaphor for a cell, a human being, or a planet. It works on all levels because they’re all connected. Most of the cells in our bodies perform every function you find in a whole human body. Cells have their own digestive system and they use the same enzymes that we use to digest our own food. Almost all of our cells also possess respiratory, excretory, musculoskeletal, endocrine, nervous, reproductive, and immune systems—just like our bodies. It’s a fractal.

Your body is the cooperative effort of a community of 50 trillion single cells. A community, by definition, is an organization of individuals committed to supporting a shared vision. The more the cells in your body—or the individuals in a community—work together, the more powerful and healthy the whole system becomes.

**KK:** You mentioned fractals. Can you explain what they are?

**BL:** The geometry that we learn in school is called Euclidean geometry. It uses shapes like cubes, spheres, triangles, and cones. It’s the math of putting structure into space. We use it to design buildings, cars, and computers—all the physical things that humans make. But you can’t use a Euclidean geometry equation to create something in nature because nature uses fractal geometry. A fractal is an infinite pattern of self-similar structures at every level of a structure’s organization—in other words, the pattern repeats at different scales. So if you understand the structures or functions at one level of organization, you can apply that understanding to the patterns at both higher and
lower levels of organization. That’s the built-in character of a fractal.

**KK:** And it’s also the scientific explanation of “As above, so below”! Getting back to what we were saying about community, where does that concept take us next?

**BL:** We now recognize that cooperation and community are the underlying principles driving evolution, as opposed to Darwin’s “survival of the fittest.” Darwin said primitive organisms expressed greater and greater genetic complexity, which led to the evolution of humans. But the Human Genome Project undermined that theory because the scientists in the project found humans had only about 20,000 genes (not the 100,000 they were expecting)—that’s the same number of genes that are found in primitive organisms.

The “new” biology emphasizes that evolution is expressed in terms of the development of consciousness. The neural foundation of consciousness is represented by physical protein complexes built into a cell’s membrane—the cell’s equivalent of skin. When an individual organism possesses all the perception proteins it can physically handle, it reaches its fullest evolution. The individual organism can’t evolve any further.

But there is a next level of evolution that happens when fully evolved organisms form a community with other evolved organisms so they can share awareness. They work better together. A human is just such a community of 50 trillion cells sharing their awareness. So now look at each human being as the equivalent of a fully evolved cell. After individual humans maximized their consciousness, the next level of evolution was for humans to assemble into communities to enhance our evolution by sharing our collective awareness. Our future evolution would be for all humans to assemble into one giant communal organism we can define as humanity. The evolution that we’re now facing is to recognize that all humans are actually cells in the same superorganism and to behave cooperatively.

**KK:** And as you often teach, crisis ignites evolution.

**BL:** Humans have essentially hit the wall. We can no longer live on Earth the way we have been living. Humankind will either evolve or face extinction. With all our divided families, communities, states, and countries, we have not only separated people from one another, but our way of life also encourages competition and fighting. If cells started fighting each other in a cellular community, biologists would call that autoimmune disease—a state of self-destruction.

**KK:** I’m holding out hope. Is that crazy in the midst of all this chaos?

**BL:** We are in the middle between an old civilization breaking down and a new, more evolved civilization rising. We’re facing the equivalent of metamorphosis. Before a caterpillar turns into a butterfly, it goes through a pupa stage, which looks very much like a stage of chaos. There’s a pattern in that chaos, though—it’s not random. That’s what’s happening with our civilization now. This chaos we’re in is a necessary stage in human evolution.

The younger generations—people who are under age 40—are crucial in this process because they’re not incorporated into the system. In fact, younger people make up more than half of the total population, and they don’t give a damn about the current system. That’s why the system is on very shaky legs. If the young people decide to come together in community, they can change civilization’s evolutionary path in one election cycle.

**KK:** You teach that we’re on the road to uniting allopathic medicine, complementary medicine, and spiritual healing. Can you talk about the spiritual healing coming into this new way of life?

**BL:** What quantum physicists call the “field,” the invisible energy that surrounds our bodies, is what ancient people referred to as spirituality. Organizing the field to manipulate biology will become more commonplace once we understand that genes are not controlling the body and that our health is intimately tied to our consciousness, which is an expression of our spirituality. Only one percent of disease can be attributed to defective genes. The rest is due to “operator error,” the consequence of a consciousness not living in harmony.

People are waking up to the fact that they have more power to control their lives than they thought. Nearly half the population is turning to energy-based healing offered by complementary and alternative medicine because it’s more effective, costs less, and doesn’t have side effects. They’re seeking solutions outside of the box—another good sign that our civilization is evolving.