

REFLECTION

Why

The **WHY** factor

**Robbie Young** invites us to ask the right questions if we want to hear the 'right' answers.



### Relationships within relationships

It's often said that to get the right answer you need to ask the right question. If you address reality with a 'what' question you will get an answer, but it seems that reality is structured in favour of being addressed by 'why' questions. Could it be that's because at its heart reality is relationship, relationships within relationships? And when you ask a 'why' question you are seeking the specific type of relationship between one thing and another. For example, the relationship between my friend, a stepladder and a light bulb. Not only, because by asking a 'why' question you are allowing reality to reveal itself to you as an infinite set of relationships. Why does your friend love his wife? Because she loves him. Why does she love him? Because she was loved by her father and this has helped her to love her husband. And why did her father love her? And so you get a universe of relationships affecting relationships, right down to the blood passing through your friend's lungs to pick up the oxygen which allows his muscles to support him on the stepladder.

### The big 'WHY'

All relationships are good by their very nature; without relationships nothing could exist. Plants can grow only if sunlight and leaves interact. So when goodness seems to depart, our 'why' becomes a cry for goodness to reveal itself. Why did that earthquake happen? Why did that child die of cancer? Why did that suicide-bomber kill so many innocent people? We intuit that some fundamental law of relationship within reality seems to have been broken and we fear the worst: that all along we have been wrong about our belief in the goodness of reality. We have come to the point to where every 'why' has been leading us. Our small 'why' becomes the big 'Why' of the whole of creation. Yet, we must know that the essence of a 'why' question is that we do not create the answer through our own thoughts, it is revealed to us; and for a revelation you must be prepared to wait. But by asking 'Why' we have already done our part. 



**I** **Imagine you went** to a friend's house and saw him standing on a stepladder in the living room. If you asked him what he is doing you would probably get a very clear answer such as, 'I'm changing a lightbulb.' But if you asked him why he is doing it, his answer could be: 'because it need's changing'; or: 'because when things don't work I like to fix them'; or even: 'because I love my wife and if I change it she'll be happy'. When it comes to knowing reality, asking 'what' questions will take you a long way, but if you want to probe deeper then you need a 'why' question. A plane will take you high in the sky and give you a spectacular view of the earth below. But only a rocket has enough momentum to break free from the pull of the earth's gravity and take you into outer space. 'What' questions are like planes. 'Why' questions are like rockets. My dog can ask a 'what' question and get a satisfactory answer. She is dozing on the lawn, half-asleep, half-awake. She hears a sound, lifts her head with a look on her face as if to say 'What caused that sound?'. She then decides that either it is nothing interesting or she gets up and goes to investigate. If she does run towards the sound and find it's caused by a cat, she won't ask 'why' the cat made that sound. Her mind has enough information. Now it's time to chase the cat.