

My personal philosophy is everything I've gathered through experience to make sense of my life. Some has been passed down to me from my family and friends, other bits I have figured out through research and study. Most of it feels like it has just happened to me. I don't think any one perspective is large enough to account for everything in life, and I'm suspicious of those who claim there is. I'm also aware that my beliefs do not always mesh neatly. "*Do I contradict myself? Very well, then I contradict myself, I am large, I contain multitudes.*" - Walt Whitman.

I am not convinced that anything like "absolute knowledge" can ever be known. Our sense perceptions are just too limited; we never get close enough to anything to be able to say with absolute certainty what it "is." There are also some situations where the difference between knowledge and faith becomes meaningless. I take many things on faith, but only because I have reasons for doing so that are acceptable to me. I'm also aware that there is sometimes very little certainty in life. To quote a well-known theologian from the 1980s, "There is nothing pure in this world. There is nothing sure in this world." I crave certainty, because living in a state of uncertainty is uncomfortable. But living in uncertainty beats living in illusion.

So much about what we sense and experience is relative. This seems obvious to me when I think about time. Time can either drag or go by in a flash based on my mood and how I feel about what's happening. Time feels linear to me, but it could be circular. Or everything could be happening at the same time. Or everything has already happened and we are just picking out that one little sliver that we can wrap our minds around. I like to do a thought experiment sometimes: I try to stand on the outside of a situation, noticing how other people judge it based on their own preconceptions and attitudes. This is hard sometimes, especially when I'm part of the situation. But I try to look at things from different angles, to see the truth. I believe that we've charted only a fraction of the immensity and wonder of the universe, and that it contains endless possibilities.