

# Remembering Infinity

I was recently on the phone with my brother while he was babysitting his two grandchildren, ages two and five. He put me on speaker so that they could say hi, and somehow, we very quickly got into a brief conversation that included numbers. The youngest very excitedly proclaimed some fact, followed by the words, "Up to infinity!" My heart leaped that this two-year-old soul already had some awareness of the concept of limitlessness.

Unfortunately, our life experience often firmly attaches us to narrow assumptions. Our comprehensive belief systems are based largely upon the ways that our family either held or neglected us, along with the circumstances that affirm this upbringing. We may also experience a single or series of epiphanies that advance, refine, or significantly alter our perceptions. However it is formed, our belief system is the fundamental framework upon which we firmly rely in order to make sense of our world.

During my lifetime, I've heard a variety of social and neuroscientists assert that human beings naturally form assumptions about our surroundings as a necessary protective mechanism. In other words, our natural inclination is to close, rather than open our mind to what lies before us. As this compression of what we absorb takes place, we rarely speak anymore of the value of infinity. But I've also heard many philosophers and theologians claim that in any given moment, the choices before us – the possibilities – are limitless. Though this may or may not be provable, we can all accept that the universe is much grander than our personal experience of it, thus making the concept of infinity relevant rather than remote.

I've decided to remember my short phone conversation with my grand niece and nephew. I bring it into my conscious mind when I'm daily confronted with the social ugliness that surrounds me – the divisive politics; the economic inequality; and the willful ignorance regarding our connection to each other, the Earth and all its species. I remember the tiny, joyous voice of a dear child saying to me, "Up to infinity!" – both a poignant reminder that there's little I know for sure, and a welcome invitation to hold onto hope.