



August, 2026: Feynman's Thinking Habit Science, MetaSpirituality, and Reflection Questions

Thomas Oppong's piece on Richard Feynman's thinking habits connects brilliantly with our practice of **Questioning Unquestioned Answers**. Feynman was the ultimate champion of unmasking assumptions, dismantling conventional wisdom, and refusing to hide behind comfortable jargon.

Here is a guide featuring supporting scientific insights, MetaSpiritual context, and practical reflection questions to prepare for our discussion, and use these ideas to walk the path on positive, practical, and prosperous feet!

Supporting Science & Multi-Perspective Context

- **Neuroscience of the "Feynman Technique" (Cognitive Load & Schema Building):**
 - *Supporting Science:* Cognitive science confirms that trying to explain complex ideas in simple terms—known as self-explanation and retrieval practice—forces the brain to strip away "extraneous cognitive load." It consolidates memory and restructures mental schemas. When you cannot explain a concept simply, neuroscience suggests you have not yet mapped the neural pathway deeply enough.
 - *Counter/Nuance:* Cognitive psychologists note that oversimplification can sometimes lead to the "illusion of explanatory depth" or a false sense of mastery. Certain hyper-complex quantum or spiritual dynamics can lose critical nuance if forced into overly elementary metaphors too early.
- **The Science of "12 Favorite Problems" (Selective Attention & The Reticular Activating System – AKA our Cosmic Bouncer!):**
 - *Supporting Science:* Keeping a running list of core questions engages the brain's Reticular Activating System (RAS), which we call our Cosmic Bouncer—the neural filter that determines what information enters conscious awareness. When you hold open questions, you are literally handing your Cosmic Bouncer a VIP Guest List! Instead of letting in the routine worries or old habits, the Bouncer starts letting in synchronicities, unexpected ideas, and fresh insights that match your curious inquiries.
- **Playful Curiosity vs. Burnout (Dopamine & Creativity):**
 - *Supporting Science:* Oppong highlights how Feynman's Nobel Prize-winning work began by casually watching a spinning plate in a cafeteria. Neurobiology shows that high-stress, goal-directed focus shrinks creative insight, whereas playful, non-attached curiosity releases dopamine, opening up diffuse mode thinking where breakthrough synthesis occurs.

- **Walking the Spiritual Path on Positive, Practical, Prosperous Feet**
 - **Positive (Emotional & Mental Energy):**
 - Feynman famously remarked that he didn't feel frightened by not knowing, but rather found wonder in a mysterious universe. Cultivating "beginner's mind" frees us from the anxiety of having to be the "expert." It shifts our emotional state from defensive certainty to joyful discovery.
 - **Practical (Actionable Daily Application):**
 - "The first principle is that you must not fool yourself — and you are the easiest person to fool." Practically, this means auditing our daily assumptions. Where are we acting on inherited beliefs or traditional ways of doing things simply because "that's how it's always been done"?
 - **Prosperous (Abundance & Expansion):**
 - Feynman's habit of keeping "12 Favorite Problems" active in his mind is a masterclass in dynamic, prosperous living. Instead of viewing life's unresolved issues as terrifying voids, holding them as open inquiries invites fresh insights, opportunities, and abundance to flow through surprising channels.

Reflection Questions:

1. **Unmasking the Jargon:** Feynman believed that if you can't explain something simply, you don't fully grasp it yet. What is one spiritual concept or personal truth you often reference, and how would you explain it to a twelve-year-old without using standard spiritual catchphrases?
2. **Questioning Unquestioned Answers:** Oppong notes that Feynman was willing to look foolish to himself by starting from zero rather than accepting established learning. Is there an "unquestioned answer" in your life right now—a belief, for example, about your health, relationships, or work—that you are ready to dismantle and rebuild from basic principles?
3. **Your 12 Favorite Questions:** Feynman maintained a list of open questions that he held passively in mind to test against new information. If you were to list 3 to 5 "favorite questions" about your spiritual growth, consciousness, or daily life right now, what would they be?

Some additional guidance around the 'Favorite Questions' concept:

While you can have specific inquiries on your list, Feynman's true superpower was holding **broad, foundational, open-ended questions** that could act as a lens or filter for anything he encountered—a research paper, a conversation at lunch, a walk in nature, or watching a plate wobble in a cafeteria.

The magic of these overarching questions is that they give your Cosmic Bouncer (your Reticular Activating System) a permanent, high-level guest list. No matter what book, article, belief, or life situation you are looking at, these questions sit in the background waiting to catch surprising patterns and connections.

Here are examples of the types of flexible, cross-applicable questions you might keep on a **12 Favorite Questions** list, broken down by how they help you view the world:

A. Questions That Unmask Assumptions

These questions act like a flashlight, helping you spot hidden beliefs, rules, or automatic habits in any situation:

- What unstated assumption is making this seem complicated, hard, or impossible?
- How would this look if I stripped away all the 'tradition' or jargon and explained it from scratch?
- Is this a fundamental truth of nature/life, or is it just 'the way we've always done it'?

B. Questions That Reveal Interconnection & Patterns

These questions help you connect dots across completely different areas of life (like connecting quantum physics to daily spiritual living):

- Where else in my life or the world does this exact same pattern show up?
- If this principle is true here, how does it change how I look at my beliefs, values, relationships, health, or creative work?
- How does this connect the 'visible world' (outer action) with the 'invisible world' (inner state) and the 'ethereal world' (my Cosmic Consciousness)?

C. Questions That Invite Ease, Play, & Expansion

These questions flip the switch from 'efforting' and stress to open curiosity and flow:

- Where is the hidden playfulness, joy, or lightness hiding inside this situation?
- What becomes possible here if I don't need to be 'right' or have the final answer today?
- How can this serve my growth on positive, practical, and prosperous feet?

D. Questions That Bridge Knowledge & Practical Action

These questions ensure that learning doesn't stay stuck in abstract theory, but translates into real life:

- If I truly believed this concept, what is the very next small, practical thing I would do differently?
- What is this teaching me about how energy/focus actually works in daily life?
- What am I ignoring right now simply because it doesn't fit my current worldview?

4. **The Prosperity of Play:** The breakthrough for Feynman's Nobel Prize came when he dropped burnout-induced pressure and allowed himself to observe a wobbling cafeteria plate purely for the fun of it. Where in your current routine could you replace rigid 'efforting' with playful curiosity to allow new growth to unfold?