

EXPLAINING THE RAINBOW

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Ever since an especially fascinating Science class in middle school, the pouring of rain followed by sunlight to this day makes me look up and around in anticipation of a rainbow. It has endured as a symbol of all things good across cultures and decades, and the diversity of interpretations it lends across the world is fascinating.

We're all aware of the science behind it. Water droplets receiving the rays of sunlight disperse them into the spectrum of wavelengths making up visible light; double refraction breaks the sunlight into its component shades of VIBGYOR and one of nature's prettiest masterpieces is made visible.

Henceforth stems the age-old saying of "Going through the rain to get to the rainbow", stressing on the need for patience, through experiences both good and bad, that leads to the end result. A Physics textbook diagram of light passing through a prism is also what gave us the image we've come to relate to Pink Floyd since the release of "The Dark Side of the Moon" – with the triangle symbolising the theme of freedom in their song lyrics, and the rainbow in tribute of the lighting used at their concerts.

Travelling a few decades back, the 1939 release of the first The Wizard of Oz movie in Technicolor brought with it the iconic song "Over the Rainbow". Fans of

the Cowardly Lion, Scarecrow and Tin Man watched Dorothy singing of a colourful land behind the clouds where dreams come true – a rendition which may also have been a testament to the Dust Bowl droughts that hit Kansas in the

But the magic of rainbows traces even farther back to Irish legends, Buddhist philosophies, Norse traditions, and Chinese and Celtic wisdom.

The Buddhist Tantra refers to it as the "body of light" – the highest meditative

as a celestial pathway between those on earth and the heavens.

The notion of the rainbow bridge connecting this world to higher enlightenment is also shared by Norse mythology where the rainbow, i.e. the Bifrost retains ties to the realm of Asgard.

Celtic wisdom, meanwhile, thinks of the arc of colours as a symbol of the treasures of the female. From their belief in the rainbow's powers of enabling reproduction springs the Irish legend - the leprechaun's gold at the end of the rainbow.

In Christianity, the rainbow is a sign of God holding back on His wrath, relieving the world from a second flood that would wipe out humanity.

The freedom, optimism and beauty symbolised by the rainbow are what marked it as the choice of flag to drag queen Gilbert Baker for the LGBT movement – and the recent outpouring of "gay pride" sentiments have made it synonymous to the rainbow; but it is so much more than just that. It stands for happiness, optimism, creativity and magic.

Amidst the grit of concrete jungle, a rainbow makes us look up at the sky – a rather amazing achievement these days, and it makes a child want to put crayon to paper.

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1930s. In Dorothy's yearning for a magical realm, as well as the real-life context the song seems to draw from, the presence of a rainbow symbolised hope for better days – and a better place – in the Wizard of Oz.

state a person reaches when they are freed from all earthly ties. In Chinese legend, the five-part spectrum of lights represents perfect harmony and balance as in the Yin and Yang, while the two-headed dragon crowning the rainbow bridge acts



THE PHASES OF A NEW RUBIK'S CUBE ENTHUSIAST

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Rubik's Cube seems like mission impossible for those who don't know how to solve it. Recently having learned how to solve it, I realized that it isn't all that difficult once you get the hang of it. Here are the phases that a person trying to solve a Cube usually goes through.

Zeal: When you start, you are at the peak of your determination. You watch some YouTube videos where some guy solved the Cube in 8 seconds, and it seems so easy and trivial that you go buy yourself a basic 3x3x3 Rubik's Cube. And in order to get started, you mess up the entire thing by turning and twisting the Cube to your heart's content. And thus begins your journey through a maze.

OMG what is this: After spending an hour trying to salvage the Cube from the mess that you created, you start getting worried, and the zeal starts to falter a bit. With every twist and turn of the Cube, you seem to jumble it up even further instead of organizing it the way it should. Your head starts to spin ever so slightly.

Frustration: A couple more hours pass but you still aren't anywhere close to solving the Cube. For a moment there

you thought you almost had it, but it was only a mirage that evaporated in the next few turns of the Cube. Desperate, you try to retract your steps but to no avail. The passion is now feeble, almost a myth.

Giving up: No, this is going nowhere. The idea of pulling the pieces of the Cube apart and reassembling them correctly has crossed your mind several times by now, but your innate sense of ethics didn't let you act on it. Frustrated to your core, you give up and throw the darn Cube somewhere in the corner of your room. Maybe the Rubik's Cube isn't your proverbial cup of tea.

Passion reborn: Now, most people never recover from 'giving up' phase. After all, there are about 43 quintillion possible combinations; how could you be expected to find the correct one? But it's the ones who come back and pick up the Rubik's Cube again who move forward ultimately. It's all about rediscovering the lost passion and trying harder this time around. At this stage, you things slowly start making sense.

Finally solving: Be it through countless hours spent trying to figure out the Rubik's Cube, or using YouTube or other internet-based tutorials where you have to memorize algorithms, you finally

solve the Cube. It doesn't matter if it's pure luck or not, you've done it and that's what matters. Pat yourself on the back; post a picture of the solved Cube on Instagram; add a life event commemorating this day on Facebook – let everyone know that you possess a skill that most others don't.

Addiction: Deep down, even you know that solving the Rubik's Cube once doesn't mean you've mastered it. You must keep practicing till you know all the processes and algorithms by heart and the steps come fluidly to you. At this point, you start practicing the Cube whenever you have a few free minutes in hand. It gets so addictive that you have dreams (or are they nightmares?) about solving the Cube, and it's the only thing you can think of all day.

Abandoning the Cube: Now that you are something of an expert of the 3x3x3 Rubik's Cube, it's time to move on to a different challenge. So once again you leave the Cube at a forgotten corner of your room, where it gathers dust, dreaming of the days past, awaiting to be picked up by its rightful owner – you.

In all honesty, learning how to solve the Rubik's Cube is not all that difficult. Besides the right resources for learning, all you really need is patience.