



## Three Millimeters of the Universe, by Daniel Gottlieb

Dear Sam,

One night in the hospital, a friend came to visit me. I told her I didnt think I could go on anymore. What I was feeling went beyond despair. It was a loss of hope -- of everything I valued, trusted, and loved. The pain had become simply unbearable.

My friend held my hand and said, Dan, what you are about is more important than who you are.

That night, I had a dream. I dreamed that God came to me. This was not the God I believe in, the one you read about in the Bible. It was some other God, and when He spoke, he said, Im going to give you a piece of the universe. Your job is to take care of it. Not make it bigger or better -- just take care of it. And when Im ready, Ill take it back, and your life will be over.

I looked at the piece of the universe that God was showing me, and I saw that it was just three millimeters! Was that all? I could feel my ego begin to rail against this indignity. Im a psychologist! I am an author! I have a radio show! Arent these things important?

Of course, no matter how much I protested, it wouldnt make any difference. My allotment was still -- and would always be -- just three millimeters of the entire universe. That was it!

But in this dream I also saw that caring for three millimeters of the universe was an awesome responsibility. A God-given responsibility. Though I had felt I couldnt go on, finally I had to acknowledge that I would have to give back my three millimeters before I was ready. And because, at the time of the dream, I had a wound that was healing in millimeters, I knew that my job was to help heal my three millimeters of the universe.

Sam, part of the reason Im at peace with my life is that I take care of the part of the universe Im responsible for. I havent made it bigger or better. I havent changed it. But I have cared for it. Writing these letters to you is just one of many ways of tending my three millimeters.

What I wish for you, Sam, is what I wish for everybody -- to get as clear a sense of what your life is about as I got in that dream. Your three millimeters is not much in terms of area. But I hope you will feel the gratitude and joy that I feel, having been given that much to tend.

Love,

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