

# Lifestyle

## Psychics offer insight, advice to clients

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As you walk into Michael DeWitt's "psychic reading" room, he asks you to sit down before a small wooden table draped with a handwoven silk cloth. On the cloth sits a small burning candle, a ceramic Buddah, a stack of pink note cards and a stick of incense burning in a sculptured urn.

Michael, a dark-haired man clad in a blue sweater and matching jeans, asks you to stretch your arms in front of you with your palms up. Then, placing his palms over yours, he closes his eyes and softly utters an unconventional invocation:

"Father mother God, surround us with your great white light. Remove all negativity from our auras. Make me a pure channel that only the highest information will come through, that I may give this child of God what he needs at this time of his life. In the name of Christ. Amen."

That done, Michael asks you to write your name on one of the pink cards and place it face up on the table. He then asks for a personal object (such as a car key or ring), rubs it thoughtfully between cupped hands, and begins his psychic reading.

"Every reading is different," says Michael, who asked that he not be photographed. "A lot of it depends on the person. A person with spiritual concerns will get a spiritual reading. A person with material concerns will get a material reading."

"I may give advice or insight into a problem. I may give a past-life reading. Or I may read a poem or some inspirational prose. It all depends on what my sources give me."

Michael is a 28-year-old Indiana University graduate student in education. He rooms in a Bloomington apartment with Mary Watson, a 30-year-old administrative assistant with a private research and development company.

Both are among the 25 members of the Bloomington Metaphysical Fellowship, a non-denominational, non-profit organization that provides "psychic consultation" through clairvoyance, psychometry, past-life readings, numerology, astrology, tarot cards, and dream interpretation.

Michael and Mary charge \$15 for an hour-long psychic reading, though, as Michael says, "we never close the door to someone in need who doesn't have the money."

"I don't have Michael's flamboyance," says Mary. "But I'm capable of readings. My area is dream interpretation. Michael's is clairvoyance, psychometry and past-life readings."

"Before doing a reading," says Michael, "I meditate for a good hour and read something of a high spiritual nature, such as a poem or one of the holy books, to get in touch with my spiritual guides."

"Then I hold an object in my hands and feel its vibrations. Through my spirit guides, I am able to sense where a person is and see symbols that relate to circumstances in his life. Then my guides help me interpret these symbols into meaningful messages that relate to the person's job, health, love life, spiritual life or other areas of concern."

"A medium is simply a channel between heaven and earth," says Mary. "Through daily meditation, we are able to tap into the universal consciousness, the spirits of relatives who've passed on to the other world, and the psychic energies of the person we are doing the reading for."

"I always ask the client if he wants me to focus on a particular area or if he wants to just hear what comes forward," says Michael. "Later, I may ask a person if he is open to reincarnation before giving a past-life reading, because if they don't believe in reincarnation, it won't help them. We often do reincarnation work if a person has a block or phobia. A deep fear that we can't explain usually comes from a traumatic experience in a previous life."

Indeed, Michael says he learned a great deal about himself from a medium who gave him a psychic reading several years ago.



Staff photo by John Tertune

Michael DeWitt, a psychic reader, reaches for his client's necklace, which will be used to prepare for the woman's psychic message.

"I always had this anger against men, but never knew why," he explains. "The medium found that in my last life I was a woman living in Impressionist France. I was a painter who was discriminated against because I was a woman. My paintings didn't sell and I died very bitter."

"That showed me why, in this life, I had always been so big on women's rights. And it explained a lot of other things. When I visited France years ago, it felt like I'd come home, but when my friends asked me to go to an art museum in Paris to see some Impressionist paintings, I got a huge knot in my stomach and said, 'I can't go there.' Now I know why I reacted that way."

Recently, Michael and Mary say they used a past-life reading to unlock the mystery of a woman's miserable existence.

"She felt very lonely, unloved and angry," he says. "My sources told me she had a strong link to Brahms, and I told her. She screamed in ecstasy, saying, 'My God! He's my favorite composer.'"

"Then I picked up that she had been a student of Brahms in another life," says Mary. "She had fallen in love with Brahms but he didn't love her, so she felt rebuffed and angry at his music. Now she was trying to decide between pursuing her music or pursuing love. The message was that she must first embrace music, and then a romantic relationship would follow."

Though Michael and Mary claim to enlist supernatural aid in their psychic readings, they admit there are too many volatile factors to accurately predict the future.

"We're not fortune tellers," says Mary. "For many people, that conjures up the image of a dumpy, greasy-haired woman staring into a crystal ball. We work with the here and now. Besides, I don't think it's good to know the future. If you are sure something will happen, you will stop striving."

Their clients, they say, are primarily professional people — lawyers, teachers, journalists, physicians, etc. About two-thirds of their clients are women.

"I did 23 readings last Saturday at a psychic fair in Terre Haute," says Michael, who takes appointments at his home phone (334-1909). "I did about 20 readings at a psychic fair recently here in Bloomington. Other than that, the number of private readings really varies. Last Thursday I did four readings and the next day I did three more."

"Many people have several readings," Mary says. "A psychiatrist working with a patient's fear of dark would not suddenly shut out all the lights. He would gradually dim them. That's why we don't reveal everything to the person at the first reading."

Michael and Mary say anyone who meditates daily and receives instruction from a qualified instructor can become a medium.

"I meditated every day and sat before a teacher for three hours a day for six weeks before my psychic energy opened up," says Michael. "I learned how to see and interpret signs, how to know if a sign is literal or symbolic, and how to relate the sign to the person's life."

"You have to be willing to practice and stick with it," warns Mary. "It takes time. If you're learning to play the piano, you shouldn't expect to sit down and play Beethoven the first day. You have to be patient."

Mary says psychic readings can greatly increase their knowledge of themselves and enhance their spiritual enlightenment.

"Readings help us see why we have conflicts and how we should prioritize our lives to help resolve these conflicts," she says. "They have a very healing effect. They help you have a more universal understanding of your problems, see them in perspective, and realize you don't have to work through them alone."

Mary's goal, she says, is to help her clients progress in their psychic development to the point where they, too, can become mediums.

"I want to show them they can tap into their own energy and continue their search to get in touch with themselves," she says. "I want others to have this psychic experience, learn more and eventually share it with others."

Michael says psychic readings give him a sense of purpose and fulfillment such as he's never known.

"I understand pain and suffering," he says. "This is a way I can help my brothers and sisters deal with their pain, and at the same time work through my own problems and balance out my own karma, which is the reaping of deeds done in a previous life."