

*We find that the Torah has four children: a smart child, a simple child, a wicked child, **and one who does not know what / how to ask.***

— **Passover Haggadah,**

based on Midrash Mekhilta d'Rabbi Ishmael

There are **known knowns**;
there are things we know we know.

We also know there are **known unknowns**;
that is to say, we know there are some things
we do not know.

But there are also **unknown unknowns**—
the ones we **don't know we don't know.**

And if one looks throughout history,
these tend to be
the most challenging ones.

— Donald Rumsfeld, 2002



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The Passover Haggadah and Donald Rumsfeld Have it Right



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In a world drowning in information, and “answers” coming at us faster than ever without making us any happier, healthier, or more stable, the time has come to fully embrace the wisdom of the former Secretary of Defense, not to mention that of the Haggadah: the wisdom of not knowing. In 2002, Rumsfeld said:

“But there are also unknown unknowns—the ones we don’t know we don’t know.

And if one looks throughout history, these tend to be the most challenging ones.”

He was right, and that is why the Haggadah celebrates the child who “does not know to ask.”

Far from being a weakness, appreciating that there are things for which we not only lack answers, but for which we are not even able to ask the right questions, is the beginning of the connection, wisdom, and community we seek.

We are all one of the Haggadah’s four children, the child who “does not know to ask.” Times when we think we do know what or how to ask may be the most important ones in which to embrace consciously unknowing. So, this Seder, consider the following questions when reading about the four children:

1. *How are **you** the child who does not know how or what to ask?*
2. *Especially tonight, what is an **issue, cause, or person** about which you wish you knew what or how to ask?*
3. *Why is admitting the reality of **unknown unknowns challenging**—especially those for things we care deeply about? How might we benefit from admitting those **unknown unknowns**?*

Part of Passover liberation flows from boldly embracing how much we don’t even know we don’t know. Try it and see!