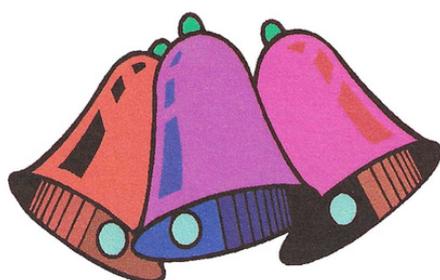

UNDERSTANDING THE JOURNEY

A Bimonthly Newsletter from Healthful Energetics, LLC
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SHARED BY SHEILA WOOD



Eli Wood
December 9, 2000

“MY FAVORITE CHRISTMAS TREATS”

My favorite Christmas treats are having Jesus at my house and Arnold Schwartzenegger. I also enjoy Christmas dinner, opening my presents, and learning about the Three Wise Men.

Jesus is always at my house because He created me, and He is always with me. Jesus enjoys our Christmas Dinner because it reminds Him of His own Last Supper before He showed His Love. Before we eat the dinner, we pray and ask Jesus to come down and say the blessing with us. And then we enjoy the Christmas dinner together.

Joining us at the feast will be Arnold Schwartzenegger. Arnold will enjoy opening the Christmas presents with us after the Christmas feast. And so will Jesus. Arnold will be making home movies with us if he gets to come over. And I know he loves food. Arnold will savor all the scrumptious treats at our table.

Dr. Donald Hoffman works in the area of mathematical modeling of concepts around consciousness and Dr. John Vervaeke studies cognitive science and Buddhist psychology, integrating science and spirituality to solve the 'meaning crisis'. In a recent discussion between the two, I realized how closely their studies in science and ancient philosophy come together to illuminate aspects of consciousness. I am delighted that we now have first row seats to the convergence of Science and Spirituality.

Donald David Hoffman is an American cognitive psychologist and popular science author. He is a professor in the Department of Cognitive Sciences University of California. He earned his Doctorate in computational psychology at MIT. Hoffman studies consciousness, visual perception, and evolutionary psychology using mathematical models and psychophysical experiments. In his book, *Observer Mechanics: A Formal Theory of Perception*, he offers a theory of consciousness and its relationship to physics.

Hoffman notes that the commonly held view that brain activity causes conscious experience has, so far, proved to be not easily managed in terms of scientific explanation. Hoffman proposes a solution to the hard problem of consciousness by adopting the converse view that consciousness causes brain activity and, in fact, creates all objects and properties of the physical world.

His MUI (multimodal user interface) theory states that "perceptual experiences do not match or approximate properties of the objective world, but instead provide a simplified, species-specific, user interface to that world." Hoffman argues that conscious beings have not evolved to perceive the world as it is but have evolved to perceive the world in a way that maximizes personal "fitness payoffs". He portends that metaphorical computer icons act as our interface to the world and enable us to function as efficiently as possible without having to deal with the overwhelming amount of data underlying reality. This theory implies that physical objects, such as quarks and brains and stars are constructed by conscious agents but have no causal power.

In 1944, two years before his death, Max Planck said this

“As a man who has devoted his whole life to the most clear-headed science, to the study of matter, I can tell you as a result of my research about the atoms, this much: There is no matter as such! All matter originates and exists only by virtue of a force, which brings the particles of an atom to vibration and holds the minutest solar system of the atom together. We must assume behind this force, the existence of a conscious and intelligent Mind. This Mind is the matrix of all matter.”

Hoffman portends that some form of reality may exist but may be completely different from the reality our brains model and perceive. Reality may not be made of space-time and physical objects. Through supposing that consciousness is fundamental, Hoffman provides possible solutions which wrestle with the notion of why we seem to have conscious immediate experiences, and how sentient beings could arise from seemingly non-sentient matter. **(When celestial angels intervene on Earth as sentient beings)**. Hoffman argues that consciousness is more fundamental than the objects and patterns perceived by consciousness.

He projects that natural selection is necessarily directed toward fitness payoffs and that organisms develop internal models of reality that increase these fitness payoffs. This means that organisms develop a perception of the world that is directed towards fitness, and not of reality. This led him to argue that evolution has developed sensory systems in organisms that have high fitness but don't offer a correct perception of reality. **Have we been witnessing this phenomenon in our society during 2022?**

John Vervaeke, is an award-winning lecturer at the University of Toronto in the departments of psychology, cognitive science and Buddhist psychology. His work is in integrating science and spirituality to solve the 'meaning crisis'. John writes, "The Meaning Crisis is at the root of modern crises of mental health, the response to environmental collapse, and the political system. We feel disconnected from ourselves, each other, the world, and a viable future." The overlap here is that 'fitness payoffs' as described by Hoffman, may not be entirely healthy as a predominating approach to life. This sounds a bit pessimistic but bits of it resonate in anyone who has been paying attention to a lack of general concern to our wellbeing within society, especially in recent years.

Dr. Vervaeke's meaning crisis and Dr Hoffman's conscious agents are bumping up against the third and fourth density interface of consciousness that we reside in today; the antagonism between those who operate within selfish motives and those whose have non-selfish motives incorporating the whole of society.

Just as my son created his own reality in the Christmas letter, we each strive to survive through the use of our own mental powers. We use conscious agents for fitness payoffs and strive to confront the meaning crisis. As we look toward concepts, thoughts and events that cause us to 'feel better' it is worth noting that unlike the scientists, we do not have to prove anything to ourselves or to the scientific world as long as we stay connected to Divine Spirit and the Source from where we receive our energy. Realizing our contributions to the cosmic consciousness goes a long way toward explaining well-being as a society. Although we cannot change everything that is happening around us, we can control our contributions to universal energetic wellness while we watch the scientists, philosophers and spiritualists catch up to one another and agree with us....

Send me your questions

BY SHEILA WOOD

I am interested in what is on your mind as you progress through spiritual learning curves. Your questions will also help others to learn about different aspects of metaphysics.

This page will reflect your input and curious mind. Hopefully, it will be a continuous dialogue and serve to develop concepts as inputs are collected.



As we all know, often answers to questions birth more questions.

So in a word - this is the "Don't Be Shy" page.

Does our perspective reveal the truth about ourselves?

Stay tuned....some answers/comments next time

"Make sure that you project from your heart and listen to others. It is the best way to grow."



Why do we sometimes feel isolated?

Feelings of isolation come when we feel that we are not in our optimum environment and our sense of self is out of focus.

Optimization is often looked at as a goal and may not be the norm. If you are goal oriented, you may believe yourself to be moving toward your optimum with goals and milestones along the way. For example, when you feel that a greater understanding of your role in this world will be achieved when you complete a course in mindfulness or quantum mechanics (and you will feel less isolated), the truth is, you may feel more isolated. Was the goal misplaced?

Take a step back and look objectively at yourself within your own reality and see that you are a part of a whole that is constantly evolving and the degree to which we 'catch up with ourselves' (or not) determines our degree of isolation. The constantly moving process of life involves catching up to our inner core and in a word, feelings of isolation revolve within perspective.