

Are we accidental-like or is there more to this?

by Mark Pavilons

?By the grace of God, I?am what I am.?

Think about this for a moment. The odds of any one of us being here today is roughly one in 400 quadrillion. Sheer chance, or by the grace of a supreme deity?

As I sat in my car at a stoplight, I?saw a small piece of oddly shaped paper spiralling across the road, blown by the wind.

I realize this tiny bit of paper was not a sentient organism, but it was an analogy on life.

As Forrest Gump put it: ?I don't know if we have a destiny, or if we're all just floating around accidental-like on a breeze, but I think maybe it's both.?

Maybe.

Hopefully there's more than just the wind blowing us oddly shaped people through our journeys.

In those few brief seconds, I?pondered existence, and the meaning of life. Okay, these are not things that can be adequately contemplated in just a few minutes.

And yet, this subject occupies my mind and it tasks me, almost like Captain Ahab's whale. But mine is not a tale of revenge or obsession.

It's one of uncertainty, of the circle of life so to speak.

If we are blowing around ?accidental-like??then we have no purpose, no meaning, no control. I?doubt that's the case, for many reasons.

First, we beat almost impossible odds to have been created in the first place. To defy these mathematical numbers, there must be some rhyme or reason. We must be part of some massive, universal plan, a huge puzzle in which we are all pieces. As most of us know if a puzzle is missing just one tiny piece, it's incomplete.

If we are not meaningful, essential and otherwise vital, our lives ? and the lives of all of our ancestors who fought to survive and continue the line ? were all for naught. Do you believe thousands of generations and their contributions were for naught?

I don't think so.

Okay, the paths of our families, maybe two or three generations past, may not have been amazing, monumental or noteworthy. However, one of those generations of young men and women lived through the Second World War, a time few of us can imagine.

From front-line soldiers, and war-torn European civilians, to those left to toil on the home front, those people faced challenging times to say the least. The situation demanded everything they had, and so many sacrifices were made. Many future generations were nipped in the bud, with the loss of potential fathers and mothers.

They, too, should be remembered for their existence and meaning.

The immortal words by Robert Binyon in "For the Fallen" ring true:

"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:

"Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn."

But we will remember them, not just the fallen, but all who follow.

I don't know if that was part of the grand scheme of things, but who knows?

For me, I am thankful that I am what I am."

My parents were teens during the war and suffered in their own ways. They saw enemy soldiers, bombings, death and lived through dangerous situations, food shortages, and loss.

They were among Canada's post-war immigrants who left everything behind to start a new life here.

I often think about how close I came to not being here today. I would not exist and by extension my children, neither had my parents not survived, thrived and overcome almost unfathomable odds. Strangers from different countries came together in Canada, met, were married, assembled a life together and had children.

What are the odds? Was it by chance, accidental-like, or destiny?

Maybe a bit of both.

When you struggle with health issues or any life-threatening condition you are always pondering mortality, and what awaits in the great beyond. If you're religious, you have some rather soul-affirming words to comfort you. If not, your imagination swirls with thoughts and images. White lights, or darkness? Eternal lightness of being, or mere nothingness?

Such is each of our destinies.

One has to weigh one's life and contributions in order to help make sense of it all. Some don't get a chance to grow and mature, and others outlive their family members. Many die far too young.

I came across a song that piqued my interest recently. The tune, "More To This," by Marc Scibilia, notes when the time comes all that we are falls into mystery:

"My neighbour says that this is it,

"My daughter says we live again,

"Most the time I'm somewhere in-between."

"Don't you dare,

"Tell me that there

"Ain't more to this,

"More to this ...?"

There's much more than we know right here, right now. From the microscopic worlds beneath the soil to the atmosphere that keeps our planet safe, miracles abound. More to this? You bet!

I believe there's way too much in terms of perfect harmony ? from our strands of DNA and sharing a joke with a dolphin, to watching a bumble bee fly ??o be accidental-like. No, my friends, these are intricate, complicated, planned wonders ??arvels beyond our comprehension.

Just as humans occupied this perfect sphere of ours, what about other life forms spread throughout the universe? What are their origin stories?

Did they arise through cosmic dust blowing around accidental-like, or were they given purposeful life by some extraordinary power?

Maybe a little of both.

Have faith my friends. More to this?

I really hope so.