

# Are we all more closely connected than we think?

by MARK PAVILONS

"You are, in fact, part of the glorious oneness of the universe. Everything beautiful in the world is within you." ? Russell Brand

Stuck in our own heads, it's easy to get distracted by our self-centredness.

To us, and our brains, we are all that really matters. Everything else is just a bonus.

We are ego-centric by nature ? we view the world through our own, unique lenses. Of course, these lenses are biased, jaded, and shaped by our personal experiences. They're never the best representation of the world around us.

There's no way to know why we were designed this way, other than perhaps for self-preservation.

It's one of the greatest stumbling blocks of humankind. Why doesn't everyone see things the same way?

If we had that problem licked, there would be no conflict, war, hunger and crime.

While we're wandering around this earth on our unique life's journey, we're often not alone. We have to emerge, like the proverbial butterfly from a cocoons, into the world of other people, other opinions, other sources of energy and emotion.

We are social creatures and our very survival depended on our ancestors forming groups and societies for mutual well-being.

You don't have to be a scientist to grasp the interconnectedness of all things ? a powerful concept that suggests everything in the universe is connected, and our actions and choices can have a ripple effect on the world around us.

I often think of the ripple in the pond scenario to see just how far the rings spread. I?also loved skipping rocks over the water, just to see what strange forces kept it from sinking.

Richard Feynman, in his lecture "The Relation of Physics to Other Sciences," said our individual and group divisions in life are artificial and arbitrary.

We can be broken down into physics, biology, psychology and even astronomy. It's the recipe we're all made of.

The universe made us all the same. Every human has the same internal organs, requires food and water, and lives a similar life cycle. Our design is quite impressive.

We are 99.9% genetically identical to every other person on the planet. So, we base the differences we see on only a 0.1% difference, a statistically tiny amount.

As human beings, we all share emotions, which tend to guide our lives. We all understand happiness, anger, love, and fear. We enjoy food and tap our toes to music. We are in awe of Mother Nature. We like how a new piece of clothing makes us feel.

We all share this planet as our home, a miraculous ball of life that was created some 4 billion years ago, by powers we may never fully comprehend.

We all rely on "Mother Earth" to provide us with clean air, nourishing foods from the soil, and fresh drinking water. Our particular orbit gives us four seasons and our closeness to the sun maintains all life.

We are not made to be solitary creatures, rather we have an innate ability to connect with others. We need others as much as we need food.

Our relationships ?? connectedness ? give our lives meaning, give us love, and allow us to grow. Our connections to others enhance our well-being. We help one another grow and enjoy new experiences.

In a way, we are all responsible for opening the eyes of our loved ones, exposing them to life's wonders. That's perhaps not a job we signed up for, but we've slid into the role effortlessly.

Again, one has to ask why ego-centric beings can be so giving, thoughtful and compassionate to others. It's almost the biggest catch-22 of our species. Experts say everything we do has an impact on others, just like those ripples in the pond. If you are an artist or writer, your work serves to inspire, evoke emotion perhaps even creates change. A builder can enjoy what she has created out of brick and mortar. A scientist unlocks hidden secrets for all humankind.

Sure, you can live in relative obscurity, but some believe who you are matters and we're constantly in a ?dance??of mutual influence. We matter to one another.

Despite our inherent qualities that bring us together, we've created barriers to keep us apart. Some believe the internet ??he greatest info sharing platform in our history ? is actually making us more reclusive, and giving us a false sense of connectedness. Personal interactions are vital.

Just look around at your own community. While many discuss issues and exchange info via local social networks, we also go out to the local coffee shop, attend town hall meetings, participate in fundraisers and fun public events.

These are what connect us ??ot an invisible signal through our smart phones.

When we reach out and bond with our co-workers, cashiers, and fellow parishioners, we expand our communal ties. I believe the words ?community??and ?connection??are one in the same.

If connecting with large groups isn't your ?thing,? then reach out to Nature, where you'll always find a warm welcome. Nature ? from tree roots and hummingbirds to veggies and squirrels ??re also among our friend groups. It's uncanny how wild animals know to approach a human for help. And yet we don't extend the same courtesy.

Connecting with others isn't difficult but it does take effort. Go out of your way to be kind to others and listen to the person who's speaking. Share a story or joke and remind your family members you always have their backs.

The Theory of Everything (TOE) is a hypothetical idea in physics that fully explains and links everything in the universe together. While that formula is currently elusive, certain facts remain.

Everything in the Universe only exists because it is in relationship to everything else. Nothing exists in isolation.

According to Margaret J. Wheatley, ?we have to stop pretending we are individuals that can go it alone.?

While quantum mechanics is still in its infancy, some scientists believe that our consciousness, like energy, is embedded in the quantum structure of reality. Rather than simply ceasing to exist, our consciousness transforms in a new form after the body dies.

Perhaps, since we're all connected ??ur consciousness and memories will return to the universe, being placed on a massive bookshelf of the ultimate cosmic library, with the subject of ourselves filtering back into the pool of everything.