

Shedding the building blocks of life in our tears

by MARK PAVILONS

Are the tears that roll down my cheeks when I'm alone filled with all that I am?

Do such small things contain all of my memories and bits of pieces of my life?

Wouldn't it be great to simply pluck a specific memory ??ike Harry?Potter ??from a pool of swirling human essence?

Tears are abundant and I?think we are all familiar with shedding a few million!

Humans typically produce between 15 to 30 gallons of tears per year in total.

?The most painful tears are not the ones that fall from your eyes and cover your face. They're the ones that fall from your heart and cover your soul.?

Tears often accentuate our language and can be a sign of strength, weakness or just a natural release.

Leonardo da Vinci stated they come from the heart; Washington Irving called them a mark of power, and Charles Dickens saw them as ?cleansing rain.?

Tears, according to Rumi, are ?the ink with which the soul writes what the heart cannot say.?

Most people agree that tears speak much more than words ? they are silent, but powerful and yet tender.

It's also proof that we're human, and haven't succumbed to numbness or the bitterness of the world. Perhaps, a single tear rolling down a cheek proves there's still something within us worth saving.

I?am curious as to what tears contain, chemically, and whether they can used to further our species, even longevity.

DNA, the blueprint of life, is a fascinating molecule that holds the key to our identity. It carries our genetic information, making us who we are.

While DNA is commonly extracted from blood, saliva, and hair, researchers have explored whether tears also contain trace amounts of genetic material. Studies suggest that tears do in fact carry minimal DNA.

DNA is contained in almost every cell of the human body. These cells, which form the various tissues and organs, carry our genetic information.

Scientific studies have shown that tears do contain DNA, primarily from the shed cells of the eye's surface. However, the concentration of DNA in tears is relatively low compared to other bodily fluids like blood or saliva.

Scientists have successfully extracted DNA from both fresh and old tear stains. And even tiny tear samples have yielded usable DNA profiles.

The composition of your tears changes depending on what's making you cry.

Eureka!

I'm sure we've all cried heavy, heart-breaking, sorrow-filled tears; tears of joy, and ?Hallmark movie??tears.

I'm not suggesting we collect and store jars of our own juices, just in case the technology arises when we can be ?reborn.? It's a bit icky, but apparently some decent DNA, combined with a healthy ovum can recreate ?Mark.? Something for my family to consider. (And yes, I'm laughing at this comment.)

When we disappear from this earthly existence, very little remains. Our soul hopefully zips on to the next life or plateau. What's left is a rather unpleasant lump of flesh, a vessel that once had a name, a life, a family, a career, a purpose, even a few friends.

Some of us worry about departing and just how that journey will be. I?am tempted to ask my oncologist the age-old question:?What happens when I?die?

I'm not sure what response that would elicit, but I'll bet it will put her off guard.

Right here, right now, I can adequately describe this person ? me ? in my head.

I'm a husband, father and have people who love me. They care about me not because of my accomplishments or what I've accumulated over the decades.

They love me because of my sense of humour, laugh, devotion, strength (and weakness).

They've seen me at my best and very worst. They will witness my last, long walk.

And that makes me sad. Not just taking the final fork in the road, but leaving them all behind to grieve. It will hurt, and hurt and hurt, until it doesn't.

I've been there, after losing all my original family members.

Modern science is constantly working on transferring our thoughts and perhaps ?souls??into computer chips, USB drives, even robots.

Being a science fiction fan, I've seen many of these themes in movies. Some work, but often something goes awry.

?Don't be ashamed to weep; ?tis right to grieve. Tears are only water, and flowers, trees, and fruit cannot grow without water. But there must be sunlight also,? said Brian Jacques.

Ah yes, the dichotomy of our existence.

Good and bad, positive and negative, yin and yang, light and darkness, heaven and earth.

Confucius once said, ?the interplay of opposite principles constitutes the universe.?

And so it is, swirling, dancing, performing, playing out some unimaginable cosmic stage play.

And we are merely players, Shakespeare said, and ?They have their exits and their entrances ...?And one man in his time plays many parts ...?

Just what is the final role, a role that summarizes a lifetime? When the curtain begins to drop, do we scurry like rodents, or stand firm, delivering our boisterous, final soliloquy?

?For in that sleep of death what dreams may come...

?When we have shuffled off this mortal coil ...?

In my tear-filled performance, I hope to be yanked off stage by that large, shepherd's hook, for some ill-time joke or off-colour remark. I?want to laugh and cough and cry all at the same time, leaving my DNA behind!

After all, tears meant to be shed.