

## Too small to make a difference??Think again

by MARK PAVILONS

We are inconsequential specs; tiny dots in the grand scheme of things.

But there's that saying, if you think you're too small to make a difference, just think of a mosquito flying around your bedroom at night.

Aside from all the quaint sayings, quotes and memes, our existence is truly remarkable.

The gift of consciousness, for the short time we are here, is incredible. It's almost unfathomable.

We were given life by our parents in a process that is still mind-boggling. That life, our current existence, creates ripples in that proverbial pond. Perhaps each and every one of us emits a tiny vibration, an inaudible noise that reverberates across the cosmos, stretching into the infinite.

We modern humans tend to equate value ?? life well lived ??n tangible, permanent concepts. And yet nothing ? not us, our species or even stars in the universe ? are permanent.

It's all so beautifully fleeting and temporary.

We come and go, over millions, even billions of years. The universe doesn't really care about us one way or another.

But it's all part of something bigger, something immense, something infinite.

?The trip to Infinity,? currently on Netflix, provided some food for thought on infinity.

One scientist explained a circle of existence this way: He said if you put an apple in a sealed box it will wither and fade, rotting away. Eventually it will be reduced to atomic particles that don't die, but continue to whirl around.

These, he contends, will continue to transform and take different shapes until they run out of unique combinations. Then, after perhaps a million years, or maybe a billion, the atoms will rearrange themselves into that same original, healthy apple.

That's incredible. But it's just a theory.

In fact, everything is just that ?? theory ? until it's proven. Science itself ?builds and organizes knowledge in the form of testable explanations and predictions about the universe.? Math and astronomy go back as far as our species itself.

As soon as we collected more than one bone we learned how to add. As we glanced toward the night sky, we wondered about those shiny lights. We were awed by the large moon overhead.

Right now, even 14 billion years after the beginnings of our universe, some things are still small in comparison. Our world is only roughly 4 billion years old, and our footprints have only been sinking in the mud for maybe 300,000 years. We only learned to text about 15 years ago. Our hairy ancestors likely never questioned their existence. They just trudged along, trying to stay warm and fed. When time permitted, they put their handprints on the cave wall. To them, only tangible things mattered ? the dirt beneath their feet; water to drink and spears to throw.

Our brains were always capable of much, much more. They only kicked into gear in the last 3,000 years or so. We really upped the

ante in the last 50 and made major leaps forward in the last decade. But old habits die hard. You can say boy, have we come a long way. Sure we have, but just how far have we truly evolved?

Sure, we have gizmos, electricity, fossil fuel burning thingamajigs, war, conflict, hunger, disease, and much more.

Yes, we can get food delivered right to our door, even late at night. We can watch entertaining moving pictures on hundreds of channels. A little robot can vacuum our floors when we don't want to.

And here we are. Our faces glued to tiny hand-held devices. Our fat-filled diets and clothes made in sweat shops. Lost luggage at the airport. That's a big deal? A few crappy old shirts and worn jeans?

Our smart watches do more than tell time, but they don't tell us how to think. They don't test us, or force us to make a difference.

No, my friends, that fire, that spark, has to come from us.

Some contend that the only knowledge that really matters is how to purify water, grow food, how to build and how to love. Think about it.

Just think, from tiny, helpless babies to fully grown, independent adults, we grew. We can do anything, go anywhere, accomplish anything.

Our simian brethren can't say the same. No, they're stuck in trees picking fleas from one another's hair. But hey, scientists taught monkeys to smoke! If we can only teach dogs to play poker!

Our world, and our fellow brothers and sisters are a gift. Some unbelievably mighty power bestowed these things upon us.

Our world can be a marvellous place, a planet of envy throughout the cosmos. If we came together, eliminated borders, greed, poverty, homelessness, disease, and aspired to do great things, wouldn't that be fabulous?

It's all within our grasp. You and I don't have to be astrophysicists or microbiologists to make discoveries. We don't have to neurosurgeons to perform miracles.

We are miraculous. Our bodies are filled with cells, atoms, DNA and molecules whizzing around in harmony and synchronicity. No machine, no smart device, could ever come close to our biological perfection.

We may not understand it all, but we're free to move about, speak our minds, lend a hand, offer compliments and extend compassion.

These intangibles are what it's all about. These small deeds outweigh the largest of moons and smallest of microbes.

Inconsequential? Not at all!