

## Celebrating our spiritual, physical connections

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?That is the exploration that awaits you! Not mapping stars and studying nebula, but charting the unknown possibilities of existence.?

? Leonard Nimoy

Billions of human beings believe in a supreme being, a cosmic force or a higher level of existence.

Some of the world's most important documents protect and enshrine religious rights and practices.

There are some fundamental truths about our human existence. Since time began we've been searching for a ?meaning,? thinking there must be a force at work in the universe, governing our lives. The very fact we question the meaning of life is so wonderfully human.

Is there a hidden meaning, fate or set of predetermined moves that we adhere to??Or do WE?give meaning to life?

The meaning of life, is life. Maybe it's all in the adventure itself.

There's no doubt that life is a journey, and not just an ultimate goal or revelation. There are many things we can't change, like the direction of the wind, or the rotation of our planet, but we can change how we steer our own ship.

Shakespeare once wrote that we may know who we are, but perhaps we don't know what we're capable of. That's kind of like saying if opportunity doesn't come knocking, build a door!

Maybe it's not what lies ahead, or even our deep roots that matter. Maybe it's all inside us.

Words, ideas and yes, love can change the world. There's plenty of evidence to support this. Our whole human history is filled with stories of immense triumph, fortitude, accomplishments and deeds.

And along the way, God has often lent a hand.

?Just as a candle cannot burn without fire, men cannot live without a spiritual life.?

? Buddha

Our species has seen many ?gods? over the millenia. We've moved from a multi-theistic to a largely mono-theistic belief system, looking up to the All Mighty.

Whether you're Christian, Jewish or a child of Islam, God and His virtuous teachings are paramount.

Hinduism, the third largest religion in the world, emphasizes goals of human existence, such as ethics, passion, freedom and the cycle of rebirth.

In Buddhism, our goal is to break the cycle of suffering and rebirth through reincarnation, by achieving ultimate wisdom, love and compassion.

If you examine all major religions, there is a common theme. It's one of constant evolution to achieve personal growth, a sort of improvement on the original model.

Whether our dedication to these ideals brings us closer to Nirvana remains to be seen. But I truly believe that all human beings,

regardless of their birthplace or religious practices, want to be good, decent souls.

?Faith helps many people make sense of the world around them. Faith gives them a spiritual connection to something larger?  
? David Harsanyi

We in the west celebrate our differences and revel in our cultural richness.

There's a certain amount of ?sameness,??and we all are much closer than you may think.

Aside from our spiritual side, all humans are all related. Scientists will tell you that everything ? all forms of life and inorganic elements ? originated from our sun. When our sun first shone, it sent out all kinds of life-giving debris, almost like seeds, to help spark life on our world. Everything, from your next door neighbour to the rocks in your garden, came from this star dust.

This is the cosmic connection that we all share.

Our DNA?also confirms our earthly connection.

I get a kick out of those companies that offer a template of our genealogy based on our DNA.

We are all related, people! Early homo sapiens first emerged in Africa, and the Middle East is known as the cradle of civilization. If we all trace our ?roots??back far enough, we'll stretch right back to those early hominids.

Homo sapiens most likely developed in East Africa between 300,000 and 200,000 years ago. The ?recent African origin? model proposes that all modern non-African populations are substantially descended from populations of homo sapiens that left Africa after that time.

The cradle of civilization was Mesopotamia, the area between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers (in modern day Iraq). This is the first place where complex urban centers grew, dating back to roughly 3500 B.C.

Much of our beautiful human past grew out of Iran, Syria, and Turkey.

One of the most widespread civilizations, the Indus Valley civilization (2600 BC?to 1900 BC), included northeast Afghanistan to Pakistan and northwest India.

Here's the irony in all of this. Today, many in the west fear or even loathe Islam, yet all of our most impressive beginnings spawned from those regions. A lesson in human and religious history would do us all a world of good.

Whether you're deeply relaxed in a Reiki session, or talking with a bronze sculptor, you will realize that we're all spiritual beings.

And we're all linked, bonded and related by blood and minerals.

I think a little more thought should be given to our collective souls and our entwined species. The ultimate goal for our planet should be unity and unification. Nothing else is more important.

Only then can we move forward and really evolve.