"The unexamined life," Socrates challenged, "is not worth living." And if we do examine our condition deeply, we can see that humanity’s myriad of challenges can be summed into one underlying problem: how to change consciousness. Our state of consciousness matters, our intentions matter, our notions of self-identity matter. In a wisdom culture, this need for understanding who we are is well understood. Enough: Join the Evolution is dedicated to providing glimpses of such a wisdom culture. Exploring the interface of science, society, and spirituality, it offers insights from outside the box and perspectives that make the impossible look possible.

This magazine is also a place for people to share their transformative experiences—experiences that encourage us to consider another point of view or try out a new activity. Whether it is growing your own vegetable garden for the first time or trying out mantra meditation, this magazine offers practical solutions that contribute to a culture of genuine purpose, meaning, and value.

I invite you to join the evolution!

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Yesterday I went to my weekly yoga class. At the end of the class, during the relaxation period, the instructor asked everyone to focus on their breathing. She added, “If thoughts come to your mind, acknowledge them with compassion and let them go.” I was left thinking, “What in the world does that mean? Acknowledge your thoughts with compassion.” It sounds really beautiful, but how does one actually go about doing it?

In a similar vein, many people equate yoga with feeling peaceful. My question is, what does peace mean? This is the challenge with words. Few of us actually take the time to decode the intangibles like “peace,” “compassion,” and “humility” etc. Even turning to the dictionary is often fruitless since in the end, the words themselves are coloured by our experiences and perceptions. That’s why “spirituality,” which promotes the development of so many of these intangible characteristics, can be confusing to many.

On the other hand, bhakti yoga is not only practical but complete, as it not only gives us the process but explains the nature of the outcome. In this sense, Krishna provides a beautiful and practical definition of yoga: “Practice your duty in an equipoised frame of mind, abandoning all attachment to success or failure.” Let’s stop for a moment and really understand what this word “equipoised” means since I’m guessing it is not a common word for most of us. Simply put, it means balanced, in equilibrium.

In the context of yoga, equipoised means to do things for the sake of doing them and giving up the attitude of “I’m doing this because it will benefit me.”

The thing is, we all need a motivating force to drive us to accomplish almost everything. If we don’t have one, we won’t do anything. Don’t you agree? So then, the question remains, “If I’m not doing this for me, what’s my motivation?” We might respond and say, “Well, the reasons why I do certain things are certainly not centered on me. I’m motivated because I’m doing it for my friends, family, my country...”
“...when we start to experience our spiritual identity then we gradually relinquish our grip on trying to arrange pleasing situations for our senses.”

The material body and mind almost completely cover our spiritual identity. In this state of spiritual amnesia, we are naturally forced to invest our energy in trying to gratify our material senses (in the Vedic worldview the mind is considered another sense). However, since material pleasure is temporary and dependent on conditions beyond our control, the quest to obtain it is inevitably a struggle fraught with anxiety and dissatisfaction. But when we start to experience our spiritual identity, then we gradually relinquish our grip on trying to arrange pleasing situations for our senses. Instead, we become motivated to act in a way that rekindles our connection with the Supreme.

This seismic shift in motivation results in the experience of a higher consciousness. This higher consciousness reveals the worries and anxieties that normally swirl through our mind for what they really are—temporary and insignificant. This is not to imply that we don’t need to take care of our worries. It means we take care of them in the proper perspective and thereby avoid anxiety.

See how the attachment has changed? Instead of obsessing over the ever-changing, transient material conditions that determine the “success” or “failure” of our attempts to enjoy our material senses, we become attached to acting in harmony with Krishna. In following these steps, we can remain equipoised and devote our attention to our prime duty of reviving our loving relationship with the Supreme.

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ENOUGH! recommends...

“...when we start to experience our spiritual identity then we gradually relinquish our grip on trying to arrange pleasing situations for our senses.”
Kirtan is freedom. How do we get beyond these covering walls of body, mind, and material environment, limitations we know so well?

I want to share with you my favourite thing, something real.

Usually, “meditation” sounds peaceful, low-key, and intriguingly mystical in aim; a personal portable grounding tool, bringing resilience to the ups and downs; it’s the hope for a spark of transcending insight from beyond the usual time-worn experiences. In practice, however, meditation may be a tad tedious and hard to do everyday... a nice idea but...

Love music, love dancing? Try this instead; it’s an emerging style of meditation called kirtan—it’s my best night out, non-toxic, and hangover-free... I’m not kidding!

Kirtan is freedom. How do we get beyond these covering walls of body, mind, and material environment, limitations we know so well?

Kirtan is a place the mind can rest. The sound vibration, being composed of spiritual energy, gives the shelter the mind crawls longingly through the material world for. The difference between these spiritual and material energies is chalk and cheese, day and night; in yoga knowledge, matter is composed of ignorance, temporariness, and distress, whereas spiritual energy is made of full knowledge, permanence, and bliss. We can choose to get absorbed in either—take your pick.

Kirtan is freedom. How do we get beyond these covering walls of body, mind, and material environment, limitations we know so well? Knowing the

Love music, love dancing? It’s an emerging style of meditation called kirtan—it’s my best night out, non-toxic, and hangover-free...

BY KHADRIJAN
limitations so well and weary of not finding something else yet, and maybe cynical that there even is something else… but then why do we, or at least some of us, crave the taste of some fresh air beyond the “same old same old” world we are used to? Kirtan is touchdown on the transcendent self beyond body and psychology. It’s the soul, the atman of yoga; it’s a home hit, the bull’s-eye. Unlike many meditation methods, it’s not just a psychological exercise, an observation of thoughts or breath, or an experience that still keeps you on the material plane. Once you taste that freedom, that release beyond limitation that you get in kirtan, you’ll never be satisfied inside the stale walls of what you know now.

So what does it feel like to really begin to be yourself again? It’s an experience that grows as you pursue it, and considering self-realisation is the goal of multiple spiritual disciplines throughout history, it’s not a cheap thing and not spoken for in a day. However, from the very beginning, you start to taste a loosening from the mental states that crowd your consciousness moment to moment and feel so “me,” however much you would prefer not to have them; you begin to taste a focusing of vision that clarifies the muddle of life and makes you gradually hunger to live the most for-real life. The heart opens to radiate and shine, and barriers between you and the people in your life—friends, family, and workmates start to disappear. You feel the desire to connect unselfishly, with all beings, via our Common Source. Those are just a few of the herculean shifts that are possible at the beginning of this exciting adventure into kirtan.

Ultimately, kirtan reboot our original intelligence so we start to see and act in harmony with dharma: the cosmic order or intelligence aka implicit order in quantum physics that gives rise to the natural laws and order we see in the reality around us. Effectively, we are tuning ourselves like an instrument with the Creator, creation, and other creatures, bringing us to a state of alignment with everything.

The mantras we chant in kirtan are names for that complete spiritual whole: Krishna. Supported by other mantras, the headliner is the maha-mantra, or great mantra: Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare, Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Rama. You can start the experiment now—try chanting these mantras for ten minutes every morning or evening, and whenever you feel like it any other time—and see what it does. This is a yoga process to be experienced, so there is no need to believe in anything: it’s just like stepping into a yoga session to try out what it does for you.

So, try kirtan out; nothing to lose, everything to gain. At the least you will feel a release from stress, anxiety, and boredom. At the most you will be the next fully self-realised, blissful, supercharged, intelligent, authentically and unselfishly powerful person walking the earth, a beacon of pure compassion, honesty, and deep knowledge that can contribute big time to easing the multi-problems the world shoulders.

Find it at a bhakti-yoga centre near you.

Khadiravan has been practising bhakti-yoga since 1997. Within that time she studied for a doctorate in yoga psychology as described in the ancient yoga traditions. She conducts yoga psychology workshops and leads kirtan nights (mantra and music meditation) at Bhakti Lounge, Wellington.
Have you heard of the zone? It's a state of mind sometimes called “flow state.” Humans experience this state when they get really absorbed in an activity such as sports, music, art, computer programming, gaming, and so forth. It is the mind scientist's state of mind when he is so absorbed in his invention that he hasn’t eaten, washed, or slept in three days; it is the child’s state of mind when she is so absorbed in playing that she doesn’t realize that she is hungry or tired; and it is the Shonan gymnast’s state of mind when he is playing the computer game so intensely, executing ten actions per second, hammering his mouse and keyboard, ultimately defeating his opponent through superior focus and micromanagement of over one hundred units in the game to see each unit to its maximum potential. It requires extremely quick reflexes.

If you have experienced the zone, then you know it is blissfully absorbing. Your attention is completely absorbed in your activity. You are fully in the moment, outside reality or the passage of time, and your mind detaches from your body. The zone produces an inner clarity, the activity you are doing becomes its own rewards, and you feel fantastic. The following quote gives an example of someone in such a state:

“I felt as though I was driving in a tunnel. I had reached such a high level of concentration that it was as if the car and I had become one.”

—Ayrton Senna (Formula One race car driver, 1960–1994)

Scientific research, particularly Dr. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's at Claremont University, has shown that the human mind can process only so much information at any one time. If we intensely focus on one task, then there is no attention left to monitor anything else. For example, if we intensely focus deeply on Shonan gymnastics, our mind doesn’t have the capacity to worry about insignificant problems like hunger and thirst. All your problems go away temporarily, and you feel great.

Dr. Csikszentmihalyi's research has shown that we can best obtain a state of flow when we are doing a very challenging activity that we are very skilled at, while other activities are less ideal for obtaining this state.

Low challenge, high skill: Imagine the world's fastest clapper (search for him on YouTube). The man can clap his hands faster than anyone alive. He is very skilled at hand clapping. I bet he has practised for years. Still, clapping your hands isn't something particularly difficult. The clapper finds clapping his hands easy, relaxing, and fun but doesn't easily get into the zone.

High challenge, low skill: You are the only passenger on a small airplane and the pilot has a heart attack. You have no idea how to fly a plane, and flying is hard. You are in total anxiety; no chance of the zone here.

High challenge, high skill: You are an amazing mountain climber; you can climb a cliff face with no chance of falling off. Climbing a cliff requires a huge amount of skill and focus, even for an expert. If you are such an expert, that this is an ideal activity for entering flow state.

Low challenge, low skill: Suppose someone asks you to turn the lights off and on five hundred times in a row. Pretty easy to do, right? At the same time, I bet it isn’t something that you have practised before or find very interesting. So, you would get very bored very quickly, doing this activity.

If you have experienced the zone, then you know it is blissfully absorbing.

BY CANDIDAS
I can get into the zone while running. A few months ago I ran the Wellington Round the Bays half marathon. It was a wonderfully fun experience for me. I got into the zone and was smiling almost the entire marathon. However, I observed that for most of the other runners, the experience of running seemed more of a chore, perhaps something they had to do to lose weight, a process more akin to torture than fun, something that definitely did not lead them into the zone. Such runners were very straitlaced expressions on their faces during the race.

Many Eastern teaching, including the art and science of Krishna Consciousness, explain that we are not the body, but are, in fact, beings of pure spiritual consciousness. The zone closely resembles our original state of pure consciousness and is therefore a state of such great happiness.

Zone consciousness involves no lamenting about the past and no hankering for the future. Hankering and lamenting are great sources of anxiety for many people, and they find great pleasure in release from such feelings. In our constitutional spiritual position, there is no hankering and lamenting, and the zone gives us an hint of that position.

This zone is not, however, automatically a spiritual experience. It can be spiritual, but, more often than not, it is simply the material mind getting absorbed in a material activity without any direct spiritual connection. Depending on one’s consciousness or purpose, a zone-inducing activity can either be spiritual or material. There is nothing inherently spiritual about writing a book, for example, but when a writer is in the zone while writing a spiritual tome of knowledge, then such activity is certainly spiritual. Let us look at a quote from the author of Caitanya-caritamrta (a biography of the Indian saint and incarnation Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu) where he describes how he is in the zone while writing:

“I have now become too old and dimmed by invalidity. While I write, my hands tremble. I cannot remember anything, nor can I see or hear properly. Still I write, and this is a great wonder.”

– Ranchorita Sarat Chandra Ghose

For all its wonders, there are some problems with the zone. For one, you can’t enter the zone whenever you like. It is difficult to get into. It requires an activity that you are very skilled at and that is highly challenging at the same time. Such activities are hard to come by and require lots of time to master. Furthermore, the zone is a temporary state. You might lose track of time for a while, but sooner or later you emerge from the zone and enter back into mundane reality—the bills, the work, the routine.

The yoga texts of ancient India elaborately describe the Krishna conscious path into the zone. The texts present a practice of meditation that leads to greater and greater absorption in relationship with the Supreme Consciousness, to Krishna Consciousness. This path starts with hearing sacred sound-atonement, then repeating such sounds as you have heard them. This repetition can be done either quietly in japa meditation, or loudly in kirtan. The more you repeat the sacred mantras, the more they embed themselves into your consciousness. Soon, as you start to remember them throughout the day, your mood lifts. With determined practice, the mantras (sounds that represent the many names of the Supreme) become second nature, until you remember them in every situation. Prolonged practice of such Krishna consciousness leads to a state known as samadhi, pure spiritual trances, or fully awakened consciousness. In that state you completely understand your relationship to the Supreme and inhabit a body made of pure spiritual consciousness. You are no longer of this material world. You are completely happy, fully and permanently in the spiritual zone.

In the stage of perfection called trance, or samadhi, one’s mind is completely removed from material mental activities by practice of yoga. This perfection is characterized by one’s ability to see the self by the pure mind and to relish and rejoice in the self in the self. In that state, one is in a position of boundless trans- anecdotal happiness. Established thus, one never departs from the Truth, and upon gaining this he thinks there is no greater gain. Being immeasurably in such a position, one is never shaken, even in the midst of greatest difficulty. This indeed is a position from which one is never relieved. The perfection of the path will be a position of boundless happiness. Established thus, one never departs from the Truth, and upon gaining this he thinks there is no greater gain. Being immeasurably in such a position, one is never shaken, even in the midst of greatest difficulty. This indeed is a position from which one is never relieved. The perfection of the path will be a position of boundless happiness.

For one, you can’t enter the zone whenever you like. It is difficult to get into. It requires an activity that you are very skilled at and that is highly challenging at the same time. Such activities are hard to come by and require lots of time to master. Furthermore, the zone is a temporary state. You might lose track of time for a while, but sooner or later you emerge from the zone and enter back into mundane reality—the bills, the work, the routine. Still, as you watch the videos (notice your hands start to tremble), you feel as if the reality—the bills, the work, the routine, the person feeling that something special has just happened—this is because your life experience from the ordinary to the spiritual, and it is in those moments that we feel truly alive and in tune with what we are doing. Once awoken, flow experience remains etched in the memory.

– Mihály Csíkszentmihályi

(Hungarian psychology professor—born 1934)

Karina Candidas has been practising the art and science of Bhakti-yoga for thirteen years. She holds a PhD in comparative science and has a keen interest in all topics scientific and spiritual. Her favourite bhakti literature is Caitanya-caritamrta, as it combines spiritual and scientific wisdom with heartwarming stories. You can follow and contact her via her blog: www.bhaktiweb.com

60-minutes report on Alex Honnold:

Short version of “Alex on a Wall”:

Full version of “Alex on a Wall”:

Below are links to some amazing videos of Alex Honnold, supremely expert free-solo climber. He climbs vertical walls without any tools, ropes, or support, simply entering into the zone when he climbs and finding great happiness in that state. Alex has an amazing skill, and I have the greatest respect for him. Still, as you watch the videos (notice your hands start to tremble as you watch), think about how you might find a safer, easier, and more accessible path into the zone by seeking out a friendly group of like-minded spiritual practitioners, practitioners engaged in a bona fide meditation practice, practitioners chanting japa and kirtan, practitioners on their way into samadhi.
MUESLI BAR SLICE

This slice is a firm favourite in our household. Oats are high in fibre, helping you feel fuller for longer and maintaining your energy levels. With the added benefit of nuts and seeds, you can happily chow down on this tasty snack, and it’s oh so quick to prepare.

BY RADHA PRASAD

1 cup rolled oats
½ cup whole oats
Pinch of salt
¼ cup raisins
¼ cup chopped apricots
¼ cup honey
½ cup sesame seeds
½ cup chopped almonds
¼ cup peanut butter
¼ cup brown sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla essence

Mix dry ingredients in a bowl. Place the peanut butter, sugar, and honey in a saucepan and heat slowly, stirring constantly until ingredients are melted and combined. Add the vanilla essence, then pour the liquid ingredients onto the dry ingredients, and mix well. Press into a greased baking tray. Chill for 30 minutes before cutting into squares.
This is what I left home for. To wake up each morning and have no idea what the day will bring and where I will be resting my head the next night.

Early morning sunrise down at the beach… Ahhhh, peace. This is what I left home for. To wake up each morning and have no idea what the day will bring and where I will be resting my head the next night. After all the stress of study and work and all the drama from my friends and family, I really needed this break. Freedom.

Now here I am, sitting in a postcard. Surf, sand, sun—no plans, no responsibility, no commitments. No boyfriend, no boss, no mortgage, and definitely no kids! This is as free as I’ll ever be.

But somehow I don’t really feel satisfied. I almost feel kind of… empty. Don’t get me wrong; I know my loved ones at home would kill to be sitting on this sand dune right now and I am grateful. I’m having once-in-a-lifetime experiences and meeting so many new people from all over the world.

Many of us seek freedom yet continue to find ourselves trapped.

Diary of a Wandering Traveller

Jamie developed a taste for travel in her childhood, hopping between the United States and the United Kingdom, where she now lives in Cardiff, Wales. Upon finishing college, she took a “gap year,” which unexpectedly lasted four years and led her to Australia and New Zealand. Her adventures and questions led her to bhakti-yoga, which she continues to pursue along with other interests including writing, reading, dance, and music.

I’m off for a swim. Carpe diem!
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The heinous crimes of a despotict idealor would surely cease to move us to indignation if we learnt that factors entirely predetermined his behaviour."

The Spiritual Problem

The Biggest One is That It Requires a Soul

Reincarnation faces many of the same philosophical problems as heaven. Unsurprisingly, reincarnation raises a common objection to the existence of spiritual reality:

"The biggest one is that it requires a soul…”

This is the sense in which we are reincarnated - our identity, in some sense at least.

There are many questions that this raises: how does it relate to the mind?…

By Sachi Dulal

The Evidence for Reincarnation

Doctors at the University of Virginia Medical Centre have uncovered some of the best evidence for reincarnation. For the past forty-five years they have conducted exhaustive investigations into young children’s reports of past-life memories. The pioneering work of more than 2200 pages, which detailed 225 cases in which children who seemed to claim a previous life had no clear biological correlation. To demonstrate this conviction, Stevenson spent forty-five years investigating the various features of past-life memories. The staggering details of these memories allowed Stevenson to track down the identity of the child’s previous birth and confirm the details. On some occasions he was able to take children to the exact location they talked about—where his investigation had already uncovered a person who lived and died exactly as the children described. The children effortlessly made their way through a foreign neighborhood, and correctly identified their previous house, possessions, relatives, and friends.

For Stevenson, the cases that provided the strongest empirical evidence for reincarnation were ones involving biological corroboration. To demonstrate this conviction, he published Reincarnation and Biology: A Contribution to the Etiology of Birthmarks and Birth Defects in 1968. This book, which corresponded to features from the life of the “previous personality,” demonstrated the conviction that we all have a spiritual component along with our physical bodies.

Given Sagan’s materialistic conviction, the results are perhaps not surprising. It is not because of my body and my atman do have a causal relationship—that is, that one can cause changes in the other), they must have some common ground.

SPIRIT MATTERS

A Response by Sachi Dulal

Most of us, by our lives under the influence of the thesis that our thoughts, ideas, and emotions have causal power. Every self-help book and most popular self-help writings is based upon this principle. By changing our intentions we change our behaviour. The heinous crimes of a despotict idealor would surely cease to move us to indignation if we learnt that factors entirely predetermined his behaviour. Yet this was the claim of classical physics—the worldview that achieved prominence during the seventeenth century due to the work of Sir Isaac Newton. Pol Pot could hardly help himself from murdering thousands of his fellow Cambodians, because the interactions of microscopic mechanical elements in his brain completely determined his actions. The apertr. Human beings are mechanical robots. Our thoughts, feelings, and ideas are causally inert and cannot influence our behaviour.

More than eight decades of cumulative evidence in quantum mechanics have long since falsified this central claim of mechanistic determinism. I feel that the fact that the mechanistic precepts of classical physics still hold sway in the general intellectual milieu is hardly surprising to anyone familiar with the trials of human thought. Evidence expecially changes our paradigm—we see what we want to see.

In responding to this student’s question, I will briefly highlight the evidence for reincarnation before addressing the deeper issue at hand: How can the physical and the spiritual interact?

The Demon-Haunted World

Hinduism, which is broadly speaking the heading that Sramanic religions (Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and Hinduism), is a broadly speaking the heading that Sramanic religions (Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and Hinduism), which is broadly speaking the heading that Sc.

A Response by Sachi Dulal

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"...many philosophers misidentify the contents of consciousness—the transformations of the physical and the mental—with consciousness itself."

The Vedantic solution to the mind-body problem begins with a clear demarcation between ‘mind’ and the mental—with consciousness itself. The soul is not the mind. The Vedic texts hold that consciousness is the ground of all content—whether physiological, psychological, or combinations of both.

The Vedic model, mind (a subtle kind of matter) is placed along with ordinary matter on one side of the Cartesian divide. The soul, a sort of pure consciousness, is placed on the other side. The question still arises, how can any connection between the soul (consciousness) and matter in its two forms (ordinary matter and the subtle material mind) be established? The key is the Supersoul. The Supersoul is the ultimate source of the soul of living beings as well as the mind and elementary and ordinary matter. The Supersoul monitors the desires and intentions of the souls of living beings and causes mind and matter to transform in response to those desires. The Vedic model also incorporates the property dualism of Spinoza, who proposed that there is actually only one substance, spirit, that is perceived differently according to its applications, just as electricity can be used to heat or cool. The Supersoul possesses a spiritual potency which can be deployed in different ways. The spiritual potency which despairs to cover the original spiritual consciousness of the individual soul is known as matter. But the same potency can be changed back to its original spiritual form by the Supersoul. Sentient beings inhabit bodies composed of many atoms, each with soul and Supersoul. But in this condition the manifestation of the soul’s consciousness is heavily obscured. However, the bodies of living
The theory will have to explain how living things can be obtained at great distances unbound by the usual limitations of space or time. Such a theory must also explain not only how one can get information from a distance in space or time, but how one can get information from time itself.

The theory must account for why we are not overwhelmed with information all the time. The theory must also explain how random processes can be revealed by mental intention. The theory of psi should explain phenomena associated with evidence suggesting that something may survive bodily death. These phenomena include apparitions, hauntings, out-of-body experiences (OBE), and near-death experiences (NDE). The theory must need to account for poltergeist phenomena, which provide the primary evidence for large-scale mind-matter interaction effects.

Michael Cremo has explained:

A theory based on the Vedic model of the cosmos, could account for all of the above. Matter, mind, and individual spirits emanate from God. God creates each atom and accompanies each individual spirit as the Supernal, or Paramatama. The Supernal, by definition, is present in all phases of time and space, and is simultaneously beyond time and space. The Supernal is also all-knowing. Therefore, through the medium of the Supernal, knowledge can be transmitted from one spirit to another beyond the usual limits of time and space. There are many examples of this in the Vedic literature. The Bhagavad Gita (15.15) says that it is from the Supernal that each individual soul gains memory, knowledge, and forgetfulness. The Supernal can therefore control the kind and amount of information that comes to each individual soul. Whether through normal or paranormal means. Since the Supernal is present in each atom of matter and in the same time-areas of conscious intentions, it is possible for the Supernal to produce the effects ascribed with random number generators. Response to the desire of experimenters and the intentions of experimenters. Experimenters could cause more cosmesis to occur or come up in the course of the experiment. The Vedic model, which postulates the existence of an eternal conscious self (atman), would explain evidence for survival of bodily death. According to the Vedic model, the eternal conscious self, if it does not return to the spiritual level of reality, remains in the material world covered by a subtle mental body. This mental body is composed of a subtle, mental element (mitra) that can, by the agency of Supernal, affect ordinary matter. This would explain poltergeist effects and apparitions. The mental body also includes a subtle sensory apparatus, capable of operating without the assistance of the ordinary bodily sense organs. This would explain the visual perceptions that subjects report during out-of-body experiences.

The mental body described in the Vedic texts actually consists of three elements—mind, intelligence and false ego—each acts as the interface between conscious and matter. Readers wishing to acquaint themselves with the content of the Vedic literature may turn to the pages of Human Decoduction where Michael Cremo draws upon the ancient spiritual encyclopedia Shri Vaikuntha Samhita to depict a more thorough version. The detailed version provides an ever more subtle and refined model of self-mind-body interaction in the environment of a multilevel cosmos, divided principally into regions of gross matter, subtle matter, and spirit. It also allows one to integrate evidence from the external gamut of human experiences, including humanity’s wisdom traditions, into an enriching synthesis, offering fruitful lines of research confirming and refining a complex model of self-mind-body interaction. The explanatory potential of the Krishna model has not gone unnoticed. “The possibility that this ancient way of viewing Nature might be useful in science,” distinguished quantum physicist Henry P. Stapp has remarked, “arises in the context of contemporary efforts to understand the artificially observed correlations between conscious processes and brain processes.”

Recent developments in medical and psychology have paved the way for the possible integration of self-consciousness into science and mathematics, economics, and popular science. However, it is not enough to study and write about the interface of science and Krishna philosophy.
“Enter the laboratory of Bhagavad-gita, I invited. Explore Krishna’s presentation of consciousness as the sure indicator of the nonmaterial self, the atma. Krishna explains, “In the same way that the sun illuminates this entire world, similarly the nonmaterial spiritual particle, the atma, illuminates the entire body by conscious-ness.” (Bhagavad-gita 13:34)

Offering time-tested techniques for verifying His spiritual information, Krishna, the Supreme Scientist, is open and magnanimous—like any respectable university, to a qualified applicant. On the other hand, where is the research institute that can provide us any methodology allowing even the slightest experience of matter producing consciousness? Reminding ourselves that not one scientific instrument in the world can directly detect the presence of consciousness, we humbly scale back our matter-centric hopes.

“You offended me,” the young university student leaned into my face and charged. Sitting with students at the University of Melbourne, Australia’s premier tertiary institution, I had just finished a presentation: “Consciousness: Pleasure Beyond Time and Space.”

Earlier, the same student had challenged me, during the questions following my lecture. Turning to face the audience, she had triumphantly asserted that since the awareness of a baby differs from an adult’s, we know, as fact, that consciousness is a biochemical product, emerging from the body’s various phases.

Patiently and gently, I sought to deal with her fuzzy logic and fiction-science. “Let’s just consider a baby. Exactly when and how does the baby body suddenly manufacture consciousness? Or does it arise from the mother, through the umbilical cord?”

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"Conscious, subjective awareness arising from inert matter—
isn’t this a faith?"

The provocative student resuming silence, another student quite politely requested me to receive something he said puzzled him. “We all know that gorillas are not conscious, whereas humans are. Since it is a fact that everything develops through evolution, why this difference between humans and animals?”

“When did you last visit the world-class Melbourne Zoo?” I nudged. Then, maintaining a straight face, I asked the young man had he noticed any difference between the behaviour of the gorillas and the antics of students strewn to their classes. “Both creatures kindly cavort in public.” The audience smiled knowingly.

“More importantly,” I continued, “saving aside evolutionary controversies about entire bodies developing completely by random selection from who knows what, I would like to hear the proposed evolutionary phases for the gradual biological appearance of consciousness.”

After the final questions, the students lined up to achieve an exquisite lunch of Krishna food. Immediately the young lady challenger pounced upon me, positioning herself a few centimetres from my nose. “Your lecture has offended me!” she accused.

Why? I thought, quickly scanning her for a clue. Certainly, she may not have digested everything in the lecture, but why the inner tempest and torment?

She enlightened me on the spot:

“I am a rational atheist. You should be more careful and sensitive to not disturb our kind. You obviously fail to comprehend that rational atheists are an important sector of society; their presence should be duly acknowledged and respected by all.”

I always tell our bhakti outreach staff at universities that we are not a debate club. Argument-mongering is not our business; friend-making is. Surrounded by the slurping, munching sounds of eighty happy students processing Krishna’s presence as spiritualized food, I chose to duck the young lady’s lance, complimenting her on her courage to be broad-minded.

But she wasn’t finished.

“One minute you quote scientific research, and the next, Bhagavad-gita—it’s not fair! What’s more, the Gita was spoken by Krishna—a guy! And all those Vedic sages you Krishna people adore—they’re guys!”

I edged back a bit, to create some breathing room. Suddenly my voice dropped, my eyelids drooping. “Sorry for my fatigue,” I softly lamented. “I guess the long lecture I gave plus the fascinating questions the audience asked combined to wear me out.”

Much as she tried to press me, definitely I was not going to do battle with her extremist feminism. Especially since I knew that she could visit our bhakti centres, such as the Loft in Auckland and Bhakti Lounge in Wellington, and hear lectures by so many astute female bhakti practitioners.

“Oh well,” she relented. “I’m going to get some food. Actually, I just attend the weekly Bhakti Club gatherings here simply and only to eat.”

I nodded in agreement: “Yes, me too.”

Later, across the room, I spotted her among the crowd, heartily devouring Krishna’s lunchtime mercy. Walking over, I submissively inquired if I could bring her more, and encouraged her to keep coming—only and just to eat.

29

Devananda Swami is an international speaker, author, Yale graduate, and monk. Traveling extensively on every continent of the planet, he has been sharing the path of bhakti-yoga with others for over 40 years. He advocates spiritually based economics, sustainability, and environmentalism. When he is not traveling, he calls New Zealand home.
Four years ago, when we moved to Chai on the Kapiti coast, my husband started his organic veggie garden. Now, after the first year, 100 percent of the veggies we use are from our own backyard (and that’s a lot of veggies for a vegetarian family of three!). Nothing tastes better than produce freshly picked from your backyard. Any gardener can tell you about the taste of a sun-warmed tomato straight off the vine or freshly picked and cooked corn on the cob. Even if you purchase “heirloom” vegetables, you don’t know how long they have been on the shop’s shelf. If you don’t have much backyard, herb boxes are great; fresh parsley and coriander are not only good for you, but make a tasty addition to any meal.

From the ecological and economical standpoints, with your own garden, you don’t have to fill your car with gas to drive to the shops to purchase food that has been sent from halfway across the world, but make a tasty addition to any meal. From the ecological and economical standpoints, with your own garden, you don’t have to fill your car with gas to drive to the shops to purchase food that has been sent from halfway across the world, but make a tasty addition to any meal. From the ecological and economical standpoints, with your own garden, you don’t have to fill your car with gas to drive to the shops to purchase food that has been sent from halfway across the world, but make a tasty addition to any meal. From the ecological and economical standpoints, with your own garden, you don’t have to fill your car with gas to drive to the shops to purchase food that has been sent from halfway across the world, but make a tasty addition to any meal. From the ecological and economical standpoints, with your own garden, you don’t have to fill your car with gas to drive to the shops to purchase food that has been sent from halfway across the world, but make a tasty addition to any meal.

To enjoy a variety of vegetables all year round, consider the following tips:

- Use a greenhouse to prolong your growing season. Last year we had tomatoes and cucumbers from late December to August.
- Grow vegetables and fruits that will store; growing better than pumpkins or kumara wedges.
- Delicious, home, fresh, or use the one intensely popular and healthy process of fermenting to keep a variety of vegetables for use all year round.
- Look around for edible weeds; you may have beautiful flowering greens in abundance, so incorporating them into a salad, or your local streams may have some palms.
- Get to know your neighbors; so many people who have fruit trees, or use the one intensely popular and healthy process of fermenting to keep a variety of vegetables for use all year round.
- If you have a small yard and you grow your own, you get left with a rather heavy amount of broad beans. Be creative in your cooking. Use broad bean leaves in your salads, cook kheer or you would do spinach, use young pods in stir-fries or larger beans in casseroles and dips, or as my daughter loves to do, eat them right out of the pod!

The purpose of food is to increase the duration of life, purify the mind, and aid bodily strength. Food also plays a vital role in our spiritual evolution. In the Bhagavad-gita, Krishna recommends a compassionate diet that excludes the needless slaughter of animals. In a world where confusion and anxiety increasingly affect the joyful act of eating, what could be more empowering than growing at least part of what you eat?"
Innumerable times, I have made decisions based on my feelings alone (especially while shopping!). It also seems to be the modus operandi these days. “Just do what you feel like.” So what do we do with our intelligence then? Do we lock it up and throw away the key? That way we would be free to do what we feel like, without having to worry about rationality, logic, objectivity, fairness, and responsibility. We would be free, just like animals. Free to do whatever we want, wherever, whenever, and however.

Once a week, I volunteer to serve out food at “Krisna Food,” the karma-free food kiosk at Victoria University in Wellington. Last week, I saw a guy in red shoes walk up to our kiosk. Spontaneously I exclaimed, “Red shoes!” and he replied resignedly, “Yeah, yeah! Red shoes...I felt like buying red shoes, so I got them.” I smiled. It was obvious from his tone that he was no longer excited about his bright red shoes. Maybe he didn’t think it was quite intelligent of him to have bought them in the first place. But I think he consoles himself with the thought that he did what he felt like doing. Whether now it makes sense or not is of hardly any importance.

Recently, I completed a thesis on trying to understand why people binge drink in New Zealand. I found that most people binge drink simply because they feel like it. They don’t think it wise to binge drink, but because they feel like it, they still do it.

There has to be more to the picture, much more than just randomly buying red shoes... But what is that more?

BY MUNJARANYA

Munjaranya has a background in engineering, management, communications, and counselling. She loves the simple things in life: conversations, laughter, and lots of fun. Munjaranya enjoys singing her heart out and dancing in kirtans, her shelter for joy and peace.
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