

Science

The Quest for Knowledge...

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'The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science.'

Albert Einstein

In sharing with you my own journey upon life, I am compelled to reflect on the words of Albert Einstein that life is the greatest mystery of all, and should be by all rights, a miraculous adventure of discovery, the product of which defines the existence of each and every one of us.

The Toltecs have long understood that true Science is experienced as our inner-most desire to learn, to understand, and to acquire knowledge of the great mystery that we call life. So what then does the quest for knowledge mean and how does one undertake such a journey?

The only way I know how to answer this through my own experience is that what we sense and perceive in the outer world cannot be separated from our own personal inner world. In reality, all knowledge that I have has been acquired by jumping into life, armed with nothing more than a deep inner longing, and willingness to find out how life works, what my place in life is, and to express myself in life in a truly unique and creative way.

So, what I can say is that the quest for knowledge is my inner-most desire to learn about my-self. From this point of departure my life has become a rich, and full-filling, journey driven by a sense of inspiration, and bringing with it, the confidence and daring to materialise my dreams.

My approach on life being fiercely practical meant that I have always learned about myself by seeing the products of my efforts take shape within the physical world. There are many times that I have taken on seemingly impossible endeavours with only a feeling to guide me, and an unwavering belief that I can make happen that which I am presented with.

I share this up-front, for my life in science, engineering, and technology, has not always brought me the rewarding sense of satisfaction that I am referring to.

As a young boy I wanted to do nothing else but find out how things worked, and to give expression to my thoughts and feelings, by building one curious invention after another. I am quite sure that from time to time I drove my parents to distraction by dismantling everything in sight, including those things that were not intended to be dismantled! And so the journey had started, I first learned to destroy what was around me.

My father being an engineer himself pointed me in the right direction, and proceeded to give me the start that I needed, by teaching me all the practical skills required to give expression to my thoughts and feelings. Before too long I found myself able to reconstruct that which I had dismantled, and before much longer, to build something new from only a thought in my mind.

Clear in what I wanted for my life and with my young experiences driving me forward, I worked hard to absorb everything I could about science and technology from my friends, teachers, lecturers, and of course my own explorations and experiences. My years at university and then subsequently in scientific research followed the same pattern, as I sought ever greater challenges to accomplish. These years were some of the best in my life, as I discovered day by day, that what I thought I already knew was only the tiniest drop in the ocean. My world continued to grow around me in a seemingly endless continuum of new experiences, projects, facts and details.

It was the following years as a technology consultant where my perspective and approach to science and technology started to turn rapidly down-hill. I took a look around me, what I felt I had become, and turned away from science and technology for what I thought at the time was to be forever. I never thought that it would happen, that I would with every fibre of my being reject that for which I had had so much passion, and I had thought was to be my life's journey and work.

It was that morning that I awoke knowing that I had turned myself into a science 'project', a problem to be solved. I felt empty, drained, and disillusioned with nothing more than what felt like a job well done, a mission accomplished. All the fun and joy, and enthusiasm with which I had undertaken my journey of discovery was gone. Science appeared in my eyes as a hard, cold, and sterile pursuit. I felt lost, lonely, and uncaring to the world around me. I have never felt closer to turning my back forever on the dream of my life, as I was at that moment. I did not like what I had become, I did not like what science has become, and I did not know what place if any I had in life.

Another way of understanding how I felt, is that my life and endeavours served no greater purpose other than to fill the world with more technological distractions, which only take us all further away from the reason we are all here on this planet together.

Science as we call it today has sadly separated the outer world that it has called 'objective reality', and our own inner world or the 'subjective reality'. It has chosen to pursue factual perfection and completeness, and modern science finds itself growing ever smaller, as a result of focusing on an increasingly pedantic complexity. This complexity is both devoid and separated from anything truly inspiring and meaningful. In the words of Nicola Tesla:

'Today's scientists have substituted mathematics for experiments, and they wander off through equation after equation, and eventually build a structure which has no relation to reality.'

Nicola Tesla

These were dark days, as I felt devoid of any real purpose upon life. I turned instead for a number of years to the alternative healing arts, and studied homeopathy. I enjoyed this whilst it lasted, and it served me well. Although I knew that it was not for me a new

direction on life, by its very nature it opened me to the people and world around me. It was during this time and through the people that I met whilst studying that I re-discovered my early interest in astrology.

The very first thing I did was buy myself a computer, from which I would be able to construct an astrological chart. Computers and computer programming had always been a passion for me since I was 10 years old, so I naturally gravitated to using this tool. But now it was just that, a technological tool to assist me in finding out more about myself and where I was at. The astrological programs of the time could not do all that I wanted, so I obtained the source code of an open source program, and re-programmed it to do what I needed.

From this small beginning something truly new had emerged. I did not fully realize it until later, that I had found what The Toltecs call a shift of focus. I had turned all my knowledge acquired so far to serve the journey of self-discovery. With this, my passion for science, technology, and computing returned, the dreams for my life where once again clear in my mind. I was able to start a new journey, for me a definitive journey. I was no-longer a project or problem to be solved, but rather a feeling to be explored and expressed. As I discover more about myself, so does life reveal itself in ways that only leaves me with a sense of awe for its beauty and for the miracle.

I had found new purpose in my life. I had re-discovered the life that I was born to live, where all that I had strived for in the past, is brought to bear on the continuing journey. No-longer was science and technology an end in itself. It is not these things that define our existence, but rather provide the forms and means of expression to unfold the mystery that is life, the mystery that is me and you.

This for me is the true expression of science, and the nature of the quest for knowledge; the source that Albert Einstein saw so clearly.

‘I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I live.
I rejoice in life for its own sake.’

George Bernard Shaw

It is my dream, desire, and belief for all scientists, engineers, and technologists of like mind, that we may find the courage, responsibility and integrity to re-define what we know as science, and in so doing come back to the source of assisting humanity within its endeavours. The purpose of our knowledge, and the creation of our inventions, can only be to serve us all on our journey to discover life, and not to waylay or distract from learning to live and work together.

If I can uphold this in being of service, and hence make a difference in the world through my knowledge and actions, then I hope to find the lasting inner-peace that is the dream of my life, and die as George Bernard Shaw so aptly expressed, ‘thoroughly used up’, knowing that my life’s purpose was full-filled and that I lived true to the mystery of life.