

## Thought for Today and Every Day

One night in September, lying in bed, it recurred to me that there are two utterly astounding and ultimately incomprehensible realities of our lives: The first is that we even exist. Think about the vastness of the cosmos! We have detected entities so distant in time and space that the numbers are mind-boggling. Consider the near or actual infinity of time, the diversity of life forms, or the immense storage capacity of the human brain. How can anyone who spends but a few moments contemplating the magnitude of the world in which we live be but astounded?

Then there is this second reality, the fact that some day each of us will cease to exist. This is almost as unfathomable as the fact that we exist.

Now, I concede that it's possible we do not absolutely cease to exist, indeed, that there may be some sort of continuing personal subjectivity possessed by each of us that will live on after we shed our mortal coils. I really don't know much of anything about that. It's also possible, I suppose, that each of us now living was previously incarnated in some other form, in some previous life. I know people who are convinced they've had previous lives, and I know those who fully expect a life hereafter. I do not subscribe to reincarnation, but I have no proof against it. Immortality remains a concept I cannot grasp.

All I really know is that right now, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century of the Common Era on planet Earth, in a rather remote region of the galaxy we call the Milky Way, I exist, and some day I will not so exist. And that is utterly amazing, well-nigh incredible, and so far beyond my powers of comprehension to fathom in all its complexity and magnitude and wondrousness that I am humbled and almost ashamed that I am unable to sustain an attitude of overwhelming awe and ecstasy at the very thought. How can it be that such a world is given to me? To you? To us? To all the inhabitants of this planet and – for all we know– to countless numbers of inhabitants in other solar systems, in other galaxies, in places far beyond our ken?

Why do we so often fail to love and cherish this world, this life, this utterly amazing existence, for ourselves and all who share it with us?

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