

I am a human being, not a clock that winds itself, as one hopeful commentator described us. My aim in these Blogs is to explore some of the special qualities that enrich our humanness, in particular those that affect our fundamental need to BELONG.

It's not very flattering to be described as a machine, but I must admit that my own field of Biological Science has been aiding and abetting this left-brain-pleasing way of thinking about life. This is especially so in molecular genetics where it sounds like we are re-assembled, bit by bit, according to a mythical 'builder's manual' written in our genes, an idea which further research has shown to be quite wrong.

I have to concede, also, that Western Medicine has been a great boon for us despite being almost entirely allopathic rather than homeopathic – that is we fix ourselves by introducing something from the outside. Even the medicines that are designed to augment our natural processes are crude, compared to Nature, but they are often effective. Blocked pipes and whole parts are replaced without a hitch and the main pump can be stopped and started again by connecting a couple of wires to an electrical stimulus. Once again, we find that the logic of parts can be very useful, but it is inadequate for describing the whole living process.

Firstly, I don't have an off-switch. Or an on-switch, for that matter – I am running all the time. For a machine, we have to work out what makes it run, or how it goes from being completely static to an active, moving state, but for anything that's living, we have to work out how it manages to stay the same despite continually moving and changing. The stream of life is a process, and a process does not have parts, nor any linear causation to get from one stage to the next – everything affects everything at all times, and it is controlled by the whole, which is the context, or unified field, within which all the change is occurring. The 'parts' are themselves changing all the time, even the one that, for centuries, was thought to be fixed – our brain. And it certainly doesn't work like a computer.

Biological Science does try to pay homage to mysterious characteristics that living organisms might have, especially humans. The idea of an '*élan vital*' or life-force, was trampled to death in the rush towards greater objectivity in the life sciences in the early 1900's. But many in this field still refer to 'energy' and 'drive' or 'coordinated processes,' implying 'wholeness,' and speak of 'purpose' and 'self-realisation' to hint at forces and Values lying beyond the basic chemical equations.

Some other branches of science have moved on from the simplistic way of thinking about the world as consisting of 'things' that interact and are governed by a linear cause and effect. On the whole, Biology has not, but there is a flourishing new field called Process Biology that I will say more about in future Blogs.

I believe that Intelligence makes a difference to the **quality** of my life. I value my creativity and awareness of beauty, my compassion and my caring relationships. I recognise intuition and imagination as worthwhile aspects of my mind alongside the rationality that we take so much pride in today.

What I'm exploring here is that I use the left side of my brain to get and have the 'things' that I feel I need in my life, but I also possess (unlike machines) a larger mind that seeks to answer a different kind of question: how is it that I BELONG and to what do I BELONG?