The Three Essentials

David S. Devor, Exec. Director
Project Mind Foundation
54 HaNeviim Street
Jerusalem 95141, Israel
devor@projectmind.org http://www.projectmind.org

Human purpose, mission and destiny can be reduced to 3 essentials:

1. Our unlimited capacity for creative vision.
2. The unlimited potential of the cosmos.
3. The total effort needed to unfold our unlimited creative capacity in order to reveal and render manifest the unlimited potential of the cosmos.

The dilemma of our existence resides in our lack of faith in the unlimited potential of the cosmos and in our creative capacity to unpack that potential. Even those who claim to believe in an infinitely good and compassionate Creator have trouble believing that we have the necessary creative capacity and thus the destiny to completely eliminate limitations such as lack, illness and death or, as a corollary of this, are convinced that these evils are inherent in the cosmos and that salvation lies outside the purview of our creative engagement with the manifest world.

Science, interestingly enough, confronts existence with an optimism and spirit of adventure that does suggest a belief in unlimited possibilities. Even more, its boldest and most recent branch, Nanotechnology, is disarmingly explicit about its ambition to control matter at the subatomic level and, consequently, to create a "synthetic" existence far superior to that which nature has to offer. To the extent that it believes that matter determined limitations such as lack, illness and death can be eliminated, nanotech can be said to embody the a/m first two fundamentals of existence. Its Achilles heal lies in it disregard of the third, the total intensity of effort needed on the part of the researcher in his contemplative and thus creative engagement with his subject matter.

This almost universal oversight is not only the downfall of Nanotechnology. It is the bane of all our efforts to overcome suffering and limitation. In spite of all we are learning about reality, it is becoming clearer, by the day, that it is what we do not know and are unable to foresee that is now threatening global existence. The increasing risk that each day brings reflects the truism that it is immeasurably easier to destroy than it is to create. This is owing to the ever increasingly powerful tools delivered up by science and technology that, by the nature of things, are more readily used for evil than for good.

But even without the mischief factor, accident alone leaves us at the mercy of Murphy's Law that, tongue-in-cheek, expresses the truism that "if something can go wrong, it will." This means that we are trapped in a tortoise-and-hare race with the destructive hare dashing to oblivion at ever increasing speed and the tortoise of creative vision barely having left the starting line. This means that Nanotechnology, arguably our most promising and potent scientific emphasis, is likely to be our undoing. It is only a matter of time until it becomes clear that all scientific research and progress is a game of Russian Roulette that, ultimately, must end badly either through criminal abuse or accident.

Accordingly, humanity's number one priority must be to transform the tortoise nature of our scientific investigation into something that will overtake the destructive hare and eliminate the risk of misadventure from our dealings with the matter of this world. This may sound utopian but it was Buckminster Fuller who said that we will have to choose between utopia and oblivion. Indeed, sooner or later we shall discover there is nothing in between.

So how do we amplify our creative vision such that it becomes so encompassing and holistic that we will be able to anticipate all the implications of our discoveries and so avoid accidents and improve life, everywhere, to such a spectacular degree that not only will all discontent disappear but also all vice and suffering. While this may sound like a messianic ambition, the alternatives are, frankly, demonic.

In order to understand possibilities concerning the amplification of creativity, we need to understand the nature and potential of creativity as well as the present state of creativity in human culture. The best way to explain present standards of creativity is to refer to the classic story illustrating creative discovery. This is the story of Archimedes' discovery of how to use water displacement to measure the volume of an irregularly shaped object.

The essence of the creative experience, the same experience that drove Archimedes out of his bath to run naked through the streets of Athens shouting "Eureka," was the sudden recognition of a powerful, new, unexpected power within himself. What goes unrecognized, is that the power of this experience derives less from the value of the actual discovery, whatever that may be, and more from the realization that, within ourselves, is a creative force that could solve any and all problems and release us from all the restrictions that ignorance imposes upon us. The energy that triggers creativity is the motivation to arrive at some result. The energy that sustains creativity, and can make it into a state, is based on the anticipation of great possibilities that could be summed up as "all forms of freedom from restriction." Unfortunately, this energy is normally dissipated in peak experiences and euphoric states of wonder and triumph. Higher "states" of creativity, unfortunately, are seldom achieved and when they are, they are almost never sustained.

Contemplative effort of sufficient intensity to lead to a Eureka experience is seldom applied to the kind of broad spectrum challenges that lead to scientific breakthroughs. Intensity of focus is far more readily generated in the interest of dealing with narrow issues and discrete problems. This is why, conceptually, creativity is so often reduced to "creative problem solving."

The author, Arthur Koestler, attributed the sudden, surprise release of energy of the Eureka experience to the ideational synthesis and emotional release resulting from the sudden, surprise collision of two ideational contexts. "Fusion" might be a better word for this melding of diverse elements into what becomes a new grasp of reality, depending upon how large a swath of reality is involved. The scope could be anything from a better mousetrap to whole new world view. For the religious, the ultimate fusion would very possibly be a fusion of Creator and Creation.

Enduring states of creativity that use a significant part of our creative potential are achieved through fusion encounters with the cosmos that go beyond mere "Eureka" problem solving.

The concern is finding enough faith to motivate a sufficiently intense effort of contemplation to bring about sustained fusion. This means confronting a cosmic mystery with a significant part of our potential. The term that best expresses this intensity is "obsession." Only someone obsessed with such a mystery will absorb it and vibrate with it with every fiber of his being. It is the magnitude of the challenge that evokes our potential. It is the effort of total commitment that empowers it.

Some questions come to mind:

1. Where are we to find scientists committed to discovery to the point of obsession?
2. If they exist, why are they not already making scientific breakthroughs?
3. Do they require special conditions and, if so, what conditions?

a) One can expect to find them at the fringes of science or, at least, not in key posts. Those who spend their lives obsessed with some fixed idea or theory are unlikely to be inclined to the kind of compromises required for advancement in modern scientific bureaucracies. The obsessed are stigmatized in our society.

b) 2. Those who are obsessed with some idea, if they have some measure of common sense, are aware of how society treats those who enter radical states of awareness and are unlikely to allow their obsession to consume them entirely. They would end up completely destabilized as evidenced by many now in insane asylums, not necessarily scientists, who did allow such excesses into their lives. While the greatest potential for breakthroughs is in the hands of the obsessed scientist, these remain unempowered on the sidelines while "geniuses," those with a facility somewhat greater than the norm, lead the pack embodying a creativity that may go somewhat beyond the problem solving mode but a far cry from the fusion that can come obsessive confrontation with truth.

c) Scientists inclined to obsession need to be empowered, nurtured and protected from the consequences of encountering higher states of creative consciousness, unprepared. Reaching these states involves unprecedented intensity and the whole process, including these states, constitutes terra incognita for psychology. An environment designed to contain such states has been conceived by the Project Mind Foundation based in Jerusalem. The main strategy for preventing burnout and psychotic breaks involves having these scientists bond with appropriately empathetic specialists who will, virtually, extend and reinforce them psychologically and spiritually.

A case for the growing threat to our existence has been made although the reader was possibly aware of it beforehand. More important, a solution, albeit a utopian one, has been presented here.

It is a bold and daring strategy, a psychological experiment of unprecedented proportions that will cost some $30 Million over three years. Does it seem like a long shot? Perhaps. But do you know of any other projects that address the threat facing us or perhaps you think the problem will go away of itself? This is a challenge to your idealism, your vitality and your love of life. In you heart of hearts ask yourself. Do you really care?