



The higher you fly the more encompassing the view. Patterns emerge. Individual trees become forests. Hills become mountains. Lakes become oceans. Each of the observations that follow are profound. Together they create a constellation of insights that reflect universal forces that shape each of our lives, for better or worse. We call these forces nurturing, attachment, bonding, authentic or original play, feeling connected to the social web. The impact of these forces on a child's development are immutable, absolute. When experienced, development moves in positive, life affirming directions. When not, the impact is crippling, aggressive, violent - even suicidal.

The journey this post invites is rich and diverse. Best to print. Hold these insights in your hand. Go slowly and savor. Here's the PDF.

Michael Mendizza

Don't ask why the addiction. Ask; Why the pain?

In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts

Gabor Maté, MD.

I speak to thousands of people every month and the most difficult audiences are the medical ones who deal with the manifestations of early childhood loss but they don't know that that's what they're dealing with. They think they're looking at diseases, symptoms, mental illness, dysfunctions, psychosis, behaviors that are categorized under one diagnosis or another. They don't realize that the commonality is the early childhood loss in trauma. Present them with that information and you present it to them in detail with all the research parameters being covered so that it's not just impressionistic or antidotal but actually research based and they sit there stunned. They don't know what to do with it. If that was only my own failure to communicate I could say okay well if somebody else presented it then maybe they would listen. But no.

Dr. Bruce Perry who's the head of the Houston Child Trauma Academy, leading research on childhood trauma and brain development, he tells me the same thing. And Dr. Vincent Falliti who's the lead investigator of the Adler's Childhood Experience Studies in California has shown again the exponential impact of childhood loss. The more losses that accrue the greater risk of addiction, the greater risk for cancer, greater risk of auto immune disease, mental illness, dysfunction, criminality, relationship problems, personality disorders, etc., etc. He tells me the same thing. So when you're dealing with a professional audience particularly who are intellectually trained, they sit there wrapped in their intellectual armor and they literally are petrified by this material.

Earlier this year there was an article in Pediatrics which is a leading journal in North America. It's the official publication of the American Academy of Pediatrics. There was an article from Harvard Center on the Developing Child in February of this year, collating all the material, showing how early childhood stress or trauma results in adaptations that help the child survive in the short term but are the basis of pathology, physical illness, mental illness, later on. And I presented this information to a room of pediatricians in a major Canadian city, grand rounds at a hospital. I said look, in your own journal, here it is, I don't have to sweat anymore to prove this you. I'd been saying this for a long time, but here it is. They sat there in stunned silence.

It's not that they argued with me. Had they argued and engaged, pointed where the data was flawed or where the logic was somehow inadequate, that would have been fine. No, they just didn't know what to do with it. Now what that tells me is that on the part of particularly professionals there's a difficulty

accepting this material because they haven't dealt with their own stuff. So the barrier is peoples own unresolved stuff that they haven't dealt with themselves.

There was an interesting study about a climate changing recently. It turns out that the more educated you are, the more entrenched you are and you're in denial. So it's not that education leads to more openness, education leads to less openness. The intellectual weapons that you gain and sharpen in the course of your post graduate education actually allows you to use your weapon to marshal them in the service of your denial. But the denial comes first.

What I am saying is, there's an emotional block. It's not an existential block, we don't need a stitch more research on what causes addiction. We don't need one more bit of research on what causes violence, rape, psychopathic behavior, mental illness. We don't need a stitch more research. I now that sounds like a radical statement in a society which is so research oriented and we're whole intellectual industries, knowledge factories are based on having to gather more money for research to justify more jobs, to justify more papers, but I'm telling you, if we simply applied what we already know, if we simply do the lessons of what's already been clearly shown, we would have a totally different world. So, even that need for more research is a factor of denial.

Whether in the states or England I forget, there was a research paper and they concluded: childhood trauma maybe be a predisposing factor in addictions. More study is required. And I'm thinking what planet are these people living on? Are they not familiar with the hundreds of studies that are showing the relationship between trauma and addiction? Do they not know Adler Childhood Experience studies? Are they not aware of the data on brain development and trauma? What intellectual labyrinth have they been lost in for the last 50 years for them to come up with a study that says childhood trauma may be related to addictions, maybe, and that more study is required?

I am saying that the very need for research and more intellectualization is actually a factor of denial. It represents denial and that denial is really people's own emotional pain. So, the block is that this stuff is painful and therefore we dare not look at it in ourselves and therefore we don't open to its existence in others and then we have to look for all kinds of other reasons.

If you deny pain owing into early experience and early loss and early trauma, then the world becomes very complicated and justify all kinds of complicated explanations. Yet, if we see that the child has certain needs and if you meet those needs that child will be just fine and if you don't he'll have to adapt somehow and those adaptations are the basis of dysfunction later on. That's really simple. They call it simplistic. It's not simplistic. It's simple. The world is really very simple. We make it complicated because of our denial.

MM Note: Drug overdoses are now the leading cause of death among Americans under the age of 50. The annual death toll is greater than entire Vietnam War, year after year. Dr. Maté explains that drugs don't cause addiction. If that were the case everyone, 100% of those who take heron would be addicted. What causes addiction is a predisposition, a pre-condition that the particular substance feels like it fills, for a moment. Then the emptiness returns, greater than before. "Don't ask why the addiction. Ask why the pain?"

The US Opioid Epidemic — A War of a Different Kind

Dr. Joseph Mercola

March, 20, 2018

https://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2018/03/20/opioid-epidemic-a-war-of-a-different-kind.aspx?utm_source=dnl&utm_medium=email&utm_content=art1&utm_campaign=20180320Z1&et_cid=DM193966&et_rid=249637580

Opioid abuse has been identified as a significant factor in rising unemployment among men, accounting for 20 percent of the increase in male unemployment between 1999 and 2015.¹⁷ [Don't ask why the addiction, ask why the pain?] Nearly half of all unemployed men between the ages of 25 and 54 are using opioids on a daily basis.¹⁸

While this was not likely planned, the industry's misleading promotion of narcotic pain relievers appears to have coincided with a growing trend of emotional pain and spiritual disconnect, and opioids satisfy people's need not only for physical pain relief but also psychological and existential pain relief. As noted by New York Magazine:²⁴

"The scale and darkness of this phenomenon is a sign of a civilization in a more acute crisis than we knew, a nation overwhelmed by a warp-speed, postindustrial world, a culture yearning to give up, indifferent to life and death, enraptured by withdrawal and nothingness ...

[U]nless you understand what users get out of an illicit substance, it's impossible to understand its appeal, or why an epidemic takes off, or what purpose it is serving in so many people's lives. And it is significant, it seems to me, that the drugs now conquering America are downers: They are not the means to engage in life more vividly but to seek a respite from its ordeals ... And some part of being free from all pain makes you indifferent to death itself."

The article cites a number of firsthand accounts of the experience opioids provides — the blissful serenity of being able to stand apart from one's psychological pain in addition to physical pain; the sensation of being connected to some deeper wellspring of peace. These are experiences typically derived from spiritual practices, and hint at a widespread lack of connectedness to the divine in general.

Evidence suggests opioid makers such as Purdue Pharma, owned by the Sackler family, knew exactly what they were doing when they claimed opioids — which are chemically very similar to heroin — have an exceptionally low addiction rate when taken by people with pain.

In fact, the massive increase in opioid sales has been traced back to an orchestrated marketing plan aimed at misinforming doctors about the drug's addictive potential. The drug's general effectiveness against pain has also been vastly exaggerated by drug manufacturers. In April 2016, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published a paper in which it noted that:²⁶

"Most placebo-controlled, randomized trials of opioids have lasted six weeks or less, and we are aware of no study that has compared opioid therapy with other treatments in terms of long-term (more than 1 year) outcomes related to pain, function, or quality of life.

The few randomized trials to evaluate opioid efficacy for longer than six weeks had consistently poor results. In fact, several studies have showed that use of opioids for chronic pain may actually worsen pain and functioning, possibly by potentiating pain perception ..."

More recently, government-funded research^{27,28,29} published in the journal JAMA earlier this month confirmed that patients taking opioids did not experience better pain-related function than those taking far safer, non-narcotic pain relievers. The study is the first to compare opioids against non-opioid pain medication for people with chronic back pain or osteoarthritic pain in the hip or knee.

Contrary to popular belief, patients who took Tylenol, ibuprofen or lidocaine actually reported less pain intensity than those taking an opioid drug such as morphine, Vicodin or oxycodone. Not surprisingly, however, opioid users were far more likely to experience adverse side effects. According to the authors:

"Treatment with opioids was not superior to treatment with non-opioid medications for improving pain-related function over 12 months. Results do not support initiation of opioid therapy for moderate to severe chronic back pain or hip or knee osteoarthritis pain ... Overall, opioids did not demonstrate any advantage over non-opioid medications that could potentially outweigh their greater risk of harms."

MM Note: Why the pain? Development during the critical early months, and even years, is sensory. "More damage occurs with the sensory deprivation of pleasure than the actual experiencing of physical painful trauma, which in fact could be handled quite well in individuals who were brought up with a great deal of physical affectional bonding and pleasure which carries with it emotional trust and security." Early childhood trauma and loss that creates the 'hunger' we call addiction. The pharmaceutical cartel profits from our suffering.

Sensory Deprivation and the Developing Brain

James W. Prescott, PhD

If we have pleasurable sensory stimulation then that's the brain engrams, the templates that will be stored and they will be images of pleasure. If they are painful they're going to be images of pain and pain evokes violent responses. But there is something else that evokes violent responses and that's the absence of pleasure. And that's really different than the sensory experience of pain, and most people don't really yet appreciate that distinction. And in fact, more damage occurs with the sensory deprivation of pleasure than the actual experiencing of physical painful trauma, which in fact could be handled quite well in individuals who were brought up with a great deal of physical affectional bonding and pleasure which carries with it emotional trust and security and so forth. So we really have to look at the trauma of sensory deprivation of physical pleasure and that translates into the separation experiences, the isolation experiences of the infant from the mother. That's the beginning.

Film: Rock A Bye-Baby

Some of these children at LourHas Institution in Munich suffered brain damage. Some are mentally retarded. All have suffered the effect of disrupted maternal-infant relationship. The effect of early separation from their mothers upon children was noted in scientific publications some 25 years ago when psychologist Rene Spitz observed a high frequency of retarded development upon institutionalized children. The English psychiatrist John Bowlby created controversy in 1944 with his conclusion that early separation leads to a character disorder marked by a lack of affection or feelings for anyone. These depressed children might be found in institutions around the world. They are withdrawn. Their pace of development has slowed. They are listless, vacant, and unnaturally passive. They have few emotional contacts or relationships with others, little spontaneity. No laughter. No tears.

James Prescott, PhD

What constitutes sensory deprivation? Because if you live in a culture in which the cultural norm is you don't get touched very much, people don't perceive that as deprivation. It's like the converse issue of circumcision or genital mutilation. That is so common place in our culture that most people don't look at that as genital mutilation or as torture as mutilation. It's the norm. So that's a very important question.

So we have to go outside our own culture to get a different frame of reference, a different bearing, a different standard of what's normal. And not only outside of our own culture but also outside of our own species, and we are primates. If you take a look at how other primates mirror their infants, or even mammals with respect to mothers and their newborns, what do we see? We see an enormous amount of physical body contact. There's no mammal that separates the newborn from its mother at birth, or any extended period after that except the human mammal. Yet we do that routinely and isolate them. That's sensory deprivation.

Let's go over the primates. What I'd like to do is look at any program involving primates in the wild and where do you see the infants? They're attached to the body of their mother and they hang on for dear life as the mothers move around all the time. Continuous body contact and that should tell us a lesson. Because that's become the standard and the norm of what brings up we're responsible for healthy infants.

And we in fact have demonstrated that experimentally in the laboratory by taking the infants away from their mother's, rear them in cages by themselves, where they can't touch or have body contact with other animals, not the mother or any other animals. Even in the colony where they can have social relationships with the other animals by vision and hearing and smell but no body contact. No touch.

Film: Rock A Bye-Baby

At the Hazelton Laboratories in Falls Church Virginia, these normal monkeys are being studied and filmed by Dr. James W. Prescott, of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. Active, curious and alert, these healthy monkeys have been raised by their mothers. When they are put together in a cage they react to each other with interest. They are at ease with each other. They play and touch each other freely. When Dr. Prescott separates the monkeys they resist, holding each other tightly. They maintain body contact and cling to each other even through the wire mesh cages. Monkeys

raised in isolation react quite differently. These monkeys were removed from their mothers at birth. They were hand fed in incubators. They are raised in cages through which they could see, hear and smell other monkeys but could not touch or be touched by them. When they are put together there is not play between them. They seem indifferent to touch. Or they react as though touch is unpleasant and move away from each other. When they are held the isolation reared monkeys show signs of great stress, screeching and bearing their teeth. The stereotype movements of rocking backwards and forwards over and over again is typical of animals deprived of normal mothering. It is as though the animals attempt to give themselves the touch and motion they were denied in infancy. Similar behavior can be seen in maternally deprive children, rocking and other stereotype movements are common symptoms observed in institutionalized children all over the world. Some children who engage in stereotype movements endlessly repeated show evidence of brain damage. Stereotypical movements are observed in retarded children as well. All these children have been deprived of normal mothering for one reason or another and display the same emotional and social impairments and stereotype movements as animals raised in isolation.

Authentic Play Deprivation

Stuart Brown, MD.,

Founder; The Institute for Play

I got a call from my chief of service who was in Spain saying that the Governor had called, and he was putting me in charge of organizing an investigation to find out why this young man, who by then had been identified as Charles Whitman, just shot thirty-one people, killed nineteen off the Texas tower. This was 1966, three years after the Kennedy motorcade and determined to figure out what went on in this kid who was 25 years old that produced this kind of tragedy. We organized a very, very intricate team and studied his life in as much detail forensically, psychologically and physically as possible.

We gathered a huge amount of data; childhood drawings, interviews with his family practitioner who had delivered him. Charles came from a tightly knit Catholic family near Lake Worth, Florida. He had killed his wife and mother the evening before he went on the tower so they weren't available. We interviewed his two brothers, his father, an extended family, and within a week began to get a sense of what Charles Whitman's life had been like.

What came out of the interviews, again and again and again, was that he did not ever engaged in spontaneous play. He'd been an over-controlled, humiliated kid, very bright, youngest Eagle Scout in the United States, an altar boy, participated in ROTC, a scholarship recipient, married a delightful woman by all accounts. It looked like he had everything going for him. But there was abuse, over control and other factors. But the one that stood out was the absence of spontaneous play.

Within the next year, I headed a team that went throughout the Texas prison systems and the State Hospital system to interview all the young male murderers in the State of Texas. This time we did a much more intricate comparison and control group to see whether or not the murderers were significantly different from the non-murderers, even though we masked them by age and demography and economics, and many other variables. We weren't looking for play but we asked about it. The murderers, whether they came from higher class economic circumstances or were psychotic and in a State Hospital system having been criminally insane by their conviction or by their crime, play deprivation was a common denominator in over 90%. And this was whether it was solitary play, play with pets, play with colleagues, normal friendships, spontaneous play, imaginative play, music play, sports play. [Note; this was before technology counterfeited original play. Counterfeit play isn't authentic play.] These individuals that ended up killing someone differed widely from those we compared them to. And that finding has stood the test of time.

We knew the profile of Whitman. Now we had the profiles of these young murderers. If the adult culture is itself play deprived, which I think is persuasive in Western Europe and the United States, that adult culture is not going to allow the natural evolution of play-culture in children to develop. And children have a very separate culture from adults.

MM Note: What we call attachment, bonding and relationship in early childhood and throughout life is explored and expressed best in the state of authentic play. Play is attachment and bonding in action. Closeness with others heals. Separation can kill.

Isolation: The Ultimate Poison

From *The Lucifer Principle: A Scientific Expedition Into The Forces of History*
Howard Bloom

Remove the sponge cell from the sponge, prevent it from finding its way back to its brethren, and it dies. Scrape a liver cell from the liver and in its isolation it too will shrivel and give up life. But what happens if you remove a human from his social bonds, wrenching him from the superorganism of which he or she is a part?

In the 1940's, the psychologist Rene Spitz studied human babies isolated from their mothers. These were the infants of women too poor to care for their children, infants who had been placed permanently in a foundling home. There, the children were kept in what Spitz called "solitary confinement," placed in cribs with sheets hung from the sides so that the only thing the babies could see was the ceiling. Nurses seldom looked in on them more than a few times a day. And even when feeding time came, the babies were left alone with just the companionship of a bottle. Hygiene in the homes was impeccable. But without being held, loved, and woven into the fabric of a social web, the resistance of these babies was lowered. Thirty-four out of 91 died. In other foundling homes, the death rate was even higher. In some, it climbed to a devastating 90%. A host of other studies have shown the same thing. Babies can be given food, shelter, warmth and hygiene. But if they are not held and stroked, they have an abnormal tendency to die.

Two means have been discovered to produce depression in laboratory animals: uncontrollable punishment and isolation. Put an animal in a cage by himself, separated from his nestmates, and he will lose interest in food and sex, have trouble sleeping, and undergo a muddling of the brain. Tampering with bonds to the larger social organism can have powerful consequences. In humans, feeling you're unwanted can stunt your growth. The flow of growth hormones, according to recent research, is affected strongly by "psychosocial factors." Monkeys taken away from their families and friends experience blockage of the arteries and heart disease. On the other hand, rabbits who are petted and hugged live 60% longer.

When their mates die, male hamsters stop eating and sleeping, and often succumb to death themselves. They are not alone. A British study indicated that in the first year after a wife dies, a widower has a 40% greater risk of death. In another study at New York's Mount Sinai School of Medicine, men who had lost wives to breast cancer experienced a sharp drop in the activity of their immune system one to two months after the loss. A survey of 7,000 inhabitants of Alameda County, California, showed that "isolation and the lack of social and community ties" opened the door to illness and an early demise.

An even broader investigation by James J. Lynch of actuarial and statistical data on victims of cardiovascular disease indicated that an astonishing percentage of the million or so Americans killed by heart problems each year have an underlying difficulty that seems to trigger their sickness: "lack of warmth and meaningful relationships with others." On the other hand, research in Europe suggested that kissing on a regular basis provides additional oxygen and stimulates the output of antibodies.

Closeness to others can heal. Separation can kill.

The cutting of the ties that bind can be fatal even in the wild. Jane Goodall, the researcher who has studied chimpanzees in the Gombe game preserve of Africa since 1960, saw the principle at work in a young animal named Flint. When Flint was born, his mother adored him. And he, in turn, doted on her. She hugged him, played with him, and tickled him until his tiny, wrinkled face broke out in the broad equivalent of a chimpanzee smile. The two were inseparable.

When Flint reached the age of three, however, the time came for his mother to wean him. But Flo, the mother, was old and weak. And Flint, the chimpanzee child, was young and strong. Flo turned her back and tried to keep her son away from the nipple. But Flint flew into wild tantrums, lashed about violently

on the ground, and ran off screaming. Finally, a worried Flo was forced to calm her son by offering him her breast. Later, Flint developed even more aggressive techniques for ensuring his supply of mother's milk. If Flo tried to shrug him off, Flint struck her with his fists, and punctuated the pummeling with sharp bites.

At an age when other chimps have freed themselves from parental apron strings, Flint was still acting like a baby. Though he was a strapping young lad, and his mother was increasingly feeble, Flint insisted that his mama carry him everywhere. If Flo stopped to rest and Flint was anxious to taste the fruit of the trees at their next destination, the hulking child would push, prod and whimper to get his mom moving again. Then he'd climb on her back and enjoy the ride. When shoves and whines didn't motivate his mother to pick him up and cart him where he wanted to go, Flint would occasionally give the exhausted lady a strong kick. At night, Flint was old enough to build a sleeping nest of his own. Instead, he insisted on climbing into bed with his mommy.

Flint should have turned his attention from Flo to the other chimps his age, forging ties to the superorganism—the chimpanzee tribe—of which he was a part. But he did not. The consequence would be devastating. Flint's mother died. Theoretically, Flint's instincts should have urged him to survive. But three weeks later, he went back to the spot where his mother had breathed her last and curled up in a fetal ball. Within a few days, he too was dead.

An autopsy revealed that there was nothing physically wrong with Flint: no infection, no disease, no handicap. In all probability, the youngster's death had been caused by the simian equivalent of that voice which tells humans going through a similar loss that there's nothing left to live for. Flint had been cut loose from his single bond to the superorganism. That separation had killed him.

Social attachment is just as vital to human beings. Research psychiatrist Dr. George Engel collected 275 newspaper accounts of sudden death. He discovered that 156 had been caused by severe damage to social ties. One hundred and thirty-five deaths had been triggered by "a traumatic event in a close human relationship." Another 21 had been brought on by "loss of status, humiliation, failure or defeat." In one instance, the president of a college had been forced to retire by the Board of Trustees at the age of 59. As he delivered his final speech, he collapsed with a heart attack. One of his closest friends, a doctor, rushed to the stage to save him. But the strain of losing his companion was too much for the physician. He, too, fell to the floor of the platform and died of heart failure.

Our need for each other is not only built into the foundation of our biological structure, it is also the cornerstone of our psyche. Humans are so uncontrollably social that when we're wandering around at home where no one can see us, we talk to ourselves. When we smash our thumb with a hammer we curse to no one in particular. In a universe whose heavens seem devoid of living matter, we address ourselves skyward to gods, angels and the occasional extra-terrestrial.

Our need for other people shapes even the minor details of our lives. In the early 1980s, a group of architects decided to study the use of public spaces outside modern office buildings. For over twenty years, architects had assumed that people long for moments of quiet contemplation, walled off from the bustle of the world. As a consequence, they had planned their buildings with solitary courtyards separated from the street. What the architects discovered, to their astonishment, was that people shunned their secluded spots. Instead, they parked themselves on low walls and steps near the packed sidewalks. Humans, it seemed, had an inordinate desire to gawk at others of their kind.

Even mere distortions in the bonds of social connectedness can affect health. According to a study by J. Stephen Heisel of the Charles River Hospital in Boston, the activity of natural killer cells—the body's defenders from disease—is low for people who, on the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Test, demonstrate depression, social withdrawal, guilt, low self-esteem, pessimism and maladjustment. Those who withdraw have pulled away from the embrace of their fellows. Those with guilt are certain that their sins have marked them for social rejection. The maladjusted have failed to mesh with those around them. And those with low self-esteem are convinced that others have good reason to shun them.

In the study, low natural killer cell activity wasn't linked to use of medication, alcohol, marijuana or recent medical treatment—just to measures of impaired social connection.

Meyer Friedman, the doctor who delineated the Type A and Type B personality and its relationship to heart disease, says, "If you don't think what you do is very important, and if you feel that if you died, nobody's going to mourn, you're asking for illness."

Even the well-being of the men we would imagine to be most invulnerable to social forces depends on the sense that the superorganism needs them. When President Dwight Eisenhower had his heart attack on September 24, 1955, mail came in by the sackful from all over the world. Ike said, "It really does something for you to know that people all over the world are praying for you." Eisenhower's doctor sensed that the president's position in the social network could heal him. He insisted that Ike's aides continue to discuss business with the recuperating president, making him feel he was still important. Eventually, Ike went to Camp David for five weeks of rest. It was the worst thing he could have done. Stripped of his sense of social purpose, he went into severe depression. It was the first setback Eisenhower had experienced since his heart attack. The ailing chief executive eventually recovered...when he was allowed to go back to work.

Finding himself necessary to the social organism had a similar impact on another warrior—Colonel T.E. Lawrence, Lawrence of Arabia. In the Middle East, Lawrence had been a dashing, energetic figure. He had dressed as an Arab, and worked hard to win the respect of tribal leaders. He had taught himself to jump nine feet onto the back of a camel, something few Arabs could accomplish. He had steeled himself to ride across the desert for days without food. He had stretched his limits until he'd gained an endurance far beyond that of the average desert dweller, and he was admired greatly for it.

At the same time, Lawrence convinced the British that he could successfully mobilize the Arab nomads into a unified fighting force. With that force, Lawrence argued, he could help defeat the Germans and Turks in the First World War. The success of his argument boosted his power. When he rode into a circle of Bedouin tents, his camels frequently carried several million dollars worth of gold—a gift to cement his negotiations with the desert chieftains.

Using bribery and the force of his personal reputation, Lawrence drew together the widely-scattered Arab tribes to storm Akaba. His force took the city despite seemingly impossible odds, defeating a small Turkish army in the process. After riding the desert for days, and leading the charge in two successful battles, Lawrence was totally exhausted. Yet when he realized his troops in Akaba were starving, he mounted his camel and rode three days and three nights, covering 250 miles, eating and drinking on his camel's back, to reach the Gulf of Suez and summon help from a British ship.

The sense that he was critical to the success of the social organism had given the young British officer an almost unbelievable physical endurance. When at last the war was over, Lawrence rode into the city of Damascus in a Rolls Royce as one of the conquerors of the massive Turkish Empire. But once the fighting ended and Lawrence was forced to pack his Arab robes away and return to England, he felt totally out of place. True, he had friends in high places—Winston Churchill and George Bernard Shaw, among others. But he felt wrenched from the social body into which he had welded himself. He was bereft of purpose—unneded by the larger social beast. Lawrence went back to live in his parents' home. His mother said that the former war hero would come down to breakfast in the morning, and would still remain sitting at the table by lunchtime, staring vacantly at the same object that had occupied his gaze hours earlier, unmoving, unmotivated.

Eventually, at the age of 47, Lawrence died on a lonely country road, victim of a motorcycle accident. Or was he really the victim of something far more subtle? Not long before his death, Lawrence wrote to Eric Kennington, "You wonder what I am doing? Well, so do I, in truth. Days seem to dawn, suns to shine, evenings to follow, and then I sleep. What I have done, what I am doing, what I am going to do, puzzle me and bewilder me. Have you ever been a leaf and fallen from your tree in autumn and been really puzzled about it? That's the feeling." Experts on suicide explain that vehicular accidents often occur to those who are depressed and courting death. Was it mere chance, then, that T.E. Lawrence, a man of almost superhuman physical skills, was killed by a bit of sloppy driving on a vehicle he had used for years? Or had the former leader of the Arabs' inner calculators come to the conclusion that, like the un-needed cell in a complex organism, it was time for him to simply slip away?