

BOOK REVIEW

One Mind: How Our Individual Mind Is Part of a Greater Consciousness and Why It Matters by Larry Dossey. Hay House, 2014. 339 pp. \$13.05. ISBN 978-1401943158.

One Mind brings age-old philosophies into immediate focus, and more importantly illuminates the current context in a world dominated by a materialistic view of everything. In *Recovering the Soul*, written in 1989, Dossey created the term *nonlocal mind*, what he states “is a spatially and temporally infinite aspect of our consciousness.” Nonlocal mind, he suggests, is analogous to what has been described as the soul; a concept often rejected by traditional scientists. There is an inherent conflict between a materialistic worldview and a concept of a consciousness-based, infinite interconnectedness, and the implications could not be more profound. If Dossey is correct, and everything is interconnected at some fundamental level, and I certainly believe he is, then it should impact all aspects of our daily lives. Understanding that the hurtful actions we often take against others also are harmful to ourselves and everyone else, while far from new, is mostly lost in our day-to-day lives. He argues that it shouldn’t be.

One Mind is oriented toward the layperson but will still be of interest to researchers such as most SSE members. The author is well-known to the SSE, and a frequent contributor at our conferences. Dossey is the author of many books on the power of mind and alternative healing methodologies, including the classic *Space, Time & Medicine* published in 1982. As an internal medicine physician, he is exceptionally well-qualified to address the complex and not-well-understood issues of the impact the mind has on health. Previously he served as the chief-of-staff of Medical City Dallas Hospital, and he had extensive experience with traumatic injuries as a combat doctor assigned to the U.S. Army 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vietnam.

Dossey explores a wide range of phenomena in the book. He begins by asking what observations might be made if his premise of nonlocal mind is real. These include shared thoughts and emotions, detailed knowledge of a deceased person’s life, and telepathic communication as examples. He also suggests behavior of large groups of animals in which we see choreographed movements responding to the environment but in ways that could not be communicated through traditional means.

A major thrust of the book includes chapters that exemplify all of the attributes that are hypothesized in the nonlocal mind concept. Addressed, of course, are the perennial brain–mind duality conundrums. Here Dossey briefly surveys some of the extensive literature that examines the role of the brain and he notes that none of the observations “prove that the brain produces the mind, or that the mind is confined to the brain.”

One interesting chapter discusses *telesomatic* events, based on a word coined by neuropsychiatrist Berthold Schwarz. These are events in which two or more bodies, separated by distance, share “similar sensations or actual physical changes.” Dossey, himself an identical twin, has personal experience with such events. One anecdote that caught my attention was that of a lone Tuareg sitting on a camel in the remote Sahara Desert in Mali. He was waiting for a friend coming from a different direction to join him at that undesignated and nondescript location. Having traveled to Timbuktu and been with the Tuaregs, I know how foreboding the Sahel really is. When one leaves a town, it can be a thousand kilometers, or more, to the next location that provides the resources necessary for survival. The sands constantly shift, making traditional land navigation following trails or identifiable checkpoints nearly impossible. Yet, his friend arrived, and this meeting was an example of mental communication that defies explanation. There are many such reports attributed to indigenous peoples. Addressing miracles, Dossey notes that St. Augustine indicated that they “did not contradict nature, but they contradict what we know about nature.” As Dossey relates in some detail, there is an urgent need to expand our concept of science.

As a researcher of near-death experiences (NDEs), I was especially drawn to the chapters concerning not only NDEs, but also evidence for the continuation of consciousness beyond bodily death. Previously, I reviewed Eben Alexander’s book *Proof of Heaven* for the *JSE*. I believe Alexander’s experience to be one of the most extraordinary cases that exists. As a medical doctor, Dossey agrees with the significance of having a neurosurgeon report on his personal venture into unexplored realms. He believes that Alexander produced veridical evidence to support his claims and has included a synopsis in *One Mind*. In a further step, he covers the recent work of another medical doctor and pioneer in NDE research, Raymond Moody. The topic of shared-death experiences is introduced to those not intimately familiar with the field of NDEs. It becomes very difficult to dismiss such events as hallucinations or psychological aberrations of the dying patient when they are externally confirmed by additional independent witnesses.

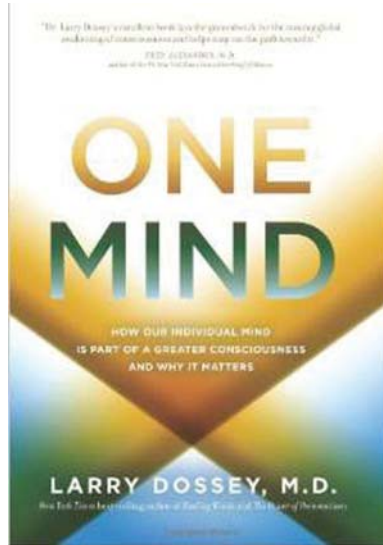
Equally hard to explain are reports of communications with deceased entities via mediums or dreams. Dossey again examines the work of several

SSE members including Julie Beischel and Gary Schwartz as well as other non-member researchers. He notes that historically such material caught the attention of experts including William James and Carl Jung. Not included, but certainly related, was research at the University of Sao Paulo comparing the psychographs of famed Brazilian medium Chico Xavier to material written by a known individual who had died earlier. The researchers found that the letters Xavier wrote were nearly completely compatible with those of the now-deceased person, someone Xavier had never met.

Other topics illuminated include instances of data acquisition at a distance using only the mind and devoid of technological devices. These examples include both spontaneous transmissions, often with high emotional integration, and intentional applications. What is now called remote viewing is a classic illustration and one practiced and taught by some of our SSE members.

Dossey also reports on nonhuman cases of interconnectedness of consciousness. This will be appreciated by all readers who have a strong affinity for their pets. The book cites numerous cases that strongly suggest interactions that are not simple to explain. These include amazing homing stories, as well as a sense of impending danger or reaction to the death of their human companion, even when at a distance. Dossey references the work of Rupert Sheldrake who carefully studied the reaction of animals to actions of humans distant from them.

Clearly, if consciousness continues in a post-mortem condition, the implications are extremely significant for everyone. Yet serious research into the topic is minuscule compared with the funding put into the search for a *God Particle* that many materialists believe will solve the question of the fundamental nature of everything. As a compendium of anecdotes and research reports, *One Mind* provides a very compelling case for the existence of nonlocal mind. Even though one reviewer termed it “subway reading,” meaning that it can be read in short bursts, it is still worth reading to renew your acquaintance with the breadth of topics covered. I guarantee you will learn things that you were not previously aware of.



For the individual, *One Mind* provides food for thought about how you conduct your own life. We tend to think of our physical bodies as establishing limits on our “beingness.” That which lies outside our skin is often thought of as being “other,” and too frequently not of one’s concern. Dossey suggests that we are part of a much larger whole, one bounded only with infinity. Thus, our actions, and even thoughts, may be like the butterfly wings that create hurricanes.

There are geostrategic implications for Dossey’s postulation as well. In recent years, we have witnessed the devolution of the nation-state as the foundation of international relations. Witness the breakup of the Soviet Union, disintegration of the Balkan states, and conflicts across Africa and the Middle East. Apparent are emergent tribal or clan identities that often precipitate into civil wars that now plague many areas of the world. Macro-social organizations often are based on belief systems, ones that are established by emphasizing differences between them and external groups. Xenophobia has become increasingly endemic and impacts international policies. Worth considering are the implications postulated in *One Mind* when viewing our positions on refugees and immigration policies. These are now destabilizing factors in many areas of the world, and these problems likely will increase for the foreseeable future.

At the personal level, we tend to foster ideas as to how we are different from others. Throughout the developed nations, too many people encourage a *winner-take-all* philosophy and honor the ultra-wealthy; even though some have risen at the expense of the many. The Gordon Gekko admonition that “Greed is good” reverberates throughout the world. All of these observations are antithetical to a notion of interconnectedness portrayed in *One Mind*. Yet, egocentrism abounds. I urge everyone to read this book, and consider how their own role fits in a realm of universal consciousness.

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