

WE ARE THE AIR

The living body is very sophisticated, made up of billions of cells. These cells combine into groups forming tissues, which combine into groups forming organs, which combine into groups forming systems. These systems work together to serve the whole organism... YOU. Therefore, the health of one cell affects the overall health of the body – they all play an integral role, as shown in the diagram on the next page.

You can expand this concept further into the macrocosm of the universe. **Consider the words of Dr. David Suzuki and the American Astronomer, Harlow Shapley. This quote begins at 1:47 into the video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-iftqSuz8H4>**

“We are air. And when I breathe out, the air that comes out of my nose quickly mixes and goes straight up your nose. And if I am Air and you are Air, then I am You. And we’re embedded in a matrix of air, not just with all other human beings in the world, but with the worms and the snakes and the spiders and the birds and the trees. We are Air. There is no boundary between us. The American Astronomer, Harlow Shapley, did this wonderful thought exercise. He said “What happens to one breath of air?” How do you follow a breath of air? 98% of air is oxygen and nitrogen. We need that air for the oxygen which fuels our metabolic fires. So a lot of the oxygen in a breath stays in our bodies. Some of the nitrogen reacts biochemically and also stays in our bodies. But 1% of the air is an element called Argon. Argon is an inert gas, doesn’t react with anything. Breathe it in, it goes into our bodies. Breathe it out, it comes right back out. So Argon is a very nice marker, or indicator, of a breath of air. How many atoms of Argon is in a breath of air? Shapley calculates about 3×10^{18} . That’s 3 followed by 18 zeros. Take it from me that is a hell of a lot of Argon.

So if we take a single breath that comes out of my nose, very quickly that one breath spreads by convection through this room and every one of us is breathing gazillions of Argon atoms from that one breath. But, of course, the door is open and that one breath eventually diffuses across Vancouver, across Canada and around the world and according to Shapley, one year later wherever you are in the world, because air is a single matrix, every breath you take will have about 15 Argon atoms that came from that one original breath a year before. So on that basis, Shapley calculates that every breath you take will have Argon atoms that were once in the bodies of Joan of Arc, and Jesus Christ. That every breath you take has Argon atoms that were in the bodies of dinosaurs 65 million years ago. That every breath you take will suffuse terrestrial life forms as far as we can see into the future. So air is more than just a physical component of the biosphere. Air is a sacred element. It gives life to all terrestrial organisms. It links life in a single matrix, and joins the past, the present and the future into a single flowing entity.”