

Mind, Body, Soul, Tech

The Integration of Mind, Body, Soul and Tech

An old friend looked through this blog a while back. He said “You’ve got some good articles there, but what’s that mind, body, soul, tech thing? That’s kind of screwy.”

As old friends often are when they say the things that others won’t, he was right of course. Not about the “screwy” comment but rather that I have never explained here what to me has been very obvious for years. That being that as humans I believe we are creatures of 4 dimensions, that these are the four major component areas of the life of a civilized human in the information age.

This is an informal essay, not Philosophy 101 at a Junior College, so what am I talking about and why?

The “what” is straight forward. I believe that Mind, Body, Soul and Tech are the four necessary components of what it means to be human.

The “why” is that once we know what the primary and necessary components are we can then act to improve or expand them. And, this is the whole theme of this blog and of much of my life.

Mind — Mind is the central part of any definition of human being. Without the concept of mind the concept of human really doesn’t and can’t exist. Without the ability to think and to remember, without the ability to abstract new ideas from observations we can’t be considered to be fully and functionally human no matter what our appearance.

Body – Our bodies are the central physical part of the definition of human. Our body structures and supports our mind. When we are well rested, have reasonable fitness and quality food we are much more able to think clearly and to take the actions necessary to further our lives.

If we are “actors” in the drama of our world we must have “body” with which to act.

Soul — I am not going to argue for my conception of the idea “soul.” But rather that all of us atheists and religionists alike have a conception of this thing we call soul. The religionist may say that the soul is the divine spark. The atheist may see it as the combination of our mind and body with history and cognizance of lives beyond ours. The theist (who oft nominally) sits between these two conceptions will have a combination of the attributes. My points is that

however we may argue about the specifics of its philosophic roll, virtually everyone uses and acknowledges “soul” as a concept integral to the human qua (hyperlink to definition) human.

Tech – Now moving from the merely controversial to the seemingly bizarre. How, my friend says can you hold “tech,” (my iPhone for god’s sake) to be a part of what it means to be human. Let’s first examine a somewhat older “tech.” I am going back a bit here. Say 100,000 years or so. Tech then consisted of a club or a piece of sharpened rock on a stick.

Yet that “tech” could make the difference between you being lunch or having lunch.

Ok, so it’s a weapon you say. What about communication tech? How about when caveman “a” talks to caveman “b” and they agree that this predator who killed their children must be taken out. Now remember that caveman “a” is your direct ancestor. If he and possibly his buddies don’t survive this, you will never be born – nor will any of his other down-line extended relatives (millions of them) – get it? You want his tech to work. You want that sharpened rock to be sharp and tied firmly to that stick. You want him to use it to keep the baby who is your great umpty-ump grandfather alive.

My point here is that you can’t separate the human from the products of the human mind, and all those products of the human mind (and body) are tech of one kind or another.

At every level we produce and pursue tech to further our lives and those of our progeny, and as a species this is clearly a defining trait. No other species comes even close to us in this pursuit of tech.

Moreover I believe that this is a fundamental instinct of the thinking mind. We can no more stop creating and using tech than we can stop breathing. If we do either we are dead. Dead body or dead mind it doesn’t matter much. As human qua human it pretty much amounts to the same.

Thus, my integration of Mind, Body, Soul and Tech as the four dimensions of that which is human.

What does this mean?

It means that I value all four: Mind, Body, Soul and Tech. After, the manner of the Greeks I believe that it is in an integration of those things that make us most distinctly what we are, human where we find our lives, where we find our greatest joy and fulfillment.

The Integration of Mind, Body, Soul and Tech

The integration of mind, body, soul and tech is one of the great problems of our era. There are financially successful people who are without any noticeable happiness. There are very bright people who have problems creating a living income for themselves. There are many many unhappy people

At the end of the day tech is rushing at us headlong and will not be ignored or denied. It is the speed of that rush and its acceleration that creates many of the noticeable challenges that abound all around us.