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Is Altruism a Principal Fruit of Spiritual Experience? An Exploration of the Alister Hardy Religious Experience Research Centre Archive

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This paper focuses on the 'fruits' or consequences of religious and spiritual experiences (RSEs) recorded in the Archive of the Alister Hardy Religious Experience Research Centre (RERC). My first research question asks, 'What, in the RERC Archive, are the fruits of RSEs in terms of inner transformation and outward behaviour?' A quantitative, numerical analysis of the range of consequences, including religious and spiritual changes is given, and in a qualitative approach specific accounts are explored in more depth. My second research question became, 'Is the designation "Intense Experience" as expounded by Wesley J. Wildman in his *Religious and Spiritual Experiences* (2011) helpful for researchers when evaluating RSEs, particularly those of people who do not consider themselves religious?' Study of the literature gave rise to the third research question, 'Can the hypothesis that a turn from self-centredness to altruism is the dominant category underlying the variety of fruits of experience be supported through analysis of the RERC Archive?' A mixed methods approach to the data appeared to lend support for this hypothesis.

Key Words: Religious; spiritual; experience; fruits; transformation; altruism.

Introduction

My involvement with the Alister Hardy Trust is long-standing and I wrote an introduction to religious and spiritual experiences (RSEs) as an Occasional Paper and then a book, *An Introduction to Religious and Spiritual Experience* published in 2008 by Bloomsbury. I have given talks in schools and to many spiritual groups and recently completed a PhD on 'Researching the Fruits of Religious and Spiritual Experience in the Alister Hardy Religious Experience Research Centre Archive.' So I have a long-term interest in the subject, the organisation and in reaching out to others.

The contents of the Religious Experience Research Centre (RERC) Archive were my data and I chose the fruits of religious and spiritual experiences as my research focus. Over the years, I have become increasingly interested in the effects of the enormous range of experiences which we have in our collection. Many researchers have focused on different types of experience and there is an enormous range in the approximately 6,600 accounts in the Archive – Near-Death Experiences (NDEs), Out-of-Body Experiences

(OBEs), End-of-Life Experiences (ELEs), encounters with the deceased, with angels, hearing voices, visions of light, feelings of love, guidance and comfort as well as negative experiences. But I have always been fascinated by how people were changed and their lives altered by these experiences.

Methodology

For my PhD I formulated three research questions. My first question was a general one, asking, “What, in the RERC Archive, are the ‘fruits’ of RSEs in terms of inner transformation and outward behaviour?” This formed the basis for further exploration. My second research question arose as I considered that so many people these days would not describe themselves as religious, so I asked: “Is the designation “Intense Experience” as expounded by Wesley J. Wildman in his *Religious and Spiritual Experiences* (2011) helpful for researchers when evaluating RSEs, particularly those of people who do not consider themselves religious?” I explored the category of Intense Experiences (IEs), as an alternative term for RSEs, but as this aspect involves an understanding of Wildman’s research and analysis, I do not propose to look at it in depth in this lecture. However, I did find that a category which enabled people to accept their experiences as natural, rather than linked to religion was helpful. My third question arose because as each experience was embedded within a personal story, giving a great variety of individual fruits, I wanted to draw out a common theme, or underlying pattern, by formulating a hypothesis. Study of the literature – religious and scholarly, plus several pilot studies – gave rise to the question: ‘Can the hypothesis that a turn from self-centredness to altruism is the dominant category underlying the variety of fruits of experience be supported through analysis of the RERC Archive?’

This turn from a focus on the self to concern for others was an aspect which I wished to attempt to tease out of the data, as I believed it to be present in many accounts, even if not specifically mentioned. Jesus linked the love of God and the love of others in his two great commandments, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind’ (NRSV, 2015, Matthew 22:37) and ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself’ (Matthew 22:39). I wanted to find out whether that link is borne out by the fruits of experience found in the RERC Archive, whether an experience of a higher dimension, or power beyond the self would lead to altruism. For the title of my lecture, I have slightly amended this question – changing ‘the dominant category’ to ‘a principal fruit.’ I bore the three questions in mind throughout my research as I tackled each in turn in more depth. I chose a mixed methods approach to my data – quantitative and qualitative. I offered a quantitative, numerical analysis of a range of consequences of

experience, which I recorded on Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. This offered percentages of different fruits of RSEs found in the first and final accounts, and an overview of secular, religious and spiritual responses. My Qualitative Research involved a careful reading and close analysis of individual accounts, with attention paid to the triggers or antecedents, the experience itself, its interpretation and the fruits. The experiences tell of significant events in the lives of the correspondents, and how they make sense of them.

Briefly, in terms of methodology, I was mindful of the interpretations by both the correspondent and the researcher, and I found Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009/2012) to be a helpful approach. IPA involves a double hermeneutic: The researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of what happened to them. Although IPA is predominantly used with small samples of homogenous groups, and is usually based on semi-structured interviews (Smith, 2017), such an approach was nonetheless helpful in my research. Although no interviews took place, the accounts in the Archive are in a sense answers to an open question, The Hardy Question: “Have you ever been aware of or influenced by a presence or power, whether you call it God or not, which is different from your everyday self?”

Data

As it was based on the online contents of the RERC Archive, my research did not involve interviews or questionnaires (so I was not affected by Covid lockdowns). Although nowadays researchers are deprived of the original documents, the convenience of being able to refer to all the experiences and to return to particular accounts at will, makes up for that. I decided to record and analyse the fruits of 2,000 accounts – the first and approximately the final thousand accounts in the Archive. This was to enable comparisons between accounts submitted in the late 1960s and early 1970s, many in response to Sir Alister Hardy’s original appeal, with those of the twenty-first century, particularly in respect of religious background. I expected the increasingly secular nature of society to be reflected and wanted to know how that affected religious attitudes following the RSEs. The most enjoyable part of my research was reading the accounts. Each told a personal story, many of which were very moving and so often had not been shared before – particularly in the early letters. It was Hardy’s standing as a respected scientist undertaking research into spirituality which encouraged people to send those precious accounts to him. To remind us – the Archive was established when Hardy asked for people to write to him in answer to what is now known as The Hardy Question. He would frequently link this to an article or interview, illustrating the kind of experience he meant and he also used questionnaires. In

a pamphlet, Hardy explained more clearly what he sought, giving a subtler understanding of the nature of the experience, as inner and outer, where he also mentioned the consequences:

All those who feel that they have been conscious of, and perhaps influenced by, some Power, whether they call it God or not, which may either appear to be beyond their individual selves or partly, or even entirely, within their being, are asked to write a simple account of these feelings and their effects (Hardy, 1971, p. 2).

These appeals resulted in a flood of responses with descriptions of all kinds of experiences which had meant a lot to people, but which they often found difficult to understand. The results of Hardy's research and analysis of the first 3000 accounts were first published in *The Spiritual Nature of Man* in 1979. In my thesis I made use of Hardy's understanding of religious experience as:

A deep awareness of a benevolent non-physical power which appears to be partly or wholly beyond, and far greater than, the individual self (Hardy, 1979/2006, p. 1).

According to Hardy, RSEs are not the exclusive property of any one religion, or for that matter of religion in general, but can occur to anyone at all at any time (p. 1). Such experiences may be described in religious, non-religious and even anti-religious language but in my analyses, I refer to religious and spiritual experiences (RSEs).

The Use of Metaphor

Rather than just use the term effect or consequence, I decided on the metaphor of fruits. As religious and spiritual experiences are difficult to describe, David Hay suggests that 'we would expect metaphor to play a large part in religious language' (Hay, 1998/2006, p. 236). Having decided to focus on the consequences of RSEs, the choice of the metaphor of fruits arose quite naturally as it is widely used, by Jesus and St Paul in scripture; and in scholarship – notably by William James – as the criterion for evaluating whether or not an RSE is genuine. As such experiences are subjective and open to doubt by third party observers, Jesus, Paul and William James stress that it is by their fruits that they are to be judged. My focus is less on fruits as proof of genuineness, more an exploration of the range of effects of RSEs in the lives of the experiencers and specifically on whether altruism is a principal fruit.

A metaphorical view of the outcomes of RSEs as fruits in contrast to their roots (Donovan, 1979/1998, pp. 126-130) opens new avenues of thought. Fruits grow, develop, ripen and can be shared and nurtured, but they may also be left, ignored and even rot. Of course, fruits contain seeds, which are an important part of the metaphor. Fruits depend on how the seeds germinate. Some RSEs lead to prolific fruit whereas other experiencers maintain that they were not much affected.

The exploration of RSEs as seeds put me in mind of the parable of the Sower, which illustrates that not every seed bears fruit. Much depends on how the seeds respond to different types of soil. Some fall on the path, where they cannot take root; others on stony ground where their roots are shallow; some spring up but quickly wither or are choked by weeds; whereas others grow, spread and multiply. I linked the types of soil to religious or secular responses to the experiences and explored just how that affected the fruit, whether the effects remained with the experiencer or whether they spread more widely, affecting others. This led to an appraisal of the links to altruism.

The Fruits of Experience

As a researcher, I engaged with the experiences recounted in the Archive, and I juxtaposed the interpretations given by the correspondent with my own. Some correspondents included a clear account of the consequences of the experience, but although the current RERC form for submission of accounts includes a section for 'Fruits of the Experience,' not everyone uses the form, and in fact many correspondents do not mention any consequences at all, making research problematic as Hardy noted:

...while one person will devote a couple of pages to the ways in which his or her life has been transformed, another will merely say, '*I have never been the same person since*' (Hardy, 1979/2006. p. 99).

In many cases, the fruits had to be searched for and extrapolated from the account. Some fruits are instantly evident – to the experiencer and the researcher, but particularly if there is a gradual growth in understanding over time, this may only be implicit in the account and the fruits often only become apparent when the narrative is studied carefully. Changes are found to be inner, in terms of religious and spiritual beliefs and attitudes to self and others; and outer, in terms of behaviour relating to religious practice, relationships with others and often choice of profession. Here is an unusually concise example:

My experiences have had a profound influence on my life. I now live with a refined purpose to uplift myself and in doing so to help uplift others where I can [005505].

As I have referred to the parable of the Sower and am considering RSEs as seeds, I would like to share an interesting account, which shows how an experience is never forgotten, even if not immediately acted upon. The correspondent gives a lengthy description of an extraordinary experience in 1917 between battles on the Somme in the First World War. He was walking in the moonlight along a canal tow-path and had an experience of seeing and hearing heavenly harmonies – the music of the spheres. It made him think – how wonderful it would be to die at this moment – but after about thirty seconds the experience faded and the magical scene receded. It was when he heard that his ‘old friend A.C. Hardy had become interested in experiences of this sort’ that he revisited the incident, wrote it down and reflected on it. Paul’s experience on the road to Damascus came into his mind in a similar manner, which prompted the thought ‘By their fruits you shall know them’ and he asked himself what the fruits of the experience had been in his life. He admitted that:

...no inner change had been wrought: I was the same man after as before: my behaviour, purposes and conduct were the same; no one saw, or knew of any difference.

Yet on further reflection, he analysed his experience with reference to the parable of the Sower, in terms of seeds germinating over time. He wrote:

Scepticism may have reduced the potential fertility of the soil. But I cannot at the same time say that it had no effect. Some of the seeds may have germinated over the ensuing years without my knowledge. Others, it now occurs to me, may yet germinate, half a century later. The remarkable thing, as I now see, about such seeds...is their capacity to remain dormant for long periods, perhaps waiting inertly for an auspicious change in the soil which contains them. I would like to think that my old friend A.C. Hardy, who had unwittingly prompted me to include my neglected tow-path experience in a biographical sketch of the first war, may have been responsible for a (perhaps belated) improvement in the receptivity of an area of ground wherein there has been insufficient change for too long [000035].

I found this assessment that it is never too late to respond to an experience not to be unusual. Often experiences are forgotten until something triggers the memory – frequently

just when it is needed – and it is often then that people reflect on whether or not there have been fruits from the RSE.

Quantitative Research

In composing the spreadsheets for my quantitative research, I bore in mind Hardy’s categories of the consequences of experience:

1. a sense of purpose or new meaning in life;
2. change in religious belief;
3. change in attitude to others (Hardy, 1979/2006, p. 29).

I worked on several pilot studies, leading to the final selection of 21 codes: account number; sex; religious background; change to spiritual but not religious; change to religious; change to religious and spiritual; change to neither religious nor spiritual; no change; strengthened convictions; sense of purpose or new meaning in life; feeling loved; loving attitude; sense of comfort; sense of guidance; sense of assurance of survival of death; awareness of unity and interconnectedness; supports the hypothesis; opposes the hypothesis; negative consequences; intense experiences; notes. I applied these to the two thousand accounts and recorded the percentages of the first and final thousand separately. I expanded Hardy’s second category of consequences: the changes in religious beliefs. I recorded the religious background as given in the form – almost always answered and mostly Christian – 87% in the early accounts but down to 57% in the later years, although I noted other religions too (see Figure 1). I then focused on the subsequent changes. I considered the variations within religious, spiritual and non-religious responses to RSEs, the equivalent of the different locations where the seed falls:

Figure 1. *Changes in religious attitude from Christian background*

	Religious Background (Christian)	Spiritual but not Religious (SBNR)	Religious Xn/Other	Religious and Spiritual	Neither Religious nor Spiritual	No Change	Strengthened Convictions
First Thousand	87%	36%	2%/5%	12%	0.7%	10%	30%
Final Thousand	57%	34%	1%/3%	6%	0.8%	4%	16%

I explored whether there was a difference in the fruits, depending on whether or not they were spiritually nurtured. Some people find support in religious or spiritual practice or in groups of like-minded folk, enabling them to build on their experiences, whereas others go it alone. Many people changed to 'spiritual but not religious' – 36% and 34% because their experiences did not seem to tie in with what their religion taught. They felt led to a more open, spiritual approach to life. However, in the early years 30% did find their convictions strengthened but this was down to 16% in more modern times, with 10% and 4% showing no change. Some correspondents undertook a spiritual search, but very few changed religion – 2% and 1% finding Christianity and 5% and 3% finding other religions. Even fewer (less than 1%) decided against any kind of religious or spiritual response. Quite a number of correspondents became both religious and spiritual – 12% in the early years although only 6% in more recent times. Those people found their faith deepened. I found that a more in-depth engagement with life – and often death – was evident, whether this was overtly considered as spiritual or not.

As regards Changes in Religious Attitude, in a more qualitative approach, I explored whether or not correspondents received understanding or support from their religion after their experiences. I used the different categories to explore individual accounts to find out whether the fruits of experience were nurtured by religious or spiritual support. Like the soil on which the Sower's seeds fell, I evaluated whether or not the seeds were able to take root. To balance the religious and spiritual perspective, I also considered how the fruits of Intense Experiences were or were not nurtured. People reacted in a number of ways to integrating their experiences with their religious beliefs. If the parable of the Sower is borne in mind, all types of soil are evident in the Archive. Sometimes regret at the lack of fruits was expressed, a recognition that more could have been made of an experience, the seeds falling on the wayside. Some people found immediate solace from their experiences, but then did not explore further, they are stony ground, where roots are shallow. Others intended to respond more fully to their experiences, but the duties and cares of life – or life's more enticing distractions took over – the seeds falling among thorns. But it is evident that the fruits are best nurtured where the experiences take place within a religious tradition or where a deeper development of spiritual practice or awareness is found. That is the good soil, where the seeds produced grain, growing and yielding fruit thirtyfold or even a hundredfold. Continuing my empirical research, I explored Hardy's sense of purpose or new meaning in life. Where he found 18.5% (Hardy, 1979/2006, p. 29), I recorded 25%/24%. This often involved a change from depression or unexplained lack of direction to a new vision. It is significant that Hardy recorded 18.4% of RSEs being triggered by depression or despair (p. 28) as such times of trial do seem to lead to a re-evaluation of the purpose of life. Other fruits I recorded were:

Feeling loved – 22%/19% with a number of people finding this moved them to a Loving attitude – 20%/12%.

The figures in the spreadsheets indicate that almost everyone who featured in the 'loving attitude' category was also in the 'feeling loved' category, although not vice versa. This seemed to point to a link between an awareness of love, however experienced or analysed, and altruism. Once again, a slight fall in these percentages is recorded in the more recent accounts, possibly reflecting a more secular outlook.

Sense of Comfort – 44%/40%

Sense of Guidance – 43%/30%

High percentages of people felt a sense of comfort and guidance. Correspondents told of being lifted out of depression, having their fears calmed, their problems solved, of being sustained in bereavement or being aided in a spiritual search. Many seemed to be shown a path in life, and to receive assistance in taking it. People felt changed in unexpected ways, in terms of their own inner attitudes and in how they responded to outer reality. Those changes seemed significant, and I detected an underlying pattern of receiving help to cope with life leading to a change of perspective, from looking inward to outward. Putting these two changes together, I decided that rather than focus on comfort or on guidance *per se*, I would explore the direction of that guidance, which seemed to be towards universal love and compassion. In order to include mystical experiences in my research, rather than focus on different types – such as introvert or extravert, I retained my focus on the fruits. So I decided to record an awareness of unity and interconnectedness – often a consequence of NDEs too, and I recorded 21%/15%. This was a long-lasting, new way of experiencing the world, often fundamentally altering the experiencer's perspective, their views on life, death and consciousness. They were transformed and became aware of a deep connection with the natural world and with other people. I also undertook an exploration of a darker side of RSEs, as not all are pleasant. Merete Jakobsen in her Occasional Paper (3rd Series Paper 1) recorded 4.25% negative experiences. As my focus was on fruits rather than the experiences themselves, I recorded negative consequences of experience. I found 0.8% rising to 4% in the final thousand. However, further exploration led me to consider that although it would be unrealistic to imagine that all spiritual experiences are positive, it does seem to be the case, as Caroline Franks Davis found in her *Evidential Force of Religious Experience* (1986, p. 17) that many negative

experiences, especially those where we face our own shortcomings, do eventually lead to a positive outcome and spiritual fruits. As might be expected, the percentages of those considered Intense Experiences were high as I was recording the nature of the experience, rather than a category of fruits. In the first thousand I found 61%, in the final thousand 68%. It is possible that if RSEs are reconsidered and renamed IEs - intense experiences - or another secular designation – 'transformative' perhaps – and accepted as part of human nature, people without religious views would be able to accept such experiences as meaningful.

Qualitative Exploration of the Link to Altruism

The constraints of the length of the lecture resulted in a shortened exploration of the qualitative aspect of my research and the link to altruism. Beginning with the quantitative results, Hardy's third consequence of experience was Changes in Attitude to Others, which he recorded at 7.7%. This was related to my hypothesis – the turn from self-centredness to altruism – a definition of which I accepted from the Buddhist scholar Matthieu Ricard:

Altruistic love is characterized by unconditional kindness toward *all beings*...It permeates the mind and is expressed appropriately, according to the circumstances, to answer the needs of all (Ricard, 2013/2018, pp. 25-26, his italics).

I explored the accounts and highlighted examples of the hypothesis and found 34% in support in the first thousand accounts with 0.5% opposing it, and in the final thousand 23% supporting the hypothesis and only 0.1% opposing it. As I was not sure whether there was indeed a turn to altruism, I recorded 'no turn' in the final thousand but found only 7% indicating no evidence of a change. The higher percentage in the early accounts seems to reflect a greater acknowledgement of the need to help others than is perhaps evident today. About a third of correspondents illustrated this turn to altruism in the early accounts but just under a quarter in the later sample. This may be linked to the higher percentages of Christian background in the early years, where the commandments to love God and neighbour were taken as the norm, or possibly linked to an increase in social services being available for the vulnerable and elderly today, lessening the need for individual help. I found that some accounts exhibit a clear transformation from self-centredness to altruism, as in the following account, the second in the Archive:

I think it may be relevant to say that from 1957 to 1966 I was almost all the time very unhappy indeed. I suffered from acute pain in the back, lived in poverty, in a state of sorrow and a good deal of loneliness. I experienced unhappy relationships with relatives and neighbours and suffered from doubt in God or after life and many other troubles. In 1966, I was one day alone in the house when quite suddenly I became aware of my own attitude to life. I realised that I was wrapped up in deep self pity, that my thoughts were all for myself and my own sorrows, that I had not thought of others. I thought how others in the world suffered too. I was rather shocked at my selfish attitude and was filled with compassion for others; then, as if without thinking I knelt down in the room and made a vow to God that from then on for the rest of my life I would love and serve mankind. The following morning when I awoke I had a sudden experience, for into my mind poured knowledge (which knowledge has remained with me ever since). I knew that the love and service of mankind was the will of God for mankind...To explain my experience figuratively, it was as if all my life I had been in a darkened room and then I had suddenly walked out of it into the sunlight of day... [000002].

This extract offers a clear example of the hypothesis, showing how the correspondent's recognition that the root of her misery, both physical and psychological, was self-pity, led to an RSE and to altruism. She was comforted and received help and guidance for the rest of her life. The fruit of the experience was not only a lifting of her own unhappiness but an abrupt and lasting change, expressed in love for all. There were moving experiences of correspondents feeling filled with love, which led them to love others and to help those in need. Other accounts, particularly those of experiences of unity and interconnectedness, altered people's view of the world, linking them to everyone and everything as in this example:

Fruits: This was experienced almost twenty years ago but I have never forgotten it. It changed my life, giving me a strong feeling of empathy for all the people around me and even all those I have never met...[from questionnaire]: it made me much more aware of the feelings and needs of other people. It made me realize that we were all part on [of] one great whole [004764].

I had decided to use the binary categories recording 'supports hypothesis' and 'opposes hypothesis' on the spreadsheets to get an understanding of the views of the correspondents. I did not find any accounts in the Archive which led to self-centredness, nor any which elicited malevolent attitudes towards others. It may be that such negative

attitudes preclude response to the Hardy Question, so that the Archive does not reflect the more selfish, even evil side of human nature. Under 'opposes hypothesis' I recorded those who mentioned that there was no turn towards altruism as a result of their experiences. But closer inspection of those accounts showed that they did not record opposition to the principle that RSEs lead to a transformation to altruism, but contained an admission that despite an RSE, there had been no change in their own attitudes or behaviour (rather like in the tow-path experience). The expectation that there would or should be a change towards altruism seemed to be universally accepted in the accounts.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I returned to the main research questions to evaluate my findings on the fruits of RSEs. It was evident that trust in a transcendent power, however conceived, whether within or beyond the individual self, helps to nurture the wide range of fruits of experience. Prayers uttered in extremis, at times without faith in whatever or whoever was appealed to, when there was simply no other way to cope, were answered – often to the surprise of the correspondent. Handing over to a higher power, with or without any certainty of a response seems to work and frequently leads to a re-evaluation of the meaning of life. One way of changing direction from self-centredness to altruism is through having the humility to recognise that one needs help in order to help others, that one's own capabilities are limited. People often find that by handing over their problems to a higher power, they are able to cope in ways beyond what they feel they could manage alone. Hardy suggested an experimental faith, sincerely placing trust in a power beyond the self. He explained that:

On so many occasions men and women have achieved, by what they call divine help or grace, that which they, and others who knew them, would have regarded as being beyond their normal capabilities (Hardy, 1966/1978, p. 26).

The data from this study support the assumption in the literature, scholarly and religious, that altruism is an expected fruit of RSEs and in the Archive there is evidence of a turn from a focus on the self, to a concern for others. I wanted to explore whether or not people are by nature altruistic and co-operative. Although few described themselves as being self-centred before their experience, many were in personal difficulties. In those cases, the RSE seemed to liberate them by offering them comfort and often a new path in life. In my research I have found that humans seem to be compassionate by nature or at least aware of a seed of goodness within them, but that this is often hidden, submerged through force

of circumstance or personal problems. RSEs often help to resolve these issues, allowing innate altruism to emerge. So often the focus in the media and in scholarship is on the negative, reinforcing an underlying assumption that everyone is ultimately out for themselves. Of course this is often true and news reports tend to focus on tragedy and wrongdoing, but I have not found this to be the case in the Archive accounts. The seeds of RSEs, even if dormant, are able to germinate in time and bear fruit.

The Archive offers a rich database, ripe for further exploration of the meaning and value of life as reflected in personal testimonies of spiritual and religious experiences, however interpreted or named. My research indicates that some of the most profound, life-changing experiences that people have, lead them to become more loving and altruistic. These fruits of experience are significant, particularly in today's secular, sceptical, often selfish society, where instances of isolation and depression seem to be on the increase. The fruits of the religious and spiritual experiences collected in the RERC Archive seem to encourage a change of focus from 'I' to 'We.' The importance of this on a personal level and for society as a whole, is encapsulated by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and I will leave the last words to him:

I believe that our strong focus on material development and accumulating wealth has led us to neglect our basic human need for kindness and care. Reinstating a commitment to the oneness of humanity and altruism toward our brothers and sisters is fundamental for societies and organizations and their individuals to thrive in the long run (Dalai Lama, Facebook post, February 25th 2020).

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