

One Life

by Servaas de Kock

There really is just one life. As amazing as it seems one has just to contemplate the following to understand it.

You, although termed a “new life”, were conceived when many sperm competed in a speed trial for the micropyle (entrance pore) of mother’s egg cell. The sperm that was victorious was part of your dad’s many million sperm cells. But it was the DNA that was your dad’s contribution to the conception that ultimately became you. When your mother’s egg cell with half it’s DNA count fused with your father’s sperm with half it’s DNA count, it started a cell division process which resulted in your life. That became an adult “you”.

What escapes most people is that your mothers egg cell, is really a modified body cell that will allow this multiplication to happen. That cell contains many aspects of your mother. It is of her body. It contains cell fluids, mitochondrial DNA and other cell structures, which are unique to her. Even the cell wall is from her. It is as representative of her as any cell could be, but is prepared for cell duplication once a sperm enters the micropyle and it’s DNA combines with her DNA.

So really, when that ovum starts to multiply, it does so with the same cell life of the mother. The blueprint which becomes you, may steadily affect many of your more superficial characteristics. In essence, you will be a continuation of your mother’s life. You may carry some characteristic of your father, but not his life. For that, you have to thank your mother. Every living thing must have a mother’s cell to start a “new life”. A father’s input will just invoke random change. Some uniqueness to the superficial characteristics, but you will inherit your mother’s life.

Every fusion is an experiment of nature. Many fail immediately, the union is defect and the cell dies. Others live longer. Since the development of organs and body functions are time dependent, a doomed experiment may only realise itself later. Many years later.

From this, another simple truth presents itself. Whatever you see around you is the result of success. It does not know anything about the future, but for now it is successful. To be simplistic: I am alive because I am not dead.

Success can only be achieved if a union results in an adult which can create another living being. Your mission in life can only be to continue the life that your mother had. Otherwise your branch dies with you. Extinguished forever. Whatever attributes you had – gone. (I hear objections, but let us not confuse life with the results of life and the continuation of those results. Yes, you can have an idea, and yes, you can embed that idea in a piece of timeless sculpture or whatever. But it is at a different level. That is a story for another time.)

Now, if we step back in time, we may imagine the countless experiments of life. All the failed and half-failed experiments. All those which mutated due to internal or external forces. Imagine all those successful beings which were eliminated by catastrophic events of nature, and become extinct, like branches being cut from the tree of life. Think of all of those accidental duplications of genomes with new vigour or potential or simple termination.

And still we can go back in time, millions upon trillion upon trillion of times. I estimate 10^{480} times. And then you may come to the arch-mother cell that survived long enough to clone itself and start a successful chain reaction that will ultimately terminate when the space on earth limits life or our energy sources, be they wood, gas, coal, oil, nuclear or solar, run out.
