

# A Mystic's Call to Action

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So you have tasted divine essence, awoken from your slumber, peeled back the veil of limited perception and apprehended the underpinnings of existence, shed illusory concepts of self and ego, immersed your consciousness in unitive states, let go and let go and let go again until there is nothing left...not even a lingering concept of what you have left behind. You have surrendered to the raw, exposed ground that reflexively evokes compassion for all things, you are brimming with a profound affection that annihilates all perceptions of difference, hierarchy and personal conceit. You are consumed by a purifying, invigorating flame of gnosis that insists in translating spiritual bliss into practical blessing. You know, intuitively and with certainty, that what you have experienced amid the depths of your being longs to be expressed in fluid, skillful, unselfconscious service to others. There is an intense momentum within you to release the floodgates of unconditional love upon the world. Your cup is running over.

Okay, now what?

Integral Lifework proposes that our most noble efforts in response to this awakening must be supported by all of the dimensions of our being. Compassion, discernment, skill, patience, persistence – all of these may add to the mix, but they are not enough. Why? Because all truly effective effort arises from balanced and harmonious wholeness; that is, an energy, intention and love-in-action that is invigorated by all of the supportive structures that make up our being. By consciously attending to these supportive structures, our wholeness not only become harmonious, but also greater than the sum of its parts. There are hints of this principle in many spiritual traditions. In the emphasis on commitment to a spiritual community, or the imperative of regular prayer and meditation, or the encouragement to be reflexively generous and eschew material wealth, or the importance of conditioning the mind

and body through prescribed self-control. All of these practices define interior and exterior structures that invigorate spiritual aspirations and facilitate the translation of what we might describe as the *evolution of being* into pragmatic and effective action. And each tradition carefully defines a means of engaging like-minded community and the broader society to support spiritual nourishment and maturity.

Of course these traditions also remind us that relationships between *gnosis* (the intuitive apprehension of mystical insight), supportive structures, and reinforcing actions are interdependent. That faith without loving actions is a nonfunctional faith; enlightenment without compassion is not enlightenment; letting go of selfhood without service to others is not really letting go. In this way, spiritual systems seek to maintain a dynamic equilibrium between inner stillness, personal development, and constructive interaction with others. Even as each belief system seeks to transcend the conventional, mundane and material – to relinquish attachment to various aspects of the physical world – they ultimately return to affectionately serving that physical world in order to facilitate spiritual maturity. Prophets always come down off the mountain to mingle with the masses, saints humbly cultivate kind deeds, bodhisattvas devote themselves to relieving the suffering of others, and so on.

In many spiritual traditions, the encouragement of spiritually supportive frameworks and compassionately reinforcing behaviors is often contrasted with egocentric, willful, profligate dissipation. Religious institutions have an unfortunate habit of overemphasizing this contrast to elevate the orthodoxy, purity and self-righteous zeal of a particular tradition. And most of these institutions tend to emphasize the exoteric over the esoteric, ironically discouraging *evolution of being* in favor of social conformance. But when we peel back the veneers of institutionalization, tribalization and legalistic controls, we discover what is essentially a system of spiritual nourishment at the heart of all religions. And all these systems demand that other supportive structures and reinforcing behaviors be concurrently developed in order for that nourishment to succeed.

As some more specific examples, we can observe how a Christian learns that spiritual maturity is not really occurring unless there are character changes such as self-control and

sincere humility; that the physical body must be cared for because it is a vehicle for the Divine; that involvement in a community of fellow believers is an essential part of the Christian experience; that loving others is the only enduring evidence of one's love for God; and so on. These other dimensions of essential nourishment are meant to support each other and facilitate spiritual growth. Likewise, a Buddhist refines skillful compassion not just as evidence of meditative insight, but because skillful compassion creates a fertile, facilitative environment for liberation from suffering in oneself and others; the noble eight-fold path articulates wisdom, ethical conduct and mental development to support one's entry into that liberating stream and continuous progress along the path to Nirvana; and of course Buddhists take refuge in their community of believers as well. So here, too, we find practices that interdependently nurture various dimensions of being alongside spiritual development. Why is charity and concern for the needy one of the five pillars of Islam? Why do Hindus believe both physical discipline and mental discipline can transform awareness? Why do Sikhs believe that kindness and selfless service encourage spiritual progress? In nearly every tradition we can see a similar pattern: the spiritual dimension of being does not exist in a vacuum, it is supported and sustained by other dimensions.

Integral Lifework expands on this principle. Not only are all dimensions of being equally important, but they radiate outward across concentric boundaries of our existence. That is, every dimension within correlates with broader and broader arenas of intention and action, so that each conscious choice – and each unconscious expression of personal will – is eventually manifested in ever-expanding ripples. As within, so without – with the caveat that there is an overarching intention that necessarily subordinates all other motivations. We will discuss this intention later on. But in order to appreciate the relationship between the many dimensions of being and how they radiate outward, we first must define what those dimensions are, and what effective nourishment looks like. Then we can appreciate how, when all dimensions are fully nourished, each aspect of being supports, sustains and evolves every other. And finally we can explore the governing intentionality that fans this energy from a smoldering spark to a continually unfolding flame.

Here is a brief overview of the twelve dimensions as they are defined in Integral Lifework. These aren't intended to be rigid (or even complete), but are merely placeholders for concepts observed in my work with clients and students that help define mutually supportive structures of being. Integral Lifework asserts that balanced, multidimensional nourishment must be occurring to encourage healing, growth and transformation in each of these dimensions. *Evolution of being* is defined through harmonious nurturing of all dimensions, beginning with self and expanding outwards as a natural consequence of disciplined effort. When any one dimension is neglected, it tends to undermine all others, which once again is why holistic balance is critical to sustaining both growth and effectively compassionate action.

The twelve dimensions of Integral Lifework:

**Healthy Body.** Sustaining and strengthening our physical being through conscious patterns of diet, exercise, sleep and other key factors uniquely suited to who we are. What this looks like will vary from person to person, but one key component is listening to our own body's promptings to know what is really the most nourishing.



**Playful Heart.** Maintaining healthy emotional expression and connection with our inner life, and engaging in regular playfulness and creative self-expression from day to day. Once again each person will benefit from different avenues of play and creativity, and once again we must learn how to listen to our own heart's joys and longings, and be guided by them here.



**Supportive Community.** Inviting love and acceptance into our lives, both in what we receive from others, how loving and accepting we are of others, and how actively we participate in our community. This will also look different for each person – and for the same person over the course of their life.



**Expanding Mind.** Building, broadening and routinely stimulating our knowledge, understanding and mental capacities and abilities. For one person this may mean regularly researching new topics of interest; for another it may mean having spirited discussions with friends; for another this nourishment may take the form of watching plays or films that challenge their perspective, or reading books that stretch their imagination; for another this may mean playing chess. It will be different for everyone, with the shared result of sharpening and strengthening mental faculties.

**Fulfilling Purpose.** Discovering and actuating a satisfying life-purpose that is perfectly matched to our authentic self, and which supports the focus, strength and healthy expression of our personal will. This may be a lifelong pursuit, expressing itself in many stages and transitions, but the fundamental act of exploring activities and interests that resonate with our essence – that strongly persuade us of what is most meaningful to us by inspiring and energizing our efforts – is the core nourishment practice here.



**Authentic Spirit.** Establishing and increasing our connection and interaction with the ground of being – described in different traditions as the fundamental essence, spiritual energy, potential for liberation, or divine nature of reality – and translating that deepening connection into a spiritually authentic life. This, too, will be different for each person, and may require years of exploration and experimentation with different spiritual disciplines to fully appreciate and understand. This does not mean, however, that we need to become religious or subscribe to some established belief system, just that we explore and sustain this dimension of being. As with all other dimensions, there are suggestions for how we can achieve this within Integral Lifework, but each person must find their own way.



**Restorative History.** Acknowledging, honoring and, when necessary, reprocessing all the experiences of our lives – whether remembered or forgotten, integrated or rejected – that have contributed to our current state of being; every significant relationship, trauma, milestone, accomplishment, perception or influence that has led us to the present moment. There are specific practices suggested within Integral Lifework to accomplish this, but once again how this dimension is nourished will be different for each person. For some this may require heart-to-heart conversations with family members. For others this may mean reviewing life experiences and how they have shaped self-concept. And for others this dimension may be so traumatic or confusing that it requires the assistance of professional therapy. But, like all the others, it is essential to wholeness and well-being.



**Pleasurable Legacy.** Creating and sustaining new life, pleasurable experiences that are shared, and an enduring and positive impression on our world, while at the same time maintaining a sense of safety and stability for ourselves and those we love. For many people this dimension is all about creating a home and having children – who in turn are encouraged in turn to create a home and have children of their own. But there are many other ways this dimension can be effectively nourished. For one person this may entail writing novels. For another this may involve a lifetime of community service. For someone else this may mean being an educator, or establishing some sort of business or nonprofit organization, or perhaps inventing some kind of helpful technology. But all of these avenues share the characteristics of both being pleasurable for the individual, and sharing that pleasure beyond one's own lifespan. The synthesis of pleasure and legacy is nourishment for this dimension.



**Flexible Processing Space.** This means being able to regularly and effortlessly transition through different modes of processing, with each centered in different facets of our being – the heart, mind, body, spirit and soul – so that we fully nourish those facets and create transparent access to the insights, wisdom and discernment each has to offer. In part, this is learned through nourishing all the other dimensions of being. But there are also specific practices (including mental, emotional, physical and spiritual disciplines within Integral Lifework) that encourage in-depth exposure to each type of processing, and a means of effortless transitioning between them.



**Empowered Self-Concept.** This dimension is about understanding what we think about ourselves, how we feel about ourselves, and how we arrived at those conclusions. Here we expand our self-awareness, explore our self-worth, and define what it means to live our lives effectively – that is, to achieve what we set out to achieve and successfully navigate the complex world around us. So nourishment in this dimension is as much about looking inward as it is about looking outward at the consequences of our actions; it equally emphasizes how we subjectively perceive ourselves, and how we can concretely measure our effectiveness in the mysterious task of living.

**Satisfying Sexuality.** Here we explore the nature of our own sexuality. What does sexual gratification feel like for us? What does intimacy look like to us? How do sexuality and intimacy intersect for us? How do sexuality and intimacy express themselves in our relationships? Answers to these questions will vary for each person, so nourishment will

look different for each person as well – and it will inevitably change over time. But the more clearly we can answer these questions, the more effectively we can nurture this dimension.

**Affirming Integrity.** This involves consciously aligning the unfolding essence of our being with our thoughts, feelings, words and actions, so that *how* we are from moment to moment authentically reflects *who* we are in our innermost depths.

What do I mean by “effective nourishment” of twelve dimensions? Each facet of the whole requires its own focus – its own special flavor of energy and effort – and the descriptions above make much of this self-explanatory. But there are other, less obvious characteristics of effective nourishment as well. For instance, there is a Goldilocks zone for each dimension, a virtual space between deprivation and indulgence that provides optimal support, and although this will be different for each person, it is important to cultivate a Goldilocks zone in every dimension. There is also a component of dialectic tension that establishes push-and-pull stimulation for each type of nourishment. Like tides moving up and down a beach, the energy of that tension stimulates growth and change. For example, the tension between rest or relaxation and vigorous exercise for a Healthy Body, or the tension between creative self-expression and appreciating and internalizing the creative expressions of others in Playful Heart.

There are also certain qualities of connection, openness, intimacy and relationship that must be present in each dimension for it to be nourished; like an inner family of hungry kids, we must help them care for themselves and each other, and sincerely care *about* themselves and each other. And although Integral Lifework begins as a series of nourishment routines that target particular dimensions, its ultimate objective is harmonized nourishment of the whole through integral practice. That is, to cultivate habits, activities and patterns of thought and emotion that nurture many dimensions at once in the most balanced and loving ways.

Harmonious interplay is the final most critical characteristic of multidimensional nourishment. There are many additional components of essential nourishment, but these few are key.

At first all of this may sound a bit overwhelming, but one of the delights of holistic nourishment is that simply becoming aware of all twelve dimensions and their importance is a significant step towards wholeness. To whatever degree we can include the care and feeding of these twelve inner selves in our daily routines, we will begin to create synergies and harmonies that nourish and sustain the whole in unexpected ways. This care and feeding may begin as the targeting of just one or two undernourished or neglected dimensions, and developing slowly from there. And of course there are many activities that will nurture more than one dimension at once – sometimes all arenas can even be nourished at the same time. All regular self-care has unintended cross-pollination, even if we are not conscious of it. Eventually, when all twelve dimensions come into balance, something miraculous happens...but I'll expand on this in a moment.

I began this article with the assumption of certain peak experiences of consciousness, experiences most often associated with spiritual disciplines, and frequently described as mystical *ahas*. It is my contention that these experiences will not translate into persisting modes of being, or even inform moral character and development, without the concurrent nurturing of all other dimensions. That is, they will not contribute to enduring shifts in consciousness unless that consciousness is supported by balanced, holistic nurturing. Why? Because all twelve dimensions are interdependent. None can thrive in isolation – indeed there's a real question of whether they exist independently at all. So the idea that supportive structures are necessary to heal and grow in any dimension of being is inherent to Integral Lifework. In this sense, “integral” is not an invented prerequisite but a *de facto* assumption about the nature of human experience and potential. We are integral beings who require integral nourishment, and our spiritual dimension is part of that mix.

The intimate interdependence of all twelve dimensions is easily recognizable. For example, if we persistently neglect any of these dimensions to an extreme degree, others will be impaired. If we're always depriving our body of sleep, nutrients and exercise, our ability to think clearly will be compromised, and we may experience physiological depression or severe emotional depression. If we deprive ourselves of healthy relationships and social contact for too long, our physical and mental health will deteriorate. If we avoid working

through childhood trauma or dysfunctional family-of-origin issues, we'll almost certainly sabotage our most important relationships as we reenact unresolved confusion, grief and pain. If we cannot follow through on commitments we make to ourselves and others – or we are unable to align our thoughts, feelings and actions with each other – then that lack of integrity will undermine our plans and rob us of our goals. If we do not feel empowered, or haven't discovered our purpose, then our energies will keep dissipating and our efforts will feel incomplete. If we cannot achieve a modicum of flexibility in how we interact with ourselves, others and the world around us, our rigidity will narrow our experience and prevent us from coping with stress, unforeseen outcomes or sudden change. And of course the neuroses resulting from repressed sexuality are well-documented. In all of these cases, each dimension of nourishment is part of the support for all of the others; to neglect one is to neglect them all.

Thus aspirations in any dimension require the support of all the others, and healing in any one dimension likewise requires attention to balance and harmonization. It is in fact quite surprising how subtle relationships between nourishment centers can be. For example, that someone who has struggled with years of disrupted sleep may quickly resolve the issue by nurturing Playful Heart; or that someone struggling with compulsive thoughts can attenuate them by giving Healthy Body more attention; or that someone who has been clinically depressed for many years finds relief attending to Pleasurable Legacy. These are not rigid, one-to-one correlations that apply universally, but in working with many clients and students it has become increasingly clear to me that undernourishment in one dimension leads to seemingly unrelated challenges or compensations in other dimensions. Thus the easiest path to healing and wholeness is simply to offer loving attention to all these inner selves.

So now we have defined (albeit briefly) twelve dimensions of being and the nature of nourishment. Returning to a mystic's call to action, how does multidimensional nourishment radiate outward? What do the widening arenas of action and intention look like? Further, how does this influence ongoing nourishment, growth and transformation?

In the wonderfully diverse creativity of human experience, twelve dimensions of being will radiate differently for different people. There are, however, some observable trajectories that tend to be shared. For instance, Playful Heart often finds its next emanation in creative hobbies or artistic professions that involve others, are displayed and performed for others, etc. Healthy Body might enlarge itself by joining an exercise group, participating in a dance class, playing community sports, or competing professionally. Restorative History may lead to healing that involves an entire family, mutual support groups, or somehow sharing a personal restoration process with others. Satisfying Sexuality has often been confined by social mores to intimate relationships, but has also found more diverse expression in certain spiritual traditions and societal practices. Flexible Processing Space can propagate as new work habits, or even whole new work cultures, where each processing space is deliberately honored throughout the workday. For many people, Pleasurable Legacy is focused on creating a biological family and providing stability and opportunity for that family, but it could also manifest in some area of creativity, engineering, philosophy or other discipline. Expanding Mind can radiate through any media (including this one) to encourage that dimension in everyone who encounters it. A Supportive Community may be a few select friends, a larger group, a regional club, a national organization and so on. Authentic Spirit tends to amplify itself through developing spiritually-centered relationship with other people, society, Nature, other beings and other realms of existence, and so on. Affirming Integrity may propagate outward as cultivating more supportive friendships, community activism, choosing a profession that aligns with personal values, or consciously asserting when and how to conform to societal expectations.

For all dimensions, the natural expansion will have a unique flavor, frequency and resonance that remains consistent through widening arenas of intention and action. That is, the broadcasting of nourishment beyond ourselves will always reflect our underlying motivation and the stage of our interior evolution. Whenever we jump ahead of ourselves – pursuing some realm of idealized activism that is not grounded in our interior development – we will rapidly become depleted in many dimensions at once, and our actions and intentions will tend to be undermined or sidetracked. They will, in effect, become unsupported facades of overextended effort. Many people may already recognize this in their own experience. On

the other hand, when all of our efforts naturally arise from the interior momentum of an *evolution of being* that is focused by an overarching intention, our actions flow more spontaneously and cultivate harmonies and energies that are otherwise inexplicable. And why does this occur? Because all of our dimensions are working together to fulfill a conscious volition that is in harmony with unconscious patterns of being – that agrees with and supports all dimensions at once.

The process of expansion is difficult to appreciate in the abstract, so here's an example. Let's say I am passionate about musical self-expression. I could focus all of my energies on furthering that passion in every waking moment, to the exclusion of all other dimensions. However, what really feeds and supports my musical proclivities? Is it just sitting alone in a sound-proof room, cut off from the world, perfecting some new fingering technique on my favorite stringed instrument? Well, that is part of my passion, to be sure. But in and of itself this would be unsustainable. For music requires many other streams of input and expression, of varying importance for different people. I require food and sleep, of course, but also social interaction and exposure to new musical ideas. I'm inspired by the excellence of other musicians, by new sounds and musical patterns, and by familiar musical styles and themes – my favorite companions since I was a child. I also need to rest from musicizing to provide space for my heart, mind, body and spirit to expand into new fields of experience and absorb new stimuli. If I were focused solely on practicing or producing music all of the time, I would be confining all dimensions of my being to a single point, rather than to an infinite openness of ever-expanding possibilities.

So this is how my musical passions are nurtured and sustained. How do they then expand into new arenas of intention and action? As my musical mind intersects with other dimensions, they naturally find new expression in radiant trajectories. In a community of like-minded musicians. In online resources for music appreciation. In new collaborations and mutual inspirations. In new avenues of performance or sharing – a house concert, posting my music on the Internet, in writing a piece that other musicians perform, etc. And this, in turn, creates a natural resonance with broader efforts to propagate and support musical experiences. Perhaps via political activism that encourages government grants for

the arts, or involvement in charities that provide musical opportunities for underprivileged kids. However, if I do not continue to balance and harmonize multidimensional nourishment, my efforts will constrict rather than expand; either I'll tend to return to smaller circles of propagation, or I'll disconnect from the foundations of my own musical passions. If I'm out of balance, I'll overextend myself beyond my own energies, or collapse into the smallest confines of personal ego.

This musical example illustrates how one dimension, Playful Heart, amplifies itself through particular talents, strengths and personal vision. Other dimensions will extend outward in similar ways, tuning themselves to an individual's journey without a rigidly predictable pattern of expression. Yet all dimensions begin their expansion as first order propagations, where personal nourishment is shared in relationship with loved ones, collaborative exchanges, and communities of various scope. Then the ripples expand into larger and larger systems of interaction. Into politics and government, economics and monetary systems, public education and workplace training, international commerce and law, and so on. What would a form of capitalism look like that honors all twelve dimensions of being? How would civic institutions be structured if they nurtured each dimension? How would mass media be shaped by balanced, harmonized consideration of all twelve aspects? And what if every child learned about these dimensions at an early age, and were encouraged to cultivate them throughout their entire educational experience? How might local, regional and national legislation be shaped through awareness and caring for these twelve dimensions? As the individual is healed, nurtured and transformed through integral awareness and discipline, so the family, community, region, nation and world can likewise be healed, nurtured and transformed through cascading outgrowth of an initial spark. And that initial spark rises and flourishes within a multidimensional interiority that is holistically supported.

How then does integral nourishment create transformative impacts? How does it contribute to any sort of evolution? Primarily this occurs through spontaneous, unexpected synthesis. There is once again little predictability in how any system will evolve, but the presence of fully charged dimensions offering maximum support for the next synchronistic leap is a confirmable outcome of this kind of integral practice. Enabling the harmonious interplay and

enrichment of all facets, while at the same time consciously and unconsciously enlarging their expression in broader arenas of intention and action, excites inexplicable and far-reaching exchanges. It helps energize the patterns that inevitably lead to evolution. Is this change always constructive or positive, in some absolute sense? From my experience and observation, that is not the case. Instead, there is an ebb and flow of what subjectively appears to be constructive and destructive, failure and recapitulation, regression and advancement, which all contribute to a secondary, mainly unperceivable process. That secondary process is, for all but the most prescient, only observable in extended retrospect. It does possess a certain subtle forward movement – individually, collectively and universally – but we could say that movement is measured either in millimeters over eons, or eons over millimeters; either in events too subtle to be recognized, or contextual changes so vast they are presumed to have always existed. This is why any wisdom in-the-moment that intuits such movement, or patterns of action that skillfully align with the underlying arc of evolution, so often seem foolhardy, impractical or contrary to status quo presumptions.

As indicated earlier, experience and observation has persuaded me that an overarching, governing intentionality is necessary for cascading propagations of being to be sustainable and effective. The intention I believe to be ideal is a commitment to the good of All. This “All” includes everything and everyone...all of existence. The “good” is not a specifically defined set of specific outcomes or conditions, but an all-encompassing focus of personal and collective will. Who can claim to know in any absolute sense what is really best for everyone and everything in a given moment? Instead we can encourage every thought, feeling and action to align with a generalized, deeply felt positive intention. And we can sincerely, openly, courageously and passionately seek out what “the good of All” means in each moment. We can be devoutly committed to the best possible outcomes and conditions for the largest, most inclusive group we can imagine.

At first this may seem a bit vague or wishy-washy, but really it is quite specific. The difficulty in describing this motivation is that "the good of All" is a felt sense that is experientially learned. We could say it is grounded in universal compassion, or that it emerges spontaneously out of unconditional love, or that it involves attenuation of personal

ego...but what does any of this really mean? Without experiencing this as a felt sense – a condition of the heart – it is challenging to define and promote. One of the Integral Lifework practices that helps cultivate this intention is a simple gratitude exercise: to sit still in a quiet place with eyes closed, breathing evenly and deeply, and gently encouraging feelings of gratitude to grow within. For some, imagining a gradually expanding point of warmth or light in the center of the chest helps amplify this mediation. For others, repeating a mantra of "thank you" over and over again is useful. Eventually, if we practice this daily for fifteen minutes or more, an intuition of what "the good of All" looks like for us personally will begin to take shape.

The guiding intention of the good of All is an article of faith, inspired by love, pragmatism and the aforementioned wisdom-in-the-moment. With it we can consecrate every effort to an ineffable hope, through a felt affection and goodwill toward All that Is. This can be as simple as prefacing each choice with a heartfelt "may this be for the good of All." And this orientation can be reinforced many different practices – especially explorations of Authentic Spirit. In fact, for me and many other mystics, such a governing intentionality has been a natural consequence of spiritual nourishment; the very unitive, blissful affection that spurs loving action towards others is an indelible characteristic of mystical *ahas*. But at the onset of any disciplined self-care, cultivating this guiding intention has tremendous benefit. At its heart this orientation nudges us into ever-more-inclusive contexts for our efforts, inspiring insights and energies that synchronize with advancing moral development.

Is all of this a purely romantic vision of mysticism, integral practice and holistic development? Is it just a magic trick of the mind, a creative fantasy that constructs meaning where none actually exists? Perhaps this is the case, though my own experiences and observations suggest another possibility: that such a framework is necessary for the multidimensional maturation of the human species, its short term success, and even its long term survival. It is my belief that the Universe will continue to change and evolve with or without our conscious participation, but that we have an opportunity to contribute if we choose to do so. Integral Lifework is one avenue of choice. There are many others – nourishing twelve dimensions is not an exclusive approach – but the mystery of ever-

enlarging propagation of goodwill is grounded in a journey of individual and collective wholeness. And if we do not choose to participate in some way, to contribute to the evolutionary process with the miracle of consciousness, I suspect humanity will lapse into one more dry creek bed among the many tributaries of being. We may perish, not through our reckless spirit of adventure, but from a paucity of love. So, in choosing to participate, my hope is that our species will endure long enough to witness the next great event horizon, and to celebrate the wondrous surprise waiting just beyond our comprehension.